



Reporting on the Twinning weekend in Nailsworth, 5-8 May 2018 and other things



We arrived in Lèves at 11.30 pm. We had a good trip. Thank you for this weekend. Everyone was very happy. Good reception at Town Hall with the music band. Congratulations to Nailsworth music band.



Children really enjoyed Amberley Cow Hunt and Treasure Hunt at your home. It was a good way to speak English.

Parents and grand-parents liked to organize activities for children.

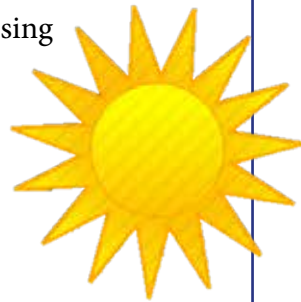
And a very nice and pleasant evening at Primary School. Very good dinner. And very good show with Nailsworth Dramatic Society. Sketches very successful. Congratulations -and it was in French !

As usual, the welcome in the families it went very well.

In summary, a great weekend. See you soon. **Best wishes. Philippe**



The Nailsworth and District Twinning Association, now in it's 23rd year, has achieved another successful hosting weekend. New members as well as old hands took part in the May bank holiday weekend's activities. I'd like to thank all the hosts and the committee for organising such a special visit for our guests. Judging by the feedback from both our members and the French, it's a weekend that will be remembered for a long time.



One noticeable difference this year was that a number of children and teenagers travelled to Nailsworth for the first time. Some with grandparents and others accompanied by parents or their teacher Brigitte. This is a development we'd like to build on and very much encourage members to bring children with them to France next year.



The search for a new person to step up and take over as coordinator/organiser for the Association has been successful. The committee is pleased to announce that **PAULINE SCOTTING** has offered to take the role on and will ease into the post gradually before taking over from Rachael at the next AGM. This leaves us with a vacancy for someone to help with accommodation / hosting. If you think you can take on this role we'd love to hear from you. Judith Haines can give more information about what it involves and of course you won't have much to do until 2020!

TRIP TO LÈVES 2019 : 3-6 MAY

We are already in discussion with Philippe about next year's trip which is likely to involve the Nailsworth Silver Band as part of their 100th birthday celebrations. **THE DATE HAS BEEN CONFIRMED AND IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT TO LET ME KNOW WELL IN ADVANCE IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN COMING**, because with the band, the numbers are likely to be limited. **EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST TO ME BY EMAIL ASAP** Thank you. **Rachael**

The Mayor, Town Crier and NW Silver Band welcome the arriving French party at the Town Hall reception



I'd like to thank you for your absolutely fantastic management of the whole weekend. All the work you did upfront must have taken a lot of time, effort and dedication. That things ran so smoothly shows that your organisational skills are exemplary!

Thanks also to Pauline for the wonderful show that she put on with her amdram troupe, to Elisabeth and all the work she put in re the extra catering, and obviously all the other committee members who met frequently to put the weekend together and were always there to give a hand with everything. And a big thanks to ALL the members, hosts in particular, participants and their friends for their huge contribution to the success of the weekend.

Best wishes and Vive Nailsworth, **Isobel**

the champagne bar at the Old Lodge, Minch Common



supper in the garden at Sue & Colin's



Keith, Lorraine and myself had a wonderful few days with Annie and Jean Jacques. We went to a few places we had not been to before but the



favourite place for our French visitors was the Tun and Groove, "a petit pub" in the shed of our friend's garden, Jean Jacques particularly enjoyed playing on the fruit machine. **Linda**

lunch at the Painswick Hotel





Bonjour Isobel .. bien rentrée hier soir à 23h30 après un bon voyage (nous avons bien papoté avec Jannick ..) ensoleillé presque sur tout le parcours .. J'ai la tête pleine de merveilleux souvenirs .. de grands moments d'amitié .. ce qui est si important .. Je crois que tout le monde a été ravi de son séjour et a vraiment apprécié le chaleureux accueil que Nailsworth nous a réservé .. Le temps nous a gâté en plus .. on pense à l'an prochain maintenant ... Je t'embrasse, **Monique**

In spite of what we said previously about our participation in the twinning

this year being a one-off, we have decided we would like to join the association after all. We still think that it is in great need of new, younger participants, but at least we can supply some new blood, even if we are not really in the "young" category. We were influenced by the disappointment shown by our French visitors when we initially expressed some doubts about our future participation – they also seemed a lot more relaxed during their stay with us than when we stayed with them in France and were keen for us to visit Lèves again.

