



AUGUST NEWSLETTER



Report from our Twinning Weekend

Allez Les Bleus!

This year our French guests arrived on the evening of Thursday 12th July. As on other occasions we met them at Oak Tree Farm, the home of Chrissy and Mike Odams. Although they were unable to be there, Chrissy's mother Carol kindly stood in for them. Their arrival was rather later than expected so instead of a welcome drink at the farm we all took our French friends home for refreshments and light meals.

On Friday morning, those of us who had families staying with us were up bright and early since both Wortham Primary School and Hartismere High were hosting the French students. They all had an interesting time and Hugo, eight years old, in honour of the French National Holiday, sang La Marseillaise in front of the whole school at Wortham!



The adults meanwhile went off to St. George's Distillery in East Harling. This proved to be an informative trip in an extremely impressive building. We were divided into two groups and given a detailed description of the distilling process and afterwards given a taste of whiskies. Interestingly, once a drop of water was added from a pipette the aroma and taste were transformed. After the tour we were treated to a buffet lunch which was excellent. The Distillery also has a lovely shop. Since the French were flying home I'm not sure they were able to buy much; a pity.

After the morning at East Harling families went their separate ways. Some walked along the river, others went shopping and some may even have had a rest.

In the evening we all descended on the home of David and Andrea Key in Palgrave for a Bring and Share supper. The setting was beautiful with a garden which overlooked the woodland leading down to the Waveney. A table tennis table had been set up in a bar and Jenga on the lawn amidst gazebos where drinks and supper were arranged.



The weather was glorious as it was all weekend and a thoroughly good evening was had by all. It was wonderful to listen to the mix of French and English being spoken, cementing bonds of friendship. (I have to add a personal thanks to David and Andrea who allowed me access to their television to watch the final stages of an overlong men's semi-final at Wimbledon.)



On Saturday the entertainments continued with a journey to Oulton Broad where we embarked on a River Cruiser to take us up the River Waveney. The sun continued to shine, and we were able to enjoy not only the fascinating views of gardens sloping down to the Broad but also views across the wide Waveney valley. We went as far as Burgh St. Peter where there is a small marina and then returned for a picnic in Nicholas Everett Park by the water. Some of us reached the dizzy heights of French style picnics with tables, table cloths and elegant glasses. Others of us followed the English style with rugs on the ground.

Afterwards as on Friday, families went their different ways, some to visit Lowestoft South Beach and others shopping in Southwold. In the evening we were all together again at Wortham Village Hall where we enjoyed a welcome drink and canapés before having a tasty supper presented by Ma Hubbard and her wonderful team. The young people enjoyed a Treasure Hunt and the recreational facilities on the Common.



Those of us who stayed in the Hall were entertained by a great band called Ludham Pikes. Vicky Tustian is a member of the band, playing fiddle and singing, while Tim is in charge of the sound. Excellent to have members of the Twinning who are so talented. There are four members of the band and their music even encouraged people to dance and at some point, attempt a Breton style dance which we had been taught on a previous occasion by the band Bof. A bonus was that one band member spoke fluent French which was lovely for our guests.

Sunday morning called for a committee meeting to be held at Easter Barn, Mellis. While this was happening, some people may have been having a lie in or a rest while others went to Wortham Tennis Club to enjoy the annual Wimbledon Breakfast and even try their hands at the game themselves!

In the late morning and afternoon there was a choice of activities. Pam had kindly offered guests the temptation of making Strawberry Shortbread at her home in Botesdale and the pictures of said shortbread looked delicious. Anybody with much energy left went to Thetford Forest for an hour's cycle ride. Some were more adventurous than others with their choice of route and the cycling was enjoyed by all. This was followed by another picnic...in the shade I hasten to add.



