



TWIN TOWN NEWS



Volume 10, Issue 1 July 2007

From the (Sub)-Editor

Jean, the "Editor-in-Chief", has asked me to take over for this issue of Twin Town News, and I hope that, under her guidance and that of Linda at Glint Print, I have been able to avoid most of the editorial pitfalls!

We have a very full issue once again – indicative not only of the many events that have taken place since the last edition went to press but also of the great pleasure and excitement that are reflected in the contributions we have received; we are grateful to all those who have put pen to paper to share their experiences. We especially thank Pam Morris for her very full accounts of the "Oldies" visit to Kidderminster in October 2006 and of their return visit, with others, to Husum in May 2007.

A word of thanks, too, to all who have made this such a successful year (so far) for Kidderminster-Husum twinning – not forgetting our many friends in Husum who have shared in our events here in England or have opened their homes and their hearts to those of us who have journeyed to Germany. We look forward with keen anticipation to news of further visits and experiences.

Ray Harrowing



Our President

With this issue we take the opportunity, not long after the commencement of his year of office, to welcome our new President, Town Mayor of Kidderminster, Councillor Mike Shellie. Almost Mike's first experience of twinning was to find himself and his wife Gloria, only hours after his election as Mayor, bound for Birmingham Airport for the morning flight to Hamburg! Once in Husum, they took a full part in the events over the Whit weekend, and they seem to have had a great time. We suspect that Mike would quite enjoy being the *Bürgervorsteher* of Husum should the opportunity arise! We send our best wishes particularly to Mrs Shellie, who is undergoing frequent visits to hospital but manages to carry out the duties of Mayoress to the full.

Twinning is not only for "Oldies"!

Many twinning organisations across the country seem to have the same worry – what is the future for Town Twinning? Well, we in Kidderminster have only to look at the history of the "Oldies", whose visits to and from Husum in the last few months have been so well described by Pam Morris, and to think back to their first visits in the 1960s and '70's, to realise that the future is in the hands of the young people who are now involved in twinning because of their connection with schools, scouts, cricket and so on.

So we are hoping to capitalise on that involvement. The Association's Committee has decided to bring together as many of these young people (say, between 16 and 25 years of age) as possible, and suggest to them that they might set up some kind of forum that will "spread the message" about the delights of linking with Husum and about the ways and means of making that link.

As we go to press, arrangements are being made for a first get-together, at St. Mary's Chantry on Monday, July 16, at 7.30 p.m. We do invite any groups that include young people in this age group

among their membership to make sure that they know about this, and persuade them to come along. Refreshments will be provided, and we shall mount a display of photos and other items about Husum, as well as showing the new video of Husum (referred to elsewhere in this issue).

Among the groups that we hope will want to be involved are: Scouts; cricketers; Carnival Queens (past and present!); schools; Kidderminster College; Wyre Forest Young Voices choir; church youth groups; younger members of other choirs and orchestras, etc.

Pauline Geddie has kindly consented to act as a link between the Association and any youth group that may be formed, and we look forward to hearing more about this initiative in due course.

The “Oldies” get together again! – October 2006

At our Reunion in October 2005 it was mentioned that a group of past Husum youth visitors (from now on known as ‘*The Oldies*’ – *older in body but not in mind*) would make a visit to our town in 2006. Just a year later, they had arranged the trip and were due to arrive. I scanned the list of names of people coming and only recognised a few from the years I was involved with the group and realised that there would be representatives from almost all of the years in which exchanges were made.

I did have a few anxious moments – would the rooms be ready, would we all get along with each other? Forty years is a long time and we would have had many different experiences that would have shaped us into what we are now. Would we recognise each other? I have met with Gely and Harald many times over the years, we had met each other’s children, so our reunion would not pose any problems. Ulli and Dicker I had not seen since 1970 – had we all changed? 1968 and 1970 – I was very quiet, would they remember me? I was looking forward to the next six days – an opportunity to meet old friends and to make new ones.

At last the day was here: too late to withdraw. I was late picking two of my guests up – as usual work delayed me. I needn’t have worried, my guests were waiting patiently and I recognised them immediately. They did confess that they had struggled to remember me from the name they had been given but knew me as soon as they saw me. Gely and Harald had already arrived and we had begun to reminisce.

My house was full of laughter for the whole time. We had fun from the time we woke in the morning until we went to bed – which was often very late! We spent time looking at pictures from previous years and reminiscing about previous visits. We played games - often after evenings out when we were almost ‘brain dead’ and the relevant vocabulary had disappeared we made up new words, not found in either a German or an English dictionary. We were so comfortable in each other’s company, it was as though there had not been a gap of 40 years and we were eighteen again!



We all enjoyed the visits that had been organised. I had to miss the visit to Caldwell Tower and Harvington Hall, due to work commitments. I know my guests enjoyed the visit, the photographs and conversations were evidence. The Severn Valley Railway and Ludlow trip was lovely. Gely found items in the market that she needed and I have to say they were really nice. Bridgnorth in the rain was OK – but we did get soaked. Even trips to the supermarket became fun and I really do hate shopping!

All too soon the six days had passed. Saying goodbye was as difficult this year as in 1968 and 1970, and was as emotional. The youth visits had been good, but I feel this exchange was even better. The ties have been renewed and strengthened. I know that this time we will continue to stay in touch. It is easier now with improved technology and we can send emails.

Gely and Harald still had one more day with me before they left and we made good use of it. I know Gely collects Portmerion pottery, so I drove them to the seconds shop in Stoke-on-Trent, where she was able to help our economy by purchasing some more. Then we had to visit the supermarket - their trolley was laden. If they had not come by car, there would have been an expensive excess baggage bill to pay!

Thank you Charles, Jean, Jerry, Val and Rainer for making this exchange possible. It was so nice to have the opportunity to meet old friends and to make new ones. I am looking forward to May 2007 and meeting everyone again, this time in Husum.

Pam Morris

PS The Zielke twins had often been referred to as 'the terrible twins' but I found them 'hard on the outside but very soft-centred' - a delight to have as house guests, especially as they did a few minor repairs for me! They can come again.

A message from Gely ...

Harald and I would like to add our thanks to Jerry, Charles, Jean and Rainer, we really enjoyed our stay in Kidderminster. The reception, the trips and sightseeing you had planned for us were great!!!! And many thanks also to our hosts who gave us such a warm welcome. It's been a pleasure to meet old friends again and to make new ones.

When we had the idea to come to Kidderminster



An invasion of "Oldies"!

with a group of 'oldies' at our Kidderminster Club reunion party in Husum last year, nobody thought that anything could ever top the fun we had had there. Meeting friends from Husum and Kidderminster, whom we hadn't seen for ages, had been a great event in 2005. But staying in England together and visiting people and places that we had seen when all of us were teens was even better. And though Kidderminster had changed a lot, so much was still familiar: the pretty countryside, friendly people, lovely pubs on the Severn...., we just couldn't stop talking about old times. As the Twins, Pam, Harald and I remembered lots of different things from the exchanges then and as so much had happened up to now we chatted away from early in the morning till very late at night. It was so nice to meet people from other exchange years and now this reunion is another chapter in the history of the towns' twinning worth remembering.

We are looking forward to seeing all of our old and new friends in Husum next year.

