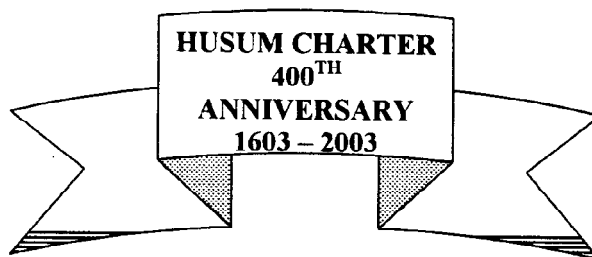

Twin Town News

Volume 6: Issue 2

October 2003



The Valentines and Kidderminster Male Choir travelled to Husum at the August Bank Holiday weekend to join in celebrations marking the 400th Anniversary of the Town Charter. It was the second visit to Husum by the Valentines and the first by the Male Choir.

The reports below speak for themselves but Von Stewart (who accompanied them in the Garbett's minibus) wrote in a review and report for the Shuttle 'I can't describe the atmosphere at the harbour on Friday evening – you had to be there. The ever-increasing crowd and people watching from their hotel windows joined in the songs, whether in English or German, all moving to the music. At times we were almost dancing.'

The final joint concert in the Marienkirche brought standing ovations and raised a large sum of money towards the 'Kidderminster Window' project.

The Valentines in Husum

In their own words:

'Not just a concert tour, but a wonderful holiday'

'A holiday to remember'

'It's thrilling to know that we helped raise money towards the Kidderminster window in the St Marienkirche'

'It was a magical moment when we sang in the Water Castle'

'We had great fun – we even enjoyed singing in the rain'

'Our Husum hosts treated their guests like kings'

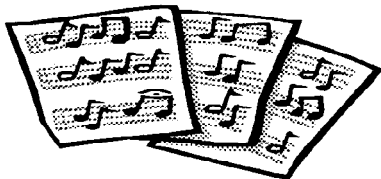
'Our first standing ovation was in Husum – a fantastic experience'

'We made new friends, and shared local traditions courtesy of our hosts and the Shanty Chor'

'It was lovely to meet old friends from our first trip to Husum – and we do consider them to be real friends'

'There was great warmth from all our audiences, at concerts large and small'

'It was an emotional moment when our hosts turned out with a farewell banner for our departure'



Kidderminster Male Choir in Husum

The choir and its supporters travelled by coach from Kidderminster to Harwich and then by car ferry to Cuxhaven, Germany. The journey continued by coach to Husum where accommodation was arranged for four days at the Theodor Storm Hotel.

KMC performed three concerts in four days and were joined in two of the concerts by the Valentines.

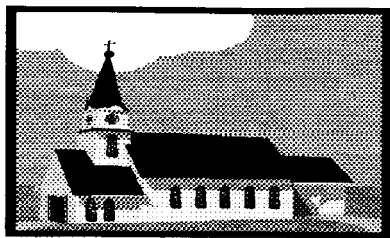
The first concert was held in the open air at Husum Harbour and was followed by a concert the next day in Bredstedt where KMC were joined by the local male choir.

The third and final concert was performed in the Husum town church in front of a packed and appreciative audience. The choir sang a full programme and included two songs in German, "Mala Moya" and "Nacht" which were greeted with extended rounds of applause. The encore included "Nessun Dorma" and "Da Do Ron Ron" which culminated with a two minute standing ovation.

Peter Burns, Chairman of Kidderminster Choir said "We are delighted and privileged to have represented Wyre Forest and Kidderminster so successfully in Germany. We would like to thank our hosts for their hospitality and their help in making our tour such a memorable and exciting experience."

Kidderminster Male Choir and the Valentines were supported on the tour by the presence of Charles Talbot, Secretary of Kidderminster Twinning Association and his wife, Jean. Paul Brown

A Happy Husum Time



At the end of August we welcomed a party of 14 representatives from Husum churches for a long weekend – a return visit following the May 2002 trip from Kidderminster. Many of those who went to Husum were able to take part in various aspects of the weekend, together with others who were new to the twinning experience; hosts for the visitors came from Trinity, St. Mary's, Baxter, Bewdley Methodist and Bewdley Roman Catholic, and others took part in the various trips and activities throughout the weekend.

