



# Bath-Braunschweig Twinning Association



No 21

Oct 2022

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## Monthly meetings

Until further notice society meetings will be held by Zoom monthly on Friday evenings, starting at 7.30 pm

The next meeting is on Friday 14 October 2022

to join contact: Martin Guest, Hon. Sec. BBTA  
[bbta18@hotmail.com](mailto:bbta18@hotmail.com) 07932 144136

links: [www.bath-braunschweigtwinningassociation.co.uk](http://www.bath-braunschweigtwinningassociation.co.uk)  
[www.deg-bsjimdo.com](http://www.deg-bsjimdo.com) (German English Society Braunschweig)

## In Memoriam

George Odam took over the musical links between Bath and Brunswick for 3 years from Gordon Phillips. It was part of Avon County music services then and Tim and Jo, George's children and many others were involved. At that time George led the Bath Saturday Orchestra, and took them to visit Brunswick several times, supported by many parents.

Later George also took some of his National Scouts and Guides Orchestra to visit Germany, and there were corresponding visits here from German groups.

Penny often went on these trips and made many good friends, some of whom are more like family now - they are still very much in touch. One of the first communications Penny had after George's sudden death was a card from the youngest of the German family. He had heard his mother crying on the phone, telling her sister the news, and he was very upset. "On no! Not George!"

Penny says that the close relationship with the Sieffert family has lasted for many years. "We have shared holidays both in the UK and in Germany and family friendships are ongoing. The Bath/Brunswick twinning group brought a wonderful extended family to us all.

Penny Odam

## Forthcoming events

The Lord Mayor's visit to Bath, due to take place on the weekend following the Queen's death, was understandably cancelled. However, it is hoped that this can be rescheduled before Christmas. We will keep members informed of any developments

6 Dec to 8 Dec 2022: [Christmas Market BBTA stall](#)

Members are very welcome to participate in these events. Please contact:

Martin Guest (Hon Sec): [bbta18@hotmail.com](mailto:bbta18@hotmail.com) or

Judy Spencer (Chair) tel: 01761 434702



Thanks to the developments made in online bridge, the tournaments between Bath and Brunswick players continue on a regular basis, and the mixed pairs events (German - British partnerships) have proved so popular that they have become an important part of our fixtures up until the end of 2022. In 2023 we hope that we will finally be able to get together in Brunswick and meet all our new friends in person.

Judy Spencer



Among other activities that it organises, the Bath German Society meets every Wednesday for German conversation between 12 and 2pm.

During the winter we normally meet at BRLSI. Sometimes the location varies because a room is not always available and we - often meet at the Hilton Hotel next to Waitrose.

In the summer we generally meet at the Holburne Museum garden café.

The regular members of the Wednesday meeting are of differing levels, and include many ex-teachers who naturally have a very good level of German, but also some of an intermediate or beginner level.

Please let us know if you would like to be included in the Stammtisch email list to be informed of any update of location. Our email address is: [bathgermansociety@gmail.com](mailto:bathgermansociety@gmail.com).

## A floating gin tasting



One of our most memorable events of the past few months was the invitation in July to join members of the Bristol-Hannover Council aboard the "Spirit of Niedersachsen". This is a small cutter, registered in Brunswick, which - after a lengthy journey across northern Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, the North Sea, the Thames and the Kennet and Avon Canal - was moored in Bath, before finally moving on to take part in the Bristol Harbour Festival. It was crewed by volunteers and was carrying a large barrel of Hannover Gin, which we were invited to sample. The journey was a fund-raising initiative to aid the Invictus Games and the German War Graves Commission, and to raise publicity for the events surrounding the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the twinning link between Bristol and Hanover



## Did you know ?

Bath U3A run beginners and intermediate courses in *German*. Find out more at the U3A 'Open Morning' at the Pavilion on 20 Oct or on line [u3ainbath.org.uk](http://u3ainbath.org.uk)

## HM Queen Elizabeth II

First there was shock, disbelief almost. Then sadness - realisation that the foundations of our society, our nation, our constitution had been rocked. Then, as the truth began to sink in, a wonderful outpouring of affection, respect, gratitude ... yes, even love.