Angelika

PS Pam makes it sound as if I had spent hundreds of pounds in Britain, that's not true though I would have liked to, but she knows how much I love everything typically English. In the 1970's we took home Yorkshire Terrier puppies, we were so fond of, as well as boxes of Heinz Baked Beans, to mention only two things hardly known in Germany at that time. Both have become very popular over here in the meantime but there are still things you just don't get in Germany. We love pies and pastries better than pizzas and thanks to Pam I know how to make them properly. But English custard is more delicious than German vanilla sauce etc. and then what about Breakfast Tea, cereals like Shredded Wheat (at least you can get Weetabix here now), Lemon Curd, Sage and Onion Stuffing, Heinz Salad Cream or Strongbow Cider.... You can imagine that Harald suffered from SOS (shopped out syndrome - a word he, Ulli and Dick-er invented) and I think Pam did so, too. I'm very sorry!

And from Ulli ...

A visit to Kidderminster, after nearly 40 years, in October 2006 ... I joined the youth exchange Husum-Kidderminster in the years 1965 - 1969. I visited Kidderminster in 1965 and 1969 with the group - most of us were pupils. In 1970 I came on a private visit with friends. 1965 was the first journey to a foreign country and without parents. We were curious, young, wild, happy-go-lucky and thought that our whole life would be a great party. The journey to Kidderminster was more uncomfortable than today, we

went by train, ferry and bus and it takes a longer time, but it was an adventure for us. We were a little bit excited. We knew before, that you are driving on the wrong side of the street, that you speak another language and you have a queen. The visits to Kidderminster (65/69) were great. We were looking forward to meeting the girls, drinking English beer and having much fun. We learned something about your history and visited interesting places in your country. The best of all was that we became acquainted with you, the English people. You were the same as us, kindly, heartfelt and welcoming. After 1970 some of us were gone with the wind, as was I. I lost the connection to Kidderminster and in the following years also to Husum. I became grown up, learned a job, built a house, got married and got two sons. I turn round and nearly 40 years were gone. Sometimes my brother said to me, it must be

great to go back to Kidderminster, to see the friends from earlier times.

Last year Rainer organized a meeting of the old members of our group in Husum. I think it must be very difficult to get the addresses of all of us. The meeting was great, because we had not seen others for many years. Rainer said, that there will be a chance to go to Kidderminster next year with accommodation at private hosts. I didn't believe it really. But in October 2006 this dream became truth. I was nearly as excited as in the sixties. Will I recognize some of the English friends, how has Kidderminster changed, who is my host? The journey was comfortable and shorter than earlier times, but the safety regulations on the airports were a little bit irritating. When my host picked me up at the parking place in Kidderminster, there was only just a second of feeling strange, but then I felt, that we haven't grown apart, there was a heartfelt feeling.

I really recognized some of the old friends, they were the same as before. The program was interesting. I only recognized in Kidderminster the Town Hall, the statue in front of it and the fire station. I didn't find the GREEN MAN and the restaurant RIVERBOAT. With my host I felt as if I have got the jackpot. Sometimes we fall back to earlier times and behave foolishly like teenagers.

When we talked about our life, we found out that in the last 40 years we all knew the ways of the world. Overall it was an exciting, interesting and very beautiful visit to Kidderminster. The best of all was, to see the old friends after such a long time and get to know new friends.

Thanks to all who made this visit possible, especially to the hosts. I will be absolutely delighted to see you all again in Husum in May 2007.

Ulli Zielke

A message from Frauke Wulff

Hallo Charles and Jean, here is my first E-mail from home. I'm sending you the impressions of the Oldies:

I enjoyed every minute of my stay. Our hosts have been marvellous - Eva

An old dream became reality!!! - Rainer

Very good program. Good hosts – Anne and Manfred

*A warm welcome. Very friendly hosts – Holger and Karin
What can I say: It was great!!! Thank you - Birgit*

We had a warm welcome, wonderful hosts, and nice company to all. – We continued after 40 years. Thank you for everything – Karin Meister nee Holm

After so many years it was a great pleasure to see you all again. I look forward to come to Kidderminster next year. Thank you for all your kindness - Brigitte

Who said English people are unable to cook? Betty cooked and we finished the lot completely, marvellous!!!

After 32 years it was a wonderful experience. We had a lot of wonderful impressions. Thanks, thanks, thanks – Susi and Wolfgang

It was fantastic to meet old friends and to find a lot of new friends – Olaf and Heinke

We lived as if we would die today in a green room. Sometime posh, sometimes unposh. We dreamed as if we would live forever. It was great with our "Pretty Woman" the noisy twins - Ulli & Joachim (Dicker)

Chateau Pavie 1982 ... Bombay's Sapphire ... Good Golf courses ... Old TREES ... and England lost Cricket game against Australia - Ingo

Almost like it was 41 years ago ... People nice ... Bombay Sapphire nice ... Guinness nice ... Bitter nice ... Food nice ... Golf courses extremely nice, because I had "Grandma" in my luggage! ... See you soon – Joachim Tobien

*Before I left, I had to work through the night until 15.30. Just one hour to pack my bag. A taxi took me to the airport. I felt happy and tired, when I reached Kidderminster station at 23.40, and Hillary discovered me, the late-comer from Lübeck. I felt it was a big present to come to know Hillary and Geoff - Lissa
PS I am looking forward to our first live meeting with Richard Wagner in the Lübeck opera, Geoff*

It was exactly like it had been 35 years ago. The bus reached Kidderminster and our expectations were great. Where shall I stay? Will it be a flat without furniture, but a sofa and half a car in the garden? Has the drainage improved? The toilet flush made many problems. - No, it was completely different. Nobody picked us up. After 90 minutes Jerry felt sorry for us and took us to his house. Better to leave our luggage in the car, so that he doesn't have the feeling, we want to stay. We had coffee and

these thoughts were on our minds: They, (our hosts) have passed the car park, had seen us and thought: "These people are no good!" The door bell is ringing, a kind man enters. We are excited, somebody is fetching us at last. After a quick cup of coffee he says: "Let's go and he takes Bernd with him. The minutes become longer. We had finished the coffee. The doorbell is ringing again. The sun rises, when Geoff enters the room. Is it really him, who want's us??? I cannot believe it. In Germany there is a saying: "The last will be the first. For a very long time I have not met such wonderful friends!!! - Manuela PS And one of both toilets was always working perfectly, and that was enough.

A dance with Betty brought back memories from times of youth - Peter

Since 43 years I come to Kidderminster, but this time it was something special. To be together with the "Oldies" from our old KIDDERMINSTER CLUB was great fun. We all felt young again.

Thanks for all your efforts. You have done a great job, because everybody felt comfortable and we all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves together with our "old English friends". Now we are looking forward to see the English group in Husum next year.

Special thanks of course go to Charles, for he is The Heart and the Motor of this exchange. In the beginning he was supported by Pam, and then Jean took over. I assure you she works very hard for the twinning, apart from everything else. I am proud to call this wonderful couple our best friends. Since more than forty years they are part of our family. I do hope I can serve them their morning tea for many more years when they stay in HUSUM.

Frauke Wulff (Sussy)

Eurolinx Twinning Conference – Coventry, 14th October, 2006

Coventry's commitment to, and level of activity in, twinning are almost unparalleled. It has 26 twin towns and cities (ranging from Lidice, Czech Republic, pop. 500 to Jinan, China, pop. 3m), of which four – including Dresden – were represented at this Conference. Its University is one of few which has a Department for Peace and Reconciliation, and linked to the Department is the Welcome Centre, the venue for the Conference. We were welcomed by the Lord Mayor, Councillor Ram Lakha, then given a brief history of the city's international contacts by Prof. Andrew Rigby.

