

Chair's letter November 2019

Dear Members,

It is now coming up to eight months since our AGM when I took over the chairmanship from John Auric, where does time go?

Before that we had held an auction of Promises and below are few articles from people who made successful bids. This proved to be a very good fund raiser and your committee would certainly like to repeat it in the future, get your thinking caps on. In May this year we hosted our French visitors and I'm sure you'll agree that we had a great weekend; I seem

As usual we met or guests at Portsmouth on the Friday evening. Saturday we rode the double decker bus to Amberley open air museum; due to the low bridge at Amberley we took the slightly longer scenic route.

to remember that the weather was fairly kind.



On arrival we had an introductory talk by one of the volunteers, after which we were free to wander round at our leisure. We were divided into two groups to watch the demonstration of the Faraday machine, many thanks to those who provided the translations for our French guests.

Lunch was at the Riverside Café a short walk from the museum, the proprietor had agreed that we could have sole occupancy, much appreciated. On the menu a

British ploughman style meal, which I think our visitors enjoyed.



After dining we made our way back to the museum and spent more time browsing. On the day of our visit there was an added bonus for some, a rally of Minis which brought back fond memories for those of us who owned one in our youth (I am talking cars not skirts)! Sunday morning we were free to entertain our guests, John Auric had arranged for us to have use of the Boules Pitch at Bedhampton and several members and guests had a match.

That evening was our gala dinner catered by Fresh Food Catering. Following dinner we had a Line Dancing lesson run by Richard Hennessy and many of us enjoyed the dancing whilst others enjoyed chatting and watching. I don't expect any of us who were present can forget the amazing cakes.



Earlier this year Hazel and Gary organized an evening walking quiz round Emsworth and we followed this with a Fish and Chip supper, another occasion when the weather was kind to us.

Just last weekend there was another French Themed quiz run by John Auric and his family, many thanks. We

started by playing lotto, in French we then had supper another cold collation, my grateful thanks to Carol Sheppard and Jean Morrin for their help. After supper we had a couple more games both in French.

Our next event will be Coffee and Mince pies on Saturday 7th December 10.30/12.30 along with a bottle stall. This is not primarily a fund raising morning but more a chance for people to sit down take the weight off their feet and have a chat. All enquiries regarding this should be made to either Hazel Willard or Carol Sheppard (addresses at the end).

Sadly this year we have lost two longstanding members Chris Morrin and Brian Cope I'm sure you all join me in sending commiserations to their families.

On a brighter note I would like to welcome Jean Morrin onto the committee, I'm sure she will be a great asset. Some weeks ago now a few of us joined with Fishbourne Twinners for a Skittles evening and some of our members went to a social evening run by Denmead Twinners. Hopefully we will be able to join forces again. I know that Hayling Island are also interested.

<u>Future Events</u> Our AGM and Annual dinner is being planned and should be in January or February and once again at Emsworth Sailing Club, details to follow.

Another Call my Wine Bluff is also in the pipe line and will take place in April.

And of course our exchange in May, this year we will cross the sea to St Aubin, Carol Sheppard will be in charge of liaising with our hosts and I'm sure she will keep everyone updated.

Lastly I would like to take this opportunity to thank my committee for their support, without a good team I would not be able to manage, however the real stars are yourselves please continue to support the association and perhaps come up with some ideas for events!

Judí Mílburn

Auction of Promises.

An Introduction to researching your ancestry.

This lot was offered by Roy Seabrook and the successful bidder was Pam Burns, she writes:

I spent a very interesting couple of hours with Roy and Siriol learning about all the possibilities available with the Ancestry website. I had the date and place of birth of my paternal grandfather (someone I had never met and knew almost nothing about) and they successfully traced back another couple of generations.

It was very interesting and helpful and I look forward to finding out more about that branch of my family in the future. Thank you Roy and Siriol.

Christmas Cake

I myself made a successful bid for a home made Christmas Cake the lot having been offered by Anne Powell. Home made Christmas cake who can beat that!

