



Twinned with Chantilly, France

Spring Newsletter 2012 (no 44)

Chairman's report

Town-Twinning is alive and well!

These have been a busy few months for those engaged in twinning. A hugely successful trip to Chantilly in December for the Xmas market has been followed up by participation in various events with more to come.

We manned a stall at the Herald of Spring in Bourne Hall over two days and made various useful contacts, including a cycling club which is interested in finding a partner club in Chantilly. Using our connections there we hope to be able to help them out.

Margaret, Diana and I also attended a volunteers evening at the Town Hall which was an enjoyable experience and a chance to meet other organisations in the area. Then we held the Cheese and Wine evening, again at the Town Hall, which was a chance to catch up with friends old and new. Meanwhile Anne has been busy organising the Soirées Française, which are proving to be very popular with those who want to practice their French in a relaxed environment. Details of more evenings coming up are in this newsletter.

Committee members are actively involved in other events with a twinning connection. This includes the Model Railway Exhibition at Nescot later this month and the Choral Festival in Watermael-Boitsfort in Belgium. Cllr. Judith Glover is also planning a Coach trip to Chantilly for members of Cuddington RA, but Town-Twinning members are free to join in if they would like to.

Looking ahead we hope to be able to welcome a delegation from Chantilly at some stage for the celebrations taking place to mark the Borough's 75th anniversary, as well as the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, probably in late September. Hopefully we will have more news of that in our next newsletter.

Clive Woodbridge, Committee Chair

Christmas Market

Our Chairman, Councillor Clive Woodbridge, his wife Mary and nine Twinning Association members headed to Chantilly to man the Epsom stall at the annual Christmas Market on 10th- 11th December 2011. We had been well warned that the weather could be extremely cold, especially as we would be in a marquee outside the Town Hall. However the weather was kind and the thermal underwear was somewhat redundant! The stall was set up on the Friday evening ready for a prompt start on Saturday morning. As last year we were placed alongside the Belgian and German towns which are also twinned with Chantilly, and a jovial atmosphere pervaded the whole event.



The Epsom stall manned by Clive and Anne Richardson and Carol Thorley

We took the usual stocks of Christmas puddings and mince pies which sold very quickly as a faithful clientele has been built up over the years. For the first time, as a trial, we took jars of home-made English breakfast marmalade which sold steadily over the weekend. Our Christmas crackers always prove popular, with some families coming especially to visit our stall as each child gets a gift of a cracker!

On the Saturday evening the representatives from the three twinning associations were entertained to a lovely buffet at the Mairie where there was ample opportunity for chatting with a wide variety of people. As there were eleven of us representing Epsom, it meant that the job of manning the stall was not too onerous, with plenty of time to do some sightseeing, and also Christmas shopping at the wide variety of stalls on offer, together with a check on the animals in the excellent Nativity display.

On the Sunday morning several of our number attended the English Anglican church and were delighted to find it was the day of the children's Nativity Service. The market was equally well-attended on the Sunday and the day passed very quickly.



The farm area outside the entrance to the Christmas market marquees

We felt well justified in celebrating with a lovely meal in the evening at our hotel prior to our journey home on the Monday morning. The whole experience was most enjoyable and is highly recommended.

Carol & Ron Thorley, Founder members

A visit to Lille

My friend Andrew is a confirmed Francophile and my command of French is adequate to cope with the daily necessities of life in that country. We both enjoy visits to France, and the French way of life. Saturday 4th February was an opportunity to visit. Being a railway enthusiast, Andrew wanted to visit an exhibition of model railways in Lille, and invited three friends and myself to join him by car via the Channel Tunnel. We caught the Métro from the Place des Postes to Gambetta near the exhibition and the city centre. The Métro was completely automatic, from purchase of tickets to driverless trains. However woe-betide anyone taking advantage by avoiding the fare or misbehaving on the railway.

In addition to the quality of exhibits we were impressed by the warmth of our welcome at the exhibition held in a large sports hall. That the Club organising the event was sponsored by the local authority was evident in the admission charge (£3.50). In this respect French voluntary organisations appear to be at an advantage to those in the UK. The French are particularly generous with both hospitality and expenses, for example if an organisation is affiliated to the local authority, hire of premises is either nominal or free.

Interesting as I found the exhibition, a short tour of Lille grabbed my enthusiasm and I set off to walk into the Grande Place. There was no evidence of grit on pavements frozen with overnight snow, and with temperatures of -6C it was very dangerous underfoot. However it was a very pleasant walk into the city centre past the Musée des Beaux Arts. I found my way to the Tourist Office where la vendeuse helped me to buy presents for my family and French class. Returning to the exhibition, warm "pain au chocolat" for my companions was much appreciated on such a cold day.

