



CITYLINK

(THE CITY OF CHICHESTER twinned SINCE 1959 with THE CITY OF CHARTRES)

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF CHARTRES Chichester's French Twinning Association

June 2012

[Re-numbered from the Millennium] **ISSUE: 49**

THE ANNUAL EXCHANGE WENT TO CHARTRES 27th April - 1st May 2012



FROM THE CHAIRMAN . . .

By now many of you will have heard about the marvellous Exchange visit to Chartres from 27th April to 1st May.

Thirty-eight 'FoC' members participated and it has been described as 'the best ever'. For me the highlight was the conducted tour by candlelight of the ancient Crypt and main Cathedral during the late evening, with the Cathedral empty, silent and in complete darkness apart from the light of our small hand-held candles. This was an experience just not available to an ordinary tourist and was a great example of what Twinning Activity can achieve.

As mentioned in the last Citylink, I took the opportunity during the Exchange, along with Clare Apel, to visit 'Les Compagnons du Partage' in Luce, a suburb of Chartres. More details inside, but a very sincere thanks to Chartres' City Councillor Maria Chedeville and the Charity's Director, Mme Nicole Gausseron for making such a useful and motivational visit possible.

Despite the very full Programme I was also able to visit Mme Simone Goussu at the Residence Silvia Monfort. As a young 6th-former in 1940, Simone helped Jean Moulin, Prefect of Chartres, look after thousands of refugees fleeing south-west through the City from Paris.

Later in the War, brave Simone was to become 'la femme qui a caché Maurice Violette' from the Gestapo for many months in her small cottage. Violette was a famous Government Minister and Mayor of Dreux in the late 1930s who supported Moulin's early Resistance activities.

She was in great form at 90 years old and talked at length about the imminent French Presidential Election. Her prediction was that François Hollande would win!

On the 5th May we held our third Schools Art Competition Awards Ceremony at Pallant House Gallery and were delighted to welcome Chartres' Deputy Mayor, Patrick Geroudet, for what was a very successful event.

Finally, we have just heard that Chichester Mayor and long-standing FoC member, Anne Scicluna, has won second prize in the Chartres' International Photographic Competition!

On behalf of the Exchange participants I would like, once again, to thank Mme Claire Crézé and 'Les Amis de Chichester' for a superb Exchange Programme and Julia Sander for organising things so well from the Chichester end.

MARTYN BELL
CHAIRMAN

53 years CHICHESTER Twinning 1959

53 years CHARTRES Jumelage 2012

PRESIDENT	
The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Chichester	
Councillor Anne Scicluna	
VICE PRESIDENT	
Diana Taylor	
OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS	
CHAIRMAN	Cllr Martyn Bell..... 839704
VICE-CHAIRMAN	Ray Brown.....783776
HON TREASURER	John Wilton788833
HON SECRETARY	Margaret Brown.....783776
Emma Heaver.....778568	Penelope Johnstone....771881
Julia Sander.....641488	(& 3 VACANCIES)
<i>(Co-opted)</i>	
Tony Harrison (<i>Chichester Lions Club</i>).....	785737
Iain Shepherd (<i>Chichester Chamber of Commerce</i>).....	787427
Alan Thurlow (<i>D.E.E.C.</i>).....	533092
CITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES	
(July 2011 - June 2012)	
Cllr Anne Scicluna.....	789065
Cllr Michael Woolley.....	789539

CHARTRES' PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION 2012:

Chichester wins 2nd place



Congratulations to our new Mayor, Cllr Anne Scicluna, on scooping up second place in the "Robert Laillet Prize" photographic competition with her entry "Swarm of bees on a park bench" which is shown below. Her prize, a special glasswork created by l'Atelier Picol was presented to her by our Chairman, Martyn. She was delighted and this now takes pride of place in the Mayor's Parlour.



