

*Founded
1989*



*French
Association
3035*

May 2016 Newsletter

*Events, activities, news
and reports for members*



Chauvigny Photograph by Jackie Luckett

[Appeal for Walk Organisers in the South](#)

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, we need someone to organise walks in October and November to give us a complete set for 2016 in the South.

As ever, John would be happy to help arrange the meal aspect if needed. Please get in touch with him either by email john.buckley@free.fr, or by phone on 05 49 07 70 68 if you can help.

[Don't Forget the GT Photographic Competition 2017](#)

Don't forget about your entries for the 2017 GT calendar competition.

The theme for this year is "La Vie Française".

Your pictures can be of any subject matter which you feel best expresses life in France and obviously they must have been taken somewhere within France.

What do you think best portrays France and why we have chosen to make it our home (or even second home)?

The seasons, landscapes, French holiday destinations, local animals and wildlife, French food, sports, heritage – in fact anything...FRENCH! Over to you!

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 will be **midnight 30th September 2016**.

Details of how to submit your photographs will be available later, in the meantime start snapping!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Book Library	Mon 2 nd May	2 – 4.00 pm	St Pardoux	David Brennan
Walk	Sat 7 th May	10.30 am	Chenay	Jane & Fred Oram
Reading Circle	Wed 11 th May	2.30 pm	L'Aumonerie	Jenny Harfield
Photo Club	Mon 23 rd May	11.00 am	Cherveux	David Brennan
Walk	Fri 27 th May	10.30 am	Secondigny	David & Rebecca Sewell
Walk	Sat 11 th June	10.30 am	St Coutant	John & Pat Chard
History Group Day Out	Thurs 16 th June	12 Noon	Abbaye Royale de Fontevraud	David Sewell
Garden Party	Sat 18 th June	1.00 pm	St Coutant	Steve & Noreena Parker
Summer Event/BBQ	Sun 17 th Jul	TBC	Le Tallud	The Committee

- **Next Committee Meeting** Thursday 5th May, Chez Sewell
- **Final Copy Date for Newsletter Items** Wednesday 25th May (gtnewsletter79@gmail.com)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Book Library Mon 2nd May 2 – 4.00 pm St Pardoux

The next library day will be on Monday 2nd May at Chez Brennan at St Pardoux. It's a great way to spend an afternoon, including a cuppa and biscuits.

We are always pleased to receive donations of paperbacks in good condition!

Walk Sat 7th May 10.30 am Chenay

Please note the date, it's a week earlier than usual!

The walk will be around 8 kms on a combination of tracks and road and will be fairly level.

Suitable footwear should be worn. There will be an option for a shorter route.

Directions - Chenay can be found on the D950/D150 road between Melle and Lusignan.

At Chenay take the route to Vancais (right hand turn if coming from Melle direction) and meet in the car park on the left. There is a toilet available near the church.

Afterwards lunch will be at Les Trois Pigeons restaurant in Chenay and will cost €15.

There is a choice of starter, main and dessert which must indicated at the time of booking.

Starter : salade de lardons or terrine de saumon

Main : roti de porc echine ratatouille or saumonette and riz:

Fromage

Dessert : bavarois mangue passion or moelleux au chocolat
cafe et 1/4 vin compris

**Reading
Circle**

Wed 11th May **2.30 pm**

L'Aumonerie

At our next meeting we shall be discussing *Flight* by Isabel Ashdown which was first published less than a year ago. A young woman wins the lottery. She doesn't tell her husband but instead packs her bags, kisses her baby daughter goodbye and disappears.

Two decades later the past comes back to haunt those she left behind and maybe we eventually get to learn what prompted her to leave in the first place.

You can catch up with our latest book reviews on the GT website.

Photo Club

Mon 23rd May **11.00 am**

Cherveux

The next Photography group meeting will meet at Chateau de Cherveux.

We will start with our normal meeting at 11.00 am, this will be followed by a talk about the history of the Chateau by its current owner Francois Redien.

Look at www.chateau-de-cherveux.com for more information.

We will have a bring & share picnic lunch, then in the afternoon we will take photos of the Chateau.

It promises to be a great day out!

Walk

Fri 27th May **10.30 am**

Secondigny

Note 10.30 am start (Can't get Beccy out of bed in the morning!)

We will walk round the lake and the little forest across the main road. It's fairly flat but there's an incline in the wood. If it's been raining – it will definitely be wet around the lake – so suitable needed footwear etc The walk will be approx 7 kms and a shorter walk of 3 kms.

