

Greetings:

1. Dr. Clemens Maier, Mayor of Trossingen

Dear friends and guests of Matth. Hohner AG,
dear music enthusiasts from all over the world,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
dear fellow citizens,

For 150 years already, Hohner has manufactured musical instruments in Trossingen, and Trossingen could not be imagined without Hohner. Therefore, today's jubilee is also and in particular a special event for Trossingen, for which I would like to express my warmest congratulations in the name of the town and also personally.

In the year 1857 Matthias Hohner began to manufacture „Mundhärfler“ (“mouth harps”), as the harmonicas are called here lovingly, in the house of his father as a family business. What we would call today a start-up-company, emerged as the beginning of a success story which turned the name of Hohner into a synonym for harmonica and accordion all over the world and at the same time made the name Trossingen known around the globe. Simultaneously to the growth of Hohner the town bloomed as well, and last but not least it is due to the local harmonica industry that Trossingen is able to celebrate its 80th town jubilee.

The close connection between the town and Hohner did not only persist in good times but also in economically difficult times. Many public institutions bear the name of Hohner, at this point I would like to mention the Dr. Ernst-Hohner-Concert Hall and the Hohner Conservatory to name but a few; many streets are named after members of the Hohner family. Hohner family members assumed seats in the municipal council for many decades and thus participated actively in the public and political life of the town. The town owes a lot to the Hohner family.

On the other side Hohner in many ways always could count on the support of the town. Especially when the company got into serious economical difficulties in the 90ies the town was on the spot and took possession of important parts of the company's former production and administration buildings within a few years. Therefore, it was possible for Hohner to move to the present location in the industrial park to modern premises. Still, it can be clearly recognized in the so-called Hohner-Area how the former production location looked like – today a new inner-city centre develops there, which will give an urban air to Trossingen.

Meanwhile, there are student rooms, apartments, artist studios and diverse commercial premises at the place where accordions were built in former times. Space could be created for the new Dr.-Karl-Hohner senior citizen home, which is centrally located; the former Kesselhaus (boiler house) became a place of cultural interest, known far beyond the city limits, and a function room used for different causes, belonging to Trossingen as a fixed institution.

Even though this was a big task and some buildings still have to be prepared for their new use, this more and more turns out to be a lucky case for Trossingen with regard to urban development.

Furthermore, Hohner also enriches the social life of the town in many ways. Only be aware that there certainly is an accordion in every household in Trossingen, even though it is perhaps forgotten on the attic. Be aware that there are a total of four accordion orchestras in Trossingen which make music in peaceful coexistence. Be aware of the fact that there is a variety of offers for mutual harmonica playing in the schools, which is willingly accepted by the pupils.

In Trossingen you cannot leave out the Hohner branded instruments. This explains the attempt to set a world record for which I expect that many harmonica players will come to the town hall square tomorrow. I am sure that we will even exceed the set aim of 2,500 players. Where else, if not in Trossingen, can such a project be successful!

I am very happy that we, the town of Trossingen and Hohner, celebrate together our mutual background of 150 years, of which we can be proud. The wide jubilee program reflects the musical variety that can be played on Hohner instruments and it presents the town as a place where music and cultural identity are lively rooted. Many nationally and even internationally known artists will perform, but also clubs and institutions from Trossingen will be on stage; and this possibility, to be able to present with Hohner at least a bit of the musical life in Trossingen, makes this weekend so special.

I wish that every visitor has a nice time and a pleasant stay in Trossingen, and of course I wish a successful future to our anniversary celebrating company, Matth. Hohner AG, so that the advertising slogan from the 50ies still applies for the future:
“Hohnerklänge überall, auf dem ganzen Erdenball”! (Hohner sounds everywhere, all around the globe!)
