



Wharfedale German Circle

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2025

Monthly Meetings

These are held at the Salem Hall, Main Street, Burley in Wharfedale, LS29 7DG.

Sunday 12th October 2025, 7-9pm - Cold War Berlin and the GDR

For just over 40 years Europe was a divided continent - and nowhere was that division more apparent than in Berlin. In 1983 **Peter Workman** visited both halves of that city, and Potsdam. Now working as an EU translator, he will share his experiences with us in this talk, which will be in German with summaries in English.

Sunday 16th November 2025, 3-5pm - the first of our afternoon meetings

WGC member **Heike Funke** will give a talk on **Karneval in Germany**. Her presentation will cover some of the history, traditions, and quirky customs of Karneval in the Rhineland, especially Cologne. The talk will be in English, but with plenty of Karneval-related German terminology!

Sunday 14th December 2025, 3-5pm - Weihnachtsfeier - Christmas celebration

This is always a lovely event. German-style refreshments will be provided, and we are putting together a series of festive activities. They are likely to include readings, games, a film extract, a quiz and musical items. If you have any suggestions or would like to do a turn, please contact Marion Lawson or Peter Lodge. A fun afternoon is guaranteed!

Sunday 18th January 2026, 3-5pm - TBC

Sunday 15th February 2026, 3-5pm - Johann Sebastian Bach

Jackie Mavro-Michaelis, who is a WGC member, will talk about this great composer. More details to follow.

Sunday 15th March 2026, 3-5pm - Verein Deutsche Sprache

Eddie Lawler will talk about the German Language Association. This will be in German with English summaries.

April 2026 - AGM date TBC



Wharfedale German Circle

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2025

Remembering Fritz Weiss, 7th March 1927 – 5th July 2025.

Sadly, our friend and WGC member Alfred Fritz Weiss passed away at home this July. It was lovely to have his family in Germany come over from Saxony to take the funeral service which was held in German and English.

Fritz was born in Mylau, Saxony and as a teenager became a chimney sweep by trade but at the age of 17 was compulsorily conscripted into the German navy in WW2. He spent several months protecting a bridge in Denmark. Around January 1945 he became a prisoner of war and was billeted in the camp on Weston Lane in Otley. As he was living in a tent in the middle of Winter, he soon had the inclination to get a job at Otley hospital looking after the boilers and chimney. He then spent five years in the Royal Engineers in London in bomb disposal.

Eventually he came back up to Yorkshire to work for a businessman as a chauffeur and lived in Langbar, above Ilkley where he met his wife, Maxi. Eventually the couple moved to Fritz' present house in Guiseley where he became a very well-known and well-loved ice cream man. Many adults today remember him as their kind and gentlemanly ice cream man in Guiseley and Yeadon and there have been many lovely tributes to him on the local Guiseley Facebook page.

If you would like to read a lengthier version about his life, prepared for the funeral please email koxtooby2023@outlook.com

Other activities

Visitors from Alsheim: Six friends from Alsheim, whom we met on our trip to Mainz last year, visited Yorkshire in June, staying in Shipley. We arranged several social events for them, including a curry and our Sommerfest, and visits to Saltaire, Haworth and York. The weather was kind, and a great time was had by hosts and guests!

Visitors from Dortmund: Geoff Tranter and a group of about twenty people from Dortmund will be visiting Yorkshire from **16th to 19th October**, staying at a hotel in Leeds. They are very keen to meet up informally with members of the WGC and of other local German groups for walkabouts and meals in York, Leeds, Otley, and Ilkley. Please see the "Programme" page of the WGC's website for further information.

Kaffee und Kuchen: These conversation sessions, held on **Zoom**, are open to all members and their friends who would like to practise speaking German. The first half of each session is for general conversation and news, and during the second half a specific topic is considered. Participants are split into smaller groups as and when appropriate. Kaffee und Kuchen usually takes place twice a month on Friday afternoons from 4.00



Wharfedale German Circle

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2025

until 5.30 pm. The next sessions will be on 26th September and 10th October.

Anglo-German discussion group on Zoom for WGC members and our German contacts: This 90 mins long meeting happens every 3 months, with approximately equal numbers of WGC members and our friends in Germany and Austria. The 20 or so participants are divided into smaller break-out groups for some of the discussion, which can be in German or English, whichever suits the participants. This year our friends who visited from Alsheim last June have asked to take part in our sessions. It would therefore be good if more WGC members could take part in these sessions too. If interested, please contact Marilyn at wgcircle@gmail.com for more details of how to participate. The next meeting will be on Thursday 4th December, 7pm in the UK, 8pm in Germany.

German lessons: The latest series of 8 weekly lessons on **Zoom** started in the summer. They take place on Thursdays from 5.30 to 6.30 pm and are free to all existing and new members. We will also run a few **advanced sessions** at times to be arranged with participants. Contact Peter if you're interested in either of the above.

Student events: These events (in English) for foreign-language assistant teachers of all nationalities, including German, will resume in the autumn, when they arrive in this area to help in schools for 6-8 months. This year events planned consist of a visit to Haworth on Saturday 8th November, a tour around Skipton on Saturday 15th November and a treasure hunt in Ilkley on Saturday 22 November. If you'd like to be involved, please contact Marilyn Heron at the WGC email address. wgcircle@gmail.com

Events organised by other local German groups, e.g., the Leeds Anglo German Club and the Calderdale German Circle, are frequently available to our members. Some of these are on **Zoom**, others in person, and invitations are sent before each meeting. The next **Sprachcafé/Language Café**, run by the Leeds Anglo German Club, will take place at the Toby Carvery, Harrogate Road, Chapel Allerton, Leeds, LS7 3PT from 10 am until 12 noon on 6th October.

Contact: Information on all our activities can be found at www.germancircle.ilkey.org. Our website includes a "hot of the press" page with recommendations for items in the media relating to the German speaking world. Our email address is wgcircle@gmail.com