

From your last batch of letters I have learnt many new things. I want to share a few of these with the whole group.

From B. I discovered that it is not easy to sell office buildings in Hamburg and get a good price. She also says that there is a Danish law that forbids foreigners to buy houses in Denmark.

K. was trained to draw building plans in pencil and also in ink. Then in the late 90's she was trained to do all this drawing work on computers. The computerisation of planning offices seems to have come quite late, only around 8 years ago. I am surprised.

W. tells me he is two months my senior. He was born in April 1940 and me in June 1940.

His Dad fought in Crimea and was taken prisoner.

My Dad, an Italian, was imprisoned by the British in June 1940. He was set free in 1943.

Walter still does plumbing jobs for his friends. He keeps his toolbox in the cellar of his house.

O. likes Hamburg because he finds its buildings, parks and rivers beautiful. He also likes Hamburg because the State authorities are more accessible (more open) than in other parts of Germany.

A. likes cooking Italian dishes. In my view she is a very intelligent cook!!!! She writes that she taught herself to cook. I wonder if she also cooks Polish things that she learnt from her Mum, from her Gran, from aunties?

H.'s motivation for learning more English is her wish to understand her grandchildren in California when they burst into English. Though their Dad is German they go to school in San Francisco and they tend to speak more and more English. Naturally she wants to keep up with them.

A. says that she worked for 22 years as an accountant (Steuerberater), helping people to make their tax returns. She did not find retirement easy. She retired little by little.

For two years she only worked for 3 or 4 days per month.

Now, four years into full retirement, she is really happy.

E. explains to me that her mother is living in her house now and that this means she must be at home a lot. This is why she goes to evening school to learn about pedicure and cosmetics.