

FRIENDSHIP LINKS WITH GERMANY



Bromley and their twin town of Neuwied, in Germany, have had exchanges for 20 years. Town twinning specifically aims to build strong personal relationships and understanding between people of different countries and cultures. Many contacts and friendships have been forged between the citizens of the two towns and the hospitality that visitors from Bromley have received in Neuwied has been overwhelming; we aim to offer equally warm hospitality in our Borough too. The Bromley / Neuwied carnivals are just a couple of the annual events that are shared, and we now hope to strengthen our friendship with an organisation called 'Informa'.



Sewing Upholstery for Buses

Informa are a nonprofit organisation giving support to hearing-impaired people, with the aim of integration into the work market. They are looking at making links with local organisations who work with deaf and hard of hearing people, like Deaf Access, as a way of sharing experiences and ideas for working, to support the deaf community with employment, education, & training.

Informa started in 1975 as a small association for deaf people, called 'Förderverein für Hörgeschädigte e.V.' It was run by volunteers, who were parents of deaf children. They began offering advice services, but gradually grew into a large social enterprise employing around 35 people.

This organisation offers a range of practical employment, together with support services, which include jobs such as sewing and alterations of industrial products, mailing and courier services, and services for the automobile industry. They also have counselling departments covering job services, education, interpreting services in German Sign Language, together with assisted living for deaf people in their own homes.

Since 2002, Informa have been involved in the European program EQUAL, a program to find new ways to reduce unemployment and discrimination. They have several contacts with organisations across Europe and are now keen to link with Deaf Access. This may lead to an exchange for which there may be funding available.

Andrea Schramm of Informa has spoken with several people in Neuwied; they are going to write a news article locally to introduce this new link to the different associations in Neuwied (sport clubs for deaf people, the "Förderverein", and the local school for deaf and hard of hearing pupils, etc.).



From Friday 5 October to Tuesday 9 October, a group from Neuwied are coming to visit Bromley. Peter Job Application Training Brown, Bromley's twinning association secretary, hopes to arrange a visit to Community House for Inge Gutler, his counterpart from Neuwied, so that they can meet with us and move this forward.

So what happens next? - Are you interested in getting involved? Would you be interested in helping Deaf Access organise an exchange? Are you interested in linking up with staff, volunteers, hearing impaired people? Would you like to be or have a pen friend? Can you speak or write in German (not essential)?

– Then please contact Sue Craney at Deaf Access.

Peter Dyer

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Access points is the newsletter of Deaf Access, The Bromley Resource Centre for the Hearing Impaired.

Available to:
'Friends of Deaf Access' -
See back page for Centre contact details.



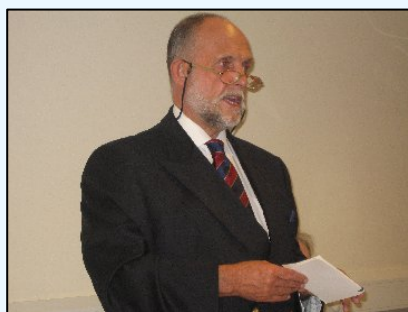
AGM - 24 July

Dear Friends

It was lovely to see so many of you at our AGM on 24th July. The talk by Councillor Charles Joel about his mayoral year was very interesting and humorous!

Thinking about his stories of putting on weight, I recall a TV news feature where the Mayors' of Chester have to be publicly weighed after their year of office, and if they have put on weight the Town crier calls out "and more!", or if a lot of weight, "Much more!" The crowd then jeer! I'm sure Charles was relieved not to go through that!

As you know, Charles supported two charities during his Mayoral year - Bromley Sparks and Deaf Access. We heard about his fundraising events, curry evenings, quiz nights, dinner dances



Councillor Charles Joel

and concerts, to name but a few. We appreciate all of his hard work – as well as that of the Mayor's team in the office and behind the scenes! When the total is known, we will be announcing it to you all at our next [Friends coffee morning - 11am](#)

on **Monday 12th November**. We invite you all to discuss options for how the funding should be spent. Write in with ideas of what you think would be beneficial, or better still, come and have your say!

