

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Bridgwater-Marsa Twinning Association

Wednesday 4 th November 2015 at the Mayors Parlour.

Present- Alex Glassford (Deputy Mayor) Steve, Pat and James Morgan, Mike Grabner, Helmi Holder Wolff, Tricia Brown, Joseph Abela, Barbara and Gordon Taylor and Margaret Evans.

Apologies- Steve and Stella Austen, Di Grabner, Pat and Jennie Parker (who would like to visit Malta next year) Wes Hinkes. Ian Liddell-Grainger MP who was sitting in the House of Commons.

All were welcomes by **MG** who also thanked Bridgwater Town Council and our Deputy Mayor Alex for allowing us to use the Parlour this evening and in the past which has been a great help to us the Association.

Minutes of the last meeting- All had received and a copy was printed out in the pack for all to see. There were no issues arising.

Chairman's Report- **MG** commended all and thanked all for raising and maintaining our profile. We attended many Civic and other events including the Twinning Conference/ Forum held in March and the Skittle evening the night before. **MG** expressed pleasure that after nearly 10 years we are still here! Much has been done in this time with visits to Malta/Marsa and now the involvement with the Town Twinning Forum meetings that he, **PM** and **SM** has attended. **MG** thanked **SM** for keeping a very good eye on and managing our Finances, **TB** for her hard work trying to raise our numbers and linking with schools over the years, **JM** our Web Master, **JA** our Vice Chairman for raising awareness in Marsa, and **PM** our secretary for her tireless work in keeping up contacts in Malta, keeping everyone informed and she has achieved much here and in Malta. Also for all the relationships and friendships she has achieved. **MG** concluded by thanking us all by enabling him to fulfil his post.

Vice Chairman's Report- **JA** thanked **MG** for being at the helm and directing us very well. He will be visiting Malta next week and will promote our twinning at every possible moment. The Commonwealth Conference will be taking place and he intends to take the Somerset Flag and show it off. He has contacted Raymond Montebello secretary of the Marsa Historical Society and will meet up with them. He also expressed his aspirations to try and meet with members of the Council, Regatta and maybe even our Honorary Vice President the Prime Minister of Malta. It all depends on time and circumstances.

Secretary Report- **PM** had included the last minutes of the Town Twinning Forum in the pack she had prepared and read out the options for the music from various twinned towns. It was suggested that it would be a good idea to be able to give some local talent a chance to take part. After the Conference in March we realised perhaps we had missed taking details of people who had shown an interest which we could have pursued. The event may well take place in the Charter Hall which pleased all as it was expressed there would be more footfall passing. There will be the kitchen area with a serving area where a taste of each country could be sampled. We may or may not need to pay some money depending possibly on what music is decided on.

PM, SM, BT and **GT** had a good trip to Malta and now has a firm link with the Marsa Historical Society and Raymond the secretary has been sending information about Marsa which **PM** has printed out and is now in a folder (up to the Romans) available to read **BT** and **GT** have borrowed it.

Councillor Dominic Spencer has sent **PM** his pictures he used in the presentation in March so **PM** will contact Bridgwater's Civic Society to try and arrange to give a talk to them and hope to get them linked with each other.

PM sent emails to our MP Ian Liddell-Grainger and the Prime Minister of Malta to ask if they would still like to be our Honorary Vice Presidents but did not get a reply. She then sent physical letters, **SM** had hand delivered **ILD** to his office in Northgate but despite this no replies. She did have a letter of apology after she invited **ILG** to our AGM. **BT** said it sounded as if he was still interested.

We have been asked to take part in the Annual Remembrance Sunday from the Town Hall to parade to Kings Square for the service leaving the Town Hall at 10.40 hrs .**PM** had obtained the Poppy Cross from The British Legion but the Castle Club where they were based has been shut for some time. **JA** had been talking to Norman Allen the parade manager and everyone is worried as the building was left to the people of Bridgwater.**SM** asked **AG** if the council were aware as the deeds are now in London and apparently there have been several people who wanted to take over the running of the Club as it was a centre for many clubs and activities.**AG** said it is rather a complicated matter and the council were aware.

PM has an email inviting us to take part in the Methodist Church Christmas Tree Festival .Do we take part again? the overall decision was yes, she was asked if anymore decorations were needed but no, it is stored in **PM** and **SM** attic.

PM asked **JM** how many hits we have had on Website-he replied 103,815 since it was set up in 2006.

