

**Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association.**  
**Report to the Norwich City Council Twinning Committee.**  
**June 2008.**

**Developing links between schools.**

In February the Association's Chairman visited two very distinguished and impressive secondary schools in Novi Sad. The first, Jovan Jovanovic Zmaj, has enjoyed a proud history since its foundation in the early eighteenth century. Many famous scientists, scholars and academics were former pupils. It occupies a palatial, early twentieth century building in the heart of the city. It is state school, is much revered and is highly selective.

The second school, Isador Bajic, is located nearby and specialises in music. It teaches music to primary and middle school children on a part time basis and provides a full curriculum for its 250 gifted and talented secondary school music students. It is superbly equipped and staffed. There is 150 specialist staff and all practice and teaching rooms are superbly equipped. For example, there are 30 teachers of the piano alone and each teaching room has two half grand pianos – one for the teacher one for the student.

In March the Association gave a small grant to Scott Morrison, a Hewett School sixth former, to spend a week at Isador Bajic during the City's Music Festival. He is a promising pianist and it was thought he would benefit from the experience. He has given us glowing reports of the teaching he received, the exceptional generosity of his hosts, the superb quality of the music festival and the 'amazing' nature of his overall experience.

In early May two teachers of English from Jovan Jovanovic Zmaj, Neda Nolic and Jelena Josic, visited Norwich for a week. Members of the committee were their hosts and took them on visits such as to Cambridge, the Suffolk coast, and Norwich School.

**School Student Chamber Music Concert – 20<sup>th</sup> September 2008.**

The Association is arranging a chamber music concert in conjunction with the County Music Advisory Service and the Isador Bajic School in Novi Sad. It will take place at 7.30 p.m. on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September at St. Thomas's Church, Earlham Road, Norwich. Two or three outstanding students from Novi Sad and two or three from Norfolk and Norwich will give a collaborative concert. At the time of writing Diana Beckley, the Association's Chairman of the Concert Sub-committee, is in Novi Sad negotiating details with staff at the Isador Bajic School. The Association is delighted to have a very positive response to its proposal from the County Music Advisory Service. It is hoped the Association can fully fund the enterprise itself by providing accommodation with families, through ticket sales and the support of some grant aid.

From these small beginnings, links between schools might be re-established between our two fine cities. These virtually ceased in 1991 after the start of the break up of Yugoslavia and yet another re-organisation in the Norfolk Education Department.

### **“The State of Exit” Festival.**

The “Exit Festival” is now rated by many critics and music authorities as the best pop music festival in Europe. The Chairman met senior Exit representatives in February and submitted CDs as part of performance applications from Norwich bands. Two bands were accepted, the Neutrinos and Halfway to Heaven. However, three good bands from Norwich were rejected. Competition to perform at Exit is increasingly fierce. The Neutrinos received a small grant from Norwich City Council towards their expenses. They are playing a fund raising gig towards their expenses at Norwich Arts Centre on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May. Many other young people from Norwich are also travelling independently to Novi Sad for “Exit”. Over 10,000 from Britain attended last year. Numbers from Norwich are unknown but some estimates have put them in three figures. Other aficionados are travelling via Lake Balaton under the auspices of “Muzica” - The Norfolk and Norwich Music Group - under the leadership of its Chairman, Paul Billing.

### **Novi Sad Football Club.**

Novi Sad FC remains in a parlous state financially. Its stadium is dilapidated and it has been without water and electricity for many years. The club was once in the Yugoslavian Premiership. It played top European teams and sold players to Chelsea and to Italian clubs. Some of these famous players have returned and are paid a pittance to train over 400 youngsters each week in the hope of keeping the club alive. The club colour is yellow and by an incredible coincidence is nicknamed “The Canaries”! We are hoping that some more fortunate than our Novi Sad Canaries may give them a helping hand.

Norwich Rotarians have shown interest in the plight of Novi Sad FC. It is not known if they are able to help. Norwich City FC with the help of The Lord Mayor donated some second hand football shirts but disappointingly they proved to be of little value.

Richard Mills from the UEA Department of History has recently returned to Bosnia and Serbia to continue his research into the clubs. He and his wife Jenny plan to study Serbian at the University of Novi Sad from September in order to enhance their research.

