

Past Activities and Projects of Douzelage Europe



Board Meeting in Meerssen, September 2018
(Mette Grith Sørensen, Miha Ješe, Tibi Rotaru and Annigje Kruytbosch)

May 2018 - May 2019
From GM to GM



Stimulating project in Marsaskala on the Future of Europe - April 2019

On the 18th and 19th of April, the town of Marsaskala organised a project "Integrate together for a better European future". Students from the member towns Bad Kötzing, Chojna and Meerssen participated. The students took part in discussions on migration, integration policies, climate change and sustainable development in the presence of several Maltese politicians and policy makers involved in the EU. They talked about their experiences and thoughts on multiculturalism and cultural identity in their respective countries and presented the results of the exchanges in a plenary session. The students were highly motivated and contributed to a better understanding of what the future of Europe should look like. Thank you Marsaskala! (source: website Douzelage.eu)

It is a privilege to participate in the Europe for Citizens programme organised by the town of Marsaskala in Malta in the framework of the Douzelage European town twinning association. Nine master's students (in Public Policy and Human Development at UNU-MERIT/Maastricht University) and I are forming the Dutch delegation on behalf of the municipality of Meerssen (where I live). We are attending the programme together with Douzelage delegations from Bad Kotzing in Germany and Chojna in Poland, at the invitation of the mayor and the local city council of

Marsaskala. All four towns are members of the Douzelage European Town Association, which consists of 28 towns located in all 28 EU member states.

The programme on Thursday 18 April opened with speeches by the economist Robert Micallef (a candidate for the European Parliament and a European policy lecturer at the University of Malta) and Andrea Camilleri, a representative of MEUSAC (Malta-EU steering and action committee). The speeches focused on the future of Europe and the European identity. During the ensuing workshop, we all mingled and discussed issues of migration, climate change and sustainable development. In the evening, our Maltese hosts took us to visit a few picturesque localities and interesting exhibitions related to the traditional Easter celebrations on the island.

On Friday 19 April, the day started off with an informative presentation on the role and activities of the European Asylum Support Office in Malta (EASO). We had the opportunity to ask many questions and engaged in lively discussions on asylum and integration policies in Europe. We talked about our experiences and thoughts on multiculturalism and cultural identity in our respective countries and presented the results of our exchanges in a plenary session. (source: Facebook, Sueli Brodin, mentor Dutch delegation)



Annual Benelux Meeting Douzelage Meerssen - March 2019

Benelux meeting with old en new friends from Houffalize and Niederanven in Meerssen.

Discussing initiatives and projects as Nordic Walking in Niederanven, the successful 'projet d'immersion' of last Summer in Houffalize and how to shape it for the future, Via Douzelage and 75 years of liberation to be celebrated in September in Meerssen.
(source: Facebook Douzelage Meerssen)



Four Douzelage towns join in Tourism Ireland's Global Greening! - March 2019

Sherborne – UK, Granville – France, Judenburg – Austria and Bundoran – Ireland were four of the Douzelage member towns that participated in Tourism Ireland's Global Greening this year. The initiative which sees landmark buildings across the globe turn green for St Patrick's Day (March 17th) is now in its 10th year.

The Leweston Chapel in Sherborne, the Casino and Old Town in Granville and the Judenburg City Tower & Planetarium joined iconic world landmarks like Niagara Falls, the Sydney Opera House, Christ the Redeemer statue, the Burj al Arab and the Empire State Building in changing colour to celebrate the Irish national holiday. In total almost 300 global greenings took place in 2019.

Shane Smyth of Douzelage Bundoran (Ireland) initiated the idea with the member towns late last year "everyone wants to be Irish on St Patrick's Day and we always turn as many buildings as possible in Bundoran green for the holiday. Seeing the success of Tourism Ireland's Global

Greening project over the past 10 years, I thought it was an ideal opportunity for our Douzelage partner towns to come on board also. We were pleased to see three of our twins take on the challenge and we hope that more will join us for the 2020 Global Greening"

Annijie Kruytbosch, President of Douzelage added 'we were thrilled to see some of our towns go green for the Irish holiday. Any initiative like this that encourages our member towns to collaborate must be welcomed whole heartedly. We are one Europe and the global greening project by Tourism Ireland further cements that. I look forward to seeing more of our member towns participating in the years to come so that we can have a truly European greening!'

