

The German-British Society

"Landesgruppe Mecklenburg Vorpommern": Aims and Activities

by Dr. Claus Hemmer

The Deutsch-Britische Gesellschaft e.v. (German-British Society) is a non-party-political and private organisation. Its aim is to bring forward German-British relations in all areas of public and cultural interest, and to encourage and support German-British exchange on a social, political, and business level. We achieve this through the organisation of high-profile annual conferences for decision-makers from both countries as well as by inviting British speakers to take part in our nationwide lecture programme based around our regional branches in Germany. The headoffice is situated in Berlin, the President (Chairman of the Board) is Gebhardt von Moltke, former Ambassador to the United Kingdom.

On the occasion of her State Visit to Germany in November 2004, Her Majesty Elizabeth II sent the following message to the Deutsch-Britische Gesellschaft: "The occasion of my fourth State Visit to Germany next month will be an opportunity once again to celebrate the great friendship which exists between our two countries. This friendship has been the basis for our partnership in Nato and the European Union. Such friendship cannot rely on the work of governments alone. It depends far more on the tireless efforts of volunteers from all walks of life. In this context I can think of no better example than the Deutsch-Britische Gesellschaft. Since the society was formed in Düsseldorf in 1949, our members throughout Germany have done much to widen and deepen the personal contacts between us. I congratulate you on your success and I thank you



Chairman Dr. Claus Hemmer

Contact

Whoever will be anyone who supports the aims of the Gesellschaft.

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for your dedication to, British-German friendship."

The German-British Society comprises ca. 2000 members in Germany organized in 18 regional Working Groups, one of them being the "Landesgruppe Mecklenburg-Vorpommern". This regional working group with its ca. 50 members is a *small* but vivid and very active group. The headoffice is situated in the capital Schwerin, and a branch in Rostock. Our group is in close contact with an English conversation

round in Wismar that meets bi-monthly. The Landesgruppe was the first one to be founded in the "new Länder", on 25. January 1991, with the Landesgruppe of the neighbouring federal state Schleswig-Holstein as the "godfather". Its aim is the accentuated integration of the federal state Mecklenburg-Vorpommern into the network of German-British relations with emphasis on: promoting the English language, the cultural and scientific exchange, as well as economic and touristic connections. We are trying to achieve this goal with joint projects such as the panels "Deutsch-Britischer Wirtschaftstag" and "Expertenwissen - Innovationspotential für die Wirtschaft", in cooperation with the Chamber of Industry and Commerce and other institutions. We are enjoying the continuous support by authorities in state government, in economy, culture, science, and media who tirelessly give their time to meeting our British speakers.

The regular activities comprise English conversation rounds and, particularly, lectures given in English by distinguished British experts in politics, economy, science, culture, and the media who fly in from the UK for one-week lecture tours each of which go to five selected German cities. The Landesgruppe also offers lectures, in English as well as in German, by speakers recruited on their own. The programme is complemented by social events such as theatre evenings and visits to museums. These offer manifold opportunities for deeper studies of the English language and culture, but *also* for new contacts across professional and social boundaries. New guests to *all* our events will be very welcome.