



Österreichisch-Britische Gesellschaft Austro-British Society

Open most Wednesdays, 7 pm onwards, Karfreitstr. 6/1.

Club Tel: 0650 5668278 & 0664 4506196.

www.austrobritishcarinthia.at

September 2023

Dear members and friends of the Society

Firstly, this is the start of a new era: we now meet on Wednesday evenings: no longer Thursdays. So much seems to happen on a Thursday evening in Klagenfurt that there is often a conflict of interest as to where one should go. Hence the change.

We had one of our most successful summer parties ever at the Hotel Kärnten in Krumpendorf at the end of June. It came at a cost, food being paid for by the club, but the ambience and food were all superb. The saying goes 'You get what you pay for' and this was certainly the case.

Eleven people attended the wine tasting event in August at the Weingut Karnburg. This is run by Sem Kegley and Georg Lexer: Sem being one of the PIONEERS of Carinthian wines. We managed four hours of eating and drinking, including meat from their specialized Freiland-pigs (Mangalitzza - und Duroc-Schweinen). The 'jause' was all one could have wished for.

We have some great events coming up. Be aware that when not specifically listed, the Wednesday of that week will be a cozy Club Night in. Lastly, we have several new members, from near and far, so a special welcome to you all.

Helen and Australian Susan



Summer Party 2023



Sem Kegley



After the tour

Calendar of Events

On a Wednesday, when otherwise not specified, meetings will be in our clubrooms in the Karfreitstr 6, Klagenfurt, first floor, 7 pm onwards. We reserve the right to change events. If in doubt, check our website www.austrobritishcarinthia.at or Facebook, Austro-British Society Carinthia, Klagenfurt, or phone Helen on 0650 5668278.

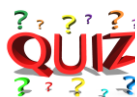
Sep 20



Club Night Out, Joe's Restaurant in Weisses Rössl, start 6.30 pm

St. Veiter Ring 19, 9020 Klagenfurt: opposite the prison. We have not been to this venue before, as a club, so let's give it a go!

Oct 11



Quiz Night at the Rokohof Hotel, start 7.30 pm.

Villacher Str. 135, 9020 Klagenfurt. Fear not: there is plenty of parking.

Oct 25



Club Night Out, Landhaushof, start 6.30 pm.

Landhaushof 1, 9020 Klagenfurt. Always a popular choice.

Nov 1, Club closed, All Saints Day

Nov 11



Remembrance Service, a Saturday

The British and Commonwealth War Cemetery in Klagenfurt. Lilienthalstraße 7. Gather at 10.30 am, service starts exactly at 10.50 am.

Nov 15



Club Night Out, RICARDO Restaurant, start 6.30 pm

Tabakgasse 3, Klagenfurt. Enjoy good Portuguese cuisine in the company of your friends from the club. We have our own private room reserved.

Nov 29



A talk at the club. Speaker to be decided, start 8 pm sharp

We already have the speaker in mind but are waiting to confirm. Make sure to check your weekly emails.

Dec 13



Christmas Party, start 6.30 pm

The venue will be the same as last year: Molly Malones in Klagenfurt, Theatergasse 7. Always a great evening, we look forward to seeing you.

Dec 20 Club open, Dec 27 Club closed, Jan 3 Club closed, Jan 10 Club reopens

Jan 17



Club Night Out, Angkoon Restaurant, start 6.30 pm

This is the Thai restaurant under the club premises. Great food.

Feb 7



Club Night Out, Ciao Ciao, start 6.30 pm

Bahnhofstr.18, Klagenfurt. Tonight we go Italian – and why not!!

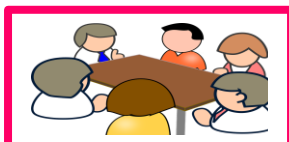
Feb 14



It's Valentine's Day at the club, start 7pm

We are organizing a special night of fun and romance. Further details will be posted in our weekly emails, closer to the day.

Feb 28



Annual General Meeting, Rokohof Hotel, start 7.30 pm

Villacher Str. 135, 9020 Klagenfurt. Always well attended. This is your special chance to have your say and elect the committee. Plus, a great opportunity to catch up with those you may not have seen for a while.

A most interesting member of our society:

Sonja Welsh

Born to Carinthian parents on the 17th October 1948, Sonja grew up in Klagenfurt, living in the stately apartment her grandfather bought, as a wedding gift to her parents. When Sonja was eighteen she left home to learn French, working as an au pair, in a famous ski resort in France. After a year, upon learning of her father's ill health, Sonja returned to Klagenfurt. She worked for a few months in the company her father owned and later worked seasonally at Velden and Kitzbühel, both famous and exclusive holiday resorts.



