



THETFORD'S INTERNATIONAL CARNIVAL Saturday 5 June 2004

The whole town will come alive once more with a great mass of performers to see and hear, celebrating Thetford's own heritage and culture as well as linking with entertainment and friends from around the world. This event will be similar to the very successful International Day in 2001. There will be contributions from all our twin towns, and from more local sources there will be Morris Men, children's groups, a huge variety of different performances including Irish, Samba and Belly Dancers, acrobats, puppet shows and many more. At 3.30 pm the grand procession will march from King's House to Castle Park, led by the brass band Togido from Spijkenisse. There is a free concert on Melford Common from 6.30pm with music by three popular bands, with a firework finale at 10.30. The Tourism Office are engaging the help of professional stage management to set up much of the arrangements. The Twinning Association has been at work during the past few months trying to organise groups of performers from all our twin towns of Hürth, Spijkenisse, Les Ulis and, now, Skawina in Poland. The whole weekend will be, I believe, something of a bonanza. As usual, our major problem will be to find accommodation for our overseas guests and if you have not already done so we should be very grateful if you would kindly be prepared, in your normal kindly fashion, to offer hospitality to guests for one or two nights.

~ *Barrie Nutt*

For more details of the carnival visit the website
www.explorethetford.co.uk

Our forthcoming events

Saturday, 22 May

12.00 Pique-Nique and Petanque afternoon at Riversdale. £1.00

Saturday 5 June

International Day in Thetford

24-27 June

The Mayor and members of the Twinning Committee have been invited to Spijkenisse's town festival

Sunday 4 July

12.00 Annual Summer Lunch at 24 Mackenzie Road. £5.00 for members, £6.00 non-members

Sunday 11 July

Hürth are holding their own International Day – visitors from Thetford will be made very welcome

Thursday, 29 July

Outing to watch the Devil's Dyke Morris Men performing at The George, Babraham and The Pear Tree, Hildersham, near Newmarket – meet at The George at 7.30

16-26 August

Trip to Camarès in the Aveyron region of SW France

8 September

Evening tour of Nunnery Lakes followed by refreshments – meet at The Nunnery at 6.30

16 October

Next meeting of the Norfolk Association of Twin Communities in Norwich

November/December

Trip to a Christmas Market in Germany or France –final details still to be arranged



International Day 2001



Join us for our next event:

A Pique-Nique and an afternoon of Petanque at Riversdale
12.00 on Saturday, 22 May

Further details of our forthcoming events

Pique-Nique and Petanque, Saturday, 22 May

This has been arranged by our own special Francophile, Albert, who hankers after his ill-spent youth 'outré-manche', and will take place at Riversdale at about midday. There will be petanque, of course, and you are invited to bring your own picnics. In the unlikely event of bad weather arrangements have been made to move indoors. Cost £1.00.

~ *Barrie Nutt*

International Weekend, 4-6 June 2004

Saturday 5 June will be our 2004 International Day when Thetford has invited people from Hürth, Spijkinisse and Les Ulis and, in addition, from Skawina to take part.

We all remember, of course, the successful weekend in September 2001 when the whole town seemed alive with sounds of music and colourful costumes from abroad and from home. Obviously one hopes for an equally successful celebration this time.

Invitations to Mayors and senior officials are the responsibility of the Town Council. But the Twinning Association has responsibility for non civic groups such as bands, dancers, etc. While looking forward to a pleasant variety of participants from Europe, we are anxious that we shall not be embarrassed by accommodation problems.

Economic pressures are quite serious for local authorities everywhere in Europe as well as in the UK. One is aware that it is quite difficult for groups in all these towns to get financial help from their councils to meet the cost of travel. Our Polish guests are arriving on Thursday 3 June until Sunday 6 June, the Germans and French are here from Friday 4 June until Sunday 6 June, and the Dutch band are coming over just for the one day on Saturday 5 June especially to play in the Carnival.

We are grateful to those who have already generously offered to host our guests, but if anyone else is able to help do please let Barrie or Sheila know.

~ *Barrie Nutt*

Summer Lunch, Sunday 4 July

The annual Summer Lunch this year will be on 4 July at 24 Mackenzie Road. We hasten to add that the choice of date has no transatlantic significance whatsoever, nor indeed any historical reference to any rebellion in the colonies! Only, perhaps, that the hosts are going on holiday in Europe on 16 July and need to have time to do their packing and to finish the washing-up. As usual we shall need your names in advance to allow for purchase of victuals.

