



NEWSLETTER JULY 2016

OUR FIRST LADY PRESIDENT

Dear Douzelage friends!

It is my pleasure to address my dear friends in Sherborne as your new President of Douzelage Europe. Together with 3 vice-presidents - Mette Sørensen from Holstebro, Tibi Rotaru from Siret and Miha Jese from Skofja Loka, I will be glad and honored to commit myself to this interesting and challenging task for at least 3 years.

After the shock vote for Brexit, I believe we cannot dismiss one of our founding 'fathers' as a result of the referendum. We have to discuss the 'how?' with all our Douzelage partners at the next GM in Bad Kötzting if not before. You will have our support in every possible way. In 2011 I joined the committee in Meerssen and since then have been an active believer in the potential of Douzelage. I came to know the 'Douzelage of 27' and since Tryavna (2016), we are proud to be with 28 members, welcoming beautiful Rovinj in Croatia. We are indeed a large group of friends!

What I have seen these last five years is a colourful, close group of friends, interested in each others cultures and mostly prepared to connect. We are a non-political group (so glad we are!), but we cannot ignore the signals that threaten

unity within Europe. The British, the Greeks, the Dutch, the Austrians and others are facing serious challenges .

I want to emphasize that the future of the EU lies in the hands of a generation that has no recollection of a divided Europe and of a war. We can be of help setting an example for our younger generation. What values a united Europe has in store for each of us and by teaching them about the benefits of our united Europe. **And** we need to listen to our youngsters, discuss and learn!

Our Youth Meeting is a great asset; I'm sure we all agree on that. But after graduation, youngsters tend to leave their home towns and study



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elsewhere. At this point we 'lose' youngsters with potential and commitment to Douzelage. Thanks to social media and modern communication, the young do not particularly **need** to be geographically linked to a town as long as their loyalty to Douzelage is alive. We cannot afford to lose track of them! So let's include them as long as possible even when they are living elsewhere. They are our continuity and future.

The appointment of a youth president is a good step in this direction and I am so glad that Elizabeth Does of Sherborne – who has been an active member within Douzelage for many years already (as if she was old and grey ;)) – has been appointed for this new task. I am in favour of finding more ways to involve young people with Douzelage.

As proud as I am of our 28 befriended towns, I am also aware of the fact that our group is large and diverse, and that it is not always possible to stay in touch with everyone. Therefore it would be an

idea to introduce 'in between' meetings for those towns that are geographically close or are simply interested in seeing each other more often. Meerssen for example meets Houffalize and Niederaanven once a year in a Benelux Meeting in which we discuss and organise projects and enjoy each others' company. I am sure this kind of meeting makes it easier for people in our towns to connect.

Last year during our meeting in Siret the break-out sessions or workgroups were introduced.

These smaller discussion groups give room for all of us to express ideas and set up future projects. Since this is the life blood of Douzelage, I am all in favour of continuing this practice.

Janusz Cezary Salamonczyk did a great job as president of Douzelage for six years! I would like to thank him wholeheartedly for all his efforts.

Before us lies the serious task of maintaining a strong Douzelage, with a sustainable involvement of our youth sharing the European values and fostering cross-connections between our members. May Douzelage continue to set an example for anyone willing to explore European cooperation!

Annijge Luns-Kruytbosch

WHAT THE DOUZELAGE MEANS FOR US

It was a real pleasure for us to be the host of the Douzelage General Meeting in Tryavna this May. It was a huge event in which nearly 140 delegates from 26 twinned towns took part.

Organizing such an event was a great challenge. Many months ago we applied for funding through the Europe for Citizens Programme. Unfortunately our project proposal was not one of the 12 from 175 who were awarded funding.

Nevertheless we carried on our preparation activities. I want to share my thanks to Cezary, the ex-president of the Douzelage, for his long-lasting support and collaboration all the time. He was always there with advice sharing his huge experience with me. I admit I would not have been able to handle it all without him.

But let's talk about the feeling of being a part of the event.

Douzelage is a friendship not depending on nationality, cultural differences or age. It has this special atmosphere, a positive energy, smiling people ... all the friendly moments shared. This was the Douzelage Meeting for me.

