

Visiting Austria's (and probably Europe's) first workshop Center

Written by Elisabeth Cook

On Sunday, October 16, 2016 I visited a small Unification community in the region of Lower Austria, about 150km north west from Vienna. It consists of 7 families who meet once a month in a place which used to be Austria's first Divine Principle workshop center. Most of the members who joined in the 1970-ties had their first DP workshop there.

The occasion of my visit on October 16, 2016 was a change of leadership within the small community: Josef and Lilly Gundacker handed over their responsibility, which they carried for more than 14 years, to the couple of Andreas and Helga Napteschnig.



After a Sunday service in a loving family atmosphere they received an award of recognition, together with a gift, for their work.



Andreas & Helga Napetschnig



Josef & Lilly Gundacker



The community



In front of the house is a Holy ground

The history of the place in brief:

In 1970 this farmhouse was bought by the Austrian movement and restored to a workshop center within 2 years.



In January 1972 the first Divine Principle workshops were held there:



In the following years 2-day and 7-day DP workshops were held without break at this workshop center. That's why for the 1st generation members of Austria this is a historical place.



The national leader of the 1970-ties, Rev. Peter Koch, had to find a way how to stay legally in Austria, as he was a German citizen. As the persecution of our church had started in 1974, the officials wanted to force him to go back to Germany. So, together with members of the Austrian movement, in 1972 he founded a Candle-producing company at the workshop center which gave him the legal status to stay in the country. In the following years members were employed at the company, and they made it a successful business. At the same time the DP

workshops went on, until the facility became too small and a new workshop center was bought in 1980: Gafrenz.

The candle factory though continued the production of candles.

Today, 36 years later, this company is still producing beautiful candles under the leadership of Rainer & Rita Streibl.

Recognizing their hard work over many years:



Rainer & Rita Streibl





Local newspapers used to publish articles in recognition of their unique handmade products.

www.koch-kerzen.at