

BRIDGWATER-MARSA TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Minutes of meeting Thursday 4th Sept 2014.

Held at the Mayors Parlour

Present- Steve and Stella Austen (Mayor and Mayoress) Barbara and Gordon Taylor, Tricia Brown, Steve and Pat Morgan, Joseph Abela, Di and Mike Grabner, Helmi Holder- Wolff.

Apologies- James Morgan

The Meeting Started with **MG** welcoming Rachael Wise and her Mum Fay. Rachael has been selected after rigorous procedures to represent Somerset at the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in Japan. She was one of the group from the 1st Bridgwater who went to Malta in April 2013 and came to a meeting after with Grace and gave us a presentation about their visit and the time they spent with Marsa scouts. **MG** and **PM** presented her with a cheque for £50 towards the total of £3.250 she has to raise to enable her to go. **SM** was also involved but his camera "played up" so taken on **PM's** who will send to the Mercury. Rachael thanked us all and we took posters of a Craft and Table Top Sale being held at Wembdon Parish Centre on 20th September 10am-12MD to help promote the event and help raise more funds.

Minutes of last were correct meeting- all had received and were correct.

Chairman's report- MG expressed his concerns about us staying as a standalone association when the other twinning associations were involved with Bridgwater International which has at its head Councillor Brian Smedley who seems to have many contacts and expertise which could be of benefit to us. **MG** and **PM** have attended meetings of the Bridgwater Twinning Forum. The other groups appear to have the same problems as us- they are all very committed and have their own regular meetings. There was a long discussion with various questions asked-**BT** asked if there would be a financial benefit to us and also what it may cost us. **Steve A** feels we need to ask Brian what he could offer us as we are established and if we did decide to join what can it offer our group-also any cost implications. **HHW** feels we need to know how we would benefit. It was discussed that perhaps we twin with the island of Malta as somewhere in the world is but not sure where. It was felt it was not a good idea as we are closely linked with Marsa. **MG** asked **JA** if Marsa was council orientated which he said it was. It was felt that we need more people of Marsa to be aware of the twinning and maybe become involved. **SM** pointed out that when we go we try and speak to people and promote ourselves. **JA** pointed out we have links with the Historical and Cultural Society and Scouts and hope that maybe the school will be soon. We have problems expanding our numbers here.

It was felt by all that we (**MG** and **PM**) need to meet and talk at length and in depth with Brian Smedley to see what further opportunities would be available. Other associations have had student/ job opportunities which we may be able to access also. The meeting all voted yes to contact **BS**.

Vice Chair report- JA had been to Malta and has had visits from his family to Bridgwater and close friends Kurt Briffa who is chief of personal security to the President of Malta. His son is a very gifted footballer and belongs to the Maltese Football Academy but as it was the closed season here was unable to meet any local players. **JA** had also met up with Marsa's Mayor who had presented him

with the commemorative plaque Francis was very pleased we had presented it to our Mayor to be placed in the Parlour.

Secretary Report-PM asked if anyone was able to go to the Mayors Civic service on 21st September at the Salvation Army as she and **SM** will be away but unfortunately all had previous commitments so we gave our personal apologies to Steve and Stella- **PM** will contact Alan Hurford to let him know.

She asked if all had received all the information and minutes from the Town Twinning Forum and all had received them. She then gave a list of town events that had been sent to her by **AH** Town Clerk.

1. Bridgwater Memory Walk to raise money for the Alzheimers Society on Saturday 6th September. **TB** pointed out there was another on Sunday at Brean /Burnham.
2. Blake Museum is holding a 1st World War Centenary Exhibition until Saturday 13th September. **HHW** said it was extremely good.
3. The Carnival Concerts start on Monday 29th September for 2 weeks. Tickets from the Carnival centre.
4. St Mary's Church is holding their Autumn Fair on Saturday 11th October 10-13.00 (PM's birthday treat!)
5. There will be Wrestling at the Town Hall on Saturday 18th October in the evening and tickets are £10.

On the subject of World War's **B** and **GT** had been on a cruise called "Lest we forget "They went to battlefields, the Menin Gate where there was a band from the Isle of Wight who played at the evening ceremony with many other people present which happens every evening. They also visited a concentration camp in Belgium which was a very grim reminder of those times. **HHW** is going to be on Radio Somerset tomorrow recounting her stories of the 2nd World War in Holland as a child. **PM** had already heard some trailers of the programme.

Treasures Report-SM reported we have £870.62p in bank after the £50 given to Rachael. He had given **AH** a receipt for the core grant and after the AGM will give him our audited accounts.

Membership Secretary Report- TB will try and get into St Mary's school to see teacher Danny Houghton now the new term has started to find out if we can help him. **TB** had printed some holiday offers to Malta which she had emailed to **PM** which people took.

Twinning Forum- BS has booked the Art Centre for 7 Th March where the plan is for all the Associations to promote themselves these ideas were suggested

Food and Drink JA explained much could be bought through Amazon.

Tourism- PM will contact the Malta tourist office in London where they have been very helpful in the past. **JA** feels the High Commissioner in London is very keen on promoting Malta

Sport

Education

History and Culture – will need to contact Marsa

Art- again to contact Marsa.

PM to do Letter to Maltese High Commissioner in London to introduce ourselves.

MG wonders if as here there are custody visitors to prisons- to explore.

Will need to involve very closely Marsa council to see how they can help.

Any ideas to **PM** please.

Steve and Stella would like to have an area where they can really promote Bridgwater as we are rich in many ways and they have found out a huge amount already in their time of office.

Any Other Business- As web master **James** asked if there was anything that needed adding or taking away. **JA** felt the picture of him with the High Commissioner could be removed as there is now a new person in post.

It was suggested we contact the British Legion to arrange a poppy cross for Remembrance Sunday.**PM** to do

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 5th November 7.30hrs

The Mayors Parlour.