



# NEWSLETTER



November 2018

Website: <http://exetertwinningcircle.wordpress.com>



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### 1. Your Newsletter

Another year is coming to a close, giving us the perfect time to wish our friends and family love and happiness, the time to reflect on the year that went by and to remember all those people, who made it special. So, here is your Christmas ETC Newsletter.

The ETC 'Winter Event' will be a **Christmas Party** at the Cardinal Newman Centre on Saturday, **December 8, 2018**.

The cost is **£13.50** pp for Members and **£14.50** pp for Friends/Guests.

Please fill in the 'Reply Slip' and send it to **Josie Mardon, Heimat, 35 Woodwater Lane, Exeter, EX2 5JY. Tel: 01392 253 469** by Friday, **November 23, 2018**.

All ETC members are welcome to attend the **DTC Meeting** which will be held on Saturday, **January 19, 2019** in EXETER! ETC is hosting



this meeting and the ETC Committee will welcome your support and participation. So please come for the lunch and then stay for the meeting or just attend the meeting. For all details please contact **Josie Mardon** by email: [mandj@heimat.plus.com](mailto:mandj@heimat.plus.com) or telephone: 01392 253 469.

Please make a note in your diaries that the ETC **Annual General Meeting** is a lunchtime event which is on Monday, **February 11, 2019** at the Devon Hotel, Matford, Exeter, EX2 8XU. All the paperwork will be sent to you in January 2019.

We would remind ALL members that subscriptions are due on **January 1, 2019** for the forthcoming year.

The membership subscription is **£11.00** for a single person **£15.00** for a couple or a family

Please make cheques payable to Exeter Twinning Circle and send your subscription to:

**David Parsons**  
5 Spinney Close  
Exeter  
EX2 5PE  
Tel: 01392 278764



Members will be deemed to have not renewed membership if their subscription remains unpaid by **April 1, 2019**.

If you have any queries please contact David Parsons by email on [etc.membership@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:etc.membership@yahoo.co.uk) or telephone: 01392 278764



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## 2. Word from the Chair

Hello Twinners!

Since the last Newsletter the main event has of course been the visit of a group of 16 of our friends in Bad Homburg from 2nd – 8<sup>th</sup> November. Despite the expected dodgy November weather, it was a great success and you can read all about it in Alison's article. "Wolfgang Herder told me he is looking forward to our return visit in 2019." At the splendid farewell dinner on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> in the University's Reed Hall we had Deputy Lord Mayor Cllr Rachel Lyons as guest of honour and I made this little speech which I thought I might share with you:

*Deputy Lord Mayor, distinguished guests, Exeter and Bad Homburg Friends.*

*It seems only yesterday that we were celebrating 50 years of twinning with Bad Homburg, and yet that was already 3 years ago! Last year – the first week of December - we had a wonderful pre-Christmas visit to Bad Homburg which those of us who took part remember with great pleasure. I don't think we can reproduce that German Christmas atmosphere over here, but you will enjoy a typical if very early British Christmas Dinner here tonight. I hope, dear friends from Bad Homburg, you have enjoyed the beauty of our region well outside our tourist season despite uncertain weather and have also learnt how on November 5th we celebrate with fireworks the failed attempt over 400 years ago to blow up the English Parliament with gunpowder! You could say perhaps that nowadays the political atmosphere in our House of Commons is explosive without gunpowder!*

*I think we in Exeter Twinning Circle are all very conscious of the importance of the personal links between our twin cities, especially in this difficult political period. Our links at civic level are also important and we are very conscious of and thankful for the continued support of Exeter City Council. I really should avoid mentioning politics in my speech, but it occurred to me that if over here we are wondering what life will be like after Brexit, perhaps in Germany you are wondering what life will be like after Angela!*

*Any visit involves a great deal of teamwork and I would like to express my thanks to the committee who helped to prepare the programme: Alison,*

*David, Julie and Maurice but especially our secretary Josie Mardon who has put in so much hard work these past weeks and not least the attractive printed programme!*

*I'd like to add a few words for Wolfgang Herder who's the pillar of the Bad-Homburg partnership. I know that a few months ago you had a special birthday Wolfgang, so congratulations and thanks for everything!*

*So friends, I will now conclude and simply say enjoy your meal – guten Appetit!*

We have just celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> World War and it is perhaps a moment for us to remember that one of the reasons that led to the twinning movement was a desire to create understanding at a personal level between nations that had recently been at war.