Of course there was also a great responsibility and challenge which I accepted with pleasure. The whole

team involved in the preparation of the event gave their best to win the satisfaction of participants. And believe me, there is no better award for the hard work than friends' positive assessment.

These four days passed as an instant for me and although a little bit tired, I missed the energy of it all. I wished I had more time to spare with all participants and pay attention to each one.

I must also pay tribute to Annigie our first Lady President. What she said both publicly and privately after her election surely emphasized her commitment to the Spirit of the Douzelage.

Dear friends, we are so happy that we had the opportunity to meet all of you and be a part of the Douzelage!

Daniela Petkova



NEW THRILLS IN EASTERN EUROPE

We set out early in the dark hours of the morning on an adventure to the far east of Europe. Our purpose was to take part in the Douzelage annual meeting held in Tryavna, Bulgaria.

Travelling a day early, we were able to briefly enjoy the delights of Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. Sofia holds a mix of different cultural influences due to its history and all are evident sometimes within the same street. The main highlight was the Orthodox Christian church in the centre of Sofia, boasting immaculate murals on its interior. We followed this up with a traditional lunch in a small café to get a true taste of typical Bulgarian food (and drink...).

The next day signalled the start of the conference and after travelling through the Bulgarian countryside of mountains and forests we arrived in Tryavna. Vastly differently to Sofia, this small town was very similar to Sherborne in size and in terms of the community.

We were overwhelmed by the sheer number of individuals who had congregated from all over Europe to this conference and it was a pleasure to get to know so many of them. As members of the youth delegation we joined

in with activities to showcase our cultures and traditions from our own towns and countries. The medium through which this was chosen was arts & crafts. The Sherborne display was made up of Dorset Buttons, Corn Dollies and Tully's very own mechanical snowman! Tryavna showcased their arts and crafts by showing us a local arts college and introducing us to traditions such as leaf-painting, wood-carving and went even further by showing us traditional dances!

A Douzelage trip never disappoints in creating unforgettable memories and forging strong friendships. In July we intend to meet up with youth delegates from Meerssen, Netherlands and Asikkala, Finland to catch up from where we left off in Tryavna. The food and drink was scrumptious, the hospitality was fantastic and the whole experience was one we definitely intend to repeat!

Richard Jenkins & Tully Butler



PICTURES FROM TRYAVNA



DOUZYOUTH

This year 2 Youth delegates from Sherborne attended the General Meeting in Tryavna. Two of which Elizabeth Does, and Tully Butler are general committee members of Sherborne Douzelage, and the third is a local boy, Richard Jenkins.

We arrived in the capital, Sofia the day before and visited local monuments, the cathedral, the icon museum, public baths, the basilica, various lovely churches, and the ancient Roman ruins of Serdica. We ate in local restaurants and took in the Bulgarian culture.

On Thursday at the airport we met delegates from the other Douzelage towns. The coach to Tryavna took just under 4 hours, but the views were breathtaking. The forests and landscape was so lush and plentiful, with layers of variety, colour and beauty. In the evening we arrived at the Kalina Palace hotel, in Tryavna, where after a welcome dinner we saw a wonderful performance from the 'Zornitsa' dancers.

On Friday the meeting began with speeches by the Mayor of Tryavna, Mr Doncho Zahariev and President of Douzelage Mr Cezary Salamonczyk. The first highlight was the unanimous acceptance and warm welcome to Rovinj, Croatia as our 28th member town. Later we had an exhibition in the square themed 'traditions of my region' to

which youth from each country had bought homemade crafts.

After lunch we had workshops in groups together with teachers and students from the national arts and crafts school (associated member of the global school network of UNESCO), before touring around the beautiful school and workshops, where we participated in wood-carving and icon painting. After a walk around the local shops and pebbled streets we gathered in the square to view stalls of handmade folk instruments, and then attended a magnificent concert of folklore dancing by the group 'Trakia'.

Following dinner we gathered in the square to watch the 'dancing on fire of coals' demonstration, where as the title suggests dancers, barefoot, performed on burning hot coals. It was a community affair with the young and old, Tryavna locals and members of all the Douzelage countries hands joined in unity, dancing together around the burning coals. Then whilst we were gathered together in the square, a movie of florescent lights mounted on the church tower became a story of how Tryavna was born! The finale; a

DOUZYOUTH

beautiful display of fireworks above us. was a great end to a lovely day.

