

# The Twinning Times

Melton Mowbray and District Twinning Association.

December 2001 Newsletter

## Polish visit hits high note

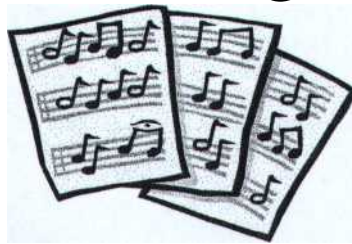
A highly successful visit to Melton Mowbray by the Ladies Choir, fire fighters and councillors from Polish twin town Sochaczew in September heralds a new chapter in developing twinning links between the two communities.

The four-day trip by 25 choir members and eight fire fighters could lead to return trips to Poland next year by both Melton-based singers and local members of the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service.

One major highlight of the recent visit to Melton was the grand concert held at Melton Baptist Church involving the Sochaczew Ladies Choir, Melton Parish Singers and the Melton Male Voice Choir. Each choir sang a selection from their repertoire and then combined to sing Ave Verism in a most moving experience of a finale for both singers and audience alike.

It is hoped that the two Melton choirs will be able to travel out to Poland in October next year to join with the Sochaczew Ladies Choir in a concert in the main Sochaczew church with the main feature being the Millennium Mass, written by Melton musician Clive Rogers.

The Polish Ladies - who also gave concerts at Leicester Cathedral in the presence of the city's deputy mayor, during a service at Leicester Polish Church and at a most enjoyable Melton Rotary Club-hosted lunch during their stay - are hoping to return to Melton in July next year to practice the Millennium Mass with their Leicestershire choral friends.



While the Polish singers and their Melton counterparts struck a harmonious choral note and are planning to renew acquaintances in the future, the Sochaczew and Melton fire fighters also forged friendships and plans for a reciprocal trip to take place next year are underway.

### Hot stuff

A group of Melton fire fighters could be heading to Sochaczew to demonstrate the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service's special programme on fire safety in the home and workplace.

This will be part of a free exchange of information between the two groups of fire fighters, which started when the Polish group visited Leicestershire in September.

Events included a visit to the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service in Leicester where the country's Chief Fire Officer welcomed the Polish guests, a presentation was made and mementoes exchanged.

To showcase various aspects of the country's Fire and Rescue Service op-

erations, the Sochaczew fire fighters visited the Loughborough Hot Training Unit for a demonstration of methods used to combat severe fires and inspect the range of modern equipment used. The East Midlands Airport's fire staff displayed one of their 32-ton fire engines to the group while Central Fire Control in Leicester showed how hi-tech touch screen computer equipment was used and also demonstrated equipment including a high reach ladder which can extend up to 90 feet.

Melton-based Leading Fireman Paul Saxby, who looked after the Polish fire fighters throughout their visit and was responsible for the day-to-day organisation of their programme of activities, was also interviewed on Central TV. A camera team covered the Melton fire fighters demonstration for their Polish counterparts of the methods used in dealing with road accidents.

During the Polish visit, three Sochaczew councillors were also able to undertake a fact-finding mission including visiting Melton facilities and amenities and discussing the financial organisation of Melton Borough Council with the authority's Treasurer, John Flower.

### Work, rest and play

But it was not all work and no play for Melton's Polish visitors.

Among the activities for the Ladies Choir members were a Twinning Association-guided town centre walk and a tour of the Melton area's countryside including Belvoir Castle and a visit to Rutland Water.

They enjoyed lunch at Sysonby Knoll Hotel hosted by Melton's mayor, Councillor Tim Cullen, a social event specially organised by Melton's Polish community and held in the Polish Club and an evening get together at the home of David Morris, who was tireless in his efforts in the organisation of the trip and management of the choir's programme. Mr Morris also met the Polish visitors when they arrived in England and took the fire fighters down to London to have a good look around the city and vote in the Polish elections.

## A date for your diary

Get ready for some food, fun and festivities at the Melton Mowbray and District Twinning Association's Christmas Social.

Taking place at the Melton Council offices on Thursday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, it starts at 7.30pm and we are hoping to have a quiz, competitions, prizes and lots of Christmas time goodwill. Don't miss it!

Could everybody attending the Christmas Social please bring a sweet or savoury item for the buffet supper.



## Pulling for the people across the Pond.

### Transatlantic communications



Recent events in the USA and the UK have brought the communities of Melton and Clarksville in Indiana even closer together-with prospects of stronger links developing in the future.

Following on a successful visit by a group from Clarksville last year, communications developing friendship and greater understanding have flowed between members of the Melton and District Twinning Association and the Clarksville Sister Cities Association.

The latest communication from our Association was sent by chairman John Rudman following the terrorist attacks on New York's World Trade Centre and Washington DC's Pentagon on September 11<sup>th</sup>.

Although Clarksville is some way from New York and Washington DC, the shock of the attacks was felt around the USA - as well as the rest of the world- and John wrote letters of sympathy and condolence from the Association to John Minta, the president of the Clarksville Town Council, and Lynn Lewis, President of the Clarksville Sister Cities Association.

With the USA celebrating Thanksgiving Day on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, John also sent the Twinning Association's best wishes to the people of Clarksville through an email to Mr Minta.

