

Guernsey Friends of Biberach Association

Chairman
Chris Day
01481 255172

Secretary
Irene Harvey
01481 247492

Treasurer
Gloria Dudley-Owen
01481 263536

Woodlands
Houmet Lane
Vale
GY6 8JG

e-mail: iharvey@cwgsy.net

April 2010

NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

It is nearly time for our AGM, which as you know always takes place on the 23rd of April. This year the former deportees will be celebrating the 65th anniversary of their liberation. To mark this special occasion a memorial to commemorate those who died while interned will be unveiled at the White Rock on the 23rd April at 11.00 am.

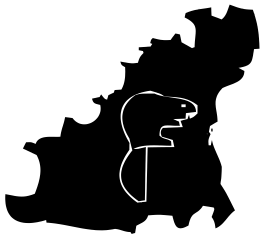
I am sure you are all also aware that the exhibition "Occupied Behind Barbed Wire" is at the moment being shown at the Candie Museum. Dr Gillian Carr and the Museum staff have done a wonderful job with the display of artefacts and everyday objects made by the people who had been deported to Germany. It can be seen until 12th September and it is certainly worth a visit.

The Committee of the GFBA has once again had a busy year and we are very pleased how our links with Biberach are developing and how many local people are involved in our reciprocal visits.

At the end of May / beginning of June 2009 45 members of the Biberach Wind Orchestra came to Guernsey with performances at St James where they teamed up with the Bel Canto Choir and in the Market Square. They had a very packed programme with an Island Tour, visit to Castle Cornet, a day trip to Sark, and a reception in the Royal Court hosted by the Bailiff.

Just a week later The Mayor of Biberach, Herr Thomas Fettback, and his wife spent a few days in the island on the invitation of the Bailiff. Herr Fettback was very interested to learn more of our education system, so visits to a few local schools were included in his programme.

The highlight of 2009 was obviously the Guernsey Week in Biberach, which took place from 16th to 25th October. Around 60 people from Guernsey made the trip, including Sir de Vic and Lady Carey, Culture and Leisure Minister Mike O'Hara, Richard De La Rue and the Town Church Strings, Soloists David Le Page and Angelique Lihou, Christine Anthony and the Bel Canto Choir and Hendri Liebenberg and the Jazz Band. The Dean of Guernsey Canon Paul Mellor and the Roman Catholic Dean Fr Michael Hore took part in an Ecumenical Service. Dr Jason Monaghan especially designed an exhibition for the event which was shown in the Town Hall in Biberach initially and was subsequently to be used by schools in Biberach.



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Dr Gillian Carr presented her research on the art produced by the former deportees, Cedric May gave a talk on Victor Hugo, Marguerite Paul did a cookery demonstration introducing our friends to Guernsey specialities. Eric Grimsley made contacts with Scout leaders and is planning to take a group of Scouts to Biberach in August 2011. A few youngsters from the Grammar School and Ladies' College also came to Biberach for the occasion of the Guernsey Week there and attended school.

A very special event took place just recently: Our Chairman Chris Day was awarded the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany at a very festive ceremony at the German Embassy in London. Members of the Biberach Friends of Guernsey, Mr Fettback, Pastor Goehner, Helga and Hans-Peter Reiser and Rotraud Rebmann had especially flown in from Germany for the occasion. It was wonderful to be hosted by the Ambassador Mr Georg Boomgaarden at his official residence in Belgrave Square. It is very pleasing to realize that our efforts to create links of friendship between Guernsey and Biberach are being recognized at such a high level.



We are obviously committed to keep working at what we have already achieved and hope that more and more people from Guernsey as well as from Biberach will become involved.

We hope to see you all on Friday, 23rd April at the White Rock at 11.00 am for the unveiling of the memorial and afterwards at 12.00 o' clock at the Peninsula Hotel for our AGM.

The Guernsey Deportees' Association will be holding their St George's Day Luncheon at 1.00 pm at the Peninsula Hotel. The cost will be £ 13.50. Please telephone Tom Remfrey on Tel. 254185 if you want to attend the lunch.

With best wishes,

Irene Harvey
Secretary, GFBA