

We had planned to join our English friends in Calais for our annual meeting this year. After two hours and half by coach, we reached the ferry terminal under a torrential rain, with a wind blowing like in American blockbusters. We were supposed to pick up there most of English people who had crossed the Channel, as one of us said, by foot (but all the same by the ferry !!). After they had got into our coach, we went to our general meeting place, the Calais Lace and Fashion Museum. Everybody had time to say hello to each other before we shared in two groups as usual.

The two committees members met then in the educational workshop for children (this cannot be invented !!!) to discuss about our twinning operation and especially youngsters exchanges. During this time, the other members could take advantage of the temporary exhibition visit on women lingerie, under the leadership of a very capable guide woman. This theme did not dislike men as well as women !

We then met again for a drink and lunch at the museum restaurant. Lunch delighted French taste buds as well as English ones and it was of course the occasion of exchanges in the most perfect contentment.

During the afternoon, English and French could, each from his part, visit the permanent collections. It was a fascinating visit for everybody : lace history through centuries, the thirty or so clothes shown among the 4000 owned by the museum and, overall, all machines in working order, among them the imposing looms of English origin which staggered all of us. It is absolutely impressive to see those nearly centennial monsters which feel the walls with their vibrations and their deafening noise. The most astonishing discovery is that they work the same way as a barrel organ (hurdy-gurdy), with cardboard punch tapes !

We then drove our English friends to the port and started out again to Verberie after some farewells full with friendship. Rain kept us company on all the way back as during all the day.

We should have not thought about that visit without our vice-chairman Marie-Thérèse Marcelle, who needs to be thanked for that so good idea because everybody enjoyed especially the day.