On the club's trip to Italy, 2017

In 1970 Sonja met and fell into infatuation, with Joe Welsh, a dashing British widower. However, keen to learn English, she had already committed to Kiki Kogelnig, the acclaimed artist, to move to New York, to take care of her young son. As a provincial but confident girl in her early twenties, now living within a five-minute vicinity of Carnegie Hall and the Opera House, Soja embraced the artistic spirit of New York. But she and Joe had not forgotten each other and a plethora of correspondence rode the waves of the Atlantic Ocean and it is through these letters that their romance blossomed.

One evening Sonja received a phone call, telling her that her mother was dying. The next day she left for Klagenfurt, via Amsterdam. Luckily her mother recovered and then, reuniting with Joe, Sonja decided to stay in Klagenfurt. Romance became love and in 1973 the couple married. Sonja looked beautiful in her long white gown, complemented with the wide brimmed hat iconic for these times and holding a bouquet of pink orchids. Joe's young daughter wore a matching pink dress.

Two weeks later Sonja and Joe moved to England and held a second wedding, so Joe's family could attend. But upon arriving in the Midlands, Sonja cried. *"It was such a shock"*. Being an industrial area, famous for its pottery, to Sonja *"everything appeared so black, including the clothes I brought in from the washing line"*. However, Sonja is quick to add that the countryside was beautiful.

Joe took on the business of a news agency and studied nursing and Sonja worked in a home for the blind. Upon Joe's graduation the couple's son, Dominic, was born in 1979. Life was happy and the young family continued their many trips to Austria, and sometimes Spain, for holidays. Then in 1993 Joe retired and they sold their house and moved to Austria. They lived in Sonja's family home and started major renovations. *"It was like living in a building site,"* said Sonja.

During this same year Sonja and Joe first visited our club, with Joe soon becoming bartender and later president of the British Club in 1997. After their renovations were completed, Sonja worked caring for and helping the local community. She also joined amateur theatre and became recognized as a talented actress, delighting many with her performances.

In 2013 Joe died at the age of 79. Although devastated Sonja explains how grateful she was to her large and loving family (and friends) who supported her through the grief process. She continues to enjoy theatre, galleries, jazz, literature and popping in to the club to entertain us with her fabulous sense of humour. Indeed, when I arrived at her home, to interview her for this biography, the first thing she did was apologize, explaining that it is *"her butler's day off"*. I burst into laughter, for she has no butler!

Written by Susan Griffiths

FUN FACTS ABOUT THE UK

The UK has the world's third-largest coastline.

No matter where you stay, you'll never be further than 115 km from the sea.

Scotland, England, and Wales have over 6000 islands, 136 of which are inhabited.

Llanfairpwllgwyngyll-gogerychwyrndrobwlllandysiliogogoch, the name of a town in Wales, happens to be the longest such name in the world.

It is estimated that there are more Indian restaurants in London than in the large Indian urban centers such as New Delhi and Mumbai.

Christmas was banned during England's Puritan reign in 1647, when it was believed to promote immorality. This ban was lifted with the restoration of the monarchy in 1660.

In the UK all horses, donkeys and ponies must have a passport.

During the 16th century, the king raised a tax for everyone with a beard!

William the Conqueror ordered everyone to be in their beds by 8pm.

French was the official language in the UK from 1066 to 1362: almost 300 years. The UK has more than 40 different dialects.

There are more English speakers in the US, India, Pakistan, Nigeria and the Philippines than in the United Kingdom.

Windsor Castle is the largest royal home in the world.

The British Library is the 2nd largest library in the world, housing over 150 million items.

Macbeth is the most produced play ever written. On average, a performance is staged every 4 hours, somewhere in the world.

Shakespeare added approximately three-thousand words to the English language.

England was part of the shortest war in history. They fought Zanzibar, in 1896, who surrendered after 38 minutes.

The UK and Portugal hold the longest standing alliance in the world. It was ratified in 1386 and is still in force.

The UK had the world's first postage stamp, which featured Queen Victoria, in 1840.

It is considered an act of treason, to put a postage stamp with the queen's head upside down, on an envelope.

The English invented the world's earliest railways and London had the first-ever subway system.

Edinburgh established the world's first fire brigade.

The Nightingale Nursing School was the first nursing school to be established and was founded in 1860.

An Englishman drinks more tea than any person, of any other nation, (over twenty times more than Americans).