



NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2018

For the first time since 2002, Oxelösund hosted the 43rd Douzelage General Meeting with 27 countries from Europe. With great pleasure we welcomed Antanas, Vilma and Jurgita from our newest Douzelage member town, Rokiškis in Lithuania. And from Friday till Sunday unbroken sunshine shone brightly over Oxelösund, Douzelage's third most northerly town in the network.

Oxelösund's beautifully organised team was enthusiastically led by the mayor Catharina Fredriksson, ably assisted always by her team Johan Persson, Goran Cengic, Johan Petersson, Niklas Thelin and Linnéa Stenfeldt.

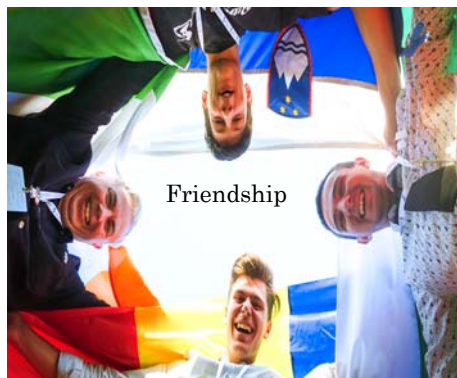
All together, across the simultaneous meetings, General, Educational and Youth, 168 delegates and non-delegates shared meetings, workshops, lunches, suppers, excursions, conversations and dances together. The workshops this year concentrated on the refugee issues of integration through learning languages, civic society issues and culture. Once again it was a really successful and enjoyable Douzelage event.

My thanks, as Chair, also go out to Jill Hogben, Sherborne's mayor, for joining us this year at the General Meeting and for her excellent and supportive speech about Sherborne's ongoing commitment and wish to stay firmly in the Douzelage community post-Brexit in March 2019.

This year the accommodation was divided between two hotels, Sunlight (a converted soap factory!) in Nyköping and Stjarnlohn nearer Oxelösund. The meals were spread around Oxelösund, the main steel works Restaurant Järngrytan (The Iron Pot) and a wonderful last night dinner and dance at Öster Malma in the countryside. Swedish food, everything from herrings and salmon to roe deer,



OXELÖSUND



herbs and salads was really fresh, local, beautifully presented and delicious!

All 19 Sherborne participants will have their own 'highlights' of the General Meeting. Personally I won't forget the stunningly beautiful and "relaxing" boat trip on a flotilla of little boats in the glorious sunshine of the last afternoon around the archipelago, enjoying the company of wonderful friends. My personal thanks also go out to the Oxelösund hosts for choosing a hotel with its own Vintage Car collection, and for organising the local Borgward Car Owners Club to turn out in force at Öster Malma!

Let's hear it for Sweden and Oxelösund and when the band played Mamma Mia! – You rocked! Douze points!

Marcus Ainley - Chair

ROVINJ - ROVIGNO

A walk along the streets of the historical centre is an artistic experience. You become enthralled by the cultural and historical monuments, the church of St. Euphemia, the Rovinj Heritage Museum, galleries and studios displaying artworks and souvenirs. Spring is the perfect time for taking a walk along the *Moncodogno and Monsego* archaeological sites, as well as visiting *the Palud* special ornithological reserve, situated on the edge of our town.

Life in Rovinj-Rovigno has always been inextricably linked to the sea. The town's centuries-old fishing tradition has been preserved until today, as the harmony between the citizens living in the old town and the coastal Adriatic landscape became symbolized by the batana. This is a wooden flatboat of 4-6 meters in length and the commonest type of vessel in our town. Visitors



MY BELOVED TOWN



can enjoy a boat ride in a *batana* and have a typical dinner at the “*Spacio*” (old tavern where fishermen used to meet after work).

