

## Lèves visit to Nailsworth - 9 to 12 May 2024



What a wonderful few days. It couldn't have been such a success without the help of so many individuals and organisations, so let me mention them all, as they deserve our grateful thanks:

**Nailsworth Town Council and Deputy Mayor Shelley Rider** for her welcome and presentation of the gift at the Long Table meal. And of course **Tony Evans, Town Crier**, for attending the arrival and departure in his expert style, dressed in beautiful costumes for each occasion.

**Nailsworth CofE Primary School** and especially Deputy Executive Head **Kat Wood**, the children and their French teacher **Anna Moore**.

The **Lèves Jumelage** with their 'Président', **Philippe Vanneau**, Town Council representative, **Joël Houvet**, and of course Mayor, **Rémi Martial**.

The **Long Table** for agreeing to host us, with special thanks to **Will, Carina and Jo**.

The **Nailsworth Silver Band** for their wonderful concert.

To **Meg Evans** for working so hard replanting the Lèves Corner garden.

To **Jacque and Rob Joyce, Sue Ratcliffe and Callum Wardle** for stepping in to help out with accommodation.

To **ALL THE HOSTING FAMILIES** for their care and hospitality.

And almost last but not least to our tiny **TWINNING COMMITTEE** who worked so hard to make it all happen in the first place.

And a final thanks must go to the glorious weather! **Isobel**



Visit to **Woodchester Valley Vineyard**: Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> May was a glorious morning, perfect weather to enjoy the beautiful Woodchester countryside. Thirty five of us, French and Brits, turned up at this family owned vineyard for a guided vineyard and winery tour. Last May, we had visited a newly planted vineyard in Lèves and thought that our French friends might be interested in seeing how we made wine, very close to Nailsworth.

Rachel and her staff were the perfect hosts and delivered a fascinating tour, explaining how the vines were tended, harvested and taking us through the production process. With the help of translators, all of us were able to understand how the wine is made. We then had a tasting of four of their classic wines including a Pinot Rosé, a Culver Hill White, the Cotswold Classic White Sparkling and my favourite which was the Rosé Brut, a gold medal winner. (I enjoyed it so much that I bought a bottle of it for Keith's birthday). Our guides were very interesting and with the help of pictures and diagrams and wine, we spent a happy morning with our French companions.

Our guests were very impressed with the quality of the wines and at the end of the session, many of them bought bottles to take home. It may be a case of "taking coals to Newcastle" but it shows how much they appreciated our local wine. **Sharon**



chocolate cake at Three Storeys



Stroud Museum & garden and Amberley Church



afternoon tea at Burleigh Court Hotel





Kat Wood

Organised by ExecHead Sarah Broadbent and Acting Deputy Head Kat Wood, with help from French teacher Anna Moore, a twinning group was led around **NW Primary School** premises by the (elected) class reps. We were impressed with the well behaved, calm, happy atmosphere and the obvious pride of the children in their school. The children all filed in, in a very orderly fashion, for the end of week assembly, where Mayor Rémi Martial addressed them in very good English and demonstrated on one of the students how the French mayor wears his mayorial sash. Questions from the floor included “Did he know any French footballers?” “What was his favourite English food?” to which he responded that he had discovered Marmite – although he didn’t say whether he liked it or not!

One class was invited to stand up and sing ‘head, shoulders, knees and toes’ in French! Kat Wood explained that the children had been talking about Lèves during the week and were very interested.

Emilie and Léonie were quick to grab a couple of school jumpers in the after-school PTA sale.



Le beau temps a contribué à un très bon weekend qui s’est passé trop vite!

*Elisabeth*

The **joint committee meeting** was held on Saturday morning in the Sub Rooms café, where twinning matters were discussed and dates agreed for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reunion which will take place next year in Lèves: Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> to Mon 5<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

The NW Silver Band is keen to join us again and hopefully we will be able to persuade Tony Evans, town crier of both NW and Lèves, to come along too. It is hoped that representatives from Lèves will be able to attend this year’s Remembrance ceremonies in NW on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November as long as they can get back in time for their own event on Monday 11<sup>th</sup>.



**Mayor’s Visit**

On Friday, we had the pleasure of welcoming Rémi Martial, Mayor of Lèves along with other French visitors and members of the Twinning Committee, for a tour of our school. The visitors were impressed with our vast grounds and facilities that we offer our pupils. The School Council did an excellent job of showing around the group and answering any questions they had. After the tour, Mr Martial conducted a whole school worship, with the help of his translator, where the children asked some fantastic questions and were really engaged with the event. Overall, we were really pleased with how the visit went and hope to welcome Mr Martial back to our school in the future.

