



Spring Newsletter

2025 (No 66)

Message from the Chairman: No let up in activity

Spring is nearly upon us, and it is my pleasure to introduce our latest newsletter. You will note elsewhere that your committee has been very active throughout 2024 with more events planned as we enter our 30th year.

As some of you are already aware, the French Twinning Association (Comité de Jumelage) in Chantilly was due to be dissolved during 2024 for administrative reasons. We have now received details of the new International Relations Commission which Chantilly's Council has established to ensure ongoing links between our two communities. From now on our contacts will be managed by this Commission.

Informal meetings and visits will be organised as appropriate and formal visits, for example Mayor to Mayor, will be undertaken by the Commission. Your Committee believes that our good relationship with Chantilly will continue under the new arrangements and are delighted to learn that the Epsom link within Chantilly will be led by Councillor Tony Clout, who, as a former trainer, is primarily responsible for Chantilly's equestrian activities. Marie-Claude Fontaine, a teacher of English at the Lycée de la Forêt, will remain our key day-to-day contact.

As many of you will also have heard, there are plans to reorganise local government in Surrey, with the creation of probably two or three unitary authorities. While at the time of writing plans are in a state of flux, it does seem likely that it will mean the dissolution of all the districts and boroughs in the County. If this is implemented, Surrey County Council and Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will no longer exist as they do at present. I have written to EEBC's Chief Executive to seek clarity on how this might impact Twinning's Charter between Epsom and Chantilly and will let you know as soon as I have any more information.

We understand that the English Church of St Peter in Chantilly is to hold a "peace ball" on 8th May this year, commemorating the end of WW2, and everyone is welcome to attend if they are able to. More details will be shared when we have them. Sadly, this is likely to conflict with the Beacon Lighting

on Epsom Downs, in the viewpoint car park, on the same date. We hope to see members there to mark 80 years since VE Day.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Committee for their hard work and support over the past year, and for their continued commitment to the cause of twinning. And my best wishes to you for 2025.

Nigel Collin
Chairman

Book now for the Epsom Rotary Club Centenary Spring Ball!

There's a big day coming up this Spring for Epsom Rotary Club, which is holding a Centenary Spring Ball at the Queen's Stand, Epsom racecourse, on 26th April to celebrate 100 years of service to the Epsom Community. There will be a excellent three-course meal and entertainment throughout the evening, including the chance to dance till you drop to the band Avarice after the meal. All profits from the event will be donated to local charities and as part of the fundraising there will be an auction and a raffle during the evening.

There is a very good relationship between Epsom Rotary Club and Epsom and Ewell Town Twinning Association with a number of our members wearing both hats. Jim Munns, who is a Twinning member, is also co-president of Epsom Rotary Club during its Centenary year, and together with the other co-President, Carol Caiger, he has invited our member Barbara Lewis to lead a team to organise the Ball. The organising committee also includes Twinning members Anne Richardson and Martin Lewis amongst others.

The Twinning Association wishes Epsom Rotary Club every success with the Ball. A party of our friends from Chantilly will be making up a table and they have donated some impressive bottles of wine to be auctioned. Quite a few Twinning members will be there, so if you want to catch up with old friends why not consider buying a ticket for the event. You can book on www.epsomrotary.uk.

Anne Richardson

Cyril Frazer Award

The Twinning Association is delighted to invite applications for this year's Cyril Frazer Award. The Cyril Frazer Award is a legacy set up as a memorial

to Cyril Frazer who died in 2016. He was Mayor of Epsom and Ewell when it was twinned with Chantilly in 1995 and a founding member of this association. As well as Twinning, one of his other great passions was singing, and he was a keen member of the Epsom Male Voice Choir.

The award of £500 is available to individuals and groups within the Borough and will be awarded to qualified applicants who meet some or all of the following agreed criteria:

1. Applicants live or study in the Borough
2. The award meets a special need – e.g. mental or physical health
3. It benefits young people – such as educational links including higher and further education, eg UCA and Nescot
4. It has cultural/educational value
5. It is music or performing arts related
6. It furthers friendships/links etc with Chantilly
7. Is not part of day-to-day twinning activities
8. It supports a key twinning or community event, such as an anniversary, music or arts festival

The prize will be awarded at our AGM in June. For further information and to apply please contact: diana@epsomtwinning.com.

