

*Founded
1989*



*French
Association
3035*

August 2016 Newsletter

*Events, activities, news
and reports for members*



“Hermione” Photograph by Jackie Lockett

[GT Photographic Competition 2017](#)

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.

- **Next Committee Meeting** **Thursday 11th August Chez Ritchie**
- **Final Copy Date for Newsletter Items** **Wednesday 24th August**
(gtnewsletter79@gmail.com)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Second Circle | Mon 1 st Aug | 10.30 am | Scillé |
| Book Library | Mon 1 st Aug | 2 - 4.00 pm | St Pardoux |
| Reading Circle | Thurs 4 th Aug | 2.30 pm | Cherveux |
| Garden party | Sat 6 th Aug | 1.00 pm | St Coutant |
| Photo Club | Mon 8 th Aug | 2.00 pm | Fenery/Clessé |
| Walk | Sat 13 th Aug | 10.30 am | Pamproux |
| Horse Racing & Games Afternoon | Sat 20 th Aug | 12.00 Noon | Lezay |
| Walk | Sat 10 th Sept | TBC | Rouillé |
| History Group | Thurs 15 th Sept | 3.00 pm | Menigoute |
| Historical Walk & Picnic | Wed 21 st Sept | 10.00 am | Scillé |
| Vinyard Tour & Lunch | Sat 24 th Sept | 12.00 Noon | Domaine d'Enchantoir |

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Second Circle **Mon 1st Aug** **10.30 am** **Scillé**

We will be reading *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Anne Schaffer.

Book Library **Mon 1st Aug** **2 – 4.00 pm** **St Pardoux**

The next library day at Chez Brennan at St Pardoux. It's a great way to spend an afternoon, including a cuppa and biscuits.

Reading Circle **Thurs 4th Aug** **2.30 pm** **Cherveux**

At this meeting we shall be reviewing *A God in Ruins* by Kate Atkinson. This tells the story of Trevor Todd - would be poet, heroic WWII bomber pilot, husband, father and grandfather - as he steers his way through the 20th century, learning to live in a future he never thought to see.

Described as gripping, funny and emotionally devastating, the book looks at war and the effect it has on those who lived through it and on their subsequent generations. All our previous book reviews can be found on the GT website.

Garden Party Sun 6th Aug 1.00 pm

Fortunately Noreena and Steve have kindly agreed to hold their postponed Garden Party on the 6th August 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 plastic glasses and paper plates can be provided if need be. Get Together will provide an "apero", 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.

St Coutant



Photo Club Mon 8th Aug 2.00 pm Fenery/Clessé

The August Photography group meeting will be at Fenery, chez-Sewell. Then we will drive to the Plan d'Eau at Clessé (approx 4km away) for a photo-shoot. Bring your camera and have some fun!

Walk Sat 13th Aug 10.30 am Pamproux

This walk will take place in and around the village of Pamproux, which is situated to the NE of La Mothe St Heray. We tried to do it in February – well seven of us and two dogs tried, but got so wet that the dogs asked to quit, so we only did half of it. Hopefully the weather in August will be more agreeable.

The walk is about 8km on quiet roads and tracks, with optional cut off at 4km and no, it's not flat.

There are some short, sharp slopes, but not very steep or very long.

The going is generally very good, but there is a short stretch that could be muddy after a lot of rain, and strong footwear is recommended as usual.

The start will be from the car park in the centre of the village, opposite the Mairie and the Auberge du Trefle à Quatre Feuilles, where we will partake of lunch for 14€, including wine and coffee. GPS ref N46°23.71', W 0°03.325'

Horse Racing & Games Sat 20th Aug 12.00 noon Lezay
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!

Walk **Sat 10th Sept** **TBC** **Rouillé**

Details to be confirmed at a later date.

History Group **Thurs 15th** **3.00 pm** **Menigoute**
Sept

Subject: *Agnes Sorel, the first official mistress to a French King* – Presenter: Robert Pierson

It was Joan of Arc who got the Oscar. It was Joan the martyr whose gilded statue would stand in Paris. It was Joan who was beatified, "Saint Joan". Plays extol her courage. And yet, her true impact on the 100 years war, against the English was small. Perhaps she did crown and encourage the timid, fearful, dithering Dauphin who became Charles VII. And yet, there in the shadows, stands a second woman who really did inspire Charles to earn his title, "Charles the Victorious", for expelling the English, the mighty English, from France: and she was Agnes Sorel.

Pope Pius II, a contemporary, wrote of her, "A certain Agnes, called the Beautiful, of noble origin, came to the court of the king (1444). She was so very, very, beautiful that she stole a king's heart. In a little time, his passion became a kind of madness; he could not bear to live even an hour without her. Whether dining, or in the Counsel chamber, or in his bed chamber he wanted her by his side."

The story of Agnes Sorel is, in one sense, bright and lovely; we know, precisely, what she looked like and we know something of her influence at court. In another sense, she remains a tragic figure, dying young. She might have been murdered. Courtiers were ever competitive, conniving, often nasty, often vicious.

