

Pastor Peter Ziersch and Friends of George Kausch

We are gathered here to commemorate, in the truest sense of the word, a most remarkable individual who endured the trials and travails of World War Two, then for over fifty years found his physical home at 45 Gray Street, Freeling.

His Freeling home was built in 1905, renovated in 1965, and in 2005 he celebrated its centennial. Some of you, who were a part of his extensive network of correspondents, may well recall his Post Office Box number: 123.

Why did Georg settle at Freeling? The gravestone with his selected inscriptions gives us a look into his mind: He considered himself to be a *Gelehrter* – a Scholar. To that I would add that Georg was not only a scholar but a Gentleman as well!

He sums up his life's maxim in the form of the inscription on his gravestone:

Buhle nicht um den Beifall der Zeitgenossen - erwirb dir die Achtung der Nachwelt -

Do not bother about the applause of your contemporaries - get the respect of posterity.

Georg was born at Gumbinnen, near Königsberg, East Prussia, on 18 June 1927, and from an early age he reveals his active, enquiring mind, which his experiences during World War Two somewhat accentuate.

Georg's father, Franz Kausch, had a thriving transport business at Gumbinnen, which is destroyed during the war and no compensation was ever paid to him for this loss; unlike some individuals who to this day are receiving compensation from the German government for alleged losses suffered during World War Two.

In 1944 as a 17-year-old conscript into the armed forces, Georg attends an electronics course, which later determines his career as a mining engineer.

As Georg's family, and millions of Germans, flee from East Prussia, he witnesses how his mother, aunt and one-year younger sister, are brutally raped by Soviet soldiers, causing his sister's death and his mother's and aunt's subsequent suicide. Only rarely would he mention any such details to me.

Then, on 29 April 1945, while Berlin is in total lockdown, together with his Luftwaffen companions, he escapes the Soviet invasion of Berlin by swimming across the River Spree, a day before Adolf Hitler suicides on 30 April 1945.

Now, as a young man a month shy of 18 years, Georg makes his way to the British sector of Schleswig-Holstein, North Germany.

Here he also meets up with his father who is living in a shack as a displaced person.

Over 15 million Germans are expelled-ethnically cleansed during and after the war from former territories where Germans had lived for over 700 years.

Of those, at least three to five million perish as they flee, not to mention the millions of Germans who are transported to Siberia as slave labourers.

It is also during this time that he is approached by the British occupying forces who are recruiting German soldiers as part of the proposed multi-national defence force that aimed to stem the Communist Soviet Union's advances into Europe.

On 11 January 1946, at age 19, he is discharged from the Luftwaffe.

It is almost unimaginable, beyond belief, what extraordinary experiences this young man of just on 20 years of age has had to digest and understand.

What a credit it is to his mind and to his basic moral and intellectual value system that he survived at all, and then until the ripe old age of 89!

After the war Georg goes to Duisburg where he attends the Bergbauschule in Hamborn and where he obtains his engineering degree

Besides studying for his degree Georg is also an avid bicycle rider, hiker and camper, something which is in line with his quest to maintain a healthy body, mind and soul. His photo albums, especially the ones from 1951 and 1952 attest to that.

Together with two friends he covers Bavaria in 17 days, and in a comment he exclaims:

Bayern, du Land voll unvergleichlicher Schönheiten, Heimat der Weisswürste und des süffigsten Bieres, wir lieben dich!

Bavaria, land of incomparable beauty. Home of the Weisswürste and of the süffiges-drinkable beer, we love you.

His tripping not only reflects a deep appreciation of Nature's beauties but also of Germany's cultural

heritage, and especially how this is reflected in the engineering feats that made natural phenomena accessible.

But there is more: in 1954 he again sets out with a KAMERAD traversing Baden-Wuerttemberg, then northwards through Holland, Denmark and Sweden. He is impressed with basic hospitality coming from the staff at a railway station where they had arrived tired, drenched and without enough Krone for the fare:

So war unser Abschied von Schweden nicht weniger ein wunderbarer Ausdruck nordischer Großzügigkeit als die großartige Geste der Begrüßung.

