

Burton Latimer Twinning Association Visit to Castelnuovo Magra, October 2015



A contingent from Burton Latimer visited our Italian twin town of Castelnuovo Magra in two overlapping parties.



Friday 23rd October

Party1 comprised three adults and one child from the same family. Only one of the adults had visited our twin town previously. Having been met at Pisa airport by Italian twinning members, they went to meet their host family in the Castelnuovo Magra area. During the remainder of Friday through to Sunday, they visited the town of Sarzana and dined at Napoli Pizzeria, travelled by train to the very pretty coastal villages of Cinque Terre, were treated to highlights of the famous city of Florence, and dined adjacent to the castle at Castelnuovo Magra as guests of the local organisation Proloco.

Monday 26th October

Party2 comprised four adults from two families, who had all visited Castelnuovo Magra previously. They were met at Pisa airport by Party1 members, plus Italian twinning members. All travelled into Pisa in the Castelnuovo Magra Commune minibus to see the famous tower and adjacent buildings. In the time available and in the pleasant warm sunshine, The Baptistry, Cathedral and Leaning Tower were viewed, and the whole group took a late lunch nearby. Later, all returned to Pisa airport, as three members of Party1 were flying home. This being their first visit, they had been very impressed by the whole

twinning experience, and had had a wonderful time. The remaining party of five with their Italian twinning members travelled to Castelnuovo to meet their host families. One of the Italian host families was new to twinning, and they made their English guests very welcome.

Tuesday 27th October

We went to Bosoni winery in the morning, had lunch in a local café in the square in Columbiera, and later travelled to Carrara for a look at the old town. In the evening, we went up to the old town in Castelnuovo Magra for a private dinner at the invitation of a local Italian family.

Wednesday 28th October

We travelled to the seaside town of Lerici for a walk along the promenade and viewed the Castelnuovo do Lerici. Later in the afternoon we attended a presentation on Mediterranean food benefits at the social centre hall by invitation of The Università del Tempo Libero. The Burton Latimer Chairman gave a short vote of thanks to the President and Speaker. In the evening, we had dinner at country restaurant Francesco offered by the Università. The Burton Latimer Chairman gave short vote of thanks to the Università for their dinner invitation, and cited the UK U3A as a possible future exchange opportunity.

Thursday 29th October

We visited two schools today. The children were very receptive and asked many questions. At the second school, we also met the headmaster, who was very interested in what had been accomplished. It was suggested that we should collectively try to encourage pen pals with the schools, and also work towards a possible exchange of school children – although it was acknowledged that this would need to be carefully handled.

Later we had lunch at the home of one of the Italian twinning members, and then went to Fosdinovo castle which was opened especially for us – thanks, again, to the Università who made the arrangements, and greeted us. In the evening, we were treated to dinner by the Proloco organisation, in the hall near to the castle at Castelnuovo Magra. The Burton Latimer Chairman gave his final address and presented the Italian twinning members with some Burton Latimer memorabilia by way of thanks, which was well received.

Friday 30th October

On our final day we visited and ascended the tower at Castelnuovo castle, and lunched at the Arci bar adjacent to the castle, before the minibus took the Burton Latimer group back to Pisa airport for the return journey back to the UK.

Overall, the visit had been very successful indeed. The Italian twinning team had done an excellent job of preparing a very diverse program, and worked hard to implement it. The Burton Latimer Twinning Association committee was very complimentary, and sincerely thanked the Italian team. We look forward to a return exchange visit of Italian twinning to the UK, hopefully early in 2016.

Steve Thomas
Chair, Burton Latimer Twinning Association