

Twinned with Chantilly, France

## Autumn Newsletter 2012 (no 45)

### Chairman's welcome

As you can see from the items in this newsletter your Twinning committee has been very active. Margaret Nightingale and I were amongst a group of volunteers and others invited by our MP Chris Grayling to a reception at the House of Commons on 7th June. Margaret was able to broach the subject of Twinning with our MP who was immediately supportive and kindly agreed to be the 'patron' of the biennial Choral Festival with Chantilly and our other twin towns, assuming this takes place as hoped in Epsom in 2016.

It was a lovely evening and an opportunity to network with other volunteers. It shows that Twinning is 'on the radar' and we thank Chris for the invite.

Elsewhere there have been Soirées Françaises and wine tasting evenings chez Richardson, and of course your committee pulled out the stops to welcome a delegation from Chantilly who came over to help celebrate the Borough's 75th Anniversary. There is more on this inside the newsletter but I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all the committee and twinning members who rolled out the red carpet and made our guests feel so welcome. I know that many twinning members have been warmly received when they have visited Chantilly, so it was important that we should reciprocate.

Looking forward, there are plans for further Soirées and a Members Christmas dinner at the Chalk Lane Hotel. I hope as many of you as possible will attend this festive event which is always a good opportunity to renew old acquaintances and make new friends. An intrepid group of Twinners will also once again be setting out to represent Epsom at the Chantilly Christmas market in December.

I would like to welcome a new committee member, Bob Ellison of Epsom College, who is keen to forge links between his school and counterparts in Chantilly. He has also agreed to be our publicity officer. It is an ongoing challenge to get the message about Twinning out there to the general public, but with Bob's help we can do more of that in the New Year.

Clive Woodbridge, Chair

## **Festival du Chant Européen - 11-13 May**

Sponsalia Chamber Choir, chaired by Jane Foxon, with their conductor Beresford Bell, were delighted to represent Epsom at the Second European Choral Festival, hosted by the Music Académie and Twinning committee of Watermaël-Boitsfort, a leafy suburb of Brussels. Sponsalia spent a fabulous sunny weekend from 11-13 May taking part alongside a children's choir from Budapest, 4 local choirs from around Brussels, and the 3 other choirs from our twinned towns, Chantilly, Uberlingen, and Watermaël-Boitsfort.

We received a tremendously warm welcome, and the three-day festival was brilliantly well organised. Performances included choral music of each choir's own choice representing varied styles and periods, at well-attended concerts on Friday and Saturday evenings in the L'église Notre Dame du Perpétuel Secours, with the finale comprising the 3 communal songs for all choirs - Jacques Brel's *Bruxelles*, *V'amo di Core* by Mozart, and the uplifting spiritual 'O Happy Day'.

In the several speeches preceding the concerts, there was much praise for continuing support for twinning, and the importance of shared interests, particularly music. Diana Deavin presented a gift plaque to the Mayor of Watermael-Boitsfort from Epsom and Ewell Borough Council to express our thanks for their hospitality. Each evening rounded off with a post-concert reception offering seemingly endless provision of Belgian beer!

On Sunday all the choirs joined together for a buffet lunch and an afternoon of song in beautiful sunshine in the Rose Garden of the Parc de Tournay-Solvay, joyous music-making made for a splendid closure to the festival.

Sponsalia are glad to have participated in this successful second choral festival and look forward to continued choral collaboration with the choirs of the twinned-towns. Already a sincere invitation has been extended to reconvene in Uberlingen in 2014 for a third festival, and naturally following the biennial pattern now established, it is anticipated that, in turn, Epsom will be the host town in 2016.

Visit [www.sponsalia.co.uk](http://www.sponsalia.co.uk) to hear more of the Sponsalia's performances and for bookings.

Jane Foxon, Chair, Sponsalia Chamber Choir

## **Visit to the Chemin de Fer de la Baie de Somme - 23 June**

As many members will know the "Aire de la Baie de Somme" (service station) on the Autoroute 14 is a pleasant place to stop, roughly half way between Calais and Chantilly. The view from the tower, north eastwards is marvellous, wide open skies with distant vistas of St Valery sur Somme and Le Crotoy on the opposite side of the estuary.

