



# Friends in the World

## Braunschweig's Twin and Friendship Cities



## Review 2020

### International Relations

The city of Braunschweig maintains contacts to numerous towns and cities in different countries all over the world. It has partnership agreements with seven twin cities and two friendship cities. This review looks back at the activities of the "International Relations Office" of the city of Braunschweig in the year 2020.

In March, numerous events, jubilees, the summer party with the international associations, student, youth and artist exchanges as well as citizen journeys had to be cancelled owing to the Corona pandemic. But even though personal meetings were not possible, the close contacts to our partners and friends are unbroken.

Many activities have to be rescheduled in 2021, if the situation allows. This effects in particular the anniversary celebrations with Bandung (60 years in 2020), but also the citizens journeys to Kiryat Tivon and Bath. Another citizens journey that will take place in 2021 is the trip to Kazan.

There are also two anniversaries coming up in 2021, namely 50 years of twinning partnership with Bath and ten years of twinning partnership with Zhuhai. In this context, there are two dedications planned for places in the Kiryat Tivon Park.

## Common activities

### Solidarity and exchange during Corona times

After the "International Relations Office" had asked their partners to provide information about the situation in their towns and cities, the "Braunschweiger Zeitung" reported on the pandemic in the twin and friendship cities in May (<https://www.braunschweiger-zeitung.de/braunschweig/article228907519/how-is-the-situation-in-our-partner-cities.html>.)

The city of Bandung asked for information about the Corona measures imposed in Braunschweig in order to have a comparison as to whether and to what extent the measures in Bandung could possibly be expanded or supplemented.

In addition, the Lord Mayor of Braunschweig sent expressions of solidarity in connection with the Corona pandemic to all twin and friendship cities, wishing perseverance and confidence.

### 75 years of peace: Lord Mayor Markurth wrote to partner and friendship cities

Even in times of Corona, the horrors of World War II were not forgotten. On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe on May 8th, Lord Mayor Ulrich Markurth wrote to the twin and friendship cities of Braunschweig affected by the war. Nîmes (France) and Bath (Great Britain) as twin cities and Kazan (Russian Federation) and Omaha (USA) as friends of the city of Braunschweig received letters expressing that the city of Braunschweig mournfully commemorated all victims of the war on the "Day of Liberation from National Socialist Tyranny" - especially all peoples who suffered under the Nazi regime and whose citizens lost their lives.

### Article in Braunschweig's city blog

This blog [„Leben in der Löwenstadt“](#) published by Braunschweig Stadtmarketing GmbH, reports from the nine partner and friendship cities and their traditions and local dishes on New Year's Eve.



Kultur @home Mitgehen Essen Kaufen Unterwegs Gut zu wissen

#### Was unsere Freunde an Silvester essen



Geschrieben von Maria Simon

Maria entdeckt mit Vorliebe die vielfältige Kulturlandschaft der Stadt, sie genießt aber auch die vielen Erholungsmöglichkeiten, die grünen Oasen und vor allem gutes Essen.





# Bandung/Indonesia

## **210th anniversary of the founding of the city of Bandung**

For the celebrations of the 210th founding anniversary of the city of Bandung, Lord Mayor Ulrich Markurth sent a video message to Bandung in August, congratulating the city of Bandung and its citizens on the anniversary and saying that the city of Braunschweig is looking forward to further cooperating with Bandung as well as to the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the city partnership, which had to be postponed due to the pandemic. The video message was published on the website of the city of Bandung.



A still from the video message

## **60th anniversary of the town twinning**

In Braunschweig, too, the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the city partnership with Bandung was to be celebrated in 2020. In addition to an official ceremony, the naming of a bridge after Bandung combined with a citizen's festival, an Indonesian market on the town hall forecourt and other program items were planned. An official delegation from Bandung was also to come to Braunschweig to take part in the anniversary celebrations. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the festivities had to be postponed to the year 2021.

## **Consul General from Hamburg watched the carnival parade**

In 2020, the consulate general visited once again the carnival parade. While dancers in traditional dress presented their country with typical Indonesian sweets, the official delegation headed by Consul General Dr. Bambang Susanto watched this spectacular event from the balcony of the Old Town Hall.



