



## From the Editor

*This edition of the Newsletter should have appeared in November, and I am sorry that it has been delayed, the more so as much of its content is now more history than news! We have a number of reports from visits to and from Husum, and we now look forward to a busy and eventful 2012! As always, we are very grateful to all those who have contributed articles and photos.*

**Ray Harrowing**

## Holy Trinity School and Husum's danske Skole

Imagine the scene: a beautiful March day in Husum with the crocuses in full bloom and the sound of leather on willow in the Sports Hall at the local *danske Skole*. Denmark's best cricketer is coaching a group of girls in the art of batting. To a

Discussions are ongoing as to whether more schools, both in Kidderminster and in other European countries, can be involved too. A major purpose is to continue the tradition integral to twinning in Kidderminster of increasing understanding between young people in the town and its environs and their counterparts in Husum. Holy Trinity International School's link with the Husum *danske Skole* has been made possible because of the very generous support both of the Kidderminster Twinning Association and of *Stadt Husum*.

The partnership between the schools will have as its focus a cross-curricular project. The extensive use of wind farms, solar energy and dykes makes the Husum area a geographer's paradise. Literary studies might focus on local writer Theodor Storm's "*Der Schimmelreiter*". There is strong interest in exploring the position of minorities in society.



*Crocuses in the Schlosspark*

To a historian like myself, the history of the Danish population in South Slesvig is a fascinating one. Though the northern part of the region which Danes know as *Sønderjylland* returned to Denmark after the plebiscite of 1920, the southern part remained a part of Germany. The *danske Skole* exists to provide an education that ensures the continuation of Danish values and the Danish language amongst the minority population of Husum. On my visit to the school I was made aware of the challenges facing minority populations, and the teachers at the *danske Skole* are especially keen on exploring them as part of the partnership between their school and Holy Trinity International School.

cricket-loving Englishman like myself, this is a revelation, for I have not expected to see cricket being played here in Husum. Immediately my preconceptions are being challenged - which is one of the purposes of twinning.

It was Saturday, 26th March, the day of the first meeting in Husum between me (I'm Head of English and History at Holy Trinity International School), and Horst Grunwald, head of the Husum *danske Skole*, and his colleagues. It is envisaged that in 2012 a pupil exchange will take place between the two schools.

Holy Trinity is an international school and welcomes the opportunity it has been given to extend its network of international contacts. Since I returned from my visit to Husum, there has been great enthusiasm amongst pupils at Holy Trinity International School for developing links with the *danske Skole*.

**Ernest Carwithen**

*A footnote to Ernest's report: it is hoped that a small choir from HTIS will be able to visit Husum over the coming Krokusfest weekend.*

## Crocuses for Kidderminster

Seven gardening enthusiasts from Husum arrived in Kidderminster on Friday, September 9 as guests of Kidderminster Horticultural Society, and immediately found themselves involved in a spot of very public gardening.

On their way from Birmingham Airport they stopped off at Broadwaters Park to assist in the planting of hundreds of crocus corms (yes, they are not strictly bulbs). The crocuses are of the same species as those that cover several acres of Husum's Castle park, which are a major tourist attraction in the Spring every year and form a living backcloth to the town's annual *Krokusfest*.

The planting at Broadwaters is the first stage of a plan by the Association, to introduce the purple crocuses to several areas of Kidderminster over the coming months and years. The Association is very grateful to a number of Kidderminster members of the County Council who have been able to secure financial backing for the project, to Wyre Forest District Council's Parks staff for their co-operation, and to Alan



*Getting down to it! The crocuses being planted at Broadwaters Park*

Breen from Parks who brought his very shiny spade for the occasion.

## A big "Thankyou"...

to the stalwarts who manned (& womanned...) the Association's display stand at the Ramada in September! Despite the variety of adverse weather conditions this summer, the Horticultural Society managed to stage an even bigger and better Grand

Autumn Show with numerous visitors. Our stand in the corner by the demonstration arena was not as busy as the site by the refreshments area last year, but there was enough interest to make it worthwhile, and an enjoyable day, for our volun-



*Klaudia Knopf, Annalene Topf & Klaus Sackrawewski (l. to r.) help with the twinning display at the Horticultural Show*

teers: Chris Dutton, and Ken and Pat Garbett on Saturday and Mike and Betty Stokes on Sunday. We should also thank the Husum gardeners who helped to arrange the display early on Saturday morning!

