

**1947 - 2017**  
**70 YEARS OF**  
**FRIENDSHIP**

**BRISTOL and HANNOVER**

**It was in the wake of the Second World War, when a defeated and demoralised Germany were emerging from the devastation, many people destitute, having little food or clothing, some even without footwear, that the first tentative footsteps were taken** *In Someone Else's Shoes*.

Victor Gollancz 'went into school after school in Germany...simply asking children with *kaputten* - ruined - shoes to put up their hands. One child said he wouldn't be able to come to school tomorrow, "because father would want his shoes": another - "I have Hans' shoes so he's got to stay at home." ' (*In Darkest Germany*, Gollancz, V, 1947.) Gollancz was visiting the British Zone of Occupation in particular, in order to highlight the dreadful situation there, so that perhaps money might be raised in Britain to reduce the suffering.

Following the bitter winter of 1947, when here in Bristol, Henleaze Lake was frozen so thick with ice that people could skate on it, Alderman St. John Reade, Vice-Chairman, Bristol Education Committee received a letter from Brigadier Maude, British Educational Officer for the Hannover area, asking for 'cast-off' shoes so that Hannover children could go to school. It had been a German, Katharina Petersen, who had emigrated to Britain, then returned to Germany to work in the Education



Skaters on Henleaze Lake.  
Image courtesy of Warwick Moreton and  
Bristol City Council's Know Your Place website.

Ministry of Lower Saxony, who suggested Hannover, 'a city of similar size and importance to Bristol', as a link to Bristol. Thus it was that five pioneering men, headed up by St. John Reade decided to take action and set off for Hannover on a Goodwill Mission to extend the hand of friendship.

Upon their return, these five 'men of goodwill', St. John Reade together with Professor Dr. August Closs (Professor of German, Bristol University), Edward G. Seath (secretary, Bristol Youth Committee), Crofton E. Gane (businessman and furniture maker) and Donald Hughes (artist) arranged for 'relief goods' to be dispatched and encouraged the children of Bristol to send shoes to the poverty-stricken children of Hannover, whose city had been virtually destroyed with only ten percent of its buildings remaining. In return, having no money, Hannover

'paid' for the shoes with music. They sent young choirs and musicians across the sea to sing their thanks and from the six dreadful long years of conflict, both sides who had so recently been enemies reached out to each other. As a result, Bristol and Hannover became the first English and German communities to twin, post Second World War, laying the foundation for many more exchanges to follow.

In celebration of this 70 year relationship between the two cities, generous funding from Arts Council, Heritage Lottery, Heritage Schools, Bristol Hannover Council, Quartet Community Foundation, Bristol Scheme Trust and Bristol International Twinning Association have made it possible to bring together secondary school students from Fairfield, Cotham and IGS Kronsberg to perform *In Someone Else's Shoes*, sharing stories, songs and upcycled footwear in celebration of this enduring friendship.

# THE MISERY OF BOOTS

# Boy's Letter to Hanover Children

A letter "to cheer up the dear children of Hanover," written by a nine-year-old boy, was discovered in a heap of gifts by the Lutheran Bishop of Hanover today from Bristol school children.

**“W**e are sorry that your town was badly bombed, and we know that in winter you have very bad weather, so we have collected many gifts so that you can go to school and perhaps to Sunday School,” wrote Robert Burfoot of Hillfields Park Junior School.

We hope it will soon be repaired and gradually built up again, and when we grow up and you grow up, there will be peace between Germany and our Isles.

## Chocolate - Shoes

Miss D I Porter, headmistress of Mina Rd School, motored six pupils to Bristol Youth committee offices, Great George St, where they met the Bishop (Dr. Lilje), who was imprisoned by the Nazis, and sentenced to death.

Movietone camera shots to be published in a magazine for Germany were taken as the children, Terry Dicks (10), Maurice Merchant (10), Colin Jeston (10), Nina Harris (10), Jean Workman (9), and Eileen Pearce (9), shook hands with the Bishop.

They told him the chocolate they gave him for the children of Hanover had been saved from their sweet ration. The school had collected over 100 pairs of shoes.

