

DEVON & SOMERSET TWINNING CIRCLE

HOME FROM HOME

Winter 2024

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Joyeux Noël et bonne année
Buon Natale e felice anno nuovo
Frohe Weihnachten und ein glückliches neues Jahr
Prettige Kerstdagen en een Gelukkig Nieuwjaar
Krismasi Njema na Mwaka Mpya
メリークリスマス、そして新年明けましておめでとうございます
Boldog karácsonyt és boldog új évet

Welcome

Street has joined the Twinning Circle family and has already provided articles for this newsletter.

There will not be a meeting in January 2025

The next meeting will be hosted by Dawlish in April, either the 12th or 19th, and the July meeting, will be hosted by South Molton on 19th July.

Chanteuse parisienne

In November, Jenny circulated an invite from a chanteuse parisienne to attend one of her concerts taking place in Devon & Cornwall.

Did anyone take up the offer and, if so, would you like to provide us with a report on the show?

Contributions to the newsletter

Articles are invited for anything relevant to twinning – how you undertake your fundraising, some historic stories and/or photographs from years gone by or just something you think will be entertaining or useful.

Remember you will be entered into the Monica Saunders Competition and could win £50 plus another £50 if judged the overall winner of the year.

Please keep the articles coming

Please send articles, reports, photographs by email to babenton52@gmail.com
Or by post to Mr B Benton, 5 Silver Street, Bampton, EX16 9NR

This newsletter contains many articles for you to read if you wish

Burnham-on-Sea & Highbridge visit to Fritzlar

Street visit to Isny im Allgau

A few words from Braunton

A gift to Isny im Allgau from Street

Tiverton newsletter

Another chance to enter the competition

The presentation of the Monica Saunders award and Don Leech cup

**THE BURNHAM-ON-SEA & HIGHBRIDGE – FRITZLAR TWINNING SOCIETY 35th
ANNIVERSARY VISIT 2024**



Seen off at 7.30 am in impressive style by our Mayor, Sharon Perry, with a speech in German, the tone was set for our return to Fritzlar for the 1st time in 5 years (because of Covid), to celebrate the 35th Anniversary of our Twinning, which was established just before the Berlin Wall came down in 1989.



After an overnight stay in Lille, we arrived to the warmest of welcomes by our German friends, many of whom had made a special effort to surprise us. The following day we were given a fascinating tour of the Army Helicopter Base, whose pilots are deployed on NATO Missions, and treated to an excellent dinner in the Mess.



Chairman Keith Hay receives
the Regimental Badge

On Thursday we visited the Eder Dam in warm sunshine, followed by a Boat Trip on the Edersee in a dramatic thunderstorm, Museum and “Kaffee & Kuchen” at Schloss Waldeck, where our Twinning was first agreed in 1988, and a drive through glorious countryside in sunshine again to a delicious Buffet Supper in a beautiful rural inn.

Our final day included free time with our hosts, and the Farewell Evening – a wonderful celebration of 35 years of Twinning, with a New Orleans Jazz Band before the meal and, afterwards, a Carnival dancer, now 22, who had entertained us previously aged 9!



Founder Chairman of the Partnerschaft,
Hans Schaefer (centre)
Past Chairman Gabriele Ulrich (left) and
current Chairman Marlies Heer.

On our way home we spent the final night in Ypres, and attended the moving daily Ceremony of Remembrance at the Menin Gate, made even more poignant by post-war reconciliation, and our current relationship with our German partners.



Just as we were approaching Burnham, we heard that England had beaten Slovakia in the Euros – a great end to the trip!

Report from Street on their trip to Isny im Allgau, July 11th to 16th 2024



Street Twinning had an extremely successful and convivial visit to Isny in July. Twenty-six of us were booked to travel, in the event due to sickness/family issues, 24 of us went. Two new families came, and others were staying with hosts they hadn't stayed with before. Without exception people were very happy with the warm reception given them and forged good links with their hosts.



