

Minutes of AGM of the Bridgwater-Marsa Twinning Association.

22/11/2017 at 7.30 hrs held at St John's Church, Blake Place.

Present-Pat Morgan, Barbara and Gordon Taylor, Mike Grabner, Joseph Abela, Tricia Brown, Heather Powell and Margaret Evans.

Apologies-Ian and Sonia Tucker, James Morgan, Di Grabner, Jennie Parker, Dave and Jean Gibbs.

Chairman's Report-MG warmly welcomed those who had attended. He reflected on the 10th Anniversary celebrations in Marsa last year where we had a wonderful very busy time. He and **PM** had given a talk to Bridgwater and District Civic Society in March about our twinned town and the celebrations, we had had some constructive criticism so when we did another talk in October to the Senior Citizens Forum we were able to change it slightly and had very positive feedback. We have attended the Town Twinning Forum and next year the date has been set for 2nd June for the Annual Conference, but due to some of the other countries who felt it was not a conference as they were expecting it will now be called a Twinning Event. The idea was suggested that we had local musicians from each town, **PM** had contacted Marsa about the Jacksons but the Marsa council asked who would fund it as they have no money to send quite a large group over. At the last Forum we were informed that there is money to provide a signpost on the Cornhill with all our twinned towns name, direction and distance but there could be problems due to procurement and Hinkley Point but we could not understand why. **MG** thanked all those involved when Marsa's Mayor Francis Debono, his wife Carmen and their friends from Marsa Charlie and Pauline Formosa visited in August and the lovely meal in the Green Olive.

Secretary's Report-PM explained she had done lots of advertising for the AGM, it had been mentioned by Jackie Sealy on Bridgwater's local radio Sedgemoor FM, she had contacted the Mercury, BBC Somerset and all the Bridgwater Sites on Facebook with several comments including one from a lady whose Mum lives here now who comes from Marsa-the Farrugia family and from people who had hoped to come.. She had contacted Glen Burrows from The senior Citizens Forum who announced it at their meeting and sent out emails, PM also talked to Wembdon Ladies about it. PM thanked BT for taking over the job of Treasurer at short notice.

The April twinning event was a very busy and tiring day as it was just the nucleus of people who did the work but we did give out 50 bags of information about Malta that was provided by Visit Malta .com, we also did attract a couple of people. In the evening we gave an illustrated talk about our 10th Anniversary. She thanked her son James who helped them put together the talks and taught them to use the equipment to allow them to go solo!! Will possibly explore giving a talk to Wembdon Ladies next year. **MG** and **PM** represented us at the Mayor Making in May when **Graham Granter** became the Mayor for this year and agreed to be our President.

When Marsa's mayors party came we had a busy few days took them to Cannington Walled Gardens to see the National plant of Malta that was grown by **JA** and Planted by Councillor Dominic Spencer and it and the 2 spare plants were in Flower! We drove back around the village of Wembdon to see the views out to the coast and the new village Hall and new church rooms, in the evening we had a meal at the Green Olive. The next day our Mayor and Mayoress Graham and Kay Granter took them to Sunday Lunch at the Tudor and then planned to go to Blake Gardens for the Band Concert but it rained so they really enjoyed an afternoon in the Museum. They requested to go to Wells and Cheddar which thanks to **B** and **GT** a wonderful day was had by all, **FD** took many photos as that is his profession. In the evening we had a lovely evening at the home of our Chairman **Mike** and his wife **Di** and the party returned to Malta the next day

PM asked do we take part in the Methodist Church Christmas Tree festival as had an invite, the answer was yes and **BT** will take **PM** and they will do it. **PM** will contact and sort it out.

PM had obtained a Poppy Cross which we laid on Remembrance Sunday for all those who lost their lives in Malta in WW2.

There had been a piece in the Mercury about the George Cross Island Association 30th anniversary which had been set up by Fred Plenty in 1987 who came to Bridgwater after the war with his wife .It involves service personnel from around the world to honour all those who had fallen during the Siege of Malta 1940-1943. Their Website is www.georgecrossisland.org.uk. **JA** was aware of them and had tried to contact them in the past without success, it was suggested that **PM** tries again.

PM showed the meeting the Bridgwater Town Calendar which is on sale for £3 from the Town Clerks office.

PM read out an email from Caroline Wilkins from Bridgwater Arts Centre suggesting a format for next year's Twinning evening entertainment with live streaming in each direction to each of the Twinned Towns from the with 2 performers from each country with real artistic exchange. Prior to this we had asked Marsa about the family local musician group but the response was who will pay for travel and accommodation? As Marsa could not fund them, which we understand as we could not either but there, may be some money available from Sedgemoor.

MG also mentioned that **IT** was trying to sort out a link between our Sea Cadets and Malta, he had a conversation with Francis in August and **PM** had emailed **FD** to ask about it but no reply.

Treasurers Report-BT explained the balance sheet that all had, she was delighted to report a refund of £30.24p from the bank, our total Balance is £651.77p.**MG** accepted the accounts and **JA** seconded. **MG** thanked **BT** very much for taking over at very short notice ,spending time in the bank changing all the signatures etc.Her time was greatly appreciated. **BT** thanked everyone but wishes to resign the post as due to her age feels she needs to cut down on her responsibilities.

Membership Report-TB had emailed St Mary's school and informed them about the AGM (as had **PM**) but no reply. She had also tried to see teacher Christine Homewood but never convenient. **MG** explained that perhaps due to the pressure of work that teachers did not have time for extra work.**PM** will contact Claudette Spencer as her girls go to the school in Marsa that they were going to link with to see if anything had happened, as it seemed so positive when we were there last year.

Membership Fees-MG proposed 3 options

1. Remain the same, £5 individual or £10 corporate.
2. No fees
3. Increase.

There was a general discussion as to the viability of the Association as so few had come for the AGM, just the usual ones who work so hard. We have tried extremely hard to increase membership but too little avail (but thanked Heather for coming and apologised for despondency) the question raised was do we continue? It was felt we need and Extraordinary General Meeting after Christmas with as many people as possible who were unable to attend to discuss the future. We feel we are not sustainable with the number of members we have at the moment, it was proposed by **MG** that we do not re elect any committee members or take subscriptions at the moment, seconded by **GT**. Meeting to be arranged.