The Greening initiative promotes Irish culture more widely around the world and deepens links to Ireland's diaspora and is an initiative of Tourism Ireland.

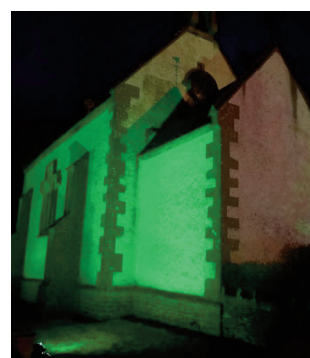
(source: Douzelage.eu)



Stadtturm, Judenburg



Leweston Chapel, Sherborne



Old Town, Granville



Mayors invited by Judenburg for a fruitful discussion - November 2018

The Austrian town and member of Douzelage, Judenburg took the initiative to invite the mayors of the Douzelage partner towns to attend a round table conference on several topics. The mayors and vice-mayors of Bad Kötzting, Köszeg, Marsaskala, Oxelösund, Skofja Loka, Siret, Tryavna and ofcourse Judenburg were present. Also town representatives of Chojna and Sherborne attended the meeting, as well as the president of Douzelage. Several topics were discussed: the environmental policy of Judenburg, the city marketing and the 2019 Summer Festival. The initiative of Meerssen to create a network of cycling routes "Via Douzelage" was also discussed, as was the idea to involve specialists of municipal organisations and NGO's more in the Douzelage meetings. Judenburg was the first to take this initiative, hopefully many more will follow.

(source: Douzelage.eu)

Participants:

Tryavna: Mayor Doncho Uhariev & Milen Michev
 Bad Kötzting: Mayor Markus Hofmann
 Sherborne: Honorary President Jeremy Barker & Sarah Whittick
 Köszeg: Vice-Mayor Bela Basthy, Istvan and Ilona Matrei
 Marsaskala: Mayor Mario Calleja & Ex-Mayor Charlot Mifsud
 Meerssen: Mdm. President Annigje Kruytbosch & Alexander Luns
 Chojna: Douzelage Chojna Cezary Salavamonsyk
 Siret: Mayor Adrian Popoiu & Florian Maidaniuc
 Skofja-Loka: Mayor Miha Jese & Accompany
 Öxelösund: Mayor Catharina Fredriksson

Judenburg: Mayor Hannes Dolleschall
 Senior Counselor Finance Christian Füller
 Senior Counselor Environment Erwin Miesbacher
 Counselor EU, Twinning, Civic Participation & Integration Elke Florian
 Counselors Thorsten Wohleser, Maria Heibili, Michael Ruckhofer,
 Wolfgang Gelter, Evelyn Schupp, Petra Kratky
 City Manager Heinz Mitteregger, City Management Karoline Straner
 Tourism Association Petra Stockinger
 (Source: minutes Mayors Meeting Judenburg by Elke Spekner)



EULOCAL - Even Us Little Ones Count A Lot Kőszeg - October 2018

Kőszeg Town Twinning Association has been very active since 2004 in taking part in international projects. Its members, particularly the youngsters participated in many programs, where we were invited as partners, but also, they organized with a big enthusiasm several Youth in Action, Erasmus, and Europe for Citizens events.

The last big project that has just finished is the EULOCAL (Even Us, Little Ones Count A Lot) under Europe for Citizens. Delegates from Bad Kötzting, Chojna, Kőszeg, Marsaskala and Velletri took part in a 3-day-event to share their ideas about the most important questions of the EU (little countries' role, immigration, borders now and earlier, labor market in the EU, Euroscepticism). At each place participants had the chance to study typical "local" concerns both theoretically and through study visits.

Not surprisingly it turned out that the "local" concern is not local at all, these questions are important at each country. That's what the last event in Kőszeg also emphasized: saving water is more and more important. Workshop about water footprint, exhibition of drawings, paintings, photos by youngsters all reminded us of water. The cleanness of water, mountain springs environment protection was the main theme of the field trip on Saturday.

Professor Georg Schöpflin MEP in his speech highlighted the importance of the EU, and also talked about

the feelings of Hungarians – particularly 3 days before October 23, the day of the great Hungarian Revolution. Friday afternoon we had the chance to listen to Ms. Annigje Kruytbosch, the president of the Douzelage. We gave the title for her presentation: What does EU mean for me? Instead of a lecture we heard a touching true story which convinced us, parents have an important role in the future of the EU.

