

Droitwich Spa Twinning Association
DROITWICH SPA GERMAN TWINNING GROUP



BAD EMS

NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2016



DROITWICH SPA



A reminder of Bedspring 2015, when we went on a three rivers cruise. Photo by Frank Holliday.

FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

The highlight of our year is almost upon us: BedSpring 2016

It will be great to have our friends from Bad Ems over to stay with us once again.

There will a briefing meeting on Thursday May 19th at 7pm which should only take about half an hour of your time and will hopefully give a complete round up of the details of the weekend and answer any questions you have.

It is always a challenge to build on the successes of years past but your committee has, as usual been busy working hard to that end.

This year we will welcome our guests to Droitwich spa at the Cricket club on the Thursday at 4pm.

Friday will be free to do as much or as little as you and your guests wish until, that is in the evening when we will congregate at the Norbury theatre for an evening of entertainment. Leave plenty of time to get to your seats for a prompt start at 7:30.

The entertainment will be musical, comical and impressive and be provided by The Rock Choir, The Worcester Ukulele Band, Grafton Consort and our very own Twinners In-House Unterhaltung!!

On Saturday we will venture to experience the Birmingham canals with a trip on a narrow boat.

Sunday will be free to relax and build up an appetite for the Sunday evening Farewell Meal with even more entertainment on offer. The venue for this is The Worcester Masonic Hall on Rainbow Hill.

On Monday morning at 8:30 we will say our fond farewells at the Chateau Impney and we will wonder where the time has gone!!

I hope you all have an enjoyable BedSpring weekend.

Best Wishes for the rest of Spring and the following summer.

Peter Gilfeather

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday May 19th – Bedspring 2016 Briefing Meeting
Thursday May 26th to Monday 30th May – Bedspring 2016
Sunday July 3rd – Garden Party at Salwarpe Village Hall



A couple of pictures taken at the Antiques Evening.



ANTIQUES EVENING.

On Saturday evening the 13th February 2016 we enjoyed yet another twinning social event.

The evening started with an interesting talk by the Antiques expert -David Walters, who was accompanied by his wife. David told us that much of the Victorian gold and silver items have in recent years been melted down, purely for the value of the metal content. This means that any good small items are now worth collecting as they are bound to appreciate in value. Apparently all the gold in the world only amounts to the size of a semi-detached house!

We were told that antique furniture and porcelain items no longer fit in with the décor of the modern home and have therefore gone down in value.

We were asked to take part in an 'Antiques Quiz'. David had brought along a selection of items ranging in value from £20 to £2,000 and we were asked to place a value on each. Well at home we have been watching 'Bargain Hunt' on television for many years now – so consider ourselves world experts. We even take our lunch at 12.15pm to watch 'Timmy Time' as we like to call it. OH DEAR Tim has let us down!! We were wrong on every item!

However, we do have some very well informed couples in the twinning group. The couple with the most correct answers were Lynda and John Hayward followed closely by Jenny and Peter Leonard. Well done to all of you.

Whilst David Walters went to each table to discuss and value the items we had brought along, we all enjoyed an excellent Ploughman's supper followed by delicious cakes. Many thanks to our Committee for organising such a lovely spread. They make it look so easy when platters of cheese, baskets of crusty bread and much more, appear on our tables, but this all takes time and effort. So thank you again to Adrienne and her team.

It was very interesting to hear David Walters comments on some of the items we had brought along. Some surprises and some disappointments!!

My Clarice Cliff (look alike) vase – is worth just £30. Oh well- it's hideous anyway. David has a William 1st (Will the Conqueror) Silver groat, which he has treasured for many years believing it could be worth about £800. It's a fake!! - worth just £1. However gold sovereigns are apparently worth £200 each. So a nice surprise for some people.

The evening concluded with a raffle and all of the ladies were given a red rose as the following day was Valentine's Day. A very lovely touch.

A big thank you to everyone who helped to organise such and enjoyable evening.

Dee Jepson.

GUESTS FROM SOLIHULL TWINNING

At the antiques evening, we were joined by a number of members from the Solihull Twinning group.

Solihull has enjoyed town twinning connections for more than thirty years with Main Taunus Kreis, a wine producing area near Frankfurt. This remained their sole twinning link until Cholet proved to be a good match for Solihull. Cholet is situated in the Loire Valley, famous for its wonderful chateaux and vineyards.

MEMBERSHIP

Thank you to everyone who renewed their membership.

I attach the membership card for 2016

Password is for access to members section on the website.

BEDSPRING

Details of the twinning weekend order forms for tickets and menu forms for Sunday night will be sent out soon.

Please note return date as we have to have final numbers for all our reservations.

We hope that all our members whether hosting or not will join in all the events.

Any queries please contact me.

Joyce Holliday
01905 775474 joyce.holliday@btinternet.com

NEXT NEWSLETTER.

Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this newsletter. If you have any twinning articles or photographs for the next newsletter please send them to: **droit_twin_pub@btinternet.com**

Any items sent by email for the newsletter will be acknowledged by email. Hand written articles and printed photographs also welcome; contact Penny or Will on 01905 381757. Items must reach us by **Thursday 30th June** for inclusion in the next newsletter, due out in the summer.

