

La città di Sant'Ellero
e Teodorico

Galeata

ROMAGNA'S VILLAGES

PROVINCE OF FORLÌ CESENA

Origins.

Galeata has very ancient origins. The first archaeological evidence of human settlement in this area dates back to the Copper age.

The original town centre is the small town of Mevaniola, which was founded in Roman times on the river terrace between Pianetto and Galeata. Mevaniola, whose name suggests probable Umbrian origins and relations with the town of Mevania, that is the present town of Bevagna, is mentioned both by Pliny the Elder and in several epigraphs.

St. Ellero and Theodoric.

Between the 5th and 6th century AD, the Roman settlement was abandoned and both the monastery founded by St. Ellero and the sumptuous Villa di Teodorico with an elegant spa were started to be built.

St. Ellero and Theodoric were the protagonists of a legendary encounter-clash described in a medieval hagiographical text on St. Ellero's life: "(...) enraged, King Theodoric got onto his horse with a quick run (...) but

before having reached the walls of the monastery (...) his horse started to groan and did not want to go on anymore (...). Seeing this sign, King Theodoric (...) sent him two soldiers asking him to be freed (...)". This episode is featured on a bas-relief kept at the "Mons. Domenico Mambrini" Civic Museum.

In Galeata, legend and archaeological evidence are intertwined: the excavations carried out by the Archaeology Department of the University of Bologna have found in Saetta the remains of a big villa built during King Theodoric's reign in Italy.

The Middle Ages.

The vitality of the area in this period is demonstrated by the remains of several castles like the castle of Pianetto, the tower of Poggio Galmino and the tower of Monte Erno in San Zeno.

In addition to these castles, in the Middle Ages there were also many religious settlements and villages, including Galeata itself.

The Florentine period.

In the 15th century Galeata passed under the dominion of Florence, which ruled over it for several centuries. The local dialect, popular traditions and cuisine thus show a clear Tuscan influence, even though harmonised with the Romagna's one.

The town planning, the architecture of the historical buildings and the works contained in the various churches are, too, in Florentine style.

Yesterday and today.

The Civic Museum, which is the result of Mons. Domenico Mambrini's great passion and love for his home land, shows the intriguing history of the upper Bidente valley. The Museum is the ideal centre of an area rich in churches, archaeological remains, silent streets and hidden corners all to be discovered.



PIANETTO

CASTLE

SANTA MARIA DEI MIRACOLI

CIVIC MUSEUM



VILLA DI TEODERICO

MEVANIOLA

GALEATA



FAMOUS PEOPLE:

Sant'Ellero (476 - 558 d.C.)
Ferdinando Zannetti (1801 - 1881) doctor
Rufillo Perini (1848 - 1931) africanist
Mons. Domenico Mambrini (1879 - 1944) priest of Galeata, local history scholar and founder of the homonymous civic museum
Don Giulio Facibeni (1884 - 1958) founder of the Opera della Divina Provvidenza "Madonnina del Grappa" - Florence

PRODOTTI TIPICI:

- * *Raviggiolo cheese*
- * *Tortelli alla lastra*
- * *Bread and sweets ('Mantovana' cake)*
- * *Pasta dishes with bladder-campion*

NUMERI UTILI:

MUNICIPALITY OF GALEATA - tel. +39 0543 975411
 protocollo@comune.galeata.fo.it
 www.comune.galeata.fo.it

MONS. DOMENICO MAMBRINI CIVIC MUSEUM
 tel. +39 0543 975424 - museomambrini@libero.it

TOURIST OFFICE - tel. +39 0543 971297
 cv.santasofia@parcoforestecasentinesi.it

Ospitalità nei Borghi
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Regione Emilia Romagna

Assessorato Turismo. Commercio
 tel. 051 283491 - www.emiliaromagnaturismo.it
 emiliaromagnaturismo@regione.emilia-romagna.it

PROVINCIA DI FORLÌ CESENA
 IL CUORE VERDE DELLA ROMAGNA

www.turismo.fc.it



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Al progetto partecipano le Regioni Emilia-Romagna,
 Campania, Basilicata, Molise, Toscana, Liguria, Friuli Venezia Giulia.