Nigel Collin

A 'surprising' Twelfth Night enjoyed by all

A group of around thirty members, including the Mayor and Mayoress, met at the Epsom Club on 10th January to celebrate Twelfth Night. It was one of those cold, wet January evenings when you would prefer not to venture out – but we were glad we did. Anita of Avita Catering prepared a delicious French themed dinner offering a choice of Boeuf Bourguignon or Paupiettes de Sole and rose to the challenge of baking the traditional Galette des Rois, a frangipane filled pie with a surprise in it.

It seems that the custom varies according to region, but the original idea was to hide a dried fava bean in the pie, and the person who found it in their slice became king for the evening. Elsewhere it could be a “charm”, previously we have had something like a Smurf or a Minion in commercially produced tarts, or it could be some kind of nut. Not wishing to cause any of the guests to choke, Anita had sensibly chosen an almond, which had blended into the pie so well that the recipient had eaten it before he could be crowned king! However, this was soon remedied with a splendid, inflatable crown.

Thanks to many generous donations of prizes, we had a successful raffle which was followed by a few words of appreciation from the Mayor and from the Chairman, wishing everyone a very Happy New Year.

Diana Deavin

Chantilly Christmas Market - a warm welcome on a chilly weekend!!

A group of eight intrepid members met in Chantilly for the annual Christmas Market event, proudly flying the twinning flag.



On our arrival Clive, Donna and I found Brian had already set up a bright, eye-catching stall with lots of information about Epsom and Ewell to interest the locals. We were welcomed by members of the organising committee, who provided us with coffee and were on hand if we had difficulties.

Neil and Ann arrived later, as did Barry and his wife, and their dog. So we had a strong team, who were able to man the stall and take some time off to visit the other charms of the town.

Food is widely available, both at the market with stalls from all over France, and at the many restaurants. There are also plenty of places to stay in

Chantilly, from the high class Jeu de Paume hotel nearest the Chateau, through the Le Chantilly, Hotel du Parc, L'Avenue - my favourite for its great food - to 'travel lodges' slightly further out.

On Saturday we had a celebratory meal at a pizza restaurant with members of the delegation from another twin town, Watermael-Boitsfort in Belgium. It was good to meet our old friends once again, and three generations of the same family were at the market to provide Belgian waffles, which were very tasty!



Along with leaflets about Epsom and Ewell we took marmalade, jam and chutney made by local firm Jam Packed, beer made by Anspach & Hobday, who were once Scouts in Epsom, and shortbread. Sadly, because of Brexit, we are no longer able to take our Christmas puddings and mince pies, as they were always very popular.

We also met with members of Chantilly Rotary, the Karate Club, who welcomed the Mo-Ichido Epsom Club in the New Year (*see below*), delivered Christmas messages from Southfield Park school, and met many members of the town who wanted to keep in touch with us.

I would very much recommend a visit to the market, and to Chantilly, at any time of year!!

Anne Richardson

Mo-ichido club visit to Chantilly

One of the aims of Twinning is to encourage connections between local clubs and organisations and their equivalents in Chantilly. So we were delighted to be able to facilitate eight members of Mo-ichido England who travelled from Epsom and Ewell to Chantilly on 24th January to attend training seminars run by the Shotokan Karate International Federation with Kancho Kanazawa. The Club was also kindly invited by the Chantilly karate club to train alongside them as part of both towns' twinning relationship.

Colin Parker, Director, Mo-ichido England reports: "On Friday, once we had arrived in Chantilly, we had a few hours of down time before heading off on an hour and a half drive to the first session that we were set to attend. This started with all belt grades, where we ran through karate basics and Heian kata (Pattern) in depth, then followed this by breaking the moves down into bunkai (interpretations). This was a great opportunity for members to learn through pair work.

This class was followed by a brown and black belt session that focused on a senior kata (Jion). Following the structure of the previous class we were able to learn different applications of the moves we had practised. After 3 hours of karate and another 1.5 hour drive, we finally grabbed some food and got to our beds.

On Saturday morning we woke up early to visit the Château de Chantilly. We spent a couple of hours taking in the beautiful works of art displayed through the château. We learnt that this collection of art is the second biggest in France after the Louvre!

Following the visit to the château, we then headed off to attend the next training session, this time a bit closer to where we were staying. On this day we trained for three hours in a similar structure starting with Heian Yondan in the class catered to all grades, then Gojushiho Sho for the black belts. For some members of Mo-ichido this was an opportunity to learn a new kata and for others a chance to perceive it in a different way.

