

# Reigate & Banstead Twinning Association

Covering the areas of Reigate, Redhill, Banstead and Horley



## Twinning News 2023/2



### Important Dates for your 2023 Diary

- AGM-----19 May
- Summer lunch-----2 July

### Brunoy Link

Dear friends,

This year is a special year for us as we celebrate 30 years of Twinning with Brunoy. Twinning, over the years, has meant many group exchanges between sport clubs, judo or football for instance, music groups like choirs, student exchanges too, at secondary or sixth form levels, adult education groups or just more social events like friendly bridge competitions. And more I have forgotten... The success of all these depends on the leadership of the group but our association will always encourage and facilitate them. However the main stay of our French Twinning is the personal links forged over the years between individuals and families in the course of our annual visits to Brunoy. We stay in each other's homes and thus share our daily lives.



We celebrated together the 25th anniversary both in France and in England, so now that we have celebrated the 30th anniversary so well in Brunoy at the beginning of this month, we need to plan our celebrations in Reigate and Banstead for the next French visit in 2024. Please do contact us if you have any good ideas about this. Twinning also involves a civic link and works so much better when supported by an enthusiastic Mayor as it was in 2018 and this year by Cllr. Kelly.



Before concluding, I must mention that this year we are trying to forge a completely new link between some primary schools in Brunoy and Reigate Priory School. It's still very early days but the two Priory teachers who came with us for the Twinning weekend made a promising start. An exciting new venture for both our communities.

Many thanks to all of you for your continued support, not just financially but also your regular involvement in our varied activities. "Le jumelage c'est l'affaire de tous" See you all at the AGM and the Summer meal.

*Monique and Anne*

**Monique Pottage** (Joint Chairman & Brunoy Link) (01737 221073) [mpottage@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mpottage@hotmail.co.uk)  
**and Anne Miller** (01737 913542) [anne.miller@mail.com](mailto:anne.miller@mail.com)

Dear Twinners

We were delighted to be able to visit Eschweiler for Karneval once again this year, after Covid had forced its cancellation previously. Everyone seemed delighted to see us and some of our friends from the Redhill Corps of Drums. It was explained that, to many in Eschweiler, it is more important to celebrate Karneval than Christmas, so everyone really went for the celebrations this year. It was also the 200th anniversary of Karneval in Cologne, and we were honoured to be invited to participate in one of the parades there with the KG Ulk group from Eschweiler and meet the famous three “stars” of the Karneval, the Dreigestirne. Karneval is all about tradition, and we were so pleased to be able to meet everyone in the Dürwiss and Eschweiler processions again; our badge this year was in especially high demand.

**Janet Powell**

*Joint Chairman & Eschweiler Link*

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## RECENT EVENTS

### ▪ New Year Lunch 20 January

The Mayor of Reigate & Banstead attended and was greeted by Monique Pottage our Joint Chairman

Following a delicious meal, organised by Janet Powell her fellow Joint Chairman, Monique welcomed the Mayor of Reigate & Banstead, as well as all present including new members Janine and Peter recently moved from West Yorkshire to live in Chipstead.

The Mayor, Frank Kelly, addressed those gathered. He thanked us all for his 6 years of being a member of Town Twinning. He remembered his first visit to Brunoy. It was the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Town Twinning. He recalled an amusing incident at customs when his luggage was searched and his silver chain of office was found. He surmised that if this occurs again at our next visit to Brunoy for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in March they would find a gold one this time! He is looking forward to joining us. Monique thanked him. She then thanked Janet for organising the lunch.

A date for our next Twinning Quiz was announced. It will be held on 3 March.. The venue will be the United Reformed Church at Shaws Corner. Fish and Chips will be served at the interval. It will commence at 7pm, and the Quiz to commence at 7.30pm. Raffle Prizes will be needed and the Mayor has kindly offered to donate some. This will be our first fund raising event for 3 years!

Monique advised for our visit to Brunoy to please check that your European Health Insurance and travel documentation is up to date!

Following our visit there could be plans for a reciprocal visit by our French friends in 2024.

Monique concluded saying that she is looking forward to seeing everyone soon at the Quiz.

**Rosemary Jones**

### ▪ Quiz

3 March 2023, a very cold night in Redhill but in the United Reform Church things were really warming up. It was the return of the best quiz in Surrey, well in Redhill certainly. People were arriving from all directions laden with bags full of all sorts of goodies to see them through the exciting but strenuous evening ahead. They knew in the next two hours they would be facing brain stretching exercises, some easy, some difficult and some downright devious!

