



# "THE FRENCH CONNECTION"

WRINGTON TWINNING ASSOCIATION

WINTER 2016/2017 NEWSLETTER



Since the last Newsletter in Summer 2016 a great deal has taken place both locally and internationally. On the international front the election of Donald Trump as the US President raises many questions about international relationships. The decision by Parliament to support the triggering of Article 50 raises further questions. The French Presidential election at the end of April / beginning of May adds to the uncertainty. However, we continue to strive for wider and stronger relations with France and our twinned community Villeneuve-lès-Béziers (VLB).

## THE LATEST NEWS

### A visit by students from Marc Bloch college in Sérignan

On 26 January, on a bright, chilly morning, a group of twelve post 6<sup>th</sup> form French students arrived for a visit (organised by The French Connection). The students were from the Lycée Marc Bloch in Sérignan, which provides secondary education for students in VLB, just as Churchill serves Wrington. Since the students were following a course of management studies the focus of the visit was local agricultural production.

The first stop was Churchill Academy where the group leader could move from email exchanges to personal talks with language staff at the Academy with a view to developing educational collaboration. There was also a warm welcome from the Year 9 Churchill student ambassadors who quickly established a rapport with the visitors as guides on a tour of the school.

The next destination was Thatcher's Cider Mill in Sandford. This visit provided a fascinating insight into the latest production techniques at the stunning new facility that, in a seamless process, starts with the apples and ends with wrapped pallets of cider. The students could and did make interesting comparisons with a process with which they are much more familiar back in the South of France – one of the largest wine-making regions in the world. A quick coffee break at the refurbished Railway Inn café-restaurant was followed by a short scenic tour of the Mendips via the Cheddar Gorge, ending with a finger-buffet at The Plough Inn. David Simpson joined the group to welcome the students on behalf of Wrington Parish Council.

Next on the agenda was a visit to the new dairy unit at Regilbury Park Farm followed by a trip to Lye Cross Farm, both of which are run by the Alvis family, before they departed.

The tour was an enormous success and cemented the relationship between Wrington and the French communities. Many thanks to everyone involved.



## EVENTS & OTHER ACTIVITIES

**THE FRENCH HONORARY CONSUL** for the South West, **Mme Josette Lebrat**, gave a fascinating talk about her (unpaid) work on 2 November at the Reading Room. A friendly animated discussion followed. A thoroughly enjoyable & educational evening.

**"FRENCH WITHOUT TEARS"** **Anthony Hancock** book on how to help you survive in France is enjoying great success and an order for 200 was received from a French property company. **Mme Lebrat** has also referred the book to several local French interest groups. All proceeds go towards supporting French Connection projects.

**THE 2016 AGM** was held at Redhill Village Hall on 29 November. It was accompanied, against a French café backdrop, by wine & charcuterie tasting. It finished up with an enthusiastic game of skittles.

**THE FRENCH CONVERSATION GROUPS** continue to attract new members and take place fortnightly on a Wednesday evening. **There is no charge for Members**. Please contact **Margaret Hancock** if interested.

**THE REDHILLBILLIES** Following the incredibly successful visit to VLB last year by **Tom Vowles & Jo Dean** of **The Redhillbillies** they are looking to return there this year with the full band! What great ambassadors they are.

**OTHER EVENTS & SPORTING ACTIVITIES** We are currently looking at a calendar of events for the year. They include a visit to Goodfellows in Wells on 7 April following a successful visit last year. A quiz evening is being organised. Sporting exchanges are also being pursued. Possible involvement in the Wrington Fair & Pageant by VLB has been mooted but this may be ruled out by the French Presidential election taking place at the same time! See our website [www.wringtontwinning.co.uk](http://www.wringtontwinning.co.uk) for more details.

**We also welcome suggestions for activities so please contact us!**



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