

Guildford-Freiburg Association

NEWSLETTER



Looking back over the past year of twinning

The chairman of the Guildford Freiburg Association, Mrs Mary Lloyd-Jones gives a summary of the past year's activities.

This has been a quiet year after the excitement of the millennium and the 21st anniversary of the twinning between Guildford and Freiburg. No civic visits by council delegations have taken place this year. In October the association hosted a successful social evening in the Guildhall at which Dr Peter Slade showed a selection of his excellent slides of Freiburg to an appreciative audience. That month also saw a visit to Guildford by His Excellency the German Ambassador, Dr H.F Von Ploetz. During the day he attended a reception in the Guildhall, visited Guildford College and several local schools and businesses. In the evening the University of Surrey hosted a forum at which the Ambassador gave an address entitled "Britain, Germany and Europe: what counts in the future?" During the summer about 30

members of various churches and denominations in Freiburg visited Guildford, staying with host families from different congregations in the town

In January the association hosted the usual New Year party in the Guildhall, and in May we held a very enjoyable Spring Dinner at La Pergola Restaurant at the Clavadel Hotel - 34 members attended. The Spring Dinner is becoming an annual event and seems very popular.

One of our members, Janet Russell, who until her recent retirement, was deputy editor of the Surrey Advertiser, took part in a sponsored climb of Mount Kilimanjaro in East Africa, in aid of the Abracadabra Appeal of the Royal Surrey County Hospital.

The association was happy to sponsor her in this brave venture in gratitude for her help with our newsletter.

Parties of students from the Royal Grammar School and George Abbot school visited Freiburg during the year.

On a sad note, my vice-chairman, Honorary Alderman Douglas May, is

stepping down

because of ill health.

I would like to thank him for all his help and support to me and the association generally. He will remain on the committee for another year.

I shall be writing to Guildford's new Member of Parliament, Ms Sue Doughty, to invite her to become our patron.

It was hoped that artistes from Freiburg would have taken part in the International Music Festival. They were booked but cancelled on the day the programmes were printed - a great disappointment to us all.

Finally, my thanks to my committee for their invaluable help and enthusiasm throughout the year.



Our chairman
Hon Alderman Mary
Lloyd-Jones

Twinning candles

An unusual gift is now available from the Guildford Tourist Office in Tunsgate - candles bearing the coats of arms of Guildford and Freiburg

Freiburg – “green”

by Peter Slade, GFA committee member and chairman of the Guildford Environmental Forum



Freiburg Münsterplatz: The market place in the shadow of the cathedral

Who's who in the Guildford Freiburg Association

Life patron: Stanley Roberts OBE
President: The Mayor of Guildford
Chairman: Hon Alderman Mary Lloyd-Jones.
Secretary: Kathy Atkins
Membership secretary: Sarah Smith
Treasurer: Andrew Hodges

If you would like further details about the GFA please telephone Mrs Smith on 01483 560712 or Mrs Atkins on 01483 811005

Most members of the Guildford-Freiburg Association will know that our delightful twin is the "capital of the Black Forest". Perhaps fewer know that it is also regarded by many as Germany's "green" capital.

For the last 25 years or so Freiburg City Council has had a deliberate policy of doing as much as possible to improve the city's environment.

The most obvious effect seen by visitors is the complete exclusion of cars and trucks from the city centre, day and night, except for deliveries. However, trams and buses run through the town centre and pedestrians happily share the streets with them and with large numbers of cyclists of all ages.

As often happens, when pedestrianisation was first proposed the town's traders protested that it would mean the "ruin of Freiburg": now they enthusiastically support it and nobody would dream of now proposing that cars should again be allowed to enter the city centre.

The public transport system is superb, convenient and a pleasure to use and is fully integrated over an area 60 km across.

The buses and trams are run by the city council and are heavily subsidised (using profits from the city-owned gas and electricity companies) which means that fares are low. Freiburgers of all ages and social classes use public transport and most live only a few minutes walk from a bus or tram stop.

Buses and trams leaving the town centre are full of people until 11 pm or later – no sign of the "deadness" at night which is sometimes alleged to occur when vehicles are excluded from town centres. To add to all this there is a 400 km network of bicycle paths in the Freiburg area and three quarters of roads are paralleled by cycle paths. Vehicle speeds are restricted to 20 mph in all residential areas.

But Freiburg's environmental achievements are not limited to developing a rational transport system.

Some examples:

□ The Freiburg Energy & Water Company (owned by the city) makes no basic charge for electricity: there is a scale of charges which means that the less that is used, the lower the cost per unit

Germany's capital

- As in all German cities there is a high level of recycling.
- The city council has conducted a successful campaign for many years to reduce energy consumption in the city
- It has also stimulated research and business activities based on environmental and solar power is being introduced. For example municipal swimming pools are heated by solar power
- There are more than 60 environment-related organisations in the city.

