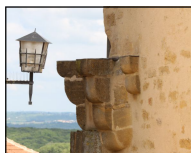




A ARROW-SLITS : previous to the 14th century, these very narrow vertical slits were contrived within the thickness of the wall to allow archers or arbalesters to shoot their arrows. After the 14th century, an aiming slot was added to facilitate the use of firearms.

B ECHAUGUETTE : a small watchtower corbelling out of the wall was built on that corner. Its purpose was to survey and protect the access from the North side. Its corbels are the only remains.



C BRATTICES : these corbelled machicolated constructions were used for plunging and grazing fire attacks. They protected the three big bays and the small choir door. They were rebuilt in 2007 during the restoration of the church.

D CANONNIERES : at the end of the 15th century, oval embrasures were contrived next to each window in the thickness of the Southern wall to accommodate gun barrels and artillery (bombards, small cannons).



E LOOPHOLES WITH OFFSET RESSAUTS : at the end of the 15th century sophisticated loopholes, shaped as a lying figure of eight adapted to arquebuses and musketoon were added to the South side. As they covered their inner linings, these ressauts deflected the assailants' bullets, thus lowering the risks incurred by the defenders of the church.



THE BELL-TOWER : for a long time this stout tower (10 by 10m) served as a donjon for the fortified building. Only accessible from inside the church, the tower initially had two levels, one of which was the guardroom. As most of the tower was destroyed in the 17th century, it was rebuilt as a bell-tower sheltering five melodious bells; the oldest bell, named Marie-Thérèse, was installed in 1791. The Northern facade displays a single-hand clock.

From the past ...



...into the present

Romanistic era	11th – 12th century : building of the crypt and a Romanesque church.
Gothic age	<p>13th century: extension of the building: adding single bay-windows in the aisles and tracery in the choir.</p> <p>14th – 15th century : defense works on the church due to ongoing wars between the dukes of Bar and Lorraine and the city of Metz.</p> <p>1490 : village burnt down by Metz.</p> <p>1500-1504 : rebuilding of the church.</p> <p>Circa 1510 : stained glass windows for the choir signed by Thomas de Clinchamp.</p>
16th -17th century	<p>1574 : strengthening of the apse with the addition of flying buttresses.</p> <p>1636 : plundering of the supplies stocked in the church during the Thirty Years' War.</p> <p>Circa 1655 : demolition of the defenses to carry out a decree from the king of France.</p> <p>1691 : installation of a first bell in the reconstructed and converted donjon.</p>
19th century and first Annexation	<p>1843 : uncovering of about twenty Merovingian sarcophagi during the laying of the current parvis.</p> <p>1895-1910 : erection of two neo-gothic side altars followed by a new white marble altar for the choir.</p>
From 1918 to nowadays	<p>1930 : crypt listed as an ancient monument.</p> <p>1958 : four new bells.</p> <p>1965 : new stained glass window panes by Pierre Chevalley.</p> <p>1983 : the church as a whole listed as an ancient monument.</p> <p>1985 : restoration of the crypt.</p> <p>1998-2007 : restoration of the church façades and roof.</p>

