

## Presteigne and Norton Twinning Association

### Officers

Chairman	John Kendall	01544 260550
Vice-Chairman	Elwyn Powell	01544 267717
Secretary	Liz Boyles	01544 260076
Treasurer	Stephen Wilson	01544 267428
Membership	Patricia Wilson	01544 267428
Accommodation	Hugh Pope	01544 260087

### Membership Application/Renewal Form 2004

Membership of the Association is open to anyone. The annual subscription is £5 per person, and falls due at the AGM held in January each year. To join, or renew membership, for 2004 please complete/amend the following form as necessary:

Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Email:	
Amount Enclosed:	

Please make cheques payable to **Presteigne and Norton Twinning Association**. Send the completed form with appropriate payment to the Membership Secretary:

Patricia Wilson  
Penkevel, School Lane  
Norton  
Presteigne  
Powys  
LD8 2EL

## PRESTEIGNE AND NORTON TWINNING ASSOCIATION

### NEWSLETTER No. 5 November 2003



*The Mayors of Ligné and Presteigne after the inauguration of the 'Place de Presteigne'*



*The Reading of the Twinning Declaration*



*The Mayors exchange their Insignia of Office*

ing the visits of the football team and the Ramblers group to Ligné earlier this year.

The first fund-raising event will be held on Saturday 6 December, when the Radnorshire Arms has very kindly offered to host and subsidise a Wine and Cheese Party for the PNTA. Tickets will cost £5.50 and will be on sale shortly. Unfortunately numbers are limited, so the first 20 tickets will be reserved for PNTA members, the rest being on a 'first come first served' basis. The PNTA will also have a stall at the Chamber of Trade Christmas Fair on 20 December.

Finally, the second Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held in January 2004. You will find the official notice of this below.

With best wishes for a very happy Christmas and New Year,

**Patricia Wilson**

**Presteigne and Norton Twinning Association  
Notice of Annual General Meeting**

The Second Annual General Meeting of Presteigne and Norton Twinning Association will be held on 22 January 2004 at 7.30 pm in the Lounge of the Radnorshire Arms, Presteigne.

All those who are interested are very welcome to attend, but only paid-up members of the Association are entitled to vote.

building. It gave us a chance to experience the *Salle Jean Yanne* transformed into a very comfortable theatre. We only had time to see the opening concert, which featured the young people of Ligné (some very young indeed) giving a variety of music, song and dance performances. Sadly, we had to leave before the drama performance began, but we were impressed with the range of activities and talent on offer in the town.

Shortly after 5 pm our coach departed for Caen. The rain now pouring down did not dampen the affectionate farewells, reflecting the depth of the friendships that had been formed between the members of the two communities. We left feeling that the visit had been an overwhelming success, and our only regret was that we could not stay longer. The coach made good time to Caen and we had a short, rather choppy, overnight ferry journey back to Portsmouth. The coach arrived back in Presteigne by 11.30 am on Monday, exactly according to timetable, with its passengers exhausted but happy after a very enjoyable visit.

Our grateful thanks go to Mayor Maurice Perrion, Deputy Mayor Anne-Marie Cordier, who has been a leading light from the beginning, and to André Girard, president of the Ligné Twinning Committee. Anne-Marie and André played major roles in organising the proceedings and worked very hard to make the occasion such a success. It is not possible to mention everyone by name as many people in Ligné contributed to the weekend, but we would like to thank all the host families who showed us such hospitality. Thanks also to PNTA Secretary Liz Boyles, whose sterling work in organising the trip resulted in a trouble-free journey and a happy crew; and to Chairman John Kendall who masterminded the visit from the Presteigne end and played an important role in the official ceremony. Sadly, Vice-Chairman Elwyn Powell, another key figure, was unable to take part in the visit; as a close friend of Bill Weiland, he was involved in helping Bill's family.

We are now looking forward to the official ceremony in Presteigne on 1 and 2 May next year, when we shall welcome our visitors from Ligné. Planning for this is already underway and details will follow in the next issue of the Newsletter. In the meantime, we are hoping to foster more exchanges between groups in the two towns, follow-

Dear Members and Friends,

Welcome to Newsletter Five, a longer than usual edition to cover the visit to Ligné for the formal twinning ceremony on 18 October.

As you know, Bill Weiland died three days before the departure to Ligné. All of us who knew Bill were deeply saddened. He was a guiding spirit in the Twinning Association since its beginning and played a very active role, not just as Treasurer but also when he and Elwyn Powell organised the highly successful visit of the young footballers to Ligné in April this year. At the start of the official ceremony in Ligné, Mayor Maurice Perrion and Colin and Ruth Kirkby paid tribute to Bill, followed by a minute's silence in his honour. We shall miss him greatly.