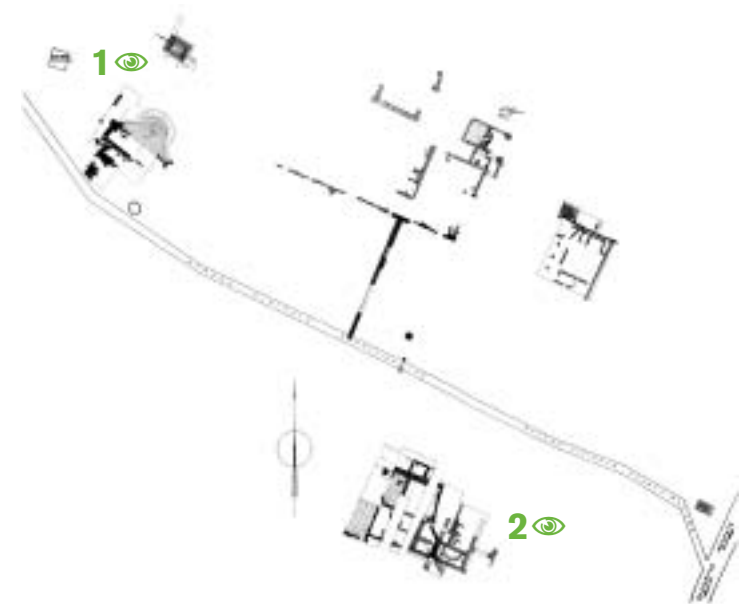
Archaeological Area of the Roman town of Mevaniola

The archaeological site of the Roman town of Mevaniola was excavated in several steps by the Archaeological Superintendency of Emilia-Romagna. Excavations brought to light some structures which can be connected to the town: the spa (partially visible), what is presumed to be the forum area, the small theatre and the water tank (all visible).

The small town had presumably a terraced layout with public buildings lined up along a main road which probably followed the route of the present country road crossing the archaeological area.

The finds found in a sector of the necropolis excavated in 1993 are shown in the “Mons. Domenico Mambrini” Civic Museum.

The name *Mevaniola* recalls the ancient town of *Mevania*, that is the present town of Bevagna in Umbria, but the relationships between these two towns and their names are not very clear yet.



points of interest

1. Theatre (1st century b.C.)

It does not show a Roman architectural pattern but is quite similar to Greek-Hellenistic patterns, especially in the perfectly round orchestra tangent to the straight stage. Considering its proximity to the forum area, it was probably used as venue not only for theatrical performances and music shows but also for public meetings.

2. Spa

Nothing but a rectangular room with an apse (probably a bath) and some remains of ditches and sewers for the drainage of water still remains of the ancient spa during whose excavation the famous mosaic inscription of Caesius was found (second half of the 1st century b.C.).



Archaeological Area of the Villa di Teoderico

In 1942 a group of scholars of the German Archaeological Institute of Rome excavated a quite modest structure which was identified as the hunting lodge of King Theodoric.

As a matter of fact, in “The Life of St. Ellero” it is told that King Theodoric came here to build a mansion at the foot of this mountain above the Bidente river and had established a lot of corvées for the neighbouring populations.

In 1998 the Archaeology Department of the University of Bologna restarted the excavation works in this area, which brought to light both Roman structures and structures dating back to the time of King Theodoric.

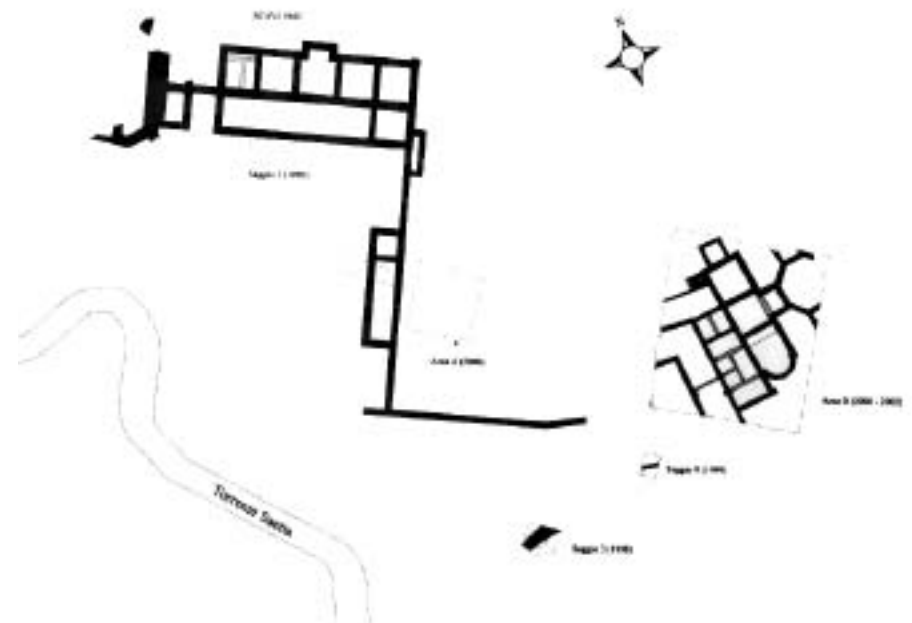
In particular, an elegant covered thermal area with the traditional artificially heated rooms (*calidarium* and *tepidarium*) and cold rooms (*frigidarium*) connected to a large courtyard paved with sandstone paving tiles and with a big tank in the centre were excavated.

