

Launceston & Plestin Packet



Occasional newsletter of Launceston and
District Twinning Association

web-link: launcestontwinningassociation.weebly.com

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PLESTIN VISIT SPECIAL

Wow – what a weekend!

OUR French hosts entertained us to a memorable weekend of vivid contrasts – in activities, locations and weather – during our visit over the early May bank holiday.

A busy formal schedule saw 70 Launceston twinnings in party mood for the reception and dinner on Saturday evening, displaying true British grit dealing with the elements at the *Vallée des Saints* on Sunday morning, and savouring the atmosphere of a striking Bretagne chateau and its colourful gardens in the sunshine on Sunday afternoon. Host families individually laid on other interesting activities to entertain their Launceston guests – and for all of us that seemed to include impromptu gatherings in the wine aisles at Super U and Lidl!

The evening reception, hosted by the Mayor of Plestin, Andre Lucas, with the traditional party that followed, was unanimously declared one of the best-ever evenings.

We were welcomed by past president Mado Menou, standing in for new Plestin President, Bruno Phillippe, who had a prior engagement.

Our chairman, Jill Whitechurch, thanked our hosts for entertaining Launceston on this, the first of alternate year exchanges. Translations were provided by Cherry Warne, standing in – or should it be limping in – for our vice-chairman Carolyn Burch.



Andre, Mado, Jill and Cherry (with stick)

In an ironic turn of events, Cherry had damaged her knee in a fall just before the exchange, having said she would take over as interpreter for Carolyn, who had seriously damaged her knee while on holiday.



As the formalities concluded, there was a big round of applause when Mado introduced Christiane le Gleau, painter of the delightful *Aspects of Plestin* presented to us by Plestin twinnings last year to mark 30 years of twinning.

Mado also pointed out a healthy young tree on the patio behind her – the orange tree we gave to Plestin last year.



An excellent meal, with delightful desserts made by the Plestin ladies, was enjoyed against a background of accordion music. And it was the accordionist who really got things buzzing as the night progressed.

More people than ever before joined the dancing, which went on until late in the evening and ranged from traditional Breton group dancing to ballroom and pop.

Culture – in the rain

It was an early start next day for the expedition to the *Vallée des Saints*. Armed with waterproofs, wellies, walking shoes, umbrellas and... picnics!

The intrepid travellers braved rain, mist and wind to wander around the hillside and marvel at the collection of huge sculptures depicting Brittany saints and the stories associated with them.

Luckily there was much-appreciated cover for the soggy visitors to lay out and enjoy their picnics before setting off on the next leg of the journey.



Culture – in the sunshine

Our first sight of the *Château de Trévarez* – a truly grand and imposing brick structure – was a surprise. It is currently a modern art installation as well as an historic 20th century building. Shafts of silver foil now highlight the front of the building in abstract fashion while the interior focuses on the past.

Probably the last castle built in France, inside the building its history is traced in writing and illustrations. It was bombed and badly damaged by the RAF in 1944 because it was being used by the Nazis. Over the years, its exterior and gardens have been restored and the work goes on.



Last day

The three-day visit ended with a few hours spent in the old town of Roscoff – tranquil on a public holiday – buying some last souvenirs or enjoying a meal and coffee before boarding the ferry.

Lots more photos from the weekend – including some great atmospheric shots from David Rogerson at the Vallée des Saints – on our website at <http://launcestonwinningassociation.weebly.com/gallery.html>