Our web site - **www.droitwich-twinning.freesevers.co.uk**

TWINNING BY TRAIN.

For Bedspring 2013, Penny and I decided to travel to Bad Ems by coach and train, which worked out well, except that we kept seeing the Beasleys! (Judith wrote an article about their trip in the Winter 2013 newsletter).



For Bedspring 2015, we decided to go all the way by train, especially as we had never been on Eurostar. So many hours of research on the Internet, and we had a plan.

In theory, it is possible to go the whole way by train in a day. The times are as follows -

Droitwich Spa	07.34	
Birmingham New Street arr.	08.09	
Birmingham New Street dep.	08.30	
London Euston	09.54	500 metre walk to St Pancras – 10 mins.
St Pancras international	10.57	
Brussels Midi arr.	14.05	
Brussels Midi dep.	14.25	
Cologne Hbf arr.	16.15	
Cologne Hbf dep.	17.53	
Koblenz Hbf arr.	18.46	
Koblenz Hbf dep.	19.00	
Bad Ems	19.22	

Looking at the times, it will be seen that there are some tight connections, and if one is missed, the whole trip would be chaos, with no seat reservations on the later trains. So we decided that we would only go as far as Cologne on the outward trip, have two nights there, and conclude the journey on the Friday. Coming back, we had four nights in Cologne. This meant that we would not be worrying all day about connections.

I always use Ffestiniog Travel for continental rail tickets, and as usual they were very good.

So on the Wednesday morning, we walked round the corner and got the 356 bus from Crowle to Worcester Shrub Hill station, then the 08:38 train to Paddington, having a cup of tea on the way. Arriving at Paddington on time at 11:00 we stopped for a Cornish Pasty and a cup of tea. Then it was a 205 bus from outside the station to St Pancras. As we had plenty of time, I stayed with our cases while Penny explored the station, and bought a couple of extra presents for our German hosts, and had a cup of tea.

Our Eurostar tickets had a barcode on them, which opened the barrier to let us into the departure area. Then it was an airport style security check, and we sat in a lounge until our train was ready. The train left on time at 14:04, but entered a tunnel after only a few hundred yards, and didn't leave it until we were outside London, so we couldn't see much of London. Once in the Channel Tunnel, Penny went off for a cup of tea (can you spot a pattern emerging?).

We arrived a couple of minutes early at Brussels Midi at 17:03, so could have caught the next train to Cologne. However, we were booked on the following train, which was 2 hours later, so again I looked after the cases, and Penny explored and had the worst cup of tea ever! We then had a hamburger in a Quick Restaurant.

Our train was due to leave at 19:28, but was delayed in France (it was coming from Paris) and was 45 minutes late. We arrived in Cologne at 22:00, and caught a tram the four stops to our hotel at Barbarossaplatz. I had emailed the hotel a week before our travel date to let them know that we would be arriving after 22:00 so that they would keep our room.

On the Friday morning, we caught local trains from Cologne to Koblenz, then from Koblenz to Nassau, and our host picked us up at the station.

Our return journeys all ran to time with no problems.

So, would we do it again? I think the answer must be Yes, but then we both enjoy travelling by train. Breaking the journey in Cologne made it far more relaxing. Of course, we had to handle our luggage at all times.

And the cost? Well, it worked out at about £162 each.

Penny and Will Owens.

Ottmar Canz. 10th May 1947 to 10th December 2015.



The sad news of the sudden death, at age 68, of Ottmar Canz has reached us from Bad Ems.

Ottmar had been involved in local politics for many years. He was a member of the local council for 27 years; for 15 of these, he was the deputy, and for 10 years was the mayor, until 2009. For almost 20 years, he was the Chairman of the Bad Ems CDU. He was widely respected throughout the community, and was known to believe that political promises should be kept. During his time, projects such as the Bypass, the transformation of the Roman Road, the re-organisation of the area around the railway station, and options for the new building of the thermal baths were successfully completed.

He was always a champion of local causes. He was always ready to listen to the concerns of the local people, and a simple walk through the town could take hours as he would speak with anyone about local matters.

Ottmar Canz was one of the two initiators of the establishment of the Community Foundation of Bad Ems and was until his untimely death, its founding CEO. Just a few days before his death, Ottmar was at an event marking the 5th anniversary of the Foundation.

These words do not, however, convey the tremendous personal warmth of the man, evident whenever you were in his company in Bad Ems, people were always coming up to him to ask him something or pay their respects to a man they obviously admired. His greeting to us was always "Alles Claar?" Everything O.K?

Perhaps more than other twinningers Christine and John Harwood were able to spend much more time in Ottmars company as he was a lifelong best friend of Wolfgang and Elke Schmitt, and during twinning visits spent many happy hours in his company, round the town, wine tasting and visiting local places that otherwise would not have known about. We viewed him and will remember him, as Mr. Bad Ems.

The funeral took place at St Martins Church, Bad Ems, on the 17th December 2015. Our condolences go to his wife Regine, his son Stephan and his wife, Ariane, and his grandchildren Emilian and Titian.

Will Owens / John Harwood.