

## **Name of Durmersheim**

### **Why Durmersheim is called "Durmertsheim"!**

#### **991-2016: 1025 years of Durmersheim!**

But how old is our place really?

It all starts with a "miscalculation"!

Durmertsheim reminded 2016 of its 1025th anniversary:

In a document of the monastery Weißenburg written around 1280, which refers (erroneously) to the year 991, the name Durmersheims as

#### ***"thurmaresheim"***

is recorded in writing for the first time together with a statement of the year.

Only a few cities and villages can determine their foundation, their "birth", as precisely as, for example, our neighbouring city Karlsruhe. It can trace its 300th birthday back exactly to 17 June 1715, when Margrave Karl Wilhelm von Baden-Durlach's laying of the foundation stone of the castle tower practically marked the beginning of the construction of the fan-shaped city.

For Durmersheim, this also applies to our neighbouring communities, there is no historically provable founding act. If we look for our beginnings, we help ourselves with finds, documents or other records, in which for the first time references to our place are to be found.

#### **The first written mention of our site**

Related to Durmersheim this is in the so-called "Codex Edelini" from the monastery Weißenburg in Northern Alsace. In it "Thurmaresheim" is mentioned several times, partly without year information. One of the notes refers back to the year 991, but is definitely due to a "miscalculation".

This "Codex Edelini" is a stock list of all possessions of the Weißenburg Monastery, which Abbot Edelin von Weißenburg had subsequently compiled around 1280. It states that in 991 the monastery had to cede part of its possessions on the right bank of the Rhine, including some in Durmersheim, to the Salier Duke Otto on the order of Emperor Otto III.

From the comparison with various other historical sources, however, it can be safely concluded that this "Weißenburg property loss" must have already occurred in the year 985.

We can therefore hold fast to that: The first known mention of our village by name was written down around the year 1280. However, the entry in question refers to an event from the year 985, which was erroneously dated to the year 991 due to a transfer error from older originals. Sounds very complicated, but in principle it is simple and comprehensible.

Actually, Durmersheim could have celebrated its 1000th anniversary in 1985 and its 1025th anniversary in 2010.

By the way, it is interesting that the "Codex Edelini" already mentions a church. However, it is not to be recognized whether this stood in the center of Durmersheim or whether Bickesheim is meant.

### **The first traces**

Of course our place is also older than its first mention by name. This can be proven archaeologically for Durmersheim by many finds in the "Im Eck" at the swimming pool.

Besides Roman finds, which were made in 1940 (and also earlier) during the gravel quarrying for the Westwall, numerous objects from all previous epochs since the Neolithic Age (approx. 2000 BC) also came to light there.

A Franconian-Alemannic cemetery in the area of today's Karlsruher Straße, which was discovered in 1959, points for the first time to a larger settlement around 600 AD.

In addition, place names ending at *-heim* are usually places which initially formed as farms ("homes") during the Franconian occupation of the land (up to approx. 600).

In addition, finds from the Neolithic and Roman periods originate from our district.

They testify that the transition points from the Tiefgestade to the Hochterrasse have attracted people since early times. The intersection of Roman roads in the Bickesheim area was probably the origin of permanent settlements.

### **Where do the names Durmersheim - Würmersheim - Bickesheim come from?**

Whether Durmersheim has a founder, in this case "Thurmar", as eponym and thus is the "home of Thurmar", can neither be clearly affirmed nor certainly denied. Many settlements from that time were probably founded by family clans and were then named after the head of the clan.

It can therefore be speculated whether there could have been such a clan leader with this or similar name or not.

However, linguistic research offers an etymological and certainly more reliable interpretation of the name, which does not refer to a founder but to the topographical location of the place.

It refers to the Celtic origin of the word "tur", which means "water".

Durmshheim would therefore be the "place by the water". And water was present at this settlement at the Gestadebruch, i.e. at the edge of the flood area of the Rhine, and at the Federbach (no misprint: our stream at the edge of the village has always been correctly called "die Federbach -Pfedderbach" and not "der", in the dialect "d'Bech - die Bech") certainly in abundance.

Related names would be e.g. Durlach, Durbach or Durlangen and also the word "Durst". From Switzerland Thur and Thurgau fit, from the English Durham or Durbridge, from France we know e.g. Durance.

The Celtic word "Mar/Mer/Mor" means "marshland". Also this connection with our place name is very obvious.

We also find references to this Celtic word stem in Marbach, Marburg, Marschlandschaft, Mörsch and also in Durmersheim or Würmersheim, where "Würm" also refers to "Quelle-Bach".

The name "Würmersheim" certainly has nothing to do with the worm which can be seen since 1901 in the local coat of arms of Würmersheim.

Also the place name "Bickesheim" can be explained linguistically and is not automatically called *home of Bugin*.

If you come from Au am Rhein to the Hochgestade (high terrasse), you have to cross the "Biggser-Buggel" or "Biggser Berg" up to the Hochgestade. (Berg = hill)

For such elevations or ascents from the lowlands there is the old term "Buckel" or "bow", i.e. today's word "hump". Bickesheim is thus the "home on the hump".

For the sake of completeness, however, it must be mentioned here that it can be proved that there was never an independent village of Bickesheim. Such one is also not described in any of the old renovation reports.

Probably there was a farmstead in the surroundings of the early place of pilgrimage, but clear evidence is not known. Still in the town plan of 1763, only the "Gasthaus Lamm", which still exists today, and a mill on the Federbach in the area of today's building yard of the municipality are drawn in at this place next to the church building.