CATHEDRAL NEWS

Chanoine Dominic Aubert (Chartres) attended Bishop John Hind's final service



On Sunday 29th April 2012 representatives of Chichester Cathedral's twin partners in Europe were present at the Cathedral for the 11 am Sung Eucharist, marking the occasion of the final service taken by Bishop John Hind before his official retirement on the following day. Honorary Canon Dorothea Greiner had travelled from Bayreuth, and Canon Wolfgang Klausnitzer from Bamberg, representing Chichester's church twinnings; joining them at the service was Chanoine Aubert, Dean of Chartres, representing the civic side of the twinning as well as the links between the two cathedrals.

Bishop Hind was introduced to the Chartres twinning as long ago as 1982, when he first came to Chichester as Principal of the Theological College. Shortly after his arrival here the German twinnings were initiated and he was very active in promoting them at that time. He worked closely with Canon Klausnitzer (then Vice Principal of the Seminary in Bamberg) in establishing the very active links between the two Colleges, both of which have sadly closed in more recent years. In 1991 John Hind was consecrated as Suffragan Bishop of Horsham and then, just two years later, moved on to become the Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe (he is a fluent speaker of a number of European languages). In 2001 he succeeded Bishop Eric Kemp as Bishop of Chichester. Bishop John and his wife Janet have retired to Emsworth, just across the border in the Portsmouth Diocese.



ALAN THURLOW

'Des Amis des Jumelages de Chartres' had sent an invitation to all amateur photographers in Chartres and its twin towns (Speyer, Chichester, Ravenna, Bethlehem, Evora, Léon and Sakurai) to take part in their second photographic competition. They received a total of 55 entries, five of which were from Chichester, and the jury selected 20 photographs to be displayed in Collégiale Saint André. These included three from Chichester: Rob Campling's 'Farming in the City'; Diana Taylor's 'La Chasse au Sanglier est Arrivée' and, of course, Anne's. Sadly, Ray Brown's 'A kiss in the park' and Margaret Brown's 'A host of golden daffodils' were not selected but thanks go to them for supporting Chichester's submission.

The other 17 photos selected for Exhibition included one from Bethlehem; two from each of the following - Eure et Loire, Lujan, and Sakurai; and ten from Ravenna. Members of the Laillet family, together with members of 'Des Amis', were at the Collégiale Saint André when the final results were announced. The Chairman of the Ravenna Commission collected the prizes for First and Third places whilst Claire Crézé received Anne's prize. This was brought to Chichester just in time for Anne's "Mayor's at Home" thanks to Richard Hammond, President of Chichester Rotary Club.

MAB



The Winning photo (left) and 3rd place (below) were submitted by Ravenna.

FRIENDS OF CHARTRES

Programme of Events 2012

- June 1st** **French Film Evening**
'Le Gamin au Vélo' (The Kid with a Bike)
Including pre-film glass of wine and canapés
(from) 7.30pm at Chichester Cinema at New Park
- July 12th** Petanque Match to Celebrate 'Bastille Day'
(Thursday)
- Sadly this has been postponed as Building Works at the Canal are not yet completed**
- September 27th** **"Pilgrim Routes across France"** by Julia Sander
(Thursday) 7.30 at St George's Parish Centre,
Cleveland Road, Whyke
- The following events are in the process of being organised
(Dates and venues to be advised)*
- October** *"Arles, Avignon, Aix-en-Provence, European
Cities of Culture"*
Illustrated talk by Julien Tognetti
- November** Celebrating 'le Beaujolais Nouveau'

EDITORIAL

Thank you to all who have contributed to this edition and, as you will see, there has been a lot of activity to report. To do justice to Jose Pound's comprehensive account of her visit to the Atelier Picot Workshop, this will be included in the next edition together with John Wilton's very interesting article about the afternoon Guided Tour of the Cathedral. I've also been promised an article about the Imperial Chapel in Dreux - visited during the 'Free Time' with hosts on the Monday. Any other articles about what you did on that day would be most welcome and I look forward to receiving them.

Two Rotary Clubs have also visited Chartres. Firstly, Harbour Rotary Club's Annual Charity Cycle Ride to Chartres took place over the Bank Holiday weekend - during the first round of voting in the French Presidential elections. More recently, Chichester's City Rotary Club were hosted by members of their 'Twin Club' and, as already mentioned in the previous column, helped us to retrieve Anne's prize. Their programme was very interesting and I hope to receive an article for the next edition.

