



## ISSUE 11, AUTUMN 2019

I refuse to acknowledge the evidence that we are probably more closely aligned to Winter, to judge by recent weather challenges; I also refuse to focus unnecessarily on current politics as I might become weepy. I therefore bring you the latest cheery Newsletter full of MBTA news.

### SUMMER ACTIVITY

Two enjoyable sessions of the Boules/Bistro combo (otherwise known as boules followed by a pint at The Morgan pub) once again figured on the Summer calendar, orchestrated very efficiently by our resident expert player, Peter Tooke. During one session a visiting young family from Bagnères, on holiday here in a house-swap arrangement with a *Somers Park* teacher, joined in .... and showed a distinctly higher level of expertise than we did!

This year we also added to the summer outdoor programme an enjoyable afternoon's croquet, thanks to an invitation from the Norton Croquet Club's President Ken Potts. We are considering offering such an activity to our French friends on their next visit, which could be in early summer 2020.

A wonderful example of the joys of twinning occurred in late August, when two of our very supportive Friends, Phil and Honor Arundel, just happened to be passing through Bagnères as part of their holiday. Once our French friends had been tipped off about this casual visit, it was immediately turned into a whole day's programme of visits, eating, chatting and ... eating – a wholly unexpected display of generous hospitality.

### COME AND SING!

Our latest idea for a twinning experience involving groups of people with a common interest seems likely to involve choirs. Through contacts made in Bagnères during the April Rugby visit we have been able to link up a Bagnères choir with *The Severn Voices*

*Ensemble* here in Malvern. Their musical director Will Coleman is already in touch with his counterpart in France to initiate plans. This could be a very harmonious partnership as the repertoire, size of choir and ambitious programming of the two groups seem well matched. Watch this space!

## REPORT ON AGM

Last Monday our AGM took place, as advertised, in the Foley Arms. Aside from the business of the meeting it was a convivial affair as we finished up enjoying a curry there and having the chance to chat to existing and new members of our Friends' group.

One important decision was made and unanimously agreed by those present – this is to raise the level of the subscription from the current £5 pp (unchanged for 4 years) to £10 pp. We do hope that you will continue to support us again this year; we really will be most appreciative of your prompt response to this request. This can be done in two ways:

*Either:* cheque made payable to **Malvern Bagnères Twinning Association** (full name necessary)

*Or:* By BACS transfer to this account. **Sort Code: 30-95-41 Acc. No. 32526160**

If paying by this method, please remember to include the word **SUBS** as a reference.

## COMING UP IN 2020

Before Easter we will be holding three social events to which everyone is welcome.

The first of these will be the...

### ***GREAT BAGNERES BAKE-OFF***

*To be held on Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2020*

*At Apt. 1, The Revue, 2, Orchard Rd*

As in the past 3 years we will have a French theme. This year's theme will be a '**Bûche de Noël**', or maybe, in view of the date, 'bûche d'après Noël... As always judging will take into account both cake-baking skills and creativity.

Before Christmas Denise will be contacting you to remind you of the date and give full details on how you can become involved. But get out your 2020 diary NOW!

***QUIZ NIGHT: Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> February, 2020 at 7.30 p.m.***

We hope to hold our fourth MBTA Quiz Evening on Leap Day itself, so heaven knows what the questions will be about. Once again we hope to welcome back **Kate Moore** as our Quiz Guru and look forward to seeing you there. More info anon.

***PLAY BRIDGE AND ENJOY AFTERNOON TEA***

***Colwall Village Hall on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 - 2p.m. start***

New this year is an event we hope will appeal to all those who like to enjoy a hand or two of Bridge during the afternoon. We shall be hosting an afternoon's Bridge for an entry fee of £10, to include afternoon tea and cakes.

You will receive reminders of all these events closer to the date and we look forward to welcoming you and your friends.

**FUTURE VISITS**

The Committee is currently in discussion with Maite and her own committee in Bagnères with a view to arranging a possible French visit here to Malvern in the early summer (May/June?). There are likely to be more visitors here than at the time of their first community visit of three years ago and it is likely that our French friends would like to stay with English families. If you think you might be able to offer hospitality to a French visitor (or to a couple) for 4 or 5 nights, I would be immensely grateful to hear from you. At this present time this would be merely an expression of interest, not a firm commitment.

At the same time I would love to know who among you might be interested in participating in our next joint visit to Bagnères – provisionally sometime in 2021.

**A FINAL REFLECTION ON 2019**

2019 has been another successful and rewarding year for those of us actively involved in the twinning programme. Last year I recorded that around 100 individuals had enjoyed a direct experience of twinning activity; this year we are again proud that almost another 100 have joined the ranks of Malvern–Bagnères 'twinners' – largely thanks to the superb Rugby Club visit in April and the continuing contacts between schools. Vive le jumelage!

**Gina Butler, Chair**