

WITNEY & DISTRICT TWINNING ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2016

This is a re-launch of a regular Newsletter for members of the Witney and District Twinning Association and for our friends from Le Touquet Paris Plage and Unterhaching.

I am a new member and look forward to meeting you and to becoming involved in the Twinning Association. This Newsletter will reflect the year's activities and look ahead to the future.

FUTURE EVENTS

We very much enjoyed being involved with this year's Special Effect Twin Town Challenge car rally, and are looking forward to being involved in the next event planned for 2018.

We also hope to team up with Le Touquet Motorsport Club in arranging a vintage car rally from Le Touquet to Witney scheduled for 2018. Hopefully this rally will coincide with our Witney Carnival. More news to follow as we make plans!

Next year there are two events in Unterhaching which we might attend, Europe Day on May 9th and the Beer Festival in July. If you would like to come to either of these please let us know. More details later!

John Thornton and Margit Kail have been working on a student exchange between Cokethorpe School and Unterhaching. In addition, John is our liaison officer now working with local schools to promote student exchanges.

EVENTS IN 2016

REMEMBRANCE WEEKEND NOVEMBER 11-13

We enjoyed a successful weekend with our friends from Unterhaching and Le Touquet who came to join us for Remembrance Day. We started with a reception in the Town Hall on Friday evening, followed by a wonderful concert of piano music at Witney Methodist Church. On Saturday about 20 of us sat down to a meal at Café Rouge, and then some of the group went to Henry Box School for a concert of Melodion music.



On Sunday the representatives from our twin towns laid wreaths at the War Memorial, which was followed by a service in the church. A 'vin d'honneur' was held at Eleonore and Tony's house to thank our guests for their participation in our Remembrance weekend. Many thanks to our generous hosts - Francine and Kate were hosted by Eleonore and Tony, and Veronique was hosted by June Taylor.

Reception at Witney Town Hall

The Rev. Toby Wright, Team Rector at St Mary's Church, led an outdoor service which was very well attended by the people of Witney.



Bernard Maidment from Unterhaching laying a wreath on the War Memorial



Kate Landry-Madden and Veronique Crae-Pruvot from Le Touquet at the War Memorial with Bernard Maidment



Wreaths laid by representatives of Le Touquet, Unterhaching and the Mayor's wreath



The War Memorial with all the wreaths laid by organisations from Witney and our Twin Towns

Also in November, our Deputy Mayor Chris Woodward travelled to Unterhaching for their Remembrance commemorations and laid a wreath there on behalf of the Witney Twinning Association, for which we are very thankful.

VISIT TO LE TOUQUET SEPTEMBER 2016

Members of the Association went to Le Touquet in September to join in with the celebrations for the town's 50th anniversary of being twinned with Winterberg in Germany. Eleonore writes 'As always we were received with smiles and welcoming words from our Le Touquet twinning friends as we arrived on Friday 25th September. Le Touquet looked very elegant and vibrant as we drove in and to our surprise the Centre Leonce Duprez where we would meet for the next two days had been refurbished and repainted and now has a state of the art kitchen. All of which added to our delight in being part of the Winterberg celebrations. Our Mayor and his family stayed on at the CLD while Mike was hosted by Marie-Helene and Patrick Lorand, and Eleonore and Tony by Yvette Debailleul in their respective lovely villas.

Saturday was a very busy day, starting with a visit to the covered market, with a quick trip to the Carrefour for Eleonore and Tony so they could stock up on wine and confits de canard!

The formal reception at the Town Hall presided over by Kate Landry-Madden was very impressive. Speeches from the Mayor of Winterberg stressed the strong alliance it has had for the past 50 years and still has with Le Touquet. The Belgian representative said a few words and our Mayor Chris Holliday added to the festivities with a short but warm and witty speech. The Mayor of Le Touquet Mr Daniel Fasquelle addressed the twinning groups with words of welcome and congratulations after which the signing of a renewed contract between the towns of Winterberg and Le Touquet took place.