The quiz had been unable to go ahead for the previous two years because of the Covid pandemic so the prospect of getting together again had added to people's enthusiasm. There were fifteen teams made up of around 8 players so well over one hundred people were taking part. The quiz followed its usual format of 9 rounds with 10 questions in each. There was also the "floater" round which went on throughout the quiz and consisted of a series of clues to a one word answer. If your team guessed the answer correctly after one clue you received a fifty point bonus. A new clue was given at the start of each round with the bonus diminishing by five points each time. Two teams got the correct answer on the second round so received a bonus of 45 points. Luckily for me I was a member of one of those teams though sadly I can't take any credit as I hadn't a clue what the answer could be. The subjects ranged from Adjectives to Geography to Fairy Tales so there was something for everyone.

At the halfway mark we paused to enjoy a well deserved meal of fish or chicken and chips. Some people had the foresight to bring some alcoholic accompaniments which I'm sure added to the meal. It may not of helped people answer the questions but at least they no longer minded so much if they were losing!

At the end of the quiz whilst the final figures were being totalled the always popular raffle was called with a very generous number of prizes available. Table one were then pronounced the winners of the quiz with a bottle of wine going to each member of the team. A big thank you was given to the quizmaster Helier for a thoroughly enjoyable quiz. It was very well designed with a lot of variety and a very efficient method of delivering the questions and the answers. Thanks were given to Ann for doing such a sterling job of collecting the scores and keeping them so accurately on the scoreboard.

Thanks were also given to all those people who had worked behind the scenes to organise and deliver such an enjoyable evening.

### ***Marilyn Belton***

#### ▪ **Visit to Brunoy**

It didn't bode well at the beginning. I think I can safely say that our group had been looking forward to the first post-Covid get together with old and new friends in Brunoy. But standing outside the Reigate Town Hall at 5 am it was pitch black, cold and wet. The bus was a bit late, and when it came it was smaller than had been anticipated. Not the most auspicious of beginnings, but my goodness! how that changed. The journey itself was destined to be quite long, with a planned break for lunch and a viewing of the cathedral in Amiens, but Brexit reared its ugly head; we got stuck at Dover and missed our ferry. Not only that, the Channel was looking decidedly choppy and it was still raining. Once on the French side, however, we made steady progress, although unfortunately we had to miss Amiens. On arrival in Brunoy we met up with our hosts - for some that was a joyous meeting with old friends, and for newcomers like myself an introduction to new friends. We went direct to the Salon Leclerc for the official welcome – no time to make ourselves look pretty (although Mayor Kelly did stand out in his short-sleeved shirt and pullover!). There were of courses speeches and toasts and the mayors of both Brunoy and Reigate signed a new agreement confirming the continuation of the twinning programme between our two towns. But this was catch-up time! After a long break the twinningers from both towns had a lot to tell each other and the newcomers had a lot to learn. Speaking for myself, I found meeting everybody exhilarating but tiring, and I rather suppose most of the Reigate contingent were glad to get to bed that night.

Up early on Saturday – and it wasn't raining!! The Brunoyens had arranged for us to go on a cruise on the Seine continuing on through the nine locks on the Canal St. Martin to La Villette in north east Paris, and it was spectacular. Starting from the Musee d'Orsay, we cruised past the Louvre and Notre Dame (hoping it will be in good shape by the time of the Paris Olympics) before turning on to the Canal. Going through the locks and under the cast-iron footbridges was really special, and fun, especially when the water came rushing through the gates, often soaking the unsuspecting passengers. For part of the trip we passed through three underground vaults, which formed a two kilometre long tunnel, partly under the Bastille, with natural light from above. Impressive! Unfortunately the commentary was not easily understood in either French or English, but the experience was definitely worth it visually. There was a bit of excitement when the boat suddenly stopped in one of the locks and we learned that a tent had got caught in the propeller. The captain swiftly dealt with the problem, however, and was rewarded with a round of applause.

After a quick lunch in La Villette it was back on the bus and “home” for a rest before the evening’s entertainment. We were celebrating the 30th anniversary of the twinning between Brunoy and Reigate, so I knew that it was going to be a special evening, but I had no idea that it would be as terrific as it was. Our friends had decorated the room, set up tables for six with red and white covers and flags and hired a band for background music and dancing. There was also a viewing of pictures that had been taken during the day plus a bit of flashback. And the food....! Following an aperitif, we were treated to a massive display of salads, all prepared by our kind hosts, and a main dish, followed by cheese that had been brought from England. All this before the piece de resistance – the cakes. Two cakes, one to represent each of our countries. The French mayor and Mayor Frank Kelly all spoke before cutting the cakes and exchanging gifts.

