

BRIDGWATER-MARSA TWINNING ASSOCIATION

MEETING 25/07/2018 Held at Vino's, High Street Bridgwater.

Present-Joseph Abela, David Ridgway, Margaret Evans, Jennie Parker, Mike Grabner, Ivor Butt, Barbara and Gordon Taylor, and Pat Morgan.

Apologies-Chris Tottle, Steve and Stella Austen, Ian and Sonia Tuckered Grabner, James Morgan, and Pat Parker

Chairman's Report-MG thanked all for coming and thanked **PM** for arranging alternative venue as the Mayor diary is too busy to accommodate us. He explained that Helmi who had been a member for so many years had died and PM and BT will go to her funeral and represent the Association. The Twinning week –all were thanked for their help B and GT were on holiday so missed the event. The Saturday when we all attended in the Library with our display went well but no interest in anyone joining.MG brought up the fact at the Twinning Forum Meeting held after that although many photos were taken and the Mayor who hosted the evening entertainment felt it was a very important part of Bridgwater that there was no article in the Bridgwater Mercury, Brian Smedley (Chair of the Forum) said he would do something about it but as yet nothing. The event has now been overtaken by other things in the town, such a disappointment. The evening event at the end of the Twinning Week went very well even if no one from our twinned towns were able to attend, each English side did a 10 minute presentation, and we used the Video that was presented to us by the Marsa Cultural Society about Marsa and PM talked as it was shown. The Voices of the Peoples Choir were excellent and really enjoyed, The Mayor Diogo Rodrigues did a wonderful joy linking all the acts and the whole evening was a great success. At the last Forum meeting all the groups were given £300 grant from the council .We now have a date for the Maltese Rugby team who are coming from Malta who have chosen to accept an invitation from Bridgwater and Albion Rugby club on Saturday 15th September when we will be playing Cullumpton.They declined an invite from Exeter Chiefs (1st Division), The Mayor has offered to fund the buffet but as yet we are not sure what /how we will be involved, but delighted they will be coming.**PM** had found out some prices for visit to Malta in April next year from a local Travel Agent but were very expensive so after talking to **MG** he went online Malta Direct to the Waterfront B and B from Gatwick was less than £500 ,Mercury was a bit more but no single supplement. From Gatwick it was Air Malta and Bristol Ryan air, the prices included transfers plus a visit to The Malta Experience. The Waterfront has been refurbished with some work going on at the moment and some building work nearby.**BT** was a little concerned.

Secretary Report-PM Just to remind all that Helmi's funeral is on Friday 27th July at 3pm at Sedgemoor Crematorium. I had contacted Dominic Spencer and Edward the Executive Secretary of Marsa Council asking when would be a good time to visit, not too hot and with something going on in Marsa. They both suggested April for the Pageant, I then contacted

through Facebook the Pageant to find out the date of Palm Sunday and it is April 14th. Our Twinning Event went well with wonderful support from Visit Malta with a lot of free information to give out. The Deputy Mayor Tony Haywood opened the week in the Library and spent a long time talking to all the members of the 5 Twinning Groups. PM thanked all who had helped transport all the stuff to make the exhibition, those who came on the day and evening, which was a wonderful event, with people up and dancing at the end! She had also invited Tony to the meeting this evening but was rather late! **PM** also gave a talk about us the Wembdon Ladies and gave out more information and answered many questions.

PM had noticed that the Town Clerks post had been advertised again, the closing date was 23rd July and interviews the following week! She had also been in contact with Yvette Staelens the Voice of the Peoples Choir leader who had shown an interest in Malta, she had been in the past so PM had contacted Dame Marie Therese Vassallo who has brought her choir based in Balluta Church to England many years ago and we had been contacted as we were the only town with a Maltese link and had been asked to write a welcome, she still has it in pride of place in her music room. **PM** has given them both each other contacts and hope they will use them. At the last Forum Meeting Caroline from the Arts Centre informed us that on 7th October there will be a joint Art Exhibition with Homburg indoors and outdoors with live streaming at 6pm in The Arts Centre.

Treasurers Report-BT has written a letter of thanks to the council for the £300 grant .The bank balance is £925.77p.A discussion was held about the use of the funds? For transport to airport here, transport around Malta .MG will look at Bristol, JA informed us Ryan Air fly Thursday and Sunday from Bristol. A Minibus or car share was discussed.JP also suggested we could use some for gifts when we visit maybe also for when the Rugby team visit.MG will investigate prices from Bristol, send to PM and she will send out to those interested.

David Ridgway-DR he has come as a guest of JA as he has no experience of Twinning recently moved into Walter Barnet House and met JA he explained that he does some interviews for Sedgemoor FM based at the YMCA, had asked JA if he would do an interview but has been very busy, PM was asked if she would, explained she had done one about 2 years ago with Jackie Sealey, DR explained his work is usually broadcast in Jackie's programme. AS DR has sight problems PM will contact JA to sort it out.

Malta Visit-Those interested-Mike and Di Grabner, Pat Morgan, Ivor Butt, Barbara and Gordon Taylor, Ian and Sonia Tucker? Joseph Abela and Margaret Evans? Jennie and Pat Parker.**MG** will investigate. If we all go together there may be a group discount. **JA** feels it would be a chance to promote our town here and in Malta-It would be ideal if we could meet our Honorary Vice President the Prime Minister of Malta Dr Joseph Muscat and have a photo and publish here and there. It was suggested we inform our MP who is our other Honorary Vice President.

Any other Business- MG suggested that we contact Judi the Mayors PA to ask for a date for the next meeting with Diogo as all the previous Mayors have always taken time out from their busy schedules to host us at the Mayors Parlour, we have always been made very welcome. The present place was too noisy and open. Also to try and get the Web site up to date.