Coun. R. St. John Reade, vice-chairman, Bristol Education Committee, reported that over 400 pairs of shoes had already been collected in local schools.



Bristol Evening Post.  
Saturday November 1947  
A Boy's letter to Hanover Children.

**Myers-Insole Local Learning is a small, Bristol-based community interest company who specialise in exploring our local heritage with all members of the community, to uncover and share what we learn about our past.**

Drawing on the memories and experiences of members of the Bristol - Hanover exchange alumni, we have worked with two key people in particular, the fantastically supportive Dr. Ann Kennard (chair of the Bristol Hannover Council) and Dr. Debbie Pinfold (senior lecturer, German dept, Bristol University) to bring together secondary school students from both cities to collectively produce a piece of theatre, involving movement, music and mime conveying the story of the twinning from 1947 to present day.

Those children of the first Goodwill Mission all grew up, recognising the value of friendship, but this story of overcoming hostility and suspicion is as relevant today as it was then, seven decades ago.



Fairfield student sharing ideas with Ruth Myers.



With thanks to a grant from Historic England's Heritage Schools programme we brought together Bristol-Hannover twinning participants and Year 9 Fairfield Secondary School students for a lovely afternoon of sharing memories and tales of the two cities; stories of night time building, the restorative powers of Rodio Luxemburg and Schnapps at dawn to steady the nerves before getting married in the early morning.



"My penfriend invited me to Bristol in around 1951 and the family put me in a front room which was very kind. A couple of things impressed me greatly - I had never been abroad before - in the morning the girl brought me a cup of tea - that was wonderful and then I noticed that in the kitchen the family had an electric kettle - just imagine!"

"First of all I was nervous because I kind of don't like talking to people...but I like how they were comforting us and we were comforting them. It just felt like - I know this might sound weird but it felt like a little family..."

Fairfield student commenting after the inter-generational event.

"Both cities were badly bombed, when I went back in 1953 to Hannover, they were rebuilding, same as here. One night we went into town and they had flood lights and we didn't have that. They were rebuilding at night to get it up and running again."

"I was married in Hannover and I suppose that's one of the most memorable occasions for me. In the Old Town Hall, 8 o'clock in the morning - I had a Schnapps before I went!"

"I went to Hannover for the first time in 2013. I found it to be a very modern, clean and very progressive city."



"We had only one real emergency that I can recall (in the 1968 exchange): a girl who, after two days in Hannover, found her way to the post office and phoned home (no mobiles in those days) to say she hated it and wanted to go home. We calmed her down, showed her how to get Radio Luxemburg - apparently the vital factor - and by the end of the three weeks she was saying she wanted to stay longer."

"They were able to reconstruct the character of the old city (of Hannover) and capture the spirit of the architecture."



"The zoo was very different because the zoos I was used to, the animals were all encaged in a small area. In Hannover the animals were mixed together - like rhinos and giraffes - that you wouldn't find in the UK. There was even a boat that would take you through a stream to see some animals."

"I can truthfully say that the Bristol - Hannover exchange had a huge influence on my life by introducing me to a family in Germany and strengthening my love of the German language."



**To gather more material for the performance and for the exhibition that will tour Bristol in 2018, multi-media producer, Tot Foster trained up exchange alumni volunteers, Barbara Cowell (née Haythornwhite) and Lynne Evans to collect more stories as well as sharing their own.**

After becoming close friends with a 10 year old German girl who came to stay with Barbara's family in 1948, she chose to study German to try to discover why we had been at war.

Barbara has fond memories of studying under Professor Closs at Bristol University who was "a very paternal figure,

particularly given that I started my degree course at 17.

He was eccentric, but somehow able to imbue all of us with a love of the German language. Even after my studies when I held my first job at the University of Frankfurt, I remember his encouraging letters written in all directions around the page!"

Barbara feels that when she worked for the BBC World Service in the 1950s, the fact that Professor Closs had fostered spoken German meant that unlike Oxbridge graduates (normally preferred by the BBC at the time) she was able to fill in for absent participants in German service broadcasts.