Elizabeth Williams, Welsh European of the Year, from Aberystwyth, had a challenge for us: "Twinning is great, and we should be going for great!". She had some useful pointers on press and media relations (if it's in the papers, it must be true!), motivation, reinvigoration, community involvement, and she stressed the value and importance of the individual experience – so often life-changing. A panel discussion followed, on subjects including: school exchanges, funding, cultural differences, trade links, work exchanges (students and more mature workers) and youth conferences.

After a lunchtime devoted to networking, Thomas Poggenpohl, from Bonn, described how a business link between Banbury and its German twin, Hennef, had widened, first to Cherwell District and the Kreis, then to Oxfordshire and the Bonn region, and now to much of South-East England and North Rhine Westphalia. He felt that business contacts were invaluable in the twinning context, and conversely that twinning relationships could be of value to local businesses seeking to expand their areas of interest.

Keith Watson, whose Gloucestershire village, Bisle (pop. 2,000), has a French twin, described how they do twinning, and gave some pointers to success in gaining EU grants. He was followed by Albert Kemp, whose insurance company specialises in covering events and who has been involved in insuring various aspects of twinning. He gave graphic descriptions of what could go wrong, and stressed the need for adequate and appropriate cover.

The Rev. Robin Blount distinguished between "twinning" (just good friends) and "partnership" (sharing skills and visions, discovering a common purpose, engaging in joint initiatives and projects). He described how this could happen in the context of churches in twin towns, and showed how the churches could contribute to the twinning process, in understanding, ecumenism and reconciliation.

John Errington, a Yorkshire teacher, gave a unique insight into his school's links with a school in Zanzibar (yes, they have exchanges, and each has learned from the other). We started to think outside the envelope of "comfortable" European links, helped, in further discussion, by a student from Sierra Leone who is taking a year's course in the Peace and Reconciliation Department, and by Perwaiz Khawaja, whose Redditch Muslim group is linked with a district of Pakistan.

It was a real privilege to be able to represent the Association at this Conference – my twinning horizons were widened, my ideas were given focus, and

some at least of my questions were answered. I was glad also to be able to contribute from the store of good practice that the Association has built up. Several aspects of the Conference were thought-provoking, and I am discussing various points with our Association officers or with other groups.

Ray Harrowing

Our “Social Events” Team

As with most twinning activities, indeed as with most societies and organisations, much of the spadework is done by a few people, and among the least recognised – at least in our case – are those stalwarts who make sure that refreshments are laid on, that venues are booked, that entertainment is provided and so on. One of their biggest tasks, and greatest achievements, in the course of a year is to organise a Race Night, which is usually held during the winter months, and this was the case in December, when we had a very successful Race Night on December 2, which raised £300 net for the Association’s funds.

We say a very big thank you to Ken and Pat Garbett, Liz and Keith Weston, and our Vice-Chairman



From l.: Ken, Liz, Keith and Pat - a well-earned drink!

Terry Garbett for putting a lot of thought and effort into the Race Night and all the other occasions on which their expertise and generosity come to the fore.

From Localism to Globalism: the West Midlands, Europe and the Wider World - Wolverhampton - 8th December, 2006

This Conference and International Roadshow, put together by the Local Government International Bureau and held at Wolverhampton Civic Centre, brought together representatives of a number of local authorities and also several “twinners” from towns in the West Midlands. There were several

sessions, on such topics as Local Government in Europe and the wider world, Europe and Local Government in the West Midlands and so on. We heard how the international aspect is dealt with by some of the “big boys”, such as Birmingham, as well as by some smaller authorities, such as Lichfield District Council, that have opened up to the possibilities of involvement on the European stage. The Chief Executive of Lichfield gave a thought-provoking talk, which included reference to a visit to Brussels that resulted in a successful application for several million pounds – as well as recognition on a much wider stage than is achieved by many local councils.

It was particularly interesting to have the opportunity to meet, and to bounce ideas off, people who are at the centre of international activity, such as the representative of the LGIB and the Head of the Regional, European and International Division of Birmingham City Council.

Ray Harrowing

Worcestershire Twin Towns Forum

The Forum is a group of representatives from any of the “twinners” in the county who are interested in discussing common problems and opportunities, and in spreading good news and best practice about twinning. I attended a recent meeting of the Forum in Bewdley, at which Bewdley, Bromsgrove, Worcester, Redditch and Tenbury Wells were also represented.

Twin town organisations operate in quite different ways; our own Association is one of relatively few that encourage what might be called “do-it-yourself” twinning, with lots of groups making links with their opposite numbers in the twin town and the Association acting as a kind of midwife in helping to plan and co-ordinate. Most of the Worcestershire twinners concentrate on one big visit every year, or perhaps two or three. When they saw our full calendar of twinning exchanges, and heard about the total numbers who are involved in visits every year, I think some of them felt that this was a course of action that might be worth looking at. Some towns, of course, have more than one twin – Bewdley has three (German, French and American) and Worcester has links of various kinds with four or five (including one in Africa), so that their efforts are somewhat spread out rather than being concentrated in one direction as ours are. Some, such as Redditch, deal with this by having almost entirely separate local groups, each concentrating on one of the overseas towns. In this particular

instance there is a group which has close connections with an area of Pakistan.

So the problems and opportunities that the various organisations face may in some cases be quite different. But one common situation is the problem of attracting the interest of younger people; most of us are “silver twidders”, and everyone is trying to find ways of bringing younger blood into the organisation – both to bring new vitality into present activities and to ensure that the work of twinning continues into the future. Those at the meeting were most impressed by the success that we in Kidderminster have had in bringing together Scouts, cricketers, schools, youth groups and others, and they are watching keenly to see how our plans for the future with these groups progress.

We looked at ways in which twinning might be promoted and publicised at a county-wide level, and there are possibilities such as taking a stand at a County Hall Open Day or the Tenbury Wells Show. We also felt that the importance of twinning to tourism and the local economy should be emphasised with District Councils, possibly persuading them to do something for us in return such as printing, posting, etc. It’s interesting to look at the effect that our twinning has, in monetary terms; the overall contribution to our local economy of the churches’ visit in May, for example, must have been something approaching £8,000!

Other brief points from the meeting:

Some groups are looking at links of some kind with communities in developing countries;

Some are looking at ways of linking with new migrants into their areas (e.g. Polish, Baltic States, Romanian);

We are invited to support and take part in the Inter-Town Quiz Night at Bromsgrove on Friday 28th September (if you would like to organise a team of six, please let us know!).

Ray Harrowing

A Christmas Concert - by Twinners, for Twinners!

At the suggestion of Pam Cunningham, who conducts one of the Association’s member groups, the Kidderminster Valentines, we shall be holding a Christmas Concert at Baxter Church on Saturday, 1st December. The programme will include Christmas music for choir and audience, with David Morgan (organist of St. Mary’s Church) at the organ and Morfudd Griffiths (accompanist to the Kidderminster Valentines) at the piano. We hope also to in-

clude solos, and choral and instrumental music, by members of the Association and others.

A proportion of the proceeds will be donated to Kemp Hospice. When details have been finalised we shall notify all members and friends of the Association. Please put the date in your diaries!

Annual General Meeting

The Association’s AGM was held in March, at the Chester Road Sports Club, and was once again very well attended. We had the pleasure of welcoming Georg Weßler, the Chairman of our “sister” organisation, the *Verein für Städtepartnerschaft der Stadt Husum*.

