

The Norfolk & Norwich Novi Sad Association

Dedicated to Friendship

This edition contains the report of the Annual General Meeting. Attendance was down this year but this is not a reflection of lack of interest but that of circumstance. The number of apologies received and the greetings sent is a good indication of the interest shown in the working of the Association.

The Annual visit to Novi Sad is fully reported in this edition of the Newsletter. This enjoyable and adventurous event continues to be the one activity that affords direct contact between friends in both countries.

The Committee is delighted that the Lord Mayor Cll. Eve Collisaw, has agreed to be our President during her term of Office.

The Annual General Meeting

The Lord Mayor, Cll. Jeremy Hooke, as President of the Association, took the chair and in welcoming the members and guests spoke of his two trips to Novi Sad and the welcome he had received there.

There was much evidence of the continued close links between the two cities that in all that he saw and experienced.

He spoke of the work of the Association and the dedication of the committee and members to extending and strengthening the links between the two cities.

Fifteen members were present. The num-

ber of apologies and greetings from other members gives a guide to the interest that members have in the Association.

The following officers were re-elected: Mr. Doug Underwood (Chairman); Mrs. Diana Beckley (Vice Chairman); Mr. Jack Brooksbank (Treasurer) and Mr. Peter Beckley (General Secretary).

Other Committee Members were elected as follows: Mrs. Heather Ashmore; Mr. John Jennings; Mr. Ken Lock; Mrs. Caroline Lock; Dr. Brenda Moffitt and Mrs. Wendy Quinn.

The Association's Honorary Vice Presidents are: the Rt. Hon. Charles

Clarke M.P.; Prof. Djordje Janjc and Mrs. Carole Cross, and Dr. Muriel Huppell. The Honorary life Vice President is Mr. Derek Bishop. Two people who do not get mentioned often enough are the Association's Honorary Life Members: Mrs. Marija Pilipovic (Secretary of the Novi Sad/Norwich Association) and Wendy Timm.

After the formal business of the Peter Beckley gave a talk on "Other Things I get Up To in Novi Sad and Serbia".

Visit to Novi Sad May/June 2009.

This annual event is always more than just a 'holiday' visit. Much of the work that is done by the Association in maintaining links and giving support to our twin town of Novi Sad is followed up and extended. Nevertheless, the group (smaller this year) enjoyed a wonderful time and experienced the kind hospitality of our

sister organisation (The Novi Sad/Norwich Association) and the President of the City Assembly who took time out from a very busy schedule to meet the group.

Those in the group represented the Association's geographical and age range with members from London, Wales, and Oxford as well as mem-

bers from Norwich and Norfolk.

One characteristic of the members of the group was the number speaking and learning Serbian. It was sometimes difficult to engage local Serbs in conversation as they found it surprising that so many could speak and understand so much Serbian!

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The Milan Petrović School

The visit to the School was a very special occasion since it coincided with the school's celebration of 50 years since its foundation.

The visitors joined in the many interesting activities the school had arranged. There was a large formal meeting with representatives from the Ministry of Education and the local School's Authority. Diana and Peter were asked to speak on behalf of the Association. There was an opportunity later to talk about the Association's long standing connection with the School and to make a presentation of the gift of €770 for the furnishing of a 'sensory area'.

The gift from the Association was enhanced by two anonymous donations from members.



The Principal of the Milan Petrović School showing visitors the Sensory Area which will be enhanced with equipment purchased

A print of the Novi Sad Friendship Bridge in Norwich which was kindly donated by one of the Association's members was presented to the Principal Slavica Marković, not only to mark the continued friendship and connection between the Association and the School, but also to mark their 50th anniversary.

In presenting the picture Diana remarked that next year saw the 50th anniversary of the first contact between Novi Sad and Norwich and that the picture could also be seen to mark that occasion. She explained that the crowns and aeroplanes in the border represented the buildings which were formerly at the ends of the bridge.

Our stalwart members from Wales brought with them a large quantity of small knitted garments for the school knowing that they will be able to distribute them to where they are most needed.



Members of the Group with the President of the City Assembly, Aleksander Jovanović, presenting books for the English section of the Novi Sad Library



Milica Marković receiving the picture of the Novi Sad Friendship Bridge in Norwich. The print is suitably inscribed marking the occasion of the presentation.

Books

As always with a trip to Novi Sad visitors never go empty handed.

Earlier in the year it was learned that The British Council had been instrumental in setting up an 'English Section' in the Public Library. The President of the City Assembly spoke to visitors in February about the possibility of English books being donated. Consequently the group arrived in Novi Sad with books distributed throughout their luggage. It is hoped this will continue. All the books have a book plate stating "Donated by the Norfolk & Norwich Novi Sad Association".

People

The group of visitors to Novi Sad on these occasions is always made up of an interesting collection of people. This year it represented the wide distribution of our members in Britain and the wide range of ages

Two members came from Wales; one from Oxford; three from various parts of London, and five from Nor-

wich/Norfolk.

