

Hands of Friendship

by Christine Henderson

A wonderful trip to Germany, sponsored by the Friends of Zetel, was experienced by young Sutherland people this Summer when they were hosted by local families for 10 days in August.

Our German hosts gave us a huge welcome and had organised a varied and pleasing programme.

One of the highlights was a day spent at a flying club where everybody was offered a ten minute flight in a small aeroplane over the area near Zetel. For many, this was their first flight. The panoramic view was quite spectacular and left a lasting impression of miles of orderly fields, farm houses along the roadways, Friesian cows, horses and the North Sea Coast in the distance. A video on aerodynamics, a lesson on how to plot a flight to the coast, along with instruction from one of the pilots on how to fly a plane filled up the spare time.

Highland Games were held to the accompaniment of Scottish

music, tossing the caber, throwing the haggis, pillow fights and wonderful Highland dancing by nine-year-old Eilidh Dibble from Strathnaver. The young folks spent the afternoon swimming in the lake beside the park, drinking in the sun and obviously having a lot of fun.

A visit to a working windmill, a walk in an ancient forest, swimming in an outdoor heated sea water pool with artificial waves, riding lessons and a visit to a private zoo were some of the free entertainment provided by our hosts.

Time was also allowed so that the individual hosts could involve their guests in their own home life, privately show them places of interest. This included trips to Wilhelmshaven, Bremen and Hamburg. Eating out in gorgeous restaurants, enjoying Greek and Italian food as well as the local delicacies which included wonderful sea foods and in particular a special delight, smoked eel.

Shopping in different towns, in particular Varel where a Festival was being held, was quite a colourful sight. Some played mini golf, visited the brickworks and a pottery. Others were taken to Jever, the town of the famous beer, then on to visit the castle museum and of course the discos in the evening.

A full day cycle trip with a club for one youngster was a very special occasion to meet people, eating every ten minutes or so and generally taking in the sheer fun of the day. Some were lucky enough to spend time touring and taking in a visit to neighbouring Holland.

When asked what was the highlight of the holiday for them, most of the thirty youngsters from homes all over Sutherland said the entire ten days. It is hard to describe the hospitality, generosity and friendliness of our German hosts. Many friendships have been made and indeed by the floods of tears shed by both Scottish and German young people when we left many Scottish hearts have been left behind in Zetel.

At a meeting officially to welcome us, the Burgermeister, Herr Hans-Werner Kammer, expressed the hope we would feel at home in Zetel and he said he wished to visit Sutherland soon. A strong message was given that we must keep the youth exchange programme active on an annual basis. The experience for young people to live in each others' homes was not just good educationally but friendships develop between families which last for life.

The Burgermeister addressed the visitors in the recently appointed

Sutherland Room in the old school. This room is decorated with souvenirs and gifts from Sutherland. It is hoped that some Sutherland tartan and more donations of items representing our district could be sent out with future exchange groups or when individuals go on holiday.

The Friesland area is noted for its tea drinking. Beautiful china teapots are used sometimes with a matching china stand holding a candle to keep the pot warm. Tea is served with an air of gentility and finesse reminiscent of earlier formal times. In the afternoon it is served with huge slices of cream gâteau of every kind imaginable or fruit tort. Lovely to eat, but very hard on the waistline. For our Scots youngsters all the meals were an interesting change.

Much gratitude must go to modern language teachers Mr Andrew Murray and Miss Kate Weir for organising the holiday and looking after the group. Also to Mrs Liz Dibble of Farr who is in charge of the group from Bettyhill. It was very hard work for them all the time. It was they who gave the young people of Sutherland the chance of a memorable holiday. The Friends of Zetel group, too, must be thanked for enabling the exchange to take place and providing funds for food en route in both directions.

