

Norfolk and Norwich Koblenz Friendship Association
Report to Twinning Committee
2 June 2011

In a unique position I write this Report, on 24 May, high up above Koblenz on the terrace of the Fortress Ehrenbreitstein, overlooking the “Deutsches Eck” confluence of the Mosel and the Rhine. This is BUGA (The German National Garden Show), which is being held in Koblenz this year. We are on a visit with the NNKFA from 22 to 29 May. Koblenz has been truly transformed over the last few years, with much infrastructure work, and a specially constructed cable cars across the Rhine, from near the Kastor Basilka and up to the gardens on the plateau at the top, and the superbly restored fortress, with numerous new BUGA attractions and exhibitions. The Federal Garden Show is a huge success. Our Norwich Twin City Garden, created by George Ishmael and Chris Southgate for Norwich in Bloom, on behalf of the city, has been well received and represents the theme of the mediaeval churches in Norwich. It is probably the best of the six twin city gardens.

Thirty Eight of our members have travelled by coach to Koblenz, and have spent the first two days in BUGA and a short boat trip to the castle at Stolzenfels, which has also been restored and brought into the BUGA programme. Some of our parallel association members have joined us for parts of the programme, and we will have a joint dinner on Thursday, at the Rhenania boat club. On Monday we were welcomed by the new Lord Mayor of Koblenz, Prof. Dr. Joachim Hofmann-Goettig. It is now 30 years since our first visit to Koblenz in 1981. With the garden show we are particularly pleased to have Reg Chidduck, vice chairman of Norwich in Bloom and his wife with us. Chris Southgate and his wife Jeanne have taken the opportunity to replenish part of “our” garden.

Since my last report in March we have had a number of Koblenz connected events:

- 18 March our AGM
- 19 March the Koblenz Musik Institut Choir and Norwich Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra performed the Brahms German Requiem in St. Andrews Hall. They have been singing together since 1983.
- 12 April, Dragon Hall AGM, I expressed concern regarding Twinning Room.
- 15 April BUGA opened until October 15.
- 20 April visit to Koblenz with Jill Noble and first visit to BUGA, with millions of tulips most colourful.
- 1 May “Norwich Day” at BUGA with civic visit from the then leader of the council, the twinning officer, and the Kemps Men and Passion Dancers and two young singers drawing big crowds to the stage where they were performing. The Kemps Men stayed in Winningen, renewing their contacts with the Winningen “Spätlese” Dance Group.
- 23-29 May AKM Painters from Koblenz exhibited “Twin Visions” with the Norwich 20 Group in The Forum.

Future Events

- 12 June Apprentice Exchange starts again between Norwich City College and Handwerkskammer Koblenz.
- 25 June Our Summer Outing to Ickworth and Bury St. Edmunds Theatre Royal
- July Joint Photo Exhibition NPDS and Photo Club Koblenz.
- 23 August to 17 September, opening of “Immer wieder Rhein” (Rhine again and again) Photographic Exhibition in the Cathedral Hostry.

A Philatelic link between Norwich and Koblenz is being established. Norwich celebrates 100 years and Koblenz 125 years. Program in preparation.

Waltraud Jarrold, NNKFA President