

Le Touquet - Witney - Unterhaching

Witney Twinning Association



Final Draft Minutes of the Witney & District Twinning Association Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 4th September 2019, 7.00pm

Present: Mark Pengelly, Margit Kail, John Thornton, Liz Duncan, Owen Collins, Duncan Enright, Hilary Warner, Lesley Morris, Keith Harris, Mike Breakell, Brenda Churchill, Mark Churchill, Chris Bamford

Apologies: Felicity Hill, Jeanette Barker, Tom Jones

AGENDA

- Annual review
- German update
- French update
- Anniversary 2020
- Fundraising with Voice Box & Witney Town Band
- Plans for anniversary event
- TTC 2020
- Financial report
- Twinning Fees 2020
- Election of officers
- AOB

Annual Review:

Overall 2019 has been a year of effort. We had some activities around the centennial anniversary of the end of the first world war, we had a successful beer festival and, thanks to our friends in Unterhaching along with the town band, had a very successful and enjoyable anniversary.

We also attempted to raise funds for the Twin Town Challenge (TTC) next year through hosting a Bingo night on two occasions. The weather was not in our favour with heavy rain the first time and a very hot evening the second time. It was a great shame these events were not more successful, as it was a little discouraging. However with the right support through the grant the Association should give it another go.

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German Report:

Remembrance 100 weekend 9 to 12 November 2018

Bernie Maidment, Klaus Kaefer and Gisela Pfeifle from our twin town of Unterhaching took part in the Witney Remembrance weekend. A number of events took place at this centenary weekend including an armistice centenary Dinner at the Corn Exchange, Royal British Legion Service of Remembrance and Remembrance Day Church Service.

30 years of twinning between Unterhaching and Witney 5 to 8 July 2019

The Witney Mayor, Duncan Enright, his wife, the town band, and a number of the Witney twinning association members, incl. John Thornton, Chris Bamford and Margit and Mark Pengelly went to Unterhaching for the celebration.

A number of events took place including a concert of the Witney town band at the Bürgerfest and a sight-seeing tour of Munich. The official twinning celebrations took place on Sunday 7 July. The guests were looked after very well and received vouchers for lunches and dinners.

Remembrance Day 2019

This year's Remembrance Day will take place on Sunday 10 November 2019. Bernie Maidment from Unterhaching will attend the ceremony in Witney. Renate Fichtinger, who is also a member of the Unterhaching twinning association, will be coming too. She will be staying with Melody Robson.

Town Band Report of Unterhaching Visit:

A further report was prepared by the Town Band to be read out during the AGM, however was unintentionally omitted from the agenda. (*Sincere apologies from John Thornton.*) The report can now be found in its entirety at the end of these minutes.

French Report:

Voice Box Choir to Le Touquet December 7–9th 2018

Following many discussions with the French team, a date was agreed for the long awaited choir trip to Le Touquet.

We hired a mini-bus and went over on the ferry to Calais.

As well as the choir, we had our Mayor Brenda Churchill and her husband Mark, with her. They joined in everything, sang along and we enjoyed having their company. There are some lovely photos to remember it all by.

Unfortunately, we had two large rainfalls, much wind and a couple of showers. However, in spite of the weather the trip was a great success. We all hope that it helped to foster and develop the friendship between the two towns, and that this friendship will continue to grow and flourish.

We were made very welcome at the house in the centre of town reserved for visitors – we were served with a wonderful supper, speeches were made, songs were sung, there were drinks, and also gifts exchanged. Bernard the mayor was there to greet us and there was much conversation and people getting to know each other.

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Some of us had been to Le Touquet before, some not. For most of us I think it was a first time, and we were surprised at how pretty the town is. Everyone was extremely friendly, and the Christmas decorations, which were all round the town, were gorgeous. We noted Mme Macron's parents' house with the gendarmes outside because of the Gilets Jaunes who were demonstrating at the time.

We all loved the sand miniature Eiffel tower which became a popular tourist spot for us! Our three performances, all outside - though under cover, went down well, and were a success, though if it had not rained there would have been more people and it would have been even better!

Small children enjoyed joining us to ring the bells for 'Jingle bells' and other bell carols. We all enjoyed a free morning too, on the Saturday, to go shopping and to visit the cafes, and the very popular chocolate shop.

I think that the singing in the covered market was the best, even though it was the rainiest! It was full of people, lights and bustle, some people stopping to listen, some to sing, some to chat and ask questions, and wonderful stalls, and small dogs.