~ *Barrie Nutt*

Devil's Dyke Morris Men, Thursday 29 July

What better way to spend a summer evening – sitting outside a local pub and being entertained by a tradition that has been around for more than 500 years. The Devil's Dyke Morris Men will be performing outside two pubs in the Newmarket area on 29 July – The George, Babraham and The Pear Tree, Hildersham. If you're interested in joining us do let us know, especially if you need transport or directions – we'll be meeting up at The George at 7.30.

The Devil's Dyke Morris Men will also be performing at our International Carnival and they've got a colourful display of photos on their website showing just how much they enjoyed their trip to Hürth with us in 2003. Take a look at their online photo album: <http://www.devilsdykemmm.org.uk/photos.html>.

Holiday in Camarès, 16-26 August

A party of 10 members of the Twinning Association, including the Mayor and Mayoress, are joining members from Les Ulis for a 10-day holiday in Camarès in the Aveyron region of SW France. Look out for a report in the next newsletter.

Tour of Nunnery Lakes, Wednesday 8 September

We've organised an evening tour of the Nunnery Lakes under the expert guidance of Chris Gregory, the BTO's Lakes Manager. The gentle stroll around the lakes will be followed by refreshments in the BTO's Library – meet at The Nunnery at 6.30. Cost £1.00.

Christmas Market

Plans are still going ahead to visit a Christmas Market in France or Germany sometime around the end of November or beginning of December. Janet will let us know more details as soon as they are available.

Recent Events & Activities

Annual General Meeting

We had a good turnout for our AGM in January and were pleased to welcome several potential new members along with many of our regulars. The display of photos of our many events last year was greatly enjoyed and in her Secretary's Report Sheila gave a superb summary of our activities:

"We held twelve committee meetings at our house during 2003, most of which have been attended by Albert Paines the Civic Links chairman. It was sad to hear of the death of Ann Rombi, the chairman of the Les Ulis twinning group who had done so much for their twin town in Senegal, and whom we knew very well.

Socially it was a busy year again, with our events being a Welsh evening in March with a Welsh hat competition, a Midsummer lunch in our garden in June, a BBQ in the Marriott's garden in August, a Town Treasure Trail with lunch at the Mulberry in September and a Chocoholics evening in October.

Seven of us again joined the retired group from Les Ulis at Pornichet in May for a holiday, and nine of us visited Hurth in June to celebrate the anniversary of the formation of the town from the combining villages. We were accompanied by the Devil's Dyke Morris Men from Newmarket who performed at the festivities.



In July fifteen of us went by minibus to Montreuil sur Mer to see the son et lumiere version of Les Misérables. Paul Waghorn was our excellent driver and it was a most enjoyable weekend. It was our fifth visit to the spectacle and we are now looking for other similar venues.

In June we had a stall at the Mayor's Carnival - a hot sunny day on Castle Hill, and in October we helped to man the stall of the Norfolk Association of Twin Communities at the French Market in Norwich. This was of limited value owing to the position of the stall, but Susan made a superb banner for the stall and Janet produced leaflets - such talent!



Barrie and I hosted a French mother and son and a German father and son with the hope of arranging exchanges for them, but unfortunately accommodation was not forthcoming. Julian Faust, the German boy, ended up at a school in Gloucester for four months through an agency, and has spent two pleasant weekends with us during his stay.

We again subscribed to a hanging basket for the town and gave a donation to the chess club for their congress with Dutch visitors. We also sent £50 to help the victims of a boating disaster in Seidhu in Senegal which is twinned with Les Ulis. A donation was given to the Chris Mead memorial fund towards furnishing a library in his memory at the BTO. Barrie and I attended a memorial day held for him at the BTO in May.

On the advice of NATC we decided to take out a public liability insurance cover for the association.

On the suggestion of our PRO, who felt we needed some identity at meetings, we now have our Association flags, which I made up using transfers produced by Janet. There was some discussion on colour but this was the final choice.

Albert got together a team to play petanque at Riversdale, and this should flourish this year.

You will have read in the Newsletter that we already have plans for this year that we hope you will all want to participate in. As usual I do appreciate your early replies to these events to avoid ringing around.

