

# ROMSEY TWINNING



## NEWSLETTER

*Summer 2024*

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Welcome to the Summer edition of the  
Romsey Twinning Newsletter

It features accounts of our visit to Treviglio in Italy in April and the visit to Romsey by our French twin town Paimpol at the end of May. We are also delighted to announce in these pages the launch of our Website! Finally, there are dates for your diary for the rest of the year. We hope you enjoy what you read here and as always welcome feedback and suggestions for other topics and articles we could include. The next edition will appear at Christmas.

*Roland Matthews (Chairman)*

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## Visit to Treviglio 11 – 15 April 2024

Nineteen members of Romsey Twinning travelled to Treviglio in Italy on 11 April; seventeen by air to Bergamo where they transferred by minibus to Treviglio, and two by train.

In spite of a late flight arrival all the visitors met their hosts at *La Quercia di Mamre*, a community kitchen enterprise in Treviglio, for a reception and meal. In his welcome speech Gian Battista Scrivanti explained how a small army of volunteers at *La Quercia* help to provide regular hot meals for the needy of Treviglio and surrounding areas.



The next day – Friday – was devoted to a series of visits in central Treviglio. The first was to the Council Chamber of the Town Hall, where we were formally welcomed by the Sindaco (Mayor) of Treviglio. This was followed by brief visits to the Vertical Museum (an ingenious layout in the civic tower), to the *Santuario* (the principal church), and to the fine new Museum displaying the *Polittico* (Polyptych), the town's greatest treasure.

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In the afternoon there were visits to the SAME tractor museum and to the Giardini Romsey.



On Saturday hosts and guests travelled to Monza where they were treated to a guided tour of the Villa Reale. Built in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century the “Royal Palace” is neoclassical in style and was a private residence during the Austrian domination of that period. In 1861, under the new Kingdom of Italy, it became a palace of the Italian Royal House of Savoy. In 1934 Victor Emmanuel III donated most of the villa to the municipalities of Monza and Milan.



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After the visit to the Villa everyone made their way to the city centre where Francesca Possenti – one of the Italian hosts – gave an interesting account of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century Arengario Town Hall and of the Cathedral, the origins of which can be traced back to 603. With temperatures in the high twenties (as they had been for most of the weekend) everyone was happy to escape the heat for lunch in a city centre restaurant.



Sunday was spent with hosts until the evening when we all made our way to the magnificent 18<sup>th</sup>-century Villa Malliana near Bergamo. A truly sumptuous meal rounded off the day and weekend perfectly.

*Phil Thomas*

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## Paimpol visit to Romsey 30 May – 3 June

We were thrilled to welcome our friends from Paimpol back to Romsey after a break of five years. It is great to report that the friendships forged before the pandemic (many of them going back some considerable time) are as fresh today as they were then. In both groups it was refreshing to be able to count new participants.

A little lie-in was permitted on Friday before the group assembled at Romsey Town Hall for a reception given by our new mayor and Twinning member, Cllr John Parker. He donned his robes for the event, which proved impressive for the young daughters of Paimpol's mayor, Mme Fanny Chappé, who was joining us for the first time. The group were invited to a tour of the Town Hall 'backstage', while some people simply enjoyed their tea and the delicious lemon drizzle cake made by member Mavis Trantham.



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After lunch, a guided visit around Romsey was arranged. The tour was written by Bob Heather, a member of RAODS and author of a number of pantomimes. He provided an enlightening visit, which took rather longer as the French visitors were keen to take lots of photographs. The weather was kind, which meant that no one was really in a hurry to reach the end.

The afternoon and evening were spent with hosts, some of whom joined together for an evening meal which provided much enjoyment on all sides.

There was a fairly early start on Saturday for our group excursion to the D-Day Story in Southsea. The trip wasn't without its challenges – Portsmouth was preparing for the national events to commemorate 80 years since this eventful day, so public transport and parking weren't quite as we'd expected!



