

Grenzerinnerungen.de

Memories of the Inter-German Border

Extending from the Baltic Sea to the Thuringian Forest (*Thüringer Wald*)

Photos Taken in the Past and at Present

This website has been dedicated to the almost one thousand people, who during the years of German Partition lasting until 1989, died on this border or whose death was causally related to it.

Memories of the Inter-German Border

From 1952 to 1989 there was a perfectly designed and highly sophisticated system of barriers established on the Inter-German Border which prevented people (who were not granted an official permission by the GDR authorities) from leaving Eastern Germany and entering into Western Germany, this means from leaving the German Democratic Republic and entering into the Federal Republic of Germany. This border separating the two powers of the Cold War which, until the dismantling of the frontier barriers, was often called "National Border West" ("*Staatsgrenze-West*") by the GDR government and "Zonal Border" ("*Zonengrenze*") by the people living both in Eastern and in Western Germany is exactly 1,378 km long. Since 1961 *West-Berlin* was separated by this border (its length being 155 km) from its second half located in the Eastern part and also from its surrounding areas.

The author (born in 1967) of this website often visited the Inter-German Border and the *Berlin* Wall before autumn 1989. He also frequently visited the GDR where, beginning in 1984, he could make friends with many people through the German Protestant Church (*Evangelische Kirche*). Both parties had put up with and accepted German partition. As most of all the other people did, they were of the opinion that the border separating Germany would continue to exist for centuries to come. For this reason, the author only took a relatively restricted number of photos there. Was it worth taking photos there if it is possible to visit this border again and again?

It was already soon after the political changes in the GDR that it became clear how important the memory of the Inter-German Border is; this can be perfectly justified by the fact that the system of barriers erected on this border was torn down and cleared away at an incredible speed as early as 1990; in *Berlin* these demolition works were carried out even more carefully than anywhere else on the Inter-German Border. Therefore, the main interest of the author focused and still focuses on the remains of this "German Building" (quotation taken from the book by *Ritter / Lapp*) made of concrete and steel which divided Europeans from Europeans, Germans from Germans, churches from churches, families/family members from families/family members and friends from friends. Here the intention is that nowadays' generation and in particular future generations will never forget what totalitarian regimes are to be blamed for and that especially personal freedom is and will always remain a sacrosanct and inviolable human right.

Since there are, in the mean time, numerous good websites (cf. list of links) dealing with the *Berlin* Wall the subject-matter of this page is the Inter-German Border which, like a tapeworm stretched from the *Priwall* Peninsula on the Baltic Sea to *Prex* located on the Czech Border. The photos taken during numerous trips are arranged in geographic order, which means beginning in the North and ending in the South; the first photo showing the *Priwall* Peninsula on the Baltic Sea.

Most of the photos were taken by the author himself; some of the photos have been taken by family members or friends. In addition, some visitors of this website made available their photos to the author. In this context, I would like to thank in particular Mr. *Ingolf Hermann*, a staff member of the Inter-German Museum (*Deutsch-Deutsches Museum*) in *Mödlareuth*. Most of the graphics/diagrams/charts presented on this website were done by him.

The oldest photos date back to the year 1966; the photos taken most recently date from October 2018. In the course of time new photos will continuously be published to supplement and update this documentation. Most of the photos have a rather unspectacular character. The remains of the system of barriers erected on the Inter-German Border often do not express much of the situation before the political change and nothing remained of their menacing character. But the major concern of the author is to precisely document these remains before they are demolished completely and/or before it will become impossible to find some people who can tell you what was the function of these or those remains.

For those visitors of this website who intend to go into more depth of the history of the Inter-German Border and of German Partition reference is made to the list of literature.

The author puts special emphasis on the fact that the Partition of Germany would never have happened if this terrible war which is not comparable to any other war in the history of mankind had not had its origin in Germany; due to this war all European nations were on the brink of ruin.

Moreover, the author is deeply convinced that, in the end, only the understanding and love of one's neighbor will help us to overcome external and internal borders. Therefore, a quotation from the bible (*Maleachi 2,10*) precedes this website.

The author would be very pleased to get some feedback regarding this website and to receive some amendments and/or corrections (cf. e-mail address).