

do \_ co \_ mo \_ mo \_

## Minimum Documentation Fiche 2003

International working party for  
**documentation and conservation**

of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the  
**modern movement**

composed by national/regional working party of:

Germany

### 0.1 College of the Federation of German Trade Unions, in Bernau near Berlin 1928-30 by Hannes Meyer / Hans Wittwer



depicted item: ADGB School, students houses  
source: Winfried Brenne architects  
date: 2007

	db code
<b>1. Identity of building/group of buildings/urban scheme/landscape/garden</b>	
1.1 Current name of building: Bildungs- und Innovationszentrum Waldfrieden (BIZWA), Internat der Handwerkskammer Berlin	3
1.2 Variant or former name: Bundesschule des Allgemeinen Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes (ADGB) Bernau / College of the Federation of German Trade Unions	4
1.3 Number & name of street: Hannes-Meyer-Campus 1	5
1.4 Town: Bernau near Berlin	6
1.5 Province/state: Brandenburg	7
1.6 Zip code: D-16321	8
1.7 Country: Germany	9
1.8 National grid reference:	10
1.9 Classification/typology: EDC, college (further training for unionists)	11

do \_ co \_ mo \_ mo \_

ISC/R members update 2003

*for office use only*

International working party for  
**documentation and conservation**  
of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the  
**modern movement**

- 1.10 Protection status & date: listed monument since 1977. An extension to the College built 1950-1954 is also part of the monument. 12
- 2 History of building**
- 2.1 Original brief/purpose: college and residential school: further training for unionists 13
- 2.2 Dates: commission/completion: The Trade Union school of the ADGB in Bernau near Berlin was a work of the German Labour movement of the Weimar Republic, financed by the contribution of 4½ million union members. The objective of the institution was to enable volunteers from the trade union movement to enjoy further education in subjects such as trade union studies, management, economics or labour law. During the one month schooling, the student would be given physical training in natural environment to induce him to raise his standard of living and culture. 14
- The design actually executed was the result of a keenly contested competition in 1928 in which six of the foremost German architects were invited to take part (including Erich Mendelsohn and Max Taut). The prize and the assignment to build the school went to Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer because they not only designed a striking set of buildings but also put forward a new form of socio-educational organization of the school.
- Construction period / date:  
 March/April 1928: competition  
 July 1928: laying of the foundation stone  
 August 1928: start of construction  
 May 1930: inauguration
- 2.3 Architectural and other designers: Responsible for the planning and the final design of the ADGB school were the Swiss architects Hannes Meyer (1889-1954), successor of Walter Gropius at the Bauhaus in Dessau and its director in the years 1928-1930, and Hans Wittwer (1894-1952), leader of the architecture department at the Bauhaus Dessau between 1927 and 1929. 15
- 2.4 Others associated with building: Arie Sharon, Hermann Bunzel and Konrad Püschel, students at the Bauhaus Dessau, made their first experiences in the architectural profession on the building site of the ADGB school. 16
- 2.5 Significant alterations with dates: The Trade Union college of ADGB did exist for only 3 years until the trade unions were banned by the Nazis in 1933. During the Nazi period 1933-1945 the site became a school for high-ranking SS officers. Astonishingly the school complex was untroubled by rebuilding, except for a baffle paint. After the war the Soviet occupation authorities handed the college over to East German trade union federation (FDGB). The new owner extended the site, which was given the status of a Trade Union Academy. 17
- In the early 1950's the planning by architect Georg Waterstradt with new buildings let the school of the 1920's untouched. Waterstradt added a building of almost the same size which stood parallel to the existing one and was modelled after its architecture. In 1952 the politics changed in the GDR, following Soviet directives, as well the official position about urban development and architecture. The official enacted architecture, better known as "Bauen in nationaler Tradition" defamed Bauhaus architecture. In case of the ADGB-college a complete deformation of the entrance situation took place, eliminating the original architecture by Meyer and Wittwer. Later on followed further annex buildings, neglecting the cultural and architectural relevance of the ADGB-college.
- 2.6 Current use: After closing the FDGB Trade Union Academy in 1990 the college complex was vacant for many years. In 2001 the province Brandenburg, owner of the college complex, and the Handwerkskammer Berlin (chamber of crafts of Berlin) concluded a contract to use the former ADGB college as an institution of education and technology with residential school. The opening 18

**d o \_ c o \_ m o \_ m o \_**

ISC/R members update 2003

*for office use only*

International working party for  
**documentation and conservation**  
 of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the  
**modern movement**

will be in autumn of 2007.

- 2.7 Current condition: The ADGB college has been renovated completely between 2001 and 2007 by 19 Winfried Brenne architects, Berlin.