Many thanks, **John & Jane Bethell**

PS We were initially somewhat surprised about the lack of organised activities in this year's programme, but it actually turned out rather well, at least in our case.

*As you'll see the Bethell's enjoyed the weekend so much that they have decided to stay as members. We're pleased that they are not leaving and welcome also to new members **Sue & Callum Wardle** who have also decided to join after hosting for the first time.*



My wife and I were fortunate to have Hervé Pelletier as our guest for the fourth time: his second visit to The Forest. The plan for Day 1 was to look at the historical resources of The Forest (ie. timber, charcoal, stone, coal and iron), with Day 2 looking at transportation of these heavy and bulky goods (ie. by River Severn and tramways and railways).



Sunday morning saw our first stop at the remains of Dark Hill foundry, less than a mile from home. It was here that Robert Forrester Mushet perfected the Bessemer process and invented Titanic steel, which

continues to be produced to this day. As an engineer, this had direct relevance for Hervé and of course the ruins were delectably overgrown and totally peaceful despite the holiday weekend.

Next stop was at the site of the old New Fancy mine. Here a giant geophysical map has been laid down, showing all the main coal mines, iron mines, quarries and railways in The Forest. This gives a great overall impression of what it was like to live here in The Forest's 19th century heyday.

A quick stop at Cannop Ponds to look through the fence at the stone-masons' yard. Top quality modern machinery cutting top quality Forest stone and burnishing it to a glass-like finish in some cases. A lot of the final products were stacked outside where we could feel the texture and admire the skills of those who select, excavate and work them.

Then it was on to Hopewell; a colliery still working but still reliant on paying visitors to make ends meet. We were part of a group of about ten making a guided tour. We were briefly told the history of Free Miners. (Jennifer and I have met one young couple whose children - because there is no maternity unit in The Forest - were born at home so that they could still qualify as Free Miners if they wished.) We walked down a steep path that used to bring the coal to the surface - initially by manpower, then ponies, then by winch. At the deepest part all lights were extinguished and for the first time in our lives, we genuinely could not see our hands inches from our faces. Souvenir pieces of coal were brought back to the surface, bound for Lèves + thoughts of lives that were brutal and short.

The craft street-fare in Coleford supplied some bottles of good local beer. We looked at some of the old shops including the butcher's that 86-year-old Mrs Voyse still runs single-handed, and Mr Boulter's recently closed tobacco shop - unchanged for fifty, sixty or seventy years - Capstan Full Strength adverts and all! Before heading homewards for lunch and a siesta, we also paid a quick visit to Mushet Walk with its huge mural of the area's legendary metallurgists.

After lunch, Jennifer joined us for a visit to the iron and ochre mine at Clearwell Caves. Immense caverns compared to the cramped conditions of the colliery but the same back-breaking work, clasp a candle-holder in one's teeth while swinging a pick at the seam. Tough times.

On Monday we started at Dean Forest Railway. First we were given a tour of the workshops and sidings that stable these beautiful and romantic giants. Hervé then joined the

driver, fireman and engine-cleaner on the footplate of the loco pulling passengers to Lydney Junction. Conditions could not have been better for this thrill-of-a-lifetime and Hervé did a short video for Youtube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVO69g_PiY). Due to restricted footplate space, I had to travel in a carriage along with the rest of the public, but I still think I was almost as excited as Hervé. Afterwards Hervé said he was surprised at how complicated the driver's job was. Another lunch and another very necessary siesta.

Lydney Harbour next stop. From here small sailing craft used to shift thousands of tons of Forest coal a week to west country ports, principally Bridgwater. We read how they had to time their entry to the dock gates in great harmony with the tide. Even so, the entrance seems absurdly small and the task unbelievably skillful - and yet hundreds, maybe thousands, of skippers with a crew of one or two accomplished it regularly. It's over fifty years now since the last collier called and the railway tracks were removed. Nowadays it is a very sleepy harbour where one rarely sees even a leisure vessel arrive or depart. The two Severn road bridges grace the horizon to the west and the much closer ice-cream van allowed us to honour a traditional Bank Holiday ritual.

We drove a few miles upstream to Purton. Here one can scramble under the current Gloucester-Cardiff track onto the foreshore. This gives a good view across the Severn of the towers either side of the Sharpness-Gloucester ship canal. These are the last remains of the once-mighty Lydney-Sharpness railway bridge, which was demolished after piers were seriously damaged by two fog-bound barges in the 1960's. What a memorable trip that would have been!

