



## **The Royston and District Twinning Association**

Every time you come into Royston you pass the Royston town sign stating “Welcome to Royston – Twin towns Grossalmerode and La Loupe”. But what does this mean in practice? This article explains a bit more about twinning activities with Royston’s French and German twin towns.

### **Twinning Links with Grossalmerode in Germany**

Royston’s Twin town in Germany, Grossalmerode, is a picturesque small town with many traditional half-timbered buildings with steeply pitched roofs, set amidst the excellent walking country of the wooded hillsides of the Meissner Kaufunger forest. Grossalmerode is located quite close to the former “iron curtain” border with the former East Germany and the nearest large town in Kassel.

Town twinning with Grossalmerode has been going for over 30 years: the twinning was set up in 1973 - Royston had an existing link with Grossalmerode at that time through Johnson Matthey. Regular twinning visits have taken place from 1974 onwards, often in association with links between particular groups in the towns such as the Band, sporting groups, especially Footballers, and the Parish Church.



### **Twinning Links with La Loupe in France**



La Loupe is situated mid-way between the Normandy coast and the Loire valley in France. The nearest town is the picturesque city of Chartres with its historic cathedral. Like Royston, La Loupe also has commuters to its country’s capital city – a number of people there commute daily to Paris by train. The countryside around La Loupe is not dissimilar to that around here – gently rolling hills, and on the edge of the great grain growing area of the “Beauce”.

Royston has been twinned with La Loupe since 1986. Regular twinning visits to La Loupe take place every other year, usually in May, with coach travel laid on from Royston. During these twinning weekends, some of the time is spent with the hosts and some with the group as a whole. There is always a sightseeing excursion – in recent years places visited have included the Palace of Versailles, the city of Chartres, the Château of Chambord, a lunchtime cruise on the Canal de Briare, visits to wine cellars, etc. There is usually a reception with wine and great food, and then perhaps a chance to take part in a game of Boules. In the alternating years, return visits to Royston are made by the French.

**Twinning Events in Royston throughout the year** As well as the exchange visits with Royston’s European neighbours, the Twinning association organises various social events such as Beaujolais Nouveau evenings, Quiz Nights and a Christmas Dinner. A very popular activity that has grown up in the last few years has been the informal Boules evenings every Tuesday evening during the Summer at The Chequers in Barley.

### **Twining For Children and Teenagers**

For students of French or German, then what better way to try out what you are learning than by having some French or German friends and talking to them in their own language? They will be keen to try out their English too. A family exchange visit, either visiting France or Germany or hosting when they visit Royston is an ideal way to do this.

Twining exchange visits also give a chance for younger children, who may be too young to participate in conventional school trips, the chance to experience life with a French or German family, with the added security of having their own parents there.

The town of La Loupe kindly donated some French books to Royston – these include children's books, and a selection of these can be found in Royston Library.

There are also number of young French and German children in La Loupe and Grossalmerode who would like to find younger Roystonians to correspond with by letter or e-mail. Please contact the twining association if you are interested.

### **Contact Us**

If you would like to join the Twining Association or find out more about the various activities, contact the Chairman, David Gray on 01763 245895 or by e-mail: [david.r.gray@ntlworld.com](mailto:david.r.gray@ntlworld.com). We also have a display board in the reference section of the Town Library.

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### **Forthcoming Exchange Visits in 2008**

- **Weekend Break to La Loupe** Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2008 (Spring Bank Holiday). Celebrate 20 years of Twining with France! Price approx £90 per person, includes coach travel and full board accommodation staying with your hosts. *Contact Paul Rydon on 01763 241721; e-mail [paul@rydon.net](mailto:paul@rydon.net)*
- **Visit from Grossalmerode** *Royston's footballers will be visiting Grossalmerode during 2008 and Royston will also host a general visit, possibly 3-7<sup>th</sup> October 2008 – dates to be confirmed.* *Contact Sally Jones on 01763 231433 if you are interested in hosting; e-mail [sally@sallad.co.uk](mailto:sally@sallad.co.uk)*