

Friends of Chaville Newsletter Winter 2009

After a really full spring and summer for the Friends of Chaville, the Autumn has been extremely lively too.

With 50 years of twinning, there have been many memorable occasions. You can read about some of them at the end of the newsletter.

Petanque

Firstly there was our highly successful Petanque session in September. The very worthy winner was a relative newcomer to the game - Cllr Hugh Rayner. There was a really good turnout, and we hope, from that display of enthusiasm and prowess, that we will regain the Coupe Sportive next spring.

Chavillois family visit to Barnet

At the end of September, a group of parents, each with one child, came for 4 days to explore London. Malika Bouchaib had organised it from the French end and the group, also accompanied by a primary school teacher from Chaville, spent their time most fruitfully. The warm welcome given to the group by their Barnet hosts was very much appreciated. Thanks to Pam Dawson, we were able to put the teacher in touch with St Mary's School (Finchley Central), who are interested in the idea of setting up links with the Paul Bert school in Chaville.

We would very much like to enable young Barnet families to take advantage, in a similar way, of the possibility of staying with host families in Chaville, and exploring Paris. If you know of anyone this would interest, please put them in touch with Penny (020 8440 9096).

We have also been asked to promote and expand youth links in general. Do you have any suggestion or contacts with sports or youth groups? If so, please contact Chelle (020 8959 4504)



A happy group after dinner

The French youngsters in Barnet

Tennis Weekend 6th – 8th November

In spite of the small number of Barnet players who were able to go this time, a most pleasant morning's tennis was enjoyed by everyone, followed by lunch at the clubhouse. It is always great fun to play at the Chaville tennis club, where the rain is kept out, but the welcome is all-embracing. Thank you to those who organised it.



Tennis Players and supporters

In the afternoon, some took advantage of exhibitions in Paris, such as the Tiffany glassware at the Musee du Luxembourg. Later that evening, we were all welcomed by Françoise and Jean Hirtz, who have always been so hospitable. On Sunday, 10 of us went to Provins, a wonderful medieval town to the east of Paris. There was much to explore and to discover about life in the area. Strange to think that such a small town now, it was a hugely important trading centre in the early middle ages. Our thanks to Manu Cortez for guiding us through the town



Provins

The Civic Visit to Chaville November 8th-12th

Following on from the Civic visit to Barnet in June, as part of our 50th Anniversary of the Barnet/Chaville Twinning, the Mayor of Chaville invited a Civic delegation from Barnet to spend four days as the guests of Chaville. Cllr. Hugh Rayner, Deputy Mayor of Barnet, accompanied by his wife Susan, Cllr. Barry Rawlings and Cllr John Hart formed our official delegation, but a number of other FoC members were also in Chaville at the time, and were able to share in much of the programme which had been arranged. There were many highlights, such as a visit to the Assemblée Nationale, a Civic reception and dinner and a 'Paris by Night' trip along the Seine. It was a wonderful opportunity for us to meet up with long-standing members of the twinning, such as the Sommereux, the Cauzits, the Prod'hommes, the Prousts and Pauline Santiago



At the Assemblée Nationale



Section of Peace Ceiling

The ceremony on Armistice Day was very moving and the importance of the long-established strong links between our two countries was recognised in the speech by M. Guillet, the Mayor of Chaville. It was particularly appropriate that Fred Harris, a 2nd World War veteran, was able to be with us. The desire to foster further links between our two towns was clearly expressed by both Chaville and Barnet and we would hope to encourage greater participation from a wide range of the population in our twin towns. Chaville is soon to become part of an agglomeration (to be known as Grand Paris Seine Ouest), which will make the population similar to that of the LB Barnet.

We thank everyone who was involved in all the arrangements and in hosting us.



Armistice Day Ceremony



*Exchange of gifts at the Civic dinner,
The Mayor of Chaville, M Jean-Jacques Guillet and Cllr Hugh Rayner*

John also presented an engraved glass trophy to the AIJC and the Mayor in recognition of the 50th Anniversary of our twinning

Future Events and suggestions

30th January 2010 - Quiz supper Our quiz will take place at Quench Café. £15 per head for a great evening's entertainment and supper.