*Hilary Boyle*

## Forest Quilters travel to Husum

Forest Quilters of Kidderminster had been invited by Storm Quilters of Husum to visit their Art Quilts Exhibition at the end of July. Many of our group had submitted quilts of their own on the subjects of Our Town, our Environment, or Friendship.

Brian and I were looking forward to our first visit to Husum and had no idea what to expect. Our visit more than exceeded our expectations. We loved the brightly coloured houses lining the quayside and were very much surprised at the obvious Dutch influence; and the *Rathaus* where the exhibition was held, very modern and innovative in design, imitating the shell of the old ship-building 'shed'. Outside, remnants of the rails used to launch the ships into the harbour could still be seen. Most interesting were the dam and the giant earth dykes keeping the North Sea from engulfing the town.

The Quilt exhibition was inspiring and was roundly praised by those who visited it. It was opened by Husum's *Bürgermeister*. There were quilts for all tastes and in many styles, all beautifully executed. The different interpretations of the themes were amazing.



(l. to r.) Brenda Banner, Rainer Maaß, Karin Petersen, Georg Weßler, Hilary Boyle

sewing a ‘lolly mouse’. What is that? Well it was a cheeky little mouse complete with big ears, whiskers, a long tail and inside a large red loving heart symbolising love and friendship. The purpose? As a favour to be given with a gift of money. What a lovely idea! Ours held a pretend €100 note!

Our hosts could not have been more welcoming and generous. We were treated to much *Kaffee und Kuchen*, and on one evening delicious *Suppe*. As it was a Quilters’ visit there was much talk of fabrics and threads and patterns and colours. All

Another evening we were invited to a BBQ and *Schützenfest* held in the lovely garden of one of our hosts. The *Schützenfest* involved us shooting at the Imperial eagles and trying to dismember them bit by bit in a prescribed order (yes there were two, one for the men; one for the ladies!). In order to do this we were armed with an air rifle and shot, and with butt against shoulder we took aim. As most of us “Kiddy” ladies had never held a gun in our lives much hilarity was involved. Also a great deal of time as the eagles refused to fall so by the time the King and Queen were crowned it was almost dark and very cold!

We were very sad to say “Goodbye” to our generous hosts, and we all sincerely hoped that we would meet again.

*Sara Hollis – Forest Quilters*



*Friendship across the water - one of the quilts in the exhibition, sewn by Glynis Rabin*

### The Oldies visit Kidderminster

After several months of planning, and a change of date so that the Oldies visit would correspond with the 375th anniversary of the granting of Kidderminster’s Charter, 14 Husumers arrived in a warm and sunny Kidderminster on Sunday July 31 at the start of a hectic four-day visit.

the male partners took it in their stride – let’s face it, they’re used to it. Brian was hoping that he would not be asked to translate ‘fat quarters’ into German fearing there might be some misunderstanding.

The morning of Monday August 1 saw all the Oldies plus three more, who had travelled independently to Kidderminster, and numerous hosts, meeting on the bridge outside Baxter Church for a walk around the town with local historian Melvyn Thompson. Melvyn’s route took us past numerous places of interest in the town including the Husum bridge, Kidderminster’s Town Hall, Brinton’s Offices and the fountain at the bottom of Comberton Hill, which was donated to the town by the Brinton family, a look inside the empty Woodward Grosvenor building in Green Street which will soon be home to Kidderminster’s Carpet Museum, and then passed by Caldwell Castle before taking to the canal towpath and finishing at Weaver’s Wharf by Brinton’s Bell and the famous Bull almost two hours later.

The men were not left out. Brian and David were taken on a fantastic light aircraft flight over the polders, the sea and the islands and were able to see at first hand the work entailed in keeping back the sea. The other men had an equally interesting visit to a sea world centre that explained the wealth and problems of life in the North Sea.

