

Newsletter

August 2011

www.bordeauxbritish.com



WEBSITE VERSION of NEWSLETTER *(without contact details)*

There is a shorter Newsletter this month, historically we have missed an issue this month as many are so busy with visitors.

*Let us hope that our disappointingly wet and almost chilly July will be followed by a lovely August. Fortunately our July events were not disrupted by the weather, and we hope to commence August with a great Pig Roast on Sunday 7th. 25 members have booked to date, but unless we can grow this to 40 by this Friday, there is a risk of cancellation ! Please contact the Rankins **urgently** if you would like to come and remember your friends are welcome also.*

After a lull in August, the BBC programme takes off again in September with our activities week/weekends in the Lot 3^d-12th, a Wine Harvesting/Tasting day at the Domaine de Chouette at Leogeats on 22nd. and a lunch and visit to Bordeaux's Botanical Gardens on 28th. Golf date to follow

We look forward to seeing you at many of these events.

As always we welcome comments and contributions to the newsletter and also any ideas you may have for new activities, especially if you would like to help organise an event.

Upcoming BBC Events

Charity Pig Roast in Carcans : Sunday 7th August from 12.30 onwards

Following successful Pig Roasts for the last three years, the R..... have kindly agreed to host a fourth one in their lovely spacious and pool equipped garden near Carcans. Please bring your own drinks, crockery, cutlery and picnic rug or table and chairs. For the modest sum of 15€, you will get a starter of paté, bread, succulent roast pig, salad and a dessert. All surplus monies to go to Medecins Sans Frontiers. If hot sun is forecast it would be worth bringing your own parasol as we don't have a huge amount of shade. Well controlled dogs (and children!) are welcome as well as visiting friends and relations. Dependant on the number and ages of children (and interest) we will organise some suitable games.

If you would like to come, please telephone or email me, and send a cheque for 15€ per person, made payable to the BBC to:

D.....

Please make sure your cheque is sent to me by Friday 29th July (We need to order the pig !) Your cheque should include the appropriate fee for children (under 4 are free, 4-12 year olds half price), but please also provide their ages.

I will send directions on receipt of your cheque.

Activities Week (or Weekend) in the Lot area : September 3- 12th

So far we have had a great response for this event with 21 persons registered. The gîtes we have hired are now fully booked (apart from one room which is still available from 8th – 12th Sept). The cost will be less than €25.- per night per room.

However, should more members be interested more gîtes could be hired in the area though not in the same compound.

For those of you who have not read the previous newsletter(s) a brief reminder:

In previous years the BBC has organised annual walking holidays in the Pyrenees. For a number of reasons this was discontinued and was last year replaced with a long weekend in the Lot.

This year we are again going to the Lot but because of our experience of last year some of our members wanted to stay for a longer period and therefore we decided to hire accommodation for 9 days which includes 2 weekends to enable those who only want to come for a weekend to join us.

Our main activity will be walking (walks are from 5km to 13km max) but there are plenty of opportunities to do other things. Rocamadour is only an hour or so away, there is the "gouffre de Padirac", the causes of Quercy, the little town of Figéac, near which our gîte is located. Even the famous bridge at Millau could be visited in one day.

If you want to join us and/or want more information please contact Piet

Golf in September (details in September newsletter)

It has been decided that in view of the anticipated high temperatures, course crowding and with many members being busy with visitors, that we will not play during August.

It is proposed to make the next BBC Golf outing at Lacanau in September, and following the success of the Texas Scramble (see last month's report), perhaps follow the same format with 9 holes before lunch and 9 after. Please let me know if you prefer this to the more normal competition, I have received little response to this question posed last month ? As usual, all are welcome, anyone can play or even come for the walk and lunch. Please let me have your thoughts.

B.....

Wine Harvesting/Tasting Day at Leogeats : September 22nd

Domaine de la Chouette is a small family vineyard in the south of the Graves region. Our peaceful vineyard is situated on the top of a hillside overlooking the village of Léogeats. The vines are cultivated using traditional methods, working with the environment and the rhythm of the seasons to minimize chemical usage and to provide the vines with long-term vigour. All our grapes are hand-picked to select for optimum ripeness and the highest quality. We make a full range of wines: Graves Rouge, Graves Sec (dry white), Rosé and Graves Supérieures (a delicious Sauternes-style dessert wine).

You are invited to join us for a fun introduction to the harvest, our vineyard and our wines.

Starting at 9.30 with a welcome and morning tea, the programme includes an introduction to harvesting, techniques and tools, and then 'hands on' in the vineyard. This is followed by a Harvest Lunch with regional charcuterie, salads, cheeses, organic bread, fruit, coffee/tea – and of course accompanied by Domaine de la Chouette wines (with a commentary)

Further details will follow in the September newsletter.

