

ELFORD/AWOINGT ASSOCIATION:FRIENDS OF AWOINGT REPORT

MAY 2021 - 2022

The contents of the report for 2020 -2021 was disappointingly brief due to the constraints imposed by the covid virus and regrettably long term covid has continued to have a detrimental effect on the plans for this past year, including the very sad loss due to Covid of two of our French friends. However the Friends of Awoingt were really pleased to have been able to play a significant part in the first village events allowed post lock down, with a display of wonderful photographs of Awoingt wedding dresses included in the Wedding Celebration exhibition held in June at St. Peter's Church swiftly followed by a very successful repeat of the "pop-up " Crêpe cafe held at the Playground in July and of course having these close connections with a village in northern France with its own British Cemetery makes our Remembrance Sunday services all the more poignant. Importantly the exchange of our monthly news letters continue to ensure close contact is maintained between our two communities.

Any small profits made from the Pancake cafe go towards the costs of the exchange visits between our villages which have always been uplifting and joyous occasions and sadly missed whilst travel restrictions rendered them impossible. Similarly to many organisations this second year of restrictions seems to have proved harder in maintaining momentum and for example other indoor social occasions which we had previously enjoyed have been postponed until members have more confidence in meeting together in confined spaces. In Awoingt, they too have faced changes and difficulties in following their usual agenda: unfortunately Christophe Perron has had to stand down as President, we will miss his enthusiasm but we still look forward to seeing him and his family both here and in Awoingt on future occasions. The Headteacher at the Ecole des Sources who had visited Elford on several occasions retired unexpectedly and her replacement arrived to face an extremely difficult and disrupted term due to covid and then was herself off work from November until the end of January, consequently the connection between the two schools has suffered but the continued enthusiasm of Howard school for this project is much appreciated. It remains the aim to expand and rejuvenate the active members of the group to ensure its continuity.

Having recorded the successful events but also having had to mention the frustrations and negative points of this last year it is encouraging to end on a very positive one: after the imposed break in the rhythm of exchanges it is great news to be able to report that we have been invited to visit Awoingt for the weekend of June 25th/26th and although at present it is likely to be a small group making this journey (a parish council representative would be a very welcome addition!) we trust it will announce the renaissance of this village initiative