In the afternoon everyone travelled to Bewdley for a look around the town before many of them took a short walk in Wyre Forest. That evening a welcome reception hosted by the Association took

While this was taking place the ladies were enjoying more *Kaffee und Kuchen*, and were engaged in

place in the King Charles Room at which our Chairman Terry Garbett and our President the Mayor of Kidderminster, Councillor Anne Hingley, who had kindly provided the drinks, welcomed the Oldies to Kidderminster. Rainer Maaß, the outgoing Husum *Bürgermeister*, duly responded. It was so nice to see so many friends old and new, including three additional Charter Trustees and Alan Parsons, the mayor's consort, at this event which was enjoyed by all.

Tuesday morning saw 31 of us take a step back into the past at the Black Country Living Museum for a day's visit. Following a short introductory talk about the site given to us by Police Constable World, in which he warned us to beware of thieves,



Twinnners on the Town Bridge

pickpockets and vagabonds, everyone was then free to enjoy the sights and sounds of a hundred years ago before taking part in a lesson at St. James's school where unfortunately Georg Weßler was judged by the schoolmaster to have misbehaved and duly received several strokes of the infamous cane. Fortunately for the rest of us the lesson finished soon after with Eva Maaß being selected to ring the school bell. Everyone then dispersed far and wide for lunch, many partaking of the Museum's famous Fish and Chips, before meeting up again for a trip on an electrically powered narrow boat into the manmade limestone caverns deep under Dudley before returning to Kidderminster later to recover from the exertions of the day.

On Wednesday morning at 10 am the Oldies and hosts gathered at the Kidderminster Town station of the Severn Valley Railway for a day out on the railway. "Freedom of the Line" tickets had been purchased in advance for everyone so that they could break their journeys whenever they fancied enabling them to take in the delights of Arley vilage with its beautiful Arboretum, the Engine

House at Highley and of course the historic town of Bridgnorth. It came as a surprise to many of the Oldies when they came upon the Church of St. Mary Magdalen near to the ruins of Bridgnorth Castle; although built by Thomas Telford in 1794 the church bears an uncanny



Eva rings the bell

resemblance to the *Marienkirche* in Husum's Market Place. Even inside, the church is very similar except for the stained glass windows at the far end of the chancel which were added by the Victorians in the late 19th century. The day passed by rapidly and it was soon time for everyone to return to their hosts in Kidderminster.

While everyone enjoyed themselves on the railway a further nine official visitors from Husum arrived in Kidderminster, as guests of the town, to take part in the Charter Anniversary celebrations the following day, making a grand total of 26 visitors from Husum in Kidderminster altogether.

Thursday morning duly arrived and right on cue the weather changed from warm sunshine to rain as everyone gathered outside the Town Hall for the Anniversary celebrations, prompting some of the Husum officials to make a quick dash to the Weaver's Wharf shops via the Husum Bridge to purchase umbrellas. At 10:45 am, as a growing crowd of people waited patiently in the rain outside the Town Hall, a trumpet was heard to sound and a party of children in period costume, followed by two King's Messengers on horseback, made their way to the Town Hall steps. The Messengers then presented a proclamation regarding the granting of Kidderminster's Town Charter by King Charles I to our Vice-President Charles Talbot in his capacity as the Town Clerk of Kidderminster, who, having read it, handed it to our President, the Mayor of Kidderminster, who also studied the document and in her turn handed it to the Town Crier who informed everyone in the assembled crowd of its contents. The Messengers, followed by the children, then made their way along Vicar Street for all to see while everyone else entered the Town Hall for



*Reading the proclamation*

Railway station for a farewell party. Rainer Maaß presented Anne Hingley with a framed print of

refreshments and a Medieval Fair in the Corn Exchange.

After an afternoon free of organised activities, the Oldies, official visitors from Husum, Charter Trustees, hosts and invited friends gathered at the Valley Suite on the Severn Valley

ringing its heart out, unheard above the blaze.