However the lower estuary of the Somme is a very pleasant place to visit in its own right. There are the bird reserves to the north west of Le Crotoy. With a guide, at low tide it is possible to walk across the estuary between St Valery and Le Crotoy. Cayeux has the

longest sea-facing wooden promenade in Europe and its beach huts are unique. St Valery is an ancient walled town from which it is claimed William departed in 1066 to subject the Anglo-Saxons in England. From the ancient fishermen's church at St Valery, overlooking the estuary there is a magnificent view. The town has a cobbled main street and a huge market along the promenade on Sunday mornings. Although the Baie dries at low tide, St Valery has a "port de plaisance" (marina) and is a popular yachting centre. On high spring tides a lesser equivalent of the Severn Bore can be experienced.

Being within easy reach of Paris the town is popular for "maisons secondaires" (second homes). However the whole region retains a relaxed calm air, despite one very popular tourist attraction. The area is home to Le Chemin de Fer de la Baie de Somme, the most popular metre gauge preserved railway in France, and this same railway is also revered by enthusiasts across the Channel.

Thus with a party from the SNCF Society (a group of enthusiasts in the UK interested in French railways) that friend and fellow twinning member Trevor Taylor and I visited the railway on Saturday 23 June. It was a fine, warm, day. We had a special charter steam train, a surprise really because we were expecting the ride in a historic railcar. Our train consisted of old wooden carriages with uncomfortable wooden seats. However the redeeming feature was the balcony at the end of each carriage. It was permitted to ride on the balcony; in fact a notice proclaimed it was for a maximum 7 passengers (they would need to be good friends).

The railway circumnavigated the Baie in an inverted "U" plan, taking us first to Noyelles sur Mer (now landlocked by silting) where it reversed. Excitement was provided there by staff turning the locomotive, by hand, on a "pont tournant".



From there we proceed via an embankment overlooking the marshes and through back gardens to St Valery. There was an unscheduled stop outside the company's workshops whilst we waited for vessels to pass through a lifting bridge over the adjacent canal. We had an hour in St Valery before our train continued to Cayeux, enough time to purchase "un sandwich" in the narrow main street and eat it on a promenade overlooking the sea. With everyone strolling around there was a relaxed, cordial atmosphere.



After a ride across open countryside we returned to the workshops at St Valery for afternoon tea, and an onward journey to Noyelles where our coach awaited. Our hosts made us truly welcome and were most apologetic that they were unable to provide the historic transport envisaged. Consequently they offered us a free return visit in the Autumn: fantastic!

My thanks to our hosts at the CFBS and to the organiser from the SNCF Society for a truly memorable day. And if anyone is looking for an overnight stop between Calais and Chantilly, I think you would like St Valery.

Peter Hardy, Committee member

### **Report on Twinning AGM - 28 June**

The Association's AGM was held at Epsom Town Hall on the evening of Thursday 28 June. Nineteen members attended with 9 apologies received.

The Chair, Clive Woodbridge, gave his annual report on the events of the previous year, including a successful team visit to the Chantilly Christmas market, which he had attended for the first time. Clive also reported on preparations for the Borough 75th Anniversary weekend in September, and we were pleased that a delegation from Chantilly would attend.

Membership secretary Anne Richardson reported 8 new annual members had joined, and that membership now stood at 139.

Re the committee, Clive proposed a new post of Vice-Chair to stand in for him if he were absent. Diana Deavin was nominated, and this was approved.

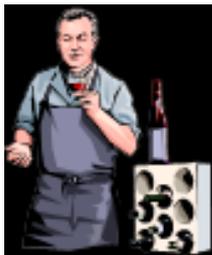
A new member was proposed to join the committee, Mr Bob Ellison of Epsom College, and this was agreed. All officers were re-elected, and committee members now numbered 18.

A decision was also taken to proceed with the creation of Vice-President status for retiring committee members.

Clive looked forward to another successful year for twinning in 2013.

Margaret Nightingale, Secretary

## **Wine-tasting at Madan Cottage - Tuesday 10 July**



On 10<sup>th</sup> July twenty-four members joined together for a wine tasting with a difference with wine guru Phil Doyle. We were issued with four glasses, a piece of white paper and a pencil and we sat back to listen with eager anticipation to his introduction. It was with shock and horror that we realised that there was more to it than just glugging the wine. In the first instance we had just to look at it. This required superhuman restraint - then we were allowed to smell it, then swirl it and smell it. Don't tell Phil, but one or two had tasted a bit by then. At last we could taste and ah the bliss. By then Phil had conjured out of us an excellent set of descriptions of the wine and we weren't a million miles apart from each other - maybe we could make wine buffs yet... So one wine down, onto the next. We were on a roll now as we began to understand how it worked. I think it safe to say that we got better through the evening until the alcohol intake began to loosen the tongues and the concentration began to go. All in all we had excellent fun, learnt a lot about wine, and made new friends. When is the next wine tasting, Phil??????

