

Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation

Summer 2009

2009-2010

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ASCF Annual Meeting

On Sunday, June 14, 2009, Albuquerque Sister Cities Foundation held its annual meeting at the Jewish Community Center. Eighty members were in attendance for the occasion. A sumptuous buffet lunch of turkey, avocado, lettuce and tomato wrap; chicken salad on wheat; sun chips, cole slaw and desserts provided by the ASCF board, began the event. Andrew Thomas, a Navajo, played several songs on his wood flute. Andrew went to the Sister Cities International conference in Belfast this July to provide entertainment at the Albuquerque night there. A short break was taken to savor some more dessert. President Richard Buckler then introduced Harold Albert, the primary force behind the Rehovot, Israel/Albuquerque, NM affiliation. Mr. Albert gave a

short history of this sister city formation and then introduced Drs. Etti Benevenisti and John Graham. They presented an informative power point program on "Israeli Scientific and Educational Innovations in Rehovot." Door prizes and then a short business meeting followed.. Officers for 2009-2010 were elected: 2nd Vice President (social chair), Carol Dawley; 3rd Vice President (membership chair), Dave Baggley; Secretary, Mary Hope Buckler; and Treasurer, Mark Bentz. President Richard Buckler was elected last year for a 3 year term. The bylaws included in the 2009 spring newsletter were passed. Richard thanked all for coming and mentioned some upcoming events - a fall activity featuring Chihuahua, Mexico and Guadalajara, Mexico; and a winter happening featuring Lanzhou, China and Hualien, Taiwan. ASCF is forming a youth group and eight young people were present. Their mentors are Georgina Solis and David Buckler.



Andrew Thomas



2009-2010 ASCF Board : L to R
Mark, Carol, Richard, Mary Hope, & Dave



Gina Solis, 6 youth, David Buckler



L to R: Richard Buckler, Dr. Etti
Benevenisti, Dr. John Graham,
Harold Albert

from the President's Desk ...

Belfast! For most of us the name conjures up images of violence and strife. Yet, this city was the site of the 2009 Sister Cities International Conference with the theme: Building Enduring Peace after Conflict. Here are some of my thoughts as I reflect on the visit.

Significantly, the Albuquerque delegation held their showcase night at the Europa, which we were told was the site of the most bombings during the years of "trouble" (1969 - 1998). The night was a great success, thanks to the efforts of the Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau and volunteers from Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Santa Fe.

But, as I watched delegates from all around the world enjoy themselves, I couldn't help but marvel at how far Northern Ireland has

come in the peace process. Apparently, it wasn't always easy, as two opposition leaders explained as they welcomed us to the Stormont Parliament Building a few nights earlier. Both leaders, now sharing the same platform, admitted candidly to us that they had refused to speak to each other until just two years ago.

What struck me was the candor expressed by these two leaders, and in fact the residents of Belfast in general. From tour bus operators taking us to the areas where much violence had occurred in recent decades, to seeing the so-called "Wall of Peace" that still physically separates Catholic and Protestant houses, such candor was on display. A city might naturally want to hide such a controversial past, but not so Belfast. Instead, I was struck by the friendliness and openness of all the

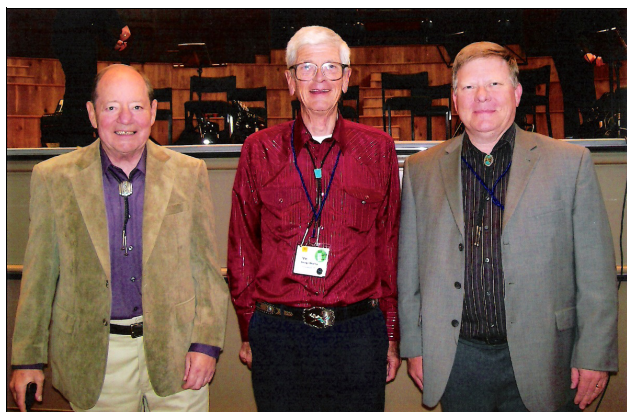
citizens we met.