This thermal area was certainly part of a sumptuous mansion dating back to the period between the end of the 5th century and the beginning of the 6th century AD whose residential sector is still to be found.

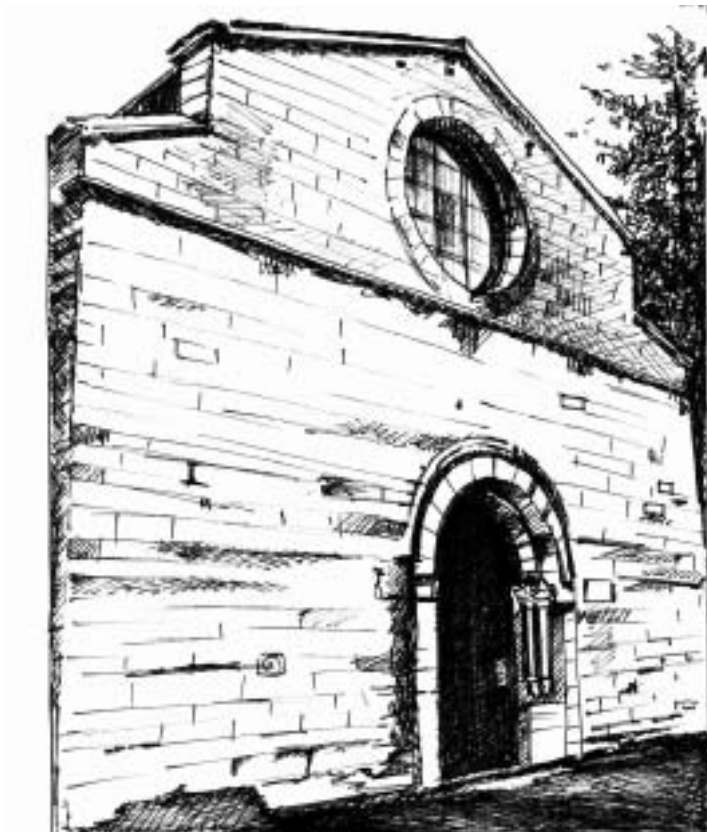
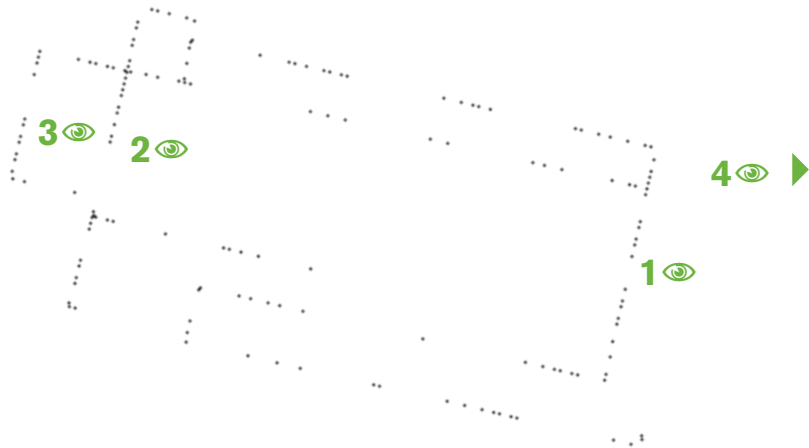
The villa could have been the residence of King Theodoric or of a rich dignitary of the Goth court in Ravenna.