Our Mayor presented Mr Fasquelle with a framed photo of the Buttercross in Witney and Mike presented him with beer from our Wychwood brewery to replace the beer that was dropped on the floor during the official part of the Twin Town Challenge 2016! Mr Fasquelle was delighted.

In the afternoon we had a guided tour of Le Touquet which was highly appreciated by those who had not been there before and for those who had, it was wonderful to reacquaint ourselves with this very English French town! We followed our beach stop by visiting the 'Manufacture du Touquet Biscuits et Gourmandises' where we were treated to a special demonstration from the chef pâtissier. The biscuits were delicious and the whole place smelled of spices and buttery pastry. Divine!

In the evening after drinks on the terrace of the CLD we sat down to a meal especially prepared for us by the town's designated chef. Needless to say it was 'haute gastronomie' all around!

On Sunday we were treated to a special tour of the magnificent villas in the forest area of Le Touquet, thanks to Marie-Helene and Patrick Lorand who also showed us the impressive hippodrome complex and last but not least the Baie de Canche near the Nautical Centre. Views of the bay at low tide were breathtaking. We all promised ourselves to come back and see what it looks like at high tide.



We regretfully said our goodbyes after a gorgeous lunch, grateful for having had the privilege of taking part in these well organised and impressive celebrations. A huge thank you to all our Le Touquet twinning friends who made the weekend so special.'



Eleonore and Francine enjoying lunch!

VISIT TO UNTERHACHING JULY 2016

Pauline and Andrew Carter represented Witney at the Unterhaching Beer Festival in July. Other nations represented included visitors from France, Poland and USA. Apart from the two evenings at the Beer Festival they were treated to a visit to a nearby camel centre and organ museum in Bavaria as well as meals in two of the local restaurants. The weekend finished with a spectacular fireworks display in the Sportpark where the Beer Festival was held.

WITNEY CARNIVAL JULY 2016

Witney Carnival is a tradition in the town, when local groups and organisations parade through the town on floats. There is a band, and fairground rides, and entertainment of all sorts. Local clubs and societies have the chance to inform people of what they do.



This year for the first time the Twinning Association took an active part in the Carnival and as a result we have new members and have raised the profile of the Association in the town. This was particularly valuable at a time of such public discussion around the recent Brexit vote.

Mayor Mr Chris Holliday and Mike Breakell at the Twinning stand during the Witney Carnival

BREXIT

Brexit has been a topic of conversation among all our European friends. After the vote, Eleonore wrote to our twin towns of Le Touquet and Unterhaching. Here is her letter.

‘To All Our Twinning Friends

As you all know the past week has been one of the most challenging for us here in UK. We wish to make it clear to you that the aims of our Twinning Association were and still are to promote and foster friendship and understanding between our twinned towns of Le Touquet and Unterhaching.

Now more than ever we need to pursue these aims. Together we have forged important personal and cultural links over the past 35 years. Our most fervent wish now is that we continue to do so for a long time to come.

We have all been enriched from our past association one way or another. We look forward now to a future where our twinned towns continue to hold a special place in our hearts.

The Witney and District Twinning Association’

WEBSITE

Please look at our new website which has been put together by Mark Pengelly. There is more about our twin towns, recent events and committee meetings, plus names and email addresses of the committee.

Does anyone know who put together the previous website? It is now out of date and we wish to remove it, but cannot until we can provide Angelfire with information about the author. If you can help please let Mark Pengelly know. His email is markapengelly@googlemail.com.

AND FINALLY...a word from our Chairman

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jenny Smith our newsletter editor and all our hard working committee members, as well as the Witney Mayor Chris Holliday and our Town Clerk Sharon Groth for their much appreciated support this year.

Seasonal Greetings, Joyeux Noël , Frohe Weihnachten, to all our membership, friends and families here in Witney, Unterhaching and in Le Touquet at this special time. We all look forward to another successful and happy year in 2017!

Mike Breakell

Jenny Smith December 2016