

*Founded
1989*



*French
Association
3035*

**August 2015
Newsletter**

***Events, activities, news
and reports for members***



Collioure

Don't Forget the GT 2016 Calendar Competition – Only 2 Months left to Enter!

Start sending in your entries for the 2016 GT calendar competition!

The theme for this year is "La Belle France". Your snaps can be of any subject matter which you feel best expresses the beautiful side of France and obviously must have been taken somewhere within France.

The subject matter is wide-ranging, perhaps a favourite view, holiday destination, wildlife, building, pastime, food, sport - absolutely anything - be as creative as you wish!

Each family member may submit up to four photographs. Photographs must be in landscape format (rather than portrait) and your entry must state where in France each photograph was taken.

Closing date for submission of entries is midnight **30th September 2015**.

Once the competition has closed, all entries will be displayed on the GT website and members will be invited to vote for their favourites, with the most popular 12 photographs used for the calendar.

*In addition, this year prizes will be awarded for the photograph considered to be the most creative image and also the most voted for picture, this will be judged by an independent person.

Please send your entries as low resolution jpeg attachments by email to gtphotocomp@gmail.com, providing the name of the photographer and details of

where each photograph was taken. If your photograph is selected, you will be asked for a high resolution copy at a later date.

Full rules of competition entry are available on the GT website.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Book Club/ Library	Mon 3 rd August	2 – 4.00 pm	St Jean de Sauves
Walk	Sat 8 th August	10.00 am	Thorigné
Second Circle	Wed 12 th August	10.00 am	Exireuil
Reading Circle	Thurs 13 th Aug	2.30 pm	Vautebis
Horse Racing And Games Afternoon	Sat 22 nd August	12 noon	Lezay
Horse Racing	Sun 6 th Sept	2.00 pm	Niort Hippodrome
Walk	Sat 12 th Sept	10.00 am	St Leger de la Martiniere
Book Club/ Library	Mon 14 th Sept	2 – 4.00 pm	Mazieres en Gatine
History Group	Thurs 17 th Sept	3.00 pm	Menigoute
Walk	Fri 25 th Sept	10.00 am	Moulin des Prés, Azay sur Thouet

- **Next Committee Meeting** **Thursday 20th August, Chez Green**
- **Final Copy Date for Newsletter Items** **Wednesday 26th August**
(gtnewsletter79@gmail.com)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Book Club **Mon 3rd Aug** **2 – 4.00 pm** **St Jean de Sauves**

August's Book Club/Library will be held at Chez Sangster at St Jean de Sauves.

Walk **Sat 8th August** **10.00 am** **Thorigné**

This walk will start in the village of Thorigné and is about 7.6 km long with a 5km alternative, which also has cut-offs to reduce it to about 3.5km. It is nearly all on grassy and stony tracks, and passes through a variety of countryside, about half of which is well shaded. The long walk goes down into the Lambon valley, and what goes down also comes up, with a 150 metre climb at 7% (that's quite steep), but there are no other significant hills. There is a stretch of path in the valley that could be muddy if there has been a lot of rain - hopefully not in August. As always, sturdy footwear is recommended. There are toilets at the start.

Thorigné is about 5km NW of Celles sur Belle. From Celles take the D948 towards Niort and after about 2km turn right onto the D304. At the roundabout in the centre of the village turn left and immediately right into the car park by the football pitch.

GPS ref N46°17.53', W0°15.11'

Lunch will be available at Le 4 Saisons in Celles sur Belle. This is situated in the middle of the village at 6 rue Ancienne Mairie, and there is a car park close behind at N46°15.70', W0°12.70'. For three courses, wine and coffee the cost will be 16€.

Second Circle **Wed 12th August** **10.00 am** **Exireuil**

The Second Circle reading group will meet on Wednesday 12th August. To discuss *The Quarry* by Iain Banks.

Reading Circle **Thurs 13th Aug** **2.30 pm** **Vautebis**

The book chosen for our August meeting is *My Sister's Keeper* by Jodi Picoult. A compelling and thoughtful story which raises many controversial moral and ethical issues. Lots to discuss. As usual, you can look up all our previous book reviews on the website.