The tradition of building *batana* boats is inseparable from the musical tradition of our town, namely *bitinada* songs, folk songs representing an authentic musical expression. *Bitinada* songs came to be as our fishermen, whose hands were occupied for hours while fishing on boats or repairing nets, thought of a way to achieve top-quality orchestral performances using their own voices instead of instruments. Rovinj-Rovigno, especially in autumn and spring, thanks to the pleasant temperatures, are perfect for taking an activity holiday and spend time cycling, walking in nature, rock-climbing, etc. Fans of activity will surely not be disappointed with the Punta Corrente forest park, situated near the city centre. In autumn, the grape harvest is collected in vine-

yards and on 16th September the feast of St. Euphemia (the patron saint of Rovinj), you can enjoy various activities dedicated to wine.

Rovinj-Rovigno is a very pleasant town to live in. It is a bilingual town (Croatian and Italian language are both official), where major attention is given to kindergarten and schools, to sports, to the environment and to the preservation of our historical heritage and marvellous traditions. It offers a very high quality of life, both for living and working. As Croatia is in the European Union, many entrepreneurs from all over the EU come to work and live here.

I am in love with my town. Come, visit us and see with your own eyes.

Maria Crnac Rocco -Chef Executive



SWEDISH STUDENTS VISIT LEWESTON

Last May 21 young students and teachers from Oxelösund in Sweden left home to visit Sherborne on a Sherborne Douzelage exchange visit. For many it was their first time overseas and the excitement was palpable.

Their aim was to share music with a culture different to their own. On arrival at Stansted airport they were transported by coach to Stonehenge, where they had an educational history visit.

The students were most enthusiastic and discovered more than they expected. They are keen to complete the project with a visit to a standing stone site in Sweden and will be able to compare the two sites.

Leweston School welcomed the Swedish group, and Music Director, Rachel Milstone, introduced them to the school and pupils.

Meals were provided by the school and it gave the students time to mix with the Leweston students. Sherborne Douzelage assisted with finding accommodation in family homes around the area and over the next three days the group were taken to Bradford Abbas and Sherborne Primary Schools, where they shared live musical activities.



On their final day the Swedish students gave a concert at Leweston School, wearing their specially designed uniforms. Much to the delight of the Swedish group, five Leweston music students joined their performance. This was followed by a history tour of Sherborne.

The visit culminated in a skittles match at The Weavers, a game unknown to the Swedish group. They joined in wholeheartedly and after being presented with a souvenir gift returned to their hosts before leaving next morning for home. This was a special day for the Swedish group as it was their National Swedish Day.

Mary Clothier

BUNDORAN THE PRIDE OF DONEGAL

Bundoran is a small seaside town nestled in County Donegal in the northwest of Ireland. With a population of just over 2,500 this number swells to at least 10 times that during the busy summer months, when the town becomes alive with visitors, looking to get away for their annual summer holiday.

Bundoran attracts all age groups and indeed all groups are catered for – from young families, couples, seniors, surfers or just the lone traveller in one of the 6 hotels or many self-catering apartments, houses, hostels, guesthouses and B&Bs.

First noted in 1777 as the holiday home of Viscount Enniskillen,



Bundoran Lodge (now Homefield Rock Hostel) still exists in the West End of the town. The West End (Bundoran) was the home of the “gentry” with many of the houses including the Victorian Bayview Terrace still in existence. “Bundoran” was joined by the bridge to the village of Single Street with the two villages merging as a result of the arrival of the railway in June of 1866.

This marked the “start” of Bundoran as we know it today, as a popular seaside resort attracting visitors particularly from Northern Ireland due to the convenience of the train line from Belfast and also Dublin.



BUNDORAN THE PRIDE OF DONEGAL



Nowadays we still welcome visitors from north of the border, but also from the republic and further afield from all over the world, to experience the bracing sea breeze fresh from the wild Atlantic ocean. Visitors can enjoy panoramic views of Donegal Bay and nearby the majestic Benbulbin mountain featured in Manys the poem from the famed Irish poet William Butler Yeats.

If angling is your thing, you can choose from sea, river and lake angling – all within close proximity to Bundoran.

