



*Freunde*  
DER WIESBADEN STIFTUNG E.V.

# WIESBADENER BRIEF



## DEAR FRIENDS OF WIESBADEN,

some encounters leave a deep impression. I had the pleasure of such an encounter in the summer of 2015 with about 7000 other friends of a man who was celebrating his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. We experienced the Dalai Lama just like an endearing "old acquaintance" in the Kurpark. Some may have difficulty in understanding the wisdoms spoken by the Tibetan, who does not seem to age, but one thing is indisputable: the Nobel Peace Prize winner has a wonderfully calming presence. For that reason alone I would like to be able to listen to the Dalai Lama again – in view of the depressing occurrences in our world.

Let us dwell for a moment on the major European problem that the Hessian capital also has to manage with decency and an enormous effort: the influx of refugees. The politicians in the City Hall are committed to the so called "Wiesbaden line" and thus do not consider the refugee issue as a point of contention. Hopefully this will remain the case in spite of the local elections (in March 2016) and the election campaign due to start at the beginning of the year. The local population is more than prepared to help, if somewhat concerned, making it all the more wonderful that around 8000 demonstrated against xenophobia at a "No Pegida walk" initiated by a Wiesbaden man from Holland in January.

The "Week of freedom" – 25 years after the reunion of East and West Germany was certainly a highlight in Wiesbaden. There was a series of interesting events; schools developed great projects. Young people showed their talents at the "Wiesbaden Foundation's Leonardo School Award" for the sixth time. The gala with the award presentation on stage at Kurhaus was wonderful (see photo on the front page). The inclusion prize was awarded for the second time within the framework of the high-caliber competition in eight categories including "Ideas for Wiesbaden".

Schoolchildren will also be involved with exciting contributions when, at the end of April 2016, a week of tranquility under the motto "Wiesbaden pauses for a moment" will take place for the first time – a project initiated by the protestant church in close cooperation with the city. The Head of Marketing, Martin Michel, also really likes the program with oases of tranquility in the middle of the city, with walks to special places and with artistic and church contributions, and thus supports the project and finds it attractive not just for local people. Wiesbaden Marketing recently celebrated their ten-year anniversary. And the Michel team can certainly be proud of their work, which can be seen by the continuously increasing number of tourists.

But things are not just quiet in the Hessian capital: the 40<sup>th</sup> Rheingau Wine Festival was a huge magnet once again. The



Sports Ball also proved that you can have a great party in a provisory venue – the ball remains in Wiesbaden in spite of the demolition and rebuilding of the Rhein-Main-Hallen. It was held with celebrities from all over Germany at the Kurhaus and in an impressive “ball arena” made of aluminum on the Bowling Green much to the satisfaction of all those involved. This alternative is planned again for February 2016. The President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Joachim Gauck, is expected at the society highlight for the first time, as was announced at the beginning of December.

Would you like to know how the rebuilding of the new Rhein-Main-Hallen on the old site is progressing? “Everything is on time and within the budget”, the Project Manager, Henning Wossidlo can report. The foundation stone was laid in October. The inauguration of the 195-million euro Rhein-Main convention center is planned for January 2018. Let us stay with the construction: The renovation of the Pressehaus in the pedestrian zone has made great progress, and should be ready for the staff to return to May; the editorial staff of the local Wiesbadener Kurier and Wiesbadener Tagblatt daily newspapers will return to the property, inaugurated as a “Newspaper palace” in 1909, in which shops and top-notch apartments are also located.

Let us take a detour to Schwalbacher Strasse, cross it in the direction of the Westend. This is where the Quartiersplatz has been erected beside the well frequented large new sports hall on the Platz der Deutschen Einheit areal. An open stream among other things attracts many people. The planned city square however, still has to happen. . . Hopefully, there will not be any problems with financing.

Come with me to the Kulturzentrum Schlachthof, behind the train station: The water tower has now been restored and is home to the administration, boiler house and bar. And just as they are delighted with the 60/40 bar, the young people in particular will follow the construction of student apartments, in Dotzheimer Strasse for example, being pushed by the city with interest. An important measure, as there are now 12 000 students and counting at the Hochschule Rhein-Main where another lecture theatre cube has recently been inaugurated.

Zoom into Wilhelmstraße: Kaiser Friedrich III. returned to his pedestal with a spectacular crane manoeuvre at the Nassauer Hof after a brief, fruitful “spa”. A stone’s throw away, at the Kureck, there is finally movement on the major construction site, the demolition and rebuilding work is making progress. The derelict high-rise building is due to disappear in the first quarter of 2016; a residential block will be erected on the same site. Some 100 luxury apartments as well as 20 000 square meters of office and flex space are planned for the complete areal by 2020.

In the short term, there will only be a small solution for the Stadtmuseum which is still a contentious issue: It will relocate to the Marktkeller in March. On the “Rue”, not far from the new convention center, where the major plans were intended

to unfold, a new hotel will be built. The hotel is urgently needed according to a study conducted by the Chamber of Industry and Commerce. By the way, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, resident in the Erbprinzenpalais on Wilhelmstrasse since 1971, celebrated its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

All of the anniversaries cannot be listed here, but I would like to mention a few: One of our landmarks, the Russian Church on the Neroberg, was inaugurated 160 years ago. The Russian cemetery up there, where the painter, Alexej Jawlensky, is buried, will also be 160 next year – it is good that it has already been renovated. 125 years ago, the local Wiesbaden people delighted in the completion of Wilhelm Bogler’s refreshments hall at the Kochbrunnenplatz, which is the “Spital” bar and restaurant with a highly popular outside area today. The Nassauische Sparkasse (then Landescredittasse) was founded 175 years ago.

