

## Devon Twinning Circle



# Home from Home

Winter 2023

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone**

### January 2024 meeting is cancelled

There have been no offers to host the January meeting so, as it is a time of year when travelling could be difficult, it has been agreed to cancel the meeting.

The next meeting will be hosted by Braunton on 27<sup>th</sup> April and the July meeting, will be hosted by Bampton on 13<sup>th</sup> July.

Thanks to all the contributors to this newsletter, and for those who may not have seen it, I have included the details from Brittany Ferries of their discounts now available to us.

To obtain these discounts, an account must be set up with Brittany Ferries.

Articles are invited for anything relevant to twinning – how you undertake your fundraising, some historic stories and/or photographs from years gone by or just something you think will be entertaining or useful.

Remember you will be entered into the Monica Sanders Competition and could win £50 + another £50 if judged the overall winner of the year.

**Please keep the articles coming.**

Please send articles, reports, photographs by email to [babenton52@gmail.com](mailto:babenton52@gmail.com)  
Or by post to Mr B Benton, 5 Silver Street, Bampton, EX16 9NR

## JIM CAUSLEY

Hello, my name is Jim Causley, and I am a folk singer and musician from Devon who specialises in the traditional music of my home county.

I grew up near the village of Whimble in East Devon but now live in South Zeal on the northern edge of Dartmoor.

I have had a love of music all my life which started at a young age from experiencing the wassail tradition in Whimble every January 17th and being taken to Sidmouth Folk Festival by my grandmother in my carrycot! I later joined Whimble Church Choir whilst I was at primary school and was musical and theatrical throughout my school years. I was also an enthusiastic member of the Whimbletons Pantomime Group for many years! I studied Performing Arts and Jazz Music at Exeter College. During this time, I was a member of a gospel choir in Okehampton and a folk choir in Exeter who led me to discover that we have a great wealth of traditional songs from Devon collected by the Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould in the late 1800s. I then went on to study Folk & Traditional Music at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne for four years. During which time I met a lot of people from all over the British Isles and beyond who were very passionate about the traditional music and culture of their respective regions, and this greatly inspired me, and I wanted to bring back some of that passion to my home county.

Since returning home I have researched and recorded several albums of traditional Devonshire folk songs, I have worked with many well-respected musicians on the English folk scene and I have also recorded albums of my own self-penned songs as well as my musical settings of poems by my late relative, Charles Causley. I have been involved in many projects which celebrate some aspect of Devon's culture such as my work at Hembury Hillfort, The Devon Voice Group, composing a new ballad in celebration of the tin-mining heritage of Dartmoor, composing new wassail songs for various villages and providing the music for the annual Lammas Fair procession in Exeter.

Through another project which looked at using Saint Boniface's feast day as a day to celebrate everything Devon, I met a lady called Judy Tucker who was the secretary of the Boniface Link Association. Judy's great passion and enthusiasm was a huge influence on me and through her encouragement I joined her campaign to have St Boniface recognised as the official patron saint of Devon (which she succeeded in doing when Devon County Council voted in favour of the motion in 2019) and I also joined the Boniface Link Association. Judy sadly passed away in 2020 but has left a huge legacy. She was very passionate about maintaining the historic, 1264-year-old links between Crediton and Fulda in Germany and Dokkum in Friesland, Netherlands. In fact, the Boniface Link Association and its sister organisations in Dokkum & Fulda could be described as the oldest twinning association in Devon! Saint Boniface has often been described as "*the first European*" and in this post-Brexit world I feel it is more important than ever to keep these links with the continent alive and thriving. As well as various French and German exchange trips I took part in at school, I was also thrilled to represent England when I danced with Raddon Hill Clog Morris in 2011 in Besigheim, Germany. Several members of Raddon Hill were residents

of Newton Abbot and were very active with the Newton Abbot twinning Association. Through my musical touring I have fostered good friendships in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Brittany. I also have a particularly special place in my heart for the Avranches area of Normandy as my family have friends near St James and we spent many happy family holidays in that area.

As a specialist in English traditional music, I am very aware that my fellow countrymen are often little aware (if at all) of their own culture and traditions and can feel great embarrassment when interacting with other cultures who are very strong in their own cultural knowledge and understanding. Therefore I am so passionate about preserving and educating people of our own local culture because I strongly believe there is something universal in the local and if you don't foster what you have in your own backyard then you have nothing to share with anyone else!

