

Newsletter 2/2016

Oberursel, 29.04. 2016

To all our friends in Épinay, Rushmoor and Lomonossov,

We held our Annual General Meeting some weeks ago and were happy to report that 2015 had been a successful year for us. Three people were voted onto our committee: Andrea Einig, Beate Kratsch and Luytsia Zenker re-stood and were re-elected by a large majority. We gave a brief report on our plans for the coming year. The highlights are the Brunnenfest (20 – 23 May), our group visit to Lomonossov (21 - 28 August), the weekend to celebrate our 25th anniversary, (7 – 9 October) and the publication of our cookery book (deadline for completion is 1st October).

We have already had the pleasure of welcoming guests from Rushmoor and Épinay this year. Some artists from Épinay came a short while ago and contributed their works to the annual exhibition of the PrismO artists' group. This exhibition, entitled "Heaven and Hell", attracted a large number of guests for the opening on 9th April and could be seen in the foyer of our town hall until 29th April.

We are expecting visitors from Lomonossov at Whitsun for the first time this year.

May will be a busy month for us because we have to prepare for several events, and some of them will run concurrently. Teams from Rushmoor and Lomonossov will be participating in the traditional young people's football competition which is scheduled for the Whit weekend, 15 to 16th May. The young footballers from Lomonossov will be staying in Oberursel from 13th to 19th May. They will be mainly looked after by our member Roswitha Ritschel-Kluge and her team, with some help from the town administration. During the competition the sport club will take the team from Rushmoor under their wing.

On this very same weekend the Institute for European Twinning and Cooperation will be holding a conference in Oberursel under the title "Partnership in times of crisis". We and the town of Oberursel are supporting them and we will give a presentation on the subject of "Town twinning in 2016 – out of date nostalgia or an opportunity for promoting understanding?"

We have been working hard on preparations for the Brunnenfest which runs from 20th 23rd May, and are happy that guests from all three of our twin towns can come and offer culinary specialities from their respective countries in the "Europadorf". It is always fun to work and play together and we would ask our visitors to put 12.00, 21st May in their diaries as we would like to invite them to join us at a barbecue as our way of thanking them for all their hard work during the Brunnenfest. This will also give us a chance to discuss future activities and projects. The "Hochtaunus Europe Day" will also be held in Grävenwiesbach on 21st May this weekend, and we will share an "information stand" there with the town of Oberursel.

Once May is over we will concentrate our attention on the detailed preparations for the civic visit to Lomonossov and our jubilee weekend. In July we will hold our traditional summer party on 16th July and our annual committee conference on 17th July.

We have put off participation in the programme "Oberurseler Summer" until next year because we have only limited financial and personnel resources, and voluntary work should continue to be fun. We, in the committee, see it as our duty to ensure that we only take on a sensible level of activities, but we are always open to new ideas and suggestions.

We think it is important to promote activities for our members too and for that reason we organised a joint visit to a special exhibition in Frankfurt's Liebig-Haus in March. Entitled "Liaisons dangereuse" – the art of the French rococo", this exhibition presented sculpture, paintings, prints and arts and crafts on loan from famous museums, such as the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, the Louvre in Paris, the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert in London, the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, the Wallraf-Richartz Museum & Fondation Corboud in Cologne and the Bavarian Alte Pinakothek in Munich. After an entertaining and informative tour in the museum we had time to view some of the installations on display in Frankfurt as part of the Luminale light show.

We held another of our regular members' meetings in April which gives them and others interested in twinning to get together to exchange information and talk to our committee about current and upcoming activities. The main topics this time were our planned trip to Russia and our plans for the second half of the year.

If you have time you might like to take a look at our home page (www.vfos.de) or at our Facebook page where you can find photos taken at various events, and some further information (in German).

We would like to conclude with some information on local politics. There was an election for representatives to our town parliament on 6th March, and the initial session was held at the end of April. The Christian Democrats (CDU) and Social Democrats (SPD) have entered into a coalition and have a slight majority. Gerd Krämer was elected chairman as successor to Dr. Christoph Müllerleile. Hans-Georg Brum (SPD) had been re-elected as mayor in June 2015.

We will continue to cooperate with the town of Oberursel and its town parliament and hope that very many of its members will actively promote the work of town twinning and grant us their support in future.

The VFOS committee would like to send you their best wishes and look forward to seeing you soon, either at the Brunnenfest or on another occasion this year. At this difficult time Europe needs active support from its citizens and meetings at all levels.

Best wishes



Birgit Roeher, Chairman VFOS