

UPF of Upper Austria's 2018 Peace Road 30 KM bicycle ride along the Enns River

Maria Pammer
October 13, 2018



Reichraming, Austria -- For its 2018 Peace Road event, UPF of Upper Austria organized a 30-kilometer bicycle ride along the Enns River.

The event's date, October 13, was chosen to commemorate the International Day for Disaster Reduction, declared by the United Nations General Assembly.

In collaboration with three communities and their mayors, UPF-Upper Austria organized a bicycle tour from the Peace Bridge in front of the Forestry Museum in Reichraming, out of the Enns Valley through to the Peace Memorial in St. Ulrich.



In front of the Forestry Museum the mayor of Reichraming and the board of the Forestry Museum gave us a breakfast of regional cuisine and entertained us with music. The mayor emphasized the harmony of the location, with the Forestry Museum representing the legacy of the past and the Peace Bridge, built by youth from Israel, Palestine and Austria, representing hope for the future.

A local councilwoman of Reichraming, who last year strongly supported the Peace Road initiative and also this year greatly contributed to this project, was appointed as an Ambassador for Peace.

After the brass band of Reichraming played the European anthem, the cyclists set out.

The cyclists passed Trattenbach, the valley of the pocket knife craftsmen.

During their stop in the town of Ternberg the peace cyclists were received by the mayor at a former prisoners' barracks. From 1942 to 1944 there was a subcamp of the Mauthausen concentration camp which housed up to 400 prisoners who were put to work building the Enns power plant. Considering the nature of this memorial site, the mayor served his guests only water and bread. We also were given background information about the memorial site.



The last part of the 30-kilometer (more than 18.5-mile) bicycle ride was an exhausting climb to St. Ulrich, the world's first "peace community."

In front of the Peace Memorial in St. Ulrich the mayor and members of the town council awaited us. Regional food and drink were already prepared, and the cyclists could take a rest and relax outdoors thanks to the wonderful weather and the prepared seating.

We were very pleased that two vice mayors from the neighboring city of Steyr came to welcome the peace cyclists.

Also Dr. Walther Lichem, a former Austrian diplomat, arrived from Vienna, accompanied by Peter Haider, the president of UPF-Austria.

Everybody, especially the guests from Vienna, felt very welcome in the community of St. Ulrich, which in 1982 became the world's first "peace community" as a result of the efforts of former Mayor Thaddäus Steinmaier.

Two students from the preparatory class of the Steyr Rose school, who also had joined the bike ride, expressed their gratitude for the voluntary donations collected in Reichraming and St. Ulrich to support the school's preparatory class of about 20 refugees.

The Peace Road event concluded with a lecture by Dr. Walther Lichem in the community hall of St. Ulrich on the topic "Peace through Movement, through Open Doors." He gave an interesting overview of the development of the terms "peace" and "human rights" within the United Nations over the years. The audience was touched by his numerous personal experiences as Austrian ambassador in various countries, but also his adventures as a teenager traveling by bicycle and a (locally made) Puch moped through the Middle East and Africa.