



Paris Branch

Newsletter

N° 28 - July 2024



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Chairman's introduction to the July 2024 Newsletter.

Welcome to this month's newsletter.

Since the last we have had a very successful lunch in the clubhouse with a good number in attendance. Again, many thanks to all those involved in helping to make it a success.

I been fortunate enough to attend two evening events at the Embassy. The first was to greet Sebastian Coe and Paula Radcliffe two very well-known British athletes whom I am sure you will have heard of. The second was to watch the results come in on the British Election night, which was exciting and an enjoyable opportunity to meet up with a number of good friends. With new governments in both France and Britain we will surely have some interesting times ahead.

I shall be attending another evening at the Embassy to meet the British Olympics team and HRH Princess Ann on the 24th. With a little luck I shall be able to get a few photos for our September newsletter.

Janet, our secretary, is heading for the US again to cruise down another river (she's already done the Mississippi), and I too intend to take a break during the rest of July and August in the hope of finally finishing two books that I plan to publish later this year.

Coming up is the Pedal to Paris on the 8th September. I hope to see a good number of you there. This will have to replace our traditional August "*ravivage de la Flamme*" – a victim of the Olympic events. See Janet's afterword for details.

For the same reason there will be no lunch this month or August, and no Newsletter in August but both will be back in September. Watch this space.

Happy holidays

Richard Neave

Afterword from the Secretary

Normally the 4th August would find us at the Arc de Triomphe where we rekindle the Flame at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. However, this year, due to the Olympics and Paralympics we will not be able to do so.

All is not lost as we will be welcoming the “Pedal to Paris”, which arrives at the Arc de Triomphe on Sunday 8th September. The time will be earlier than usual and the cyclists, who will cover a four-day route from Eltham Palace to Paris, should arrive around 15h00-15h30. The Ceremony will start at around 16h30. You are all invited to attend and to meet those courageous participants who accomplish the itinerary and who, on arrival, will be welcomed with a shot of the local brew and a medal. Usually between 200-250 cyclists take part.

The National Chairman is expected to be in attendance. He will also lay a wreath at the Arc.

We hope to have a small reception at the rue des Acacias after the Rekindling of the Flame. If you would like to join us and take part in the reception please let me know at janetwarby@yahoo.com so that we can cater accordingly.

Hope to see as many of you at the Arc as possible.

As mentioned below, our monthly lunches have stopped for the summer a little earlier than usual. Normally we would have programmed one for July but the Olympics will make it hard to get into Paris and to travel around.

Happy Summer Holidays and see you in September.

Janet Warby

JANET'S JULY QUIZ

1. The month of Quintilis was renamed July in honour of which historical figure?
2. Delphinium is a genus of about 300 species of perennial flowering plants, which are toxic to humans and livestock – by what common name is this plant known?
3. Bastille Day is celebrated in France on which date?
4. On which British ship did Napoleon Bonaparte surrender to Captain Frederick Lewis Maitland on the 15 July 1815?



5. In the poem, The Garden Year, in the line 'Hot July brings cooling showers, apricots, and gillyflowers', which modern day flower is a gillyflower
6. "Fourth of July", is a slow ballad in the "Butterfly album" of which singer? (Hint : it was released in 1997)
7. St. Swithin's Day falls on which date every year? And if it rains on St. Swithin's Day, for how many more days will it continually rain?
8. Which musician once said: 'Kiss is a Fourth of July fireworks show with a backbeat'?
9. Neil Armstrong became the first man to step onto the moon on July 21 in which year?
10. What name is given to the hot, sultry days of summer that are said to begin in early July?
11. Which 1989 American war drama film is the autobiography of war veteran Ron Kovic?
12. Usually observed on 5th July, Tynwald Day, is the National Day of which part of the UK?
13. The only men who signed the Declaration of Independence later to serve as Presidents, both died on the same day, July 4, 1826; can you name them?
14. Which zodiac sign for the month of July ends on July 22? And which sign starts from July 23 onwards?
15. Which gemstone, a variety of the mineral corundum, symbolizes contentment, is the birthstone of July?
16. The '20 July Plot' was the attempted assassination of whom?
17. True or false. On average, July is the hottest month of the year in the UK?
18. Which rowing event, held annually on the River Thames, ends on the first weekend in July?
19. Which battle took place on 1 July 1690?
20. A famous festival is held in Whitstable, Kent, each year for three days in July, celebrating which food? (It is also my home town!)

