



Windermere / Diessen Twinning Association

Chairman's Report 2011 – Jennifer Borer

In general terms, 2011 was a quieter year than most with regard to arranged visits for Members both going to and from Diessen, although several Members made individual arrangements with their respective hosts and once again enjoyed the generous hospitality of our Bavarian friends.

However, we did have one special visit from Jenny Turthill, who came over with her husband to visit Windermere at Easter in her role as 'Miss Diessen' and spent a few days enjoying walking in the area with her sister and family. Bill Smith, as our Mayor at the time, greeted her in Bowness and the occasion was duly recorded with photographs with 'Miss Diessen' in traditional Bavarian costume which attracted much attention from other visitors in the area!

Our successful School Exchange visits started with the Diessen Carl Orff School students coming over here in April for a varied programme of activities including a daytime visit and an evening at Lakes School where they were able to meet up and socialise with their counterpart year group students. A large number of Lakes School students made a return visit to Diessen in July, and our thanks go to the lakes School staff for organising and accompanying the groups who benefit both culturally and linguistically from these valuable exchange opportunities.

A new initiative in 2011 saw several students from Windermere School visiting Diessen for work experience which proved to be both challenging and enjoyable to judge from the reports submitted by the participants on their return. A similar group of students from the Ammersee Gymnasium had the opportunity of taking up the return challenge of work experience over here and again this gave valuable experience for those taking part in understanding different lifestyles. We treated the group to a trip on the lake followed by a 'fish and chip' supper so it was not 'all work and no play'! Our thanks again go to the staff at Windermere School for organising these exchanges.

We also had two individual students from Diessen who stayed with host families whilst attending Lakes School to polish up her English in Caroline's case, and Margot who spent her voluntary one month social work requirement helping with the children at a day nursery in Windermere. We are indebted to the families who so willingly hosted the two students and remind everyone that there are similar opportunities available in Diessen in exchange, so please let us know if you are interested.

Our programme of social and fund raising events continued with our Annual Garden Party, although due to the inclement weather the strawberries and Pimms were enjoyed indoors with the kind hospitality at the Fairfield Hotel. The Coffee Mornings held at the Methodist Church have proved to be pleasantly relaxed events when everyone can get together for a chat over tea or coffee and biscuits and take home a few treats from the home produce stall. We would like Members to continue supporting these events as they give the opportunity to catch up on activities in between the newsletters which I hope are useful and informative.

We are also indebted to Windermere Town Council for their funding support, and to the Mayor, now Joan Stocker, for her continued interest and involvement.

So – we have been quite busy after all! I would like to take the opportunity to thank your Committee Members who have been wonderfully supportive and flexible, following difficult times due to health problems affecting various members during the year.

We are now looking forward to 2012 which we know is going to be a busy year here with the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations and the Olympic Torch Event, together with several expected visits of groups from Diessen including the Blasergruppe who will be celebrating their 50th Jubilee with a Concert at Lakes School at 7.30 on Monday 28th May to start it all off!