



## Another programme of great events heading your way

\*\* Well into 2024 now, we have been busy as you will see below, and we have exciting events coming up this summer.

On April 25 a brand-new twinning signpost styled on the street signs of each of our twin cities is to be unveiled on College Green by the Lord Mayor, showing the importance of Bristol's city partners to its international strategy. N.B. Our Chair will be giving an interview in advance of the event on BBC Radio Bristol, together with the artist Steve Joyce, at 3.30 on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April.

In May comes our visit to the Expressionists' exhibition at the Tate Modern, and a new version of Upfest to which Hannover has traditionally sent artists, though not this year.

In June there will be two choral offerings from Hannover: on June 15 our old friends Cantà Nova will feature via a podcast at the Festival of Voice at St George's; then Bristol Choral Society will host Hannover's Oratorienchor, with whom they sang Brahms' German Requiem in the Marktkirche in 2022. On June 29<sup>th</sup> they will sing together a programme of mainly English music in the beautifully refurbished new Beacon Hall. Members are encouraged to buy tickets to support them!

In July all the twinings hope to participate in the Harbour Festival, and August will bring a new venture: *Twinning Tuesdays*, when each Tuesday one (or two) of the twinings will present a day of information and activities relating to their partner city – our date is August 6 – more later on that. In this same month, Bristol Cathedral Choir will visit Hannover and sing in a series of concerts, both in the Marktkirche in Hannover and around the region.

Then in September of course we are excited to be going to visit our friends in Hannover, and you can read below about the interesting programme which is being organised for us. A great year ahead!



## Games with Thrones

\*\* On March 6 our member Dr Mark Allinson, German historian at the University of Bristol, gave us a fascinating talk about the demise of the German monarchies: after 1918 there was an immense reorganisation in order to say farewell to the Kaiserreich, consisting of four kingdoms, six grand duchies, five duchies, seven principalities, three free cities + Elsaß-Lothringen which was ceded to France as Alsace-Lorraine.

There was, of course, imperial collapse all over that part of Europe as a result of the Great War: Russia in 1917, Austria in 1918, the Ottoman Empire in 1922; some of the German states had sided with Austria, including Hannover! rather than with Prussia, but Mark gave us a very entertaining run-down of multiple abdications, not to mention revolutions, throughout the Reich.

Even so there is still today a far-right monarchist, Heinrich XIII Prinz Reuss, who has never accepted the demise of the monarchy nor the existence of the Federal Republic and simply puts the fact that Germany lost the first World War down to Prussian incompetence!

A very lively and informative talk, which was greatly enjoyed by a good number of our members over a glass of wine – thank you Mark!

**ANN KENNARD**



## Bristol-Hannover Council celebrates successful meeting with representatives from Clevedon and Portishead twinning associations

\*\* The sky was clear and the panoramic views across the Severn Estuary to Wales provided the perfect backdrop for the inaugural meeting of the Clevedon, Portishead and Bristol/Hannover twinning groups on Sunday, February 11, at The Windmill outside Portishead.



Each of the groups had a unique origin story to tell - Bristol with its post-War aid to Hannover, Clevedon linked to Epernay in the Champagne region of France, Ettlingen in the Black Forest and Middelkerke on the coast of Belgium (towns that are all linked with each other) and Portishead that leveraged personal connections to create long-standing arrangements with Schweich near Trier and the Dutch town of Den Dungen.

It was great to hear from each group about their successes and their challenges. While each of us has an active programme of local events and exchanges, we face the same difficulties inspiring and engaging the younger generation, for instance.

After wide-ranging discussions, it was concluded that we had much to gain from collaborating and sharing information about our activities. We also looked for ways in which we could benefit from the distinctive features of our local area-one idea which excited a lot of interest being a programme for all our partners themed around gardens and including visits to the many horticultural highpoints of our region.

As our friends from Clevedon commented: "We hope that this meeting marks the beginning of exciting new partnerships that will enrich our communities and promote friendships across the seas with our twin towns.

“We have come away with a new lease of motivation, excited about the prospect of collaborating with other local twinning associations to achieve our common goals. Together, we'll continue to foster connections, create unforgettable experiences, and build bridges between countries.”

To follow up on these ideas, a troika was formed with representatives from all 3 groups to take the ideas forward.

**IAN TURNER**



## Rhineland comes to Westbury for Rosenmontag



\*\* The Rhineland is the heart of the Rosenmontag tradition in Germany, particularly Köln, Bonn, Düsseldorf, Aachen and Mainz. Thus it was entirely appropriate that an entertaining streamed link from the parade in Köln provided an atmospheric backdrop to the Bristol-Hannover Council's annual celebration.

