



CRAWLEY TOWN TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Issue 84

CTTA NEWSLETTER - Autumn EDITION

October 2020

Dear Members and Friends,

Welcome to the October 2020 issue of the CTTA Newsletter. The executive committee and myself do hope that in these difficult times you and your families are all well and keeping safe.

With regards to our CTTA 2020/2021 meetings and activities I would like to sum it up as follows:

Main Group Visit (MGV) planned for 01. August to 9th August 2020 had to be cancelled and postponed into next year (2021). Dates for the next year MGV are 07/08/2021-15/8/2021.

The Dual Committee Meeting (DCM) in Crawley planned for 09.October 2020 to 12th October 2020 was cancelled and postponed into next year. The dates for the next year DCM are 08/10/2021-11/10/2021

Annual General Meeting (AGM). The committee has not met since March 2020 and are currently in discussion to agree the best way to proceed (e.g. by correspondence/email or by Skype/Zoom). Date and the method of the AGM will be advised asap.

Annual CTTA Dinner 2021– again as above and subject to Government’s rulings and restrictions. We do hope that it may be possible to hold the Dinner in the Spring or in the early Summer of 2021.

Regretfully at present time the committee can not plan any current or future activities with any certainty, however we must be all hopeful that the current pandemic situation will drastically improve or disappear in the next few months and as soon as possible.

In the meantime and due to lack of travel please enjoy the “CTTA Memory Lane” articles/contribution from CTTA members. These are the reflections of their favourite or enjoyable moments experienced on town twinning visits to Dorsten or in Crawley. Special thank you to Keith and Di Sullivan for their initial suggestions for this issue, and for all the members who contributed with their articles. Well done and keep safe.

Peter Klin,
PR officer and Newsletter Editor
On Behalf of CTTA



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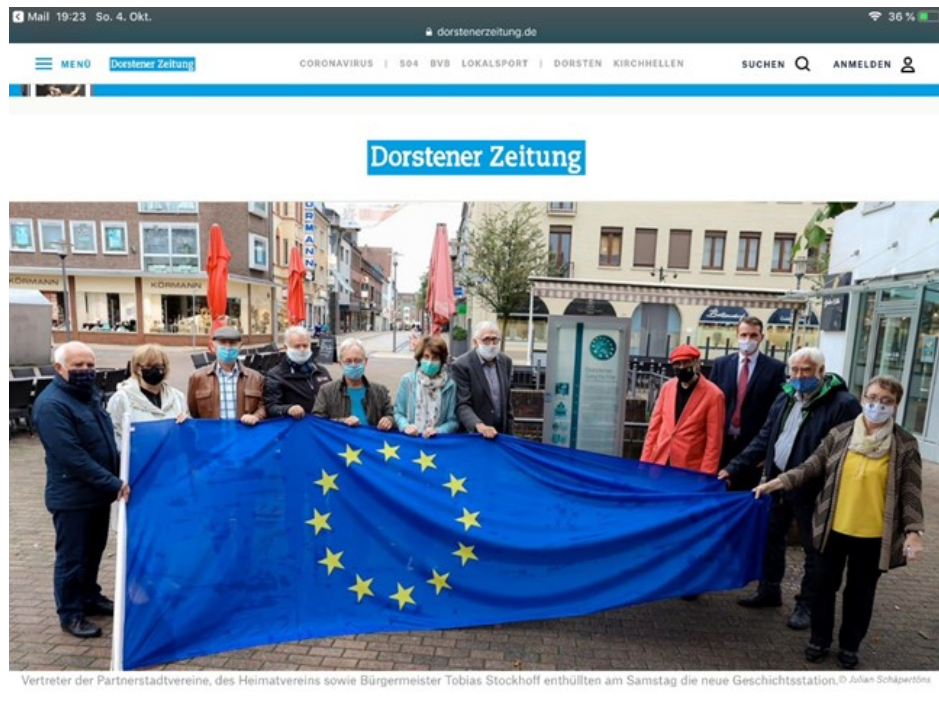
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Crawley Town Twinning Association



Inauguration of the Town Twinning HISTORY STATION IN DORSTEN



In 2001 Dorsten celebrated its 750th anniversary and the town council, in collaboration with the Lions Club and various sponsors set up project to erect a series of History Stations to display the history of different parts of the town.

These take the form of notice boards 1.8m high and 80cm wide in a steel frame and so far 40 have been erected in different parts of the town. They record the history of important buildings such as churches, a roman camp, coal mine, and railway station as well as Sporting activities and now one to celebrate Town Twinning as Dorsten is twinned with 8 towns (UK, N.Ireland, France, Poland etc.).

