

Lingua Franca

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In the middle years of the twinning, especially the 50s to the 90s many small groups exchanged with their counterparts in Hannover.

- My names Gareth Hodgkinson and I was with the Bristol youth band I took up playing in school and in the first year I'd been playing Hannover band came over, the organ brass orchestra so we went and stayed with them and we played a piece I just remembered a piece called Tyrolean Tubas which went down a storm. Universal language was just music.
- Mary now Watton, was Evans. Well my father had a tremendous amount to do with the Bristol/ Hannover exchange I think at least 4 or 5 times every year we had people from Hannover staying with us. My father would go to Hannover maybe twice a year each time taking a group of young people with him and the first time I went was 1953. My sister also went and friends of ours went and we made friends as well. Everything to my father was all in the cause of youth because he felt if the youth learnt the right way to live the world would be a better place.
- My name's Mavis Gray and in 1964, 65 and 66 I took part in the Bristol Hannover exchange. It wasn't a school group we came from all walks of life some were at work, some were at college, some were at school still. In the day time you could talk English to the friends that you've gone on the exchange with, but in the evenings you're obliged to use the language. It really does broaden your mind because you get a total picture of what it is like to be of somebody roughly your own age who is growing up in a city in another country in Europe, how they live, what they have for breakfast.
- Hello Peter Davey I'm a Bristol boy. We were in Bristol Players and we had a link and it was great fun. We took a play there a couple of years later they would come back and do a play here and then that went on for many an exchange. Of course English people get away with it in Germany because most of them over there can understand English so we could do a play in English without any worry. They would come here and do a play in German now, therefore we had to go round all the schools to make sure that school

students who were studying German bought a ticket otherwise the whole thing collapsed.

- My name is Martin Jefferd. Our connection with Hannover was that I belong to Kensington Baptist Church on Stapleton Road. It was 1965 when Hannover Baptist Church came to Bristol and we found that we were doctrinally similar and so they felt very at home at our church and of course being hospitable they invited us as a church to go back in 1967.
- My name's Lynn McAleavey. We answered an advertisement in the Bristol Evening Post requesting a host family, for a mother and her child and we thought that might be quite nice. My husband and myself both spoke German and Uta Johansen arrived with her daughter Christina. Christina was 11 at the time. The reason that they had come was that Uta herself had come to Bristol as an 11 year old and had had such a fantastic experience that she wanted her daughter Christina to experience it as well and we visited them a couple of years later and that was my first visit to Hannover.

Most exchanges involved staying with host families and memories are still strong.

- When we arrived in Hannover we were met by the various families that we were going to stay with and they were extremely kind.
- We stayed with a family and we got on very well with them. I can remember eating frankfurters a lot.
- The mother made time to take me on little visits with the daughter. We went to a Volkswagen factory, we went to Bahlsen biscuit factory, that's still my favourite biscuit, the one that's a biscuit on one side and chocolate on the other.
- I mean when I first went there, there was funny little things it was the first place I saw sugar cubes wrapped in paper. They used to put little doily in your saucer before they put the cup down, I'd never seen that before get slightly different ways of life haven't they?

Marina Dolman

- We have little ways that are so different like in Germany it's polite to keep your hands on the table while you're eating and in England it's more polite to keep them in your lap silly little things like that, but I think it's just interesting. The people are very good to me. I had a great time in Hannover. I really enjoyed it.