

*Founded
1989*



*French
Association
3035*

June 2016 Newsletter

*Events, activities, news
and reports for members*



Sword Beach, Ouistreham Photograph by David Brennan

Reminder to both Organisers of Events and Attendees

From time to time problems have arisen because people have not followed up bookings once made, if no acknowledgement has been received from the event organiser. If you make a booking, but do not receive a confirmation, either at the time if made by phone, or in a reasonably short time if the booking has been made by email, then it is **YOUR** responsibility to ensure that the event organiser has actually received the booking. Conversely, if you are organising an event, you **must** acknowledge event bookings in a reasonably short time.

There have been instances of people making bookings by phone by leaving a message on an answer phone, which has never "arrived" and other cases of emailed bookings never reaching their intended destination.

Let's hope we can avoid any problems in the future!

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 member may submit up to four photographs. Photographs must be in landscape format (rather than portrait). Closing date for submission of entries will be **midnight 30th September 2016** please email your photos to gtphotocomp@gmail.com including your name and stating where in France the picture was taken.

After the closing date the members will be invited to vote for their favourites. The 12 photos with the most votes will be chosen for the 2017 calendar.

There will also be a prize for the picture that receives the most votes.

Full terms and conditions on GT Website www.gettogether-france.org click on the EVENTS Tab, then click on Forthcoming Events and scroll to the bottom and find Calendar Competition Rules.

[Walk Organisers for the South](#)

I am delighted to tell you that we now have a full programme for 2016. Many thanks to all those willing volunteers!

John Buckley – Southern Co-ordinator

[CALENDAR OF EVENTS](#)

Book Library	Mon 6 th Jun	2 – 4.00 pm	St Pardoux
Walk	Sat 11 th June	10.30 am	St Coutant
Reading Circle	Wed 15 th June	2.30 pm	Oroux
History Group Day Out	Thurs 16 th June	12.00 Noon	Abbaye Royale de Fontevraud
Garden Party	Sat 18 th June	1.00 pm	St Coutant
Horse Racing	Sun 19 th June	2.00 pm	Niort Hippodrome
Walk	Fri 24 th June	10.00 am	St Pardoux
Walk	Sat 9 th July	10.00 am	Sepvret
Summer Event/BBQ	Sun 17 th July	12.30 pm	Le Tallud
Horse Racing & Games Afternoon	Sat 20 th August	12.00 Noon	Lezay
Historical Walk & Pic-nic	Wed 21 st Sept	10.00 am	Scillé
Vinyard Tour & Lunch	Sat 24 th Sept	TBA	Domaine d'Enchantoir

- **Next Committee Meeting** **Tuesday 14th June, Chez Green**
- **Final Copy Date for Newsletter Items** **Monday 27th June**
(gtnewsletter79@gmail.com)

[FORTHCOMING EVENTS](#)

Book Library Mon 6th June 2 – 4.00 pm St Pardoux

The next library day will be on Monday 6th June at Chez Brennan in 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 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€ and will consist of four courses with ¼ wine and coffee included.

There will be a choice of confit 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.

**Reading
Circle**

Wed 15th June 2.30 pm

Oroux

At this meeting we shall be discussing *James Miranda Barry* by Patricia Duncker. Who is he (or she)? This is a story of 'dark family secrets, adultery and thwarted desire, heroism and extraordinary daring.' So nothing unusual there then! Looks as if we are going to be in for an engaging read and no doubt an equally engaging discussion at our meeting.

**History Group
Day Out**

**Thurs 16th
June**

12 Noon

**Abbaye
Royale
de
Fontevraud,
nr Saumur**

Sorry but this trip is now full.

Garden Party

Sat 18th June 1.00 pm

St Coutant

Noreena and Steve Parker 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.

Horse Racing **Sun 19th June** **2.00 pm**

Niort
Hippodrome

This year's horse racing afternoon will be Trotting instead of Flat racing.

This isn't common in the UK, but very popular in France, it is exciting – and those horses can really go!

Even though they're only trotting.

So if you fancy risking the shirt off your back – well a few Euros –

come along and join us.

Niort Hippodrome is holding a race meeting on Sunday 19th June 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 was 2€ last year (so hopefully it will be the same this year).

Entrance fee is 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.



Walk **Fr 24th June** **10.00 am** **St Pardoux**

This is a walk of approx 8 km along tracks and lanes through undulating countryside. Sturdy footwear is advised and, if sunny, hats may be required as some stretches are without a lot of shade.

