

Chipping Norton & District Twinning Association

have just returned from visiting their twin town of Magny-en-Vexin for their bi-annual visit.

Thirty-five members travelled to Magny this year and, as always, were received with great warmth and affection. For a few members this year was their first visit to France and they were not sure what to expect but, with hindsight, all have concluded that they should not have worried at all!

Travel to France took place on Friday and the members arrived in Magny-en-Vexin just before 6.00 p.m. and were received with welcome refreshments in the Salle des Fêtes before departing for their hosts homes.

Saturday was like a beautiful summer day and for those who wished to participate the Amicale Magnytoise had organised a guided tour of the town with an English speaking guide, to give some historical background. This proved to be extremely interesting and very enjoyable, especially with the good weather. The programme for the remainder of the day was left to individual hosts. For some of the Twinners this was a day spent with their French twin family and friends, particularly where the individual twinning link had been in existence for some considerable time. Others, with newer links and not very much knowledge of the area visited local parks and chateaux, or famous sites such as Monet's garden in Giverny or they went sight-seeing in Paris.

The Amicale Magnytoise offered a different format to the formal function on Saturday evening by arranging a dinner/dance with traditional folk music. This received a mixed reception on both sides – for some people it was extremely interesting to listen to French Folk music (and interpretations of some famous English songs) and join in the dances. Others would have preferred a more usual arrangement with a modern music group. However, the function lasted well into the early hours of the morning with a good number of people there.

A visit to Versailles was arranged for Sunday afternoon and the French and English participants had own-language guides around the Kings and Queens apartments in Versailles, including the spectacular "Hall of Mirrors", which is still used today for state functions.

We returned to Magny in the early evening to have dinner in an old watermill just outside the town. This was a very relaxing occasion with most people having remembered more French or English than they thought they knew and not so many people with "dictionary thumb" on this visit!

We look forward to receiving our French friends in Chipping Norton next year in the springtime.

If anyone is interested in the possibility of linking with a French family and would like to find out more then please call:-

Stuart Golding on 01295 510457.