



**Radlett and Aldenham International Friendship
Association**

**Twinned with LAUTERTAL Bergstrasse
and LOUVECIENNES, Yvelines**

Newsletter Autumn 2007

It's been a while since our last newsletter, so we have a bumper crop of news this time!

French Links

La Fête des Fleurs – September 2007



Francesca at the Fête

It was very exciting to be one of the three attendants to the Flower Queen at the Fête des Fleurs in Louveciennes. The other girls were from the twin towns in Germany and Romania. We all got on well although we didn't always understand each other. It was a lot of fun to be sitting in the large carriage covered in dahlias and being part of the procession of floats. We all wore beautiful historic costumes. People were throwing confetti and streamers, which created a lively atmosphere. The weather was hot and sunny which made the day very pleasurable. We started the weekend with Lotto at the Mairie. I was very nervous but managed to call out the numbers in French. We visited Versailles Park on Saturday, on bikes in the morning and on foot in the afternoon when we saw Marie-Antoinette's little village. On Saturday evening there was an open-air show with knights on horseback and on Sunday night there was a fantastic firework display.

I was very lucky to stay with the Dujardin family. They have three girls who were very kind and friendly. The food was marvellous and different from home. All in all it was an amazing weekend and I can't wait to go back.

Francesca Whitham

French Families Visit to Radlett – May 2007



The Radlett and Louveciennes Families together in Shenley Park

As part of our initiative to encourage families with young children to get involved in twinning, we invited three families from Louveciennes to visit Radlett in May. The families – Benoit & Catherine Dujardin with children Fanny, Marie and Perrine, Bruno & Cecile Weber with children Estelle and Alexia and Jean Marie & Catherine Benchimole with children Nathan, Leonard and Salome - all drove to Radlett via the Tunnel and stayed with families in Radlett over the weekend of 17 to 20 May.

The programme arranged for the visitors included visits to the Radlett Tennis Club and St Albans Abbey and sampling our local cuisine at the Cat and Fiddle on the Friday evening. The Saturday morning was spent at Knebworth House and gardens. Saturday night saw a general get together meal (including French wines and cheeses provided by the visitors) and singsong at the Gills Hill home of Gaenor Withyman, ably assisted by Suzanne Tomlins, Nasse and Norah as well as Morwen Harris. This involved a total of over forty people – including some 20 children – and was a highly successful occasion.

The following morning the visitors had English breakfasts at the Shenley Tea Rooms and then left to catch the afternoon Shuttle home. Thanks go to Miranda, Gaenor, Morwan and Suzanne for making all the arrangements and catering for the visitors. We hope to continue the family exchanges and have a weekend planned for the hosts to return to Louveciennes next May.

Fête de la Musique June 2008 We have been invited to send a small group of singers and musicians to the Fête de la Musique in Louveciennes next June (over the Mid-Summer weekend). If you are interested, please contact Miranda.

25th Anniversary October 2008 will see our celebration of 25 year of twinning with Louveciennes and we shall be inviting a group to join us in Radlett, probably over a weekend. The date is as yet to be confirmed, however and we will be looking for hosts - all volunteers please make yourselves known to Miranda.

Jean Clément, former President of the Comité de Jumelage de Louveciennes (CJL)

We were all very sad to learn of the death of Jean Clément in April this year after a fall at his home. I first met Jean during the joint holiday with friends from Louveciennes in Périgord in 1991. He was subsequently elected President of CJL and remained in that post until he was over 80 when, not in the best of health, he handed over the reins to Marie-Yvonne Cassegrain in 2003.

Not only did he guide our twinning relationship with a wise and paternal eye but also did many good works in the community of Louveciennes, particularly his classes for children with learning difficulties and for which he received a well merited award from the Mairie. With failing eyesight his last years were very frustrating for him.



Jean Clément with Dick Bolt in Radlett in 1999

During my years as chairman of RAIFA it was always a joy for Mary and me to stay at No 4 rue des Bois and experience the generous hospitality of Jean and Nicole and meet some of their large family. He is sadly missed.

Dick Bolt

German Links

Lautertal – Jarnac Anniversary – May 2007

This May fifty of our friends in APEG enjoyed a successful group trip from Lautertal to their French twin town, Jarnac. This visit was to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of their twinning.

