

COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Strasbourg, 1 February 1979

AS/Loc/Prix (30) 14 ~~xx~~

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL PLANNING
AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES



Sub-Committee on the Europe Prize
and the propagation of the European idea

EUROPE PRIZE

Supplementary information concerning the candidature of
BIETIGHEIM-BISSINGEN Baden-Württemberg
Federal Republic of Germany

Letter from the mayor and progress report on
twinning activities

See also: AS/Loc/Prix (27) 11
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Europe Prize - Flag of Honour

Bietigheim-Bissingen hereby renews its application for the award of the Europe Prize or the Flag of Honour.

In support of our application I should first like to draw your attention to the formal application of 20 November 1975 and the reports submitted in the meantime on twinning activities.

Undoubtedly we also succeeded in fostering and developing our existing twinning relations in 1978.

The key event in the context of our town twinning agreements was the 10th anniversary of the agreement with Sucy-en-Brie, also attended by delegations from the British "twinning" town of Surrey Heath and even from the Japanese "twinning" town of Kusatsu. In connection with that event, a festival was organised in the old part of the town round the Bietigheim Town-Hall in the context of a "French Week" on 20/21 May 1978. On that occasion a concert given by the band of the 43rd French Marine Infantry Regiment from Offenburg was particularly successful. The extremely varied programme aroused interest in French politics, culture and also everyday life in France. Among other items, the town library organised an exhibition entitled "French Lithographs of the 20th Century". Professor D. Poupet of the French Institute in Stuttgart provided samples of wines from Burgundy, the Loire and Bordeaux at a wine seminar. A lecture in French on "Everyday life in Paris and the provinces", illustrated by slides, by Monsieur Michel Control, General Secretary of the French Institute in Stuttgart, was given to a full house. The programme was rounded off by a lecture evening entitled "Germany as seen by the French", given by Mr. Jean-Jacques Hadey, Cultural Attaché at the French Embassy in the Federal Republic of Germany. The following events also took place in the context of our twinning agreement with Sucy-en-Brie in 1978:

a. In Sucy-en-Brie

Easter 1978: TSV Bietigheim-basket-ball section with 50 sportsmen from the CSS in Sucy-en-Brie

24.4 - 7.5.78:
Joint holiday spent by senior citizens from Sucy-en-Brie and Bietigheim-Bissingen in Port Barcarés near Perpignan

b. Bietigheim-Bissingen

1 - 2.4.1978:
Visit by the Sucy-en-Brie Amicale Philatelique on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Bietigheim-Bissingen Stamp Collectors Association

1 - 2.4.1978:
Sports Amicale from Sucy-en-Brie (ASS) entertained

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7.5.1978: Visit by the Schiller Adult Evening School (French conversation course) to members of the groups taking German courses in Sucy-en-Brie

13 -

15.5.1978: First sports fixture attended by the 08 Bissingen Football Club in Sucy-en-Brie (4 young teams)

25 -

28.5.1978: Meeting between pupils from the Ellental Grammar School at the Fort Secondary School in Sucy-en-Brie

2 -

4.6.1978: Visit by a group of senior citizens from Bietigheim-Bissingen to Sucy-en-Brie

20 -

25.9.1978: Cycle tour by members of the TSV Bietigheim - table-tennis section - to Sucy-en-Brie (more than 600 kilometres)

23 -

24.9.1978: Participation of the Stamp Collectors Association in an exhibition arranged by the Sucy-en-Brie Amicale Philatelique

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8.10.1978: Participation by the Lord Mayor, Mr List, and the Mayor, Mr Himmelsbach, at a meeting of the "twinning" towns of Surrey Heath and Sucy-en-Brie

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15.11.1978: Exchange of school-children - 8th form of the Ellental Secondary School to the Fort Secondary School in Sucy-en-Brie

by the Bietigheim-Bissingen Swimming Association, including competitive events.

13 -

15.5.1978: Return visit by the Sucy-en-Brie ASS to the TSV Bietigheim - table tennis section

3 -

7.9.1978: Visit by the General Secretary, Mr. Fischer, for conversations concerning the twinning programme for 1979 and participation in the Europa Forum of the Government of the Land of Baden-Württemberg in Stuttgart

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31.10.1978: Visit and guest performance by the dance group of the "Association des Amis de la Danse" from Sucy-en-Brie to the Athletics Association in Bietigheim-Ludwigsburg e.V.

Further details about these meetings will be found in the enclosed press reports. In addition to these events, many friendly contacts between families were further developed in both towns and new ones established. Considerable efforts were made to provide accommodation for schoolchildren with families in both towns. Similarly the work of the local Schiller Adult Evening School was concentrated on the active twinning relations and the promotion of European unity. The number of language courses has increased yet further. In addition to 25 English courses and 15 French courses at all levels, introductory and medium courses were also begun in Italian. A particularly positive development can be seen in the fact that the German courses in Sucy-en-Brie and the French courses in Bietigheim-Bissingen have been arranging for personal contacts for some years now. Particular interest was once more aroused by the study journeys to European neighbouring countries: e.g. the weekend seminar "Developing Europe" which was backed up by a study journey to the official headquarters of the European Community in Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg.

