

Foxton Twinning Association

Chair's Report – 22 January 2020

Firstly, I would like to welcome everyone to our third Annual General Meeting. It doesn't seem long since the beginning of this whole twinning endeavour and so to be at the end of the Association's third year seems remarkable.

It has felt like a quieter year this year. With the responsibility for hosting with the *Montignais*, and the Foxton finances on a secure footing, the need to constantly fundraise has been somewhat reduced and so events have focussed a little more on maintaining the profile of the association.

Our first event of the year was a second Film Night, presented in association with Saffron Screen. An audience of over 50 people, including an intrepid group from Saffron Walden, enjoyed the classic French film *Amélie*. The film nights have become a popular part of our programme of events and so we are pleased that a third outing has been arranged for Saturday 7th March. I hope we will see you all there.

The weekend of 1st and 2nd June 2019 saw Foxton families return to Montigny for the second time since the formation of the Foxton Twinning Association and our *jumelage* with Montigny. We were blessed with the most glorious weather and a welcome as warm and generous as that of the inaugural visit two years ago. We had an organised visit to Fécamp and the *Palais Bénédicite* but this weekend was a little less "organised" than previous incarnations and this meant more time with hosts and a more tailored itinerary for visitors. There was still a fantastic Saturday *soirée* and a chance for old friends to get together and catch up and a little more flexibility in the dates meaning that some *Foxtonais* were able to stay on until the Monday and enjoy a tour of the local school.

We had planned another French *Soirée* for the end of November following the positive feedback from the first *Soirée* which had doubled as our launch event. Unfortunately, ticket sales were poor and we took the decision to cancel rather than risk unnecessary cost – it's an event with particularly large overheads. Nevertheless, we are looking for another date and hope that we will be able to gain more support at another time of the year.

Of course, our proudest moment this year has to have been the installation of 'Twinned with Montigny' signs at the various entrances to the village. We are particularly grateful to Peter for organising this and liaising with County Highways and the Parish Council. Permission to install these ourselves means that they have been provided at minimal cost but, I'm sure you will all agree, they look great as you drive in to the village. Now there's no excuse for people not knowing about the *jumelage*.

Plans are already under way for this year's visit to Foxton by the *Montignais* in May. It is a long weekend and so we are hoping that families from both sides of the channel will make the most of the extra day. If you would like to be involved, then please contact Jill and express your interest. We're hoping for even more families to offer hosting than last time – we know that there are plenty of *Montignais* wanting to travel – so please offer if you can, and get your neighbours and friends involved too!

On a final note, I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank all the members of the committee for their hard work, enthusiasm and commitment over the year. This will be my last AGM. As many of you know, I shall be moving house this year, and so, it is with some sadness, that I hand over the reins to another chair. It has been an enormous joy and a privilege to be a part of the Foxton Twinning Association, and to work with the committee and all of you as members, and I wish it, and you, all the success in the future.