The group included Manfred Kamper, retired Propst (Dean) of the Husum-Bredstedt area, Friedrich Mörs, the Pastor of St. Mary's Church, Husum, Hans-Peter Johanssen, the police chief of Husum, Renata and Heinrich Lingkugel (a Roman Catholic couple who are members of the Theodor Storms Chor, and who know Kidderminster well), an English lady married to a German pastor, the American wife of another policeman, and of course Georg Wessler, who was making his third visit to Kidderminster this year!

The group flew in to Birmingham on Thursday, and arrived in Kidderminster in time for a welcome lunch at St. Mary's Chantry – a good time for "breaking the ice", when we found out a bit more about those who had not visited us before. Then it was time for them to go off with their hosts and spend the rest of the day together.

Friday saw us travelling to Worcester for a visit to the Cathedral which included an informal service of friendship and thanksgiving in the Crypt, a guided tour of the Cathedral, and a chance to see the wonderful manuscripts (some of them dating from as early as the 10th and 11th centuries) in the Cathedral Library – a rare privilege. We had lunch in the cloisters, and there was time for some shopping before returning home. In the evening we all relaxed at a skittles evening in Hartlebury, where we were joined by some members of the Kidderminster Male Choir, who had returned from Husum just a week before.

Saturday was a day for visiting churches and gardens – and what a perfect day! In the morning we saw the church and garden at Morville, near Bridgnorth, lunching there before coming back to Arley. We happened upon a wedding at the church, so the visitors were able to take photographs before being invited to meet the bell-ringers in the tower – a first for most of them (and for most of us who accompanied them!). Mr. Nigel Goodman then gave us a guided tour of Arley's recently-opened Arboretum – one of the

top half-dozen in the country and well worth a visit, before hosting us for a sumptuous cream tea at Arley House – our grateful thanks to members of Arley Church for that.

Sunday brought not one but two ecumenical services: in the morning at St. Mary's, when the preacher was Friedrich Mörs – in English. Lunch took the form of a splendid garden party at the home of George and Ann Lloyd – another time of relaxation and laughter and good food. Then for some it was further visits to old and new friends, before evening service at Trinity, led by John Palmer, the minister. Again members of the group took part. We ended the day back at the Chantry, with a farewell get-together (and more food!).

On our last day, Monday, the group had a guided tour of the Town Hall, and the Mayor of Kidderminster welcomed us to the Mayor's Parlour where we were able to see some of the many mementos that have been gathered over the years of official visits to Husum. Those who wanted to then did some final shopping, and we had lunch in the Town Hall before the coach left for the airport.

That is a bare outline of a very busy weekend; what it does not include are descriptions of the many friendships that were formed, of the many conversations ranging from family news to serious thought about our churches, of the many discussions about the future of our church twinning, of the many plans for further contacts and so on. This was indeed a happy time for all who took part, and the numbers of people who want to do more of this twinning are growing all the time.

Apart from informal contacts and visits, we plan to take another group to Husum in May next year. The grateful thanks of the organising group go to all those who made the weekend possible, and so memorable and meaningful, and to all who gave generously of food, transport, time and money.

Ray Harrowing

Other Twinning News

- **Visit by Husum Verein** – At the end of June members led by their Chairman Georg Wessler were hosted by members of the Association. As usual, a lot was packed into a short time! Visits to schools and the College, to the Ludlow Festival (picnic first in thunder and lightning), to Bodenham Arboretum and a memorable Garden Party hosted by Rod and Sandra Summers gave plenty of opportunity for informally building up new working contacts and friendships.
- **'From Husum Castle to the King Charles Room'** – the talk by Dr Ulf von Hielmcrone arranged jointly with Kidderminster Civic Society in July was well supported. He traced the royal link between Husum and Kidderminster created by the Duchess Augusta of Schleswig Holstein Gottorp who lived at Husum Castle and was the aunt of King Charles the First.

Scouts go to Husum

For the first time a party of 25 Kidderminster scouts, cubs and beavers and adult leaders from KD 8 (St John's Scouts) visited the Danish scout community in and around Husum. A specially commissioned carpet woven by Carpets of Kidderminster incorporating the town crests of Kidderminster and Husum was presented to the hosts. Stuart Hanslow, one of the leaders, kept a detailed diary, brief extracts from which follow.

'By 8.00 we are in Stansted Airport, queuing to have our baggage weighed. The carpet rolls cause a bit of a stir.'

