

Baldur Lemke – Wiesbaden 41 Club, Germany.

Monday, April 17th, 2023.

This morning I received the following email from Peter Taylor, (a member of Wiesbaden 41 Club, Germany) telling me of Baldur's passing.

Dear Peter and Margaret,

We have received the most sad news this morning that our dearest friend Baldur Lemke passed away in the early hour of this morning. He had been suffering a serious health condition (he was diagnosed with cancer) for some weeks and was in the Palliative Station in Lindenberger Krankenhaus (about 15 miles from Oberstaufen). He went into a sleep during the night and passed away with Monika at his bedside.

This has been a terrible time for Monika, they left Germany early in December to sail with a German cruise ship from the north of Italy "a round Africa Cruise, and were due back in Germany on 4th April. Sadly, Baldur developed bad health at some point somewhere near South Africa / South west Africa. After 10 days in the ship's medical facilities he was transferred to a hospital in Dakka, Senegal on 29th March. Baldur remain in the Dakka hospital for 12-13 days, several attempts were made to fly him to Germany, but what with strikes on German airports, bad weather and so on, this transfer was always delayed. During this hospital stay he fell during the night, broke 2 ribs and also had Lung damage as a result. This prevented him being flown to Germany on a regular flight, he was eventually flow by the German Red Cross to Stuttgart at lower altitude, where he was transferred about 150 miles to the Lindenberger Krankenhaus, arriving there on 2 April.

Monika also arrived back in Gemany the same day, but was flown vis Istanbul to Munich. Then she was the following morning back together with Baldur at the Lindenberger Krankenhaus, where she has spent most of the last 13 days.

The loss of Baldur to all of us here is "massive", at this time our hearts go out to Monika, works cannot describe how we all feel. It is so difficult to prepare yourself for such an event even when you know it's coming. Our Old Table Wiesbaden first concern is how to support Monika, especially being 350 mile away. We do have one pair with their holiday home in the mountains just outside Oberstaufen, they are both retired doctors, and have based themselves there during the last week to support Monika, Karl and Ingrid also now live in Baveria about a one hour drive away, so we do have "boots on the ground". But first we all have to come to terms with the passing of Baldur, and await more news from Oberstaufen.

On a more personal note, I probably know and understand better than most, the long and close friendship Baldur had with New Zealand 41 Club. It would be Baldur's wish that we work to continue the long-standing friendships he helped to created, between our clubs, between us on a personal basis. Let us use the time we have to continue his dedicated work and friendship.

I will write again when we know more, in the meantime, please excuse any spelling mistakes, it really is not an easy day to write. To all of our friends in New Zealand, we send our kindest regards, if Baldur was with us he would also say "Please also add kindest regards from me". I last talked with Baldur 3 days before he departed for his cruise, one of the last things he said to me was, "When I come back from Africa, why don't we plan a visit to New Zealand, we can do it together". He always had a plan in his head, right to the end!

*We send our best regards to everyone, on what is a very sad day
Peter & Roswitha*

We first met Monika and Baldur when a group from Germany joined up with a group from New Zealand to attend the South African 41 Club A.G.M. in 1992.

Since then they have hosted Kiwis in Wiesbaden in their home, greeted us at Frankfurt with (very) early morning drinks, and have come to New Zealand twice – once in 2005 with the U.K. group, and again in 2020 when Margaret and I were able to meet them off a cruise ship at Tauranga.



During all this time, the bonds between Wiesbaden and New Zealand grew stronger, mainly due to Baldur and his efforts to be the perfect host – and he was, believe me.

To Monika we (New Zealand 41 Club) offer our most sincere sympathy and we hope that time will erase the hurt you are feeling today.

Yours in 41,

Peter Butchart