



Hanwell Friends of Sabastiya

أصدقاء هانويل سبسطية 'حفصة'

Bulletin 17 – Spring 2019

Contents:

1. Forthcoming events
2. Bunny's report from Sabastiya
3. Twinning network conference
4. Netanyahu's son visits Sabastiya
5. Contact and donation details

1. Forthcoming events – requests for helpers

- Hanwell Carnival, Sat 15th June in Elthorne Park
- Brentford Festival, Sun 1st Sept in Blondin Park

Please put these dates in your diary and volunteer! It's very helpful to the committee if you say in advance that you will do any of the jobs below – contact Marje – see below .

We need handcrafted goods made by members, prizes for a tombola for children and adults, cakes of any sizes and shapes and jewellery for both events. We need volunteers to run the stall and relieve those manning the stalls. Any suggestions for new ideas for the stall would be much appreciated.

We need one person to take charge of the tombola which is always a money-spinner.
General help with gazebos needed from 10.30 and about 4.00 pm.

Donations and offers of help to Marjorie Kelly.
Telephone number 07960 804 650 or email mjkelly31506@gmail.com.

- Summer Social, Sat 3rd Aug from 7-10pm

Enjoy a Summer Evening by the River Brent – food – music – boating - at Mary Short's house Brentford. Helpers needed in the kitchen. Musicians – bring your instruments. More details available later.

- Art session, Sun 13th Oct from 1-4pm in Northfield community centre, 71A Northcroft Road W13 9SS with Saadeh George

2. Bunny's report from Sabastiya



Bunny is now in Sabastiya for a few months as a volunteer to teach English, below are a few thoughts she wrote for us. The feedback from Sabastiya has been very positive and they would like more volunteers to come. There are many possibilities. If you are interested, please contact Bunny or the committee.

"A month into my volunteering in Palestine and the more I find out, the more I realise there is to find out. After four busy weeks, the teaching is continuing to be both challenging and fascinating. My day starts off with an hour in the kitchen helping to make delicious snacks for local schools. It is lovely to meet an older sibling or mum in the shop next to the Guest House. Life in Palestine is so intense from one minute to the next.

The Kindergarten organised a trip for local families which included the only zoo in Palestine at Qalqiliya, and MEGALAND near Tulkarem. This was an opportunity for everyone to relax and enjoy some free time.

Sabastiya is a beautiful large village/ 300 plus families live in the historic place which includes an Ottoman Palace, St John The Baptist's Tomb, numerous Roman ruins etc. There are many people who strive every day to improve people's lives: eg Zeinab the Librarian, the incredibly determined road sweeper, teachers, inspirational youth workers and headteachers trying to support traumatised children and families, local doctors and nurses and people from the Municipality.

Children are loved very much here and are completely at the heart of the family. The absence of women from the public spaces is evident and this contrasts with the massive numbers of female students who are either highly qualified or training at the nearest An Najar University in Nablus.

Sabastiya in the Spring is beautifully-filled with over 2000 various types of white flowers. Golden eagles are a common sight here along with many different types of birds. Maybe with Abu Yasser's help and support, Sabastiya's application for World Heritage Site could be successful. This would be a major form of resistance to the creeping settlements surrounding Sabastiya. I continue to be impressed by the love and warmth of the Palestinians people".



35 people from UK, from 14 different twinning groups, and over 50 Palestinians.

The day in Sabastiya was memorable. Abu Yaser set the scene by introducing the Sabastiya mayor and other officials. He then led a tour of the historical remains, with everybody enjoying his commentary. Then followed a marvellous lunch at the Holy Sun restaurant, with entertainment – including dancers.

In the afternoon there were workshops and then a full gathering of all delegates. The conference ended with a firm commitment amongst the Palestinians to establish a working group, to plan the next conference in Palestine in 2021.

The twinning network were very pleased that Abu Yaser agreed to organise the second day of the conference in Sabastiya. The show abu Yasser arranged for the end of lunch was to demonstrate Sabastiya and Hafsa at their best.

The dubke dance group were a real treat and had everyone up and dancing at the end! There was a football skills display and Shadi talked about our gas masks project. Abu Yaser gave other examples of what hafsa had done over the years. The 80 or so in the audience were highly impressed.



3. Twinning Network conference

HAFSA is a member of the UK Twinning Network which has over 30 groups. There was a two-day conference 12/13 April. First day was in Nablus and second day in Sabastiya. It was attended by



4. Netanyahu's son visits Sabastiya!

Less appealing is this photo which Tom sent recently for inclusion in the bulletin.

In Tom's words:

*Good morning Colin,
I hope this email finds you well. I've got an item which you may wish to include in the next HAFSA bulletin.*

This week, on Twitter and Facebook, the son of Benjamin Netanyahu (Yair) posted pictures of his visit to Sabastiya and Mount Gerizim during the military lockdown for Passover.

He said it was great to visit Sabastiya at 'the heart of Israel' and encouraged others to visit also.

He's pictured with the Yigal Dimoni, the deputy head of Yesha Council, an umbrella organisation for settler municipal councils. Tom

In a scene which totally encapsulates the injustice of the occupation, while Yair Netanyahu was strolling around Sabastiya by the columns, just 100 m away, Jean witnessed heavily armed IDF soldiers aggressively forcing old women by gunpoint into their houses so that they could not witness the Passover celebrations. Why can't the settlers have their celebrations in the nearby settlement!



5. HAFSA's contact details and how to donate

We have a Facebook group you can join at:

- Facebook: 'Hanwell Friends of Sabastiya'
- Website: www.hafsa.org.uk
- Email: hanwellfriendsofsabastiya@gmail.com

- Donate by bank transfer:

The Cooperative Bank, Ealing Branch
Sort code: 08 92 99
Account number: 65 44 90 04

If you pay this way, please email hanwellfriendsofsabastiya@gmail.com to say you have donated.

Often the bank statement does not include the donor's name. We like to acknowledge your generous donations.

- Donate by cheque

Please send a cheque made out to HAFSA to:
HAFSA Treasurer – Colin Lomas
109 Southdown Avenue
London W7 2AE

- Donate by PayPal or Debit/Credit Card

Visit the website at www.hafsa.org.uk and click on Donate to HAFSA then Donate. Enter the amount you are donating. If you have a PayPal account, select Donate and proceed. If you are paying by credit/debit card, select Pay with a Card and proceed. If using a card, the Expiry date MUST be entered in the form mm/yyyy.

Editor: Colin Lomas

Mob: 07909 896 541

Email: colinlomas83@gmail.com