Check out our 18 hole championship golf course, our indoor waterpark, our famous cliff walks, our outdoor swimming pools, our Blue

Flag beach, our world class surfing amenities, our adventure activities, horse riding opportunities and of course the mystical Fairy Bridges and Wishing Chair – Bundoran's original tourist attraction for hundreds of years.

Bundoran is easily accessible via Dublin, Belfast, Derry, Knock and Donegal airports with numerous public transport options to get you here easily.

For more information on everything to do with Bundoran, check out www.discoverbundoran.com or follow us on our social media channels – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and You Tube.

Shane Smyth - Tourism Director



ROKIŠKIS OUR NEW PARTNER IN LITHUANIA

At the General Meeting in Oxelösund last May **Rokiškis** was welcomed as our new partner in Lithuania following the resignation of Prienai. The city is in north eastern Lithuania with a population of about 14,500. First mentioned in 1499 as the residence of Prince Kroszinski, some decades later Count Tyzenhaus built the beautiful neogothic church of St Matthias and **Rokiškis** Manor, which is well preserved to-day and houses the **Rokiškis** Regional Museum. The town was planned in a classicist manner.

Annexed by Russia in 1795, **Rokiškis** is part of the new Republic of Lithuania. The city has a substantial Jewish heritage and in the Second World War the Nazis constructed a ghetto, where 29,000 Jews were held before being transferred to concentration camps.

Now Lithuania is a much happier country and is famous like Latvia and Estonia for its music with both classical and jazz concerts as well as dances and choirs. **Rokiškis** shares in this and has many cultural events through much of the year. **Rokiškis** is also well known for its cheese with one of the largest cheese manufacturing companies in Lithua-



nia. After reconstruction and foreign capital investments, sales exceed £120,000 per year, with 60% sold abroad.

We will hear more about all our new friends have to offer in Asikkala next year. You will be assured of a warm welcome.

Michael Morrell



EUROPEAN YOUNG MUSICIAN FESTIVAL

Granville and Sherborne contacts and exchanges are in the news again, as the French town hosted the Douzelage European Young Musician Festival from 1 -6 July. Music students from Latvia, Lithuania, Czech Republic, The Netherlands, Slovakia, Belgium and England together with local French students had a wonderful week of making music together, giving two concerts and taking part in a competition to select the best musician.

Sherborne, representing the UK, had five young musicians there and they were led by Dr Rachel Milestone, Director of Music at Leweston School. Our students played wonderfully and took two of the top five places with Kelly as the best pianist and Bea as the best



woodwind player. The standard of music was very high.

As well as the soloists performing in the concert our young musicians, Kelly (piano), Bea (recorder), George (oboe), Ciara (violin) and Eliza (piano) also performed with the music school orchestras and in ensembles making chamber music.

Our youngsters were great ambassadors for their schools, the town and the UK. Several of them also introduced their music and fellow performers in French, which helped our international credentials.

We all stayed in the CRNG Sailing School down by the harbour side in Granville, where they have the largest daily tidal changes in Europe. Being by the sea meant that swimming was a great way to relax,

SHERBORNE STUDENTS PERFORM WELL

no matter what time of day or evening and the jumping platform, about 100m out from the sea wall was a popular spot. Sharing accommodation and meals with people from other countries was a wonderful way to understand Europe from the grass roots. We ate well and the favourite snack for all of us was Crêpe, with sugar or chocolate, or fruit sauces.

Our social activities included seeing French street dance performers, a treasure hunt, town tour, band night, visiting Mont St. Michel and on the way home going to the Normandy Landing beaches.

At Mont St. Michel, in addition to exploring the town, we went on a guided walk across the sands at low tide, crossing rivers and practising



what do if stuck in quicksand. It was a lot of fun, especially as we knew that we had experts with us to help us, if we had really bad problems.

On the D-Day beaches we visited Pointe du Hoc, Utah Beach (more swimming) and the museum at Quineville, where we experienced life as it was in France under occupation.