Having the 'flu' meant Ray and I were not able to travel with the Exchange, which saddened us both. However, we did manage to join Alan Thurlow at the Cathedral for Bishop John's 'farewell' and were also able to say 'bonjour' to Chanoine Aubert.

Our next event is Julia's talk in September, more details of which are on the enclosed flyer. Various members of the committee are working on our future events, details of which will be published in the next edition.

Finally, if you have something to contribute to the next edition I need to receive it by Friday 31st August please. My contact details are on the back page and I look forward to hearing from you.

MARGARET BROWN

THE ANNUAL EXCHANGE WENT TO CHARTRES

27th April - 1st May 2012

This year the coach journey to Chartres included crossing the Channel from Newhaven to Dieppe on the Transmanche Ferry - a sister company of LD Lines Ferries. On arrival in Chartres the following programme, which had been prepared by our French counterparts, was revealed.

Friday Arrive in Chartres - evening with hosts.

Saturday - a selection of activities including:

- Macaroon Making - a 'Hands-on' experience
- Trip around the Old City in Chartres' Little Train
- Visit to Master Glass Maker, Denis Picot
- Visit to Micro-Brewery of Vincent Crosnier
- A Civic Reception in the Salon of Hôtel Montescot (Mairie) Patrick Geroudet, representing the Mayor, together with City Councillors Isabelle Vincent & Marie Chedeville plus Yves Bastide, Chairman of Friends of Twinnings, and Claire Crézé.
- During the afternoon there was also a guided tour of the restorations taking place in Chartres Cathedral.
- Evening - Dinner Dance at the 'Hippodrome' restaurant (in Chartres' Race Course)

Sunday Ceremony of Remembrance - Monument Jean Moulin

- Wreath laying by Prefect of Eure et Loir, Mayor of Chartres' representatives and the Mayor of Chichester, Cllr Tony French, who laid a Poppy Wreath.
- Followed by a procession to the Cathedral for a service.
- Afternoon - Horse Racing at Chartres' Hippodrome
- Joint Committee Meeting in Abbey St Brice
- Visit to Chartres Cathedral Crypt - by candlelight.

Monday Free Time with hosts

Tuesday Morning - Leave Chartres for the return journey home.

On the return journey Julia Sander asked some of our members to write about the activities in which they participated and these reports are shown in the centre pages. The accompanying photos are a combination of those from Jim & Diana Payne + their host François Remy, John Wilton, Julia Sander and lots taken by the French 'Twinners' (with thanks to the help of Claire Crézé in collecting these).

Claire has asked us to let you know about a 'blog' site which she and Jean-Paul Hernandez have created using some of these photos. It can be reached at www.cctwin28.blogspot.fr and the text is in French.

Next year's Exchange dates are:
Friday 3rd to Tuesday 7th May 2012

when we will host our Friends from Chartres



BREWERY VISIT

After lunch on the Saturday we were given the choice either to make macaroons or visit the brewery of Chandres, so you can guess where most people went! Vincent Crosnier, the eldest son of a farmer from Beauce told us how he got started. He soon understood that two families could not make a good living if they just produced cereals on their farm, and that he had to get an alternative source of income. It was during a training course in Lorraine where he was studying micro organisms that occur in the various stages of the brewing process that he noticed that all the conditions for the creation of brewing were present on the farm.

Thanks to several springs, water was abundant and cereals were already being produced on their farm. So in 2005 he started brewing on a small scale and the success that he encountered encouraged him. He was lucky enough to buy a large amount of vats and other brewing equipment second hand which interestingly was made in England. He still works on the farm but the brewery is his main interest nowadays.

Whilst his brewing process follows that traditional formula with hops and yeast he has added some ideas of his own. Cereals are added to malted barley to give a lighter flavour to the beer and sometimes flowers or fruits are added which gives his red beer its colour. After the various stages of boiling, filtering and fermenting, the beer is put into bottles and a little sugar added to carbonate the beer. He said that the whole process from start to finish takes 2 months.