The formal business of the meeting consisted of the approval of the accounts, the election of the Officers and the Management Committee (all the Officers were re-elected - see the last page of this Newsletter - and the membership of the Committee remained unchanged apart from the addition of Pam Morris, who represents the “Oldies”), and the receiving of reports from the various organisations and individuals who had been involved in the activities of the preceding year.

Acting as Chairman for the evening, in the absence of Rod Summers, Terry Garbett (Vice-Chairman) commented that the year had once again been full of good things, and that the Association appeared to be continuing on a very healthy footing, both financially and in terms of its activities and plans for the future.

Then followed a talk by Jill Robinson, Acting Head of the Regional, European and International Section of Birmingham City Council, who had been invited to talk about her work and to give her impressions of the role of large and smaller twinning organisations. She outlined the work of her Section, and its involvement in contacts with other large cities around the world, but emphasised that this work, although it included dealing with very large sums of money and contacts with high-powered people in industry and commerce, had very little to do with the communities of Birmingham. She felt that the big cities could learn from the extent to which the Kidderminster-Husum Association and others like it were able to engage with the people at “grassroots” level, and she congratulated all those who were involved in such activities.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Robinson for her kind words and for her interesting talk, and the meeting ended with refreshments provided by the Social Events team.

Husum – first impressions of a member of Trinity Methodist Church’s Youth Group

We went to Husum at the end of March with a group consisting of the Mayor and Mayoress, representatives of the Carnival Committee, the Carnival Queen, and people with an interest in the historical aspects of Husum. Other members of the group told us great stories about their previous trips to Germany, and how much they had enjoyed themselves. They were of a different generation, and this did make us a little apprehensive, but as keen learners, and with my quite inquisitive personality, we were fascinated by the history of the places we were to visit and to anticipate the differences between the Husumers’ everyday lives and our lives back home.

On arrival in Husum we had lunch at the Schloss café which is run by handicapped people, who are either deaf or hard of hearing, and so there is a special ordering system. The meal was very nice - we had fish, which we were told was fresh from the harbour that morning! “*Kaffeetrinken und Apfelkuchen*” followed, with a number of new friends, including Melanie, a French student who’s staying for some months with one of the families. Fortunately she spoke English (her father is Irish), so we were able to chat to her, and ask her to translate things for us. We then went to Nordstrand, where we visited a church of the “Old Catholic” tradition – they have married priests! Nordstrand is well known for its pottery, and Robyn was given the chance to make a mug, which after being kilned, would be painted and glazed in the traditional Nordstrand design, which looks like entwined fish.



Just like home!

The next day was the crowning of the Crocus Queen, where our Carnival Queen was also recognised. The ceremony was led by the Husum *Bürgermeister*, and accompanied by the well-known *Rödemitse Spielmannszug* (youth marching band). An elaborate fête was also part of the celebrations. That same afternoon, we were fortunate enough to have a tour of the Schloss. Perhaps the most interesting part of this was hearing about the painting of an old lady who was a past duchess

of the Castle - she gambled most of her money away playing Bingo! On Saturday evening, we attended a reception, where after a delicious buffet of German food, we sang folk songs in both German and English, accompanied by Mr Talbot (Secretary of the Twinning Association) on his guitar.

Early on Sunday, we went to St. Marienkirche for the morning service, where we listened to the sermon, and admired the glorious architecture of the



Robyn at the wheel

church, including the simple but effective Kidderminster window. In the afternoon, we picnicked in the park at Friedrichstadt, and saw the houses built in the typical Dutch style, with staggered gables, and the decorated homes ready for Easter. In the central square of Friedrichstadt was a water pump, with an inscription on its roof explaining that if anyone was ever ill, they could drink this water, and they would be cured. Later that afternoon, we visited a sea life centre, focusing on the creatures that live in the North Sea. We were given an extensive tour, seeing sea horses, jellyfish, and many other exciting fish, the skeleton of a whale and so on; my favourite part was the tank in which we were allowed to touch the creatures, and pick them up, things like crabs and star fish. The water was very cold, but it was great!

Our last full day consisted of a visit to Theodor Storm Schule, a trip to Hallig Nordstrandischmoor, and the reopening ceremony of the Nissen Haus Museum. At the school, we sat in on two English lessons, the first for children of 13 years, who were learning about the tenses, and the second lesson, for children of only 9 – 10 years old, who were already quite capable of holding a conversation with us, after just one term of English lessons. Next we took a trip to Nordstrandischmoor, which is a small island just off the coast. In order to reach the Hallig, you must either walk across the mud flats, while the tide is out or, if you know one of the residents of the island, take their train. Fortunately Juliane, our host mother, was very good friends with Doris, who

lives on the island, and who very kindly allowed us to use her train!



In the classroom at Theodor Storm Schule

At the Hallig there's one school, which has just three pupils all from the same family. There's also a farm, small harbour, beach and plenty of flat countryside, which is protected by the national



The railway to the Isles

trust, because the native birds make their nests on the ground, as it is so windy. On Monday evening we all shared in a fantastic meal, at a *Braukeller* in Husum, where the portion sizes were humungous! I had a lasagne, which was equivalent to the one

my mum makes for all four of us at home! We left before the end, as we were very tired, and still had to pack, and be ready for another early morning for our return journey home the next day.

On Tuesday morning we said our goodbyes and thank you's to Juliane, Katja and their families for such a wonderful time; they have invited us back in the Summer, when we can go surfing and swimming in the sea.

Laura Howles

Theodor Storm Schule visits King Charles 1 High School 22nd to 29th March 2007

The long-awaited link between Kidderminster's King Charles 1 High School and Husum's Theodor Storm Schule, which began last year with three KCS teachers journeying to Husum, moved into top gear in March with a week-long visit by 20 TSS students and their teachers, Christiane Schultz and Stefan Buchenau. KCS staff (particularly Sarah Shaw) and others had put together a full and varied programme, which included visits to the Carpet Museum Trust's Weavers Loft, the Town Hall, the Black Country Museum, Stratford-on-Avon, the Severn Valley Railway and Harvington Hall. The students, who were all accommodated by families of KCS students and spent the weekend with their hosts, also spent some time in the classroom.

Many very enthusiastic comments have been received from the German students and their teachers; we congratulate Sarah on achieving such a successful visit, and we are confident that the exchange will continue to flourish.

We record below the impressions of some of the students:

I really enjoyed having my exchange partner, Valerie staying with me. She spent the whole weekend with us. On Saturday we travelled to Birming-



Sarah and Valerie in the Bull Ring

ham, sightseeing and shopping, and in the evening we went bowling.

On Sunday we went to the Safari Park, drove around the animals' enclosures and fed some of them. They were really cute! Then we went on the rides and met up with our friends; Valerie went on lots of scary rides but I was too scared! My little brother, James, won her a huge Spongebob soft toy which she took back to Germany with her.

During the week we became really good friends and at the end of the visit I was very sad to see her go. They left very early on the Thursday morning and we didn't want to say goodbye - I had such a great time. It was a great week and I can't wait until October when I go to stay at Valerie's house!
Sarah Martindale

Thank you very, very much for everything!!! We think it was a fantastic experience for everybody! We can't wait until October. **Valerie und Nele**

I was sooooo sad when everyone left and drove away on the coach - I wished I was on it as well.
Jodie

We had a lot of fun! Now we are all back in Germany. I am very happy to meet you all in October.
Valerie

We can't believe it's gone so quickly! **Charlotte and Georgina**

Organist of St. Marienkirche plays Kidderminster!

