

L'Amitié

*The Newsletter of the Norfolk & Norwich Rouen
Friendship Association*



Welcome to the May/June 2015 Newsletter.

Visit to Rouen 18th—22nd May 2015

Monday 18th May.

We assembled at Notcutts for our departure to Rouen, 22 members in total, unfortunately the Edwards had to cancel due to illness.

Making good time we stopped at Maidstone services for refreshments. On our way to the Dover Tunnel port the driver was aware of a warning light on his instrument panel, so we made a stop at the services at the Tunnel site for the driver to investigate. It appeared a belt and a pulley had broken. He contacted his depot who advised him a mechanic would be out to us. 2 hours later he appeared and discovered he had parts for a lorry not a coach !

We were assured the parts would be with us asap. 4 hours later the mechanic appeared with the parts and within half an hour we were on our way again. We arrived in Rouen sometime between 10 & 11 pm local time. We were met by our hosts and made our way

to our accommodation by which time we looked a bit like displaced persons.

Tuesday 19th May.

After a well deserved rest and breakfast we boarded the coach for our first days excursion. This would take us into the Haute-Normandie region to the town of Offranville. A small town of farming and light industry, birth place of the portrait artist Jaques-Emile Blanche. We parked outside the Marie and made our way to the eglise St. Ouen. Dating from

16th century with its unique twisted spire.



the

We visited the interior of St. Ouen with its stained glass windows, statue of Jeanne D'Arc and a large painting, a war memorial to the fallen townsfolk many of whom featured in the painting. On leaving St. Ouen we passed the famous 1000 year old yew tree, 23 feet in circumference.



After a short walk we turned into driveway and was greeted by the sight of a Colombier (dovecote) which Offranville is famous for . More like fortified round houses, some 3 storeys high, built of limestone and sandstone with a frieze of decorative masonry which served as a “slippery” barrier to enterprising rats, hoping for a free meal of nesting pigeons, their and the eggs.



Continuing on we saw many half timbered



By then it had started to rain, undaunted we carried on to see more of what Offranville had to offer. Those less intrepid escaped to a café for refreshment and to dry out! We all met up at the Parc du Colombier for lunch. A Buffet Campagnard was laid on for us.



A good lunch of cheeses, pates and pies

Washed down with Vin, Cidre, D'eau and beer!

Followed by a typical apple tart, this completed a very filling lunch.

We boarded the coach once more to make our way a short distance to the Manoir d'Angio at Varangeville. The Manoir was built in the 16th century inspired by the Italian buildings of the Renaissance.

Within the courtyard we encountered another



Colombier, built in the 17th century and was the largest in France at that time. Measuring 11 metres high and 22 metres in circumference, crowned by a “bulb” shaped dome.

It could hold up to 3200 pigeons, the pigeons



meat and eggs were for the aristocrats table, the resulting litter on the floor was used as fertiliser. The peasants suffered because of

the pigeons feeding off their crops ! (no wonder they revolted. Ed) After a good visit taking in the interior of the Colombier and the rooms and Loggia we made our way back to the coach.



On our journey back to Rouen we took the scenic route travelling up to the coast and making a stop.

Those who wanted to take in the view of the Atlantic Ocean and being quite windy made a good spectacle.

We then took tea or what ever was on offer in a nearby Café.

Once more onto the coach for our return journey to Rouen, arriving at rush hour, our driver Tony was more than a match for the French drivers!

Wednesday 20th May.

Today was a free day for us to take things at a leisurely pace. The planned walking tour of hidden Rouen was cancelled. We all gathered at the Hotel de Ville for the official reception, where there was more meet and greet, with Champagne, soft drinks and Canapes.

Thursday 21st May.

We boarded the coach once more for a visit to the Chateau du Champ de Bataille in the Department of the Eure. The Chateau was built in the 17th century. But its story begins in year 935ad, a huge battle took place on the grounds of the Chateau, between two noble families, the Epee's and the de Danois. The former being the victors and thanks to that victory Normandy gained its independence.



Like many Chateaus, Champ de Bataille fell victim to the Revolution and up to the 19th and 20th centuries the Chateau fell into disrepair. In 1992 the Chateau was acquired by its present owner Jaques Garcia, who undertook the task of restoring the Chateau's décor and furnishings to its past glory. With the help of his Head Gardener Patrick Pottier the 40+ hectares of grounds are also restored to formal gardens.

Our guide to the Chateau was a stunning French woman exuding all the panache one would expect.



Some of the interesting views.

Lunch was taken at the Golf club adjacent to the Chateau. After which we had a short time to visit and explore the formal gardens

Friday 22nd May.

Home today! We made an early start and driving towards Le Haute-Somme to the town of Peronne which was in the centre of the battle of the Somme area. For those who wanted a visit to the local Hyper-Marche was offered whilst the remainder of us explored Peronne. In the Castle is the Historial of the Great War museum. A modern building, light and airy and the displays sympathetically presented and easily viewed. After lunch we once more boarded the coach for the journey to Calais and the Tunnel terminal. A thankfully uneventful drive back to Norwich.

Thanks must go to Bob Barnard for arranging the coach and his patience relaying information when we were stuck in Dover.

To Mary Corbould (our Akela) in sorting out accommodation and rounding us up when necessary.

The driver of the Richard's coach Tony for his good humour despite the unforced stop.

with the Christmas lights switch on and will ease parking.

Menus and times will be sent out to members nearer the time.

Committee Members

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FUTURE EVENTS

Garden Party:

This year's garden party will be held at Mary Corboulds house. On Saturday 25th of July. Please bring a savory or a sweet plate, chairs as well would help. From 12 noon.

Mary's address 6 Elmdon Court off St Leonards Road. There is parking at the Church on Telegraph Lane West.

November Dinner

This popular event is to be held on Thursday 25th November 2015, at the St Benedicts Restaurant. A later date so as not to clash

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September 2015



Welcome to the latest newsletter.

Since our bi annual visit to Rouen this May there has been just one event on our social calendar, the Garden Party.

This year it was held at Mary Corbould's house.

Garden Party July 2015

A very select few scaled the heights of Thorpe Hamlet on the wettest Saturday in July for the Garden Party. Although the weather was seemingly against us, the sun did come out in time for us to spend a very pleasant couple of hours in the garden. As usual the food brought along was delicious, especially the puddings! Thank you everyone, for your contributions.



Geraldine Smith.

We were sorry to learn of the death of Geraldine at the end of August after a short stay in hospital following complications of the stroke suffered as a result of the stroke she had while in Rouen with us two years ago for the Armada. On returning to England she spent time the Warren Care Home being unable to live in her own home again.

Geraldine served for many years on the committee of the NNRFA, and latterly as Secretary. She was active in arranging social events and organising accommodation for our visitors from Rouen when they were in Norwich. In recent years she generously hosted the annual Garden Party in her beautiful garden. She was someone who for many years was the face of the NNRFA. She will be greatly missed both here and in Rouen.

A memorial service was held in Norwich Cathedral at the end of August.

Future Events

Looking forward a date has been set for the annual November Dinner. This year it will be held in The Library Restaurant, Nr Guildhall Norwich. The date for this is the 26th November 2015. The price has been kept down

although a small rise to £22. This still offers good value for money. It is a week later this year so as to miss the Christmas lights turn on in Norwich.

The menu and application form will be out to you asap.

We still have to hear from our friends in Rouen re dates for their visit. The committee is busy sorting out a programme for this visit. If anyone of the membership has ideas how we can entertain them please let a committee member know.