

The partnership between Rosendahl and Entrammes / Forcé / Parné sur Roc

Two Trappist monasteries create a connection

Rosendahl, Germany and Entrammes, France have been linked since 1815. At that time, an emigrant from the Darfeld Trappist monastery in Germany kept his promise and together with four other monks founded the first French monastery after the Napoleonic persecution. It was situated in the small town of Entrammes in the Mayenne department in France – *Abbaye Notre Dame du Port du Salut* (Abbey of Our Lady of the Port of Salvation).

The Elysée Treaty on German-French cooperation of January 22, 1963 and the growing friendship between the two countries paved the way for a partnership between Rosendahl and Entrammes, a rural town with around 2,000 inhabitants. Based on their historical connection, in 1969, both cities endeavored to establish a partnership – strongly supported by the monks in Entrammes. On October 4, 1970, the formal signing of the town-twinning partnership agreement took place at Darfeld Castle. Despite the great distance of 900 kilometers (more than 550 miles), contacts and friendships developed very quickly between the residents of the two places. A friendship which continues to this day. Since the 1970s, the street names *Straße von Entrammes* (Entrammes Street) in Rosendahl and *Rue de Rosendahl* (Rosendahl Street) in Entrammes are visible signs of this connection.

The town-twinning partnership grows

The two communities celebrated the 25th anniversary of their partnership from September 29th to October 3rd, 1995 in Entrammes. There were also many families from the neighbouring villages of Forcé and Parné sur Roc, who had increasingly taken part in the communal encounters. Both villages officially joined the partnership on September 30, 1995. This connection is also reflected in street and square names such as the *Straße von Parné* (Parné Street) in Darfeld, the *Straße von Forcé* (Forcé Street) in Holtwick, the *Square de Rosendahl* (Rosendahl Square) in Parné sur Roc and the *Jardin de Rosendahl* (Rosendahl Garden) in Forcé.

Regular youth exchanges are an integral part of the partnership. Young people from the French partner communities along with their peers from the former Rosendahl secondary school even created the current partnership logo.

Places of remembrance for the future

In 1984, the partnership committee, in cooperation with the community of Rosendahl, set up this memorial to the eventful history of the Darfeld Trappist monastery. Previously, there was already a cross on the adjacent meadow in memory of the monastery community; this cross is now included in the new memorial.

For their 40th anniversary in 2010, the Rosendahl partnership association presented the Entrammes monastery a replica of the "Antonia" bell from the former monastery, which, like the original, was cast by the Petit & Edelbrock bell foundry in neighbouring Gescher. Today, it hangs in the bell tower of the abbey church in Entrammes. The original bell is in the Baumgarten Trappist convent in Alsace.

After 200 years it is far from over

On February 21, 2015, more than 300 Trappists celebrated the bicentennial in Entrammes, the 200th anniversary of the founding of the monastery after returning from Darfeld. Representatives of both partnership associations as well as clergy from Rosendahl were guests of honor in the *Abbaye Notre Dame du Port du Salut*. A delegation from the Franco-German partnership were also guests at the bicentennial of the Trappist Nuns of the *Abbaye Notre-Dame de la Coudre* (Abbey of Our Lady of la Coudre) in Laval, France on June 6, 2016.

An information board on the history of the partnership has been on display in the entrance area of the Entrammes monastery since May 2019. The 50th anniversary of the partnership had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic; Rosendahl and Entrammes, Forcé and Parné sur Roc plan to make up for this with a big celebration in 2022.

The Trappists from Entrammes are very aware of their Darfeld roots and feel a great sense of gratitude, as their monastery might not exist without the settlement in Darfeld. The annual encounters are characterized by great cordiality and friendship. The depth of the connection is nowhere clearer than when together, holding hands, they sing the song *Main dans la Main* (Hand in Hand) during religious services.

In 2021, to commemorate the historical story, the partnership association erected a scaled-down replica of the archway of the Entrammes monastery at the memorial and updated the facility with QR codes for audio stories and films to make it a modern site of history and learning.

THE COMMUNITY OF ROSENDAHL WITH THE VILLAGES OF DARFELD - HOLTWICK - OSTERWICK

Today's municipality of Rosendahl in the north of the district of Coesfeld has existed since January 1, 1975. In the course of municipal reorganizations of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, Darfeld and Osterwick initially merged to form the commune of Rosendahl in 1969. Holtwick then joined them six years later.

The name *Rosendael* (rose valley) once referred to a piece of common land between the villages of Darfeld and Osterwick in the area of the former monastery; a shared area known as *Rosenthal* at the beginning of the 19th century that was given up in the course of land consolidation. The slightly low lying (*dael / dahl / Tal* in German; valley in English) pastureland was probably overgrown with wild hedge roses.

With the new name *Rosendahl*, the three formerly independent communities wanted to express one thing above all else – from now on they will form a community.

More information about the commune of Rosendahl and its sights can be found at www.rosendahl.de.