|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| lester-bathco | BATH – BEPPU FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION | \\osiris\users$\martina1\My Pictures\Flag_of_Beppu,_Oita.png |
| Mayor's Office, Guildhall, Bath. BA1 5AW Tel: (01225) 477411 e-mail: mayorofbath@bathnes.gov.uk  [www.mayorofbath](http://www.mayorofbath).co.uk  Chairman: Councillor Paul Crossley  email: paul\_crossley@bathnes.gov.uk |

Year 2 BBFA - Chairs report - Spring 2017 to Spring 2018

The second year of the Sister City Link has seen a growth on ideas and activity and a lively involved membership. The meetings have been well attended and the model of alternating a pure committee meeting with a business meeting with the whole membership invited including a social section after the formal business has proved very successful.

We are now formally recognised by the Charter Trustees (CT) and get an annual grant from them - though smaller than the 4 Twinning societies. We are also included in CT twinning functions and will also now start being included in the Twinning Newsletter that the CT produce occasionally.

Looking back over the year we have, for a small Society, put on a large range of events:-

* the second Japan Festival in partnership with the Museum of East Asian Art on 18th June which again raised money (£1,225.25) for earthquake victims in Kyushu
* the second Sake Tasting evening as part of the Great Bath Feast which had a range of events in addition to Sake. We were fortunate in again being sponsored by Nishinoseki and Yo Sushi and additionally were joined by Akashitai / Independent Spirit and also a traditional sweet maker Korindo from the Tokyo area
* delivery of the money raised at the Japan Day to Joto Primary School in Kumamoto organisations working with the consequences of the earthquake in Kyushu by our members (Kaoru Jaques)
* introduction of Japanese Clubs in a few Bath schools
* an emakimono project between schools in Bath and Beppu
* the delivery of the emakimono work to the sister schools in Beppu by our members - an event that got local, regional and national exposure in the media and TV
* start of a postcard project between the two cities
* I was invited to give a Keynote speech at the Beppu City Council Onsen Conference. Yukie Scott accompanied me as translator and Maggie Crossley accompanied me as a Conference delegate and also was a panel member at the main plenary. Our Theme was Spa Culture as part of a wider wellbeing strategy
* we worked with Bath RFC (the amateur club) to send a Colts rugby team (16-18 year olds) to Beppu for a 3-nations set of games involving 4 teams from Beppu ( 2 High Schools, Asia Pacific University and Beppu Barbarians), Bath RFC and Rotorua in New Zealand. Bath played 4 games over 10 days and won all 4.The tour was a complete and outstanding success. Kaoru Jaques accompanied the tour as translator and fixer. I joined the tour for the second half. Beppu City and local business put in over £10k in Beppu to make the tour happen as well as a lot of time. Bath RFC and BBFA raised nearly 30K (nearly £9k by BBFA) and BBFA also helped in organising some of the club fundraising activities.
* there have been at least 3 Social evenings in pubs and restaurants
* we have hosted delegations from Beppu City, Kunisaki City and Oita Prefecture
* there was a visit for afternoon tea at Castle Combe by members all in Kimono
* in addition to our lively Facebook group we have also developed a Web Page and blog. Our Facebook page is active both in Bath and Beppu and surrounding areas
* we have started building links with the University off Bath Japanese Society
* We have started exploring how to put on a Japanese Film on a regular basis

A very impressive outcome of our Sister City link is to see how Beppu City, from a delegate Visit here during our first year has developed its bid to host a team for the 2019 Rugby World Cup. The facilities are impressive and our boys were amongst the first to play on the pitch. The Japanese Rugby Association is delighted by the way Beppu is promoting and building up to the RWC.

All of this has involved a lot of activity and work by many members of the Society to which on behalf of BBFA I say thank you to you all for the work. I look forward to a successful third year of our Association and the growing Sister City links between our two communities.

Thank you

Councillor Paul Crossley