

## **Stroud French Connections: a French rural meal in an English rural setting**

The Stroud Town Twinning association, Stroud French Connections, held its first event of 2008 on Friday evening, 1<sup>st</sup> February, at Pitchcombe Village Hall, where a French dinner was prepared by Muriel Brooks for anyone with an interest in France and food. The hall, decorated with flags and bunting, was filled to capacity and a convivial evening was enjoyed by all. Joy Cawthraw had made attractive table decorations in the appropriate colours to enhance Muriel's delicious food.

Dr Margery van Zyl and other members of the SFC committee had organised the evening which was intended to entertain us, to attract more members and to raise a little money towards hosting our French friends from St Ismier, when they come for their second group visit to Stroud from 10<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> July.

Laurence Carmichael, Chair of SFC, who had welcomed guests at the door with an *apéritif*, hosted the evening, during which we were invited to try to do a challenging quiz about France and its culture which she had devised to get people talking, with excellent results. The prize was a bottle of champagne, won by the Alders, Huxfords and Oosthuysens. There was a raffle later on in the evening with prizes contributed by members of the committee.

The meal itself was aptly rural and traditional: large helpings of warming *cassoulet* followed by cheese, a green salad and puddings, including French apple tart.

**To find out more about SFC contact the secretary, Sarah White ([sarahiwhite@hotmail.com](mailto:sarahiwhite@hotmail.com)) or look at our website [www.stroudconnect.org.uk](http://www.stroudconnect.org.uk) where you can download a membership application form and find out about French classes for adults. Parents of Stroud Valley Primary School year 5 and 6 children may contact Carole Oosthuysen to obtain penfriends ([oost@btopenworld.com](mailto:oost@btopenworld.com)).**