

20th Anniversary Edition

A message from our Chairman, David Minns



2014 was a celebration year for the Association and proved that our link with Montbazou is as strong as ever.

It also was a year tinged with sadness on hearing of the death of Beryl Guyatt. Over the years Beryl made a great contribution to the Association as Chairman from 2007 to 2010. She will be sadly missed.

The highlight of 2014 was a visit of our French friends to celebrate our twenty years of friendship with them. The programme put together for their visit was much appreciated and the feedback from Montbazou was very positive.

The Mayor, Councillor Vicky Davies, was extremely supportive in holding a Civic Reception and on that evening unveiling of our anniversary plaque. We were pleased that she was also able to attend our Anniversary Dinner on the final evening.

The Anniversary Dinner held in Hylands House was impressive. The initial drinks reception was given added drama by the fire alarm going off, resulting in everyone having to leave the building for a short while to stand outside in the rain. Nevertheless, this did not dampen spirits and the event was enjoyed immensely by all who attended.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sheila Hornsby and all the members of the social committee for their hard work in making the visit run so smoothly.

Thanks are also due to all the executive committee for their ongoing commitment in running the Association. In particular, thanks are due to Jude Ripley who, in her first year as secretary, has risen to the challenge and ensured the smooth running of things.

I would like to give special thanks to Judy Withyman and Christine Minns for putting our Newsletter together and to those who contributed the articles and photos.

Finally, we are always pleased to see your friends and contacts who show interest in our local activities and visits to France. Please encourage them to come along to our social events. They will be made very welcome.

Best wishes to you all.

Beryl Guyatt Remembered by Sue Saunders



Beryl sadly died in October 2014 after many months of illness.

She joined the Town Twinning Association over 10 years ago and quickly became a most active and respected member together with her husband Mick.

This culminated in the years 2007 – 2010 when she was Chairman of our Association.

Beryl had very high standards, great organisational skills and an immense wealth of knowledge. She was firm but never belligerent. She and Mick were warm and welcoming hosts to visitors to their home, 'Conifers', in Shenfield.

Her knowledge of foreign travel and more importantly, wine, were invaluable assets to our Association. She had many years of experience organising trips for the Brentwood Wine Appreciation Society including visits to vineyards at home and abroad.

Beryl and Mick visited Montbazon many times, often driving themselves non-stop from Brentwood. They became firm friends with many of our French members, most particularly Pierre and Christiane Gissat and their family.

Following the untimely death of her husband in 2012 Beryl continued to support the Association until her last illness overtook her.

We send our condolences to her daughter, sons and grandchildren.

Fête des Rois by Pam Richards



11th January 2014

Christmas is only just over and here we are again, Epiphany and the Fête des Rois – the Festival of the Kings. It was held at the Belli Centre, attached to South Weald church, which is a perfect venue with a large hall and excellent catering facilities.

As usual our Twinning committee had arranged a really special evening of entertainment for us with delicious food. A really tasty ragout of lamb cooked perfectly by our 'in house' chefs including Sheila Hornsby, Rosemary Smith and Monica Donegan, followed by the speciality of the evening, the Galette des Rois, also 'home made' by Twinning members. The 'fèves' concealed in the galettes were found by six lucky people who were duly crowned Kings for the evening, and fortunately all survived with their teeth intact.

The meal was followed by a very interesting quiz compiled by Judy Ripley which was enjoyed by all, but left some, including me, realising how lacking is our knowledge of the French language.

Compulsory raffle followed (always necessary to boost funds) with some excellent prizes to be won.

Our thanks go to all the committee and spouses for all their hard work and for making the evening such a success.

Antiques Evening 16th May 2014

by Monica Donegan



The Antiques evening was a new addition to our Social events programme and one that I was eagerly anticipating.

We were fortunate to have the expertise of Mark from Reeman Dansie Auctioneers of Colchester for the evening. He explained that his interest in antiques began at the very early age of around seven.

He would take old coins or other small items to a local lady who encouraged him and offered advice as to whether or not they were of any value.

Our guests had brought an assorted collection of items for him to examine and comment on. These included a framed painting, a silver jug, a sword and some unusual stones from Scotland. Mark made each piece come alive with his expertise and easy manner. He was able to date most objects and speak about their place in history.

The usual raffle and refreshments rounded off the evening and both members and guests agreed that this had been an interesting and enjoyable evening.

Summer Ramble by Sheila Hornsby

Following a successful summer ramble in 2013 ably led by Colin Miers, we decided to repeat the experience in July this year. Despite a dodgy knee, Colin once again planned a leisurely evening stroll through the countryside around his home village of Blackmore. The walk was enjoyed by all despite the rain which meant that waterproofs were very much the required attire! A short respite was enjoyed during a brief visit of the Norman church of St Laurence, where Colin told us a little of the history of the building.



Our battle with the elements was amply rewarded with an excellent ploughman's supper at Lawrie's Brasserie at the Prince Albert in the village. No ordinary ploughman's this, but an assortment of tasty morsels to satisfy our appetites on a damp 'summer' evening.

Colin has agreed to be our leader again in 2015 – he informs me that his knee has now recovered, so expect a more challenging walk next time!

Titanic: Her story from launch to loss

by Judy Ripley

On the 11th of October, Steve Lester came to the Belli Centre to narrate the story of the Titanic, still fascinating over 100 years since the tragedy happened. His keen interest in all things Titanic began when his wife bought him a book about the ship and he now has a varied collection of items of memorabilia, including a uniform of the White Star Line, which he wore for the occasion.