The visit was reported in the school newsletter

Despite all our practice, we Nailsworth **pétanque** players were soundly thrashed against the Lévois. We took it in typically good sportsmanlike fashion, shook hands, and enjoyed some welcome cool drinks and nibbles. Thanks to Fred Harkle for producing a pristine court and to youngsters Alice and Connie from the school, who came along to learn how to play. They show great promise so there's hope for the future.

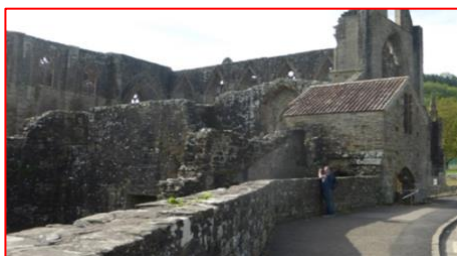


Thanks Isobel and team for organising another fantastic twinning weekend! The feedback from our guests was really positive. Thanks also for letting Anthony's mother join in; she was delighted and felt so welcome. Looking forward to our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary to come. **Rachael**

Hervé and I had a great start to the weekend. We checked-in to very nice and very spacious rooms at Egypt Mill before dining at the Balti. This proved to be a somewhat different experience to Indian meals Hervé had eaten in France. A measure of confusion arose when ordering the first course and the only French translation Google provided for 'popadom' unhelpfully turned out to be, er, 'popadom'!

After a hearty Egypt Mills breakfast we both thoroughly enjoyed the Woodchester Vineyard tour – but of course it meant rather more to Hervé with his responsibilities for the Community Vineyard in Lèves.

On the way back to The Forest we lunched in Westbury then visited the NT Dutch Garden. So good to see such a beautifully maintained place after one's own haphazard efforts at home. Stars of the show were a gigantic tulip tree and a three hundred-year-old holm oak of immense girth. Ah yes..... and the gorgeous bunch of asparagus we bought there just when I was getting desperate about what veg to have with our evening meal. We were not late to bed.



Before nine on Saturday we were on our way to Tintern – hunting wild garlic and bluebells en route along the Wye Valley. We did further bluebell hunting in Cadora Woods on the way home, before introducing a neighbour to Hervé over coffee. Lunch was followed by a nap, followed in turn by a trip to Mallards Pike beauty spot. And then visiting other neighbours for tea and cake in their garden.

In the evening, further neighbours laid on a BBQ in Hervé's honour and yet more locals were introduced. They were of mixed origin and

Hervé heard accents from The Forest, South Africa and Malta – with which, of course, he coped with great aplomb.

Finally, what would a jumelage visit be without a swap of presents? As usual I was almost overwhelmed by Gallic kindness but especially by a bottle of wine from the same grape variety that the Lèves community vineyard is growing and – treat beyond all treats - jam made with figs from Hervé's garden!

Hervé has now had his vintner's horizons widened by bottles from Woodchester, Three Choirs and Tintern vineyards and shortly will be introducing his wife, Marie to that most English delicacy - a jar of tahini.



**Ron Birch**



# THE LONG TABLE



Many thanks for all the planning and hard work that went into organising the twinning weekend and especially for the Long Table evening. Good food, music, ambiance . . . not to mention the weather! THANK YOU. **Rosemary**



**Gifts** were exchanged: a Bristol Glass blue dipper (Nailsworth's iconic bird) for Lèves and for Nailsworth, a lovely painting of the ancient abbey at the Fondation d'Aligre where John of Salisbury (1110s-1180, Secretary to the Archbishop of Canterbury, then himself Bishop of Chartres) is buried.

Croquet and pizza chez Rachael & Anthony



Piano playing chez Sue & Colin



Merci pour tous les bons moments et un grand merci à toutes les personnes qui ont participé à l'organisation de cet événement réussi. À bientôt. **Anais**

Dinner and a sing-song chez Julian



Many of us missed the **Aurora Borealis** over NW but its appearance at this time was a good omen for the future of our twinning relationship!

All too soon, it was time to say goodbye as the French coach set off early to cope with the motorway closures on the way to Folkestone.



Coming up . . .

Nous sommes bien rentrés à Lèves. Merci pour tous les bons moments passés avec vous. Nous sommes tous heureux de ce weekend ensoleillé. **Philippe**