During lockdown I had the time and resources to spend on recording some albums of traditional Devonshire music, a lot of which I had been meaning to record for ages! Some albums feature the better-known songs such as Widecombe Fair while others focus more on the lesser-known gems that have been hidden away in books for too many years. The titles of these albums are: 'Devonshire Roses' (2020), 'Devonia' (2021) and 'Songs of Dartmoor' (2023). You can find more information about me and my music at [www.jimcausley.co.uk](http://www.jimcausley.co.uk) many thanks for reading this and I look forward to meeting more of you very soon! Merry Christmas and a Joyful New Year

Jim Causley.

## TIVERTON TOWN TWINNING ASSOCIATION

### VISIT TO CHINON – 14<sup>TH</sup> to 18<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023

#### Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023

I left home at 2.30 a.m. and walked the short distance through People's Park, down Park Hill and down Bolham Road to Tiverton Town Football Club car park, in good time for the 3.00 a.m. pick up by Blakes. We left at 3.05 a.m., on way to Portsmouth. The ferry was due to depart at 8.15 a.m. and our coach had to be in Portsmouth by 6.45 a.m. There were 26 passengers on the outward journey, and 24 passengers returning (two were travelling independently, by public transport, from Chinon to see family in Germany, and returning to Caen via Paris). The driver was changed at Taunton – Tim was to be our driver for our trip.

We arrived in Portsmouth at 6.00 a.m. On arrival we left the coach and went into the terminus, where our passports were scanned, and returned to us, and I had a cup of coffee. We returned to our coach at 7.00 a.m. At 7.15 a.m. six suitcases were randomly removed by security, from the coach and scanned, together with their owners. We boarded the ferry, the MV Normandie, and it left Portsmouth at 8.15 a.m., and was due in Caen by 2.00 p.m. (3.00 p.m. French time) – a journey time of 5 and 3/4 hours. On board our party were allocated Salon B/4 on Deck 7. I decided not to bother with a cabin, as they were only available for couples or families. I had a leisurely breakfast as the ferry began its journey. I then spent an hour in our salon but left because one of our party, was snoring loudly! I then purchased crisps and drink for my journey from Caen to Chinon. The sea was very calm, and I went up on the sun deck and spent 2 hours sunning myself. At 1.00 p.m. I watched fascinated as a workman raised the French flag – navy, white and red. At 1.30 p.m. I made my way down to our salon, in preparation for our party going to the information desk prior to disembarkation. At 2.00 p.m., the crew left first, and then we made our way to the shuttle bus and went through customs. We waited outside the arrivals lounge for our coach to arrive. We boarded the coach at 2.20 p.m., leaving Caen at 2.25 p.m. (3.25 p.m. French time – which I shall be using from now on, until we board the ferry for our return journey).

We travelled along the A13 towards Paris, passed fields full of sunflowers, which are grown for their oil. The motorway was very clear. As we arrived in Chinon at 6.45 p.m., we passed the castle. We had been travelling some 15 hours. We were met by our hosts in the car park opposite Chinon Square – I met Nicole, whom I discovered spoke no English. Fortunately, my fellow guest, Sue, spoke some French and was able to translate for me! When we arrived at 7.30 p.m. in Nicole's lovely home, with its kitchen, and huge lounge-diner, she showed us our separate rooms. However, there was only one toilet and bathroom, although Nicole might have had a separate bathroom – I am not sure. Her home sits in huge grounds, with a large wall around the perimeter. I learned that she was a widow, with two sons and daughters-in-law, a grand-daughter and two grandsons. She had two dogs, who would be staying with her cousin during our visit. We then sat down at 8.00 p.m. for a VERY leisurely meal of melon, bread and brawn, home-made quiche, cheese, gateau and strawberries, coffee, and wine. (I learned during my visit that in France cheese is offered between the

main meal and sweet, and that the French take their time during meals). I retired to bed at 10.00 p.m. very tired - I had been up since 2.30 a.m.

### Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023

After showering, at 9.15 a.m., Nicole took Sue and I to Chinon Square for breakfast and a tree planting ceremony to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the twinning between Tiverton and Chinon. It was a crab apple tree which had been planted some two years prior to our visit. Underneath the tree was a plaque to celebrate the occasion. Breakfast consisted of croissants and tea and coffee. Wally Burke and Les Cruwys were dressed in their Mayoral Regalia and were greeted by the Mayor of Chinon. He welcomed everyone, and his speech was translated by Ivan Godfrey. Wally Burke replied, thanking everyone from Chinon for their wonderful hospitality.

At 10.45 a.m. Nicole drove Sue and I to l'Abbey de Bois Aubrey for a picnic and a tour of the site. It was a lovely sunny day, and we had a lovely ride around the French countryside – Nicole had to take a detour – and arrived at the Abbey at 11.30 a.m. Tables had been laid, and we all helped ourselves to salmon, salad, tomatoes, bread, grapes, goats' cheese and Rose wine. After the picnic, we had been informed that the abbey is privately owned, and the owner's wife gathered all the guests and gave a talk on the abbey in English. John Smith then took everyone around to each station. The owner then gave this talk in French and took our hosts around the abbey. During our tour of the abbey, we were astounded by the work being done to restore it and its huge cost. I, personally, would not have bought the abbey! During my walk around the grounds, I saw where Yul Brynner's ashes had been re-interred. There is a room beside the abbey which commemorates his life, with posters in French of all his films. He was born in Russia. His parents were white Russians. After the Russian Revolution, the family fled to Paris. Yul Brynner went to London before going on to Hollywood. He died in 1985. His ashes were buried, dug up and re-interred in the abbey grounds, in accordance with his wishes. We had had a lovely picnic and visit to the abbey. We returned to Nicole's home at 5.00 p.m. On our return Nicole and I exchanged gifts. I gave her a book on the history of Tiverton – without realising that she might not speak or read English (apparently, she would enjoy the photographs!) – and she gave me a Chinon mug and locally made biscuits. Sue also exchanged presents with her. At 6.30 p.m. Nicole drove us to the venue in Chinon for our evening meal – apparently it had been changed at the last minute. This was organised by our hosts, and everyone was seated by 8.00 p.m., again it consisted of six courses – the main course being pulled pork. Unfortunately, one of the courses was based on shellfish, which I had to return because of my allergy. However, an alternative was prepared, and all was well. Champagne and rose wine were served. At the end of the meal all the female guests were given a bottle of Chinon red wine as a present, and John Smith was given a flagon of Chinon red wine to take back home to Tiverton, for everyone to enjoy at our next function. By the time the meal ended, and Nicole had helped to clear everything away, it was midnight before we returned to Nicole's home.

### Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023

After showering, Sue and I had a leisurely breakfast at 8.30 a.m. An hour later, we left Nicole preparing lunch for seven, and had a walk around Nicole's garden and the Hamlet of Riviera, with its large houses and small vineyards – like allotments in Tiverton. On our return, Nicole's fellow host, Annick, had arrived with a fellow guest, Les Cruwys. (Les is a Tiverton Town and Mid Devon District Councillor and was an ambulance driver with Keith Norris, my Sister-in-law, Shirley's, husband). At 12 noon we all went in Annika's car to visit a Place De L'église – a lovely Catholic Church in Riviera – where the choir were rehearsing for a wedding in the afternoon. We were greeted by the Priest. I learned that it is an X1, X11 and XV century church. After our visit, we walked down to the river Vienne.

On our return to Nicole's home at 1.00 p.m., Annika's husband, Robert, and son Clement, had arrived to join us for lunch. Again, it was a six-course meal based on chicken, with Chinon pie for sweet – apple on a pizza base, spread with jam, and ice-cream. Annick's family are arable farmers, growing wheat and sunflowers, and after lunch Robert returned home with Clement, as Clement wanted to finish combining as rain was expected tomorrow (Sunday). I sat out in the garden, for a leisurely afternoon nap, when Nicole, to my surprise, announced we were going out in ten minutes time! At 4.00 p.m. Annick drove Nicole, Sue, Les, and me into Chinon for a visit to the castle. We went through the shop and visited the exhibition on Joan of Arc's rehabilitation trial in Chinon, 25 years after her execution. She had tried to take Paris, been captured by the English, and handed over to the Burgundians for interrogation and execution in Rouen. Her cause was not helped by the fact that she refused to wear armour and dress like a man. She was rehabilitated and later made a Saint. We left the castle at 6.00 p.m. and stopped for a drink in a café down by the river. To my surprise, Robert, joined us. We all returned to Nicole's home at 7.10 p.m. for another six-course meal! I retired to bed at 10.30 p.m., after a very pleasant evening. Annick took Les home in one vehicle, and Robert went home in his van.

### Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2023

There was a thunderstorm and rain during the night. After showering, we had breakfast at 9.00 a.m. At 10.15 a.m. Nicole took us into Chinon to visit the Cave Monplaisir, where we were met by Robert and Les. Inside the cave the temperature was extremely low, and we viewed numerous barrels of wine inside. Aged wines, 1893, 1921, 1947, 1959, 1964, 1976, 1999 and 2009 were on display. I also observed an underground spring. On the way out, visitors could sample the latest wines prior to purchasing a bottle. Nicole then took us to our venue for our lunch, and a "surprise". (I was wondering why this meal was set to take over six hours!). There were eight tables set with nameplates of all hosts and guests. At 12 noon we helped ourselves to champagne and aperitifs. Everyone sat down at 12.30 p.m. We were welcomed by all the dignitaries including Wally Burke, who was wearing his Mayoralty Regalia. (Les also wore his Mayoral Regalia – he had been Mayor of Tiverton in 1991). There were several speeches, which again Ivan translated. The Mayor of Chinon presented Tiverton with a metal tree, made by a local man, with 29 flowers, representing the 29 districts of Chinon. Wally accepted this gift on behalf of Tiverton Town Twinning Association, to commemorate 50 years of twinning between Tiverton and Chinon.

At 1.00 p.m. the first and second courses were served. Unfortunately, I had to reject the second course, as it was based on shellfish, to which I am allergic - again an alternative was found for me. Now came the "surprise". At 1.45 p.m. the cabaret began, with five French ladies on stage – four very scantily dressed – followed by a male French singer. At 2.00 p.m. the main course – Veal – was served. Afterwards, there were toasts to Tiverton and Chinon and the hosts sang the French National Anthem. There was more cabaret at 2.30 p.m. and the fourth course was served at 3.00 p.m. At 3.30 p.m. Wally and Les blew out the candles on the celebration cake, accompanied by the Mayor of Chinon. This cake – the fifth course - was then served to hosts and guests and at 3.55 p.m. there was more cabaret and dancing as coffee was served. The cabaret finished at 4.30 p.m., when the artists took their final bows. There had been over 20 costume changes during the performance, and the lady helping with these changes was introduced. Several group photographs were taken, and we left at 5.15 p.m. and returned to Nicole's home at 5.45 p.m.

I thought we were going to have a quiet evening, after our meal. However, at 6.30 p.m. Nicole drove us to Annick and Robert's home, for a five-course meal, with plenty of wine! This had been arranged by Annick and Nicole, and Robert just joined in with a good supply of wine! We were joined by Clement, who had finished combining. We left at 10.00 p.m. after another very pleasant evening. The cabaret had been a surprise, I was expecting it after our meal, not during it.

### Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023

After another pleasant night's sleep, I showered and went along for breakfast with Sue at 8.30 a.m. At 9.30 a.m. Robert brought Les to Nicole's home, and then returned home. At 10.30 a.m. Nicole drove Les, Sue and me to Chinon Square. All the guests said bon voyage to our hosts, along with the Mayor. Particular thanks were expressed to Jean-Pierre, who had organised our weekend. It was raining as we boarded the coach and left Chinon at 11.00 a.m., but the sun came out during our return journey, and it was quite warm. We arrived in Caen at 3.00 p.m., and we all walked on foot to the departures lounge, where our passports were checked against the manifest by a lady from Brittany Ferries. We learned from our driver that we would not be permitted to re-board the coach before it was driven onto the ferry – as on our outward journey last Thursday. As he left, our driver, Tim, checked he had no stowaways on board – apparently, he and Blakes can be fined, separately, £2,000 per stowaway if they are discovered! We went through passport control, where our bags were scanned, and nineteen passengers rode on the shuttle bus and then went up three flights of steps on to the ferry – five disabled passengers went separately in a lift. We were allocated Salon 2/B on Deck 7. The ferry, the MV Normandie, departed at 3.40 p.m., British time. I had a very pleasant meal of poached fish, mashed potato, peas, carrots and coffee. The sea conditions became rougher and at 7.45 p.m. passengers were not allowed to go up on to the sun deck. At 8.00 p.m. I went up to deck 8, found a seat and spent an hour talking to two teenage girls who had been travelling with a party of schoolchildren from a school in Suffolk. Time passed very quickly, and I returned to our salon at 9.00 p.m. from where we all made our way to the information desk, prior to disembarkation. The ferry docked at 9.15 p.m. At 9.35 p.m., nineteen passengers were led down a covered walkway – again the other

