



COMMUNIQUÉ

The Newsletter of **LA SOCIÉTÉ GUERNESIAISE**

Autumn Issue 2012 No.79

Guernsey's Local Research, Natural History and Conservation Society

Publications of the Transactions for 2011

Normally we aim to publish the annual Report and Transactions before Christmas, that is to say within twelve months of the year to which it relates. This year we just missed our target and the Transactions were published in January.

We regret to announce that we shall miss our target for the second year running. It is expected that the Transactions for 2011 will be published in February 2013. Members will be informed in due course of the actual date of publication. We hope that the 2011 Transactions will be worth waiting a little longer for, and intend to resume 'normal service' in 2013.

Please note due to the high cost of postage we would be very grateful if those members who are able could collect their Transactions from our Candie office during the month of March 2013 – please feel free to also collect Transactions for other Société members who are relatives, friends or neighbours.

Please note the Candie office opening hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday between 10am and 11.30am. Those who are unable to come into the office in person will have their Transactions posted in April 2013.

Please remember that you can receive the Transactions electronically via our website **www.societe.org.gg** using a password which will be issued by e-mail in March.

If you would prefer an electronic version of the Transactions kindly e-mail: **membership@societe.org.gg** to let us know, please include your name and initials.

Communiqué

Please note the newsletter is available on our website **www.societe.org.gg** If you no longer wish to receive a paper copy by post kindly e-mail: **membership@societe.org.gg**.

Christmas Luncheon

Sunday 13 January

This year we have chosen to go to Les Cotils for a carvery on Sunday 13 January at 12.45pm. There will be a good selection of starters and desserts and for the main course a choice of 2 meats, a fish and vegetarian option. Tea and coffee are included in the price.

The cost will be £16.50 a head to include a tip to the staff, but excluding drinks.

If you would like to join us please send your cheque, payable to La Société Guernesiaise along with the names of those attending to the Secretary Kate Lee by 15 December. There will be no seating plan.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions for 2013 will be held at the same rate, that is:

- Local single - £22
- Local double/family - £30
- Overseas (Single, double or family) - £20
- Students - £5
- Corporate - £200
- Single Life - £300
- Double Life - £400

Thank you to the members who now pay their subscription by Direct Debit. If you would like to switch to Direct Debit please e-mail **membership@societe.org.gg** and we will send you a form.

Please note Direct Debits will be taken in January of each year. **Those who pay by cheque should please note that subscriptions are due on January 1st.**

If you are still paying by Standing Order kindly amend the amount in accordance with the above rates or switch to Direct Debit.

E-mail Addresses

La Société find it useful to be able to tell members about future events such as talks, annual trips to Jethou and collection of the Transactions from Candie, by e-mail.

If you have not heard from us before by e-mail and would like to, kindly send your e-mail address and name to **membership@societe.org.gg**

Please note your e-mail address will not be passed on to a third party.

Obituary Betty Caldwell



Members were saddened to learn of the death of Betty Caldwell on the 30 May.

Records show that she was Honorary Treasurer from 1990-1998 but she was much, much more. Her small height belied an enormous energy and she worked tirelessly for La Société, often behind the scenes, but also alongside her husband Griff.

She was very good company with a wonderful sense of humour, and a visit to her kitchen always involved a cup of tea and a piece of cake and a lot of laughter, together with a bowl of raspberries and some plants to take home.

She was taken seriously ill some years ago and despite being sometimes in considerable pain remained her usual cheerful self. This photograph, supplied by her daughter-in-law Lesley, was taken last Christmas at Lesley and Philip's home.

We send our good wishes to Griff and to her children and grandchildren.

There will be a full obituary in the Transactions.

Pat Costen

New Hon. Treasurer

Due to ill health, our current Hon. Treasurer may not be able to carry on with the role much longer and we are urgently looking for his replacement.

The position would require a time commitment of about 6 hours per week with a visit to the office at least once a week to collect post etc.

Also, the New Hon. Treasurer has a seat on council and you would be required to attend 1 meeting per month. If you are interested, please contact Rodney Collenette on 249021 to discuss further

Sponsorship

As you may know, Jessi Jennings is currently training to complete a cycle challenge from Vietnam to Cambodia on November 8 2012 to raise money for La Société Guernesaise.

