

## Visit of the daily board to Desborough and Cashel

- from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2011

The original plan was for the daily board to visit Desborough and Cashel in order to ensure support for the Charter group in Desborough and assist with the plans for the annual meeting in Cashel, answer any questions and explain and the changes and the development concerning the current projects. Being as vice-president DI Karl Grammanitsch had booked a skiing holiday, long in advance, it was decided that Jette Johnson, from the presidium should travel instead. President Frans Ronnes, the secretary Helma van Drunen and the treasurer Sandra Hengl completed the group.

The first to arrive on Birmingham airport, on Friday the 14th from Copenhagen, was Jette, Sandra arrived from Vienna via Munich about half an hour later, around 10:30am. We were greeted by Pamela Goodman and transferred to Desborough. Shortly after lunchtime Helma and Frans also arrived in the reception of Kettering Borough council offices, with June Ryan, following a train journey over Brussels.

Along with June and her daughter-in-law, her granddaughter and Pamela, we were greeted by the mayor of Kettering Mrs. Shirley Lynch in the mayors parlour. Shirley's attire was very impressive; she welcomed us in her red robe, white gloves and triangular hat. Her chain of office of was beautiful craftsmanship and very valuable.

The mayor proudly showed us the chamber of council and explained the ceremony. Whilst consuming sandwiches, Victorian sandwich cake and tea and coffee we had the opportunity to talk about current charter matters, the development of our Charter, the on coming meeting in Desborough and the necessity for the council (especially the mayor) to support the Charter group. The mayor explained that she would only be in office for a short period and suggested making connections to the appropriate councillors in order to secure the necessary support in future.

Following the meeting we were shown around a care centre including a demonstration of the latest assisted bath version complete with bubbles and lift. We saw the latest building estates, the war memorial (still covered in poppy wreaths), the church and the park. We did a flying visit to the heritage centre and the handbag factory store was well appreciated by the females. Needless to say a few handbags from Desborough travelled on to Cashel and then emigrated to other European rural communities.

After having dinner with our host families we gathered at Loatland's Primary school in Desborough for a meeting with the town council, Charter and twinning members and local residents. The mayor Mrs. Lynch and four local councillors, as well as a county councillor were present. The Chairman of the twinning committee, Ben Murphy Ryan explained the situation in Desborough and Frans Ronnes spoke of the problems, the tasks and the future. Jette, Helma and Sandra assisted in answering the questions which were raised and during the evening informal contacts were made and many questions were answered. Thanks to Joanne Watson for the organisation.

On Saturday after breakfast we left Desborough for the airport with Mark Watson, just after 9 am.

On arrival in Dublin, with a slight flight delay, due to strong wind, Dr. Niall Gregory was there waiting. He didn't admit it, but he really enjoyed driving through the toll so he missed the turn off and showed us the procedure again. We still managed to arrive in Cashel in time for the meeting with the organising committee. The committee consisted of active community members, including councillors, the present mayor, the designated future mayor, a nun, the Charter youth contact and others.

The mayor Mr. Michael Brown opened the meeting and the very enthusiastic committee members poured out their ideas and presented us with a good meeting framework. Frans explained in some detail the rules and the needs for the new projects concerning the annual meeting. One topic was the transfer from the airport to Cashel. It was decided that it is reasonable to say that Dublin airport should be the one for the delegates to arrive at, in order to make it possible to arrange transfers. Anyone arriving elsewhere will have to arrange their own further transport. Other topics were the timetable, the hosting, the participation lists, the report and the funding. The need to officially divide the adult and the youth programmes were explained.

Cashel also told of the legal need for youngsters under the age of 18 having written parental consent in Ireland, also naming the responsible adult. The recommendation was given for all delegates to bring "E1 11" forms to Cashel with them in case of need of medical treatment during the meeting.

After the official meeting we were invited to dinner in the Palace hotel and were shown the buildings and locations which are intended for use during the annual meeting. We spent several hours together discussing all kinds of things connected with the organisation. It was early morning when we went to bed.

Breakfast was at 8.30, then departure to Dublin airport. Sandra's flight left at 16.30, Frans and Helma at 17.10 and Jette a bit later. We used the time in between to discuss Charter matters, but as so often time was too short.