On a more downbeat note we had to cancel the event in Clyst St George village hall planned for October 13<sup>th</sup> due to insufficient numbers.

However, we look forward to seeing you at our ever-popular Christmas Party in the Cardinal Newman Centre on December 8<sup>th</sup> and any prizes for the raffle will be welcome! One other thing: on January 19<sup>th</sup> ETC is hosting the Devon Twinning Circle for a meeting at the Cardinal Newman Centre.

So, all that remains for me now is to wish you a **MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

*John Whitton*

**PS Stop press:** Express and Echo published a short piece on 15th November about the visit with photo of the Guildhall reception.



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## 3. “We Couldn't Wait to See You Again”

### **The TWINNING Celebration in November Exeter – Bad Homburg**

I was asked to write something about the visit. I could not make it short because there were so many highlights during the week in wonderful Exeter.

This time we couldn't wait to see you again, so we came just 11 months after your visit to Bad

Homburg in 2017. The usual rhythm of two years between the mutual meetings will start in 2020 again. That will give you, and also us, time for organising all our other obligations.

Coming via Bristol this time the journey seemed a bit shorter - but it took some hours, time for looking forward to seeing our familiar friends again. There were a couple of newcomers this time, being a bit nervous and curious, but on our way home you could no longer decide whether newcomer or "oldie" - they all seemed to have a deep pleasure with their experience.

In Exeter our friends were waiting for us at the Falcon bus station - that was the first heart-opener and heart-warmer. In the evening there were first meeting in different groups in different houses. Saturday brought us to Knightshayes - a traditional Manor House with a wonderful large park. We spent the day in that wonderful location and again there were meetings of groups in different houses in the evening.

Sunday: again tradition at its best: in an antique train with steam-engine (heart-beating) which took us to Minehead, the rain was outside, but nice chats with hosts and guests inside – and outside very green grass and the wonderful landscape, even some sheep to be seen.



After the train-ride we changed into a coach, drove to Dunster, where a special lunch was served.



After the meal there were some "wet" minutes, but we were able to walk along the main road. Then back into the coach again, via Exmoor (no stars to be seen in the sky) to Bickleigh Mill.



There we enjoyed a splendid 3 course meal, (huge Yorkshire-Pudding) ever so traditional with apple-crumble and custard. We felt in heaven because of the delightful food, no matter whether we saw extra stars beyond the rain and darkness or not.

Monday: a further tradition waited to be celebrated: Cream Tea in the Victoria Hotel

Sidmouth. Before we took the tea, there was a very refreshing walk along the seaside in front of the hotel. You heard Aah, and Ooh for the building from the outside and later inside for the white table clothed room with a splendid view over the beach and sea. The mood of the guests and hosts was in the best possible condition, when the scones with cream and strawberry jam were served. The location showed the tradition of holidays at the seaside in the last centuries. People like tradition and you lucky people have a lot of it.

Late afternoon took us to Westpoint to enjoy a fantastic firework display accompanied by music. Weather perfect, very dark sky - perfect as background for the colourful bursting fireworks. Every year on the 5th November this magnificent show is presented to commemorate Guy Fawkes (17th century). Happy and inspired, we went home singing and chatting.

Next morning, quite early, we drove to Tiverton Castle for a guided tour by a lady aristocrat. To get explanations by the owner of the Castle was so interesting and we were happy to hear about the families who occupied it over centuries. She even offered tea and biscuits and made us feel so welcome.