So, be reminded of a modern tragedy and of another beautiful, tragic mistress who died young and who might have been murdered. Perhaps Agnes Sorel and Marilyn Monroe compare notes, out there....somewhere over the rainbow.

The cost is **€5.00 per head**, to cover refreshments, hire of the room & heating (if needed).

Please book by Thursday 8th September 2016

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!

As many members are now choosing to arrive early and enjoy a lovely social lunch at the Auberge, Charlotte has asked that if possible, you book ahead, call 05 49 69 13 66. (She speaks good English.)

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

A walk with a difference for GT in Scillé which will begin with around 5km in the morning to see Chateau La Verdonniere and La Touche-Paris (now in a hamlet called La Fouctiere), followed by a bring-your-own picnic lunch.

After lunch there will be a 6 or 7km walk in the afternoon to see Saint-Marc, the church at Scillé and La Volette.

The theme is local history, concentrating on the Vendée War in 1793-5.

Vinyard Tour **Sat 24th Sept** **12.00 Noon** **Domaine**
d'Enchantoir



Visit to Domaine de l'Enchantoir, Chavannes, 49260, Le Puy-Notre-Dame. See www.enchantoir.fr

Price €15 per person. What is included?

We will meet at the Domaine at 12.00 noon for a buffet lunch of local produce plus 2 wines from the vineyard.

After lunch we will have a conducted tour of the vineyard to include an explanation of the vine growing and soil working, and a visit to the cellar with an explanation of the wine making process.

We'll also go into the troglodyte cave where there is a pictoral explanation of the 'methode traditionnelle'.

Booking in advance is essential so please send your name, phone no and cheque for the full amount for each member of the party (friends are welcome) payable to GET TOGETHER no later than 15th September.

REPORTS ON RECENT EVENTS

Walk

Fri 24th June

St Pardoux

Report by
Martin Hughes



What a day to be having a walk! I sit writing this report with my fourth, or is it fifth, glass by my side and that excludes any imbibation at lunch. At least the weather was not subject to the gloom and chaos fanning the world as we gathered in the sunshine on the day of Brexit. As we paused for the group photo there seemed to be a preponderance of Roman emperors elect given the number of thumbs down for the result. Rather than one man and his dog we had one dog and her 20 odd human friends walking up the hill out of St

Pardoux looking for a meadow to wander through. At the top of the road as we entered a farm track we were able to appreciate the rolling hills of this part of L'Hexagon, with its hedgerows and copses still retaining their spring verdure adding to the rural feel of it all. After all the rain this year there was only a little mud and a few puddles to negotiate as we strolled along a combination of quiet side roads and tracks and thankfully we were able to enjoy welcoming shade in quite a number of places. Down a leafy walk we thought we were about to have a Richard III moment on discovering what appeared to be a tombstone laid in the path but it was not to be. Though did any French king not receive a proper burial? And so past netted apple groves and back down into St Pardoux with the heat of the sun beginning to be felt. A quick change of footwear and we were off to the O Fil de L'O at La Trebesse where numbers increased and everyone agreed that the lunch, with main dishes of fish or pork, was most satisfactory. All washed down with a light summer rose or a red. Many thanks to Diane and Keith for arranging such a delightful day.

Walk

Sat 9th July

Septvret

Report by Tanya
Lazar

On Saturday July 9, Margaret and David Boardman led a group of 20 two-legged and 3 four-legged walkers on an unusually sight-studded and varied trek starting and ending in Septvret. The long walk was 8km, the shorter version 4km.

We enjoyed ideal weather for our purpose: slightly overcast with a refreshing breeze. Just a few metres into the walk, our first point of interest was an impressive stone double archway, the remaining vestige of 14th century château de Septvret.

Following paved road and dirt track, through open areas and woods, we passed an 8th century stone well of Circé, surviving the long-gone château de Plessis Sénéchal. The 4km group turned off shortly after, while the 8km group continued on in a loop, stopping to admire an old Logis now converted to multiple dwellings with expansive views of rolling hills, still green in July! A huge, beautifully renovated Pigeonnier is part of the property. Following our path around a big loop, we were able also to see it from across the small valley. Through the woods, down a somewhat rough and wet track, our



route then opened out to a charming house with a picturesque lavatier, which is the source the Sevres Nortais.

More ups and downs took us through The Wood of Wise Sayings, 8 tablets scattered along the trail, with philosophical quotes in praise of nature. We rejoined the rest of our group in front of the Sepvret Mairie.

We were a hungry, lively bunch of 23 for a very enjoyable lunch at Trois Pigeons in Chenay.

We thank Margaret and David for a great job!!

Wine & Lunch **Thurs 14th July**

Scillé

Report by Leslie Green

Sometimes cakes are upside down,
And brownies are not always brown.
A steak should not be made of wood,
And well done doesn't mean it's good.
Sometimes food is sweet and sour,
Petals are not found in flour.

It's fair to say before they're eaten
Spuds get mashed and eggs get beaten.
Sugar often gets dissolved,
But there's no cruelty involved.
One gastronomic puzzle lingers,
What kind of fish is born with fingers?



