



## **NEWSLETTER 3/2023**

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## THE CAR - COPERNICUS TRAIL



arch. WMROT

Although some people may associate Nicolaus Copernicus with Toruń, he spent most of his life in the region of Warmia. Here, he made many discoveries and wrote his famous work entitled 'On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres'. He died in Frombork, Warmia, in 1543 and was buried in the cathedral.

The trail takes us through cities associated with the life and work of Nicolaus Copernicus – the famous astronomer, physician, administrator and canon of the Warmia Chapter. You will be able to travel along it through the Pomeranian and Kuyavian – Pomeranian voivodships. In Warmia – Masurian voivodship along the route you can travel through Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, Lubawa, Olsztynek. then, the trail goes through Olsztyn, Dobrze Miasto, Lidzbark Warmiński, Orneta, Pieniężno, Braniewo and Frombork. Next, it crosses the boundary of Warmia, leading through Tolkmicko to Elbląg.

**Length of the trail in Warmia and Masuria voivodship:** more than 300 km

**Sign/colour:** marked trail with an astrolabe

**The trail:** Nowe Miasto Lubawskie – Lubawa - Olsztynek - Olsztyn - Dobre Miasto - Lidzbark Warmiński- Orneta - Pieniężno - Braniewo - Frombork - Tolkmicko – Elbląg

Nowe Miasto Lubawskie is located in the historic land of Chełmno. The Old Town has two 14th-century Gothic gateways. The town's most outstanding monument, however, is the Gothic collegiate basilica of St. Thomas the Apostle.

Lubawa used to be the seat of the Chełmno bishops. All that has remained of their castle are fragments of the peripheral walls and a round corner tower. In the 21st century the surviving fragments of the castle walls were secured. An educational trail was created around them, presenting the history of the castle at the background of the history of the city and the Lubawa region. The foundations and the courtyard of the castle were explored by archaeologists for many years. The revitalisation completed in 2020 resulted in the restoration of the two wings of the castle in a modern way. A Social Activity Centre has been created in their premises. Moreover, there are beautiful churches (the Gothic St Anne's and the wooden St Barbara's Church) in Lubawa as well.

There is a castle of the Teutonic Knights, a fourteenth-century Gothic church and the Museum of Folk Architecture – the Ethnographic Park in Olsztynek. Moreover, you can also take a lift up to the water tower and enjoy the panoramic view of the city from there.

The capital city of the voivodeship - Olsztyn, can be proud of its castle where Copernicus lived in the years 1516-1519 and 1520-1521 working as an administrator of the chapter. Today, it houses the Museum of Warmia and Masuria with a permanent exhibition dedicated to the astronomer. Visitors have an opportunity to see an astronomical board, located in the cloister, which Copernicus used to determine the moment of the spring equinox.

Lidzbark Warmiński is the next town on the trail, but before we get there, it's a great idea to visit Dobre Miasto. You can see the second largest Gothic church in Warmia and the Stork's Tower (Baszta Bociania), a preserved fragment of the medieval fortifications in this town. There is the town heritage museum as well.

Copernicus lived in Lidzbark Warmiński in the castle, with his uncle, the bishop of Warmia - Łukasz Watzenrode. He was his secretary and doctor. Just as it is in the case of Olsztyn, this castle now also houses a museum where there are a lot of interesting exhibitions.

On the way to the next town connected with Copernicus - Frombork - we pass Orneta, Pieniężno and Braniewo, which the astronomer occasionally visited.

Finally, we reach Frombork where Copernicus spent approximately 30 years of his life. Being here, it is worth visiting the Cathedral Hill with the Museum of Nicolaus Copernicus, the Planetarium and the Tower of Radziejowski.

Moreover, we can admire the Museum of the History of Medicine. From the observation point of the Water Tower we can enjoy a view of the Vistula Lagoon. Further, the trail leads through Tolkmicko and finishes in Elbląg. Before we leave the city, it is a good idea to see the old town with a Gothic church dedicated to St. Nicolaus, the Trade Gate and the unique Church Path.

