

*Founded
1989*



*French
Association
3035*

February 2017 Newsletter

*Events, activities, news
and reports for members*



Chamonix in the Alps Photograph by Kaye Scott



Announcing the Photographic Competition for the GT Calendar 2018

You can now start thinking about your entries for the 2018 GT calendar competition.

The theme for this year is "Nouvelle Aquitaine".

Your pictures can be of any subject matter which you feel best expresses why YOU have chosen this area of France to make your home (or even second home).

What best portrays YOUR life here!

The seasons, landscapes, views, local animals and wildlife & flora and fauna, French food, wine, markets, sports, heritage, cities, buildings, churches – in fact anything reflecting French life and French events within the region.

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 specify where in

Nouvelle Aquitaine each photograph was taken. Please email your photographs to
gtphotocomp@gmail.com

Closing date for submission of entries will be **midnight 30th September 2017.**

So start snapping!

History Group Dates for 2017

Many members have asked for a list of proposed History Group meeting dates for the year ahead.

So here are the plans for 2017:

Thurs 16th February 2017 (see full details on page 4), Thurs 20th April, Thurs 22nd June (proposed Day Out), Thurs 21st September, Thurs 19th October, Thurs 23rd November. Obviously this is subject to change, so watch your Newsletter for full details.



Bridge Club Anyone?

Are there any bridge players who would be interested in joining a regular group based around north DEUX SEVRES. Please contact Patsy or Steven for further information

Assistance Required

Is there anyone going to the UK by car sometime this year, to where there is a children's hospice or hospital with a sick children's ward? I have been given some beautiful hand knitted dolls for fundraising which I would like to pass on. Contact Beryl Brennan.

- **Next Committee Meeting** **Tuesday 7th February Chez Green, Exireuil**
- **Final Copy Date for Newsletter Items** **Thursday 23rd February**
(gtnewsletter79@gmail.com)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Wine & Lunch Club	Thurs 2 nd Feb	11.30am	Cherveux
Book Library	Mon 6 th Feb	2-4pm	St Pardoux
Family History Group	Thurs 9 th Feb	2.30pm	Saint Jean de Sauves
Walk	Sat 11 th Feb	10.30am	Soudan
History Group	Thurs 16 th Feb	3.00pm	Menigoute
AGM	Fri 17 th Feb	11.00am	Le Tallud
Photo Club	Mon 20 th Feb	2.00pm	Menigoute
Knit Stitch & Stick	Thurs 23 rd Feb	11am – 4pm	St Pardoux
Walk	Fri 24 th Feb	10.30am	La Chapelle-Baton
Reading Circle	Wed 1 st Mar	2.30pm	Beaulieu-sous-Parthenay
Wine & Lunch Club	Tues 7 th Mar	11.30am	La Revaliere
Walk	Sat 11 th Mar	10.30am	St-Romans-Les-Melle
GT Summer Event	Sun 30 th July	TBA	TBA

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Wine & Lunch Thurs 2nd Feb 11.30am Cherveux Club

The February meeting will be held on Thursday 2nd February and will be hosted by Lesley and Neil Ritchie at Cherveux a little earlier in the month than is normal so as to avoid the holidays of the organisers.

The theme for this month of February will be St. Valentine's Day for which we hope that our chefs can provide some "food of love" or perhaps "love for food."

For the wine tasting we will be "visiting" the red wine areas of the Loire Valley from where we will find some 'lovely' wines for the enjoyment of all.

As previously we can accommodate a maximum of 14 members on a 'first come basis'.

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

February's library day will be as usual at Chez Brennan at St Pardoux. There will be tea & biscuits plus the usual selection of paperbacks. We are always pleased to receive donations of paperbacks in good condition!

Family History Group Thurs 9th Feb 2.30pm Saint Jean de Sauves

The next meeting of the Family History group will be held on Thursday 9th February. We will be discussing layout and organising of records and hearing of some experiences our members have come across.

We will also be discussing a date for a meeting dedicated to Irish research. Complete beginners to experienced researchers would be most welcome to join us.

Walk Sat 11th Feb 10.30am Soudan

This walk is on roads and tracks around the village of Soudan, situated on the D611 about 10km east of St Maixent. It is about 8km long with a shorter version of about 4km. It is boringly devoid of any hills worth the name, and the surfaces are good and should not be muddy, but sturdy footwear is recommended.

