

GUILDFORD-FREIBURG ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

29 May 2013

Present: Diana Lockyer-Nibbs - Mayor of Guildford and about 28 members

Chairman's Introduction: The Chairman, Peter Slade, welcomed all members to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

1. **Appointment of Mayor as President.** Peter advised his first pleasant duty of the evening was to appoint the new mayor Diana Lockyer-Nibbs as president for the year in accordance with our Constitution, and he confirmed that as usual the mayor would be chairing the meeting.
2. **Apologies for Absence:** Anne Milton MP – Patron, Kathy Atkins, John Bannister, Sonia Coombe, Gavin Dix, Graham Ellwood, John and Caroline Greenwood, Angela Gunning, Val Hazelwood, Michael Jeffery, Eileen Johnson, Tessa Johnson, Bernard Parke, John Perry, David Petche, Joan Roberts, Tony Stockwell, Keith and Lucy Taylor, Mr and Mrs David Watts and Joan Wrenn.
3. **Minutes of last Annual General Meeting 30 May 2012.** These were circulated at the meeting. There were no comments and the minutes were agreed.
4. **Chairman's Report.** Peter Slade outlined the highlights of the past year in his report – see attached – and thanked the outgoing president and mayor Jennifer Jordan for her support. Peter summarised by saying he felt the association had enjoyed a very good year and he hoped all would agree.

Peter commented that he considers the term 'partnership' better than twinning.

Referring to the visit by a group of Freiburgers in Summer 2012 he asked for anyone with any comments or suggestions on involving people with home exchanges for future trips to speak to him after the AGM.

Peter then asked whether anyone had any questions or comments and the following points were raised:

- Barbara Ford mentioned the quiz night held in March which she and her husband Tony had organised. The evening had been very enjoyable, with interesting questions devised by Barbara and Tony.
- Wolfgang Pietrek said he would like to acknowledge the activities of the churches link in fostering relationships, a visit from Freiburg having taken place recently. Peter Slade mentioned that the churches link actually pre-dates the twinning by 2 or 3 months and has run successfully since. Stanley Hemming-Clark commented that the recent visit to Guildford included a reception by the new mayor and visits to various local attractions, churches and chapels. He added that families host each other and this works well, there is usually no problem in organising the home stays. He suggested Katie Butcher could advise the GFA on home exchanges if they wished to pursue this with other groups of visitors.

Ros Calow was then invited to speak on schools liaison. She said there were two regular contacts - George Abbot and the Goethe Gymnasium have been going for a long time and a newer link is between Guildford College and the Max Weber Schule. There is also a small pen

friend scheme between County School and the Wenzinger Realschule in Freiburg. In addition, the Staudinger Gesamtschule arranged their own visit with accommodation through Gina Redpath.

Much work has been done in trying to organise an exchange between the French-German School in Freiburg and the South West Surrey Concert Band, but unfortunately it has failed due to lack of interest by the German school, perhaps because it is sometimes difficult for teachers to take on extra work. Attractive grants of up to £1,000 are offered by the German Embassy for new projects with schools in Germany but teachers here are not taking them up because their time is fully committed. Also, the number of pupils studying German here is rather low. Freiburg have also been asked if they would be interested in sending younger children, eg middle school, to Guildford but we were told they want to put more effort into contact with France as Freiburg is so close to the French border.

Ros concluded by saying it is proving very difficult to organise new exchanges for school children because schools do not want to accept any liability, but we will continue to do what we can.

Camilla Allison, the new Musical Liaison Officer, introduced herself, saying she had studied German and taken a *Reifeprüfung* at the *Musikhochschule* in Detmold in northern Germany. She had given some thought on how musical contacts with Freiburg could be expanded.

Ros Calow mentioned there had been several enquiries at the Partner Cities Fair from choirs who would like to come to Guildford and it was felt some would place the emphasis on fun but that there were also some serious musicians.

Camilla advised that in Germany musicians study for many years and then take a practical degree, a *Reifeprüfung*, meaning they are expert in an instrument. She said Freiburg has a *Musikhochschule*, a *Barockakademie* and a *Jazz & Rock Hochschule* and she felt contact with these by the GFA could be useful. Camilla also suggested we could perhaps invite students to come over here to give a recital before they go into their profession, perhaps obtaining a grant from Freiburg to pay for their fares. Accommodation could be arranged in people's homes, with food expenses perhaps being reimbursed by the GFA. Peter Slade advised that Gina Redpath looks after home stays and has a list of contacts.

Trevor Jones asked whether we are looking for families with children of a similar age or older people and Camilla replied that accommodation with all types of families always proves to be great fun, with just B& B and possibly a meal being provided.

Barbara Ford suggested a link could be made with the Guildford Academy of Contemporary Music and it might be easier for Freiburgers to come over here as they can get a grant.

Peter Slade said the big prize is the world famous Freiburger Barockorchester and he is keen to try to make a link happen.

Stanley Hemming-Clark mentioned that he is trying to build up funds for the next visit of the Churches Link by arranging entertainment and a lunch. He would be grateful for any support.

