

Freundschaft

Chichester's **Friends of Speyer** newsletter



Issue 2 – January 2025



Willkommen!

View over Weihnachtsmarkt from Speyer Dom
Photo: David Elliott

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Welcome to the second edition of *Freundschaft*. Since the last issue, many things have happened and these are covered in other articles. The undoubted 'big event' was the first visit of the Friends to Speyer at the end of November.

For those of you who have not yet been to Speyer, I strongly recommend that you try a long weekend. There are many festivals and other activities going on throughout the year that would be well worth visiting beyond the

excellent Christmas Market.

We will welcome our opposite numbers from Speyer who will be coming to Chichester in late August for three days. The visit will commence on Saturday 23rd August with an evening welcome reception in the Assembly Room, North Street. I hope to see as many of you as possible there. If you wish to become involved in playing an active role in arrangements for the visit, please do speak up.

Recruiting is still an issue for us. At the last AGM, I said that it would be good to hit the target of 100 members by the 2025 AGM – we are still short of that target, presently around the mid-80 mark. As other articles in the newsletter will show, the twinning link isn't about simply having a good time socially; there are education, cultural and business links to grow and nurture.

Having been associated with the Speyer twinning link for nearly four years, I will be standing down as Chairman at the forthcoming AGM. If you are interested in leading the Friends of Speyer in their next phase of development, then please let me know.

With my thanks and best wishes to you all.

Rodney Duggua
Chairman, Friends of Speyer

Visit to Speyer: welcome events

For some, the trip to Speyer started at the crack of dawn in Northgate car park where 15 or so bleary-eyed Cicestrians boarded a minibus for Heathrow. From Terminal 2 it was a short flight to Frankfurt, and then a bus down the Autobahn to Speyer. Others took different routes.

For our first evening, our hosts arranged a wonderful welcome dinner at Haus Trinitatis on Johannes Strasse in the city centre. Over an excellent buffet meal and free-flowing wine, we were able to renew acquaintanceships and make new friends. Our German friends switched tables every now and again at the sound of Matthias Nowack's vigorously rung cowbell. Deputy Mayor Monika Kabs gave some welcoming remarks, and our own Mayor Sarah Quail thanked her in reply. It was a great start to the weekend.

The next morning, we reconvened in the 18th-century Rathaus (Town Hall), covered in scaffolding on the outside but looking very stately on the inside, for a joint reception with a visiting Friends group from Italy. Monica Kabs and Sarah Quail again spoke warmly of the links between Speyer and Chichester, and Graziella Graziani did so for Ravenna. The interpreter, juggling between English, Italian and German, was kept busy.

Vice-Chair of the Friends of Chichester, Petra Exner-Tekampe, presented Sarah with the unlikely gift of a football, a symbol of a proposed sports event between Chichester and Speyer in 2026. It is hoped that Ravenna and Chartres could join later making it a four-cities event. It would encourage greater involvement in the twinning movement, particularly with younger members of the communities. Watch this space!

Afterwards we were served sparkling wine and pretzels, that most famous of German snacks, an effigy of which is carved into the doorway of the Dom.

David Elliott



Getting to know everyone at the welcome party at Haus Trinitatis in Speyer.



Members of Friends of Speyer gather at a joint reception in the Rathaus.



Petra Exner-Tekampe presents Mayor Sarah Quail a gift in the shape of a football, a symbol of a Chichester–Speyer sports event planned for 2026.



Mayor Sarah Quail with Deputy Mayor Monika Kabs

Visit to Speyer: Dom and Judenhof guided tours

Following Saturday morning's reception, a large contingent of us gathered in front of the Rathaus for the start of a tour of the city centre. Sigrun, our guide, began by giving us a condensed history, wielding a two-metre-long folding ruler which conveniently split the epochs into manageable '10cm' chunks.