Sadly we haven't had much of a summer this year, but not so bad when you are working hard in the office preparing extra events, workshops, talks etc. for you for the winter ahead! See **Page 4** for information about the next Positive Deaf Lifestyle BSL talks (about health related topics), watch out for dates for Craft sessions and even Quizzes! All designed to help to reduce isolation and improve health - thanks to funding by the Dept. of Health's Opportunities for Volunteering grant. Another Understanding Your Deafness Course is also in the pipeline one evening a month, for people who work (deafened, or losing their hearing) and their spouses. It is proven that hearing loss can cause breakdowns in relationships, which could be reduced with support and education such as this course. Contact us if you would like to attend.

City Bridge Trust funding is helping us to develop and liaise services and organisations for families across the south east - early days yet for this project!

Hayes (Kent) Trust have kindly given us £500, and with the money raised at our two fundraising events in July (see **page 6**) we will be able to offer a short introduction to lipreading course at the centre after Christmas. (Priority given to Friends who have never attended lipreading classes before.)

As you can see on **page 1**, we are building links with Bromley's twin town Neuwied, and in particular with a charity there for Deaf people. What is interesting is that both our organisations are of a similar age and were both started by parents of deaf children!

However, what is intriguing, is how from the same start we have gone in different directions! It will be interesting to look into why. Is it cultural influences or education? Different issues facing deaf people in England and Germany? We shall have to find out. One question I will be looking at, is whether their way is something we should be considering for the future? Maybe Remploy is our local equivalent? I will investigate and let you know.

We have also been busy developing a new website – do have a look at the link. As technology moves on we need to make our website more accessible and easy to use for everyone.

We hope you feel our quarterly newsletter keeps you up to date. Please do write in to us with your news, personal experiences of deafness - good or bad - tips, and any funny stories you want to share with us all for inclusion in the late January issue.

So don't be a stranger please do keep in touch!

Warm regards,

Sue

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW TREASURER & TRUSTEES

After saying goodbye to Michael Pink in July, we would now like to Welcome **Mr. Philip Jones** as our new Treasurer.

Philip has been married to Frances for 34 years and has a son and daughter, who are 30 and 29 respectively.

Most of Philip's working life has been spent with Julius Baer, a Swiss private bank, where he has been their Financial Controller for the past 23 years, and their Company Secretary for 17 years. He has recently cut down his working week to 3 days, allowing him to work on his golf handicap and to pursue his love of travelling and walking.



Philip Jones



Along with Philip we also welcome two other new members to the Board of Trustees -



Joy Marrion

Joy Marrion, and Mary Garside.

Joy Marrion is a widow with two sons and four grandchildren, 2 of which are twins; she has lived in Bromley for the last 33 years.

Since retiring, she has been involved in voluntary work, which included 10 years at the Rachel Notley Day centre. She is a member of Bromley Council on Ageing and the Older Peoples' Panel, and is interested in anything to do with improving life for the deaf and hard of hearing.

Her other interests include History and Art Appreciation and is a member of several groups of Bromley U3A (University of the Third Age). Joy says, "I am fit and active and enjoy walking a neighbour's dog for daily exercise - for both me and the dog!"



Mary Garside also lives locally and says she has always had a keen interest in deaf issues in Bromley. For many years she worked as a teacher of the deaf at Darrick Wood Primary Deaf Base.

Since being on the committee of Bromley Chain, she has set up two primary deaf provisions in Bexley and worked as a peripatetic teacher of the deaf in Wandsworth and Tower Hamlets and is now Head of Sensory Impairment in Tower Hamlets.

Mary says "I am looking forward to becoming involved more closely with Deaf Access."

BSL PRACTICE GROUP

"I wish I had heard of this service before. I think the teacher is very good and is very patient with everyone, no matter what their ability."

These are a couple of the responses we have received back from the BSL Practice groups being held here at the centre. They are proving very popular, especially with people who are eager to brush up on their signing skills. If you would like to join Mary Coleman, who is running these sessions, do come along - no need to book - We would be pleased to see you.

"I have found the signing sessions to be very exciting and informative."

"I feel I have learnt more from 2 sessions than many months of classes."