After this a very active workshop tested the knowledge of the participants on Euroscepticism. This was followed by an activity: we all had to express our feeling about advantages of the EU membership. The field trip on Saturday also gave examples for EU-supported projects and we also saw how difficult it was to approach the border line a few decades ago.

A really exciting concert, dinner with home-made desserts, lunch at a wine museum allowed participants to see Hungarian cultural heritage.

On Sunday the yearly Ursula day market gave an excellent possibility for the visibility of the project: visitors had the chance to taste food and drink brought by our German, Italian, Maltese and Polish and also Hungarian partners, and meanwhile leaflets about the project were distributed among them. The Hungarian team hopes that all participants had a good time here and will return.

Read more about the project on eulocal.eu.

Dr Mátrai István

(source: Douzelage.eu)



Skofja Loka visits Kőszeg October 2018

In the beginning of October we went on a two-day excursion to Slovenian Prekmurje and to the Western part of Hungary: in the towns of Kőszeg and Szombathely.

Kőszeg was our main goal. Kőszeg is a nice and pleasant town where excellent people live, with which we have special relations & bonds within the Douzelage.

Our Hungarian friends there, led by a tireless dr. István Mátrai, have prepared us a friendly reception and a great dinner!

The next day the mayor Huber László also received us in the Town hall. Then we made a trip through the old town and visited the castle, town land mark and famous from the victorious battle with the Turks.

Then we said farewell to our friendly hosts and went to the border town of Felsőcsatár, where we visited a Iron Curtain Museum, and then further into the town of Sombotel, which is the oldest Hungarian city and the birthplace of St. Martin.

(source: Jernej Tavčar, Douzelage Skofja Loka)



Skofja Loka planting a tree in Sušice September 2018

Mid-September, the delegation of Škofja Loka visited the Czech Republic.

This year, besides the twin-town of Tabor, we also visited our Douzelge-partner town of Sušice.

We planted a Linden tree which represents our Czech-Slovenian friendship. Of course, we selected the town Sušice precisely, because of our partnership in the Douzelage.

The Linden tree was planted in the city park and to grow well, they got together four goodfathers to take care of it: Jan Jelšik, the initiator of planting trees of friendship, mayor of both partner towns: Petr Mottl and Miha Ješe and Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to the Czech Republic, mag. Leon Marc.

We hope that with this solemn event, we will only strengthen our friendship.

(source: Jernej Tavčar, Douzelage Skofja Loka)



Summer Carnival

Meerssen visits Marsaskala, August 2018

Sunday, the 19th of August was an important date in Marsaskala: the celebration of the Summer Carnival! A truly nice event, that took place in the early to late evening, with presentations of dance groups (of all ages) and impressive floats, all beautifully decorated. Music in the air, nice costumes, happy people: it was a real pleasure to be able to take part in such a colourful event!

As we took the liberty to visit Marsaskala for a few days more, we were taken to all highlights of both Malta as Gozo, visited the rich cultural heritage, enjoyed a very nice and informative boat trip (thanks to Sandro Gatt) and were treated like kings and queens. Charlot Mifsud turned out to be the best guide one could wish for and drove us to all landmarks (driving style of a 18 year old!).

And last but certainly not least we had the pleasure to be in the company of Mario Calleja and his wife Grace, who took very good care of us. Mario showed us the town, gave us information on future initiatives which will eventually lead to improving the quality of life for all citizens of Marsaskala. An example is the kids playground, that looked amazing and inviting. We also visited the townhall and some interesting sites in the vicinity of Marsaskala. Thank you, Marsaskala!

We'll be back!

(source: Annigje Kruytbosch, Douzelage Meerssen)



Owen Bonnici, Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government





Youth project with 12 participating towns in Houffalize impressive - July 2018

In July the project “Memory Work, Democratic Engagement and Civic Participation for the Future of Europe” was held in Houffalize where 70 Students were actively engaged in topics concerning the past, present and future of the EU.

The students and their teachers flew in from Altea, Bad Kötzting, Bundoran, Chojna, Granville, Meerssen, Rovinj, Sherborne, Sigulda, Skofja Loka, Susice and of course Houffalize itself.

The common theme of the meeting was considering the creation of the European Union, born from the war, as a means to preserve peace, which is by the way always good to remind to a generation that did not know war. Peace keeping is a supreme goal that must be kept in mind in times of Euroscepticism.