After that, we walked alongside the vibrant Weihnachtsmarkt (Christmas Market) which runs the length of Maximilianstrasse from the Altpörtal (Old Gate) to the Dom (cathedral), pausing to admire the Jakobspilger (St James pilgrim) statue, forever on his way to Santiago de Campostela.

Soon we reached the majestic, splendidly isolated Dom – the largest extant Romanesque building in Europe. Founded in 1030 (so a big anniversary coming up in five years' time), Sigrun explained its long and complicated history as we walked around the perimeter.

The next day another guide, Bastian, took us inside, exploring the nave, the crypt with the tombs of the Holy Roman emperors and German royalty, and up to the huge Emperor's Hall above the western entrance. Here, nine immense, laboriously restored frescoes by Johann von Schraudolph are displayed.

Finally, some of us climbed yet more steps to the top of one of the towers to be rewarded with a wonderful view of the city as the sun set.

But back to Saturday... After visiting the Dom, Sigrun walked us to the Judenhof (Jewish Courtyard), the history of which dates back almost as far as the Dom. The medieval remains include a 'mikvah', or subterranean baths, which against the odds have survived to the present day.

David Elliott



Visit to Speyer: Auf Wiedersehen and Industriebhof

As our last day in Speyer became night, we made our way through the lively Weihnachtsmarkt to the Dreifaltigkeitskirche (Trinity Church) to say our goodbyes. By special arrangement we were able to have an out-of-hours gathering inside the church – much to everyone's relief as by now it was very cold. Drinks and nibbles were once again on offer, as well as a scholarly talk, by Helmut Damian, about the history of the church.

Baroque in style, it was built in the early 1700s and still has its original wooden galleries and extensive panel paintings.

Its reredos is particularly elaborate and that is where we chose to have a group photo. Matthias Nowack spoke on behalf of the Friends of Chichester, and Sarah Quail replied on behalf of the Friends of Speyer, thanking our hosts for their wonderful hospitality. We have invited the Friends of Chichester to visit us from 23–26 August this year, so the planning starts now!



Twin City Friends say Auf Wiedersehen in Dreifaltigkeitskirche.



In the north-east of Speyer, alongside the Rhine, is an old industrial quarter called Industriebhof. It was once home to the Speyer Celluloid Factory which, in its 1930s heyday (see left), employed over 1,000 people. It closed in 1968 but the site was well maintained and used for miscellaneous industrial and semi-industrial businesses. In recent years lots of small enterprises have moved in. Our hosts, Gottfried and Hildegard Jung, took us there and we spent an enjoyable hour or so wandering around artist studios and galleries, cafes and restaurants, and a few cool shops and antiques stores. We even caught an impromptu concert organised by a micro-brewery.

Chichester of course is only half the size of Speyer and has never had an industrial quarter of the scale of Industriebhof, certainly not in the factory-made-of-bricks sense, Shippam's excepted. Terminus Road and Quarry Lane don't quite have the industrial chic of Industriebhof. Wouldn't it be great if the old House of Fraser on West Street could be revitalised along similar lines?

David Elliott



50 years of Rotary Club Speyer

In June 2024, a group of six Chichester Club Rotarians visited Speyer to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Rotary Club of Speyer. In a prestigious ceremony Hartmut Loos was appointed President and it was indeed a grand occasion with 120 invited for the ceremony and the banquet afterwards. There was a full programme of speeches and lovely musical interludes and even a short speech from me in German! The friendship link with Thun in Switzerland was marked with a huge Swiss cowbell presented to the outgoing President, Oliver Kolb.



Relaxing Rotarians: Hartmut Loos, Ulricke Loos, Keith Osterloh, Richard Plowman, Rachel Hammond, Dick Hammond

Our visit happily coincided with Kult(o)urnacht Speyer where all the cultural centres, churches, galleries and museums put on concerts and events on one night only from 9pm to 1am. You obtain a Fan-pass and pop in and out. I found it extremely valuable to see what Speyer could offer and several useful discussions took place.