The Indonesian guests at the reception held by the marshal of the carnival parade in the Volkswagen Hall

## **Indonesian Consul General visited Lord Mayor Markurth**

On 7 October 2020, the new Consul General of the Republic of Indonesia in Hamburg, Mr. Ardian Wicaksono, made his inaugural visit to Lord Mayor Markurth.

Topics of the meeting were activities for the anniversary year with Bandung, planning of the anniversary celebration in 2021 as well as new possibilities of cooperation between the two cities.



General Consul Ardian Wicaksono and Lord Mayor Ulrich Markurth handing over of official presents.



# Bath/Great Britain

## **Citizens' trip and visit of an official delegation**

A delegation trip to be led by Lord Mayor Ulrich Markurth and a citizens' trip to Bath unfortunately had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. The numerous registrations for the citizens' trip demonstrate the great interest in a trip to the British twin city. We intend to organise the trip as soon as the situation permits.

Other already planned activities between associations and representatives from both cities, such as the traditional exchange of the bridge clubs from Braunschweig and Bath, also had to be postponed indefinitely.

Unfortunately, the long-standing student exchange between the Ricarda Huch School and King Edward's School, but also the internships of the Heinrich Buessing School with the Vocational Schools Technology in Bath could not take place.



# Kasan/Russian Fed.

## **Youth encounters**

The youth encounters 2020 between students from the comprehensive school Wilhelm-Bracke-Gesamtschule and its partner school in Kazan had to be cancelled. Braunschweig's Department for Children, Youth and Family, which is responsible for the encounters, hopes to continue the exchange in 2021.



# Kiryat Tivon/Israel

## **Award of honorary citizenship to Sally Perel supported by the twin city**

On 26 August 2020, Lord Mayor Ulrich Markurth officially awarded Salomon "Sally" Perel with honorary citizenship of the city of Braunschweig. The Corona pandemic made it impossible for Sally Perel to travel from Israel to Braunschweig. Instead, he and the Mayor of Braunschweig's twin city Kiryat Tivon, Ido Grinblum, and further guests attended this moving ceremony from Kiryat Tivon's city hall remotely via video.



Mayor Grinblum from the Israeli sister city handed the certificate of honorary citizenship to Sally Perel

Despite the pandemic or precisely because of it, the partnership between Braunschweig and Kiryat Tivon has thus produced a unique and unforgettable cooperation. Moreover, the city of Kiryat Tivon has gained Salomon Perel as a friend. The distance and the measures imposed by Covid-19 notwithstanding, and thanks to Sally Perel, Braunschweig and Kiryat Tivon have never been as close as on that day. This closeness shall persist in the future.



Sally Perel during his vote of thanks to Braunschweig (© Miriam Rauch)



Miriam Rauch, Sally Perel, Mayor Ido Grinblum, Uri Themal (l. to r.) (© Miriam Rauch)

## Days of Jewish Culture

The Israel Jacobson Network for Jewish Culture and History (IJN) organised Days of Jewish Culture for Braunschweig and the region for the first time in the fall of 2020. The city of Braunschweig supported this event.

The Israel Jacobson Network aims to showcase authentic places and objects of Jewish culture in history and present to the whole region and beyond.

The Jewish Culture Days place a special emphasis on dialogue with today's Jewish community. Face-to-face events and virtual events allowed participants to exchange with representatives of the Jewish Community in our region. The program also included walking tours to explore Jewish history, guided visits to Jewish cemeteries, as well as exhibitions, lectures, readings, concerts and film screenings.

In this context, the International Relations Office of the City of Braunschweig, the Jewish Community and Braunschweig's twin city Kiryat Tivon prepared an online event.

Host Michael Brandt interviewed Renate Wagner-Redding, chairwoman of the Jewish Community Braunschweig and rabbi Uri Themal from Kiryat Tivon. They talked about Jewish life in Braunschweig and in Kiryat Tivon and about Jewish customs and holidays such as the Jewish New Year.

The two interviews are available on the the Israel Jacobson Network's YouTube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zW9sSBi5W3o>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fv3ie1odNJY>



Rabbi Uri Themal from Kiryat Tivon and Renate Wagner-Redding, Chairwoman of Braunschweig's Jewish Community Braunschweig

## Artist exchange, Youth encounters, Student exchange

Unfortunately, the annually recurring projects such as the artist exchange, the youth encounters organised by the Department Children, Youth and Family of the City of Braunschweig as well as the student exchange between the Waldorf schools of both cities could not be realized due to the pandemic.



