

# CONNECTIONS CONNECTIONS

Spring 2009

BATH'S TWINNING NEWSLETTER

Issue No 16

## ALKMAAR



*Grenville Jones (right) with the members of the Bath Male Choir who enjoyed a very successful concert tour in Alkmaar last summer.*

*Dick Bateman from The City of Bath Male Choir recalls their concert tour to Alkmaar.*

On a long, fine weekend in early June 2008, The Right Worshipful The Mayor of Bath, Councillor Tim Ball, Mayoress Councillor Sharon Ball and Ann Tipper, Clerk to the Charter Trustees of the City of Bath accompanied The City of Bath Male



*The Mayor of Alkmaar, Piet Bruinooge and members of the Cheese Guilds cheer The Mayor of Bath, Councillor Tim Ball, as he rings the bell to open the world-famous Alkmaar Cheese Market*

choir on a visit to Alkmaar, Bath's twin city in The Netherlands.

After a pleasant flight from Bristol International Airport and an hour's coach trip from Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam to Alkmaar, we were met by representatives from the Alkmaar-Bath twinning committee, who made us feel quite at home. The Golden Tulip Hotel bedrooms (and bar) proved to be very comfortable. Walking through the streets nearby to the historic and delightful city centre, many of us were amazed to see how tame such wild birds as herons and oystercatchers were; they sat on local lawns and pecked away for worms within touching distance of passers-by with no fear at all, not even a nervous glance.

Alkmaar has its own cheese market, a great attraction for residents and tourists. Local television and radio interviewed our Mayor who rang the bell to officially open the market and then burly cheese carriers, dressed in traditional white with orange, yellow and blue hats, hoisted sleds of whole cheeses and ran them to parts of the central Market Place, where they were sampled and valued. Their prices were then given to the crowd by an expert, using

**ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS WERE DUE ON 1 APRIL**  
**please send a cheque (£10 individual, £15 family and £30 organization)**  
**to the Secretary of your Association**



*The Mayor, Councillor Tim Ball, Mayoress, Councillor Sharon Ball and Clerk to the Charter Trustees, Ann Tipper, sampling the tasty cheese at the Alkmaar market with the Mayor of Alkmaar, Piet Bruinooge.*

a microphone and PA system to give a running commentary. The "Cheese Master" kindly gave the choir permission to interrupt proceedings to sing a couple of songs, to the enjoyment of a large crowd.

After a canal cruise through the ancient city, we rehearsed and then sang in the Kapelkirk with a wonderful local ladies' choir, The Vigoroso Chorus, who then took us all on the town, some for longer than others!

On Saturday's walking tour of Alkmaar, the Mayoral delegation and Choir learned that one of Alkmaar's claims to fame is that they survived a siege during the Spanish occupation of The Netherlands by opening their dykes and drowning the besieging army.

Very pleased to be on their side, we enjoyed another concert with Vigoroso, this time in the "Hidden Church". The choir's more intrepid walkers were then led by some of the ladies into a polder near Alkmaar, to one of the many live-in windmills which stand out high above the flat landscape. This group from the choir sang like a shanty crew as we turned the mill to face the wind and then a mighty

pile of pizzas were bought and eaten on the windmill lawn, as the sun set on a lovely day in our twin city.

Sunday's visit to Amsterdam was marked by a concert in the English Reform Church after which the Mayoral party had to rush back to Bath to prepare for more civic duties. The choir's evening meal ended in song and the visit to The Netherlands was declared by all as a great success.

Following the success of this concert tour Grenville Jones is hoping to take another of his choirs ('Stocking Tops' or 'The Bath Chorus') to Alkmaar later this year.

Alkmaar is hoping to become a Fair Trade City. Alison Wells, the Council's former Twinning Officer who now has Fair Trade as part of her brief, is back in contact with the Alkmaar Twinning Officer to help with their application. The Twinning Association is endeavouring to set up a link between pupils aged 11 - 16 in secondary schools in Alkmaar and Bath. Sixteen people from The Rotary Club of Bath will be visiting Alkmaar from 14th to 17th May keeping up a tradition dating back to the first twinning exchange in 1945.

Avon Arsenal Junior Football Club is planning to take three teams to compete in the FC Koedijk Football Tournament in Alkmaar on 30th and 31st May. Alkmaar cyclists came to Bath last year and from 9th to 16th June the Bath Branch of the Cyclists Touring Club will visit their counterparts in Alkmaar with eight riders cycling all the way there and back! The Alkmaar Brass Band is planning to visit Bath in 2010 as the guests of the Bath Spa Band.

All are welcome to attend the Association's AGM at 6pm on 29th June in the Mayor's Parlour.

**To join the Association contact our Secretary, Morag Cribb, Uplands, 6 Bloomfield Drive, Bath, BA2 2BG, telephone 01225 833082, e-mail moragfox@tiscali.co.uk**

## BRAUNSCHWEIG



*Dr Jocelyn Jones receiving her Doctorate at Bath University on 9th December 2008. The Chairman of the Bath – Braunschweig Twinning Association, Don Withers accepted two copies of her thesis studying Prisoners of War on behalf of a British and a German POW who could not attend the ceremony. The other recipient, who had spent five years as a POW in Poland was there to receive his copy.*

All are welcome to attend the Association's AGM at 6 pm on 23rd June in The Mayor's Parlour.

