



## ***Youth leads the way in another non-stop year***

\*\* These past 12 months - after a year full of events in 2022 when we celebrated our 75th anniversary - might have seemed rather quiet but the relationships, both old and new, have continued unabated.

The best thing about this is the increasing number of young people who are involved in our partnership with Hannover. We report below on all these activities, which run alongside our Bristol-based programme as well as visits to cultural and other locations, where we have been reaching out and extending our range.

I am delighted to welcome you to our latest newsletter, highlighting events, exchanges and some of the people involved.

***ANN KENNARD, chair BHC***



***MARCH DATE: Neil Taylor - 'The GDR: Could it have succeeded?' (Stoke Lodge)***



## ***'Annual lunch' really is a beach***

\*\* A new variation on our Annual Dinner took place this year, thanks to committee member Ian Turner.

A Sunday lunch was arranged at No 5 The Beach in Clevedon for members of our association and also some of the members of the Clevedon Twinning group.



Clevedon is twinned with four cities, one of which is Ettlingen in south Germany. In contrast to Bristol, the group all work together on events and visits. The food was first class and of a varied selection. We needed to walk it off afterwards(!).

We had some lively discussions on various topics of interest to both our organisations, including their histories, reasons for being a member and things to attract a new younger membership.

The lunch was deemed a great success and the Clevedon group look forward to joining us again for an event in Bristol.



*APRIL DATE: Film: Das Gesicht einer Stadt (Stoke Lodge)*



## ***Another great visit from Hannover***

**\*\*** After last year's anniversary junketings at the Harbour Festival – gin boat and all – how could we follow that with our Hannover friends coming back to Bristol this year? In the event, our guests agreed in chair Robert Nicholls's words: "There were no highlights – it was all fantastic!"

This time arrivals and departures were varied in modes of transport, plane or car, and the airlines did not help with several cancellations disrupting travel plans but somehow everyone managed to reach their destinations eventually. The first day involved a trip to Cheddar Gorge, where everyone scattered to do their own thing, be it climb Jacob's Ladder, enter the caves or just relax in the sunshine with a coffee.



After lunch we went to Thatchers Cider Distillery at Myrtle Farm – a request of Hannover’s vice-chair, Petra Pilger, last year – and had a comprehensive tour of the distillery, followed by tastings of four of the latest ciders and the opportunity to buy samples.

Saturday saw us visiting backstage at Bristol Old Vic, always fascinating as the oldest working theatre in the country, and then in the afternoon a visit to the Underfall Yard museum, where we witnessed the historic machinery in perfect working order at the touch of a switch.

On Sunday, we all met at the Llandoger Trow to start a tour of the harbour with Christel Stöcker-Danby giving her usual excellent illustrated tour in German.

As a great extra, we were invited by former Lord Mayor Alderman Royston Griffey, member of BHC and chair of the Matthew Trust, to board the Matthew, where he gave us a wonderfully colourful historical account of the ship, complete with multiple flags.

Monday was busy, with a reception in the Council House led by another former Lord Mayor and member and friend of BHC, Alderman Colin Smith, followed by our now traditional combined committee meeting at City Hall. This time, however, we invited representatives of Young Bristol, Ashton Youth Football Club and Bristol Cathedral Youth Choir, all of whom are engaged in plans to visit and exchange with like-minded groups in Hannover. It was a fruitful exchange.

In the evening 46 of us sat down to a splendid farewell dinner at Aqua Restaurant in Welsh Back, Harbourside, presided over again by the Lord Lieutenant of Bristol, Peaches Golding OBE.



## ***RISE Youth Dance and Hannover partner at Harbour Festival***



**\*\*** RISE Youth Dance, after a stunning performance in the Rathaus in Hannover last summer with their partners, welcomed their friends to Bristol this year for another week of workshops, culminating in a series of dances on College Green as part of the Harbour Festival.

Bristol-Hannover Council again funded an exploratory visit to Hannover in April by lead choreographers Helen Wilson and Luke Antysz. RISE was subsequently successful in applications to the UK-German Connection and this time also the Arts Council, to enable the visiting group to join them this year in Bristol.

The Hannover troupe, a loose grouping last year, has now taken the name Under Construction and is looking forward to more cooperation.

After the performance BHC chair Ann Kennard was stopped by a Radio Bristol reporter who wanted to find people enjoying the Harbour Festival. Ann took the opportunity to explain about the twinning and how great the dance relationship had become - hopefully providing extra publicity.



**OCTOBER DATE: Film: Frantz (Stoke Lodge)**



## ***Diary of BHC Chair's participation in the new 'Freundship' project***

**\*\*** The 'other' Hannover organisation, the Hannoversch-Britische Gesellschaft (HBG2), has initiated a project to sponsor three students of Bristol University to visit Berlin and Hannover to experience some of the German institutions and the life of our German friends.

The idea is partly to do with the fact that EU Erasmus funding is no longer available. Bristol-Hannover Council and the Hannover-Bristol Gesellschaft (HBG1) were invited to participate in the organisation of the project moving forward.

BHC Chair Ann Kennard joined in part of the visit of the first group of students and below is a diary of her visit.

**Monday evening:** Arrived in Berlin, HBG2 Chair Catrin Kuhlmann and the students arrived a bit later from a visit to Volkswagen in Wolfsburg and we went to an amazing book/media shop, enormous and apparently open all night.

**Tuesday:** Met the young Hannover MP, Ades Ahmetovic, born in Germany to Bosnian parents who fled the war in 1992. I duly passed on greetings from his friend, Hannover's Mr Rugby Horst Josch, which surprised him. That was in the Abgeordnetenhaus (Lower House), then after lunch we went through a tunnel to the Reichstag and up into the Dome.