What has given rise to such a crescendo of emotion that people will travel the length of the country, queue all through the night, just for a few moments in the presence of a coffin? The answer is, of course, obvious. It is Her Majesty's incomparable, unparalleled personal qualities, added to her unprecedented life of immense service to us.

The qualities are obvious and well-rehearsed: integrity, faithfulness, dignity, selflessness; but also a concern for other people, people of every conceivable walk of life, her ability to engage with them instantly and without any trace of condescension ... oh, and a wonderful sense of humour.

That we, the people of Britain and the Commonwealth, have been the beneficiaries of these qualities for a whole lifetime - three-score-years-and-ten - might account for the emotion and the desire to "pay our respects"; but I think there's more to it. I truly believe that the example of sheer goodness that Queen Elizabeth II radiated resonates with us because it reminds us, subconsciously possibly, of the best of which human beings are capable. Too many of those who claim positions of leadership in our society, whether it's in politics, in the media, the so-called "influencers", those who have a following ... too many appear not to embody all that is good and noble, generous, kind, and so on. But when we see someone who so patently does radiate these qualities, it strikes a deep chord within us, and we long to respond. It struck me that our late queen was the very model of what twinning is all about - respect for the other, generosity towards those who are different, an unselfish desire to befriend the stranger, an appreciation that all sorts and conditions of human beings are to be valued and appreciated.

The Queen had much to endure by way of loss and sadness; but she did not allow any disappointment to dampen her conviction that human beings are capable of the best as well as the worst; and it would be the most fitting tribute if we were all to adopt that aspiration for reconciliation between peoples, and peace and harmony across the whole world.

Jeremy Key-Pugh

## Belfast Marburg Group visits Bath

On 10<sup>th</sup> September members of BBTA and Bath German Society were delighted to welcome a group of former pupils of the Methodist College Belfast (which opened originally in 1868 for the sons of Methodist ministers) and of the Gesamtschule Kirchhain (situated near Marburg and now renamed the Alfred Wegener Schule). These pupils had first met on an exchange in 1966, but - after much research and hard work - had contacted each other again in 1996 and instituted a number of subsequent reunions in places such as Berlin, Dresden, London and Cambridge. We were honoured that they had chosen Bath and its countryside for this year's reunion, and had great fun in showing them the sights of Bath, including some that tourists normally don't see, and in watching the annual Jane Austen Parade.

It was a pleasure to meet so many people for whom UK-German friendship has become a way of life. My thanks to Michael for organising our part of the visit, and to Philippa and Daniel (who had formerly taught at Marburg University) for their help in guiding the guests round Bath.

The next reunion is already planned for Freiburg in 2024.





Our friends in the *Deutsch-Englische Gesellschaft* continue to hold regular online book group meetings, and this has become a friendly social gathering as well as a way of discovering all sorts of books and poems that we might not otherwise have read. The next work to be discussed is "The Dictionary of Lost Words" and anyone interested in joining us can contact Judy Spencer in the first instance. The meetings are held in English, but we also contribute to literary discussions in German, which are hosted by Bath German Society

## The BBTA - who are we?

**Our Aims:** 'The BBTA exists to encourage and support friendly relations between the people of our two cities, and in particular to encourage young people to make friends across borders. The BBTA also aims to inform our fellow citizens about events in Braunschweig and to involve them in related social activities.'

**How are we funded?** We receive a yearly grant from the Charter Trustees (who represent the local authority); our only other income is from membership subscriptions.

**How do we spend our funds?** By contributing to the costs of cultural and educational visits of groups from Bath to Braunschweig and vice versa. Recent examples are:

- **2018** a 4 week visit of 5 engineering students from the *HB Schule* in Braunschweig to Bath College. **2019** a 3 day visit of 3 scientists from Braunschweig to take part in an Environmental Forum in Bath. **2019** visits by *Bath Operatic and Dramatic Society* and *Uke Can't be Serious* to the *Kulturnacht* in Braunschweig

**What do members get for their yearly subscription?** An opportunity to participate in all the above activities - for only £10 (or £15 for a couple). There is also corporate membership for £30 p.a.