

The Fürst Donnersmarck Foundation, Berlin

Smoothing the way ... with and for people with disabilities

The origins of the Fürst Donnersmarck Foundation Berlin go back to the experience of the founder, Count Guido Henckel Prince of Donnersmarck, in a military hospital he set up in Berlin-Frohnau in 1914 for those wounded in the First World War. Most of the injuries were caused by gas and grenade shrapnel, and medical science had little to offer in the way of treatment.

In 1916, the Prince of Donnersmarck therefore founded what became known as the "Fürst Donnersmarck Foundation" which was to set up a sanatorium for the war-wounded in combination with a medical research facility to work on ways of treating new types of injury.

The founder died in the same year. The consequences of the Great War and the inflation that followed it meant that the monetary assets of the foundation soon melted away.

It was only after the Second World War that the Foundation was able to sell the land it possessed in Berlin-Frohnau and operate as its founder originally intended.

Since then, the focus of the work of the Foundation has been on the rehabilitation of people with physical disabilities.

Today, the Foundation employs some 550 people working in the fields of rehabilitation, training and tourism.

Rehabilitation

The Rehabilitation Section of the Foundation has developed steadily since 1954. In 1964 it took over responsibility for the Evangelical Home for Severely Handicapped Children in Berlin-Frohnau, later renamed the Fürst Donnersmarck House. This rehabilitation centre today offers long-term neurological rehabilitation, permanent residence, and therapy for people with disabilities.

Since 1979, the Foundation has also offered additional residential forms with visiting supervision, such as the residential home for the disabled in Frohnau, shared apartments, and possibilities for sheltered individual accommodation. In addition, an independent care service also dedicates itself to the provision of assistance.

Training

In the sector of recreation, training and counselling, the Foundation has been carrying out its work since 1980 in the Forum for Self-Help and Counselling "blisse 14". A café of the same name provides a meeting point for disabled and non-disabled people in Berlin-Wilmersdorf.

In the "Villa Donnersmarck" in Berlin-Zehlendorf, the well-appointed meeting rooms and a large garden with conservatory offer a wide range of leisure and training opportunities for disabled people..

Tourism

Since 1963, the travel agency of the Fürst Donnersmarck Foundation has been providing barrier-free travel for people with disabilities. The offers range from day trips in Berlin to holidays in other European countries and further afield.

Since 1972, the Bad Bevensen guest house in the Lüneburger Heide has been providing accommodation for its disabled guests in 82 rooms specially fitted out for wheelchair users.

In June 2001, HausRheinsberg Hotel am See was opened in Brandenburg. Situated directly beside the Grienericksee lake, this purpose-built hotel for the disabled offers 108 comfortable rooms, together with leisure facilities, function rooms and a wide range of sports activities. In addition, the HausRheinsberg offers well-equipped seminar rooms and a multi-functional hall making it an ideal venue for conferences, congresses and other events relating to work in the field of the disabled.

The Fürst Donnersmarck Foundation is a member of the Association of German Foundations, the Association of Evangelical Disabled Aid Organisations and the Diakonisches Werk Berlin-Brandenburg e.V.

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