Whats on and Where

August is a quiet month in Bordeaux as the French have the inflexible habit of taking the month for their holidays. You can benefit from the absence of the university students and those away on holiday to walk quietly in some of the streets which are usually crowded. Why not visit the quarter of St Michel, just at the west end of the Pont de Pierre? The bell-tower of its church, like that of the Cathedral, is not attached to the church and is a clear landmark. Apart from Arab and Turkish shops full of food and other goods from the Orient, and a wide selection of cafés, restaurants and confectioners selling delicious cakes, there are markets on the church square, full of colour and ethnic mix. Mondays 7am until 4pm. is a non-food market, Saturdays 7a.m. to 1 p.m. is both food and non-food. Many of the snack bars sell a pretty acceptable kebab sandwich! In the quarter are also antique dealers and the Capucins market, famous for fresh food.

The Sporting Quais

Until 15 August. Near St Michel (above) and on the riverside, the quai south of the Pont de pierre is given up to a wide range of "suck-it-and-see" sport. The main period is 4p.m. to 8p.m., and the sports on offer range from tennis, BMX, and speedminton (don't ask me!) to roller hockey, tai chi, and pole-vaulting

African Art

Also within 5 minutes walk of St Michel is the Musée d'Aquitaine with an exhibition of African art in August. The works include masks, costumes, statues etc and it is open every day except Monday from 11a.m. to 6p.m. The museum itself is free, but entry to the exhibition costs €5.

Rugby : Saturday 13th August

Ireland v France at the Chaban-Delmas stadium in Bordeaux

Cantate Youth Choir Concerts

Reminder that these concerts, given by one of the UK's leading youth choirs, are taking place on :

Monday August 1st 9pm : Notre Dame des Pins - PIQUEY

Wednesday August 3rd 4pm : Notre Dame, rue Mably – BORDEAUX

Friday 5th August 9pm : Notre Dame des Passes - LE MOULLEAU, ARCACHON

These concerts are FREE . Their programmes include some of the finest pieces of sacred music from Faure and Mozart as well as Gershwin and Spirituals. If you go to their web site www.cantate.co.uk, you can see and hear them. They would like our support.

CEILIDH : Saturday 17th September

For those of you not born north of the border, a Ceilidh is an evening of music and country dancing. The French describe it as a "bal ecossais".

Following the resounding success of the one held last year, we are organizing another one on Saturday 17th September 2011 at 8.00 PM at the Chartreuse Saint André in Caudéran, as always to raise money for the Chaplaincy and the charities it supports: Emmaüs and the Foyer Fraternel Gouffrand. Music and dancing with Scotch Mist, the Atelier de Danses Ecossaises and the pipes of Jack Harrison plus a tombola and refreshments with a Scottish flavor. Do come and bring your friends. Do not be put off if you have never done any Scottish country dancing. M..... is a marvellous teacher and she always walks us through the dances before we do them.

Entrance: adults 6 €, teenagers and students 3 €, children under 12 free.

For more information and reservations contact P..... If you are unable to come, a small donation by cheque to CHAP-AID would be most gratefully received.

Useful Bordeaux Cultural Websites

www.bordeaux.sortir.eu

www.bordeaux-tourisme.com

www.lepingalant.com

www.BilletReduc.com/Billetterie

www.euroteam.net

www.Abacart.com

www.box.fr

Site that sells all tickets with up to 80% reduction

Another site for " tickets on line"

Dîner spectacles in Bordeaux

A great site for info on entertainment

The above info with thanks to D..... and others, do you 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 August at 10.30 in the Chapelle de l'Assomption, 370 boulevard Président Wilson, Bordeaux. 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

We have nothing new this month . Have you got something to inform or amuse fellow members ? Please send to the editor and we will publish it subject to availability of space.

Recent BBC event reports

Strawberry/Petanque Garden Party : Entre Deux Mers : July 2nd

Nearly 40 members and friends enjoyed a glorious day at Domaine de la Freynelle, the magnificent home of the F..... Their beautiful garden was a perfect setting for the party, I cannot do better than reproduce the poetic commentary provided by N..... :



"Un grand coup de chapeau to all those involved in the organisation and arrangements for yesterday. Such attention to every detail on the part of our gracious hostess to every detail for our comfort in a dream setting. The house and layout would have given Capability Brown pause for thought. The magnificent trees standing all around, each competing with its neighbour for grandure and magnificence. Every item of ornament seemed to be in the only place it should be. Where did they find that

miniature carpenter's bench by the pool? A craftsman's proud indulgence for his growing son ? The tea was perfect in every particular. I don't think that, even as a schoolboy, was I ever confronted with such a sumptuous tea as that, touching as it did, every nostalgic nerve in the memory of an Englishman long time separated from his native land. In truth, a day to savour".

