



# Friends of Triel

[www.friendsoftriel.com](http://www.friendsoftriel.com)

Newsletter of the Leatherhead & District Twinning Association

Nov 2011

## Twining Exchange – June 2011

### A newcomer's view!

Four days in France, coach to and from Leatherhead, opportunities to shop, stay with and get to know French families, a day in Versailles... what's not to like? That's why I find myself joining Leatherhead and District's 'Friends of Triel' on their seventh 'twining' visit – and my first.

I know a few of the English group already and others seem friendly. Sitting on a coach going through the Tunnel is... novel – but soon we're in a Calais hypermarket, gathering our very own wine lake. That's because all shops will be closed for our Sunday return. The coach driver stashes everything away for the remainder of our trip.

The coach is comfy, the wildflowers edging the autoroute delightful and soon we're arriving in Triel, right on time. Or are we? The coach driver is turning round in a very tight spot. This isn't the River Seine, it's the Oise. Triel is half an hour away – but our French hosts are waiting and waving as we arrive.

A charming young couple take me to their flat. Next to my bed is a balcony and a few metres beyond that flows the Seine, complete with huge barges and river cruisers. My hosts speak good English and I reply in French. Amazingly my brain recalls enough of long-ago lessons to make myself understood with some fluency. Who cares about grammar? This is fun!

My hosts have prepared a delicious four-course meal featuring local specialities – wow! By the time it's finished – 23.30 – I sleep well. Next morning we're up bright and early to re-join the coach for our day in Versailles. It is unbelievably ornate, crowded, huge and hot, with a lamentable lack of loos and refreshment points. Inside the Palace I find myself separated from the group, hemmed in among a solid mass of strangers. Thank goodness we're all reunited in the end. Back to the flat for another four-course meal. I'll return larger than when I left...

The next morning we all meet up at a civic reception in Triel, complete with champagne, speeches in French and English and the exchange of gifts. All agree that 'twining' is a Good Thing – for future generations'



sake as well as our own. After lunch we're off to the nearby historic town of St Germain en Laye, with its great little shops and stupendous view towards Paris. We can even see the Eiffel Tower, just as we can see the Millennium Wheel from the hills around Leatherhead. The countryside is similar too – wooded, hilly – and many people in Triel, as in Leatherhead, commute to work in the capital. We're well-twinning, even if the Mole is a little smaller than the Seine.

The dinner-dance that evening isn't their most successful, I'm told, proving that French cooking isn't *always* good. But they can dance a lot better than the English! Our group is, on the whole, older than our hosts – I'm the second youngest, at 57, but can't dance. Our oldest fellow-traveller is a sprightly 91 – and she can.

After a late – and thundery – night we bid fond farewells to our generous hosts and hope we'll see them on their return visit to Leatherhead next year, if not before. Thanks to their hospitality and all the hard work of Paula and the committee, real links have been forged or strengthened – full of 'rapport' and 'bonhomie'. Thank you, all – I'm hooked!

By Chris Leonard



En route to Triel, we stopped by the canal at Amiens

## Carnival time in Triel's (other) twin town!

Our twin town of Triel has now been twinned with a German town called Seligenstadt for 45 years. Every 4 years, a special festival called the Geleitsfest takes place in Seligenstadt, and this year 4 members of the Leatherhead Twinning Association flew to Germany in June to participate in the festivities.

Seligenstadt is a beautifully preserved medieval town with cobbled streets and 177 listed buildings dating mostly from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. At that time, major trade routes from Nuremburg and Aachen met in Seligenstadt, and every year merchants travelling to Frankfurt to market would celebrate their safe arrival at Seligenstadt with a huge carnival and, of course, a drinking competition! The Geleitsfest (or 'Festival of the Spoons') involved local merchants and dignitaries drinking red wine from a giant spoon which holds 2 litres of wine...and this has to be drunk in one go! The winner was entitled to an armed escort for the remainder of the hazardous journey to the Frankfurt market.



These days, the festivities involve a re-enactment of this tradition in full costume and include a procession of horse-drawn wagons in which all the guilds and crafts of that time are represented, as well as dancing in the main square and a re-run of the wine-drinking competition. The whole town is festooned with flags and lights, and all the little squares become open-air bars with live music and stay open well into the night. The finale to the weekend is a spectacular firework display over the River Main, called Main in Flammen (the Main in flames).

