

Report on Granard Twinning 2024

Granard Town Twinning Association Visit to East Rouen.

Departing for a visit to East Rouen on Wednesday 18th September, Councillor Padraig Mc Namara, was wondering what he was letting himself in for, on his inaugural visit, in his first year of becoming a member of Granard Municipal District.

And perhaps he had a need to worry as one of the venues for our visit was Paluel Nuclear Power Station. Both Twinning Associations are exploring the Theme of Energy, so when the French came to Ireland they were brought to the bog and when the Irish went to France they were brought on a visit to a Nuclear Power Station!

This was just one of the exciting venues visited by the Granard contingent.

The group were treated to 4 days of culture, history, debate , music and above all hospitality. Day 1 brought us to the Chateau de Bizy, property of the Duke of Albufeira.

A special treat was in store in the afternoon....a visit, in beautiful sunshine, to Monets gardens in Giverny. It gave us all the gift of beauty and an opportunity to sit and stare.

That evening we met our friend Depute Annie Vidal at the Ymare village hall. She gave us the heads up that Monsieur Macron was going to name his Prime Minister on Sunday. We were first with the news! She also remembered her tour of the Dail on her previous visit and asked after local TD Joe Flaherty who facilitated the visit. Councillor Padraig Mc Namara spoke strongly on the night about the importance of such visits and the need for unity in these troubled times. He thanked the assembled Mayors and Depute Vidal for their attendance and support.

Day 2 saw the Group heading for the seaside, again in glorious sunshine! The group visited the Fisheries Museum in Fecamp and had a beautiful lunch before heading for Paluel. There was some trepidation among the group as we approached the Power station. Was it safe? Could there be a leak? Overheating? A terrorist attack? Tsunami? All fears were allayed by our host at Paluel Nuclear Power Station. She explained all aspects of the process and the amount of energy generated by the single station was very impressive. The station supplies energy for 4 million citizens! Food for thought...

Day 3. Another day of glorious sunshine. The warm, dry day was great for our visit to Catel Manor in the morning and the city of Rouen in the afternoon. The city of Rouen on the banks of the Seine is a beautiful, interesting city for any tourist. The Cathedral, Medieval Streets, outdoor cafes, the story of Joan Of Arc and lots more combined to give the Irish Group a real taste of life in Normandy.

Our final night was spent with our hosts in Bonsecours Casino dancing, singing and eating

beautifully prepared local dishes. Our hosts couldn't have been more hospitable, on each and every occasion the French charm and friendliness was poured over our group. We learned local Norman dances and we were not found wanting in the dancing stakes!!

Day 4. The arrival of the rain on Sunday morning reflected the change in mood as we realized that this was our last day with our hosts from East Rouen. After a fond farewell the party left for the church of St. Germer de Fly and Gerberoy and on to the airport at Beauvais.

A wonderful trip full of interesting venues but most of all wonderful French hosts living the Town Twinning ethos of sharing, generosity and welcome.

A huge thank you to our Town Twinning committee, Councillor Mc Namara, Barbara Heslin LCC, Thomas Kiernan, Pat Donnelly , Granard Municipal District, and our French hosts led by Daniel Dominique. Au Revoir Rouen.

