



**Minutes of Thame & District Twinning Association  
Annual General Meeting  
Friday 3rd July 2020  
8.00pm held virtually by Zoom**

	<b>Agenda items</b>	<b>Action</b>
1	<p>Present Committee: Linda Emery (Chair); Sue Motteram (Secretary); James Green (Treasurer); Liz Barker, David Laver, Don Butler, Bridget and Robert Trueman Members: Diane Ansell, Roy Motteram, Martin and Philomena Goodall, Norma Laver, Elaine Butler, Anna Harper, Owen Davies, Helena Fickling, Jeannette Matelot-Green, Deborah Miller, Dudley Wilson, Cynthia Jackson, Pieter-Paul Barker, Briony Bradbury</p> <p>Apologies for absence: David Jackson, Sonja and John Francis, Nigel and Alison Champken-Wood, John Brown, Carl Barnes</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of the AGM held on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2019. No matters arising. Proposed by Bridget. Seconded by David</p>	
3	<p>Chair's Report (see end) This has been sent out by email (hard copy delivered to Phyllis Brown). Excellent year despite the circumstances. Linda thanked Anna for the work she's done to create the new Facebook pages. Anna requested that members let her know of events / activities that she can put on there for us to reach out and shout about. Clearly everything has been upset by Covid-19, especially the May visit which had promised so much, especially our joint VE day celebrations at Towersey Manor. This has also meant that we were unable to say an official farewell to Jean-François who has retired this year and is no longer mayor of Montesson. Bridget wondered if we could do something else to recognise the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ending of the war. She suggested August 14<sup>th</sup> (VJ Day), but given the current government guidelines for social distancing, we aren't in a position to be able to organise anything right now. Linda thanked the committee for their support, especially James who has kept control of the finances which are in a very healthy state due to the fact that no expense was incurred in May. James is stepping down after 10 years as Treasurer. Linda thanked him and we hope to be able to have some sort of "surprise" celebration to say thanks to him at some point, whenever we're allowed! We thanked Linda for her excellent work as Chairman. In turn she thanked members who support the association in lots of ways, not least the Jackson's who hosted the Christmas Carol, mulled wine and mince pie evening for us in December.</p>	

4	<p>Treasurer's Report; to include the 2019/20 Annual Accounts</p> <p>Everyone had received a copy of the treasurer's report and the accounts prior to the meeting (see end). The unusual and unfortunate circumstances of the year so far mean that we have made a substantial profit over the year. The current balance is £3474. Owen asked if we had ever been so well off! No, but the May visit could have eaten a big hole into this given the big celebration planned. However our successful fund-raising pre-Covid and careful budgeting meant that we would have had enough to pay for the weekend.</p> <p>Huge thanks to Dudley who made a very generous donation to enable us to buy a sturdy gazebo with our logo on the roof and side panels. We had hoped to have already been using it, but this has obviously been impossible. However in the future we will save money every time we have an event where we usually have to rent one. Once we're allowed, we hope to have profile-raising events outside the Town Hall. Liz has agreed to take over from James as Treasurer.</p>	
5	<p>Election of Officers and their Roles &amp; Responsibilities</p> <p>No-one has come forward to express their wish to stand as an officer or committee member. The current committee have agreed to stay on in their current rôles, other than the change of Treasurer. There were no objections.</p>	
6	<p>Fundraising 2020/21</p> <p>This is clearly all on hold at the moment and we can only wait to see what the coming months hold.</p> <p>The November Quiz is on the calendar and perhaps it will be possible, but we can't make any decisions now. We'll think about it in the Autumn. Sue Boyle (our Quizmaster) is currently holding Zoom quizzes to raise money for the Stroke Association – could we do the same? The committee will have to discuss this and talk to Sue if it looks like the Town Hall quiz has to be cancelled.</p>	Committee
7	<p>September Visit 2020</p> <p>This will almost certainly be cancelled but we haven't heard from Montesson yet.</p>	
8	<p>Christmas Events 2020 – Montesson and Thame Xmas Markets</p> <p>No-one knows what is happening, but the likelihood that these will be cancelled or certainly not taking place in the same way as usual.</p>	
9	<p>Thame Twinning with John Hampden and Montesson Schools</p> <p>As with everything else this is sadly very much on hold at the moment, especially as John Hampden is not open to the year groups involved.</p> <p>However before the lockdown was imposed, Laura McDonald at JH was in touch with her counterpart in Montesson and email / present exchanges have been taking place. Montesson school sent a digital book to JH at Christmas and Laura had been planning to return something similar at Easter. Sue Motteram had been in to support her a few times with a view to making this more regular, when everything came to a sudden stop. Hopefully the link will be re-established again in September. We will support and encourage as much as we are able</p>	Sue M
10	<p>AOB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diane asked if anyone could help her find an English penfriend for the 11 year old son of one of her French friends.</li> <li>• Martin and Philomena thanked the committee for their work.</li> <li>• David and Norma asked how we can keep our profile up at this time. The community stall at the Tuesday market has been discontinued for the time</li> </ul>	All

