

BRISTOL-HANNOVER COUNCIL



HEUTE

www.Bristolhannovercouncil.org.uk

Christmas 2013

IT'S ALL GO!

Yes indeed! Bristol Hannover Council is busy on all fronts. It has been a very active year, and next year promises to be full of events. Fortunately we have a keen group of younger members who keep the wheels turning, but a number of our old faithfuls have to limit their contributions while remaining faithful to the cause. There are important plans for next year which will consolidate the aims and purpose of our existence. These will call on the cooperation of our members.

In the main, our activities centre on two main events. One is the celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of the accession of the Hannoverians to the British throne. For this, there will be major events and exhibitions in Hannover and its surrounding area (such as Brunswick and Celle), and this is combined with the second major event, which is our own visit to Hannover, as it is our turn to visit our friends there and to tour the exhibitions. We are planning events in Bristol to celebrate the Personal Union

We meet up in Hannover on 22 May and stay until 27 May. This year we shall be a much larger group than usual, as other organisations are arranging to join us. Hannover is already making plans for our stay, and before long will be asking for our numbers. So please over Christmas give it a good think over. Keep your eyes on the website for further information.

This time of year we think of Christmas. In Bristol, we have the German Market. In Hannover, on Christmas Eve (Heiliger Abend) families will be busying around the house, avoiding the living room. At about four in the afternoon, mother will ring a bell and announce 'Das Christkind ist da', and the family, smartly dressed, will gather in the doorway of the living room, where they will stand, with their hands behind their backs, holding the gifts they will present. The room has been transformed. Small sprays of foliage, particularly spruce, have decorated it. There is the fragrance of burning pines. The only lights come from candles and from the main attraction, the Christmas Tree, decorated with glass balls, tinsel (Lametta) and candles. Below, under the tree, around the Krippe (crib scene) are presents wrapped in bright paper which have been brought by the Christkind. The family remains in the doorway, greet each other for Christmas and sing the Christmas carol which we all know.

Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht,
Alles schläft, einsam wacht,
Nur das traute, hochheilige Paar,
Holder Knabe in lockigem Haar,
Schlaf, in himmlischer Ruh,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.

BRISTOL-HANNOVER COUNCIL WISHES ALL ITS FRIENDS A HAPPY CHRISTMAS
UND VIEL GLÜCK IM NEUEN JAHR

FOOTBALL LINGUISTICS

Mertesacker (Arsenal) was looking very assured with his 94 caps for the German national team, but he had not always won acclaim in Germany, having spent time in the Bundesliga with unfashionable Hannover. (Cheeky!) Out of the blue Ramsey (of Wales) struck. Tomas Rosicky (Arsenal, once of Dortmund) moved the ball to Özil (Arsenal, once of Real Madrid, German international player although not German) whose cross met by the head of Giroud (French), Ramsey won the ball and beat Roman Weidenfeller with a downward header. Lewandowski (Dortmund) continued to threaten Szczesny's (Arsenal) goal. Klopp (Dortmund's coach) sent on Aubameyang to bring on more pace, while Wenger introduced Nacho Monreal in the place of the tiring Cazorla. (Times)

GERMAN SOCIALISING

You are warmly invited to join members of BHC at monthly social evenings held at the new Bavarian Beerhouse in Queen Charlotte Street (off Baldwin Street and Welsh Back). Enjoy a drink, German food and snacks (Wiener Schnitzel is top of the menu), and a chat (in English or German). We meet at 8.00 p.m. Check dates with our Secretary Gerard (cambrensis@blueyonder.co.uk) and check out the Gasthaus at www.Bavarian-beerhouse.co.uk PROST!

MEET DEN ALPEN KLAUS

Meet Klaus at the ever-popular German Christmas Market in the Bristol Shopping Quarter this year from 8 November to 22 December. Enjoy the chalet market stalls selling traditional crafts, gifts and mouth-watering festive German food and drink. The open-air German Christmas Market is located at the Podium, Broadmead East and Merchant Street South - and join us at 1 p.m. on 15th December for lunch! bristolgermanchristmasmarket.co.uk

BRISTOL IS BEST

Our readers in Hannover will be pleased to know that Bristol is the best place to live in the UK. This is confirmed by the Office for National Statistics. Edinburgh comes second. It has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country and the average wage is the third highest of the largest cities. Life satisfaction is very high and the city is so full of beauty, interest and culture. Aren't we fortunate to live in such a beautiful part of the world!

A GOOD BOOK

NOBLE ENDEAVOURS by
MIRANDA SEYMOUR

In recent years a number of books have been written about British and German relationships, and this volume is a perceptive and often moving account of age-old ties between two great nations which shows how wartime imagery is an historical aberration.