The students were actively engaged by playing role plays such as reconstituting a court judging war crimes. The results were impressive for all present. The meeting ended by adopting a resolution to be presented to Donald Tusk, chairman of the European Council.

(source: Douzelage.eu)



Choir Niederaanven performs in Meerssen July 2018

On the 8th of July 2018 Douzelage Meerssen got visitors from their partner Niederaanven.

Meerssen had the honour to give the Choir Saint Cécile the opportunity to be in concert together with the Harmony Orchestra from Rothem/Meerssen.

Two days earlier the members of the choir enjoyed the performances of the worldfamous orchestra of André Rieu at the Vrijthof in Maastricht.

The next day on Saturday July 7th they came to visit Meerssen, where the former mayor and still Douzelage member Ger Kockelkorn guided them to visit the buildings and spots worth seeing in Meerssen (i.e. the Basilica and Synagogue). At the same time he shared his knowledge about the history of Meerssen with them.

Of course several members of the Douzelage-committee from Meerssen joined them and assisted them when they finished their concert with the provincial anthem of Limburg (the home province of Meerssen). A very nice Douzelage event indeed.

(source: Wil Schrijnemaekers, Douzelage Meerssen)



Kristýna Prančlová from Sušice wins 3rd Douzelage Young Musicians Festival in Granville - July 2018

18 Douzelage Young Musicians from Houffalize, Meerssen, Rokiskis, Sherborne, Sigulda, Sušice, Zvolen and Granville have just spent a music- and fun-packed week in a hot and sunny Granville for the 3rd Young Musicians Festival.

After their welcome to the sound of rock and pop music from local young musicians from the music school, the first day was spent in rehearsals, both individually to prepare for the contest, and with the local young orchestras, followed by the semi-finals the next day and the end-of-year music school concert when the Douzelage players joined the orchestras and Sofija, the contestant from Meerssen, gave a special demonstration of the harp.

The talented young contestants gave performances of an exceptionally high standard on the violin, piano, flute, harp, recorder, trombone and trumpet, but five finalists had to be chosen and they were from Meerssen, Sušice, Zvolen and Sherborne. They gave their performances in front of a highly appreciative audience. Whilst the jury of professional musicians were undertaking the difficult task of choosing the winner, the audience were entertained by impromptu chamber music performances by the other young Douzelage musicians. The announcement was then made: in 5th place was Bee Thomas (Sherborne, recorder),

4th Kelly Kwong (Sherborne, piano), 3rd Sofija Kirn (Meerssen, harp), the runner-up was Simona Bohovičová (Zvolen, violin), with the trophy being awarded to the worthy winner, Kristýna Prančlová, a young violinist from Sušice, who had given an exceptionally talented and sensitive performance.

During their stay, apart from the musical activities, the musicians and their adult accompanists were able to make the most of the local beaches, do a lively Treasure Hunt in the old High Town, and visit the Mont St Michel, even venturing out with a guide to find out about the surrounding mud flats with their quicksand and interesting flora and fauna.

Thanks to all the contestants for their hard work, their amazing performances and their high spirits and good humour, which created a fine group spirit, overcoming any competitive rivalry and making the whole week one of intense exchanges and friendship, strengthening the links between our towns. Rendezvous in two years' time in Türi, so now is the time to encourage all your young musicians to keep up their practice so that it can be their turn to make the most of this wonderful experience.

(source: Douzelage.eu)



EULOCAL - Even Us Little Ones Count A Lot Chojna - June 2018

The aim of the fourth event was to show local examples of the advantages of the European Union membership, to demonstrate how an Eastern European country, one of the former communist countries, thinks about the importance of membership, and to encourage local communities to actively take part in European issues. Additionally, a secondary aim was to discuss working and studying across borders, the attitude of the local participants and foreign visitors towards working abroad, and the involvement of students in international apprenticeship, as a small step towards being European, and to initiate discussion about the problems and about possible solutions related to these issues.

The event was organized by Douzelage Association in Chojna, a local NGO. On behalf of Chojna Town they prepared an excellent program for the participants. The organizers did their best to find the most suitable places for the events (for example the school involved in EU projects), study visits (museum, lake, market, etc.), meals (Piastowska, Bielin horse farm, etc.), accommodation (local hotels and hostel) to make sure the event will be beneficial and memorable for all participants.