# Magdeburg

## 30 years of German reunification: Witnesses from Braunschweig and Magdeburg discussed experiences

To mark the 30th anniversary of the reunification of the two German states on October 3, 1990, politicians and representatives of civil society shared their views in a panel discussion on October 2. Around 150 citizens, among them a number of pupils, attended this event.



The moderator and the Lord mayor with the witnesses at the closure of the event (© Philipp Ziebart/BestPixels.de)

After the opening speeches held by Braunschweig's Lord Mayor Ulrich Markurth and by Dr. Lutz Trümper, Lord Mayor of Braunschweig's twin city Magdeburg, keynote speaker Dr. Gert Hoffmann, former Lord Mayor of Braunschweig, spoke about the German reunification.

Afterwards journalist Ingeborg Obi-Preuß moderated three discussions with the following participants: Gerhard Glogowski (former Prime Minister of the State of Lower Saxony, then Lord Mayor and now Honorary Citizen of the city of Braunschweig) and Dr. Wilhelm Polte (then Lord Mayor and now Honorary Citizen of the city of Magdeburg); former teachers from Magdeburg and Braunschweig Ute Mühlner and Sabine Meyer, Prof. Dr. Eckhardt Fuchs (Director of the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research), Prof. Dr. Matthias Puhle (former Deputy Mayor in Charge of Cultural Affairs of the City of Magdeburg) and Dr. Rüdiger Koch (former Lord Mayor and Deputy Mayor in charge of Culture, Sports and Youth of the city of Magdeburg).

During the discussion rounds, the events that took place around October 3, 1990 were examined from the participants' different perspectives: from the first contact between the then city leaders almost three years before reunification, to very personal and emotional

accounts, to the difficulties that arose after the initial euphoria over reunification and newly won freedom. The exchange of ideas captivated and moved the audience.



## Nîmes/France

**Nîmes will participate in the artist exchange of the "Circle of friends of visual artists"**

Similar to the artist exchange with Kiryat Tivon, which had already been planned for 2020, an artist from Nîmes should also exhibit at the annual art market of the "Circle of friends of visual artists" in Braunschweig. This activity was postponed to autumn 2021 and could be the beginning of an exchange between artists from Nîmes and Braunschweig.



## Omaha/USA

Unfortunately, no activity with the friendship city Omaha could be conducted in 2020. Thus, the youth exchanges organised by the Department of Children, Youth and Families, which take place in close cooperation with Braunschweig's Raabeschule High School and the Harry A. Burke High School in Omaha, could not take place. The student exchange between Hoffmann-von-Fallersleben School and Omaha North High Magnet School was also cancelled.



Harry A. Burke High School Omaha  
(© Carol Stoltenberg)



Omaha North High Magnet School  
(© Carol Stoltenberg)



# Sousse/Tunesien

## 40 years of partnership with Sousse

Braunschweig and its Tunisian twin city Sousse celebrated together the 40th anniversary of their partnership. For this purpose, a delegation from Sousse headed by Mayor Dr. Mohamed Ikbel Khaled visited us 20 to 26 February 2020. Four representatives of the departments for environmental, touristic and cultural affairs accompanied him.

For this anniversary, the city of Braunschweig had invited to a festive reception at Richmond Palace on 21 February 2020. About forty guests attended. The speeches given, the mayor of Sousse signed the Golden Book of the city of Braunschweig. Music by a traditional folk group from Sousse accompanied the ceremony.



Honorary Citizen Gerhard Glogowski, former Prime Minister of the State of Lower Saxony, Braunschweig's Lord Mayor Ulrich Markurth, Tunisian Consul Sonia Ben Amor, Christoph Unger, President of the Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (BBK), Mayor of Sousse Dr. Mohamed Ikbel Khaled (l. to r.)



Lord Mayor Markurth presents his counterpart from Sousse with a Braunschweig lion.

As per this year's theme, "Braunschweig is cosmopolitan and international, and so is our carnival!", the visitors' participation in the Braunschweig "Schoduvel" (the carnival parade)

on 23 February 2020 was part of the agenda. The Tunisians presented themselves on a specially decorated parade float. The folk group who had already played music at the above mentioned ceremony, accompanied the parade float on foot .