Kai Böhm-Krakenberg, the organist of St. Mary's, Husum, visited Kidderminster to give an organ recital at the Town Hall on May 10, as part of the



Kai Böhm-Krakenberg

Hill Organ Promotion Society's series of lunchtime concerts. This proved a great success, with a larger audience than usual. His programme, which he had "previewed" in Husum a few weeks earlier, included works by some of the "late Romantics" of France and England (Boëllmann, Vierne and Percy Whitlock), as well as a piece from the 1758 "Husumer Orgelbuch".

Kai was one of the participants in the visit by representatives of the Husum churches, and he took the opportunity to visit – and play the organs at – a number of churches in and near to Kidderminster, including St. Mary's, Stourport Methodist and Great Witley. He pronounced himself very impressed by the instruments, and seems to have enjoyed his first visit very much.

We are very grateful to David and Mary Howles, who hosted Kai for nearly a week, and also to Tim Morris and David Morgan, respectively the Town Hall organist and the organist of St. Mary's Church, for their part in organising his itinerary.

Ray Harrowing

Another Churches' visit to Kidderminster

The sixth visit (or by some calculations the tenth, since the full visits were preceded by some planning trips) took place over the weekend May 11-14, when we welcomed 19 members of churches in Husum for a packed programme of visits, fun, meals, services and so on. Three members of the group, who had arrived earlier in the week, made a



Getting to know you

very interesting visit to King Charles I High School, where they were welcomed by Tim Gulliver, the Headmaster, and Sarah Shaw, the German teacher. On the first evening we all gathered at Nero's Café for a "get-to-know-you" session, when our thoughts were particularly directed towards the Church's place at the centre of the community.

Propst Manfred Kamper, the former Dean of the churches in the Husum area, preached at St. Mary's Church on the Sunday morning, and the pastor of St. Marienkirche, Friedrich Mörs, was made very welcome at St. Ambrose's Roman Catholic Church. The visitors and their hosts gathered at Trinity Methodist Church for Sunday lunch. The weekend



Pastor Mörs with members of the congregation at St. Ambrose's Church

also included a coach tour that took in the Abbeys at Pershore and Tewkesbury, and a very enjoyable skittles evening took place at Sladen School. We ended with a farewell dinner at the new Valley Suite at Kidderminster Severn Valley Railway Station. The visit strengthened the links between the churches in the two towns, and a number of new friendships were formed which may well lead to further contacts in the future. Everyone agreed that the weekend had been a success, and we look forward to repeating it next year and in future years. We are very grateful to all those who offered accommodation for our friends from Germany, or who helped in other ways.

Ray Harrowing

The "New Schleswig-Holstein Question"

Is there cricket in Germany? Before Gorbachev and the end of the Cold War the answer would have been yes. It was played by the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR). That legacy has left a small residue of high quality grounds now mainly frequented by ex-pats and migrants from the Indian sub-continent. However, in the part of North-West Germany that borders Denmark cricket is also played. It has different origins although ironically it is also the by-product of the power politics of a much older era. Cricket in Denmark has its roots in a common Anglo-Saxon heritage but more recently it was the building of Danish railways by British engineers in the 19th Century that was the key to its development. As far as Husum is concerned the cricket

club was founded in the 1960s with the wider purpose of helping to preserve the Danish language and cultural identity of Danish Germans living in and around Husum. The Club has developed exceptional facilities under the guidance of the founder, Henry Buhl, and boasts several adult and junior teams encouraged by its charismatic junior coach, Jorg Kruger.

Now at long last links have been forged between Kidderminster and Husum Cricket Club following the "inaugural" match on 28 May 2007 between Kidderminster U14s and a Husum team which it must be said included some older and more experienced boys than the Kidderminster side. It looks as if a regular link will be established with plans already being discussed for a U15 Tour by Husum to Kidderminster and Worcestershire in 2008 and U16 and U12 tours to Husum in 2009.

For the record Husum scored 300-6 in 40 overs with the very impressive Lars Boldt making 153 while the Kidderminster boys held on for 139-9 in their 40 overs.

So the answer to the "New Schleswig-Holstein question" - do Germans play cricket? - is yes. Danish Germans certainly do, and rather well.

William Franklin

"Oldies Reunion" Husum May 2007

On Thursday, May 24, at some unearthly hour of the morning, the first group from Kidderminster made the journey to Husum for another reunion of



Phil, Margaret and Silke renew acquaintance

former youth group members. Some of these members had not visited Husum since their visit in the early 1960's, and were excited, anxious, nervous, with some feelings of trepidation: what's it going to be like? will I be able to stand the pace of a very busy stay etc., etc.? But everyone was looking forward to the visit.

On Friday, Charles and Jean Talbot, the Mayor and Mayoress of Kidderminster and other civic dignitaries joined the group in Husum. There had been a change of protocol for the civic party and for the first time they were going to be hosted by private individuals in Husum. So, I guess they were also feeling anxious. These two groups then began a very hectic programme of events.

On Friday the early arrivals spent the morning on a guided tour around Husum, familiarising themselves with the town as it is today and (for some of them) learning something of its history for the first

time. In the evening the whole group joined with their hosts and other friends for a very convivial party, when old friendships were renewed and the photograph albums were in evidence. A lovely and generous buffet meal was followed by a time of singing and general bonhomie.

Saturday saw us on a boat trip to Amrum, passing small islands some of which had only one house or farm. From the distance they looked strange as the land could not be seen, just the building rising out of the sea. Watching the seals basking on the exposed sandbanks was good. Once on Amrum, we all did different things – some went on a bus trip to see the church in another village, some walked on the beach, some walked in the small town and of course sampled the famous German cakes! This trip was followed in the evening by a superb meal at the Café Halligblick, where many sampled the famous “Pharisée”. As usual when groups from Kidderminster and Husum meet there was lots of chatting and laughter.

The official reception on Sunday evening gave us an opportunity to meet friends who had moved away from Husum or who were unable to host for personal reasons. It was especially good to meet up with people we had first met some forty years ago and was surprising how many faces we recognised after all those years. The years just seemed to drop away, as we talked and laughed together. As in October, there was lots of laughter and special bonds of friendship were renewed or even made for the first time. The real purpose of the reception was to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the signing of the twinning charter which marked the official link between the two towns, and there were appropriate speeches and other ways of marking the occasion. But it was evident that most had come to renew old friendships or to make new contacts, and this “networking” will no doubt be realised in new ways of twinning in the future.

On Monday we had the opportunity to watch a youth team from Kidderminster play cricket

against a local team. Rainer Maaß was the opening batsman, and did look nervous, as the cricket ball sped towards him! Unfortunately, the Kidderminster team did not win. Maybe next time!

We were taken on a tour around Husum; like Kidderminster, the town has changed considerably during the intervening years. Husum now has a much smaller fishing fleet but has developed a strong wind turbine industry. Change has affected both towns and they have had to move with the changing times. A short visit to Friedrichstadt was included in the programme. Unfortunately, the weather was not kind to us and it rained hard but we were able to admire this beautiful town – and of course sample its cakes and ice cream.

We were all staying in people’s homes and had wonderful experiences to share when we returned home. I stayed in the same house as in 1970 – with Angelika’s mother. Joining Gely, Harald and I were the ‘quiet’ Zielke twins. I just hope we did not disturb Frau Spiering’s peace too much, as we talked and reminisced long into the night. We have been invited back, so I guess we didn’t cause her too many problems. I know, on talking to others there were also late bed-times in other homes too, as it was so difficult to stop talking and sharing so



many experiences. So much to say and only a short time!