Answers on last page

EVENTS

The Normandy branch of the RBL has brought out a Newsletter, very rich in both information and illustrations. We are, of course, interested in the doings

of other branches in France so here are the links they have been kind enough to send:

FRENCH VERSION

<https://online.flippingbook.com/view/683043397/>

ENGLISH VERSION

<https://online.flippingbook.com/view/530316882/>

George Fortune of RBL Nice Monaco sends a report of the recent Laying Up of their old Standard from 1925, and the Dedication of the new Standard in a Ceremony of Charging in Monaco.

This was in the presence of the Branch Chairman, Chair to be, HSH Albert II, the Ambassador from France, the British Consul and a congregation of some 80 other participants



The event was splendidly orchestrated by Padre Hugh Bearn of the Anglican Church in Monaco, accompanied by Capt. J J W Thornhill QARANC (The National Parade Marshall for the RBL), - R N Espie (recent National Standard Bearer), - F W M Bearn (recent Deputy National Standard Bearer) - T J D Morley (Standard Bearer - Nice / Monaco Branch)

At Hermanville-sur-Mer, the Association d'Entraide des Anciens Combattants Polonais en France Section Parisienne (SPK) attend the ceremony to mark the Polish Sailors who died during the battle of Normandy. They also attended the Norwegian ceremony in the present of King Harald V and Crown Prince Haakon of Norway.



COMING EVENTS

We have received the following from the Mayor of Larmor Plage in Brittany. Given the fact that the holiday season is well underway and that a good number of our members may well have opted for Brittany as a destination, we bring it to the attention of any of you who might be within range.



Dans le cadre du programme des commémorations du 80^{ème} anniversaire de la libération de la poche de Lorient,

Patrice VALTON, maire de Larmor-Plage, et le conseil municipal,

vous invitent à la cérémonie des 80 ans du crash du pilote de la RAF Ernest Russell Lyon,

Samedi 27 juillet 2024 à 10h,
au rond-point Ernest Russell Lyon,
route de Ploëmeur, à Larmor-Plage.

La cérémonie sera suivie d'un cocktail,
à la salle « L'Escale », 9 rue Victor Hugo à Kerhoas.



ANNIVERSAIRE
POCHE DE LORIENT



INVITATION



VILLE DE
Larmor-Plage
Larmor-Plage - France

Réponse souhaitée avant le 12 juillet
Contact : service communication • 02 97 84 26 52 • communication@larmor-plage.com

And please note this upcoming Paris branch event, a dinner-dance at the Ecole Militaire to celebrate 120 years of the Entente Cordiale:
More details later.

Celebrating together
120 years of
ENTENTE CORDIALE
17th October 2024

"JAZZ UNDER THE COUPOLE"
Live 21 piece jazz band !



Dinner Dance
(95€ per person) *g.v.*

MC Big Band at the RBL Paris "Entente Cordiale Dinner" at the Ecole Militaire

Save the date ~ Reservations

Please contact Tim : timothy.lorkin@sfr.fr

Payment via Credit Card, Bank Transfer or Cheque

The definitive Summer Menu will be available around the 20th July & on the RBL-Paris website

Romania: a detour via Whitby.

Last month I described a curious trip to the Danube Delta some 50 years ago. The mosquitoes finally drove us away and, we headed for Transylvania, where hopefully the mountain air would keep the creatures at bay. Inevitably we visited Bran castle, perched on its picturesque cliff, a relatively small example of a castle with something of an almost homely atmosphere, probably due to the influence of Queen Maria, whose favourite residence it was



in the post WW1 years. There is little evidence of that less popular and much earlier visitor, Vlad the Impaler. On that first visit – some 50 years ago - Bran Castle was not the hugely popular tourist attraction it is now (and which I have visited much more recently). It was on a much later visit, relatively recently, that I discovered an addition - a wall in the castle was devoted to pictures of the town of Whitby in Yorkshire.

Making an unlikely detour from the depths of Transylvania, I find I can't leave the subject of Whitby without a mention of that remarkable town and its numerous curiosities.

The oldest of them is the Abbey which dominates the town on the south side of the river Esk. St Hilda, the most powerful woman of her time reigned here and most notably hosted the Synod of Whitby, held in 664 which reconciled two



branches of Christianity – one lot had arrived with St Patrick in Ireland somewhere around the year 432, moved over to Mull in Scotland from where it headed south getting as far as Holy Island, Lindisfarne, where it met with a new lot of Christians

who had arrived with St Augustin in 597. Augustin was the missionary sent by Pope Gregory who had made his famous play on words "Non Angli, sed Angeli" (not Angles but angels). He had seen some blond British youngsters while doing his shopping down the local slave market and thereupon decided that the heathen Anglo-Saxon race should try on Christianity for size.