Members might remember that the Clarksville community leaders, knowing that Melton is in the middle of a farming area, sent letters of support and concern following the outbreak of Foot and Mouth around the UK.

It is an indication of how friendships that began during the Clarksville delegation's visit to Melton last year have flourished.

More Transatlantic link-ups sought

A number of people in Clarksville have indicated they would like to correspond with people in Melton by email or by ordinary mail.

Those Association members in contact with Clarksville residents are already finding letters from America full of interest and warmth.

If you would like your address sent over to Clarksville to start up a two-way transatlantic communication then do let a member of the committee know.

### A stitch in time...

Twinning Association member Dinah Rudman is flexing her sewing fingers to start work on a Melton contribution to a project celebrating Clarksville's history.

She is contributing a design square for a memorial quilt being prepared by a quilting group from the US community as part of Clarksville's major celebrations for the bicentenary of the pioneering Lewis and Clark expeditions across America.

Lewis and Clark covered 8,000 miles from the Mississippi River west to the Pacific Ocean during a US government-backed exploration in 1804-5 charting the massive area of land known as the Louisiana Territory from the French in 1803. It was from the banks of the Ohio River at Clarksville in 1803 that Lewis and Clark began their expedition.

The Clarksville memorial quilt will focus on the town's history. But it was felt that a contribution from Melton would be a welcome addition to symbolize the friendship between the two towns.

Dinah's square, which she hopes to complete by January next year, will portray the Melton Parish Church. It will add a bit of Melton history to that of our American friends from Clarksville.

# The road to Kapelle

It was a case of better luck next time for the Dutch treat of a weekend planned by the Melton contingent set to travel to Kapelle for the August Bank Holiday.

A total of four cars full of Melton folk was expected to head to our Dutch twin town for the annual Kapelle Day. This is the highly enjoyable annual event where the town's streets are filled with stalls, the Ring Riders display their skills, many local people wear their national dress, marching bands perform and large quantities of beer, coffee, apple pies and other delicacies are consumed.

It was the marching bands that formed the first friendship link between Melton and Kapelle and led to the present formal Twinning agreement between our two communities about 12 years ago.

But a few spanners in the works of the arrangements for the Melton group travelling to this year's event meant that the Borough's mayor Tim Cullen and his son

Jack were the only ones who eventually managed to make it to Kapelle to join in the celebrations including the Kapelle Day parade.

Unfortunately, plans by Nick and Nadine Leah to take the veteran Morris Minor, kindly donated by John and Gill Lister for restoration by Nick and the young members of his Motor Car Project team, over to the Netherlands to participate in the Kapelle Day Parade had to be postponed.

Nick and the youngsters enrolled on the restoration project, some of whom would have also travelled out to Kapelle with the car, did not manage to finish the Morris Minor to the standard they wanted.

Hopefully the Dutch trip for Nick Leah, their young helpers and the veteran vehicle can be resurrected for next Kapelle Day to show off good English craftsmanship.

Sadly, Sue Gowans and her daughter were also not able to attend Kapelle Day as planned. The Kapelle Twinning Association were not able to find a host family while Kapelle has no guesthouses and the only hotel, the Swan, was not taking guests that weekend.

Sue, who is masterminding Melton's second Food Fair on Sunday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, had hoped to make some useful contacts.

Although it was disappointing for all those who were not able to attend this year's Kapelle Day, Councillor Cullen and Master Cullen can obviously recommend the event.

Reports back to the Twinning Association indicate the Cullens had a good time carrying the Melton Mowbray & District banner during Kapelle's festivities. They were given a wonderful welcome by our Dutch friends, met the Kapelle fire fighters and had their photographs taken with Dutch ladies in costume.

A visit to Kapelle is great fun and well worthwhile and hopefully next Kapelle Day might be a great time to see a larger Melton presence.

For anyone keen to visit our Dutch twin town in the future, the Twinning Association is going to compile a little guide to transport links to Kapelle and accommodation in and around the town.

Tim and Jack's travel arrangements included flying out to Amsterdam then letting the train take the strain to reach Kapelle. Tim said it was very easy.

It is possible to go by train all the way from Melton to Kapelle - via ferries from Harwich to the Hook or going under the Channel on Eurostar services-with public transport in the Netherlands being first rate. There are some motels, chalet sites and good camp sites not too far from Kapelle.

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### Thanks

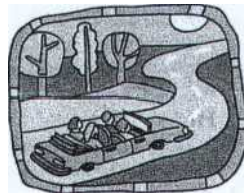
Melton Mowbray and District Twinning Association chairman John Rudman paid tribute to the efforts of both Mr Morris and Mr Saxby for helping make the Polish visit such a great success and the "tremendous help" of the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service throughout the visit.

He warmly thanked the members of the Melton Polish community, the twinning association and local fire fighters for their help and hospitality in supporting the visit and hosting the visitors from Sochaczew during their stay.

"The visit of our friends from Sochaczew has been a great few days. We hope and trust it paves the way for even closer friendship and cooperation between our communities in the future," he said.

### Choral co-operation

One idea, which has already been mooted, is the possible organising of a tri-nation musical choral gathering between choirs in Melton, Sochaczew and Kapelle.



The drive to reach Kapelle goes on