



100 Years of Finland



UPF Gießen held another 'International Cafe' event on 23 June, in the tradition of fostering international understanding. The topic was 'one hundred years of Finland'. Seija Künzig, a native of Finland who lives near Gießen with her German husband, gave a very comprehensive and enlightening power-point presentation about Finland, and succeeded in giving an overview of one hundred years of the history of her native land in just one and a half hours.

Already a good atmosphere had been established; the guests enjoyed coffee and cake and music from Finland.



Benedikta Becker gave a short introduction about the goals of UPF and reviewed the 'international understanding' project, mentioning countries which have already been introduced as well as Finland the most northern, which borders on Russia.

Finland is an exemplary country with the best grades in the PISA evaluation of standards in schools, free education, warm hospitality and many other points. According to the world happiness index, which was initiated in 2012, the Finnish people are the happiest in the world (2018).

Using a map of Europe, Mrs. Künzig explained that the Finnish people make up half of the world's population who live north of the 60th latitude; others are Swedes, Norwegians, Icelanders, Russians, Alaskans, Canadians and Greenlanders.

Mrs. Künzig started by giving a historical review, and went on to mention some important facts such as size, population, language, climate, education and economy.

She informed us that Finnish people are very nature-loving, artistically talented, innovative and creative and that they love music, literature and architecture.



The pictures with comments about significant personalities included many famous people such as Mika Häkkinen (see photo).



In closing, Benedikta Becker encouraged us to continue this kind of international understanding and gave a short preview of an upcoming event, a World Peace Blessing in the form of a family festival encouraging harmonious families as a foundation for a healthy society, peaceful nation and unified world.



Then followed a barbeque celebrating Finnish mid-summer with the German-Finnish Association in beautiful weather with Finnish temperatures (under 20C). In many places, the occasion is used to make a bonfire.

And since we were in the midst of the Football World Cup, many took the opportunity to watch Germany play Sweden, a thrilling game with an unexpected end.

Josef Resch (English, Catriona Valenta).