



Tonbridge & Malling  
**Heusenstamm Friendship Circle**



**NACHRICHTEN**

From the Secretary: Eileen Best, Flat 7, Shrublands Court, Mill Crescent, Tonbridge, TN9 1PH  
 Tel 01732-353937 email eileen.best@uwclub.net

ADMIN/LEGAL SERVICE

7 JAN 2014

January 2014

Liebe Freunde

First of all, may I wish you a very happy New Year, and I do hope you are not struggling with the aftermath of the Christmas floods.

I received a message from David Packer yesterday giving me the sad news that Eva Zeidler has died, and her funeral took place on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> January. David had been told at the Nikolausmarkt that she was gravely ill with cancer, so her death was not unexpected. A condolence card has been sent to her husband, and those who knew her will remember her with great affection.

While I am writing, may I remind you of our Social Evening on Saturday 25 January at 7.30pm in the lower church room of Tonbridge Parish Church. Dr John Ray will be speaking about World War One, to mark the centenary of its beginning. We will have the chance to see his fascinating memorabilia as well, and light refreshments will be served. The cost will be £5 per person at the door. Parking is permitted in the church car park when attending functions in church, or there is a public car park behind The Ivy House, or at the Castle, which are free of charge in the evening.

The Committee is meeting on January 14<sup>th</sup>, after which a more substantive Nachrichten will be published.

With all good wishes,

Eileen.



Tonbridge &amp; Malling

# Heusenstamm Friendship Circle



## NACHRICHTEN

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Tel 01732-353937 email eileen.best@uwclub.net

February 2014

Liebe Freunde

Our **Nikolausabend** was enjoyed by 51 people, including the Mayor and Mayoress, with excellent catering provided by the new ladies.

The **Nikolausmarkt** was also successful with a profit of €500, attended by six from Tonbridge including Cllr Howard & Jane Rogers.

### Social Evening, 25 January

Despite a freak storm in the afternoon, 27 people – including 6 non-members – braved the weather later and came to the Parish Church, where John Ray fascinated us all with his talk on World War One. Because his father took part in some battles in France, history came alive for us as he referred to personal incidents and stories. We were so grateful for his preparation on such an epic subject. Also, thank you to those who travelled from outside Tonbridge, even as far away as Maidstone, to be with us.

### AGM Dinner, Tuesday 4 March, 6.30 for 7 pm Rose & Crown Hotel, Tonbridge

Full details about the Dinner are attached. I hope you will find the menu attractive. Please send your cheque and completed form to me by 24 February at the latest, in order to book places. You will see that the price remains the same as last year. David and I have met with the Events Manager to make sure that all complaints from last year are addressed. We look forward to an enjoyable evening, and hope you will come.

Also attached are the Minutes of last year's AGM, an agenda and a form for the election of officers, all of whom are prepared to be re-elected.

We will be discussing ideas for a Summer Outing, as well as whether we should have our own Facebook page, and/or be on Twitter. If you are experienced in this area we would love to know. We would need someone to put regular information, pictures etc. on these sites if they were to be interesting and useful.

**Holiday in East Anglia** Plans are progressing, and if you have booked you will soon be receiving more information and a request for the balance of payment, which needs to be received by 30 April.

25 friends from Heusenstamm will be arriving on Thursday 12 June, and a Dinner will be held at The Vauxhall for them and for members who are not going on the trip, to give you a chance to meet them. Further details will be given at the AGM.

**Torbau Celebrations** Over the weekend 18-20 July the biggest celebrations ever in the history of Heusenstamm will take place, which you would be welcome to attend. More details will be given at the AGM.

**30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Twinning** This will be celebrated over the weekend 12-14 September and on Monday 15<sup>th</sup>, the actual anniversary. A civic visit will take place, and it is expected that we will host a Dinner for our German guests on the Friday evening. This weekend coincides with the *Heritage Weekend* when many local places of interest will be open and free: more details nearer the time.

**www.heusenstammfriendshipcircle.co.uk**  
Our website has recently been updated, so do look at it and tell your friends about it.

### Membership

We welcome Mrs Mandie Davis and Mrs Gillian Mohideen who have recently joined the Circle. We look forward to meeting them soon.

### Subscriptions

These became due on 1<sup>st</sup> January, and you will recall that it was decided at the 2013 AGM to make a modest increase, in light of the extra expenses we will incur this year with visitors from Heusenstamm in June and September.

The subscription is now **£5 per person**, (£10 per household/group) which is still very low in comparison with other societies. A payment slip is attached, unless you have already paid for 2014.



*Tonbridge & Malling*

## *Heusenstamm Friendship Circle*



The 29<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting will be held  
at The Rose & Crown Hotel, Tonbridge,  
on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2014,  
following the Annual Dinner.

### **A G E N D A**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 27<sup>th</sup> AGM held on 5th March 2013,  
already circulated.
3. Matters arising
4. Chairman's report
5. Treasurer's report
6. Peace Fund report
7. Election of Officers
8. Suggestions for future events
9. Any other business



Tonbridge & Malling

# Heusenstamm Friendship Circle



**MINUTES OF THE 28<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
 held at The Rose & Crown Hotel, Tonbridge,  
 on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2013

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Present: David Packer (Chairman), and 37 members, as well as three non-members.