For example, in the wonderful Dreifaltigkeitskirche, the Swing Band Harthausen was playing and after a very brief discussion they said they would like to do a joint concert with Chichester City Band when they visit. The next Kult(o)urnacht will take place on Friday 13 June 2025.

Many of the Rotary Club of Speyer are key contacts for the twinning activities and the whole visit was very productive in planning possible exchanges and events. The hospitality was magnificent and we extend particular thanks to the new President, Hartmut Loos.

Five months later and a number of Rotarians joined the wider Friends of Speyer visit, including Lynne and myself, Howard and Jennifer Bottomley, Peter and Margaret Evans, and Michael Bevis.

Hartmut Loos invited us to lunch at the Feuerbachhaus restaurant, birthplace – and now also gallery – of the 19th-century artist Anselm Feuerbach. We were also joined by the Director of the Cathedral Choir, Markus Melchiori, and Clemens King who had visited Chichester earlier. We took the opportunity to discuss how we might develop the link with the two clubs.

Arrangements have been made for our club to visit Speyer from 16–19 May 2025, along with their twin Italian club of Faenza, and for them to come to Chichester with the Faenza club in 2026.

Our club will be sponsoring a Bishop Luffa student to visit Speyer for three weeks under the Rotary STEP scheme, while the Rotary Club of Speyer is offering a short stay for five students. Markus Melchiori will also be bringing a group of about 40 students on a choral tour of England and would like to include Chichester on the tour if accommodation can be found.

Richard Plowman

President

Rotary Club of Chichester

German films

Watch out for two German films at Chichester Cinema in February: the original *Nosferatu: Eine Symphonie des Grauens* directed by F.W. Murnau in 1922 (not to be confused with the recent Hollywood remake), and last year's *September 5* about the 1972 Munich Olympics hostage crisis, directed by Tim Fehlbaum.

Meanwhile, we are in discussion with Chichester Cinema about a German film event later this year.

Laura Buckle: artist in residence

During July and August 2024, local artist Laura Buckle undertook a residency in Speyer, concluding with an exhibition. What follows is her account of those two months.

My time in Speyer was truly life-changing. It was an honour to be a part of such a long and rich history with the Künstlerbund e.V. Speyer. My stay at the Künstlerhaus felt like a home-from-home and Speyer will forever hold a place in my heart. The members of the Künstlerbund, alongside all the Friends of Chichester, were so friendly and kind, and made me feel so welcome.

Arriving in Speyer I could instantly see why the cities have twinned, and I explored all it had to offer. Learning about the place and people through the local community was a privilege, and the city's architecture, history, and landscape is truly special. I spent my days exploring, meeting new people and, of course, making artwork.



Artwork by Laura Buckle

Andrea Niessen from the Künstlerbund told me about a flower in the local woods which she saw and thought I'd find interesting: a catkin from a sweet chestnut, which became the main feature in my work. I collected as many catkins as possible from the local woods and brought them back to my studio where I began weaving with them. I created small weavings



Laura Buckle receives a gift from Künstlerbund e. V. Speyer's Chair, Magdalena Trimborn.

which I then attached to create large hanging sculptures.

I am predominately a textile artist, but my research is heavily based in the textile industry, particularly waste, and its impact on our climate. Therefore, when I make work, I always consider where my materials are sourced, what they are made of, and how I will dispose of them once I have finished. My intention had been to return my catkin sculptures to the woods, as I made them ensuring no other chemical or material would be added. I merely borrowed them. I borrowed thousands more which I used for stuffing my soft sculptures, and these were returned to the woods after my exhibition was over. All the materials I used in my exhibition were donated by the local community in Speyer.

I also hosted some open days at my studio and invited the local community to take part in a communal weaving. This was made using materials donated by the people of Speyer, woven by them, and in Speyer.

