

This summer, thanks to the twinning between the towns of Saint-Germain-en-Laye and Winchester, I had the amazing opportunity to spend three weeks near Boston in the United States.

I was warmly welcomed by the Meng family, with Ching-An as my host father and Ming-Hui as my host mother, along with two delightful young girls, Anabelle and Arielle. Together, we did some arts and crafts, cooking, and learned about French culture and language.

During my stay, I was an intern at the Kidstock Creative Theatre. This is a summer and vacation camp for children aged four to fourteen, where children learn basic singing, artistic, and acting skills. I was in charge of a group of four- to five-year-olds. Every week, the children learned choreographies to a fun song, and each song was linked to the week's theme. For example, one week was "beach week," and the song was Surf Surf Crazy from the movie Teen Beach Movie. Next, I accompanied my group to the theater activity, where we would read a story and try to act out different parts of it. The children particularly enjoyed the arts class, where they created projects related to the theme. For example, during "space week," we created spaceships by gluing different colored pieces of paper together and drawing aliens. These activities were in preparation for the weekly show, where parents were invited to watch their children perform the song of the week and one of the stories we had read. I accompanied the children from the sidelines for their song performance, but I joined them on stage for the acting part of the show. I had a lot of fun playing a part with them and interacting with their lines, which were sometimes improvised and made the whole room smile.

It was very interesting to notice the different ways American adults interact with children compared to French adults. Indeed, we referred to the children as "my friend!", which was a bit of an adjustment but allowed us to connect with them in a different manner.

During my stay, there was the July 14th celebration, also known as "Bastille Day," where we met and interacted with the American side of the twinning through a dinner at the Winchester High Society Hall. Moreover, with Eve and Noemie, the other two French interns, we had a chance to visit Boston, including the aquarium, where we saw a ninety-year-old turtle that swam at an amazingly slow speed around the central cylindrically shaped tank. We also saw sea lions from South and North Carolina that had been rescued after being abandoned by their mothers.

We also went whale watching on a four-hour-long trip outside Boston Harbor to a place where many whales pass. We were lucky enough to see at least four to five whales up close and a few more further away. It was amazing to see them dive deep and their tails flip majestically. We even caught glimpses of dolphins swimming alongside a whale. It was a spectacular scene.

All in all, I had an amazing stay in Winchester, discovering American day-to-day activities and being integrated into the family's daily life. It truly was an enriching experience that I will cherish for a long time.

I would like to thank everyone who made this trip possible: the members of the Twinning Committee for organizing this exchange and allowing me to take part in it, Mr. McConnell for welcoming me upon my arrival and giving us a tour around Harvard, the Meng family for

hosting me and making me part of the family during my stay, and finally, Kidstock and the staff for giving me a different view of American daily life and culture.