The start is from the car park behind the Mairie, and is approached by turning left immediately after the Hotel L'Orangerie when approaching from St Maixent, then left again. Don't use the small park directly beside the Mairie.

Lunch will be on offer at Le p'tit Toqué at Nanteuil. It is situated on the left of D737 St Maixent –

La Mothe road about 1km from the D611 junction. Price including wine and coffee 16€.

History Group Thurs 16th Feb 3.00pm Menigoute David Sewell

1st July 1916 – Brings Death to Footballers on the Somme - presented by Jim Hutchison

This talk is based on 12 years historical detective work by author Jack Alexander – who wrote the book McCrae's Battalion, the story of the 16th Royal Scots. McCrae's Battalion 16th Royal Scots, was the

Heart of Midlothian Battalion raised in Edinburgh, shortly after the start of the 1st

World War.

It was perhaps the finest unit in Lord Kitchener's Volunteer Army – a brotherhood of sportsmen bound together by their extraordinary Colonel, Sir George McCrae and their loyalty to a quaintly named association football club HEARTS. War was declared on 4th August 1914 when the Germans invaded Belgium. Great Britain, Belgium's guarantor issued an ultimatum which Germany ignored, and by midnight war was declared.

Lord Kitchener of Khartoum was appointed secretary of state for war and his initial appeal for recruits produced 100,000 in a fortnight with the same number by the end of August, and 1 million men had volunteered by January 1915. The War Office had adopted a new approach – The Pals Battalion – where recruits could serve for the duration with their neighbours, workmates, team-mates, schoolmates, brothers or cousins, fathers and sons marched proudly to the colours in the name of their town, their city or profession. They would die within 18 months in a tragedy that should have been foreseen.

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

AGM **Fri 17th Feb** **11.00am** **Le Tallud** **The**
Committee

In accordance with article 11 of the constitution of Get Together, notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on Friday 17th February 2017 at 11.00am, at La Buvette, Parc de Loisirs, at Le Tallud, 79200.

**Could members please aim to arrive at arrive at 10.30am
as we need to start PROMPTLY at 11.00am**

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE!

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.

All members who have paid their 2017 subscriptions are welcome and entitled to come to the AGM without giving prior notice.

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the previous AGM.
3. Matters Arising from previous Minutes.
4. President's report.
5. Treasurer's report, adoption of the 2016 accounts and appointment of an auditor to represent the membership for the 2017 accounts.
6. Other Officers' reports.
7. Election of Members to serve for a term of two years.
8. Any other business.

Members are requested to forward items pertinent for an AGM for discussion under Any Other Business to the President, Beryl Brennan, by **Friday 20th January 2017**.

The elected committee consists of the following positions:

President, Secretary, Treasurer and 3 other members (one of the three other members is appointed by the Committee to serve as Vice President).

John Buckley (Southern Co-ordinator), Annette Green (Northern Co-ordinator) and Rebecca Sewell (Newsletter Editor) are standing down.

In addition, Neil Ritchie (Secretary), Eric Hansford (Treasurer) and Michele Hansford (Membership Secretary) have each completed their two- year terms.

The President welcomes expressions of interest from any members interested in filling these positions. The current post holders are happy to discuss what is involved and potential volunteers can be assured that appropriate training and support will always be available. Nomination forms are available from the Secretary and should be completed and returned to him by **Friday 20th January 2017**.

At 12.30pm after the AGM there will be a Bring and Share Informal Lunch & Talk by Sue Burgess French Language Specialist entitled 'Getting Involved'.

We will be having a bring-and-share lunch after the AGM, from 12.30 pm – 2.30 pm. Wine, juice, tea & coffee will be provided free but please bring a Plate of Food to Share.

There is no need to say in advance if you are coming to the AGM but if you are staying on afterwards please fill in the booking form below as Beryl needs to do some pre-planning.

If you would like some advice on what to bring, please call Beryl 05 49 69 86 16 **banddbrennan@yahoo.co.uk**

You will also need to provide your own, crockery, cutlery, glasses, cups etc.

Please let Beryl know if you are willing to help set-up and /or clear up the room.

If you wish to attend the lunch please complete the form below and post it back, or email the information to banddbrennan@yahoo.co.uk before Saturday 11th February 2017.

