



# Forest Row Twinning Association



SUMMER 2025



Espace Culturel Paul Bédu - where the reception was held on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> of May on the first day of the Forest Row Twinning Association's visit to the Milly-la-Foret visit this year.

## Diary dates:

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> July Proposed walk from Forest Row to Weirwood Reservoir (café) and back. [Meet at 10 – 10.15 am at Chadder Car Park.]

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> August – Annual BBQ and Children's games – Holy Trinity Church garden from 3 – 3.30 pm.

November Social Event – [possibly Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup>] details to follow.

## FRTA Chairman's Notes June 2025

Hello dear Friends

After a wonderful Spring and, currently, a warm Summer, welcome to the latest edition of the FRTA Newsletter. Once again, it has been skilfully put together by Patrick Crawford and it is an enjoyable read.

Since our last Newsletter we have held a couple of major events; the annual meal at the Three Crowns in Ashurst Wood which was well received. More impressively, we finally managed to make the trip to Milly to see our wonderful friends over there; our first trip post-COVID. Due to coach costs being uneconomical members made their own way and it seemed to work well. The feedback from members going over has been very positive and we are glad that our old relationships are still as strong as ever. As a Committee we will



be looking at the travel methods used, and the attendant costs, to rate the viability of these against the usual coach travel. We will let everyone know the results in due course.

We have some upcoming events in the diary; a walk is planned for Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> July. It will be local and User friendly with a lunch stop involved. On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> August we have our annual BBQ planned in the garden of Holy Trinity Church. Normally a very convivial occasion, we are looking forward to as many attendees as possible. The details for both of these events will be posted in the coming weeks, so please keep your eyes and ears open for details.

Sadly, we lost Tim Leeney and Brian Infield recently. There are obituary articles about both of these highly thought of members below. Both were staunch and long-standing supporters of FRTA and loved by all on both sides of the Channel. Brian's last appearance for us was at the evening reception for the French last October. He looked well and was just days off his 99<sup>th</sup> birthday. Sadly, he didn't make it to his hundredth, but he will always be remembered for his enthusiasm and help by the FRTA members who knew him.

That's enough from me, and it just remains to wish everyone a happy Summer period and good health to all.

Best wishes

Ralph Ingram



**THE THREE CROWNS DINING AREA WHERE WE ENJOYED  
A LOVELY CONVIVIAL MEAL IN THE EARLY SPRING.  
HERE'S TO THE NEXT ONE!**

## Keeping the Entente Cordial alive! – Fleur Britten

(Copy of Fleur's post from FR Community FB – with Fleur's permission)

Just want to give a shoutout to the Forest Row Twinning Association. My children and I joined the trip to Forest Row's town twin, Milly-la-Forêt, this weekend (along with Charlotte Harvey and family), and genuinely had an absolutely brilliant time. We were matched with a lovely young family (whom we'd hosted back in October), but we also had plenty of freedom to explore too. Milly is similar to Frow in that it's about 50km from the capital, and is located near a forest, but it's actually far more beautiful and cultural, and has even better bread.



**WE MUSTN'T PARLE FRANÇAIS!**

free to do, except for your travel.)

Here are the links to the FRTA.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/219452651950777>

<https://forestrowta.wixsite.com/forestrowta>

We got to speak lots of français - honestly, if you want your kids to speak more French, or gain more confidence doing so, there aren't many better ways of doing it. It was delightful to see. We even had a hilarious tutorial from our French family on how to greet like a true French person, not an awkward Brit. Don't test me on that, though.

Thank you so much to Don, Ralph and Patrick of the FRTA for keeping this amazing entente cordiale alive. (I should add that it's completely

### \*\*\*Our Wonderful Visit to Milly 30th May – 1st June 2025\*\*\*

After a l-o-n-g hiatus of six years, nineteen FRTA members travelling independently were able to be housed, entertained, fed, watered and wine'd by the wonderful hosts of the Milly Jumelage.

We (Natasha, my brother, John, and I) joined the weekend slightly later as we arrived from Gonneville-sur-Scie in Normandy (where thirteen of us had enjoyed a fantastic family week there) on the Saturday. The journey went relatively smoothly. Although at first I was slightly disconcerted by the lack of physical toll barriers, it soon became clear that the Sanef company (which manages the péage on the A13 and A6) was trialling a 'free-flow' procedure. It isn't 'free', of course, but if you're



travelling from Dieppe to Milly, using the motorways, it works out at about £7 or £8 each way. Using camera recognition technology, it does all the calculation for you and you have 72 hours to pay online.