This will involve cycling 400km from Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam to the tranquility of Siem Reap in Cambodia, cycling through coconut groves and thriving river communities at the heart of the Mekong Delta and the stilted villages and mysterious temples of Angkor.

Average humidity is 75-70% making this cycle challenge exactly that; a challenge and the chance of a lifetime.

Jessi sees this challenge as a chance to take part in something extraordinary and an opportunity for her to do something positive for the island we live on.



Please find below a link to a Yahoo search engine, which, every time it is used, donates an amount to Jessi's nominated charity. If you set this as your homepage/ use this link when searching the internet, you'll be supporting Jessi without spending a penny!

<http://sites.afflyon.co.uk/cambodiavietnamcycle>

Jessi says that if you would like more information on the challenge, please feel free to contact her at **JJennings@hssd.gov.gg**.

Farewell Party

On the afternoon of Sunday 8 July a tea party, organised by Pat Costen and Liz Collenette, was held at Les Cotils to mark the well-earned retirements of Lawney Martin as Société Secretary and May Teagle as Hon. Membership Secretary.

Invitations had been sent to past and present Council members, Section Secretaries and in particular volunteers who had been such a good support to Lawney during her many years in office.

Les Cotils' catering staff did us proud and served up a lovely spread of sandwiches, scones with jam and cream, and cakes, after greeting everyone (some fifty odd) with a glass of bubbly. After a short speech by the President, Pat Costen presented Lawney with a Texier handbag and May with a Creasey's voucher.

It was a lovely convivial affair at which many old acquaintances were renewed and which was thoroughly enjoyed by all present. After a group photograph every one wended their happy way home.



Photograph Courtesy of Richard Lloyd.

Archivist

About six months ago, while waiting at Candie for people to arrive for a meeting, I popped up to the library and found the most beautiful 150 year-old dried flower collection, *Hortus Siccus*. I contacted botanist Jennie Grange who, despite having been Botany Secretary for many years, knew nothing of it. Further enquiries revealed that Charles David was the only Council member to know of its existence.

Some months earlier I was made aware of the fine collection of photographic slides that Council member Mike Deane is in the process of copying and publishing on the website. These are kept in cupboards in the Meeting Room and despite a couple of stints on Council, and three years as President, I had no idea of their existence.

I therefore proposed to Council that the position of Archivist be created. Council agreed and I was duly elected to the position. My intention is to catalogue everything that La Société owns and publish a list on the website.

Pat Costen Archivist

Rock Pool Ramble

On the afternoon of July 23 2012 La Société Guernesaise provided a guided rock pool ramble at L'Estrainfer next to Cobo beach to 22 members of the 1st Wash Common Cromwell cub scouts.

The ramble began with a talk about the diversity of species and about their distribution on the shore. Crab carapaces, ormer shells and an assortment of other mollusc shells, a cuttlebone, a pink sea fan skeleton, an echinoderm test, and dried bryozoan colonies were passed around the group to show the range of species that they might find on the shore.

The group discovered a large male shore crab, *Carcinus maenas*, reproducing with a soft-shell female of less than half the size. The moulted carapace of the female was still present so it was possible to show the size increase between moults. One of the scouts netted a little cuttlefish, *Sepiolo atlantica*, over the sand, which showed off its chromatophores.

The scouts learned about and saw a variety of brown and green algae, beadlet and snakelocks anemones, limpets, topshells, juvenile chancre, broad-claw porcelain crabs, cushion starfish, star ascidians, and a number of gobies. The Scouts asked lots of questions and it was a pleasure to see them enjoying themselves so much.

After an hour and 15 minute rock pool ramble, the cub scouts were eager to jump in the sea for a swim.



Photograph Courtesy of Richard Lloyd.

Christmas Gift Ideas

This year we are enclosing our book list for you to browse. We also sell an attractive range of note cards with local views priced at 50p each. Some of these cards are also available as Christmas cards.

Cards and books can be purchased from the office during opening hours. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday between 10 and 11.30am. Books can also be purchased via the website: www.societe.org.gg.