A special thank you to those who shared their memories and insights of Bristol and Hannover:

Tony Ainger • Joan Clifford • Barbara Cowell • Stefan Csaki • Peter Davey • Marina Dolman • Lynne Evans • Bev and Colin Evans • Matthew Evans • Mary Fowler • Steve Gear • Mavis Gray • Andrew Hambly-Smith • Ian Harding • Richard Harris • Christian Heppner • Alix Hughes • Martin Jefford • Chris Jones • Dr Ann Kennard • Lynne McAleavey • David Perkins • Dr Debbie Pinfold • Jurgen and Ruth Schwiening • Alderman Colin Smith • Sylvia Supple • Diana Swales • Tanya Tribbell • David Vowles • Jenny Wood • Mary Wotton •



History undergraduates from the University of the West of England joined artists and alumni with their research at Bristol Archives.

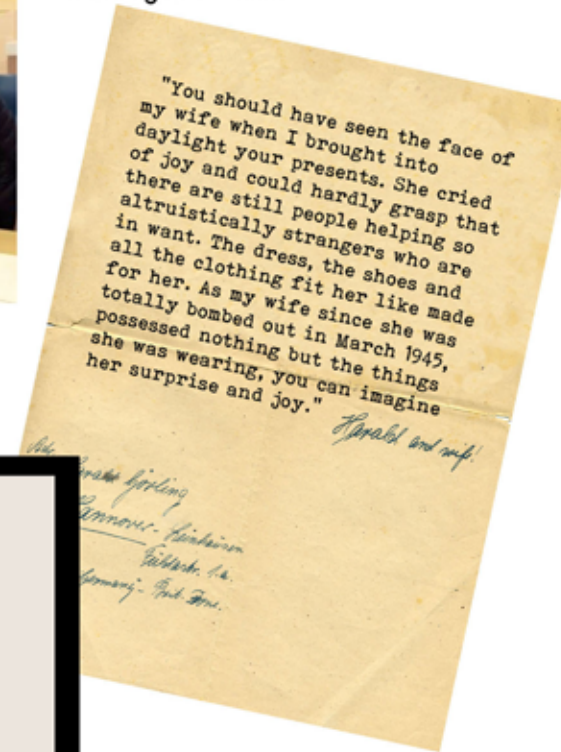
Bristol Archives offers 10 miles of historical documents and is an invaluable resource for our city, a place freely available to make your own discoveries about the city's past.

Bristol Archives, 'B' Bond Warehouse, Smeaton Road. Bristol, BS1 6XN

[www.bristolmuseum.org.uk/bristol-archives](http://www.bristolmuseum.org.uk/bristol-archives)

## Artists and alumni visited Bristol Archives to research the relationship between the cities.

With help from local historian, Clive Burlton we discovered that our story actually begins in the First World War, when in 1916, an injured soldier from Ashton was aided off the battlefield at the Somme by a captured German. It is this same soldier from Ashton, Private Gilbert Dicks who later receives a letter from Harald Gorling, a German Prisoner of War in the Second World War, thanking Dicks and his family for looking after him.



Extract from letter, courtesy of Bristol Archives. Reference Number: 42601/1/9-14

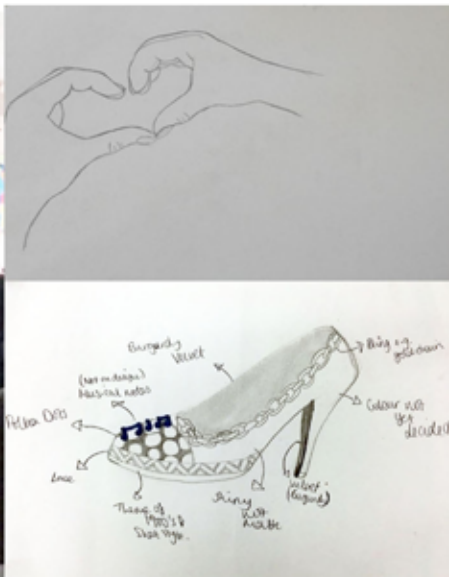
Local Learning work in partnership with other specialists to create engaging and inclusive learning experiences for all participants and *In Someone Else's Shoes* is the result of a collaboration, a coming together of talented local artists and dedicated teachers sharing their expertise and creativity.