### **Social Programme.**

The Association is delighted to have a new and excellent Social Secretary in Wendy Quinn. She has planned two events. On Tuesday 1st July 2008, members and friends are invited to take a Big Dog Ferry round trip from Beccles to Geldeston Locks Inn (specialty real ales available!) for a pub lunch. Then on Thursday 17th July 2008 there is a Great Yarmouth Heritage Walk - "The King John 1208 Charter – 2008"- celebrating this historic event. The walk begins at St Nicholas Church and includes the Market, The Rows and the Norman Undercroft of Greyfriars.

### **Annual Association Holiday Visit to Novi Sad.**

Diana Beckley, the Association's International Secretary, has once again organized and is currently leading this very popular and successful holiday visit to Novi Sad. Hotel rooms were scarce, coinciding as the visit has with the European Song Contest in Belgrade. The Lord Mayor elect, Councillor Jeremy Hooke, after attending the European Song Contest will visit Novi Sad, meet up with the Norwich holiday group. His hosts in Novi Sad will be the Chairman and Secretary of the Novi Sad Norfolk and Norwich Association.

The holiday programme includes varied trips, such as to Belgrade and to The Milan Petrovic Special School. This is our principal charity and during the visit our Vice- Chairman, Doug Underwood, will present the proceeds of our January concert to the Head Teacher. This year they are intended as support for the creation of a sensory garden.

### **The Novi Sad Friendship Bridge.**

The Association Committee has received a number of complaints from members on the dismal condition of the Novi Sad Bridge. It is not well maintained. Rust, weeds, graffiti and even more worryingly, signs of wearing and weakening in the structure are evident. We would ask the Twinning Committee to approach urgently the responsible authority and request a report on the condition of the structure and the maintenance programme.

A number of younger members have also complained of the condition of the bridge and also posted blogs on Myspace and Facebook sites complaining that none of their friends refer to it as the Novi Sad Friendship Bridge. They hear it called 'The Millennium Bridge', 'The White Bridge', 'Morrison's Bridge' and never the Novi Sad Bridge. Radio Norfolk has referred to it as the 'Friendship Bridge'. Our young members think, and the Association Committee agrees, that the name plate is not only in a very poor condition but that it is minute and in a very obscure position. The Association Committee asks that the name be much more

prominently displayed in more weather proof materials and with an addendum stating that the name celebrates the link with our twin city. Something similar to the size and prominence of the Koblenz Avenue signs will be more suitable.

### **The political climate.**

As widely reported in the British press there was a swing towards the centre left Democratic Party led by the President, Boris Tadic. Although now by far the biggest party it is without an overall majority. Its support is very strong in Vojvodina, less so in the South of Serbia adjacent to Kosovo. After the local elections there is a similar stalemate in the City. In both cases a coalition with another party will be necessary to form governments. A second round of elections took place on 25<sup>th</sup> May in Vojvodina. We look forward to reports of the results when our holiday party returns on 5<sup>th</sup> June.

JSJ 26 05 08

# *The Norfolk & Norwich Novi Sad Association*

*Dedicated to Friendship*

This edition contains the report of the Annual General Meeting. Although the AGM has a good attendance it is not always possible for members to attend. This is a good opportunity, therefore, to keep everyone informed about the members of the Committee.

Two important visits — one to Novi Sad and one from Novi Sad—illustrating the continued work of the Association in establishing links between the two cities.

The Committee is delighted that the Lord Mayor Elect, Cll. Jeremy Hooke, has agreed to be our President during his term of Office. It is so easy to accept the new Lord Mayor will be our President as a foregone conclusion when they do have a choice!

## **The Annual General Meeting**

The Lord Mayor, Cll. Roy Blower, as President of the Association, took the chair and in welcoming the members and guests 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. He spoke of his admiration of the work carried out by this and the other Twinning Associations which had been his privilege to witness as a member of the Twinning Committee. He hoped to continue this close contact as a member of the twinning committee after his period as Lord Mayor.

Twenty Eight members were present. The number of apologies and greetings from other members gives a guide to the interest that members have in the Association.

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

Other Committee Members were elected as follows: Mrs. Heather Ashmore; Mrs. Diana Beckley; 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. 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 meeting Tamara Dobler, one of our Student Members studying at UEA, gave a very interesting talk on "Novi Sad and other things".