Our farewell from Sweden was an expression of Nordic magnanimity as was its great welcoming gesture.

He sums up his reflections thus:

Das Negative, Schlechte verblasst, die schönen Erlebnisse treten umso kräftiger hervor. Vergessen sind die brennenden Augen, die nassen Kleider, vergessen ist, daß Peter, der nun auf der Bank vor Erschöpfung zusammenklappte und ich jetzt für ihn wachte. Wie er in der Nacht für mich gewacht hatte. Man empfindet erst viel später, was ein Kamerad bedeutet, was es heißt, Kamerad zu sein! Hunger, Entbärung, Strapazen: Auch sie gehören zum großen Erlebnis das sich unauslöschlich in die Seele prägt, weil man das alles überwunden hat. Über alle Widerwärtigkeiten gesiegt zu haben, gibt uns erst das Glücksgefühl der schönen Erinnerung, das einem gewöhnlichen Touristen immer fremd bleiben muss..

The negative, the bad fades, the beautiful experiences are all the more powerful. Forgotten are the burning eyes, the wet clothes, forgotten is how Peter collapsed on the bench from exhaustion and I now watched over him as he had previously watched over me. Only much later does one realize what a comrade means, and what it means to be a comrade! Hunger, deprivation, hardships: they too are part of the great experience that is indelibly imprinted on the soul, because you have overcome all this. Having conquered all odds gives us the feeling of the beautiful memory, which must always remain elusive to the average tourist ...

It does not surprise that once settled in Australia he makes an annual pilgrimage to OLD EUROPE for about eight weeks.

It is on such a journey to Norway after visiting Dr Hamer that he departs joyfully to a friend in Germany on his return home to Freeling, when he suffers a heart attack.

He does not like travelling to America because he hates credit cards, and in the USA it is almost impossible to get anything without a credit card. Hoteliers are not impressed with his exclamation: ***Kausch pays cash!***

A year after his father dies on 18 March 1957, Georg at 31 marries on 7 February 1958 and sets sail for Australia. In 1969 he divorces his wife, who returns to Germany.

He spends a year in Burma-Myanmar, returns home and then becomes an Australian citizen on 22 October 1975. He joins GMH as a precision toolmaker, and upon his retirement he predicted that GMH would in time close down:

"because my expertise kept the place going".

Such is his sense of humour, which some misinterpreted as typical German arrogance".

In 1977 Georg teams up for 35 years with Evelyn and her cats, and together for many years become hobby farmers, rearing poddy calves. Not only do they foster calves who had lost their mothers, Evelyn and Georg also become foster parents to children and adolescents. Evelyn passes away in 2012.

Georg was also Adelaide Institute's secretary/treasurer from 1996 until 2004.

Few knew of Georg's passion for astronomy – he turned an old water tank into an observatory – befitting a man who delighted in thinking, and all thinkers discriminate – that's how they develop their moral and intellectual values.

Then in 2007, aged 80, Georg finds his real passion in the *Deutscher Freiwirtschaftsbund*, for whom he produces its newsletter. Two years later, on 31 July 2009, his 1995 completed book manuscript is published by this organization

The essence of his book's thesis is summed up thus:

It turns out that there has been a boom and recession for millennia and has badly damaged the human race. ... the German nation had its own, natural, exploitation-free economic system. It is necessary to restore it in a modern form, so that man can thrive and develop further.

On 18 August 2010 Dr Hamer appoints Georg as lecturer to his private *Universitet Sandefjord*, where Georg is admirably qualified to teach about history/money/economics. This appointment makes his annual pilgrimage to Europe obligatory!

Now back to my question posed at the beginning: Why did Georg settle at Freeling?

After surviving the war and wandering about Europe and coming to Australia, he had at last found a home, a physical home, which he could personally defend.

In the 2015 December fire that swept through Freeling he refuses to vacate his home, which did not surprise, as the news report of that event quotes him exclaiming:

'Get out of here, get out of here,' they said. I said, 'I stay! This is my place. I've lived here for 52 years and I will perish with it. If you do not fight, you have lost already!'