



International Women's Association
Region Braunschweig e.V.

Newsletter 44
December 2017

What has the IWA_BS been up to?

Dear Ladies,

Wow, where has the time gone again? Here we are beginning of December, the Christmas market has opened and temperatures are down to nearly zero! How is it possible that time flies so much quicker every year???

To start on my report of past events I will go back to August when Paula Schnackenberg got together a group of 19 IWA family and friends for indoor mini golf. It was the perfect day for it as it was raining cats and dogs (wasn't it the whole summer???). The group split up into five groups of four players with two-year-old Nasim Schulze being the youngest. Paula's husband, Jörg, coached the novice players as if he were Jack Nicklaus! A few of the participants shot several hole-in-ones which is quite a difficult feat in a 5-hole-par course. There was a lot of laughter and everyone had a great time. It was so much fun that Paula said she will do it again in 2018!

The IWA kept busy for the rest of the autumn and I will start with an outing to the Heather region that was organised by Ellen Wenzel on the 2nd of September. 8 of our members went for a long walk through the Lüneburger Heide followed by a heartening meal in a restaurant. The weather could have been better but the outing was enjoyed by everyone.

On the 8th of September Martina Sawalsky put on another beauty evening at the perfumery Douglas. 9 of our Ladies were looked after and beautified by 2 make-up artists who did a fantastic job. The results were simply 'wow'! Armed with a shopping voucher the Beauties were then allowed to shop to their hearts content. A lot of fun for everyone who participated.

Ellen Wenzel planned the next trip on our list – to Hann. Münden this time on the 23rd of September. The IWA Ladies and partners were given a guided tour through this pretty old town with lots of listed buildings with coffee and meal stops on the way. It was a lovely day for everyone and another new town added to our list of destinations. The Autostadt in Wolfsburg was the next stop on our list with the – by now regular – cooking event 'Allerlei Genuss' run by Martina Sawalsky. 13 Ladies were instructed by the 3 cooks Enza, Enzo and André. On the menu this time was fresh trout. The surprise here was that the fish (16 of them!) had only been caught and collected the evening beforehand and had to be gutted. A shock to some of the participants but the delicious results made it all worthwhile! A 3-course meal and a cold glass of white wine finished this eventful morning.

On the 22nd of October a group of us went to Peine to attend a gospel concert with our member Karina Glenewinkel. Please read my article further on in the newsletter.

Andrea Reinhart treated us to a basketball game with the Braunschweig Lions against Brose Bamberg. The tickets were sponsored by the Managing Director of the BS team who looked after our group of 9 superbly all evening. Some of our IWA guests discovered a new passion for the sport despite the home team losing 68-94 that day. The atmosphere in the Volkswagen Halle was fantastic and very impressive for anyone who had never been to a basketball game before.

The last but not least item on my list is our 2017 Christmas party that took place on Friday the 24th of November at the newly renovated Golfclub Braunschweig. Well, what a party it was! The location was gorgeous, the food delicious, the drinks plentiful and the DJ got (nearly) everyone on the dance floor. It was a fun-filled evening and lovely to see so many of our members and partners again. A huge thanks to everyone who helped organise this party and to the fantastic chef and staff at the Golfclub who made everything run so smoothly.

Well, that's it folks! For this year anyway. A huge thank you to everyone who was involved in running these past events. Without their help and hard work none of them would be possible.

I do wish you all a very happy Advent time, fun at the Christmas market and a wonderful, peaceful, healthy and happy Christmas. We are all looking forward to an eventful 2018!

All the very best,

Susanne Kendell

Inside this Issue

What has the IWA-BS been up to?	1
St. Urban Gospel Choir Concert in Peine	2
"A British View of German Quirks"	3
"No-Show-Fee" for our Special Events - a Necessity?	4
Christmas Food Traditions	5
One Last Thought	6
Changing of the Guard Tilman Siebenmorgen	7
Upcoming IWA -BS Events General Information	8





International Women's Association
Region Braunschweig e.V.

Newsletter 44
December 2017

St. Urban Gospel Choir Concert in Peine

As mentioned in the last newsletter the IWA-BS acquired tickets for this concert on the 22nd of October and 5 of us drove to Peine on a rainy and cold Sunday evening where we were met by another couple from the IWA.

We had good seats (thanks to Karina Glenewinkel who sings in the choir and had reserved the tickets for us) and therefore had an excellent view onto the stage and the incredible light installations. The St. Jakobi church in Peine is beautiful (I had never been before) and was beautifully lit-up for the occasion.