## **Two Important Visits.**

The Association has always been keen to develop relationships between young people of both cities.

It has been a significant disappointment that the long established contact between the education departments of both Novi Sad and Norwich/Norfolk was broken and never resumed.

Circumstances of history and changing administration, beyond the control of both cities, contributed to this.

Trying to establish similar contacts has been an unfulfilled exercise by the Committee.

With the dogged determination of the Chairman, John Jennings, backed by the Committee, it now

looks as though there might be a 'break-through' on this front.

After devoting much energy and time John arranged for a talented young pianist from the Hewett School to visit Novi Sad as a guest of the Isador Bajić School. This school specialises in music.

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## Two Important Visits (cont from page 1)

Scott Morrison was looked after by Dina Suklar from the school and his visit in early May has been an almost 'life changing' experience for him. Members of the Novi Sad/Norwich Association helped with his programme and he was able to see much of Novi Sad as well as improving his music with the students at the school.

The Association was pleased to be able to award a small grant from the Paddy Goldring Memorial Fund towards Scott's travelling expenses

It is said that Scott has not stopped talking about his stay in Novi Sad since he returned.

Another visit, this time by two teachers from Novi Sad to Norwich in early May, was also organised by John.

Neda Nicolić and Jelena Josić are English Teachers at the Jovan Jovanović Zmaj School.

With John acting as host and members of the Committee and Association giving time to show them Norwich and parts of Norfolk, Neda and Jelena returned to Novi Sad with a wealth of knowledge and impressions

Their visit to the Norwich School, where they were warmly welcomed, proved to be very useful to them—particularly as they were able to see English education in action.

Although it is not possible for contact between the two schools to

be established immediately it is hoped that there will be some contact in the future.

Both these visits have been very encouraging with regard to re-establishing educational contacts and it is pleasing to announce that there will be a meeting soon with the Norfolk Schools Music Service.

A concert is being arranged at:

**St. Thomas's Church, Earlham Road Norwich on Saturday September 20th at 7.30pm.**

It is hoped to have music students from Norwich/Norfolk and Novi Sad performing together which might establish a precedent for future activities.

## The Euro Vision Song Contest

The Eurovision Song Contest affects many people in different ways.

As you will know this is taking place in Belgrade on the 24th May and the city is preparing itself for the usual 'international invasion' that accompanies this event.

The need for hotel space has spilled over into Novi Sad and the pressure on accommodation has had some effect on the Annual Association visit. This has not been helped by the Putnik Hotel being out of action (as reported in our last Newsletter).

However, quick thinking on Diana's behalf in February secured the last rooms available

and the group are looking forward to their visit—some of which is being extended into Hungary.

The Association is always pleased when the new Lord Mayor accepts the position of President of the Association.

Cllr. Jeremy Hooke, the Lord Mayor elect, is pleased to 'take us on' but what has that to do with the Eurovision Song Contest?

Jeremy is very keen on the Eurovision Song Contest and has not missed one for many years.

Whilst he is in Belgrade it may well be that he will be able to 'pop down' to Novi Sad for a few hours on an informal basis as guest of

the Novi Sad/ Norwich Association during the day that they will be entertaining their visitors from our Association



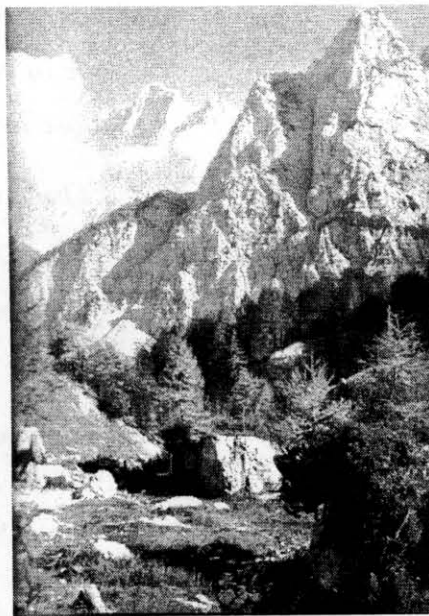
## The Western Balkans

Diana has been delivering a series of lectures for the Workers' Educational Association entitled 'The Western Balkans'

This has proved very successful and many of her students have expressed an interest in the region that has stimulated the idea of a visit.