Clive (bon viveur) Richardson, Webmaster

## **Epsom Combined Choirs Festival - Friday 28 September**

2012 has been quite an annus mirabilis for us all. A succession of celebrations has provided opportunities for coming together. The Queen's Diamond Jubilee with her jubilant subjects, the Olympiad hosts with guests from around the world, the Paralympic enabled have all served to unite the disparate. Nearer home, the weekend's celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Borough presented events encouraging its constituents to move closer to each other.

This week-end began on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September with a concert at the Racecourse. Its title 'Epsom in Harmony' neatly summed up the nature of the concert and many local musicians, a silver band and six choirs got together to entertain an audience of over 300 in the Duchess Stand. It was considered by the organising committee to be a tremendous success.

Guests of Honour were our MP, Chris Grayling and his wife Sue. The MC, Roger Mowbray paid tribute to Bill Henderson who had been the driving force behind the Festival before his sad death only two weeks before. The programme began with the Epsom and Ewell Silver Band playing the very fitting 'Jubilee Overture' by Philip Sparke. Under its conductor Jack Smith it was to play a significant part in the concert acting as a musical link between each choir's turn on stage.

The wide variety of choirs and musical styles which followed included:

Epsom Choral Society under conductor Robin Kimber.

Recently-formed Soundbytes under its conductor Hazel Hannam.

Next were the Downsmen, the stage-name for the North Surrey Barbershop Harmony Club conducted by Lisa Robathan.

The second half began with Sponsalia Chamber Choir under conductor Beresford Bell, well-rehearsed after their recent visit to Watermael-Boitsfort. As its name implies the choir specialises in music for weddings.

Then followed Ewell Ladies with their conductor Margaret Harrington.

Last on stage was Epsom Male Voice Choir under director Neil Mackay, with characteristic mellifluous tones until a sudden translation to Cardiff Arms Park for 'Gwahoddiad' provided a climactic finale.

Afterwards an appreciative Mayor Long spoke of her charities which the concert was supporting, before the audience joined choir and silver band under conductor Jack Smith in a rousing Land of Hope and Glory and the National Anthem.

A service at Epsom's parish church, St. Martin's, on Sunday evening brought members of churches in the Borough and their leaders together with the town's Mayor and councillors. Singers from Epsom in Harmony joined forces with St. Martin's church choir to lead the singing at the service - a final symbol of the community's closing of ranks.

Jon Pullinger, Epsom Choral Society and member of the organising committee

## **Borough 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration - 29-30 September**

We pulled out all the stops when visitors from Chantilly joined us over the Borough's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration weekend. We greeted our guests at Bourne Hall at lunchtime on Saturday, with light refreshments and flags flying either side of the entrance.

Throughout the weekend an Epsom Coaches minibus ensured we stayed together in comfort and safety even after a drink or two. Its first destination was Hook Road Arena where Rotary and the Borough Council had organised an ambitious Funday including parachutists and excellent weather. We then dispersed to the various host homes to prepare for the main event - the Anniversary Banquet at Epsom Downs Queens Stand. This was a sparkling well-attended evening with excellent food and entertainment and the 16-seater was especially welcome afterwards.

On Sunday morning Friends of Nonsuch Mansion opened their Service Wing especially early for a private viewing, including the intricate £48,000 model of Nonsuch Palace. We concluded that even if the real thing could be rebuilt today for a mere £10m with Lottery Funding, its design would again prove far too expensive to maintain!



At Sunday brunch lots of members took the opportunity to meet our guests. Thanks to Anne and Clive Richardson and others, the buffet was scrumptious and plentiful, a serious challenge for people like me who don't know when to stop. Chez Richardson was supplemented with a tent in the garden and more flags and bunting.



Finally up to the race meeting on Epsom Downs where the Racecourse generously provided hospitality and arranged for our Guests to present the prizes after the Chantilly race.



Then straight back to their car and back through the tunnel if they were to have any chance of arriving back in Chantilly before midnight! Anne Peck's thanks are reproduced below, I know these thanks are well deserved by a team "too large to mention individually" and we thank our visitors for making the trip.

Brian Angus (Transport Manager)

“ Dear All,

I just want to thank you very warmly for the incredible welcome we got in Epsom. The whole experience was very friendly, interesting and on top of that, we had fun. A good show of team work!

