

Hayling Island Gorrion Twinning Association 25th Anniversary 1998 - 2023

Bi-Annual Visit 29th April to 1st May 2023

Our friends from Gorrion docked at the Ferry port at 6.45 am and, as usual, brought the sun with them! The hosts were there to greet and collect them and, this year, as well as old friends, there were new friends and families with children. They were whisked off to the Barley Mow pub for a full English breakfast which everyone loved including the children!



Hosts then took them home to recuperate after the long night journey and to settle in for the weekend. Some hosts took their visitors to places of interest in the afternoon, e.g. The Lifeboat Station and Havant, whilst the families with children were taken to Funland for a few hours and joined by English children from member families. Apparently, they had an “awesome” time!



The evening was spent with host families with some hosts getting together with others for dinner and, what turned into, in some cases, Party Time!

On Sunday morning the Gorrionais were taken to Hollycombe Steam Fair near Liss for a few hours of fun and rides. All of the children, including the “older” children had a great time! It was, then, time to head home to prepare for the Gala Dinner at the Newtown House Hotel.



The evening began with a Bucks Fizz reception followed by a three-course dinner with Roast Beef - well we are English!! After the cutting of the Anniversary Cake speeches were given and gifts exchanged. Then the fun started! There was music and dancing to the Nick Chandler Band and the evening finally ended with carriages at midnight.



Monday was our final day and we said Goodbye with a buffet lunch at the Community Centre. We were entertained by the Hayling Young Stars who are SO talented! Each performing a solo rendition of a classic piece of theatre.



Rosy Raines, in her capacity as Town Crier, made us laugh with her poem about the visit. A silver leaf was added to the "Arbre de Gorrion" - the Gorrion Tree- to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of our joint Twinning. Unfortunately, Michel Duchemin, the creator of the tree, was unable to be there as his wife Catherine had succumbed to a bug and was too unwell to travel.



Lord David Willetts, who has been a supporter for 25 years, joined us and presented Jean Marc Allain, the Mayor of Gorrion, with a bottle of House of Lords Scotch Whiskey. We don't know if it actually made it back to Gorrion- it's a long crossing!

We would like to give huge thanks to the following people:

The staff of the Barley Mow for opening early and discounting the meals.

John and Marshall Hill from Funland for discounting the children's wristbands.

Hollycombe for discounting the tickets.

The Newtown House Hotel for discounting the meal and wine.

The Community Centre for their constant support and last but not least the Hayling Young Stars and Hayley Wallage for giving up their time to entertain us.

And finally a group photo



If you would like to see Dave Collins has provided a video record of the week-end please click on the link below.

(Right mouse click "Open Hyperlink"

<https://sendvid.com/7xm95lyd>