AGM 2017 Bring & Share Lunch Form
Name:
Number of People Attending:
Phone Number:
Email Address:
Dish:

Beryl Brennan, Les Metairies, St Pardoux. 79310

Please let Beryl know what you wish to bring: banddbrennan@yahoo.co.uk as soon as possible

For example Potato Salad, Pasta Salad, Rice Salad ,Tomato salad, Egg salad, Waldorf salad, Coleslaw, Green salad. Selection of desserts e.g. fruit salad, crumble, trifle, fruit tarts (not all apple please!) Cheese Board.

Photo Club **Mon 20th Feb** **2.00pm** **Menigoute**

The next Photography group meeting will meet at Martin Hughes house at Menigoute (79340)

Come and join in and learn how to use YOUR camera! Don't forget your bin liner!!

Knit Stitch & Stick **Thurs 23rd Feb** **11 – 4pm** **St Pardoux**

Our next meeting will be in the form of a workshop on Thursday 11.00am – 4pm, at St Pardoux.

Walk **Fri 24th Feb** **10.30am** **La Chapelle-Baton**

The walk will start from the car park of the Maison des Associations/Mairie in the centre of La Chapelle-Baton. Toilets are available close by.

We will walk mainly on quiet country lanes and farm tracks which could be muddy so appropriate footwear please. There are a couple of inclines but nothing too steep. The long walk is approximately 7kms with a shorter option for those wishing to do a shorter walk. Lunch will be taken at the Au Bon Accueil which is on the main road in Augé. The cost will be 16€ to include an aperitif, starter, main course, cheese, dessert, wine and coffee.

Directions:

From St Maixent l'Ecole take the D6 to Augé, pass through the ville and after approximately 2kms (at the 3rd set of cross roads) turn right, there is a multi destination sign here and the first two state Taulai and A Chevaucherie. Follow this road for approximately 2kms. You will see signs to La Chapelle-Baton.

Go into the centre of the ville and park in the car park of the Maison des Associations/Mairie which is close to the Church.

From Parthenay direction take the D743 after passing the golf course on the right and before you reach the roundabout take a left turn on to the D329. After about 1km turn right, you should see the Church steeple, park as above. From Niort direction take the D743 straight on at the roundabout and after approximately 1km turn right taking the D329 as above.

Please note for those coming from the Augé direction, at the time of writing the D122 is closed and under quarantine restrictions.

Reading Circle **Wed 1st Mar** **2.30pm** **Beaulieu-sous-Parthenay**

Plain Truth by Jodi Picot, is Jenny's choice for this month's Reading Circle. Katie Fisher is Amish. For eighteen years, she has grown up in a community set apart from the modern world by lifestyle and belief. It is a community fiercely protective of its way of life.

To turn your back on it is to lose everything - your church, your home, and your family.

The review of this novel will be added to the reviews list on the GT website

The March meeting will be held on Tuesday 7th March and will be hosted by Diane and Keith Mousdale.

Walk **Sat 11th Mar** **10.30am** **St-Romans-
Les-Melle**



starter is self-service from a buffet and, as usual, there will be a choice of meat or fish for the main course. Please let us know your choice of main course when booking your place on or before the 4th/5th March

A date for your dairies. Please look out for further details.

Family History Thur 12th Jan St Jean de Sauves Report by Gerry Riley

While the wind howled and the rain beat down outside nine members, plus our hostess sat facing the warm red glow from the poele, for the inaugural meeting of this new group. Kate Sangster, who has been involved with family history research for 51 years (started in her pram I think) has kindly offered to lend her expertise to help interested beginners and those who have reached an impasse in their quest. Some future members had sent apologies for this meeting but hope to join in later.

Kate began by asking each new member of the group to tell of their experience so far. Some absolute beginners, who did not know even the names of their grandparents, will

be guided first and be followed by those who have done much research but have gone back as far as they can for the present, and also need methods of recording their finds. Kate then explained the dates when records began to be kept, when registration became compulsory for births, marriages and deaths and the dates of the UK censuses, starting with 1841, continuing to 1911, the last one available to be consulted by the public. The 1931 census was lost in a fire and the 1941 census never took place. We then heard of the various sites available on the internet, and other sources such as parish registers, available for research. Some sites make a charge and some are free but Kate stressed that there are many inaccuracies and great caution must be used. It is necessary to have several different sources and if possible to see the actual documents in reality or photographed on the internet. Transcripts, where a document was copied from a register to another central document are particularly suspect for mistakes. If possible question very old relatives before it is too late, but beware of other people's research on the same family.

