

History of Bonn

1989 marks the 2000th anniversary of the city of Bonn. Although this celebration refers to the founding of Bonn by the Romans, the city was originally a Celtic settlement (the Celtic word "bonn" meaning a wade). First written references to Bonn, when it was a fortified Roman camp, Castra Bonnensia, were made by the Roman historian Tacitus in A. D. 69.

When the Roman Empire lost the Rhine as its eastern border, it lost Bonn to the Franks. The flourishing market in Bonn gained importance by 1273, when it became one of the residences of the Prince Elector of Cologne. The electors Joseph Clemens (1689 – 1723) and Clemens August (1723 – 1761) turned Bonn into a baroque style city. The French controlled Bonn from 1794 to 1814, and then, in 1815, the Prussians took over.

Bonn was previously noted as a famous but quiet university town. This small university town was successfully transformed into a federal capital after it was selected in 1949 to become the new seat of government of the young Republic.

Greater Bonn, which includes Bad Godesberg (home to the large foreign community) and Beuel, has a population of about 294,000. This relatively small city in German terms, offers its citizens a high quality of life, rich in cultural heritage amid a hilly countryside.