

ST ANDREWS-LOCHES ALLIANCE



Newsletter; August 2013

Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held at The Scores Hotel on Tuesday 26th March. The Annual Report and Accounts for the year-ended 31st December 2012 were adopted by the meeting and have subsequently been submitted to and accepted by OSCR.

A proposal from the floor, that the annual subscription revert to £10 **per person**, was unanimously approved.

New Members

At the Wine-tasting on 13th July (see below) eleven new members joined the Alliance and paid their subscriptions. We offer them our warmest welcome and look forward to their participation in future events.

Quiz Night

The Madras Rugby Club was packed on 10th May for a splendid Quiz Night organised by Lindsay Murray, Joyce Duncan and Gordon Wowk. The questions were amusing and testing, with a May theme with French connections; the food was outstanding – not many quiz nights offer such tasty fare! The evening was a fund-raiser, so it is good to be able to report that a healthy sum was added to the Alliance bank balance. Congratulations to the organisers and their helpers on a fun evening.

Bastille Day

Well, not quite. Since the 14th July fell on a Sunday this year, it was decided to commemorate Bastille Day on Saturday 13th July with a wine tasting at The Scores Hotel. Peter Wood of the St Andrews Wine Company provided the wines and selected canapés to match, as well as a commentary on each wine (appropriately, all the wines were French). A fun evening for members and guests – and, as noted above, eleven of the guests joined the Alliance on the spot. This was not a fund-raiser, but at the end of the day there was a small surplus.

Poetry Competition

Thanks entirely to the efforts of Joyce Duncan, primary schools in St Andrews and Loches once again enjoyed a friendly competition, this time involving poetry reading. The enthusiasm of pupils and staff at Canongate and Lawhead was inspiring and the selection of winners challenging. Prizes from the Alliance were presented by Joyce Duncan and Lindsay Murray. It will be quite a challenge to decide the nature of the next competition – perhaps singing?



Visit by pupils from College Georges Besse

The Alliance very much welcomes this new link between Madras College and College Georges Besse in Loches. As reported in the last Newsletter, your committee had decided to support the exchange with a donation of £600 to Madras and a cheque for this amount was handed over to Lyn McCartney on 1st May. A small hiccup occurred when it turned out that the French coach driver had no accommodation, but the Alliance was able to help and funded accommodation at the St Michael's Inn (no other accommodation could be found and at least the coach could be parked there!). Thanks to Bill Sangster for finding this accommodation and subsequently securing support from the Bell Fund to cover this cost.

Lyn McCartney has confirmed that the visit went well and this message has been



underscored by an email from Christine Toulouse (Principal English Teacher at College Georges Besse) to the Nouvelle Alliance in Loches which was copied to us. Roughly translated, it reads: 'We returned from our visit to St Andrews on Thursday evening. We were received like princes and princesses. The pupils are over the moon with this exchange which enabled them to make firm links of friendship with their opposite numbers. We can hardly wait for their visit to Loches between 18th and

25th September this year.'

We wish Lyn, her colleagues and her pupils a very happy visit to Loches.

Visit to Loches, October 2013

Our French friends await our visit during the weekend of 26th/27th October. We hope that many members, old and new, will be able to take part in this visit. As usual, individuals or groups make their own arrangement for travel and choose what kind of accommodation they would like. There is no need to tell those who have visited before, but some guidance may be helpful to those visiting Loches for the first time.

Travel

1. For the railway enthusiast, it is possible to travel by train from Leuchars to Kings Cross, then take Eurostar from St Pancras to Paris Gare du Nord and then the TGV to St Pierre des Corps (Tours). The only awkwardness is the need to change stations in Paris (the TGV leaves from the Gare Montparnasse), but it is an easy journey by Metro or taxi.
2. Probably the easiest and most convenient way is by air from Edinburgh to Paris Charles de Gaulle (Easyjet or Air France) and then by TGV from the airport to St Pierre des Corps. Prices can vary hugely, so it is wise to do some careful checking. The arrivals area for both airlines is an easily walkable distance from the TGV station. With Air France it is possible to book all the way from Edinburgh to St Pierre des Corps; they provide a voucher for the train segment of the journey.
3. The third option to consider is to fly with Ryan Air from Stansted to Tours Airport. It's easy to get to Stansted from Edinburgh with Easyjet and the timing of the Ryan Air flight is now much more user friendly than in the past.

The journey from St Pierre des Corps can be done by coach, (the infrequent) train or rental car, but it is hoped and expected that our hosts will be able to collect us from the TGV.

Accommodation

The aim of the exercise is to get to know one another and staying with one of our French hosts is warmly recommended. The Lochois are wonderful hosts; some live in the centre of town while others have beautiful country houses nearby. If, however, anyone wishes to stay in an hotel, the Hotel Georges Sand and the Hotel de France are recommended. Both are in or very close to the town centre and, while rooms are simple, both have good restaurants.

Any guidance needed?

If anyone would like further advice, just contact any officer (contact details below).

Please let a committee member know if you wish to take part in the visit, indicate your travel plans and any assistance needed with accommodation as soon as possible.

Plans for the future

Building on the successful events so far this year, it is intended to have one further event after the Loches visit, but well before Christmas. More news anon.

For 2014, it is intended to have four events, at least one of them a fund-raiser. If any member has ideas for events which would be of interest to members (and others) please get in touch with Lindsay Murray. We will try to get out a draft programme before the end of the year so that dates get into diaries early.

On the assumption that the Madras visit to Loches this September goes well, we intend to continue to support the exchange and we will be in touch with Lyn McCartney towards the end of the year to explore how best we might be able to help.

Odds & Ends

SCO Concerts

We will be operating a wine bar at the SCO Concerts on the following dates: 16th October 2013, 13th November 2013, 5th March 2014, 19th March 2014 and 28th April 2014 (all Wednesdays). We need a small number of helpers to organise and man the bar. Can you help? Please advise any committee member.

Subscriptions

A few members seem to have forgotten to pay their membership subs. If you are uncertain, please contact Bill Sangster.

Committee

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