It was indeed a sumptuous tea, brought together by S.... and a number of members – the sandwich making immediately prior to the event was quite hectic ! S..... even catered for the helpers before the event, providing a convivial gathering, a moment's relaxation and a last minute briefing. There was a last minute glitch as the ordered strawberries were not available and it was not easy for C.... and D.....



to buy such a large quantity at the last minute, but they did us proud !

T..... kindly organised and refereed the Petanque which produced some entertaining (there were a number of novices !) and also exciting matches. We were honoured by a visit of the local Mayor and his wife in the latter stages ! The final was won by J... and young F....., the grandson of J.....

The other competition, 'the best hat' was won by G..... with her dramatic summery creation, amidst a great turnout –not only from the ladies !



So, a great day out, made possible by the generosity and hard work of the F.....s, and a number of helpers, especially our President.

Report and photos by the editor, with support from N..... and T...

Visit to Citadelle and Picnic at Blaye : Thursday 21st July

Thankfully, Plan B worked! The original idea was for a picnic beneath the mulberry trees in D..... and C.....'s garden in Berson before a guided tour of Blaye's UNESCO Citadelle. But the weather forecast was bad and so Plan B came into operation where garden furniture found it's way into the house and 22 ½ members of the BBC and guests were accommodated. The delightful ½ being D.....'s grand-daughter.

Before, during and after lunch D..... ran a book sale – the profits to go to Mediciens sans Frontieres and a total of 48 euros was raised for that worthy cause. D..... would like to thank those other members of the BBC who brought books to sell.

After lunch, the sun started to show itself and 19 BBC members left in convoy for the Citadelle, where they were joined by a further 8 members. The whole group were shown around the Citadelle by L..... who spoke excellent English and was clearly very passionate about the site.



his incredible garden and flower box display. The gardener was in fact seated in the shade nearby carving wooden animals.



She explained the political and geographical importance of Blaye, from the Medieval times onwards. However, her real enthusiasm came to the front when she described the work which Vauban had achieved in creating the Citadelle. We were amazed to learn that he spent just 10 days at the site before drawing up his plans for the fortifications and then left to continue his work elsewhere in France. I believe Lia said that there were a further 140 such sites in France. The plans having been drawn up, the French took just four years to achieve the incredible building we see now.

L.... took us on a tour around the moat, down into the bastions and eventually into the original medieval fortifications which had been incorporated into Vauban's plans for the site. The sun had, meantime, decided to show itself and our strolls around the moat were accomplished in full sunlight which made us even more conscious of the size and splendour of the Citadelle. We were told that only six people remain as residents of the Citadelle; one of whom is the Citadelle gardener, and we were delighted to have the chance to walk past

It was helpful to have such an enthusiastic and knowledgeable guide and it was clear that she could have continued to talk about the site for many more hours. However, some members of the group needed to catch the ferry home and others were gasping for a cup of tea so the tour ended and several people returned to Berson for tea and cakes.



Our thanks to C..... for organising this outing, and hosting us to the 'Plan B' indoor picnic and the tea afterwards*. Also for providing this report !

Photos by editor

** A new black and white umbrella was left at the H.....s, please contact them to reclaim !*

BBC Information

Membership

Please help to spread the BBC word, we have business cards available if you have the opportunity to hand them out. We also have small posters available if there is somewhere where you can display them, but often the best is word of mouth, so if you hear someone speaking English in our region, please introduce them to our BBC !

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

Car for Sale Due to the bereavement of a neighbour, Ford Fusion 1.4 5 Door Automatic LHD- colour white - 2010 - Condition as new - only 100kms. 9000 Euros negotiable. If interested, please contact D.....

Furniture and Household items for sale Michèle and David C.. are going to fold their tent, load the camel, and set off into the sunset to move (back) to Spain in late September. The camel is not huge and as a result they have furniture and household items to dispose of. Rather than bore readers with a long list, if you need anything for that holiday flat or Granny's annex, contact them and they'll tell you if they can help. Please email

Members Recommendations

If you are trying to sell an unwanted possession in France, have you tried www.leboncoin.fr I have had excellent results, E.....

Are you really missing British style, bacon, sausages, pork pies? Contact D..... at

Looking for a good B&B in the Virsac area? Very convenient for the A10. Can be recommended by [C.....](#)

If anybody has a computer problem that can't be sorted out by a friend or BBC member, the name and phone number of a very helpful computer professional who does home visits is available from L..... at [L.....](#)

If you would like to place an advert or recommendation here (members only), please send an email to the editor - at [P.....](#) If you have advertised please advise when the advert is no longer relevant

Next Newsletter

*The editor needs your copy by 28th August **N.....***