

Celebrating 20 years of Spanish links



OVER 20 years ago leaders of Lymington and Almansa in Spain set up a twinning charter and the relationship between the two towns was recognised at a special ceremony.

Last month in a shady quadrangle at Almansa's town hall, the mayor of Lymington, Coun. Michael White, and his Spanish counterpart, Coun. Francisco Nuñez Nuñez, signed a renewal pact of friendship and collaboration.

The ceremony also included speeches from Sr Antonio Callado, who was mayor when the original pact was signed in 1994, Tim Jones,

chairman of Almansa's Twinning Association, and Peter Richardson, former chairman of Lymington International Twinning Association.

Gifts of books and a picture were exchanged, followed by the symbolic planting of a tree in a new development of apartments, children's playground and fitness trail which is to be called 'La Plaza de Lymington' (pictured).

As the majority of the Lymington group was visiting Almansa for the first time, it was especially interesting for them to experience a time of fiesta and to learn something

at first hand of the town's history and the surrounding area, which lies mid-way between Valencia, Albacete and Alicante.

On arrival they were welcomed at a reception in the town hall, interviewed on local TV and introduced to their hosts.

A varied programme had been organised, which included guided tours of Almansa's castle, an exhibition about the battle of Almansa in 1707, and a visit to a local wine producer. The twinningers travelled up the fertile valley of Ayora and Cofrentes, stopping to see walking sticks, pitchforks and

wooden utensils being hand-crafted. A boat trip followed on the River Jucar, ending at an impressive dam and hydro-electric power station.

Plenty of time was spent with host families, getting to know them and their way of life; learning the importance of siesta time to enjoy the fiesta with late meals, folk dancing concerts, and a big band concert which started at 11.30pm in the relative cool of the evening. The hospitality was very generous and members returned to Lymington with fond memories of new and renewed friendships.

Lymington's German twin town Mosbach already has its own Lymington-Strasse, and there is an Avenue de Lymington in its French twin town Vitré. Lymington has Vitré Gardens near Woodside and Mosbach Place off Cannon Street, and one of the roads in the new Lymington Shores development by the river will be named 'Almansa Way'.

Anyone interested in Lymington twinning association's activities can discover more information on its website: www.lymingtontwinning.weebly.com