We have been attending meetings with Claire Treadwell the tourism and heritage officer for Thetford to arrange details for the International Carnival Day on June 5th. We hope to have visitors from all our twin towns and also Skawina in Poland so we shall be anxious for offers of hosting then."



~ Sheila Nutt

Film Show



The showing of "The Closet" on 17 February was, from our straw poll, a huge success. Of course, it was an outstanding film comprehensible even to non-speakers of French, but the response was far more enthusiastic than one could have expected. It has given us encouragement to consider further experiments in this direction. We are extremely grateful to Janet for her energies and for providing the facilities - and additionally to Paul who

was sufficiently capable and self assured to supervise the installation of sound and other systems unlike the chairman who could only watch, wait and, nervously, hope. ~ *Barrie Nutt*



Tour of Iceni Brewery

In March we had a very enjoyable tour of this local brewery – read more about this in our next newsletter.

French-themed dinner at High Lodge

With its unique patchwork of trees, interesting plants and animals, Thetford Forest Park has something to offer everyone. On the evening of 16 April as we made our way up the Forest Drive to High Lodge, the main visitor attraction, it was a relief to know we were not expected to lead a llama or attempt the high wire adventure trail. Instead we were eagerly anticipating a meal with a French flavour to be enjoyed in the restaurant set in a green oak-framed building in the style of a traditional Suffolk barn.

It was lovely to see familiar faces and make new acquaintances. There seem to be so many activities organised for the Twinning Association, we cannot possibly hope to attend them all and therefore do not yet know all the members! Having ordered drinks to the strains of accordion music we were seated at a number of tables and dinner was served. The menu consisted of a French onion soup starter and a choice of either *coq au vin* or *boeuf bourguignon* for main course. The quantity of accompanying vegetable was enough to feed an army! Chocolate pots made a very indulgent



dessert and the whole meal was complemented by a palatable house red and white wine. The meal was rounded off with coffee and mints.

Barrie tempted us with details of forthcoming events with particular reference to International Day on 5 June and requests for hosts on that weekend, so if anybody hasn't volunteered yet ... Albert Paines gave a vote of thanks to Barrie and Sheila for organising the evening and to the kitchen staff for preparing the meal.

We left having spent a convivial evening, hoping we would all take the correct exit out of the car park to avoid spending a dark night alone in the forest, a beautiful setting in which to enjoy a meal but not one in which to get lost!

~ *Christine Dovey*

Thetford's new Mayor and Mayoress

Fondest congratulations go to our two members, Ray and Alison Chart-Key, on recently becoming Mayor and Mayoress of Thetford and we wish them a happy and successful year in office.

Ray and Alison will be visiting Poland at the end of May to discuss the official twinning with Skawina in 2005.

L'ENTENTE CORDIALE 1904 - 2004



In April 1904, after many years of great uncertainty in relations between France and Great Britain, the two governments decided, in view of the possible imminence of war with the German countries as represented by the remnants of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, to dispense with their traditional differences. Certainly dark clouds of war were already on the horizon although war itself did not begin of course, until August 1914.

The more recent Franco-Britannique spats erupted, of course, following the attack on Iraq which, for many Francophiles, was a sad state of affairs. Thus, the important centenary recognition of the original signature, offers an opportunity to heal wounds which have been allowed to fester during periods of Euroscepticism during the last 20 or 30 years.

Needless to say, rifts of this kind have tended to have wider educational significance. The reluctance on the part of students to take foreign language options is, in my view, is aggravated by such quasi-political influences such as "me Dad says we don't need to learn French"!!!! My own meagre efforts to achieve an A-Level at our Sixth-Form Centre enabled me to witness that of about 7 students only 2 remained after the 2-year course. Which - one must agree - is a frightful waste of resources.