The Chairman welcomed everyone. Unfortunately the Mayor and Mayoress were unable to come as both had colds, but we were pleased to welcome the Deputy Mayor, Howard Rogers, with his wife Jane in their places. We were also delighted to have with us Mary Coppin – a founder member of the Circle who had travelled from Romney Marsh to be with us. The Stewarts had visited Anna Adams that day; she was in good health and always pleased to see people, though her memory was very short-lived. Uli Höffken had sent good wishes from Heusenstamm.

We remembered our friend and member, Sir Brandon Gough, who had died in April 2012, as well as Enno Buss – Chairman of the Freundschaftskreis for 14 years – who had died soon after. Those who had been members of the Circle for a long time would remember Adolf Kessler, who was Bürgermeister in 1984 at the time of the signing of the Twinning Charter, who had also died. Letters and cards of condolence had been sent to Heusenstamm. Wolfgang Terpitz was still gravely ill and receiving chemotherapy in Würzburg, returning home in between his treatments.

1. **Apologies for absence:** received from Audrey Anstey, John & Fran Bennett, Uli Burchette, Jean Bezant, Alison Cook, Rod & Will Crittenden, Mike & Pat Dobson, Sarah Gough, Anthony & Annabelle Hayward, Tim & Christine Hill, Michael & Dorothea Holman, Susan Levett & David, Louis Nel, Maureen Stone, Richard & Carrie Walshaw and Norman Watson.

2. **Minutes of the 27<sup>th</sup> AGM held on 6 March 2012:** these were agreed and signed.  
 Proposed: Janice Browne, seconded: Shirley Pearce

3. **Matters arising** None.

4. **Chairman's Report**

The Chairman said that, as usual, he would review the activities since the previous AGM, look ahead to some of the main planned events for the future, and conclude by making some general points.

1.a) The annual schools' exchange took place between 23 March and 1 April when 25 boys from Judd visited Heusenstamm. Because 2012 marked the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the exchange, an enhanced programme included a visit to the ZDF TV studios and a bowling evening as well as a reception presided over by Herr Jakoby. DP expressed his thanks to Kit Denny for going as an extra teacher. The return visit to Tonbridge (24 boys) took place from 16 – 25 June and the Circle donated £500 from the Peace Fund to help with their programme. This included a Council reception at Judd School attended by our Mayor, Dave Davis, and a free tour of Tonbridge Castle. Gifts were exchanged. DP paid a special tribute to the two teachers principally involved, Karin Zwanziger at Judd and Yvonne Rübsamen, for all their hard work.

b) TGS, as reported in 2011, had dropped German for new entrants and was no longer taking part in the exchanges, and we were trying to find alternative ways of providing a link for the Gymnasium girls, including accommodation for those seeking work experience. DP was happy to say that Christine Hill had managed to make arrangements for two girls this year.

c) We had also received a setback from the Hayesbrook School, since the teacher who took the lead in the previous year's exchange with the Realschule, Ozlem Yaman, had left the school and returned to France. German was no longer being taught. DP's impression was, however, that the situation was fluid and could be reversed in the next academic year.

d) Progress was being made with a link between the Slade Primary School and a similar school in Heusenstamm, following the visit last March of Rosie Hippe. Meetings had been held between the teachers in the four possible schools in Heusenstamm and an invitation had been made to the Slade School to send a

teacher on an exploratory visit at Heusenstamm's expense. Mrs. Resch had selected a teacher who would be getting in touch with DP shortly.

e) Arrangements had been made for Councillor Vivian Branson to give a talk on Jane Austen in the new Museum in Heusenstamm (Haus der Stadtgeschichte) but this had to be cancelled because of her ill health. It was hoped she might be able to give her talk on some future occasion.

f) Unlike 2011 when a group from Tonbridge spent a delightful few days touring Mainfranken with our German friends, followed by the major festival to celebrate 800 years of Heusenstamm's history, 2012 proved to be much quieter. Even our planned outing to Dover Castle on 14 July (the same date as the English Picnic in Heusenstamm) had to be cancelled for lack of support, and the local events which we assumed would be taking place in Tonbridge to mark the Jubilee and the Olympic Games failed to materialise. We had thought of inviting Heusenstammers over to soak up the atmosphere, but instead we watched our TV screens separately. There was huge interest in Germany in these events. In November the annual talk by Peter Patridge in Heusenstamm was about the Royal Family – advertised as 'the Queen comes to Heusenstamm.'

g) In October we and TWTFa were invited by the Friends of Rheinbach, in Sevenoaks, to help provide accommodation for a large touring choir from Wuppertal. We did so and a splendid concert of mainly a *cappella* music was given in St. Nicholas' Church on 12<sup>th</sup>. DP expressed his gratitude to the Circle hosts – the Dearsleys, Sarah Gough, the Hendersons, the Hills, the Nevisons, the Walshaws, and to Dorothy. As a by-product there was now a close connection between the three twinning organisations in West Kent.