In the mean time Diana is doing a days programme of lectures on the Western Balkans at Wensum Lodge on Saturday June 28th starting at about 10.30.

Diana would be pleased if members of the Association would like to attend. It does put Novi Sad and Vojvodina in context.

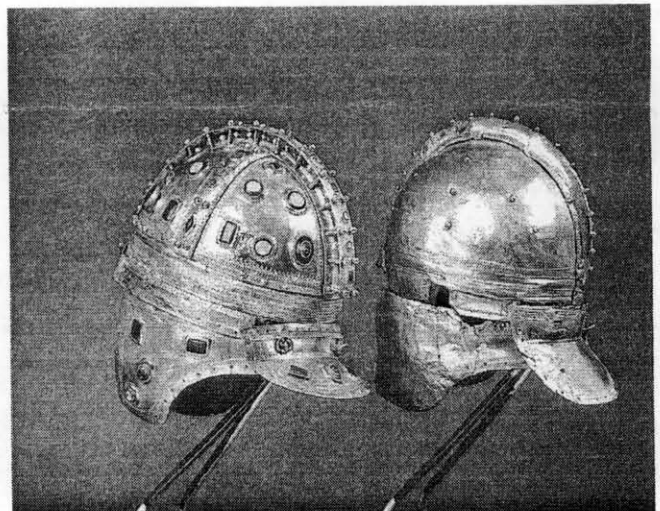


*Some parts of the Balkans are not flat.*

*The Julian Alps*



The Monastery at Gračanica



Elisaveta, Repetov, IV 102 / Hellenic, 4th century

A rich cultural history

### Some illustrations from Diana's Lecture

As you may know Peter is much involved with other organisations that do charitable work in Serbia.

The Committee wish to announce that he has been awarded the First Order Medal of St Konstantin by the Orthodox Church of Niš

**ADVANCE NOTICE** of the Annual Luncheon which will be at Park Farm Hotel, Hethersett, Norwich (please note change of venue) on Sunday 12th October. More details and menu later.



*Dedicated to Friendship*

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**Secretary: Peter L. Beckley MBE**

*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.*

**Chairman: John Jennings,**  
5, Big Back Lane, Chedgrave,  
Norwich. NR14 6BH

**Treasurer: Jack Brooksbank,**  
8, Glenalmond,  
Norwich. NR4 6AG

**President : The Lord Mayor of Norwich**

**Committee members:**

Doug Underwood (Vice Chairman); Diana Beckley (International Secretary); Wendy Quinn (Social Secretary);  
Heather Ashmore (Minutes Secretary); Brenda Moffitt (Concert Sub Committee); Ken Lock (Sub Committees);  
Caroline Lock (Sub Committees).

**Interesting Future Social Events**

Wendy, The Social Secretary writes:-

The proposed NNNSA Summer Outings in July are as follows:

**Tuesday 1st July 2008 Big Dog Ferry.**

A round trip (45 minutes each way) from Beccles to Geldeston Locks Inn for a Pub Lunch, enjoying the delights of the River Waveny and its wildlife en route. Speciality Real Ales available.

Meet at Beccles for 11.am departure returning from Geldeston at 2.pm to Beccles.

Parking close to the quayside. Limited numbers available (12).

Cost: £10 per person. Parking close to quayside. Limited numbers available (12)

**Thursday 17th July 2008 Great Yarmouth Heritage Walk**

The King John Charter 1208. 2008 celebrates this historic event and the guided walk begins at St. Nicholas Church and includes the Market, the Rows and the Norman Undercroft of Greyfriars.

Meet in Gt. Yarmouth at St. Nicholas Church for 11 am start.

The tour lasts for one and a half hours. Cost: £3 per person (min. 8 people. Max. 18/20 persons)

A lunch venue is being sought (details available from Wendy later) and there will be plenty of things to do in the afternoon.

**Please contact Wendy on 01603 458665 or at: 6, College Road, Norwich NR2 3JJ for further information and booking. As soon as Wendy has confirmed numbers she will be able to make positive bookings.**