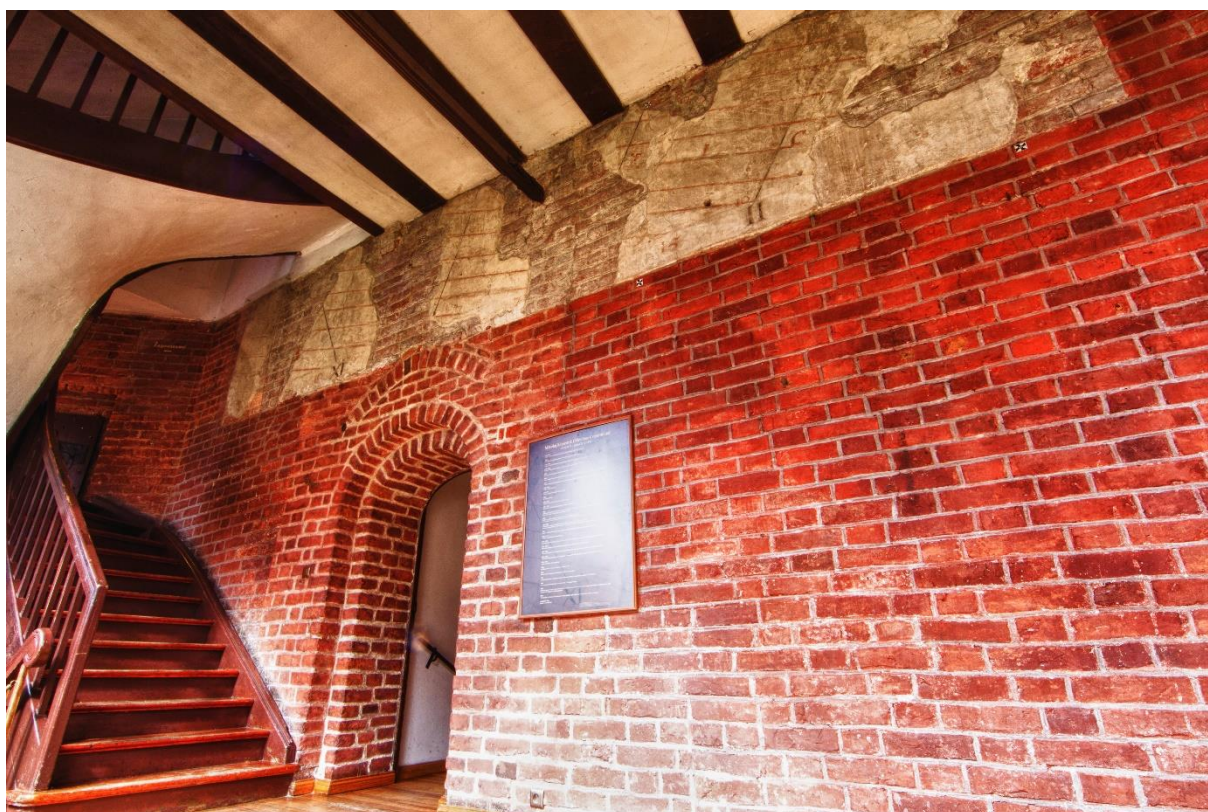
[www.szlakkopernikowski.pl](http://www.szlakkopernikowski.pl)

[www.szlaki.mazury.pl](http://www.szlaki.mazury.pl)

<https://mazury.travel/na-szlaku-z-kopernikiem-miejsca-gdzie-zyl-i-tworzyl-wielki-astronom/>



## THE RESIDENCE OF COPERNICUS - IN THE PLACES ALONG THE COPERNICUS TRAIL



The castle of the Warmia Chapter in Olsztyn, astronomical board, fot. Wojciech Krom

### **NOWE MIASTO LUBAWSKIE**

There are no records in documents confirming Nicolaus Copernicus' stay in Nowe Miasto Lubawskie. However, he must have visited it.

### **LUBAWA**

Nicolaus Copernicus used to visit his friend Tiedeman Giese, earlier canon of Warmia and then bishop of Chełmno, at Lubawa Castle. He visited him twice to provide medical assistance: in April 1538 and a year later. He also spent time here from the end of June to mid-September 1539, having come together with Georg Joachim Rheticus.

### **OLSZTYNEK**

No documents confirming Nicolaus Copernicus' stay in Olsztynek have survived. However, you can see several buildings in the town which remember the times of the great astronomer.

### **OLSZTYN**

Nicolaus Copernicus visited Olsztyn as early as 1511. He was then a visitor of the Warmia Chapter. One of the many tasks assigned to him by the chapter was to act as an administrator of its property. In connection with this function, the scholar lived in the chapter castle in Olsztyn in the years 1516-19 and 1520-21. His duties included the settlement of villages depopulated by war, which involved numerous field trips. Testimony to these activities is the manuscript entitled "Locations of abandoned fields" which includes records of visits to 43 villages in Warmia.

The Warmia bishop Fabian Łuzjański commissioned Copernicus to write a treatise on money reform in 1517, which he developed two years later into the treatise "Principles of Minting Coinage". In 1520, he prepared the castle and town for defence against an expected attack by the Teutonic Knights. This had the desired effect in January 1521, when a Teutonic assault on the city walls near the Mill Gate was repulsed. The attackers ran out of ladders. Over the next twenty years, the astronomer visited the town by the Łyna many more times.