h) The Nikolausabend on 30 November was, once again, a most successful evening, with 48 attending, including our Mayor. Our thanks were due to Sarah Gough for the Glühwein and to Tim Hill for the quiz, and special thanks to Pat Nel for her customary excellent food. She would be passing on her responsibilities to others from next year, but DP was sure the same high standard would be maintained.

i) Robert Ford accompanied DP to the Nikolausmarkt (8/9 December). It was cold and snowy, which added to the atmosphere, and all the produce from our stall was sold. We were always outnumbered by the visitors from Heusenstamm's other twinned towns, so it would be nice if we could get a group together - perhaps into double figures - in future years.

j) The first event in 2013 was the talk on 26<sup>th</sup> January at the Parish Church, given by a new member, Charles Rosenmeyer, about his Jewish ancestry. It was both moving and thought-provoking. DP was pleased that Charles and Fiona were with us for this evening too.

2. a) The programme for the remainder of 2013 was still a work in progress although some events, such as the schools' exchanges, had been fixed. 22 boys from Judd would be visiting Heusenstamm between 15 - 23 March – our thanks again to Kit Denny for accompanying them - and a similar group would come to Tonbridge in June (20<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>).

b) In June the triennial concert would take place between the Evangelische Kantorei, for whom 2013 was their centenary year, and the Tonbridge Philharmonic Society. A group of 43 would visit Heusenstamm between 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> and we would welcome a similar number to Tonbridge between 20<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, with the concert on 22<sup>nd</sup>. We planned to take our German friends to Finchcocks on the Friday.

c) We planned also a summer outing, probably in July, taking into account members' views which we would welcome under item 9 of the agenda. In Heusenstamm, in addition to the English Picnic (date to be advised – to which we had a standing invitation) the Lydian Orchestra would be giving a concert on 22<sup>nd</sup> August, following one in Wiesbaden. This resulted from the informal West Kent twinning link referred to earlier.

3. Looking further ahead to 2014, members were asked to keep in mind three important events – the joint holiday to East Anglia in June, the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the twinning link in September (when it would be the turn of Tonbridge turn to take the lead), and the likelihood of a big festival in Heusenstamm, perhaps in July, to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building of the Torbau.

4. In conclusion DP said he would like to thank everyone for taking part in our various activities, and for their ideas and enthusiasm. We needed constantly to attract new members, and in addition to our website and display in the Angel Centre, we were making use of free commercial publications such as the 'Tonbridge Residents' Guide' and the 'Town Crier' and DP was in touch with the Tonbridge Youth Forum. He also thanked his hard-working colleagues on the Committee, especially the indefatigable Secretary Eileen, who had the honour last May of being invited to a Royal garden party at Buckingham Palace.

Members were then asked for their comments on the report.

Mary Coppin voiced her disappointment that TGS had dropped German and felt this was a very ill-considered decision – to which everyone agreed. She had been the architect of the school exchanges and it was a pity that girls were being deprived of these opportunities. England was the only country in Europe that was not teaching German. It was considered of great importance in France, Italy, Spain and Germany. Kit Denny had heard that Weald of Kent School was also ceasing to teach German.

DP replied that the Committee would strive to find another local School which could help at least to provide accommodation for girls wishing to come here from Heusenstamm for work experience.

John Sweetman wondered if Kent College Pembury might be able to help, but it was pointed out that they were corporate members of TWTFa. We would bear them in mind, however, likewise TWGGS.

Robert Ford, a member for 4 years, had paid his first visit to Heusenstamm for the Nikolausmarkt and wished to record his great enjoyment of the experience. He could not understand why more members were not taking advantage of the opportunity to visit – they did not know what they were missing! The hospitality was amazing and he recommended that everyone should try to go.

Janice Browne pointed out that the weather was sometimes cold and icy in December, which precluded some from making such a trip at that time of year. Perhaps we should try to arrange for members to visit in the summer – for the English Picnic weekend, or for part of the Kultur Sommer programme.

Ann Hughes (a member of TWTFa) suggested it might be possible (and more economic) to use a coach for a joint trip, which would enable TWTFa to visit their twin town of Wiesbaden, which was not far from Heusenstamm. There was a Weinfest in Wiesbaden in August which would be a good time for a visit.

Derek Still spoke about a recent walk he had taken in the Heusenstamm Friendship Wood at Haysden with his granddaughter. He had explained about its connection with our twin town, and on the nearby 'Friendship Bridge' she said that none of her friends at school had heard about Heusenstamm, and suggested that they should get a boy and a girl at either end of the bridge with a German and English flag, and bring them together in the middle for a photograph, which might be put in the Courier as publicity for twinning. This was received with great enthusiasm by the meeting.

The Chairman's Report was accepted on a proposal by Nanette Gate, seconded by Mary Coppin

#### **5. Treasurer's Report**

Our accounts continued to show a healthy balance at the end of the year: we had started with £5,056.30 and finished with £5,953.98, a surplus of £897.68. The AGM Dinner had made a loss of £48 due to the three guests from Germany, and one late cancellation. Membership was stable at around 70 households. Subscriptions were down in 2012 but this was due to a significant number being paid in advance in the previous year. The sum of £60 was due as an annual charge for the web design, but this had not yet been requested.

