

Keeping the light on: Our shared future as British-German Friends

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75 years- 75 years since Lower Saxony was founded. Exactly one year after the End of the second world war. And what a war. A terrible one. So many people died. From Lower Saxony 300.000 soldiers died or went missing. In 1948 I was 18 years old when my Mother my two little sisters and I needed to move to Hannover. I didn't wanted to move away from Berlin but Mother said we had to. The life in the Western part of Germany is better than in the East because in the West there was the British occupation zone and in the east the soviet. She also said that the Britain started to build a democracy and to arrest many national socialist. This would be good for us. I was forced to leave. Slowly I started to get to know new people. I also got one friend, Lisa. After the war it was still awful but when I spend time with her I forgot my worries. We both forgot. And suddenly I needed to leave her. Our goodbye was very sad because she didn't wanted to let me go and I didn't wanted to leave her. After we moved to Hannover it was awful. I didn't wanted to speak to my Mother but I had to be there for my little sisters. The first months we didn't found somewhere to stay but also everyone. It was November so the weather wasn't the best. But my Mother was right the Britain helped us. They got us food and at least my little sisters got blankets so they couldn't freeze. To be honest I was a little sceptical at first because they treated us so good. We were Germans so I thought they would hate us but they said that it wasn't the fault of the German citizens that Germany killed so many people but they blame the National socialist. After one year we also found a house to stay. Our life slowly got better but I missed Lisa and to have contact with people. Not to mention that my father didn't came back yet. I was very sad but suddenly I met a man. He was a British soldier. I saw him when I went to exchange my clock for a doll at the black market. I couldn't see my sisters play with rocks they were little and they're worth it to live their childhood even if the circumstances weren't the best. He was very handsome and tall. Although there were many soldiers I could only see him. He also saw me and came to me. He only new a little German and I couldn't understand English but somehow we communicated. That is humanity we communicate although we don't speak the same language. He helped me find a doll and we spend the rest of the day together. Then we started to hangout everyday and together we taught each other our languages. I learned English and he German. He became my best friend in the darkest time of my life. I never thought I would became friends with a Britain but it happened. Sometimes he was a better friend than Lisa. After we could understand each other he told me many things. About how they want to build Lower Saxony. What they do and what they are going to do. He also introduced me to many of his British friends that slowly became mine too. Everything was perfect but we slowly realized that friends isn't enough. We had more feelings for each other than just friends have. So we started dating. One year later I found out that my father died in the war. I was an emotional wreck but luckily I had him and my friends. They cheered me up and slowly the pain just changed into grief and then into memories. I started to spend more time with my British friends and they showed me their culture, their food and more things. After a while we met every morning to eat English breakfast and later to have our afternoon tea. A habit that continues to this day. I showed them the German culture and we lived finally a happy life. I was in love and had friends. But unfortunately the happiness did not last long. My soldier disappeared and I didn't knew the reason. I was in a terrible situation. Years past by and then I married your grandpa. We had a beautiful marriage and beautiful children. And today I still have contact to my British friends because good friendship never ends. It's a forever thing. Just like the relationship between Germany and England even if the Brexit happened their relationship will forever be inseparable just like me and my friends are. England may not be in the EU but I know that they will help Germany and of course Lower Saxony. Germany and England have a common

history and this will never change. We will definitely have also a common future because so many young people from Germany have friends from England. Our relationship will grow. Not only in friendship part but in many aspects. We are inseparable. 75 years pasted by and they were wonderful. So kids I hope you can say my story for the 75 years anniversary of Lower Saxony in class. Yes grandma but one question that still occupies me. Who was this soldier do you know who he is now? He is your grandpa my dear your grandpa.