Horse Racing and Games Afternoon **Sat 22nd August** **12 noon** **Lezay**

An exciting afternoon of uproarious fun and games will take place Chez Buckley, incorporating the annual Get Together Horse Racing meet, where your fate and fortune will be totally dependent on the roll of the dice! There will also be table tennis, darts (if the board gets put up in time), petanque on our purpose built court, which is designed to even out the odds, and Molkky.

In addition, if the day is warm, a small heated pool will be available for the more adventurous - bring your own cossie & towel - no skinny dipping! For the less active, a variety of board games will be available.

The Committee is pleased to offer "un pot d'amitié". Please come equipped with a picnic lunch and whatever you wish to drink. A gas bbq can be made available if required. Tables, chairs and parasols would be appreciated, though we can supply quite a few. And as it is that season of the year, your summer visitors will be very welcome!

Horse Racing **Sun 6th Sept** **2.00 pm** **Niort Hippodrome**

Do you fancy coming along and losing - sorry winning - some Euros on the horses? Niort Hippodrome is holding a race meeting on Sunday 6th September and is situated just south of Niort off the N11. The French betting system is similar to the Tote system in the UK (e.g. no bookmakers), minimum bet is 2 Euros.

Entrance will be approx. €6 for men and ladies are free. We will meet at 2.00 pm in the car parking field off Chemin Du Lac. You can arrive earlier and have a picnic here if you wish (weather permitting). The racing usually starts at about 2.30pm.

There are also snacks and drinks available to buy.

Afterwards (this is optional) we will go and celebrate or commiserate at La Mulan Chinese Restaurant, Route de la Rochelle, Bessines, 79000, Niort.

Where there is an 'all-you-can-eat' buffet for approx €17.00 (plus drinks).

Walk **Sat 12th Sept** **10.00 am** **St Leger de la
Martiniere**

Julia and Peter are organising September's walk which will start in St Leger de la Martiniere, to the east of Melle, near Super U. The walk will be about 8.5 Km with a shorter option. Lunch will be taken at Le Petit Berlands in the market square, Lezay, to include 4 courses, wine and coffee for 16€50.

There will be a choice of chicken or fish. Full details will follow shortly, but please make a note of the date in your diaries

Book Club **Mon 14th Sept** **2 – 4.00 pm** **Mazieres en
Gatine**

Note the change of date – it's the second Monday in September NOT the first.

**History
Group** **Thurs 17th
Sept** **3.00 pm** **Menigoute**

On the subject of: ***Songs, Scribes, and Society in 15th Century France: the History and Reception of the Loire Valley Chansonniers.*** This month we have a Guest speaker: Jane Alden, Professor and Chair of Music at Trinity College, Dublin.

Jane will talk about the assumption of aristocratic provenance for chansonniers, such as those produced in the Loire Valley during the 15th Century, which has only recently been overturned. Discoveries by David Fallows and others have shown that the earliest owners of deluxe chansonniers were from the upper middle classes and lower nobility, not traditional aristocrats. In particular, notaries and secretaries were active patrons of paintings, tapestries, sculpture, metalwork, jewellery, manuscripts and printed books, and music. Chansonniers would have had a particular appeal to these individuals, who are known also to have collected and written poetry. Approaching chansonniers as mixed media representations allows us to explore these objects in ways that better relate to their original milieu. The cost is **€5.00 per head**, to cover refreshments, hire of the room & heating (if needed).

Directions to Auberge des Voyageurs in Menigoute.

From North (Parthenay), exit towards Pompaire then via Vausseroux and La Pagerie, on mainly D176 and D21. **From South** (Lezay), via D45 and D5 through Chey, La Mothe Saint Heray and Saint Germier.

From West (Champdeniers), via Saint Georges de Noisne, Chantecorps and La Pagerie, mainly D329.

From East (Poitiers), via La Torchaise and Sanxay, mainly D3. The restaurant itself is in the centre of the Bourg, opposite the small chapel.

N.B. We have to confirm numbers to the Auberge one week before the meeting. As a result we will be charged for any people who DO NOT TURN up on the day.

So, we will have to charge individuals for "No Shows" on the day, sorry about this, but we have no choice!