My thanks to Andrew for organising a wonderful day in France despite the cold weather. My limited experience from this day in Lille (and other similar visits to France) re-awakened the apparent difference in attitude between local authorities in France and England. It also indicates the added pleasure from even a limited understanding of French and the French way of life. I believe that through twinning we are able to appreciate more of French life and culture and that we are richer for it.

Peter Hardy, Committee member

Members' Dinners

Our Christmas dinner was held at the Chalk Lane Hotel, where we were made very welcome with French music playing and a splendid menu from their French chef to tempt our taste buds. We were able to welcome new members and to meet many old friends.



Twinning members enjoying our Christmas dinner at the Chalk Lane hotel

As you can see a good time was had by all! We were able to share news of events in Chantilly and plan for future meetings. Our next Dinner will be announced soon. All members and friends are welcome to these meals. If you have not yet attended one of our dinners, please do join us. You will be sure of a warm welcome. If you have a favourite restaurant that you would like us to visit please let me know.

Anne Richardson, Membership Secretary

Les Soirées françaises

The Soirées françaises continue to be popular with a regular group of members practicing their French-speaking in members' houses. The most recent event included Diana, Margaret and Peter giving a short play-reading which highlighted the joys of having a teenage girl in the family, which was very much enjoyed. Thank you.

Our next event will be at Brian Atkinson's house, 3 Links Road, Epsom, on 1st May at 7.30pm, when we will hear about the stories of Petit Nicholas, try our hand at a crossword, and discuss news articles. Please bring along any cuttings that interest you to discuss. As usual there will be a small charge of £3 to cover the cost of wine and nibbles. Please let Brian know if you intend to come by phoning 01372 723767 or email brian.marion@btinternet.com

On 10th July our Soiree will take the form of a wine tasting at Madan Cottage, Avenue Road, Epsom. Details will follow.

If you would like to host a Soiree, or suggest a topic or theme for an evening please let me know at anne.richardson@btinternet.com

Merci

Anne Richardson, Membership secretary

Herald of Spring 2012

We set up an excellent display at the Herald of Spring on the weekend of 3rd-4th March, and manned it throughout the weekend. It was a successful event for us, with over a hundred people visiting the stall to take part in the competition, or to take leaflets about the Association or for the Cheese and Wine evening. We have increased awareness of the Association which is all important (and actually written into our constitution).

Three people joined directly and 23 people want to be sent updates of future events. Three groups expressed an interest in twinning, particularly the cycle club who are keen to have a weekend ride with French colleagues.

The winners of the draw were Steven Dow - Champagne, Jackie Dodd - wine and D Croft - water. Well done all of you with special mention to Clive Richardson for providing the computer display.

Brian Angus

Also many thanks to Brian for setting up and taking down the stall, and creating the competition.

Cheese & Wine Party

Our Cheese & Wine party was held again in the Atrium at the Town Hall on 15 March to celebrate our association with our twin town and offered an opportunity to meet with others interested in France. Twenty-five guests attended and we have three prospective new members as a result.

The team had decorated the Atrium with flags and banners of red and blue, and there were displays about Chantilly town and its Christmas market. An inviting and varied table of French bread and cheeses, an excellent bar offering French wines and juices, and also an attractive raffle which raised some extra funds for the cause. All this created a friendly atmosphere where guests mingled, enjoying an informal evening in good company!

Our Chairman, Clive Woodbridge gave a short talk making everyone welcome and thanking members for their support. A big thank you to everyone who contributed to a most successful evening: to Brian and Peter for decorating the hall, to Alison, Anne and Diana for serving on the cheese table, to Richard for keeping the wine flowing, and to Ann for looking after the raffle.

Margaret Nightingale, Secretary

Sponsalia Chamber Choir

Following the success of the first Choral Festival in Chantilly in May 2010, the twinning committee in Watermael-Boitsfort, nr Brussels, is organising the second **Choral Festival** with choirs from five twinned towns under the leadership of Monsieur Thierry Fievet, to be held in Watermael-Boitsfort, Belgium Friday 11 - Sunday 13 May 2012.

We are delighted that Sponsalia Chamber Choir managed by Jane Foxon and conducted by Beresford Bell will once again be taking part, representing Epsom in this celebratory year for the Borough. Sponsalia includes several members of the Epsom Choral Society, and others who are also members of Epsom's Twinning Association. Sponsalia will be singing in two concerts with choirs from our own twinned town Chantilly, with Überlingen in Germany, Budapest in Hungary, and two resident choirs in Watermael-Boitsfort.

Three concerts are planned over the weekend, Friday evening the host choir, and a children's choir will be singing. The main visiting choirs will perform on Saturday evening at the Eglise Notre Dame du Perpétuel Secours and the third, a 'café chantant' on Sunday afternoon at the Parc Tournay-Solvay. Each concert will include a programme of music of each choir's own choice. The 18 singers in Sponsalia will be performing a selection of choral music of English origin covering 300 years from Purcell to Lauridsen. The Festival will finish with a performance of three communal songs by all the five choirs together.

