

NEWSLETTER

The Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association

Dedicated to Friendship

The Association exists to promote informal links between people and organizations 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 organization dedicated to furthering friendship between the two cities.

From the Chairman

Welcome to the first Newsletter of 2024.

Your Committee has been working very hard to organise various events for you. You will see the new date for the concert and the Annual lunch has also been booked.

Now that things are a bit easier, we may be able to arrange a visit to Novi Sad in the future. Before we do that, we need to know how many people might be interested.

It is great to see that David, our Vice Chairman, and the Lord Mayor as our President were able to go to the 'Day of the City' February 1st celebrations this year.

Thank you for your support. As ever, we would warmly welcome new members if you know of any who wish to join us.

Doug Underwood (Chairman)

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The Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association

President: The Lord Mayor of Norwich

Vice President: Chair, Norfolk County Council

2024 Day of the City

1st February 2024

David Fullman

Novi Sad celebrates the Day of the City on 1 February each year. It commemorates the day in 1748 when it received its first royal charter as a free city from Empress Maria Theresa. The city invites its twin cities and all of the nearby cities in surrounding countries to join in its celebrations.

Four people from Norwich were there this year – James Wright, the current Lord Mayor, Peter and Imogen Beckley and myself. I was particularly pleased to be there as it was 35 years since I signed the twinning agreement with Novi Sad on behalf of the City of Norwich.



Group photo of all attendees at Novi Sad City Hall

The Day of the City itself started with a reception in the Banquet Hall of Novi Sad City Hall, hosted by the Mayor of Novi Sad, Milan Đurić and the President of the City Assembly Jelena Marinković. The corridor outside the reception room was packed with people and we were hustled to the front of the queue so that we could go in first.

The Lord Mayor and I were the first to be welcomed by the Mayor. We all shook hands and beamed at a rather intimidating wall of press cameras. We were followed by Peter and Imogen Beckley and then representatives of each of the cities represented there.

The evening before the Day of the City there was a dinner for all attendees at a nearby restaurant. We took over the whole first floor of the restaurant and tables were labeled with the names of the home town of each delegation.

We shared a table with Pécs in Hungary and met Aleksander, the member of the Novi Sad City Assembly who had been allocated to look after us.



Meeting the President of the Assembly

After the welcome a short stroll took us to the Serbian National Theatre where the February award was presented to Borislava Perić-Ranković, who has won numerous paralympic and European medals. The award is given every year to a distinguished person with a connection to Novi Sad.



The ceremony was a glittering display of music, song and dance, including a children's choir, an adult choir (some of whom were standing in the auditorium close to where we were sitting), a chamber orchestra, a folk orchestra, presenters of all ages, ballet dancers and some stunning graphics. In the middle of it all Borislava was presented with her award.



From there we were driven to the Petrovaradin Fortress, overlooking the Danube. The main building in the fortress has been converted into a museum, half of which is dedicated to the story of the fortress itself. The other half told the story of Milena Marić, a local pioneering physicist who was married to Albert Einstein for 16 years. The displays were really imaginative, including a river running along the ceiling of one gallery and culminating in a waterfall down the end wall, and a room full of fireflies which had been the stimulus for their work on photo-electrics.

Documents have recently been released that show that their collaboration was probably more equal than had previously been thought, and, as she spent the first part of her life very close to Novi Sad, the exhibition was intended to retell her story.



Lunch followed in the restaurant overlooking the Danube and the city. Again, the hospitality we received was impressive and, again, we shared a table with the delegation from Pećs.

Returning to the city centre we had the opportunity to browse a local souvenir shop, followed by a beer and an informal chat with Aleksander and his wife.

Many of the other delegates had left by this point, but the few of us who stayed went to dinner together. This gave us the chance of talking to the delegation from Belarus, who compared notes with the people from Novi Sad about the strains caused by the invasion of Ukraine. Both cities said that they had received an influx of Ukrainian refugees as well as young Russian men trying to avoid conscription. Both also said that they thought we were very lucky in the UK to have clear, constant boundaries whereas on the continent national boundaries have shifted over the centuries and this has caused issues and conflicts.

David, Peter and Imogen at the Mayor's reception

The Lord Mayor and I were driven to Belgrade airport for the return journey the following morning. As we left we spoke to Aleksander about a possible visit to Norwich, and the possibility of co-operation between the Theatre Royal and the Serbian National Theatre. If something came of either of these it would be really exciting.

Dates for the Diary

Annual General Meeting of the Novi Sad Association.

Monday 18th March at 19:30.

This will again be held at St Anne's Church Hall, Colman Road, Norwich, NR4 7HD. Please do come along if you can. Refreshments will be served and we look forward to seeing faces old and new to hear how the past year has been, our plans for the forthcoming year and to bring your thoughts and ideas too.

The Paul Cross Memorial Concert.

Saturday 15th June at 19:00.

The 'challenging' winter temperatures experienced by both concertgoers and performer alike last year strongly suggested we should try moving the event to a warmer month this year!

We have booked the lovely Wymondham Abbey (Church Street, NR18 0PH) for an evening of music by the Norfolk based stringed ensemble with the glorious name of 'Chaos Collective'. The programme is likely to include Vivaldi's Four Seasons, Mozart's Eine Kleine Nacht music and a Serbian piece. Refreshments will be served during the interval. Do come along for a warm summer's evening (we hope) of wonderful music in a really beautiful setting.

2024 Triorca Concert

Friday 30th August at 19:00.

This event is a weeklong coming together of music students from Novi Sad, Koblenz and Norwich / Norfolk. It is being held in Norwich again this year between 26th August to 1st September. A highlight and culmination of this gathering will be the performance of a concert at **St Peter Mancroft Church** on Friday 30th August at 7pm. Do support this if you can. More details to follow.

Our Association proposes to donate £500 from the Paddy Goldring Fund to help support these talented young students with their costs.

A visit to Novi Sad?

We are very aware that the Association should be thinking ahead about strengthening, rekindling and developing new links with the people of Novi Sad. A new generation in our two Cities should be made aware of our links, history and friendship. If there are members or friends who might be interested in making a visit to this attractive city in the future do make contact with our Secretary, Sandra Underwood.

Annual Lunch

Of the Norfolk & Norwich Novi Sad Association
Sunday 6th October 2024

The Association is again holding the lunch at The George Hotel. 12 noon arrival for 12:30pm.

The cost of the two course Sunday lunch meal, including coffee, tea, mints and a non-alcoholic welcome drink, will be similar to that last year.

Vegetarian and gluten free options are available.

An invitation letter with full details will be sent to all members closer to the time.

The 2023 gathering was a very enjoyable event and we do hope many of you will come this year.



The George Hotel
10 Arlington Lane
Newmarket Road
Norwich
NR2 2DA

Membership Reminder

May we give a polite reminder that it is time for this year's annual membership renewal. Membership prices are £12 couple / £8 single and £5 student. This can be paid either by a cheque or, if at all possible, by a bank transfer to the following Account:
Account Number: 43300854. Sort code: 20-62-68.
Barclays. Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association.
Please give your name as the reference. Thank you.

The Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association

Chairman: Doug Underwood. [REDACTED]

Hon. Secretary: Sandra Underwood. [REDACTED]

Vice Chairman: David Fullman. [REDACTED]

Treasurer: Gaetano Piccolo. [REDACTED]

Deputy Treasurer: Mark Kenney. [REDACTED]

Committee Members: Wendy Quinn (Social Secretary). Cathy Piccolo (Sub Committees). Heather Ashmore (Minutes Secretary). Imogen Beckley-Mobbs. Carole Kenney.
