

Worcester Twinning Association

CONNECTIONS



WINTER 2015

Editor Contact Derek Furby



Victorian Christmas Fayre 2015

Thursday 26th November 2015 saw our friends from Kleve, Le Vésinet and Ukmerge join us for another Christmas Fayre.

This year the Fayre not only had new organisers but the Twinning stalls had been given a new position on the High Street. This proved to be very successful; there were more stalls on the High street than in previous years so we felt more involved in the general atmosphere.

Due to the increase in the cost of travel and hiring of vans, our friends from Kleve and Le Vésinet were reduced in numbers. It was strange not seeing the familiar faces of Karl-Heinz, Gisela, Annie and Pierre who after many years had decided to step down to allow others to run their stalls.

Sales on all four stalls were up on last year. Everyone agreed our new position on the high street was excellent and the Fayre was the best ever.

My thanks to Catherine Warren who sourced the merchandise for the Worcester stall ensuring its success. My thanks also go to all members who helped on the stall. It was very much appreciated.

The Ketch was the new venue for our Christmas Dinner on Saturday evening.

The enjoyable evening was a fitting end to the weekend.

Kleve Contact: Les Tunley

In June Gisela and Karl – Heinz had arranged with Rosemary and Les for a week's holiday in Cornwall. They could travel on a coach with the choir of the Versöhnungskirche in Kleve who were invited by the choir of St. Martin to Worcester.

The choir with more than 40 people had a fantastic week with the Worcester choir, whilst Gisela and Karl Heinz left them to travel to Cornwall with Rosemary and Les.

While preparing the trip a request from the Mayor of Kleve, Theo Brauer, was launched. Theo wanted to pay a farewell visit as mayor to Worcester. Thanks to the big help of Les and Jo Hodges this visit could be arranged and Theo, his wife Jutta, the financial manager of the city of Kleve Willibrord Haas, his wife Birgit and also the technical executive Jürgen Rauer and his wife Jutta came by plane for a few days to Worcester.

On the return of Les, Rosemary, Gisela and Karl – Heinz from Cornwall to Worcester, the whole group was invited to Les and Rosemarie's house for a party, and we all had a great evening. On Saturday Mayor Brauer and his fellows met Mayor Roger Knight at the Guildhall and then took part in the Civic Service in the cathedral followed by a reception at the Guildhall.

Later that day the Kleve delegation was invited by the Twinning to an Italian restaurant and we all had a fantastic evening with excellent food, good drinks and lots of laughter.

Theo Brauer and his delegation were ever so pleased with everything that was arranged by both twinings and they send a very big thank you to all the friends in Worcester,

And so do we.

Gisela and Karl – Heinz...

Visit to Kleve

The visit to Kleve went very well, Les and Rosemary were a great asset and without them it would not have as enjoyable nor would we have learnt as much as we did. Theo was extremely welcoming and the hospitality of the City was second to none, in fact it was embarrassingly generous!



Clearly Kleve set a high value on the relationship and Twinning with Worcester and this was reflected not only by the very warm welcome, but also by the artefacts, signs and place names relating to our City, Worcester, as you will see from the photographs.



Kleve has approximately half the population of Worcester yet the capital investment in the City is much higher than we are used to. Although heavily war damaged the City today is immaculate with buildings restored to the look and style prior to their loss through bombing. Somewhere around £112 million has been invested in a new university complex, they have a wonderful new library and both the canal and city port have been beautifully

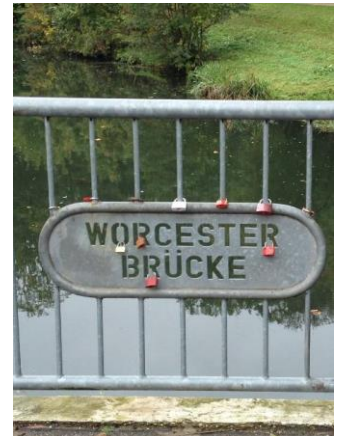
refurbished. The city was virtually litter and graffiti free, few litter bins, but it seemed that people just respected their environment.



They have an enormous theatre complex in which they not only seated 600 people for Theo's retirement celebration, but all were seated at tables and served food and drinks all evening. We left at around midnight, but I gather the party went on until 4.00am!! They clearly have more stamina than I do!!

Karl-Heinz and Gisela were great, they treated us like old friends and it was a delight to spend time with them.

I have written to all parties thanking them for their help, support and hospitality and I have also written Frau Burgermeisterin Sonja Northing, the new Mayor in an effort to continue and develop the relationship and hopefully encourage her to be as supportive as Theo has been.



I will be speaking to our MD, Sheena Ramsey, regarding some reciprocal hospitality for the visiting group from Kleve at our Christmas Fayre. On a side note the event was obviously covered by their local press, but then were mentions of Worcester and our visit. I think it was very successful, worthwhile and thoroughly enjoyable.



Press coverage and some photos:-



PARTNERSTÄDTE SAGEN ADIEU

Bürgermeister verabschieden Brauer

(RP) Die Amtskollegen von Theo Brauer aus Ronse (Belgien), Worcester (England) und Ameland (Niederlande) hatten die Einladung der Stadt Kleve zur Verabschiedung von Bürgermeister Theo Brauer gerne angenommen und waren mit Ehefrauen und Delegationen angereist. Nach der Begrüßung im Foyer des Rilano Hotels traf man sich zum ersten Kennenlernen und gemütlichem Essen. Am folgenden Morgen führte Wiltrud Schnütgen die Gäste durch Kleve und erklärte die Sehenswürdigkeiten. Zum Mittagessen war die Gruppe dann im Alten Landhaus und anschließend stand noch eine Führung durch das Museum Kurhaus und die Govert Flink Ausstellung auf dem Programm. Nach einer Erholungspause trafen sich dann alle zur Teilnahme am Großen Zapfenstreich, der sehr beeindruckend war. Als geladene Gäste durften die ausländischen Gäste dann auch noch an der offiziellen Verabschiedung in der Stadthalle teilnehmen. Alle waren von der perfekten Organisation beeindruckt und fühlten sich geehrt und sprachen übereinstimmend von einem unvergesslichen Erlebnis.