Ne pas jeter sur la voie publique

L'église de Norroy-Plesnois d'hier à aujourd'hui



Réalisation :
Association Eglise de Norroy-Plesnois d'hier à aujourd'hui

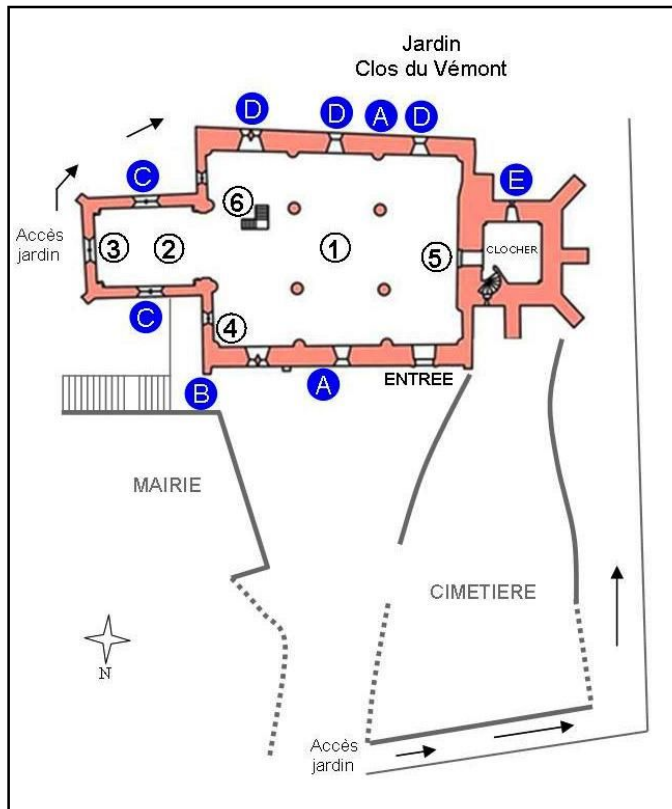


✉ 20, rue de Plesnois
57140 Norroy le Veneur



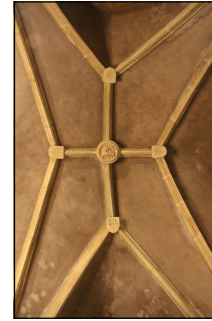
🌐 <http://www.eglise-norroy-plesnois.fr>

Norroy le Veneur is located about 10km northwest of the city of Metz. In this lovely little village, hidden in a fold of the Moselle riverside, stands the stately, but elegant church dedicated to Saint Peter. It witnessed the battles between the Counts of Bar and the Dukes of Lorraine on one hand and Metz on the other. Its history as a fortified place explains why the building architecture has both sacred and military purposes. The building has a typical basilica layout being flanked by two square towers, one of which on the west side is the most imposing in size. It has the Romanesque style typical of the rural hillside churches in Lorraine.



Built as a watchtower at the village entrance, the church gradually turned into a fortress to protect it more efficiently. The crypt was listed as an ancient monument in 1930, the church as a whole in 1983 and in 1994, the stained glass windows were registered on the "Inventaire général des monuments et des richesses artistiques de la France" (general list of French monuments and artistic artifacts).

① THE VAULTS : In the nave, four sturdy pillars without capital support intercepting vaults or lierne- and tierceron ribbed vaults. The same pattern can be seen in the aisles. The finely carved keystones are mostly circular, except in the southern aisle, where they are shaped as shields and one as an Agnus Dei. The arms of Lorraine can be seen in the nave, as well as the year 1504 written in gothic numerals.



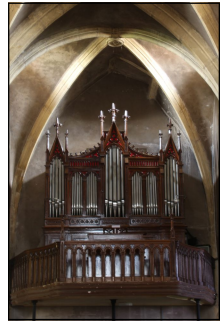
② THE CHOIR : lightly out of alignment, the choir is vaulted with lierne and tierceron ribs. The light comes through three big gothic bays with window tracery (end of the 13th, beginning of the 16th century), and tinted window panes dating back to the 16th and 20th century.

③ THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS IN THE CHOIR : the oldest one is signed by Thomas de Clinchamp, a master glass maker, who also worked in the cathedral church of Metz and the church of the neighboring village Fèves and dates back to the 16th century. Saint Peter, the parish's patron saint can be seen on the left hand side and Saint Clement, the first bishop of Metz on the right. Two restorations made by Laurent Charles Marechal in 1859 and Michel Thiria in 1934 have altered the face of the latter.



④ THE WALL CAVITY : next to the altar of the blessed Virgin, the confessional box has been removed and a wall with a Romanesque window was uncovered. This is all that remains of the 12th-13th century wall. In the 15th century a thicker wall was erected against it in order to support the vault.

⑤ THE ORGANS : a first organ was bought in 1850. Its loft was modified in 1897 adding two cast iron columns and then enlarged in 1927 by hollowing out the wall of the bell-tower. A new organ replaced it in 1901 which was restored in 1952 and 1984. The latest renovation was made in 2014 by Freddy Bauer, an organ builder from Sarralbe (France). Besides the organ stop, he also renovated the neo-gothic oaken chest.



⑥ THE CRYPT is a rectangular hall divided into three naves. In the centre nine groined vaults are supported by four monolithic pillars topped by plain square capitals and by pilasters. The notches that can be seen in the pillar capitals were probably carved out to fit supports when the pilasters needed to be replaced in 1709. In the East, three barrel-vaulted niches lit by three small windows crowned by a semi-circular arch. The central niche houses a Romanesque altar.



All these details suggest that the building dates back to the 11th or beginning of the 12th century. The tombstone fragment on the wall honours the memory of Pierre Daras, parish priest from 1670 to 1706; he witnessed the construction of the vestry in 1686 and the addition of the first bell in the newly rebuilt donjon in 1691. A basin shaped stone was carved out in the floor probably to collect water from a nearby spring.

The Merovingian sarcophagus fragment exhibited next to the basin was uncovered in 1985 during the access works to the crypt. On either side of the entrance door the stone work is shaped in a quadrant of a circle. It is thought that these may correspond with the foundation blocks of the choir pillars.