There are two shorter walks, one of 3.5 km and the other of 5 km.

St Pardoux is a left turn off the D743 Niort to Parthenay road approx 4.5 km north of Maziere en Gatine. We shall meet in the car park which is facing the Mairie, being second right after leaving the main road. There are toilets available near the car park.

Lunch will be at O Fil de L'O, La Trebesse, with a 13.50€ menu of entrée, plat – meat or fish, fromage, dessert, wine and coffee. La Trebesse is on the Parthenay to La Roche sur Yon road, D949 bis, midway between Le Tallud and Azay sur Thouet, being approx 2 Km from both places.

Walk **Sat 9th July** **10.00 am** **Sepvret**

The walk will be around 8kms on a combination of tracks, minor roads and woodland paths. The longer walk has a couple of climbs but always on good surfaces.

There will be an option for a walk of approx. 4kms. Suitable footwear should be worn as part of the walk can be muddy after rain.

Directions

Sepvret can be found about 1.5kms off the D950 Melle to Chey road.

From Chey take the D950 towards Melle and turn right onto the D108 to Sepvret and park by the Mairie.

(This road may be closed due to roadworks. If so continue on the D950 for 2.2kms then turn right to Sepvret, Follow this road to the T junction then turn left for the Mairie).

From Melle take the D950 towards Poitiers/Lusignan. Pass through La Barre de Sepvret and 200m later turn left to Sepvret. Follow the road to the T junction then turn left for the Mairie.

There are toilets at the Mairie.

Afterwards lunch will be at Les Trois Pigeons restaurant situated on the D950 in Chenay and will cost 15€.

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

Starter

Melon et son jambon cru or Terrine de campagne.

Main

Saute de dinde, haricots verts or saumonette sauce du chef, riz basmati
Fromage et salade verte.

Dessert

Salade de fruits **or** gateau aux pommes.

Café et ¼ vin compris.

**Summer
Event**

Sun 17th July

12.30 pm

Le Tallud

This year's GT summer event will be a BBQ on Sunday 17th July at 12.30pm and will be held at the beautiful riverside setting La Buvette, Parc de Loisirs, at Le Tallud, the same venue as last year.

This is a lovely wooded riverside setting with good facilities and a large covered terrace overlooking the river so plenty of shelter from rain or shine.

The Committee will provide a welcome aperitif and nibbles, meat & fish for the BBQ, a vegetarian option, wine, beer, soft drinks, bread, cheese, tea and coffee.

It is hoped that each family will buy their tickets and also bring along a large accompanying salad or dessert. Annette will co-ordinate this bring and share buffet. Also please don't forget to bring your own crockery, cutlery, glasses & mugs. There are tables and chairs at the venue.

The cost per ticket is 8€ for members and 10€ for non-members.

There are boules pitches at the salle, so bring your boules set along and enjoy a friendly game.



Directions: Le Tallud is on the D949bis Parthenay to La Roche sur Yon road. From the roundabout in La Tallud centre follow the main road in the direction of Secondigny and take the second turning on the left, Ave de la Vernière which has a small sign to Parc de Loisirs. Follow this road to its end which will be Parc de Loisirs. Continue into the Parc for approx. 200 metres where the Buvette is found in a small turning on the left with plenty of parking.

For those coming from the Secondigny direction after passing the village sign for Le Tallud take the first turning right, Ave de la Verniere and follow directions as above.

Horse Racing **Sat 20th Aug** **12.00 noon** **Lezay**
& Games
Afternoon

A second, 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, 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 also 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!

Historical **Wed 21st Sept** **10.00 am** **Scillé**
Walk
& Picnic

Would you like to explore a Curé's secret hiding place, a renovated tower where there had been five, see where gold is reputed to be and view an underground tunnel entrance that leads to a real Chateau just down the lane from Joyce Roberts' cattery named Chat-eau? Most of these fortified and historical places were built in the 1600s and are an easy walk from Joyce's near Scillé.

Michele and Eric, Martin, Nicola and Mick and Joyce have been planning an additional September walk with brief descriptions of the historical significance of each site.

Vinyard Tour **Sat 24th Sept** **TBC** **Domaine**
d'Enchantoir

A visit to Domaine de l'Enchantoir (Chavannes, 49260, Le Puy-Notre-Dame) for a tour of the wine vinyard and cellars followed by buffet meal.

See www.enchantoir.fr More details to follow.