On Saturday the new president and vice presidents of Douzelage, and the new Douzyouth Committee, Chairman, and Vice Chairman were elected. Annigje Kruytbosch (Netherlands) was elected as the new President, and Mette Grith Sørensen (Denmark), Tibi Rotaru (Romania) and Miha Jase (Slovenia) were elected as the vice presidents.

The first ever youth committee was elected of 7 members; Elizabeth Dores, United Kingdom (Chairman), Ryan Portelli, Malta (Vice Chairman), Sabine Birzniece, Latvia (Vice chairman), Luka Nunar (Slovenia), Megan Mcgee (Ireland), Patrycja Tyczynska (Poland), and Kitti Mercz (Hungary). A discussion followed as to our aims for next year.

Douzyouth would like to thank everyone who made this General Meeting in Bulgaria a hagsuccess. We aim to exceed expectations creating a successful and effective youth presence and energy within Douzelage.

Elizabeth Dores (Chairman)

OUR AIMS

1. To write our own programme with the hosting country; including less games and social activity and more structure, work and discussion
2. Increase our project participation and apply for funding from the European Commission, Youth in Action, local and international organisations.
3. Organise youth committees in each town with regular meetings and fundraising (especially ones that have a Douzyouth committee member to represent them)
4. Organise regional meetings and meetings of the Douzyouth committee every 3 months in a different country
5. Increase our work on social media, online campaigns, videos, Facebook, Twitter and expand our website
6. Have two seats in the general meeting for the Chairman and a Deputy Chairman.



DIVERSITY OF THE SIGULDIETIS DANCERS

In September 2015 an event took place that has been planned for more than a year, when dancers from Sigulda (Latvia) visited Marsaskala (Malta). During the Malta visit dance group “Siguldietis” took part at the main event of the Jum Marsaskala, festivity of the city – gala concert, where we introduced Latvian culture through the dance and music to Marsaskala locals and visitors.

Now we are enthusiastic about opportunity to be a part of International Festival of Folk Music and Dance in Sherborne, which is coming in August.

Our Latvian folk dance group “Siguldietis” gathers dancers from many different occupancies – bookkeeper, musician, director of school, teacher, doctor, sales person, business owner, gardener, clerk and more, who are 25 to 50 years old.

Since dance is where people can express themselves in many different ways, folk dance is no different. Dancers need skills such as rhythm, strength, power, coordination and many more. Dance is the way to talk to people, where no language translator is needed.

We are preparing a great programme of many Latvian choreographic dances, that will be visible on festival concerts in many parts of Sherborne. Also we will give some lessons for childrens, youngsters and adults of Sherborne and festival visitors, where everyone can learn something about dance, music, movements and Latvian traditions.

We know that Sherborne Douzelage are working hard for this event to be a success and therefore we are very thankful for this important work for culture exchanges, that could give us better understanding about unique nations and cultures and spirit of the European Union.

Guntars Zvejnieks



25TH ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL

Next month we will celebrate 25 years of the Douzelage of which Sherborne was a founder member. Now we are 28 and celebrations will be taking place across Europe.

Sherborne Douzelage will have the International Festival of Music and Dance from August 19th to 21st in the town and surrounding villages. Dancers and Musicians will come from Sigulda in Latvia, Susice in the Czech Republic, and Bundoran in Ireland. Local groups will include the Wessex Morris Men, the Yetminster Irish Dancers, No Mean Feet and Treacle Clog.

On the Friday during the day as well as performing in public in Chetnole, Thornford and Bradford Abbas, they will be dancing at the Old Vicarage Leigh care home. In the evening in Sherborne they will be playing in the White Hart and the Crown Inn.

Saturday morning they will perform on the Abbey Green and in Cheap St. In the afternoon you can see them in Pageant Gardens, where refreshments will be available.

The highlight will be the Gala Concert on the Saturday evening in the Digby Hall, Hound St. For this feast of music tickets can be bought for £10 from the Tourist Information,

Winstone's Bookshop or Mary Clothier 01963 251255.