By now I was flagging but Hervé said he was game so we took wonderful twisty lanes all the way to Bullo Pillo. Bullo What? you may ask. But Bullo Pill (harbour) was in business before Lydney and had its first horse-drawn tramway from The Forest in 1810. It became busier still later and early photos of Bullo Pill Junction show railway tracks in profusion. Coal-chutes lined the tiny harbour and trows and ketches of probably less than fifty-tons would have been queuing for loading. Today the lock is filled by half a dozen large but homely craft that ingenious owners have converted to living accommodation. They hardly look as if they could ever go out into the Severn, today sparkling and peaceful beyond all wonder.

A busy but wonderful weekend. If it hadn't been for the Jumelage I would probably have shared my time between the snooker and a chair in the garden. So thank you Hervé and bon voyage for that long trip home. **Ron Birch**



great meal provided by William's Kitchen



Hello Isobel

I am grateful for your lovely welcome. All the visits we have do together were wonderful . They were very, very interesting. I've discovered a lot of new things about your so beautiful country.

Visiting Gloucester : cathedrale, maritime museum, Potter shop... were very pleasant. Later the canal junction in Saul. Now I can imagine the traffic, the trader, the life of the people

in the past.

Walking among the meadows and the hills in flower was also very pleasant. Full of thanks to you !

Our chat was also interesting. I also appreciate the atmosphere of the twinning : welcome, kindness and warmth of all the people and particularly the members of the committee. Rachael, Pauline, Allan June and Laurie are also very delightful.

I also enjoyed the last evening : the dinner with the locally sourced produce, the entertainment with all the sketches, your involvement in the success of this evening. Cheers to the teenagers : Rachael's daughter (I don't remember her name) Elliott, her son and Chloé (Elisabeth's grand daughter). What good management ! Many thanks for your welcome. Kisses, **Jannick and Roger**



It gave us great pleasure to welcome Philippe and Odile Vanneau to our home for this twinning visit, having met them so often over the years. As they have visited Nailsworth many times before, we asked them what they would like to see or do and to our surprise, Odile said she would like to find the source of the Thames or La Tamise! We set off on our expedition on the Sunday morning in glorious sunshine, first of all showing them a very pretty stretch of the canal near Frampton Mansell followed by coffee at the Daneway. We then stopped just outside Kemble and walked alongside a very young and clear stretch of the Thames. This is also the site of the first bridge over the river. Unfortunately, after about half a mile the river suddenly disappeared completely. There

was no sign of the stone monument we had seen in photos, so we retraced our steps and drove on to the Thames Head pub for Sunday lunch. At the pub we established how to find the true source and had a very pleasant walk across some meadows (after carefully crossing the railway line!). However, as we expected, no water was visible, just a circle of stones, an engraved monument and a sign telling us it was 184 miles to the Thames Barrier. There we met a mother and daughter who had just completed the whole of the Thames Path, although it had taken them nine years - mainly because the daughter had spent a year in Edinburgh and had two babies in the interim period! Luckily, not en route!

We later found out that the reason Odile was so keen to find the source of the Thames is that she has been making up a comprehensive file about the river with photographs of all the bridges in London. They now spend quite a lot of time in London because their daughter, Anne-Laure, is married to an Englishman and lives in the city. They will probably be spending even more time there in the future as they now have a six-month old granddaughter, called Chloe.

All in all, an extremely enjoyable weekend, great company and idyllic weather. **Judith & Les**



entertainment from Merv & friends of the NDS



Rachael accepts gifts from Philippe and Annie



Pimms to start off the evening



Here is a flyer for **DAVID JACKSON'S MEMORIAL CONCERT**. David was a much loved member of the twinning for many years and treasurer of the committee. He also had a great passion for music, so the concert will be a fitting tribute to his memory. Ann and others have worked hard to put this concert on and would welcome as many friends as possible to attend.

Golden Memories

Concert in memory of David Jackson

In aid of Longfield Hospice at Home

Sunday 15th July 2.30-4.30pm



Christopher Boodle will play David's piano

compositions and some of David's favourite music.

Also playing— members of local clubs who influenced his compositions , with whom he had musical conversations or whose music he enjoyed .

Dark Island, Sue Edwards, Janice Frape, Barry Martin,

Clive Perkins, Nicola Clark

Venue - The Hub, Tobacconist Road,

Minchinhampton. GL6 9JJ.

Tickets £10 (including refreshments)

Tickets available from Ann tel: 01453 832552 or Longfield shops in Nailsworth and Minchinhampton

