

Steintor, about 1650, drawing by Adolf F. Lorenz

Source Lorenz, Adolf F.: Die Umgestaltung des Steintors im Wandel der Zeiten und der Neubau der Ritterschaftlichen Brandkasse, in: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Stadt Rostock, Bd. 16, Rostock 1928, S. 58-64, hier S. 59.

## Rostock's fortifications

Like nearly all medieval cities Rostock was fortified against external enemies. At first the fortification consisted of a simple wall-trench-system, reinforced with palisades, but this soon evolved into a closed city wall of boulders and bricks (stations 3, 4 and 9) with a height of about 5 m (16 ft) and a thickness of about 1.2 m (4 ft). Road access to the city was through gates (stations 1, 6, 8, 10 and 11) which had to be particularly well fortified as they were the weakest points in the system.

In the late Middle Ages city gates were also an indication of prestige. Those situated on the busiest roads were often elaborately decorated on the outside (field side) – as is seen on the Kröpelin Gate today. Longer sections of the wall were reinforced by projections (Wiekhouses) and towers (stations 3 and 7). The requirements of new weapons technology (e.g. the introduction of the cannon) led to modification of the fortifications. Stone walls became less important. From the 16th century onward city defences were more characteristically earthworks and projecting bastions behind deep ditches. Some elements from that period can still be seen today (stations 2 and 5). An end to the idea of city fortifications and the needs of a growing city in the 19th century led to the demolition of parts of the city wall and the extensive earthworks were turned into parks.



## Rostock Historical Workshop

The Rostock Historical Workshop is an association of interested people which, since its foundation in 1995, has been working, among other things, for the preservation and use of buildings of recognizable architectural and historical value. The Workshop is the initiator and editor of the „Lexicon of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern“ (2006) and since 1997 publishes twice yearly the magazine „Zeitgeschichte regional. Mitteilungen aus Mecklenburg-Vorpommern“ (Regional history and anecdotes of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern). Since 2005 the Workshop has been located in the Kröpelin Gate and uses this setting as an opportunity to further appreciation of the historical city defences for example with a permanent exhibition and a walking tour.

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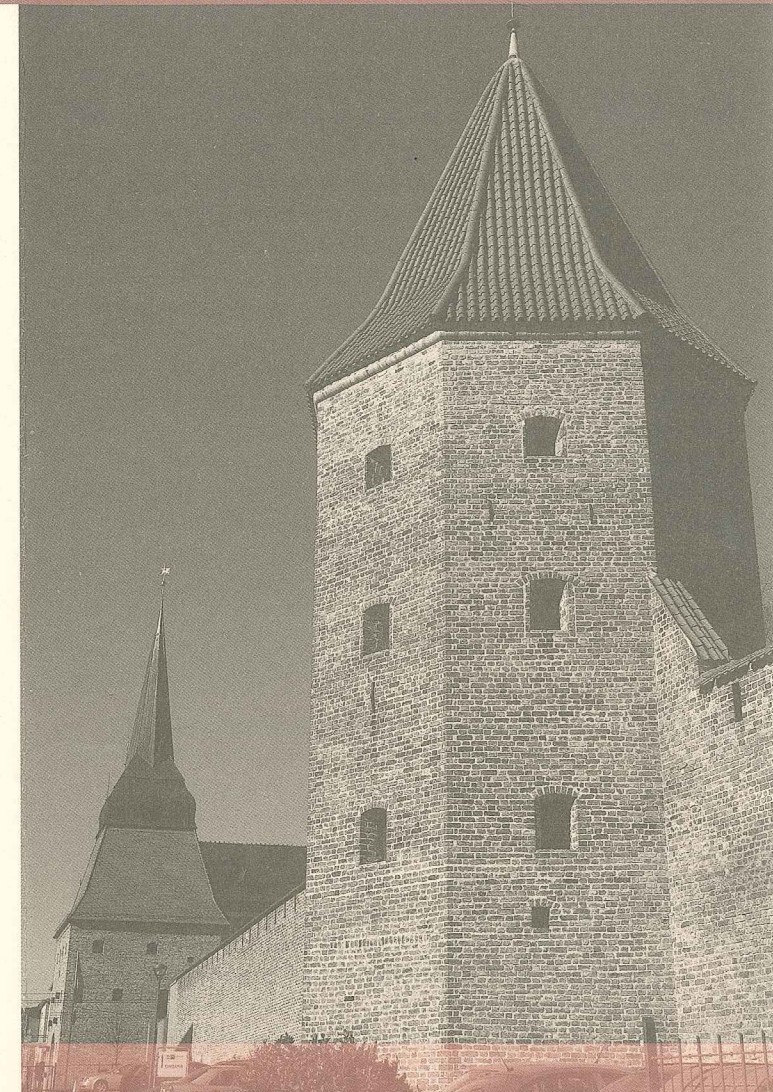
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# Gates – Towers – Walls

A walking tour of Rostock's fortifications