The grand piano curve of Brinton's boundary hugged The Sling, a huge five-storey warehouse which soon became a smouldering shell while the tiny bell on the nearby dyehouse drying room failed in the job it was meant to do.

So now I find it pinned to the wall of Slingfield Mill over Debenham's door with a plaque I hadn't noticed before.

When Brinton's Piano Building was gutted it was full of wool on wooden floors, combustible yarns with oil and gas lamp open flames, a terrible shame to lose it all but never fear, The Bull is here!



*Presentation to Rainer Maaß*

Husum 375 years ago while Rainer himself received a piece of cut glass from Charles Talbot in recognition of his services to twinning between the two towns during his tenure as Husum's *Bürgermeister*. The evening ended with an impromptu singalong led by Charles Talbot on guitar supported by the Oldies from Husum and Kidderminster, and the Husumers left town the next morning still tired but very happy after an eventful visit.

*Jerry Mayfield*

## The Bell and the Bull

*(This poem was prompted, we understand, by the visit of the Oldies to the Weavers Wharf area of Kidderminster and the buildings there; we are grateful to Heather for the opportunity to publish this memoir of old Kidderminster - Ed.)*

When Brinton's Piano Building was gutted, they blamed the bell,

The Bull snorted steam and bellowed once for a town fire, twice for a district fire, three times for a Brinton's fire till fire-fighting went professional so they found another use for The Bull:

It started and ended the working day and during the war at the dead of night four short blasts and a longer one warned Kiddy folk to stay at home.

On eleven eleven nineteen eighteen it breathed a public sigh of relief and many special occasions later its final song was three long blasts as Brinton's finally closed its doors

and now I find the Brinton's Bull pinned to the wall in Weaver's Wharf with a plaque I hadn't noticed before.

The Bull was louder and fitted the bill so I feel quite sorry for Brinton's Bell.

© *Heather Wastie*

*August 2011*

## Theodor-Storm-Schule welcomes King Charles School

*We were very pleased to receive this report, compiled by the KC students who visited Husum in September.*

On the German exchange we had many trips to local sites and museums but one of our favourites was the trip to *Hallig Hooge*. This is a collection of mud flats that floods regularly. We left Husum at around 9.30 am. and the boat trip to *Hallig Hooge* took

about two hours. While we were there we watched a short film on the area. After that we were free to look around before we went back home, then we went swimming and the local pool. There were many more events, such as a brilliant trip to a science museum, after which we had a nice meal at a Greek restaurant in Husum.

At the weekend, some of us went to Hamburg to visit the miniature *Wunderland*, the largest model railway in the world, which was brilliant, and a boat trip around the harbour in Hamburg. Others went to St. Peter Ording and had a great time at the beach. We were surprised by the hot weather, as we had been told to prepare for it to be very cold and windy!

Each day before the trips we spent time in some of



King Charles students on the Schiffbrücke

the lessons; this was good on some days because they had double English but on Monday we had double German which lasted an hour and 40 minutes!

Lessons are quite different in several ways. In some lessons rather than the children moving to the classrooms where the teachers are based, the teachers come to them. In a History lesson on Friday morning the teacher left at the end and the German teacher came in to teach her lesson. This is different to some English schools. The pupils also do a lot more writing in Germany than in England, where the lessons are a lot more interactive.

It is interesting to see the range of subjects that different countries teach their pupils, such as learning Danish in Germany and the number of times a subject is taught in a week. Also, the lessons in Germany are mixed ability but in England for most lessons children are put into 'sets'.

The *Bistrothek* where the pupils can eat and relax serves a choice of food at lunch and break times.

Unlike King Charles I, the school has no swimming pool, so swimming is taught at Husum swimming pool instead. Overall the School has a relaxed environment, with kind teachers and the pupils are happy.

Some of the pupils live many miles away from their school, so unlike walking to school like most English people, they take the bus or train, and a lot of them ride their bikes.

We had a great time in Husum taking part in lots of different activities and we look forward to meeting up with our partners again!

