

About the History of our Gathering Site for the 7. International Gathering

(Based on Robert Boegle's document „ Zur Geschichte des Platzes für das 7. International Gathering 10.-16.09.2017“)

815 The Jugendsiedlung Hochland is on the area of the former „Obere Rothmühle“, first mentioned in an official document in 815. There were likely people living in this area before then, but this is the first written documentation we know about.

1003 The whole area between the Isar and Loisach rivers is given the Benediktbeuern Mone-stary as an area for hunting.

13th century – 1907 The Rothmühle becomes a „Gewerbegebiet“ (commercial zone) with 2 farms, a cheesemaking operation, two saw mills, an oil extraction factory, a tannery (using tannins from oak bark), a place that made waterproof “Loden” material, as well as lime and charcoal kilns. The products were shipped to Munich on the Isar river. There was even a ferryboat crossing the Isar here.

1908 The city of Munich buys the area as well as fishing rights in the Rothbach creek to build a water supply pipeline. All businesses stopped operation, except the two farms.

1936 – 1945 The land was owned by the NSDAP (Nazi Party). In 1936 the first “Hochland-lager” (Hochland summer camp) was held with about 8000 Hitler Youth (HJ) participating with the theme “Discipline and Faith”. The time at the camp was intended to prepare the youth for later service in the various branches of the military. The key theme of this dark time in history was “We have been born to die for Germany”. When no youth camp was in session, the camp was used to educate and train Hitler Youth group leaders. Starting in 1937, there was also a camp for BDM girls (Bund Deutscher Maedchen, the female branch of the Hitler Youth), but at a different time than the male youths. Starting in 1942, the camp was officially expanded to become a “Wehrtüchtigungslager” (Defense Strengthening Camps). All 17 and 18 year old young men were required to participate in a three week pre-military training, where among other things, they learned how to handle common infantry weapons. American soldiers liberated the Rothmühle on 1 May 1945 and confiscated the land. In 1950 it was finally given to the State of Bayern.

1946-1948 After the end of WWII, under American military government, Holocaust survivors lived here in preparation for emigration to Palestine (now Israel). About 300 Jewish DPs (displaced persons) were housed here, and a Trainingkibbutz was established. The prospective settlers received training in farming and animal husbandry to prepare them for helping to establish a Jewish state in Palestine. Because of the ongoing conflicts with British and Arab citizens in Palestine, the founding of Israel was not entirely peaceful. For that reason the Jewish paramilitary organization „Haganah“ started an underground military school on the site, where about 500-600 young women and men from DP-camps were educated as officers. Many of the fighters in the Arab-Israeli war in the early years of the state of Israel came from southern Germany.

1948 The Catholic group „Katholische Junge Mannschaft“ leased the camp and organized lodging and job training for young war orphans and refugees.

1949 the still existing organization „Jugendsiedlung Hochland e.V.“ was founded with the mission to “assist young people with the difficulties of their times”. The first project was a

group home for orphaned and displaced youths, with job training workshops (at Obere Rothmühle) and a training farm (at Untere Rothmühle). Additionally there were summer camps for newly re-established youth groups.

1950 first tent summer camp.

1956-1977 The buildings were used for youth camps, particularly for young people from the „Ruhrgebiet“, a densely populated area in Northern Germany with coal mines and heavy industry.

1975 more log cabins were built

1981 the „Jugendbildungsstätte“ (youth education center) was opened, and it was recognized as a „Umweltstation“ (environmental station) in 1996.

2006 The program becomes recognized as an official UNESCO project under the theme “Understanding the past, creating the present, preparing for the future”.

The Jugendsiedlung covers about 27 hectars, or 67 acres.