**The Chair's Statement 2013**

The highlight of the year was undoubtedly the visit by a good sized party from Hédé. It seems hard to remember now, but we were worried that our guests may suffer from heat stroke. In a year that was notable for it's poor weather the sun came out just before they got here and went back in when they left. In such circumstances it was hard to get it wrong.

A grand day out in Bury was enjoyed by all. Guided tours of the town, the brewery and the theatre were a success and the younger members enjoyed the ten pin bowling. An excellent picnic lunch in the cool of The Malthouse Project provided a respite from the heat.

On Sunday there was a variety of things to do. Nick Smith and friends generously took some guests on a vintage car run to Laxfield. I went with a party that ended up at the plant fair at Helmingham Hall. Where others went I know not, but I do know that when we met up again that evening there was nothing but praise from our guests for another great day.

The Gala evening meal prepared by our own Charles and Chris Appleton was another triumph. Entertainment was from a talented young magician Ollie Ward. There was even an attempt by Charles to upstage the lad with a magic cake at the end of the evening.

Hard work from the members resulted in a good result from the Christmas Markets in both Hédé and Wortham. I think we have the formula right now for maximising sales at both venues. As long as we can rely on the generosity of our jam makers, Mike and Chris Odams, and the mistletoe gatherers of Hédé we should continue to make it viable.

Efforts continue to find new ways of cultural exchange with our Twins. Nick Beasley has made a number of visits to Hédé which have resulted in an exhibition in the restaurant in Hédé market square. Art works by three of our members is on show along with local member's contributions. This has been very well received. So much so that there is now a plan to move on to Tenteniac before returning for exhibition in the Wortham Tea Shop.

The year has ended on a high note with a highly successful Race Night at the village hall last week. Good fun was had by all. Figures were not in at time of going to press but I am confident that a good sum has been added to the bank account.

Finally for the second time I am announcing my retirement from the chair at the AGM this year. Many thanks for all your support over the years. Especially Judi and Linda who as our secretaries have of course done all the work.

Chris Grocott