We had again benefited from receiving half the profit from the English stall at the Nikolausmarkt in Heusenstamm (£607.45), for which we were very grateful. Our own events were largely self-financing; profits had been made on the January Social and on the Nikolausabend. Administration costs had been lower at £164.26, helped by the increasing use of e-mail to send newsletters and other information to members. Bank interest remained very low.

The Accounts were accepted on a proposal by Chris Smart, seconded by Derek Still.

Our thanks were due to Robin Apps, our independent examiner, and it was hoped that he would continue to act for us. This was approved by the meeting.

#### **6. Review of Subscriptions**

JC reminded the meeting that next year there would be extra expenses for the events already mentioned in the Chairman's report. Though our finances were in good shape, the profit from the Nikolausmarkt was beginning to decline, and we needed to have sufficient funds for unexpected administration costs. Moreover we would want to be generous to our Heusenstamm friends when they visited us, with lunches and trips etc. Since 1995 the subscription had remained at £5 per household. It was therefore recommended that from January 2014 it should be set at £5 per person which would mean that a couple, family or corporate members would pay £10, and a single member £5. This was agreed by the meeting.

**Joint Holiday: 2014** JC also reported on this. A small group consisting of himself, Susan Levett and Sarah Gough were planning a trip to East Anglia, following our successful visit to Stratford via Oxford in 2008. Crusader Holidays organised that trip for us, and although they had now been absorbed into the Motts Travel Group they would again be organising hotel accommodation and transport for us. There were many possible places to visit, but with a limited time available good choices would have to be made. The group from Heusenstamm would arrive on the Thursday afternoon, and the holiday would begin on Friday morning, returning on the Monday. The most likely dates were 12-16 June.

## **7. Peace Fund Report**

PN reported that we had been very pleased to use the Peace Fund in 2012 to assist with twinning visits made by Judd School. The only income reflected in the 2012 year was £5.55 which was the interest earned on our Deposit Account as interest continued to remain low and payments of £500.00 were made to Judd School for the year. As the Balance Sheet showed, we started the year with £8,220.38 and after the addition of interest and deduction of payments the total Fund on hand at 31 December 2012 was £7,725.93.

We were very pleased that the school exchange visits continued to establish contacts between the students of Heusenstamm and Tonbridge (although we recognised there would be difficulties ahead in this regard). We continued to encourage the possibility of a Junior School link between Slade School and another school in Heusenstamm (through Rosie Hippe), but the wheels were turning slowly.

DP mentioned that Judd School might need around £180 for the air fare of the extra member of staff needed for the exchange trip to Heusenstamm in March.

Accepted on a Proposal by Marjorie Moffat, seconded by Margaret Bolt.

## **7. Election of Officers**

Derek Still took the chair for this part of the meeting, as Vice Chairman of the Council's Twinning Committee. He asked for the re-election *en bloc* of the current officers and committee members, and this was agreed by the meeting.

DP thanked everyone for their confidence in the committee, which tried always to represent the best interests of all members. He wanted to let members know that both he and Eileen Best would like to retire from office in the near future. Eileen was willing to continue as secretary for a maximum of three more years, by which time she would have served in this capacity for 20 years.

## **8. Future Events**

DP outlined what the Committee believed to be the basic ingredients for a successful outing – it should last all day, it should be on a Saturday (so that working members and families could take part), it should go somewhere off the beaten track, but not too far (since car-sharing would normally be the means of transport though a minibus could be hired if numbers permitted). A range of activities (i.e. steam railway with cream tea) might prove popular. The outing should take place in the summer, especially if weather-dependent. Other suggestions already received from members included a cream tea in a nice garden, and a fish 'n chip supper (which could be had on the Spa Valley steam train to Groombridge). It could be that the lack of interest in last year's July outing to Dover Castle was because of its familiarity and distance from Tonbridge.

The subject was then opened to the meeting for discussion.

**Robert Ford** suggested taking the train from Tenterden to Bodiam Castle.

**Gerti O'Connor** suggested taking advantage of the Friendship Wood, maybe for a picnic.

DP reminded us that the past we had taken a boat ride from the Watergate to Haysden Park for a picnic.

**John Sweetman** suggested that Saturday was not necessarily the best day and a weekday might better, as families often visited with grandchildren on a Saturday.

Another suggestion was a trip on the catamaran 'Kentish Lady' which sailed from Maidstone for one hour or 3 hour cruises including lunch, with a bar on board. There was also the Museum of Rural Life in Maidstone which could be visited too. **Ann Hughes** said that TWTFa had enjoyed a similar cruise from Maidstone to Allington Lock.

DP mentioned that if National Trust or English Heritage properties were visited, for those who were members this reduced the cost of such outings. He concluded by saying that the Committee would bear these suggestions in mind and come up with proposals at the next meeting in April.

## **9. Any other Business**

[a] DP reported that the AGM in Heusenstamm would take place on 14 March, at which biennial elections would take place. The TWTFa AGM would be held on 16 March.

[b] An Easter choral concert would be given by TPS in Tonbridge School Chapel on 6 April.