As well as Kate's help and expertise she also offered her home, with warmth and refreshments for which we thank her heartily. We left with new found enthusiasm to delve into the past via this intriguing subject – Family History.

Walk

Sat 14th Jan

Chey

**Report by Neil
Ritchie**



Twenty several humans and a few canine companions (I tried counting both species but there was always a tree in the way) assembled at Bob Seager's house to enjoy a walk on a beautiful sunny day. Bob told us that the hunters were occupying the high ground so we were to take the low flat route. Needless to say, we took a left turn out of his front gate to encounter the road rising before us, although to be fair it was mostly pancake country after that. You'll see that John eventually managed to get his phone to take a photograph, keeping his focus despite the distraction of being told that a dog was weeing on his boots.

Part two took place in a restaurant down the road at St Sauvant where both wine and conversation flowed in equal measure, pausing only for the occasional mouthful of rather tasty grub to be consumed and for a ringing round of applause for John, Maureen and Bob whose joint enterprise as organisers and guide meant we all went home satisfied. I hereby claim the James Joyce award for the longest sentence ever to appear in a GT newsletter

Photo Club**Mon 16th Jan****Sourches****Report by Roger
Amsden**

10 happy snappers of the photo group gathered together at Ali and Vinny's our hosts to enjoy like minded convivial company and to talk about all things photographic and to show our new efforts and invite constructive criticism. We had a brief sortie first to take one or two pic's in the near vicinity and second to all take a pic of an ornamental duck (don't laugh) its purpose was to compare our various techniques, all were very different. Of course it helps if one remembers to charge

one's batteries. Apologies came from Jim Hutchison, he sent a couple of amazing pictures via David.

We then chose the pic of the month. Bec's unusual take of some farm equipment also got my vote which was overruled (can't vote twice) Leslie's got the most votes however (see pic) showing the texture and subtle shades of winter logs. Batteries charged then !! Finally the task for next month an artistic challenge to take a pic of flaking paint!

Knit Stitch & Stick**Thurs 19th Jan****St Pardoux****Report by
Beryl Brennan**

At our inaugural meeting, ideas flew fast. Amongst the crafts we can share are card making, sewing, crocheting, patchwork, knitting (also with a machine), scrapbooking...meetings will focus on the Fomperron/Refannes/St Pardoux villages as being central and within easy travelling distance for the more 'far flung' crafters.

We need to build a stock of supplies, so if any GT members have material remnants/good condition cotton/trimmings, - also sample pots of emulsion – all colours, could they please bring them to the AGM.

Welcome to our NEW MEMBERS

Peter & Gemma Beale

Exoudun

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.

Items for Sale

Fish kettle, unused 5€

Fondue set + forks 8€

Large wicker coffee table, hexagonal 30€

Mahogany dining room table, extends from 1.8m to 2.4m 100€

Steel wine rack with table top over 40€

White toilet, complete and unused! (Straight down outlet) 25€
(Photos available)

Tel: 0549508867 or email: frankstubbs1@hotmail.com

Natural Solutions from Neals Yard

Following the training that GT member Julie Hutchison has undertaken at Neal's Yard Organic Remedies, she is about to embark on a series of Wellbeing Workshops, to help maximise health this year, with a particular theme each month including natural solutions to problems.

She will be starting off later in February with the title Immunity....Eat yourself well....which will include recipes for lovely "Deliciously Ella" nibbles which you can enjoy with tea. It will be fun with an informative workshop, discussing natural solutions for seasonal remedies and healthy eating.

The venue is yet to be arranged, but will certainly be within reach of Get Together members, and the cost will be €10 per person, which will include tea, cakes and a goody bag of Neal's Yard products to that same value.

This will be the first monthly workshop (each on a different theme) if you are interested please contact Julie at juliehutchison67@gmail.com or 06 72 22 20 14 for more information and the venue.

If you would like to host one of these workshops at home, please let Julie know, other subjects include Womens Health, Joint Care, Stress and Allergies.

NYR Organic believe in transforming peoples lives by educating on how to live more healthily and naturally. They are the world's first company to be awarded 100/100 for ethics.

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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