

## Minutes of meeting-Bridgwater-Marsa twinning Association

West India House 14-5-2013

**Present-Mike Grabner, Joseph Abela, Pat and Steve Morgan, Barbara and Gordon Taylor, Helmi Holder-Wolff.**

**Apologies-Di Grabner, James Morgan and Lorna Walker (2 scout leaders giving presentation at District AGM)**It was noted that **Tricia Brown** was still on holiday.

**Minutes of previous meeting-** all had received and were correct.

**Chairman's report-MG** had personally handed a letter to Mr Pete Bastin as chairman of the Bridgwater Carnival Committee re Dominic Spencer idea of taking a carnival cart to the Maltese carnival. He was awaiting a reply (the chairperson was just about to be changed)

The Mayors charity event was a very enjoyable evening which raised over £2,000 for Graham and Kay's, charity which was St Margaret's hospice.**BT** won a raffle prize. We did not see anyone from the other twinning associations.

We have been invited to the Mayors Parlour to present the gifts we have been given from Marsa on this trip and previously when **S** and **PM** went to the Regatta in September. We discussed what to wear and it was decided that it was too cold to wear our polo shirts so it was decided we will wear anything with Maltese/Marsa connections.

**Secretary report/correspondence-MG** had answered the town clerk re attending the Mayor Making on May 17<sup>th</sup> at St Marys Church at 7.20 hrs which **MG** and **PM** will attend.

Email from Raymond Montebello (secretary of Marsa Cultural and Historical Society) who will be happy to be in contact with Bridgwater Civic society and will like to see us next time we visit and thanked us for the gift of the Bridgwater Plate.

**JA** had been sent a copy of the Marsa Cultural Society newsletter and he read us the piece about our visit.

**PM** had a copy of the email sent to Dennis Grech the Band president in Marsa by Chris Hocking ( Bridgwater Carnival ) re possibility of taking part in our Carnival.

**PM** has sent a letter to Marsa Mayor and Council thanking them for arranging so many interesting events for our members and the Scouts on our recent visit. **MG** asked if **PM** could send our letter head with changed footer to him.

**PM** will ask our new mayor Dave Loveridge if he will be happy to take on our Presidency for his year in office.

**Presentation evening-** Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May- a general discussion was held. It was decided that we will explain what we did and who we met and contacts made. We would then present the gifts with explanations 1<sup>st</sup> the beautiful piece of **Mdina Glass** which was give to **SM** from the Regatta committee which had all the colours of the towns taking part around it with a commemorative description in the middle. 2<sup>nd</sup> would be the Marsa **Honour Award** presented to **JA** by the

government minister at the opening of the Art Exhibition we attended- an account would be given of the evening and the prestige that it represents. The 3<sup>rd</sup> gift was presented to **MG** by Raymond Montebello a piece of his own artwork of Holy Trinity Church which was celebrating its centenary just after we left Malta. **MG** will also explain the gifts we gave to the Council, Historical Society, The Prime Minister Dr Joseph Muscat (our Honorary Vice President) via a Marsa MP, Polo shirts were given to Paul Demetri who gave us a wonderful tour of the churches, The president of the Marsa Labour Club and the Bridgwater Teaspoon to Claudette Spencer who had (and always does) offers hospitality and entertains us wonderfully every time we visit.

We wondered if our council could offer us more support- as the mayor had said we get our annual core grant and we can call on them for some support but it is up to us to continue. **MG** pointed out that we are not formally twinned and wonder if the council would be interested in formalising it at EU level. It was discussed if we want to make any application to the EU we will need the Town Council to support us as we could do some work but do not have the manpower or all the knowledge to enable it. **BT** says she has some connections with Stogursy and Nether Stowey Villages who have strong links and will try and find out if they have accessed EU money. **MG** wondered if the council could contact MP and MEP who could support us. There is a large list of towns who are formally twinned .How is it done? We know there is much paperwork to complete which has to go to Brussels and we believe someone has to go when given a date and time to give an account of the town and then wait to hear if successful. Who would co-ordinate this? **SM** suggested we find out from others who they managed to do it. Where would money come from for travel, expenses etc?

**MG** suggested he would ask when we meet the mayor what the council expects from us and if they would like to go further with the EU.

It was pointed out by **BT** that Somerset Art weeks are in September and wondered if Marsa Art could be shown somewhere then.

**Article for the Bridgwater Mercury- JA** feels that we should have as much publicity as we can get following our very successful visit including 1st Bridgwater Wembdon Scouts who were a credit to Bridgwater. **JA** wondered about a supplement but it was explained in England it would cost a huge amount of money and we do not have funds for that. **PM** will email the editor to see what would be the acceptable format. She will then write the text and take a disc into the papers office as it was suggested that 3 photos should be included including the presentation of the honour award, a picture of the Scouts with the Government minister and one of the presentation of the gifts to our Mayor and council. It is very positive news for the town but **PM** says she has sent articles in before and they have been drastically cut and pictures not published which is a great disappointment. **HHW** had just had a piece and photo published and had spoken to a journalist.

**Treasures report-SM** explained we were still in credit of £864.16p. but explained we only have 2 signatures for the cheques and as **TB** is away for a long holiday despite her signing some cheques there was still one needed. It was suggested that normally there are 3 signatories so **SM** will get the paperwork from the bank. **BT** proposed that **MG** became the third person which was 2<sup>nd</sup> by **JA**. So the cheques will be signed by the treasurer and one other.

Next meeting to be arranged