The openness perhaps can be attributed to the solid principles in the now famous Good Friday Agreement, which had been signed in the same hall in which we were first welcomed. This agreement committed all parties to seek "exclusively peaceful and democratic means" to achieve ones political goals.

Will there always be some dissenters? Will some always feel left out? Those of us committed to the vision of Sister Cities have accepted the responsibility to be agents of change so that broken bridges can be repaired and peace achieved. We can be encouraged that if Belfast and Ireland can make peace with itself, then there is hope that other parts of the world can too.

Richard

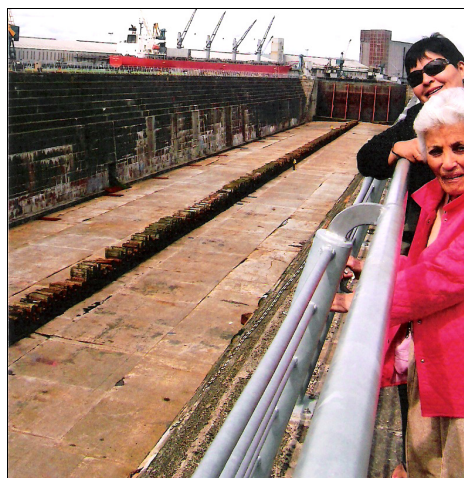
Richard Buckler, President



Three amigos from Albuquerque - Bill Myer, Vic Dawley and Richard Buckler enjoying the Belfast Mayor's reception.



Richard Buckler and the Bangor, North Down, Northern Ireland delegates



Alma Solis and Betty Mae Hartman view the Thompson Dock - the final place where the Titanic rested on dry ground.

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Membership Update

Currently, our membership stands at 214, with 37 renewals and 8 new memberships.

Albuquerque will host the Sister Cities International Conference in July 2010, with a gathering of 750 delegates expected from all over the world. While most travelers will stay in conference hotels downtown, we expect some of our nine sister cities' delegates will need, or want, home stays. To ensure that we can provide accommodations, please let us know if you can home stay visitors. Send a brief note to the email address below, subject "Home Stays", include your name, phone number and email address, and I'll note it in our data base record. No email? Please give me a call at 771-3114. Many thanks, Dave Bagley, Membership Chair.

Membership@Albuquerque-Sister-Cities.org

Youth Group Report

The first youth meeting was held in June where goals and the Sister Cities mission was discussed. Plans are underway for a back-to-school pizza party in the fall.

They are following the P-E-A-C-E guiding principles when selecting activities:

P = Prepare ourselves - learn the protocol & general culture of our sister cities.

E = Explore these cultures in creative ways.

A = Accept the call and responsibility to be a youth ambassador.

C = Connect with our counterparts in our sister cities and with our local community.

E = Excite others, sharing the vision.

Turkmen to visit Albuquerque in October

The Ashgabat Sister Cities Committee was selected for a grant from Open World in the Academy for Educational Development. The grant will be for hosting 4 or 5 Water Management professionals and a facilitator for 8 days in early October. Those wishing to be involved with home stays, meetings on water-related issues, touring and/or social events please contact Bill Myer at bill.myer@yahoo.com or 821-8774

**Helmstedt, Germany
Has Change of
Committee Chairs**

A HUGE thank you to Wolfram Krank for his years of service as Committee Chair of Helmstedt, Germany.

We welcome Nathan Young as the new Committee Chair. Nathan, fluent in German, has lived in Germany in the past.

Sasebo Report

The Sasebo Youth Delegate's visit, scheduled for July 2009, has been postponed until next summer due to the swine flu.

The New Mexico BioPark will be having an opening dedication of Ogata Kai Garden on Sept. 18, 2009, followed by a small reception for the Ogata Kai gardeners. The next day, Sept. 19, the BioPark Education Department will host an event at the Japanese Garden for the public with demonstrations, activities and specialized tours.

A Visit to Chihuahua in Oct.