five were ferried separately in a lift – and at 9.45 p.m. we boarded the coach for the short journey to the hall, where we had to show our passports to British customs. I was asked to remove my glasses – I was very surprised, as people are not permitted to wear them when photographs are taken for passports, etc. We arrived at the arrivals/departure lounge at 10.00 p.m. and had to wait for the disabled passengers to arrive. We re-boarded the coach and left Portsmouth at 10.15 p.m. Our driver, Tim, informed his passengers that we would be arriving at 12.45 a.m., Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September. He travelled via Salisbury, the A303, the M5 at Taunton to Junction 27 and the A361 to Tiverton, arriving at 12.45 a.m. exactly. We all congratulated him. Normally I am only ten minutes from home, but two of our party drove me home, after we had collected our luggage. I was amazed how many cases of wine were brought back by our party! I had had a lovely time in Chinon, getting used to the lengthy mealtimes, the number of courses of each meal and cheese following the main course. Our hosts had laid on a marvellous weekend to celebrate 50 years of the twinning between Tiverton and Chinon. Their return visit to Tiverton is scheduled for June 2024. We had all contributed to the cost of three bottles of Champagne, which were given to John Smith, in appreciation of his organisation of our trip.

Irene Butler

28<sup>th</sup> September 2023



## Stokeinteignhead Twinning Association

### Another successful twinning visit

We at Stokeinteignhead Twinning Association were pleased to host our twinned guests from Trévières in Normandy in September this year. Usually, they come here in the Spring, but luckily this visit coincided with our Village Show, when our local produce is displayed, promoted, and put into competitions for biggest and best. At our suggestion the Trévières twinning présidente, Mauricette Richard, had sent over a recipe for a baking competition: a Normandy Pear Tart. Many of our locals had a go at making it and several were brave enough to enter the resulting tarts for Mauricette to judge. The winning entrant was clearly thrilled to have her tart judged as “parfait”!

There were also some lovely moments at the show when, ambling around the displays, our French visitors met up with former twidders they had not seen for many years.

It was great publicity for the twinning to be so high profile at the show, with speeches given by Mauricette and our own chair Dot Simmons.

Our numbers may be low at the moment, but there is no shortage of enthusiasm on both sides!

*Regan Toomer.*

## Taunton Twinning

The visit of our friends from Konigslutter, Germany to Taunton September 2023. FOK

Our friends arrived on 10th September, and we met them with flags.

We had a myriad of events planned and the weather could not have been better.



On the Monday some of went to Mr Miles in Taunton for breakfast then to the placing of a bench that FOT gifted to Taunton before covid hit us.



Nick O'Donnell the mayor of Taunton joined us. We then had a tour of Hestercombe followed by a cream tea kindly provided and enjoyed in one of our members gardens



Tuesday again blessed with blue skies and warm weather, we took our guests to Abbotsbury's garden and had lunch in their plantation café before going to Portland to see the views, finishing off at Weymouth to enjoy the seaside.



Wednesday was a trip to Lynmouth via Porlock hill ( an adventure in itself!!!) via the beautiful Exmoor which was loved by our guests who couldn't believe how beautiful the area was. Many a photo was taken that afternoon.



Wednesday evening we held the civic meal at rugby club which was filled with laughter. The mayor attended and stayed to the end, this meant so much to our guests.



