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NEWSLETTER

Norfolk & Norwich Novi Sad Association

Dedicated to Friendship

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Paul Billing

Paul Billing was a warm hearted, enthusiastic, engaging free spirit. He was inventive, challenging, hilarious and generous to a fault. All and everyone were welcome to his house, orchard, garden, gazebos and bar. His parties were legendary.

Paul had long experience as an entrepreneur in the world of local pop music. With a group of friends, who called themselves 'Wombat, Wombat', he encouraged and supported young musicians by arranging recording sessions and organising superb gigs. A highlight of every month was the 'Wombat Wombat' Friday night gig at The Norwich Arts Centre.



In 2005 Paul approached the Association with the suggestion that bands from Norfolk and Norwich should be supported to visit and perhaps play at the now famous, student inspired 'Exit Festival' in Novi Sad. The Association felt it could not comfortably encompass such an enterprise and suggested a 'sister' association. So Paul became the founder and chairman of 'Muzica'.

In 2006 Paul flew to Novi Sad to negotiate with the two student leaders of 'Exit': Darko and Dusan. Lazar Stritevic, who was present during the negotiations, said later 'You could not have sent anyone better!' The famous pair immediately warmed to and were impressed by Paul's enthusiasm and expertise in the genre. They agreed that two bands from Norfolk and Norwich should perform at the 2006 Novi Sad 'Exit Festival'. They would stay free at The Vojvodina Hotel.

Two talented young bands, none of whose members had ever been out of the country before, were selected. They were to play on the prestigious 'Future Shock' stage. They had no money; Muzica had no funds. Flights were out of the question.

Audaciously, Paul decided to buy a second hand bus and drive them to Novi Sad. He and his brother Pete drove non stop to 'Exit' with the bands, their instruments and some supporters. The bands performed wonderfully to rapturous audiences.

The President of Serbia, Boris Tadic, visited the festival, congratulated Paul and the bands and told them "You are very welcome musical ambassadors". They were later interviewed for television and newspapers where they similarly captivated everyone. Paul was lovingly dubbed by the young musicians as 'Proud Paul'. He and his friends continued annual visits to 'Exit' with more promising young bands.

Paul had a stroke a few years ago but it did not quell his spirit. Sadly he suffered a second stroke on 30th March from which he did not recover. For ever surprising us, there would be no funeral but an unattended cremation. ***Paul Billing. d. 30.03.2019.***

Projected Annual Visit to Novi Sad

As mentioned in the previous edition of the Newsletter, preparations are being made with regard to our Annual visit to Novi Sad. At the moment we have five people who are definite about going.

We usually go for a week sometime in September. Last year the visit was from 15th September until 22nd September but it has sometimes been later in September and/or early October.

The provisional programme reflects the activities of last year's including

- the exploration of Novi Sad and Petrovaradin.
- Visits to vineyards
- Visit to other town(s) in Vojvodina
- Visit to the Fruska Gora
- Visit to Belgrade

Participants arrange their own flight costs. (early booking can bring down the cost to about £300 or under)

The cost of the visit programme is dependant on the number of people joining. (Last year it was just over £600 pp). The Association copes with this payment and members reimburse the Association.

The visit is always enjoyable, with those who have been before re-establishing friendships and those who are there for the first time experiencing the hospitality of the people and the city as well as exploring the countryside and towns of this beautiful Balkan area. ***BRING A FRIEND!***

Please contact Peter at:



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01508 480262



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NNNSA Summer Outing

17th July 2019

Broads River Trip from Horning Village **Wednesday morning 17th July 2019.**

Please join us on-board the Southern Comfort Mississippi Paddle boat, sailing from Horning Village along the scenic River Bure to Ranworth Broad and back, passing thatched cottages, windmills, Norfolk reed beds and traditional Broads river boats.

There is a commentary on the bird and wildlife as we sail. The cruise lasts one and half hours, leaving at 10:30. Refreshments available. Afterwards, join the group for a pub lunch at the Swan Hotel, next to the mooring.

Tickets: Adult £8.70/ OAPs £7.70. Pay on the day. Wheelchair access.

Meeting 10.15am Southern Comfort Mooring, on the green by the Swan Hotel, Lower Street, Horning. NR12 8AA. Pay and Display Parking close by. Please contact our social secretary Wendy Quinn if you wish to come on the group outing by 10th July 2019. Let us know if you need a lift to Horning.



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A.G.M.

The Annual General Meeting took place on the 11th April, chaired by the Lord Mayor of Norwich.

The following nominations were presented to the meeting and subsequently elected:

Mr Doug Underwood (Chairman); Peter Beckley (Vice Chairman); Mrs Sandra Underwood (Honorary Secretary); Gaetano Piccolo (Treasurer) and Sue Prutton (Vice Treasurer)

Dates for your calendar:

2020 Paul Cross Memorial Concert



We are delighted to announce that **Rita Kinka** is going to be the performer at the 2020 Paul Cross Memorial Concert on the 18th January. The programme has yet to be finalised but, after her overwhelming success in 2005, be prepared for an outstanding music event!

Annual Lunch

Our annual lunch date for this year has been booked for the **13th October 2019**. The venue is the Park Farm Hotel - Hethersett, same as last year. The price per person, including the drink on arrival, is £24.00.



The Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association.

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Treasurer: Gaetano Piccolo, 2, Thickthorn Hall, Norwich Road, Hethersett. NR9 3AT
Dept. Treasurer: Sue Prutton, 41, Waldermare Avenue, Norwich. NR6 6TB
Committee Members: Wendy Quinn (Social Secretary);
Heather Ashmore (Minutes Secretary); Dr. Brenda Moffitt (Concert Sub Committee);
John Jennings (Sub Committees); Cathy Piccolo;
Peter Beckley MBE (Vice Chair, e-mail:orns@btconnect.com)