The City of Chihuahua will celebrate its 300th anniversary on October 12. Alma Solis is planning on a trip there in October (specific dates to be decided on later). If interested, please call her at 417-0525.

SCI Conference Belfast, Northern Ireland 2009

What a wonderful conference it was !! The Northern Ireland hospitality was exceedingly warm and friendly. The conference had a full schedule - lots to see and do. The following articles cover some of the specific events at the conference.

Welcome Reception

First Minister Peter D. Robinson MP MLA and Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness MP MLA held a welcome reception at Parliament Buildings Stormont on Wednesday, July 29, 2009 to officially launch the Sister Cities International Conference. Welcoming the delegates, Mr. Robinson said, "It is a tremendous boost for Northern Ireland and our international recognition that Sister Cities is holding its international conference outside the USA for the first time in its 53 year history in Belfast. It is a significant opportunity to showcase and promote Northern Ireland to people from worlds of politics, finance, education, medicine, manufacturing and media and to bring direct economic and tourism opportunities to the local economy." Mr. McGuinness said, "We welcome the delegates and their families who have traveled from over 21 countries. The founding vision of Dwight Eisenhower is as relevant today as when he called the Sister Cities project together. The theme of the SCI conference, "Building Enduring Peace after Conflict," has a clear resonance for us and I believe we can provide a meaningful and constructive insight from our experience to the international delegates."



Carol & Vic Dawley in front of Stormont.



Womens' Chorus entertained in the Great Hall, Parliament Building.



Prince Kwami Kludjeson, President of Ghana Sister Cities and Carol Dawley are welcomed to Stormont by a bagpiper



P.J. McAvoy, Deputy Mayor of Ballymena; James Currie, Mayor of Ballymena and Roy Beggs, Alderman from Larne enjoying festivities at Stormont.

Summary of Fundraising Workshops

When economic times are tough, securing programmatic funding can be most helpful. Sources for these funds can come from individuals, foundations, government, corporations or special events. Patrick Madden, CEO of SCI, offered some helpful tips on obtaining grants: Be specific - does your program fit with the foundation's goals? Do your research - get to personally know the members of the foundation's board and/or staff. Fulfill a community need - do something that no one else is doing. Form a partnership with another community organization. Focus on what you will achieve, not on what you will do. If using a grant-writer, make sure that person is in tune with your organization. And always say thank you. Anne Belecke from Arizona mentioned some building blocks for a successful fundraiser - Decide on the type of fundraiser that best fits your goals and keep it simple. Determine what you are hoping to achieve both financially and for community awareness. Timing is important; try to prevent overlapping your fundraiser with someone else's. Build a strong team of volunteers. Develop a timeline and stick to it. Prepare a specific budget, watching for hidden costs. Communication is key - keep team regularly updated. Thank everyone who participates. Have a post fundraiser meeting and celebrate your success. Carol Dawley from ASCF offered specific suggestions for fundraising activities. A member of the audience said that her town in Northern Ireland puts Santa Claus in jail and he has to be bailed out. All the town's children insist that their parents donate to the cause!



Ulster Hall

Lord Mayor's Reception

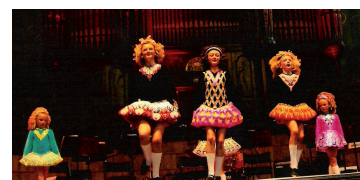
Councillor Naomi R. Long, Lord Mayor of Belfast, hosted a reception in Ulster Hall for SCI conference attendees. After her brief welcoming speech, the entertainment commenced. There was a delightful accordion band complete with a fabulous young singer and some traditional Irish dancers.



Councilor Naomi R. Long, Lord Mayor of Belfast



Accordion Band



Traditional Irish Dancers

Off-site Session - Queen's University

The Art of Peacebuilding at Queen's University by David Buckler

Queen's University is Northern Ireland's premier university with over 8,000 students. The central plan of the main campus echoes that of Madelene College, Oxford.