The concert this year dealt with the topic of the Reformation and was called 'Luther, Martin, Martina. We were greeted with 'Hello Martina' by members of the choir and were giving a little piece of cardboard with a miniature packet of salt on it which said: 'You are the salt of the Earth'.

So far so good but all a bit puzzling! But then the concert started and we were knocked off our feet by the incredible voices, the gorgeous light show and the theme of the concert.

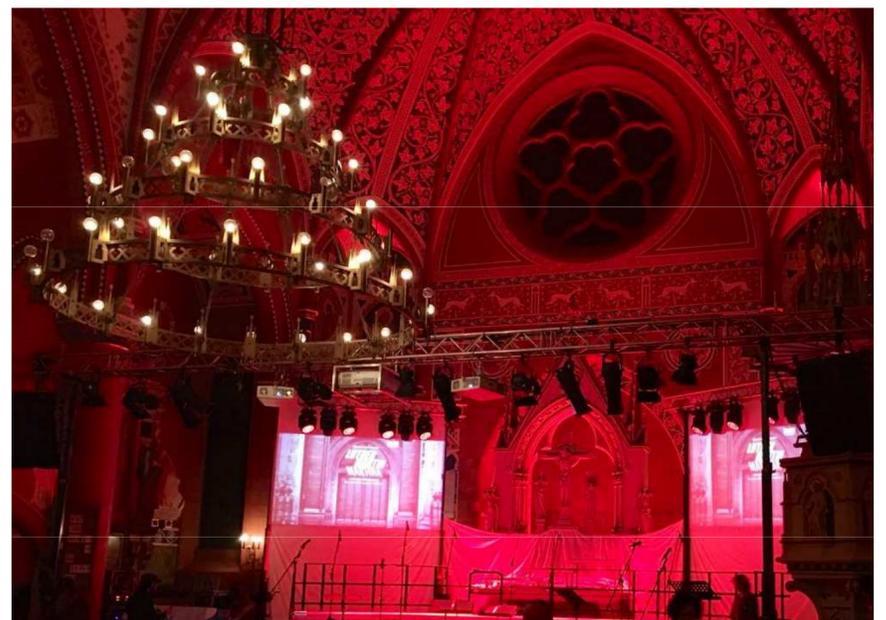
The topic of reformation was very much at the heart of the concert and a storyline was woven beautifully throughout. We learnt a bit more about Luther's history but it was also highlighted how some of his ideas were quite old-fashioned (to us anyway) and would today be regarded as wrong. The role of the church was critically dealt with and it was pointed out how relevant some of the topics of the reformation are even today. Also the 'Martina' in the title was fully explained!!!

All this was incredibly well done and wrapped up in a variety of music styles and songs. We were all surprised by the outstanding voices in the choir and I just so wish I could include a video in this article (please see our facebook page for videos and photos!). Karina sang some of the solos and she was absolutely brilliant. We were so proud of her!

Anyway, we laughed, we cried and we swayed to the beat of the music and went home full of this delightful experience, humming some of the melodies and full of thoughts about what we had been told.

Let me just say that you should not miss the opportunity to hear this choir next year. They are incredible..... Watch this space as we will be offering tickets for the next concert.

Susanne Kendell



Pictures: IWA's Members



International Women's Association

Region Braunschweig e.V.

Newsletter 44

December 2017

“A British view of German Quirks”

Just under 7 years ago I moved to Germany from the UK. It has been full of ups and downs just like any good life changing experience should be. It was educational too in that I attended language school, but educational and enlightening with respect to the culture, food and the people here. Its been a mad rollercoaster, which has enriched and changed my life forever. I can also tell you about some of the affectionate things I have discovered and observed along the way, which I love to hate, or rather to love to find odd, amusing, frustrating or all of the above.

Let's start with the A2. Having spent lots of time travelling back and forth between Braunschweig and Hannover airport I have been astounded, bewildered and down right livid at the road works. What is it all about? They ALWAYS are doing something, and it seems to always be in the same 100 km stretch somehow. What they do, no one seems to know either and most of the time there is never a soul to be seen. Heavy machinery sitting there and great deal of traffic cones, oh and more recently smiley faces to look at to tell you how well you are doing with regards to the end in sight. Talk about rubbing it in! Let's not even start on the Berlin airport, shall we?

It wasn't long after I arrived that I was exposed to Schlager music. Unlike the old 80's tunes, with a fan base all aged in their late 30's or so, I found it fascinating that this interesting music seems to span all the generations here. I have also observed that the more alcoholic beverages one consumes, the better it gets, and by some mysterious magic, once you get the tune to one or two songs, you've kind of got the tune to them all. Oh yes, and Schlager in combination with skiing or Trachten seems to be very popular.

