



August 2015

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## MADAM PRESIDENT

### *The Worshipful the Town Mayor of Kidderminster*

We are delighted to welcome as the new President of the Twinning Association Councillor Mrs Rose Bishop, who is one of the three Wyre Forest District Councillors representing the Offmore and Comberton Ward of Kidderminster.

opportunities to fulfil her 'presidential' role during her year of office.

Councillor Mrs Bishop's first duties as our President will involve greeting and getting to know the visitors from the *Husumer Partnerschaftsverein*, at a Reception at the Town Hall on August 20, and subsequently at the farewell meal at La Brasserie on August 25.

We hope that the Mayor will have other



Friendship and Understanding

Freundschaft und Verständigung

### *From the Editor*

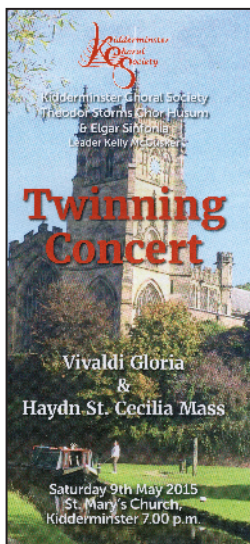
In this issue we have what I hope readers will find is a varied and interesting selection of reports and news. Apologies for the lateness of publication - this edition should have been with you in July!

Please keep your contributions coming!

**Ray Harrowing**

## SILVER SINGERS

MANFRED KLASS, a non-singing member of the group that represented Husum's Theodor Storms Chor in Kidderminster in May, kindly set down his impressions as a first-time visitor. He



mentions Jane Williams; this was Jane's first time as organiser of a visit, taking over from long-time supremos Pauline and Bob Powell, and she is to be commended for her efficient handling of the many component parts that go to make up a memorable visit.

25 years ago the musical partnership between Theodor Storms Chor and the Kidderminster Choral Society came into being. To celebrate the

anniversary, 18 singers from Husum, as well as two family members, made their way to Kidderminster on Thursday, May 6. We travelled by bus to Hamburg, to the airport, and from there by plane to Birmingham, where Jane Williams was waiting for us. We continued with the bus to Kidderminster. There the travellers took up their quarters in a hotel, a Guest-house, or with Choral Society members.

The days were filled with sightseeing (Kidderminster's Museum of Carpet, Avoncroft Museum, a visit to Bewdley, etc.). Here, we were accompanied by our Kidderminster friends. When walking or when we were partaking of the obligatory teas old friendships were revived and whole new relationships were made.



Geoff Weaver, KCS Director of Music

In the evenings it was time for intensive rehearsals. Always, when the two choirs meet, they give a joint concert. This year it was the same; in St. Mary's Church works by Haydn (*St. Cecilia Mass*) and Vivaldi (*Gloria*) rang forth. Both the Storms Choir and the Kidderminster Choir had previously practised separately, so that they had just three days to rehearse together. The concert took place on Saturday at 19:00.

The official part of the meeting took place at a dinner after the concert. The President of the English choir, John Gaston, and the Chairman of The Storm Choir, Ille Eggers, talked of the 25-year friendship and said that a meeting was held every two years. Heinrich Linkogel, a former Chairman, had been instrumental in maintaining the good contact between the two choirs. Siegfried Carstensen gave a highly-acclaimed speech about the end of the second world war, the 70th anniversary of which fell at this particular time.

Everyone looked forward with anticipation to the 2017 Kidderminster visit to Husum, and a very intensive visit to Kidderminster ended on Sunday.

**Manfred Klass**

## PEACE AND HARMONY

THANKS TO Katherine Dickson for her impressions of the Twinning Concert and of the rehearsals that led up to it:

I'm always up for a choral challenge, and rarely miss weekly rehearsals in preparation for end-of-term concerts. But the time-scales were overturned somewhat as far as this special occasion weekend

was concerned, as choir had scarcely got going again after the well-earned Easter break.