Apart from his red beer, he produces six other types. His Ambre Myrte has a spiced flavour as does his Cuvée de Noël which of course he only makes at Christmas time. He has 2 pale beers which he calls Blanche and Blonde Ale and two Bière de Garde varieties, Brune and Rousse. And, of course, as you would expect, he then invited us all to sample the various varieties accompanied by some tasty nibbles that his wife produced.

GRAHAM POUND

MACAROON MAKING

We arrived in l'Îlot Delices' classroom (first floor of the prestigious "Maison du Saumon" above Chartres' Tourist Office) to learn the sticky art of producing macaroons. First task was cleaning hands and donning plastic aprons under the supervision of our tutors. We then divided into three groups of six each at a table with the measured ingredients set out.

All took turns at each stage. First mixing the sugar, ground almonds and other dry ingredients, followed by beating the egg-whites to a stiff consistency. Fortunately electric beaters were provided. After combining the eggs and powdered ingredients came the tricky, sticky bit: piping the mix onto baking trays to form about fifty neat little discs for each table. Fortunately the tutors were at hand to explain the technique. The discs were baked and meanwhile we prepared a chocolate mix which again was piped to cement pairs of the disks together to form the final product, the macaroons.

The final stage, quality control, was of course quite crucial. And yes, they tasted great!

JAN SANDER





THE CRYPT BY CANDLELIGHT

It's the only event in our wonderful programme in Chartres with no photographic record and yet it was for most of us one of the most memorable and powerful experiences of our lives. At 10.00pm on the Sunday evening, the great doors of the crypt were opened for us and we made our way down into the depths below the cathedral. Here we were given tapers, which were to be our only light as we followed the ancient walkway in the steps of generations of pilgrims.

Our excellent guide evoked for us the awe felt by those arriving at the cathedral centuries ago, after many days on the road. The sheer size of the edifice must have been overwhelming, as buildings of more than one storey were rare in the Middle Ages.

The journey through the crypt formed part of the pilgrimage, starting at the west end of the cathedral, walking up the north side and passing under the great altar before heading back along the south side. At the end of their journey, the devout pilgrims emerged into the glorious Baptistry, where they were baptised and cleansed of all their sins.

The high point of the visit was the moment when we emerged, still clutching our tapers like pilgrims in the past, in the cathedral itself, miraculously clear of the usual milling crowds. We could dimly make out the pillars supporting the cathedral, soaring above us like an avenue of tall trees. The atmosphere was peaceful, welcoming and deeply spiritual. To our amazement and delight, our guide launched into plainsong, which rang out around the vaults and pillars.

Then there was time for quiet reflection, deep in our own thoughts, feeling privileged to have been granted this extraordinary experience before returning to the outside world.

JULIA SANDER

DINNER DANCE . . . with Cabaret

Somehow the French always find a way to make an event special. This year we visited the Hippodrome Restaurant at the Horse Racing Stadium. Nicely set out with plenty of space and of course good French food and wine. A toast to the Twinning and some very short speeches was followed by "God save the Queen", not sure who started that singing but of course it had to be followed, good naturedly, by the Marseilles.

Dancing to some easy to follow popular music quickly saw the floor filled with people. An announcement then produced six Frenchmen to entertain us with English songs. 'If You're Happy, Clap Your Hands', 'Old MacDonald's Farm' - and the 'Chicken Song', fronted by a man dressed in a full length Yellow Chicken suit (François!) Dancing then continued to a late hour and we retired, quite exhausted, to prepare for another exciting Chartres' day.

Next year we entertain the French - could we practise some French songs? (Might be easier to cheat and pay someone!) I understand their 'training' was helped by generous helpings of Whisky. Could that be a temptation for some brave Chichester singers? I will provide the first bottle.

