

# Worcester Twinning Association

# CONNECTIONS

Summer 2015



Editor Contact Derek Furby  
Membership Contact: Malcolm Campbell



VERNON



Contact Rosemary Campbell

Worcester was back in Vernon for the Foire aux Cerises (Cherry Fair) that took place from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> May. Six members of the Worcester Twinning Association (Caryl and Lyndon Bracewell, Pam and Derek Furby, Rosemary and Les Tunley)

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came over to man the stall. Unfortunately Rosemary Campbell, the liaison officer, and her husband Malcolm, the Treasurer, could not join the party as Malcolm had suffered from a heart attack 3 weeks before and was due for an operation on the 21<sup>st</sup>. I am glad to say he is now making good progress.

This year the stall has moved from Place de la République to Place De Gaulle which is a better location as it is right in the middle of the town's shopping area. People were walking past the stall on their way to different shops. There is also much more space and the surroundings are more attractive.

The stall was double the size it used to be thus could be divided into a part devoted to the selling of goods, and a part where the food was being prepared. The home-made marmalades were particularly popular, and after 2 1/2 days they had run out of (mainly local) beer. Ploughman's lunches and cream teas were served at round tables in front of the stall. People came to sample English food, buy products that reminded them of trips to England, and speak English too! There were as usual friendly meetings with the Germans from Bad Kissingen, who came for cups of tea and to stock up on English goods, while the English enjoyed German beer and sausages.

There was plenty going on: music, clowns, a medieval fete, even some wrestling on the Sunday! The weather was nice and sunny, even hot at times, and it only rained once on the Saturday afternoon for a good half hour – but didn't it rain then! After that it was back to normal and "business as usual".

On the Friday the Vernon Twinning Association had organised the traditional European Dinner. The English and Germans were guests of honour. The Mayor, Sébastien Lecornu, and several councillors, among whom Nathalie Roger who is in charge of twinings, were present. They stressed the importance of the links with the 2 foreign towns and that for them a Friendship Pact was as important as a twinning. The Mayor and 2 or 3 of his councillors are keen to visit Worcester in 2016: an event to look forward to.

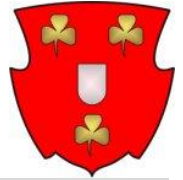
The English party left on the Tuesday morning, a little tired but happy after this successful return to the Cherry Fair and already thinking of next year's edition. A big thank you to them all for their hard work and good spirits (there was a lot of laughter), to Rosemary Campbell who was the chief organiser, the host families and the support of the Twinning Associations. See you in Vernon in 2016 for the 33<sup>rd</sup> Foire aux Cerises!

**Bénédicte Reynolds**





# KLEVE



Contact: Les Tunley

A photo of Theo Brauer, mayor of Kleve with our mayor Roger Knight. Theo is here on a visit with his wife Jutta and 2 other officers from Kleve City Council and their wives.

This is the last visit to Worcester for Theo as mayor of Kleve who is ending his term of office as mayor in September this year. Theo will not be standing for re-election.

He has been an excellent ambassador for Kleve/Worcester Twinning, very supportive and we will all miss his support and friendship very much.

The group of six, Karl-Heinz and Gisela who are also in Worcester at this time on a private visit and Les and Rosemary were invited to attend the Mayors Civic Service in the Cathedral.



## Upcoming visit from Kleve

It doesn't seem that long ago since a good number of us went to Kleve for a very enjoyable visit. Now preparations are underway for approximately 35 of our German Twinning friends to visit us here in Worcester. The proposed date for this visit is currently 4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and we are still looking for a few more volunteers to be host families during this time. If you are free and available and willing to help out please contact . Even if you are not able to host a family for this week we would still greatly appreciate offers of help you can give in any other way (i.e. a meal out at your favourite pub or help with transportation).

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## English Drama contest "Tell a Story!" Continues to be a success.

This year we held a very successful English drama contest aimed at schools in our town. One hundred boys and girls have staged their productions and took care of every detail. The judges, composed of specialists in the field, highlighted the good level especially with how the students expressed themselves in English. Both actors and audience enjoyed the show immensely, so the Association has already delightedly committed to convene next year, the fifth edition of the competition.