It was particularly pleasing that Dr. Muriel Heppell was able to meet former pupils from her first English class. Muriel says she spent ten happy years in Novi Sad in the early sixties as English Lektor and was involved in the formation of the Novi Sad University. It was an unexpected surprise for her to meet the former pupils of the first group she taught all of whom went on to become teachers of English. They are all now retired and were delighted to meet Muriel again and pleased to see her so well. (Muriel is in her early nineties)



Emma with Verna.

Emma is an accomplished artist and a Champion Ballroom Dancer

She will return to Novi Sad to develop her contacts and friendships.



Dr. Muriel Heppell (one of our Honorary Vice Presidents) with a group of her first pupils in Novi Sad.

If Muriel represents our 'oldest' member Emma (at 15+) represents our 'youngest' The group were delighted when Verna Hill, from Wales, brought her granddaughter, Emma Jones, with her. Emma was very patient with grandma's generation. There is a family connection with Novi Sad that goes back two generations. It was said that Emma came along to see what her grandmother gets up to in Novi Sad each year!

The group were pleased to meet Richard and Jennifer Mills (also

among our younger members). Richard gave a talk to our AGM in 2007 about his research. This he is continuing in Novi Sad at the University. This will go towards his PhD. Jennifer is learning Serbian and both are much involved with the younger members of the Novi Sad/Norwich Association.

The Novi Sad/Norwich Association.

Each year the visiting group is hosted by our sister organisation. This gives the opportunity to meet and be entertained by members in their homes.. The final event of the visit is always an evening with friends and guests at a 'farewell meal'. The

following day some returned home. Others continued there stay in Serbia by visiting the Šumadija region for a few days.

Coming Events

We have a range of events planned and hope very much that you will be able to attend one or more of them.

Summer Outing

A visit to **Mannington Hall gardens** is planned for **July 8th**. This will consist of an opportunity to look at the gardens, in particular the rose gardens for which Mannington Hall is well-known, followed by tea. We will meet at the Hall and can arrange lifts for people without transport.

The cost will be £4 entrance fee plus the cost of tea.

Please let Wendy Quinn know as soon as possible if you can come.

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Day School

Diana Beckley is repeating her **Day School on the Western Balkans** (Yugoslavia to you and me) on **July 11th** in **Poringland Village Hall**.

This event is organised by WEA. There are orange leaflets about the WEA summer schools available in the usual places (Wensum Lodge, Learning shop n the Forum etc) or contact Mrs P. Swinburn, Galen House, Church Walk, Burnham Market, King's Lynn, PE31 8DH Tel: 01328 738381



Dedicated to Friendship

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President : The Lord Mayor of Norwich

Committee members:

Diana Mrs Beckley MBE (Vice Chairman); Wendy Quinn (Social Secretary); John Jennings (Sub Committees)
Heather Ashmore (Minutes Secretary); Dr. Brenda Moffitt (Concert Sub Committee); Ken Lock (Sub Committees);
Caroline Lock (Sub Committees).

The Association exists to promote informal links between people and organisations in the City of Norwich and the County of Norfolk and those in the Municipality of Novi Sad.

The Association is a non-political, non-sectarian organisation dedicated to furthering friendship between the two cities.

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Treasurer: Jack Brooksbank,
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Heritage Open Days

The theme for the Heritage Open Days in Norwich from September 10th – 13th is 'International Connections' and we have been asked if the Association would like to contribute to this weekend. The committee felt that this was a very good opportunity to reach a slightly different audience and try to tell more people about Novi Sad. It has been arranged that we will put up the **exhibition of photos of Vojvodina** (which we showed in the Forum a while back) in **City Hall on September 10th and 11th** when City Hall will also be open as part of the weekend. In addition Diana will give an illustrated talk on **Thursday 10th September at 7 pm in City Hall** entitled '**Novi Sad – Norwich's Serbian Twin**'. The talk will be free but will probably be ticketed (to make numbers easier) – more details of this later. Do come and bring your friends.

Annual Lunch

Following the very successful meal last year, this luncheon will again be at **Park Farm Hotel, Hethersett on October 11th** at 12.30pm for 1 pm. The price will be £16.75

Details and menu choices will be sent out later.

50 years of twinning

*Norwich -
50
Novi Sad*

Next year is the 50th anniversary of the twinning of Norwich and Novi Sad. The committee is making plans to celebrate this anniversary. The plans include 'branding' all our events next year as part of the celebrations in addition to any special events. The first of the events is:

Paul Cross Concert

We have a real treat in store for you! Both **Milan Miladinovic** and **Marina Milic-Apostolovic** are coming to play a concert called 'Chopin and Liszt – friends and rivals'. Make sure you book this date!

We are changing the venue to **Norwich Playhouse** and the date is **Saturday, January 16th 2010**. Again ticket details later.