Please visit our website:

[www.kidderminster-husum-twinning.co.uk](http://www.kidderminster-husum-twinning.co.uk)

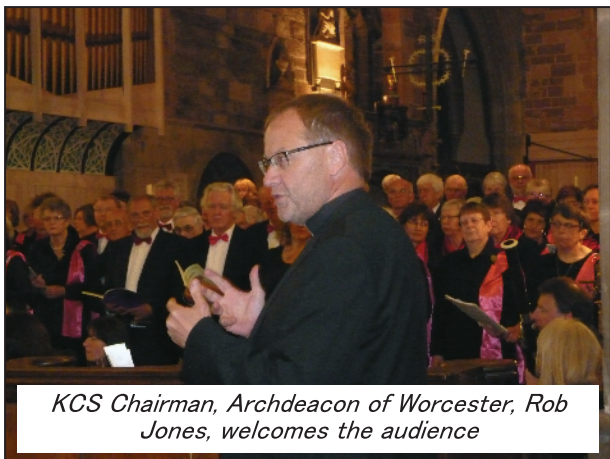




*Christoph Jensen leads a rehearsal in Baxter Church Hall*



*The 'official party' at Saturday's concert*



*KCS Chairman, Archdeacon of Worcester, Rob Jones, welcomes the audience*

How difficult could it be, though, rehearsing 'just a couple of pieces' to sing with our visitors from Kidderminster's twin town of Husum in Germany? There may have been only a few short weeks to get to grips with the music, but as half the performance would be Vivaldi's popular and well-known *Gloria*, there was a certain confidence, possibly misplaced ...

The other piece, you see, was Haydn's *St Cecilia Mass*, not something I'd even heard, let alone sung before, and it seemed I was in good company. We soon found out there were an awful lot of notes to learn, Semiquaver Central, you might say, together with tricky tempo changes between and even within movements that had a habit of taking us by surprise. It's a lovely, lively and uplifting work though, and on the face of it the music tends to do what you expect, reaching satisfying cadences after all the ins and outs of its texture, so that even going astray here and there, there was a good chance of us all finishing together!

I hadn't bargained for being quite so busy with family and work in the run-up and during the weekend itself, so I had to think twice about whether to see the commitment through, but in the end it did me the world of good, as music-making always does. We worked our soprano socks off (the other voices can provide their own clichés if they wish) at our first rehearsal with Theodor Storms Chor on Thursday evening, and I do hope it wasn't too obvious to their lovely director, Christoph Jensen, that *St Cecilia* was still subject to a good deal of sight-reading.

Familiarity's half the battle though, so another busy session on Friday evening brought us that bit closer to the optimism overcoming the nerves. Combining the two choirs' voices was of course a joy, and by the time we'd had our final rehearsal together on Saturday afternoon, followed by a cream tea, we were working as a coherent unit of friends – and not just in terms of getting to know the visitors, but also making the most of the rare opportunity to socialise more than usual within our own choir.

**Katherine Dickson**

**OFFICERS OF THE TWINNING ASSOCIATION (see also next page)**

**Chairman: Terry Garbett, 14 Trimpley Lane, Kidderminster, Worcs. DY11 5LB (01562 637900)**

**Secretary: Hilary Boyle, 30 Blakebrook, Kidderminster, Worcs. DY11 6RG (01562 68535)**

**Treasurer: Christine Dutton, 40 Lea Bank Avenue, Kidderminster, Worcs. DY11 6PA (01562 823961)**

## THANK YOU, SIEGFRIED

*SIEGFRIED CARSTENSEN, a member of the Theodor Storms Chor, gave this speech at the dinner that followed the joint concert given by the TSC and Kidderminster Choral Society on Saturday May 9. We are grateful to Siegfried for allowing us to reprint his thought-provoking words.*

It is not possible to be here in this country as a German, and at this moment in time, without remembering the events that happened 70 years ago. Events that have defined an era and whose global significance is still affecting the world today. Together with us, millions of people throughout Europe and the world are currently also remembering this time. The time when Allied troops put an end to a reign of tyranny in Germany that had attempted to subjugate the people of Europe under an inhuman and racist ideology.

As a result of this, Europe's towns and cities lay in ruins and an unimaginable amount of death, loss and suffering had been caused by the perpetrators. Not far from here are the cities of Birmingham and Coventry, which for us Germans, too, are symbols of the extent of this destruction and suffering.

