

## Friends of Chaville – Chairman’s Report 2007- 2008

We had a good year. At our planning meeting in May 2007 when we hosted our Chavillois friends, we laid down a programme that included:

- A visit by Chavillois to the Lake District 7-12 July 2007, John Hart main organiser
- A visit by FOC to Loire Valley 3-7 September 2007, Josiane Lecomte organiser
- Youth exchanges : Christine Debono arranged a visit for 8 young Chavillois to stay at Moat Mount, with their Pegase youth workers, 23-27 July 2007. This return exchange following the highly successful visit by Barnet youngsters to Chaville, went very well. Madam Mayor, Cllr Maureen Braun, visited Moat Mount and saw the programme of activities arranged by Barnet.
- To coincide with the young people’s visit, Patrick Souahalat and Victor Gottesmann , from la Mairie de Chaville, visited Barnet. John Hart arranged for their stay at Days Hotel, London Gateway, and ferried them to meet Flo Armstrong and representatives of business and youth organisations in Barnet. They sought to strengthen Chaville-Barnet links.
- Subsequently, Chaville Pégase youth service invited young people to Chaville for July 2008. Owing to Christine Debono’s illness this looks unlikely to take place, which is a pity.
- Tennis exchange, Penny Telfer is hoping to arrange a return match for Barnet’s successful tennis visit to Chaville in Spring 2007
- Our annual Quiz on 26 January, held at Quench Café, was a sterling success, socially and financially. Chelle, Jim, Lorely, Penny did wonders. My Chairman’s thanks on behalf of us all.
- Visit and planning meeting Chaville, 13-17 March was generously hosted and organised by Josiane, Françoise, Emmanuel, Chantal and their committee. We visited le Château de Chantilly, Chartres, *Les Phéniciens* at l’Institut du Monde Arabe, *entre autres*. Only regret was that the visits to Brittany and Cornwall were off. and we lost the petanque match, so La Coupe Sportive remains in Chaville. *Note*: more training is needed. Clearly our 2 sessions during the last year were insufficient preparation. Watch out for more opportunities in the coming year.
- Our visit coincided with the ‘deuxieme tour’ of the municipal elections: Chaville swung right against the trend and we lost a friend in Jean Levain and the Mairie staff.
- Irene Nicholls is improving our website on Barnet’s website. We are designing a welcome pack for new members

This barebones account gives no idea of the *camaraderie* participants felt in each event. The Lake District was a revelation to the French, (who preferred to slum it at Youth Hostels and B & Bs, whereas we comfort-seeking Brits lodged at the Sawrey Hotel at Far Sawrey). *Chacun son goût*.

Eight FOC took up Josiane's invitation to the Loire Valley in September. Nothing but thanks and praise for her organisational flair, and the support of the rest of her team. It was a wonderful visit.

## **Future Plans**

- Music : Finchley Chamber Choir wish to perform in Chaville. Joan Bloomfield, its driving force, is meeting Cedric Perier in Chaville this June to arrange a concert in 2009 to coincide with Chaville's tripartite Alsfeld-Torino-Barnet twinning event.
- Separately, London Pro-Arte Choir is anxious to perform in Chaville, target being 2010. We are in contact with Dr Molly Scope, its Chairman.
- Penny Telfer has worked hard on arranging video conferencing between East Barnet School and Jean Moulin College. Nick Christou, Head of East. Barnet School, is keen to support this.

None of this could happen without a stout committee. You have one. I am very thankful to them, and the kindness of Penny, Chelle, Lorely and Phyllis for hosting meetings, with refreshments. Being Chairman of such a crew is a pretty cushy number. I wonder there is not a queue for the job.

**John Hart, June 2008**