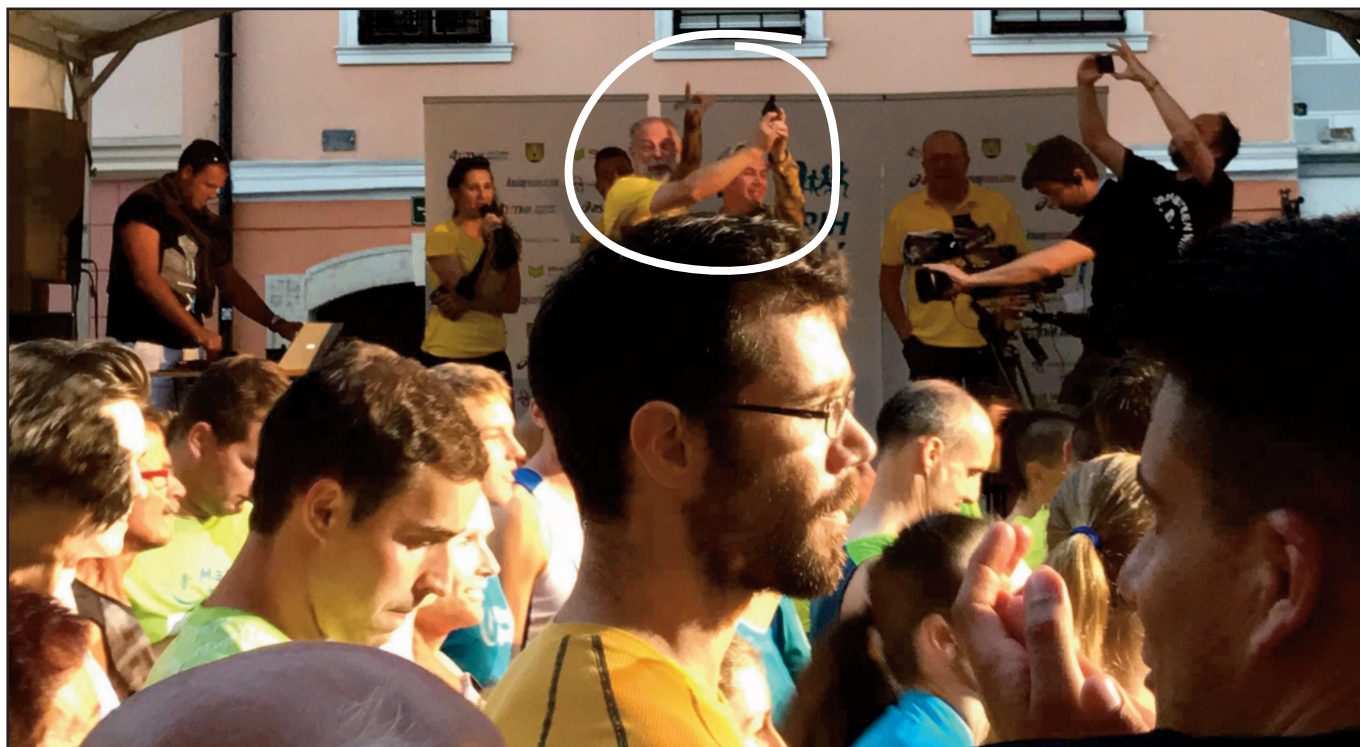
On Thursday 28th, after the delegations arrived, Cezary Salamończyk greeted the participants on behalf of Chojna Douzelage (Poland) and outlined the importance of the project. He officially introduced the delegations the host group. He stressed how important the international meetings are, where EU cooperation is realized between very different participants. He underlined the idea of this project, under the Europe for Citizens program. He also mentioned his good

memories about the former EU projects carried out by partner towns in the Douzelage, from which many participants he had already met before. He also mentioned that a part of the Polish delegation is very young, and we all need their cooperation for the sake of their future.

Afterwards the groups of the partners were also introduced by their leaders with a few sentences.

Still on the first evening, before the dinner the event in Chojna continued with a debate 'To be or not to be – in EU?'. The debate was open so apart from project participants from host and partner countries there were some local people present. In the introduction main advantages of EU membership were mentioned such as right to live and work in any EU country, social security, freedom and liberal democracy. There were also remarks on current problems like immigration crisis, lack of solidarity among EU countries, not enough democracy in decision making process on European level.

