

Darley Dale & District Twinning Association

The weekend of the May Day Bank Holiday saw 30 members of the Twinning Association travel to Onzain. A new air route has recently been set up from Manchester Airport to Tours, which is only 45 minutes from our twin town and a number of the group used it for the first time. This makes the journey by air so much more convenient than having to travel to Stansted airport. Other members travelled by car, using various crossing points across the Channel or North Sea.



On the Friday evening, we had an official welcome from the Mayor of Onzain at a drinks reception. During our stay we were treated to a visit to an artisan chocolatier, who is the sole importer of cocoa beans from a very small island off the west coast of Africa. His chocolate designs were quite inventive with some very large and intricately sculptured figurines. Sampling proved to be quite popular with our group. Our hosts organised a communal meal with entertainment on Saturday night and it was an opportunity to make new friends and meet up again with others we new already. Kevin Senior, Chair of the Twinning Association said "It is often the case, during these get togethers, when firm friendships are made and arrangements made to visit each other, individually, on separate occasions".

As usual, we were expected to sample wine from the local vineyards and nobody had to be dragged along to that. It is always the case that all our "twinners" enjoy the wonderful hospitality from our French hosts who delight in receiving us as their guests. For those that are not aware, the only costs that we incur on these twinning exchanges are travel and whatever spending money each individual decides upon. For our part we try to reciprocate the hospitality in our homes but this can only be if our members have such accommodation. However, it is not a requirement of membership of our twinning association that you have a spare room.

Whilst we are not a political organization, it was very interesting that our visit coincided, on the Sunday, with

the voting day for the French Presidency. Quite a number of our hosts took great interest in the result, which was declared only two hours after voting concluded; with something like an 80% turn out.

Whilst in Onzain, both of our twinning committees took the opportunity to have a joint meeting, at which we discussed future strategy. Our main focus, for the coming years, will be to get younger families and individuals interested in corresponding and exchanging visits; as groups or individuals (small or large, families, organisations, etc). As a start, we are currently trying to organise a visit of four teachers from the primary schools in Onzain to spend a couple of days in our schools during the last two weeks of this summer term.

Finally, The Twinning Association's Annual General Meeting takes place on Monday 25 June at 8.00p.m. in the Whitworth Centre. All members will have received the notification, details of which are available in the members section of our website. If any non-members are interested, please come along to the AGM and you will be made very welcome. At the very least please look at our website www.darleydaletwinning.org.uk and contact us via the site if you would like to know more.



The entertainment