Craft Making

This lot was offered by Evelyn Lister and several of us spent an enjoyable time at Evelyn's home making owl key rings and teddy bears, the latter were pre cut for us. We also enjoyed delicious home made soup and bread.

"La Poule au Pot"! (roi Henri IV) by Siriol Seabrook

At the St Aubin-Emsworth Twinning Association's fundraising "Auction of Promises" evening last October, Lois and I bid for the lot "Making as many meals out of a 3-Ib chicken" chez Sheila Morris. In the rather uneventful days which followed Christmas and New Year festivities, it was something to look forward to and we weren't disappointed. The due day in February arrived and hungry with anticipation, I arrived at Sheila's lovely home on the edge of Slipper Millpond. Four of Sheila's friends also joined us for the demo. and subsequent feast. We were given full instructions for the recipes and sat back and enjoyed the event. We all fitted into the kitchen on chairs and watched and listened in amazement to the exciting life Sheila and her husband had led from seven years in Iran to twenty-five years aboard a small yacht in the Baltic and Med. which is where Sheila learnt how to cook meals underway in a pressure-cooker and how to avoid waste. Dishes containing chicken kept coming thick and fast before our eyes, amongst which were two

soups containing chicken and its stock, Chicken Divan with secret ingredients, Chicken & Mushroom pie and a dish I now cook regularly Jambalaya etc. We then sat down and enjoyed the "fruits of Sheila's labour" – what a really convivial time we all had.



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D-Day 75 years on

(John Auric & Keith Richardson visit D-Day Celebration)

At our Twinning soirée in Emsworth in May 2019, Alain Tranquart, [President of St Aubin Jumelage] invited individual Emsworth members to attend their "D-Day 75 years on" commemoration ceremonies In Normandy on June 8th.

So it was, two of us from Emsworth took the Normandy ferry on the evening of Thursday June 7th. Keith Richardson and John Auric were met at Ouistreham by Keith's hosts, Serge and Huguette Bouet and driven to Langrune-sur-mer, to the house of Linda and Jean El-Bahar, John Auric's hosts.

The next morning, the first commemoration ceremony was held on the beach at Bernières-sur-mer, the commune immediately to the west of St Aubin, where the Canadian forces landed on June 8th 1944.



"French, Canadian, British & German flags flying on Bernières Plage"

The ceremony was very moving, featuring many young Canadians whose grandfathers had made the courageous storming of the beach that day in 1944. For the first time, I believe, a group of young indigenous Iroquoi from the French Canadian interior performed a traditional chant for the spirits of their departed ancestors – incense was burned and drums played. Many tears were shed amongst the onlookers.

The mayors of Bernières and St Aubin welcomed all those present and listed the representatives from twinned towns in England, Germany and Canada. The priest [not sure if he was a bishop or local padré] gave a blessing to those fallen on both sides in the conflict.



"The priest and mayors n carried a wreath across the sands and laid it at the sea's edge."



"Local schoolchildren then formed up and laid decorated "cailloux "along the sand"

Keith and John were next invited to cross the border into the commune of St Aubin and immediately met up with other members of the St Aubin Twinning Association. Amongst them was Sophie Marie , who stayed with Siriol and Roy Seabrook in May. Sophie said we must go and see the "memories exhibition" in the village square where

there was a display of "vignettes" by residents – children, teenagers in 1944 – who recalled/recounted their experiences, some harrowing, of those days of bitter fighting, with villagers caught up in between.

Sophie also said that the English translations for some of these vignettes she had much help from Siriol and was really pleased with the result.



"Recollections of Paulette Meriel, founding member of the Twinning, at the 'memories' exhibition."

There was due to be another commemoration ceremony on the promenade at St Aubin but apparently the new commemorative plaque was unavailable so we were invited by Alain Tranquart to join with 150 or so young Canadians mainly from New Brunswick, to lunch in the "Gymnase de la ville"

This was mass catering French-style, with a full three course meal, wine, beer and cheese, provided on preformed lunch "platters". Perhaps not gourmet, but very well cooked and very welcome.