The most controversial issue was immigration crisis. Some people emphasized negative sides of the process, especially cultural differences and possible dangers connected with terrorist attacks. However, there was also strong voice of the need of solidarity and help towards people in need like refugees. Debate participants were in favor of distinguishing refugees and economic migrants. Financial help received by farmers and improvement of infrastructure in Eastern European countries were also listed as main advantages of EU membership. The debate initiated further, informal discussion during the dinner. (source: eulocal.eu)



Four Bridges Night Run Škofja Loka - June 2018

"I participated in more than 40 city races all over Europe, and the one I loved the most, is the Škofja Loka Four Bridges night run!" ... "Incredible atmosphere!" ... "The spectators eagerly cheered everyone on, all along the 10-kilometer track. I had goose bumps while running past the crowded Town square!" ... "Excellent organization!" ... "We'll definitely return next year!"

These are just some of the comments from previous Four Bridges Runs (4BR), organized in Škofja Loka and taking place on the streets of this medieval city beauty.

In 2018 - the 7th edition of the Four Bridges Night Run - Shane Smyth fired the starting gun together with Mayor Miha Ješe!
(source: Shane Smyth and Jernej Tavčar)



EULOCAL - Even Us Little Ones Count A Lot Bad Kötzing - June 2018

Bad Kötzing (DE) was involved in this project together with Chojna (PL), Marsaskala (MT) and Velletri (IT). Initiator of this project, which was funded by the "Europe for Citizens" program of the EU, was Köszeg (HU). Istvan Matrai conceived the program together with the other participants. After meetings in Marsaskala and Velletri, Bad Kötzing took its turn.

Besides workshops concerning the EU ("Why be in the EU?" and "Why do we respect EU?") one of the main topics was a workshop about the endangerment of bees and other insects. Karsten Nasdal and Simon Haselbauer, teachers at the local Gymnasium, gave a lecture about beekeeping, about the reasons why bees and other insects in Europe are endangered, and what we can do against the constant decline of the population of these insects, which are so important for our ecosystem. Not in the least bees are crucial for pollination. But even the little things count a lot: we were given examples for it. E.g. building "hotels" for insects in the garden, or just let the lawn turn into a meadow by mowing less or not so short. After the theoretical part the participants could observe the bees in the school's bee house and work at the honeycombs.

The next day a field trip was organised. The participants went up a mountain by chairlift and were given a guided tour by ex-officers at a former NATO tower, a

huge building, from where German air-force soldiers scanned the radio communication between Czech and Russian military aircraft and the ground stations during the times of the cold war. The impressive construction on the mountaintop could be climbed up to a platform high above the ground with spectacular views of the Bavarian Forest and into the Czech Republic. But the participants also got an impression of the enormous costs of the Cold War and the amount of man power which was needed. The abandoned construction made them feel that peace and partnership in the center of Europe is also a benefit of the enlargement of the EU. "Why to be in EU"? The visit gave one of the positive answers to this question.

Due to a thunderstorm the chairlift had to be stopped for some time. A part of the visitors walked down the steep hill. Unfortunately Mario Calleja, the mayor of Marsaskala, toppled over during the descent, broke his ankle and had to be brought to hospital. We wish him all the best for his recovery.

We are looking forward to the next meetings in Chojna and Köszeg later this year.

Wolfgang Kerscher (source: Douzelage.eu)



Boundary Stones Enlargement in Bad Kötzting - June 2018

Alois Öllinger – artist in the region of Bad Kötzting – had the brilliant idea to place 15 different boundary stones in an united circle in the Spa gardens of Bad Kötzting. This was back in 1999 when Douzelage had 15 member towns. Today, Douzelage has 28 member towns, so it was time to reinvent this work of art and add the missing 13 stones!

Thanks to the input of the 'new' towns and the ongoing enthusiasm of the Bad Kötzting team, the missing 13 stones plus the 15 already present stones were placed in a spiral, symbolically representing the dynamics of partnership, which overcomes boundaries without obliterating the characteristics of each partner town.

This calls for a grand opening! And so it was! Present were delegates from Douzelage towns Marsaskala, Siret, Chojna, Köszeg, Rokiskis and Sigulda and guest town Velletri (Italy), the town council from Bad Kötzting and those who took interest in this joyful event. Markus Hofmann (mayor of Bad Kötzting) officially revealed the artwork and he and Annigje Kruytbosch, President of Douzelage Europe, spoke a few words. Great musical entertainment was added by The Brass band 'Weißenregen'.