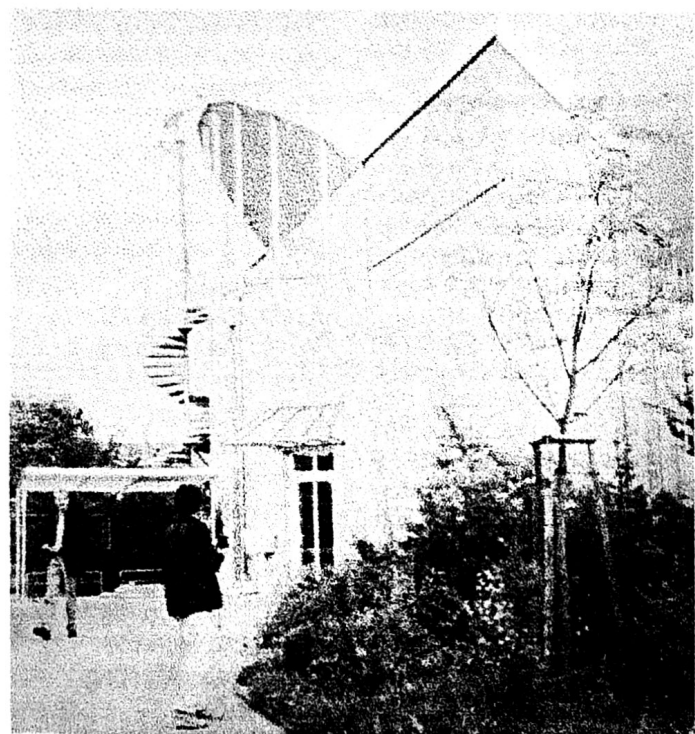
One of the aims of town-twinning should surely be to learn from each other's experiences and we in Guildford could emulate some of Freiburg's environmental achievements. We could co-operate on suitable projects and grants are available from the European Union to facilitate this. In fact at the time of writing (early May 2001) Guildford Borough Council is looking into the possibility of a joint EU-funded project with Freiburg on the introduction of solar energy.

I hope that this type of co-operation can be developed. Of course there are many differences between Guildford and Freiburg - not least the fact that Germany's decentralised system of government means that Freiburg has much more of its destiny in its own control and can decide its own policies on key issues such as transport, energy use and subsidies.

But there are also similarities with implications for the achievement of similar environmental goals. Both are beautiful towns surrounded by delightful countryside, neither town has a legacy of heavy industry, both are regional shopping centres and magnets for commercial activities and both have a high quality of life with a wealth of cultural activities and the intellectual stimulus that should come from being university towns.



Look no traffic: Freiburg's traffic-free city centre, but mind the trams!



Environmentally friendly: A zero-energy house

Useful websites for more information
on Freiburg

www.freiburg-online.com

www.sbo.de/e/freiburg

Successful visit by Freiburg churches to Guildford

by Rev Stanley Hemming-Clark

The link between our two communities was strengthened by the church visit from Freiburg to Guildford from June 2 to June 10, 2000. This was sponsored by Churches Together in Guildford and organised by a representative committee.

Twenty-seven people, of a wide age range from several Freiburg Churches, took part, staying with Guildford host families.

The theme of the visit was education. A day at the University and Cathedral included a presentation on the University, a cathedral tour and a discussion on adult education.

Several meetings at the local churches were held, for both meals and socialising and learning about various

educational programmes.

There was a civic reception at the Guildhall, a conducted walk around Guildford, a rose planting at St Nicolas and a slide presentation to illustrate 2,000 years of church history in stained glass.

A coach visit was made to Salisbury Cathedral, with Stonehenge on the way. On Sunday visitors joined in Guildford Church Worship with their host families. There was some time free for individual interests; some paid visits to local schools.

This full and rewarding programme helped to renew old friendships and make new ones. It is hoped to make a return visit to Freiburg in 2002.

Keeping in touch over the airwaves

GDRS

For more than twenty years member of the Guildford Radio

Society and the members of the Freiburg radio have met on air every Thursday.

The leading light in Freiburg has been Erich Groth who made the first contact all those years ago. This resulted in a close relationship between us, some individual members have visited Erich Groth and his wife Helga in Freiburg and a party of us spent 5 days in Freiburg in 1997.

Erich is now 81 years of age, a retired accountant and a keen gardener. We decided to ask Erich if he would like to contribute a piece for the news letter, the following is the result presented to you exactly as Erich has written it, we hope you will enjoy reading it and be as touched by it as we were.

Roy Jones,
Radio call sign GOINX,
Secretary, GDRS

What is Life?

Life is not only learning, studying, working and loving. Most people developed a hobby and are happy with it throughout their life.

Nowadays many people are joining groups of partnerships between twinned cities of foreign countries. Therefore it is much easier now to become acquainted with life in other parts of the world e.g. Freiburg/Guildford.

When I was young, it was very difficult to contact people in other countries and develop international friendships. The borders were closed except for NATZIS. You couldn't even get foreign banknotes. You were not allowed to listen to foreign broadcasting stations.

1936 I didn't like my

membership in the Hitler-youth any longer and changed over to the DASD (German Amateur Transmitting Service).

There I had to pass an examination as SWL (short-wave listener). Twelve words of Morse code per minute. - I got the ticket beginning of 1938 and began to listen to the world with my homebrew receiver.

In May 1951 (50 years ago) I got my licence DL9DW in Freiburg, one of the first in our club. Finally I could develop International friendship and I am very happy now. I've got friends all over the world and had no problems to meet many of them especially the members of the GDRS.

Many, many thanks for your friendship

Erich Groth

Hosts needed

Could you welcome a Freiburg visitor into your home for a few days? Sharing your home and way of life with a visitor from abroad can be a rewarding experience for everyone one involved.

The association receives several requests each year from individuals and couples who would like to stay in a private home. They are often willing to offer accommodation in their home in return.

Hosts with children are also sought for exchange visits. Do you have a son or daughter who would like to have a German teenager to stay and then visit them in Freiburg?

If you would like further information or are willing to be a host, please contact the association's secretary Kathy Atkins on 01483 811005.

Thanks from the editor

In February of this year I joined a team from The Royal Surrey County Hospital in its attempt to climb Africa's highest mountain, Kilimanjaro (29,000ft).

The Guildford Freiburg Association generously sponsored me and I would like to say a very big thank you. So far our efforts have raised more than £92,000 for the Abracadabra Appeal to build a much needed new children's and adolescents' unit at the hospital.

Janet Russell