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Europe/International

Sign of friendship and good neighborliness

Dutch municipality of Aalten donates Kaiserlinde to Bocholt for the 800th anniversary of the town

Since January 17, 2022, the city of Bocholt celebrates its 800th anniversary. Reason enough for the Dutch neighboring municipality of Aalten to present the European city with an imperial lime tree as a sign of friendship and neighborliness. Mayor Thomas Kerkhoff and his Dutch counterpart Anton Stapelkamp now planted the lime tree at the Bocholt Aa Lake.

The Dutch municipality of Aalten chose a linden tree as a gift because its coat of arms features such a tree. Bocholt has a beech tree in its coat of arms.

Imperial lime tree from Dutch lime tree

The Aalten gift, the Imperial Lime Tree (nl. Koningslinde - botanical name: Tilia Europea Pallida) is a selection of the Dutch Lime Tree. The tree in the coat of arms and in the logo of the municipality of Aalten originates from the coat of arms of the "old" Aalten. The origin of the tree coat of arms is unclear, although there seems to be a connection with the surrounding villages. In earlier times, Bredevoort and Groenlo also had a tree in their coat of arms. The draft of the current coat of arms of the city of Aalten mentions a "green lime tree".

Growing contacts between both cities

Mayor Anton Stapelkamp came to the tree planting event together with the first alderman Martin Veldhuizen. In his speech, he emphasized that cross-border contacts between the two municipalities would continue to grow: "There are many things we can do together." A plaque in front of the tree explains to visitors at Lake Aa why the linden tree has found its place there.

Linden tree is symbol of living friendship between cities

Bocholt Mayor Thomas Kerkhoff expressed his gratitude for the tree as a sign of friendship. "A tree fits well in the present time. We cherish and care for it," he assured his Dutch counterpart. He sees the roots growing further and firmer as well as the new branches as a symbol of a living and growing city friendship. Kerkhoff: "There could not have been a better date for this beautiful sign of Dutch friendship than the day of the 800th birthday of the city of Bocholt."



Bürgermeister Thomas Kerkhoff (l.) und sein niederländischer Amtskollege Anton Stapelkamp pflanzen zum 800-jährigen Jubiläum der Stadt Bocholt eine Kaiserlinde als Geschenk der Gemeinde Aalten am 17. Januar 2022.

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