An interesting culinary delight it seems is something called Mettbrötchen. The first time I was introduced to this, I was quite shocked at the concept, and simply couldn't get over the idea of the raw mince meat on a bread roll, but it appears to be very popular. But then I thought, new country, new ideas, new food and then someone plonked a load of salt and onions on top and then that really was the end of my relationship with Mettbrötchen.

And now for a controversial one as I have come to realise is no shops open on Sundays. You can imagine my shock upon coming from the UK, where everything is open, almost all of the time, including 24-hour supermarkets, to discover that the shops all close on Sundays. Torn between the concept of the 'good old days' of families and friends going to walks together and having Sunday roasts together, over being someone working with two children struggling to fit it all in to a 7-day week. I don't really fancy the prospect of joining the throngs of people heading to the city on a Saturday or joining the milelong queues for the car parks etc, and I am British so being able to effectively queue is like a national past time!



Pictures Straßen. NRW



Pictures: Pinterest





International Women's Association
Region Braunschweig e.V.

Newsletter 44
December 2017

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You can imagine my surprise then when on Sunday I started to drag the lawnmower out of the garage and was duly informed that after a packed week with kids, housework, food shopping and all the other bits that I am prohibited from cutting the grass on Sundays. So not only can you not go shopping or run those essential errands you can't make noise that day either, ha, or during the 'Mittagsruhe'.

Germany has many funny, quirky things like some of the ones I have mentioned and many more I could write about, particularly relevant for a mummy or for a woman here which I have stumbled upon. Although I find them somewhat odd I don't think I would change them as they are what makes Germany, Germany. It is these things which to some are odd are to others loves, or in my case a bit of both.

Selena Homann

“No-Show-Fee” for our Special Events - a Necessity?

Dear members,

It's almost time for those New Year's resolutions again... We, the Steering Committee, have a suggestion in this regard – a resolution which is easy to keep and will save us a lot of trouble and costs.

It has to do with our special events.

A great amount of effort goes into the organization of the special events we offer all year round. The events are preceded by quite a lot of planning and also negotiations with our respective hosts.

The non-appearance of members who have signed up to participate is an aggravating nuisance for the organizers. At sponsored events, at which we are often offered food and drinks, this is especially embarrassing for the organizer. And, unfortunately, this deplorable custom also sheds a bad light on the IWA, which in turn does not facilitate future event organization. Also: booking or blocking slots and tickets makes these unavailable to fellow IWA members. It's a bit like the (very often German) bad habit of throwing towels at a beach resort and turning up late or not at all.

Therefore, as much as we regret having to do so, we will in future demand payment for forfeit tickets and we will reserve the right to charge a “no-show fee” from case to case.

The best solution to this recurring problem would be, of course, the New Year's resolution suggested above: to turn up for events you signed up for, or, should you be prevented, to inform the organizer in due time. This way, the tickets can be passed on.

The Steering Committee



Pictures: IWA's Members



International Women's Association

Region Braunschweig e.V.

Newsletter 44

December 2017

Christmas Food Traditions

At last - the holiday season is upon us! The pre-Christmas activities are in full swing - the Christmas markets have opened, mulled wine is flowing, the smell of roasted almonds is in the air and, like every year, we enjoy exchanging stories about Christmas traditions, which differ so greatly from country to country.

Just take, for example, a very small subsection of the many categories of traditions: Christmas food. There are some really strange ones out there!

I started thinking about this topic when the Portuguese girlfriend of our English nephew told us about their traditional Christmas Eve meal and how not very many members of her very large family actually looked forward to it. The Portuguese serve "Bacalhau", which is salted cod. The cod is boiled and then served up with all the trimmings (mainly cabbage), which are all boiled as well. And yes, it's supposed to taste exactly as bland as it sounds. Is your mouth watering yet? No? There is a scrumptious alternative (drum roll): stewed octopus. It may come with cabbage as well, I'm not sure... Quite the choice, wouldn't you agree?

But if you think the Portuguese have it tough, you should leave a bit of sympathy for the people of Greenland. Oh, the Christmas treats they get to look forward to! There's "kiviak", an absolute delicacy. A small bird is placed in the hollowed-out body of a seal (who comes up with these things??), where it stays for a couple of months. When it finally comes out for the holidays, it's decomposed and mouldy.... Plop, onto the Christmas dinner table it goes! OR, you may skip the decomposed bird and decide to go for the "mattak", also nice. This one's a treat made from whale skin and blubber. You have the choice of either eating it raw or throwing it in a deep fryer and then drizzling it with soy sauce.... The Greenlanders are truly spoiled.

