

AGROS : ALTEA : BAD KÖTZTING : BELLAGIO : BUNDORAN : CHOJNA : GRANVILLE  
 HOLSTEBRO : HOUFFALIZE : JUDENBURG : KARKKILA : KÖSZEG : MARSASKALA  
 MEERSSEN : NIEDERANVEN : OKELÖSUND : PRIENAI : PREVEZA  
 SESIMBRA : SHERBORNE : SKOFIA LOKA : SIGULDA  
 SIRET : SUŠICE : TRYAVNA : TÜRI : ZVOLEN

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*NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2012*

**GREAT RESPONSE TO CLOTHING APPEAL**

Siret, Romania is a partner town of Sherborne through the Douzelage and they have been active in the Vol-unTEAMing project, including when two priests from the town visited Canon Eric Woods and the Zest Cafe in November 2011.

Siret made an appeal to Sherborne Douzelage for clothing donations, which is fully in line with the Charitable Status of Sherborne Douzelage. Sherborne Abbey, The Roman Catholic Church and Sherborne Rotarians gave an immediate and generous response, such that the volume of clothes was twice as much as there was capacity to transport.

Sherborne Douzelage and Father Daniel Merla of Siret wish to thank the people of Sherborne and all the



organisations who have been so generous with their donations. The European Conservation Action Network (EuCan) kindly offered space in a van going to Romania and Sherborne Douzelage has contributed to the fuel costs as well as having arranged collection, sorting and packing of the clothes.

Some excess clothes have been donated to the Dorset Women's Refuge as part of their recent appeal. Our pictures show volunteers, Moira Western and Lin Ashby who sorted and packed the clothing. The van is being driven by Nigel Spring, who is a director of EuCAN.

Kevin Waterfall

Siret Painted Church



## WHAT VOLUNTEERING MEANS TO ME

Participating in the Sherborne Douzelage 'Together Across Generations' project this summer was a wonderful and unique experience. I wanted to take part because I have always been aware that not all older people have such happy and fulfilled lives as those close to me. I hope that what I have learnt from the project will make a positive difference for older people in this situation.

Volunteering in Sherborne involved helping out in different day centres, lunch clubs and nursing homes. After visiting several of these, it was obvious that, in the Dorset area, there are many opportunities for older people to get involved.

However, after talking with fellow volunteers, it was clear that transport is a major issue for many older people, and quite often prevents them from getting involved in sociable activities. The Senior Lunch Club has its own voluntary minibuss that collects and returns people to their homes. This works fantastically and provides a real incentive for older



people to participate in social activities.

In Poland, the most obvious difference for me was the lack of older men involved in volunteering. Many men, once retired, like to play golf or go fishing, whereas the women are more likely to get involved in social activities. It was a shame not to see men and women interacting with each other as I had seen in England. Many of the activities held were very female friendly, such as arts and crafts afternoons held in the local library, or meetings and discussions of the University of the Third Age. Perhaps activities more attractive to men should be introduced, in the hope of integrating older women and men. Older people in Poland admitted that transport was an issue for them as well, although overall people seemed very contented with their lives. A big difference between the two countries was that younger people appeared to volunteer more with older people in Poland. For example, many had taken



## WHAT VOLUNTEERING MEANS TO ME

part in ICT workshops run by young volunteers, and said that they often talked with the younger generation which they really enjoyed. However, only a few had taken part in this workshop in Sherborne.

A lasting memory of the trip is of an older man I met. His perception of the world and his position within it really reflected the compassion shown to him by his neighbours, volunteers and friends. This showed me that volunteering with older people is not just giving them some occasional company, but also making them realise their value in a society that can often underestimate their importance.

I gained so much from the 'TAG' project and I feel I will always volunteer with older people in future.

Marie Hunt



## ENCOURAGING ADULT EXCHANGES

Following the last General Meeting in Zvolen I now have contact details for all Member Towns. In addition 13 towns have sent me their present list of Clubs or Groups with 11 specifying what Clubs might be interested in exchanges in 2013 or 2014.

Two other towns have indicated that they will shortly be sending this information. Once I have received this, I will then ask Stanislaw to post all these lists on the [www.douzelage.org](http://www.douzelage.org) website under Adults. Furthermore the spreadsheet for those Clubs or Groups actually seeking an exchange will also be updated.

In Sherborne we have welcomed an exchange between the Short Mat Bowls

group from Holstebro with a return visit planned for next February. We also have regular exchanges of Walkers from Chojna and Meerssen.