The gala dinner was very nice and full of cultural information for me. The visit of Nonsuch mansion was marvellous and brunch at Anne's was a plunge in the good, friendly, pretty England I love. I found Epsom and its variety of houses and trees beautiful too. We were very well hosted at the races as well. Everything was so well organised and fun.

I will write special thanks to Susan with whom it was a real pleasure to stay!  
I look forward to see some of you at the Christmas market and welcome whoever would like to stay in our home.

Love to you all, Anne “

## News from **Vivre à Chantilly** September/October 2012

### **L'évolution urbaine de Chantilly**

**Vous avez donné votre avis lors de l'enquête publique...  
...nous vous apportons des réponses**

Last year in June Chantilly Council decided to move on their local urban plan, following public consultation in April and May. Two areas were identified: Rue Victor Hugo near the station and the intersection of Chartres Avenue and General Leclerc Avenue in Bois Saint Denis. The intention is to build social and affordable housing, offices and business premises and a crèche. These are 2 major projects which will combat the fall in population, in evidence since 1990, the need for affordable housing and develop economic activity. There is more information at [www.ville-chantilly.fr](http://www.ville-chantilly.fr) but for now we are just going to look at the plan for the Bois St Denis. There is concern about how this will affect the race horses and their access to the training grounds. There are training stables in the North and East of Bois St. Denis.





It is for this reason that the project has been situated in the west of Bois St. Denis, at the opposite end to the stables, which are predominantly in the east. The increase in traffic which the project will generate will be in the west and therefore will not impact the movement of the horses which are very important to the economy of Chantilly.

### "Journées du Patrimoine"

On the 15 and 16 September Chantilly, along with the rest of France, put in place a large number of visits, exhibitions and events based on the theme of hidden heritage.

A highlight is the cine concert, which as its name suggests is a film accompanied by musicians. The subject matter of the film is 100 years of cinematic news dating from 1911. It includes such news items as the theft of the rose diamond from the chateau, the inauguration of the statue of Marechal Joffre with the man himself present (covered in a previous newsletter, the Marshall spent time in Chantilly during the war). Music for the evening includes work by Mozart, Schubert, Offenbach, Charles Trenet and Ennio Morricone.



Other free events over the weekend include:



- Team Rally Game to discover the secret of the Princes of Chantilly with secret documents, clues and coded messages hidden around the town.
- Visit the council archives showing important documents of historic events.
- Opening of the race course stables.
- Visit the Bourillon Cemetery.
- Opening of the Pharmacy of the Princes of Conde.
- Visit the statue of Diana, the ice house and the Chapel of the Holy Cross at the edge of the Forest of Chantilly.
- Lacemaking demonstrations at the Lace Museum.
- A day dedicated to the secrets of the Princes, (builders of the Chateau and the Great Stables) to whom the town owes a debt for many other treasures - the Pavillon du Manse and kitchen and vegetable gardens (shown above).

**Du haut au très haut débit...**

**...la fibre optique à Chantilly en 2015 !**

- As the title suggests high speed fibre optic broadband will arrive in Chantilly around 2015, with Orange as the provider. In the Oise District Beauvais and Creil will get it in 2013 and Compiègne in 2014.

**La cloche a sonné.... c'est la rentrée !**

The start of the school year is a big event in France, all schools going back on 4 September. There are 847 pupils of currently in nursery and primary schools in the town. The town is responsible for the upkeep of the 5 nursery and 3 primary schools. Indeed the Nursery School Bois St. Denis will be extensively modernised, painting, new flooring, windows, insulation, reception area for families, disability access, 2 x 30 bed dormitories, multimedia library, motivity room and a covered outdoor playing area for inclement weather!

The town also offers after school activities in the evenings and Wednesday afternoon, in cycles of 6/7 weeks at a time. It has a specific class for autistic children and one for those who are struggling with the school system. For working parents there is child care from 7.30 in the morning to 7.30 in the evening. Also during the school holidays there is leisure club every day, which children can attend. Open to children from the age of 3 to 12, 170 did during the last summer holidays. The club will be open for the first time this Christmas offering leisure activities and games.

Alison Chatterton, Committee member

### **Soirée Française - 16 October**

These evenings continue to be very popular with our members. Our latest **Soirée** included the solving of a crossword and the reading of an article discovering more about the new "First Girlfriend of France", Valerie Trierweiler, partner to Françoise Hollande. We also read a very moving prayer by Mere Teresa.

