

A Walk around the Dutzendteich (Part One)

I think the vast majority of our members will have heard of the Dutzendteich in Nuremberg, the large lake close to the city's football stadium (named after the local football hero, Max Morlock), the Volkspark where the very popular summer open-air concerts take place (Klassik Open Air), and the Nazi Party Rally Grounds (the Congress Hall, the Zeppelin field etc). There is a great deal to see and discover here, an ideal prerequisite for a healthy winter walk!



Such a walk might begin at the Meistersingerhalle, Nuremberg's magnificent concert hall which opened in September 1963 with music that included Richard Wagner's "The Master Singers of Nuremberg". The construction was a costly affair, well over 70 million in today's terms, but necessary as the 2nd WW had deprived Nuremberg of all its major concert venues.

Adjacent to the Meistersingerhalle is the Luitpoldhain, named after the Bavarian Prince Regent and laid out for the Bavarian State Exhibition of 1906, a jubilee event marking the 100th anniversary of Nuremberg becoming part of Bavaria. The main building on the site, the Luitpoldhalle, erected to showcase achievements in engineering, was left standing for future large-scale events. Given a new façade by Albert Speer (many in the NSDAP intensely disliked its Art Nouveau look), it was used for the 1927 and 1929 political rallies whose goal was the glorification of the Nazi party and its leader, Adolf Hitler. It was

large enough to accommodate 16,000 people. In 1942, however, it was destroyed in one of the earlier air raids on Nuremberg.

From the Luitpoldhain one can cross over to the “Grosse Strasse”. Work on this 2.5 kilometre “parade” road came to an end in 1939 with the outbreak of the war. Coming from the south-east, it points directly towards the Imperial Castle in the distance (the symbolic significance is obvious) and was paved with two differently coloured granite slabs, making it easier for those marching along it to keep in formation. Furthermore, these square slabs of granite are 1.2 m in length which corresponds exactly to two “Prussian” march steps, often referred to as “goosesteps”.

Close to the “Grosse Strasse” is the Kongresshalle, the biggest preserved national socialist monumental building in Germany. Intended to serve as a congress centre for the NSDAP with a self-supporting roof, it was inspired by the Colosseum in Rome. Its foundation stone was laid in 1935, but the building remained unfinished at the outbreak of the war. Since 2001, the Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände (Documentation Center of the Nazi Party Rally Grounds), currently being restructured, has been located in the northern wing.



The Documentation Center

End of part one. Part two to follow in January with an explanation on why the adjacent “pond”, or rather lake, is called the Dutzendteich. It has nothing to do with “dozen”.

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