

FRIENDS OF CHAVILLE Report from the Chair 2013-14

The Friends of Chaville have had another busy and successful year, maintaining old contacts and developing new ones between Barnet and Chaville.

The first event of the year was that, in June, Keith was invited to speak at the Cercle de Lecture in Chaville's library which is housed in the splendid Atrium building. The Cercle de Lecture is a reading and discussion group run by the indefatigable Marie Alice. Reading and discussion take place in English. Keith's talk encompassed the 54-year history of the twinning and also featured extracts from his book 'Friern Barnet - the library that refused to close'.

There has been a demand for more social events during the year so we organised a picnic in Trent Park in July, luckily on a beautifully hot day and in September we enjoyed a meal at the '36' restaurant in Friern Barnet where we were particularly pleased to see a number of new members.

A new development this year has been the visit of a small group of children (9-12 years old) from Chaville under the care of stalwarts Brigitte de Palma and Marie Jo Coel. The children did not already know each other but got on wonderfully well. They had a very busy programme and enjoyed their visit immensely. We are hopeful that a similar group will come again this year.

A new idea was to introduce a darts evening. How would we fare with such a quintessentially British event against the French? It remains to be seen.

Our annual quiz in March was a most enjoyable evening with a range of interesting, challenging and entertaining questions - thanks to Jim and Chelle - and a delicious ploughman's supper with an astonishing array of French cheeses. This event keeps us financially afloat - a great boon!

In March there was also a petanque match between FoC and the Saracens, played on the new piste at Allianz Park, (previously known as Cophthall). Saracens won, but the practice paid off - see below.

The most important event of the year was, of course, the twinning weekend. The group of ten from Chaville included a number of new people, which is always good to see. The very full programme, put together by Penny and Irene, included visits to the splendid Museum of London and a very informative and entertaining guided walk led by Paul Baker through the Spitalfields area. There was also a very full visit to St Albans with a wonderful tour of the cathedral from a lady whose knowledge was, to put it mildly, fascinating and profound. The evening activities were a Bring-a-Dish at Penny's house and a fish and chip supper at the excellent restaurant next to Barnet Odeon. On Sunday the petanque match was much enjoyed and we even managed to regain La Coupe Sportive. Many thanks to Potters Bar Petanque Players for allowing us to use two of their pistes and also to Barnet's Mayor, Melvyn Cohen, for presenting La Coupe. The weekend was rounded off by a delicious lunch at Bistro The Walk in Potters Bar. My thanks to all who hosted our visitors. We were very sorry that Pam who hosted was very ill during the weekend - thank you to Joe for carrying on - but we are pleased to say Pam is making a full recovery.

I would like to thank heartily all members of the committees both here and in Chaville who work so hard to keep the twinning a vibrant reality.

Irene Nichols, May 2014