My weaving, hanging catkin sculptures, and many large soft sculptures stuffed with catkins, were shown alongside a mixture of other works. This included illustrations of the similarities and differences I had noticed between Chichester and Speyer, 35mm film photographs, and soft vessels; which were gifted to visitors who signed a contract to become activists by sharing the issues this industry creates.

The works were open to the public at the end of my residency.

Laura Buckle

Four Cities and Gala events

All the twinning cities were involved in quick succession with two very successful events. For the Friends of Speyer it was the first opportunity to have a stand to promote Chichester's twinning with Speyer. We wanted our stand to be welcoming and interesting, and to reflect the great progress made since we were formed. The events were also good opportunities for recruitment.

Tom Brown talk, Four Cities event (24 June 2024)

The first was the Four Cities talk, *Tom Brown in Conversation*, on 24 June, in the Assembly Room, North Street, Chichester. This was organised by the four city-twinning societies of Chichester – Friends of Chartres, Ravenna, Valletta and Speyer – and followed by wine and nibbles from the four countries involved. It was a full house and the talk from West Dean Head Gardener, Tom Brown, was excellent. Our stand location in the hall was not the best but we put on a good show with Luckes providing excellent Häppchen (German canapés) which proved to be a big hit. I would particularly like to thank Peter and Margaret Evans, who did an excellent job providing the wine and serving the refreshments.



Tom Brown in conversation with Phil Hewitt at the Four Cities talk in June.



Twinning stall at Gala Day (29 June 2024)

The second event was the Chichester City Council's Gala in Priory Park on 29 June, where, aside from the fairground attractions and performances, a range of stalls and food venues were laid out to showcase societies, organisations and makers in the Chichester area. Each of the four cities had a stall, grouped close to the main park entrance. It was a perfect summer's day and thousands attended the Gala which continued into the evening with local musical entertainment. There was a lot of interest in our stand and the game for children was a big hit and encouraged them to learn a few German words whilst having fun. Thanks to all who staffed the stand throughout the day especially Rosemary and Miles Halford.

Richard Plowman



Rodney Duggua and Craig Gershater at Gala Day.

Membership

Membership of Friends of Speyer is open to anyone interested in international friendship. Joining us brings many rewards and opportunities, and membership costs from just £12 per year.

- ◆ Receive *Freundschaft*, the Friends of Speyer newsletter where you can find the latest news and events.
- ◆ Enjoy exchange visits and new friendships.
- ◆ Sign up for German language classes and conversation groups.
- ◆ Discover Speyer's rich heritage and experience its culture.
- ◆ Sample Speyer's regional food and wine.
- ◆ Celebrate the spirit of twinning at Gala Day during the Festival of Chichester.

See overleaf to complete and post a membership form, or go to www.friendsofspeyer.org/membership/ or email Membership@FriendsOfSpeyer.org

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Date	Signed

Please indicate (tick box) which membership is required:

☐ Single person £12.00

☐ Joint/Family (up to 2 children) £18.00

☐ Corporate £20.00

Subscriptions are renewable annually on 1 January.

Email addresses are for the sole use of Friends of Speyer and will not be used for any 3rd party communications.

To give you the benefit of the full experience of membership of Friends of Speyer, we would like to send you information about the association's events. Under GDPR requirements, your consent, in the form of a positive opt-in, is required before we can add your details to our mailing lists. Without this consent we can only send information regarding the administration of Friends of Speyer. Please tick as appropriate the agreement sentence below:

☐ I / We **give** consent to receive details of optional events.

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Complete the **membership form** opposite, then scan and email to **Membership@FriendsOfSpeyer.org**

Or post to: Friends of Speyer Membership, 3 Baileys Way, Hambrook, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8FE

For payment by bank transfer, or for a Standing Order Mandate, please use the following details:

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For payment by cheque, please post your cheque to the address above, made out to 'Friends of Speyer'.

***Freundschaft* newsletter**

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