Please let me know if you would like exchanges with other member towns or if you are already planning these. I am also looking into the possibility of grant aid under the Gruntvig or EC Culture programmes and will circularise other towns on the available opportunities.

The motto of the Emperor Augustus was "Lente currite" or Hasten slowly". We are certainly doing that.

Michael Morrell

## TROODOS MOUNTAINS GREEN VOLUNTEERING

Agros is our Douzelage partner town in the Troodos Mountains of southern Cyprus. Late April is a delightful time to visit with warm days to enjoy the mountain scenery. We were there to join groups from Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and the young people of Agros in a youth project. The objective was to discuss environmental issues and the possibilities for voluntary action to promote sustainable development.

The Sherborne group consisted of Ben Evans, Lizzie Heygate Browne, Laura Doggett and Jack Thomson, plus myself as the so-called leader with an age which was not far short of their four ages combined. Their company made me feel young; trying to keep up with them in all the activities made me feel old. I found it an inspirational experience, seeing such a diverse assembly of youngsters sparking ideas off each other, supporting those who integrated more slowly, and forming friendships - all amidst much laughter.

The project leaders excelled at mixing everyone up in some crazy team-building and energising activities. In addition to some interesting discussions, when Ben excelled with many original and stimulating contributions, we planted trees and

flowering plants around Agros, tidied and litter-picked various public areas, and 'invaded' Nicosia as a flashmob to persuade locals to "turn off your cars". For those unfamiliar with the term (as I was), a flashmob is a group of people who suddenly appear in a public place to perform an act, either as a pointless piece of fun or to deliver a message to the surprised audience, and then disappear.

The other important element was to learn about each other's cultures, traditions and identities. There were national cultural nights which provided much entertainment. When it was our turn, our dodgy acting ability was rescued by Laura with her superb singing and dancing and Lizzie who wowed everyone with her culinary skills - delicious cakes and sweets. Putting together the hospitality of Agros, the humour of the young people and the commitment of Ben, Lizzie, Laura and Jack, it was a magical and memorable ten days.

Mike Balfour, aged 65½



## FUN FOOD AND FIRE

Estonia, was for me and all of the party travelling, our introduction to Eastern Europe, and how pleasant it was. We were met by Sulo and his friends and set off for Turi, a journey with not a hill in sight!

We passed the first two days, sharing various sports from each country. We introduced Rounders to the group which was well received. We also gave a successful presentation on our home town and culture including the Yeo Valley 2011 advert!

The group then travelled from Turi (spring capital) to Parnu (summer capital) for the Grill-Festival. The set-up was very professional with lots of sponsorship. We were not permitted to light the BBQ until 10am and after eventually getting the coals going, we cooked ribs, a whole chicken and our 'special recipe' part of which was prepared on the BBQ. Unfortunately our delegation did not win a place in the competition; however Fleur was drafted into the



Slovakian team, which picked up third place in one competition!

We also spent a day preparing 'sculptures' to burn by the lakeside as part of the 'fire' aspect of the trip. Encouraged to be as creative as possible, we proceeded to turn a log into a British post-box, which almost ended upside down! We saved our masterpiece and burnt it by the lakeside, as well as lighting lanterns and playing volleyball into the evening.

On the last evening Sulo had organised for us to visit an activity complex where we played bowling, went go-karting and experienced an Estonian sauna – very hot! The week was a great experience and I believe everyone took something away from the trip and made new friends.

Ducky Campbell



## A FAIRY TALE REALISED

## GM IN ZVOLEN

It all started more like a fairy-tale. It is said that tales always have happy endings. In addition it should have at least some baddies and a lot of goodies and it is supposed to start with a slow motion, live music and sun rising from the horizon along with the well known "Once upon a time....." The story I am going to reveal for you had its fights for right at its very beginning, but as it usually goes, all the dragons were slain before the happy ending.

So once upon a time there was a small town in the middle of a valley. This town has always been guarded by two castles, although not all the citizens were familiar with them. People lived here together but were not always united, in one town but not often in one mind. One sunny Friday we knew it needed to be changed, because we believed and we were right. This decision made us grow together more as a school and as a town.



We decided to invite all 27 Douzelage member towns to hold their 2012 AGM in Zvolen.

Being tired, worried, in doubts, often crazy by timing, always in touch and often touched by the intensity of it, all this was nothing compared to the power of smiles and joy we were able to share. We felt and we still do a huge dose of friendship in each email of support for our call for help. Our deepest thank you, said so many times, is real.