Another aspect of driving in France which was also a bit of a surprise was the Crit'Air sticker you are expected to display if you're driving through the bigger cities such as Paris or Rouen. It's a bit like ULEZ, except you have to display the sticker on the windscreen. It's essential to sign up online in the UK and print out your sticker as they come in different colours according to the type and emissions of your vehicle.

Of course, everyone who drove there will know this already. This is just for the ones who are planning a future journey to France.

Thanks to Don and Saskia, we found Claude and Dominique's address. Even though it is centrally-located in Milly, there

are many separate buildings surrounding a courtyard with a beautiful garden. Claude explained that it was once a farm and one of the most striking buildings is the huge, converted barn, the venue for a sumptuous communal meal in 2017, that I remember with such fondness.

But I can't say anything different for the equally sumptuous Saturday lunchtime meal this year, prepared by Dominique for Natasha, John and I. The highlights for me were a delicious Provençal dish of stuffed tomatoes which was followed by a delicately flavoured dessert of passion fruit and strawberries. It was lovely to nourish and strengthen our friendship with Claude and Dominique after a long gap and it was great to meet Quentin, their grandson, who very graciously came to my assistance as I struggled (continuously!) with communication.

After a short rest it was time for another glorious meal – the group dinner on the Saturday evening at La Piazzetta. The atmosphere was abuzz with jollity and merriment when we arrived (slightly late!) in the large glass-walled annexe of the restaurant, so it was difficult for our little party to meet and greet everybody. Next time, we hope! The whole evening was a happy commingling of French savoir-faire and chic, British repartee and mistranslating and Italian flavours and cuisine. I was given a refreshing mildly-bitter but fruity beer, which might have been the blonde Affligem, but, sadly, I didn't ask. There were lots of takers on our table for that staple of



RECEPTION AT THE ESPACE CULTUREL PAUL BÉDU



CHEESE STALL AT THE SUNDAY MARKET

French culture, Ricard – the anise and liquorice-flavoured pastis. I was assured by many connoisseurs nearby that it was important to get the ratio of one part pastis to five of water. I tried a sip and must say it brought back the heady days of trips to France decades ago – although I think it's also linked in my memory with the strong tarry aroma of Gauloises. I was also given a sip of Kir. In my ignorance, I had thought that this must be some sort of Russian liqueur. I was really pleasantly surprised to find it is a very palatable combination of white wine and Crème de cassis, a blackcurrant liqueur. The taste is a pleasant blend of sweetness and acidity. I have it on my Christmas wish list.



**CLASS OF 2025**

All of the main courses looked mouth-watering and I have to say that the Vegetable Cannelloni was beautifully cooked and the best I've ever tasted. For dessert I had a rich creamy tiramisu that melted in the mouth. After post-prandial drinks, the memorably delicious evening came to an end. Like an Italian opera, it was rich and sensory with a great many flavours and textures and PSG won 5 – 1!.

Our home journey via Dieppe went quite smoothly. We were able to park relatively easily in Dieppe, as the Grand Rassemblement de Dieppe or Alpine sportscar rally, held from 30 May to 1 June was just winding down. As far as I know it's an annual event, but this year was the 70th anniversary of the brand's founding by Jean Rédélé in Dieppe in 1955 so there were a huge number of visitors in the port city. However, the area around the Church of Saint-Jacques was quietly inviting so we ventured inside this uniquely charming building, which, we discovered, is on the pilgrim route to St James of Compostela and has a history going back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Various prayer chapels for different Saints lined each side of the cathedral-like nave. Both the outside and inside are, sadly, in serious need of restoration.



**THE CHURCH WAS PAINTED BY CAMILLE PISSARRO IN 1901**

It was then a quick scamper to the car followed by a long circuitous drive to the port. The four-hour crossing gives you a chance to wind down after the waiting and delays and then, before we knew it, we were back in leafy Forest Row.



## Tim Leeney 1941 – 2024 – A Full and Well-Lived Life

Patrick

It was a huge shock for everyone at the end of December when we heard that Tim had died suddenly. Although he had been under the weather for several weeks before Christmas, nobody was expecting the sad news. Tim had been a member of FRTA for many years and had also taken over as



MONIQUE, FRANÇOIS, TIM AND JEAN-PIERRE IN 2017.

