

Newsletter



April 2011

www.bordeauxbritish.com

WEBSITE VERSION of NEWSLETTER

(without photos / names, contact details)

The coming BBC month includes an interesting visit to EDF as well as lunch plus la Batellerie Museum in Port St. Foy on 9th (note need for urgent booking). The BBC golf season kicks off at Cameyrac on 13th, and we have a tour of Ville d'Hiver and Arcachon on 20th, as well as a bike tour of historic Bordeaux on 1st May.

We had some well attended events last month, including a walk around St. Emilion, an enjoyable and memorable evening celebrating St. Patricks Day, and an excellent lunch with fascinating talk on Roman Bordeaux and the Legionnaire's lifestyle, and finished the month with a healthy walk and Lancashire Hotpot provided by hospitable members. Check the reports !

Your newsletter is early this month, hence there is still the opportunity to join the unveiling of the memorial commemorating the daring commando canoe raid on Bordeaux (Operation Frankton), with due ceremony, warship and dignitaries at Le Verdon on Thursday 31st March. If lunch and the Vin d'Honneur is oversubscribed, our members will visit a nearby restaurant.

We look forward to seeing you at some of these upcoming events, but also to any ideas you may have for new events or information for the next newsletter.

Upcoming BBC Events

EDF visit Saturday 9th April

Over the last century, the River Dordogne has seen a radical change in its appearance and its functions. On the one hand, the river trade, conducted and dominated by the Gabariers, the river navigators from the High Dordogne to Libourne, Bordeaux and beyond, has fallen from a hive of flourishing activity all down the river to nothing. On the other hand, from the beginning of the 20th century, the demand for electric power has grown exponentially and the Middle Dordogne saw France's first hydro-electric power stations, which have since proliferated to the point where the rivers can take no more and their day-to-day appearance and behaviour depend almost entirely on the activities of EDF rather than upon Nature. This radical and progressive change has produced a whole variety of effects on the people who live along the river, to the character of the little towns which line its banks, and certainly to the flora and fauna to be found there.

Jane and Norman arrived in Port Sainte Foy in 1994 and since that time have tried to immerse themselves in the history, the culture and the heritage of le Pays Foyen, the stretch of the Dordogne and its environs which they now regard as home. Jane is a European historian by training. Norman is curator of the museum in Port Sainte Foy, la Maison du Fleuve or the Musée de la Batellerie, depending on whom you talk to. On 9th April they will be happy to welcome you and share their enthusiasm with you.

There are 2 visits in the day. We will start at the Museum of the Batellerie with its magnificent models and dioramas which will give you a good picture of the history of the river and its trade.

Lunch (12 to 13€) is at La Grange aux Loups in Port Sainte Foy which some members may remember from a previous visit in the area. Afterwards, we move on to the EDF Interpretation Centre further upstream at Tuilières where we are expected at 3.15. The exhibition there covers the history of electricity and the implications for the environment. There are good graphics in English. The Tuilières site is one of the oldest hydro-electric stations in France. Among the interesting things to be seen are a fish staircase and a spectacular flight of locks. Norman will cover the history of the canal and lock system during the museum visit, so this is a good opportunity to see the real thing.

Afterwards, if time permits, we can follow the canal to Couze and visit the old paper making works. There is a group tariff of 2€ per person at the Museum. The Tuilières centre is free.



You can get to Port Sainte Foy from Bordeaux via the A89, exit 12 for Sainte Foy la Grande 19km. On entering Port Sainte Foy, turn right at the lights, then first left and left again. You will see the museum straight ahead (Marked 7 on map). Park opposite the church just before it.

Coming from Bordeaux on the D936, you arrive with the restaurant 'La Grange aux Loups (marked) on the left and a college on the right, with a roundabout ahead. Take 4th exit which effectively means straight on past the boulodrome. Take first right, the first left and you will see the museum ahead.

From the Duras direction, you go over the level crossing and at the lights, take the offside lane to turn left onto the inner ring road. Follow this round and go over the Dordogne bridge, after which take the first exit off the roundabout. The first right and first left.

For the afternoon stage, I will brief visitors personally.