We are very grateful to all in Sponsalia for making this commitment, and for all the hard work involved in the preparation for the concerts. Do visit the Sponsalia website to read more about the choir, www.sponsalia.co.uk

Jane Foxon, Chair, Sponsalia Chamber Choir

Celebratory events planned for 2012

There are a number of events planned to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the 2012 Games, and the 75th anniversary of the Borough. Details can be found on the Council website www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/2012

One of the highlights will be the Epsom & Ewell Round the Borough Walk, on Saturday 12th May, which challenges residents of Epsom & Ewell to a 20-mile walk around some of the most beautiful open spaces in the Borough, and which has been granted the Inspire Mark by the London 2012 Inspire programme. The walk joins up the stunning open spaces of Epsom & Walton Downs, Epsom Common Local Nature Reserve, Nonsuch Park, the Hogsmill Local Nature Reserve, and Horton Country Park Local Nature Reserve. The walk is estimated to take around six to nine hours, depending on speed and length of breaks, and anyone interested in should register via the Council website or by requesting a paper copy of the registration form from the Leisure Developments Team at the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Town Hall. Afterwards, legacy maps will be available to download to enable everyone to walk all or part of the route.

The Queen starts her Diamond Jubilee celebrations at the Derby on June 2nd, and the Lighting of the Jubilee Beacon will take place on June 4th on Epsom Downs. On Saturday 23rd June there will be a Celebration Parade in Epsom Town Centre, and on Saturday 8th and 9th September there will be a Heritage Weekend when various historic buildings in Epsom and Ewell will be open to the public, including the Town Hall. The programme will reach a conclusion around the last weekend in September. A number of the Borough's choirs will take part in the Combined Choirs Event - Epsom in Harmony - at Epsom Downs Racecourse on Friday 28th September. There will be a 75th Anniversary Borough Fun Day in partnership with the Rotary Clubs of Epsom & Ewell at the Hook Road Arena on Saturday 29th; and on Sunday 30th September there will be a race meeting on Epsom Downs at which it is hoped both Chantilly and Epsom Races will be run. There will then be the 75th Anniversary Civic Service of Thanksgiving at St Martin's Church at 6.30pm on that same Sunday.

Clive Woodbridge, Chair

Residents' coach trip to Chantilly 8-9 December

The Residents Associations of Cuddington and Ewell Court are currently costing a coach trip for the weekend of the Christmas Market, leaving Saturday morning and returning Sunday evening. Anyone interested should contact Councillor Judith Glover at JGlover@epsom-ewell.gov.uk or 0208 3307686. We will make a list of those interested in coming along and contact them when we have confirmed prices.

Councillor Judith Glover

Calendar of Future Events	
2012	
Sat 28-Sun 29 April	Model Railway exhibition at Nescot
Tuesday 1 st May	Soiree Française at Brian Atkinson's house
Thursday 3 May	Committee Meeting at the Town Hall
Sat 12 May	Round Borough Walk
Sat 12 - Sun 13 May	Watermael Choral Festival
Sat 2 nd June	Derby Day on Epsom Downs
Sunday 3 rd June	Jubilee Celebration Lunch Day
Monday 4 th June	Lighting of Jubilee Beacon on Epsom Downs
Saturday 23 June	Armed Forces Day parade
Thursday 28 June	Committee Meeting at the Town Hall
Tuesday 10 th July	Wine Tasting at Madan Cottage
Sat 8 - Sun 9 September	Heritage Weekend
Friday 28 September	Epsom Combined Choirs Festival
Saturday 29 September	75th Anniversary of the Borough - Civic Dinner
Sunday 30 September	Afternoon racing at the Grandstand
Sunday 30 September	Civic Service 6.30pm after afternoon racing
Sat 8 - Sunday 9 December	Christmas Market in Chantilly Residents' coach trip to Chantilly

Committee for 2011/12

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 - Liaison Officer	01372 727382
Mrs Betty Emery	01372 725027
Mr Brian Angus	0208 3931749
Mrs Alison Chatterton	01372 811099
Mr Cyril Frazer	0208 3933628
Cllr Judith Glover	0208 3307686
Mr Peter Hardy	01372 721148
Mr Ron Thorley	01372 727592
Mrs Susan Serrano	01372727588

Representatives of Local Groups supporting Twinning

Mr Geoffrey Stone - Epsom Civic Society
 Mr Bill Henderson - Epsom Male Voice Choir
 Mr Terry Maggs - Epsom Rotary
 Mr Cyril Frazer - Epsom Rotary
 Mrs Jill Preiss - Epsom Choral Society
 Mr Frank Warren - Epsom Model Railway Club
 Ms Jane Foxon - Sponsalia Chamber Choir