

Tuesday 15th October 1974

District president Hugo Geisert at the memorial unveiling in Michelbach.

'EIN BRUCKENSCHLAG DER FREUNDSCHAFT'
(A bridge of friendship)

Honour for the designer and builder Karl Frauhammer.
Many took part in the ceremony.

1. rik. Mosbach. "With the erection of this memorial you have set up a lasting monument, not only to the seven fallen English airmen, but also to your people," said the British military attache, Air Commodore General Martin to the builder of the memorial opened on Sunday in the presence of many people. His charming Berlin-born wife translated the conversation between her husband and K. Frauhammer. One could not rate Frauhammer's action in terms of international understanding high enough, went on General Martin. Severely disabled in the war and expelled from his homeland (Hungary), Karl Frauhammer had really achieved a great deal.
2. Along with many people from Michelbach and Aglasterhausen, the Mayor Horst Lehmann gave a hearty welcome to special guests General Consul Mr Hale and wife, the British R.A.F. attache General Martin and his wife, provincial council member Dr Hans Heider, member of the squadron at that time - Mr Greenwood, district president Hugo Geisert and wife, certificated engineer Colonel Kowald, acting Commander-in-chief of military district command V (Stuttgart), Lieutenant Schäfer, acting Commander of the Air Force Supplies Regiment 4, Neckarelz, manager of the People's Federation for the care of War Graves, H Grasing, Chief Magistrate Kurt Wagner, Karl Frauhammer and his wife, Father Wild, formerly of Michelbach but now in Bretten, and the local parish councillors.
3. Though himself severely affected by the war, fellow citizen Karl Frauhammer had created a work which is to be looked on as exemplary, said Mayor Lehmann. He then went into the story behind the monument, which we have already reported on, at length in our Saturday edition. He also praised the bold resolve of the former municipal council of Michelbach on its leader Mayor Wagner, the work of chief forester Knorzer, the action of the Air Force Supply Regiment 4 and of the community workers.
4. Frauhammer did not only create a memorial for the fallen Englishmen, but also for the local community and the world. Just as here the former enemy has been honoured, so have fallen Germans had a monument put up in many countries of Western Europe, through the maintenance of cemeteries with the support of the Peoples Federation for the care of War Graves. The majority of fellow citizens have rightly praised Frauhammer's act. Mayor Lehmann went on to say that the care of German Soldier's graves in England was exemplary. He thanked the British guests for this.

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He looked briefly back in time, and said that in the past small German states fought each other, and three times within one century, nations have become involved in great wars. Today we have seen the advent of thinking as Europeans, and one can expect the peoples of Europe will no longer fight each other, for they have drawn closer together. Former enemies are today friends.

5. District President Hugo Geisert declared that since the second World War almost three decades have passed. The painful wounds caused by this deadly war, are healed but not forgotten. All over the World war memorials, monuments of stone, remember the war dead. Even the ancient Romans knew the saying 'Saxa loquuntur' i.e. 'Stones can speak'. This memorial stone is to remind us that the war dead left a legacy to say; we should do our utmost and work unremittingly and unwavering for reconciliation with the former enemy, for the maintenance and preservation of peace and understanding between peoples.
6. "Ladies and gentlemen of Britain, today's meeting in which you are taking part, and to which I as district President heartily welcome you, should not reawaken all the suffering and grief which afflicted countless families in Great Britain and Germany in the second world war. Today's meeting, we all heartily wish, should deepen and help nurture the good relations between the English and German people, reached at last after the hostilities", said District President Geisert, and he ended his speech with the comment that this commemorative spot for the English airmen might be a sign of good will and of reparation. It should forever be a bridge of friendship over the borders of Germany to England. At the end of his remarks, the district President said he hoped this day might contribute to the friendship between the two countries, which formed the basis for a free and peaceful world.
7. General Consul Hale thanked the builder of the memorial for his deed which united peoples. He acknowledged not only the great personal sacrifice of Frauhammer, but also praised its meaning for human relations between both peoples. He recalled the words of a famous English poet who said about graves on foreign soil 'Here is a piece of earth on foreign soil, that will always signify'*(possibly based on "The soldier" by Rupert Brooke). He thanked the parish council, the mayor, the German Air Force, and all who took part in the ceremony. Director of Studies, Dieter Dannenberger from Mosbach, read out the names of the fallen. The Music Society and the Male Voice Choir provided a musical setting for the ceremony. The Voluntary Fire Brigade likewise made a remarkable contribution.
8. Following the ceremony a reception for the guests took place at the 'Gluck im Winkel' (inn). Mayor Lehmann took this opportunity of thanking fellow citizen Karl Frauhammer on his big hearted action, for designing and producing the memorial. He went once more into the background of the man whose hobby was creative ironwork. After the war he had to show a preference for a substitute profession, as he could no longer carry out his job because of war injuries. Frauhammer became known for this. In

recognition of his services to understanding between peoples, he awarded him the heraldic plate of the parish of Aglastershausen. The hand carved heraldic plate of the parish was received by General Consul Hale, Air Commodore Martin and editor Richard Knopf.

9. Provincial Council Member Dr. Hans Heidler gave thanks for the hospitality, "One should take oneself across borders entirely without complications. The world of the future should be a world in which all can talk to each other. One citizen has obviously achieved that. He has expressed something artistically, which moves us all". Dr. Heidler turned again to the guests in English. He established thus, that this day had been a day of progress. Two soldiers of the Air Force Supply Regiment formed a guard of honour in front of the memorial. Active and reserve soldiers were likewise gathered before the monument.

UNDER THE PHOTOS;

10. In Michelbach on Sunday a memorial for seven fallen English airmen was unveiled. Our photos show (top) General Consul Hale during his address and (on the right) Mayor Lehmann (middle) Members of the Voluntary Fire Brigade hold the wreaths during the ceremony. (Below) Mayor Horst Lehmann during his address. Two soldiers of the Air Force Supply Regiment 4 forming a guard of honour.

(Photos; Richard Knopf)

* Start of "The Soldier" by Rupert Brooke.

If I should die, think only this of me;
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England.



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Our reference

DDPR/30/L/3/PJ

Date

12 November 1974

Dear Mr Jenkinson

Your letter dated the 20 October 1974 has been forwarded to me by Mr Dawson of the Daily Telegraph.

I have spoken with the Press Office in Germany and they advise that the arrangements for the ceremony were dealt with by the air attache in Bonn. I have written to the Embassy for any information and for pictures they may have or that they might be able to obtain.

Any information received will be forwarded as soon as possible.

I enclose a copy of the air Ministry News Service Release AMB 20372/1945 giving details of the Citation which I thought you might like to see.

Yours sincerely

Richard Kane
R KANE
PR4(RAF)