It reminded us all why we were there, and how vital it is in these times for these twinning exchanges and meetings to continue – even more now that we are about to lose so much by leaving the EU. We will need to work even harder to sustain outings like this and to host similar things here.

Unterhaching Anniversary:

The Voice Box Choir together with the Witney Town Band will be performing a concert on the 10th November to raise funds for the anniversary between the Twin Towns. The Twinning Association will be applying for a grant together with usage of the Corn Exchange Hall. The thought was to invite several visitors from the Twin Towns to enjoy this event and ask them to stay until the Monday in order to make sure this event will not be missed.

The anniversary date has been fixed to take place on the weekend of Friday 3rd April to Sunday 5th. An event for Saturday has been tabled, using the Bowls Club for a game and the use of the hall for a buffet style meal. Any further suggestions will be welcomed.

Twin Town Challenge 2020:

Due to change of circumstances, participation in the Twin Town Challenge has been put on hold for the time pending further discussion. The Twinning Association should reach out to the organiser of the TTC to offer any support, as it is an event that Twinning should be more involved with.

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Financial Report:

Two attempts to raise funds for the TTC through Bingo evenings were unsuccessful as mentioned. Overall the assets of the Twinning Association have moderately declined from £3535.69 to £2860.97. The main goal for the year has been to grow the membership, which we have done successfully by registering 20 new members during the Bingo and the Beer Festival.

It was decided that the annual subscription will be reduced to £0, giving existing members the benefit of continuing to enjoy the benefits and new members an opportunity to find out more about the association. The subscription shall be reviewed on an annual basis.

Twinning Association Accounts AGM 2019

| | In | Out | Balance £ |
|------------------------|-------|--------|----------------|
| Opening Balance | | | 3535.69 |
| AGM 2018 | | 95.98 | 3439.71 |
| Invoice for TTC | | 81.3 | 3358.41 |
| Membership | 196 | | 3554.41 |
| Remembrance Day | | 385 | 980.25 |
| Beer Festival | | 184.19 | 2774.97 |
| | 44.31 | 59.11 | 2760.17 |
| Stamps | | 7.32 | 2752.85 |
| Dabbers (Pens) | | 12.99 | 2739.86 |
| Engraving | | 24 | 2715.86 |
| Bingo | | 40.17 | 2675.69 |
| Closing Balance | | | 2675.69 |
| Assets | | | |
| Paulaner | 18 | 2.16 | 38.88 |
| Paulaner Weiss | 27 | 1.4 | 37.8 |
| Erdinger | 7 | 1.6 | 11.1 |
| Sub-total | | | 87.78 |
| Funds from Round Table | | | 97.5 |
| Total Assets | | | 2860.97 |

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Twinning Events for 2019-20:

There are several events that The Twinning Association will be taking part in event in part being organised by the town The list is enclosed.

Twin Town Pictures:

To create awareness the idea was brought forward to create a display/ photo gallery for the anniversary in the Gallery Room with pictures of people being involved in Twinning activities – the older the better to encourage multiple generations to share their memories of their connections with Unterhaching and Le Touquet.

These can be displayed initially in the Library window and the bell-tower next to Waitrose.

To make collection easier some tasks have been allocated:

- John Thornton will receive all digital picture
- Chris Bamford will collect any physical photos
- Hilary Warner and Chris Bamford will book the library windows and create the display
- John Thornton will find out when the clock-tower space can be used.

Twinning Fees:

In order to grow the Twinning membership it was proposed by John Thornton to remove the membership fee to encourage people to explore what the Twinning Association does and what the relationship between the twin town can offer new members and their families. It was agreed that until further notice the membership would not need to pay to be a member of the Twinning Association

Election of Officers:

There was no change in the role held by the committee and all continue in their present role for another year.

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Chairman: | John Thornton |
| Treasurer: | TBC |
| German Representative | Margit Kail |
| French Representative | TBC |
| IT & Website | Mark Pengelly |

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German Report Continued:

Witney Town Band – Unterhaching 5th- 8th July 2019

Fourteen members of Witney Town Band, plus 7 accompanying guests, departed London Heathrow T5 early on Friday 5th July in a British Airways A320, climbing into a bright morning sky. They arrived at Munich International Airport in Bavaria at approximately 11am, to begin a 4-day programme of international relations and entertainment.