Those of us who went to Queen's University for the off-site day were given the opportunity to interact with the youth delegates. We enjoyed a lunch, as well as various other activities, in which several adult delegates were partnered with some of the youth delegates. I per-

sonally was able to meet students from various parts of the USA, Northern Ireland and Mexico. It was interesting to see how these students interacted with each other. Of the students I encountered, none had met each other before the start of the conference. And yet, they were able to converse as good friends would. One student commented that even though he had observed many differences in his time in Belfast, he found that people were more similar across the various cultures than they were different. To sum up, the reason the students were able to get along so well in such a short time was because they had realized this fact.

Off-Site Session - Newry

Bridging the Gap Across Borders at Newry

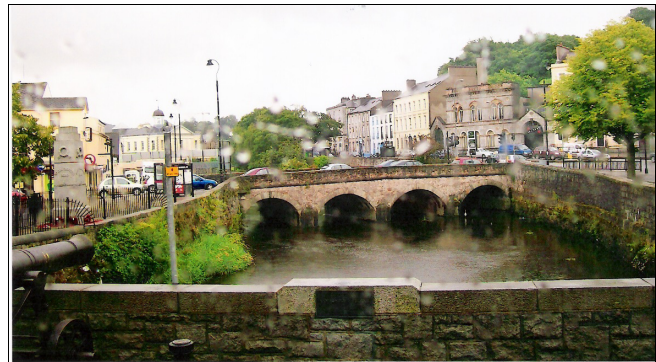
Newry is a modern thriving retail and business city nesting in the valley of the Clanrye. A busy and vibrant place today, it has historical origins, being one of the oldest towns in Ireland with continuous settlement in the area since Mesolithic times. Newry traces its origins to St. Patrick who reputedly planted a yew tree at the head of the Clanrye River, from which the city gets its name - 'yew tree at the head of the strand' in Irish "Iur ChinnTra", and anglicized as Newry. A Cistercian monastery was founded on the site in 1144 from which the present city can trace its origins. During the 18th century, Newry's economic importance as a major trade center grew after the construction of the canal from Carlingford Lough to Lough Neagh. Newry & Mourne, a border region at the heart of the Dublin/Belfast Corridor, was economically and socially affected by "The Troubles." Since the Good Friday Agreement, the region has developed a great ethos of self help and resilience. Working through cross border initiatives, the community's Good Relations Office, along with leaders from the public and private sectors, has led the effort to improve the well being and development of the region. Newry received its city status in 2002. Today Newry has a population of 29,000 with 100,000 people living in the surrounding area.

Our group was officially greeted at the Newry Town Hall. Constructed in 1893, it was one of the last works of the old Newry Town Commissioners whose crest can still be seen on the bridge. Reputed rivalry, between counties Armagh and Down, over its location led to the Town Hall being built on a three arched bridge astride the Clanrye River, the county boundary. On the bridge is "The Russian trophy," a 19th century cannon captured during the Crimean War. This was given to the town in recognition of the men from Newry who volunteered to fight in the War.

Upstairs in the Town Hall, the mayor of Newry greeted us and introduced the panel. A brief slide presentation of Newry's history was given by Liam Quinn. Councillor John Feehan told how local leaders are working together with citizens for a shared future. In the 1970's, Newry's unemployment soared to an astounding 43%. Today it is about 6.8%. A factory which had 600 workers was closed but local residents jointly purchased it and the building now houses several small businesses. Michelle Boyle from the Good Relations Office told how the community is working with immigrants from central Europe to find housing and become productive members of

the city. The Good Relations Office is striving to assimilate these new residents into Newry everyday life without their cultural identity being lost. Tea and pastries followed the Q & A session. All were very favorably impressed with the work being accomplished. An interesting note - when the Dawleys were in a cab going to the Dublin airport, the driver mentioned how folks from the Republic of Ireland go to Newry regularly for vacation and shopping - that they always feel welcome there.