## Crewkerne & District

Crewkerne signed the charter to twin with Igny, which is situated to the south-west of Paris, in 1976 and then welcomed Bures-sur-Yvette in 2006

When we waved goodbye to our French visitors in May 2019 no-one could have imagined the devastating consequences of the global pandemic which hit us in 2020. After 4 years a group of thirty-three of us left Crewkerne early on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> October to head for Dover. Unfortunately, due to bureaucracy and a customs inspection we waved goodbye to the ferry and had to get a place on another, scheduled for an hour later, which took us to Dunkirk instead of Calais. A group of us shared a bottle of Bollinger to pass the time. Consequently, we didn't reach our final destination in Bures until 10.30pm but we were greeted with the customary enthusiasm from our hosts and ended up eating our dinner just before bedtime! Two of our intrepid members who had cycled for eight days from St Malo arrived well ahead of the rest of us.



One of the passages of Paris

The weather was perfect, sunny and warm, as we gathered at the railway station at 8.15 on Saturday morning to travel into Paris where we had a two-hour guided visit to some of the famous passages in the Opera district. These iron and glass-covered arcades were introduced into the city in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and featured a variety of shops with window displays of luxury goods, restaurants, and cafes. Perfect for a trip back in time to the beautiful Belle Epoque. We were then treated to a three-course lunch in a typical Parisian restaurant followed by a three-hour guided coach tour of the city. We returned by train to Igny and Bures to spend the evening with our hosts.

Sunday was a free day with our respective hosts. After a continental breakfast, provided by the Mayor of Bures we went our separate ways. Some of our members, who were staying in Igny, paid a visit to a bird observatory at Saclay where there is a network of ponds and channels which were originally to collect water for the fountains of the Chateau de Versailles. The system suffered from urbanisation and ceased in the 1950s but today, restoration has provided a haven for a large number of waterfowl, both permanent and migratory. Although the hide is small it does have telescopes and binoculars to give ample opportunity for bird spotting.

A group of us from Bures visited the Chateau de la Madelaine which was constructed between 1020 and 1090. Although in a ruined state the remaining structures have been conserved and its position overlooking the town of Chevreuse offered spectacular views. After a long lunch in a nearby creperie, we travelled on to Chateau de Courson set in a romantic English style park with many botanical treasures. Originally Courson belonged to the Duke of Padua, general of the Empire and first cousin of Napoleon.

Then it was time to rush back and get ready for the farewell soiree which was held in a restaurant in Igny. On arrival all lady guests were presented with a blush-pink, long-stemmed rose, two jazz guitarists were strumming away. The mayors of both towns were present and thankfully the speeches were brief. We were served a splendid feast with a spectacular finale.



On Monday, we left Bures just after 6.30am to collect the rest of our group from Igny. Final goodbyes were said.



Our two cyclists ready to set out on the last leg of their journey from Epernon to Bures-sur-Yvette

The journey to the port was hampered by Monday morning rush hour traffic and diversions due to road works which meant that once again we missed the ferry! We finally arrived in Crewkerne at 7.45pm after a hectic weekend and two eventful journeys, tired but happy having re-connected with old friends and having made new ones.

The French twinned are hoping to visit us in early May next year.



The Mayor of Igny, M. Korchia, and the Mayor of Crewkerne, Mr J Cornelius, signing the twinning charter on June 26<sup>th</sup> 1976

## Louvigny And Feniton Twinning Association (LAFTA)

### Visit to Feniton – 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> September 2023

We were delighted to welcome our 10 guests from Louvigny, nr Caen, France for our first Twinning weekend since pre-covid 2019.

Friday evening, we welcomed them all at the village hall, and having renewed friendships & introduced new members on both sides to each other, they dispersed with their various hosts.

Saturday, thankfully, was dry and we all went to Charmouth and the Discovery Centre there, then did some fossil hunting on the beach, where one of our guests was delighted on finding an ammonite - albeit small. On to beautiful Belmont House in Lyme Regis, which was open as part of the Heritage Days, which run annually each September. Then a stroll down to The Cobb & town. Beautiful!! All our guests loved it – as did we.