Unterhaching lies immediately to the south of Munich city centre, is an independent municipality with a population of 25,000, and is a twin town of Witney. The purpose of our visit was to take part in the official twinning ceremony, and to perform concerts at the town's annual beer festival. Unterhaching is twinned with several other European towns that include Bischofshofen in Austria, Le Vesinet in France, and Zywiec in Poland; delegations from these towns were also present.

The band was warmly greeted by our twinning hosts Thomas Jaeger and Bernard Maidment on arrival, and swiftly conveyed by coach to our hotel in Unterhaching. The band soon headed for lunch at a nearby hostelry to sample the local food and beer; after our early morning start and travel, this met with the band's full approval!

Friday afternoon saw WTB's first performance at the beer festival. We were positioned at the entrance to the festival site; Orts Park has a lake & fountain, fairground rides, and what appeared to be the world's largest beer tent! The 10-day festival season was about to start, and the band helped commence the festivities with an hour-long set. Playing outside as the public arrived, we performed a mix of popular tunes including numbers by The Beatles (Hey Jude, Ticket to ride), Dolly Parton (Nine to five) and The Proclaimers (500 miles). The first beer barrel was "tapped" by the Unterhaching Mayor, and the festival was underway.

Saturday was a day of rest and relaxation with no official engagements. The band was extremely well looked after by our Unterhaching friends, who cannot be thanked enough for making us so welcome, and for providing our transport and such delicious food and drink during our stay. We were taken by train into Munich city centre, and treated to an open-top

bus tour to view the principal sites of the city. Memorable places included the beautiful Isar river, the central Marienplatz square with neo-Gothic buildings, and the Feldherrnhalle monument, site of the infamous Beer Hall Putsch of 1923. The band was then treated to a marvellous lunch, and after a hot afternoon strolling in the city, the day concluded with dinner in Munich's most famous beer hall, the Hofbrauhaus.

The official twinning celebration ceremony was on Sunday morning and held in the Kubiz Hall, attended by several hundred dignitaries and guests. The band of the Unterhaching Fire Brigade first played outside as people arrived, and then during the ceremony Witney Town Band shared the stage with two bands from Bischofshofen. There were many dignitaries in ceremonial costume, in particular representatives from Zywiec looking splendid in national dress complete with fabulously feathered helmets.

Our Mayor, Duncan Enright, delivered an eloquent speech of friendship, entirely in German, that was extremely well received and followed by heartfelt applause. It was clear that the alliance and comradeship offered by the twinning program will endure long after the

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uncertainties of our current political turmoil fades. The band played two pieces, first was the Barnard Castle march, and after prayers this was followed by a beautiful rendition of All Through the Night. Full of warmth and harmony, together with changes in dynamics and tempo, this was a performance of which the band was especially proud. Our multilingual euphonium player, Helen James, delivered a speech in German on behalf of Witney Town Band, thanking Unterhaching for their warm hospitality, their continued friendship, and for being such excellent hosts.

The formal ceremony was followed by a procession by all participants to Orts Park and the beer tent. Sadly, the fine weather had deserted us, the rain was falling, but spirits were never dampened, and the Austrian marching band played with gusto. Once in the tent, Witney Town Band set up on stage, and performed another hour-long set to the festival-goers. We started with a rousing "Salute to Sullivan", and then progressed through ragtime, some classic brass band numbers (Floral Dance), movie themes (Beyond the Sea from Finding Nemo), a Michael Buble number (Sway)... and of course ending again with a rousing rendition of The Proclaimers' 500 miles. It was a good performance, there were several hundred people in the audience, and we hope that we did Witney proud!

On Monday we had one final engagement, which was to play at lunchtime for the Unterhaching pensioner's club. Once more in the beer tent, we set up again on the now-familiar stage and launched into our well-honed repertoire. We played our final performance, which was well-received, and then we headed for home. A coach returned us to Munich International Airport, and we arrived back to Heathrow at 10pm.

This trip was a great success. As ambassadors for Witney, the band took its role seriously and we hope that we gave our best. It was an absolute pleasure to spend such valuable time with our German friends, whose hospitality and friendship made us so well received. For several members of the band this was their first time to Unterhaching and Munich, and everyone returned with fond memories.

Jon Warwick

Treasurer, Witney Town Band

The meeting closed at 20.50 hours

Minutes prepared and written by John Thornton, September 2019