It is hard to convey the atmosphere of this colourful and spectacular event in words, but Paula, Paul, Navin and Beverley had the most wonderful welcome in this small town and loved the whole experience of the Geleitsfest. We four will all be there again in June 2015, and we hope that some of the Friends of Triel will join us then for an unforgettable weekend!

## The 'red, white and blue' picnic!



Guests at our Summer picnic were invited to come wearing anything they wanted to as long as it was red white or blue, and this colour scheme made a big splash in Navin and Beverley's garden on Friday 2 September. The attendance was excellent with over 35 members of the twinning association arriving on this balmy summer's evening to share a delicious picnic.

All our attire, from socks and bow ties through to hats and scarves, was in line with the 'tricolore' theme and one male guest (who shall remain nameless!) was even spotted wearing red mules! Bernard became something of a fashion icon for the evening, sporting a nifty red boater complete with home-made ribbons!

After a radiant sunset, we retreated indoors to peruse 2 dozen or more photographs of our Triel members as babies/toddlers, and to attempt to match them up with those present. This proved to be a hilarious and extremely challenging task, especially as some of the photos were over 7 decades old!

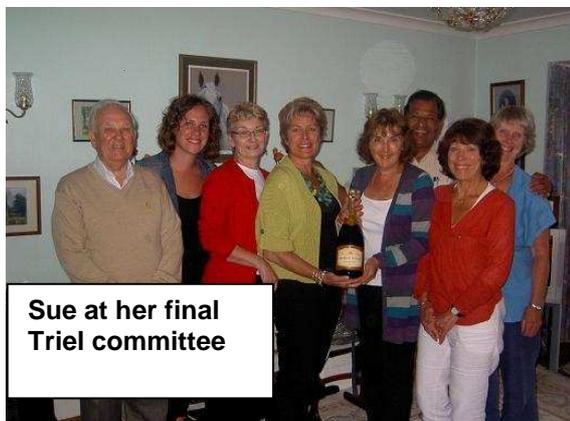
Our thanks go to Navin and Beverley for inviting us to take over their lovely house and garden for the evening, and to all those who came for making this another memorable Triel gathering.

## Around Leatherhead Quiz!

During our April "summer", you might have seen teams of two prowling round the town centre trying to spot local landmarks in answer to some fiendish questions about Leatherhead Town Centre. If you thought you knew your town, you were in for a surprise! But after much hard work and shoe leather, we found our winning team - Paul and Johanna Hancock. Not to be outdone Bernard Salisbury won the picture quiz.

## Ode to our Sue

Sue and Peter Brader moved to the West Country in January 2011. Sue served on the committee for many years. She set up the web site, edited the magazine and was the expert on all things IT. We'll miss you, Sue.



Our Sue buzzed off, what shall we do?  
She's upped and gone and left  
No 'by your leave', just 'cheerio'  
...we're feeling quite bereft

Our Sue resides far, far away  
Way down in the West Country  
She quit her job and beetled off  
and left us up a gumtree!

Our Sue's retired, thrown in the towel  
She's now a lady of leisure  
A life of Riley, just for two  
Her life is full of pleasure!

Our Sue's bailed out, we miss her so  
Her style, her smile, her wit  
Her Aussie charm and sassy ways  
We miss them quite a bit

Our Sue's not here, and now it's time  
for another Triel newsletter  
We need her skills, her IT flair  
...or maybe this one's better?!!

Dear Sue, we're pleased you're having fun  
And your life is now complete  
But how can we forgive you when  
...you took our lovely Pete!!

Come and see us soon you two  
That's what so many have said  
We'll share some stories and some laughs  
...and a lovely bottle of red!

## In Vino Veritas

Below are some questions about French wine to challenge you as the days get shorter. Please email your answers to [elaine.crutchley1@gmail.com](mailto:elaine.crutchley1@gmail.com) or bring to the AGM. There will be a prize on the night.

1. What three grape varieties can be used in making champagne?
2. In what year was "Appellation d'origine Contrôlée" introduced?
3. What was the occupation of the creator of "Kir"?
4. What appellation has the same name as an American car maker?
5. How many named villages are entitled to produce Côte du Rhone villages?
6. Up to how many authorised grape varieties can be used in Chateauneuf-du-Pape?
7. What was brought from the USA to revive the French wine industry from 1865?
8. In France most Riesling comes from which region?
9. Traditionally what vineyard activity began on the feast day of St.Vincent?
10. What does VDQS on a wine label stand for?