'A quick tour of the site leaves us amazed at the size of the facility here, the river that the scouts make a bee line for to have a well deserved swim. The games field is also soon taken over by a football game, the first of many, where our Scouts and Cubs take on the German and Danish scouts, and get soundly trounced. A well behaved competition is developing.'

'I have made arrangements with BBC Hereford and Worcester Radio to call me during breakfast today to talk to Peter Bang (the Danish Leader) about the carpet, so we are very careful not to give the game away. We present the carpet to Peter at 9.15, he is delighted. The radio station calls at 9.35, we are put on hold for a long time whilst they build up to our story. All of a sudden it is my time to speak, I tell them how the flight has gone and pass the phone to Peter. We hope the folks at home have heard the phone call, and that some one will have taped it for us to hear when we return.'



'We get dropped off next to the Kidderminster Bridge! A short walk into the town centre takes us through the town market, and soon we are there, in the town square that we have all seen on the video. And Tine! the statue. We split into small groups and have a good look around the market, some of the cubs are already buying gifts for home.'

'We meet up again and go to the town hall to meet the Lady Mayor. She welcomes us and we have a good chat about our trip and what we hope to do whilst in their country. The local press are there, and we are assured that we will be in the paper before we leave. We have a guided tour of the town hall, finishing in a viewing area high up from where we can see way into the outer harbour. From the town hall we go to the local Shipping Museum, where many artefacts of the towns history with the sea are kept. I am approached by some locals who, having recognised the Kidderminster logo on our uniforms, want to tell me all about their trip to our town many years gone by. I would have a similar conversation many time during our stay, the Husum folk take a great interest in us and our links to themselves.'

'We finish our tour of the museum and strike off towards the park for lunch. A local bakery has produced a small feast for us in fresh rolls again, meat or fish rolls we were told, and we have our fill.'

'A swift change into our "civvy uniforms" blue shirts with the 8th Kidderminster crest on, and we have another short walk back into the town. More shopping for the little ones followed by the best ice cream I have had in years'

'After tea we meet with the Danish Scouts and some of their leaders for a campfire. We sing Danish songs and play their games. The shark song takes our fancy and we vow to get the words to bring home.'

'The Cubs and Beaver are paired up with Danish cubs and go hunting for little things to collect in empty film cans. They manage to communicate well enough even though none of ours speak Danish, and only one of theirs speaks English.'

'We are to have a Backwoods style lunch, which we prepare under Ellen's guidance. Chinese take away style trays, greased, then filled with pre cooked frankfurter, raw potato, carrot and onion, salt, paprika and pepper to provide some seasoning, and a squirt of Tomato Ketchup for the sauce, topped off with some water to steam the food. The foil trays are then sealed with more foil, triple wrapped to help keep the steam in. The Big scouts have been busy during the morning making a Big Fire, it needs to be big, we have over thirty lunches to cook on it. Twenty minutes in the embers and dinner is done, a feast for all.'

'We have planned to make a bridge or similar structure near the river, and need a large stock of timber. We deliver the poles and the construction commences, two 6m A frames to start with, the sun is taking its toll on the younger ones and they start to flag a bit. We manufacture the platform out of 6.5m poles lashed to short cross beams. Rather than a bridge we convert it into a diving board, thereby making something that all the other scouts might want to use. Sure enough as soon as we finish, we are surrounded by eager youngsters wanting to leap into the river off our board.'

'We are called to the pioneering site, to investigate the state of the diving board. Unfortunately it has been so popular that some of the river bank has fallen away, making it dangerous, so we have to take it down.'

'The afternoon is taken on the sports field, learning Danish Rounders, similar rules to ours, but they run the wrong way. A couple of games of this, and we teach them our version. No one really wins or loses.'

'Friedrichstadt itself is another wonderful town, its architecture influenced by Dutch builders, a dramatic change from the Danish and German styles we have seen so far. The Town square also holds another surprise, a travelling reptile show, complete with a twenty foot Python! All the lads survive the meeting...'

'Meeting place for our group is the town hall entrance, guess who is there to say hello, the

Mayor! We follow her to the side of the floating fish restaurant, where a singing group signal the opening of the Harbour festival. A short speech in German, is followed by the traditional ringing of the bell. We meet Charles Talbot, who we are to have our evening meal with at Hadstett Scout Headquarters later. We say our goodbyes to the Mayor and her friends, and make our way back to the bus, to be followed by one of the town's marching bands, a coincidence, but it really makes us feel special.'