[c] A tourist booklet had been published by the Council in Heusenstamm with information about local sites of interest, and it included a mention of the memorial to the Lancaster bomber crew who crashed in 1944, five of whom died. Bill Carman, one of two survivors, had visited the site but had sadly died the year following, on the very day on which the memorial was unveiled.

Thanks were expressed to the staff who had looked after us at Dinner, and a basket was passed round for people to give a tip if they wished.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.55 pm.



Tonbridge &amp; Malling

# Heusenstamm Friendship Circle



## NACHRICHTEN

From the Secretary: Eileen Best, Flat 7, Shrublands Court, Mill Crescent, Tonbridge, TN9 1PH  
Tel 01732-353937 email eileen.best@uwclub.net

April 2014

Liebe Freunde

Following a very enjoyable Dinner and a well-attended AGM, there are a number of matters to report. The Minutes are attached – please read them to save my having to repeat information that is already in your hands!

30 boys from Judd went to Heusenstamm from 28 March to 5 April – the largest number ever – most encouraging! The return visit is from 4 to 12 July when 19 girls and 11 boys will come to Tonbridge. We are grateful to Karin Zwanziger at Judd for her hard work in organising these exchanges.

### FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE EVENTS:

**Thursday 12 June:** Members who are not taking part in the joint weekend trip to East Anglia are invited to **Dinner at The Vauxhall Inn** at 6.30 pm, in order to meet the group of 26 who will have just arrived from Heusenstamm. **Please let David know if you would like to come – 01892 823884 or davide.packer@virgin.net**

Those coming from **Heusenstamm:** Rosie Hippe, Sigrid & Janna Rebell, Uli Höffken, Christa Buss, Barbara & Erik v Knorre, Ulrike v Knorre, Heidi Henschel & Helmut Rehm, Vera Terpitz, Christel Matischak, Christine Wangerowski, Ute & Kurt Strubel-Heubeck, Inge & Georg Ubenauf, Christel Rukwied, Barbara & Hans-Otto Ohlig, Inge Sibylle Löhlein, Edith Kletsch, Edith Conrad, Marianne Hansel.

**Tonbridge** members: James & Alison Cook, Marjorie & Kenneth Stewart, Lesley Gregory, Jean & John Sweetman, Barbara Harrington, Nanette Gate, Susan Levett & David Walsh, John & Fran Bennett, Shirley Pearce, Anne Metherell, Fiona Marwood, David & Dorothy Packer, Eileen Best.

### Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July: Summer Outing:

It has been agreed to visit **Bateman's**, the home of Rudyard Kipling in Burwash, East Sussex (TN19 7DS). Free for National Trust members. The house opens at 11.00; the gardens, shop and restaurant 10.00. Lunches and cream teas are available. There is also a working water mill which can be seen in action, where flour can be bought.

If you would like to come, please let David or Eileen know and we will arrange car-sharing, and a time to meet there.

**18-20 July: Torbau Celebrations.** Members would be welcome in Heusenstamm to enjoy the events taking place over this weekend, which will be spectacular! It is suggested that you contact your friends in Heusenstamm direct, or David could give you advice on travelling and arranging your own accommodation. See all about it on the Heusenstamm website and their Facebook page.

**5<sup>th</sup> September in Heusenstamm:** The English Picnic, to which members are always welcome.

**12-15 September: 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Twinning**  
More information will be available nearer the time, but please keep this weekend free so that you can enjoy the Dragon Boat Races on the Medway in Tonbridge on Sunday – part of the Mediaeval Fair – and the joint Band Concert at Big School on Sunday evening. We will be hosting a Dinner for the civic dignitaries from Heusenstamm sometime during the week-end to which members will be very welcome.

**28<sup>th</sup> November:** Our Nikolausabend at St John's Church Hall, Hildenborough.

**6-7 December:** Nikolausmarkt in Heusenstamm.

### OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

#### 21 June: Tonbridge Philharmonic:

'Last Night of the Proms' style concert, 7.30 p.m. at St Stephen's Church.

To include *Eric Coates' Dam Busters March, Sea Shanties, Jerusalem, Elgar' Pomp & Circumstance March, and other light-hearted pieces for choir and orchestra.*

Tickets: Adult £15, Senior £12, Student £7 from Eileen or David, or other TPS members.

As this will be the last concert with Robin Morrish as Conductor, Dr Eberhard & Dr Mechtild Frömter and Georg & Eva Schumann will be attending on behalf of the Evangelische Kantorei.

**3 July:** Talk on Jane Austen's 'Mansfield Park' by Jill Webster, at Tonbridge Library 7-9.00 p.m.





Tonbridge & Malling

# Heusenstamm Friendship Circle



**MINUTES OF THE 29<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
held at The Rose & Crown Hotel, Tonbridge,  
on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

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Present: David Packer (Chairman) and 40 members, as well as three non-members.

The Chairman welcomed everyone, including Mike Dobson who joined us after the Dinner. The attendance of 43 was the second highest since 2009, and was a good indication of the continued enthusiastic interest in twinning. Uli Höffken sent his best wishes. Anna Adams, now 92, was quite well but had little short-term memory.

