

**CHAIR'S REPORT 2010-11**  
Annual General Meeting, 27 October 2011

The work of the committee has continued to be difficult, due to the very small numbers of people available to cope with the many events and contacts with which Bristol-Hannover Council is still involved after 64 years! However, we are very grateful for the contributions of two new committee members, and for occasional help from outside the committee. So we march on to our 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2012 and what promises to be a tremendous visit to Hannover in June!

- Our last **AGM** was presided over by the Lord Mayor, Councillor Colin Smith, who was very supportive of our work, and after the meeting a lively discussion took place over a glass of wine on the future work and development of the Council.
- The annual **Neville Osborne Lecture** was given in November by our Hon. Sec. Dr John Veale, on 'Living in Europe', a lively presentation enjoyed by VI Formers of Bristol Grammar School and members of BHC and BAGS
- In December a group of **BHC members visited Hannover** to celebrate Nikolaustag on December 6<sup>th</sup> with our friends, since our September visit had had to be cancelled due to illness. We enjoyed the snow, the Christmas markets, the delightful town of Celle, and of course the good cheer and hospitality of our Hannover friends. We also met with the Oberbürgermeister, Herr Weil, and discussed future plans, including the Hannoverians' visit for the 2011 Harbour Festival weekend.
- Back in Bristol a group of us met up at the **Christmas Market** for Glühwein and Wurst, and we were delighted that this time there was a stall named Café Hannover! We had hoped for more Hannover input to this year's Weihnachtsmarkt, including a name change to the Hannover Christmas Market, but after considerable discussions about it, this does not look like happening – or at least not this year. But we are hoping for some German choral singing.
- In February at the Council House we were treated to a gathering of young people whom we had supported to visit Hannover, when they gave us inspiring presentations of their activities there. They were members of the **Cathedral Choir, the Ariel Rowing Club and the Avon Scouts**. We are delighted to help these groups of young people, as this is the main reason for our existence.
- Our annual **Rosenmontag Fasching Party** took place again, this year on March 7<sup>th</sup>, at the Black Swan in Westbury-on-Trym, where we enjoyed a light supper of traditional German fare, accompanied as ever by traditional Karneval music! We were again delighted to welcome members of BAGS to this event, but also members of the Westbury Singers, to discuss the possibility of their accompanying us on our visit to Hannover in 2012.
- Our **Annual Dinner** was held this year in April in the more informal setting of the Banco Lounge – a 'first' for us on the south side of the river! But it was greatly enjoyed by the participants and I am grateful to Marianne Moser for organising it for us.
- In March, Watershed again hosted a **Digital Storytelling Workshop**, first attended last year by our friends Helga Wawra and Wilhelm Knicker from Hannover. This time HBG member Vera Landgraf participated along with another Hannoverian, and the story to be told in film this year was one of a Love Story, a theme which was interpreted very differently by the participants.
- Six students from the **University of the West of England** accompanied by two staff members, Adam Sheppard and Nick Smith, spent two weeks in Hannover being hosted by the **Leibniz University Institute of Environmental Planning**. This was part of an Erasmus partnership between six European universities, and cements the already wide-ranging relationship between UWE and the Leibniz University.
- In June there was a **civic visit from Hannover, led by the Oberbürgermeister, Herr Stephan Weil**; the delegation, invited by the City Council, was divided into a business group and the Oberbürgermeister's group. The BHC Chair and Secretary were invited to dinner with the latter group, and the Chair also attended a meeting at Bristol City Football Club to discuss the possibility of a fixture with Hannover 96 in anticipation of the construction of the new stadium.

- 2011 saw the happy juxtaposition of the **biennial visit of members of the Hannover-Bristol Gesellschaft and the celebration of the Harbour Festival**. The visiting group was a small one this time, due to the difficulty in Bristol of providing enough homestays – a situation which we greatly regret. However, a great time was had by all, with a day excursion to Stourhead, a visit to the new ‘M’ Shed museum during the Harbour Festival celebrations, a reception by the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House, followed by our now regular combined committee meeting, a visit to the Arnos Vale cemetery, guided by our committee member, Doreen Pastor, and a splendid farewell dinner at the HMS Flying Fox, organised by our stalwart committee member, Paul Watson, even though he now lives in Gosport! The whole visit was blessed with beautiful weather, and was altogether a great success.
- Later in the summer there have been visits of other Hannover groups: the Chair addressed the **Hannover dental students** on their exchange with the Dental Hospital, and attended Mansion House receptions of the **‘39’ Club** and the **Cotham-Goethe Schule** exchange.
- In September, the **Ariel Rowing Club**, which has been given financial support by BHC in the past and appears to be the only sporting group still exchanging regularly with Hannover from the previous lively Sporting Exchange, invited us to join them when they welcomed their Hannover partners, the Ruderverein Linden. Several members of the committee joined them at different times over the weekend of the visit.
- We are in regular contact with the **German Evangelical Church** and the **German Saturday School**, where our Treasurer is now assisting with teaching, and they keep us informed of their events.
- We are very sad to report the deaths of two of our most loyal members: **Professor Frank Shaw**, who was a Life Member and always supportive of BHC, and **Mervyn Morgan**, who first went to Hannover in 1947 as a student. A little bit of our history fades with the demise of such valuable members.
- But nevertheless, we now look forward to celebrating our **65<sup>th</sup> anniversary** in 2012 with a visit to Hannover, hopefully to include various groups from Bristol, such as the Westbury Singers and the 39 Club, and possibly others. We are proud to be one of the few twinings which are so active at such a great age! Long may it continue!
- I would like here to pay tribute once again to the work of **Alix Hughes**, the BITA coordinator, for the huge amount of help he has given us in keeping links with different groups in Hannover, and also in setting up events here in Bristol. He has been an enormous asset to the work of BHC and to the international profile of the city – without him we would find it very difficult to stay ‘on the ball’ with all the relevant contacts and activities .
- And finally, I would like to reiterate once again how very much I appreciate the continuing hard work and enthusiasm of our Hon. Sec. **John Veale** – he is still an absolute tower of strength, at a time when his health has been of increasing concern. I am glad to say that the arrival of some new members on the committee has begun to take some of the load, and to ensure that Bristol-Hannover continues to play a significant role in the city.

Ann Kennard  
Chair