

## Wortham and Burgate Twinning Association

### Chairman's report January 2016

First of all, I would like to thank all members of the Association for their support in numerous ways throughout 2015 and particularly the members of the committee who have worked hard to further our aims and provide a programme of activities for us all to enjoy.

#### *Review of the year.*

These items have all been described in the excellent newsletters which have been produced by **Linda Simpson**, but I will briefly mention them to refresh our memories:

March. Film night held at Easter Barn which was much enjoyed, the film being 'Populaire' set in the 1950's with English subtitles.

April. The visit to Hédé for 28 members, thoroughly enjoyed by all despite being shortened by the industrial action of the French air-traffic controllers.

June. Summer garden party at Battelys Cottage, courtesy of **Linda and Andy Simpson**, supported by the Gislingham Silver Band.

September. French cookery demonstration for members by **Pam Gurhy**.

October. Murder mystery evening at the Village Hall. Encore un mystère!

December. Christmas market in Hédé, 6 members/sales personnel regally entertained.

Nearly all members and some new recruits came to the Association Christmas party held at Easter Barn, courtesy of **Frances and Nick Beasley**.

#### *Other activities arising from the twinning:*

Links between the Primary schools saw an exchange of materials between the children of Wortham and Mellis with those of Hédé and Tinténiac. On the strength of their work, Mellis Primary School has been awarded a bronze Lingua mark.

**Klaoda Lastennet** of the garden lovers group came over to stay with the Simpsons and to visit Hampton Court Gardens.

**Bernard and Marie-Claire Van Schoorisse** came over for a week's visit, staying with **Sally and Phil Tyley** and then **Frances and Nick Beasley**.

**Clementine Delambily** came over for six weeks work experience, staying with **Sue and Edward Coales**, **Frances and Nick Beasley**, **Andy and Linda Simpson**, **Chrissie and Mike Odams**.

Cyclists from the Eye twinning association en route to Pouzauges were received in Hédé one evening by members of the Hédé jumelage.

Three language/conversation groups continue to run, honing the skills of the brave. Thanks to **Lynn Clark** and **Maggie Hale** for their leadership of two of the groups.

#### *This Year's plans.*

We have a programme for this year which has been circulated and which I hope you will be able

to support. The most important feature being the visit by our French twinning partners from 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> July, please try to keep those dates available if at all possible.

In addition:

- We are still trying to match up a French choir with the Gislingham Silver Band for exchange concerts.
- We have been asked to locate a basketball club who would host a team of young teenage girls for a short visit, keen to try their sporting skills against an English team.
- There is to be a visit from this area, including at least one of our members, of a convoy of WW2 military vehicles which will pass through Hédé and stay a night in the town.
- Finally, we have received an invitation from the Town of Badbergen in Germany which is also twinned with Hédé to join in their visit to Hédé coming up this year in October and to pay a visit next year to Badbergen. The group from Badbergen who were at the market this year are keen to expand the range of our twinning with Hédé. It is not the first time I have come across a triangular arrangement like this but if there is some interest from us we could look into the possibilities.

#### *Other news:*

The Hédé jumelage committee has several new members and a new President in **David Hallifax** and a new secretary for the English link, **Nadine David**.

Our Association secretary **Linda Simpson** is standing down this year but has agreed to remain on the committee. I am sure you would want to join me in thanking her for her significant contribution to the Association which is thriving thanks to her drive and enthusiasm. **Judith Phillip** has agreed to take over the role and I am sure we will all give her our support, reading and responding to emails promptly.

#### *Chairman's personal comment.*

In the wake of the horrific events in Paris and throughout Europe this last year, it seems to me that the aims and the concept of twinning are still valid and relevant today. Had I still been in the position to lead an assembly at school, I could well have addressed the question of 'Who is my neighbour?' and talked for some time.

However the need for mutual support, empathy and understanding for our near neighbours in Europe is now perhaps as important as it was when twinning initiatives were set up between such cities as Dresden and Coventry and between Bristol and Hanover after WW2.

I am very much aware of the positive, engaging and friendly nature which you all display in our contacts with our French twinning partners, showing I think that the spirit of the twinning ideal is still alive in the Wortham and Burgate Twinning Association.

*Nick Beasley*

*January 2016*