



Busy year ahead to celebrate the 75th anniversary

** Exciting times ahead with the arrival of the 75th anniversary of our partnership with Hannover!

I think we can be very proud that our friendship has continued without a pause since 1947 - we have celebrated the decades in a big way, and next year will be no exception. Some of the events below will be shared with Bristol-Bordeaux Partnership, since that link was also set up in 1947. The Oberbürgermeister of Hannover will lead a delegation of Hannoverians when they visit us for the weekend of the Harbour Festival in July, and in late August we will visit Hannover, possibly led by the Lord Mayor.

These exchanges will be preceded in April by a return visit of the Young Bristol community group to Hannover for a busy programme of activities, including a trip to Berlin. Also in April the Hannover Police youth football team will visit Bristol. They will be welcomed by the Lord Mayor and attend a match between Bristol City and Peterborough United.

From July to November Hannover's Historical Museum, in cooperation with Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, will mount an exhibition on colonialism and slavery, linking the two countries as a result of the 'Personal Union' when the Hannoverian dynasty ascended the British throne. The role of the two cities will be highlighted.

In August Hannover will stage a World Choir for Peace performance to commemorate the bombing of Hiroshima in 1945 (Hiroshima is another twin city of Hannover). Hannover hopes to attract singers from all seven of its partner cities. Later in the year Bristol Choral Society are hoping to join with a Hannover choir to sing a major concert together.

Other events and exchanges are still in the pipeline, such as the long-running sports exchanges involving rowing, badminton and gymnastics, as well as initiatives sharing memories, dance as a means of prioritising human rights, and school exchanges, including primary school letter exchanges

ANN KENNARD, Chair



Blue plaque tribute to Crofton Gane -- one of 'our Five'



** Crofton Gane was a man of many parts: Quaker, design pioneer, businessman, furniture salesman, philanthropist and also, in our context, one of the five men whose mission to a winter-battered Hannover in 1947 led to the creation of the Bristol-Hannover Council and one of the first and most enduring of city twinings.

Acknowledgement of Gane's full-hearted contribution to the life of Bristol has been recognised with a blue plaque at the College Green site of his furnishings showrooms.

The plaque was unveiled on October 16 by Penny Gane, his grand-daughter, in the presence of around 30 representatives of civic and cultural organisations who have all come to appreciate and value his legacy. The Bristol Hannover Council was represented by chair Ann Kennard and Jonathan Radnedge.

This is the 33rd such blue plaque in the city in a programme overseen by the Bristol Civic Society and with funding support from the Gane Trust which he created after winding up his business, P E Gane, in 1954.

The plaque can be viewed at 43 College Green which was the site of the P E Gane furniture business showrooms before its wartime destruction. He reopened the showroom at 79 Park Street before the business was wound up in 1954. The building now adorned by the plaque is a student accommodation centre.



Penny Gane unveils the plaque on the site of the P E Gane showrooms

Gane had become chairman of the business on the death of his father in 1933 and was excited by new design concepts. When the leading Bauhaus designer, Marcel Breuer, came to Britain as a refugee from Germany, a lifelong friendship began.

Among many commissions for Gane was one of Breuer's two all-time favourite buildings - the Gane Pavilion, built in 1936 for the Royal Show in Ashton Park. Breuer's other favourite was his design for the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

Gane died in 1967.



Sign of the new times

** Hannover Quay is now formally marked and signposted once more (*pictured*).

The Quay on Harbourside, an area originally known as Canons Marsh, was named after our twin city back in the mid-1990s along with the Bordeaux and Porto Quays. Bristol City Council policy officers Stephen Hewitt and Dammy Legrand worked with the planning and Legible City teams to make it happen.

The original signs were unveiled during the 50th anniversary of the twinning by the Lord Mayor and the Oberbürgermeister.

The sign was damaged more than a year ago but has now been replaced by a more robust replacement - looking its best again for our anniversary visitors next year.

Originally Canons Marsh was a hay meadow owned by St Augustine's Abbey (now Bristol Cathedral). In the 19th century it became a centre for the shipping industry but the area became derelict after wartime action and the transfer of port of Bristol activity to Avonmouth in the late 1950s.



Jasleen weaves a poetic spell at the highest level

** Jasleen Singh is one of the newest members of the Bristol Hannover Council and who introduced herself with a talk about her journey since 2018 when she won first place in the international Never Such Innocence poetry competition in the age 14-16 category.

Her poem, *The Indian Soldier*, was drawn from the written inspiration of her great great great grandfather Lena Singh as well as to commemorate the 1.3m Indian soldiers who came to fight for the British during World War One. She was invited to recite her poem at the Guards Chapel in the Wellington Barracks and was awarded her prize by the Vice Chief of Defence Staff Sir Gordon Messenger.

After that, she was invited to become a Young Ambassador for Never Such Innocence and was asked to recite her poem at Buckingham Palace and the House of Lords in front of the various assembled dignitaries.

Jasleen was chosen as one of three young people to read a prayer at the 2018 Remembrance Service commemorating the centenary of World War One in front of the Queen, the Royal Family, politicians, dignitaries and religious leaders. This was preceded by a live BBC interview in which she discussed her poem and the personal inspiration.



Jasleen Singh, one of the most recent BHC committee members, exploring Berlin's history

In 2020, she travelled to Germany on the invitation of the Federal President of Germany. Here she delivered a four-minute address reflecting on the 75th anniversary of World War Two as well as her hopes for the future from the perspective of a young person.

She was selected by the British Government as the only other UK representative at the ceremony along with the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall. The other three young people that spoke were from Moldova, Israel and Germany.