## Friends of Triel AGM

You are all cordially invited to the Friends AGM / Cheese and Wine which will be held on Tuesday 15 November 2011 at 8pm in the Reeves room at Leatherhead Parish Church Hall.

The agenda will be

1. Welcome
2. Minutes of last AGM
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairman's report
5. Treasurer's report
6. Election of Officers
7. Any other business – May 2012 Triel visit to Leatherhead

The committee hope as many members and friends as possible will join us for cheese and wine (all French of course!) after the meeting. We would also be very interested to hear from anyone who would like to join the committee.

Members should note that the new annual subscription of £5 per person or £10 per organisation will be due for payment in November 2011 at the AGM.

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## STOP PRESS!!!

We are delighted that our friends from Triel will be visiting us from **Thursday 17 May 2012 to Sunday 20 May 2012**. We are planning a trip to Brighton Pavilion and have already booked Tyrell's Wood Golf Club for the Saturday evening dinner and dance. Put the dates in your diary!

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## Joining the Friends of Triel



There is great enthusiasm in Triel to link up with local organisations over here - representatives from French churches, choral societies, football clubs, schools and a host of other organisations in Triel are keen to foster links with similar organisations in the Leatherhead area. The twinning committee would be delighted to hear from any local groups who would like to join the 'Friends of Triel'.

On a more personal level, the welcome and hospitality encountered by the various groups who have visited Triel over the years is always warm and generous. The committee are keen to expand the membership of the 'Friends of Triel' and would welcome any individuals or families who would like to join as new members. If you are interested in joining or finding out more, please contact Paula Hancock on 07767 833427 or by email [paula303@2000net.com](mailto:paula303@2000net.com)

### About Triel

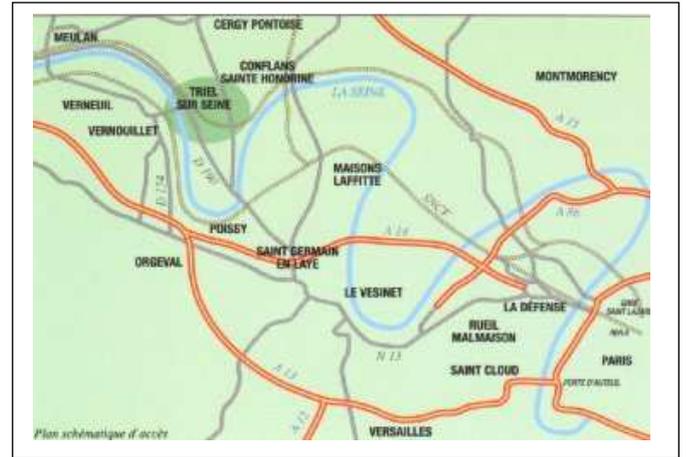
Triel-sur-Seine is a small town of 11000 inhabitants situated approximately 30 kilometres north-west of Paris on the banks of the River Seine.



Located on an old trade route which ran from the coastal towns of the north-west to Poissy and Paris, Triel was proclaimed a free town in 1221. The ancient church of St Martin in Triel, which dates back to 1240, is renowned for its impressive stained glass

windows. Triel also has a small theatre in a recently-restored 18<sup>th</sup> century building.

The wooded hills behind the town are known as the Bois de L'Hautil and are a popular place for walking. On the crest of these hills is the Château de la Tour which was built in 1890 and now houses the Triel Observatory. Opened in 1991 and known as the "Parc aux Etoiles", the observatory affords an unparalleled view of the universe and is a stargazer's paradise!



The people of Triel-sur-Seine are known as "les Triellois" and are not only proud of their town, but also extremely hospitable. We hope that you will take advantage of their hospitality and discover Triel for yourself.

For more information see the web-site <http://www.mairie-triel78.fr/>

### Friends of Triel (Leatherhead and District Twinning Association)

#### Annual Membership Application

(£5 for Individual membership; £10 for Organisational membership)

Name

Address

Telephone

Email

Signed

Please tick the boxes below to indicate your interests:

- Host a French Visitor
- Take part in an exchange visits
- Help organise an outing

Please enclose a cheque made payable to "Leatherhead and District Twinning Association" and send to Johanna Hancock, Rye View, 21 Links Close, Ashted, SURREY KT21 2HH