

CONNECTIONS CONNECTIONS

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BATH'S TWINNING NEWSLETTER

Issue No 17

ALKMAAR



The Lake Singers perform on the Quayside in Bristol after visiting SS Great Britain.

The Lake Singers

Alkmaar's Lake Singers arrived in Bath on 23rd October to prepare for their concert the next day. The Mayor of Bath, Councillor Colin Barrett, welcomed them, Hans Tanger, Chairman of the Alkmaar Twinning Committee and Mrs Tanger, at a Civic Reception. Former Mayors, Councillors David Hawkins and Roger Symonds and Honorary Alderman Sheila Sheppard reminisced about their official Twinning Visits five years ago to celebrate Alkmaar's 750th Anniversary

as a City. When members of the choir found a piano tucked away in a corner of The Guildhall they wasted no time in wheeling it in for an impromptu performance. The Chairman of Bath & North East Somerset Council was so impressed he immediately bought two tickets for their concert!

After travelling to Bristol on Saturday for a tour of SS Great Britain the choir sang on the quayside to the delight of passers-by. This was followed by a rousing Saturday evening concert back in

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TO THE SECRETARY OF YOUR ASSOCIATION.**

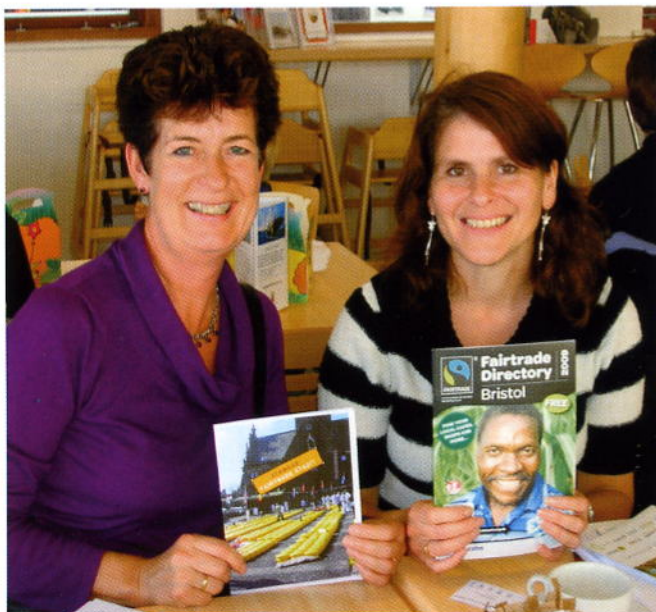
(£10 individual, £15 family and £30 organization) (25% discount when joining more than one Association)



The Lake Singers concert in the United Reformed Church with (centre) Alan Gwynn, Chairman of the Bath-Alkmaar Twinning Association, (left) The Mayor and Mayoress of Bath, Councillor Colin Barrett and Mrs Pam Barrett, (right) The Chairman of Bath & North East Somerset Council and his Consort, Councillor Bryan Chalker and Mrs Glenys Chalker.

Bath at the United Reformed Church then supper with members of the Bath-Alkmaar Twinning Association.

Former Twinning Officer Hanneke Schrijen introduced her successor Lisbeth Sluick. Hanneke had hitched a ride on the coach with the choir so she could begin her new project for Alkmaar Council by getting advice on Fairtrade in Bath and Bristol. Hanneke has been a great support and friend to the City of Bath and its twinning activities for many years so it was fortunate that she was able to come with the choir and we were able to say goodbye and to meet her successor.



Hanneke Schrijen meets Jenny Foster for advice on Alkmaar becoming a Fairtrade City

Badminton Club

Chris Swordy, Chairman, Bath Sports Centre Badminton Club recalls their trip to Alkmaar in September.

The 2009 exchange was the 20th anniversary of the first visit so it was a very special trip for all 13 of us. Our first outing was to a 'hidden church'. From the outside the Remonstrants Church looks just like its neighbours but back in the 17th Century its camouflage was necessary to avoid the persecution of non-Calvinistic faiths.

To our surprise we were greeted by the Mayor of Alkmaar, Piet Bruinooge, who presented us with a framed etching of four views of the City. After welcome refreshments we were entertained by a local close harmony male voice choir called 'Blair'. No relation to our Ex-Prime Minister – apparently 'Blair' in Dutch means 'to howl' – however the singing was very good!

After spending the night in our hosts' homes we were driven to De Rijk where we walked through the village streets to appreciate the fine architecture. After a stop for coffee and apple cake we hired bicycles to ride to Fort Spijkerboor where prisoners of war were incarcerated during World War Two. One of 42 fortifications, it was designed to protect Amsterdam from invasion more than 100 years ago but is still in remarkably good condition.

After lunch we cycled back to De Rijk via Schermer Island, Schermerhorn for an afternoon tea stop and on to the Mijzen Polder. En route we stopped at a house once the home of a couple and their eight children but so tiny half the family had to sleep in the attic! Most of us are not used to cycling so we were exhausted after 18 km in the saddle and glad to be driven back to our hosts' homes where there was just time for a shower and change of clothes before a meal at an Italian restaurant.

Saturday morning we had a five minute aerobic warm up at the Sports Centre and were presented with tee-shirts printed with the club logo before the tournament began. After four hours play, results were tallied and prizes presented, all witnessed by a representative of the Alkmaar Twinning Committee.

After a shower and a spot of shopping the evening celebrations were held in the Club House. We had Chinese food and Dave played the piano before we slipped out to change into our Scottish dancing

