



ASHBY-PITHIVIERS TWINNING ASSOCIATION



Newsletter No. 6, 2011

NOVEMBER

Santa at Sunnyside



We had a very good turnout on Friday 18th November at Sunnyside Garden Centre in Ibstock with around 50 of us attending. Thanks to the arrangements negotiated by our

Chairman, Joan Inchley, 'Sunnyside', the garden centre in Ibstock, was opened specially for members of our Association and their families.

The evening started with a two course meal which by general opinion was first rate. The gateaux were the best many of us had ever tasted.



Santa Claus arrived by sleigh bearing a gift for each young person present. There remained time for us to examine the Christmas goods on offer and purchase if we wished.

It was a wonderful evening that also contributed some £300 to our funds. Well



The Annual General Meeting

This year the Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on Tuesday 9th November in the residents' lounge at Brown Court, courtesy of new members who have joined us from there. Just under 20 members attended.



Chairman, Geoff Cort, reported the year's activities and there were also reports from Treasurer, Peter Wilkinson and Membership Secretary, Nita Pratt, confirming the current generally healthy state of funds and membership. It was agreed that the annual subscription rate next year

would remain unaltered.

Major Changes

The election of officers and committee members for the next 12 months was announced, details of which appear on page 3. After 6 years in office Geoff Cort stepped down, although he remains a member of the Executive Committee. Joan Inchley is elected as the new chairman and her place as secretary is taken by Elaine Shaw. Nita Pratt, after many years service in the role of membership secretary is replaced by Les Aldrich. All officers

are in place and 6 of the 10 committee members, leaving 3 vacancies. Nita was thanked for her loyalty in stepping up when needed so many times over the years and Geoff was presented with a charming fountain pen set as a memento.

The Future

Joan spoke of her hopes and aspirations for the future and emphasised the need for more members to get involved in running the Association. She looked forward to a challenging and exciting year.



Retiring Chairman's Report to 2011 AGM

Ladies and Gentlemen it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Annual General Meeting of the Twinning Association this year, as guests of Brown Court, a number of whose residents have joined the Association and who are in process – with our help – of establishing a link with a similar group in Pithiviers. We thank them for their kind hospitality.

At the end of this, my last year in office, I offer my grateful thanks for the support of my fellow officers and Executive Committee members for a year of outstanding activities. This year we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Twinning in Pithiviers with one of the largest (if not the largest) delegation from Ashby. As you will see, there is to be a smooth and efficient “transition of power” in the leadership of the Association and the capable hands into which it is passing guarantees a long and strong future for us all. Interestingly as I am stepping down after 6 years as your chairman, Aimée Hannequin is also relinquishing that role in Pithiviers but after 20 years of service, as is Jeannine Vievard as secretary for the same period of time. I am happy to take this opportunity to thank them on our behalf for all their loyal and hard work over the years and to note that they will both remain on their committee.

The year has, again, seen a small increase in membership and Nita Pratt, as your retiring Membership secretary will shortly be reporting on this but I am afraid it is my usual and sad duty to note the passing of some of our members on both sides of the Channel. From the Ashby Association we have lost John Tuckey, husband of Mary, who many will remember (in addition to his long term role as the local vet) for his cycle ride to Pithiviers to publicise the Twinning in its early days. Joan Crane, wife of Arthur, passed away suddenly and quite recently. She was, I believe, the last founder member of the Association and served on its committee and as an officer for very many years. In Pithiviers we were sad to learn of the death of André Saillard, who survived his wife Betty by only a few months and was a stalwart of the

twinning both there and here as well as being a prominent local politician, a modest author and something of an amateur musician. There was also the loss of Paulette Mercier and Francis Pin, both well-known to older members for their visits to Ashby and their hospitality to us in Pithiviers. To all their families we offer our deepest sympathy.

There have also been members suffering severe ill-health this year and I mention particularly Peter Thompson and Mike Inchley. Our thoughts are with them and their families.

On the membership front I am pleased to announce that the Executive Committee under the authority granted to it by the Constitution has seen fit to award to Rosemary and James Tildesley Honorary Life Membership of the Association. Rosemary was extremely active from the early period of the Twinning and served as Secretary for some 20 years. It is a well-merited and probably overdue award.