Her address, which was televised live on the main German TV channel, was heard by an audience which also included the Federal President of Germany, President of the Bundestag and President of the Volksbund. She met them all after the ceremony along with the British Ambassador.

Jasleen is now looking forward to providing a new perspective to the work of the Bristol Hannover Council, with the aim of encouraging more young people to engage with the rich seam of history that the council aims to preserve and further through its work.

Jasleen Singh is a Year 13 pupil at Bristol Grammar School



Hannover and me: Jonathan Radnedge

** My Hannover journey began in the long-ago days when travelling across the Channel was an exotic adventure before package holidays and long before low-cost airlines brought the rest of the world to the bottom of the road.

In spring 1965, when I had just entered the Cathedral School sixth form, my parents had learned that the Bristol-Hannover exchange organised annually by the city's youth service might collapse. Take-up was minimal. Was I interested?

No need for second thoughts. So I joined a dozen other young venturers who shared, firstly, the hosting of new friends from Hannover and then returned via a cross-Channel ferry for a dramatic overnight train ride deep into the heart of 'abroad'.

The memories, as I learned much later, have stayed etched in all our minds: Hannover city itself, the Rathaus, Kropke and a weekend in the Harz mountains with a surreal view out across and into the GDR.

Several of us undertook the exchange again the following year. Old friends and new friends. We travelled to Hannover shortly after England had beaten West Germany in the World Cup Final. So we re-enacted the match on a makeshift pitch behind the Haus der Jugend. It ended in a diplomatic 2-2 draw. Honours even so no-one suggested playing extra-time.



Bristol's exchange group in Hannover in 1965 with youth leader Peter Sheppard.

That second visit also included a weekend in Berlin which then meant travelling by coach and the curiosity of that long hold-up in the autobahn queue at the border. One of our group lost his passport in Berlin. That meant he flew back to Hannover to obtain a visitor's replacement while the rest of us experienced the other-world curiosity of a day beyond Checkpoint Charlie in strangely quiet East Berlin.

More Hannover visits followed: one, with two friends, heading home from a camping holiday; another with the Bristol Youth Orchestra. Then . . . nothing until, out of the blue, seven years ago an email arrived from one of our friends pointing out that we had a 50th anniversary looming.

She rounded up the German group and I contacted the Bristol-Hannover Council to ask for any possible help digging up our own past. I had the names on an old German newspaper cutting and secretary/sleuth Lynne Evans, magnificently, found almost all of them.

Our old friends came to Bristol in 2015: we returned to Hannover in 2016. Sadly, of course, not all of us were still around. The years fell away. Fifty years plus? Seems like only yesterday.



Honorary Consul spreads the word for next generation

** Kai von Pahlen, the the German Honorary Consul in Bristol and a BHC committee member, has launched a German Club at Castle Primary School in Keynsham. The club offers each pupil the chance to develop a pen friendship with a German child and to pick up the basic language skills needed to draft a letter to their new pen friends.

The letters include information about the pupils, such as hobbies, favourite foods and the jobs they want to do some day.

Shared history between England and Germany is also included - ranging from the first arrival of the Anglo-Saxons in Britain to the royal houses of Hannover and Saxe-Coburg and Gotha (now Windsor of course).



Kai von Pahlen with his eager pupils

The club has partnered up with Egestorffschule in Hannover, whose pupils look forward to receiving German letters from their English counterparts before responding in English. The German club has been scheduled over eight hours in September, October and November.

Kai says: "I believe that understanding one another is the basis for cultural cooperation and friendship, so I hope that my students will continue to on their path to learning a new language."

He is planning to record his teaching sessions so they can be shared electronically with other schools in England who would like to develop similar letter exchanges with a German counterpart.



Youth Voice to be heard in Hannover

** This coming spring will see Young Bristol's Youth Voice group visit Hannover following on from an exchange visit to Bristol in Summer 2019. The trip has been a long time in the making, but with funding secured from UK-German-Connection, we will begin linking on with our Hannoverian counterparts from February 2022.

The Youth Voice group are Young Bristol's youth advocacy group, made up of members from across our club network. The young people will initially meet online to get to know each other through games, language quizzes, and shared content such as 'a typical day in the life of a Bristolian.' Building these relationships before the actual visit in the Easter Holidays will enable the young people to immerse themselves while with their peers in Hannover.



Over here . . . the Hannover group in Bristol in 2019

During the trip, the group will be using creative methods to record, research and reflect on their experiences of the youth service in Hannover. They will be taking part in practical activities such as rope walks and street art tours, as well as visiting other youth clubs. Each day will see some time for personal reflection and journaling. Once back in the U.K. the group will meet to share their experiences and create new art inspired by them.

The art work and documentation of the visit (photographs, journals, writings, videos), will be curated into an exhibition, along with a creative presentation for the Chief Executive of Young Bristol, Trustees, Bristol Hannover Council and other youth club members.

The intention is that they will have suggestions and ideas about the way Young Bristol currently operates and where improvements or changes can be made. We will be building even stronger links with Marco and the team in Hannover and welcome a return from them in 2023.

FAYE KEANE
*Creative Programme Lead
 for Young Bristol*



Bristol-Hannover Council aims to involve as many Bristolians as possible, young and old, in extending these ties which have already enriched the lives of so many people in both cities. Many exchanges have been supported by the Council, including:

- Schools exchanges*
- Exchanges of citizens*
- Sports exchanges*
- University student exchanges*
- Band, choir, orchestra and drama visits*
- Youth club visits and exchanges*
- Church exchanges*
- Reuniting old friends*

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Frohe Weihnachten und ein glückliches Neues Jahr!