In this area some interesting pre-Roman finds were also found, such as a small bronze statue of a knight (mid-6th century b.C.) and some Attic ceramic fragments (4th-5th century b.C.). All finds brought to light during excavation works are exhibited in a small room of the “Mons. Domenico Mambrini” Civic Museum.

Not far from this area there is the small church of Santa Maria Assunta del Pantano whose Romanesque façade made of sandstone is worth seeing.



Abbazia di Sant'Ellero



The Abbey of Sant'Ellero was probably founded between the end of the 5th century and the beginning of the 6th century by St. Ellero who, as reported in the Life of the Saint, retired in the upper Bidente valley to lead an ascetic existence.

The current building is the result of the overlapping of several construction stages and restoration works necessary due to the state of neglect and to periodical earthquakes.

Inside, the church has just one nave ending with an elevated presbytery and a rectilinear apse.

However, the most charming part of the building is certainly the crypt, in which a complex religious rite linked to the magic of stone takes place.

points of interest

1. Façade (11th-12th cent.)

The Romanesque façade is made of sandstone blocks and is dominated by the portal with small twin columns and capitals decorated with figures of monks and sirens.

2. Crypt

The crypt is accessible by two side stairs located near the presbytery. Of interest also the recycling of early Christian sculptural elements (peacock tails and claws) used in the steps.

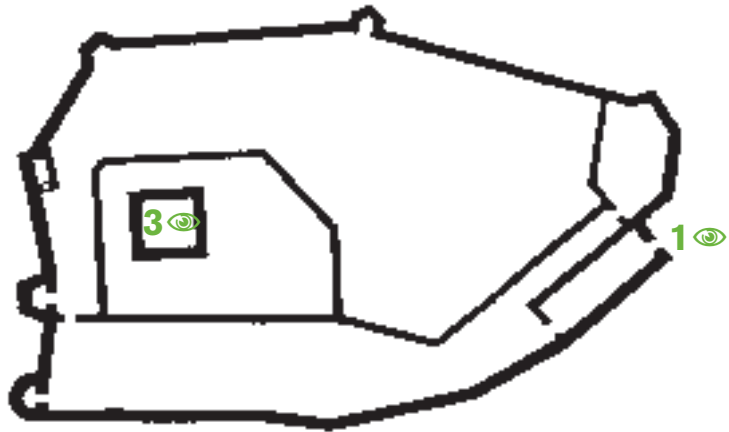
3. Sarcophagus of St. Ellero

The crypt contains the sarcophagus of St. Ellero dating back to the end of the 8th century-beginning of the 9th century, which is decorated with crosses contained in some niches.

4. 'Sentiero delle cellette' path

The abbey can be reached on foot following the 'sentiero delle cellette' path, which represents the historic route followed by pilgrims coming from Galeata. Tradition has it that St. Ellero and Theodoric met along this path, an event beautifully represented in a bas-relief housed in the Mambrini Museum.

Castle of Pianetto



In 1371, Cardinal Anglico described the castle of Pianetto as follows: “ it lies on the shore of a very high bank above the Aqueduct river, it lies on the road leading to Tuscany, (which) passes between the castle and the river and which cannot be used by anyone without the permission of the lords of the castle which is looked after *ad petitionem* of the abbot (of St. Ellero); near this castle there is a hamlet crossed by the above-mentioned road. It is a castle suitable for war. In the castle and hamlet there are 33 fireplaces.”

In the 13th century, the castle was owned by the Counts Guidi, and later became property of Florence.

In addition to the above-mentioned text by Cardinal Anglico, another proof of the domination and power of the abbots of Sant’Ellero is the election of the abbot of Sant’Ellero in the church of Santa Maria inside the castle of Pianetto in 1316.

The structure that can be seen today consists of walls over 300 m long with defensive redans. There are two access gates.



points of interest

1. Northern gate

One of the two gates of the castle, whose structure can still be seen in a building turned into a country house with a big arch located along the road leading to the castle

2. Southern gate

Next to it there is a massive semicircular keep containing the water tank.

3. Keep

The castle is dominated by the about 10 m high main keep, which has a 5 m wide quadrangular base.

Church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli a Pianetto

The church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli was built in 1497 following a miracle occurred in a house in Pianetto where a tablet portraying the Madonna was seen crying and shedding drops similar to milk from the breast.

