



# *Llanwrtyd Twinning Association*

## **Notes on Official Twinning Meeting**

Saturday August 25<sup>th</sup> 2012, 10.30am at Dol y Coed, Llanwrtyd Wells

**Cllr June Newman**, Mayor of Llanwrtyd Wells opened the meeting and offered a warm welcome to everyone, especially Monsieur Jean-Louis Delannoy, Mayor of Mériel and Mgr Dalibor Carda, Mayor of Český Krumlov.

Cllr Newman continued that it was fitting to pay tribute to the late Bryan Watkins who had been a long time member of Llanwrtyd Town Council, and a driving force in the Twinning Association. Bryan had played an active part in the arrangements for this visit, and our sympathies go to his widow Margaret and the rest of their family. Cllr Newman said that 'twinning' is an important part of Llanwrtyd's culture, and that although the official twinning with Mériel took place in 2000; the strong association goes back much further. Links with the Czech Republic go back to the Second World War when Czech children were evacuated to our town.

She continued saying it is essential to a small rural community like Llanwrtyd to maintain links with other communities, to keep horizons open and allow our youngsters to learn about life in other countries. Llanwrtyd Town Council hopes the exchange visits will continue and that we can continue to enjoy each other's hospitality.

Cllr Newman offered thanks to members of the Twinning Association for organising this joint visit. She touched on the World Alternative Games and the special twinning day that took place the previous day. The focus for the games is taking part rather than winning, and she outlined how there are many groups within the community who give freely of their time and work very hard, including Town Councillors. She outlined some recent successes for members including securing Post Office services in permanent premises, the organising of a Diamond Jubilee event for the whole town, and the successful applications for grants to renovate the pavilion.

At this point Cllr Newman presented individually dedicated pictorial history books of Llanwrtyd and District to Monsieur Delannoy and Mgr Carda.

**Monsieur Delannoy** said that there was a tradition of meeting every two years with a focus on family events. This time Bryan is not with us and he will be sadly missed, he offered his condolences to Margaret and her family. He said his belief was that Bryan was not far from us and would be with us for this great new event.

Monsieur Delannoy said it was hard to imagine that it was 25 years since Jean-Michel François and Bryn Davis first met, and 12 years since our two towns were officially twinned. He spoke of how the visit 4 years ago was filled with enthusiasm, friendship, music, song and dance.

He continued that this time it was a great pleasure to be here at the same time as the party from Český Krumlov. The saying goes that 'the friends of our friends are our friends', and it was a great pleasure.

Monsieur Delannoy said it was also a pleasure for him on a personal basis to be accompanied on this visit by his wife Pascale, and said that on their way back home they would visit London where they lived for 3 years 35 years ago.

Monsieur Delannoy offered thanks to both Twinning Associations for organising the event, and on behalf of himself and the other 'Mayors' present he offered official thanks to Nicole Cabon and Jacquie Brown and their teams.

He thanked everyone for being here and the hospitality received and said Bless the twinning and the friendship between Llanwrtyd and Mériel.

Monsieur Delannoy presented Cllr Newman with the key to Mériel.

**Mr Radim Rouce**, Secretary of Municipal Authority spoke on behalf of Mgr Carda. Mr Rouce offered apologies on behalf of Mgr Carda who speaks no English. He offered thanks for the invitation to Llanwrtyd, and said that he and Mgr Carda were enjoying the visit. He commented on the beautiful countryside which is similar to the region close to his home town and makes them feel like they are at home. He thanked everyone for their hospitality and said they would love to visit again in the future. He offered a warm invitation to everyone to visit Český Krumlov. Mgr Carda had already presented gifts to Cllr Newman before the meeting began.

**Jacquie Brown** offered her thanks to both twinning groups for all the hard work, getting the finances together and giving freely of their time to organise the WAG twinning day, which had originally been Nicole's idea. Mrs Brown continued that it had been Bryan Watkins' dream to get everyone together for this event, and she expressed her gratitude to the visitors who had travelled far to make the dream a reality.

**Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines** said she still has email contact with some of the students who were in Llanwrtyd during WW2, as well as the Headmaster who is over

100 years old. Lady Milena continued that she had taken Mgr Carda and Mr Rouse to see the Abernant Lake Hotel, which now belongs to Manor Adventures, but was the school house for the evacuees. The manager of Manor Adventures didn't know the story behind the photographs on the walls of the building, so Lady Milena wrote to him and explained the story. The manager then ordered 50 copies of a book written about the Czech children being taught in Llanwrtyd, and he ensures his team leaders have a copy so that they can make visiting children aware of the history. Lady Milena also reflected on the three reunions that have been held at the Abernant.

**Cllr Newman** asked if anyone else would like to speak. She said that a visit to the History Resource Project office would take place followed by a visit to Dol y Coed well. She then thanked everyone for attending and offered refreshments.

Pat Dryden – Clerk to Llanwrtyd Town Council

28/08/2012