

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2010

Didcot delegates arrive in Planegg

A group of 10 people from the Didcot area visited Planegg in Germany in September to find out more about the town. They were warmly welcomed by the mayor, Frau Anne-Marie Detsch, before setting off on a tour of the town. The day included visits to the secondary school, the town's theatre, library, recycling centre, and road depot. Best of all was the fire station with delegates encouraged to sit in the fire engines.

The programme also included a visit to the local science park where the role of the IZB in supporting start-up bio-tech companies was explained. In the afternoon, the delegation was delighted to be invited to a reception in Planegg's castle, as guests of the Baron and Baroness von Hirsch, before being shown the castle's chapel. A walk through the main shopping street from the new church to the shrine to Maria of the Oak, a site of pilgrimage, finished what had been a busy day.

Saturday started with a tour of the Schloss Nymphenburg which was the summer palace of the Bavarian kings. After lunch in the palm house there was a chance to explore some of the sights of Munich itself. The fact that the city was celebrating the Oktoberfest was clear from the numbers of people everywhere. The square in front of the Rathaus (Town Hall) was full of people proudly wearing their traditional costume.



Group welcomed in the Rathaus by Planegg's mayor

Getting to know Munich

On Sunday morning, we made our way to our reserved table in the Oktoberfest. We all marvelled at the number of litre glasses carried by each server and quickly learned that custom forbids that you should drink alone, hence there are lots of toasts. It was interesting to see, that at lunch time on a

Sunday, this is very much a family event, and the fun fair rides were as busy as the beer halls.

Finally it was time to say goodbye to our most agreeable hosts and to come home to plan for their next visit to Didcot.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Scenes in Didcot painted by Linda Benton

find them: One Stop Shop @ Civic Hall, Cornerstone.

Didcot Street Fare,

Hagbourne School Craft Fare

Farmers' Market.

£2.50 for 5, £4.50 for 10.

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PLANEGG SECONDARY SCHOOL the group was greeted by the head teacher and shown around the school



AT THE FIRE STATION Angela fulfills an ambition to sit in the driver's seat of the fire engine



SCHLOSS PLANEGG where the group were received by the owners and shown the castle's chapel

Meylan party finally reaches Didcot



Basildon Park visit

After the disappointment of the cancellation of their previous visit, Didcot was delighted to welcome the party from Meylan. The first full day of the visit was spent in Oxford, at the magnificently refurbished Ashmolean Museum where they were entranced by the Pre-Raphaelite Exhibition and amazed at the wealth of art on display in the main galleries. Lunch in the Red Lion was followed by an open-topped bus tour, where the group defied the elements as they viewed the city's magnificent architecture. The following day there was some spare time for shopping and sightseeing in Didcot. Many of the group decided to support the coffee morning held in memory of a previous committee member, Andrea Mitchell. In the afternoon, Peter Mitchell had not only organised a visit to Basildon Park, a National Trust Property, but had also arranged for his son, Stephen to play the piano during our visit. It was notable that the drive to Basildon, across the downs, provoked comments that we had

perhaps strayed off our route, as the hills were higher than expected. The tour of the house evoked the life and times of its previous chatelaine, Lady Iliffe, who had done much to bring the property to the present state. Tea with scones and jam completed the visit.

That same evening, hosts and their guests were invited by Keith and Kate Beswick to a bring&share supper. In a relaxed atmosphere, the two parties enjoyed some excellent food, with an emphasis on the best of British. Conversation was wide-ranging and multilingual and in some parts there was evidence that the world had indeed been put to rights.

On Sunday there was a final opportunity for shopping or local sightseeing and all-too-soon the visit was over. Farewells were said and the minibus set off for Gatwick airport. Sadly the return flight was delayed for almost an hour but everyone was safely back in Meylan by about midnight that day.



Basildon House

Ashmolean museum, Oxford



Exchange of gifts on Saturday evening

FROM THE EDITOR

The twinning association is always looking for new members so if you know someone who might be interested in joining, please encourage them to get in touch.

Thanks to Will Harvey, director of Modern Languages at Didcot Girls' School a version of our last newsletter was circulated to every pupil's home. We hope that this will raise the profile of twinning.

BUSINESS MEETING PROGRESS

Plans for a meeting in Meylan of business people from Didcot, Planegg and Meylan moved a step closer with a breakfast session at Cornerstone. During their recent visit, delegates from Meylan Town Hall had the chance to meet representatives of local employers to talk about the agenda for the meeting next spring and to consider what each partner town might contribute.

YOUR TWINNING COMMITTEE

Chair	Terry Joslin
Vice Chair	Keith Beswick
Secretary	Geoff Oldham
Treasurer	Robin Eastham
Communications	Sue Totterdell
	webmaster@didcottwinning.org.uk
Town Council Rep	Colin Daukes

SOCIAL EVENING

Anne-Marie will entertain us with a selection of French songs at a bring and share supper
 details to follow later
 watch our website
www.didcottwinning.org.uk