Other members of the group who made the trip from Kidderminster have all said they were overwhelmed by the friendly welcome they were given by their hosts, and the excursions that had been arranged for us. We had an action-packed few days and needed another break, once home, to recover! As Anne commented, “The visit was just perfect!” The towns of Kidderminster and Husum have formed a very special bond of friendship, and long may it continue. Many thanks to Charles for being the driving force behind the youth group exchanges, especially during the 1960’s. Those of us who visit-

ed Husum in May are a living testament to their success.

The driving forces behind this recent exchange were Rainer Maaß and Jerry Mayfield and on behalf of everyone who visited Husum in May, a very big thank you for organising the visit and providing us with the opportunity to catch up with German friends and acquaintances again. We all came away with positive experiences and many of us will be visiting again – and not leaving it so long this time. Some of us were able also to renew acquaintance with English people with whom we had lost touch with over the years!

Pam Morris

Time to Celebrate! – 24th to 29th May, 2007

We have, it must be admitted, taken every opportunity over the years to have a celebration but the event in Husum over the Whitsun weekend was really worthy of the name. It marked the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Twinning Charter in Husum – although of course, for those of us who can count back that far, it's well over 50 years since the first feelers were put out and the first contacts were made that have since grown into what is a very close and very vibrant partnership.

Seventeen of us in total made our various ways to Husum, some to stay for longer periods, one or two making flying visits, but all enjoying the wonderful hospitality that is Husum's trademark. The Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor Mike Shellie and his wife Gloria, were numbered among the party. Mike had only been elected to office a few hours before departing! Two other Kidderminster Councillors, both seasoned travellers to Husum, Lyn Hyde and Fran Oborski, were also in the group. We came together for the first time at the *Altenbegegnungsstätte* (a church facility catering for the elderly) on Friday evening, when we met up with all the hosts and others taking part in the weekend's activities; a time of good food and wine, laughter, conversation and music – a good start to the visit.

Saturday morning gave us a little time for shopping – although the weather was not on our side. After lunch we travelled to Nordstrand to take the ferry to the island of Amrum: a fascinating holiday island and a visit which many Kidderminster visitors will look back on with delight. Returning in the evening we had a meal together at the *Café Halligblick* on Nordstrand, again a very convivial time. On Sunday many of the party spent the morning at St. Marienkirche for the Pentecost Sunday (*Pfingsten*) service, before spending the afternoon with our hosts – some went to the international festival of marching bands at Rödemis (part of Husum), while

others went in various directions around North Friesland, or rested in anticipation of the evening's event!

The highlight was of course the Civic Reception at the *Rathaus*. We joined about 150 Husumers, all interested in some aspect of the twinning between our two towns and all eager to make or renew our



acquaintance. We met up with old friends, some from many years back, and made lots of new friends, over a sumptuous buffet provided by the Stadt Husum, before listening to speeches by Rainer Maaß (the *Bürgermeister*), who has a long association with twinning, Councillor Mike Shellie and Georg Weßler (Chairman of the *Verein für Städtepartnerschaft der Stadt Husum*) and yours truly. All referred to the strength of the partnership, the benefits that had been gained from it, and hopes for the future success of the twinning. As a memento, the Mayor was presented with a copy of the original Charter (German version). A particular welcome was extended to members and supporters of the Kidderminster Victoria Junior Cricket Team, who had arrived in Denmark on Friday to play five matches there and in Hattstedt, near Husum. The evening certainly portrayed the wide extent of interest in the twinning within the community of Husum.

On Monday the group made a coach tour which included visits to Hattstedt (where a very nervous Rainer Maaß took the first ball at the Kidderminster-Husum cricket match), Tetenbüll and Friedrichstadt, returning to Husum in time to prepare for a memorable farewell party at the *Brauhaus*. Tuesday saw the majority of the party making their early departure for Hamburg and Birmingham, where unfortunately the coach meeting them did not arrive, and alternative arrangements had to be made!

Our sincere thanks go to Rainer, Georg and their teams for making this such a successful and memorable weekend; our belief in the bonds of friendship that come out of the twinning has been immeasurably strengthened, and we all gained confidence in the continuing success of our links with Husum.

A Holiday in Husum

After nearly twenty visits, almost all of short duration and of frantic content, it was time to spend a relaxing few days with friends in Husum. The holiday came at a good time, after the busy weeks of helping to organise the churches' visit to Kidderminster, and a spell in the tranquil surroundings of Schobüll would do us both good. Well, that was the theory!



Flying into Hamburg on Monday, we were met by Heinrich, who sped us up to Husum in time for lunch and a siesta, before he, Renate and I went off to the evening's rehearsal of the Theodor Storms Chor, leaving Penny to watch TV and catch up on some sleep (much to the interest of the neighbour opposite, who evidently had not been informed of our arrival). I was greeted in typical TSC manner by members of the choir, and made to feel very much at home. And so to the comfort (and quiet, and complete darkness) of our lovely bedroom.

Tuesday saw us lunching at one of Husum's many open - air restaurants, before strolling round Schobüll and out to the end of the jetty (where we were surrounded by a kindergarten group out for a picnic), before visiting a typically windy Nordstrand and having a cup of tea at the *Töpferei*, where the famous Nordstrand pottery is made. On



Wednesday we did the obligatory round of the shops in town, before meeting up with old friends Propst i.R. Manfred Kamper and his wife, then a family meal in the evening which included Georg and Marketta Weßler.

Thursday took us to Flensburg, the lovely old town on the border with Denmark. Heinrich and Renate guided us along the pedestrianised kilometer-long main shopping street, with its variety of old and new architecture, its interesting churches and the ubiquitous outdoor cafes. We ended up at the harbourside from whence, as we had spent so long in the town, we were about to return home, when Heinrich decided that we should take a boat trip



round the harbour – in a small boat which took just the four of us. A fascinating trip, of more than an hour, with plenty of opportunities for photography and a commentary from the very knowledgeable boatman.

We were able to relax on Friday morning, before meeting up with friends Ciara and Stefan and their children in the afternoon, enjoying *Kaffee und Kuchen* in their unique five-sided house. Stefan, a teacher at the Theodor Storm Schule, made the trip to Kidderminster with students in March; Irish-born Ciara, a member of the Theodor Storm Chor, is determined that her first visit will be very soon! The evening saw us joining with the other Kidderminster visitors to Husum at the welcome party – a friendly and happy occasion when many acquaintances were renewed.

Saturday started off wet, but undeterred we paddled off to Friedrichstadt with Georg for a very interesting glimpse of the architectural and other treasures of that unique town, before joining the Kidderminster group for a trip to the island of Amrum. The boat trip and the visit to the village of Nebel were fascinating, and Penny has made up her



Thatched cottages - Amrum's trademark (the constructions on the roofs are lightning conductors)

Theodor Storms Chor) who had hosted Laura and Robyn on their visit to Husum in March.

Tuesday was a wet day – we had our suspicions that this resulted from Heinrich installing a well and pump in his garden! We had hoped that our son and his partner would arrive on their motorbike during the day, or even the evening before, but it was late in the afternoon before they put in an appearance, so at least we were together for the evening meal.

On Wednesday we spent the morning shopping in town with Richard and Mary, who

mind that we should take a holiday on the island before too long. As Heinrich and Renate were spending the day running a sport flying competition, we enjoyed a meal with Georg and Marketta to end the day.

then went off to Hamburg while we paid our last call of the visit, this time on Frau Chromik, the Head of the Theodor Storm Schule. Again a very generous, and most interesting, hostess.