Everyone made it at the appointed hour and enjoyed the museum at leisure. Some took advantage of a free guided tour, others embraced the technology of the self-guided audio version. The sun continued to shine, so many of the group spent a few hours after lunch exploring Portsmouth's Old Town or the Historic Dockyards.

Exceptionally, our group dinner was held on Saturday evening rather than the traditional final evening, as Mme Chappé and her family needed to be back in Paimpol for the start of the working week, so it was decided to move the meal to allow them to join us.



Drawing of Cllr John Parker by  
the Mayor of Paimpol's daughter

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There was sterling work by Bryan Bolton, Julie Brinton, Debbie Evenhand, Judy Phillips and Angela Bernhardt to produce a 3-course dinner for 52 people in an unfamiliar kitchen. Everyone enjoyed the fare, which included local Chalk Stream Trout with sourdough bread from 108 The Bakery, main courses and desserts from COOK Romsey and of



course there was singing at various points in the evening led by Brian Budden. I think the spirit of cooperation certainly showed in the tidying up – in less than 15 minutes the hall was cleared of all tables and chairs as the revellers packed up to go home!

With lots of sunshine on Sunday hosts treated their guests to trips to the New Forest, Beaulieu, pub lunches and the seaside ahead of a very early start for their journey home on Monday morning.

*Karen Bolton*

## **Battenberg**

A group of 11 Romsey Twinners will be visiting Battenberg, our twin town in Germany, from 4 – 7 October. A full report will appear in the Christmas issue.

## **New WEBSITE**

We are delighted to use this edition to launch the Romsey Twinning Website [www.romseytwinning.org.uk](http://www.romseytwinning.org.uk) Previously Romsey Twinning had a page on the Romseynet site until this ceased to operate a few years ago, since when our online presence has been restricted to a

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Facebook page. We hope that you like the new site and that it gives you the information you expect to see about our twin towns and our own activities, both past and future. The site has links to our newsletters and to photos of recent twinning visits. It also has a Members area with password access; members will receive the password in a separate mailing.

We hope that the website will become an important tool for promoting the association and attracting new members. In the meantime please take time to browse it and let us have your comments and suggestions at our email address, [romseytwinning@gmail.com](mailto:romseytwinning@gmail.com). It is very much a work in progress and we expect to be fine tuning for a while yet!

*Roland Matthews*

## **Informal get-together**

Would you like the opportunity to meet informally with other members of Romsey Twinning? Do you feel you only see members involved with visits to one of our partner towns? If so, please come along to Romsey Memorial Park Café on **Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September** anytime from 10.30am to 12.00 for coffee and chat. Hopefully it will still be warm and dry then, though as there is a shelter we will still meet there even if it is drizzling. If it should be really stormy and wet then we will instead meet in Josie's café in the square (near Palmerston's statue). Committee members will be present so you won't be on your own. We are looking forward to seeing you!

*Judy Phillips (07484 272187)*

## **Annual General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting of Romsey Twinning will be held on Friday 11 October at 7pm in the Court Room of Romsey Town Hall. The meeting will start with an illustrated talk by Janet Cairney on 'The French in Romsey 1792-1805'. The talk is based on Janet's research for an MA about a neglected chapter in Romsey's history when the town and

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surrounding area provided a refuge for so-called *chouans* – post-Revolutionary royalist exiles from France – in the early years of the nineteenth century. Refreshments will be served and all members are warmly invited to attend.

## Skittles Evening

We will be holding a skittles evening for members and guests on **Friday 1 November**. The venue is still to be confirmed but it will be in the local area so please make a note of the date in your diaries! Full details will follow in due course.

## Diary Dates

### 2024

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>17 September</b>  | Informal get-together (10.30-12, War Memorial Park) |
| <b>4 – 7 October</b> | Twinning Visit to BATTENBERG                        |
| <b>11 October</b>    | Annual General Meeting (7pm, Town Hall)             |
| <b>1 November</b>    | Skittles Evening (details to follow)                |

### 2025

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|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>28 February – 4 March</b> | TREVIGLIO visit to Romsey |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|

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