Please arrive at the car park by the museum in Port Sainte Foy by 10h30 (approx 1.5 hours from central Bordeaux).

Numbers are limited so please let Norman know if you would like to come. It is essential that we have your booking by **4th April**, including your menu choice (see below)

Contact Norman on

For more information : www.musee-batellerie-port-ste-foy.com

Menu at **La Grange aux Loups** 12€ (1/4 vin compris)

Paté de canard en croute or Terrine aux 2 poissons crème à l'estragon

Joue de boeuf braisée au vin rouge or Filet de chimere à la fondue de poireaux

Fromage blanc au sucre ou à la confiture de fraise or gateau basque

Opening of BBC Golf season in Cameyrac : Wednesday 13th April

This will be held at Golf de Bordeaux Cameyrac. The golf club is situated just off the Route National 89 Exit No.5 direction St.Sulpice Cameyrac on the D.13. I have booked lunch for 12.15 and four tee off times from 2.00 p.m. Green fees are 38 euros per round. If we can muster 12 players the fee will be reduced to 31 euros. I look forward to a good turn out and I will be delighted to welcome members and friends for lunch and/or golf.

Please let me know by Sunday April 10th. Graeme

Computer Help Seminar : April 16/17th or mid-late May

Some flesh is being put on the bones of the idea for a "computer help" seminar. I have a few helpers and a few students already enrolled. If you are interested and have not yet mentioned it to me please send me an email as soon as possible indicating in what area you require help and whether you can bring your own lap top and which dates would suit you best.

The dates I am putting forward are April 16/17, May 14/15, May 21/22 or May 28/29. These are all weekends but if a weekday suits you better this can be discussed. The venue would be Chez Rankin at Carcans. Depending on numbers and requirements we may need to do more than one session as a maximum of 4 students and 4 helpers is all we could cope with at one time. It would probably entail a full day and a basic lunch would be supplied at a minimal cost.

Contact Deirdre

Tour of the Ville d'Hiver Arcachon : Wednesday 20th April

Please note new date

Join us in the picturesque nineteenth century winter town of Arcachon where the wealthy of Europe indulged their architectural fantasies in the building of beautiful villas.

After a tour, including Arcachon's Eiffel Tower, the Observatour, which Gustave Eiffel helped to construct, we will lunch at Arcachon's Yacht Club which enjoys panoramic views of the Bassin. Lunch, two courses with a choice of six dishes costs 15- 18€ . After lunch, those who would like to stretch their legs further can stroll past the port and marina, along the boardwalk and finish the visit with a drink at one of the many cafes along the Promenade de la Plage.

The tour will begin at 10.30am. Free on road parking is available beside the Parc Mauresque in Allée Turenne or Allée du Moulin Rouge. To reach Parc Mauresque, come into Arcachon on the N250 straight towards the town centre where you arrive at a large round about in Place de Verdun. Take the 4th exit into Boulevard du General Leclerc and go straight on to the second roundabout passing the station and market on your left. At the second roundabout take the 4th exit into Avenue Léon Gambetta and follow the road uphill passing the Casino supermarket on your left. At the top of the hill, the road bears sharp right and becomes Avenue Victor Hugo. After 400 metres you arrive at Parc Mauresque. We will meet at the gate at the junction of Ave Victor Hugo and Allée Turenne.

Please let us know if you will be coming by 18th April so that we may give numbers to the restaurant.

Organisers :Jill and David

Cycle around Bordeaux + Lunch on Traffic Free Sunday 1st May

Many enjoyed our Cycle tour last year, this will be Part 2, around historic Bordeaux. Meet at the city gate PORTE CAILHAU on Rue de Porte Cailhau at 1200 for 1230, where Mike Pratt will be waiting to escort you to a restaurant for lunch (with an aim of 18 euros menu) Mike will dig out the history of the area we are visiting and have a map for everyone. Bring your bike with you (or hire from one of the many nearby bike ranks) so that we can make early start after lunch

Telephone Mike for details. restaurant location and menu.