At Hadstett, we meet the Danish leaders again and have a barbeque meal with them. Once we have eaten, we make our presentation of the third carpet to their scout leader. They are delighted, and quickly pick out a space on a wall where they intend to hang the item.

Badges are exchanged between our leaders and theirs, we receive south Slesvig regional badges, which we are going to ask to be able to wear on UK uniforms for at least the coming six months, in recognition of the twinning event. Our gifts also include a St. George and St. Andrew flag.'

We have had only two meetings of the scout section since our return, but on both nights five of the six scouts that went to Husum have lead activities to show the remainder of the troop how much fun we had. The first night we played Danish Rounders until it was too dark to see the ball. The onlookers on the field stopped playing their football to try to work out what we were up to. We had quite a crowd by the time we went back in to the hut.

Next week we are trying out Peter and Ellen's version of Backwoods Cooking, making an evening of it, and in the process, combining four of my Troop's favourite activities in one evening. Chopping wood, burning it, cooking food, and EATING. All we need for a full house would be to add an overnight camp in tents, but school the next day makes that a bit impractical.

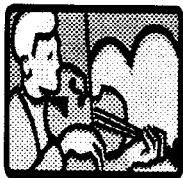
Stuart Hanslow

'It seems like weeks have past since we arrived, not just ten days. When we arrived we did not know what to expect, now as we leave I feel that we still have lots we could do here. Such kindness and assistance has been shown to us during our stay, that I feel that we have been made to feel part of the local group by everyone concerned.'

Tentative discussions have been made on the return trip, as to making a further venture to Tydal, maybe to coincide with their next Jamborette, in 2006. By this time the Scouts that visited this time will have in the main joined explorer sections, the younger cubs will be amongst the elder scout section, and Drew will have finished Beavers, completed his Cub Section and joined as a young Scout.'

'I wonder how many we will meet again, and will they remember us, I will remember them.'

Wyre Forest Symphony Orchestra



Music is the universal language and once again the Wyre Forest Symphony Orchestra joins hands in friendship with Collegium Musicum Nordfriesland - the Husum orchestra. WFSO will be combining forces with CMN in a joint concert at the Castle for one of the last main events of the town's 400th anniversary celebrations, on Friday October 31st 2003. The programme will be Wagner's Rienzi Overture, Dvorak's Bohemian Suite, and the Brahms Double Concerto. Our new conductor, Martin Leigh, will not be travelling with us so the concert will be rehearsed and

conducted by Thomas Wiese, who has made a remarkable recovery from a serious illness, and is now back at the helm.

Twenty of us will be travelling from Kidderminster and Bromsgrove, of whom twelve are players, and we shall be going with Ryanair from Stansted to Lubeck; happily our German hosts have very kindly offered to collect us by car from the airport, which will help keep costs down. We will be staying on a home-stay basis, and some of us will be renewing old friendships made possible through our mutual love of music, not to mention the golf! We are all looking forward to this special visit, and to adding a few more words of German to our vocabulary, and a few more happy hours of music-making to our repertoire. If you would like to hear the orchestra in full voice, our next concert will be at Kidderminster Town Hall on Saturday 6th December.

Linda Fowler

This year has been one of the most active in the long history of the Kidderminster / Husum connection. Space in this edition does not permit reports on the visit by the West Mercia Police Band in September, the Civic visit by the Burgermeister, Burgervorsteher and seven senior Husum councillors in October, the renewal of the school connection between Baxter College and Realschule Nord and much more. We will cover them in our next - any reports, correspondence, comments or other copy to Jean Talbot [please!](mailto:charles@talbotkidd.demon.co.uk) [charles@talbotkidd.demon.co.uk]

On Sunday 2nd November the Chairman of the Twinning Association, Dr Rod Summers will formally present the 'Kidderminster Window' to the Marienkirche, as a contribution to the major restoration work of the church. If any member or group would like to make a donation towards the cost of this, please do so by sending a cheque payable to 'Kidderminster/Husum Twinning Association' to Charles Talbot, Barratts Court, Rectory Lane, Rock, Kidderminster DY14 9RR.