### **DOBRE MIASTO**

Nicolaus Copernicus travelled many times through Dobre Miasto because of its location. He was here in August 1538, when he took part in a tour of inspection of the diocese with the newly elected Bishop of Warmia, Johannes Dantiscus.

### **LIDZBARK WARMIŃSKI**

Copernicus first arrived at the court of his uncle, bishop's Lucas Watzenrode, in Lidzbark Warmiński, at the turn of 1495 and 1496, in connection with his attempt of taking over the position of a Warmia canon. After arriving permanently in Warmia in 1503, he lived in the Lidzbark castle until 1510, acting as the bishop's personal secretary and physician.

Copernicus accompanied his uncle to conventions of the Prussian estates, during Polish-Teutonic negotiations and other political events. Therefore, he honed his diplomatic talents. Simultaneously, he also conducted astronomical research, developing an outline of his heliocentric theory, which he included in the so-called 'Little Commentary'.

As a token of his gratitude, he dedicated to his uncle his first published work, a translation from Greek into Latin of a volume of letters by the Byzantine writer Theophylactos Simocates. After moving to Frombork, the astronomer visited the episcopal capital many times.

### **ORNETA**

The town lies on the route along which Nicolaus Copernicus made his business trips, so he undoubtedly visited it many times. A documented visit took place in

August 1538 during a tour of inspection through property with the newly elected bishop of Warmia, Johannes Dantiscus.

### **PIENIEŻNO**

Nicolaus Copernicus stayed at the local castle of the Warmia Chapter on several occasions, in particular when he was locating settlers in the surrounding villages. He did this at the beginning of 1517, in October and November 1518 and in March 1519.

### **BRANIEWO**

Copernicus had a difficult time in Braniewo in January 1520, after the seizure of the town by Teutonic knights, when, as an envoy of the Warmia Bishop Fabian von Lossainen, he conducted negotiations with the Order's Grand Master. He was certainly also here in August 1538 during a tour of inspection through the domain with the newly elected Bishop Johannes Dantiscus, and also in June 1541 for a meeting with the same bishop.

### **FROMBORK**

Copernicus first came to the town in July 1501 to officially take up the position of a Warmia canon. Then he lived here from the end of 1510 for the rest of his life (with interruptions for stays in Olsztyn and shorter trips).

### **TOLKMICKO**

The Warmia Bishop Łukasz Watzenrode convened a meeting with representatives of the cities of Gdańsk, Elbląg and Toruń in Tolkmicko in April 1508. As the bishop's personal secretary, Nicolaus Copernicus probably also attended the meeting.

### **ELBLĄG**

Nicolaus Copernicus visited Elbląg many times. First, as a secretary, he accompanied his uncle, bishop Lukas Watzenrode, to the conventions of the Prussian estates.

He first arrived in Elbląg in January 1504, when a convention of the estates of the Royal Prussia was held there. At that time, Copernicus, as a doctor of the canon law, accompanied his uncle Lucas Watzenrode, who was attending the convention. Copernicus' second visit to Elbląg dates from 18 to 20 May 1504. It was time of the solemn homage paid by Elbląg citizens to King Alexander Jagiellon, an event that took place on 20 May. On the same day, Copernicus

appeared at St Nicholas' parish church as a witness to the pronouncement of a judgment in a divorce case between Elbląg citizen Philip Holkener and his wife Catherine of Krüger. The sources give the sacristies of St Nicholas' Church as the place of the affair. The next, third stay of the canon Copernicus in Elbląg is provided by the sources with the date of 1 September 1507 at the convention of the estates of the Royal Prussia, also at the side of the bishop Watzenrode. During the Polish-Teutonic war (1520-1521), Copernicus lived in Olsztyn, as the cathedral hill in Frombork was partially destroyed. Moreover, he endeavoured to strengthen the town's defences. Thus he took charge of bringing various weapons from Elbląg. On the other hand, when working out a monetary reform, he partly offended citizens from Elbląg, as he strove to establish only one mint in Toruń, common for Royal Prussia. Copernicus' new astronomical theory must also have been the subject of many disputes, which did not pass by Elbląg, since even Professor Jan Brożek from Kraków mentioned it. Copernicus was also a doctor and treated, among others, the seriously ill sister of the Elbląg parish priest Achace Freundt. A note on one of his medical books gives the composition of a prescription written by Copernicus for the sick woman.

In 1531, the scientist became one of the heroes of a ridiculous masquerade in the city.