Walk

Fri 25th Sept **10.00 am**

**Moulin des
Prés, Azay
sur Thouet**

The walk starts from the picnic area at the Moulin des Prés, between Secondigny and Azay-sur-Thouet. Its 8kms. along drovers' lanes, woodland paths and 'petits chemins'. Mainly gently undulating and varied countryside route with some excellent long distance views. There is a 15 minute upward slope (on tarmaced lane) 40 minutes into the walk, and a stretch on the 'home straight' can be rather muddy. So please come well-shod. Unfortunately there are no toilets near the start point, and there is no shorter version of the walk. However, it's only a few kilometres from Secondigny with its cafés, shops, and toilets, for any non-walkers. Lunch will be at the Hotel L'Ecu in Secondigny at a cost of €14.50.

Menu

Buffet

Main course, from Brochette de Boeuf, or Steak, or Poisson.

Desserts au choix

Wine & coffee included

Parking for lunch.

Hotel L'Ecu is next to the traffic lights in Secondigny. Coming from Moulin des Prés, turn right at these lights and then left, into the large SuperU car park.

Directions to Moulin des Prés:

From Parthenay, take the D949b, (direction Secondigny) passing through Le Tallud and Azay sur Thouet; continue towards Secondigny, passing the Notre-Dame church (on your left, about 1km. from Azay) and turning left after another 1km. on to lane marked 'Moulin des Prés'. The Moulin is 1km from the D949b. There is car parking space but it is limited, so please park carefully.

From Secondigny, at traffic lights, take the D949b (direction Parthenay), passing the Maison de Pays de la Pomme (2kms) on the right before turning right, after another 1km, on to lane marked 'Moulin des Prés'.

REPORTS ON RECENT EVENTS

Walk

Fri 26th June

Fenery

**Report by Karin
Meek**



It was June 26th and a very hot morning. As the 15 members assembled for the walk we heard the primary school children rehearsing for a concert – in the car park!

David & Beccy had planned an 8 kms walk from their home village of Fenery. This easy and level walk took us along tree lined bicycle route on the old railway line and onto a

few quiet lanes. The tree coverage was very welcome as the temperature soared. It was unusual to only be accompanied by 2 dogs who, due to the heat, were taken back to the car park via the shorter route.

The meal at La Parth de Boeuf was plentiful and very tasty. This 'good value for money' meal was consumed along with copious amounts of cold water and wine.

Throughout the morning people engaged in conversations from the serious to practical and everything in between! **Q.** So how do you kill a mouse with Mars bars? **A.** Let it die from frustration at not being able to open the packaging! Wrong answer.

Even a quick visit to the W.C. was memorable. One lady was trying to comb her hair when she pointed out that the facilities had obviously "been designed for the shorter French ladies" as she had to bend very low to see into the mirror.

Beccy, you might have thought the walk was uninteresting however, I am sure everyone will have taken back a small memory of the day. For that and taking the time to organise the walk, on behalf of everyone attending I would like to say thank you very much to you both for organising it.

Walk

Sat 4th July

Caunay

Report by David Sewell

23 arrived at the centre of Caunay to walk on Saturday 4th July, no dogs YES no dogs! What a sensible idea on behalf of their owners, as the temperatures were rising faster than the £ against the Euro! With all the dogs safely at home in the cool that left us humans to challenge ourselves to walk in the high temperatures. Fortunately the 8k walk was well planned by Brian and Joan Stead as quite a lot of it was under dappled, leafy, shaded areas.

We all had plenty of water and enjoyed the scenery and each other's company as we wandered through the villages, tree-lined tracks and fields.

Unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances Joan and Brian were unable to be there. So John and Maureen Buckley stepped in to save the day, (although John had just come out of hospital, what a hero!)

At the end of the walk we all reconvened at the Market Restaurant in Lezay, where 29 of us enjoyed a super 4 course lunch.

So many thanks to John and Maureen for organising everything on the day, and to Brian and Joan for the original walk route, well done to you all!



Garden Party

Sat 11th July

Scille

Report by Keith Mousdale

About 30 members and friends attended the second garden party of the Summer at the home of Joyce Roberts where we were able to enjoy a walk around her grounds including her cattery, terrace, lake and open fields.

The event opened with wine tasting presented by Roger Boisdrion, a vineyard owner and wine producer from the Muscadet region. After explaining the various wines he produced and the vinification methods, we with gusto on a very hot day tasted and enjoyed his selection of wines, starting with the extremely dry *Gros Plant* through to the *Cru Muscadet* which, contrary to the traditions of Muscadet wine, is produced for keeping up to 5 years after spending 3 years at the winery. Many members were pleased with the selection and bought from the producer.