Alan Johnston commented on visits made by members of the British German Association (BGA) last year, including to the Rolls Royce factory, owned by BMW. It was agreed the subscription to the BGA is money well spent. Appreciation was also expressed of Peter Slade's sending out of details of BGA events.

Camilla Allison mentioned that a German pastor from the Christuskirche in Knightsbridge holds a service on the third Friday of every month in St. Mary's Church, Ash Vale. Anyone who speaks German was urged to attend and Peter Slade will add this information to an update.

Peter Slade then mentioned that we are now part of a regional group of twinning associations, with representatives from about 10-12 local associations meeting every 6 months or so to discuss common problems and solutions and to share experiences.

Andrew Aylott asked, as a new member, whether there is a link between Surrey University and the University of Freiburg and Peter Slade replied there had been a little contact in the past. Pat Grayburn commented we had had no luck in making contact with the University of Freiburg but Peter said there have been several instances of individual students going to Freiburg and vice versa.

5. Treasurer's & Membership Secretary's Report.

Copies of the audited accounts for the financial year ending 31 March 2013 were distributed at the AGM by Michael Gorman, Honorary Treasurer.

Michael began his report by saying it was an honour to address the current mayor as well as two former mayors. He said the audited figures were now being presented and that our auditor, David Barr is now retired and living in Guildford.

Michael advised the Association's funds of £4,770 are made up of money on current account and deposit account, interest on the latter being sadly negligible. We are £616 ahead of where we were a year ago, ie this represents the surplus of receipts over payments. Payments include secretarial expenses such as postage and printer cartridges, newsletter printing and the subscription to the British-German Association, which is considered very worth while. On the income side, membership subscriptions are slightly ahead this year, mainly because Michael has been chasing people a little more. Allianz were very generous last year in sponsoring the newsletter but unfortunately this was not repeated this year although they have suggested we do get in touch again in future. Guildford Borough Council have also provided a grant of £420 so our funds are in a healthy position. Not as much money has been given to worthwhile twinning activities as in previous years but we would like to offer help to musical and other cultural events. We did give financial assistance to a student attending Freiburg University and we are open to further legitimate requests for money.

Membership comprises 113 household this year, the same number as last year though there have been a few changes and a steady trickle of new names. Of the 113, 58 are single memberships and 55 are couples. 97 of the 113 households are on e-mail, which saves a great deal on postage. However, Michael added that we try to avoid sending attachments with e-mails as these can be a problem to a few people.

Michael advised 39 households pay by standing order. A total of 58 subscriptions are up to date this year and Michael will be posting membership cards shortly, as well as reminders where needed.

Trevor Jones asked whether subscriptions could be paid after the AGM and Michael confirmed he would be delighted to receive these. He advised rates are £7 for single and £10 for joint membership, and Peter Slade added that standing orders are extremely helpful.

Katie Butcher asked whether we receive Gift Aid and Michael replied that we are not a registered charity so are not eligible to apply for it. He advised that a lot of paperwork would be involved and that after discussions in Committee it was agreed we should remain as we are, a voluntary organisation but not a charity.

6. Elections

- a) **Appointment of Patron - Anne Milton MP.** Agreed as in the Constitution.
- b) **Election of Officers.** The following officers were unanimously re-elected:
Chairman: **Dr Peter Slade**
Vice Chairman: **Mr Wolfgang Pietrek**
Hon. Secretary: **Ms Hilary Mills**
Hon. Treasurer/Membership Sec: **Mr Michael Gorman**
- c) **Election of Committee.** The following were elected en bloc, no-one else expressing any interest in standing:
Mrs Irene Black, Mrs Frauke Burge, Mrs Katie Butcher (Social Secretary), Mrs Rosamund Calow (Schools Liaison), Mrs Barbara Ford (Newsletter Editor), Mrs Patricia Grayburn (University Liaison), Ald. Bernard Parke

Peter Slade advised that Mrs Val Hazelwood has decided she no longer wishes to stand on the Committee but will continue to help at Christmas markets etc.

Council Representatives (appointed by Guildford Borough Council):
Cllr Graham Ellwood, Cllr David Goodwin, Cllr Keith Taylor.

Camilla Allison, the newly appointed Musical Liaison Officer, advised she is happy to attend meetings as a working guest but does not wish to become a Committee member as she is frequently away. Peter Slade suggested she attends meetings when there is something to report regarding musical activities.

- d) **Election of Hon Auditor.** Michael Gorman confirmed **David Barr** is happy to stand for another year. David was nominated by Katie Butcher and seconded by Pat Grayburn.

7. Any Other Business

- Trevor Jones suggested the list of apologies had been exceptionally long, perhaps due to the clash with the AGM of the Guildford Environmental Forum being held on the same evening. Hilary Mills advised only one apology had referred to this clash, most other people giving holidays as their reason for non-attendance.
- Peter Slade asked people to collect and sign for their copy of the latest newsletter after the meeting; anyone not on the list would be receiving a copy by post.

The official business of the AGM ended at 8.35 p.m.

Unfortunately the talk which was to have been given by Nikki Simmonds, Chair of Guildford City Boys & Girls Football Club about their successful exchanges with Freiburg's Blau Weiss Club could not be given as Nikki had been taken ill shortly beforehand.