

Geographical Location and Historical Background

Tambach Museum is located in Tambach Town, Elgeiyo/Marakwet County, approximately 42 kilometres from Eldoret Town.

Tambach lies at an altitude of 6,500 feet at the top of the Elgeiyo Escarpment. It has a spectacular view of the Kerio Valley, the Tugen Hills, and the Kerio River.

HISTORY OF THE MUSEUM

Tambach is one of the oldest towns in Kenya. It was established in 1920s as a British colonial center of administering Elgeiyo and Marakwet people. For much of the colonial period, the town grew from a tiny village to a busy urban center. By the end of 1950s, Tambach developed into a very pretty little town.

British colonialists constructed a number of buildings that included; administrative offices, the prestigious Government African School, A church, detention camp and hospital. Today, the historical buildings and the cultural landscape are treasured monuments and form part of the heritage of the Elgeiyo/Marakwet County. Currently, Tambach and Iten form Iten-Tambach Town Council, a local authority in greater Elgeiyo/Marakwet County.

The idea of establishing a museum at Tambach was conceived by the National Museums of Kenya in 2002. The museum was established to safeguard the Tambach heritage site and the culture of the Keiyo and Marakwet people. Tambach has a rich cultural heritage. It is famous for the Sirikwa Holes constructed by the Sirikwa people in the 17th & 18th centuries.

It also has a rich colonial history. In 2003, NMK renovated the former District Commissioner's residence, a seven roomed bungalow to create an exhibition space for ethnographic and archaeological collections of the Elgeiyo/Marakwet County. Tambach Heritage Town Exhibition is the premier exhibition for this Museum and was funded by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Kenya through the efforts by AFRICOM (International Council of African Museums).

It is the first museum exhibition in the entire county and is anticipated to promote heritage activities and form part of the North Rift Circuit as a major tourist attraction in this area. This exhibition highlights the development of Tambach town during the colonial and independence period and factors which influenced its growth and decline and now renewed growth. The exhibition also explores the culture (past and present) of its inhabitants-the Keiyo and the Marakwet.

It looks at their lifestyle, livelihoods and traditions in the context of the surrounding- the Keiyo Valley. The museum plans to engage in the collection, documentation, research, education and exhibition of the cultural heritage of the local community. The museum was officially opened on 31st March, 2012.