On Sunday we joined the congregation at St. Marienkirche, in the centre of the town, meeting again many of the friends who had been with us in Kidderminster only two weeks before! After lunch we met up with two of them, Hedwig and Gerd (who had celebrated his 80th birthday two days previously), before proceeding to the reception, at the Rathaus, to mark the 30th anniversary of the signing in Husum of the Twinning Charter. This really was a memorable occasion, attended by about 160 people, all of whom had an interest in the twinning. Again, the opportunity to meet up with many old friends and acquaintances and to enjoy the hospitality that Husum does so well.

On Thursday morning we were up at the crack of



Friedrichstadt

While the main Kidderminster group were starting off their day of visits to the cricket match and to other destinations, we spent the first part of Monday morning at the annual ecumenical service at St. Marienkirche. A packed congregation, and a service that included all the churches in the town in a sequence of music, prayers and thoughts which contained much to surprise and delight. Perhaps the biggest surprise was the participation of a Jewish rabbi, whose proclamations in Hebrew were translated into German by one of the pastors. Later in the morning, while the other three went off (briefly) to the cricket match at Hattstedt, I elected to stay at home and fulfill the famous Husum phrase: “Ray is sleeping”! In the afternoon we visited friends (two of them members of the

dawn to travel to the airport with Heinrich and Renate. We could in fact have left an hour later, as the plane was late arriving from Birmingham! We flew from Hamburg in bright sunshine, but Birmingham welcomed us with driving rain – an apt reflection of our mood as we remembered nine great days in our twin town.

Ray Harrowing

A return match – the Golfers’ visit to Kidderminster June 3rd to 9th, 2007

Nine players, including three ladies, visited us for seven days in June, mostly staying at local hotels,

although four stayed with us. The week consisted of two days' competition for the "Schimmel-Ryder Cup", resulting in a tie. Morally this was a victory for Kidderminster, since three of our best golfers turned out for the under-strength Husum team – and won their matches. This was strictly against the Captain's instructions!

Two other days of golf were included, the ladies competing in Kidderminster Golf Club's Ladies Open Day competition, while the men played at Kington in Herefordshire – the highest course in England. The weather was lovely and we had a wonderful day. We also visited Pembridge en route for a light refreshing drink. The other away day was at Sapey, again in beautiful weather, and en route this time we were given a tour of Witley Church followed by tea in the nearby cottage garden.

On our free day we took a coach to Blenheim Palace, calling at Broadway and Morton-in-Marsh on the way. A guide showed us round the Palace and afterwards we had a massive cream tea (scones, clotted cream and jam - a Devon Cream Tea though in Oxon!).

Various large meals were consumed, we had an evening barbecue at Barnetts Lane for all the week's players with wives, and a riotous final dinner with prizes on the last evening at Kidderminster Golf Club. Our visitors returned home happy, replete, and well watered. We have received enthusiastic messages (sent, evidently, with various levels of sobriety) since their return.

We would particularly like to thank Ken Garbett for his tireless and cheerful help with transport, including vast amounts of golf equipment in his articulated pantehnicon.

Roderick Summers - Twinning Chairman and Golf Captain

Did you know ... ?

... that the "Schimmel-Ryder Cup", which our golfers play for, takes part of its name from the most famous of the stories by Theodor Storm, Husum's well-known literary son? "Der Schimmelreiter" is the story of a ghostly rider on a white horse, who in life was the most important man in the area – the dykemaster, responsible for the building and upkeep of the dykes that to this day keep the sea from invading much of the low-lying land around the town of Husum.

Carnival Time again!

The Carnival weekend came with gloomy prognostications – the wet weather that had dogged us for weeks was forecast to continue and to cast its

shadow over the celebrations. Sure enough, the *Krokusblütenkönigin*, Katharina Petersen, arrived in Manchester from Husum to "showers and prolonged spells of rain", as the weathermen have it, travelling down the M6, with her father and Klaus Evers and with Terry Garbett driving, in very poor conditions. That Friday evening was spent, first, at the "Bewdley Open Studios" event, finishing up with a meal at Franky and Benny's in Weaver's Wharf.

Carnival day itself started off with one or two showers, and everyone thought that the weather would deteriorate once again, but to the surprise of all the parade and the afternoon's festivities in Brinton Park were completely dry, and the whole event was – to Carnival Chairman Colin Hill's evident relief – a great success. The new Carnival Queen, Charlotte Berrington got to know her German opposite number, and that turned into friendship at the dinner held at Natural Break, in Kidderminster, later in the day. This was a very convivial occasion, towards the end of which Charles Talbot addressed the assembled Carnival and Twinning Committees' members somewhat haphazardly, as he was not sure at times which language he should have been using! Sunday started off with rain, but the group nevertheless took the opportunity to visit Bodenham Arboretum, before



Charlotte and Katharina

repairing to John Southall's home in Wolverley for a (fortunately by then dry) celebratory barbecue, after which the Husum group were whisked off to Manchester for the return flight.



L to r: Charles Talbot, Max Petersen, Katharina Petersen, Joanne Elkin, Charlotte Berrington and Jean Talbot

The Association's "float" was much in evidence in the Carnival Parade, and we thank Ken and his crew for doing such a good job to publicise the organisation. We also mounted a stand on the Carnival field, with a display of photographs and information about twinning, and this was well-patronised. The preparation and manning of the stand involved quite a large number of Association members, and our thanks are due to all who made this such a successful occasion.

Kulturnacht

... or, in English, Culture Night. Husum is well-known as a centre for culture; its five most prominent museums and several smaller ones, concert hall, *Speicher*, St. Marienkirche, are all venues for a vast array of cultural events. The people of Husum and a wide area around are treated to a programme – or series of programmes – that make the mouth water if one is a follower of such things as orchestras, choirs, bands, creative artists, puppetry, performance art ...; the list is endless. Our own singers and other performers look forward to the high standards of presentation that come into play when they put on an event in Husum.

For the fifth year, all this has recently come together on one day, the 7th July just past, when in a five hour extravaganza not five, not ten, but SIXTEEN venues presented a programme that included something like 87 separate shows and performances! Shuttle buses ran between the various venues, and all those who took part said that it was a great evening out. The overall theme for the evening was "wind" in all its aspects – a subject that is never far from Husumers' minds!

We are very fortunate to be twinned with the "cultural centre of the west coast", and to be able to partake in the rich tapestry of the arts and crafts in Husum.

Ray Harrowing

Gardeners' visit : flood, fire - and bombs!

The annual exchange between Kidderminster Horticultural Society members and Husum gardeners seems set to become a regular event. This summer we enjoyed the company of 13 Husumers (plus 2 visiting Australians!) for five days, timed to include our Open Gardens Day on 1st July. We received such marvellous hospitality whilst in our twin town



in Germany last summer that we were determined to do at least as well for our guests in Kidderminster this year. Little did we realise quite what an action packed roller-coaster time was ahead!

At one point, the Open Gardens itself seemed doomed, with too few willing volunteers, until an abbreviated format was devised. Next, we effectively lost a day's activities when Flybe took over BACconnect, and flight times changed; never daunted, we re-jigged the timetable to squeeze everything in, and prayed for fine weather. Sadly, this was not to be the case either, but at least none of our hosts were flooded out – although we did get pretty wet at times! Driving to the Aggborough allotments on Sunday morning was a challenge, with the 40's weekend at the SVR, the Mayor's parade temporarily stopping all traffic, and part closure of the town because of a fire in Coventry Street. Disappointingly, the guides failed to show for our promised tour behind the scenes at Brinton Park (and opening the bowling green) so our stalwart guests and hosts took themselves around and explored the canal instead. Finally, the necessary new security meas-

ures at the airport on departure caused delays and an extra long walk to check in!

