

MY FRENCH EXPERIENCE 2008 - by Rosemary Tremper

In July I took advantage of the invitation of the Committee de Jumelage in Mâcon to attend their annual French course. It was indeed a wonderful experience which I shared with people from other twin towns in Spain, Italy, Germany and Finland. There were about 50 participants in total from the age of 14 to 80 plus. We arrived by train, plane or car. I decided to confront my loathing of tunnels and took the train which was an experience in itself!

The duration of the course was one week and took place at the Agricultural College, Davey situated just outside Mâcon in beautiful countryside and surrounded by hectares of vines. We stayed in the student accommodation of the college which was comfortable. The dining facilities and classrooms were all in the same building. A continental breakfast and a four course lunch (with wine and cheese made at the college) were provided. We were responsible for sorting out our own evening meals apart from the first evening, (Sunday) when we were taken to a restaurant close by, by the Committee de Jumelage where they outlined the time table for the week ahead. It was our first opportunity to get to know each other and I found everyone very friendly. With six languages to contend with the evening passed by quickly with much hilarity fuelled by good food and wine.

The classes started on Monday morning. We were divided into three classes dependent on ability and spent each morning on the classroom. The teachers did everything possible to make the time informative and fun. Each day after lunch a coach was provided to take us site seeing, Dijon, Cluny, Chateaux Cormantin and a bird park were we witnessed the most amazing show put on by the birds of all varieties and their keepers. One evening we had a wine and cheese tasting experience in the Cave of the college itself. We were taken into Mâcon on the Friday afternoon where we were shown around the town, learned its history and then attended a display of Mâconaise and Finnish folk dancing followed by a reception at the Town Hall. The final morning (Saturday) all three classes together convened in the dining room where we had a quiz to see how much we remembered from the week and a sing song. We had a collection and bought gift tokens for the organiser Madam Chevalier, the teachers and the chef who all made the week most memorable.

The next course will be in July 2009 and I hope that more people from Crewe and Nantwich will take advantage of this excellent opportunity to learn or perfect their knowledge of French and forge new friendships among the people from other nations.

The cost of the course was 365 euros which included all the trips, accommodation, breakfast and lunch, very good value I thought. Anyone interested in more information can contact me on 01270 669379, email me rosemary.tremper@uwclub.net.