In view of the economic situation in Great Britain, exchanges with our British "twinning" town of Surrey Heath did not develop quite as swiftly as those with Sucy-en-Brie. Nevertheless, in addition to official contacts, the friendly relations between families, which have existed for many years, led to a constant exchange of visits during the year, involving all sections and age groups of the population. Contacts were established with further families - particularly for the purpose of providing accommodation for schoolchildren.

A delegation from Surrey Heath naturally took part in the 10th anniversary of the pairing agreement with Sucy-en-Brie. Guests from Surrey Heath also attended the traditional Bietigheim horse market (the largest horse show in Southern Germany and a supra-regional popular festival). The German St. Georg Bietigheim-Bissingen Scout Troop arranged a joint camp with the boy scouts from Surrey Heath from 22 July to 5 August 1978. Our town sponsored the camp itself, and those attending it subsequently stayed with families in Surrey Heath.

The exchange of pupils between our secondary schools and their British opposite numbers (including places outside our British "twinning" town) was actively continued and involved longish stays, including attendance at schools.

Students attending the English courses at the local Schiller Adult Evening School visited Great Britain in October and November last year. Surrey Heath was also visited during that journey and personal contacts were established with the German classes of the Adult Education Society. Arrangements for exchange visits this year have already been made.

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Our town provided exhibits for a "German Fortnight" in Surrey Heath.

Friendly relations which have existed for many years with the Northern Italian town of Pontelongo were developed yet further.

After an exhibition of the works of Italian artists in the Bietigheim Hornmoldhaus in 1977 had met with extremely encouraging public support, four well-known artists from our town had an opportunity to exhibit their works at the German-Italian Cultural Society in the provincial capital of Padua. This exhibition was also promoted by the German Consulate General and the Goethe Institute in Milan. These cultural exchanges can also be regarded as a successful initiative to promote European unity.

This year - as far as it is possible to forecast events at this stage - we expect an even greater number of meetings under our twinning agreements. The following exchanges have been arranged with Sucy-en-Brie:

1. Visit by a group of senior citizens from Sucy-en-Brie at Whitsun.
2. Participants in German classes from Sucy-en-Brie to be entertained in Bietigheim-Bissingen (Ascension/Whitsun).
3. Joint orchestral concert given by the Sucy-en-Brie Conservatoire and the Bietigheim-Bissingen Music School in Bietigheim-Bissingen.
4. Return visit by young football teams from the Sucy Football Club to the 08 Bissingen Football Club during the Whitsun holidays.
5. Visit by the Women's Club from Sucy-en-Brie at Whitsun.
6. Organisation of a wine-tasting session by the Bietigheim-Bissingen Wine Connoisseurs Club in Sucy-en-Brie.
7. Visit by the Stamp Collectors Association to Sucy-en-Brie at Easter/return visit to Bietigheim-Bissingen on 10-11 November 1979 in connection with a major stamp exhibition.
8. TSV Untermberg - Tennis section

Exchange meeting at Whitsun in Sucy-en-Brie.

9. Return visit by the Bietigheim-Ludwigsburg e.V. Athletics Association to Sucy-en-Brie including an exhibition of dancing in the Sucy-en-Brie Festival Hall.
10. Swimming competition between the Bietigheim Swimming Club and the Sucy-en-Brie ASS in Sucy-en-Brie.
11. Joint meeting of the Red Cross Associations in Sucy-en-Brie.
12. Joint skiing holiday involving the Bietigheim and Bissingen Ski Clubs and French skiers.
13. Visit by the Club des Amis du Chien de Défense to Bietigheim-Bissingen.
14. Meeting between the Bissingen Rifle Club and Police marksmen from Sucy.
15. Exchange visits between the Ellental Secondary School and the Fort and Experimental Secondary Schools in Sucy-en-Brie.

In addition to the exchange meetings with Sucy-en-Brie we shall also endeavour to step up exchanges with Surrey Heath, particularly between associations.

1979 will be dominated by the European elections. Accordingly all available forces will be mobilised by the town to interest the population in participating in the elections and making them even more aware of the need for European unity. In so doing we shall give particular support to the programmes of the Europa Union, the International Union of Mayors and the Franco-German Institute in Ludwigsburg. Naturally, school and out-of-school education will place particular emphasis on European matters. The object is to foster knowledge and an understanding of the integration process and promote a desire for participation in the process towards European unity among wide sections of the population.

Thanks to regular reports in the press of the twinned towns and personal co-operation between those responsible for public relations in the town halls, there is a regular exchange of information about important developments and events in the "twinned" towns. Thus citizens and inhabitants who are not directly involved in pairing events are made aware of the twinning idea and the ideals of the European Community.

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In conclusion I should like to say that, as far as its means allowed, Bietigheim-Bissingen has performed an outstanding service in promoting European union and the idea of unity, and it will continue to do so. I therefore believe that the pre-requisites for the award of the Europe Prize exist and that our application this year will meet with a positive response. I look forward optimistically to such a positive decision.

In view of the forthcoming European elections, the award of the Europe Prize to our town would have an outstanding impact on the political scene in our Land. As financial Mayor of Bietigheim, Lothar Späth, the Prime Minister of Baden-Württemberg, helped to establish the pairing agreement with Sucy-en-Brie and made his own personal contribution. His personal participation in the ceremony for the award of the Prize - which could undoubtedly be arranged - would be broadcast by the media throughout the Land and therefore be given publicity well beyond that which could normally be expected. This would be an excellent way of making public opinion aware of the aims and work of the Council of Europe.

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Manfred List