In the afternoon, we visited the British Embassy and the Deputy Ambassador Kieran Drake talked to us about the work of the Embassy staff, linking up British and German citizens.

**Wednesday** - Having travelled to Hannover, we were received by the President of the Landtag in the Leineschloss, Hanna Naber, who represents Oldenburg and explained the role of the Land Parliament.

**Thursday** –Visited the Anzeiger Hochhaus, where the British authorities fostered the new era of journalism in the post-war period. Then later met Thomas Hermann, Robert Nicholls and the staff of the Cultural Office.

**ANN KENNARD**



**NOVEMBER DATE: Film: Cabaret (Stoke Lodge)**



### ***Visit of a Wikipedia Group from Hannover***

**\*\*** September saw a group of Wikipedia volunteers spending a week in Bristol, getting to know the city - none had visited before - and taking many photographs to write reports on the city for the German version of Wikipedia and other publications.



We arranged for them to have a walking tour with a Blue Badge guide, showing them the old city and the harbour area.

BHC chair Ann Kennard showed them the Cathedral, Park Street - including the blue plaque to Bristol-Hannover pioneer, Crofton Gane - Brandon Hill and the Cabot Tower, the Victoria Rooms and the RWA.

All of this included intense conversations about the background and history.

We hope that Bristol will become even more well-known in Hannover and Germany at large, as a result of the visit!



### ***Reunion of 1983 school exchange***

\*\* Martin Werner and Mike Norman first met on a school exchange in 1983 when Martin was a student at the Tellkampfschule in Hannover and Mike at Churchill Community School (now Churchill Academy).

They remained close, friends with parents and grandparents, kept writing, attended family weddings, went on holiday together and are friends to this day.

Martin then found himself captaining the famous Gin Boat which was a star attraction at the 75th anniversary celebrations in Bristol Harbour in 2022.

He was in charge of the boat on its journey from Reading to Bath, including watering the tree which the boat brought, along with the barrel of Hannover Gin. They were delighted to be able to celebrate 40 years of friendship, and also to see that the cherry tree so carefully transported across the North Sea was blooming beautifully in the Botanic Garden.



## ***Keeping the Martinstag tradition alive in Bristol***



**\*\* November 11 is St Martin's Day in Germany. This day celebrates the Roman soldier turned saint who was such a good guy that he gave half his coat to a beggar during a snowstorm.**

The most iconic tradition in Germany is a lantern procession, for which children make their own paper lanterns in school.

After the sun sets, young and old come together to walk through town and sing songs carrying their colourful lanterns.

It was my great honour and pleasure once again to represent the holy Saint Martin at the lantern procession organised by the German Saturday School Bristol.

Martinstag has always been a special day for me. I grew up with it in Germany and I always loved it. So when I left Germany and moved to the UK, it felt like something was missing. I am so glad that German Saturday Schools throughout the UK celebrate this special day and happy that I could play a small part in it.

**KAI VON PAHLEN**

*Hon. Consul and committee member  
of the Bristol-Hannover Council*

*Photo: @Cappel Photography*



*DECEMBER DATE: Tales of Hoffmann (film)*



***‘Just a second!’ . . . how Ruderverein Linden experienced  
their Bristol Exchange 2023***



**\*\* From September 29 to October 1, 2023, we had the pleasure of spending an unforgettable weekend with our partner club, the Bristol Ariel Rowing Club in England. An exciting rowing exchange – this weekend was a true feast for the senses and a celebration of friendship between our clubs.**

On Friday evening, 17 rowers of the RVL arrived at the club full of anticipation. A warm welcome awaited us.

The evening started with an "Autumn Beer Tasting" where the Bristolians spoiled us with their delicacies from small breweries. We had the opportunity to taste different types of beer as well as cider and immersed ourselves in the diversity of British beer culture.

On Saturday, the day started with breakfast in the homes of our hosts, who had given us a warm welcome. Full of energy, we went to the Ariel Rowing Club.

All preparations for the implementation of the traditional President's Cup had been made.

Two teams of eight, the Bristolians and RV Linden, competed against each other. Although the mixed eight of the RVL lost by only one second (!), the team showed an excellent performance.

The final corner of the race brought an exciting twist, showcasing the incredible team spirit and talent of both teams.

The regatta was undoubtedly a highlight of the weekend.

The evening brought us to the Marriot Hotel, where the "Annual Dinner" took place. This evening was marked by special tributes and emotional moments that celebrated our shared passion for rowing and the friendship between our clubs.

Afterwards, the dancing continued tirelessly in the clubs of the Bristol night scene.

Sunday started comfortably with time, nice conversations, lots of coffee, tea, "cheddar cheese" and "jam". After a good night's sleep, we set off for a rowing tour from the club to the harbour of Bristol. Here we enjoyed the impressive scenery of the city, its new buildings and the old parts of the city from the water.

"Last but not least" ... the last evening ended with a fantastic "Skittles Night" before we made our way home the next morning.

This weekend in Bristol was a journey filled with adventure, sightseeing, delicious beer and cider but, and most importantly, a celebration of hospitality and the deep connection between RVL Linden and the Bristol Ariel Rowing Club.

**. . . via STEVE HOWIE**  
*Bristol Ariel Rowing Club*



## ***Going crackers for Christmas***

\*\* The Christmas Market meal this year was a bit different, as we were in two heated 'igloos' in the outer area, so the two groups were separate from each other and from the carousing crowds outside, which were quite noisy.



The tables were beautifully laid out for us, with the novelty this year of crackers for everybody. The festive group, which met to enjoy the usual German fare of Wurst and Gluehwein, were very happy with the arrangements and thoroughly enjoyed themselves.



*Frohe Weihnachten und ein glückliches Neues Jahr!*

