

News from The French Connection and VLB

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF TWINNING



On 10 Oct 2010 Echo Irving for Wrington PC and J.P. Galonnier for (VLB) signed the formal Charter of Twinning, which is on display in the Memorial Hall. So ten years later, on Saturday 10 Oct 2020 a group of Wringtonians and Villeneuvois joined on Zoom to raise a glass in celebration. The French drank mid-day champagne and a few of us raised an 11am glass of wine - no names mentioned! Jill Rawlings, the Chair of Wrington PC said, "Congratulations for 10 years of successful twinning, and I toast everyone for the next ten years of *entente cordiale* - with a cup of tea!"

Fabrice Solans, the new Mayor of VLB, together with Céline Dubois and Jérôme Fabre, are strongly supportive of the twinning relationship. They recently won a hotly contested mayoral election and as part of their election campaign came to visit Wrington! They are keen to deepen the relationship and broaden participation and involvement - and we agree. In-between sips of champagne they proposed cultural and sporting exchanges for children and seasonal work exchanges for young people. Coronavirus permitting we hope for some "adult" exchanges, perhaps involving food and wine, culminating in a group visit of Villeneuvois for the Wrington Fair in May 2022.

They are also planning to hold a commemoration to upgrade the plaque honouring Lt Rodgers, a Royal Navy pilot who gave his life near VLB during WWII. Please contact John Urquhart for more details john.urquhart54@gmail.com

There was a tangible vibrancy and sense of fun from the new team in France and this bodes well for the future of our twinning. If you would like to know more about any of this please contact John Adams at welcome@wringontwinning.co.uk

Shail Patel

Interim Chair, Wrington French Connection

Annual General Meeting

Dear Member,

The Annual General Meeting of the Wrington Twinning Association will take place on 11th November 2020 at 7.00 p.m. via Zoom.

The agenda for the Annual General Meeting will be as follows:

1. Apologies and welcome
2. Minutes of the AGM 12th November 2019
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairman's report
5. Resolutions
6. Finance report
7. Elections to the Committee
8. Any other business

Notice of any resolutions to be presented should be sent to the Secretary no later than one week before the meeting.

Nominations for Committee members should be sent to the Secretary by email one week before the meeting with a brief profile of the candidate and her / his reason for seeking election.

Seconders will be accepted at the meeting, as will new nominations subject to the Chairman's approval.

A link to the Minutes of the last AGM, the Finance Report and other items will be circulated in advance of the meeting.

If you have any queries, please email me

I look forward to seeing you 11 November

JOHN ADAMS

Secretary, Wrington Twinning Association

Email: secretary@wringontwinning.co.uk .

News from France

- As in the UK and many other countries, Covid-19 rates are soaring in France and strict lockdown measures are in force across the country to try and contain it. As during the earlier lockdown, if you leave your home you must first fill in a form giving your reasons for doing so. This is a *déclaration sur l'honneur* which means that false declarations are a punishable offence.
- Passengers flying to and from Paris airports are required to take an 'antigenic' virus test, for which results should be available in 10-15 minutes.
- France has been rocked by the beheading in a Paris street of Samuel Paty, a schoolteacher who had illustrated a lesson on free speech with what were said to be offensive cartoon pictures of Mohammed. The culprit was an Islamist of Russian birth. He was shot dead by police. A number of Paty's pupils are being accused of supplying information on his whereabouts to the assassin in return for money. Paty is being treated as a national hero for upholding the traditional French constitutional values of secularism and free speech and President Macron has also talked of awarding him the *Légion d'Honneur* posthumously. There has since been a knife attack in Nice killing three people and there are reports of another knife attack in Lyon. There is a school of thought which argues that, whilst nothing excuses the conduct of the assassin, Paty's action was highly provocative and almost bound to provoke a violent reaction (as in the case of the *Charlie Hebdo* cartoons referred to in last month's newsletter) and that he ought not to have done it. The subsequent knife attacks are seen as evidence of this reaction. President Macron has come under heavy criticism in some Moslem countries for his apparent support of Paty.



Might you be deemed to be resident in France for tax purposes?

How much time do you spend in France each year? Might you be at risk of being considered to be resident there and therefore liable to French income (and other) taxes. The fact that you declare your income and pay your taxes in the UK does not automatically absolve you. You could be considered to be resident in both countries. The French use the term '*domicile*' to denote where a person is resident. This does not have the same meaning as the word '*domicile*' in English tax law. You can be considered to be fiscally domiciled in France if you

satisfy any one of the following tests:

- Your principal home is in France or you spend more than half the year there.
- You are employed or carry on a business in France, other than as ancillary to a business carried on in another country,
- The centre of your economic interests is in France,
- Your family is in France.

If the French tax authorities decide you satisfy any **one** of these tests you could become subject to French income tax on your worldwide income and, on your death, to French inheritance tax (*droits de succession*) on your worldwide assets. If you are also resident in the UK there are complex rules to avoid you having to pay all these taxes in both countries, but they are not always clear and satisfactory and it is best not to have to rely on them. Even if you are not *domicilié* in France for tax purposes, you will still be liable to French taxes on income arising in France and to *droits de succession* on all your French real estate on your death.

To get advice on French tax matters you can consult either a *notaire* or a *conseil fiscal*.

Fontevraud Abbey



If you are in the Loire Valley a site that is off the track of the most visited châteaux and that is well worth a visit is the 12th century Abbey of Fontevraud, just a short way off the river, between Saumur and the lovely old town of Chinon. Here, amongst other attractions on this fascinating site, you will be plunged back into English history, It was the home of Eleanor of Aquitaine and her husband the English king Henry II, who was of course French (or rather, Norman). Henry, his wife and his son Richard the Lionheart were all buried here in the abbey church around the end of the 12th century and their tombs are there to be seen, although their remains have been removed, probably during the French Revolution. Eleanor was the former wife of King Louis VII of France. She was Duchess of Aquitaine and she conferred the dukedom on Henry so that, when Henry took the English throne from Stephen de Blois in 1154, Aquitaine effectively came under the same rule as England. Henry II was the first king of the Plantagenet dynasty and it is interesting to note that the word 'Plantagenet' comes from the French '*plante à genêts*', meaning 'broom bush'. It is doubtful whether Henry even spoke English.

Following the end of the Plantagenet dynasty the abbey fell into disrepair and eventually, at the time of the French Revolution, it became a prison. The church, the cloisters and some of the other old buildings are still there and there are relics of their days as a prison. Since 1975 Fontevraud has been a cultural centre and it is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Apart from the buildings, the extensive abbey grounds are well worth a visit and the adjacent village of Fontevraud is a charming place to stop for lunch.

Humour is international – French joke of the day!

Monsieur le commissaire, annonce un mari éperdu, je viens vous déclarer la disparition de ma femme. Elle était sortie pour promener le chien et voilà une semaine qu'elle n'est pas rentrée à la maison.

- Pouvez-vous me donner son signalement ?

- Euh... Elle est rousse. Non, blonde... Pas très grande... Pas vraiment petite, non plus... Et elle a les yeux verts. Non, bleus... Non, verts, verts... Enfin je crois.

- Bien, dit le commissaire en soupirant. Et le chien, il était de quelle race ?

- Briard. Soixante-cinq centimètres au garrot, poil fauve clair, truffe noire, yeux marrons foncés, légère cicatrice sous le menton, numéro de tatouage GAH 492.

ANTHONY HANCOCK