

Wallace Fountain is a Gift from Sister City Douai, France



In 1981, Kenosha, Wisconsin became a sister city of Douai, France. To honor the affiliation, the citizens of Douai gifted a Wallace Fountain to the city of Kenosha and it stands today on a plaza named Place de Douai at Harbor Park, a redeveloped neighborhood on the former site of an auto assembly plant located on the shoreline of Lake Michigan.



What these cities had in common was the manufacture of automobiles. Kenosha was the home to an American Motors Corporation assembly plant. Renault acquired a major interest in American Motors in 1979. Renault had manufacturing plants in Douai and the partnership with American Motors brought a little bit of France to Kenosha. Renault executives came in to run things alongside AMC officials at the Kenosha factory, which was retooled to produce an Americanized version of the Renault 9 model, the Renault Alliance. American Motors was ultimately acquired by Chrysler and auto assembly at the Kenosha plant ended in December 1988.



While the business partnership was not long lasting, the sister cities relationship has endured along with the Wallace Fountain. GHM markings indicate it is a newer fountain, perhaps it was manufactured new for the occasion. Currently, it is not operating as a drinking fountain, but the fountain holds a distinguished and highly visible spot on the plaza of the Kenosha shoreline community.

Source: www.visitkenosha.com, research by Suzanne Vyvyan.