

30 years of friendship between the allotment garden federations from the region of Poznan (P) and Westphalia-Lippe (D)

On August 19th 1987 the presidents of the German and Polish allotment garden federations signed a friendship treaty. Already some weeks later, from 20th until 26th September 1987, the historical meeting between the allotment gardeners from the province of Poznan and the national federation of Westphalia and Lippe took place. From this start a friendship developed, the 30th anniversary of which we are celebrating this year. Following an invitation of our Polish friends, a delegation of our national federation, under the leadership of President Wilhelm Spieß, visited the province of Great Poland/Poznan from 4th until 9th September, 2017.



Our host commemorated this special anniversary with a very varied program. Receptions at the town halls in Śrem, Czerwonak and Poznań were part of the program as well as visits of allotment sites. The historical highlight was the visit of the allotment site Przyłuskiego in Poznan, site on which the delegation from Westphalia-Lippe, first entered allotment garden ground on September 1987.

What have we realised together all over these years? What are the results of this partnership? Here some examples:

In 2012 the allotment gardeners from Poznan and Westphalia-Lippe signed a resolution together concerning the protection of allotment garden land and transmitted it to the Sejmarschall.

Receptions organised by the mayors of the region of Poznan have always been more than simple exchanges of greetings. We have very often discussed with the communal politicians and representatives from authorities the missions of the communes as far as the local allotment garden movement is concerned.

Also, research and scientific missions have dealt with the allotment movement; especially with the aspects concerning town planning and ecology. Comparative research studies concerning the allotment movement in Poland and Germany are finally also a result of an active partnership with mutual visits including students and young scientists.

The common closing evening and the participation in the Thanksgiving celebrations were certainly unique highlights of our journey. As an expression of our relatedness yesterday, today and in the future, president Wilhelm Spieß and director Werner Heidemann presented the Polish allotment gardeners on behalf of the German delegation with two sheep of the herd of the Westphalian artist and 'blue shepherd' Rainer Bonk. The blue of the sheep represents the blue of the European flag. And as each one of us is unique and important, he can, however, only be strong in a union. That is the message of the blue sheep farming.

A third blue sheep grazes in front of the town hall of the town of Poznan.
They all graze peacefully together.

Zdzislaw Sliwa, chairman of the Poznan federation gave a certificate to our chairman Wilhelm Spieß commemorating the 30th anniversary of our partnership.

Wherever we went, we were received with friendship and an open heart. This anniversary represents for us a thank you, **a recognition** and a stimulation. A thank you goes to those of you who laid down the foundation stone of this partnership and friendship. Recognition is due to all our friends in Poland and Germany who with hands and hearts contributed to the understanding and to the consolidation of this partnership and friendship.

We hope that motivation and incentive will grow out of this anniversary for the future, because partnership and friendship which are an important part of the understanding between people need care, discussions and common activities.

Werner Heidemann, director of the national federation of allotment gardeners from Westfalen-Lippe

The entire article can be read in the Fachberater Nr. 04/2017.



Barbara Czaplą, president of the association and Wilhelm Spieß, president of our federation unveil the commemorative plaque



Visit of a neighbourhood garden in Poznań



Information on biodiversity on the allotment site 2 Armii Wojska Polskiego in Poznan



Reception and lecture on the allotment movement in the auditorium of the Adam Mickiewicz University



And at the end a picture of the group at the occasion of the thanksgiving celebration



Wilhelm Spieß and Werner Heidemann remitted to Jędrzej SolarSKI, mayor of Poznań (on the left in the picture) a blue sheep as sign of tolerance and peace



Our hosts with blue sheeps from left to right from Westphalen-Lippe, Wilhelm Spieß, Jęrzy Kucznerowicz, executive board member of the Poznan federation. Zdzislaw Sliwa, president of the Poznan federation, Werner Heidemann



Zdzislaw Sliwa, president of the Poznan federation (left on the picture) hands over a diploma for the 30th anniversary of the partnership to Wilhelm Spieß, president of our federation