In the evening again an experience: Reed Hall at the University. That was one of the top offers of tradition. It was a pre-Christmas Christmas Dinner with Christmas-Pudding etc. Additionally, Heather brought her magic hand-bells and made some of us play the bells and sing English and German songs. We felt absorbed by the indescribable atmosphere. Glorious Tradition! The last day arrived: Guildhall doors were opened, and we all felt the history and tradition of this place. Another very impressive moment came with the reception of the Deputy Lord Mayor and the display and explanation of the silver treasure. After all that, our way led to Exeter Cathedral with the Winter Fair, a presentation of local homemade products. Thank you all for the wide variety of impressions - bonds of friendship have been tightened again and will last further on.

We are looking forward to seeing you again in 2020 (visit either in or out every 2 years - see Newsletter Nov 2011)



*Helga Hahnenbruch*



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#### **4. Visit from Bad Homburg November 2018**

From Nov.2 – Nov.8<sup>th</sup> we had the pleasure of welcoming 16 guests from Bad Homburg, including the former Bürgermeister of Bad Homburg, Karl Krug and his wife Elke Barth, who is a County Councillor for the Landtag in Hessen. Karl was with us for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015.

Wolfgang Herder did an excellent job of recruiting 4 new members to the twinning partnership: Ralf Gandenberger, Irmhild Dörschel and Cornelia and Peter Humbert.

New friends and old travelled for the first time on the BMI flight to Bristol and then with the Falcon bus service to Exeter.

Our first evening was spent meeting up in small groups in each other's homes.

The programme included a visit to Knightshayes on Saturday, where everyone enjoyed exploring the house and gardens, which used to belong to the Heathcote Amory family.

The day trip by steam train on the West Somerset Railway on Sunday in our own reserved coach from Bishops Lydeard to Minehead was an opportunity to travel back in time and see the lovely Somerset countryside and coastline, even if the rain was streaming down the train windows!!



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We managed to have lunch in Dunster and look round without getting wet, before the rain returned with a vengeance as we travelled by coach up Porlock Hill to Exford and Bickleigh Mill. The cloud also covered the sky on what should have been an evening of star gazing as part of the Exmoor Dark Skies festival. However, we enjoyed chatting together and the beautiful ferns and beech hedges were stunning in the late autumn light, not to mention the many pheasants straying onto the road along the way!

After a beautiful summer and autumn, the weather did well and truly break during this day trip, but nothing was too much trouble for our experienced driver Adam, from Kingdom's

Coaches, who navigated the challenges of Porlock Hill and Exford as well as the wayward pheasants with great skill.

After a stop in Exford for a photo and a drink, we continued to Bickleigh Mill for a delicious three - course meal. We had made choices before the trip from three options for each course. Kim and his team worked with efficiency and speed. Despite the fact that one or two people had forgotten what they'd ordered, Kim accommodated everyone's choices and the food was hot and delicious!



During the meal Christine Kuhlemann presented Wolfgang with his own mini Gin tasting experience on behalf of the German group as a mark of their gratitude for his organisation of the visit.

On Monday November 5<sup>th</sup>, we travelled by coach to Sidmouth and after walking along the promenade and into the town we met up again for a cream tea in the elegant setting of the Victoria Hotel. Our guests loved this taste of regal England.

The evening fireworks at Westpoint were impressive and once again our coach driver did a really good job of negotiating our prompt exit.



We were welcomed on Tuesday at Tiverton Castle, by the owner, Alison Gordon with coffee and biscuits. An informative tour followed which tested our knowledge of English history!



The celebratory Christmas dinner was held on Tuesday evening at Exeter University in Reed Hall.



We were very fortunate to be joined by the Deputy Lord Mayor, Rachel Lyons and her daughter Christine Raybould - Gooding, as well as Bindu Arjoon, who is to be Exeter City's next Director and Baan Al-Khasaji, the city solicitor. Christmas turkey, complete with stuffing and pigs in blankets, not forgetting the amazing hats, crackers and awful jokes gave us the full British

Christmas experience. Heather Dark and her daughter Jane taught us the basics of hand-bell ringing with clarity and patience and we finished by playing and singing carols in both languages!