An event to mark the official inauguration of the Town Twinning History Station was originally planned to take place in March 2020 in the presence of representatives of each town but was cancelled due to the pandemic. It was timed to coincide with the celebration of 75 years of peace in Europe.

The ceremony was now held on the 3rd October with the Burgermeister of Dorsten and local representatives of each organization together with video contributions from each town and music performed by the Dorsten town orchestra and choirs.

The Mayor of Crawley, Francis Guideira, Brenda and Iain took part in a short video which was shown during the ceremony together with videos from their other twin towns.



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Wuppertal 2014

In short I love railways, I always have, I always will. The Dorsten committee had arranged a day trip for Crawley visitors to Wuppertal and a ride on the famous Schwebebahn or suspension rail (Schweben = to hover or float in German). Why's it famous? The railway was built in 1901, runs for 13.3 kilometres (8.3 mi), at a height of about 12 metres (39 ft) above the River Wupper and the streets of Wuppertal and is an engineering wonder of its time. It's no surprise then when I say how thrilled I was at the idea of travelling on the railway.

Point of fact it was actually the second visit to the railway; a few years earlier the Dorsten committee had arranged for us to ride the same railway on a one hundred year old carriage known as the Kaiserwagen. That for me was certainly one of the most memorable moments whilst on a town twinning visit. What's your most memorable visit - care to share?

The photos below show the suspension railway in operation along with a fellow traveller from Crawley. The final photo is of the Kaiserwagen I mentioned.



Crawley Town Twinning Association



CTTA Newsletter article – Iain Millar PAPENBURG

One of the most interesting excursions for us was that to Papenburg during the MGV in 2006. It was a two hour journey to this picturesque small town on the river Ems near the north coast of Germany but it was worth the journey. With a long history of shipbuilding it is not surprising to find some old sailing ships moored in the canals in the centre of town and the beautifully restored old houses and flower beds completed the picture.



The main objective however was to visit the biggest covered dry dock in Europe at the Meyer Werft shipyard. Inside the enormous buildings were two large cruise ships under construction at the same time, including Norwegian Pearl – 93,000 tons. I was intrigued to see the construction technique as all the cabins



Schiffbau in Papenburg



were built and fitted out off-site and in- stalled into the ship like a lot of Leggo blocks. Using this technique and being unaffected by the weather a modern cruise ship can be constructed in less than 12 months.

We have subsequently seen Norwegian Pearl on the high seas to bring back memories of this fascinating visit.

Click on this link to see a video of a ship leaving the dock.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JSn0KyAqcwI>

Crawley Town Twinning Association



Everything's Fine !!!!

The day started really well with everyone at the pick up point on time (I'd had my doubts) and the coach arrived on schedule so we loaded the luggage and everyone got on board for this years main group visit to Dorsten.

The journey was going very well and we were approaching the Kennedy tunnel in Antwerp when Alan (our driver) mentioned the signs advising width restrictions at the tunnel of 2 metres. We needed to find the diversion sign – too late! All of a sudden the Belgian police waved us to the left and a traffic cop started writing in his little black book. He explained we should not have been there as repair works to the tunnel meant we could not go through and we had to pay a fine of € 50.

Out came my wallet and we paid the fine, asking for directions on how to get around Antwerp and towards Dorsten. We took the ring road in the opposite direction which involved a toll of € 15 and out came my wallet again. I thought this was a good start but little did I know what was to follow.

We arrived safely and earlier than expected at the Bus station. Everyone was collected by the hosts and all was well.

On the Monday, was the trip to the Dechenhole caves. As we reached our destination a sign was spotted showing a low bridge ahead, 2.8 metres and we are 3.425 metres so wisely Alan and the coach stayed behind. We walked down to the caves and on the way down spotted a parking place.

Helga, our guide for the day after the tour went to get Alan and the coach. On the way down the turning was missed so Alan stopped the coach, looked behind and seeing nothing started to reverse back up the hill. Little, did he know a small Matiz was sitting on his bumper literally frantically tooting? Well, a fifty seater coach is no match for a tiny car and she (the driver and car) start to also travel back up the hill.

Fortunately, no one was hurt in the incident, but within Germany it is drummed into people to call the Police should an accident occur, even when there is no real damage.

Eventually, the Police arrive and with them came 'the fine' this time the option of a court visit and possible fine of € 350 or the option of an on-the-spot fine of € 35.

Well, you can guess what happened next so out again came my wallet.

The remainder of the day went well and during the evening our host Georg and I went next door to his parents. The ruse was to tie a large red tomato on one of the plants his Father was growing. He'd never grown tomatoes before and had said they seemed to be taking their time in turning red. Well, after the laughter had subsided and a beer or so later, Georg's Brother and his daughter visited. Georg introduced me and mentioned his brother was a Policeman. So I reached for my wallet saying does he need money. Of course, he didn't need money, how could he the coach wasn't there!