The next Douzelage Young Musician event will be held by Turi, Estonia in 2020, where we hope to take part. Our thanks go to all the local sponsors and funding bodies, who have helped create this memorable experience for our young musicians.

Kevin Waterfall



MALTA AND REFUGEES

The many problems that Malta has had with Refugees were highlighted at the 2nd Douzelage Youth General Meeting, held in Malta last February. The island, being nearer the coast of Libya than Sicily or mainland Italy, is the first port of call for those fleeing the hardships of Africa.

Since 2015 refugees have only been held on medical grounds. Other refugees were moved to new open centres and integrated into schools. This made them feel less trapped, more accepted and more independent in their communities.

In 2017 the U.S.A terminated a resettlement programme of 300 to 400 a year for those refugees who had spent a few years in Malta. These people failed to see why they should integrate with the Maltese way of life, as their stay was only going to be temporary.

After initially being very agitated and distressed at the situation, the migrants eventually accepted that their permanent home would be Malta.

Following this realisation, the



Maltese people and government have seen a very positive change in how migrants and refugees have seen Malta and have started to become more integrated with less resistance. Refugees and Migrants have themselves set up support groups to help their fellow men and women.

Negative views of refugees held by the public were often due to the media, lack of information and physical contact. Those Maltese citizens in regular contact were more likely to have a positive experience of interacting and accepting them. Malta is however a small island and there is a limit to the overall number of refugees it can take.

Lizzie Dores - Youth President

SHERBORNE DOUZELAGE AFTER BREXIT

Last month Marsaskala told Sherborne Douzelage that because of Brexit, no delegate from Sherborne would be allowed to attend a Conference planned for next April on the future of Europe. As this will be funded by the EU, you can well understand the reason.

Sherborne was one of the founders of the Douzelage in 1991 and indeed Jeremy Barker, who played such a great part in this, is still going strong. As well as organising three General Meetings, we have been very much involved in arranging and taking part in exchanges with other Douzelage towns in particular with young people.

We also have excellent relations with the Town and District Councils, Schools and several Charities. This has enabled us to build a cushion of funds for paying at least initial costs for new projects.

Our level of commitment was well recognised at the last General Meeting in Oxelösund, when initial discussions on Brexit were held.

However the majority of the other 27 member towns are not in that happy position. For their activities they depend very much on the Euro-

pean Commission to subsidise their projects. And they fear that if delegates from a non European country are involved, the organising town will not receive any funding.

The problem will be discussed at the GM in Asikkala, Finland in May 2019, but that will be after we have left the EU. It is not known yet whether we shall be there as delegates or observers.

Are there other grants available such as Erasmus? As the months roll by, I think that Sherborne must be much more active in talking to the Presidency as to all the likely possibilities.

Michael Morrell - Editor



OUR COMMITTEE IN 2018



Chair: Marcus Ainley

Secretary: Mary Clothier

Treasurer: Chris MacAdie

Youth Chair: Elizabeth Does

Newsletter Editor: Michael Morrell

Twinning Representative: Scilla Copper

Other Members: Lin Ashby, Mike Balfour, Jeremy Barker,
Linda Bygrave, Ray Dyson (Wessex Morris Men), Cliff Jelbert,
Moirra Western, Sarah Whittick

A SELECTION OF EVENTS

Houffalize Belgium Youth immersion – History, Democracy and the
Future of Europe July 22nd to 28th

Sherborne Walkers visit Meerssen Netherlands August 26th to 29th

Chojna Poland Days of Integration September 9th

Bad Kötzting Germany Kaitersberg Mountain Run September 16th

Bellagio Italy Skyrace October 21st (to be confirmed)

Asikkila Finland 44th General Meeting 16th to 19th May 2019

Rokiškis Lithuania General Invitation in 2019 to the European City Of
Culture and Events

Rovinj Croatia Walking Group to take part in the Cape to Cape Walk
September 2019 (date to be confirmed)

For further details contact Mary Clothier on 01963 251255 or see updates
at sherborne-douzelage.org.uk/whats on