The new Felsenmeer Visitor Centre at Reichenbach opened this spring. It has attracted a great deal of interest locally and farther afield and has recently featured on Hessen TV. For more information about the Centre please visit "<http://www.informationszentrum-felsenmeer.de/index.htm> "

Interestingly, Helmut Lechner from APEG has told us that the German Post Office refused to put a new post box at the site despite many visitors buying postcards there and wanting to post them immediately. So APEG has moved the traditional British red post box we gave them some years ago to the site, where it is emptied every day and the post transferred into the main postal system. APEG held a special inaugural event to launch this new postal service!

Ian Macdonald

Dr Erwin Fahlbusch

It was with regret we received the news of the death on 20 August of Erwin Fahlbusch who was leader of the Lautertal Council when twinning between Gemeinder Lautertal and the Parish of Aldenham was first proposed.

His personal commitment played a significant part in the formation of the twinning links between our communities. Those who were involved in the early days will remember the warm welcome and gentle guidance of Erwin Fahlbusch. He laid secure foundations for the successful development of our twinning which continues as his lasting memorial.

Our formal condolences have been sent to APEG and especially to Erwin's wife Ruth and her family.

Paul Marley

Hungary

Visit to Dunaharaszti – June 2007

For two days in June I went with our chairman, Clive Glover, and Suzanna Connett to Dunaharaszti, Hungary, to investigate its potential as a twin town. The town lies about 20 kilometres south of the centre of Budapest, and about 20 kilometres from the international airport. It has an expanding population of almost 20,000 people and is comparatively prosperous. House building seemed to be going on everywhere – shades of Radlett!

We were welcomed by the mayor (“polgármester”), Dr Laszlo Szalay, and treated to several interesting visits to important local commercial enterprises, including a Coca Cola plant and a highly-automated distillery. We also went to a kindergarten, a junior school, the town's library and the national parliament building in Budapest, which had many similarities to our own Houses of Parliament.

Our general impression is that it may well be feasible to establish some cultural, sporting, scouting or horticultural exchanges in the future as forerunners to the sort of arrangements that we already have with Louveciennes and Lautertal. The major obstacle to be overcome will be the language, but that would apply in many places outside Western Europe.

Without Suzanna, a native of Dunaharaszti, it would have been very difficult to form an opinion of the place and its people. However, many Hungarians are now learning English and communication in the future might not be too difficult.

We plan to invite the Mayor and a few representatives to visit us in 2008.



Inside the Hungarian Parliament in Budapest –
Dr Laszlo Szalay (Mayor of Dunaharaszti), plus
John, Clive and Suzanna

John Howley

Forthcoming Events

AGM

The RAIFA Annual General Meeting will be at 8 pm on Wednesday 12 March 2008 at St John's Hall, Radlett. Please put this into your diaries now!

Social Events

We have decided to make a change to the usual date of our annual dinner this coming year. It has not been easy to organise this event in the midst of Christmas preparations and festivities, so we are going to celebrate the proximity of Christmas with a "Wine & Nibbles" (with a Christmas flavour) in early December and hold the Annual Dinner in the Spring.

Brief details of our intended programme are as follows:

9 December 07	Wine & Nibbles	21 Watford Road, Radlett
5 April 08	Annual Dinner	Phillimore Hall
12 July 08	Garden Lunch	7 Faggotts Close, Radlett
Autumn 08	Quiz	Village Institute

You will all, of course, be advised of full details of these events nearer the time. We are always seeking venues for our functions and would be very pleased to hear from anyone who could volunteer the use of their home or gardens for one of our events. Volunteers to join the Social Committee would also be much appreciated!

Joan Doughty

RAIFA Website

I would like to set up a RAIFA website and have already bought the domain (web "address") www.raifa.org.uk

I think there is a great opportunity to put together a website containing historical information and pictures as well as copies of newsletters and information about future plans and so on.

If anyone would like to volunteer to help put this all together, please let me know!

Clive Glover

RAIFA Future Visits Plan 2008-2012

Some provisional dates for your diary!

2008

March Mayor of Dunaharaszti visit to Radlett
June Fete de la Musique, Louveciennes
September Fete de Fleurs, Louveciennes
October 25th Anniversary of Louveciennes Twinning in Radlett

2009

May 25th Anniversary of Louveciennes twinning in Louveciennes
September Fete de Fleurs, Louveciennes

2010

Radlett visit to Lautertal
September Fete de Fleurs, Louveciennes

2011

Lautertal visit to Radlett
September Fete de Fleurs, Louveciennes

2012

September Fete de Fleurs, Louveciennes

RAIFA Contacts:

Please feel free to contact us if you have any ideas for any twinning arrangements for any individuals or societies in Radlett or Aldenham.

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