

**Members of the Twinning Association of Beverley to  
Nogent-sur-Oise**

**28 April to 1 May 2017**

On **Friday 28 April** the group of 14 people from Beverley travelled to Nogent-sur-Oise, mostly by car this year, a few by Eurostar and one by air to Charles de Gaulle airport. We started the official proceedings of the weekend with the usual Mayor's reception. He welcomed us and emphasized the importance of Twinning in the need for uniting Europe. Once again we were entertained by a group of 8 year olds who sang 2 songs, the second of which was a rousing performance of The Beatles' "Yellow Submarine" and most of the English guests joined in enthusiastically. We then went to our hosts' homes for dinner. Earlier a teenage girl in our party with her mum had requested a visit to a French secondary school and joined the 13 year old son of their host family in his class for the day. The teachers and the other children were very welcoming and interested in their English guest who coped admirably with a technical design and physics class. She even successfully wired up an electrical circuit having followed the instructions in French.

On **Saturday 29 April** the programme allowed free time with our hosts. Several people were taken to the 13<sup>th</sup> Century Gothic Beauvais Cathedral and marvelled at the enormously high ceiling of the choir, the highest in Christendom at over 48 metres, and the amazingly ornate clock, from the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century, which besides telling the time, could also predict eclipses, tides, planetary positions and even what will happen on Judgement Day. Others visited the historic and pretty nearby town of Senlis. However one of our group who is a café owner in Beverley visited Bar de Saulcy in Nogent to meet Christine the owner with the view of exchanging recipes and other items of joint interest. Watch out for a real French Fondant au Chocolat coming soon to a café near you! Also the regulars in Bar de Saulcy will soon be savouring English Fruit Scones. This relationship between the 2 cafés is exciting

because it is Christine's restaurant that is to host the Saturday Soirée in October 2018, le Vingt An, more of this later.

In the afternoon the whole group visited the Chateau de Chantilly, des Grandes Ecuries (the Stables) and the parc. We had a knowledgeable Guide who spoke both English and French and instructed us on the history of the Chateau and informed us about the race course and stables. One of our number commented that he found his first sight of the Chateau breath-taking especially as it was on a beautiful sunny day, in addition he had never seen so many brides, who had all chosen to have their wedding photos taken in this picturesque setting.

Our dinner was at Chez Saison, a restaurant priding itself on providing only local produce and each in its season. This was a happy and convivial occasion where we were able to discuss the day's adventures.

On **Sunday 30 April** the group visited the Musée de la Nacre et de la Tabletterie à Méru. The history is that the mother of pearl craftsmen joined forces with tablet craftsmen. Tables were items made of bone or ebony for chess boards or other traditional games. This joining of the 2 crafts resulted in very beautiful games such as dominos inlaid with mother of pearl and the amazing fans which were fashionable in society weddings in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, in today's money one of these fans would buy a car. The French guide was a bit modest about his command of English which led to la Présidente's husband stepping in to translate for us, which was entertaining as well as informative. Having been told that there are sets of dominos going up to double nine, certain of our group undertook to calculate how many dominos would be in such a set and were delighted to have their answer confirmed.

We then went for lunch at a nearby golf course, Templiers à Yvry le Temple. We had a short time to relax with our host families before meeting up again for the farewell dinner in a community hall near the Council offices. We had a very pleasant evening enjoying the buffet supplied by our hosts. There was a speech from la Présidente and one of our number gave an impassioned response in French, without notes, and received a standing ovation for his efforts and for the

expression of the necessity for a world without walls. Two people in our group were privileged to be invited to a private party being held by the parents of one of the hosts to celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary.

**Monday 1 May** saw us either making our way home or continuing our stay in France. Once again we all had a lovely time with our hosts making us feel very welcome. It is so interesting to spend time in their homes discovering both different culture and customs but also realising just how similar we are. There were 3 new families who took part as hosts this time and they all seemed to enjoy the experience, so hopefully they will become regulars.

2018 is the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the start of the Twinning relationship between Beverley and Nogent-sur-Oise and our French friends have named it **le Vingt An**. They are determined to make it a memorable occasion and have already started discussing venues for our visit, including Christine's restaurant, Bar de Saulcy for the Saturday evening soirée. They want to welcome as many of us as possible so please make a note of the date: **Friday 26 to Monday 29 October 2018**.