JIM PAYNE

A short video clip of the singers is available from Diana Payne on the internet at chipayne@tiscali.co.uk



FIRST VISIT TO CHICHESTER -

for Valerie Bonnin & Isabelle Vincent



Claire & Isabelle with Sarah Hunter (Art Co-ordinator) and Mr Fleming, Headteacher of Kingsham Primary School; Isabelle & Valerie with Emma Raynsford at Parklands Community Primary School; with Mrs Carvell (Head of Languages) and Mr Cannell, Headmaster at The Prebendal School

Just before Christmas the Headteacher of Jessie Younghusband School, Mrs Patrick, informed me that the *new* Headteacher at Chartres' l'école du Grand Jardin, Mme Bonnin, had accepted her invitation to visit JYS. The pupils of these two schools have been enjoying correspondence links since 2008/9, with thanks to Mrs Meyer (who is teacher of French at JYS) and Mme Bonnin (at that time teacher of English at Grand Jardin), which had been strengthened by our Schools Art Competition. Valérie Bonnin proposed a further strengthening of the link with visits to Chichester and Chartres by pupils of these two schools and the purpose of this invitation was to investigate this proposal.

Eventually it was confirmed that Valérie would be accompanied by Claire Crézé and Cllr Isabelle Vincent (+ son Joseph) arriving by Le Havre/Portsmouth ferry on the evening of Monday 23rd April and returning on the overnight ferry 48 hours later. Our schools were on holiday when this confirmation arrived - but on their return a meaningful Programme was produced for this small 'delegation' whilst Mrs Patrick organised Valerie's visit to JYS.

On the Tuesday morning Valérie went to JYS with her host, Mrs Patrick, whilst Claire, Isabelle + Joseph - who slept at Jose & Graham Pound's - came to my home where I was able to explain the programme and discuss with them the 'links' put forward in July 2011. Towards the end of last year's summer term Claire asked if we could find some more schools to link with Chartres' schools. It was a tough order but we managed to do it and last September more schools started their 'links'. By Christmas it was evident that only one of these was continuing to develop and this visit was an ideal opportunity for us all to look into this.

Our first visit was to Kingsham Primary School where Sarah Hunter introduced pupils who were working on their entry for our Schools Art Competition. She then showed us around the school and it was a privilege to go into the classrooms where the teachers and pupils were working. Headteacher, Mr Fleming, was disappointed that the link with l'école Maurice de Vlaminck had floundered but was keen to re-establish this using a cross-curricular approach, which was very encouraging for our visitors.

After lunch (prepared by my husband, Ray) Valerie joined us at Parklands where Emma Raynsford conducted the 'Grand Tour'. As previously reported, their link with l'école Jules Ferry was successful and we saw a part of their entry to our Competition. Like last year, several classes had been involved in this project including many pupils of different ages.

Prebendal and l'école Guéry are private schools located very near their respective cathedrals. The Headmaster, Mr Cannell, and his Deputy, Mrs Carvell, had prepared new proposals to establish email links. These were discussed and clarified with our visitors and we now wait with the hope of a positive reply from the French school. Mr Cannell then took us to the Cathedral's choir school which is accessed by a circular stone stairwell within a tower. We saw, and heard, the choristers practising for a live BBC performance the next day. This was indeed a very special treat which was appreciated by our guests who then completed a short tour of the Cathedral before leaving for the shops.

Other committee members joined us at The Nags hostelry in St Pancras for a relaxed evening meal comprising a typical English Carvery - and pudding, of course! Our guests liked the ambiance of this typical English pub/restaurant and it was a most enjoyable evening with lots of conversations taking place.

Mrs Patrick invited Isabelle and Claire to visit JYS early the next morning whilst Valérie completed her 'programme' by visiting St Anthony's Special school. At 11am we arrived at the Council House to meet the Mayor, Tony French, and his Deputy Mayor, Anne Scicluna, who gave our visitors a very informed tour of this historic building, finishing in the Mayor's Parlour.

Next on the programme was Pallant House, for Valerie to deliver her school's artwork. Unfortunately we were not able to meet Marc Steene as he was in Belgium, but Isabelle and Valérie took advantage of being able to look at the Exhibitions in the Gallery. And finally 'shopping time' before catching the over-night ferry from Portsmouth.

A rather short but very worthwhile visit, with much achieved.

MARGARET BROWN



English hospitality at 'The Nags' with some of the Friends of Chartres' committee



Tour of the Council House "in style" with the Mayor, Tony French, and Deputy Mayor, Anne Scicluna dressed in their 'official' robes.