We had been invited for the weekend of the Kinderfest which is an ancient and annual celebration in the town attracting people from other nearby towns. The highlight was a procession on the Sunday through the town and up to the field where tents were set up for eating and drinking and several bands were playing. We had been asked to dress as a recognisable group and to march in the procession. After a discussion about costume and what people would be comfortable wearing, we opted for red, white and blue outfits, white tops, blue trousers/skirts, and red sashes with small Union jacks and a rose on our shoulder. A peaky blinders type hat completed the outfit. We had lots of cheers and encouragement as we processed through the town. Supper was provided in a tent and thoughtfully our hosts had arranged, later for us, to access a smaller tent with television that was showing the World Cup final (England v Spain).

We were well entertained on the other days. We had a wonderful day out to Bregenz on Lake Constance and the Swiss/Austrian border and visited the fabulous opera house. The Bregenzer Festspiele is a big performing arts festival, and we saw the large floating stage set being prepared for this year's opera 'Der Freischut'. En route we had stopped in Tettwang province at a brewery where we marvelled at the fields of tall hops all around and were treated to a talk on the brewing process with plentiful tastings followed by an excellent lunch. On our last day we visited a nearby Landesgartenschau by the old interesting town of Wangen. The day ended with a final meal outdoors at a restaurant up in the hills with one of our hosts playing her alpenhorn.

The only effort on our part for this trip was organising the travel, a much bigger problem with the rise in fuel and coach costs.

Isny had travelled to us by coach, sharing the coach with a group twinning with Wellington. It involved an overnight stay each way although the cost per person was good. It was clear after consulting our twinnings that this was not an option for us.

We also considered train travel as a new service has opened up from Paris to Stuttgart and there is also a direct line to Basle, but the timings didn't work on this occasion, and it was expensive. (However, our German friends have just told us they are thinking of travelling by train to England next year. By everyone purchasing an Interrail pass they say it will be a realistic option, watch this space.)

So, we looked at all possibilities if we flew. We are lucky in that our Isny friends said they could meet us at a number of airports including Munich, Stuttgart and Zurich. The coach is paid for by their Town Council. On a previous occasion we had flown from Bristol to Basle where our hosts had met us but there were only weekly flights available this time. Our researchers decided the best and cheapest route was Heathrow to Zurich. There were several daily flights, helpful when bearing in mind the delays and cancellations we had been hearing about.

The other problem with booking flights is ensuring the whole group gets on the same flight which can be challenging with budget airlines. BA has a group booking service which we went through. It was all done online and was a bit nerve wracking as we had to enter full details for each passenger in one go which had to be accurate but was quite straightforward. We also had to ensure on the two dates we had to make payments that Marina, our Treasurer was available as her name is on the twinning credit card and BA insisted the named person was present.

We booked a local coach company to take us to and from Heathrow. We met up at Strode college leaving Street at 7am for a midday flight. Strode college agreed to us leaving cars in the car park as term had finished, provided we left our registration numbers with the office. At Heathrow we were booked in as a group and were quickly on our way through security.

Our hosts were at the airport to meet us, and we had a scenic 2 hour drive back to Isny. After a short welcome at the Town Hall, we went home with our hosts.

The final cost per person was very reasonable (£208) and we were able to subsidise travel for the families with young people from twinning funds.

A few words from Braunton

Here in Braunton we are preparing for our 50th anniversary and plan to welcome around 35 friends from Plouescat next May.

We are working hard to attract new, younger, members and are very pleased that contact has been made between our U16 team at Braunton FC and FC Plouescat with a view to Braunton FC touring in Brittany in 2025. Hopefully some new contacts will be made following this visit.

À bientôt !

Street gift to Isny im Allgäu

A few years ago, when we were running out of ideas for a gift to take to Germany, we decided to make a wallhanging which is now displayed in their Town Hall.



The upper left corner shows the Clark's shoes headquarters with a separate picture of shoes, Clark's being the the key company in the growth of Street.

The heron shows the Somerset levels.

The Isny graphics show their iconic buildings plus a field of flax which used to be grown there and a caravan representing one of their biggest employers Dethleffs.

