

WHITCHURCH & GORING HEATH TWINNING ASSOCIATION



Chairman's Report 2009

Trip to La Bouille

Over the early May bank holiday week-end, a group of 25 from Whitchurch and Goring Heath went over to La Bouille for a week-end of fine food and wine and an outing taking in two very different local places of interest. As it was the 30th anniversary year of the Twinning, this was a particularly momentous trip.

Reception at the Mairie

Upon our arrival, early Saturday evening, we attended a reception at the Mairie, given by the mayor of La Bouille and La Presidente of the La Bouille Twinning. Speeches marking the 30th anniversary were given and gifts were exchanged. The French gave us a painting of La Bouille which will be displayed in a suitable location for all to admire. Our gift to the French was a clock with an inscription commemorating the 30th anniversary. The French announced the launch of their Twinning website www.labouillejumelage.com, which is well worth a visit. Following the reception, we sat down to a magnificent meal.

Chateau de Beaufresnil

On Sunday we set off to visit two attractions in Normandy. Our first stop was the chateau de Beaufresnil, a Louis XIII baroque style chateau built from 1633 to 1640. The owners look after the place themselves and the lady of the house gave us a guided tour. The chateau houses a number of ancient book bindings which are intricately decorated in gold. We took a picnic in the magnificent grounds of the chateau and enjoyed the warm sunny weather that blessed the entire week-end.

Haras du Pin

Next stop on the itinerary was Haras du Pin in Orne which is one of the stud farms comprising the French National stud. The stud was founded to provide horses for the many wars that France was involved in. Now its purpose is to maintain the purity of the breeds. There are only stallions at the stud, and mares visit to be artificially inseminated. We were given a tour of the stables and were able to see the stallions up close. They are kept inside apart from short periods of exercise, as they would fight if put together in a field.

The evening was spent dining with our host families.

Art Gallery

On Monday morning we were free to wander around La Bouille – a relaxing respite from the hectic activities of the previous two days. We were able to visit an exhibition of paintings by well-respected artists and the organiser explained about the exhibition and the paintings.

After lunch it was time to set off back to Whitchurch and bid a fond farewell to our French friends.

30th Anniversary Return Visit

As it was the 30th anniversary year, Martine visited us with a small group in August. We arranged an enjoyable evening at the Ferry Boat who provided a tasty meal for us. On the Sunday, the French joined in with our Boules event.

Fund Raising

Twinning stalls were mounted at Whitchurch Hill and Whitchurch Fetes. The generous gifts of cakes and savouries by our supporters ensured association funds were topped up. The Boules Event took place while the French were here and they took part enthusiastically in our English version of the game.