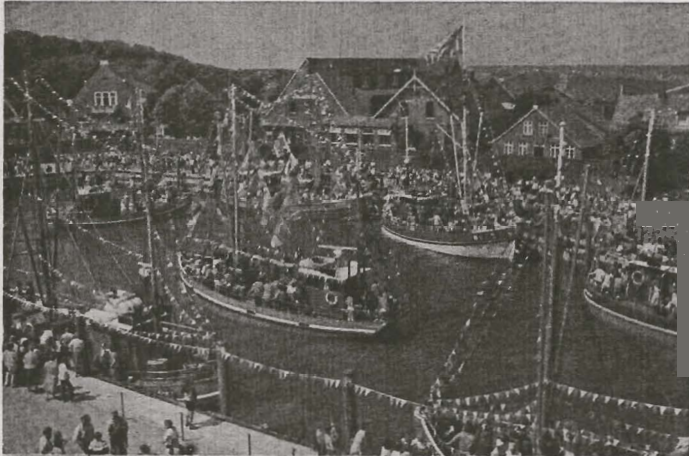
It is difficult to find words expressive enough to thank the Friends of Sutherland in Zetel. In particular Herr Gunther Merthens who was in charge of the extensive programme and who tirelessly organised arrangements for all events which were free of charge to us. It is the hope and wish of our counterparts in Germany that our youth continue to get to know each other better, and each year will bring new friends and happy experiences.

This is the fervent wish of us all.

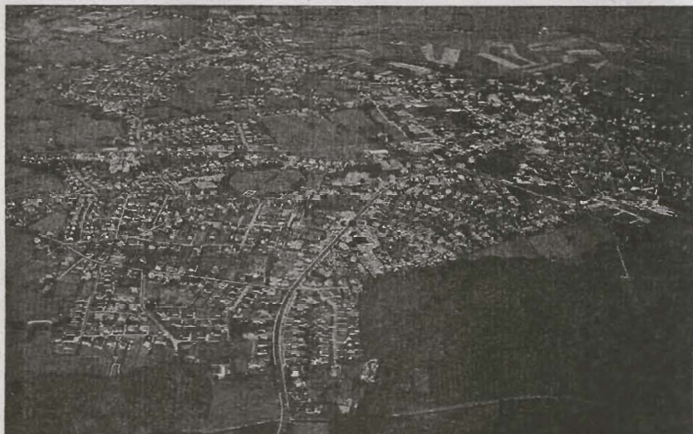


Charles Mackay, Dornoch, chairman of the Friends of Zetel Group, at the entrance to the German town.

Fishing boats decorated overall for the annual regatta of the Nordsee fleet at Neuharlingersiel.

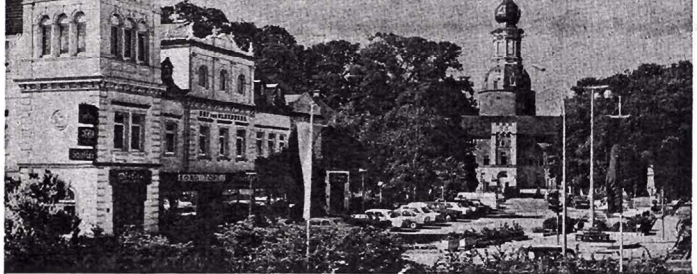


Dinner party of Anke Lammers, secretary of the Friends of Sutherland, Heike Heidenreich, frequent visitor here, Charlie Mackay and Willi Harrcnberg, chairman of the Friends of Sutherland.



