

Remembrance Weekend 6-8 November 2015

Odd structure, or is it artwork?
at Gare du Nord



Jannick says hello to Paddington



Cornflowers were included in the church arrangements to acknowledge the French tradition of Remembrance cornflowers (like our poppies). We were most impressed with Rev Mike Smith's welcome to our visitors IN FRENCH, and learnt later that Mike had been a language student in Manchester, although his first (foreign) language is in fact Spanish.



Many thanks to members who hosted our visitors. Everything went smoothly and, in addition to the Remembrance ceremonies which they always find very moving and well done, they were able to enjoy some autumn tree colours, very English rain, and fireworks, which for most of

them was a new experience.

Lèves Mayor Rémi Martial and wreath bearer François Dauvillier joined Nailsworth Mayor Myles, MP Neil Carmichael (with Town Crier Tony supervising) to take the salute. Gilles Cointepas carried the ULAC standard.



Following the ceremonies, the Silver Band accompanied us over to inaugurate our Anniversary Cherry Tree and played the two national anthems (Isobel knew all the words of the Marseillaise!) The plaque was planted by Rémi and Philippe with Nailsworth Mayor Myles, Town Crier Tony and a goodly crowd, along with some drizzle. (Allan and Les held up the French flag in the hope of making the tree stand out a bit better against the background, but with only a few leaves left, it did look a bit miserable. Still it's got lots of buds . . .)



After coffee in the Mortimer Room by kind invitation of the RBL, the Mayor asked to see the stained glass which had been presented to us by Lèves over the years, so we were able to pop over to the TIC where these are now displayed. They were also fascinated by (Paul & Carole's) two red poppies from the Tower of London display last year.



Marie had organised a very pleasant traditional Sunday lunch at the Brit.

Bruce Fenn & Sue, who had taken lots of great photos of the morning's activities, joined us over coffee and presented each of the French with three framed photographs - what a lovely touch and greatly appreciated.

Rémi presented us with a box of Lèves-made delicacies, including a first pot of their latest product - honey.



In his response, Myles told us about the one French soldier, Georges Brunet, who is recorded on the Wayside Cross at Inchbrook*. Myles thought perhaps he was there because he had a brother in the monastery which used to sit on what is now the Catholic church car park.



When taking our visitors back to Stroud Station on Monday morning, several of us stopped on the way to look at the monument and we will try and find out more about Georges for a future Bulletin.

**The First World War memorial of 1917 is the oldest in Britain and was erected on land given by the Dominican monks of the friary nearby. It bears the names of more than 140 of the fallen, which were re-etched in stone during a renovation in 2014 following a major fundraising effort by parishioners.*



Myles and Angela then hot-footed over to Lèves to share in the Remembrance ceremonies over there, which take place on 11 November, whichever day that might be. If it happens to be on a weekday, it is a bank holiday, but if it falls at the weekend, there is no day off in lieu.

The opportunity was taken for a photocall at the Lèves anniversary oak tree. I am pleased to see that, although it's a tad taller than ours, it doesn't have any more leaves!



Myles writes:

After saying good bye to our friends from Lèves on Monday 9th , Angela and I were back on Eurostar the next day to make the return visit to our twin town for their Remembrance Service held on Wednesday 11th.

We stayed in a smart and surprisingly inexpensive hotel close to the cathedral in Chartres. We were collected in the morning by Philippe Vanneau and driven to Lèves. I am pleased I wore the Town Mayor's chain of office because their Mayor, Rémi Martial looked so smart with his red, white and blue sash. Whilst we marched behind the town band returning from the war memorial, Rémi was holding hands with his 3 year old son Louis, interestingly dressed as a Red Indian!

On our way to the banquet, we stopped and were photographed by the Oak Tree given by Nailsworth Twinning Association to mark our 20th Anniversary. It is a healthy tree and well sited in front of the modern Sports and Recreational hall (Espace Soutine).

The meal put on by the ULAC was spectacular and ensured we had a peaceful return train journey.

Since returning to Nailsworth and following the tragic events in Paris, I have been able to send this message on behalf of our town to the Mayor of Lèves, written in French:

Dear Rémi,
Our Union Jack flies at half mast as we share the suffering with our friends in France.
With deepest sympathy
Nailsworth Town Council.

Myles makes mention of the trip in his Mayor's Report for the December Nailsworth News.

The following message was sent to Philippe on behalf of Nailsworth Twinning Association:

Cher Philippe

De la part de tous vos amis du Jumelage, nous voulons vous dire combien nous sommes désolés des événements hier a Paris.

Nous pensons bien fort a vous et espérons vivement qu'aucun de vous n'est personnellement touché par ces atrocités, ni les membres de vos familles, ni vos amis. Il est difficile de croire a cette évolution de terrorisme et la mentalité qui le soutient.

Je vous transmets a tous nos sincères pensées d'amitié et de condoléances.

Carole

Nailsworth Twinning Association

Thank you to Tony Evans for lowering the flag in Mortimer Gardens to half mast.

The French contingent stands before the 10th Anniversary gift from Lèves



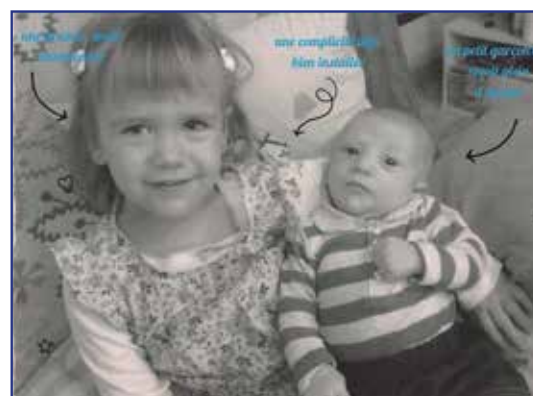
You will notice that Rémi is wearing the traditional mayorial sash in the Lèves pictures.

The chain which he wore for the ceremonies in Nailsworth has an amusing history. Michel Castaing was Mayor in 1995 and signed the twinning charters with Nailsworth Mayor John Cross.

The first part of the ceremony took place in Lèves; Monsieur Castaing was wearing the French sash, but was most impressed with John's chain.

Not to be outdone, when the French came over to Nailsworth two weeks later for the second part of the signing, Monsieur Castaing was sporting a magnificent English style chain of his own!

This has since been brought out by successive Lèves' mayors on high days and holidays, and of course, any occasion involving Nailsworth.



Following the news in the last Bulletin that Jean-Jacques and Annie had a new grandchild, here is Mathis with big sister Mélina.