### 3 Description

- 3.1 General description: The ADGB-college was built 25 miles outside of Berlin in the State Forest of 20 Bernau amidst a delightful pine forest with a lake. The college was designed to accommodate 120 students. Meyer and Wittwer designed a set of buildings putting forward a new form of socio-educational organization, affected by Pestalozzi's theories of the small circle from which larger communities would emerge. For studying this, the houses of the students are the most significant examples. The 120 students were organized in 12 cells of 10 cells each. Two students roomed together and five of these groups of two formed a cell (community of the floor) whose members lived together separate from the others. They ate together in the dining room, studied together in the lecture room and formed a section for physical training. Finally all cells could be assembled together with the teaching staff in the big auditorium hall, the dining room or stadium. The buildings were intended to reproduce these socio-educational functions in terms of brick and mortar by the configuration of the buildings. The school (with seminaries, classrooms, a reading room and a gymnasium), the separate houses for the students and the teaching staff, the main wing with common rooms (auditorium, refectory, kitchen). The blocks are laid out along a main line of the gently undulating land, connected by a glass corridor going from the main wing near the approaching road to the school building at the furthest point of the property. The landscape is utterly unspoiled, with the exception of a sports complex. The beautiful view from the common rooms and the living rooms is a document for the architects' intentions to forge close links between buildings and landscape. Also the architectural conversion and the design of the buildings and rooms follow purely functional thoughts. All buildings (except the education building with the class rooms) have flat roofs, and have been carried out in yellow brick. Furthermore steel windows, prism glasses for windows, walls and ceilings and uncovered components of the construction (reinforced concrete) characterize the design of the facades and the rooms inside.
- 3.2 Construction: Reinforced concrete slabs and columns in conjunction with masonry linings of the 21 side and gable walls. Ceilings of the Kleine's system with standard blocks and steel reinforcement  
Intermediate floors were insulated with layer of xylolith, sound-absorbing powdered peat and a covering of linoleum; Roof constructed like intermediate floors, then Torfisootherm slabs, 1:5 concrete and layer of Ruberoid roofing
- 3.3 Context: No specifications 22

### 4 Evaluation

- Technical: The use of modern construction systems and building materials was a central principle in Meyer's philosophy of architecture. Meyer used the potentials of new constructions and materials (steel, concrete, glass), to full capacity, as well for the design of the buildings. Meyer's view to comprehend architecture as an economical and technical process, to "organise living", always was affected the search for reasonable, persuasive and economically justifiable answers relating to construction, technique and design of a building. In Meyer's entry to the 23 competition the students houses should be erected with an ultra-modern skeleton frame structure with slight ceilings of the "Feifel" system.  
This modular technique, similar to a construction kit, was not accepted by the building owner ADGB. Meyer and Wittwer had to fall back on a construction system for walls and ceilings (reinforced concrete) in combination with conventional masonry linings; a construction, which in

**d o \_ c o \_ m o \_ m o \_**

ISC/R members update 2003

*for office use only*

International working party for  
**documentation and conservation**  
of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the  
**modern movement**

	1930 was already proved and tested for years.	
4.2	<p>Social: In the 1920's the ADGB ascended to the biggest organisation for unionised employees with political virility in Germany. The self-image of the trade unions aimed for a strong workers' representation in the young german democracy. The activities of the trade unions followed the image „industrial democracy” with educational work as an important factor in the strategy. Beside the increasing sociopolitical power, grew the economical potenz of the ADGB. This allowed to intensify the educational work and to build up institutions working in the field of education. The educational duty proclaimed by the ADGB intended to build 2 colleges in Germany for the training of the members of trade unionists, one in the western part and the other one in the eastern part of Germany. Only the college in Bernau near Berlin was carried out between 1928 and 1930.</p>	24
4.3	<p>Cultural &amp; Aesthetic: The structure of the college is based on a concept bound to the ideal of living and working in a community: learning as a social act and not only as an act of knowledge transfer. This pedagogical motivated concept is reflected in the architecture and the design of the college. With the layout of the College in domains for living, learning and community the students sphere is compiled clearly. The architecture should strengthen the mind, to be functional, convenient and honest.</p> <p>In fact the building construction (reinforced concrete) is visible, outside and inside. The combination of construction, masonry linings with yellow bricks, steel windows and wall areas designed with glass prisms well-defined and functional structures are created. The architecture of the rooms inside is marked by the demonstration of the construction, of the characteristic surfaces and colours of bricks, steel or glass. In the students houses colour is used like an orientation device, a signage by colours.</p>	25
4.4	<p>Historical: Unlike to the Bauhaus building, the houses of the Bauhaus masters or the settlement Dessau-Törten, which were designed in the private office of Walter Gropius, the Bernau college was a project of the architecture class, established in 1927 by the new Bauhaus director Hannes Meyer. The Trade Unions College gave the Bauhaus Dessau with its new architecture class and the associated facilities the chance to create a demonstration object, to show the productivity of the design school and to emerge credits.</p>	26
4.5	<p>General assessment: The Trade Unions School is one of the most important buildings designed by the Bauhaus in Dessau and is a main work of the Modern Movement architecture in Germany. The college was a role model for education buildings in the 1920's in Germany and further on till the 1950's. For example: The Hochschule für Gestaltung (University of Design) in Ulm, built 1953-1955 by Max Bill, is unmistakably affected by the ADGB college Bernau.</p>	27
<b>5</b>	<b>Documentation</b>	
5.1	<p>principal references  <b>literature (selection):</b>  Meyer, Hannes: erläuterungen zum schulprojekt. grundsätze der gestaltung, bauhaus. Zeitschrift für gestaltung, vol.2, 1928, No.2/3, pp. 14-16  Behne, Adolf: Bundesschule in Bernau bei Berlin, Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung, vol.51, 1931, No. 14, pp.213-222  Meyer-Berger, Lena: Hannes Meyer. Bauen und Gesellschaft, Dresden, VEB Verlag der Kunst, 1980  Wittwer, Hans-Jakob: Hans Wittwer (1894-1952)Zürich, gta Verlag, 1985. ISBN 3-85676-026-1  Bauhausarchiv Berlin / Deutsches Architekturmuseum, ETH Zürich (ed.): Hannes Meyer 1889-1954 – architekt, urbanist, lehrer, Frankfurt (Main), Zürich , 1989  Winkler, Klaus-Jürgen: Der architekt hannes meyer – Anschauungen und Werk, Berlin, Verlag für Bauwesen, 1989  Brandenburgisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege (ed.): Die Bundesschule des ADGB in Bernau bei Berlin</p>	28