~ *Barrie Nutt*

Free Eurotunnel crossings for town-twinning initiatives

To celebrate Eurotunnel's tenth anniversary, the centenary of Entente Cordiale and the 60th anniversary of the D-Day landings, Eurotunnel is offering up to 8,000 free trips for members of town-twinning organisations travelling between now and the end of 2005. They believe this initiative will encourage thousands of cross-Channel exchanges and make 2004 and 2005 the busiest years for Anglo-French cultural exchanges. From 1 March 2004 to 19 December 2005 each UK town with an existing twinning link in France is entitled to one free coach ticket and three free car tickets for Eurotunnel travel. More information is available at Eurotunnel's website <http://www.eurotunnel.com>. ~ *Sarah Bilal*

BTO receives Lottery Funding

Members may be interested to hear that the British Trust for Ornithology has recently received a grant of £379,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to open up its nationally important collection of bird survey data to enthusiasts across the country. Funding will greatly improve the library, archive and other facilities at BTO's Resource Centre.

The Chris Mead Library will be revamped to include archive and display facilities, working areas for birdwatchers and BTO staff to maximise use of the collection, as well as flexible space for displays and workshops. Work will also provide meeting rooms and a radio studio that will be used to publicise the Trust's activities via national and local radio news networks, and made available to the local community. Storage facilities and conditions will be greatly improved and collections fully catalogued.



Housed in the Grade 1 listed Nunnery, the Resource Centre is planned primarily for use by birdwatchers and anyone looking to explore the library and archives. In addition to safeguarding these for future generations, the Centre will be used to hold training sessions for volunteers, seminars for visiting students, and to showcase the work of the BTO to locals and visitors alike.

The project is part of a wider scheme totalling £801,358 of which the BTO project has attracted £194,000 of European Objective 2 funding via the Norfolk Museum and Heritage Partnership. This project is designed to improve and open up the adjacent nature reserve, to develop a BirdWatch Garden and to improve the Trust's web-based communications.

~ *Susan Waghorn*

A guide dog comes to stay

I have had dogs most of my adult life. When our last one had to be put to sleep last year, aged 14, I was lost without a dog but because our lifestyle had changed (not least, more trips abroad with the Twinning Association!) we felt that we were unable to commit to a dog again, so we wondered if there was a way we could have a dog on a part-time basis.



I have been a supporter of Guide Dogs for the Blind for some years, as a member of the Bury St Edmunds group helping to raise funds for the charity. We knew that volunteers were used to puppy walk, taking a puppy into their family at a few weeks old until about a year when they are ready for their formal training, and volunteers are also needed to look after working guide dogs for short periods. This could be because the owner is going on holiday abroad, or into hospital, or maybe they have a retired dog as well as a working dog that they can't take away with them.

We applied to GDBA to become volunteers, and were approved as boarders a few weeks ago. We've just have had our first Guide Dog staying; a four-year-old yellow Labrador called Cherry. Her owner was going away for a few days and it was easier for her to manage without the dog on that occasion, so she needed someone to look after Cherry.

We picked Cherry up on Friday evening and she stayed for the weekend, during which time we had the company of a well-behaved dog while we had time to spend with her, but we didn't have the commitment of having a dog full-time.



We have also boarded friends' dogs while they have been away so they don't have to be put in kennels.

For some time I have been a member and supporter of the Cinnamon Trust. This is a charity that supports pet owners who, for whatever reason, can't manage their own animal. The Cinnamon Trust was set up because research showed that many older or disabled people who would benefit from the company of an animal did not replace a lost pet because they were worried about what would happen to it if they were not be able to continue looking after it in the future. Cinnamon Trust volunteers may walk someone's dog, or drive the owner and pet to the vet, or board an animal while the owner is in hospital. We have just taken on a cat, Cookie, on a long term



fostering basis as her owner has died, until a permanent owner can be found. Members of the Trust can register a pet with the Cinnamon Trust and fill in a card stating that the Trust will take responsibility for their pet if they are no longer able to look after them.

So if you would love to have a pet but feel you can't commit to one on a permanent basis, do think about volunteering – like us, you could have the best of both worlds!



For information about the Cinnamon Trust, either to find out about volunteering, or if you or someone you know you could use the services of a volunteer, phone 01736 757900, or look at their website: www.cinnamon.org.uk.



For information about Guide Dogs, working as a volunteer either with dogs or with blind or partially sighted people, ring 0208 506 1515 or see www.gdba.org.uk.

Or speak to Janet Fuller and Brian Gibbons: 01842 820335

Committee Members 2004

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
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| Vice Chairman | : Stephen Davy | Dutch Secretary | : Mike Jacobs |
| Secretary | : Sheila Nutt | Newsletter Editor | : Susan Waghorn |
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