In the mean time, we encourage you to visit the website of our Association where you can find a graphic story that illustrates the event well.

<http://www.achlacanada.com/actividades/teatro-en-ingles/144-tell-a-story-2015>

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the teachers and students for their enthusiasm and effort, by enabling learning English in a more experiential and close dimension. We are confident that the results are worth the effort.

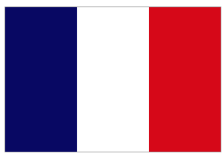
Congratulations to all participants and to close... Tell a Story!

Best regards,

Marina

President ACH-La Cañada

Web: <http://www.achlacanada.com/#>



**LE VÉSINET**



**Contact; Rosemary Campbell**

## **VISIT TO LE VÉSINET - 2015**

In June, a small group of members from Worcester attended the « Fêtes de la Marguerite » in Le Vésinet to celebrate its 40th anniversary of twinning with Outremont in Canada.

On Friday, there was a visit to the Louis Vuitton Foundation in Paris and everyone was totally mesmerized by the unusual futuristic building, which resembled a ship with billowing glass sails. We saw some of the world's most recognisable works of art at the contemporary art exhibition inside and we enjoyed fantastic views across Paris as we explored the rooftop terraces of the exterior.



In the evening, we were invited to a splendid twinning dinner, where we met old and new friends from Outremont, Unterhaching (Germany), Villaneuva de la Cañada (Spain) and Hunters Hill in Australia as well as our dear hosts from Le Vésinet.

[www.worcester-international-link.org.uk](http://www.worcester-international-link.org.uk)

On Saturday, after the official ceremony at the picturesque Lac d'Ibis, Anne-Marie Borderie, the new Présidente, took us to the delightful neighbouring town of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, where we learned about its history, which dates back to the 11th century. We visited the famous castle, where Louis XVI was born in 1638 and where King James II of England lived until his death in 1701. We also saw Debussy's birthplace, which is incidentally now the Tourist Information Office. In the evening, we attended the Dîner en Blanc on the Grande Pelouse, where the mandatory all-white dress code was duly observed. It was pleasantly warm and sunny and as we walked to the centre of the huge expanse of lawn, clutching picnic boxes, tables and chairs, the scene in the distance was reminiscent of a village cricket match in England. Our host families produced gourmet picnics, which were carefully set out like culinary masterpieces on the perfect white table linen. Corks began to pop and the glasses twinkled in the evening sunlight. The atmosphere was magical and became almost ethereal, when the candles and lanterns were lit in the fading light.



On Sunday we attended a special Mass with the Archbishop of Reims by the lake and this was followed by the town's traditional barbecue and a picnic, provided by our host families. The theme for 2015 was the celebration of 140 years of flowers in Le Vésinet. There was a display of vintage cars, numerous stalls and lively entertainment for all the family throughout the afternoon.

On Monday, we enjoyed a full day excursion to Chartres to visit the awe-inspiring cathedral, which was in the process of being painstakingly cleaned and extensively restored for the first time in its history. The magnificent medieval rose windows gleamed brightly and our hosts were astounded by the transformation of the once black grimy façade, which appeared like a luminous pale gold silhouette totally exposed by the daylight.

We would like to express our thanks to Anne-Marie Borderie and her team for the warm welcome we received during our stay in Le Vésinet and we are particularly grateful to all those families, who looked after us so well and worked hard to ensure that our visit was a great success.

**Rosemary Campbell**

## Work Experiences

Millie Jones (LVI)

I was looking forward to my exchange visit to France during February vacation. Georgina and I took a flight to Charles de Gaulle airport where the two French host families were waiting for us. The next two days I spent with my host family. On Saturday, we left le Vésinet to go to Paris, this was my first visit to Paris, so we did a little tour of the city. We ate the "Brunch" at a restaurant where we listened to gospel music while we ate. Amazingly, the work week was great fun. Employees (and of course the boss) were nice and they provided me the opportunity to serve customers



and to learn how to make coffee in France. Italian cuisine at the Cantina was impeccable and I was eating there at lunch every day. My stay in France was very nice. I loved French cuisine (especially snails) and the two visits to Paris were incredible. I must go to le Vésinet again soon!

