

COLWICH & HAYWOODS TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Visit to Rimbach, October 2008.

Twenty-five years of Twinning was sealed by the signing of a commitment to a future of continued friendship between the people of Rimbach in Germany and of Colwich and the Haywoods on Friday the 24th of October in Rimbach. The Re-affirmation of the original Charter was signed on behalf of the two communities by the Burgermeister, Herr Hans Jurgan Pfifer and the Chairman of Colwich Parish Council, John Coates. A similar reaffirmation was also signed between Rimbach and Thourotte, in France, with whom Rimbach have also enjoyed a 25 years twinning association.

The ceremony, held in the Martin Luther School, was opened by a welcoming speech by the Burgermeister, followed by replies on behalf of Colwich and the Haywoods by John Coates and Lloyd Dulson, Chairman of the Twinning Association. The themes running through all the speeches was the reconciliation of the peoples of Europe, and the continuation of the peace enjoyed since WW 2. This peace has been promoted by twinning arrangements leading to friendships between communities and families being established. The continuation of these friendships, made during the last 25 years, will depend on the younger members of our communities if another 25 years of friendship is to be achieved. In this respect all three communities represented actively encourage their youth to become involved in the twinning movements. This policy was shown by the inclusion during the ceremonies of dancing and musical interludes by the school's dance troupes, singers and the wind and swing bands – to a very high standard it must also be said. Last year the swing band visited The Haywoods and played in a joint concert with Blessed William Howard's swing band in Stafford and during the summer holidays Stafford's Twinning Committee hosted a Youth Camp for the youngsters of France, Spain, Stafford, Poland and Stafford Borough. All these and similar events will hopefully bear fruit in the future for the continuance of the twinning movement.

To mark the 25 years of twinning, the Rimbach Partnerschaftsverein presented a marble plaque incorporating the badges of the two communities to Colwich and the Haywoods, who in return presented

Rimbach with a trunk road sign indicating “Colwich & Haywoods 655 miles”. Colwich also gave Thourotte a Friendship Vase and they reciprocated with a leather bound book “Thourotte & Saint Gobain”, an illustrated history of the area. (Thourotte is near Compiègne, north of Paris, and close to the place where the Treaty to end The Great War was signed aboard a railway carriage.

The party of 43 villagers had left the Haywoods early on Wednesday 22nd October to catch a mid day ferry to Calais before continuing their journey to Ostend where they stayed the night.

The visitors arrived in Rimbach next day in the late afternoon when they were met by their German hosts at a reception in the Rimbach Sports centre. After the reception the visitors left for the homes of their hosts for the week.

On Friday there was an early start to Mannheim for a visit around the factory and museum of John Deere, the tractor makers. The visit started with breakfast and finished with lunch. In between the visitors saw tractors made to order from start to finish.

After lunch the twinnings returned to Rimbach to prepare for the above celebrations. The French contingent meanwhile arrived during the afternoon.

Following the official ceremonies in the evening everyone retired to the local hostelry, the “Krone” where a buffet dinner was served in the restaurant.

On Saturday the visitors used the local train service to return to Mannheim for a chance to see more of the town; some people visited the Reiss-Engelhorn-Museum, others indulged in a little retail therapy. In the evening there was a Concert in the Martin Luther Schule assembly hall which again featured their school’s Big Band together with the French choir singing typical Paris café music accompanied by an accordionist.

Sunday was free with the host families, and the French left for home.

On Monday the coach took the Haywoodians to Worms, famous for its "Diet". There was a guided tour of the old cathedral, now a parish church. After, the visitors moved on to the "Weingut Schuster" where they took lunch as well as touring the cellars and enjoying a wine tasting.

On Tuesday morning the journey back to the Haywoods began, and having spent another night in Ostend, the Twinners arrived back home on Wednesday evening. The visit was very successful and old friendships were strengthened and new ones formed; there were a few tears, as always, as the coach pulled away from the Haywood Platz in Rimbach.

If you would like to join the Twinning Association and help carry on the friendships made over the last twenty-five years please contact our chairman, Lloyd Dulson, tel. 01889 882627, you will be made most welcome. Next year the Germans visit the Haywoods.