**To join the Association contact our Secretary, Hilary Elms, Austonley, 208 Old Frome Road, Combe Down, Bath, BA2 5RH, telephone 01225 837790, email Hdelms@aol.com**



# KAPOSVÁR



Jason Thornton of Bath Philharmonia conducts an orchestra of pupils from local schools



Anikó Kovacs (left) and Balazs Hornyák with musicians from Hayesfield School.

The Twinning Association has worked in partnership with Bath organisations over the past six months to strengthen links with Kaposvár and introduce them to the burgeoning contemporary Hungarian culture.



The Association is lucky to have computer web designer Zsolt Sikodi (pictured left) as a member. Thanks to Szolt's expertise BKTA now has a website - [bath-kaposvar.org](http://bath-kaposvar.org) for up-to-the-minute news and events.

An end of 2008 highlight was the remarkable exchange visit by two Kaposvár guest musicians, Anikó Kovacs and Balazs Hornyák to the City of Bath. They took part in the composition of a concerto with students from Hayesfield and Chew Valley Schools. Amazingly, in just six days it was ready for a public performance during the annual November MozartFest under the baton of Jason Thornton. The audience not only gave this unique musical experience a rapturous reception, but also insisted upon an encore!

This was the second leg of a Bath Philharmonia education project funded by the Charter Trustees of the City (Bath Councillors) and facilitated by BKTA. Jason Thornton worked with schools and special needs students in Kaposvár last year. He took along revolutionary Soundbeam technology to encourage all the students to join in creating and playing music. Kaposvár were so impressed that they have set aside



This is one of a series of photographs selected and gifted by BKTA to be displayed in Kaposvár at the end of May as the city celebrates its 'birthday' with an exhibition of the life and characteristics of their 10 twins.

finance to buy one and Bath Phil/BKTA have agreed to launch an appeal to help them.

The 2009 education project funded by the Charter Trustees of the City enabled Bath Literature Festival to provide a wonderful showcase of post-

communist contemporary Hungarian literature and poetry. The 'Focus on Hungary' theme included two film shows at the Little Theatre and talks by authors Ladislaus Löb, György Dragomán, plus the poets Anna Szabó and George Szirtes. The sheer diversity and breadth of the writing was impressive, sobering, witty and laced with a string of beautiful poetry readings. The Bath Kaposvár Twinning Association very much welcomed the chance to engage and work with the Literature Festival.

**To join the Association contact the Secretary, Zsuzsa Jenkins, 112 North Road, Bath, BA2 5DJ, telephone 01225 830767, e-mail [zsuzsa.jenkins@bath-kaposvar.org](mailto:zsuzsa.jenkins@bath-kaposvar.org)**



Pupils from Chew Valley School prepare to perform.

## Future Events

Three members of BKTA have been invited by the Mayor of Kaposvár to attend the annual 'Town of Painters Festival' in June. A group of Bath fine artists has been invited to show their work at the KaposART exhibition, from 23rd July to 19th August. A Hungarian Wine Tasting is planned to take place in Bath in the summer. In response to public demand, a second screening of the Hungarian film 'Fateless' from the Bath Literature Festival is planned for the autumn. A talk on 'Architecture in Hungary' is to be given by a Hungarian architect in September/October.



# AIX-EN-PROVENCE

There will be a wine tasting at 7pm on Thursday 7th May at Great Western Wine. Phone Brian Hamlen on 01225 310507 to book a ticket - £12 to include refreshments.

Intrepid members of Bath Pétanque Club will be taking on the French at their own sport in Aix-en-Provence during their trip from 22nd to 29th May 2009.

Win or lose, Bath Bridge Club hopes to build bridges with their French counterparts during their visit to Aix from 7th to 11th July 2009.

There will be a Bastille Day Dinner on 14th July. Contact the Secretary for further information.

**To join the Association contact the Secretary, Jackie Tollit, 40 Midford Lane, Limpley Stoke, Bath, BA2 7GS telephone 01225 722025, e-mail Jackie@tollit.net**

*The Mayor of Bath, Councillor Tim Ball, and Vice Chairman of the Bath - Aix-en-Provence Twinning Association, Barbara Howdle (right), welcome staff and students from Lycée La Nativité to The Guildhall for a Civic Reception on 9 March 2009.*



*The Mayor, Councillor Tim Ball, and Mayoress Councillor Sharon Ball, with the Chairman of the Bath - Aix-en-Provence Twinning Association, Marian McNeir (centre) welcome members of 'Les Seniors' from Aix to The Mayor's Parlour in September.*



As Chairman of the Charter Trustees, who sponsor the event, The Mayor of Bath, Councillor Tim Ball, opened the 18th Bath International Evening in the Guildhall. The Banqueting Room was packed with students from overseas and many members of the ethnic communities living locally who were keen to taste the international dishes on offer. Members of Bath's four Twinning Associations prepared tasty tit-bits typical of Hungarian, German, Dutch and French cuisine and are looking forward to cooking up another treat at the 19th International Evening in the autumn.



*The Mayor of Bath, Councillor Tim Ball, at Bath International Evening with Representatives of Bath's Twinning Associations: Peter Gloyn (Alkmaar), Zsuzsa Jenkins and Kean Maslen (Kaposvár), Alan Gwynn (Alkmaar) and Don Withers (Braunschweig).*