Myself, Keith and his hosts found ourselves on a table with several very amiable young ladies from New Brunswick. They explained to us that they have three languages at school and at home. First is often English, then their native Indian language – "Acadian" and then Quebecois French – quite impressive as they said

how important it was to retain the traditions of their forefathers and foremothers!

All of a sudden, people were standing up, cheering and clapping and we saw in the doorway a gentleman of some years dressed in British naval uniform and a purple beret. He was helped to a table and we were told that he was one of the veterans who had a part in the naval engagements around St Aubin during the conflict.

With a short respite for after-lunch coffee we were asked if we wished to follow the cavalcade for another ceremony at Tailleville, a village about two kms south of St Aubin. This was to unveil a plaque to commemorate the deaths of Canadian and German soldiers following a skirmish around a barn at the edge of that village. We were deliberating when Alan offered us a lift part of the way in his car. This turned out to be more than just a relief on the leg muscles as we found ourselves sharing a back seat with a rather charming young blonde lady!

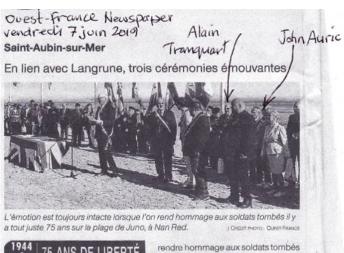
She told us in French that her name was Désirée and she was one of the two German schoolteachers with a party of pupils from Liebenburg. Alain dropped us off to park in a cornfield and we walked up to the village chatting to Dedesirée. When she found out that we were English she exclaimed that this was the first time that she had spoken to English "veterans" [?]in French – so we were a bit chuffed by that!

At the site of the fallen in Tailleville, the events of that day were explained to us by Serge and we watched while a live interpretation of the fighting was reenacted by young Canadian soldiers, before a new plaque on the wall of a barn was unveiled and honoured by those assembled.



"New commemoration plaque unveiled at Tailleville."

On the way back to St Aubin, Serge explained to me how the coastal villages from Corseulles in the west to Lion-sur-Mer near Ouistreham had escaped much of the allies naval bombardment as they were aiming at the main German forces assembled some five kms inland. However, when we dropped in to the "memories" exhibition [shown previously] there was much evidence of other types of destruction, both of humans and buildings, recounted vividly by those who were youngsters in St Aubin at that time of struggle and eventual liberation - started on the Normandy beaches in June 1944.



75 ANS DE LIBERTÉ

À Saint-Aubin, trois cérémonies ont eu lieu, conjointement avec Langrune : la première, à Nan Red, était une cérémonie œcuménique, tenue en présence de quelques vétérans et de près de 400 enfants, dont 150 Canadiens de Miramichi, qui ont notamment livré un bel hommage musical.

Puis, les très nombreux spectateurs se sont dirigés vers la brèche des Acadiens, où une plaque a été dévoiée par les jeunes Canadiens pour sur les plages.

Enfin, une cérémonie au square des Canadiens a permis aux plus ieunes écollers de Saint-Aubin de venir déposer un galet peint d'un coquelicot et de chanter les hymnes.

Les villes jumelles ont également participé : Emsworth (Angleterre), Liebenburg (Allemagne) et Bathurst (Canada)

Tous les enfants ont mangé au gymnase, grâce à de nombreux bénévoles, avant d'aller à pied pour la cérémonie de Tailleville

FUTURE EVENTS

Your Committee is currently planning the following:

- A Mince Pie & Coffee morning 7th Dec.
- AGM & Annual Dinner (2020, date TBA)
- **Call My Wine Bluff** (2020, date TBA)
- French Exchange 8-11 May 2020 (VE Day)

Members of the Committee 2018-2019

Judi Milburn 02992 471645 Chair:

Vice Chair: Vacant

Treasurer: Martin deLaporte 01243 373618

Secretary/: Carol Sheppard 01243 698487

Exchange

Membership: John Auric 01243 379018

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