The three-wing museum building in Friedrich-Ebert-Allee, designed by Theodor Fischer, was ready for occupancy 100 years ago. For the current Director, Alexander Klar, it has “one of the best museum interiors in existence”. The Museum celebrated this event under the motto “100 years of astonishment”; for the finale in November, Klar gave a ceremonial speech on “Architecture as cultural memory”.

The Museum has announced a very remarkable initiative in cooperation with the “Friends of the Museum Wiesbaden” foundation for 2016: There will be free admission to the collections and to the current exhibitions on every first Saturday of the month! This is a good way of drawing families to the house of art.

If you would like to visit a “fun museum”: The Harlekinäum in the suburb Erbenheim has been in existence for 25 years and is always good for a surprise.

The very important sister city arrangement between Wiesbaden and Görlitz also began 25 years ago, which was celebrated in both cities respectively. As mentioned in the 2014 Letter, the Lord Mayor, Sven Gerich, declared 2016 the year of sister cities. An attractive program in the areas of culture, sport, dance and business is to be put together. The focus however should be on the encounters of the citizens of the sister cities according to Gerich. “We want to promote this intensively”.

Wiesbaden has 13 sister cities. The sister city run from Poland to Spain will start at Whitsun. The runners will arrive in Wiesbaden on 20<sup>th</sup> May. A group of cyclists will start heading for San Sebastian on the 21<sup>th</sup> May.

Dear Friends of Wiesbaden, so many things come to mind that might interest you. You should also be informed of what the Wiesbaden Foundation and Friends of the Wiesbaden Foundation have put together besides the Leonard School Award: The Foundation can be proud of the “Trustee Quality Seal” awarded to it by the Federal Association of German Foundations. “Citizens, write history” is the name of a brand new project with which “district historians” are being sought and





40 years old and still a major attraction: Two young ladies drink a toast to the Rheingau Wine Festival in Wiesbaden. The golden trophy with the green 40 in the sky – a popular motif for a selfie.



80 years old and an extremely popular friend of Wiesbaden: The Dalai Lama speaks in the Kurpark in the summer and seeks close contact with his fans. Around 7000 celebrate with him.



"Ice time" in December at the Warmen Damm behind the State Theater: Not only young people love ice-skating. The curling section is fully booked out all the time.



Through the fish eye lens: The major construction site at the Kureck where there is some progress at last. Luxury apartments, office and flex space are planned here. The high-rise block will be demolished next year. A residential tower will be erected.



View through the columns of the Kurhaus: The city is taking great pains to keep the Sports Ball in Wiesbaden while the Rhein-Main-Halle is being rebuilt. An arena made of steel emerges on the Bowling Green.



160 years old and a golden attraction: The Russian Church on the Neroberg.



For the outdoor museum at the Römer-tor: The new replicas of Emperor Nero and the God Mercury are put in place.



A reason to celebrate: The construction of the new convention center is making good progress. Lots of celebrities come to the laying of the foundation stone for the Rhein-Main-Hallen in October.





## Wiesbaden needs Friends!

With your membership and your commitment at Friends of the Wiesbaden Foundation, you are documenting your solidarity with the city and helping in the practical implementation of our ideas

### Purpose of the society

- Promotion of civic commitment
- Art and culture
- Preservation and conservation of historic sites
- Environmental protection and nature conservation
- City history, preservation of regional traditions

### Our connection to the Wiesbaden Foundation?

The idea is clear: What works well large-scale there, we can achieve on our projects too. We create synergies: From citizens for citizens – two institutions for everyone.

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promoted. The Wiesbadener Kurier newspaper will accompany the project as media planner. The Friends of the Foundation have presented the city 30 benches for the park area at the Warmer Damm. And thanks to their commitment, new copies of the heads of the God Mercury and the Emperor Nero can be viewed again in the outdoor museum at the Römertor. The replicas were stolen a year ago. The new version of the "Zoom" photo competition for children and young adults is very ambitious. The motto this time is "Zoom... us your tree". At the same time, tree sponsors are sought in spring in an original way. Tree sculptures mark where felled trees have not been replaced or where there is no greenery. The sculpture wanders to a new location if a patron is found...

I would also like to let those interested in the Wiesbaden Letter know that the Citizen's Foundation, the Friends of the Wiesbaden Foundation and I, the author, are delighted to receive post from you. Just like we received from Dieter H. Buschmann from West Bend, Wisconsin. He likes the embellishment initiatives of the Foundation and the Friends of the Foundation, and like Stefan Jekel from New York, he finds it great to be kept up to date on his old hometown.

Both announced trips to Germany including Wiesbaden for this year. Stefan Jekel even wanted to come over for Christmas. He would not have regretted it.

And so, at the end of this letter, I would like to call out to all recipients overseas: Why not plan a trip to Wiesbaden at Christmastime: When the angels descend (thanks to a crane) onto the Schlossplatz and open the Twinkling Star Christmas Market, when young and old mingle on the ice-skating rink, when a Ferris wheel turns slowly in the middle of the pedestrian zone and you look down on the city, there is an atmosphere almost as peaceful as that in the Kurpark for the Dalai Lama's visit – this time a Christmassy one.

Wishing you a peaceful time and the very best for 2016 dear readers in Wiesbaden and the "outside" world



Ingeborg Salm-Boost  
(former head of local editing of the Wiesbadener Kurier newspaper)

P.S. If you do not have the opportunity to come to Wiesbaden in the near future, you can keep up to date on the internet with the two local newspapers. And perhaps you can tune into Radio Rheinwelle, a non-commercial radio station through its homepage. You can follow the "Blaue Stunde" and other programs in which interviews on cultural topics by the former ZDF-Cultural Editor, Jutta Szostak, are worth listening to once a week.

## IMPRESSUM

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