The Wine and Lunch club held their first Gastronomic Luncheon on Thursday 14th July. Sporting as much red, white and blue as we could, 18 of us met at Michele and Eric's. We also celebrated Diane and Keith's Golden Wedding Anniversary - they look far too young!

Our resident sommelier Keith was tasked with providing an eclectic selection of wines for all the different course, including vegetarian - not an easy feat, but he did us proud. Starters - Vouvray and Pouilly Fume, mains - Medoc Cru Bourgeois and Cotes du Rhone Village, dessert - Vouvray and Alsace.

Homemade nibbles complimented the champagne for our aperos, this was followed by a selection of starters - shrimp bisque avec Pernod, stuffed mozzarella and basil tomatoes and spicy lentil and carrot patties, for mains - veal in a mushroom sauce, confit de canard with gratin dauphinois and stuffed peppers. A fantastic selection of cheeses

swiftly followed and then desserts - ummm! Chocolate roulade, summer pudding and raspberry frangipani - delicious.

A big thank you to Michele, Eric and Audrey for hosting, Keith for researching and buying the wine (possibly testing too!) and Annette for coming up with the idea and pulling it all together.

It proved to be a great success with lots of excellent food, wine and lots of chatting and laughter!

Our next meeting is at Gloria and Brian's at the end of October - details to follow.

BBQ

Sun 17th July

Le Tallud

Report by Fiona Green

On Sunday 17th July, summer finally arrived, Audrey celebrated her 91st birthday and 68 GT members gathered for our annual barbecue.

Shaded on the river bank at the fabulous picnic venue at Le Tallud, the GT committee treated members to a welcome drink and then an excellent meal. Everyone appreciated the organisation that had gone into making the event run so smoothly and the work of the chefs - David Brennan, Keith Mousdale, Les Green & Eric Hansford. There was also a great selection of salads, cheese and deserts brought by members themselves and the wine flowed freely. The event was compared and controlled by David Sewell with wit and common sense preventing bun fights amongst the hungry hoards.

Your intrepid reporter sought the comments of those present; everyone agreed it was excellent and all praised the cooks- the most negative comment was from someone who wanted chicken thighs rather than legs!

The vegetarians in particular felt they had treated to something special- a great change to the omelettes that are generally their lot on GT walk lunches. We shall mention no names of those who had thirds of pudding, you know who you are and you can repent at your leisure!

With prizes provided by members the raffle raised 185 Euros for Cancer Support Deux Sèvres.

In spare moments members were able to see the computerised slide show of the photographs taken by the talented members of the GT photographic group- beautiful and thought provoking!

After lunch, while the committee and their helpers continued their hard work tidying up, some of the rest of us played boules or Peter's outdoor skittles game, the name of which nobody knew.

There were winners and losers but no tears were shed and, as we all hopped into our by now boiling cars, we couldn't believe 5 hours had passed so quickly!

Once again thank you to the committee for their travails. Here's to next year



Welcome to our NEW MEMBERS

Roy Parsons and Liz Ball Parthenay

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 the following newsletter – if space permits.

Brexit Pressure Groups

There are pressure groups that might represent expat interests in the course of Brexit (and, of relevance to some of us in GT, the interests of those who are not permanently expat but in France for shorter periods and own property, etc.). I came across two which have websites – EUPATS (www.eupats.com) and ECREU (<http://www.ecreu.com>) and also a Facebook closed group called RIFT – Remain in France Together (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/RemainInFranceTogether/>). They may be of interest to fellow GT members in these changing times, perhaps to join or simply to monitor. Of course, it may be that the UK government has our interests fully to heart but there's no harm in making sure we are heard.

If there are other, similar groups known to GT members it might be useful to add them to the Newsletter.

Kenneth Gray

5th Fun Dog Show at St Pardoux

Sunday 4th September 2016 at Les Metairies, 79310 St Pardoux

Judge is Mrs Lesley Oldham.

Classes include: prettiest bitch, most handsome dog, best crossbreed, best brace (not necessarily the same type), musical chairs, fastest round over jumps, best handler – under 14 years and over 14 years.

Rosettes and prizes to 3rd place, plus Best in Show.

Reel fish 'n chips will be serving, plus coffee, tea and cakes on sale; Pet-a-brac stall with dog coats, dog toys, bedding, collars etc; Photo Portrait of your dog (and you), decorative plaques and key racks, raffle.

Entries 3 Euros per dog per class, registration from 10am, first class 11am.

Showground signposted throughout the village, follow signs for Manifestation.

More info and entry forms email me banddbrennan@yahoo.co.uk

Emergency Phone Numbers

- 15** SAMU (Medical)
- 17** Gendarmes
- 18** Pompiers (Fire Service – also trained for Medical Emergencies)
- 112** European Emergency Number

Don't Forget to Download the 'In Case of Emergency' Leaflet off the Get Together website gettogether-france.org, move your mouse to 'information', then click on 'Useful Links'. You will find the ICE leaflet at the top of the list. Why not keep a copy by your phone and in your car.

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