Treasurer's Report-SM thanked Venetia Acland who kindly audited our finances this year, he suggested we give her a present to thank her and **JM** suggested that wine would be acceptable.

Our total expenditure was £500.17 p and Total Income £1,361.62 with a finishing balance of £861.45

All the information was available for all to view.**SM** thanked **AG** for the Core Grant that Bridgwater Town Council gives us each year. **HH-W** thanked all for the lovely plant and card with beautiful words after her surgery and she will continue with treatment but is feeling reasonably well. **SM** suggested that it would be a good idea to do some fund raising this year. A Quiz Night was suggested , **BT** explained that Wembdon Ladies usually hold one but have found that numbers have fallen off but Prize Bingo was very well attended, **JM** also said that when the Scouts have Bingo it is well attended .Both do it for charity. Barbara could obtain the equipment. **SM** pointed out that Quiz sheets usually sell well (several had bought one for Wembdon Sports fields but had not returned them as too difficult!)and as **JM** pointed out not a huge number do get returned.**MG** felt it would be good to engage with the other twinning groups perhaps for a quiz evening. The other suggestion was a Bingo night and sell Quiz sheets also.

Membership Secretary-TB explained that the teacher from St Mary's school has had to give up the twinning as his work load had increased but was contacting other members of staff to see if they would like to continue.**TB** had been into school and had been unable to see Danny or the head teacher. She had received an email to say there had been no interest but he was going to contact the headmistress so we will wait a reply. **TB** neighbour Russell is still interested and sent his apologies as unable to attend this evening. He and his wife are travelling to Malta next week.**TB** also informed us that Penrose school was no longer interested but had offered us the use of the school.

MG thanked **TB** for all her work trying to increase our membership. **MG** asked if we had seen the article in the Mercury recording that 10 years ago Bridgwater Town Council had agreed that we should twin with Marsa. **PM** had also sent an article about the recent visit with a photo but they had not included all the text or the photo. All had seen them.

Membership Fees- **MG** asked for options on as to whether we **1.** Paid no fees **2.** Increase fees **or 3** stay the same. **HHW** said she was happy for them to remain the same as it gave you a sense of belonging and commitment. **BT** proposed the motion that the fees remain the same, which is £5 individual, £10 for a group. **JA** seconded and all agreed. **PM** wondered that as the Association had given some money to Rachael (Wembdon Scout who went to World Jamboree) that perhaps she could come and give us a talk about her experiences. **JM** said that if would be part of her commitment to come and thank those who helped sponsor her. If we let him know he would be able to arrange it.

Election of Officers- **MG** asked our Deputy Mayor **AG** if he would take over the meeting for the election who did.

Chairman- **SM** proposed **MG** who was asked if he was prepared to take the post again. **BT** said he was extremely dependable and **HHW** seconded it.

Vice Chairman- **JM** proposed **JA** who was happy and was seconded by **BT**.

Secretary- **BT** proposed **PM** and was seconded by **MG**.

Treasurer- **SM** was proposed by **GT** and seconded by **HHW**.

Membership Secretary- **TB** was asked by **MG** if she was happy to continue and seconded by **BT**.

BT thanked all who arrange meetings and keep the Association going.

AG handed the meeting back to **MG** who expressed how well we have been doing with the Road Sign on all the entrances to Bridgwater with Marsa's name included with the other 4 twined groups. We also have a road names after us several years ago- Marsa Way which will be there forever. In Marsa there is the Bridgwater Play area where **MG** had planted a Palm tree many years ago which is growing well and in the Council Offices there is the picture of Bridgwater and as **BT** pointed out it is in the entrance area so can be seen by all visitors with the Bridgwater Seal and explanation in English and Maltese below. We should be proud of what we have achieved and friendships made, **MG** asked **PM** if the cups that Marsa have given us were being used and **PM** explained that they are awarded every year. **SM** said **PM** had presented them for several years at the annual prize giving evening. We have given a shield which we presented to Marsa Scouts which **JM** believes is being presented yearly. We also presented a beautiful Cup to the Marsa Regatta team.

Any Other Business- **SM** would like to collect subscriptions if possible. A Christmas meal was discussed and it was decided that after Christmas would be better and The Green Olive was agreed on. Perhaps the beginning of January. We will need to let **MG** know numbers and he will arrange.

Date of next meeting- 6 or 7 th of January **AG** will ask Judi- the Mayors Secretary.