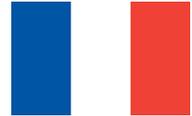




# BILLERICAY TWINNING ASSOCIATION



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## NEWSLETTER No 15 September 2011

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### FISHERS VISIT 2011

by Marion Wilson

Once more we were pleased to welcome 4 students and their teacher Naomi Jackson in July. Their visit followed the now usual pattern of a day in London which this year was a visit to the House of Commons courtesy of John Baron, followed by a trip to Buckingham Palace sadly only on the outside but we were lucky enough to see people gathering for a garden party for limbless ex-servicemen. A trip on a river bus took us to the Tower of London before we headed back home. Amazingly no-one got lost or was late for any of our meet ups!



*Having lunch outside the palace.*

Having arrived safely on the Tuesday we gave them a restful day on the Wednesday by taking them on a narrow boat at Paper Mill lock which included a picnic lunch on an island. Our thanks go to Alan Evans for once again hosting us on his boat. This was followed by an English afternoon tea in the Reading Rooms. Surprisingly most of the young-

sters actually drank tea at home which is more than I can say for myself! There was a wonderful spread of sandwiches and cakes organised by Jacqui Clare of Billericay school and her helpers.

Days were spent in each of the schools and the weekend with their hosts. Many of them headed back for shopping trips to London. Some of the girls went unaccompanied so goodness knows how much they spent.

Our final evening was at The Cock in Stock where we were provided us with an excellent buffet to round off another brilliant visit

I will be going out to Fishers at the end of September with our teachers and students. I know we are all going to have a wonderful time.



*The group who will be going to Fishers later this month*

Naomi, one of our students who went to Fishers in 2008, visited her contact Alison in June this year for two weeks. We congratulate her on her excellent A level results. Naomi is going to UEA to read English literature. News about other Billericay students who have visited Fishers: Megan did extremely well and is headed for Manchester to read Geology and Geography, Amy is off to Liverpool to do Accountancy and Finance while Kieran is heading for a career in the city. We wish them all every success.

## SIX YEARS OF THE FRIENDS OF CHAUVIGNY

by David Clark

The Friends of Chauvigny grew out of a suggestion in 2001 from the Chauvigny Council that Billericay might be interested in twinning with their town. The idea came from Elise Paret who had spent a year at Buttsbury School on work experience and was impressed by Billericay and its people. Previously, Chauvigny had been unsuccessfully twinned with Daventry. A delegation of Town Councillors visited Chauvigny. They liked what they saw and a group of Chauvinois, who were members of the well-established Chauvigny Twinning Association, came to Billericay. It was agreed that Billericay and Chauvigny would be twinned.

However, there was a problem. There were no fluent French speakers among the initial group of Town Councillors and their spouses. French would be essential for liaison and negotiation with the Chauvinois. The Basildon French Circle was approached and Patricia Clark, who is a fluent French speaker and a member of the Institute of Linguists, agreed to take on the liaison role. Patricia recruited her husband David, and soon, in 2003, a Billericay delegation went to Chauvigny to discuss the technicalities of twinning. In 2004, the Chauvinois came to Billericay and signed the first Charter. In 2005, the second Charter was signed in Chauvigny. Since then we have been joined by other fluent French speakers: Jeannine Watson, who is French by birth, Roberta Copsey, who is also a Member of the Institute of Linguists, Janet Cosgrove and Margaret Trasler.



*The Chauvigny Sub-committee 2011*

*Left to right back row: David Clark, Roberta Copsey, Howard Watson, Jeannine Watson, Gareth Herbert.*

*Seated left to right: Patricia Clark, Margaret Trasler, Grace Herbert, Mary Hawkins, Janet Cosgrove.*

*Inset: Marion Wilson*

We have visited Chauvigny in 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009 and have been taken to such places as the historic town of Poitiers with its magnificent Town

Hall, the picturesque waterways of the Poitevin marshes, the Park of the Monkeys, a Loire chateau and a neighbouring vineyard and the ancient port of La Rochelle, as well as visiting many local beauty spots and places of interest.

On their trips to Billericay, we have taken the Chauvinois on trips to Norsey Woods at bluebell time, Cambridge, Cressing Barns, and the Houses of Parliament where we were given a guided tour by our MP, John Baron. Hosts have also taken their French guests to various places of interest in London, the Essex countryside and the coast.