REPORTS ON RECENT EVENTS

Walk

Fri 29th April

Clavé Lake

Report by Bob Seager



So 23 humans and numerous dogs went for a walk around the lake. Obviously the water in the lake is flat, therefore a walk around the lake would be flat as well. Wrong.

The path started innocuously enough, but very soon we found that there were a lot of ups and occasional downs.

Most of these were fairly harmless, but by the time we got to the far side of the lake we found what Annette had described as a boulder, but was more like a mountain. Before we could put our crampons on, we had to climb over a tree which we assume Les had cunningly felled for us.

This gave us the choice of clambering over or crawling under, neither of which was tremendously graceful.

There was a short cut on offer, which involved a minor problem of swimming across the lake, but apart from one of the dogs

which seemed keen on the idea, the rest of us decided to continue the walk the long way.

However, it must be said that it was a very pleasant walk in excellent weather conditions (that's even cleverer than getting a good walk), and a good time was had by all.

After getting our breath back, we repaired to the Auberge des Voyageurs at Menigoute where a further 6 members joined us for lunch, this restaurant lived up to its reputation of serving an excellent meal at a very reasonable price.

Our thanks to Annette and Les for organising a most enjoyable walk and a pleasant meal.

Walk

Sat 7th May

Chenay

Report by Martin Hughes



30 doughty walkers and assorted canines met in the centre of Chenay for the start of a generous 9km walk.

Being on the route to Santiago de Compostela there seemed a little more fervour than usual as we set off under a demi-azure Charentaise sky with the sun promising warming hours ahead, though

thankfully there was a cooling breeze blowing.

After a few hundred metres of walking on the road to La Motte Saint Heray we passed the village pond with its monolithic stone bank and almost immediately turned right onto farm tracks to enjoy the gentle undulations of the local countryside.

After about 30 minutes we paused for our group photo and for those who were walking the shorter route to branch off. By now the sun had persuaded us that a layer of clothing needed to be discarded.

And so, on down into the discrete valley containing Bagnault with its delightful stone houses, some covered in burgeoning whisteria., The village hardly appears to have a modern house which adds to the feel of transiting a minor time capsule.

Pause for the dogs to be watered in arboreal shade [note to self, take a bottle of water

next time!] and then through the outskirts of Brieuil and turning to return to Chenay.

Two more members joined us for a most pleasant lunch taken at the 700 year old 'Les Trois Pigeons' which used to cater for the pilgrims though not a monk in sight [though there were a few merry patrons by the end of lunch fuelled by red and rose wine. Almost like one or two scenes from the Canterbury tales]. Many thanks to the new owners Johanna and Nicolas for opening on their non-opening day.

Many thanks must go to Jane and Fred Oram for organising a delightful day.

P.S. Second note to self. Arrive in very good time then can suggest a late arrival to write the report.



Second Circle

Tues 10th May

Exireuil

**Report by
Joyce Roberts**

On Tuesday the 10th of May, six of us (including a new member) discussed Elizabeth is Missing, by first time author Emma Healey. Perhaps this novel would have been better as a short story because it is frustrating to enter an elderly woman's world of Alzheimer's, although from an empathy perspective, perhaps that was the point! The consensus was that the story took too long to unfold. Our next meeting will be on the 27th of June chez the Hansfords to discuss Shantaram, a novel over 900 pages long by Gregory Roberts about a man who breaks out of an Australian prison and travels to India, working as a doctor living in the slums of Bombay.

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.

Niort Races

For those of you that ask me about other horse racing meetings at the Hippodrome in Niort, see www.lescourseshippiques.com – Niort Romagne.

The meetings this year are: 29th May Gallop, 19th June Trot (we are organising a GT day out on this date), 4th September Gallop, 25th September Trot, 16th October Gallop. The races usually start at approx 2.30 pm and the cost is 6€ for men and ladies FOC – Good Luck!

Rebecca Sewell

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>

CSSG Grand Summer Market and Garden Party – 10th July 2016 – 11.00 to 16.00

Reel Fish & Chips, Tea, Coffee & Cakes, Numerous Traders Including Crafts, Gifts, & British Products

Splat the Rat, Hoopla & Hook-a-Duck, Archery Demo, Plus Sing-a-long with 3+1 And Keynotes Choir

Chambord, 79130 St Pardoux (N46 32.557 E003 06.123)

5th Fun Dog Show at St Pardoux

Sunday 4th September 2016. Watch out for further details.

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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