Happily, most of the programme did actually go according to plan and the visitors were an extraordinarily good-natured and resilient bunch who took everything in their stride. After a very early flight to Birmingham, the Husumers arrived just in time to dump luggage and grab a bite of lunch with their hosts before Mike Shellie and Charles Talbot gave us a warm welcome and tour of the Town Hall,

with an English “cuppa” organised by Jean to follow. A superb guided tour of Bodenham Arboretum in the early evening kept everyone awake until bedtime – ready for an early start on Friday, to visit Brintons No. 6 site. The rain held off for an alfresco

and various activities, but quite a crowd found themselves all at David Austin Roses at tea time and in Bridgnorth for a fish and chip supper! As a prelude to the Open Gardens on Sunday, an hour at Aggborough allotments sped by as we enjoyed the splendid plots worked by Colin Costin and Trev.

After Jean and Derek Hughes had made us welcome indoors for a “Friday leftovers” lunchtime picnic, each took their own route around the other gardens, regrouping at Little Larford for tea. The finale was a hugely successful Skittles evening at the Squirrel, including a Mayoral entourage – hopefully, all the laughter burning up the day’s cream cakes as well as the basket meal! A few hours’ sleep, and hasty packing (especially of cuttings and plants), and we were all back at Aggborough for farewells. Many of us have already accepted the invitation to visit Husum next June - not only will there be their



The Boyle Arch (Trevor, Geoff and Charles)

picnic lunch during which Trevor Jones and Charles officially opened an arch (complete with red ribbon and plaque to unveil!) in Geoff Boyle’s newly laid-out garden, and then we were off again, this time to a tour, by guides in period dress, of Harvington Hall. A stroll around Brinton Park then allowed time for an energetic team to transform Holy Innocents Church Hall into a most attractive and welcoming venue for a meal - especial thanks to the flower arranging ladies! Vast amounts of food were consumed, conversation levels rose as wine flowed and friendships were forged and strengthened.

Saturday was intended as a day for guests and hosts to do their own things, and indeed there were many



Armchair gardening?

“Offener Garten” but a major Regional Garden festival nearby to enjoy as well. However, if truth be told, I suspect most of us will just be going to see our new friends.

Hilary Boyle

Best Wishes

We send greetings and good wishes to Frau Therese



Chromik, who will retire in the July from her position as Director of the Theodor Storm Schule in Husum. Frau Chromik is a member of the Committee of our “sister” organisation, the *Verein für Städtepartnerschaft der Stadt Husum*, and has

visited Kidderminster on a number of occasions – most recently during discussions on the link between her school and King Charles 1 High School.

Frau Chromik is a poet, and has published a number of collections of her work; she is well-known in eastern Europe in this guise. One of her first projects in “retirement” will be to travel to Poland and work with a translator there to bring her poetry to a wider Polish public.

We understand that Frau Chromik will continue living in Schobüll, and we hope that her retirement will not see the end of her association with Kidderminster. Conversely, we are very hopeful that the new partnership between the two schools will flourish under the new leadership in Husum.

Ray Harrowing

Did you know ... ?

... that Sherborne, in Dorset, has a twin town in each of the other 26 countries of the European Union? They started this trend when there were 12 member states in the EU, and have carried on the tradition with every expansion of the Union. We do wonder whether any of the links between these towns can be much more than symbolic!

Coventry also has 26 twins, but we suspect that this has come about for somewhat different reasons. Among them are Stalingrad (twinned in 1944) and Dresden, which suffered in much the same way as did Coventry as a result of “carpet” bombing during the war.

Obituary

Margaret Matthews



We were sorry to receive news of the death of Margaret Matthews, who was one of our members and someone who was, although not able to travel to Germany herself, very enthusiastic about the contacts with Husum, acting as a host to visitors and taking part in Joe Lorbert's German classes.

Margaret was a member of Trinity Methodist Church, which is one of the leading supporters of the Churches' twinning between Kidderminster and Husum.

Iris Baggott, Joe Lorbert and Ray and Penny Harrowing were among members of the Association who were present at the service of thanksgiving that followed Margaret's funeral.

Our Website

The Association's website (www.kidderminster-husum-twinning.co.uk) has seen a few changes over recent months – mostly cosmetic, and done some minor up-dating. By the time you read this we shall have at least some of the pages translated into German and Danish (we don't know of another Twin Towns website that has this facility, but I stand to be corrected!). We thank Eva Maaß and Peter Bang for their kind assistance in making the translations.

You'll know that we now have a Guest Book on the site; this has hardly been used at all as yet, so why not use it to make announcements of forthcoming events (whether related to twinning or not), birthday greetings, comments about the content of the website, and so on?

Ray Harrowing

Welcome to our new Members

We're delighted that, since the last edition of the Newsletter was published, quite a large number of new members have joined the Association, and we give them all a warm welcome. They are listed below. We hope that we shall see them at forthcoming events and that they will be able to take part in visits to and from Husum (of course, many of them have done so already!):

Mr. and Mrs. K. Birch, Mr. and Mrs. B. Bytheway, Mrs. M. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. R. Fleming, Mrs. P. Geddie, Mrs. F.M. Oborski, Mr. and Mrs. R. Poole, Mr. P. Reed, Mr. and Mrs. D. Sey and Kidderminster Horticultural Society.

News in Brief

A new Video of Husum

We are pleased to announce the recent issue of a new DVD of aspects of life in Husum, under the title: “Husum ... von Krokussen, Krabben und Puppenspielern” (Husum – from Crocuses, Shrimps and Puppetry). Copies are available from Buchhandlung C.F. Delff in Husum

(www.delff.de) or, if you know of someone travelling to Husum, they can probably be persuaded to bring one back!

We shall be showing the video at the meeting for young people at St. Mary's Chantry on the 16th July, and no doubt there will be other opportunities for members to see it.

On the Horizon

Here's just a brief outline of events and visits that will be taking place over the next few months:

25th July – 5th August – 80 Scouts from Husum, Denmark and Poland visiting the KD 8 Scouts before going on to the Centenary Jamboree in Essex

4th – 11th October – 20 students from King Charles 1 High School visiting Theodor Storm Schule, Husum

1st December – Christmas Concert by Twinners for Twinners, Baxter Church, Kidderminster

28th May – 2nd June, 2008 – Kidderminster Choral Society visiting Theodor Storms Chor, Husum

1st June – Joint Concert of Theodor Storms Chor and Kidderminster Choral Society, St. Marienkirche, Husum.

We shall be reporting on these events in future issues of Twin Town News; meanwhile, please watch for further details.

Kidderminster-Husum Twinning Association



Officers

Chairman – Dr. R. Summers; Secretary – Charles Talbot; Cultural Secretary – Ray Harrowing; Membership – Phil Austin.; Treasurer - Christine Dutton

Newsletter

The Twin Town Newsletter is edited by Jean Talbot. Any contributions for the next Newsletter will be welcome. Please post, fax or email copy and photos (jpeg format) to:

Twin Town News
Barratts Court
Rectory Lane
ROCK
Kidderminster
Worcs. DY14 9RR

Tel 01299 832797 Fax 10299 832923
Email charles@talbotkidder.demon.co.uk