

BRIDGWATER-MARSA TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Minutes of meeting Wednesday 6th January 2016

Present-Alex Glassford (Deputy Mayor) Mike Grabner, Barbara and Gordon Taylor, Steve and Pat Morgan, Joseph Abela.

Apologies-Tricia Brown, Chris Hewett, Di Grabner, Wes Hincks, James Morgan.

Chairman's Report- MG Welcomed all and thanked AG and Bridgwater Council for welcoming us to the Mayors Parlour, there is not much to report over the Christmas period – he and DI had received a Christmas card from the Mayor Francis Debono and all the family which unfortunately was delivered the first post after Christmas. The next Forum meeting will be held on Tuesday 11th January which he will attend with **PM** and **SM**.

Vice Chairman's Report-JA reminded us that on 25TH April will be the 10th Anniversary of the signing of the Twinning Agreement here in Bridgwater. He visited Malta before Christmas and had planned to try and visit many people about the twinning but his younger brother died very suddenly so stayed longer with the family so was unable to do as much as he had hoped for. Everyone expressed their condolences when he explained the circumstances.**PM** and **SM** had met JA's niece and did not realise it was her Dad. Prior to this **JA** had met the new Parliamentary Secretary for Local Councils and twinning Dr Stefan Buontempo. **JA** knew his parents from years ago and remembered him as a child! Dr Buontempo wishes to cultivate bonds between countries and was not aware of Marsa's twinning with us but is hoping to visit England in January **JA** had invited him to our area.

JA has grown a Maltese native plant here in Bridgwater called Widnet IL Bahar (Loosely translated means Sea Ears) And the Latin Name Palaeocyanus Crassifoliu. It is the national plant but needs a greenhouse to flourish. Mr Roy Cheek (a local world renowned Horticulturist) has advised **JA** who wondered if there was a local Botanic Garden that would accept it, **PM** suggested that the Walled Gardens of Cannington (Now belongs to Bridgwater College) It was suggested that as Mr Cheek used to work there and has contacts that he may be able to give **JA** a name. **JA** sees him at church so will ask him. He felt it may be able to be presented as part of our 10th Anniversary **MG** suggested that perhaps if a party comes from Marsa for the Twinning Conference that it could be done then with a commemorative plaque. Perhaps even Dr Buontempo could be invited and then a full council function may be able to be arranged with past Mayors and those involved in the Twinning and our MP.

Secretary Report- PM reported that as usual we laid a Poppy Cross at the War Memorial in Kings Square on Remembrance Sunday with several members present. We have taken part in the annual Christmas Festival at the Methodist Church where the church was filled on each side with Trees of all shapes and sizes representing many organisations in the town. **SM** and **PM** put it up and it stayed there until 5th January when they took it down and is now safely stored in their attic. We had received Christmas cards from the Prime Minister of Malta Dr Joseph Muscat, and many other friends in Malta and like **MG** their card came at the same time from the Debono family. A few days after the card from the PM one came for the members of the Association. The cards were shown to all. That really was all they had heard from Malta.**PM** will contact Dominic Spencer (councillor with special interest in the twinning) Francis Debono (Mayor of Marsa) and Marsa Council to remind them about the Twinning Conference on Saturday 23rd April. We have the next Forum meeting on Tuesday 11th but as yet no Agenda.

PM showed the invite to the Mayors Civic Service on Sunday 21st February at Hamp Church at 3 pm there were several people interested but **PM** would clarify with Alan Hurford how many people were included but it appeared to be 2 only. She also asked if we would like to invite Rachel Wise a Scout who the Association gave a donation to her fund raising to enable her to attend the 23rd World Scout Jamboree 2015 in Japan. Everyone

agreed and **PM** will discuss with James (Wembdon Scout Leader) for contact details. It was thought the next meeting would be good.

PM has also made contact with the Chairman of the Bridgwater Civic Society Dave Chapple and the Vice Chair Hannah West and has offered to give them a talk about Marsa and the Historical Society there who wish to have links with the Civic Society; she will wait to hear from them.

Treasurers Report- SM explained the association has £901.45p in the bank. He has paid in £45 in annual subscriptions but is still waiting on some individual members and the Scouts. He still needs to pay the Site master fee for the website. He wondered if it may be possible to have a raffle on the day of the conference, we **will ask** Brian Smedley at the next Forum meeting.

Any Other Business- MG asked if we still would like to go out for a post Christmas meal as everyone had been so busy before Christmas. The unanimous answer was yes and it was agreed on the Green Olive on West Quay. A date was agreed for Saturday 6th February 7pm for 7.30hrs. **MG** will book a table but if people would like to go please to let him know by Wednesday 27th January. We will pay for our own meal but the association will provide some wine and soft drinks on the table.

Date, Time and Place of next Meeting.

?25th Febuary 7.30 hrs

Mayors Parlour.