These two branches of Christianity clashed, St Patrick's lot coming from the north, St Augustine's from the south and discovered that, lo and behold, someone had lost his calendar in the intervening century and a half, and they had different dates for Easter. This, of course, was a Big Deal, Easter being far more important than Christmas for theologians, and a major reason for the above-mentioned synod where Hilda either whipped or seduced them into order.

Cementing her place in history, Hilda had a sidekick called Caedmon. He was an unprepossessing cowherd, too shy to open his mouth in public until a dream told him to sing. This he did, writing poetry to go along with it, amazing all who heard. Hilda made him a brother of the community and "Caedmon's Hymn," survives to this day (check it out on YouTube if you are so inclined).

Upon reflection, the Abbey is not in fact the oldest of Whitby's claims to fame. One of the town's natural attributes and beating the Abbey in terms of age by some 180 million years, are the ammonites. They figure heavily in Whitby's souvenir shops, snail-shaped fossils, once ubiquitous but now extinct save



Ammonite cut in two and polished

for a couple of distant relatives, comprising the Nautilus family. So numerous are these fossils in the tall cliffs of Whitby that their different stages of evolution have allowed their dating, one above the other, throughout a substantial chunk of the Jurassic period. By comparing other ammonites, and they are found worldwide, with the Whitby series, ammonites can be slotted into a relatively precise time scale – and used to date accompanying fossils too.



Bridging the gap between science and fashion is that other stone still recovered from those same cliffs – Whitby jet. A particularly hard variety of coal which can take a high polish, this had had a reputation as a modest and relatively inexpensive decoration since Roman times. Then its popularity received an unexpected boost thanks to Prince Albert, that splendid benefactor to whom Britain owes so many

museums, art galleries, social improvements and, not least, the Christmas tree. How did Albert contribute to the economy and renown of Whitby? Quite simply: he died.

Queen Victoria, in her many years of mourning which followed, refused all forms of jewellery (except, presumably, the crown jewels on occasion) an exception being made for jet, the deep black of which went perfectly with her favourite colour in clothes. Fashion followed of course, boosting Whitby's fame and fortune and filling, to this day, those little-opened-drawers in old pieces of furniture where relics still lie of the fashionable taste of our grandmothers and great grandmothers.

Whitby boasts a substantial maritime history which cannot be ignored. Captain Cook, a local lad, spent his apprentice years with a company based in Whitby, serving on coasters shipping coal between Newcastle and London. Later, of course, he headed further south in HMS Endeavour. Whitby was also a whaling port – more than 50 whalers were once based there, an aspect of the town's history celebrated by an





impressive arch constituted of a whale's jawbones on the northern cliff top – always assuming the politically correct brigade have not by now elected it as worthy of their rancour and a target for elimination.

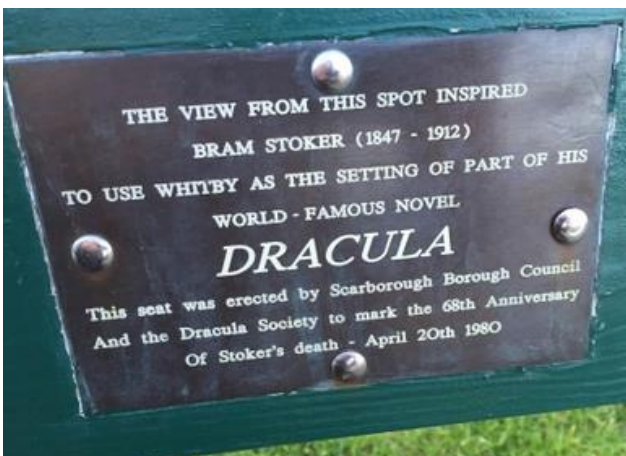
In a different domain is Frank Sutcliffe, a remarkable early photographer in the 1880's. Notably, he was one of the few who could persuade his subjects to remain still long enough, in those times

of long exposures, to get telling shots of local characters in everyday activities. One of his shots of naked children playing got him excommunicated from the local church. Edward Prince of Wales expressed a divergent opinion by purchasing a copy. The Sutcliffe Gallery has an excellent collection of his work.