This book is a chronological scrapbook of the links forged at many social levels between two leading powers. The story begins with the marriage of Prince Frederick, the Elector Palatine and Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of King James I. Their lives were tragic, yet their union was one of genuine love and is emblematic of the Anglo-German ties that Miranda Seymour traces through history, the most obvious instance being the marriage of Victoria and Albert 200 years later, which led to a time when it was common for the German language to be a part of a well-rounded English education.

COTHAM AND GOETHE SCHOOL EXCHANGE

About 20 pupils of Year Nine from the Hannover Goetheschule have been exchanging every year with pupils from Cotham School, originally led by Dietrich Doelitzsch and his wife. The latest group were here again this year and were received by the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House.

BHC is very happy that Cotham continues with this exchange and was pleased to be represented at one of this year's twinning social events. One of our main objectives is to promote and support links with young people of our two cities.

HILDE POCK

Congratulations to Hilde who for over 40 years has been a member of the Gesellschaft and reaches the age of 100 this December. She has taken part in many exchanges and was an active member of the HBG's committee, always full of imaginative ideas. For the last 20 years she has been a resident of the *Eilenriedestift* and corresponds regularly with her Bristol friend Heather Philips. Hilde goes into the town once a week and likes to look at the changes in the old buildings. She has a coffee then goes home for her *Nachmittagsschläfchen* in her apartment, where she has her breakfast and supper. She goes to the market once a week. Every morning she fusses over her pot plants then does the crossword. She's already won 6 prizes!

Of course a big party is being planned for her. The invitations have already been sent out and the chef has everything in order. So we at the Bristol-Hannover Council send Hilde our greetings and congratulations.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A cheerful gathering of members attended our AGM on 31 October under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Lord Mayor. In her Chair's Report Ann reported that we had enjoyed an active year with visits from a number of Hannover groups. These included a group of Hannoverian Seniors who meet regularly to read English books, and Bürgermeister Regine Kramarek who came over on the inaugural direct flight between our two cities (unfortunately now stopped).

In June we welcomed our friends from Hannover on their biennial visit. We visited the Bristol Records Office and viewed the documents of the history of our exchange. We also visited Tyntesfield House, enjoyed a boat trip to Beeses Tea Gardens, where we met up with Alma and Derek Brockwell, and had a reception with the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House. There was also a meeting of the two committees and a farewell dinner. It was a most enjoyable visit.

Other important activities with Hannover included:

- European Sustainability Conference organised by the Schumacher Institute at the Arnolfini with participation from Hannover.

- A meeting with Jon Winter of S&B Automotive Academy in Bedminster which trains apprentices in the car industry and has experience of exchanges with Hamburg. Jon visited Hannover with the aim of setting up an exchange with a Berufsschule there.

In July a group of photo-journalists came from Hannover to take photographs for an exhibition there of 'Life in Bristol'. Two of the group came back to Bristol recently to take part in a competition '24 hours in Bristol' where they had to take photographs during an hour allotted to them. There are some memorable photographs! One shows a Bristolian wrestling with a turkey and another nocturnal high jinks. The Hannover photographer was allocated an hour in the night. Nothing was happening and the fruit market was not even open. But a man fell into the Avon and was rescued by the photographer, who took a very muddy and wet snapshot.

- Janika Millan of the Hannover Cultural Office visited Bristol to meet representatives of the many groups hoping to link up with Hannover (Exultate Singers, Brandon Hill Chamber Orchestra, the Kelvin Players, Ariel Rowing Club, UWE Rugby Club, Ashton Boys' Football Club, Cotham School) and Ann arranged a garden party where we could all meet and discuss how they can move forward. Janika was so impressed by the enthusiasm that she has drafted a Cooperation Agreement between the two cities.

Meanwhile, we have been busy in Hannover. Mark Leach from Bristol's Sustainable Cities Scheme with Carolyn Hassan of the Knowle West Media Centre represented Bristol at the Climate and Culture Conference in Hannover.

In August, Daniel Laruelle, a Sixth Form student from Bristol Grammar School (now at Northumbria University studying Architecture) visited Hannover to investigate buildings of different ages. He travelled using BHC's new Neville Osborne Bursary and was helped greatly by his hosts. We are very grateful to Anne von Thadden and the Gesellschaft for arranging all this.

Back at home over the last year we have held our Rosenmontag Party, Annual Dinner, attended the Christmas Market, Unification Day and the Network Germany Conference at the Embassy. We are always busy!

