

Tourist attractions in Germany

Bilsteinhöhle

Bilsteinhöhle is a cave system in nature park Ansberger Wald in North-Rhine Westphalia, Germany. On the 17 September 1887 an unknown part of the Bilstein cave system was discovered during road construction works. After the discovering the cave system was named Bilsteinhöhle. The geologist Emil Carthaus was tasked with the development works, so that the cave can be used as show cave. 10 days after the cave has been discovered the first guided tours began. The annual number of visitors of Bilsteinhöhle several times nearly reached 100000, today it is notably lower.

Möhne Reservoir

The Möhne Reservoir is an artificial lake in North Rhine-Westphalia, some 45 km east of Dortmund, Germany. Formed by the damming of the two rivers Möhne and Heve the lake stores 135 million cubic meters of water in its four basins.

From 1908 to 1913 the Möhne Reservoir was built at a cost of 23.5 million marks. It was built, because calculations of the future demand for water for the people and industry in the growing Ruhr-area in 1904 had revealed that the triple amount of the existing dams in the river system of the Ruhr with a storage volume of 32.4 million cubic meters would be required. The Möhne Reservoir was also built to regulate water levels on the Ruhr river downstream, help control floods and generate hydropower. Today it is also a tourist attraction. When it was built, the dam was the largest in Europe. 140 homesteads with 700 people had to move.

In the second world war a huge hole of 77 meters by 22 meters was blown into the dam by RAF Lancaster Bombers during Operation Chastine on the night of 16 May to 17 May 1943. The resulting huge tidal wave killed at least 1,579 people, 1,026 of them foreign forced labourers held in camps downriver. Though the Organisation Todt quickly repaired the dams with 7,000 men from the construction of Atlantic Wall, so that the Möhne Dam was repaired by 23 September 1943, the impact of the raid on German industry in the Ruhr valley and indeed on the civil population was significant.



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