



Tunbridge Wells Twinning & Friendship Association

Newsletter

August 2011

With the summer holidays upon us and some of us preparing to travel to Wiesbaden for the Wine Festival, it is hard to think about autumn or indeed winter, but your committee has been looking ahead and has put together a programme of events which I now have pleasure in enclosing.

Since the last Newsletter in April, there has been quite a lot of activity between our two twin towns, albeit of a kind that is not always visible to members. We have had two visits to Tunbridge Wells from Wiesbaden schools: In May a group from the Herman-Ehlers-Schule visited Mascalls School in Paddock Wood in the morning and then spent the afternoon in Tunbridge Wells; in June a group from the Diltthey Schule who were spending a week in Hastings on a language course came to Tunbridge Wells for an afternoon and were given a guided tour of their twin town. Another school-related visit, though of longer duration, was the very successful 5-month teaching placement we were able to arrange for Wiesbaden student Andreas Bockholt at Bennett Memorial. His time at Bennett teaching German and Italian was so successful that the school would like to take another student next year. Andreas returned to Wiesbaden at the end of July with our very good wishes for his future. Another very different group to visit Tunbridge Wells were the "Weinnasen" (wine noses), members of a Wiesbaden Wine Club who came to Tunbridge Wells in July on a wine-tasting excursion, planning to visit various local vineyards across southern England. They hoped to have the opportunity to meet local wine-lovers, but sadly they gave us little advance notice, so we were unable to set up any formal meetings for them, but some Association members did visit them in their hotel and found a group of well-travelled, interested and very amiable wine experts happy to share a glass or two with them. We look forward to perhaps meeting some of them again among the wine stalls at the Wine Festival!

Visits to Wiesbaden included a very successful visit by the RTW Choral Society in May to sing in the Lutherkirche together with the Wiesbaden Bach Choir who were celebrating their 100th anniversary. Another musical visit in June was by Paul Dunton (of Local and Live fame) and his Orchestra to play in the annual Wilhelmstrasse Street Festival. Paul met with and was ably assisted by members of the Wiesbaden Vereinigung and he hopes to be able to build on these contacts in the future. The musicians were accompanied by former Tunbridge Wells Mayor Jenny Paulson-Ellis and her husband, Jeremy. Jenny took a letter from the new Mayor Cllr Elizabeth Thomas to Oberbürgermeister Müller.

In July we had our ever-popular Summer Barbecue very kindly hosted by Margaret Fuller to which many of you came. Sadly, summer was little in evidence on the day with repeated heavy showers, but with strategically placed gazeboes and true British fortitude, most of the guests braved the unreliable elements and refused to let the odd shower spoil their fun! The food as always was delicious, the atmosphere relaxed and friendly and we all had a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon. Our thanks to Margaret for her generous hospitality.

Our next big event is of course the visit to the Wine Festival later this month to support Sedlescombe Vineyard who have taken up the offer of the twin-town stand at the Festival. A party of 21 members will be travelling to Wiesbaden on or around 11 August, by plane, train and car, in time for the official opening of the Festival on Friday 12 August. Mayor Elizabeth Thomas and her husband Robert will be there as the guests of Wiesbaden Town Hall. There will be an official programme for the mayoral party and a sightseeing programme for the remaining group, including a boat trip on the Rhine and a visit to Frankfurt. We are all looking forward immensely to the trip; it will be a welcome opportunity to meet up with old friends again and of course to sample the many delights of Wiesbaden and the Rhine valley. For those of you who are not able to join us in Wiesbaden, there are other events planned for the coming months which we hope may interest you. I would particularly draw your attention to a similarly bibulous event in September when we have planned an outing to the Carr Taylor vineyard near Hastings for a wine-tasting and ploughman's lunch. This must be booked in advance, so if you would like to come, please send the attached booking slip with your cheque to Ann Hughes by 14 September. Two events by sister organisations are also included: a day trip to Arras arranged by SHDOFA on Saturday 3 September and an afternoon on the Medway organised by SAKA on Saturday 17 September. Both events will require advance booking. Please see the attached Events Sheet for full details of these and other events. Finally, and sadly, we learnt recently of the death of Masha Davies. Those of you who came to our very successful Dresden talk last year will remember an indomitable but charming lady of Russian origin who had experienced the horrors of the Dresden bombing and shared her memories of that dreadful night with us. We extend our sympathy to Masha's family.

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