Fairfield German teacher, Sharon Barnes, Cotham's Head of Performing Arts, Ben Campbell and IGS Kronsberg staff, Jens Bludau, Jessica Schlicht and Petronilla Zullo were pivotal in making this project possible, supporting and encouraging their students from the outset to mark the 70th anniversary of the twinning by building on the original 'Musik for Shoes' at a performance at Colston Hall. Working as part of our artists' collective they help to tell our story through decorated shoes, boots and bespoke musical compositions, reflecting each of the decades since the Goodwill Mission of 1947.

Upcycler artist, Helen Brown with support from Ruth Myers from Local Learning worked with students from Fairfield and IGS Kronsberg to transform unwanted footwear generously donated to the project by Bristol Textile Recyclers into something new.



Virtual classroom via Skype



Exploring ideas for shoe design



Helen Brown founded Kecks Clothing and works in collaboration with reuse sites and community projects to redirect textile waste from landfill. Helen's personal passion for fashion and thrift has seen her develop accessible techniques applicable by groups of all ages and abilities.

[www.kecksonline.wordpress.com](http://www.kecksonline.wordpress.com)  
[www.facebook.com/kecksclothingbristol](https://www.facebook.com/kecksclothingbristol)

**Gedankenaustausch** - an exchange of thoughts - between Fairfield and IGS Kronsberg students.

Students from Cotham Secondary School, worked with composer, Roly Porter to create their own original score to accompany the presenting of the shoes and help convey the chronology of the twinning.



Cotham students composing music with Roly Porter.



**1990s composer:** Will (Year 11)

**Musical influences:** Probably the popular hip-hop groups from the 90s such as Wu-Tang Clan, A Tribe Called Quest and Jurassic 5.

**What I wanted to achieve:** A classic Hip Hop beat accompanied by a sample from an old song to create a feel from the music era of the 90s.

I think this project is a good way to revisit the events that occurred after the war between the two cities; it allows people to show their skills and at the same time help other people. I am happy to be a part of it.

**Roly Porter** is a Bristol based composer and sound designer. He has scored several films including Film 4's *In Fear*, which premiered at Sundance in 2013.

Roly has an interest in found sound and archive material and in 2015 took part in FAMLAB (Film Archive and Music Lab) with the British Council and BFI,

exploring the possibilities for re-scoring archive material. As part of the RE:Vive project on behalf of the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, he was invited to create original music from their extensive audio archive focusing on the industrial history of Rotterdam.

[www.rolyporter.com](http://www.rolyporter.com)

Performance makers **Sylvia Rimat** and **Jess Hoffman**, worked closely with Helen, Roly, and Ruth, drawing on many of the themes from Bristol and Hannover's shared history to inform the performance.

Their story tells of 1940s jazz bands playing Colston Hall to the Bristol Sound of the 90s, the Friendship Trophy that has gone back and forth between Bristol City Football Club and Hannover 96 for more than half a century, of 'shoes and other things'.

**Sylvia Rimat** creates original performance with a pinch of the surreal. Characterised by playful audience interaction and strong visual aesthetics, her work often deals with processes of the mind, personal (hi)stories, with presence and the imagination. Born in Germany, Sylvia is based in Bristol. She performs in theatres, galleries and public spaces. Her work has been presented throughout the UK and internationally, including the British Council Showcase at Edinburgh Fringe Festival, London's Barbican Centre in SPILL Festival, In Between Time Festival Bristol and in Denmark, Poland, Germany, Spain and Australia. Sylvia is a member of artist collective Residence in Bristol.