The next meeting will be on Monday 14 January 2013. All members are welcome to come, no matter what level of French you possess. You can practice your French conversation in friendly surroundings with a few canapés and a little wine to create a French ambience. As usual there will be a small charge of £3 to cover the cost of wine and nibbles.



If you would like to join us please ring Anne on 01372723698 or email [anne@epsomtwinning.com](mailto:anne@epsomtwinning.com)

## Next Members' Dinner - 20 November



Our next Twinning Association Dinner will be held on Tuesday 20th November at the Chalk Lane Hotel at 7pm. I will be circulating details of the menu to all members shortly.

Meanwhile please contact Anne Richardson on 01372 723698 or by email at [anne@epsomtwinning.com](mailto:anne@epsomtwinning.com) to reserve a place by Thursday 15th November.

Also please let me know if you would like a vegetarian option, or have any dietary issues.

Anne Richardson, Membership Secretary

## Christmas Market at Chantilly 8-9 December

As most members will know Christmas Markets are a common and popular sight across the continent - for example the Christmas Market at Cologne is famous. These markets are more of a festival, with a wide variety of products and entertainment on offer. Our twin town of Chantilly is no exception and the Christmas market there is a wonderful occasion. The event is housed in a series of interconnected marquees between the racecourse and the Mairie. It is full of a wide variety of local and regional produce, attracting a wide range of visitors. Chantilly is beautifully decorated for Christmas with a huge Christmas tree in the Main Square and Christmas lights spanning the main streets.

The Chantilly Council kindly invited their twin towns to have stalls at the Christmas Market, and our French hosts make us most welcome. A very friendly atmosphere exists at the market between the stall holders and visitors. A special alcove is set aside for Chantilly's twin towns, Epsom and Ewell, Uberlingen (Germany) and Watermael-Boitsfort (Belgium). The French are very enthusiastic about twinning and the Mairie arranges a reception on Saturday evening to enable us all to meet and make contact with local people.

On the Epsom stall, we like to sell products which reflect Christmas in England; mince pies, Christmas cake, Christmas puddings, Christmas crackers, etc. Even English cheese sells well because our Stilton and Wensleydale are not available in France. If you are able to donate some typical English products, your contribution will be gratefully received, thank you in advance.

If you have the opportunity to visit the Christmas Market in Chantilly you will not be disappointed. A knowledge of French is not essential; just a willingness to enjoy yourself. This is not just a committee event, so if you would like to be involved, please contact Diana, our Liaison Officer, or any Committee member.

Peter Hardy, Committee member

<b>Calendar of Future Events</b>	
2012	
Tuesday 20 November	Members' dinner at the Chalk Lane Hotel
Sat 8 - Sunday 9 December	Christmas Market in Chantilly
Friday 14 December	Epsom College visit to Chantilly
2013	
Monday 14 January 2013	Soiree française - venue tbc
Tuesday 29 January 2013	Committee meeting - venue tbc
Tuesday 12 February 2013	Members' dinner - venue tbc
Friday 1 March	Women's World Day of Prayer at St Martin's Church
March	Return school visit to Epsom
Spring 2013	Fundraising Quiznight - tbc
Spring 2013	Postponed Coach trip to Chantilly
Saturday 1 June	Derby Day on Epsom Downs

### **Committee for 2012/13**

Cllr Clive Woodbridge - Chairman	0208 3932853
Mr Brian Vandervilt - Treasurer	0208 3958996
Mrs Margaret Nightingale - Secretary/ Newsletter Editor	01372 209704
Mrs Anne Richardson - Membership Secretary	01372 723698
Mrs Diana Deavin - Vice-Chair/Liaison Officer	01372 727382
Mrs Betty Emery	01372 725027
Mr Brian Angus	0208 3931749
Mr Bob Ellison - Publicity Officer	01372 821000
Mrs Alison Chatterton	01372 811099
Mr Cyril Frazer	0208 3933628
Cllr Judith Glover	0208 3307686
Mr Peter Hardy	01372 721148
Mrs Susan Serrano	01372727588
Mr Ron Thorley	01372 727592

### **Representatives of Local Groups supporting Twinning**

Mr Terry Maggs - Epsom Rotary  
 Mr Colin Peel - Epsom Rotary  
 Mrs Jill Preiss - Epsom Choral Society  
 Mr Frank Warren - Epsom Model Railway Club  
 Ms Jane Foxon - Sponsalia Chamber Choir