The late afternoon of course proved to be the icing on the cake for the French, with the Football World Cup Final. A large number of Les Français went to The Railway Tavern, Mellis for the match with their hosts and the pub was transformed with their flags, boas and singing. Frank, the landlord enjoyed the occasion too, and of course the noise when the French won was understandably enormous.

After this major excitement events took a more elegant turn with pre-dinner drinks at Batteley's Cottage, the home of Linda and Andy. Later suppers had been arranged at various hosts' homes, which gave a variety of families a chance to get together. Nick and I and our guests enjoyed the wonderful piano playing of Mathieu emanating from the sitting room as we sat in the garden throughout the evening. Such a talented young man.



Monday morning arrived, and we said farewell to our friends at Oak Tree Farm as they boarded the coach for Stansted. All in all, we had a wonderful weekend and many thanks must go to the Twinning Committee and the Sub-committee who organised the outings and the order of events, and not forgetting a great thank you to all of you who hosted, and to all those who joined in events.

Frances Beasley.

MORE PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE TWINNING VISIT



The visit to St Georges Distillery, including a guided tour, lunch, a walk by the river and a shopping opportunity.



Bring and Share at David and Andrea Key's, Palgrave



Pam Gurhy's cookery demonstration making strawberry shortcakes in Botesdale



Children playing at Battelys Cottage

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Autumn and Christmas seem a long way off but it is often a very busy time so please make a note of the following dates for your diary:

FRIDAY 16TH NOVEMBER

Mike Bowen will provide 'Did you Jive in 55' – a **musical presentation and singalong** of many rock'n'pop No.1 hits from 1955 to 1963, on Friday 16th November at 7.30pm at Wortham Village Hall. This is a Twinning fundraising event.

SUNDAY 1ST DECEMBER

Christmas Market Hédé. Every year Hédé Jumelage have a Christmas Market to raise funds for their events (including hosting us). We have over the past few years been successful in raising funds for our own activities by selling produce at this market. We usually have a number of members going for the weekend. This is another opportunity to be hosted and entertained by our French hosts as well as working to help set up the market and sell on our stall.

We are always keen to encourage members to volunteer to go to Hédé to help with this. If you are interested in going for this please let us know. If you are involved in taking a car to transport the goods to sell there is a subsidy from our funds to help pay for the ferry crossing. Don't be shy – it's a great weekend.

DECEMBER CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

This year Mike and Chrissy Odams will be running a casino evening for our Christmas Social. Full details will be provided nearer the time but a provisional date (to be confirmed) is Friday 14th December.

MAY 29TH – JUNE 2ND 2019 VISIT TO HÉDÉ

We have agreed that our visit to Hédé next year will take place during the half term week going out on Wednesday and returning on Sunday to ensure any children coming with us are back for the new school half term. Since flights will be popular during this week we will be investigating the best way to travel and will let you have more details in due course.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

It was another highly successful visit by our French Friends and on this occasion, they were joined, at our invitation, by two of their German Twinning partners. As you may recall we are hoping to forge informal links with Badbergen for those who may be interested.

As always, the weekend of the visits is a very busy one with most of us feeling in need of a quieter day or two afterwards! However, it was good to see some of our newer members participating wholeheartedly, including Andrea and David Key for bravely offering to host the bring and share evening as part of their first experience of Wortham Twinning – many thanks to them.

Of course, the weekend couldn't take place without the hard work of members who get involved in planning and organising the various events that take place. A sub committee led by our secretary Judith did a wonderful job so my thanks to them all and especially to Judith.

We had a sizeable group of younger French visitors (17 in all) who thoroughly enjoyed the visit. It was a shame we didn't have more English children joining in but those who did I know enjoyed making friends and trying out their language skills.

I know Wortham Primary School, who hosted a day at school for our younger French visitors, are working on boosting the learning of French and I am hoping to contact them to try and encourage more local families to join us next year. If you know of any who might be interested please let me know.

I hope you enjoy the remaining summer and autumn and hope to see you in November when we start our winter programme of activities.

Linda