

# HARTLEY WINTNEY TWINNING ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2009



## Editorial

Thank you to all who either wrote, emailed or spoke to me to give their views. I hope they have been reflected in this newsletter. I had only favourable comments on the new layout so it stays. The lack of photographs is actually not a problem as too many can make downloading problematical. We now have a website where you should be able to view any pictures and also where you can send any contributions via Steve Sharpe. I have to thank Sue Skellern for the time she has spent helping me with the technical side of the Newsletter. I am a slow learner but with her patient help I'm getting there. All errors I must claim as my own though.

The committee is trying to compile a list of people who would like to host friends from Malle and St Savin and especially those who have hosted before and have formed friendships which mean they would like to host the same people again. I know we've had this info in the past, but with changes over the years much has slipped through the net. Please send any details to Sarah Beazley.

I hope you enjoy this issue and as ever I look forward to your feed back,

By Gerda Bennett

## Chairman's Notes

Dear Twinners,

Firstly, I expect most will be aware that Vice President Louise Cox sadly lost her daughter Josie recently. I would like to take this opportunity to express our sorrow and offer the condolences of the entire Association to her at this dreadfully sad time. Dear Louise, our thoughts are with you.

I hope you all enjoyed the summer season, and, to those who travelled afar, I trust you have not returned with too much sunburn. A likely chance here at home, I fear! Farewell to the 'B-B-Q Summer', when did it occur! Jan and I enjoyed a week in Brittany dodging the rain showers, but, fortunately were rewarded with an unexpected attendance at the Pont-Avon annual Flower Queen Festival, where there was a fascinating celebration of Breton music and dancing. A memorable experience which we intend to repeat in the future.

Other known summer travellers included our very own 'Fat Boys Cycle Club' who decided to cycle from Hartley Wintney to Malle, and, then, think about participating in the Malle Triathlon! I understand that one of the main impediments (!) to their progress across the vast flat terrain of northern France and Southern Belgium during the journey was the incessant wind they were riding into. This makes the achievement all the more commendable. Congratulations to all the participants. I am sure there will be a detailed report on this event elsewhere.

Other events since our last newsletter included the Village Festival where thanks are due to Dave Skellern and all his volunteers for yet another excellent, efficient and profitable operation in the running of the ever popular Westmalle Bar. The presence of a number of our Malle friends was an added pleasure.

Nigel and Sarah organized a very successful 'Walking Weekend' hosting some seventeen overseas visitors in addition to a number of 'locals'. Thanks are due to them, also, for a very successful event enjoyed by all.

The TA were approached to support the Parish Council's running of the Jazz Festival and initially committed to running the bar for this event. As circumstances developed I was unable to commit to the co-ordination of the TA contribution to the event and regrettably was unable to enlist a stand-in. As a result, with great reluctance, I had to advise Leah that the TA would have to default on the arrangement. It is fair to say that sufficient volunteers came forward to run the bar but it was not possible to take advantage of this generosity, as we could not put together organization to co-ordinate the resourcing and setup of the marquee and stock. AS a result of this default the level of support for external events to be offered in the future is likely to be discussed at the upcoming committee meeting.

Finally, following concerns expressed about the changes in format of the 'Gourmet Raffle' in recent years the committee decided to set up a sub-group of interested parties to organize this year's event. If you have any views please pass them to Gerda , in the first instance.

If you have anything to offer or say that will improve the activities of the Twinning Association please make them known to a member of the committee, or by voicing them in your newsletter. Please

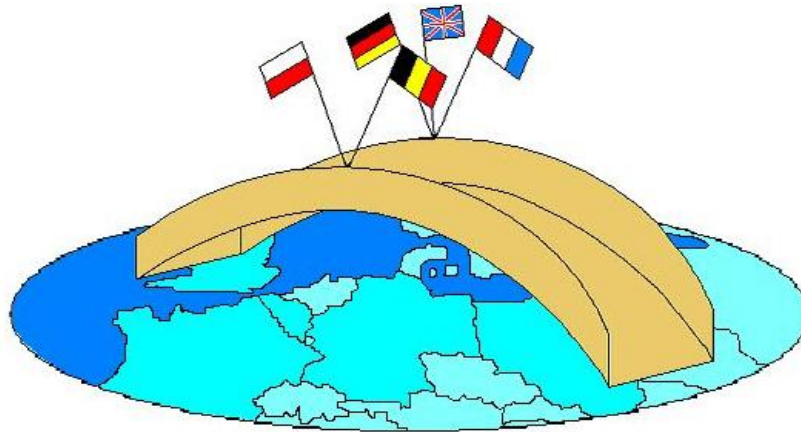
remember the Association is run for your benefit, this can only be so if we know what you want from your committee.

