

Geocaching stations

Station 1 Erna Hosemans's 3rd apartment and AWOs office from 1960

Erna Hosemann came to Fulda because of the war. She was a Social Democrat from Berlin and also became the city councillor for SPD in Fulda. Back then she was the only woman in the SPD parliamentary group!

She fought for the social issues that were important to her and founded the local organisation Workers Welfare Services (AWO) in June 1946. Later, the Senior people's home built by AWO in Ziehers-Nord, was named after her.

After her husband Franz died in 1960, her apartment, including the living-room became AWO's office.

Life and social counselling were important. Already in 1947, children were taken to the Eder lake for recuperation. They also organised stays in summer for women in recuperation homes near Vöhl.

Station 2 AWO Office from 1970

Erna Hosemann's sister moved in with her to help her out. She therefore had to move into the Schildeckstraße 12 in the former Jewish Rabbi's apartment in 1970.

Help for older people, families, social and also bureaucratic help and recuperation care continued to be offered. However at first, only the sewing room, office and conference room were on the premises.

In 1981 it was possible to rent more rooms and so there was space for school assignments help and assistance for foreigners.

Sociability always played an important role. In the 1950's after things got better for the Germans, the zest for life also returned.

AWO members then met for summer, Christmas and Carnival festivities. There were also many bus trips and other trips that took place together.

This tradition is still practised today. Meanwhile there are even festivals in the different urban quarters, a Fairy tale festival in the city centre and the annual Dinner- in-White which takes place in the Fulda meadow.

Station 3 Storehouse for aid supplies

In the postwar years, needy people had the opportunity to get clothes, shoes and food in this house at Peterstor.

This was the storage for the collected items. Furniture was also donated. The furniture was collected on handcarts and driven around!

Before Christmas there was a basaar in the City Hall where one could buy things that had been repaired and refurbished for a bit of money.

Station 4 Youth club- consultation centre

This house was a popular meeting place for the youth in the 1980s. AWO's youth work was based here. There were many groups and each had its own themes like: women, girls, Turkish youth. Child care was offered for the Mothers' group so that they could discuss with no interruption. Social workers helped them then to find suitable solutions.

A special feature then were the Punks. They found a place to go to where they got inspiration to organise their lives without social support.

AWO provides diverse offers for families, children and youth at different places.

Station 5 Bicycle repair workshop– Start youth project

Working together and eating together- that is the principle of our “ „Lohn und Brot“- translated- wages and bread, project. The model project for unemployed young men and women started in 1980. They get help to learn how to start having a structured working day. Some of them have managed to find real work that way.

Their tasks were e.g.: Helping when one moves houses and renovating or cleaning of playgrounds. The first bicycle repair workshop was here in the Nikolausstraße 12. Every year in spring a bicycle basaar is held together with the Hochschule Fulda- University of Applied Sciences.

Station 6 Central arrival point

AWO was founded immediately after World War 1 in 1946. There were many refugees and homeless people. In that year, 49 trains with almost a total of 60,000 displaced persons arrived at the train station looking for a new home in Hessa. Fulda city's population suddenly doubled. AWO helped to distribute food and clothes.

We also took care of refugees in 2015. Residential homes and social welfare and care were organised. Meanwhile, most of the refugees are living in their own homes now. Volunteers took over sponsorship of the refugees which helps them by their integration.

Station 7 L14/2 as a cultural centre

For more than 20 years the AWO North Hessen Youth Centre was situated in its quarters in the Langebrückenstraße 14. (The offices of the AWO county association were situated there too between 2000-2013 before they moved to Frankfurter Straße 28).

Due to a huge building project, the Youth Centre and its work and all its associated initiatives had to move to the Lindenstratsse 2 in 2018. During the move, about 20 groups and clubs were counted.

The AWO tradition of offering extra-curricular activities for the youth is being pursued here. Young people can try things out here and implement them for themselves. Volunteers help them, are part of the decisions they make and so bear responsibility.

Station 8 Office and Sewing parlour 1946-1960

Work here started in 1946 in the narrow and small rooms of the office in the Rittergasse.

Every week about 10 women met. They sewed clothes especially for children and sorted out the donated clothes.

A difficult task for the American occupying power was taking care of and feeding the population. AWO women were ready to support them. In the Rittergasse they filled in bagfuls of milk and egg powder from big barrels, weighed and then distributed them.

They were also responsible for distributing the CARE-packets. In them one could find to the delight of many- not only staple foods but also for many years to come, rare treats like pure coffee or chocolate. Until after the currency reform one could not buy such things on the free market.

From 1946 to 1960 almost 10 million CARE packets arrived in Germany from America. Therefrom, 3 million landed in Berlin which had been cut off from the West for almost a year after the Soviet Union closed off all the access roads. The people called the daily landing transport planes 'candy bombers'.

Station 9 Hunger and cold

The American military government started free school meals after the war for all schools and children due to extreme hunger in the families. AWO took over this task for the Heinrich-von-Bibra school.

All the school children had to take a pot and cutlery and waited during the break to get a scoop of soup out of the big pot.

There weren't enough notebooks, books, blackboards and teachers. Very often there were 60 children sitting in one class. They had cold feet due to the bad shoes they were wearing. To heat the oven they had to bring heating material from home.

The people named it the 'The Winter of hunger'. It was extremely cold, many homeless people starved and froze to death.

Station 10 Kino35-Cinema 35- Building with a history (Mosque)

This building was built in 1906 as a factory for making pencils. For many years there was a mosque on the first floor and a Turkish grocery store on the ground floor. The cinema 35-Kino 35 moved in here after a renovation. The volunteers show alternative movies and work closely with AWO.

AWO already started an information centre for the Turkish guest workers in 1975 and helped them to found their own association. Till today we are still the contact person for initiatives that need support to start their own offers.

We stand up for the sponsorship and assistance of urban quarters with a high number of migrants. Our employees take care of people from different countries in our meeting centres in the area.

Many volunteers support us in our work. It is a good sign of trust that more than a third of these have a migrational background.