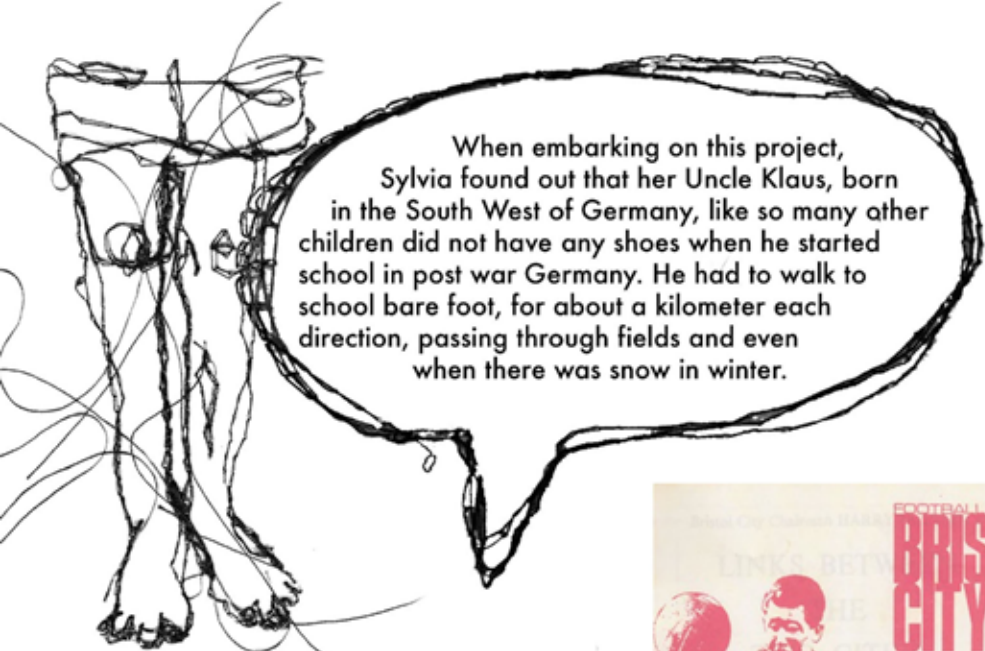
[www.sylviarimat.com](http://www.sylviarimat.com)  
[sylvia@sylviarimat.com](mailto:sylvia@sylviarimat.com)

**Jessica Hoffmann** has been making and performing theatre for the last 20 years, touring both nationally and internationally. The company she co-founded in 1998, Uninvited Guests, is interested in theatre that works with the audience in the creative process and final work.

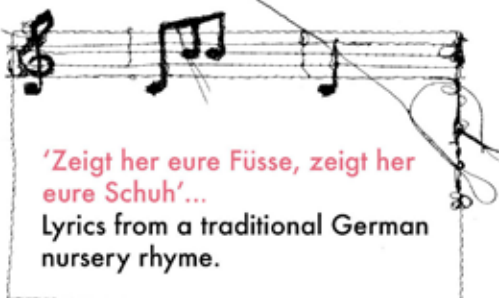
[www.uninvited-guests.net](http://www.uninvited-guests.net)  
[jesshoffmann@hotmail.com](mailto:jesshoffmann@hotmail.com)

Roly and Sylvia exploring performance space in the foyer of Colston Hall.





When embarking on this project, Sylvia found out that her Uncle Klaus, born in the South West of Germany, like so many other children did not have any shoes when he started school in post war Germany. He had to walk to school bare foot, for about a kilometer each direction, passing through fields and even when there was snow in winter.



'Zeigt her eure Füße, zeigt her eure Schuh'...  
Lyrics from a traditional German nursery rhyme.



Image courtesy of Bristol Archives:  
Reference Number: 45903/3

This celebration of the 70 year old friendship between Bristol and Hannover will continue through a forthcoming exhibition, *In Someone Else's Shoes*. Through first-hand accounts and oral histories, this touring exhibition will explore the roots of the twinning and tell the stories of some of the enduring friendships that were forged between inhabitants of these two cities, from the earliest gesture of goodwill in 1947 to the exchanges that still take place today.

The exhibition is supported by Heritage Lottery and curated by **Sarah Knight**, a Bristol-based freelance curator and one half of Sightlines Projects ([sightlinesprojects.org](http://sightlinesprojects.org)).

*In Someone Else's Shoes* will run from 29 January - 2 February 2018 at the Vestibules, City Hall, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TR and will continue from 3 February - March 2018 at Bristol Central Library.