We will meet at :

Super U car park in Secondigny. They have a toilet in Super U and public loos across the road.

Super U is on Place du Marche, Secondigny, 79130.

The Place du Marche is in the centre of Secondigny, off the D748.

Look for the Hotel de Ville or Petit Theatre – it's just behind.

We will eat at L'Ecu de France, 2 rue du Poitou, 79130, Secondigny. It is just across from Super U and will be open if anyone wants to stay there for a coffee instead of walking.

Entree, Plat (Meat or Fish), Dessert with wine & tea or coffee – 15 Euros each.

Walk

Sat 11th June **10.30 am**

St Coutant

The walk will start from the car park of the "Salle des Associations" in St Coutant and will be approximately 8km with a short cut for those who don't wish to walk the full distance.

The route is boggy at the moment but we hope that it will be dryer in June. Suitable footwear should of course be worn.

Lunch will be at Le Petit Berland in Lezay (in the main square adjacent to the Pharmacie) at a cost of

15 Euros and will consist of four courses with ¼ wine and coffee included.
There will be a choice of “Comfit de canard” or fish.

Directions:

From Lezay, take the D105 towards St Vincent le Châtre. After passing Ruisseau (2km from Lezay approx), take the next left signed St Coutant. Take care here as the main road bends right, making it difficult to see on-coming traffic. Follow the road towards St Coutant, passing a Plant Nursery on the right and take the next right, signed “Salle des Associations”.

Take the next left and follow the track round to the car park. Grid Ref. 46° 13' 50" N 0° 00' 45" W

There are no toilets at the start.

History Group
Day Out

Thurs 16th
June

12 Noon

Abbaye
Royale
de
Fontevraud,
Nr Saumur



L'Abbaye Royale de Fontevraud (www.fontevraud.fr) was founded in 1101 as a religious community for women *and* men. It became a monastic city built over 34 acres. Monastic life was ended by the revolution and in 1804 when it was converted to a prison which was not closed until 1963. It is also noted for the tombs of Henry 2nd, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Richard the Lionheart and

Isobelle, wife of King John.

We have organised a one hour and thirty minute tour with an English speaking guide. Fontevraud is approx 1 hour & a quarter from Parthenay, just south east of Saumur. We will meet at the restaurant just before 12 noon.

If you wish to reserve your place (places limited), primarily please email or phone David Sewell. Your place will not be secured until your cheque has been received.

This 14 Euros deposit (which we have to pay in advance) is for the tour of the Abbaye ONLY and is unfortunately NON-REFUNDABLE.

When David has received your cheque he will send you a map of Fontevraud giving details of where we will meet and restaurant etc.

The cost of the meal will be approx 16 Euros (we are still negotiating) which will be payable on the day.

Please note there will probably be a 15 minute walk from the restaurant to the Abbaye and the guided tour commences at 2.30 pm.

All bookings and cheques must be received before Friday June 3rd.

Garden Party

Sat 18th June

1.00 pm

St Coutant

Noreena and Steve will be hosting the garden party again and we hope that there will be wall to wall sunshine rather than the deluge at the end of last year's event, albeit creating a lot of fun.

A topical competition will run throughout as well as an opportunity to show off your boules skills after your picnic.

It is hoped that their English gardener will also be offering a selection of unusual plants for sale along with any advice you may need.

Please bring your own picnics, cutlery, plates and glasses although we can provide plastic glasses and paper plates if need be. Get Together will provide an “appero”, nibbles and a glass of either red or rosé.

After that it's up to you!

Your own parasol and chairs will ensure your comfort although some will be provided.

**Summer
Event**

Sun 17th July

Time TBC

Le Tallud

**The
Committee**

Put the date in your dairy - more details will follow very soon.

REPORTS ON RECENT EVENTS

Walk

Fri 25th Mar

Rouille

**Report by
Holly Mousdale**

After a sunny week it was unfortunately horrid drizzly rain, which I really don't like, as we left the busy market that was being held in the centre of Rouille. My friend Bonnie and I being the only ones with 4 legs, led a pack of 30 humans on a nice walk which was mainly flat and had several parts where we could be let off our leads so we could have a good run. Some people just did the shorter walk, which was round behind one side of the town but I of course did the long walk which for the second half was around behind the other side of the town with more countryside, or so it seemed. After that we went back through the town where by now the market had left but a funfair was being constructed in its place. I then was put back in the car for a nice long drink and a sleep whilst my owners and another 29 went for lunch in a very packed restaurant. The meal was good, I believe, with buffet starters and desserts during the course of which there was a free raffle for 3 Easter eggs. The lucky winners photos are shown none of whom were my owners.