Sunday, we visited the fabulous Powderham Castle, near Kenton - yet another Heritage Days property opening for free. Some of us were lucky enough to enjoy a really interesting & humorous talk given by the Earl. Technology enabled our guests to understand the Earl with instant translation on their phones - the marvels of modern life! However, by the time we came out of the castle the monsoon deluge had begun! Some of our group had managed to get to the nearby restaurant in the dry, but many of us sheltered for 40 minutes at the castle, but then braved it and ran through the rain and what had become ponds, rather than puddles, to our cars, arriving at the restaurant completely soaked to the skin! We enjoyed our meal there and made our way home to dry out. It was only the next day that we realised how lucky we were when we saw on the news that Kenton had been a flooded out and a poor 92-year-old lady had to be rescued from her house also flooded in a nearby village. We then met up at the Six Bells in Payhembury for an indoor picnic and a great evening of skittles.

Monday morning, we bade au revoir to our guests, confirming that we will be delighted to do the return trip to Louvigny next year



Some of our guests & hosts on The Cobb. Lyme Regis.

## Thoughts on returning from Exmouth Association's visit to Langerwehe, Germany.

I think I'm getting the hang of twinning.....

First, set an early (very early!) alarm and enlist a friend to drive to the coach park.

Remember to pack sandwiches (for breakfast – no one can eat at 5.30am), phone charger, puzzle book - and pen! Note to self - neck pillow would also be a good idea.

It's surprising how quickly the miles between Devon and Kent pass when you have a good driver and a riveting book. I can definitely recommend DFDS as a ferry company – and the chicken dinner was ... generous!

Once on the continent, everything looks similar but not-quite-the-same. Maybe being on the other side of the road has something to do with that. Or that everything appears so neat and clean! But it helps the time to pass, as does the quiz.

Arriving at Exmouth Platz as it's getting dark is a relief and a kind of home coming. I may have only met Maria a couple of times before but already we feel like old friends. A short walk to her house, a quick meal and the conversation is under way, not to stop for another 4 days. Topics cover (in no particular order) weather, cost of housing, family issues, migrant crisis, apples, energy cost and generation, hats, education..... Of course, this is conducted all in English, with the occasional Romanian or French expression thrown in. I feel linguistically embarrassed. Maybe I should have German lessons – any offers?

The reception is the first chance to get everyone together, with wine and beer at 11am. Very continental. But the opportunity to review past meetings and plan the next shows the positive and lasting effect this twinning enterprise has. It won't be long before we celebrate 40 years. What an achievement.



The two committees ready for their meeting before the reception.



The “day out” this time was a masterpiece of organisation and variety. First a medieval town, then a boat trip, a walk, and another boat, and finally a dinner. From the conversation level, everyone was catching up and having a thoroughly enjoyable time.



Monschau

Over the next 2 days more outings, some with the group, some individual, all enjoyable, building the relationship between host and guest. Next time the roles will be reversed but hopefully the bond even stronger.

Before you realise, it's time to say goodbye/auf wiedersehen and set off back home. Another day seeing sunrise and sunset – I don't do that often! Only 11 months until we meet again



Time to say goodbye - a few tears were shed!

**Carolyn Hallett, Exmouth Twinning Association.**

## Brittany Ferries - Twinning exclusive offer

Brittany Ferries celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, a milestone of which we are extremely proud. Since its creation, Brittany Ferries has had the objective of linking people, countries and cultures and your Twinning Committee and its members have contributed to achieving this.

Wishing to strengthen the link we have with your Twinning Committee, we propose a new partnership, namely a **reduction on all our fares** (excluding on-board accommodation), **to both France and Spain, without date exclusions**. This discount will apply to sailings throughout the year and on the following bookings: **10% discount for family trips of your members, made outside of the Twinning Committee** with their vehicle or as a foot passenger **20% discount on the public fare** for foot passenger Twinning Committee trips (10 or more people.) **10% discount on the group public fare** for Twinning Committee trips by coach.

### When can you benefit from these new discounts?

For **all bookings made from 21 September 2023** and for all **departures from 1 November 2023**.

We hope that you will be interested in these new advantages offered by the partnership between Brittany Ferries and your Twinning Committee.

If this is the case, do not hesitate to **fill in the following form** to create your account quickly and send it to [tradesupport@brittanyferries.com](mailto:tradesupport@brittanyferries.com).

[COMPLETE THE FORM](#)