We were reminded of three friends who had died during the past year –

**30 June 2013: Wolfgang Terpitz**, Chairman of the Evangelische Kantorei, after a long struggle against cancer. Peter Westley (chairman of Tonbridge Philharmonic) and David Packer had attended his funeral.  
**30 July 2013: Maureen Stone**, an enthusiastic member of the Circle, who had been unwell for some time.  
**30 December 2013: Eva Zeidler**, a talented actress, poet and lady of culture, who had been known and loved by us for many years.

We missed all three, and were grateful for their friendship.

**1. Apologies for absence:** received from Audrey Anstey, Mary Coppin, Sarah Gough, Lesley Gregory, Michael and Dorothea Holman, Chris and Jenny Hunt, Susan Levett & David Walsh, Fiona Marwood, Jean Mills, Louis & Pat Nel, Suzannah Niklas, John & Jean Sweetman, Tim & Christine Youngman.

**2. Minutes of the 28<sup>th</sup> AGM held on 5 March 2013:**

These were agreed, and signed on a proposal by Janice Browne, seconded by Sue Murray.

**3. Matters arising** None.

**4. Chairman's Report**

1. The Chairman said that, as usual, he would review the activities since the previous AGM, look ahead to some of the main planned events for the future, and conclude by making some general points, starting with the schools.

a) The annual schools' exchange took place between 15 and 23 March when 22 boys from Judd visited Heusenstamm. Thanks were expressed to Kit Denny for once again going as an extra teacher. The Circle donated £178 from the Peace Fund to help with the costs. The return visit to Tonbridge (also 22 students, including girls) took place from 20 – 29 June. There was a Council reception hosted by our Mayor, on 24 June.

b) TGS as reported last year, having dropped German for new entrants, no longer took part in the exchanges, and we were trying to find alternative ways of providing a link for the Gymnasium girls, including accommodation for those seeking work experience. Christine Hill had been most helpful in this regard and DP was most grateful to her.

c) Unfortunately German was no longer taught at the Hayesbrook School, and whilst our understanding was that this decision would be reviewed annually and therefore could change, there was no prospect of this until the 2014/15 academic year at the earliest.

d) Progress was being made with a link between the Slade Primary School and a similar junior school in Heusenstamm, following the visit in March 2012 of Rosie Hippe. Meetings had been held between the teachers in the four possible schools in Heusenstamm, and the Slade School had been invited to send a teacher on an exploratory visit at Heusenstamm's expense in the spring. The teacher selected by Mrs

Resch had unfortunately left, but another one had been nominated who may visit Heusenstamm in June 2014. DP was hoping to get some activities in motion (artwork, use of IT and social media) in the meanwhile.

e) In June the triennial joint concerts between the Evangelische Kantorei and Tonbridge Philharmonic took place. 2013 was extra special because it was the Kantorei's centenary. The concert in Heusenstamm was on 9 June – 43 went over from Tonbridge – and the concert in Tonbridge was on 22 June, augmented by 34 members of the Kantorei. This was followed by a reception, attended by our Mayor and Mayoress, at which gifts were exchanged. A very pleasant visit to Finchcocks was included in the weekend. We were very grateful to the TPS for taking part in these exchanges, which dated back to 1989. The Circle contributed £250 towards the costs of the reception in the knowledge that Council money was tight, though they helpfully printed the programmes and some of the scores.

f) The summer outing (27 July) was a very pleasant visit to Pashley Manor Gardens on a lovely summer's day. It was nice to meet some new members and friends of members.

g) On the same day the English Picnic in Heusenstamm, to which members are always warmly invited, took place.

h) The Circle helped the Lydian Orchestra, based in Sevenoaks for musicians aged 14-25, to perform in Heusenstamm on 22 August, the day after a concert in Wiesbaden. This initiative was another example of the value of the informal connection that we had with TWTFa, and the Friends of Rheinbach, in Sevenoaks, following the successful visit of the Wuppertal choir in 2012.

i) On 26<sup>th</sup> October Cllr. Vivian Branson was invited to Heusenstamm to give a talk on Jane Austen. Dressed in period costume, she charmed the Heusenstammers, and was surprised at how much was already known about the author. Her visit generated a good deal of very helpful publicity for twinning. She had now joined the Circle.

j) DP said that those who attended the Nikolausabend on 29 November, and 51 people did, would agree, he felt sure, that the high standards of catering we had come to expect from Pat Nel were continued by her successors, Marika Dodd and Chandra Standen. Even without Tim Hill's quiz it was, once again, a most successful evening, and our thanks were due to Dorothy for the Glühwein, to all of those who helped set up the hall, and to the generosity of those who brought raffle prizes. The Committee believed that, even though the extra costs of the labour involved in buying and preparing the food beforehand now have to be paid for, we should continue with the new arrangements in the future, increasing the ticket prices as necessary.

k) A group of 6 - Howard and Jane Rogers, Lyndsey Bennett, two of her Sevenoaks & Tonbridge Concert Band friends, and DP – visited Heusenstamm for the Nikolausmarkt (7/8 December). The mild and dry weather helped to ensure that the market was very busy. All of the goods were sold on the British stall, and our 50% share of the profit was £416.90. Howard and Jane were given a comprehensive tour of Heusenstamm. It was particularly helpful of Lyndsey to go since she had now taken over from Janet Saunders as the main TMBC contact for twinning.

l) The first social event of 2014 was Dr. John Ray's informative and thought-provoking talk on World War 1, at Tonbridge Parish Church on 25 January, attended by 27 members and non-members.

