

# CHARNWOOD TWINNING UPDATE

## LOUGHBOROUGH TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Report on activities and plans of the Groups represented and co-ordinated by Loughborough Twinning Association (LTA)

### Brief history of :LTA

The LTA came into existence at the behest of Charnwood Borough Council to take over the day to day conduct of relations with Loughborough's twin towns with which CBC had formally agreed to become twinned, Civic and Mayoral relations were to remain in the hands of CBC and indeed later twin town agreements, although supported by LTA, were still formalised by CBC through Mayoral signatures and Certificates

Each town with which CBC is twinned now has a group of enthusiasts within the Borough who arrange visits and exchanges and does fund raising when necessary. The LTA provides a firm, cohesive link between these groups offering advice and a co-ordinating service (strength in numbers) for things like insurance, grants etc.

Contact: Chairman -- Raymond Mason 01509-812539  
Secretary -- Hazel Meredith 01509-212008

### Activities of the Groups (in alphabetical order)

#### Bhavnagar -( *community link not an official twinning*)

This is a town in Gujarat India which has a cultural and religious diversity almost as wide as Loughborough, so finding a broadly acceptable link is not easy but a small band of enthusiasts, led by Daphne Beale, visit regularly in December/January and the Mayor of Bhavnagar has been to Loughborough. Distance and resulting costs just add to any problems.

Contact -- Daphne Beale 01509-261688

#### Epinal

A delightful town in Lorraine, France which was our very first Twin some 50 years ago. Many firm friendships have been made over these years but up to now Epinal council has insisted that the Town Hall arranges all twinning formalities.

Unfortunately, CBC has no "in house" arrangement (or budget) to reciprocate the formal civic invitations from Epinal. We have maintained and expanded personal relations by 'tagging' onto these formal visits which include, every year, a braderie, (open air market) in September and the St. Nicolas Fest in December. This year's braderie was attended by seven members who sold home made marmalade We are constantly striving to improve the exchange arrangements and with a new councillor

for international relations and new team at the Epinal Town Hall we hope for better communication. We plan to have a Choir from Epinal visit us in 2010.

Contact : Chairman -- David Wolfe 01509-231573

### Gembloux

A pleasant town in Wallonia, the French speaking part of Belgium. It has an Agricultural University and is surrounded by historical battle sites going back to Napoleon, plus, picturesque canals and rivers. The people that greet and host us are so friendly and very keen to promote the link in every possible way. A youth football team from Loughborough was warmly welcomed in the summer and an exchange of Families is an annual event, usually at the end of May The 2010 visit by the Gembloutois to Loughborough is already booked."

Contact : Joint Group Chairman/Organiser -- Jenny Carter 01509 233189#  
Sue Hunt 01509 210852

### Schwabisch Hall

A real "picture postcard" town in southern Germany, twinned with Loughborough for over 40 years, their twinning covers half a dozen or more towns and has just the right mix of Council control and input from individuals and family groups. Family Group exchanges take place every year with Loughborough and next year it is our turn to go to Germany in late July. Their Mayor has sought formal work exchanges but CBC is unable to respond whereas in 2009 a GAP year student from Loughborough was helped by the Schwäbisch Hall town official responsible for twinning to find work experience

Contact: Group Chairman -- Phil Symons 01509-569164  
Group Secretary: Pauline Hallam -- 01509- 646847

### Zamosc

Even in these days of Ryanair and Easyjet , Zamosc must be one of the most awkward places to get to in Poland! However, when you do get there, and this year our group from Loughborough made an adventure of it by going via Gdansk, it is well worth it, with lots of history, scenery and, of course, a wonderful welcome -- Many of us are even starting to learn Polish ready for their visit to us next August.

Contact : Group Chairman -- Bob Holownia 01509-214056

### **Visits planned for 2010**

To Bhavnagar	January 4 - 21	7 people
From Epinal	3-4 nights between October 25 and November 1 -	choral society and others - probably 40 people
From Gembloux	May 21 25	probably 30 people
To Schwäbisch Hall	July 28 - August 4 (provisional)	probably 30+ people
From Zamosc	August 12/13 - 20	probably 20 - 30 people

## Barrow and District Twinning Association

Barrow upon Soar has been twinned with the community of Marans in the Charente Maritime since 1997. Although only officially twinned for some twelve years, links between the two communities go back to the mid 1950's when school exchanges began. These exchanges were enjoyed, by children of both villages, right up to the late 1990's when regrettably they were discontinued.