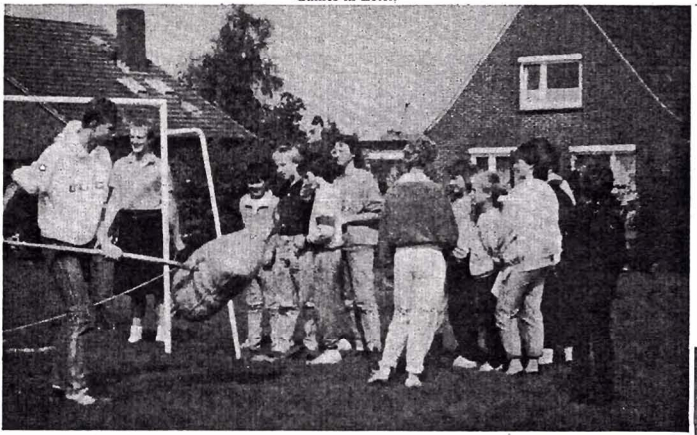
Aerial view of Zetel as seen by our youngsters Brian Ross, Calum Magee and Graham Ross getting flying instructions from the pilot of the light aeroplane at the local Flying Club.





The Market Place at Jever with the "onion-tower" Castle in the background.

Sutherland children mix with their German friends at "tossing the haysack" in an international Highland Games in Zetel.



Seafood Delicacies

Because we stayed with families for our entire visit, we could enjoy everyday food being prepared and served and, of course, eat it too. Breakfast and the evening meal are quite different in that several kinds of bread are served with a variety of meats and cheese. It is eaten with a knife and fork as an open sandwich on wooden boards. The main meal is taken at lunch time. Locally fed pork and sea foods from the North Sea (once known as the "German Ocean") are eaten in quantity, delicately spiced, in exquisite sauces, smoked or barbecued.

One particular delicacy is *krabben*, a very small prawn or a large shrimp (it was difficult to decide). They grow only in shallow water in

the tidal flats between the coast and the Nord See Islands. The fishing boats go out with each ebb tide and come in with the flow every day. Huge nets are dropped to the sea bed to scoop up the *krabben* which are cooked on board ship in sea water in large boilers. When bought, each one has to be shelled by hand. Nevertheless vast quantities are eaten despite the work needed in preparation.

When in harbour the fishermen hang their nets up high on either side of the mast the full length of the boat. At such a time the scene at many small and neat harbours all around the coast is a quite spectacular, even more so when they add flags on the annual "regatta day".

The preparation, serving and eating of food in German families and in the workplace is a routine that echoes the orderliness in which they organise and live their lives. They pay particular attention to the quality of food, how it is grown and any changes that might happen in processing. Chemicals are forbidden at all stages of food production, from fertilisers for the earth to feeding for the animals and during the process of getting the product to the customer. They have a much keener awareness of the environment they live in than we appear to have, and strive to make it a clean and healthy atmosphere.



The old church at Zetel, where the two groups of Friends attended a combined kirche service.



See our new Showroom
at
FERRIES KITCHENS
No. 2 Industrial Centre, Tain

Introducing the Coméra Collection



Budget ranges available from APPLE & RAM

Selection of Wall and Floor Tiles on display

OPENING HOURS
Monday - Saturday
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
(evening appointments on request)

FOR FREE PLAN and QUOTE
Telephone: (0862) 3436

Distance no Object
Tick either or both boxes

Free Colour Brochure Design, Pre-Plan and Quote

Name:

Address:

..... Tel. No. N.T.
Send to FERRIES KITCHENS, No. 2 Industrial Centre, Tain.



One of the Sutherland leaders, Miss Kate Weir, surrounded by (from left) Imke, Annliziese and Willie Oetkon, Charles Mackay and Gerda Behrens.



HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Are you starting a new business?
Already on your own in business?
Needing some business advice?

The HIDB are to hold Clinics in THE HIDB OFFICES, WICK, from 9.30 am to 4.30 pm on TUESDAY 11 & WEDNESDAY 12 OCTOBER and from 9.30 am to 3.30 pm on THURSDAY 13 OCTOBER JOHN MACLENNAN the Board's Business Counsellor for your area, will be available to offer advice.

This service is free and confidential. For more information or to make an appointment, telephone WICK 4353. Time permitting, clients may also be seen without an appointment.

HIDB, 76 HIGH STREET, WICK.