He began the story with information about the company and the design of the fantastic new cruise liner, taking us through the different stages of building and launch to the loss of the “unsinkable” Titanic. Members of the audience helped with the narration by reading quotations taken from newspapers, shipbuilders, surviving crew and passengers, and the enquiry held into the disaster. It became apparent that the tragedy was caused by a series of human errors, individually innocuous, but catastrophic when accumulated as they were.

After the talk, we had a fish and chip supper, and had the opportunity to chat with Steve about aspects of the story. All in all, it was an interesting and most enjoyable evening, which gave much food for thought.

Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis by Anne-Marie Ede

On the 22nd of November, members settled down at the Belli centre to watch the very popular French film " Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis (welcome to the sticks). It details a horrified



Postmaster's transfer from the Côte d'Azur to a village in the north of France. The problems he encounters are mainly concerned with the dialect and his wife, who remained in the much warmer south.

Despite employing the usual stereotypes of these two regions, this comedy was very entertaining. The misunderstandings were amusing and thanks to the English subtitles, nobody was surprised that the unfortunate Postmaster was confused. However, he finally makes friends with the locals, picks up the dialect and settles down to live happily in the village with his wife, who decides to join him in the cold north.

Many thanks to Richard Millwood from the Brentwood Cinema Arts Club for his time and the loan of the club's equipment. Our thanks also to the ladies who made the mouth-watering cakes to go with our tea.

2014 Visit of our French Friends

The Mayor's Reception



The Speeches

Exchange of Civic Gifts



Unveiling the Plaque to commemorate our
20th Anniversary



Visit to the Olympic Park and O2



ArcelorMittal Orbit Tower

*Visite
intéressante,
premier jour de
convivialité !*



Winner Takes All



At the Park

*J'ai aimé les
magnifiques
points de vue.
Le restaurant.*



Inside the Cable Car

The Cable Car and the Dome



*Je n'ai pas
aimé les
courbatures
aux mollets.*

Free Day Saturday



A day out in London



**With our coach driver, Michel,
on his final visit**



Une bonne soirée

Visit to Chatham Dockyard



Holà !

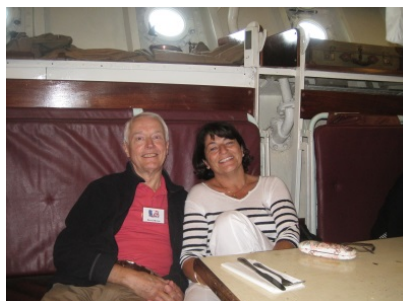
*J'ai aimé le
repas, la
corderie, la
visite du sous-
marin.*



The Submarine Ocelot



HMS Cavalier



Lunch on the Cavalier

*J'ai aimé la corderie
très intéressante,
déjeuner dans le
bateau atypique et
sympa.*



The Ropewalk

*J'aurais aimé
avoir eu plus
de temps pour
se balader
ensuite.*



Call the Midwife

HMS Gannet



Visit to Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, Chingford by Christine Minns



The day dawned wet – what a day for a picnic, which was to follow our visit to Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge.

The Hunting Lodge was built for Henry VIII in 1543 and renovated for Queen Elizabeth I in 1559 who, it is believed, used it quite extensively. Amazingly, the timber-framed building survives intact after 500 years, still surrounded by its medieval royal hunting forest.

We entered the Lodge in two groups and received a guided introduction, Valérie Milcent gallantly interpreting into French. On the ground floor we could experience the sights and sounds of a Tudor kitchen, with examples of Tudor food and objects to be found in a kitchen. On the walls were contemporary illustrations depicting hunting.

The upper two floors were reached by a wide and well-worn wooden staircase, up which Queen Elizabeth I is said to have ridden her horse. On the first floor were displays of Tudor life and it was here that we had great fun trying on Tudor outfits to the particular delight of the French. The top floor shows off the timber-framed structure of the building. With the many large windows giving a good view of the surrounding forest, it was possible to imagine the royal huntsmen ready with bows and arrows waiting for their quarry to break cover.



Heavy rain started just before we were due to leave the Lodge. Obviously the picnic in the grounds around the Lodge was off. In anticipation of this a church hall had been booked for an hour or so where we could hold our picnic.

We all boarded the coach and made our way to the Fane Hall at Kelvedon Hatch. Still under umbrellas we trooped into the hall and soon had the tables and chairs out ready, creating quite a convivial atmosphere for our picnic. Michel, the coach driver, even serenaded us on the piano.

Unfortunately, Rain Stopped Play at the planned demonstration of cricket.

*J'ai aimé la petite
présentation
historique au
début. Me
déguiser.*

*Intéressant, même si on
s'attendait à un bâtiment
plus grandiose (à la
hauteur de Henry VIII).
Visite ludique tout de
même.*

*Je n'ai pas aimé le
mauvais temps qui
a empêché de
profiter du cadre.*

The 20th Anniversary Celebration Dinner at Hylands House





....and so farewell until next year!



Brentwood Arts Festival 2014

Visit of the Harmonie du val de l'Indre



Although the Harmonie du val de l'Indre is not part of the Jumelage, our members assisted in hosting its visit in early July. The Harmonie, which is a wind orchestra, draws its players from Montbazon and the surrounding areas.

They were making a return visit to Brentwood to take part in the Brentwood Arts Festival, joining once again with the Brentwood Phoenix Youth Orchestra. They played together in the High

Street on the Saturday and at a concert in the Ursuline School on the Sunday.

Many thanks must go to Emmanuelle Darut, our former secretary, for co-ordinating this visit which gave her a challenging task in sorting out all the arrangements.

Forthcoming Events 2015

Quiz Night	Saturday 21st March
Conversation Evening	Friday 17th April
AGM	Thursday 25th June
Summer Ramble	Mid July (to be arranged)
Visit to Montbazon	19th to 24th August