Freda und Roger Knight aus Worcester beim Abschied von Kleves Bürgermeister Theo Brauer und Gattin Jutta.

FOTO: PRIVAT

Bürgermeister der Partnerstädte verabschieden Brauer

Die Amtskollegen von Theo Brauer aus Ronse (Belgien), Worcester (England) und Ameland (Niederlande) hatten die Einladung der Stadt Kleve zur Verabschiedung des Bürgermeisters angenommen und waren mit Ehefrauen und Delegationen angereist. Nach der Begrüßung im Foyer des Rilano Hotels traf man sich zum ersten Kennenlernen und gemütlichem Essen. Am folgenden Morgen führte Wiltrud Schnütgen die Gäste durch Kleve und erklärte die wichtigsten Sehenswürdigkeiten der Stadt. Zum Mittagessen war die Gruppe dann im Alten Landhaus, und anschließend stand noch eine Führung durch das Museum Kurhaus und die Govert-Flink-Ausstellung auf dem Programm. Am Abend trafen sich dann alle zur Teilnahme am großen Zapfenstreich. Als geladene Gäste durften die ausländischen Gäste dann auch noch an der offiziellen Verabschiedung in der Stadthalle teilnehmen.

Foto: privat

Article written by our Mayor Roger Knight

Le Vésinet Twinning Christmas Market



As the recently appointed liaison officer, I and a group of our members took part in the Twinning Christmas Market in Le Vésinet in early December. The ongoing state of emergency in Paris filled us with apprehension, but we all arrived in Le Vésinet on Thursday, having travelled by train, by air or by car and I was warmly welcomed by my host, Anne-Marie Borderie.

Later that evening I had the opportunity to meet the delegation from Villanueva de la Cañada and practise my extremely rusty Spanish. On Friday morning participants gathered in the large marquee in the main square in front of the Église Sainte-Marguerite, in order to assemble, decorate and set out the festive stalls. Even before the official opening, our partially completed display of Christmas puddings, mince pies, crackers, chocolates, chutneys and cheese certainly aroused interest. We crossed our fingers and hoped that the cloudless blue skies and warm sunshine would entice even more locals into town for this unique Christmas shopping experience!

In any case, the tantalizing aroma of French crêpes being freshly prepared just outside the entrance was especially inviting. Next to us, a cheerful St Nikolaus was busy serving warm Glühwein at the Unterhaching stall, which was heaped with traditional German Christmas decorations, marzipan chocolates and spicy biscuits. Directly opposite us, Le Vésinet's stall, with its abundant collection of candles and sparkling silver coloured Christmas gifts and ornaments looked very chic. At the far end of the tent, we visited the salon de thé for a well-deserved "cuppa" and slice of cake, while admiring the colourful Spanish display of delicious almond and nougat confections, ham, bottles of olive oil and beautiful fans.

Members from Le Vésinet manned the stalls for their Canadian, Australian and American twin towns. The Outremont stall had an appealing selection of cuddly Canadian animals, which proved to be a "mousst" for some of the adults as well as children! On Saturday morning the Harmonie Municipale brass band performed in the marquee and in the afternoon there was a special event for children, who were treated to cups of hot chocolate. In the evening, all delegations attended a special dinner in the Côté Marché Bistrot and we relished this opportunity to catch up with our friends from Le Vésinet Twinning Association. On Sunday a concert by the Harmonie Municipale chamber orchestra and the O Musica choir took place in the Église Sainte-Marguerite.

On behalf of all the participants from Worcester, we would like to thank our hosts for their warm hospitality, for looking after our safety and for making our trip so enjoyable.

Remains of a Lancaster shot down in 1944

On the margins of the 11th of November commemorations, there was an exhibition reliving the events of the night of 7th and 8th of June 1944 that has remained ingrained in the memory of veterans.

On this night, several RAF Lancaster bombers had taken off from Witchford, north of London, on a mission to bombard targets in the Chevreuse Valley in France. Each plane was carrying 18 bombs weighing 250kgs. As they flew over, Le Vexin, at low attitude one Lancaster was hit by enemy fire. The pilot tried to turn round the aircraft but with one of the engines on fire the plane plunged to ground near the village in a raging ball of fire. On board were 7 heroes from the ages of 19 to 31 years old, all of who are buried in the communal cemetery.

Only 12 of the 18 Lancaster's survived the mission and returned to their base at Witchford.

In 1997 and again in 2004 archaeological digs were carried out in the Ajoux plain (behind the Chennevieres windmill). Debris and aircraft parts were recovered some of them from a depth of 5m and despite the danger of finding 14 unexploded bombs from the site; bomb disposal experts found 3 propellers one of which was in very good condition, together with 4 Rolls Royce Merlin engines that powered the aircraft. These artefacts are included in the monument built to commemorate the deaths of the aviators from the downed Lancaster bombers.



The initiator of the exhibition, JF Heurteux, presented half of one of the recovered Merlin engines that was missing 2 cylinders and weighs nearly 400kgs. The engine is being looked after by the Normandy association 'souvenir aerien 39-45'.

Information from Jean-François Heurteux