Deputy Mayor gets on his bike

Farnham’s very own ‘easy rider’, Deputy Mayor Cllr Mike Hodge has completed an epic journey by riding his motorbike from Farnham all the way to Germany to represent the town in a recent twinning visit. Including breaks, the 430-mile journey took Cllr Hodge around 11 hours to complete on his BMW motorbike.

The town of Andernach is Farnham’s twin town and is located in the Rhine Valley between Cologne and Frankfurt. The purpose of the visit was for Cllr Hodge to represent Farnham at Andernach’s 600th annual carnival and to introduce him to the town ahead of the 25-year anniversary of the twinning of the two towns.

Commenting about his visit, the Deputy Mayor Councillor Mike Hodge said: “The carnival procession was an extremely lively and colourful sight – a fantastic affair steeped in 600 years of history, of which the local people are rightfully very proud. For me there was also a serious side to the visit. As part of my introduction to the town, I was interested to see the growing food to share initiative. The ‘edible city’ concept was pioneered by Andernach and is an idea we have included in this year’s Farnham in Bloom.”

Andernach’s Oberbürgermeister (Lord Mayor) Achim Hutten was host to the Deputy Mayor during the visit which began with a service at the Maria Himmelfahrt Cathedral on Friday evening. Carnival groups joined in the service, making it a light-hearted event with a parade, singing and music. The full carnival procession took place on Saturday along the promenade by the Rhine and celebrations culminated in an open air concert on the bank of the Rhine.

Councillor Mike Hodge says: “I would like to thank the people of Andernach, and particularly Oberbürgermeister Achim Hutten, for making me so welcome during my visit and for allowing me to share in their celebrations.”

The twinning of Farnham and Andernach promotes friendship through cultural, educational and business links between the people of the two towns. Anybody interested in getting involved should contact Penny Marriott at pp.marriott@gmail.com or call 01252 714489.
Bergermeister Claus Peitz