Bad Kötzting recently hosted a GM, but still all of us have a great excuse to visit the park in Bad Kötzting and trot from one country to another by simply taking this spiral road!
(source: Douzelage.eu)

Welcome speech Mayor Markus Hofmann

I am very glad to receive all the guests who came to visit us, regardless of the long distance, from the Baltic Sea to Malta, from Romania to the Netherlands. Your presence at this event is a great honour for us. Welcome in the name of the town of Bad Kötzting!

Today our lovely spa gardens are again the location of the installa-

tion of a work of art. We are happy, to set a symbol now for all the twenty-eight Douzelage towns by placing their boundary stones in the park's lawn. In 1999 an artist from Bad Kötzting had the idea, to place 15 boundary stones from the 15 partner towns of the Douzelage at that time in a circle in the spa gardens. Harmony and solidarity between the partners should be emphasized by the symbol of a circle, recumbent in itself and overcoming boundaries. In 2016 the boundary stone of our partner town Sušice was added.

Since that time the Douzelage has grown. Meanwhile many new partners have joined the Douzelage. Twenty-eight partner towns, one of each country of the European Union, are intending to foster Europe jointly. It motivated the artist to upgrade his concept. The recently added boundary stones form a spiral. It stands as a symbol for the dynamics of the partnership, which overcomes boundaries without obliterating the characteristics and specifics of each partner town. The original meaning of the boundary stones therefore is changed playfully. The physical presence of the stones from all over Europe makes this work of art a special experience. Let me say thanks to all those who helped to realize this project. Dear friends, in these days the European Union faces a lot of challenges. We experience a plenty of criticism on the EU, sometimes qualified and not the least because of a sometimes exorbitant bureaucracy. Yet in some states of the EU we see the growth of a nationalism, worrying us because of its challenge or even fundamental denial of the values of the EU.

We are a small community and we don't go for the big politics today. In fact our answer is: We have become a partner of the Douzelage because we believe in a Europe for citizens. We will live Europe, with projects with partners, with mutual visits, with personal friendships beyond all boundaries.

Vivat Europe! Vivat Douzelage!



Swedish students visit Sherborne June 2018

Last Monday 21 young students and teachers from Oxelösund in Sweden left home to visit Sherborne on a Sherborne Douzelage exchange visit. For many it was their first time overseas and the excitement was palpable. Their aim was to share music with a culture different to their own. On arrival at Stansted airport they were transported by coach to Stonehenge where they had an educational history visit. The students were most enthusiastic and discovered more than they expected. They are keen to complete the project with a visit to a standing stone site in Sweden and will be able to compare the two sites.

Leweston School welcomed the Swedish group, and Music Director, Rachel Milstone, introduced them to the school and pupils. Meals were provided by the school and it gave the students time to mix with the Leweston students. Sherborne Douzelage assisted with finding accommodation in family homes around the area and over the next three days the group were taken to Bradford Abbas and Sherborne Primary School where they shared live musical activities.

On their final day the Swedish students gave a concert at Leweston School, wearing their specially designed uniforms. Much to the delight of the Swedish group, five Leweston music students joined their performance. This was followed by a history tour of Sherborne.

The visit culminated in a skittles match at The Weavers, a game unknown to the Swedish group. They joined in wholeheartedly and after being presented with a souvenir gift returned to their hosts before leaving next morning for home. This was a special day for the Swedish group as it was their National Swedish Day.

Sherborne Douzelage is grateful to all the hosts who helped with accommodation, which enhanced the visit immensely.
(source: Douzelage.eu)



And the winner is? First Photo Contest Douzelage - June 2018

In Oxelösund we introduced our very first Photo Contest with the theme: Oxelösund and Friendship. We received entries from Agros, Altea, Bellagio, Bundoran, Marsaskala, Meerssen, Rovinj, Sherborne, Siret, Skofja Loka, Tryavna and Zvolen, 17 all together! Morten Stricker (Press Photographer at Dagbladet Holstebro) and Annigje Kruytbosch (President Douzelage) had the difficult task to choose the winning photo. They unanimously chose for the one which you see in this news item. It shows true friendship and it is photographed from a fun angle. The photo is made by Bor Dolenc from Skofja Loka and is called: Flag Roundabout. Bor is a youth member.