Chateau Visit and tasting for Wine Lovers : Thursday May 12th

A visit and tasting has been arranged at Château Canon, 1er Grand Cru Classé, Saint Emilion at 11.00 am on. This is one of the top growths of Saint Emilion, owned by the Wertheimer family who also own Chanel and Château Rauzan Ségla in Margaux. Included in the visit is a walk through the caves beneath the vineyard. The visit will be followed by lunch at the Auberge du Village in Saint Christophe-des Bardes .

Please note there is a limit on numbers for the Château Canon visit as they do not accept more than 20 people at a time, and **there are now only 2 places left !** Hence please book with me urgently, also indicating your menu choice (below) not later than Monday morning, May 9th.

For details and directions please contact Pamela e-mail or leave a message on her answer phone

The Auberge du Village offers the following **MENU at 15 €** (wine and coffee included)

<i>Terrine de Poisson</i>	<i>Fish Terrine</i>
<i>ou</i>	<i>or</i>
<i>Assiette du Terroir</i>	<i>Plate of Assorted cold meat of the region</i>
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<i>Parmentier aux Cèpes</i>	<i>Shepherd's pie with Cepe mushrooms</i>
<i>ou</i>	<i>or</i>
<i>Banderillas de Poulet aux Légumes</i>	<i>Chicken and vegetable brochettes</i>
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<i>Brébis et confiture de Cérises Noires</i>	<i>Sheep's cheese with Black Cherry jam</i>
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<i>Moelleux au Chocolat</i>	<i>Soft Chocolate dessert</i>
<i>Ou</i>	<i>or</i>
<i>Tarte aux Pommes et à l'Orange</i>	<i>Apple and Orange tart</i>

Activities Week (or Weekend) in the Lot area : September 3- 8th

A great time was had last year by a group of 11 members, staying in Gites and enjoying some healthy exercise exploring the dramatic Lot countryside – as well as sampling the local hospitality, food and beverage ! We are planning covering a different area in the Lot this year, details will follow in future newsletters, but I wanted to give maximum notice and invite all members to join us. You would also be most welcome to join us just for the weekend. Please contact me as soon as possible so that I can book the Gites.

Organiser Piet

Whats on and Where

Salon du Vin et du Chocolat : Bazas – Sunday 17th April

Bazas, about 45 minutes from Bordeaux, is of course known for its magnificent 13th century cathedral which dwarfs the small town. During the religious wars with the protestant Huguenots, the citizens saved the façade from destruction by paying a ransom of 10,000 **écus**. (Old French coin, but you can now see why the French wanted to call the Euro the "European Currency Unit" - the abbreviation just *happens* to be the "ECU"- Mon Dieu, but really we never noticed, honestly!)

But it is also home to **Salon de Vin et Du Chocolat** on Sunday 17 April, 9am – 7pm in the Salle des Conférences. All events are free of charge. They include tasting chocolate and wines, a demonstration by chocolate makers and a chocolate cake competition! Go along, marvel at the cathedral and fill your belt!

Annual Antiques Fair Quinconces 22 April to 8 May

Open from 10 am to 7pm. There are some 200 exhibitors selling all sorts of antiques and second hand goods.

Sponsored Walk - Sunday May 8th

The Bordeaux church is planning a sponsored walk and picnic on Sunday May 8th, starting in Quinsac. The full walk is 10 kms through beautiful countryside, but there are a number of short cuts that can be taken and, if you are not a walker, you can perhaps be a sponsor. Full details in the May Newsletter. Contacts: Christine or Pamela

Bordeaux International Fair : 22 May- 5 June

Organised into four sections, the fair offers everything! "Lifestyle and home" is devoted to homes and gardens, "Thrills and free time" is home to cars, recreation and arts and crafts. The "Aquitaine Agricultural Fair" honours the best of the region's farming, and the "International" section takes visitors on a journey through 50 countries. Entry is €7:70.

The new Bacalan Bridge Construction

Now that spring is with us, why not visit the new bridge site at the north end of the quays? Despite delays due to a dock strike, it is still hoped to open the bridge (in both senses) in 2012. A few facts: the bridge is 425 meters long, the towers will be 77 meters high (it will open like Tower Bridge). There will be two bus lanes, two bike lanes, and two lanes for cars and light vehicles. In case you wondered where your local taxes go, the city is contributing €94 million, which is two thirds of the total cost.