The group which travelled to Ligné was made up of Mayor Peggy Fraser-Scott and her daughter who was acting as interpreter; nine PNTA members led by Chairman John Kendall and including Councillors Evelyn Davies and Hugh Pope; *Mid-Wales Journal* reporter Sally Boyce; and members of Bandamania under the capable leadership of Sue Harris.

Following a smooth overnight ferry crossing from Portsmouth to St Malo, our coach arrived in Ligné before 11 am on Saturday 18 October, and we were warmly welcomed by our French hosts. For those of us who had taken part in earlier visits to Ligné there were happy reunions with our hosts who had now become good friends. We had a few hours to relax with our host families before the official festivities began at 5 pm.

The venue for the celebrations was *Le Préambule*, the new *Salon Culturel* which had only just been officially opened. This superb building, fully equipped with modern facilities, contains two meeting halls. The larger one, the *Salle Jean Yanne*, includes a full-size stage and can be converted very quickly into a complete theatre. A public hall on this scale would normally only be found in a British city or large town, and its existence in a small town like Ligné demonstrates sharply the difference in local government funding between the two countries.

The ceremonies began with the unveiling of the *Place de Presteigne*, the area adjoining *Le Préambule*, carried out by the two Mayors and local representatives, to the accompaniment of the local band. Everyone then crowded inside the *Salle Jean Yanne* for the twinning ceremonies. Many of the people of Ligné, of all ages, came to join the proceedings and the hall was quite full. The evening began with the tribute to Bill Weiland, followed by the playing of the British and French national anthems.

Representatives of the two communities then gave speeches, with the help of interpreters in both languages. Then came the high point – the Reading and Signing of the Oath of Twinning, by Mayors Maurice Perrion and Peggy Fraser-Scott. More than three years of hard work and goodwill on both sides had finally borne fruit and Presteigne and Ligné were now officially twins. It only remains for Presteigne to reciprocate the ceremony next May, and the union will be complete.

The occasion was celebrated with the playing of the anthem of Wales and Brittany; the two nations share the same tune. It was performed by two Breton musicians on traditional instruments, the *bombarde* (a small woodwind instrument) and the *binïou koz* (the Breton bagpipes).

The Oath duly completed, the two Mayors exchanged gifts. On behalf of the people of Presteigne and Norton, Peggy presented a crystal rosebowl to Maurice, who in turn presented her with a copy of the official key to Ligné. This is a beautifully engraved silver key designed by Deputy Mayor Anne-Marie Cordier. Shown on it are some of the principal buildings of Ligné and also three sheep – another link with Presteigne! Ligné also has a summer *Fête du Mouton* (Sheep Festival), although it is an agricultural and not a musical one. Members of the Presteigne delegation were also given small copies of the key as individual gifts. Chairman John Kendall was presented with a book on the *Loire-Atlantique département*, which will be displayed in Presteigne Library, and a set of wineglasses engraved with the coat of arms of Ligné for the Judge's Lodging. A group of local pupils then presented a series of displays of their own work and, in turn, Liz Boyles presented them with work by the primary schoolchildren of Presteigne. The finale was the signing of the

Book of Gold, followed by the raising of glasses in a toast to the joining of the two towns.

The formalities over, we enjoyed an excellent buffet dinner, and then it was time for Bandamania to take centre stage. They had been a smash hit a year ago at the ceilidh held at Titley Village Hall in honour of the visitors from Ligné, and more than lived up to their reputation. Most of the audience was on the dance floor during their two-hour performance. A short interval followed to allow people to recover, and then – for those who had the stamina – French band *Sergent Pepere* gave a very original performance with some unusual instruments and startling visual effects.

Sunday morning was rather more leisurely. Before the official proceedings began again, visitors had an opportunity to walk round the library and study the various displays on Wales that had been set up in honour of the twinning. At 11 am the Presteigne visitors were invited to attend a special meeting of Ligné council. Much of the business related to the twinning, but normal council matters were also covered, and for those who could follow the proceedings it was interesting to see French local government in action. Most of us were observers, but the Mayor and the two councillors Evelyn Davies and Hugh Pope were active participants. The meeting ended with another reciprocal gesture, when the Mayors exchanged their insignia of office. Peggy wore the French Tricolore sash with flair and Maurice seemed very taken with the mayoral chain of Presteigne. They did remember to exchange them back again before the end of the day!

Bandamania provided the official finale to the visit with a lively performance in the bar area of *Le Préambule* which went down very well with the French audience. Copies of the band's CD *Uzzlepye* and Sue Harris's solo CD *Pastorela* sold rapidly. A display on Presteigne and the surrounding area had been set up nearby, together with publicity leaflets, and this attracted much interest.

The party was finally over when the concert ended, and the visitors dispersed to spend the remaining time with their host families. Some of us were able to see the beginning of the show at *Le Préambule*, which was part of the celebrations to mark the opening of the