Seventy years on, of course, most people in Germany know these events only from history books or TV programmes. And, of course, these people cannot be expected to plead guilty for crimes they did not commit.

We cannot change or undo the past. 'It is not a case of coming to terms with the past,' said the former German President Richard von Weizsäcker in his speech on the 8th May 1985, and he stressed the importance of remembering: 'Anyone who closes his eyes to the past is blind to the present. Whoever refuses to remember the inhumanity is prone to new risks of infection.'

For the people living today, the horrors of the past can serve only as a lesson. And this also applies to the memory of the First World War, which started one hundred years ago, and to

the Armenian genocide. Even if we are not responsible for what happened in the past, we are nevertheless responsible for what will come of it.

Weizsäcker, whose father was a high-ranking Nazi official and hence also one of the perpetrators, reminded us that Hitler's prevailing tactic was to stir up prejudice, enmity and hatred. In his speech, he therefore urged the people of our time: 'Do not let yourselves be forced into enmity and hatred of other people, of Russians or Americans, Jews or Turks, of radicals or conservatives, blacks or whites. Learn to live together, not in opposition to each other.'

And if Weizsäcker was alive now, to witness the crises and genocides in our world today, he would also remind us that it was other nations and their people who welcomed and offered a new home to those imperilled by Nazi terror.

And with this thought we are here with you in Kidderminster again, and remember with gratitude the reintegration of the Germans into civilised European society after the war - and the beginning of this friendship between our two choirs as an active gesture of reconciliation between former enemies, who found a positive - and, in our case, a joyful musical - way out of the darkest chapter of twentieth century history.

And with our gratitude we combine the hope, in line with Weizsäcker's words, that together as Europeans we can face up to the great challenges the twenty-first century has placed at our doorsteps.

**Siegfried Carstensen**

## KROKUSFEST

*JESS CAMPBELL, Kidderminster's 2014 Carnival Queen, wrote down her thoughts on her March visit to Husum soon after she returned home. Although the Carnival Committee has been dissolved, we hope that Jess will not be the last of a long line of Carnival Queens, all of whom have represented Kidderminster so outstandingly.*

**OFFICERS OF THE TWINNING ASSOCIATION (continued)**

**Membership Sec:** Jeremy Mayfield, 15A Ludlow Rd, Kidderminster, DY10 1NR (01562 639257)

**Cultural Sec:** Ray Harrowing, 147 Birmingham Ro, Kidderminster, DY10 2SL (01562 822476)

**Social :** Pat Garbett, 39 Batham Road, Kidderminster, DY10 2TW (01562 630326)



My name is Jessica Campbell, I'm aged 16, I attend Baxter College and I'm currently studying for my GCSEs which I will take in May 2015. In April 2014 I was very fortunate to be crowned Kidderminster Carnival Queen - to this day I still can't believe it! My year has been fantastic and

Saturday the 28th March will stay in my mind forever. First, walking from the hotel into the *Marktplatz* (town centre) to have make up applied by the beauticians (thank you, Douglas), in preparation for the crowning of the new Crocus Queen. There I first met Kira Weinreich (past Crocus Queen), Katja Ingwersen (newly-crowned Queen) and Yanina Klitzka (Gettorf's Blossom Queen). They were all so incredibly friendly. Together, all ready in our dresses, carrying our crocus baskets and our picture postcards, we walked to the old town hall. Here the *Bürgermeister* presented Husum with their new Crocus Queen, Katja, and together we stood on the balcony looking out onto the crowds of people: 'Wow! This is such an overwhelming experience, it is a truly celebrated occasion!'



*Floral Queen Jess*

has flown by too quickly. The many highlights have included leading the procession in the Carnival parade, switching on the Kidderminster Christmas lights and now, in March, returning from Husum.

pretty and vibrant, while walking among people approaching us for photographs and asking for a signed picture postcard, I honestly felt like

With Hilary and Geoff, who were so helpful in guiding me and my Mum from start to finish, we landed in Husum on 27th March. Arriving at our hotel, the Hotel Hinrichsen, we quickly got ourselves ready to go to Husum's Town Hall. There we met many people from Husum's and Kidderminster's twinning associations, representatives from Düsseldorf, Mayors past and present. The *Bürgermeister* of Husum welcomed us in his opening speech - their English is very good! The food was delicious, everything presented so beautifully, the room looking out onto the very beautiful harbour.