2. Looking ahead, we were still working on the programme for the remainder of 2014, but some important events, such as the schools' exchanges, had been fixed, and July and September would be busy months with the Torbau celebrations in Heusenstamm and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of twinning in Tonbridge. We were thinking of a date in July for a summer outing.

a) The biggest ever Judd exchange would take place between 28<sup>th</sup> March and 5<sup>th</sup> April when 30 boys would go to Heusenstamm. 11 German boys and 19 girls would come to Tonbridge between 4<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> July. The Chairman had nothing but praise for Karin Zwanziger at Judd and her counterpart Yvonne Rübsamen at the Gymnasium, for the exemplary way in which these exchanges were organised, despite the difficulties incurred by Tonbridge Grammar School's decision to drop German.

b) In June (12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>) the joint coach holiday to East Anglia was due to take place. 27 were coming from Heusenstamm to join 21 from Tonbridge. There would be a dinner at the Vauxhall Inn on the evening of their arrival (12<sup>th</sup> June), to which members who were not going on the holiday would be welcome.

c) The climax of the Torbau celebrations in Heusenstamm would be from 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> July when they would celebrate the stay of Kaiser Franz 1 with his sons and retinue, for the coronation ceremony in Frankfurt in 1764, following which the Torbau was built. There would be an open air concert, a spectacular theatrical

event and a final closing ceremony. An official invitation had been sent to our Mayor. In addition Circle members would be made most welcome, and it was suggested that people get in touch with their friends if they wished to go. Should the numbers warrant it, a group flight could be arranged.

d) Also in July we had arranged with TWTFa for a quartet and quintet formed from the Wiesbaden Symphonic Brass Ensemble, to perform in three rest homes in Tonbridge (High Hilden, where Anna was a resident), Town Lock and Mary Magdalene House. The dates were 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

e) 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Twinning. These celebrations, led by the Council, would take place between 12<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> September, the Heritage Open Days weekend. A delegation from Heusenstamm was being formally invited, to arrive on 12<sup>th</sup>, and they would stay at the Rose & Crown Hotel. A group of musicians from the Stadtkapelle would also be in Tonbridge and they would join forces with the Sevenoaks & Tonbridge Concert Band. Details of the programme were still being worked out between the Council and the Circle, but would include visits to Heritage sites such as Hadlow Tower. A fish and chip supper combined with a musical social evening was also being considered. Involvement by Circle members would be welcomed.

3. In conclusion, the Chairman said he would like to thank everyone for taking part in our various activities, and for their ideas and enthusiasm. We needed constantly to attract new members, and in addition to our website and display in the Angel Centre, we had now set up a Facebook Page, with the particular help of Suzannah Niklas. In addition, DP intended to get in touch with Dillon Lancaster, the new Chairman of the Tonbridge Youth Forum. He also wished to thank his hard-working colleagues on the Committee, especially their indefatigable Secretary, Eileen.

4. The Chairman's final comment concerned 2014. For the next four years the centenary of World War 1 would, understandably, dominate the media, and Germany and the Germans would be shown in a negative light. We should therefore take the opportunity to demonstrate that German society had been transformed since then and that goodwill between ordinary people had not only been restored but that deep, lasting friendships had been established. Twinning had played, and continued to play, an important role in this – you could not be closer than a twin.

Comments were then invited from those present, but there were none. The Chairman's report was therefore accepted on a proposal by James Cook, seconded by Carrie Walshaw.

## **5. Treasurer's Report**

James Cook reported that the surplus for the year 2013 (£189.46) was substantially less than 2012 (£898.00), but assured the meeting that this was not a cause for concern. The reasons for this fall were due to:

[a] our share of the profits from the Heusenstamm Nikolausmarkt being lower in 2013 (£338), against £608 in 2012;

[b] a loss of £115 on the Nikolausabend in 2013, due to the fact that Pat Nel had retired after ten years of voluntarily providing and preparing the food at cost, which meant we had to pay two ladies, who were not Circle members, to do the catering.

[c] a donation of £250 to Tonbridge Philharmonic Society in June, towards the provision of a reception for the Evangelische Kantorei following the joint concert.

After taking these special items into account there was no substantial difference from 2013.

The Balance Sheet showed that we were holding £2,400 on account – deposits received for the joint holiday in June 2014 – and we had paid a deposit to Crusader Holidays of £2,500. We were not a profit-making Society, and the increase in annual subscriptions this year should help our funds to increase.

DP pointed out that there would be extra expenses in providing a Dinner for those arriving from Heusenstamm on 12 June, as well as during the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Twinning in September when a civic visit would take place. However our income would be boosted by the increase in subscriptions from 1st January 2104.

Anthony Hayward asked that thanks be given to Pat Nel from this meeting for her valuable contribution to the Nikolausabend over so many years.

There being no further comments, the Treasurer's Report was accepted on a proposal by Wil Crittenden, seconded by Derek Still.