A brief ride took the group to Bagenal's Castle. Built in the environs of the site of a 12th century Cistercian abbey, Bagenal's Castle is an early example of a fortified house. It was built by Sir Nicholas Bagenal, an English settler from Staffordshire, who was granted the confiscated estates of the Cistercian abbey by King Edward VI in 1552. The remains of the castle were long thought demolished but have recently been rediscovered inside McCann's Bakery. While much of the ground floor walls have been removed, the upper floors are better preserved. Newry & Mourne District Council has restored the castle and bakery warehouse as the new venue for Newry & Mourne Museum and Tourist Information Centre. Newry's Mayor gave each attendee a packet of information about Newry & Mourne. It would be nice to return here for an extended vacation. It truly is an area of outstanding beauty.



Town Hall bridge - note cannon on left.



L to R: Newry businessman, Liam Quinn, Michelle Boyle, Newry's Mayor, Councillor John Feehan

Off-Site Session - North Down

Economic Development Exchanges at North Down
By Mary Hope Buckler

The Economic Development session Richard and I attended in North Down was a panel including the Sister Cities leaders of Seattle and Phoenix, the Iowa State Coordinator and a Los Angeles City Councilman. They had some interesting things to say about economic development in Sister Cities.

Many Sister Cities organizations, no matter the size of their own city, are being challenged to engage in economic development with their sister cities and they are succeeding. City governments around the nation are asking for tangible benefits for their own city in return for their continued support.

These benefits can be achieved in a variety of ways: tourism, attracting international students and conferences, trading goods and services, investment, cultural and international holiday festivals open to the public, and more.

In this session we were encouraged to begin. It starts with assessing our own city and our sister cities. What do they have, what do they make, and what do they need that we may be able to offer? Each of our sister cities has the potential for mutually beneficial economic development; and as we keep our eyes and minds open, we may be pleasantly surprised at the possibilities.

We don't want to diminish what we are already doing culturally; but we could certainly enhance it and bring benefit to people on both sides of the relationship. And it remains all about people.

Albuquerque Reception

Albuquerque hosted a reception for the SCI Belfast conference attendees on Friday, July 31, 2009 at the Europa Hotel. Sporting turquoise polo shirts, New Mexico residents, from Albuquerque, Las Cruces and Santa Fe greeted guests and invited them to attend SCI's conference next year in Albuquerque, NM. Andrew Thomas, a Navajo flute player, musically welcomed folks to the event. While supping, folks heard from Dale Lockett, CEO and President of the Albuquerque Convention & Visitor's Bureau; viewed a welcome speech from Mayor Martin Chavez and a brief video of Albuquerque. Andrew Thomas followed with some more music. Performing next was a guitarist from Belfast who played some flamenco music as well as taking requests. Two Indian blankets were given away and all received a jar of salsa. The salsa was from Cervantes and had a special label promoting attendance at next year's SCI conference in Albuquerque.



Mellie & Bill Myer promote Albuquerque



Denise Suttle & Dale Lockett of the ACVB



David Buckler and a jar of salsa



The Turquoise Greeting Group

A Day Trip to Ballymena

Resting in the pleasant valley of the River Braid is Ballymena (Ballymenagh - Middle Town). Dating back to 1626, it is known as the "City of the Seven Towers," of which three remain to this day. It is also the ancestral home of Chester Alan Arthur, the 21st President of the USA.