Thanks to Julia and Peter for organising this, except for the weather!



Walk

Sat 9th April

Loizé

**Report by Steve
Parker**

Our walk around the Loizé area was very well organised by Colin and Linda Vane who gave us a warm welcome when we arrived at the car park accompanied by several “hairy friends”!!

Loizé is near Chef Boutonne and is a farming community dotted about in pleasant countryside which is a mixture of arable and woodlands – also fortunately it is flat! Our intrepid group started off in fine weather but the rain clouds were threatening and after a little while down it came in bucket loads. Were we downhearted? No we were not and being Brits we didn't bat an eyelid and carried on regardless.

With a few exceptions we completed the 8km and arrived at the Voyageurs Restaurant in Chef Boutonne in eager anticipation of our lunch, albeit looking a bit bedraggled and damp. And we were not disappointed. The welcoming ambiance of the Restaurant, excellent company and delicious food soon made up for our trials and tribulations. Especially impressive about our lunch were the individual cheese soufflés served piping hot and as high as the sky!

It was a great pleasure to meet our new President and our thanks to Colin and Linda for a “good day out”



Quiz Night

Thurs 14th April

Menigoute

Report by Roger Amsden

Thirty six members eagerly turned up to form their teams, test their knowledge enjoy good food and the company of other members. Jackie Luckett set an amazing variety of questions and also acted as adjudicator on any disputes, with Jonathan Townsend doing his expert best as Quiz Master. Half-time showed that we were all fairly level.

We were then set a teaser for three extra points, we needed to find an amusing anecdote that would end in the answer 'sardines'! Following an excellent meal and some head scratching we put our minds to the second half.

The end results were very close but Team Eric & Michele Hansford & Neil & Lesley Ritchie triumphed!

With Team John & Maureen Buckley & John & Pat Chard a close second, helped by the extra three 'sardine' points! Prizes for first & second were presented with champers for the winners and wine for the runners up, not forgetting the tail enders to sweeten their disappointment who were presented with chocs!

Our grateful thanks to Jackie Luckett & Jonathan Townsend & the generous members who donated a bottle of bubbly!!

History Group

Thurs 21st April

Menigoute

Report by Geoffrey Little



An interesting and clear talk was given by Gaynor Mickelborough, regarding the concept of “Marianne” from her origins during the French Revolution to the present date.

Gaynor explained all the early developments of Marianne this “goddess of Liberty” and her Phrygian cap. How she has become ‘who’ she is today & how she is such an emblematic symbol of French Nationality and culture, depicting “liberte”, “egalite” and “fraternite”

It was highly amusing to see how men’s obsession with the female form have influenced the character of Marianne over the decades. Most people didn’t realise that every president of France has the right to restyle her during his time in office.

Gaynor had obviously done a large amount of research to deliver such an educational talk with many half-naked photos!

Thanks Gaynor for all your efforts – it certainly made us think!

Photographic Group

Mon 25th Apr

Lac Cebron

Report by Rebecca Sewell

8 members of the Photo Club arrived at Ali Sherwin's house.

We then all headed off to Lac Cebron close by. We installed ourselves in the hide at the lakeside, but sadly we didn't get to see much wildlife.

There were birds in the distance but difficult to capture on camera. However it was a lovely spring day and we all played with our cameras and tried each others, and found various views to shoot.

Back at Ali' and Vinny's house, after tea and biscuits, David Brennan explained how to move pictures from a camera to a computer and store them safely, which was interesting.

We then discussed last month's portrait pictures of David himself and Carol Andrews. Jim Hutchison's photo of David was voted the best and Roger Amsden's photo was voted best photo of Carol.



Welcome to our NEW MEMBERS

No new members this month

Non GT Items of Interest

If you know of an event that you think other members might be interested in – please email the details to **gtnewsletter79@gmail.com** and we can publicise it in following newsletter – if space permits.

"Les Amis d'Oroux" are organising a choral concert by l'Ensemble Orpheo, a wonderful choir based in Niort. They have put together a superb, varied programme from traditional songs to operatic arias, something for everyone.

The concert takes place in the church at Oroux (79390, near La Ferrière and Thénézay) on Saturday 30 April at 8.30pm. Tickets are 12€ in advance or 14€ on the door, from **amisdoroux@yahoo.fr** or tel 05 49 63 10 40.

The Third Bilingual LitFest – dates for your diary – 24 -26 June, St Clémentin 79150

Mid-summer, Shakespeare's 400th anniversary – what a lovely way to celebrate the importance of words.