*Kira, Jess, Katja and Yanina - a royal quartet*



*Those were the days, my friends - one of the first meetings between Kidderminster and Husum youth groups*



royalty, everyone so happy in the celebrations, with every step I took, absorbing this fantastic town. We continued our walk through the crocuses to the Castle grounds. Here were the market stalls, and people continued to approach us. The other Queens took me under their wing and we truly made friends. It was an honour to be part of this celebration, all thanks to the Twinning Association. The last duty for that day was to attend the cutting of the Krokusblütenfest cake at C J Schmidt's. Here Katja cut the cake, and together we sat, laughing and talking about our wonderful day, a day I will cherish forever. Also it was such a surprise to see Thane there! It was lovely to catch up with her.

On Sunday we had a very busy timetable for the day: a tour of Husum, led by Rainer Maaß, alongside the Mayor of Kidderminster, we toured Husum and stopped off for cake and coffee, we visited the North Sea Museum, attended a classical concert and lastly went to the farewell party. Here Charles Talbot sang and played the guitar; it was another fantastic evening, sad to say goodbye to everyone we met.

I hadn't visited Husum before and didn't know what to expect, Husum exceeded everything I could have thought. They welcomed me and truly treated me like a queen.

Hilary, Geoff, Rainer, Eva, Charles and Jean Talbot, everyone from the Kidderminster-Husum Twinning Association, the Düsseldorf representatives, Ken Garbett, Queens Katja, Kira and Yanina, Colin Hill and everyone from the Carnival Committee, you

are all wonderful people; Thank You and Best Wishes.

**Jessica Campbell**  
**Kidderminster Carnival Queen 2014**

## VISITING VIOLINS

MY TWO GOOD violinist friends from the Husum Orchestra (the *Collegium Musicum*) came over to stay in March this year and I'd like to tell you how it came about. Last time I was in Husum, which was in 2014, I was fortunate to play in the concert in the *Kongresshalle* with my friends in the orchestra. Afterwards, my partner Mike and I were invited back to Henning and Suzanne Jess's house, along with a number of other players, for an after-concert party. Much intoxicating liquor was taken, m'lud, which caused me to rashly invite nearly a dozen people over to play in the Chandos Symphony Orchestra's concert, in Tewkesbury Abbey, in March 2015. There was an enthusiastic response, particularly because it was for Mahler's Second Symphony, the *Resurrection*, which is a very large-scale work (120-piece orchestra, 110-person choir, 15-piece off-stage band, two soloists and an organist) and therefore attractive to my German musical friends, who don't often get to play this kind of grandiose work.

But I forgot to remind myself that I was one of the organisers, and would therefore be very busy (not to mention stressed) that week, and thus it wasn't the best of ideas to invite international guests to stay. However, in the end only two came: Karin Ziegler and



*Inside the beautiful Tewkesbury Abbey*





Christa Lehrmann-Peterson, both super violinists who have stayed with us before on several occasions. They couldn't have been more co-operative - they insisted on helping with the cooking and clearing away, folding leaflets, and so on, and practised diligently every day. And one day announced they were going to do dinner for us, and they cooked us a fantastic beef *sous vide* dish. We didn't have time for many outings, but we did go to Witley Court and Church on a glorious spring day; and one evening, played some four-violin music for fun with a German-speaking friend.

When the great day came, we arrived early at the Abbey, which looked magnificent. However, the rehearsal started late owing to traffic problems on the M5, which stressed the conductor somewhat, but being a fluent German speaker he was an instant hit with Karin and Christa. We also had another German in the orchestra - a professional horn player based in London, and an American cellist.

All was well: we put on a great show, people were very moved by the performance, and in fact, it was a sell out, and received a four star review in the *Birmingham Post*. Karin and Christa loved the historic town of Tewkesbury, and were thrilled to have taken part in such a memorable event. I resolved to try even harder to learn German, ready for my next visit to their lovely town.