And why, you might ask, should photos of this much-loved Yorkshire town appear on the walls of Bran Castle over there in the depths of the Transylvania mountains? The answer, as you may have guessed is, of course, Dracula, whose home it was. Addicts of horror will know

that Whitby was the unlikely port to which Dracula eventually sailed, abandoning his native Transylvania and trailing the earth filled coffin which served as his sleeping quarters. His ship, despite the fact that its entire crew was dead, made a perfect landing on the quayside of Whitby, allowing Dracula, in the form of a dog, to leap onto the quayside of the town which, perhaps not by coincidence, Bram Stoker had visited in 1890. Enterprising as always in its ability to profit from any opportunity to steal visitors away from its rival resort,



Scarborough, Whitby has added "the Dracula trail" to its imposing list of attractions. Thus, this unlikely character has done his substantial bit to contribute to the tourist trade, not only in Whitby, Yorkshire but in Bran, back there in Romania, to which we may return in a later issue.

There will be no lunch this month, July. The Olympic festivities will certainly render travelling in and to Paris problematic. The next one will be in September.



A Word in your Ear... Boycott*

This is example of an eponym, a word based on a proper name, like wellington boots, garibaldi biscuits or the mackintosh. Captain Charles Cunningham Boycott was an Englishman farming in Ireland at Loughmask, County Mayo and land agent for an absentee English landlord, Lord Earne. The Irish Land League was agitating for reform of the system of land tenure, a major cause behind the potato famine which the country had recently endured. In September 1880, protesting tenants demanded a rent reduction. He refused.

Charles Stuart Parnell, the President of the Land League, suggested in a speech that the way to force Boycott to give way was for everyone in the locality to refuse to have any dealings with him. Suddenly Boycott discovered that labourers would not work for him and local shops refused to serve his household necessitating the conveying of daily necessities from far away. He couldn't even get letters delivered.

In that year, 1880, Boycott's crops were harvested (late) with the help of fifty volunteers from the north of the country - working under the, presumably expensive, protection of nine hundred soldiers. Such was the fervour aroused all over the British Isles that the word "boycott" instantly became part of the language - applicable to any form of collective and organised ostracism – a usage condoned first by its appearance in the London Times and rapidly emulated by the European press with versions of his name appearing in this sense in French, German, Dutch and Russian newspapers. By the time of the Captain's death in 1897, it had become a standard part of the English language.



Vanity Fair cartoon of Boycott

Maxine Arnault

** Many are the medical eponyms where various conditions are named after doctors (rather than their patients!) but I can't help adding that classic from the immortal Goon Show, a radio announcement which went something like this; "There was another outbreak of Barlow's disease last night when Mr Barlow suddenly cried out 'I've got it again'."*

MY

The Last Laugh:

You Can't Park Here!



Policeman: What do you think you're up to, dumping your bike against those railings?

Cyclist: I'm just parking it here while I nip down to the shops.

Policeman: You can't leave it here sir, This is the main entrance to the county court.

Cyclist: Well, I don't mind, and I shan't be long. I just have to pick up a pair of shoes at the cobbler's.

Policeman: Sorry sir. It's quite impossible.

Cyclist: Oh come on! It's not a ten ton truck. It's only a bicycle and It isn't doing any harm, is it?

Policeman: That's not the point sir. This is a public building - and the court is in session right now!

Cyclist: Well, if it's a public building, as a member of the public I ought to be able to leave my bike here, don't you think?

Policeman: No, I don't think! This is the court house. You do know what that means, don't you?

Cyclist: Of course. It's where they hold trials and send people to jail.

Policeman: Exactly. Important people go in and out of these gates all the time.


Cyclist: So what? my bike's not stopping them.

Policeman: We don't want them all to see your ratty old bike here. There are judges and lawyers, solicitors, barristers...

Cyclist: Hmm. I see. Well in that case I'd better put a lock on the bike.

Mark Yates

Janet's July Quiz: Answers:

1. Julius Caesar	11. "Born on the 4 th of July"	
2. Larkspur	12. Isle of Man	
3. 14 th July	13. John Adams and Thomas Jefferson	
4. HMS Bellerophon	14. Cancer (until July 22) and Leo (July 23 onwards).	
5. Carnation	15. Ruby	
6. Mariah Carey	16. Hitler	
7. 15 th July. 40 days.	17. True	
8. Gene Simmons (Bassist and co-lead singer of the rock band Kiss)	18. Henley Royal Regatta	
9. 1969	19. Battle of the Boyne	
10. Dog Days	20. Oysters	

**Comments & contributions to mfyates@gmail.com
Back numbers: rblfrance.org/ then "Paris Branch Newsletters"**