



Our popular members, the Ravensbourne Morris Men, visited Neuwied for the annual Deichstadtfest town festival. Here they are with a very familiar-looking person! Left, another royal touch: Neuwied Carnival's Prince Peter and Princess Silvia are welcomed by the Mayor, Ian Payne (centre), on their visit to Bromley and to the Sheppey Carnival

on a return after many years...

John writes

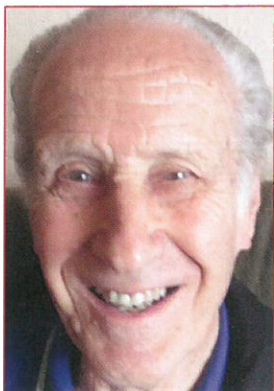
AFTER AN early departure, we made good time to the shuttle, arriving at Coqelles at 10.45am, with cloudless blue sky and warm sunshine – already 23 degrees. We arrived at Neuwied almost nine hours later, to be met by our hosts outside the Food Hotel where some of us were staying.

The next morning we started with a visit to Römerwelt, a Roman villa reconstructed on the original site, where we enjoyed cakes and wine from Roman recipes. Then it was off to the Drachenfels mountain to be taken to the summit by cog railway, visiting the ruined fortress overlooking the Rhine. Here we enjoyed Kaffe und Kuchen (coffee and cakes).

Then on to Rhöndorf, a Rhineland village I first visited 65 years ago – the home of Konrad Adenauer, the first Chancellor of the post-war West Germany. An expert guide took us around.

On Sunday, we visited the village of Leutesdorf for the Winzerfest, a celebration of the wine harvest. We enjoyed a wonderful procession and wine flowed like water, offered free to those who retained their glasses from drinking at the stalls along the Rhine bank.

The highlight of our visit was the Sunday evening at a restaurant in Neuwied. We were welcomed by a traditional horn band with a fanfare. Oberbürgermeister Nikolaus Roth greeted us after which we proceeded upstairs to a banqueting suite and a buffet with a sumptuous menu and wines. After the first course, we returned downstairs to be regaled by a Jazz choir. Then upstairs again to yet more courses, amidst enjoyable conversation with our German friends. We reluctantly made our fond farewells and began the journey home next day after a memorable visit.



John Evans

Mayor pays visit at same time

AS THE Mayor of Bromley I was delighted to visit Neuwied at the same time as the twinning association. It was a very busy weekend and the Oberbürgermeister of Neuwied, Nikolaus Roth, with his wife Agnes, were the exemplary hosts.

Our visit started with the opening night at the theatre of 'Hair,' a modern interpretation acted by young people from Neuwied and some well-known actors from Germany. It was an excellent, lively and fascinating evening.

One of the most challenging things was visiting the migrants' camp set up in Neuwied. The Deputy Mayor showed us around this well organised camp that can hold over 700 men and at present has 300. All had a shared bedroom, and the facilities included a gym, kitchen, laundry, social and benefits support, language classes and citizenship classes. It was a real challenge that was being met in a positive and practical way. All the rooms were made out of shipping containers.

We also visited the Neuwied Tennis Club as the annual match with Langley Park was under way, on a very hot day. It was good to meet with the Neuwied captain and thank him for his hospitality. I accompanied the BTТА to the Wine Festival at Leutesdorf, a very colourful and amazing event, with lots of music, dancing and of course wine!

The highlight of the weekend was the last evening dinner and entertainment with a local rock choir and the German hunting horn band, in which I the Mayor took part, much to the surprise of all attending.

I was also delighted to meet many of the BTТА members at the dinner. Regardless of Brexit or any challenges ahead, as BTТА and our Neuwied friends approach the 30th twinning birthday, we do so with confidence and a great continued partnership.



Mayor Ian Payne