1930-1993, Potsdam 1993

Modernes Bauen zwischen 1918-1933. Bauten im Land Brandenburg und ihre Erhaltung

edited by Brandenburgisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, Potsdam 1999

De Ruyter, Thibaud: Hannes Meyer ou l'architecture retrouvée, L'architecture d'aujourd'hui, vol. 76, 2006,

No. 366, pp. 196-113

Verein baudenkmal bundesschule bernau (ed.), Schriftenreihe zur Erforschung der Bundesschule, Bernau bei Berlin 1992-2007

5.2 visual material attached: photos, siteplan 29

5.3 rapporteur/date: Ulrich Borgert (mail@brenne-architekten.de) June 2007 30

Website: [www.brenne-architekten.de](http://www.brenne-architekten.de)

## 6. Fiche report examination by ISC/R

name of examining ISC member:

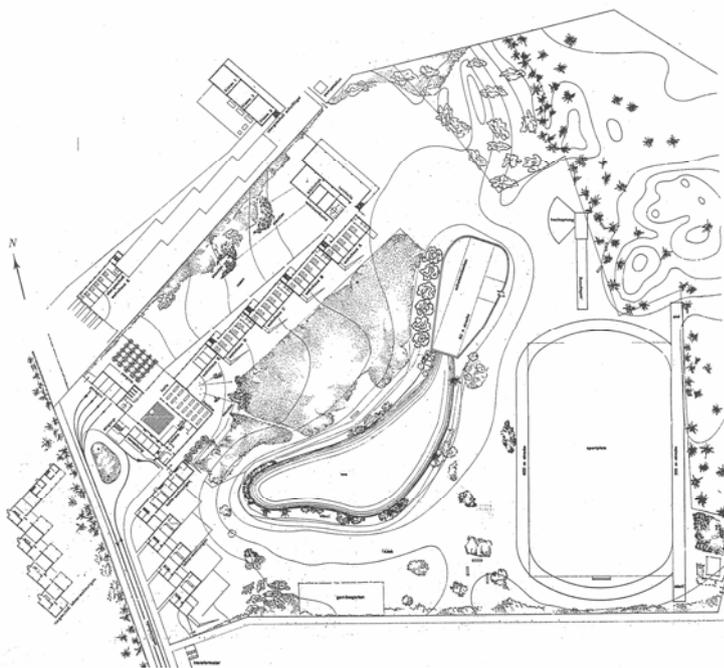
date of examination:

approval:

Wp/ref. no:

NAI ref. no:

comments:



depicted item: site plan

source: Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung, vol.51, 1931, No.14, pp.214

date: 1931

**do \_ co \_ mo \_ mo \_**

ISC/R members update 2003

*for office use only*

International working party for  
**documentation and conservation**  
of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the  
**modern movement**



depicted item: aerial view  
source: Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung, vol.51, 1931, No.14, pp.212  
date: 1931



depicted item: students houses  
source: Winfried Brenne architects  
date: 2007

**do \_ co \_ mo \_ mo \_**

ISC/R members update 2003

*for office use only*

International working party for  
**documentation and conservation**  
of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the  
**modern movement**



depicted item: school building  
source: Winfried Brenne architects  
date: 2007



depicted item: refectory  
source: Winfried Brenne architects  
date: 2007

do \_ co \_ mo \_ mo \_

ISC/R members update 2003

*for office use only*

International working party for  
**documentation and conservation**  
of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the  
**modern movement**