

## **Cllr Ford report for the Faringdon/Koenigstein Twinning Association.**

We had another successful year building on our relationship with our friends from Koenigstein im Taunus.

In May last year Cllr Ford was invited to visit Koenigstein to attend the inauguration of their new Burgmeistrine (Mayor) Beatrice Schenk-Motzko. Cllr Ford gave a short speech to the gathered multitude of dignitaries, including guests from Koenigstein's other twinning associations (including Le Mele sur Sarthe, our French friends. Fellow twinning association member and District/County Councillor Bethia Thomas also attended.

In June, our Mayor, Peter Castle met with some of our German friends during the D Day 80 commemorations in Normandy.

In October our friends from Koenigstein visited us here in Faringdon. This was their new Burgmeisterine's first visit to the UK! They enjoyed Faringdon's warm hospitality, including marvelling at the antics of our Three Legged Race. They also enjoyed tours of our town, Oxford and Bath. All in the best Indian Summer weather specially laid on for them.

A number of our members travelled to Koenigstein in the lead up to Christmas to again take in Frankfurt and their own Christmas Markets.

In April this year we had a successful "Aprilfest" at The Sadlers with German themed food and beverages, with a splendid evening had by all.

Also in April, our members Bethia Thomas and Donna Rogers met with the German Deputy Ambassador to the Court of St James (UK) as part of a pan UK twinning event organised by the German-English Twinning Association, with which we are establishing strong links.

At the end of May our German friends will be visiting us again, and as part of the 35th anniversary celebrations of our Twinning with Le Mele Sur Sarthe, they will be bringing their local award winning Falkenstein Mandolin Orchestra with them to provide entertainment in our own Corn Exchange on the evening of Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May.

On the last weekend of October we will be visiting Koenigstein again with the distinct possibility of taking in Frankfurt's Oktoberfest amongst other site seeing trips.

We are actively seeking new blood for our association and will be holding our AGM within the next Month where committee posts will be up for grabs for those interested in helping forge our association's future. We are particularly looking for people interested in helping us to develop youth links between our two towns.

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