

Friends of Chaville Society

Chairman's report 2011-12

After a decade in an old man's life, it is time to hand over the chairmanship. So this is my last Annual Report.

Pétanque apart – and Chelle arranged four matches – the year's salient event must be the trip to Cornwall, well – no, superbly - organised and choreographed mainly by Penny, 6 – 16 July. French and Brits meshed in, visited widely (I'm only sorry that I couldn't manage the visits owing to Irene's confinement to a wheel chair, but we enjoyed ourselves) and the Anglo-French teams sought to out-cook each other in the kitchen on every night. It was all immense fun, one of the best. Penny's Newsletter says it all.

Then more dining: dinner for 20 on 22nd September, again a very friendly affair, in East Barnet, *entre Anglais*. Later in the year we shared a Christmas dinner in Potters Bar with the friends of Siegerland,

We sent a FOC wreath, alongside the LBB one, to Chaville for Armistice Day, the last time Denis Sommereux would lay it for us.

Malika again came to London, bringing 4 adults and 4 children, on one of her lightning visits. Lorely laid on a hospitable bring-a-dish for them.

Before then we had enjoyed one of our best Quiz Evenings on 3rd March, at St Paul's Church Hall, with supper first, so no break in the questions and everyone fed and therefore not fed-up. That must be the best formula for future.

In this droughty year it rained especially hard for our Chaville visitors who crossed the channel for their annual visit 26-29 April. My thanks to the sub-committee which handled accommodation, tours, and programme. *Mais comme il pleut toujours en Angleterre il fallut annuler le tournoi de pétanque pour la Coupe Sportive le dimanche de la visite, pour cause de pluie...*

The French returned to Paris after a pleasant lunch at the Metro-golf restaurant. The Coupe is currently resting chez the Nichols.

Most of these events are reported, and pictured, in the Newsletters so well prepared and printed by Penny. We owe her a big *merci* for them.

Not all has been happy, however. During the year we lost two committee members - Phyllis Palmer and Nigel Ellis and a founder member of the FoC, Karl Ruge. In France Denis Sommereux died suddenly, leaving a gap in the Jumelage that will be hard to fill. Jean-Pierre Cardin, Conseiller Municipal à Chaville, has agreed to lay our wreath, beside Barnet's, in his stead.

This year has seen two of us launch new careers as authors - Keith and myself. My book, Mammoth Boy, is available at Waterstones, Ballards Lane, and on Amazon.com. Keith's are available at Waterstones also.

And finally, as we go to press, we await the visit of the Paul Bert School from Chaville. A robing ceremony with the mayor, Cllr Brian Schama has been arranged for them.

To all the Committee, my thanks for your stalwart support and organisational flair which has made my decade in the chair such an easy, pleasant and hospitable one. Long may it continue.

John Hart, Chairman