Useful Bordeaux Cultural Websites

www.bordeaux.sortir.eu

www.bordeaux-tourisme.com

www.lepingalant.com

www.BilletReduc.com/Billetterie

Site that sells all tickets with up to 80% reduction

www.euroteam.net

Another site for " tickets on line"

www.Abacart.com

Dîner spectacles in Bordeaux

www.box.fr

A great site for info on entertainment

The above info with thanks to David, do have any events information you can share, perhaps in your area ? Please contact the editor

Church Services in English

These will be held every Sunday morning in April at 10.30 in the Chapelle de l'Assomption, 370 boulevard Président Wilson, Bordeaux. Additionally, over Easter there are the following special services :

Thursday, 21 April – 18.30 Maundy Thursday Holy Communion

Easter Sunday 24 April - 7:00 Ecumenical Easter Sunrise Celebration – Bordeaux City Park.

This is in addition to the 10.30 Easter Communion service as above

For further details, including services throughout Aquitaine, see monthly Newsletter at **Chaplaincy of Aquitaine** web-site: www.chapaq.org or contact the Chaplain: The Revd Dr Paul Vrolijk (tel 05 53 23 40 73) chapaq.office@gmail.com

Info of Interest

Residence Permits in France

You do not have to have one, but, you ARE entitled to request one if you wish. What is more, it is free. If you have lived in France for more than 5 years, and can prove it, and are not working, or looking for work, you can apply for the card at the prefecture where you live.

Workers from EC states who have had their usual residence in France for less than 5 years can ask for a Carte de Séjour "CE- toutes activités professionnelles".

The card cannot be issued for a period of more than 5 years. It is valid for the same period as the work contract of the person requesting it or, for non-salaried workers, the anticipated period of activity.

Info by David who can provide details

Mobile Phone Hints

Did you know that dialling 112 (even with locked keypad) calls Emergency services (all networks) worldwide (including UK)

Lost your car key (radio remote) ? If you have another (eg at home) you should be able to unlock your car by calling home, and asking someone to hold the remote close to a mobile phone and press the unlock key. Simultaneously, hold your mobile close to the car door !

Battery empty ? Try entering code *3370# . This should give a temporary new lease of life !

Info by David

Have you got something to amuse or inform fellow members ? Please send to the editor and we will publish it subject to availability of space.

Recent BBC event reports

Walk and Lunch around St. Emilion area: Sunday 27th February



The first BBC walk of the year took place on a beautiful sunny Sunday morning in St Emilion last month. 25 members and friends set off at 10am and spent about 2 hours enjoying the views in and around the city and vineyards of this World Heritage site.

We started the walk from Port Brunet, the medieval gate to the east, and made our way through the cobbled streets. Past the outdoor cafes making ready for another busy day welcoming visitors from all around the globe. Onward through the town passing The Tour de Roi, (Tower of the King) and through the vines and past the world famous Chateaux. Chateau Aussonne, one the oldest in the region.

Once out of the town, it was off the beaten track slightly, even though we were following the markers that make these well used walking paths so easy to use. Being a hardy bunch we carried on through the sometimes steep slopes that make up the vineyards of the Bordeaux region. Once at the top of the slopes we were afforded some stunning views of the Dordogne Valley.

All this left us with a healthy appetite which was nicely satisfied at the Auberge du Village at nearby St. Christophe des Bardes, a 5 minute drive from the carpark. The lunch was a delicious set menu washed down with some very good local wines.

The weather was absolutely superb, we couldn't have asked for a better day. It was a joy to share this experience with such a great mix of interesting and charming people.

We are most grateful to John & Janet, for organising this great day out (and also supplying this report !). Looking forward to the next event.