Diary Dates

**Monday 22 October at 6.30pm:
Observatory Open Evening.**

No charge but donations are welcomed. All welcome

**Sunday 18 November 10am to 4pm:
Round Table Christmas Fayre at Beau Sejour.
Free Entry.**

We will be selling a range of our books and Christmas cards. Please come along to support us. If you are able to help man the stall for an hour please contact Kate Lee on 725093 or e-mail: secretary@societe.

Section Reports Archaeology

Archaeologically the last few months have been quiet in Guernsey, however there has been quite a bit going on in the other islands. In June Sir Barry Cunliffe carried out a further season of work in Sark, this year opening an extension to previous trenches in the Tanquerel field.

This is the field where the Sark Hoard was found in the 18th century and is towards the middle of the island close to the mill. The excavations revealed more of the Bronze Age occupation and also some from the Early Iron Age. This area appears to have been a focus for activity of a domestic nature in the Bronze Age / Early Iron Age and then of a ritual nature in the Late Iron Age / early Roman period.

Later in the summer some of the Section joined members of the Alderney Society on excavations at The Nunnery, the fort on the west side of Longis Bay. This project is led by Guernsey Museum Director Jason Monaghan.

The Nunnery is a very complex building; although the fort is almost certainly of Roman build, it has been used and maintained perhaps continuously since that time and there are many phases of archaeology to be seen.

In addition wind-blown sand has raised the level significantly, so it is necessary to dig down a couple of metres to reach the Roman ground level.

This year the work concentrated on the south side of the fort and several structures were unearthed, including a drain beneath the post-medieval south wall and two further walls, one of which may be the foundation for the south wall of the Roman fort (the upper part of which is now collapsed onto the beach below).

Work on the skeletons from the cemetery at St Tugual's Chapel in Herm is now almost complete. Early last year around forty skeletons were uncovered during conservation works to the chapel. And about twenty of these were excavated because they were in the path of a drainage scheme.

These are currently being studied by local osteoarchaeologist, Jenny Cataroche. The condition of the bone is generally good and she should be able to determine the age, sometimes the sex and perhaps also to comment on the health of the individuals.

Radiocarbon dates will be obtained from small samples and this will tell us the time of death; a range of dates would indicate the length of time that this part of the cemetery was in use. It is thought that the burials are medieval - a time about which little is known of Herm; hopefully as the results emerge, much more will be added to our knowledge of the island's population at this time.

In June there was a very exciting discovery in Jersey: two local metal detectorists found a massive hoard of Celtic coins, mainly in silver and numbering into tens of thousands. There are other objects within the hoard, some of which are gold. Because of its size the hoard had to be removed from the field in a block of earth, which will now be carefully taken apart under laboratory conditions.

Guernsey States Archaeologist Philip de Jersey is an expert on Celtic coins and was involved with the excavation of the hoard; he will continue to assist in the interpretation as the hoard is dismantled. Philip kindly gave a lecture for La Societe on the discovery and it will be fascinating to follow the progress as events unfold.

Finally, in July some of the Section visited an island even further afield - South Uist in the Outer Hebrides. This was to assist with the excavation of an Early Neolithic settlement which is being badly eroded by the sea. The connection with Guernsey is that this work is part of a wider project looking at the settlement of islands in this very early period of prehistory; the time when people first began to settle and farm the land.

The excavations at L'Eree which have taken place in recent years are part of the same project and were carried out by the same team of archaeologists.

Anyone wishing to join the Section should contact the secretary and will receive regular updates on the various projects and lectures. There are also opportunities to get involved with excavation and finds processing.

Tanya Walls

Astronomy

This year, 2012, is our 40th anniversary. We celebrated with three high profile talks which took place during April and May. The first was given by our founder Dr David Falla FRAS. David talked of the advances made in astronomy during the last fifty years due to the improvements in scientific and observational techniques in which he has been involved.

Dr Christopher Riley was a visiting Professor from Lincoln University. He has worked for twelve years on the substantial film archives held by NASA and gave us a very interesting and often amusing presentation on his use of these footings, for the many documentaries he has produced for BBC television.

The third speaker was Jurat and astronomer David Le Conte FRAS. David spoke in great detail of the many Guernsey astronomers, both past and present over the last 200 years. David also shared with us his own experiences working on the 1960s space programme.

