

48 HOURS IN AND AROUND STUTTGART – 28. – 30. May 2024

At the end of May, eight guests from different regions of Japan delivered themselves to their Stuttgart hosts for intensive sightseeing and visits to typical events.

Stepping into the nostalgic circular lift takes a bit of effort due to the lack of practice opportunities. Only a few of the paternosters that first went into operation in London in 1876 still exist. Most of the remaining lift fossils do their rounds in Germany. Paternosters have now achieved cult status, with the result that the regulation to close the latest down in 2004 was cancelled.



Image 1: A ride in the civil servant excavator "Beamtenbagger" in Stuttgart City Hall

From full power for the soul - is the name of the programme series of singing events by and with Patrick Bopp. In the Sudhaus near Tübingen, shortly before the European elections, the programme included songs about visions of a more peaceful world, calls to think and work for the survival of democracy. Issues that concern us all. Singing creates a 'we' from many 'I's. Studies have shown that sports teams that sing their anthem together before the game show more team spirit during the game and thus increase their chances of winning. As a singing Servas group, we are joining in to strengthen the idea of peace.

Picture 2 Tübingen

At full power for the soul - this is the name of a series of singing events by and with Patrick Bopp. We went to the Sudhaus nearby Tübingen to take part in one. Shortly before the European elections, the programme was dedicated to songs about visions of a more peaceful world, calls for reflection and the effort to maintain a working democracy. Topics that concern us all. Singing turns many 'I's' into a 'we'. Studies have shown that sports teams that sing their anthem together before the game show more team spirit during the game and thus increase their chances of winning. As a singing Servas group, we join in to strengthen the idea of peace.

Depending on interests, some of the group visited the architecturally fascinating Daimler Benz Museum or relaxed in one of Stuttgart's three mineral baths. Hideko liked it so much. She went to two of our pools 😊

The hike up the 511 metre-high Birkenkopf - popularly known as 'Monte Scherbelino' - once again highlights the impact that the Second World War had on Stuttgart. Almost 50 per cent of Stuttgart was destroyed in 53 air raids, due to the fact that Stuttgart located many industries important for the war. as there were many industries important to the war effort. In order to clear the city of rubble that could not be reused immediately, around 1.5 million cubic metres of rubble were brought to the south-west of the city on the Birkenkopf, which was raised 40.2 metres higher as a result. You will find a pulpit made of rubble stones and a steel cross and a great view over the city up there.

Wednesday evening, guests and hosts met at a village public baking house festival in the idyllic Rems Valley. It was a great opportunity to sample traditional handmade Swabian specialities and local wine made from grapes grown around the village.

Guests and host took the opportunity to enlarge the group and introduce other visitors to the Servas spirit. Despite the cultural differences, there were also many similarities here. Who would have thought that so many German folk songs are sung in Japan? Conducted by Tsuyoshi, the singing at the village festival took place in 2 voices and 3 languages. Our guests did better at canon singing than the Swabian village community. Well, perhaps we should give it a go and study Japanese folk songs? A wonderful way to share cultures and get into dialogue.

One guy actually told us while we were leaving: 'If everyone was like your Japanese guests, there would be more peace in the world.' So it does pay to be a member of a peace organisation. Let's get on with it!

Text und Bilder: Katja Hilbrig