Kind regards,

Tony Davies

## **VILLAGE FESTIVAL 2009** *by Gerda Bennett*

Once again HWTA and friends from Malle ran the ever popular Beer Tent (plus Pimms) where the team of helpers served a never ending queue. Thanks go to Dave Skellern, Shirley and Chris Wilkins, Andrew Morton, Steve Sharpe, Matthew Bennett, Glynis Hassell, Fiona Pinteau, Mike Croxford and more whose names disappeared into a Westmalle Tripel-induced fug. Apologies if I have missed you out. It was also nice to see so many members who just came along for a drink and a chat. As always the twinning stall was a lively meeting place and we also launched the Golden Bridge project. Sue Skellern and I talked to many people, many of whom registered their interest in Art and Photography especially. If you are one of those people please get in touch with Dave and Sue (see Golden Bridge website) as they are both fulltime workers and do not have the time or resources to follow up all their leads. As volunteers they really do depend on members making the effort to get in touch. If nothing else it raised the awareness of both Twinning and the Golden Bridge project.



## **THE GOLDEN BRIDGE PROJECT ---LINKING COMMUNITIES**

*By Gerda Bennett*

Work is in progress on the Project but with little to report on the Art, Music or Photography front. There will be an update on these when we have more to say.

### **Update from Golden Bridge ENVIRONMENT** *by Cathy Roberts.*

Greening Hartley Wintney was launched at the Festival in June, with the challenge cards distributed to all households in the village during July. The team of volunteers who have been supporting this initiative surveyed the houses and businesses in the village and their results are as follows:

Card count results:

Areas surveyed: 10

Number of households in each area range from 10 to 500

Number of cards counted: 39

Approx no. of households surveyed: 1300

Average take up: 3%

Range of take up in different areas: 0-30%

Estimated take up over whole parish of 2700 homes: 81

**Together everyone saved 38.8 tonnes CO2 and 16.1 tonnes water** - Imagine 38 massive hot air balloons flying over Hartley Wintney filled with CO2 – that is how much you all saved!! Just shows how the small differences all add up.

The results are a disappointing end to Phase One of the Greening campaign, with such a low take up of displaying the challenge cards. Hartley Wintney was the first parish in Hart to take up this initiative, which has successfully rolled out in 160 communities, and was spearheading the Hart take up of the campaign. However, it is a start and hopefully will be followed up with more information and initiatives to get Hartley Wintney Greening!

### **Update on The Golden Bridge Project HERITAGE** by Gerda Bennett

I was welcomed to Greenfields Junior School on 29th September when I took an assembly. I talked to the whole school about twinning in general and then told the children about the Golden Bridge Project. There was great enthusiasm for the Art and Photography projects and many of the pupils were already aware of both the Twinning Association and the Greening project. They were less sure about what HWTA actually did. I then spoke to Year 6 who are going to write two stories aimed at children their own age. I gave them two suggestions - one about the oaks in the village and one about Edie the Tortoise whose story appeared in 'Contact' courtesy of Debbie White. If any of the children come up with their own stories which fulfil the criteria of the GBP then they too can be considered. I look forward to reading all of them and choosing the ones to be sent.

REMEMBER ----- do get in touch with any of the Project leaders if you think you have anything to offer, particularly Art and Photography.

### **FAT BOYS SLIMMER MAKE IT TO MALLE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Congratulations to the team of cyclists who rode all the way to Malle and got there in time for the Triathlon. Steve Sharpe, Andrew Morton, Tony Bones, Chris Roberts and Dave Thomas with support driver Jim Woolhouse made the trek against a strong headwind. They tell it best in their own words and pictures so to experience for yourself tales of derring do, log on to the website where Steve has assured me all will be revealed. (I recommend a viewing - I haven't included it in the Newsletter as there are so many photos - ed.)

Steve and Andrew raised £1,571 for Naomi House so well done for helping this most worthy cause which certainly needs the money at the moment, having suffered at the hands of the Icelandic banks.