The French entry for our Schools Art Competition arrives at Pallant House Gallery

SCHOOLS ARTS AWARDS 2012

“A Tale of Twinned Cities”: Chapter 2 - Textiles



Saturday 5th May and the Lecture Room on the first floor of Pallant House Gallery was filled with children, teachers, parents/family members, sponsors and specially invited guests, all of whom were eagerly waiting for the results of this year’s Annual Schools Arts Competition. Director of the Gallery, Stefan van Raay, opened the proceedings with words of

welcome, and paid a special thanks to the councils who had provided grants and also to the sponsors.

FoC’s Secretary, Margaret Brown explained the background to the competition. In September 2007 the Mayor of Chichester (at that time her husband, Ray) was invited by the Mayor of Chartres to their Fête de la Lumière. Whilst there Patrick Geroudet told them about an ‘Exhibition’ he thought would interest our schools. Ray agreed to receive these photos of ‘Picassiette’ and 2 months later when the Chartres’ Mayor came to help Ray switch on the Christmas Lights they were brought to Chichester, initially stored in the Mayor’s Parlour and later in Pallant House - thanks to Stefan. ‘Picassiette’ is an example of naïve art and Marc Steene, Head of Learning, thought to use this for our first Art competition, which we launched in May 2009 as part of a year of celebration to mark the City’s 50th Anniversary of Twinning with Chartres. At the Awards presentations - end of September - four local schools had completed their projects. Since then the competition has gone from strength to strength - this year entries were received from one French and eleven local schools.

After Lin Chaplin, former Headteacher, thanked the committee and Pallant House Gallery and introduced Textile Artist, Sharon Kearley, Stefan spoke about this year’s competition, the focus of which was ‘Textiles’, inspired by the Piper Tapestry which was made in France and is displayed in Chichester Cathedral. He informed us that the judges had a challenging task as “*the work received was so incredible*” and he thanked his fellow Jury members before announcing the winners, starting with French entry from l’école du Grand Jardin. Deputy Mayor of Chartres, Patrick Geroudet, received the trophy and framed certificate for that school, then expressed thanks to all and extended an invitation for this year’s Exhibition to be displayed in Chartres.



The Judging Panel comprised: Marc Steene, Stefan van Raay, Lin Chaplin, Ray Brown & Natalie Franklin



(above) Winners: Lavant House School (First place)
(below) Highly Commended: Bosham Primary School (2nd Place)



Then to Chichester’s entries. Lavant House was ‘The Winner’ and The Mayor, Cllr Tony French, and Monsieur Geroudet, presented the Trophy (held for one

year) and Certificate (to keep). The pupils’ prize was a Weaving Workshop to be held in Pallant House two weeks later. Second place went to Bosham Primary School, with a Workshop for their pupils (as above) and their Certificate was endorsed ‘Highly Commended’. Parklands Community and West Dean Primary schools shared Third place and their Certificates were endorsed ‘Commended’. The Mayor then presented Certificates to each of the other schools whilst Chartres’ Deputy Mayor gave them a book about Chartres, amidst well-deserved applause.

The children felt very special that their artwork was on display in this very prestigious location and the Exhibition would continue throughout May but with a selection of entries. Some entries were very large, limiting available wall space, whilst others comprised several pieces of artwork and after the ‘Awards’ weekend the tables and easels used for displaying would not be available.



Patrick Geroudet
Deputy Mayor Chartres

We now wait for confirmation of the dates for the Exhibition to be displayed in France and, with the help of Chichester Lions Club, we look forward to taking it there. Congratulations to all Schools.

below l-r: “Commended” (Joint 3rd place)
West Dean and Parklands Primary Schools



LES COMPAGNONS DU PARTAGE

Last summer I was invited by Clare Apel, long-standing 'FoC' member, to become a Trustee of the Chichester-based homeless charity 'Stonepillow'. Clare was Chairman of the Trustees at the time and felt that with my retail warehouse background I could contribute to the development of Stonepillow's new furniture and white-goods recycling fund-raising venture 'RESTORE' which is located in the Terminus Road Industrial Estate.