Further details will be sent out closer to the time, but you can book the date now

17th February 2010 - Display and Talk at Friern Barnet Library 10.30 – 11.30

After Keith's lovely display of photos at the Library in July, showing highlights of the last 50 years of our association with Chaville, we have been asked to give a talk which Keith has agreed to do. All FoC members

are very welcome to attend.

Spring 2010.- AIJC visit to Barnet This has been proposed for the last weekend of March. During the visit of the Chavillois, we would include petanque (for the Coupe Sportive), a games evening, and possible trips to the Houses of Parliament, Kew Gardens, Eltham Palace, the Wallace Collection and an Elizabethan Banquet at Hatfield House. Watch this space for further details, but if you would like to be involved, perhaps by hosting, please let Penny or Chelle know.

July 2010 - London Pro Arte Choir A date has now been fixed for this prestigious choir to sing in Chaville on the first weekend of July 2010

September 2010 There is a proposal for a group from Chaville and Barnet to visit the Ile de Noirmoutier, off the west coast of France, for a week's walking and/or cycling. If you are interested, please contact Irene.

Book Club, in Chaville – We have an on-going invitation to attend, as explained in the last newsletter. If you are interested, please contact Irene

We are delighted to welcome a number of new members during the recent months; Hugh and Susan Rayner, Barry Rawlings. Myrtle Raffles, Kathryn and Rob Ross, Blanche Davies, Judith Fage, Tricia and Chris Larkin, Ann Wittekind

Contact us

If you have comments, questions or ideas please contact us

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Thoughts on a 20 year association with Friends of Chaville.

We first went to Chaville with a group of swimmers and a few 6th Form students. We later took groups of students –a few from each of the Borough's schools. This worked well as not only did the students make French friends but also friends from the different schools. We travelled by coach - it was before Eurostar. Marcel Houlier was Mayor: there was no Campanile or Atrium . We were met by Denis Sommereux (who was responsible for the twinning arrangements) and his wife Nicole together with Jeanine & Louis Cauzit. The visit was a fabulous success.

We subsequently joined the committee with Victor Usher as Chairman and Keith Martin as Vice Chairman.

Lorely Atkinson is, in fact, our longest-standing member, having joined some 30 years ago! She has many a tale to tell, starting with her first visit as part of a 'groupe gymnastique' - more a 'keep fit' group than real gymnastics. We have since made many trips to Chaville. We have seen 3 Chaville Mayors in office, the building of the Campanile hotel and the Atrium (Theatre, Arts, Exhibition, Library and Social Centre) - from which our own Artsdepot at Tally-Ho corner developed. We saw the naming of the Victor Usher Square in Chaville and in turn the naming of Chaville Way at Finchley Central.

When we started, there were frequent exchanges of young people, especially for sports. We have had football & weightlifting and at senior level -tennis, badminton, table tennis, and keep-fit. One May week- end we attended the Chaville Street Theatre which was a real spectacle.

We have also seen exchanges between large musical groups and small groups of artists some of whom have supplied paintings for exhibitions there. Currently Marie-Alice is promoting participation with her English book group.

The weather has played its part - we have been fortunate in some hot spells here coinciding with the arrival of our French friends - Kew Gardens was one such enjoyable occasion and at the other extreme some petanque matches have been played under umbrellas!

The twinning has been extended with delightful holidays with our friends from Chaville to the wine growing areas of Burgundy, Alsace and the Loire. They also arranged walking trips in Normandy and Brittany. They in turn have visited with us – the Isle of Wight, the Lake District & Norfolk.

Cornwall still awaits them as does a trip to Stonehenge.

Health and Safety issues make youth visits more difficult these days but we have been able to foster some exchanges mainly through Civic agencies. We should like to see more youth groups involved.

Things have not always gone without a hitch. There was the memorable time before mobiles were in common use, when the hosts waited at Edgware to receive their guests who arrived early in Mill Hill East!

Originally our planning meetings for the year took place at the Mairie (Chaville Town Hall) as a tripartite meeting with representatives from Alsfeld (Germany) another of Chaville's twinings.

These meetings were then made reciprocal with our town hall but just between the 2 towns and more civic input resulted from our end.

Both Chaville and Barnet have welcomed several Civic Delegations over the years and both towns have given great hospitality and shown their guests a wide variety of on-going initiatives, which we continue to do.

Vive l'Association!

'Chelle and Jim Paice.