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This was a delightful way to end our week. There's nothing like music for bringing people together!

The programme ended on Wednesday with the official reception in the Guildhall when the Deputy Lord Mayor welcomed the visitors to both the city and its ancient town hall. Wolfgang presented a letter from the Oberbürgermeister of Bad Homburg, Alexander Hetjes, to the Mayor of Exeter, Rob Hannaford and gave commemorative cups from the spa, engraved in gold to both the Deputy Lord Mayor and to John Whitton as chairman of Exeter Twinning Circle. The porcelain came from the Czech Republic and the cups were issued to mark the centenary of Bad Homburg's tradition of wellness.



Our visitors then spent their last day exploring the Winter Craft Fair in the Cathedral, and saying their goodbyes over a drink or a meal with their hosts.



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Many, many thanks are due to Wolfgang and his committee and to John and Josie, Maurice, David, Julie and Alison who planned the programme. We would particularly like to thank Josie for her tireless attention to detail. The programme was very attractive, as was the special Twinning Christmas tree.

Wolfgang wrote a message to us on his return in which he called us as 'family'.

That sums up perfectly the deep friendships we have all formed.

*Alison Sykes*



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### 5. A Date Worth Putting in Your Diary

On Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2019 – yes, it's not very far away now! – it's Exeter Twinning Circle's turn to host a quarterly meeting of the Devon Twinning Circle. These meetings usually take the form of a lunch, followed by a very light, and short, business session just to update us with twinning around the County, and a speaker, finishing up with tea and cake and biscuits. The actual committee of the Devon Twinning Circle have their business meeting prior to the lunch.

For this upcoming meeting the Cardinal Newman Hall has been booked and we plan to do a buffet lunch of soup, main and dessert – almost all home prepared - with soft drinks and wine which can be purchased separately. The speaker we have arranged is David Littlefair, a very humorous and light-hearted speaker on various topical subjects. There will also be a raffle – and, of course, plenty of opportunity for chat. All-in-all, we hope, a very pleasant and enjoyable event.

For those of you not familiar with it, Devon Twinning Circle is an "umbrella" organisation for all the Twinning groups in the villages, towns and cities of Devon. They provide us with our Public Liability Insurance and also Travel Insurance for any Twinner that needs it, up to the age of 83 years, and at a very reasonable rate. They also keep us up to date with any changes in legislation and regulations which may affect our twinning practices. One of the greater benefits is that they give all of us the chance to meet people from other twinning associations in Devon and discuss how they do things and perhaps get some good

ideas for ourselves, and, in some cases, even become members of their groups as well as our own. Their quarterly meetings, held in various places around the County, are open to all members of all twinning groups.

Very shortly you will receive the formal invitation to this event and we hope to get a good turnout of members attending – as a fun and interesting afternoon, as well as showing the rest of the County what a vibrant and active Twinning circle we are in Exeter. As always, we do need volunteers to help with meeting and greeting, catering, set up of the hall and so on. Raffle prizes would also be very much welcomed. If you feel you can help with any of this please, contact myself or Josie Mardon to discuss things.

*Brenda Kite*



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### 6. Dates for Your Diary

**Every Third Thursday of Each Month -  
'Coffee Meet' at Ferns Cafe – from 11:00**

**Saturday, December 8, 2018 – ETC Christmas Party, Cardinal Newman Centre**

**Saturday, December 8, 2018 - Lord Mayor's Charity Coffee Morning, Exeter Guildhall from 10:00 to 14:00**

**Monday, February 11, 2019 – ETC AGM**



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### 7. ETC Twinning Groups Contacts

**Your contact for Bad Homburg**

- Alison Sykes [alisonSykes14@gmail.com](mailto:alisonSykes14@gmail.com)

**Your contact for Rennes**

- John Whitton [johnbwhitton@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:johnbwhitton@yahoo.co.uk)

**Your contact for Terracina**

- Mara Attwater [mara.attwater@gmail.com](mailto:mara.attwater@gmail.com)



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