	<p>being. Can we make more use of social media?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anna will put things out on our public Facebook pages – please send her details / photos of activities. Perhaps photos from last year’s events? If you correspond with people in Montesson, details of what’s happening over there.</li> <li>• We plan to put together a Twinning photobook for Jean-François. Sonja and Anna are going to compile this. Please send any relevant photos to Sonja, particularly photos with him in them.</li> <li>• Briony asked about the date for the May visit 2021. We will suggest the weekend of 14<sup>th</sup> May.</li> <li>• David asked about the possibility of doing another virtual reunion with Montesson, perhaps to coincide with the date when we should have been going over in September. Anna is able to facilitate this in the same way as she did in May.</li> <li>• Please send any ideas for activities that we can do at this time that will help keep us connected to Sue Motteram.</li> <li>• There was some discussion about membership fees as some members are unsure as to whether they’ve paid or when they should be paying. We agreed that it would be much simpler if everyone paid by Standing Order and that it was made clear that the Twinning Year starts in September for everyone. Sue M will send an email to the membership to inform them and to give details of the bank account for them to set up a Standing Order. Liz will keep a spreadsheet showing an accurate and up-to-date list of paid-up members.</li> </ul>	<p>Anna</p> <p>Sonja</p> <p>Anna</p> <p>Sue</p> <p>Liz</p>
11	Date and Venue of Next AGM Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> July. Venue to be decided.	

### **Chairman’s Report 2020**

Wow what a year! It started with our September 2019 trip to Montesson and the visit to the home and gardens of Monet; unforgettable. Seventeen of us travelled by Mini bus and private car. On the way home, we made a detour to the town of Beauvais. We walked the city and had a very convivial lunch.

The calendar year ended with the Christmas markets, notably our November trip to Montesson Xmas market which we love attending and meeting the local Montesson people and English residents. Our range of goods including home-made cakes and jams always go down a storm. There was lots of dressing up and clowning around in our Mickey Mouse Xmas kits - well that was organised by Carl! Anne and John François Bel organised a wonderful meal for us on the Saturday evening. Sadly, this was our last official meeting with him before his retirement.

I really hope we will be back in November 2020.

And so our fundraising for May 2020 was in full swing. Following our near sell-out in Montesson, both we and the Montesson team had successful stalls at the Thame Christmas event. We had a lot of fun singing carols while enjoying mince pies and mulled wine at the Jacksons and the New Year got off to a good start with a Cassoulet evening. Our film nights had restarted and we were looking forward to being able to take our turn in March on the Community stall at the Tuesday market. However, on the 9<sup>th</sup> January I had watched in horror as the virus in Wuhan began to consolidate its deadly grip and then leap into other South Asian countries via international travel and cruise liners. I doubted that it would get to Europe and the UK, I was so wrong. On the 15<sup>th</sup> March we were on a family coach trip to Ireland. The coach was stopped at Conway and we were told that all hotels had been closed and we duly travelled back to Thame. On the 17<sup>th</sup> my family locked ourselves down in

Thame.

I began to realise that the French Twinning trip planned for mid-May would not take place. Sue and the committee were well ahead with the organisation of our VE day celebrations, all in vain. Our reciprocal trip in September is looking highly unlikely. Fundraising is also on hold. Fortunately, we have substantial funds in our bank for our 2020/21 programme.

We have a brand-new Gazebo complete with our twinning logo, that we have been able to purchase thanks to a very kind and generous donation towards it from Dudley Wilson. I can't wait for us to give it its first outing, once Dudley has cut the ribbon.

Last year I outlined three key objectives, successful fund raising, growing membership and improving awareness in the community. We have made gains but our excellent team are trying to do better. We have widened our objectives to include the participation of Thame schools and sports into the Twinning Friendship and philosophy. I am proud of our committee and our achievements, everyone is engaged in running "the club". We may have designated key roles, but we operate very much in the spirit of open participation and discussion. I would like to thank all members for their efforts who give their time to help the association thrive and who support us in a number of different ways, not least the brilliant Zoom meeting in May linking us with our Montesson friends, organised by Anna.

We hope to run our quiz night on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, matching if not exceeding our success last November.

I would like to recognise the efforts of James who has been our Treasurer for the last 10 years and thank him for his contribution to our winning formula.

Brexit has still not been finalised. Whatever transpires it should not affect nearly 20 years of friendship and fraternity.

2021 will be a year of uncertainty. Will our reciprocal visits be resumed? Will fund raising be possible? Will the virus be contained and will our members have the confidence to re-join our adventures?

I sincerely hope so and remain positive about the future of Twinning.

### **Treasurer's Report for the year to July 3rd 2020**

The Association recorded a profit for the year of £1798.91 on a total income of £2222.41 and expenses of £423.50. Cash at the Bank stood at £1948.62 at the beginning of the financial year, and the closing balance was £3747.53.

There were few fundraising events this year to the Covid pandemic however, the September visit to Montesson provided a useful profit and income from the Christmas Market in Montesson, the Film Nights, the Book Sales and the Quiz remain steady. There were two very generous donations. Annual subscriptions received so far amount to £300

On the other hand, there was no visit from Montesson in May due to Covid19, no expenses were therefore incurred and financially we are in a very healthy position. Accordingly, I consider that the annual subscription should remain at £10 per head. As you all know I am standing down as Treasurer after a most enjoyable eight year tenure. Technology has got the better of me and I wish every success to my successor.

James Green

Treasurer

3 July 2020