Alan, did repay me the € 100 so it all ended well and of course the other good news was we came home with all our passengers although it was touch and go there for a while. We even managed to gain a passenger as brought Carina our host's daughter back to Crawley to stay with us for a week.

Crawley Town Twinning Association



Tobi

I went with the Weald Choir to Dorsten in 1993. Travelling out on the coach I sat next to Anne Matheson and we got talking about the school. Apparently there was a German boy in Dorsten who wanted to come to Thomas Bennett Community College (linked with his Gesamtschule in Wulfen) came for a year to improve his English. The school had given its approval, but couldn't find a family willing to have him for a year. I had been having several young men staying with me over the years so I thought about it and suggested to Anne that I offered hospitality until he found a family to take him in.

Once in Dorsten we met up with the family, the parents welcomed the offer and we soon came to an agreement. So at the beginning of September Tobias landed on my doorstep. We seemed to get on quite well. Just before October half term break I asked Tobi if he had any friends: "Oh yes, I have" he said. So would he be going to stay with them? "Oh, no. I am staying here!" - so he stayed.

Fortunately he wasn't fussy about food and was willing to try English cooking and even said that he like everything I cooked! He didn't think much of English bread rolls - and I understood why when I first visited his home in Dorsten, One thing he didn't like was marmite when, after my warning, he plastered it on toast as though it were chocolate spread!

He was 16 when he arrived and has his 17th birthday with me - "the worst age" as I told him, but he didn't understand that. We had our ups and downs. One night I lay in bed wondering what had happened to him, thinking the worst, like any parent - and what would I tell his parents? He came in at 4 a.m. The next day we had WORDS and a few tears. Apparently he was with a crowd in the home of another student. On the whole we got on remarkably well.

I acted "in loco parentis", so I felt quite embarrassed to be on the other side of the table with my colleagues on parent evenings . He stayed the full school year and ,although he was not an easy lad, he worked hard and did quite well at school. His English is now impeccable.

Ever since than I have received a very warm welcome at their home in Dorsten. I am regarded as one of the family. A few years ago Tobi invited me to his wedding with Svenia, a Swedish girl, and since then I have visited them a couple of times with the CTTA and met his two lively children.

That year with me was a momentous one for both of us - me and him. I think his parents are eternally grateful that I took him off their hands for that teenage year!

By Roger Baker

Crawley Town Twinning Association



Excursion to Utrecht and Huis Doorn, August 2016

Iain and I once attended a wedding just outside Utrecht, but due to time constraints we had not been able to see the centre of this picturesque Dutch town. I was therefore delighted when I learned that one of the organised excursions was to be a visit to Utrecht. The medieval centre is built around tree-lined canals and the buildings carefully renovated and maintained. There is a gothic cathedral and a 14th century bell tower, but I



most enjoyed walking along the central canal, peering into the windows of the little specialist shops and generally drinking in the atmosphere. Down on the quayside, restaurants had set up tables with brightly coloured umbrellas and these were already filling up with the lunchtime trade. My lasting impression of Utrecht is of a vibrant

and colourful town, bustling with people and of course, this being the Netherlands, bicycles.

In the afternoon we visited Huis Doorn, where the German Kaiser Wilhelm II lived in (very comfortable) exile after the end of the First World War. The manor house was elegantly furnished and our excellent guide explained that wagon loads of furniture from the imperial stocks had been brought to Dorn by train. The Kaiser lived the life of a country gentleman, pursuing his interest in archaeology



and chopping down trees in the extensive grounds for exercise until his death in 1941.

It was a long day, but an interesting and satisfying one and I felt that I had learned a lot about the history and geography associated with this area. It also underlined how the North European motorway network makes travel so easy.

Crawley Town Twinning Association



Schutzenfest (shooting festival)

Some of you may have come across this very German combination of shooting competition and country fair. Commonly held every 2 years, a shooting competition is held to determine who will be the King for the forthcoming year. He selects his lady Queen who will be escorted with great ceremony to the festivities which last all weekend.

The festivities will vary from area to area, but will normally feature music, a beer tent and refreshments. Possibly fairground rides such as dodgems (Autoscooter) and carousels. There may also be various displays and competitions in marching, dancing and flag waving.

The one held at Geldern had a novel competition of real-life table football. Local teams climb into the fenced off pitch and are not allowed to let go of their wooden joists while attempting to score in their opponents goal.

We have always found these festivals to be great fun and are looking forward to the next one, whenever that may be!

Di Sullivan



The refreshment tent



The Schutzenfest King's chain of office



The competition



And the winner is



Real life football