

History of HYTHE TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Founded 1978

In 1980 a unique event took place in the Ancient Cinque Port of Hythe where, in St Leonard's Church, the Twinning and Friendship agreement was signed between Hythe, the French town of Berck sur Mer and the Belgian town of Poperinge. A double twinning, between two European towns and one English town on the same day. This has never been repeated anywhere else in the United Kingdom to our knowledge

Hythe Twinning Association aims to foster friendship with the people, young and old, of our Twin Towns, Berck sur Mer in France & Poperinge in Belgium.

Berck sur Mer:

It is a seaside town with fine sandy beaches. Once a year, the International Kite Festival is held here attracting participants and visitors from all over Europe.

At the time there was a link between Hythe & Berck as 'Portex' had a factory in both towns making 'Single Use Medical Products'

The town has a population of around 15000 and benefits from very good sports facilities. There are several places of interest including Bagetelle Zoo and Amusement park, the Municipal Museum along with a Bird Sanctuary. There is also a Nudist's Beach! There is good shopping and many eating places catering for all tastes.

Le Touquet is to the north of the town with its International Golf Course. It has excellent shopping and a Casino.

Poperinge:

The historical connection is Toc H founded by the Reverend Philip (Tubby) Clayton during WW1. He used Talbot House as a rest centre and oasis of peace during the war. Reverend Philip (Tubby) Clayton was a close friend of Lord Wakefield of Hythe (past Lord Mayor of London) This friendship resulted in Lord Wakefield purchasing Talbot house in 1929 for Toc H

Reverend Philip (Tubby) Clayton is an Honoured Citizen of Poperinge, along with Dirk Frimout who lived in Poperinge. He is the only Belgian astronaut to date who has been into space and was part of the shuttle crew of STS Atlantis 45 which launched in 1992.

Poperinge is a hop growing area similar to that of Kent, with a population of around 19500.

Poperinge has its own local brew, 'Hommel', and many other the towns nearby also have their own local brew. The history of the 'Hop to Beer' can be found at the new Hop Museum. The town hosts a Hop Festival every three years, a weekend of celebrating the hop, culminating in a festival parade on the Sunday afternoon.

Hythe Twinning Association promotes the town of Hythe in both these European towns. Visitors come every year to Hythe, both privately and organised visits through ourselves or schools, different sports clubs, language classes, choirs, or bands.

We have introduced a wide range of people to different cultures of the towns & countries. A group of Nurses who spent the day at William Harvey Hospital, Belgian Hop Growers who visited Shepherd Neame and Wye College are but a few.

Hythe Twinning Association is entirely independent of any other body. Both towns are about an hours drive from the shuttle or ferry terminal.

If you would like further information on our twin towns, have a look at the town website and follow the Twin Town links. www.hythe-kent.com . For a membership form contact Kevin Howell 01303 266301 or Amanda Parris 01303 268375