Picnic lunches were then taken on the terrace under sunshades which were essential at the time, and during the afternoon we toured the "estate" following the clues of a treasure hunt, the prize for the winner Geoff Little, being no surprise, bottles of wine chosen from those previously tasted.

An enjoyable afternoon was enjoyed by all.



Members enjoying the wine tasting



Geoff receiving his prize from Joyce

BBQ

Sun 26th July

Le Tallud

Report by Bob Seager

This year the committee made a fatal mistake with the BBQ - they didn't make a burnt (BBQ'd?) offering to the weather gods, and it was a bit on the damp side. However, the roof at the Parc de Loisirs of Le Tallud that protected us from the sun last year kept us dry this year, enabling the fun to proceed as usual. Over 60 attended and after a welcoming drink we watched the chefs (heavily disguised GT members) prepare a culinary tour de force for us of varying meat and fish offerings. They actually didn't burn everything to cinders, so it wasn't like a real BBQ, and we stuffed ourselves happily.

After the meal the raffle results were announced. This year there was a mystery prize, which turned out to be a framed photo of the committee (stand up the person who muttered that it was a mystery than anyone who wasn't a committee member's mum should want to hang *that* on the wall). However, Jilly Rosenberg, who won it, took it round the committee to get them to autograph it, and was heard to say that it would become a family heirloom - at least, I think that's what she said.

We then learnt that the whole event had been arranged as a birthday treat for Rebecca (22, since you asked, last year she told me she was 21, so...). She's got a few years to go before she reaches the age of Audrey, who celebrated her 90th birthday a few days before.

Roger's attempts to get us to play (underwater) boules failed miserably, so we had

another drink and then wandered off happily, grateful to the committee members whose efforts before and on the day made the event so enjoyable.

During the afternoon a cheque for €300 was given to Carol Andrews in the form of a cheque for her nominated charity - CLIC Sargent, see Carol's response below. Jeremy Lockett explained that Carol had donated a large amount of books to the GT History Group and the group had run a quiz to raise money for this, Carol's chosen charity.

The GT committee also agreed to add to the total raised to make the magnificent sum of 300 Euros.



The Venue



Before the Festivities Began



Members Enjoying the Day



The View of the River

A Very Big Thank You from Carol Andrews

When I gave Keith's history books to the history group, with his blessing, it was in the hope that someone would use them, as he knew I wouldn't!

The fact that GT/History group have given me a very generous donation for CLIC Sargent really is like the icing on the cake. I chose this particular charity as it's one that both Keith and I were very grateful for when our son was ill many years ago. It aims to make life for children and adolescents with cancer as good as it can be, trips out, little treats etc, The one our son enjoyed the most was a trip to the Horse Of The Year Show, where the kids all had tea with Harvey Smith!

So I make no apologies for my emotional little speech at the BBQ, because it really is good to know that I have such generous, caring friends.

I know CLIC Sargent will put the money to very good use,

THANK YOU, one and all

Carol

[NON GT ITEMS OF INTEREST](#)

BARN SALE

The barn sale held at Sue and Gus Gurr's for the Gurkha Welfare Trust Nepal Earthquake Appeal raised the magnificent sum of €433.11. We'd like to thank the members of GT who attended for their generosity and support.

Sue & Gus have received a letter from The Gurkha Welfare Trust for this donation which says the following:

'Thanks to your support we are able to continue supporting Gurkha veterans, widows and their communities in areas affected by the recent earthquakes. Now the monsoon has arrived, it is vital we provide temporary shelter for those made homeless. In the longer term, we will continue to rebuild homes and villages, repairing damaged water projects and school buildings.

Since the earthquake we have already distributed over £32,797 in Hardship Grants, £270,388 on materials for shelter, £89,923 on Emergency Relief Packs, £13,918 on equipment such as torches, solar lights, and phone cards, £1,094 on medicine, and £13,350 on school facilities.

To get updates on the progress of our work in Nepal to help those affected by this disaster, please visit gwt.org.uk and follow the links or look out for the next issue of Samachara in early September.

Thank you again for your kind support at this time'

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