



*The Friends of Marcq-en-Baroeul
Ealing's official French town-twinning organisation*

*<http://fomeb.eu>
[http:// lesamisdealing.fr](http://lesamisdealing.fr)*

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2023

Editor: Jane Christie

FUTURE EVENTS

Classes

There will be some changes to our French classes from September as our teacher Dominique Liesse has decided to resign. She will, however, continue to teach the Tuesday advanced class which meets at the Brentham Club, but only until Christmas. After that we have a possible new teacher who is a very experienced non-native speaker. The position regarding this is uncertain and is likely to remain so until mid-October and possibly beyond....watch this space!

The Tuesday intermediate class will continue at Open Ealing with Françoise as the teacher. There are a few vacancies, so if you are interested in joining please contact Yvonne on 0208 567 2955

The Friday advanced class will continue from September at Open Ealing with Michelle Pickard as the teacher.

NEWS

Pique-nique, Eastry

On Sunday 11th June, about 100 “pique-niquers” converged on the village hall in Eastry in Kent. We arrived from Ealing to find our guests were already there (not the plan!), so it was all hands on deck to set up the tables and seating for such large number of people. There was an array of delicious and varied food and, as usual our “amis” brought wine, bread and a wonderful selection of cheeses.

After a convivial lunch, our coach driver ferried those wishing to explore to the pretty town of Sandwich nearby. Norman had kindly supplied everyone with maps and helpful information about the history of the town and the points of interest. By an amazing coincidence, the lovely medieval town (one of the Cinque Ports) had been pedestrianised for “Le Weekend”, an annual event with “an authentic French Normandy market” in the Guildhall forecourt, as well as street stalls throughout the town and a craft fair in the 14th century St Peter’s Church. Live music and boules were also on offer! There was also a stall for the Sandwich Honfleur Twinning Association (hence the Normandy market I presume!) and I think most of us stopped there to exchange notes about the activities of our respective groups. Many of us took the opportunity to browse or pick up bargains at the many stalls or to relax and enjoy the atmosphere and the music on a lovely summer’s day.

Meanwhile, back in Eastry our valiant organisers had laid out the traditional afternoon tea provided by the committee. Many thanks go to our organisers Kathryn, Gill, Roger, Gillian and Norman for making this such a successful outing.

Ed

Diary of the 2023 cultural weekend

Thursday 11th May

On arrival in Lille, it was a somewhat rainy day but we were buoyed up by the pleasure of being in France and the anticipation of seeing old friends. We were free to lunch, wander through old Lille, shop or generally do what we liked till our 5pm rendezvous at le Château where Geneviève and our French hosts were waiting. We were in luck! The mayor of Marcq-en-Baroeul had laid on a magnificent reception in honour of Europe Day, a continent-wide celebration of peace and unity held in May every year.

Marcq-en-Baroeul is twinned not only with Ealing, but with towns in Germany, Italy, and Belgium. Members of all four twinning societies were present at the reception - quite a throng. Fortunately, Godfrey appointed himself sommelier in chief and opened and poured bottles of bubbly at an impressive rate showing great generosity to familiar faces. It was a wonderful start to our weekend of culture and we are grateful to the mayor for having organised it.

Friday 12th May

This was a busy day. It started with a visit to La Piscine, a pleasure in itself, but in this case enhanced by an exhibition of the works of Aristide Maillol (1861 – 1944). We were taken round by two excellent and enthusiastic guides who explained the artist's development from painter to sculptor. The exhibition ended with some magnificent and monumental sculptures.

Having fed the mind, it was the turn of the body. Genevieve had booked 31 friends and amis in to L'Imperatrice Eugénie in Roubaix, a handsome traditional Brasserie serving dishes of the region. We very much enjoyed the ambiance and needless to say the food!

Next stop was the old town of Lille for a guided tour of the house where Charles de Gaulle was born and spent his childhood. It has quite recently been renovated and was furnished as far as possible as it would have been when Charles was growing up there. Again, we had a very good guide who told us interesting anecdotes about Charles and his family, but who also gave us a fascinating insight into how a wealthy bourgeois Catholic family, with connections to the textile industry, lived at the turn of the 19th century.



Saturday 13th May

The day started with a lively session at the Château on the benefits of dance for the "plus âgé" presented by Mark Pace, a former professional ballet dancer. Mark was born and brought up in Australia and after an international career in ballet is now lead teacher of classical dance at the Conservatoire in Lille. By coincidence, when some years ago Mark danced the bluebird solo from Sleeping Beauty at Covent Garden, William was playing in the orchestra! Mark gave us a theoretical introduction to the "BioPsycoSocio" benefits of dance then got down to business. Before long he had us waving, clapping, stamping and having an outrageous amount of fun for 9.30 or so on a Saturday morning!



After our dance workout we headed for Club Marot, a wine bar in central Lille, to undo all the good effects of our exercise with a dégustation of charcuterie, cheese and wine - but it was worth it! Stephanie, our impressively knowledgeable sommelier, introduced 4 wines, two white and two red. She talked most interestingly about grape types, terroir and the merits of wines from California, New Zealand and other wine regions of the world. A very worthwhile and enjoyable experience.

Saturday Evening was the highlight of the weekend. Geneviève and Claude had kindly invited everyone to their beautiful house for a buffet. It was a most convivial and enjoyable occasion. There was even some musical entertainment (possibly better described as a singsong) featuring French and English favourites.

Sunday 14th May

Sadly, even cultural weekends have to come to an end and Sunday morning saw us bidding fond farewells to our French hosts at Lille Europe before our return to London. Many thanks to Hilary for all the work she did in arranging the travel and logistics and making the weekend happen and to Geneviève for planning a most varied and enjoyable programme of events.

Penny Guthrie



Who'd have thought Summer Holiday was so difficult to sing! Catherine and Bob save the day

Boules, Sunday 9th July

Some 30 FOM members enjoyed our annual Sunday Boules event. Thanks to a valiant team of volunteers the pitch had been cleared and weeded beforehand to provide us with a smooth "court" for our tournament.

People arrived armed with their picnic gear and settled down to enjoy the afternoon. We had the usual concerns about "would the rain hold off" but the weather was on our side - just- and picknickers sat and enjoyed their refreshments in between their stints on the pitch.

Ten teams played together and after some fierce competition, Penny and Moira were the winners and proudly took the trophy, which looks as splendid as ever despite its advanced years!

Jane Cocking



OUR PRIVACY POLICY

As is mentioned on our membership form, we have a “Privacy Policy”, in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Full details can be found on our website (see fomeb.eu/privacy-policy), but here are a few highlights that members should keep in mind.

- Please use the bcc field (which hides the circulation list) when circulating something on FoMeB business, even if it's just to members of a class.
- Please make other members aware if you are intending to take photographs, especially for publication on the website or facebook page, so they can request to opt out. Likewise, if a group photo is being set up, please don't join the group unless you are happy for it to appear online. We have a short list of members who have stated they prefer not to be photographed, but it has proved very difficult to police this.
- Please don't ask committee members for contact details of other members, we aren't allowed to pass them on without permission. The protocol in such a case is for you to give us permission to pass on *your* details to the member in question, with a request to get in touch or other message.
- If you are an ex-committee member, remember to delete any contact lists you may have obtained via FoMeB!

Why is this necessary?

There are several good reasons...

- Although we are a social group, I certainly don't know enough about the private lives of all our members to know who might be embarrassed by having their email address made known to other members;
- There are always likely to be new members that we don't know;
- Circulating lists of email addresses makes it easier for viruses to spread;
- And all that's apart from it being illegal!

Roger Haines (your e-postman)