Our thanks to Robin Apps were recorded, and it was hoped that he would be prepared to act as our independent examiner for the coming year.

Membership remained stable, with a total of 69 households and two groups (The Table Tennis Club and Sevenoaks & Tonbridge Concert Band).

## **6. Peace Fund Report**

In the absence of Pat Nel, her report was read by the Secretary.

'We had again been very pleased to use the Peace Fund in 2013 to assist with twinning visits made by The Judd School.

The only income reflect in the 2013 year was £5.24 which was the interest earned on our Deposit Account, as interest continued to remain low, and a payment of £178.00 had been made to The Judd School for the year which covered an air fare for Kit Denny to accompany the exchange visit, as an extra staff member was needed.

As seen from the Balance Sheet, we had started the year with £7,725.93 and after the addition of interest and deduction of payments, the total Fund on hand at 31 December 2013 was £7,553.17

We were very pleased that the school exchange visits continued to establish contacts between the students of Heusenstamm and Tonbridge (although there had been difficulties) and that the Peace Fund was being used for the purpose for which it had been set up.

We continued to encourage the possibility of a Junior School link between Slade School and another school in Heusenstamm (through Rosie Hippe), but the wheels were turning slowly. The staff member appointed to deal with this at Slade had left the school, but someone else had been appointed and DP hoped to make contact with her soon.'

This report was accepted on a proposal by Derek Payne, seconded by Claire Browne.

## **7. Election of Officers**

Mike Dobson, Chairman of the Council's Twinning Committee, took the chair for this part of the meeting, apologising for his late arrival, due to his being at a meeting at The Judd School – which was not inappropriate to mention! He said it was wonderful to see all the friends of Heusenstamm present, and that *no-one knew better than he how much this group made the Twinning so successful.*

Sadly, he had two further deaths in Heusenstamm to report – Frau Ilse Kessler, widow of Herr Adolf Kessler, who was Bürgermeister in 1984 and came to Tonbridge when the Twinning Charter was signed; and the mother of Peter Jakoby, the current Bürgermeister. He had been in touch with Peter Jakoby.

He asked for the re-election *en bloc* of the current officers and committee members, and this was agreed on a proposal by Kit Denny, seconded by Derek Payne.

DP thanked all the committee members for their continued hard work, but he would like to encourage all members to consider coming on to the Committee. We could always do with fresh ideas. As far as he and EB were concerned, they had come into their posts in 1996 and would need to step down in the not too distant future!

## **8. Future Events**

DP outlined the basis on which our annual Outings were chosen: it seemed that members liked to go somewhere off the beaten track, accessible and not too far away. Whether a Saturday was better than a weekday was another matter for consideration. The Committee had made the following suggestions for 2014 – [a] Lullingstone Roman Villa, near Eynsford; [b] Scotney Castle, near Lamberhurst; [c] the Bluebell Line; [d] Bateman's at Burwash, home of Rudyard Kipling. Dates in mind were Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> or Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> July. At their next meeting, the committee would make a decision and publish details in the Nachrichten.

The members were asked whether a week day or a Saturday was preferred but there was no clear majority for either. The date would have to be considered carefully because of the East Anglia holiday in June and the Torbau celebrations in July.

## **9. Any Other Business**

**a. Facebook Page.** Our new Facebook page was projected on a screen (thanks to Vivian Branson's help) for all to see, and members who were able to go online were encouraged to use this as another way of keeping in touch with events both here and in Heusenstamm. Individual comments could be added, but if they had any news or photos they wished to add this could only be done via Suzannah Niklas or Eileen Best, who were the Administrators. Members were also asked to let others know about its existence – especially young people who were avid users of social media. The main purpose of the Facebook page, which was free, was to attract young people to twinning.

**b. Lyndsey Bennett** informed members of a joint concert to be given by 20 members of the Stadtkapelle and the S & T Concert Band, at Judd on 14 September. It was hoped that members of the two Bands would also be taking part in the Dragon Boat races during that weekend at Bewl Water, Lamberhurst. She urged friends to come and support this fun event.

**c. Derek Still**, Chairman of the British Legion, also encouraged members to join in their activities. For instance he suggested that Herr Jakoby be invited to the Festival of Remembrance in November to show our solidarity with our friends in Heusenstamm. The Chairman said he very much agreed. This was in line with his comment in para 4 above. The deep friendship which now existed between so many ordinary people in our two countries could be seen as a vindication of the sacrifices made in World War 1.

**Janice Browne** also reminded the meeting that by September when we celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our twinning, the Memorial Gardens would have been re-furbished, and she suggested that the Bürgermeister be invited to attend the opening.

The Chairman drew the meeting's attention to the TWTFAGM on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, the TPS concert (St John Passion) on 29<sup>th</sup> March, an Exhibition on Youth and Remembrance at Tonbridge Castle (April 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>) and a talk on Mansfield Park in Tonbridge Library on 3 July.

Thanks were expressed to Helen Shaxon and the staff who had looked after us so well at Dinner (Julian the barman, Joanna and Jess, and Cloin the chef). A basket was passed round for tips.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.45 pm.