Chair from

December 2014 to October 2016. Tim had an impressive command of many languages, which included Russian, Italian, Japanese and, of course, French. I remember his fluent inaugural Chairman's speech in Milly in 2017. I was grateful to Tim coaching me (on the coach!) so that I – as a novice committee member - could address the gathering in the reception area in French. We had two lovely twinning meals with Tim and Olga last October during the visit of our French friends – both of them with Jeremy and Gwenda and Jean-Pierre Trotin and his family. I know that Tim was greatly appreciated and highly thought of by all the members of the French Jumelage as well, of course, as everyone in our own association.

I was just getting to know Tim and his family when he announced that they were off to spend the next few years in the South of France. They were all very excited to be setting off on this adventure.

A few years before, while visiting their old London friends, Caroline and her daughter Iris, in the south of France, they had been introduced to Iris's school, the Centre Internationale de Valbonne (CIV), part of a large French Lycee near Antibes. Then, in the early 2000's, when they visited the CIV, to explore the possibility of Varya studying there for the IB, they were very impressed with the spacious campus, and excellent facilities. And of course the location was persuasive - yachts on the sea, and snowy peaks inland. During



TIM IN MILLY

their stay there, they lived in a beautiful, south-facing flat just below Le Bar sur Loup, an ancient hill village.

Both Tim and Olga wrote fondly about their time in the south of France in a previous Twinning newsletter. In the article Tim reminisced about golden days in 2004, bathing in the sea by the fortress of Antibes and seeing the early snow already on the Alpes Maritimes, while Olga remembered the amazing bread, 'amazing because it was real'. She was also struck by the steep streets of Le Bar sur Loup, the 'stairs, stairs, stairs' and a castle on top of the hill, which was refurbished into a 10-star hotel, where they stayed one night on Olga's birthday.

In a ten page booklet containing tributes to Tim which accompanied the order of service at his funeral, the phrase, 'We will miss him so much' was repeated many times'. I am sure that this will be felt by all who knew him.

### Brian Infield 28<sup>th</sup> October 1925 – February 2025

#### Patrick

It was wonderful to see Brian when he came with his family to the Community Centre to greet the arrival of our French friends on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> of October last year, just three days before his 99<sup>th</sup> birthday. He had walked into the Garden Room without a stick or anyone's assistance and was still as hale and hearty as he always was. It was therefore a great shock to hear of his death in February, just eight months before becoming a centenarian. His determination to look after his wife, Denise, during her illness for as long as she lived was just one example of his steeliness and strength of character.

Brian was chair of FRTA for a number of



**BRIAN AND DENISE**



**FROM L TO R, GERALD [BRIAN'S BROTHER],  
HARRY [BRIAN'S FATHER] AND BRIAN.**

years – before I joined - so I do not remember those earlier times of the Twinning. I do remember sitting beside Brian for the Annual Dinner at the Golf Club a number of years ago where he gave me a brief resume of his fascinating personal and family history. He explained that his grandfather, Max, after having been unlawfully harassed

in Cracow by the Schlachta [an aristocratic, antisemitic Polish political party], had decided to emigrate to England in 1900.

His retirement was a happy and fulfilling time as he had many interests – Amnesty International, chairing the Board at Tablehurst Farm and, of course – our Twinning Association. He and Denise were very keen cyclists, often going off each year on cycling holidays to France. I would often see Brian cycling around the village when he must have been around 90 years of age! He seemed to be a fixture. Sadly that can't be. We will all miss him very much.

### **URGENT APPEAL! URGENT APPEAL! URGENT APPEAL!**

A big thank you to Fleur for allowing her Facebook post to be included in this newsletter. The other day Don lent me some early Twinning newsletters going back before I joined. I was impressed and astonished at the amazing history of our Twinning Association. And the newsletter is a really wonderful archive of so many enjoyable events and happy times. So – let's keep it going! We'd love to have articles from YOU. If you're 3 or 103 we'd love to hear about your experience with the Twinning or even anything vaguely connected to France. Watch out also for a new improved FRTA Facebook Page. Thanks again to Fleur for encouraging us to put more things on Facebook, including the newsletter. A reminder of the Facebook address: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/219452651950777>

So do please look out for news of all of our upcoming social events on Facebook! And keep the articles pouring in. You will all be fabulous writers before you know it!

If you have any news, articles, comments, or suggestions for the next issue, please email me, Patrick Crawford, at [pnmimische@fastmail.co.uk](mailto:pnmimische@fastmail.co.uk) [Website: <https://forestrowta.wixsite.com/forestrowta>]





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