St. Patrick's Day Dinner : Thursday 17th March

This year we celebrated St Patrick's Day at the Connemara Pub in Bordeaux. 25 or so members of the BBC fought their way through a throng of young revelers who were spilling out on to the road with their pints of Guinness, to the very slightly more sedate upstairs area.. The Irish landlord, Frank entertained us with a bit of blarney and so did the band. The McHeffs, all the way from Dublin played us through the best loved Irish songs and we sang along. Nearby sat forty or so Bordelais, five with the name of Patrick, enjoying their Saint name's birthday! We ate and drank

well and went home having enjoyed a very good evening. Eileen, it may have been a hard one to organise but thank you for sticking with it. It was definitely worth it!



Report by Jenny, photos by Phil

Mid Week Lunch + Roman Bordeaux Talk : Tuesday 22nd March

Twenty-seven of us met for the lunch organised by Graeme. We were well received by the friendly staff and sat down in the private upstairs room for a very good value for money lunch. 17.50€ for three courses including wine and coffee.

Before coming to the speaker, mention must be made of Ted's impromptu one item quiz: Who knows what the Hawaiian flag is like? Only one person, I think. Then Ted unfurled said flag. It is like the US Stars and Stripes but in place of the Stars panel is a Union Jack.

Graeme's speaker was David talking about the Romans in Bordeaux, Aquitaine and France and then about the Roman Army. It was a talk of great interest and crammed with information. I took copious notes but space and time do not allow a reportage that would really do David justice. So the people who were not there will have to be satisfied with a few bits of information I found of particular interest.

I thought that Burdigala was the Roman name for Bordeaux. Not so; that was the name before the Romans came and remained so after they left, for a period. The Commanders of Legions were actually civilians. There was no permanent military presence in Bordeaux, although there were Roman sailors at Blaye. Bordeaux was much more importantly a trading centre and lay on the Via Aquitania between Narbonne and Nantes. Minerals and corn going south and wine plus hardware from Rome and the provinces including Syria going north. The Roman army was so efficient and

ruthless in punishing misbehaviour that it was like a modern nuclear deterrent. Thus Rome was able to control most of the empire with comparatively small numbers of troops.

David took us through the development of the structure of the Roman army from its beginnings being mainly composed of the more wealthy citizens (discontinued because of problems of taking entrepreneurs out of circulation, social problems, effectiveness and logistics), to the later professional army. Of particular interest was the very high standard of army medical care being only equalled subsequently in the first world war. This was centred on a Medical College started by Augustus with Greek teachers. Any medical discovery in the field was sent back to the college, verified and circulated to all field units. Morphine was used, and vinegar as an antiseptic. There was a fully funded pension scheme. In general, structures of modern armies are very similar to the structure of the Roman army.

So a great lunch, a great talk and always good to meet everybody. Many thanks to Graeme and to David.

Report by Chris

Walk in Saugon area+ Lancashire Hot Pot Sunday 27th March



Twenty-five members of the BBC were rewarded for their efforts in tackling a two and a half hour walk through the countryside around the village of Saugon in the Gironde with a meal that reminded them of home.

The night before there were fears that the whole event would be washed out. One of the fiercest rain storms of the year had swept in and threatened to dampen everybody's enthusiasm.



But the sun shone as they set off from the home of Ricky and Susan. They both come from Lancashire and delighted the returning walkers with the county's famous Hot Pot, followed by apple pie. The warming dish came from Ricky's family recipes while Susan made every woman envious with her ability to make the lightest pastry ever tasted.

Tending to the cooking while our hosts's led the company on their journey were three "left at home non walkers" who made sure that the great meal didn't spoil.

A great day was had by all, many thanks to our hosts for their organisation and hospitality.

Report by Desmond, Photos Phil

BBC Information

Membership

We are pleased to report that we have had an encouraging number of enquiries and prospective new members.

Please help to spread the BBC word, we have business cards available if you have the opportunity to hand them out. We also have posters available if there is somewhere where you can display them, but often the best is word of mouth, especially if you start talking to another English speaker in our region.

www.bordeauxbritish.com Our BBC website is our major shop window, enabling English speakers in our region to easily find us, please help to promote it!

Members' Adverts

We regret that these are not available in the website edition of our newsletter.

*If you would like to place an advert here (members only), please send an email to the editor - Phil
If you have advertised please advise when the goods are sold.*

Next Newsletter

The editor needs your copy by 27th April