Many friendships have been made and private visits to Chauvigny and Billericay are now becoming popular.

Chauvigny is also twinned with Geisenheim in Germany and Trino in Italy. Billericay is usually invited to celebrations between Chauvigny and these two towns. Last year all three twin towns were invited to Chauvigny to celebrate 40 years of twinning between Chauvigny and Geisenheim and this year Trino invited us to their lovely town in the Piedmont to celebrate another anniversary (see below).

An annual Walk of Friendship takes place where representatives from all four towns spend a few days walking in either France or Germany. We are planning to hold the walk in England sometime in the future. There is also an arrangement that the Friends of Chauvigny brokered between Stock Brook Manor and the Agricultural College in Chauvigny. Students from the college spend a month working at the Country Club as waiters and waitresses. Others spend their four weeks working in shops in Billericay. Trino is very interested in this scheme. We have come a long way in six years and we look to the future with confidence.

### VISIT TO TRINO 1<sup>ST</sup> – 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2011

by Janet Cosgrove

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> June - Margaret and I were met at Turin airport and taken, along with people from Geisenheim, to the centre of Turin. We spent the day sight-seeing until 4.20pm when we met the minibus which took us to Trino where we were met by our hosts and taken to their homes for dinner.

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June - Margaret visited the Palazzo Paleologo with the many other non-cycling guests. They were given a guided tour of the building as well as an outline of the life of Cavour who was one of the major instigators of the Reunification of Italy and who had spent the last years of his life living near Trino.

I went on the bike ride of 22 kilometres around Trino which was well organised with two stops

offering drinks and biscuits; the second with a band which played all four national anthems.

After lunch with our hosts, we went to the Abbazia di Lucedio. There we had the official speeches from three mayors (or their deputies), speeches from the German, French and Italian Presidents (translated back and forth in all the languages concerned), presentations of gifts from each town's mayor, certificates and photographs.

Billericay was warmly included all the time as though we were de facto members of the tripartite twinning. We received souvenir photos and I received a certificate for participating in the bike ride. The Mayor of Trino, Marco Felisati, is very keen to strengthen the links with Billericay.

At this point the Mayor of Geisenheim, Frank Kilian, invited Margaret and I to Geisenheim at Easter 2012 for the visit of the French and Italians. All the national anthems were played again, and it was very moving to be the only two British people amongst so many other nationalities.

This invitation to Geisenheim was later given again by Doris Juchtern, President of Geisenheim Twinning Association at the formal dinner held at Il Convento restaurant. Margaret and I were very pleased to accept. The lady guests received magnifying glasses in the shape of a frog which is a symbol of Trino.

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June - We all went to Castle Grinzane, which was the home of Cavour, where we enjoyed an interesting tour of the castle. We were then welcomed by the Mayor of Grinzane as Grinzane is linked to Trino because Cavour lived in both places.

After an excellent lunch at the Due Lanterne in Verduno, we went to Alba where we had a browse around the town returning to Trino at about 6.30pm.

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June - The committee meeting took place in the library at Trino. Non-committee members went shopping in the Market.

After lunch with our hosts; I went to Vercelli which was very interesting. Margaret joined a few of the other guests for a guided tour of S. Michele in Insula church, followed by a visit to Leri where Cavour lived for the last three years of his life. The house was left unoccupied for some years during which time it was vandalised and all its contents stolen. Renovation began two months ago and, although a building site, we were allowed to go in and look around. In spite of its condition, it is easy to see why Cavour enjoyed his time there so much. The doorways and ceilings are very high and give a great feeling of space. In the evening 25 of the party of all nationalities including myself, went for

a pizza in Montefalco. Margaret's hosts took her to the home of friends and their French guests where they also ate pizza, followed by home-made tiramisu. After this the whole party met for a drink in the garden of a country house hotel called Borgo Ramezzana.

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June - I went to Mass with my hosts and Margaret stayed at the home of her hosts, exchanging language lessons in English and Italian with their 10-year-old daughter while her parents were preparing lunch for their friends and their French guests.

After lunch I went to Casale and saw an exhibition of designer gowns from the 50s and 60s and also an exhibition of Jewish art and books as the area has a very high population of Jews with synagogues in Casale and Vercelli.

In the evening in the local community hall which is also the covered market there was a buffet dinner, prepared by the students of the catering college of Trino, with a dancing afterwards.

