

**Chris Wrein (1966 – 1972)**

## HAMBURG 1968

I remember going on the school trip to Hamburg in April 1968 when I was 13. It was the first time I had ever been away from home and it was great experience. Since then, Hamburg has remained my favourite place to visit and it still gives me a bit of a thrill rolling in on the bus or train. Even by air is OK.

The teachers who came on the trip were John Badcock who spoke German pretty well perfectly as I remember (although I think he only taught French at the school) and Adrian Bolge who also spoke an impressive amount of German. The boys who came and whose names spring to mind are:

My brother, Martin; Nigel "Noggin" Thomas; Arthur Smith; Mick Luff; a lad called Barnes whose first name I can't remember [began with P.]; Max Little; Rich May; Barry Patheyjohns

The trip was overnight via Dover and Ostend so we arrived a bit bleary eyed at Hamburg Hauptbahnhof.

The family my brother and I stayed with were called Kreykenbohm and they owned a grocery shop so, needless to say, the grub was brilliant. The family were really nice and I called on them again a couple of times in the next 20 years with my wife and kids.

Places we visited were the TV tower, Hagenbeck's Zoo and the Reeperbahn - quite an experience for a 13 year old to visit a red light district in those days. We also had a tour of the harbour and the city called, respectively, Hafenrundfahrt and Stadtrundfahrt. We also spent time in the school which was a bit of a mouthful i.e. Gymnasium fuer Jungen in Eppendorf.

A couple of things which stand out for me were firstly, everyone on the trip went to Berlin for a few days except me as my passport wasn't a full one, apparently. It worked out well though because, whilst they were away I went to see the European Cup Winners Cup semi final between Hamburg and Cardiff City where the Welshmen gained a very creditable 1:1 draw (lost the 2<sup>nd</sup> leg though).

The other thing was that Herr Kreykenbohm had been a prisoner of war in France. I didn't speak any German in those days but I had done nearly two years French under Joe Rogers and John Brown so was able to have quite a good chat with him.

The visit left a great impression on me and, I think, spurred me on to take up German albeit in 4K and I just scraped A Level with help from Messrs Robinson, Hyland and Rees. I have met Mr Rees in the last couple of years and he still has the most resonant and pleasant Welsh accent.

Other teachers I have met since leaving in 1972 are those at the 2009 dinner and Len Veals who taught Maths. He must have been good because I got through Maths O Level.

I think, in the main, we had some really good teachers at the Southern and I'm only sorry I didn't take a bit more notice of them when they tried to encourage me to be to put in a bit more effort and show more enthusiasm, particularly in the sixth form.

**Finally I would be really interested to hear from anyone who went on the 1968 Hamburg trip. In fact I'd be happy to hear from anyone who was in my year. I've reached that age where I do feel a bit nostalgic!**

[chris.wrein@gosport.gov.uk](mailto:chris.wrein@gosport.gov.uk)