After these – for most of our palates – culinary challenges, I'd like to end with a weirdly funny Catalan tradition called the "caga tió", or defecating log. Yes, that's right. In the two weeks leading up to Christmas, the Catalonians create a character out of a log. It has a painted face, sits on the table and gets fed all kinds of treats. On Christmas Eve – and here comes the highlight – the whole family beats it with sticks while singing Christmas songs until the log "excretes" its goodies.

Quite amazing, isn't it? All these people in all these countries celebrating the same holiday in so many different ways. And we all have in common that for the holidays, families come together, sit around the table and share their time-honoured traditions. All over the world. And we'll be looking forward to our turkey just a little bit more this year...

Stephanie Cattell





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Region Braunschweig e.V.

Newsletter 44
December 2017

One Last Thought...."The joys of ollecting..."

I'm a bit of a hoarder. No, not quite like those tragic cases you see on TV with junk piled up to the ceiling in every room. No, my hoarding is a bit more concealed than that.

Ever since I can remember, I've been reading magazines and ever since I can remember, I've been tearing out recipes (and book suggestions, and travel reports, and...).

With the wonderful recipes I've collected over the years, I could easily plaster the walls of the entire house and that of at least three sets of neighbours. And if I actually used them, I could easily produce a variety of dishes or even three-course meals from now until the year 2070 without having to repeat myself once.

I don't just have one filing system, I have several. I have my old folder, in which I glued my bits of paper – these document my recipe collection up to around 2006. That is the year we moved to England and I discovered the wonderful Sainsbury's Magazine. I've been collecting these ever since and can call myself the proud owner of five complete years' issues (and the odd one since then). Now I like these not just for the recipes, but also for the beautiful seasonal covers and I get them out for the respective months and have them on standby in the kitchen. This constant rotating of piles of magazines does take some effort, but I must say that I feel inspired every time I do the switch and think to myself what a great culinary month it's going to be!

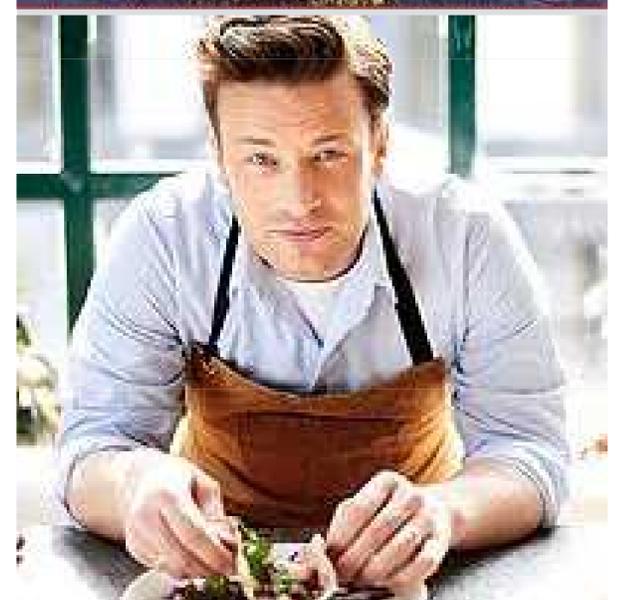
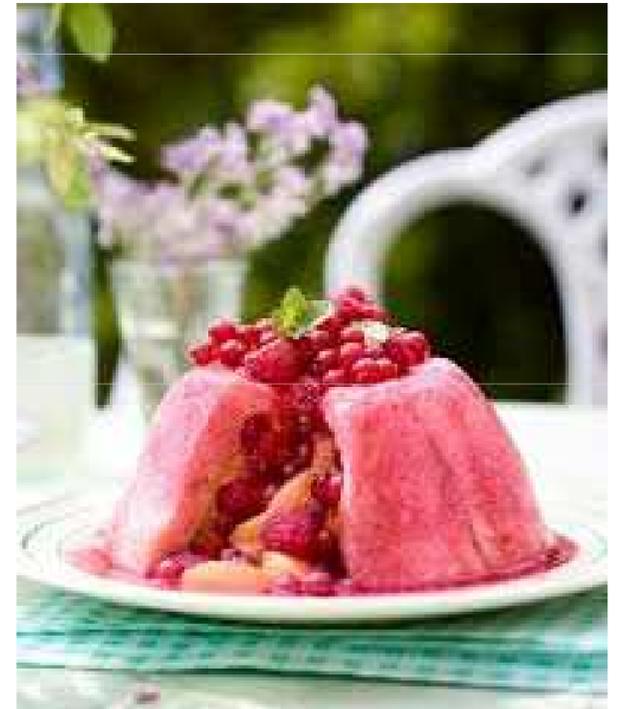
Hoarding magazines does not mean that I can't collect cookbooks as well. They're a necessity in every kitchen and in no way compete with my other collection.

