



**HEBDEN BRIDGE**  
Twinning Society

## **Visit by delegates from Hebden Bridge to Paratico: 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016 Report**

### **Visitors/Hosts**

The delegates from Hebden Bridge were:

- David Parry – President, Hebden Bridge Twinning Society (HBTS)
- Jane Jackson – Secretary, Hebden Bridge Twinning Society (HBTS)
- Eleanor Ross-Parry – Treasurer, Hebden Bridge Twinning Society (HBTS)
- June Cammack – Councillor, Hebden Royd Town Council

In Paratico we met:

- Carlo Tengattini – Mayor, Commune di Paratico
- Mariella Smiroldo - Deputy Mayor, Commune di Paratico (with special responsibility for politics, social affairs, education and culture)
- Leda Liborio - Councillor, Commune di Paratico (with special responsibility for youth politics)
- Silvia Marzoli - Councillor, Commune di Paratico (with special responsibility for tourism, sport, leisure and events)
- Leo Vernale – A M Collections srl, who assisted with translation and discussions
- Dr Giulio Bozza
- Andrea Bono
- Frank Rasulo

Jane and June stayed with Mariella Smiroldo and Giulio Bozza in Paratico while the commune arranged accommodation for David and Eleanor at a local hotel.

### **Key events during our stay:**

The main elements in our tour on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> April were as follows:

- We were given a very comprehensive tour of Paratico including the council chamber, the library (where Mariella arranges many special events including the feature on Emily Dickinson running at present), the local schools and parks (including the Oselanda Hunting Lodge used for art exhibitions), the town's sporting facilities, the Torre Lantieri (with its high tech Quadrisfera installation with its unrivalled audio-visual presentation on Paratico) and the lake shore. During the tour we saw many of the sculptures created during the annual "Scolpire in Piazza" event which attracts many international artists.
- As Paratico is in the middle of the area of the famous Franciacorte sparkling wines we also visited the Bredasole cantina to see how the wine is produced.
- We took the ferry for a tour of the southern part of Lake Iseo including a stop on the island of Monte Isola to walk along the southern shore. The beauty of the scenery

was stunning – and we were also able to see the preparations for the installation of the artist Christo’s “Floating Piers” which will be the big artistic event on the lake this year attracting many foreign visitors.

- On the evening of the 24<sup>th</sup> April Carlo Tengattini, Mayor of Paratico, invited us to dine with him and the other councillors at a delightful local restaurant. This gave us plenty of opportunities to tell Signor Tengattini about Hebden Bridge/Mytholmroyd, and outline and discuss the possibilities for informal friendship links and cultural exchanges (see below). It also was clear from our discussions that Mariella and Leda had already given a very clear account of our earlier discussions in Hebden Bridge.
- On the morning of the 25<sup>th</sup> April we had the honour of being invited to take part in the annual Freedom from Fascism/Nazism 1945 commemoration. The stirring speech from the mayor and the youth choir and musicians moving “song of the partisans” made a powerful impression on us. We were very touched that at the request of the mayor this was followed by John Lennon’s “Imagine”! Leda also included mention of why we were in Paratico when she gave a short speech.

The key points raised in our discussions during the stay can be summarised as follows:

- We all felt throughout our discussions that there were many similarities between Paratico and Hebden Bridge/Mytholmroyd. It was also agreed that the development of friendship links would be greatly assisted if there was an association in Paratico to support these that was similar to the Hebden Bridge Twinning Society. Leo Vernole may be ready to initiate such an association.
- The key practical issue will be to involve families in both towns who will be happy to act as hosts for visitors. Links will be supported by the cost effective air fares with Ryanair between Milano-Bergamo and Manchester, plus the proximity (27 km) of Paratico to Bergamo, and relative proximity of Hebden Bridge (66 km) to Manchester.
- A possible youth football event was discussed at some length especially as their sporting facilities are very impressive. We raised the idea of a 5 a side girl’s competition – but while the Brescia girl’s team trains in Paratico there is not a local girl’s team.
- An exchange of artists – with Hebden Bridge artists seeing all the sculptures in Paratico, and Paratico artists visiting studios in Hebden – seemed a promising idea.
- Music is certainly a common interest in the two towns. The Belleville Rendezvous bar/pizzeria on the lake shore hosts concerts and seems rather similar to the Trades Club in Hebden. Paratico also has an annual 4 days Buskers Festival at the end of July/beginning of August which might offer an opportunity.

#### **Actions agreed:**

- David Parry to continue discussions with Vinny Bamford in regard to a football exchange. He will also investigate the possibility of buskers from Hebden attending the Buskers Festival.
- Leo Vernole to look at setting up an association in Paratico to encourage friendship links and cultural exchanges between the 2 towns

- Jane Jackson to talk to Artsmill in Hebden Bridge about a possible artist's exchange. She will also speak to Matt Wilson (Language teacher) at Calder High to assess any interest in an exchange.
- Send information on Calderdale Council and the local government structure to Leda– Action JJ.

**Key contacts:**

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For general information on the HBTS check out our website at

<http://www.hebdenbridgetwinning.org.uk/> or our Facebook page

(<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Hebden-Bridge-Twinning-Society/759190050773233> )

Jane Jackson

29<sup>th</sup> April 2016