Sessions are held on:

Monday 9.45am - 10.45am (**Level 1**)
Monday 11.15am - 12.15am (**Level 2**)

Although '**Access Points**' likes to encourage our readers to submit their views and opinions, we respectfully remind you that contributors' opinions and statements, made throughout the Newsletter, do not necessarily reflect our views, and therefore we cannot be held responsible.

THE SWEET SMELL OF DISASTER

Please be aware that those lovely fragrant Plug-In room fresheners are not as innocent or as sweet smelling as you may think

It recently came to our attention that a couple had their house completely burnt down to ashes. Although covered with good insurance, it hardly compensates for all those lost items such as photos, sentimental items, keepsakes and memories, which are irreplaceable.

After sifting through the ashes for several hours the insurance investigator traced the start of the fire in the bathroom. It was then discovered that a Plug-In room freshener had

been plugged in and switched on in this room. Unbelievably, that, was the cause of their home being razed to the ground.

Apparently the plastic that they are made from is very thin and disintegrates at high temperatures. In the many cases of fires starting with these Plug-Ins, nothing is left to prove that they even existed. The problem arises when the fresheners are left plugged in and overheat, thus causing such devastation. Unfortunately therefore, it seems that plugging in a Plug-In, is its own worse enemy.

Do please be careful.

The Little Boy Who Never Grew Up



When you can't face yet another turkey sandwich and you find there are more pine needles in the carpet than on the Christmas tree, don't feel glum, just sprinkle on a little fairy dust and fly the family off to 'Neverland' - Just remember - It's 'the second star to the right and straight on till morning' - Yes, you've guessed: Peter Pan will be flying into Bromley's Churchill theatre on:

Friday 30 November 2007 - and then sadly flying off again on:
Sunday 13 January 2008

Signed Interpreted Performance
with Donna Ruane :- Sunday 6 January 2008 at 5.30pm

Dates For Your Diary



Positive Deaf Lifestyles (BSL Talks)

- Coping with depression - Talk by Peter Grand
1.00pm @ Deaf Access
23 October
- Healthy Eating On a Budget - Talk by Mathew Powe
2.00pm @ Deaf Access
19 November
- Healthy Exercise In Sport - Talk by Steve Wynne
2.00pm @ Deaf Access
4 December

Other Events

- DPUK** - Family Fun in Catford **24 October**
- CoDPUK** - Christmas Party **15 December**
- BDS** - Monthly meeting **21 December**

Parent & Toddlers Group

- Halloween Party - Thurs. **25 October**
- Christmas Party - Thurs. **20 December**



Other Events

- BDF** - Indoor at the Museum **20 October**
- Local Fun **17 November**

NB - Other dates for Positive Deaf Lifestyles not available at time of going to print -
For these details and all other events please contact Deaf Access or look on our web page:
www.deaf-access.co.uk

Matt Brown was one of our volunteers, who helped out at the Job Club on a Wednesday at Deaf Access. He now has a permanent job working for Dering Employment Services Ltd. Here he writes about his time being a Volunteer at the centre.

"I'd read several times that 'volunteering can change your life', but in this day and age of mass marketing and branding, it's easier than ever before to dismiss wild-sounding claims. As a society, perhaps we have become somewhat desensitised to organisations trying to promote themselves, whether they're a community-based charity or a burger chain. When so many aspects of life are subjected to hype and spin, no wonder we are more cynical. It's a vicious circle: the more people try to grab our attention, the more likely we'll dismiss them.

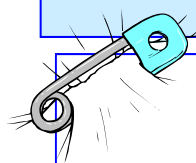
So when I started volunteering at Deaf Access, I didn't really have any major expectations. I mainly wanted to get out a bit more, having been unemployed for much too long. I knew that it would be a good way of taking my Deaf Awareness training out of the classroom and into a real-life situation, and to keep my slightly odd sign language from disappearing,

and I felt good about putting something into the local community – but I didn't really think any more of it than that. I had no idea of the direct consequences of putting some regular time and effort in. I hadn't properly thought about where it might take me.

Of course it didn't happen all at once, and it wasn't handed to me on a plate either. But looking back at my first day, nine months later, I can see a direct chain of events that led me to where I am now, somewhere I didn't really expect to be – employed by a company run by Deaf people for Deaf people, doing work in a completely different field to anything I've done before. If I'd turned up less, missed more opportunities, met fewer people, gained less experience, it's very likely that one of the links in that chain of events would never have been made. My life really has changed.

