



# ALRESFORD TWINNING ASSOCIATION



## Review of the Year 2015

### **Fêtes des Rois**

In January we celebrated Epiphany in a traditional French style. At the start of the evening, names were drawn from a hat to select the King and his Queen. Members Steve McClelland and Jean Hudson were picked and they wore gold paper crowns for the rest of the evening.

A delicious “galette des rois” was made by member Margaret Lumb to be shared by all attending. In keeping with tradition, a surprise was hidden in the cake for one lucky person to find. The event, which was well attended, was held at the Arlesford Cricketers and included a tasty buffet

### **Spring Walk**

Organised by Jim and Anna Thompson, on 19th April about 30 Members of the ATA arrived at the Fox at Bramdean for our annual spring walk. The idea of the walk is to select a circular route based on a nearby pub and returning for Sunday lunch. There was again a natural history theme and those attending were invited to record any sightings on sheets provided with both their English and French names.

This year we headed off from the pub though farmland towards the church and then north past some of Bramdean’s finest houses, on to Mariners Farm, passing into woodland as we approached Bramdean Common. We crossed the Common and then headed back through woodland with bluebells, yellow archangel and various other spring flowers fully in evidence.

After that, it was a steady downhill stroll back for a pint and a meal taking a bit less than 2 hours. Anyone is invited to attend future spring walks – they are not forced marches but a leisurely opportunity to enjoy the spring countryside

### **June Pétanque Evening**

Every year Barry Cope organises a pétanque evening for the Society. This year a hardy group arrived at Arlebury Park and enjoyed playing the traditional French game. Unfortunately we are not blessed with the warm summer evenings of southern France. This meant the group were forced to retire indoors to pursue that other traditional French pursuit a glass or two of wine. With this in mind we have decided to arrange the pétanque event on a Sunday afternoon this year in the hope of more members attending and warmer conditions.

### **Twinning Visit**

Well, 2015 was Alresford’s turn to host a visit by our French friends. Activities started with a Top Marks coach driving to Portsmouth Ferry terminal on Friday to collect twenty five French twinning members. They arrived at Alresford station around 1700 to be met by their hosts. The evening was spent at an excellent BBQ hosted by Terry and Viv Foreman in Bishops Sutton. The weather stayed fine for the evening, though could have been at least 10 deg. C warmer!

On Saturday morning most host families drove to Buckler's Hard to visit this lovely historic setting. The excellent museum gave a good overview of the village and how important it was during the 18th century regarding shipbuilding for Admiral Nelson's navy. The group later met at the quay for a short boat trip down the River Hamble. After this (and lunch) some of the group decided to walk along the riverside path to Beaulieu before returning back to Alresford, either directly or including New Forest sightseeing en-route.

Saturday's main evening meal, attended by around sixty members, was held at the lovely Old Alresford Place. After aperitifs we enjoyed traditional English fare of Steak and Ale pie, Eaton Mess for dessert and finished off with an excellent selection of English cheeses. The evening was a great success and enjoyed by all.

Sunday morning was "free time" for all (our guests spent the morning shopping in Winchester) before heading to Portsmouth Ferry terminal to catch the late afternoon sailing. Overall this was an excellent Twinning visit with fine weather for the weekend.

Thanks go to everyone involved in organising the weekend and acting as hosts.

### **Summer Wine Evening**

The summer wine evening took place on 17th July in the garden of Steve and Ali Love. Thirty-one people attended in total including new members Claire and Steve Thurlow and several guests invited by friends. The weather was kind and people remained chatting well into the evening.

A delicious buffet was organised by Margaret Lumb and there was the addition of that well known French dish of paella prepared by Steve Love.

Barry Cope organised and managed the bar for the evening and for the first time the wine almost ran out. Barry had to break into his reserve box. The raffle raised additional funds for the ATA and at least 2 of the prizes, the Calvados and a scented candle were used during the evening.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed to making the evening a success

### **Dates for your Diary in 2016**

|                    |                              |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| March (TBA)        | Terry's Quiz                 |
| April 17 Sunday    | Spring Walk                  |
| May 20-22 Fri-Sun  | Exchange visit to Bricquebec |
| June 26 Sunday     | Petanque afternoon           |
| July (TBA)         | Summer Garden Party          |
| September (TBA)    | Skittles Supper              |
| November 18 Friday | AGM                          |

Details of these and other events will be sent nearer the time