## Charles – the Godfather!

There were celebrations in September, both in Kidderminster and in Husum, to mark Charles Talbot's 80th birthday. First, on September 21, came our party at La Brasserie Restaurant, when more than fifty members and friends enjoyed a pleasant and convivial meal together before hearing speeches of congratulation (from Chairman Terry Garbett) and thanks (from the guest of honour, Charles Talbot). As ever, Charles was on fine form, and treated the assembled throng to reminiscences of his time in twinning as well as to some thoughts about the future.

A few days later Charles and Jean sped off to Husum, where, on September 30, he was again guest of honour, this time at the *Rathaus*, where again friends and colleagues gathered to honour his work in fostering the partnership between Kidderminster and Husum. Ulf von Hielmcrone, in his speech, described Charles as the "godfather" of the many friendships that exist today between the people of the two towns. As well as Ulf's description of Charles's long association with Kidderminster and with Husum, there were speeches from the new *Bürgermeister*, Uwe Schmidt, his predecessor, Rainer Maaß, *Bürgermeisterin* Frau Birgitt Enke and Twinning Chairman Georg Weßler, and the Husumer Shanty Chor entertained the party – which continued with a meal in the Thomas Hotel over the road.

## Quiz Night

Our Quiz Night, which took place on October 14, proved very successful with over 80 participants filling the Valley Suite at the Severn Valley Railway Station. The total raised for the Association's funds was more than £400. Thanks to all who came, and a special thanks to Pat and Ken Garbett, our Social organisers, who made all the arrangements and provided sustenance for the hungry quizzers.

Quizmaster Bob Hill treated the teams to some memory-jerking questions and the groans were in abundance when the answers were revealed. Greg Howard from "Our Plaice" on Comberton Hill brought a brief respite to the proceedings when he turned up with the Fish and Chips - they were delicious. The winners were the team from King Charles School - it's reassuring to know that our young people are in good hands!

The raffle realised £110.00; our thanks to everyone who contributed prizes, and of course to the ticket-sellers who managed to mug pretty well everybody! Our thanks must also go to Lee Andrews and his staff at the SVR who kept us all supplied with drinks during the evening; they even waived the booking fee for the room which was a great help for our funds.

All in all a most enjoyable event, and once again a big thank you to everyone who contributed and took part.

*Terry Garbett (Chairman)*

## Husum Calendar

For the information of any intending visitors to Husum, here are some of the events that will take place in or near Husum during the next few months.

*February 13-14 – 13th NordGastro und Hotel*

*February 21 – Biikerbrennen (traditional Nordfriesland bonfire to banish the gloom of winter)*

*March 24-25 – Krokusfest*

*April 8 – 28th Easter gathering of bikers, with a service in the Marktplatz*

*May 10-12 – 8th FolkBALTICA Festival*

*May 19-20 – Rhododendronfest – Husumer Baum-schule*

*May 20 – 35th International Museums Day*

A full programme of events, exhibitions, etc. can be found at [www.husum-tourismus.de](http://www.husum-tourismus.de)

## German at King Charles

We are very pleased to report that the German lessons, tutored by Sarah Shaw at King Charles I School, continue to be well supported, and that, with the generous support of Stuart Arch, will continue into 2012. The cost will remain at £30 per term – good value for this valuable opportunity to learn the language.

Also in the New Year Stuart is hoping to arrange a further German Film Evening, when catering students will provide German-themed refreshments. The evening will again be free of charge, but anyone wishing to attend should obtain a ticket from Hilary Boyle so that we will know how many will be there.

## New Members

We are delighted to welcome yet more new members – Sarah and Brian Hollis, Reg Hardiman and Barbara Longmore, who was a member of one of the groups of young people that visited Husum in the 1960s - we are glad that Barbara has made contact. We hope that they will all have opportunities to visit Husum and to take part in welcoming visitors to Kidderminster.