Venue here this year was the Black Swan, Westbury-on-Trym, with 16 attending, including the Lord Mayor, Councillor Paul Goggin. The party included German food and music, and a raffle.

*Wir haben alle viel Spaß gehabt!*

**JONATHAN RADNEDGE**



## THE PRODUCERS – last in the series

\*\* On January 31 the film *The Producers* was shown to members of the Bristol-Hannover Council at Stoke Lodge Adult Learning Centre, as the third part in a trilogy of movies about Germany directed by non-Germans, selected by Colin Evans. The thought-provoking film was made in 1967 and quoted then as being "Possibly the funniest film in the last 25 years".

This American satirical black comedy film by Mel Brooks, made fun of Hitler and the Nazis and, because of this theme, it was controversial from the beginning.

The style is now very dated and as most agreed, it has lost most of its comedy lustre. We reconvened at the Eastfield Inn a week later to discuss this and the other movies shown, which had included three films made by German directors, as well as this last series. We thanked Colin for his efforts and look forward to his next selection.

**FRANK TITMARSH**



## **Twining Memories at the 650<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the city of Bristol**

\*\* As part of a National Lottery Heritage Funded project coordinated by [Bristol Ideas](#) celebrating the 650<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bristol as an independent county, Local Learning (remember Ruth Myers' 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary project 'In someone else's shoes'?) has been commissioned to work with communities across the city exploring our local heritage to create a community atlas showing how Bristol has grown.

The community atlas will feature a two-page spread about the seven international twinning links of Bristol and in order to give content to this, six long-term members of Bristol-Hannover Council took part at the end of January in a memory-sharing afternoon, along with members of Bristol's other six twinings. Together the seven twinings are part of the Bristol International Twinings Association (BITA).

It was a delightful afternoon, sharing experiences going back in some cases a very long way: our member Sylvia Supple, who first went to Hannover in 1949, found herself sitting opposite David Vowles, who had first gone to Bordeaux in the same year- and both had vivid memories and stories to tell.

Barbara Cowell, for instance, also has a long history with Hannover, and was taught at Bristol University by Professor August Closs, one of the five now-famous men who went over to Hannover in 1947. Jonathan Radnedge first went to Hannover with a Bristol youth service exchange in 1965 and is still in contact with some of his friends from that time; Andrea Argent was a member of the socialist group, of which former Lord Mayor Jack Fisk was a leading light.

All participants were given a card with questions to jog their memories – when they first got involved, what their favourite experiences were, whether there was anything that surprised them about their twin city.



The results will be compiled and edited by Ruth of Local Learning, along with UWE history and photography students, and an exhibition will be shown in Central Library, as well as the community atlas being published, both digitally and in hard copy.

Hard copies will be available in all Bristol's public libraries – a great community history project.

***ANN KENNARD***



## **Members' visit to Hannover in September**

\*\* Having had a great visit from the Hannoverians in 2023, this year it is our turn to visit them, and as already advised, we will visit from September 19-24 – but there is nothing to stop people from lengthening their stay either before or after the long weekend's programme. The draft programme currently includes the following:

Visit to Wasserkunst at Herrenhausen Gardens, reception at the Rathaus along with Bristol's Ariel Rowing Club and Hannover's Linden Club, also Young Bristol; visits to World of Kitchen museum or the world-famous Continental tyre factory; a barbecue in the garden of Petra Pilger, secretary of our partner association; an all-day visit to the Steinhuder Meer (lake) with a trip on an old sailing boat, visit to weavers' and fishermen's museum and a linen manufacturing centre.

We will also have an all-day visit by train to Braunschweig, partner city of Bath, with guided tour. We plan a possible visit to the Landtag (regional parliament) and finally the usual convivial farewell dinner.



*Steinhuder Meer*



*Braunschweig*

We are excited by the new ideas which have come up this year and will be sending out more precise details later, along with travel suggestions, so that you can let us know if and how you plan to join us, and we will organise a meeting of the travellers beforehand if members would like this.

In the meantime, if you want to indicate interest already, please let Chair Ann Kennard know at [annjo.kennard@gmail.com](mailto:annjo.kennard@gmail.com).





***Bristol-Hannover Council aims to involve as many Bristolians as possible, young and old, in extending the ties which have already enriched the lives of so many people in both cities since 1947. Many exchanges which have been - and continue to be - supported by the Council, include:***

- \*\* 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***