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Georgina Hamilton (LVI)

My trip to Paris, for my work experience placement, with my best friend Millie was unforgettable! I have many fond memories. We tasted many French specialties (full of cheese), we ascended to the third floor of the Eiffel Tower and of course, we talked a lot of French. There is no doubt that I would recommend this experience to everyone, follow us? (!)

## **Gouzeaucourt,**

*The French town of Gouzeaucourt was “adopted” by Worcester in 1921 after being close to the front line throughout the First World War and totally destroyed prior to the German withdrawal in 1917. The Faithful City raised the money to install a new water supply for this town, near Cambrai.*

We thought that an appropriate way of marking the centenary of the start of the First World War would be to pay a visit to Gouzeaucourt, especially its exhibition of life in 1914. The local historian, Lucien Defawe, had written about his exhibition, which was mounted in the foyer of the local library during August. The exhibition had a splendid opening ceremony on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2014, and we arrived at the correct opening time on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, to find it closed! As they usually do, the Library staff had taken their annual holiday during the first half of August, and locked the building! They had forgotten about the visitors who might be coming to see the exhibition at the times widely advertised!

However, we had planned for this! We had written to Lucien before leaving Worcester, so he invited us to his house - for a rather special French welcome, involving some superb food! He also had his own key to the Library! So, after lunch, he gave us a private viewing of the exhibition – which turned out to be not quite so private, since several other people also turned up to see the displays! The Deputy Mayor, Madame Annie Bertrand, came to meet us, and then was kind enough to take us into the Mairie for drinks.

The exhibition was small, but very interesting. In it were extracts from a local girl's diary for the month of August 1914. In the face of the advancing Germans, the French army had retreated leaving the village defenceless. It's hard to imagine, but the whole population left the village and her diary recorded the places where they were given a night's shelter and water for their horses. After 3 weeks of travelling, their progress was hindered by destroyed bridges, and they decided that, even under German occupation, their homes in Gouzeaucourt were better than an uncertain life on the road, so they returned. The Germans promptly arrived, and the locals were forced to lodge and feed them. Some old photographs gave an impression of how this occupation affected the local people. The exhibition also showed records of soldiers from Gouzeaucourt who were killed that year, and some fascinating videos.

On our return to Worcester, we discovered that a BBC reporter had also managed to pull some strings to get into the closed exhibition! On radio 4, he gave a good report of it, as well as his visit to the tunnels under Gouzeaucourt, where the Germans sheltered from allied shelling. At the end of the War, the tunnels were considered dangerous and closed off – so they still contain some artefacts from life 100 years ago!

Lucien had also put up explanations (in 2 languages) at sites of British interest in Gouzeaucourt: the pillbox erected by the British for defending the front line in 1917, and the Commonwealth Cemetery. Both are poignant reminders of what happened here 100 years ago. This year, the exhibition is about Gouzeaucourt in 1915, and is open all the year.

**Terry Coles**

## EHIC Card

At long, long last I have upgraded my mobile phone to one of the smart phones. So what?, I hear you say. While updating Pam's EHIC card I noticed on the website there was a free downloadable App. for this card. This enables you to store all your information on your smart phone or device, gives general information about the card, emergency phone numbers, covered treatments and costs and how to claim reimbursement, thus you no longer need to carry the EHIC card with you. It also allows you to renew your card and it even reminds you when the 5 year duration is due to expire.

Details of this can be found at:-

<http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/EHIC/Pages/about-the-ehic.aspx>

When this loads, on the right hand side of the page is a link entitled—Download the EHIC Smart phone App. Click on the appropriate link (choice of 3 types) when using your smart phone and download the app directly to your phone. If this makes no sense to you, ask a teenager, as they know everything!



Derek