It's always interesting to see what Jamie Oliver will come up with next, the pictures of Donna Hay's concoctions are forever a joy to behold and, oh, the books about cakes and pies! And I've only just discovered Cynthia Barcomi and her cheesecakes. What a revelation...

You may have concluded that I spend the lion's share of my days in the kitchen – perusing recipes, designing the menu for the week, flicking through my abundance of cookbooks and then getting to work. Clad in a pretty apron and a satisfied smile.

No not really, that is not the point. I'm just a collector. As such, I enjoy collecting, sorting, positioning and contemplating. That's all. Very satisfying and quite a lot of fun...

Stephanie Cattell





International Women's Association
Region Braunschweig e.V.

Newsletter 44
December 2017

Changing of the Guard

In the past few years, everything to do with our regular groups was directed by Michaela Noth and Diana Groschopp.

At November's Group Leader Meeting at Michaela's house (where a wonderful raclette dinner was dished up and two little grills sizzled simultaneously in the middle of the table...), the announcement was made that Diana's baton will be passed on to Blanca Zenteno.

So from January 2018, please direct all questions, suggestions, proposals for improvement or for the start-up of new groups – in short EVERYTHING to do with our regular groups – to Michaela and Blanca (noth@iwa-bs.de, [zenteno blanca@yahoo.com.mx](mailto:zenteno_blanca@yahoo.com.mx)).

All the best for the new Group Leader Team!
Stephanie Cattell



Pictures: IWA's Members

Tilman Siebenmorgen

Sylke and Thomas Siebenmorgen tragically and suddenly lost their son, Tilman, on Friday the 27th of October. He died suddenly and unexpected in his sleep after a light epileptic fit. The following heart failure is a very unusual medical phenomenon and very rare.

Tilman was a delightful, lively and lovable young man who dealt with his illness in a life-affirming and positive way and who was due to pass his A-levels next August. He spread love and laughter wherever he went and touched many people with his large personality.

Hundreds of people turned up at his funeral service on the 4th of November and it was very obvious how many lives he had positively affected in his short life.

Our hearts go out to Sylke, Thomas and their two children and we can only hope that they somehow manage to get through the difficult times to come. Our thoughts are with them.

Susanne Kendell





International Women's Association
Region Braunschweig e.V.

Newsletter 44
December 2017

General Information

Please note that the ongoing, regular programme does not continue during the school holidays. That also includes the Newcomers' Coffee morning. If the first Thursday falls into the school holidays, the Coffee morning will not take place. Also, the IWA-BS will be officially closed during the holidays. Please note that e-mails and requests will not be answered until after the holidays.

DATES FOR THE NEWCOMERS' COFFEES 2017 on THURSDAYS will be:

7th of December (evening HK)

DATES FOR THE NEWCOMERS' COFFEES 2018 on THURSDAYS will be:

1st of February (morning FS)

1st of March (evening HK)

5th of April (morning FS)

3rd of May (evening HK)

7th of June (morning FS)

6th of September (evening HK)

1st of November (morning FS)

6th of September (evening HK)

Please note that the Newcomers' Coffees take place either from 9.30 a.m. – 12.00 p.m. (FS) or 6.30 p.m. To 8.30 p.m. (HK)

The venue for the Newcomers' Coffee Mornings is (unless stated otherwise):

Volkswagen Financial Services AG (FS)
Conference Centre
Schmalbachstrasse 1
38112 Braunschweig

The venue for the Newcomers' Coffee Evenings is (unless stated otherwise):

Haus der Kulturen Braunschweig e.V. (HK)
Am Nordbahnhof 1
38106 Braunschweig

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Please note that we have taken great care to make sure that all information at the time of printing was correct but we can accept no liability for mistakes or printing errors.

As always, we would appreciate any input and ideas for future publications. Anything that you think is important to you. Please inform me (Susanne.Kendell@t-online.de) of any suggestions. Thank you!

Upcoming events

23rd of January

- Theatre - ballet "Peer Gynt"

January/ February

- Harz Walking Tour

February

- Allerlei Genuss - Cooking class in Wolfsburg
- Breakfast Invitation
- Couples' Night

23th March

- Theater -Novecento

March

- Wine Tasting