Here is a quote from Patricia Dunker, a vivid, entertaining and thoughtful novelist who you can hear at the LitFest on Friday 24th June at 2pm. "A people that cannot read and write can never be free."

11.15 Saturday, our keynote speaker Lemn Sissay, brought up in a Care Home under a brutal, abusive regime will tell us something of the remarkable reinvention of himself through music and poetry in an interview conducted by BBC presenter and novelist, Roisin McAuley.

The Monkseaton Morris Men will entertain you in the village square before the afternoon's events which feature popular local authors: Alison Morton, Edwin Apps and Peter Hoskins. A troubadour, a French story-teller and accordionist and a wine-tasting culminate in a musical soirée when Les Amuse Bouches will serenade us with songs by Dylan, Brel, Cohen amongst others.

Something for all tastes each day - including writing workshops, book-signings, an impressive art and photography exhibition, a bookshop and the Copper Kettle where you can refuel on English Tea and Cakes. Check

out: www.stclementinlitfest.com and

<https://www.facebook.com/Stclementinlitfest-927589553943461/?ref=hl>

We are also running a series of free 'taster' sessions in the region - why not come along and find out what it's all about?

Friday 20th May Anglophone Library, Angers 10-11

Friday 20th May Bibliotheque, Nueil les Aubiers 17.00

Friday 27th May Pause Cafe, L'Absie (2 - 4pm - afternoon tea)

Saturday 18th June Mediatheque, Bressuire 10.00

If you think that French Paperwork is a nightmare – read this - 'apparently' a real UK passport application letter.....hope it makes you smile!

Dear Minister,

I'm in the process of renewing my passport but I am a total loss to understand or believe the hoops I am being asked to jump through. How is it that Bert Smith of T.V. Rentals Basingstoke has my address and telephone number and knows that I bought a satellite dish from them back in 1994, and yet, the Government is still asking me where I was born and on what date?

How come that nice West African immigrant chappy who comes round every Thursday night with his DVD rentals van can tell me every film or video I have had out since he started his business up eleven years ago, yet you still want me to remind you of my last three jobs, two of which were with contractors working for the government?

How come the T.V. detector van can tell if my T.V. is on, what channel I am watching and whether I have paid my licence or not, and yet if I win the government run lottery they have no idea I have won or where I am and will keep the b****y money to themselves if I fail to claim in good time.

Do you people do this by hand?

You have my birth date on numerous files you hold on me, including the one with all the income tax forms I've filed for the past 30-odd years. It's on my health insurance card, my driver's licence, on the last four passports I've had, on all those stupid customs declaration forms I've had to fill out before being allowed off the planes and boats over the last 30 years, and all those insufferable census forms that are done every ten years and the electoral registration forms I have to complete, by law, every time our lords and masters are up for re-election.

Would somebody please take note, once and for all, I was born in Maidenhead on the 4th of March 1957, my mother's name is Mary, her maiden name was Reynolds, my father's name is Robert, and I'd be absolutely astounded if that ever changed between now and the day I die!

I apologise Minister. I'm obviously not myself this morning. But between you and me, I have simply had enough! You mail the application to my house, then you ask me for my address. What is going on? Do you have a gang of Neanderthals working there?

Well, I have to go now, because I have to go to back to Salisbury and get another copy

of my birth certificate because you lost the last one. AND to the tune of 60 quid! What a racket THAT is!!

Would it be so complicated to have all the services in the same spot to assist in the issuance of a new passport the same day? But nooooo, that'd be too easy and maybe make sense. You'd rather have us running all over the place like chickens with our heads cut off, then find someone to confirm that it's really me in the picture - you know... the one where we're not allowed to smile - in case we look as if we are enjoying the process!

Hey, you know why we can't smile? 'Cause we're totally fed up!

I served in the armed forces for more than 25 years including over ten years at the Ministry of Defence in London. I have had security clearances which allowed me to sit in the Cabinet Office, five seats away from the Prime Minister while he was being briefed on the first Gulf War and I have been doing volunteer work for the British Red Cross ever since I left the Services. However, I have to get someone 'important' to verify who I am - you know, someone like my doctor... who, before he got his medical degree 6 months ago WAS LIVING IN PAKISTAN.....

Yours sincerely,

An Irate *British* Citizen.

Emergency Phone Numbers

15 SAMU (Medical)

17 Gendarmes

18 Pompiers (Fire Service – also trained for Medical Emergencies)

112 European Emergency Number

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