

Abingdon and District Twin Towns Society

Newsletter

August/September 2019

Guest Editor: John Smith

After our short summer break, welcome back to the newsletter from ADTTS. We hope that you had a good summer and we look forward to seeing you during the coming year.

Forthcoming Events

5 th – 9 th September	Sint-Niklaas Twinning Weekend
Thursday 19 th September	AGM
3 rd Thursday each month	Monthly evening meeting at PRCC
23 rd – 24 th November	Trip to Sint-Niklaas
December (date TBC)	ADTTS Christmas Lunch

Evening meetings are held at Preston Road Community Centre – 7:30pm for 7:45pm

**The AGM of ADTTS
will be held at Preston Road Community Centre
on Thursday 19th September 2019 at 8pm**

Nominations for ADTTS Officers and committee members should be with the secretary one week before the meeting. As also should notice of any other business to be taken at the meeting.

Agenda

Apologies for absence
Minutes of AGM held in September 2018 (copies of these minutes will be available at the AGM)
Reports by ADTTS Officers – Secretary, Treasurer, Chairman
Election of Chairman
Election of Officers – Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer
Election of Committee members
Accounts Examiner for 2019/20
Any other relevant business

John Smith, Secretary ADTTS

Refreshments will follow the formal meeting

Forthcoming Events

Weekend Trip to Sint-Niklaas

Saturday 23rd November – Sunday 24th November 2019

ADTTS is organising a 2-day weekend coach trip to Sint-Niklaas on Saturday 23rd - Sunday 24th November.

Information and booking forms are being sent out to members, so if you are interested please let **Nick Marsh** know as soon as possible (nick.marsh@comstar.fi), tel 07745 440047.

Trip to Lucca

ADTTS will be organising a trip for a small group to visit Lucca from 2nd to 6th April 2020.

Details are being finalised but if you would like to register your interest in going, please contact Ian & Rosemary Jardine at ian@ianjardine.co.uk or 01235 539291

Visit From Argentan Students

John Mason students will be hosting 7 students from Lycée Mézeray, Argentan, in Abingdon in October, from 7th to 14th October. Two of our members will be hosting the two teachers who will be accompanying them. We are planning to give the students a tour of Abingdon on either Tuesday or Wednesday.

A return visit to Argentan is planned for the new year.

Argentan Cyclists

Argentan cyclists will be cycling to Abingdon from 14th to 19th May 2020

Recent Events

Schongau Language Course

Six hardy and enthusiastic twin-towners from Abingdon met at Heathrow on 13 July for our journey to Schongau. John and Celia Smith, Brian and Susan Read, Noreen Carvel and I had paid our money and signed up to a week's German language course in our twin town in Bavaria. Later that day we were met at Schongau train station by our hosts; fed and watered and then taken to a welcoming reception in the town's museum where we met the other 'students', 5 Belgians from Sint-Niklaas and one lady from Colmar.

When the classes began on the Monday morning we were divided into two groups.

My German had been learned more than 50 years ago and, to say the least, was rather rusty. So I was nervous when the first lesson began. I needn't have worried too much as my group's teacher, Martin, spoke very slowly and clearly.

The theme of the week was 'Art, Culture and Nature in the Foothills of the Alps'. As well as some simple grammar exercises (well, simple for some!) we learned a lot about the surrounding area, its history and its legends.

Each afternoon an excursion backed up the morning's subject. We visited the backstage area of the theatre in Oberammergau and the town of Murnau where Kandinsky lived with Gabriele Münter and formed an expressionist group. On the industrial side we learned about mining in the area and visited a coalmining museum. We admired the double church at the top of Hohen Peißenberg and learned about pilgrimages there. Next to the churches is the oldest meteorological station in the world! Another time we went on a raft trip on the River Lech and found out about the age-old trading pattern of transporting goods downstream from the Alps by raft, selling the goods and the wood of the raft. Then the poor men had to walk back to the beginning to start the whole process again. One afternoon my hostess took me to climb the Buchenberg. She called it a hill, I called it a mountain!

An important cultural event of the first weekend was the Trachtenfest. It seems that each town/village in the area has its own special costume and hundreds (perhaps thousands of folk) paraded through the town. There were floats, bands, children, babies in wooden wheelbarrows, men and women of all ages, all dressed in traditional folk costume. I have never seen so many men and boys in lederhosen! It was truly spectacular. The following day there was a huge area of market stalls selling costumes and accessories. And there was plenty of beer flowing ...

We were wonderfully looked after by our German friends. Our hosts were delightful and one evening we were invited for dinner to another home. Morning classes were broken up by elevenses- coffee, fruit, cakes and savouries. We were taken to a different restaurant each day for lunch (I had to forego the beer and wine, otherwise I would have fallen asleep during the afternoon excursions.) But I did manage some bubbly at the Mayor's reception. The final dinner was followed by some brave souls performing regional dances and lots of 'thank-yous'. And I am now the proud possessor of a certificate saying I completed a week's German course. It is on my study wall!

Vielen Dank, Schongau.

Margaret Hancox
July 2019

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It was indeed a very good week so our sincere thanks must go to the organisers, to the host families, to everyone who helped and, of course, to our fellow students. It showed everyone how a language course should be organised.

One of the group from Abingdon had predicted that the weather in Schongau would be "wet, wet, wet". Well we never had any rain and it was hot, hot, hot. Afterwards Celia and I had a few days R&R in Innsbruck where it was even hotter!

Our only problem was getting back to England when all London airports were closed. They say it was due to storms!

John



exchanging, to take place in their canoe, with my brother forced to an uncomfortable lying position under the pier, since one part of the canoe had been slipping under it, they realized that their boat couldn't leave. As a matter of fact the bow appeared to be caught between two pillars of the pier, while the stern was blocked by some stones and roots close to the bank. After many minutes of desperate attempts to release the canoe, with the help of many willing people, both from the bank, and from the water side, pushing, pulling, shaking, rotating the canoe even with the help of ropes, the three unlucky navigators had to go back to the solid ground and repeat the maneuver. Meanwhile, Charlie had become prey of a convulsive and contagious attack of laughter. She went on laughing for minutes in her characteristic way, reaching incredibly high - Maria Callas like - notes. When the canoe managed to leave, a loud burst of applause could be heard from an until then unnoticed, group of people who, from the restaurant terrace, had been following the scene from the beginning. Thank you, wonderful Stella, thank you Richard, thank you Simon.

We will never forget!

Mario

Membership Subscriptions 2019/2020

**Subscriptions are now due for the year starting 1st September.
The amount is £7.50 per person or £15.00 for a couple.**

Payment can be made by Bankers Order, cheque or by BACS. to

ADTTS bank a/c: National Westminster Bank plc, Market Place, Abingdon

Sort Code: 60-01-01 **A/c No:** 08616752 **Ref:** Mem + your last name

Many of you have standing order arrangements. If you do, it would be helpful if you could check that you have updated the amount to the current rate.

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The deadline for copy for the next newsletter is two days before the end of the month. Please send contributions to newsletter@adtts.eu.

Keep right up to date by going to www.adtts.eu.