

MARCH 2011



ZUSAMMEN

NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN WOMEN'S CLUB OF THE TAUNUS
www.awctaunus.org

VOLUME 17 | NUMBER 2

Don't forget! The Annual Spring Charity Event Dinner & Auction benefiting START Stiftung on 19 March

Celebrate International Water Day at the Nominating Luncheon on 22 March. For more details see page 15

New! New!

Website Introduces New Sections: "Photo Gallery" & "Guestbook"



Mother's Corner New Logo Debut

Don't Miss 40th Anniversary Special Section!



March 2011 Newsletter

The American
Women's Club
of the Taunus

When planning
future events,
please contact
Stella
Kristoffersson,
Office
Manager,
for potential
scheduling
conflicts.

SAVE THE DATE ! SAVE THE DATE !

08 Mar All-Club Coffee
19 Mar Spring Charity Event 2011
**22 Mar Nominating Luncheon
and International Water Day**
26 Mar Mother's Corner Children's Bazaar
05 May Cinco de Mayo Celebration

SAVE THE DATE ! SAVE THE DATE !

Newsletter Staff / Information

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you to the 10 issues of
the Newsletter published
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***We will then send your
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Submission deadline for the newsletter is always the 25th of the month (five weeks prior to the issue month). All copy is subject to approval and editing by the Newsletter staff.

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Call Jamie Davies at 06155-66446 for information on where to send other Newsletter contributions and insertions. Prior approval by the Newsletter Editor(s) is required for any insert in the Newsletter and at least one representative of any personal group with an insert must help with the 'stuffing' at the time of distribution.

Address all other correspondence to: AWCT, Postfach 1931, 61409 Oberursel or awcttaunus@hotmail.com. The office address is Hollerberg 1, Oberursel. (Please do not send money to the office.) The office telephone number is 06171-580835. The fax number is 06171-57371. Office hours are Monday-Friday, 9am - 12 noon (additional hours are based on volunteer availability).

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Welcome to our Neighborhood...



Villa Clementine served as a setting for the filming of Thomas Mann's Buddenbrooks.



The Kochbrunnen on Kranzplatz is Wiesbaden's most famous thermal spring.



The imperial Wiesbaden Kurhaus with its allusions to the Roman roots of the city.

Ever since the era of the Roman Empire, Wiesbaden has attracted expats. From my first visit in 2005, I loved it for much the same reasons many of those migrants must have had when setting up their residences during the centuries: the mild climate, the sunny weather, the geographic closeness to the Taunus forest and the Rheingau landscape.

Much of its present splendor is related to the long 19th Century: the rise of the Duchy of Hessen Nassau after the defeat of Napoleon and the Prussian domination after the defeat of the Hessen Nassau Dynasty in the German Unification War of 1866. Most of its attractivity, however, must be due to its vicinity to Frankfurt as an emerging center of global trade and finance, attracting and generating a wealthy *monde* which participated in the new fashion to relax and seek distraction and entertainment in a spa resort. With its 14 thermal springs, Wiesbaden was an ideal candidate to become one of Europe's foremost spas, inviting heavy investment in splendid townhouses and villas, and the international *monde* became the preferred clientèle of splendid hotels and bath houses, stylish shops, cafés and restaurants in the booming pentagon next to the old Wiesbaden town center.

This development was boosted when, towards the end of the 19th Century, German Emperor William II chose Wiesbaden as a favorite summer resort, followed by a distinguished crowd of old and new riches, attracted by the imperial architecture of the Kurhaus and Casino with its allusions to the Roman roots of Wiesbaden, the English landscape garden behind it, the theater and museum with the attractive shopping mile between them and, last but not least, the majestic Kaiser Friedrich spa featuring thermal water from a hot spring. The resulting real estate boom was to open new business venues for the ducal family, whose political role was on the decline.

Unlike many other German cities, the basic structure and appearance of late 19th Century Wiesbaden was to remain essentially intact. Neither industrialization nor occupation by French and British armies after the First World War were to disrupt it. The Nazi Regime ordered destruction of the city's huge and splendid synagogue, but did not find expression in any megalomaniac building project. Nor was Wiesbaden subject to repeated bombing. Shortly after the victorious US Army moved into the area setting up its headquarters in the city center, General Eisenhower declared the foundation of the newly formed Hessen state in October 1945, making Wiesbaden, not Frankfurt, its capital. Since then both the US Army presence and state government activity have compensated for the declining spa tourism. More recently, an increasing number of visitors from the Middle East enjoy the many amenities of the city while undergoing a health checkups or medical treatment at one of the renowned hospitals and clinics located here.

When, two years after my first visit, I had to decide where to set up office within the Frankfurt Rhine-Main area, I did not need long to make up my mind. So far, I do not have any regrets for my decision to work and live within the said pentagon, a minute away from the ruins of the Kranzplatz with its Kochbrunnen and the Chancellery, the Bowling Green, the dreamy Bergkirchenviertel, the noble Taunusstrasse, the posh Wilhelmstrasse and the bristling Mauritiusplatz. I am still far from having explored the city and its surrounding area in every fascinating detail. Here, I just want to give a few hints for a lazy day's escape.