The Musicians from Sousse putting the heat on the spectators.

Besides celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and participating in the carnival, we took full advantage of our partners' stay in Braunschweig to exchange ideas on multiple topics. During a meeting with the German Federal Office for Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance, it was investigated how to improve the reaction of Tunisian emergency services during traffic accidents. The meeting focused on potential further education in the context of emergency management and on the concrete rescue of casualties.

Another topic was the renaturation of the Hamdoun River in Tunisia, which was discussed together with the Technische Universität Braunschweig. Further on, the schedule comprised visits at the Service for ideas and complaint management in the context of civic participation and at the Braunschweig city marketing department. And last but not least, an extensive program with additional activities completed the delegation visit.

## **Cooperation to improve the water quality of Hamdoun River**

Following the expert exchange within the above-mentioned delegation visit from Sousse, the Technische Universität Braunschweig and the University of Sousse, together with a German and a Tunisian engineering company, applied for project funds from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the Tunisian Ministry of Education for the installation of constructed wetlands for wastewater treatment at the Hamdoun River.

As the Hamdoun River flows through the governorates of Sousse and Monastir and in order to raise the chances for the approval of the funds, the city of Braunschweig and the city of Münster, Monastir's twin city, signed a letter of endorsement to support the application for project funds.

In December, the selection committee for German-Tunisian projects notified that the application was not approved. Now the partners have to find a way to continue the cooperation for the project "Hamdoun River", which was launched in 2014.



# Zhuhai/China

## 40th anniversary of Zhuhai Special Economic Zone

On August 26, 1980, Zhuhai was declared one of the first special economic zones (SEZ) in China. No celebrations with personal encounters being possible due to the pandemic, the city of Zhuhai presented the greetings and image films of its various twin cities on the façade of the Zhuhai Opera House during a public event. Lord Mayor Ulrich Markurth's video message was also displayed during the anniversary celebrations "40 Years of Zhuhai Special Economic Zone". An exhibition on the twin cities and a number of activities such as a quiz on Zhuhai's twin cities completed the festivities.



Lord Mayor Markurth's video message and the promotional Film "Löwenstadt" were displayed on the shell-shaped Zhuhai Opera House building.

Extracts of the greeting message and of the promotional film on Braunschweig were also shown on local television.



A still from the TV-show

## Student exchange between Braunschweig and Zhuhai

Due to the Corona pandemic, unfortunately, no student exchange could take place between Zhuhai High School No.1 and the two partner schools, Gymnasium Martino-Katharineum and Gymnasium Hoffmann-von-Fallersleben-Schule. On the occasion of the 60th school anniversary of Zhuhai High School No.1 in December, the partner schools from Braunschweig sent their congratulations.

# International Associations

Regular meetings take place with following association who contribute to the work with the twins and friendship cities:

- **Vereinigung der Tunesier in Deutschland-Sektion Braunschweig e. V.**  
Association of Tunisians in Germany – Section Braunschweig
- **Deutsch-Tunesische Gesellschaft – Sektion Niedersachsen**  
German-Tunisian Association – Section Lower Saxony  
Website: <http://www.deutsch-tunesische-gesellschaft.de>
- **Deutsch-Chinesische Gesellschaft Braunschweig e. V.**  
German-Chinese Association  
Website: <http://www.dcgbs.de>
- **Deutsch-Englische Gesellschaft e. V.**  
Anglo-German Association  
Website: <http://www.deg-bs.jimdo.com>
- **Deutsch-Französische Gesellschaft e. V. Braunschweig und Wolfsburg**  
German-French Association - The association was dissolved by 31 December 2020.
- **Deutsch-Indonesische Gesellschaft e. V.**  
German-Indonesian Association  
Website: <http://www.dig-niedersachsen.de>
- **Deutsch-Israelische Gesellschaft e. V., Arbeitsgemeinschaft Braunschweig**  
German-Israeli Society  
Website: <http://braunschweig.deutsch-israelische-gesellschaft.de>



Sabine Apel, Barbara Frisch, Gülcan Solak, Petra Havemann (from left to right)

## **Do you have questions or ideas concerning these or other projects?**

The team of the twinning partnerships/international relations is at your disposal.

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