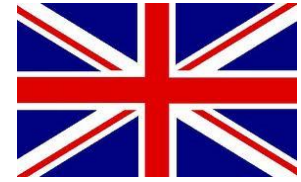


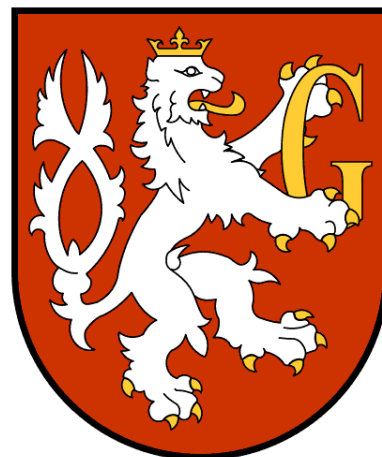


TWENTY YEARS



OF PARTNERSHIP

October 2014 marks twenty years of unbroken partnership between the Lytham Schools and the Gymnázium Boženy Němcové in Hradec Králové, the principal city of eastern Bohemia in the Czech Republic. It was in October 1994 that Julian Wilde, Headmaster of King Edward VII School, Lytham, took up an invitation from Vladislav Král, the Headmaster of the Gymnázium Boženy Němcové to visit his school. From that single day visit and the very warm welcome received that the partnership between the two schools began.



In the spring of 1995 Cyril Wildon and Gordon Grundy, Heads of Art at the then separate King Edward and Queen Mary Schools, took a group of four art students and an exhibition of work by all



the pupils of the Lytham Schools to Hradec Králové . Later the same year King Edward's hosted the second leg of this exchange. Art students from Gybon, accompanied by English teachers Pavel Adámek and Milena Hálková and art teachers Zuzana Vebersiková and Iveta Jalůvková, spent a week in Lytham.

King Edward's was next invited to form a triangular partnership with Gybon and with the Siebold Gymnasium in Würzburg, Germany for the annual international science seminar.

In 1997 six Year 10 King Edward's boys, led by Simon Smith and Graham Finney, together with six Gybon students travelled to Germany for the week-long seminar and this has continued ever since, with each school playing host in turn.



In 1999 King Edward VII School (founded in 1908) and Queen Mary School (founded in 1930) joined together to form the new

co-educational King Edward VII and Queen Mary School (KEQMS) which enhanced the scope for the hosting of Czech and German students with families.



In October 2011 the 15th seminar was held in Lytham, with the Czech group being led for the first time by English teacher Petr Slezák and Steve Matthews masterminding the week.

In October 2012 Graham Finney and Sarah Hall accompanied the Lytham group to the Seminar which was held in Würzburg and organised by Norbert Mantel.



The 17th seminar was held in Hradec Králové in the first week of November 2013. Six Lytham students, accompanied by Steve

Matthews attended – the first visit since the amalgamation of KEQMS and Arnold School (now AKS)



There have been three trips for choir and musicians in each direction. The King Edward's choir, under the leadership of Director of Music Geoff Cassidy, pioneered the way in 1998. Subsequently mixed KEQMS choirs, led by



Alastair Mackenzie and Andrew Barratt, have also visited Hradec Králové with the highlight being the chance to perform in the 14th century Cathedral of the Holy Spirit.



The Gybon choir, directed by Jaromír Schejbal, paid their first visit to Lytham in March 1999, giving concerts in St. Cuthbert's Church and at KEQMS. Mary Winterflood, Judith Denver and Liz Cole are amongst those who

have been involved in the choir trips.

A geography trip, led by Judith Cooper and Judith Rimmer and further art exchanges have taken place, with the Czech students (many of whom live in flats) particularly enjoying the chance to stay in an English home and the KEQMS students enjoying visiting a country where everyone wants to speak English.

On the retirement of Vladislav Král in 2002, Jan Šterba, the school's Head of ICT, took up the Headship and was keen to continue the partnership, attending the science seminar in Lytham himself.



In 2003 he invited Julian Wilde, Ron and Miriam Naylor and Cyril Wildon to be special guests at the celebrations to mark the 25th anniversary of the opening of the school in 1978.



Jan Šterba stayed with Robert Karling, the second Principal of KEQMS, and his family during the science seminars in Lytham in 2005 and 2008 and Robert and Julia Karling accompanied an art group to Hradec Králové.



Gybon students Klara Mokra and Šimon Tejkal were the first to work in Lytham in the summer vacation in 2007 and individual contacts



and friendships between members of staff, parents and students have led to a number of private holiday visits in both directions.

Throughout the twenty years the partnership has enjoyed the support of the Embassies of The United Kingdom and the Czech Republic. Pavel Seifter, the Czech Ambassador in London, was the Principal Guest at the King Edward's Foundation Day ceremonies in 1998 and his two successors Jan Winkler and the current Ambassador , Michael Žantovský, have both visited KEQMS.



For the past nine years Julian Wilde has made a short summer term visit to teach English at Gybon where the classes of all ages always exhibit a very high standard in their speaking and understanding of English.



The partnership which has now involved around 500 students and staff from KEQMS remains the only one of its kind between a British and a Czech secondary school and in 2011, to mark this unbroken association, former KEQMS staff funded a special travel award competition for Gybon students. At a special ceremony in Hradec Králové, attended by Julian Wilde and Ron and Miriam Naylor, the three travel prizes were presented by Nick Groves, Head of the Political Section of the British Embassy in Prague. A silver plate was also presented to Pavel Adamek to mark his contribution to the partnership since its inception in 1994.



The winning Gybon students, Johana Macková, Lenka Rejková and Veronika Palmová, all enjoyed successful visits to the UK in the summer of 2011, with Johana returning for working visits to Lytham in summer 2012 and 2014.



A highlight for Johana was a visit to Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines – one of the “Winton children” and a Preston resident - who has lent her enthusiastic support to the partnership throughout.



To mark the 20th year of the partnership three Travel Award were again available for Gybon students in the summer of 2014, with a first prize of 12,000 crowns (£400) and two second prizes of 6000 crowns each. The Judges – Ron Naylor, Liz Cole, Pat Nussey and Judith Denver - announced the three winners at the start of March and the awards were presented by Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines to Pavel Prokop, Marie Vosečková and Klára Novotná at Gybon early in June. Julian Wilde also presented a Lancashire flag to Jan Šterba to celebrate 20 years of cooperation between the two schools.



In the autumn of 2014 Mike Walton became the new Head of AKS and the Science Seminar returned to Lytham, organised by Head of Science Chris Jessop. The Czech group was again led by Petr Slezák, accompanied by Dagmar Dolejší who was making her first visit to Lytham.