Several Sister Cities folk participated in the Ballymena experience. On Saturday, August 1, 2009, they rode a coach to this delightful town where they were joined by a delegation from Rowan County, Kentucky (sister city to Ballymena). Tea and traditional Irish scones served with clotted cream welcomed the group to "The Braid," the new Mid-Antrim Museum. This museum is designed to world-class standards with content and storyline to fascinate local residents and visitors alike. It explores the history of mid-Antrim from earliest times to the present day through a mix of state-of-the-art interactive technology and original artefacts. A series of demonstrations showed traditional crafts. A blackthorn (shillelagh) maker displayed his wares. The blackthorn is a tree with black bark and can grow to 40 feet in height. The shillelagh, originally developed as a medieval weapon, in its smaller format today is used as a walking stick. Alma Solis and Carol Dawley joined some area residents in trying their hand at making willow baskets. Willow baskets are simple, practical containers. The Albuquerque residents soon found that the task was not as easy as it first looks and they gained a great respect for basket weavers today. In the bread-making area, Irish soda bread was made. Shown was the "griddle cake" or farl in Northern Ireland. It is a more flattened type of bread and is cooked on an old fashioned griddle. We were able to sample the end product, with some rich, creamy Irish butter. Next was the corn dolly exhibit. The corn dolly is a unique form of straw work made for, and associated with, harvest customs of Ireland. The last sheaf of the harvest was fashioned into hollow shapes where corn spirit would then spend the winter in this home until the "corn dolly" was ploughed into the first furrow of the new season. Alice Whyte, State President of Illinois Sister Cities, enjoyed making one for her grandchild. In the quilting area we learned how to stitch an iconic Celtic cross. Carol and Alma took their patch square home to be finished in New Mexico. Rowan County, Kentucky is known for its quilting as well.

James Currie, M.B.E., Mayor of Ballymena welcomed the group in the mayor's parlor where we were introduced to a local baroness, the newest member of the House of Lords. Mayor Currie presented each attendee with either a Ballymena tie or a purse mirror. We all signed the visitor's book and then headed for lunch, hosted by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, P. J. McAvoy. What a delightful repast! Fully satiated, the group headed out to explore the town and do some serious shopping. Delores Montoya bought a pair of very comfortable walking shoes and Carol purchased a lovely tara brooch, which she wore to the SCI gala later that night. Everyone managed to find something in one of the many shops. Before departing, visitors and dignitaries posed for one more picture and then back to Belfast it was. A special thank you to Christine Butler of the Ballymena Borough Council for arranging this special day.



Enjoying some scones with clotted cream are: Alice Whyte, Alma Solis, Betty Mae Hartman and Vic Dawley



Northern Ireland Reception & Gala

The Ramada Hotel was the scene of the final event of the Belfast SCI conference - the Northern Ireland Reception and Gala. Upon arrival, guests were greeted with glasses of champagne and Irish melodies played on a harp. During the dinner, a silent auction was held. Carol Dawley successfully bid on the Ballymena city plaque - a wonderful reminder of our day there. The evening concluded with some more traditional Irish dancing. As we all went our separate ways, fond memories of a unique and delightful conference will linger on. Hopefully our new friends from Northern Ireland will come to Albuquerque so we can extend our hospitality to them.



Welcoming harpist



Celebrate Mexican Independence!

Sponsored by Chihuahua, Mexico and
Guadalajara, Mexico Committees.

WHEN: Friday, September 18, 2009

WHERE: Manzano Multigenerational Center
501 Elizabeth

directions - off Eubank & Southern (near I-40)

TIME: 6 PM to 8 PM

Cost: \$7.00 per person

Food - tacos, rice, beans, cinnamon ice cream,
salsa and chips, Mexican coffee

Entertainment

Mercado - items from Mexico for sale by the
ASCF youth group as a fund raiser

RSVP - Please send check (payable to Albuquerque Sister Cities) to:

Albuquerque Sister Cities

P.O. Box 26533

Albuquerque, NM 87125-6533

Questions or more information - Please call
Alma Solis at 417-0525 or Bob Montoya at
352-6453

Carol Dawley and Mayor Currie of
Ballymena with the city's plaque.



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In This Issue...

ASCF General Meeting and ASCF members go to SCI conference in Belfast

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THE ALBUQUERQUE
sister
cities
FOUNDATION, Inc.

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adult - Single/Family | \$20/\$30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (65 or older) – Single/Family | \$10/\$15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth (13-20) | \$7.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Young Adult (21-35) | \$20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small Business (15 or fewer employees) | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Large Business (more than 15 employees) | \$300 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reciprocal non-profit organization | N/C |

Membership Application

☐ New ☐ Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

WEBSITE: WWW.ALBUQUERQUE-SISTER-CITIES.ORG