Events for the coming months include;

- 20<sup>th</sup> November Beetle Drive at the Bishop Beveridge Club South St. B-o-S 7.15 for 7.30pm. Cost £4.00 adults, family ticket £10 including ploughmans supper. Guests are invited to bring their own drinks.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> January Murder Mystery Evening at the Scout Hut Melton Road B-o-S  
Cost £10 per person including a hot supper. Guests are again invited to bring their own drinks.
- 29<sup>th</sup> March Visit to the Little Theatre Leicester to see their production of the Titchfield Thunderbolt . This will be followed by a restaurant meal. Cost and details to be advised.
- 28<sup>th</sup> May - 1<sup>st</sup> June Visit to Marans. This is the Spring Bank Holiday. Flights will be arranged from local airports to La-Rochelle or Nantes, accommodation will be provided with French hosts and a weekend of activities arranged by the French hosts. Full details will follow and expressions of interest are welcomed.

Barrow and District Twinning Association welcomes new members.

Secretary: Kathryn Timmons 4 Beveridge Street, Barrow upon Soar.  
Tel: 01509 416168

Chairperson: Sue Rodgers Tel: 01509 416533

## **Zamosc Group**

Zamosc group has over 60 members on their circulation list however only about 2/3 of these are active members.

We try to promote the Twinning ideals of family links, cultural exchanges, visiting historical sites in each country and discuss possible trade links between the two towns.

Majority of our members are retired while the polish group is a much lower age profile than ourselves. The polish hospitality and the friendliness that we experience on our visits is fantastic.

Our visits are usually 7 days duration. Going to Poland we usually have a two centre visit where we go to another area of cultural interest for 3 nights and finish in Zamosc staying with families for 4 nights.

This year we have split into two groups. One group went to Gdansk (North of Poland) for three nights and then went on the train through the length of Poland to Zamosc for the next 4 days, while the other group went directly to Zamosc for 5 days.

In Gdansk we visited a number of places. Malborg Castle (12century) was fascinating in architecture and its history also we have been to the Gdansk Shipyards where Lech Walensa started the Solidarity movement that subsequently changed the map of Europe.

We are planning a return visit for next year and the Zamosc group expressed an interest in visiting London for 2 or 3 days and 4 days with us.

We try to raise money for hosting our guests by having 2 or 3 parties a year in a private house during the year. This gives us a bit of money and also provides the social bonding of the group.

We are trying to increase our membership through personal contacts and writing in local press of our activities from time to time.

Bob Holownia (chairman)

**Shepshed and District Twinning Association- Twinned with Domont in Val  
d'Oise  
Activities 2009/10**

These are the events that we have planned for the coming year. Some have become traditions within the association and some are being held for the first time. We are very grateful for the active involvement of our members, which makes it possible for us to put on a varied programme.

**Sunday October 18<sup>th</sup>**

Walk in the Peak District

**Thursday November 19<sup>th</sup>**

AGM at Town Council Offices, Shepshed followed by a Wine Tasting organised by one of our members.

**Friday December 4<sup>th</sup>**

Stall at Shepshed Christmas Event at Shepshed High School to include a tasting of a Bûche de Noel and Gâteau des Rois , a seasonal quiz and prize. This will be followed by a meal at a local restaurant.

**Friday, December 11<sup>th</sup>**

French Film evening hosted by members

**Friday January 16<sup>th</sup>**

Croissant baking demonstration by one of our members in his home.

**Saturday February 27<sup>th</sup>**

Crêpes Evening hosted by members

**June 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>**

Visit from our Twin Town of Domont to celebrate 20 years of Twinning. The majority of our visitors will be hosted in families. The programme will include: A welcome drink on arrival at the Town Council Offices, a debate on a current European theme, a guided visit of Leicester, a Ceilidh and buffet, a visit to Calke Abbey Gardens and a guided tour of historic Shepshed.

**On-going Projects**

In addition to the above events, the Twinning Association is working with our Primary Schools. Each school has a link with a primary school in Domont. We would also like to encourage a sporting link between swimming or football clubs in the two towns.

## **The Family Link Group**

Members enjoy private visits both sides of the water through the year. We are currently some 49 members. Next week (21st October) we are holding a skittles evening as a substitute for our monthly meeting. Sadly this has not been very well supported. The usual few active members, some of our valued members will be on holiday though.

