

Taking place in parallel with the construction works as a part of the renovation of the old village centre in Ponikva and the outdoor area between the church and the parking lot was archaeological research: archaeological supervision, archaeological excavations, and geophysical surveying.

Particular previously discovered findings dating to the Neolithic and the Ancient Roman period bear witness to Ponikva's long history. Historical sources attest to the founding of an ancient parish in Ponikva as early as in the 10th or 11th century, and the earliest reference to Ponikva in recorded history dates back to the late 12th or early 13th century. A Romanesque church stood at the spot of today's baroque St. Martin's Church in that period, which in turn likely replaced an even older, pre-Romanesque one. The Romanesque church was rebuilt during the Gothic period. Between 1732 and 1740, architect Jožef Hoffer rebuilt it in baroque style; the exterior and the bell tower were completed in 1758, and the church was dedicated in 1760. The construction method used to build the baroque church is particularly interesting. It involved building the walls of the new church directly around the old Romanesque building to allow its continuous operation.

Archaeological research and geophysical survey have revealed the foundations of the precursor to today's church and confirmed the existence of both the ossuary discovered within the north-eastern tower, and the tomb located under the church's paving, which has been inaccessible since 1912. In addition, the foundations of a former apse were discovered on the northern part of the church, which indicates that the earlier church at this location had a somewhat different floor plan. Archaeological research also revealed the foundations of the Gothic church complete with an adjacent cemetery and the remains of a wall that surrounded the cemetery.

Due to the exceptional preservation of archaeological remains that corroborate the written sources about the fortification role of the space surrounding the St. Martin's Church, the Institute for Protection of Cultural Heritage, Regional Unit Celje, decided, in compliance with the terms and conditions of cultural protection, and considering the interest shown by the investors, to present the defensive wall and the well-preserved towers in the paving and the terrain.

FORTIFICATION AGAINST OTTOMAN INVASION
In the late 15th and early 16th century, this area was under the threat of Ottoman invasions that indeed occurred three times: in 1473, 1493, and 1529. In 1491, the villagers, in the absence of the parish priest, are reported to have fortified the cemetery adjacent to the church with a moat and a stone wall, and to have built a bastion at the top.

Archaeological research has confirmed the existence of the narrow cemetery wall (phase 1) and its fortification (phase 2), as discoveries included the remains of the foundations or walls of the fortification built in the late 15th century with the addition of a scarp and defence towers (phase 3) to defend against the Ottoman invasions. The discoveries also included all four defence towers – a part of the semi-circular north-western tower, semi-circular south-western tower with an entrance that was later walled-off, a side arrowslit and a drain channel, semi-circular north-eastern tower with an arrowslit and walled-off entrance, and the rectangular south-eastern tower. So-called offset entrances were documented on the southern and the north-western part of the fortified walls. Subsequently, the walls on the eastern end were buttressed and expanded with external walls terminating in the square-shaped south-eastern tower (phase 4). Toward the end of the Ottoman threat, the north-eastern tower was repurposed into an ossuary, the south-western tower was converted into chaplain's dwelling, while the site of the former square tower is today the location of the rectory. The documents from 1708 only refer to the south-western tower that was the last to be demolished in 1850.

CEMETERY

The Gothic and the Romanesque church were surrounded by a walled cemetery. Later on, during the construction of fortifications against the Ottoman invasions, the cemetery reached all the way to the defence wall, and individual graves were also discovered next to the towers. The deceased were buried in wooden coffins, or they were wrapped in burial cloth (or shroud) and laid in a simple burial pit. They were mostly interred facing east. A total of 369 graves were documented during the research. Despite the considerable density of the graves, at least three stages of interment could be discerned. Many objects were discovered in the graves, such as rosaries made of bones, bronze crosses, devotional medals, medallions, belt buckles and rings. Due to the limited space available for the cemetery, the north-eastern tower of the former fortification against the Ottoman invasion was later converted into an ossuary. Remains of the deceased from previous generations were transferred there to make space for the new departed. This practice must have been observed for a long time, as between 2,600 and 2,900 deceased were moved to the ossuary. In the 18th century, the cemetery next to the Gothic church was relocated to Gmajna ("Common Land"); in 1830, it was finally moved to its current location. The deceased unearthed during the archaeological research were respectfully buried in a mass grave in the today's cemetery.

