



HENLEY LEICHLINGEN TWINNING ASSOCIATION Report 2019



We continue to run the association without a Chairman. This has worked well for the past two years with jobs shared between the committee members. We welcome people wishing to join the Association to take part in our activities and also to serve on the committee.

Membership

By the end of 2018 we had 30 individual members, this is five more than last year and represents about 45 people involved with the association. We also had five group members renew. Of these, three of the individual members and two of the the group members relate to use of the marquees and not to our main twinning activity.

Films

In 2018 we had a good combined programme with the Henley Falaise Twinning Association. This started with two films by the German film producer Werner Herzog: "The enigma of Karpar Hauser" and "Heart of Glass", both challenging to watch and very enjoyable. Through with HFTA, we watched "Untouchable", "Seraphine", "Diner de Cons" and "Jean de Florette", and will be showing the sequel "Manon des Sources" in March this year.

In the Autumn we watched the first two episodes of the second series of Heimat, set in Munich in the 1950s. This was so popular that we have decided to show the remaining eleven episodes once a month through 2019.

Football

AAFC Henley was one of the first Henley groups to establish a twinning link with Leichlingen over 40 years ago in 1978. Football exchanges have taken place twice annually ever since and in 40 years we have failed only once to send a team to SC Leichlingen's Easter Tournament (Osterturnier) at U13. We sometimes struggle for numbers because so many families plan holidays over the Easter weekend.

The past year was no exception. In March 2018 a party of 12 boys and accompanying family members flew out from Heathrow to Düsseldorf. The players were dispatched to their host families and the adults to their hostel. There was trip to Cologne on the Friday, but all got back just in time for the annual 11v11 match in the evening on SC Leichlingen's new 3G artificial grass pitch.

Easter Saturday was taken up with a very well organised 9v9 tournament involving up to 12 local teams, including our own. In the tournament, despite having lost heavily to SC Leichlingen the evening before, the team acquitted themselves well, using trademark British muscle and guile against formidable German technique to sneak the odd goal. We upset a couple of teams by taking them to penalty shoot-outs and beating them. One highlight was holding Bayer Leverkusen's Academy girls' team to a draw. We have won the tournament on a few occasions, cheered on enthusiastically by the SC Leichlingen players, who seem to genuinely enjoy our successes.

SC Leichlingen invariably lay on extensive catering, and those among us rash enough to accept an invitation to go for a beer at a local Kneipe pay the price after being plied with endless glasses of Kölsch!

Later in 2018, on a Thursday evening during October half term, some 18 players, with coaches and adults, arrived by coach as guests of AFC Henley. On the Friday they travelled to London, returning just in time, but tired, for the annual match under lights at Henley Town Football Club in Mill Lane, to compete for the Dukes Shield. Despite a taxing day out, they still managed to beat us by a large margin.

The match was attended by the Mayor, Cllr Glen Lambert and Deputy Mayor Ken Arlett, who presented the shield to the winning team. More football followed the following afternoon, when the English and German boys were put into mixed teams for a knock-out tournament. A farewell party took place in the evening at Shiplake memorial Hall. The Leichlingers left on the Sunday.

Plans for this year's exchanges at Easter and in October are well in hand.

Visit of the Germans to Henley – May 31st to June 3rd 2018

The end of the Spring Bank Holiday week saw another very successful visit of our Leichlingen friends to Henley. The weather was superb and the whole weekend went off without a hitch. The visit began on the Thursday evening with a convivial welcome by the Mayor Glen Lambert in the town hall. This was followed by a visit to Kew Gardens the following day. We had morning coffee and cake in a lovely pub just outside the gardens, and we then spent several pleasant hours wandering around the beautiful gardens. On Saturday morning, most of the visitors and hosts took part in a fun quiz, which involved walking around Henley, finding out facts about several very old pubs, some of which closed many years ago. On Saturday afternoon, we were treated to a private tour of Stonor House, followed by afternoon tea. The highlight of the visit was a garden party at Remenham Hall on Saturday evening. The theme for the evening was traditional British party games, and the majority of visitors and their hosts had a lot of fun taking part in games such as Pass the Parcel and Musical chairs. It was clear to see the competitive nature of the some of the participants! All in all, the visit was a huge success, and the Germans had a great time.

Autumn Party – 16th November 2018

Once again, we joined forces with the Henley Falaise Twinning Association to hold an Autumn Party. After last year's success, we decided to once again hold the party at the Christ Church Centre. The 40 guests enjoyed a selection of French and German-themed food, and also took part in a table quiz, written on this occasion by two of our members. The evening proved to be informal and pleasant, and all who attended said they had enjoyed themselves.

Music Workshops

The Youth Music Exchange is continuing to go well and I am very pleased to report that a group travelled to Leichlingen in October. We look forward to the workshop in Henley this year.

Patrick Fleming – Secretary
Sue Fitzsimons – Events
Trevor Howell – AFC Henley

18th March 2019