

In memoriam: a tribute to Michael Biddiscombe



The first phone contact (around 1990) between Horb and Haslemere was between Dr. Hans Hörner, our mayor, and Michael Biddiscombe, the president of the Haslemere Twinning Association. They soon agreed on first visits to get to know each other. During this pioneer visit (about 26 years ago) Michael Biddiscombe was our guest and ever since then we have stayed in contact. And with Michael, this contact was never superficial, he always took a lively interest in politics, in history, in public life and in the lives and families of his friends. Whenever possible Michael took part in the twinning visits and felt quite at home in Horb.

Michael was a modest person, although he held public offices – town councillor, mayor of Waverley. Serving the public and taking on responsibility was important for this dedicated liberal. When we sat with a

cup of tea or a glass of wine after a long day Michael would talk about topics that he felt worth pursuing such as affordable housing for young families.

Michael belonged to the generation who had lived through the Second World War, he knew everything about the destructive force of war and therefore valued peace and friendship above all. Twinning for him and for all of us was an important and successful way of bringing people of different nationalities and backgrounds together. Consequently, Michael was very unhappy with the outcome of the "Brexit" vote when I last saw him in September 2016.

Michael was very close to his family, a proud father, grandfather and great-grandfather. When his dear wife Elizabeth died, Michael bravely tried to cope with daily life, prepared his own meals and took an interest in gardening. Each year his friends received a Christmas card with one of his lovely photos and now and then a really long letter in which he described his trips to Wales and other regions of the UK.

We all admired Michael's courage and energy. We have lost a very dear friend. In Horb Michael Biddiscombe will always be remembered as one of the founding fathers of our twinning with Haslemere.