KOLOFON

Projekt: »Ureditev vaškega jedra na Ponikvi in zunanjih površin med cerkvijo in parkiriščem, skupaj z ureditvijo komunalnih vodov«
Financiranje: Župnija Ponikva, Občina Šentjur, Ministrstvo za kulturo
Arhitekturna zasnova: Atelje Marko Mušič, d.o.o., Gins, d.o.o.
Arheološke raziskave: Arhej, d.o.o., PJP, d.o.o., Gearh, d.o.o.
Konservatorski nadzor: ZVKDS OE Celje, Danijela Brišnik, Marjana Krumpestar, Aleš Plevčak, Matija Plevnik, Mateja Ravnik
Besedilo in grafične priloge: Grega Čakš, PJP, d.o.o., dr. Tamara Leskovar, Arhej, d.o.o.
Prevod v angleščino: Lingua Service, d.o.o.
Oblikovanje: ZVKDS OE Celje, Lucija Čakš Orač
Založnik: Občina Šentjur, september 2019

IMPRESSUM

The project: "Renovation of Old Village Centre in Ponikva and Outdoor Area between the Church and the Parking Lot, including the Restoration of Public Utilities"
Financed by: the Parish of Ponikva, the Municipality of Šentjur; the Ministry of Culture.
Architectural concept: Atelje Marko Mušič, d.o.o., Gins, d.o.o.
Archaeological research: Arhej, d.o.o., PJP, d.o.o., Gearh, d.o.o.
Conservation supervision: IPCH RU Celje, Danijela Brišnik, Marjana Krumpestar, Aleš Plevčak, Matija Plevnik, Mateja Ravnik
The text, plan and photos: Grega Čakš, PJP, d.o.o., dr. Tamara Leskovar, Arhej, d.o.o.
Translation in English: Lingua Service, d.o.o.
Layout: IPCH RU Celje, Lucija Čakš Orač
Publisher: Municipality of Šentjur, September 2019



V ZAVETJU CERKVE SV. MARTINA Arheološka odkritja 2012-2018

IN THE SHELTER OF ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH
Archaeological findings 2012-2018



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF CULTURE



OBČINA ŠENTJUR



Zavod za varstvo
kulturne dediščine Slovenije
Služba za kulturno dediščino
Območna enota Celje

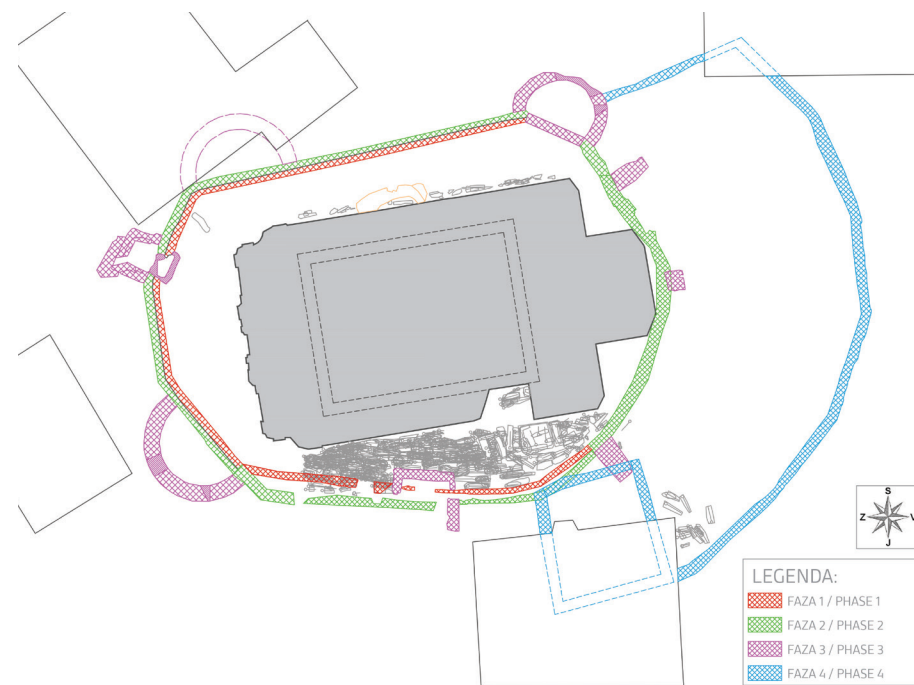


V sklopu ureditve vaškega jedra na Ponikvi in zunanjih površin med cerkvijo in parkiriščem so vzporedno z gradbenimi deli potekale arheološke raziskave - arheološki nadzor ob gradnji, arheološka izkopavanja in geofizikalne raziskave.

O dolgi zgodovini Ponikve govorijo že v preteklosti odkrite posamične najdbe iz časa mlajše kamene in rimske dobe. Zgodovinski viri pričajo o ustanovitvi prazupnije na Ponikvi že v 10. ali 11. stoletju, v pisnih virih pa se Ponikva prvič omenja konec 12. stoletja oziroma v začetku 13. stoletja. V tem času je na mestu današnje baročne cerkve sv. Martina stala romanska cerkev, ki je verjetno nadomestila še starejšo, predromansko. V času gotike je bila romanska cerkev prezidana. Arhitekt Jožef Hoffer je med leti 1732 in 1740 cerkev pozidal v baročni podobi, zunanjščina in zvonik sta bila dokončana leta 1758, posvečena pa je bila leta 1760. Ob tem je zanimiv način gradnje baročne cerkve, ki je s postavitvijo zidov nove cerkve neposredno okoli stare romanske omogočil njeno nemoteno delovanje.

