

## Greetings to the GCJZ Berlin after 45 years!

Here is the background to that unusual greeting.

I am David Cowcill, originally of the town of Stafford, England. In the nearby countryside is the Deutscher Soldatenfriedhof of Great Britain. Young people came from Germany to work in the cemetery, and a youth exchange programme grew between Stafford and Bremen. I participated in the exchange of 1964, during which the whole group, English and German young people from the host city Bremen, made a short trip to Berlin..

Excited by this visit, I returned the following year to participate in the activity of the Christlich Judische Zusammenarbeit - in the work-camp at Glienicke Park from 19<sup>th</sup> July to 16<sup>th</sup> August 1965. I have strong and good memories of this camp beneath the trees - Glienicke Park and the bridge, searchlights on the river at night, the journey into the city on the S-Bahn, Zoo station and the Gedächtniskirche, some nightlife, the museum island, a visit to a synagogue (Oranienburg str I think)...and of course the Wall - very raw in those days and quite a tension to walk alone across Checkpoint Charlie to the East.



I made only one further short visit in 1968 - until 2007, when I returned again, this time with my daughter. In the intervening time, I can honestly say that the combination of the visits to Bremen and Berlin left a lasting and beneficial legacy on my life. I learnt a little German on an informal basis; I visited many times during my working life - both with German companies and to German colleagues of international ones; many times, I had the opportunity to be more knowledgeable and understanding of Jewish affairs and issues. The cultural background and experience really helped to make a better world and to help the world go better.

SO - after one stay (and perhaps helped by visits to Wannsee, Potsdam and the occasional Berliner Weisse on K-Damn, not to say shopping in KaDeWe) my daughter has also been attracted by the Berliner Bear, and we will return for a short holiday again this year - from Sunday Sept 19<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> 2010.

I have checked your website and I see that GCJZ Berlin is active and in good health. It would be a great honour to come and visit with you during our stay; I see from the website that you seek items for your archive. I have found two small photos. (I am not on the coloured one, at the camp in the trees, but I am the one at the back to the right of the bus-stop post on the black+white one!)

Please let me know what may be possible for a small meeting and celebration of 45 years of cooperation.

Mit freundlich grüssen

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