The most surprising thing to me, as a hearing person, was that it was the Deaf community that has reminded me what the word 'community' can really mean. It's something you can't fully appreciate when you're on the outside of it. You have to get involved. I'm really pleased that I did." **Matt Brown**

TWENTY TINY FINGERS & TWENTY TINY TOES MAKE THEIR DEBUT



The month of July this year was probably one of the worst months of 2007. Large areas of the country lay under water and everyone's spirits were at a low ebb for lack of summer sunshine. However, in one small corner of Bromley, at Deaf Access, there seemed to be an endless glow of sunshine for two new set of grandparents - in the form of the birth of two beautiful baby boys.

The first of these babies to arrive was Fraser James Nathan, the grandson of Susan Craney, our Manager at Deaf Access. Fraser was born on Friday 13 July, and although unlucky for some - not for this family.

Rachel, his mother, had been diagnosed with breast cancer four years ago and after surgery underwent radiotherapy as well as chemotherapy - so the birth of this baby was even more precious to them.



Fraser James Nathan

So much so, that Rachel and her husband included the name Nathan in appreciation of the staff of Nathan House where she had been treated.

Little Fraser was born in a birthing pool, just

two hours after his mum arrived at the hospital, weighing in at 7lbs.

Our second beautiful baby boy to make his debut. was Oscar George, the grandson of Beryl Baxter, the Editor of Access Points.

Oscar was born in Brighton 11 days later, on 24 July, weighing a very healthy 10lbs 13oz (talk about making your eyes water!!). In fact Nicholas, Beryl's son had to rush out to buy a larger set of baby clothes to bring him home in.



Oscar George

Three weeks after his birth Oscar had his Hearing Screening Test, sitting happily in his mother, Emma's, lap.

For this test, a small soft-tipped earpiece is placed in the outer ear, which then sends clicking sounds down the ear. When the sound is received the cochlea will then produce an echo, which the screening equipment will pick up.

Both Oscar and Fraser passed their hearing tests.

Our congratulations go to both families. **Ed**

Access Points

Fund Raising News

Our Summer Sale, which was held on 14th July raised £700.76.

Mary Coleman, who organised this event on behalf of Deaf Access would like to thank all those people who kindly gave up their valuable time on the day to come along. There was a great team spirit with everyone pulling together.



Bargain Hunters at the Summer Sale

Particular thanks must also go to Rita of Bromley United Reform Church for her support and to Sheldon of the Bromley branch of BHS,

who kindly loaned us three clothes rails.

As part of The Beckenham Lions Club Fete held at Beckenham Recreation Ground on Saturday 14th July, Alan Roberts organised a Golf Putting Site. This was a family fun day for all to enjoy, even Lenny the Lion joined in!! The total raised for Deaf Access was £73.00 - Note that the weight of the money taken created Alan's somewhat large waist.



We hope to put the money raised at these events towards two new badly needed computers for the centre. **Ed**



Beckenham Lions Club Fete

Antique & Collectors' Fair Reminder



Don't Forget:
THE ROTARY CLUB OF LANGLEY PARK & DEAF ACCESS - ANTIQUE & COLLECTORS' FAIR

Date: Saturday 3rd November 2007

Place: Hayes Free Church, Pickhurst Lane, Hayes

Time: 10.00 am - 4.00 pm - Entrance: £1.00

Do come along - You just might find that perfect Christmas Present



Deaf Access Would Like To Say Thank You To:

Our fund raisers & donors; London Borough of Bromley, Dept of Health OFV (UkCoD), City Parochial, Rotary Clubs of West Wickham & Bromley, The City Bridge Trust, Hayes (Kent) Trust, clients, friends and family members who have made donations to enable us to continue to provide our vital services.

Bromley Chain, Churchill Theatre, Hi Kent and the many different organisations & individuals who work with us or support us, past and present.

Special thanks go to our team of Volunteers and Trustees. Without them we could not achieve as much as we do.

Thank you

Deaf Access

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And Finally -
Something to think about:

Kindness is a language which,
the deaf can hear and the blind can see.