At this point I have to mention Monique – femme extraordinaire. In addition to acting as coordinator of the trip, guide, translator and mistress of ceremonies she graciously thanked, and distributed gifts to others, such as Ann Miller, who had had the original idea of twinning. Thank you Monique.

And so the dancing began, but like Cinderella, when it unexpectedly got to midnight it was time for some of us to leave the fun and head home. I hate to think what time it was before everything was tidied away and the kind people who organized the evening got home to bed.

Sunday morning was a lazy one, free to do what we wanted. Some went to see the exhibition in the Maison des Arts; others went to the market and I went to the supermarket to buy butter of all things! At 2.30 pm we all collected at the bus, and said our goodbyes before heading for home with Richard, our trusty bus driver, and after a more or less eventless journey, midnight saw us arriving in the Reigate Town Hall parking lot.

I can’t close this resume of the trip without some personal input. Thank you all for including me and for being so friendly. I enjoyed your company, thoroughly enjoyed the weekend, and I will look forward to other twinning events in the future. Vive le jumelage!

***Brenda Juntunen***

our two mayors exchanging gifts



then cutting the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary cakes



## Forthcoming Events

### AGM

We look forward to seeing you at the United Reform Church on Friday 19 May commencing 7.30 pm,.

After the meeting drinks and nibbles will be provided. Please bring your own plates, cutlery and glasses

Sally Baker will issue the appropriate paperwork under separate cover

***Janet Powell***

## Summer Lunch

This will be held in the garden of Ros and John Borkowski. It will be a similar format as last year and further details will be sent out nearer the time. All members of Twinning will be very welcome

## Treasurer and Membership

### ◆ Membership

The Association has 84 active members, representing 66 memberships. Of these memberships, 15 are non paying foreign members.

### ◆ Treasurer

The year to date shows a good positive income however certain expenses such as insurance and website costs have not yet been incurred.

The quiz was very successful bringing in around £1000 and the trip to Brunoy was neutral with income covering the outgoings.

**Robert Bogin**  
*Treasurer & Membership Secretary*

## NEW MEMBERS



A warm welcome to

Janine and Peter Middleton who recently moved from West Yorkshire to live in Chipstead.

Jane and John Manfield

## OBITUARY

### ❖ *Jean Reznikoff*

My dear friend, Jean from Brunoy was special for me and my wife Rosemary. We first met him and his wife Marie Françoise in Brunoy in 2000. We stayed with them and would often add a few days on and go on what Jean would call 'adventures'. He spoke excellent English and would often be called upon to translate during the Town Twinning visits. I remember sitting on a stone overlooking the Isle of Wight and stirring some hot water into the powdered coffee in the mugs. Then I put out the tablecloth for the biscuits and cake. Jean had a huge smile and I asked why? He said this is so British! You would never see this in France. He had a holiday home in Provence to which we were invited and he came to my wedding to Helen in 2013.

All of us in Town Twinning will remember Jean, a warm and friendly, smiling gentleman who symbolised all the good things about Le Jumelage.

**Brian Cowle**

### ❖ *Victor Redstone*

Victor died in November 2022 just before his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday

As an early member of the Twinning Association, he was very active in exchanges with Brunoy. In these early days Danielle Malherbe was responsible, in Brunoy, for the visits to England. She was divorced, he was a widower, she was fluent in English and he did not speak a word of French : they came, they saw

and conquered each other! They married in 1996, both in Reigate and then in Brunoy. A real twinning marriage!

By the time most of us met Víctor he was the perfect English gentleman, refusing to speak French even though he lived in France for over 20 years with Danielle. His early life, as we learned at his funeral in Redhill last January, was far from ordinary. He had suffered a great deal as a war prisoner in Burma during WWII and, after the war, worked for the British government, in different European capitals. Later he worked as a MI6 agent, in London, where his children only knew that he was commuting to the "office". A very interesting life, which we, in Twinning, knew nothing about!

In Brunoy, as a retired elderly gentleman he enjoyed life, baking his special "cake anglais" for the Twinning stand at the Brunoy Christmas Market and travelling around the world with Danielle. He looked after and spoiled Danielle's many grandchildren as if they were his own. They have fond memories of their "papyboo". 5 of them came over the sea to attend his funeral in Redhill.

We will remember with affection this smartly dressed and generous friend of Twinning who made sure that the Union Jack was always flying "the right way up", even in Brunoy.

PS: Víctor received the Burma Star and met Prince Charles more than once



***Monique Pottage***