Tiverton Town Twinning Association Newsletter



Sept 2024



Visit to Hofheim 2024

THURSDAY: a party of 19 arrived at Frankfurt airport a couple of hours late, to temperatures in the high 20s, and with about a third of us coping with rather wet luggage. But that's another story....



Bembel & Partybag

FRIDAY morning: we met up at a local Apple Wine farm where we were formally welcomed by the German organising team and the Mayor of Hofheim (once he had finished monitoring a political demonstration in the town centre!).

Plentiful jugs (Bembel) of the rather tart wine washed down a substantial buffet of typical local produce. It was good to renew friendships, introduce new members, and enjoy such generous hospitality.



That evening we met again on the banks of the river Main for drinks and snacks provided by our hosts.

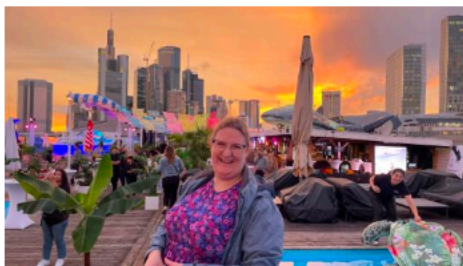


We spent a beautiful evening in this peaceful location, relaxing while watching the huge barges inch their way silently past us, to the strains of live Latin American music.

SATURDAY: an hour's drive in glorious weather and through heavy motorway traffic to the Fortuna iron ore mine. It proved to be a fascinating day looking at obsolete locos, visiting the mine via a cramped lift cage and a rudimentary train that took us deep into the cold and darkness of the mountain.

Then back into the sun for a quick Schnitzel and a beer, before a ride around the grounds in refurbished coal trucks. Clean ones, thankfully!



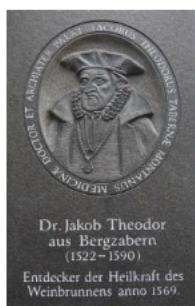


SUNDAY: the weather changed dramatically, so a planned picnic in the park enjoying live music was sadly cancelled. We spent the day with our hosts, competing with each other to find some sunshine. So a pleasant day was had exploring local towns such as Limburg, Rüdeshheim and Hofheim itself. The sunset over Frankfurt's skyscrapers was stunning.

MONDAY: the sky frowned upon us once again as we undertook a pleasant coach drive to Bad Schwalbach, a spa town, though its microclimate offered us some sunny respite for a while. We learned from our guides about the illustrious history of the spa (Kurhaus), and the various water therapies developed there.



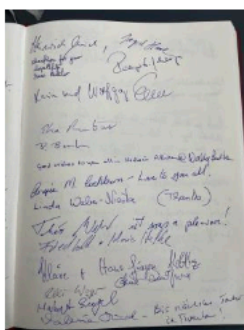
Then we sampled the iron- and carbon dioxide-rich spring water, referred to as "wine" or even "champagne". Well, let's just say it was an acquired taste – well, for some of us!



Bad Langenstahlbach

The town itself seemed to have lost the glow of its esteemed heyday. So many shops and cafes were shut, or closed for business – a sad sight amid the persistent drizzle.

In the evening, we were treated to a sumptuous farewell dinner in a modern restaurant on the Main riverbank. This was fine dining indeed, with a buffet offering us a wide variety of dishes to choose from.



The traditional speeches were made by the respective town mayors and twinning officers. Gifts were exchanged, toasts made, tears shed, visitors' book signed, and some last-chance photos taken for posterity.



That evening was perhaps tinged with the regret that our stay was nearly over, but bolstered by the warmth of our friendship, good humour, and by singing together a few well-known songs, led by a guitar/accordion duo – Roland and Ingrid.

"All good things must" But we will of course look forward to seeing each other again next year.

Newsletter Editor : Graeme Cozens : cozensg@yahoo.co.uk



Who won the Don Leech tankard in 2022-2023?

A **PRIZE** winner will be picked at random from all correct answers submitted through the “contacts us” page on the website.

Closing date – 31st January 2025

Need help? Check out the website <https://www.devontwinnigcircle.com>

The presentation of the Monica Saunders award and Don Leech cup at the 2024 AGM in October.

Well done, Crewkerne