**Linda Fowler**

**Chandos Symphony Orchestra**

## FOREST QUILTERS VISIT TO HUSUM - MAY 14-17

FOREST QUILTERS have enjoyed another successful trip to Husum. Six Quilters travelled by car, plane, train and bus from Kidderminster to Husum. Hilary Boyle had given Brenda Banner strict instructions how we, elderly ladies, should negotiate the transfer from

Hamburg airport by train to Husum. However things did not go quite to plan, as the cross-Hamburg line was being worked on, so this meant that we had to transfer from train to bus and back again. Help! Luckily assistance was at hand as Karin Petersen had made the journey from Husum and was there, all smiles, to meet us and to shepherd us up and down flights of stairs (escalators not working!), on and off trains and buses, until at last we got on the 'real' train to Husum. After that everything was great. Our hosts welcomed us into their lovely homes and treated us to their famed hospitality.



On the first day we were up early to visit the *Schiffahrtsmuseum* (Maritime Museum) which was most interesting. Our guide was a lovely gentleman (88 years old) who seemed delighted to have six elderly ladies hanging on his every word! As the weather was very pleasant we were then able to wander along the harbour front admiring the architecture and the colours of the shops and houses fronting the harbour, not forgetting to enjoy delicious ice-creams on the way. The afternoon was taken up by a carriage ride to a tiny islet (*Hallig Sdfall*) to enjoy *Kaffe und Kuchen!* The carriage turned out to be a large cart pulled by a pair of small Norwegian ponies. These little ponies



had to pull the heavy cart crammed with about 20 people. We trundled across the sand some



7km to the island, taking advantage of the six-hour window of low tide. We knew it might be cold so we were all very well wrapped up in hats, scarves, gloves and wind-proof coats. The island is a special reserve and can only be reached by the 'carriage ride'. It is the home of many sea birds, and we saw oystercatchers and Arctic terns nesting in the grass. It was very flat! The day ended with a convivial meal at a lovely restaurant on the mainland shore.

Sunday dawned dull and drizzly, which was a pity as we were invited to make a tour of Husum, and particularly of the houses lived in by Husum's poet/author, Theodor Storm. We also managed a visit to a lovely new Patchwork shop, full of lovely materials and notions. As you can imagine euros soon came out of purses. In the afternoon we all met for a 'sit and sew' afternoon. Storm Quilters had organised a lovely idea for us to make and we were soon busy with needle and cotton, with of course lots of chat, and punctuated with *Kaffe und* (delicious, homemade) *Kuchen*. The evening saw us assembled at the home of Helga and Kurt for a supper celebrating Helga's birthday, followed by a game of Lotto (Bingo to us). This involved many, many prizes, and thus we all went home laden, especially Brenda.

Our last day dawned and it was time for goodbyes. As we could not face the return trip on our own, with the same problems, we had arranged a taxi to take us from Husum to the airport. Divided between six it was 30 euros each. Cheap at the price, and it was excellent. Before that we all enjoyed a final sumptuous breakfast together at Karin's house. There it was fond goodbyes and hope to see you soon.

***Aufwiedersehen Husum from Sara Hollis - Forest Quilters***

## FROM THE COMMITTEE

THE COMMITTEE met on May 21, and received reports from a number of groups. Some of these reports are the subject of articles elsewhere in this edition of the Newsletter.

Councillor Rose Bishop had been elected Town Mayor of Kidderminster, and was now therefore the President of the Association.

A Summer Garden Party was being arranged for August 18, at the home of Tim and Pauline Wadsworth, and a Quiz Night early in October was under consideration.

Details of the August visit of the *Verein* to Kidderminster were discussed. These would include visits to the Severn Valley Railway and Ironbridge/Blists Hill, a Skittles evening and a farewell meal.

The low level of interest in Foreign Languages in schools was a continuing problem, but it was felt that the widening of contacts to include non-Language subjects could have beneficial results.

The Committee will meet again on September 16 and November 24; if members have matters that they would like the Committee to discuss they are invited to contact the Secretary, Hilary Boyle.

## PHOTO CREDITS

*Hilary Boyle, Colin Hill, Sara Hollis, Manfred Klass, Heinrich Linkogel and Karin Ziegler.*

*We apologise if there are pictures in this edition that have not been properly acknowledged.*