Chris Roberts showed that he has true Ironman potential when, only a few hours after arriving in Malle, he got back into action to compete in the Lollepotters

Triathlon. He was joined by Dave Skellern, who wisely arrived by car, while the other intrepid cyclists gave support from the comfort of the beer tent! After a 300m swim, 18km bike ride and 4km run, Chris finished in 1:06:05, just 8 seconds in front of Dave, who blamed Chris's 270 mile warm up for the defeat!

## **HARTLEY WINTNEY WALKING WEEK END**

Not everyone had long enough legs to walk all the way! Estie's little sausage dog had to have some help!!!!

There is no better way to report on the highly successful walking week end than to let two of the participants tell it how it was in their own words! Firstly Marie-Christine Bouffard from St Savin



### **WALKING WITH FRIENDS**

In October, when Sarah and Nigel proposed me to take part in the walking week-end which was organized with the Belgian from Malle, I founded it really exciting. The only problem was to find people in the Canton de St Savin. In fact, most people who could be interested are usually away for the holidays or have to take care of their grand children!

Nevertheless, Anne-Marie Nibaudeau (veteran in the twinning) and Arlette Fayol agreed to come with me. Our group was completed with my son and my friend Claudine (with her husband Dave) who organises with me, the exchange between Robert May's school and College Prosper Mérimée.

As soon as we met the whole group, on the Sunday morning at nine, we felt that the atmosphere was really relaxed and friendly. It didn't take long to meet everybody and we chatted a lot during the two days.

Our leaders, Nigel and Ron worked really well. They showed us all the points of interest and gave us all the details. We discovered beautiful landscapes absolutely unknown by people who only travel by car. Woods, fields, flowers, cottages, little churches. There was so much to see and to photograph. It was a difficult task for our leaders to be sure that nobody was left behind especially when we discovered bushes of raspberries !

But no problem ; everybody was there for the very nice lunches which were really appreciated after the effort.

The evenings were also great events. A real European atmosphere was at each table, the first evening in the Italian restaurant, where we were welcomed by the other members of the twinning association. The second evening, in a typical pub took place a real but not serious competition of skittles and unknown talents where discovered during that time.

I must say that we all had a really good time during this week-end. We really thank everybody for the warm welcome (in the families and during the activities) and for the wonderful program which let us discover a bit of Hartley Wintney, landscape and tradition.

We are now thinking of the future and hope to organise the next walking week-end in the canton of St Savin



*Walking in Hartley Wintney 2009*

**And now** from Staf Verhoeven from Malle

*“ Although England is an island, you can have endless beautiful walks.”*

“Be prepared”, were the last words in 2008 when we finished our walking in Malle, “we will meet you again next year in Hartley Wintney”, and so it happened. Saturday, July 18 was a travel day for 11 continentals from Belgium and 3 from France. Sunday morning, the village was still asleep, the weather was calm and the participants of the first walk speeded up to the meeting place for the first walking day. Nigel was the guide and led us all through the surroundings of Hartley Wintney. It was quite an impressive group; not only continentals but also the locals were strongly presented, so total group totalled more than 30 people. We discovered the old ramp (testing cables for tanks) and we found out that this region is a huge natural park where fauna and flora are still in their original environment. Efforts are made to restore the nature where necessary and the footpaths are well maintained. We were completely surprised that there was an unnamed hill but that changed immediately and this mount is named : Saint Malle Mount.

Talking and walking was a good definition because walking is an ideal opportunity to talk and to chat with all participants.

A lovely picnic at noon and a beautiful afternoon trip closed this first day.

Conclusion : no body abandoned and every one was convinced to join us the next day.

A good meal in the evening and Sandman closed the eyes of all the walkers.

After a good sleep and breakfast we were able to attack the Monday walking, prepared by Ron . This time we met each other in a huge Garden Centre and the goal today was an 8 mile walk. At noon we should have meal in this Centre and start the second part. Crossing grain fields, woods, unexpected landscapes, beautiful horizons, cosy villages, old churches, typical cottages : we were again surprised by the diversity and the beauty of this region. We talked about nature, about history, about culture and the miles disappeared under our walking boots without having any idea how many miles we already passed today. And totally surprised we were back in the centre. Fresh and well prepared sandwiches gave us a power boost and soon we were on track again. And again we passed the region of Jane Austin, the landscapes of Charles Dickens and other famous writers. And again no one

abandoned the trip. The natives were talking louder and louder and they started dreaming about the evenings skittle contest. Assured that these walking days had exhausted the continentals and the victory should be a piece of cake. But as we say in Belgium : never sell the skin of a bear before you shot him, the game of the evening became a suspense and resulted in a close final, won by the visitors of Malle and Saint-Savin.