## FUN WALK

Both sections of the Association were represented at this year's Fun Walk organised by MP John Baron and held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May. Two walkers for the Fishers section raised over £270 and the 3 walkers from the Chauvigny section raised some £240. This was supplemented by a share of the central 'pot' contributed by local firms giving the Fishers section another £242 and the Chauvigny section £210.



*Sue Rapley and Marion Wilson walked for Fisher; shown here with Marion's husband and daughter and Jacqui Clare from Billericay School*

Sue Rapley had volunteered to act as marshal for both groups. In the event she wasn't needed so joined in for the walk just for the fun of it. This is a very useful way of raising funds. Our thanks go to all those who sponsored us and of course, to those who walked.

On September 9th, John Baron presented the Friends of Chauvigny with their cheque for £210. This year's total represents half of what the group

raise from their main fund-raising event - the Annual Grand Fun Quiz. It would be great to get many more members taking part next year.



*David Clark receiving cheque from John Baron MP*

The Fun Walk is a gentle stroll of about three miles around the local countryside. It starts and finishes at Barleylands where there are stalls and exhibitions under cover in the barn. For the less mobile and small children there is a walk around a large field for which you can also be sponsored. So we hope to see more members next year on May 27th. If you are interested please contact Patricia Clark on 01277 625448 or [patriciaclark37@btinternet.com](mailto:patriciaclark37@btinternet.com).

### **ANNUAL FUND RAISING QUIZ**

In February, Friends of Chauvigny held their main fund raising event, the Grand Fun Quiz. As usual, the Canon Roche Hall was packed. This year, we had a total of 155 members, their guests and members of the public on 20 tables. The quiz was set by David Clark, assisted by his wife, Patricia who organised the event and was hosted by that cheeky chappie, Ray Keilthy.



*Ray Keilthy, our genial host*

Supporting us behind the scenes were Pippa Morton and Alexander Hurst. We made a net profit of £955.59 from ticket sales, the raffle and Pounds-in-the-Envelope. This is a record for the nine years that we have been running the Quiz. Next year, we hope to break the £1000 barrier. We only need to sell 9 more £5 tickets! So fingers crossed. The Quiz

Night in 2012 will take place in late January or early February; date not yet finalised.

### **BARN DANCE - DATE FOR THE DIARY**

The Friends of Chauvigny have organised a barn dance for Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October in the Canon Roche main hall. Doors will open at 7pm for a 7:30 start and will continue to about 10pm. We hope many members and their friends will be attending. Contact Patricia Clark on 01277 625448 or [patriciaclark37@btinternet.com](mailto:patriciaclark37@btinternet.com) for information / tickets and please make a note in your diary.

### **STAND AT LIBRARY**

A publicity and recruitment stand will be set up in Billericay Library on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October. Hopefully, members will come and give support.

### **CHAUVIGNY VISIT 2012**

More dates for the diary. Our visit to Chauvigny next year is now pencilled in as Friday 4<sup>th</sup> May to Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May, but confirmation can't be made until Ryan Air confirm their flights into and out of Poitiers. An outing would probably be arranged on the Saturday with the official dinner on the Monday evening. Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May is a Public Holiday in France.

### **AFTERNOON TEA AT JANET'S**

On 9<sup>th</sup> July Janet Cosgrove kindly allowed us to use her lovely garden for an afternoon's tea party. The get-together was well attended with about 20 members and their families attending. Each guest brought dishes to share, among which was Mary Hawkins' delicious cake; the recipe she has kindly agreed to share.

#### **Chocolate Biscuit Cake**

8 ozs Rich Tea or Digestive Biscuits  
4 ozs butter  
1 dessertspoon brown sugar  
3 dessertspoons drinking chocolate powder  
1½ tablespoons golden syrup  
2 ozs sultanas  
2-4 ozs almond sliced almonds  
A few glace cherries (optional)  
6 ozs plain chocolate (I used Bournville)

#### **Method:**

Break biscuits into pieces. Melt butter, sugar, syrup and drinking chocolate over low heat, (it helps to stir) and then remove from heat. Stir in the biscuits, sultanas and nuts evenly until all the biscuits are coated with the mixture. Press firmly into greased sponge tin (a 7-8 inch tin is fine for these quantities). Put in the fridge for about 2 hours, then remove and cover with the bar of chocolate, previously melted over a low heat or in the microwave. Decorate with nuts if you wish.