2010 is our return visit to Schwabisch Hall - proposed dates are 28th July - 4th August. We continue to hold by-monthly meetings throughout the year. For the last two visits by us we have been able to take our third generation of grandchildren - this has been well received by our counter partners in Germany.

### **SYSTON TWINNING**

We have been busy over the summer holding our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Picnic in the Park at Rufford Country Park, Ruddington, Notts. It was another glorious day and 33 members enjoyed the sumptuous spread and also took part in several light-hearted games.

Our very popular Leicestershire Luncheon, kindly hosted by John and Kathy Wright again, followed this, and raised the grand sum of £234.25 for our funds.

We have a Halloween Party, to be held on 31<sup>st</sup> October, at Barkby Village Hall, tickets costing £6.50 adults and £3.00 children, or a family ticket for £15.00. Supper and soft drinks are provided, but please bring your own alcoholic drinks and glasses.

We will also be holding a Bonfire Party on Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> November, for our members and friends.

We try to arrange social events about every 4-6 weeks, and our members like getting together regularly, instead of just for the annual twinning visit.

Visit to Deville-les-Rouen, 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

This visit will celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our twin towns.

There may be seats available on the coach for other twinning members travelling at the same time. (Deville is about a 10-minute drive from Rouen.)

Please contact our Secretary, Ann Baker, on 0116 2303835 or e-mail [thebakers33@talktalk.net](mailto:thebakers33@talktalk.net) if you are interested in any of the above events, or the coach to Deville.

## **East Goscote Twinning**

Twinned with Fleury sur Andelle in Normandy France, on the old Rouen to Paris road N14.

This year is our 30th anniversary of the 1st contact visit.

Due to reported Swine flu in France our twinned village has decided not to visit us at the end of October. We shall continue with our celebration party as planned, this will include the blessing of the village bell (Fleury bell) given to the village back in 1991.

In September we had a Sunday lunch/cruise on the river Trent at Nottingham, very enjoyable day with good food and weather.

In November we are planning a skittles evening, also an association lunch early in the New Year.

Terry Brown (Chairman)

## **Loughborough Community link with Bhavnagar (in Gujarat in India)**

Because of distance and cost this link is a little different from the European twinning links. We have tried to contribute towards the air fares for those coming from India (as the exchange rate makes the cost very high for those on Indian salaries) and paid our own fares travelling there.

We have established links with projects, especially those working with children, and with schools there. We have also established a link with the Church of North India church in Bhavnagar and with two churches in nearby villages. Visits also include meeting with the Mayor of the time who has a great deal more power than our Mayors in Loughborough.

In January 2009 three of us travelled there and had a great time meeting with people from our established links and generally getting the feel of the town. We were very graciously met by the Mayor and the Commissioner of Bhavnagar and were invited to a wonderful barbecue at the Commissioner's house.

In August we were delighted to welcome Parul Sheth to Loughborough. She, with her husband, founded the Shaishav Children's Project which encourages parents of working children to send them to school and encourages the school to welcome the children with innovative learning programmes prepared at minimum cost. They also encourage children to run groups for themselves.

While she was here she told a group at Loughborough URC about her work, visited the Dreamers project for young asylum seekers based at Mountfields Lodge, met with folk from Charnwood Arts and was privileged to meet with our Mayor, Councillor Roy Brown.

We are hoping to meet with the Commissioner of Bhavnagar if he can get to Loughborough on his travels this autumn and a group of 7 people are booked to visit Bhavnagar in January 2010. We hope to extend our links with the various projects we already know and meet others while we are there.

Daphne Beale

## **Thurmaston Twinning Diary October 2009**

We have recently returned from our annual visit to see our friends in Offranville (October 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>). Over 200 people attended the dinner dance on the Saturday night to be treated to a fine meal, dancing the night away until the early hours of Sunday morning to a live band.

Less than a week after our trip to France we held a 'Race Night' on Friday the 9<sup>th</sup> of October at Thurmaston Old School. Everyone brought their own 'drinks & nibbles' and it was such a success that I am sure we will be having another one very soon.

Our next fund raising venture is a Table Skittles night and hot supper at Thurmaston British Legion on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> of November. The way tickets are selling it looks like it's going to be another good night. There are some tickets left priced at £5 each from John Lewin, who can be contacted on 07712131922 OR 0116 2608 759.