Thank you all friends of Hartley Wintney for this beautiful walking weekend. We enjoyed it very much and we are convinced to continue this event in the coming years. We hope Saint-Savin will step in and so we can discover other borders.

Staf Verhoeven

Chairman Verbroederingscomité Malle

July 23, 2009

## **CHARITY DANCE AT THE VICTORIA HALL** *by Gerda Bennett*

The Vic rocked on the night of Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> September when we were entertained by Mark Nieuwenhuis and The Rollright Stones. The music ranged from 60's favourites to tunes from 2009 and filled the dance floor as many of us re-lived our misspent youths. There were a few young people there - quote of the evening "I've never seen old people dance before". Well we did! The band was together and obviously enjoyed playing together. Mark was in excellent voice and this time there were vocals to support him which added another dimension to his performance. The high quality of the musicianship of all the players really came across. I hope we see them again in Hartley Wintney. And nearly £1000 was raised for the chosen charity Help for Heroes. All that is needed is another £35 to make it that magic number so if anyone is feeling generous, couldn't come on the night or whatever, please get in touch with Steve Sharpe via the HWTA email - he would love to hear from you.

## **THE GOURMET RAFFLE IS DEAD LONG LIVE THE FAMILY XMAS RAFFLE!**

*By Gerda Bennett*

As you will have read in the Chairman's notes the committee have considered all the comments that we received regarding the Gourmet Raffle. What we have come up with can't please everyone but we hope the membership will feel that their comments have been taken on board.

- *The gourmet Raffle is no longer gourmet - this was the feeling that led to the change last year. It was time for something new. The people who went enjoyed the evening and the delicious food provided but the main achievement was to make people think about what they really wanted.*
- *Paying for food meant less was spent on raffle tickets - while food was introduced a few years ago along with making the event an evening do there were a few people who found that they couldn't afford to go and buy raffle tickets while others preferred a lunchtime event, not wanting to travel after dark.*

- *Where were the jam jars? - many enjoyed only buying tickets for items they wanted to win and also enjoyed the decorating of the jars.*

So a working party put together an event we hope will revive the Raffle, making it a strong fundraiser while retaining its position as a social event where members can meet up.

- *A FAMILY XMAS RAFFLE - donated prizes will be welcomed whatever they are though we hope they won't all be last year's unwanted Xmas gifts! While home cooking always goes down well and the high quality edible gifts will always be welcome, please donate any quality gifts that may have a wider appeal than just food.*
- *We will be holding the raffle at lunchtime. It will be on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December at the W.I. Hut starting at 11.30 and finishing at 13.00. A welcome drink and mince pie will be offered and entry is free. There will also be a cash bar (licensing arrangements permitting) selling alcoholic and soft drinks. Thanks are due to Shirley and Chris Wilkins who for years provided excellent food at a very reasonable price. Maybe they can celebrate having one less thing to think about at Christmas!*
- *The jam jars are back. Remember to label your jam jar with the name of your donated prize and, if you feel inspired, decorate it. There will be prizes.*

We hope you will support this event and be generous with your donations. Money raised goes to a much wider range of twinning activities rather than large trips to visit our French and Belgian friends. The trend seems to be towards interest groups getting together under the aegis of HWTA. So we helped with the walking weekend and the cycle ride to Malle to name but two. There will be larger trips organised if there is sufficient demand to make it financially viable. Make your views known!

## PHONE A FRIEND - CAN YOU BEAT THESE PRICES?

Dave Skellern sent this tip in to help you stay in touch with twinning friends.

The website is <http://www.telesavers.co.uk/>

There is no subscription - you just enter the prefix number according to the country. BT will charge you 5p connection then it's 0.5p per minute for Belgium and 1p per minute for France. Why not ask if anyone has a better method? I think I read about this one in Which?

There is also a pre-fix you can dial called telediscount. You dial 08444620620 and follow the instructions you are given. This makes calls from landlines worldwide much cheaper.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**6th December**

Family Christmas Raffle



**23rd January**

Burn's Night

**9th May 2010**

GBP launch in Malle

**July 2010**

Walking Weekend in St Savin

*date to be announced*