

## 2013 Exchange

Mais oui, our French guests arrived before our summer put in any sign of an appearance, but our five days together re-kindled the flames of friendship.

The 45th anniversary of our twin towns' link brought just under 70 Magdunois of all ages to our cool but bright and breezy "nord-ouest". This year, with the help of Cllr. Ian Marks, we were able to welcome our visitors with a "Vin d'Honneur" in the comfortable, historic and picturesque surrounding of Walton Hall.

### Thursday

A quiet Thursday with hosts enabled everyone to settle in, acclimatise and catch breath before an early departure for the fresh air and fun of Blackpool "sur Mer", in such large numbers that three coaches were required. There the full and varied programme researched and organised by Kirsty James proved a great success.

### Friday

A guided tour of the historic and truly spectacular Victorian Winter Gardens entertainment complex was a fascinating eye-opener even to previous visitors to Blackpool, not least standing on stage in front of the Opera House's 3000-seat auditorium where stars from Bruce Forsyth to Frank Sinatra had performed. The ballroom, bars and spectacular gallery where Edwardian bourgeoisie had paraded in their finery were no less evocative of the hey-day of Britain's top seaside holiday resort.



How fitting to follow this with Britain's top holiday menu, fish, chips and mushy peas at Harry Ramsden's, in sight of the crashing grey waves driven against the Prom. by a bracing gale.

Lunch over, the off to 't Tower, Blackpool's homage to Monsieur Eiffel. The high winds ruled out an ascent to the top decks, but a panoramic 3D video presentation gave us some spectacular aerial views and a thrill or two before we settled down to take in the atmosphere of the magnificent Tower Ballroom, its luxurious décor a sumptuous backdrop to a handful of dedicated, slow, slow, quick quick slow couples, gliding or skipping to the music of "Reginald Dixon's" organ.



Back soon to the reality of a dash down the windy Prom. to the life-boat station, for an interesting guided visit, then across to the rock-making factory shop for a fascinating and entertaining demo.

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And specially commissioned "LYMM-MEUNG 2013" sticks of rock to take away (first time in the EU ?). A full and highly enjoyable excursion ended in the rain, but nobody cared after such a memorable day out ; merci encore, Kirsty.

### Saturday

Saturday evening's dinner at Statham Lodge was attended by just short of 140 people, including some two dozen children. Pictured below, Président Michel Bret and Chairman Peter hold newly exchanged gifts, while Lymm P.C. Chairman Peter Powell, in his Town Crier regalia holds the beautiful water colour picture of Meung across the Loire, presented by Maire Pauline Martin to the Parish Council.



Saturday evening's dinner at Statham Lodge was attended by just short of 140 people, including some two dozen children. An excellent four-course meal was followed some energetic dancing to "Pleural Tap", a group of Medics.

### AU REVOIR, à DEUX MIL QUATORZE

All too soon our friends from Meung-sur-Loire were heading home after what we hope was for them a memorable and enjoyable visit. Merci beaucoup à tous ceux qui sont venus chez nous ; a special thak you to Maire Pauline and family who dashed over by car between civic duties at home. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the planning and organisation of the visit and all who supported the various events. Dates for our visit to Meung in 2014 are already pencilled in for the schools' summer half-term break, beginning Saturday, 24th May.