## From the Committee

The Committee met on September 14, and received reports from a number of groups, as well as news of progress with other groups that were planning to become involved. Plans were made for the visit of the Oldies in August; this marked the 50th anniversary of the first youth exchange visit, as well as being the occasion of the 375th anniversary of Kidderminster receiving its Charter, and a number of Husum councillors were among the group. The plan to plant crocuses in the grassed areas in Husum Way is progressing, and there were also proposals to plant others in Broadwaters Park, in Green Street, around the statue of Richard Baxter, and at Burcher Green. A Quiz Night was to be held on October 14 at the Valley Suite, Severn Valley Railway, and other Twinning Associations were invited to send teams; the Worcestershire Forum of Twinning Associations was to hold its Quiz Night in Bromsgrove on the previous Friday, and the Association was represented then.

A further meeting of the Committee took place on November 30, at which some of the above items were updated. A number of these items are the subject of reports elsewhere in this edition of the Newsletter.

The Committee will meet next on February 8.

## In Memoriam

It is with sadness that we record the passing, in August, of a stalwart of the Association, Joe Lorbert. Joe was 84, and had lived latterly in Lincolnshire, near to his daughter Ericka and her family, to whom we send our condolences.

Joe was of German descent, born in Yugoslavia. He arrived in England as a refugee just after the War, and became first a miner, then a hospital porter, but his career blossomed to include the teaching of languages in colleges in the Midlands and the post of Personnel Director with Duport Steel. He and his wife Peggy later ran a post office and newsagent's in Stourport. He was in demand as an interpreter, assisting, among others, Wolverhampton Wander-

ers and the Kidderminster Valentines (of which Peggy was a member). He was also the Chairman of Kidderminster's Probus Club. Through Joe's tuition a number of Association members have gained a knowledge of German, and, in his usual generous fashion, he was often on hand to meet and greet visitors from Husum.



Our picture shows Joe in Husum's *Rathaus*, on a visit with members of the Kidderminster churches.

We also have news of the death of Gil Edwards, the father of "Oldies" stalwart Pam Morris. Gil was not a member of the Association, but was very interested in the links with Husum, and was, as a District Councillor representing Kidderminster, very supportive of our activities. We send our condolences to Pam and her family.

### On the Horizon

- March 23 - 26 – visit by the Carnival Queen and official party to the *Krokusfest* in Husum
- March 22-26 – visit to Husum churches by members of Kidderminster churches
- June – visit to Husum of golfers from Kidderminster Golf Club
- June - visit of Husum's *Krokusblütinkönigin* to Kidderminster Carnival
- June – Exhibition of Husum and Kidderminster quilts in Kidderminster Library
- October 18-22 – visit to Husum by Kidderminster Choral Society

We shall be reporting on these events in future issues of "Twin Town News" and on the website, [www.kidderminster-husum-twinning.co.uk](http://www.kidderminster-husum-twinning.co.uk). Meanwhile, please watch for further details. If you wish to add events, visits, etc. to this list, please inform the Editor.

### Christmas and New Year Wishes

Among the cards (and greetings by email) that I received this year was one from Herr Claude Bruhn, the owner of the *Nordertor* floating restaurant (pictured below) and his staff. As it was a greeting to all his friends, I thought that I should



*The Nordertor, in the Binnenhafen*

pass it on to our readers, many of whom have enjoyed meals on the *Nordertor* and will have met Claude and his very welcoming team.

I hesitate to try to translate Claude's letter, which is in very idiomatic German, but of course he wishes us all the best for Christmas and *ein glückliches 2012* – a year filled with good luck.

**Photo credits:** Hilary Boyle, Ray Harrowing, Colin Hill, David Hill, Jenny Holmes, Jerry Mayfield, *Stadt Husum*.

## Kidderminster-Husum Twinning Association

### Officers

- Chairman: Terry Garbett
- Vice-President: Charles Talbot
- Secretary: Mrs Hilary Boyle
- Treasurer: Mrs Christine Dutton
- Membership: Jeremy Mayfield
- Cultural: Ray Harrowing
- Website: [www.kidderminster-husum-twinning.co.uk](http://www.kidderminster-husum-twinning.co.uk)

### Newsletter

The Newsletter is edited and published by Ray Harrowing. Any contributions for the next issue will be welcome. Please post or email copy and photos (jpeg format) to:

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