**YOU ARE CORDIALLY  
INVITED TO THE  
OPENING RECEPTION ON  
30TH JANUARY,  
5 P.M TO 6:45 P.M  
AT THE  
VESTIBULES**



To find out more about the exhibition or any other aspect of the *In Someone Else's Shoes* project please email [Ruth.Myers@locallearning.org.uk](mailto:Ruth.Myers@locallearning.org.uk)

**Carmen Garaghon** designed this theatre programme. Carmen is a Bristol artist and printmaker exploring the interplay between intimate traditional processes and modern technologies and the complexities which can be created.

**In Someone Else's Shoes cast list from Fairfield, Cotham and IGS Kronsberg:**

Shadiamond Alcott • Maya Andrews • Aineias Arango • Nila Begun • Patrycja Brezezinska • Joanna Brezezinska • Felicia Bridges • Kez Briggs • Milo Bullock • Will Cook • Agata Drozd • Grace Dunkley • Emile Eden Beaver • Leon Gerrard • Elise Glas • Assil Ismail • Emilia Jacas-Jeannon • Yahye Jama • Alfie Klinkard • Elias Kopytov • Veronica Kuznieuska • Mareike Laskowski • Lily Lay • Latini Macdonald • Anisa Mahamoud • Diana Miller • Fredericke Neugebauer • Walter Penny • Zeshan Raja • Roxana Richter • Jonathan Roche • Alina Rohrssen • Renee Smith Andersen • Mira Sukkar • Sibel Tezcan • Dijana Todorovic • Kyah Tunnicliffe • Anna K Voges • Florence Wade.



## Myers-Insole Local Learning would like to extend a huge thank you to the following:

Lisa Adler • Adam Baker • Sharon Barnes • Jens Bludau • Malcolm Boyns • Macauley Bridgman • Bristol Archives • Bristol City Football Club • Clive Burlton • Eugene Byrne • Aimee Campanella • Ben Campbell • Phil Castang • Colston Hall • Allan and Sarah Insole • Barbara Cowell • Allie Dillon • Lynne Evans • Katherine Fler • Professor Peter Fleming • Judith Furse • Steve Gear • Martin and Petra Gerdes • Josh Hitt • Alix Hughes • Neil Humphrey • Dr. Ann Kennard • Bea Landsbek • Nick Lewis • Bertel Martin • Angela and Mel Myers • Lucy Norris • Dr. Debbie Pinfold • Frazer Riches • Jessica Schlicht • The Folkhouse • Emily Tiplady • Graham Tratt • Travelling Kitchen • Tanya Tribbell • Dan Warner-Meanwell • Julian Warren • David Wright • Scott Yeadsley • Petronilla Zullo •

## Thank you to our partners for collectively making *In Someone Else's Shoes* such an enjoyable experience:

Bristol Hannover Council, Bristol International Twinning Association, Bristol University, Helen Brown, Tot Foster, Carmen Garaghon, Jess Hoffman, Sarah Knight, Roly Porter, Sylvia Rimat and the University of the West of England.

## The performance *In Someone Else's Shoes* was made possible with generous funding from:



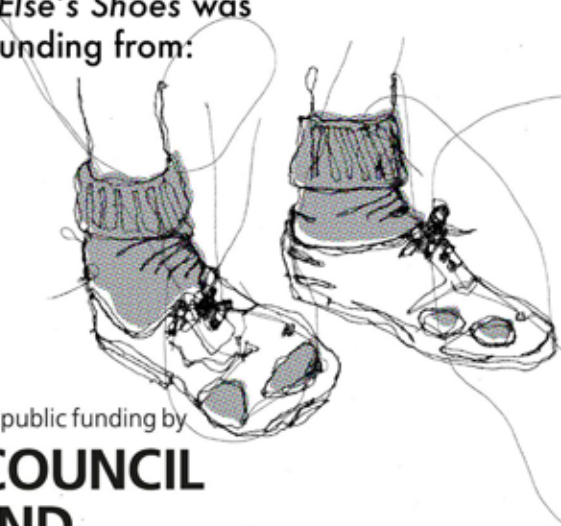
**LOTTERY FUNDED**



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