Mēru Manor Park

Mēri, Bilskas pagasts, Smiltenes novads, Latvija, Smiltenes novads, Latvija

The Mēri Manor estate is located in Mēri, Bilskas Parish, Smiltene Municipality, 15 kilometres from Smiltene towards the Estonian border. The manor park covers an area of nine hectares and is a culturally and historically significant landscaped park.

The pride of Mēri Manor Park is its majestic oak tree, whose crown is considered the widest in the Baltic States. Facing it, rising above the manor house roof, stands an impressive European larch of remarkable size

Description

The present-day Mēri Manor estate (German: Mehrhof) was developed in the mid-19th century. The estate is centred around the manor house, a stable with an arcade, two barns, and a granary supported by masonry pillars, together forming a harmonious architectural ensemble.

The current manor house was built in 1905 by its owner, Augusts Jakobs Hekers, in the Neo-Renaissance and Romantic styles, inspired by late German Mannerism. The building features a picturesque silhouette, impressive proportions, two wings of different sizes adorned with stepped gables, a steep tiled roof with a massive square tower, and decorative roof structures. The manor once boasted lavish interiors, of which original doors, wooden wall panelling, and decorative wooden ceilings have been preserved.

In the summer of 1926, the manor house was adapted for use as a school, serving this purpose until 2009.

Today, the building is home to the Smiltene Municipality Museum, where visitors can discover the history of both the manor and the surrounding area. The museum's permanent exhibitions present the cultural and historical heritage of Smiltene Municipality.

Mēri Manor Park is a culturally and historically significant landscaped park. Its greatest treasure is a magnificent oak tree with a crown spanning 35 metres, regarded as the broadest in the Baltic States. Opposite the oak, beyond the manor roof and beside an avenue of ancient trees, stands a remarkable European larch.

The park also features an impressive avenue of mature arborvitae (thuja) trees leading from the manor terrace to the Mēri pond. Visitors can still admire many trees and shrubs planted during the manor period, including a historic northern red oak welcoming guests at the entrance, walnut trees growing in another corner of the park, and Tatarian dogwood shrubs, once widely used in the park's ornamental plantings.

In spring, the old lilacs come into bloom, while the lower terraces are adorned with historic apple trees. During summer, a long row of roses decorates the entire front façade of the manor house.

Mēri Manor Park, the manor grounds, and the famous Mēri Oak are accessible to visitors with reduced mobility, as the park pathways allow convenient movement throughout the area. A car park located next to the manor provides easy access to both the park and the museum. Benches are available throughout the park for rest and relaxation. At the entrance, an information board presents the history of the manor complex as well as information about the museum.

Various cultural events are organised in the manor park, ensuring that cultural experiences are accessible to visitors with functional disabilities.

Features

- Accessibility for disabled
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- Picnic or resting places
- Shelter in case of rain or sun
- Pets are welcome
- Wheelchair accessible with assistant
- Family-friendly
- Disabled parking available

Styles

- Manor park

Themes

- No specific theme

Opening Hours

The manor park is open all year round.
Guided tours are available during the museum's opening hours.

Group Visits

Admission to the manor park is free of charge.

Museum admission:

• Adults – EUR 3.00

• School students and seniors – EUR 2.00

Guided tour of the museum's permanent exhibitions and temporary exhibitions (in addition to the admission fee):

• EUR 10.00–25.00 per group (depending on group size)

Guided tours are available in Latvian and English.

Parking

Visitors can park along the roadside, in a small parking area at the edge of the property, or within the manor grounds.

Tickets

Free entry

Additional Information

The museum regularly offers public guided tours and themed tours.

Information about upcoming public tours and the latest updates is available on the museum's Facebook and

Instagram accounts, as well as in the Events section of the Smiltene Municipality website.

Private and group tours must be booked at least two days in advance.

The historic premises of the Smiltene Municipality Museum (Mēri Manor) are also available for hire for special occasions, including weddings, birthday celebrations, seminars, and formal receptions.

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