

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

A number of our activities during the past year were focussed around the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the signing of L'Entente Cordial agreement between Britain and France in 1904. It was also the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of the Twinning Association. I will deal first with the annual visits.

### Visit to Le Vaudreuil September 24 – 26 2004

For our visit to Le Vaudreuil we were granted free travel for our coach through the tunnel. This was Eurotunnel's way of commemorating the Entente Cordiale 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This meant that we were able to reduce the travel price to £25 per person after a further subsidy from our funds. They are repeating this offer again this year so we will be able to travel cheaply again in September. In 2006 there will be no such grant but with our fundraising activities our funds are in a fairly healthy state so we hope that we will be able to subsidise the travel again to keep the fares low.

During our visit the path by the river named 'Chemin de Comberton' was officially opened by the Mayor of Le Vaudreuil, the Chairman of Comberton Parish Council and the Chairmen of Le Vaudreuil and Comberton Twinning Associations. Prior to this daffodils were planted along the path. A picture of them in full bloom can be seen on the Le Vaudreuil website. I think it will be some time before they have a display to match ours in Comberton. After the opening of the path a Davidia tree was planted similar to the tree they gave us which was planted on the green at Harbour Avenue last year. After the planting we presented Valderoliens with two mounted £5 coins minted to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of L'Entente cordiale. This apparently is residing in the Mayor's office on his desk along with other momentos we have given. I would like to see them displayed in a more public place for all Valderoliens to see. The trees we gave to Le Vaudreuil last year, courtesy of Brian Worrall of Westlands, are planted near the path and appear to be thriving.

In the evening there was food, wine and entertainment in the Salle de Fete. The entertainment was focussed around the year 1904. It was a joint effort by Le Vaudreuil and Comberton. Brenda agreed to produce our contribution and did a good job knocking a group of total novices (sorry Mavis) into shape. Mavis was our star performer. Ivan Brown had written some appropriate words which were sung to the tune of 'Oh, We do like to be beside the seaside'.

Ivan made a video of the entertainment which was shown in this hall at our social evening just before Christmas and caused much amusement especially to the performers!

### Visit of Valderoliens to Comberton 18-20 March 2005

The visit was earlier this year due to the timing of Easter but nevertheless the weather was kind to us if a little chilly. The daffodils came into full bloom a few days before the visit and the village was looking very pretty. Some members took their visitors to Thriplow and wondered why they had with the excellent display in our own village. The week-end also coincided with the Science Festival at the University and several members took their guests there. On the Saturday evening our guests were entertained in various members houses in groups of varying sizes.

We all got together for lunch at the Meridian School when the school caterer provided an excellent lunch at reasonable cost. She also went to considerable trouble with the table decoration.

Our thanks to Ann Webb for arranging the hosting. We actually had more hosts than we need on this occasion which is rare. Her contact with the Meridian School also made it possible to hold the lunch there .

### Quiz Night

It would be very difficult for the Association to survive without fundraising. It enables us to subsidise travel and events making them more affordable especially to families with young children. For the fourth year running we held a quiz night in November for this purpose. We had a different Quiz master this time (another of Peter Mitton's contacts) who was very well received. We made a record profit of over £800 thanks to the hard work of some of our members. Ann Webb organised the catering and with her team provided an excellent supper. Jane Wakelin and Nerys Wright ran the raffle which made a record profit of over £200. They asked all members to contribute a prize and so there was a very good selection which obviously encouraged the sale of tickets. Our thanks to all those who gave prizes and to all those mentioned above . Also thanks to all those who attended – we had the maximum that the hall would hold.

### Social Events

We had our usual gathering at the Three Horseshoes to play Boule and in December as already mentioned we held a Social Evening in the Village Hall at which we showed a video of the cabaret in France last Sept (thanks to Mark Bennett for the loan of video projection equipment).

We have not yet held our Annual Dinner this year. In response to several requests we have a different venue this time – Madingley Hall. We are holding the dinner at the end of June so that we can appreciate the beautiful grounds – weather permitting. The dinner is very modestly priced and the Association is subsidising the event by providing the reception drinks from funds. I hope there will be a good attendance. Please let Peter or me know if you will be going by June 15<sup>th</sup> – with your payment.

### Visit of Musicians

A group of musicians from Le Vaudreuil visited Comberton last August and teamed up with the Combertones led by Keith Jackson. Unfortunately I was away at the time but I gather it was a very good week-end during which an open air concert was performed at the Meridian School.

Our thanks to Liz Bland and Peter Mitton who did most of the organisation.

### Private Visits

A number of these have taken place. Peter & Barbara Mitton and Derek & Mary Catlin visited Le Vaudreuil in January and Stephen & Pauline Grounds have also paid a visit. I understand that Simon Hothersall and family are exchanging houses with a family in Le Vaudreuil.

At this moment in time Mike Winney & Jane Wakelin are in Le Vaudreuil where Mike is organising a visit of engineers. They are I understand holding a reception in the Maire.

### School Visit

The Annual School exchange between CVC and College Montaigne is taking place this week. 24 students from Le Vaudreuil are here with Marie Curial and Parricia le Jeune who we are very pleased to welcome to this meeting. We have helped out as we did last year by accompanying visits to London and Ely – Peter Mitton went to London yesterday and Nerys Wright has been to Ely today. No teachers or students from CVC go on these visits so it is useful that we can help fill this gap.

### Next Visit to Le Vaudreuil 23 – 25 September 2005

The travel costs will again be subsidised through the generosity of Eurotunnel by again proving free passage for our coach through the tunnel. The Twinning Association will also subsidise the travel costs. We hope to keep the cost at £25 as we did last year. We need to have as many passengers as possible.

It just remains for me to thank our hard working committee and all of you for making our Association work. This has been Mary Catlin's first year as Secretary since she took over from Ivan Brown last year. The success of an organisation depends very much on the Secretary and Mary has done an excellent job. We were also very pleased to welcome Eileen Marsh to the committee.