A long time before we could be proud that this event had happened, my new friend Zuzana, who managed all the work as a town council representative, asked me what on Earth all this Douzelage is about. Honestly to answer in few words I was not able at that moment. The very last evening and very last official moments of thanking and saying goodbyes, when I saw tears of happiness and friendship in her eyes, I was sure she knew, what Douzelage is.

Zuzana Laszlova



## REFLECTIONS ON THE DAYS OF INTEGRATION

This year 'Days of Integration' in Chojna was remarkable for two things.

The first was the now traditional return of the German inhabitants of the town who were forced to flee their homes in 1945 in the face of the Russian advance and many of whom settled then in Hanover. It remains as remarkable an example of reconciliation as one could ever hope to meet with.

Especially moving is the short service in the cemetery where the German soldiers who fell defending the town are remembered. The service is conducted by a Lutheran Minister supported by a Roman Catholic priest, with a brass ensemble playing the hymns and Poles and Germans together in attendance along with civic leaders. There then follows the ecumenical service in the largely restored church of St. Mary, conducted this year by the Roman Catholic bishop of Szezcin assisted by the Lutheran minister and with a large crowd from the town.

But secondly this year the Festival was enlivened by the presence of Romanian and Hungarian students from Siret and Köszeg and who, together with students from Chojna, were engaged on an EU Programme doing their own form of integration.

It involved all manner of activities, including dance, and the climax came in

the square in front of the *Centrum Culture* where public entertainment is provided each year. Here they danced their hearts out. First came the Rumanian and Hungarian dancers in traditional dress performed their particular dances, then all joined in traditional dances they had learnt on the course, and finally came modern dances which they all joined in on and which were simply dazzling.

The standard, the discipline of the dancing extraordinary. The entertainment was wonderful; the dancers' enthusiasm for what they were doing infectious. But above all, three disparate groups were now one, together, friends, integrated. It was thrilling and inspiring to behold! - the mission of the Douzelage fulfilled!

Jeremy Barker



St Mary Chojna

## WHAT IS SO SPECIAL ABOUT TRYAVNA

I was asked by a friend to write a short article about Tryavna. At first it seemed a boring task but then, when I started thinking about my town, I realized how much beauty and charm it has and how nice it is to live and work in a place like that.

In the small mountainous town of Tryavna, located in the center of Bulgaria, past and present mix together. Tryavna is the town of master wood-carvers and icon-painters and still keeps the spirit of the 18th and 19th century. The town is preferred by tourists for its pure mountain air, unique 19th century architecture, preserved ancient crafts and contemporary art.

In the 70s and 80s of the last century, several protected areas were designated in the region. Tryavna's natural sites, varied landscape forms, favourable climate and diverse forest plant-life provide for the



development of active tourism and recreation.

Tryavna is a place admired by the lovers of mountain passageways and picturesque adventures. The name of Tryavna comes from the word “grass”. Many, many years ago, in the ancient times Bulgarian kings and “bolyars”, living in the nearby old capital of Veliko Tynovo had their horses graze on the surrounding hills because of the succulent pastures around.

I and my family have chosen to live and work here intentionally. We gave ourselves the chance to enjoy the nice climate and beautiful nature during the four seasons – winters with very heavy snow and picturesque springs and autumns.





## WHAT IS SO SPECIAL ABOUT TRYAVNA

But what we like most is the crowded summers, not only because of the many tourists visiting, but also because of the young and cheerful people coming for their holidays, our daughter included.

We are only about 10 000 people living in Tryavna. Most of us know each other and life is easy. People are friendly and collaborative, open-minded and supportive, creative and innovative.

The Street of Old crafts is a place to have a relaxing walk in the evening, chat over a glass of red wine in a traditional restaurant, buy a souvenir-present, or suddenly meet an old friend from another town or even another country. I am not joking; I have met old international friends there several times. It is a special place, it is Tryavna's "Piccadilly Circus", where if you stay long enough you inevitably meet an old friend.



If you dare come to Tryavna you will enjoy the old Town Square with the Clock Tower and the Arch Bridge. At 10.00 sharp in the evening the Clock Tower will sing a traditional Bulgarian song to you about a Kalina (a female tree) and a Yavor (a male tree) and their unforgettable love.

You will meet crazy drivers, dangerous but beautiful women, drink endless quantities of live beer and learn a lot from us, as each Bulgarian is "a Jack of all trades".

Enthusiasts can find beautiful pictures from Tryavna and the surroundings following this link: <http://www.tryavna.bg/photogallery/photogallery.html> or just visit the official web portal [www.tryavna.bg](http://www.tryavna.bg), mostly in Bulgarian, unfortunately.