When I mentioned this to my daughter, Harriet (also a member of FoC) she recalled that the mother of a French friend at University was involved in something very similar in Chartres. The mother's name was Nicole Gausseron. The Charity was for homeless people and called 'Les Compagnons du Partage'.

Last September I mentioned this to Patrick Geroudet and Maria Chedeville who confirmed that 'Les Compagnons' was very well known, long-established and successful. Indeed Patrick had recently bought some very nice 'recycled' chairs from their warehouse. Maria agreed that when Clare and I visited Chartres on the 2012 Exchange she would try and arrange an on-site meeting for us with Mme Gausseron whom she knew. As a result, on the Saturday afternoon of the Exchange, Clare and I were driven by Maria to a cold, wind-swept, rain-soaked Industrial Estate to the south of Chartres to visit the operation. As luck would have it, the warehouse was open (it takes furniture and other donations any day but only sells on two days a month). Despite the weather the large car-parking area was packed.



Nicole Gausseron, Martyn, Maria & Clare

We met Nicole in her admin office, shared with her only full-time employee - a former 'Compagnon' originally from Ghana. After a short briefing by Clare on Stonepillow, Nicole explained that Les Compagnons raised funds simply to provide shelter for homeless men. (Stonepillow's role is not just to provide shelter for men and women, but also a voluntary 'Recovery' journey for rough-sleepers often with very serious addiction problems.)

Nicole showed us around the very large site. Besides a main warehouse for furniture, bric-a-brac & white goods incorporating a workshop, there were separate buildings for clothes and books. Everything was 'merchandised' very professionally.



The Book store was being managed by a retired Police Commissioner who also ran the Finances. Like the other staff (there must have been about 20) he was an unpaid Volunteer or 'Benevol'. Former and current 'Compagnons' were also helping. On closed days they repaired and restored furniture and electrical donations under the supervision and training of 'Benevols' who were qualified tradesmen. Literally dozens of customers were present and inside the buildings there was a real 'buzz'.

continued.....

FRENCH Language Circle

The purpose of the Circle is to read and speak French, therefore helping members to become more fluent and confident in the language. We meet at 2.30pm in members' homes, where the hostess provides tea and biscuits around 4.00pm. We then relax our conversation somewhat and either continue in French to those nearest to us, or else chat back in our native tongue. People go home between 4.30 and 5.00pm.

LE PETITE CERCLE FRANÇAIS (Afternoon meetings)

SEPTEMBER (Thursday)

13th MARJORIE WINN

"Northways", 10a Lavant Road, Chichester527376

OCTOBER (Thursday)

11th JOYCE MITTON

38 St Leodegar's Way, Hunston.....779558

NOVEMBER (Thursday)

8th DAPHNE BOWLING

"Sandpipers", Mill Lane, Sidlesham.....641660

DECEMBER (Thursday)

13th WENDY & PAUL DEVONSHIRE

"Lane End", Sidlesham.....641457

Enfin nous sommes arrivés à la fête de Noël, et on recommence le mois de Janvier.

New members please do come along and join us for an informal couple of hours of French conversation avec une tasse de thé, quelques biscuits, et un petit devoir, mais je vous en supplie de téléphoner à la hôtesse en avance s'il vous plait !!

DAPHNE BOWLING : (01243) 641660

MORNING CIRCLE Please contact me for further details - merci.

EMMA HEAVER : (01243) 778568

LE CERCLE FRANÇAIS AVANCÉ ('Twilight' meetings)

Up-to-date information from: HENRIETTA NAPIER (01243) 528238

Annual Membership Fees

£10.00 single * £15.00 joint/family * £20 corporate

For further information please contact

Membership Secretary : Mr Ray Brown

(01243) 783776

Returning to the office, Nicole gave us copies of the last 2 year's accounts and we were very encouraged by the level of sales achieved. However, Nicole pointed out that there were no Charity Shops in Chartres unlike Chichester (Clare had already noticed!) and no competing warehouse operations.

Finally, Nicole presented us with an illustrated book about 'Les Compagnons du Partage' which we are happy to lend to interested members. We came away inspired and motivated and with many ideas to pass on to the Stonepillow RESTORE team.

MARTYN BELL