Our funds remain healthy as you will shortly hear from your Treasurer, Peter Wilkinson and this year, once more, we enjoyed a variety of social and fund-raising events including, of course, the visit in June to Pithiviers. This included the return match of “It’s a Knockout”, which I am delighted to confirm we won convincingly to walk away with a rather more impressive cup than we presented to them, last year. This now seems to be established as a regular annual event. Undoubtedly the most prestigious fund-raiser was the Lola Lamour concert at Packington Memorial Hall in March, which raised a significant sum as well as providing a wonderful evening of nostalgia and pleasure. We have also introduced new and innovative events such as the Cycle/Walk-in Picnic and Santa at Sunnyside (due later this month) but the old and popular events remain, too: the Christmas Walk and Lunch, Quiz, Beetle Drive, Croquet Taster and Bastille Day Petanque – an eclectic mixture, which seems to interest most of our members, although we are always on the lookout for new ideas. This brings me conveniently to my annual appeal for more membership involvement in these

vital activities. I cannot emphasise enough how important to the continuation of our Association is the role of the Executive Committee. There are always willing volunteers to engage in individual social and fund-raising events but it is unfair that the burden of thinking-up and developing them should fall on just a few shoulders. I do therefore press any of you who can spare a little time to help fulfil this role to offer yourselves when the election results are declared to fill the five vacancies on the Executive Committee.

Another important duty of our Association, under its Charter and Constitution, is the development of links, cultural and social, between our two communities and we are always striving towards this end. I have already mentioned the intention of our new members from Brown Court to establish a connection with their opposite numbers and I am pleased to report that we may shortly – finally – be making some progress in re-establishing a youth connection since being approached by Tamworth House School and receiving an initially positive reply from Pithiviers. We have also been able, thanks to the generous cooperation of the Standard Soap Company, to arrange the second work placement of a young Pithiverien and Elaine, our new Secretary, is seeking to make a similar arrangement for a couple of students on a catering course. Furthermore, with considerable aid from Aimée the Gresley Male Voice Choir, who sang at our 50th Anniversary Lunch last year, have just completed a very successful visit when they sang not only in the church at Pithiviers but also in the prestigious cathedrals of Orléans and Chartres. Next year the Ashby Concert Band will be making a return visit to Pithiviers. I think I can safely say that in this particular field we are toiling with some success.

The regular newsletter continues to keep members informed, as does the website. This was effectively “shot out from under us” earlier this year when, Beehive, discontinued their hosting service. However, necessity is the mother of invention and, after a fairly

desperate trawl through various possible replacement free sites I was able to find one which not only meets but exceeds our previous modest requirements. By combining this with our new You Tube space we can now offer not only copies of newsletters for the last year and more photos than before but also a range of longer videos including those for visits to and from Pithiviers and even – on the Home Page – a video of the original Charter-Signing in Ashby (with added soundtrack). So if you have a broadband connection do visit your website. You can even download these items if you wish and if you have an e-mail address we don’t already know please let me know so I can put you on our list.

This is my last meeting as your Chairman, a role which I took on with some trepidation 6 years ago but which I must admit has been both a pleasure and privilege to discharge. It has been an honour to work with the officers and members of the Executive Committee. It has also strengthened my firm conviction that what we are involved in is not a self-indulgent hobby but an activity of serious import to the communities of Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Pithiviers indeed to the future of international relations in general. As I have said many times before, when governments make their political announcements and direct their actions towards each other, we are in the privileged position of being able to weigh these against the personal friendships and understanding that we have seen develop over the years with people on the other side of the international divide. People with whom we are purported to have little in common but with whom we know, from person experience, we share a great deal in terms of daily life and aspirations. This will always mitigate the dangerous generalisations and chauvinism of international politics and it is really what twinning is all about. I am proud to be part of such a movement and equally proud that our old and durable Association is playing such a prominent and important part in it.

I thank you for your continuing support and look forward to a bright future. Vive le jumelage!

THE NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman	Joan Inchley	Tel: 224494	e-mail: joan.inchley@talktalk.net
Vice-Chairman	Bruce Mitchell	Tel: 413600	e-mail: beastfife@aol.com
Secretary	Elaine Shaw	Tel: 564077	e-mail: ptva@hotmail.co.uk
Treasurer	Peter Wilkinson	Tel: 414689	e-mail: ptwilk@talktalk.net
Membership Sec.	Les Aldrich	Tel: 414448	e-mail: ashbyplumbing@yahoo.co.uk

Committee Members:

Sandra Adkins Linda Brown Barry Clarke Geoff Cort Anne Donegan Peter Meadows Ann Shilton
Bill Pratt (Honorary President) (Town Council Representative)

There are still three vacant places on the Executive Committee.