The Museum will have a window display and children's competition in various shop windows. Adult and Children Dance Classes, and Presentations and Workshops covering Folk and other Cultural traditions will be held in the Digby Hall Hound St.

These celebrations have been supported by a leading Charitable Trust, several businesses and West Dorset District Council. They are doing this because of the great pleasure and help that the Douzelage has brought to people of all ages both in West Dorset and elsewhere in Europe over the last 25 years.

Do come and celebrate with us.

Michael Morrell - Editor



OUR LIVES, HOMES, SCHOOL AND SHERBORNE

A PRESENTATION IN CHOJNA BY ALEX BRINSFORD AND FREDERICK WHITTICK

Alex Brinsford and I, Frederick Whittick, year 10, were picked up by Mr Barker and Mr MacAdie at 4am to drive to Bristol airport on Wednesday the 1st of June. We boarded the plane and were greeted at 9.45 in Poznań Ławica airport from where we were driven to Chojna our Polish twin town.

We had lunch at 1.00 in the Piastowska restaurant at the hotel where we were staying, then at 4pm Alex and I had a trip to Moryń, a nearby village, sightseeing. At 7pm we had dinner at the Piastowska restaurant with Ada (Headmistress), Cezary (English teacher and former President of the Douzelage organisation) and 2 Polish students.



On Thursday, 2nd June we woke up at 6.30am, were ready for breakfast at 8 and at 9 we had a tour of the secondary school in Chojna. We then ran an English lesson at 10.50 and watched a Geography lesson at 11.45. Lunch was at 1.30 at the school canteen.

In the afternoon we went on a trip to the Northern city of Szczecin, sightseeing. Dinner was at 8pm, yet again in the wonderful Piastowska restaurant.

On Friday, 3rd June we had breakfast and were picked up by a mini bus and taken to a Primary School in nearby Grzybno where we gave a power point presentation on 'Our lives, homes, school and Sherborne' to all 80 pupils and their teachers for 'English Day'.

We were also entertained and listened to songs and music and watched activities. After driving back to Chojna for a 1.30 lunch, we were picked up and taken on a trip to The Valley of Love. Here we walked

HALF TERM IN CHOJNA

and had a bonfire and a barbecue with 5 teachers, who will visit Sherborne later in the year.

Dinner was meant to be at 8 in the Piastowska, but we were all too full to eat anything!



On Saturday, 4th June Alex and I went out for a day with students from the Douzelage Club in Chojna. We were riding bikes, sightseeing and had lunch in a pizzeria. At 3.30pm we watched a 5 and 10k run around the town, then at 7.30pm we had our last dinner at the Piastowska restaurant – the food was always very Polish but delicious and there was always lots of it.

One of the most surprising things was that it was 28 degrees every day and we were really hot and got

a good sun tan – we weren't expecting that in Poland!

On Sunday the 5th of June we woke up at 4.45am and got ready to leave and were picked up at 5.45 for our long trip home.

It was a great way to spend 5 days of half term. So we would like to say thank you to everyone in Chojna, who were so kind to set up such an interesting trip for us and to the Douzelage Youth Travel Fund and the Chojna Twinning Committee who helped us with the arrangements and the travel. We would like very much to visit some of our other European twin towns in the future.



OUR COMMITTEE IN 2016



Chair: Cliff Jelbert
 Vice Chair: Marcus Ainley

Secretary: Mary Clothier Treasurer: Jane Smith
 Education Chair: Sarah Whittick Youth Chair: Elizabeth Does

Newsletter Editor: Michael Morrell

Twinning Representative: Scilla Copper

Other Members: Lin Ashby, Mike Balfour, Jeremy Barker,
 Tully Butler, Linda Bygrave, Ray Dyson (Wessex Morris Men),
 Chris MacAdie, Kevin Waterfall, Moira Western

FUTURE EVENTS

25th Anniversary International Festival Of Music and Dance	19th to 21st August
Meerssen 25th Anniversary Celebration	September
Polish film	September
International Youth Committee meeting	November
Sherborne Douzelage AGM	16th November
Granville Carnaval	23rd to 28th February 2017
42nd General Meeting in Bad Kötzing	11th to 14th May 2017
For further details contact Mary Clothier on 01963 251255 or see updates at sherborne-douzelage.org.uk/whats on	