Things to do in Wiesbaden: The best time of year is from May to September, when a stroll through the city streets, adorned by flowers, may be enjoyed in warm weather. Every other weekend, a street festival will attract even more visitors than usual, the **annual bi-weekly wine festival in September** closing the festive summer season. Its wintry pendant is the magically illuminated **Falling Star Market held in the four weeks before Christmas**. If you arrive

...Wiesbaden

SISTER CITIES

Wiesbaden is twinned with:

- Fondettes, France
- Ghent, Belgium
- Kefar Sava, Israel
- Klagenfurt, Austria
- Ljubljana, Slovenia
- Montreux, Switzerland
- Ocotal, Nicaragua
- San Sebastian, Spain
- Tunbridge Wells, UK
- Wroclaw, Poland



What's that doing here? The White House Villa in Wiesbaden was a present from the German sparkling wine producer Söhnlein to his American spouse. It then housed the US Army from 1945 to 1990. The café-restaurant & bar now there is due to reopen this summer.

by car, park inside the Casino parking lot. From there you have direct access to the Kurhaus and Casino, and the Kurpark and theater are only a few steps away. It is worthwhile looking up the theater playlist on the internet: staatstheater-wiesbaden.de. Besides theatrical performances, opera, musical and ballet productions are put on stage, you may enjoy some of the latter even if you do not understand German. On your first visit however, you may want to explore the Kurpark, go shopping, have a coffee, a beer or glass of wine, or dine out. Don't be irritated by flights of wild parakeets. Expats of a different feather, they have long since taken to a habitat which has proven favorable to them.

Opposite the Kurhaus and the Staatstheater, the Wilhelmstrasse features exclusive clothing shops and jewellers, as well as a chocolate shop and a renowned carpet dealer. Enjoy walking through the Arcade Gallery, finding a Belgian waffle maker and a Japanese home furnisher. Leaving the gallery at the other end, you are very close to an American bar and the Caligari cinema where you can see movies in English. You are also near the old Wiesbaden city hall and the castle, now the seat of the Hessen State Parliament. You can't miss the Protestant Marktkirche, a very impressive red brick architecture, a place not only for service, but also to attend performances of sacred music. If you turn right at the well into the street starting at the corner of the castle, you are only a few steps away from the main shopping area of the Langgasse. On your way, you will pass the old-fashioned Café Maldaner: an excellent choice for a break with German coffee and cake!

If you follow the Langgasse to the left, you will find the Mauritiusplatz with a Karstadt department store. More interesting, however, may be the small Kleine Schwalbacher Strasse with another café at the end and Balzer's, a nice restaurant. Back in the Langgasse, follow it turning right into the oldest part of Wiesbaden, the very small rows hosting interesting boutiques, a book shop, beer venues and small restaurants with international cuisine of varied quality. Take a rest in the small square in front of the Hotel Goldener

Brunnen. Eventually, you will hit the Webergasse. From there, pass on to the Kranzplatz and then turn left into the Taunusstrasse. This street is famous for its antique shops. More of them (and ones with more affordable and surprising objects) may be found in the parallel Nerostrasse.

You may close your day out there, in the intimate American steakhouse. But you may find the carefully executed traditional German *gutbürgerliche* cuisine of the Rheingold restaurant in the Saalgasse, opposite the staircase to the Kranzplatz, more in step with the city's spirits. If you are looking for a rather exclusive place close to the park: the new White House management plans to reopen the café-restaurant & bar this summer. The villa, a present by the German sparkling wine producer Söhnlein to his American spouse, was meant to resemble the original White House. From 1945 to 1990, it was used by the US Army. Located in the Paulinenstrasse across the Warmer Damm Park, a few steps away from the Kurhaus, its history and appearance represent major facets of the city's past and present.

Of course, Wiesbaden has many more interesting places to go. You may walk along the Rhine river and visit Biebrich Castle with yet another splendid park. Or you can spend a lazy afternoon at the Opelbad, overlooking the city from its terrace restaurant. Once you have started exploring the city, I'm sure you will come back again. The Wiesbaden feeling is as addictive as it ever was. Take care.

About the author:

AWCT member Dr. Ingeborg Cleve is a partner of MTL Moving Transport Logistics e.K., managing their office for overseas moves in Wiesbaden. She has earned a PhD in history and culture studies.

We are grateful to Wiesbaden Marketing GmbH for the photos used to illustrate this article.

WELCOME US TO YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD!

Read about HANAU in the next issue of *Zusammen*. Every place is special and sometimes only the insiders know where to go and what to do. Share your favorite tips and photos, sending them to awctnewsletter@yahoo.com by 25 February.