Arheološke in geofizikalne raziskave so razkrile temelje predhodnic današnje cerkve ter potrdile tako obstoj kostnice, odkrite znotraj severovzhodnega stolpa, kot tudi grobnice, ki se nahaja pod cerkvenim tlakom in je od leta 1912 naprej nedostopna. Poleg tega je bil na severni strani cerkve odkrit temelj nekdanje apside, ki kaže, da je imela predhodnica današnje cerkve nekoliko drugačen tloris. Arheološke raziskave so razkrile tudi temelje gotske cerkve in njej pripadajoče pokopališče z ostanki zidu, ki je pokopališče obdajal.

Zaradi izjemne ohranjenosti arhitekturnih ostalin, ki potrjujejo pisne vire o tabornem značaju prostora okrog cerkve sv. Martina, se je Zavod za varstvo kulturne dediščine, Območna enota Celje, skladno s podanimi kulturnovarstvenimi pogoji in zaradi izkazanega interesa investorjev odločil za prezentacijo tabornega obzidja in dobro ohranjenih stolpov v tlaku in terenu.



PROTITURŠKI TABOR

Ob koncu 15. in v začetku 16. stoletja je grozila nevarnost turških vpadov, ki so to območje prizadeli trikrat - v letih 1473, 1493 ter 1529. Leta 1491 naj bi vaščani ob odsotnosti tedanjega župnika utrdili pokopališče ob cerkvi z jarkom in kamnitim zidom, zgoraj pa so naredili zobčast nadzidek oziroma bastijo.

Arheološke raziskave so potrdile obstoj ožjega pokopališkega zidu (faza 1) ter njegove utrditve (faza 2). Odkrite so bile namreč ostaline temeljev oziroma zidov konec 15. stoletja postavljenega protiturškega tabora, ki je nastal z utrditvijo pokopališkega zidu z dodatno fronto in obrambnimi stolpi (faza 3). Odkriti so bili tudi vsi štirje obrambni stolpi - del polkrožnega severozahodnega stolpa, polkrožni jugozahodni stolp s pozneje zazidanim vhomom, stransko lino in odvodnim kanalom, polkrožni severovzhodni stolp s strelno lino in zazidanim vhomom ter pravokotni jugovzhodni stolp. Na južnem in severozahodnem delu tabornega obzidja sta bila dokumentirana t. i. zamaknjena vhoda. Kasneje je bilo obzidje na vzhodnem delu podprto z oporniki in razširjeno z zunanjim obzidjem, ki se je zaključil s kvadratnim jugovzhodnim stolpom (faza 4).

Po koncu turške nevarnosti je bil severovzhodni stolp preurejen v kostnico, jugozahodni v kaplanijo, na mestu kvadratnega stolpa pa danes stoji župnišče. Leta 1708 je izpričan le še jugozahodni stolp, ki je bil kot zadnji porušen leta 1850.



Jugovzhodni stolp in del obzidja / South-eastern tower and part of fortification



Pokopališki zid z utrditvijo / Cemetery wall and its fortification

POKOPALIŠČE

Gotsko in tudi romansko cerkev je obdajalo z zidom ograjeno pokopališče. Pozneje, ob protiturškem utrjevanju prostora, je pokopališče segalo celo do obrambnega zidu, posamezni grobovi pa so bili odkriti tudi ob stolpih. Pokojniki so bili pokopani ali v lesenih krstah ali pa so bili zaviti v mrliški prt in položeni v preprosto grobno jamo. V grob so bili večinoma položeni tako, da so gledali proti vzhodu. Skupaj je bilo med raziskavami dokumentiranih 369 grobov. Kljub veliki gostoti pokopavanja so bile razbrane vsaj tri faze pokopavanja. V grobovih so bili odkriti številni predmeti, kot so koščeni rožni vencji, bronasti križi, svetinjice, medaljoni, pasne sponje in obročki.

Zaradi prostorske omejenosti pokopališča je bila v severovzhodnem stolpu nekdanjega protiturškega tabora pozneje urejena kostnica. Vanjo so premeščali posmrtno ostanke pokojnikov prejšnjih generacij, s čimer je bil sproščen prostor za nove umrle. Praksa je morala biti v veljavi dolgo časa, saj je bilo v kostnico prenesenih med 2600 in 2900 pokojnikov. Pokopališče ob gotski cerkvi je bilo v 18. stoletju premeščeno na Gmajno, od leta 1830 naprej pa prostor zadnjega počitka predstavlja današnje pokopališče. Pokojniki, odkriti med arheološkimi raziskavami, so pietetno pokopani v skupni grobnici na današnjem pokopališču.



Severovzhodni stolp - kostnica / North-eastern tower - ossuary



Delci rožnega venca in križa / Parts of a rosary and a cross