The following members were elected as the Council's new Officers and Committee:

Chair: Ann Kennard
Deputy Chair: Alderman Brenda Hugill
Councillor Colin Smith

Secretary: Gerard Owen
Treasurer: Katerina Seery
Minutes Secretary Ian Devine

Members:
John Veale, David Perkins, Paul Seath, Paul Watson, Lyn Evans, Frank Titmarsh, Tim Illston

A PLEA

Readers will be very much aware how busy we have been. There is so much to do, so much to follow up, so much to arrange. If we are to continue to be successful it is *ESSENTIAL* that we have volunteers (not necessarily committee members) who will on occasion help us with some of our tasks. Please ring Ann our Chair if you can help (Bristol 9425860).

FURTHER ACTIVITIES

Lord Mayor Cllr Peter Main joined us for a lunchtime gathering at last year's annual Christmas Market, where the organisers treated us to delicious Glühwein, Bratwurst and Bratkartoffeln, and the Lord Mayor was given some special Hannover confectionery. Please support this year's Weihnachtsmarkt.

John showed us, as part of the BAGS film programme, the film *Saraband for Dead Lovers*, starring Stewart Grainger, Joan Greenwood and Flora Robson. It was the first British colour film and tells the story of the tragic love affair between Count Königsmarck and Sophie Dorothea, the wife of Prince George of Hannover, the future King of England.

In July BHC presented itself as part of the Twinning Zones at the Harbour Festival. Our new location suited us well, although the weather put a sudden end to the afternoon. There was good participation of the committee and the games to test the public's knowledge of Germany were again very popular.

KEEP IN TOUCH

with all our news and activities by following the Bristol-Hannover Council's website.

Last January things changed dramatically in Hannover when the regional elections took place and our old friend Stephan Weil stood for election for the SPD as Minister President of Lower Saxony against the incumbent President David McAllister (CDU) whom Ann and John had met at the Embassy for last year's Unification Day and an exhibition on Lower Saxony. We also hoped to interest David McAllister in supporting our celebrations for our 300th anniversary Bristol celebrations between Hannover and Britain. Stephan Weil won the Presidential election by one seat! We wished him well, but had to wait until October to see who would be the new Oberbürgermeister. The role is retained by the SPD, and Herr Stefan Schostok was appointed the new OB. We hope to meet him before too long.

Stefan Schostok was born in Hildesheim, and has lived in Hannover since 1971. He now lives in Hannover-List. He is a social education worker by profession and has worked at the Lower Saxony Adult Education Centre and the Lower Saxony Department for the Environment. He was also elected M.P. for the state parliament of Lower Saxony and was leader of the SPD.

He has worked politically in many areas, including science, culture and the interests of migrants.

Beyond his political work he is a member of the Federal Workers' Welfare Association, and of industrial, coal mining, chemistry, energy and several other associations.

He is also a member of the Convocation of the Loccum Evangelical Academy.

The new Oberbürgermeister is clearly an active man with many interests and experiences. Bristol-Hannover Council warmly welcomes him to his new office and we wish him well and happy and successful years in his post.

We hope we shall be able to meet him when we are in Hannover.

THE RELUCTANT IMMIGRANT

He didn't really want to come, but made up his mind to endure it. Although he had been told on 5 August that he was to migrate to London, he lingered as long as he could in his palace in Hannover, sauntering for many days through the prim Herrenhausen gardens which had been laid out by his Mother Sophia. She had been the one who had set her heart on the job for him before she died a few weeks earlier.

He began his journey reluctantly on 31 August, travelling via Holland. He reached The Hague five days later, where he lingered until 16 September, then embarked for Greenwich, arriving two days later. The year was 1714 – 300 years next year. Crowds of cheering Londoners strained their necks through the rain and the fog to get a glimpse of him. He wondered why.

He had not come alone. With him were his two favourite mistresses. He had divorced his wife from an arranged marriage and shut her up in Ahlden Castle where she would remain for 30 years. He spoke very little English and told everyone he met how much he disliked England, its people and its ways. And its food. He grumbled about the queer taste of the oysters and their want of flavour; later it turned out he liked his oysters foul and rancid. This unwilling immigrant was none other than George I.

He was the son of the Electress Sophia of Hannover, who herself was the twelfth daughter of Elizabeth Stuart, Queen of Bohemia, who was the daughter of James I of England.

The great achievement of the Hannoverian kings (the Georges I, II, III, IV and William IV) was the creation of the constitutional monarchy so valued today. They were not much interested in the goings-on in England, couldn't speak much English (even Queen Victoria who followed them was brought up speaking German), and left the affairs of state to their ministers and Parliament.

When William IV died in 1837 Queen Victoria could not rule over Hannover because its constitution did not allow women to succeed, so their next in line was the dissolute Duke of Cumberland, who still sits on his horse outside the Hannover railway station.

But Hannover today still cherishes its link with Britain and proudly celebrates the Queen's birthday, and its museums display the carriages of the English kings.