The building in Renaissance style is dominated inside by a tempietto stretching towards the nave centre in which the tablet of the miracle is venerated. The valuable sandstone decorations featuring several coats of arms are worth seeing. Next to the church there is the Convent of the Friars Minor which features a beautiful cloister.

points of interest

1. Façade

It has represented over the centuries a sort of "community's diary" on which historical and everyday events could be engraved.

2. Deposition from the Cross (16th cent.) Fresco by an anonymous painter of the Vasari's School.

3. St. Joseph of Copertino (1758) Oil on canvas by Giuseppe Ghedini.

4. Annunciation and Saints (1527) Fresco by an anonymous painter.

In the centre, St. Catherine, St. John the Baptist and St. Anthony the Abbot; in the predella, the decapitation of St. John the Baptist.

5. Crucifixion (18th cent.) Oil on canvas by an anonymous painter.

6. Wooden tabernacle (late 16th cent.)

7. The miracle of a parturient (17th cent.) Fresco previously located in a lunette of the cloister.

8. Visitation (1599) Oil on canvas by Giovanni Stradano.

It portrays St. Mary's Visit to St. Elisabeth, who are both pregnant here.

9. Tempietto

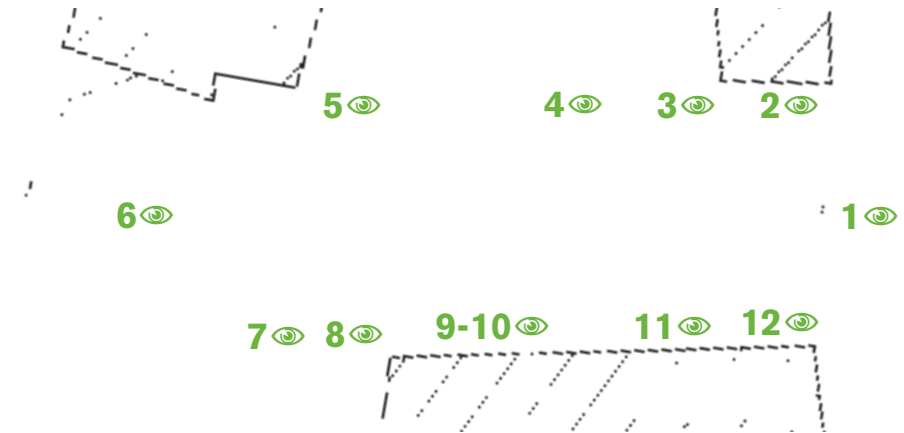
10. Tablet of the miracle (late 14th-beginning of the 15th cent.)

Virgin Mary with Child and Saints.

11. St. Augustine, St. Bonaventura and St. Clare (18th cent.)

Oil on canvas by Giuseppe Ghedini.

12. Virgin Mary's Assumption (1596) Oil on canvas by Matteo Confortini.



Museo Civico “Mons. Domenico Mambrini” a Pianetto

Founded by Mons. Domenico Mambrini in the first decades of the 20th century, it contains archaeological objects and artistic and historical works. Housed in the Renaissance Convent of the Friars Minor in Pianetto, it is divided into two sections, an archaeological section and an historical-artistic section. The former contains finds coming from the sites and religious buildings in the area of Galeata (Mevaniola, villa di Teodorico, abbey of Sant’Ellero, parish church of San Pietro), while the latter contains some frescoes coming from the church of Pantano and paintings coming from the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence. It has modern educational tools (translated into English) and a presentation video.

points of interest

1. Stone coat of arms ascribed to Desiderio da Settignano (approx. 1450)

Beautiful stone work portraying two angels holding a coat of arms.

2. Vanitas (end of 17th cent.) Oil on canvas by an anonymous painter.

These two paintings portray a series of symbolic elements referring to the vanity of life.

3. Frescoes coming from the church of Santa Maria al Pantano

Frescoes of Marian iconography dating back to the 14th and 15th century.

4. Small Egyptian idle

It portrays Isis holding Horus in her arms.

5. Honorary key of Mevaniola (1st cent. AD)

Big key with a bronze handle shaped like a dog head.

6. Gravestone of Rubria Tertulla (first half of the 3rd cent. AD)

Gravestone in which the final poem exalts the family values of the young lady.

7. Column-statue portraying St. Nicolò’s childhood (12th cent.)

Romanesque statue coming from the abbey of Sant’Ellero.

8. Bas-relief of the meeting between St. Ellero and Theodoric

It portrays the legendary meeting between the Goth king and the Saint Hermit.