Kalina Toteva



## CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW OF A REWARDING YEAR

As Sherborne Douzelage comes to the end of another very busy year we can look back in pride at our achievements. 74 people from our partner towns visited Sherborne and over 80 Sherborne people visited our partner towns, including 5 groups of young people going to projects in Cyprus, Estonia, Slovakia, Poland and Slovenia.

I wish to thank our committee members, their families, local organisations and many others without whom this activity level would have been impossible. I'd also like to thank our Mayor Peter Rhodes and Councillor Jon Andrews for their support, especially in the Volunteering events.

We concurrently ran two major local projects, VolunTEAMing and Together Across Generations (TAG), that have brought us into closer working with many other organisations. Detailed reports are available on the Sherborne Douzelage website [www.douzelage.org](http://www.douzelage.org). Both projects brought us into closer

working with many other organisations. Formal registration of Sherborne Douzelage by the Charity Commission recognises our charitable status and as an NGO it will give us greater opportunity when applying for EU grants.

I look forward to a quieter year for projects in Sherborne, but already we have adult groups making visit arrangements, such as the walking group from Chojna and the new exchanges with a Danish Short Mat Bowls group. We will hold at least two fundraising social events, and hopefully another event for Siret. We look forward to working with our Gryphon Youth Group, and the challenge that young people can bring. We welcome all people of Sherborne to join in our activities and to arrange exchanges with our partner towns. I am sure that we will have a superb time, especially at the General Meeting in Bellagio, Italy.

Kevin Waterfall

VolunTEAMing  
Conference



## THE OISU BAND RETURNS

Last August, an intrepid group of fourteen Estonians, the Oisu band from Türi, threw themselves on the mercy of the Wessex Morris Men for a return visit to Dorset.

After an eventful flight, they arrived at Sherborne in their minibus and were whisked off by their Wessex hosts. No sooner had they eaten and settled in, than they were off to the Griffins Head Inn at Nether Compton for a music and song session, much enjoyed by all.

The next day, Saturday, saw a display of music and dance in Sherborne followed by a coach tour to see the Giant at Cerne Abbas and then to lunch and give a public display in the county town, Dorchester. The plan was to show off some of the most beautiful scenery in Dorset, from Portland and along the Jurassic Coast on the way to West Bay. Sadly, the weather did not cooperate; the coast was shrouded in thick fog. Ever resourceful, one of the Morris Men described the beautiful though invisible view from Portland, over the coach's public address.

At West Bay, ice creams were eaten and some paddled in the sea, before returning to Sherborne. In the evening we held a ceilidh with joint Estonian and English bands, callers and dances.

On the Sunday the weather treated us more kindly and we enjoyed barbeque at sunny Kings Stag, which provided music, song, food (and beer!) until very late.

On the Monday, the party split between a visit to Wells cathedral, a walk around Cadbury castle led by Jeremy Barker and shopping in Sherborne. In the afternoon, with an emotional parting, the Estonian party left us for London, where they spent the next day before heading home. Altogether, the visit was a great success. The Oisu Band got to see some more of Dorset, new and old friendships were cemented and a lot of great folk music and dance was shared.

Jim Gailer



## OUR COMMITTEE IN 2013



President: The Mayor of Sherborne  
 Chair: Kevin Waterfall  
 Vice Chair: Moira Western  
 Secretary: Mary Clothier                      Treasurer: Clifton Jelbert  
 Education Chair: Nicki Edwards  
 Newsletter Editor: Michael Morrell  
 Twinning Representative: Scilla Copper  
 Other Members: Marcus Ainley, Lin Ashby, Mike Balfour, Jeremy Barker,  
 Lin Bygrave, Chris Campbell, Meg Crothers, Jane Smith, Sarah Whittick,  
 Jeremy Wilton

## FUTURE EVENTS IN 2013

4 - 8 February Holstebro Denmark Short Bowls Visit  
 8 - 11 February Granville France Carnaval Visit  
 April Bad Kötzing Germany Students visit Sherborne  
 9 - 12 May 38th General Meeting in Bellagio Italy  
 28 June - 4 July Travel Free Youth Project in Sušice Czech Republic  
 July Catering Students from Chojna in Sherborne  
 14 - 18 August Visitors from Chojna walking in Sherborne  
 4 - 8 September Walking in Meerssen Holland  
 October Return Short Mat Bowls visit from Holstebro

We are also planning some fund raising social activities .

For full details contact Mary Clothier on 01963 251255 or see our website

[www.sherbornetown.com/directory/Sherborne-douzelage.aspx](http://www.sherbornetown.com/directory/Sherborne-douzelage.aspx)