Once training had concluded the members of the club headed back to get ready for a dinner with Kancho Kanazawa, Stephan, Joel, Sylvain and members of Chantilly karate club at a local Japanese restaurant. Here we enjoyed dinner which was described as 'the French way'. We took time to enjoy each other's company as well as our food. Thankfully there were enough people at the table who were bilingual to help with communication where needed.

The next day consisted of the senior instructors and a French guest practising Kata and applications in the grounds of the château, but mainly a travel day for the Mo-ichido members as we made our way back to Epsom after a very busy couple of days.

Thank you to those who made this trip possible, and who contributed to costs and ensuring that Mo-ichido England's time in Chantilly went as smoothly as possible. We would particularly like to thank Joel and Sylvain for going out of their way to accommodate our needs and facilitate getting to and from the events and paying for training. We would also like to thank Marie-Claude for her considerable knowledge and escorted visit to the château and obviously Chantilly Karate Club Members for allowing us this experience. We had a great time and can't wait until we next visit Chantilly or indeed they visit Epsom."

Colin Parker



Souvenirs from the Mo-ichido England trip to Chantilly



Mo-Ichido England members during a training session in Chantilly

A tour of the Chateau was one of the highlights of the trip



George Baker makes an entrance at Downs House

Epsom and Ewell Town Twinning was founded on the basis of a shared horse racing heritage with Chantilly, and there has been a significant development recently within Epsom's training community, with the arrival of the well-known trainer George Baker at Downs House, which sits within the race track. It has taken since 2012 to completely rebuild the training facility, which was a scruffy 50 box yard and little else but a lovely house, and the old Eclipse barn.

Mark Travers has poured millions into this astonishing rebuild, which puts Epsom back on the horse race training map. Together with the fabulous rebuild of South Hatch inspired by Jim Boyle, we have at last a chance to reframe and rebuild the reputation of this wonderful place, the home of the Derby, unique in its history, and famous for all the wonderful horses who have passed through, including Eclipse. Downs House was originally a barn built by O'Kelly to house this amazing horse - the fastest, most celebrated thoroughbred in the world.

George and Candida Baker have a mission - they want to train horses to do their very best, to perform and enjoy life. They have now moved into the Downs House facility and are living the dream. George has always travelled his horses and believes if there is a race to be won, go out and win it, no matter where it is. His tally of winners is over 600 so we have a master here.

George trained at Whitsbury, where the great Desert Orchid was trained by David Elsworth, and knows good gallops when he sees them. He trained Belgian Bill, the winner of The Hunt Cup at Ascot 2013 and was awarded the Golden Mile in 2015 at Glorious Goodwood. He has won in Germany, Belgium, Turkey, France, St Moritz, and of course the UAE.

George is man of vision who lets nothing stand in his way to develop the talents of his equine friends. We are delighted he has come here to start a new and exciting chapter in Epsom racing life, and wish him the very best.

An open day at the new look Downs House is at the planning stage. If anyone is interested, please email Cllr Steve McCormick at smccormick@epsom-ewell.gov.uk and he can send details when they are confirmed.

Caroline Baldock

Reflections on a busy 2024

Last year saw Twinning participate in a number of events, including attending the Chantilly race at the Racecourse; celebrating Bastille Day courtesy of Ros and Richard Godson, with a fantastic dramatic performance by Caroline Baldock; attending Rotary Club's Party in the Park in Rosebery Park; and attending the Christmas Lights switch on in the Epsom Market place.

Below is a selection of photos from those occasions:



The team at the Rotary Party in the Park event in Rosebery Park, together with the Mayor and Mayoress



Caroline Baldock put on a fantastic historical performance at the Association's Bastille Day celebration kindly hosted by the Godsons

The Mayor, Mayoress and EEBC chief executive, Jackie King, joined us for the Chantilly Race at the Downs



Committee Members 2024-2025

Your current committee members are:

Nigel Collin - Chairman
Diana Deavin – Vice-Chairman and Acting Secretary
Donna Williams – Treasurer
Anne Richardson – Membership Secretary
Cllr Rachel King – Council Nominee
Cllr John Beckett – Council Nominee
Cllr Neil Dallen
Cllr Clive Woodbridge
Peter Hardy
Barbara Lewis
Martin Lewis
Barry Nash
Christine Rippon
Helen Roberts
Caroline Baldock

Our Hon. President is The Worshipful the Mayor of Epsom and Ewell,
Cllr Steve Bridger

Photos by: Clive Richardson, Epsom Rotary, Epsom Mo-Ichido, Andrew Casey and Caroline Baldock