

Duane Thompson presents reel of film to the City

Historical Film of 1938 again in Stendal

STENDAL (jp). "It is for me a special joy and a pleasure to make the film available," said Duane Thompson. On Friday the American presented a film to the City of Stendal. Not just any film, but one quite special. Because the film shows a parade from the year 1938 on the occasion of the 600th anniversary celebrations of the Winckelmann High School. Duane Thompson's father, in April 1945, was stationed in Stendal as a medical officer and brought home a film projector. In it was this historical pictorial film. "The film was a part of my childhood," remembers Thompson jr. The film was often shown by his father. With time his curiosity grew to learn where this place was, which he got to so often see on the film as a child. Therefore Thompson got down to work. He had the film repaired and digitized. He placed some still pictures taken from the film on the Internet and investigated. He discovered Stendal and also the Circle of Friends of the Winckelmann High School.

The photo of the Winckelmann High School on the homepage of the Circle of Friends Thompson recognized. They were surprised by the message from Thompson. "It is this ceremony that this material could be received", stressed Hans Basner, from the Circle of Friends.

Duane Thompson wanted to personally bring the film to Stendal. Since he was going to visit London with Patricia Mee, he used the trip to also make possible an excursion to Stendal. "Actually the delivery of the film was the principal reason to come to Germany", emphasized Thompson. The city leadership of Stendal presented themselves enthusiastically to the American visitors.

In Memory of his Father

Thompson found beautiful and multifaceted architecture of the area in addition to being so well received,. He specifically thanked the members of the Circle of Friends of the Winckelmann High School and all other persons, who received and accepted him so cordially.

At 28 years of age his father was stationed in Stendal [in April of 1945]. That the film, which was brought home at that time, would arrive once again at the place of its origins, was not yet clear to him as a small boy. But there has been a need, also for memory of his father, Duane Thompson sen., to bring this historical piece of film back to Stendal. He has brought along a restored copy of the original, that is now in federal film archives [Bundesfilmarchiv in Berlin], as well as a DVD.

Eight Minute Film

The film is almost eight minutes long, which will also be shown Friday evening at the Open Channel (OK) studios in Stendal [Public Access Television]. The Open Channel also "profits" from the fact that the film has arrived again at its place of origin because film from this time is extremely rare and it fits exactly into the OK historical project "Stendal from the 30's to End of the War".

For the conclusion of the visit of Duane Thompson and Patricia Mee, still another round of touring in the Altmark area is certainly on the program today.

Photo Caption:

Joy on both sides: Duane Thompson (r.) presented on Friday the historical reel of film to Axel Kleefeldt, Deputy Mayor of the City of Stendal at the Roland City Hall. Photo: Pfeiffer