Bor will be a happy man today: not only does he have the honor to be the winner of the very first Douzelage Photo Contest, he also receives € 150,-! Of course there were runners-up, but we decided not to have a 2nd or 3rd place. We do want to share a text of Evelin Koev (young delegate from Tryavna) with you:

"The roots of love.

In this black and white world we live, there's the friendship and love of our closest people, that gives us the colours we need.

The Douzelage family expands every year and it is spreading the colours in every country it touches. Only united, together and close to each other, we can be the change and make our world the colourful place it needs to be."

Next year, new contest, new challenge, new chances!
Thank you all for sending your great photo's!
(source: Douzelage.eu)

Events 2018/2019

2018

Jul 01/06	Granville	France	International Young Musicians Competition William Slogrove & Rachel Milestone(Lewston) leading 5 young musicians
Jul 05/08	Preveza	Greece	36 th Choral Festival
Jul 13/21	Agros	Cyprus	Healthy Living in a Healthy Inclusive Society)1 leader & 4 youth (Lizzie Dore)
Jul 22/28	Houffalize	Belgium	History, Democracy, partition for future of Europe (1 leader 5 students – Sarah Whittick leading
Aug 26/29	Meerssen	Netherlands	Sherborne Tuesday Walkers visit NL
Sept 09	Chojna	Poland	Days of Integration (JB & others tbc)
Sept 16	Bad Kotzting	Germany	Kaitersberg Mountain Run (runners tbc)
Sept 2019	Sherborne		Training sessions on new legislation – Safeguarding and Data Protection
Oct 07	Turi	Estonia	Run & Walk (possible)
Oct 14	Meerssen	Netherlands	Marathon (possible)
Oct 21	Bellagio	Italy	Skyrace (date tbc)
Nov (tbc)	Sherborne	Holstebro	Short Mat Bowls team to Sherborne & villages`

2019

Feb 2019	Granville	Carnival	6 Students with leader attended
March	Sherborne	Concert	Ana Manero Concert – fund raiser
May 16/19	Asikkala	Finland	44 th GENERAL MEETING
Sept 2019	Sherborne		South African illustrated talk – fund raiser
Sept 2019	Rokiskis	Lithuania	General invitation to European City of Culture & events
Sept (tbc)	Rovinj	Croatia	SD Walking Group to Cape-to-Cape Walk/run w/e

2020

May 07/10	Skofja Loca	Slovenia	45 th GENERAL MEETING
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2021

Spring (tbc)	Skofja Loca	Slovenia	Passion Play
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Events 2019

March 1/5	Granville	France	145th Carnival Sarah & John Whittick lead + 6 students
March 17	Bundoran	Ireland	St Patrick's Night
March 17	Houffalize	Belgium	St Patrick's Jogging (6.5 and 12km)
April 29	Chojna	Sherborne	x6 Polish students arrive in Sherborne for a month
May 16/19	Asikkala	Finland	44th Douzelage General Meeting
May 30/ June 2	Sherborne	Turi	x12 musicians & dancers visit from Turi, Estonia visit Sherborne
June 14	Sherborne	UK	Alan Peters Talk Digby Memorial Hall (fundraiser)
June 14/15	Skofja Loka	Slovenia	4 Bridges Run (10km)
June 21/22	Judenburg	Austria	Town Festival (20th/23rd) Sherborne attending
June 30/July 2	Sherborne	Meerssen	Meerssen Walkers to walk in Dorset
Summer	Rokiskis	Lithuania	General invitation to European City of Culture events
Sept 11/18	Rovinj	Croatia	SD individuals to 'Cape-to-Cape' Walk/Run w/e
Sept 15(tbc)	Bad Kötzing	Germany	Kaitersberg Mountain Run 2019
Sept 19	Sherborne	UK	South Africa Talk Catholic Hall (fundraiser)
Sept 21	Sherborne		Camelot Challenge 2019 Invite Douzelage runners
Oct 4/6	Niederanven	Luxembourg	Nordic Walking weekend
Oct 13 (tbc)	Meerssen	Netherlands	Marathon (and shorter races) 2019
Oct 20 (tbc)	Bellagio	Italy	Bellagio Skyrace 2019
Oct/Nov (tbc)	Siret	Romania	Invitation to Mayors meeting