If you would like to become a member, please contact Joan or Elaine, above.

Combined Bands' Successful Concerts

After almost two years of planning and practising, Ashby Concert Band, the Seaforth Highlanders Pipe and Drums and dancers enjoyed entertaining a large, appreciative audience for their premier appearance at De Montfort Hall, Leicester in October. The programme included several joint pieces for concert band and pipes and drums as well as popular tunes and melodies from the individual bands.

The dancers demonstrated their skills and agility with a varied programme of traditional Scottish dances, including a sword dance and the Scottish hornpipe. Under the baton of Adrian Ashton, the musical director of Ashby Concert Band, the leadership of Pipe Major Steve Bozon and the choreographer Suzanne McKenzie the combined groups received a standing ovation from the enthusiastic audience.

Friday, November 11th saw the two bands joining together once again, at Holy Trinity Church, Ashby de la Zouch to present a Concert of Remembrance which began with a

range of light, popular music including a stirring rendition of The Dambusters March, Folksongs from the British Isles and a selection of Scottish Airs from the pipers. After the interval the mood became more reflective, focussing on the sacrifice made by the armed forces in previous and present



day conflicts. This was illustrated by the inclusion of "Safe and Sound" written and sung by Julie Holland accompanied by a Brass Choir whose music was written by Adrian Ashton, who also arranged "Ashokan Farewell" for a woodwind ensemble. The proceeds from the concert will go to help the work of the Royal British Legion in this, their 90th year.

Ashby Concert Band and friends are eagerly looking forward to 17th December at Holy Trinity church, Ashby when at 7-30 p.m., they will be performing their annual Christmas

concert. Get in the festive mood and come and join us there. Further details and tickets from 01530 222934 or any band member.

(Ashby Concert Band is an associate member of the Twinning Association)

Don't Forget to Visit the Re-vamped Website!

Same address but now with lots more memorabilia such as old newsletters, photos and videos of past visits - including a movie shot of the actual 1960 Charter-signing ceremony. Just go to: www.ashbydelazouchtwinning.co.uk

OTHER FORTHCOMING EVENTS

21st-26th June, 2012

Visit from Pithiviers

A full annual programme should be announced in the January newsletter.

The Christmas Walk and Lunch

Wednesday 7th December dawned showery, cold and windy. However by 11.00 am the showers had thankfully moved away and the sun was shining as 14 intrepid members of the Association set off from the car park of the Mount Pleasant Inn on the traditional pre-lunch walk. The pleasant views of the attractive countryside around Repton and the friendly conversation made the walk most enjoyable.



to the warm welcome and excellent fare provided by our hosts. We tucked into seasonal turkey and all the trimmings. The obligatory corny jokes in the Christmas crackers added to the festive and cheerful mood. It was a most pleasant occasion when we were able to get together for a chat and catch-up with people we had not seen for a few

After about an hour's walking in the blustery wind we had worked up good appetites and then met up with the others who simply turned up to offer moral support at the end. With muddy boots changed we entered the cosy and welcoming atmosphere of the pub to join the rest of our colleagues for lunch. The fact that 41 members sat down to the meal was a tribute

months.

It was in fact the fourteenth consecutive occasion on which this event had taken place at the Mount Pleasant Inn. We gave a vote of thanks to Joe Shaw for all his hard work down the years which has made things go so smoothly.

COOK BOOK - The perfect stocking-filler!

Looking for that last-minute stocking-filler for Christmas? Just in the nick of time the Association is launching its special cook-book: *"Tasty Treats from our Twin Town"*.



There is a range of recipes compiled with the help of our numerous friends in Pithiviers. At only £3.00 this neatly presented little booklet is just waiting for your order. To secure your copy, today call Les Aldrich on 01530 414448 or e-mail : ashbyplumbing@yahoo.co.uk

Visit from Pithiviers 21st - 26th June, 2012

We are already looking at venues and locations for the official trips for next years visit from the Pithiviers delegation. If you have any ideas or suggestions please let a committee member know so it can be discussed.

Early in the New Year we will be inviting you to sign up for hosting and we look forward to next year being a continuation of the usual enjoyable reunions we enjoy with the many friends from our twin town