These talks had been arranged by David Le Conte. They were held and well represented at the Frossard Centre Candie Gardens. They coincided with a splendid exhibition staged by Jason Monaghan at the Museum and Art gallery, of photographs created by NASA.

Wednesday 6 June was the day the planet Venus crossed over the face of the sun, known as the transit of Venus. Actually it was in the morning at 5.05 am.

One of our larger telescopes had been loaded in my car the day before and we had it set up at Bordeaux before 5.00 am, complete with the sun protection. Eight of us were there but the sun was not. The clouds just would not go away.

But it was extremely pleasant. It had been a social gathering and the early morning view of Herm and Sark were superb.

Saturday 11 August was the night of the Perseids meteor storm. This is the evening when we enjoy a barbeque at the observatory and when it gets dark we settle down to watch the display. Well the barbeque was excellent, but the clouds would once more not go away. But just like the transit of Venus, it was an excellent occasion. On neither occasion did it rain so once again a social gathering was enjoyed by all.

Frank Dowding

Entomology

The Entomology Section will meet with the Botany and Nature Conservation Sections for their monthly outings in 2012. Please see these Sections for times and places.

Botany

You will receive a monthly newsletter, either by post or email.

Please send a cheque to Soc. Guernesiaise Botany Section with your details to:

Jean and Gavin Sampson, The Ferrers, 1 Milton Gardens, Rue Cauchée, St Martin, Guernsey GY4 6NU

Tel: **234430** Email: **gavsampson@cwgsy.net**.

Send your name, address, postcode and telephone number, and your email address if you wish to receive your newsletter that way.

Family History

Since the last Communiqué a lot has happened to the Section.

To mark the 25th Anniversary of the formation of the Section, an Exhibition was held at Le Friquet Garden Centre over the weekend of June 30/July 1.

The Annual Dinner was brought forward from October so that those overseas members who were attending the weekend could join in.

Following on, the Section moved from the Lukis Observatory, which had been its "home" for 14 years, to a much larger room at Les Vauxbelets. It was surprising how much had been collected over 25 years.

I must thank all the willing helpers who assisted with the move and the many who supplied exhibits for the Exhibition, as without their help, neither would have gone smoothly.

Forthcoming meetings

Wednesday 17 October - Open evening for Section members only at Les Vauxbelets Section Room at 7.45pm.

Wednesday 21 November - "The de Havilland Family" a talk by Richard Hocart followed by the A.G.M.

Unless otherwise stated all meetings are held at the Frossard Theatre, Candie starting at 7.45pm. All welcome.

Any family history queries should be addressed to The Family History Section, PO Box 314, St Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 3TG.

Edith Le Patourel

Dr. Charles David

Just before going to press we received the very sad news of the death of ex-President Dr Charles David. Our thoughts are with his family.

"For the moment I cannot come to terms with the news of Charles David's tragic and premature death in Sark on 28 September. No doubt a biography will appear in the Transactions for 2012, but on a personal level I would like to say how much I appreciated his knowledge of the island, both scientifically and historically, which was encyclopaedic.

I had the privilege of working alongside him at La Société for over 18 years, and he was unfailingly gentle and generous with his time and his knowledge, and wise with his advice. I will miss his cheery greeting "What ho?!", and his smile."

Lawney Martin, recently-retired Secretary.

Juniors

Archaeology

Saturday 24 November

Tanya Walls will be showing us some of the pots in the Museum collection followed by a session on making pots using the techniques of our early ancestors.

Meet 10am at the Archaeology Department in St Johns Street.

Astronomy

January: Date and time to be advised.
At the Astronomy Observatory

Guernsey French

February: Date and time to be advised.

Indoor session with Bill Gallienne at Frossard Lecture Theatre

Marine Biology

March: Date, time and place to be advised.
Rock Pool Ramble with Richard Lord.

Local History

April: Date to be advised but it will be a Saturday.
Gold- accredited Tour guide Sylvia Brouard will take us round Hommet Headland.

Meet at the Vazon Café at 2pm.

Pat Costen: patcosten@cwgsy.net or telephone 264500.

New members are always welcome.

Nature Conservation

If you are interested in being involved please contact Denise Thoumine on 723003.

Guernsey Conservation Volunteers

Although we are very pleased with the number of members in GCV. We would always welcome more!

If you would like to come along to a work party, or just find out more about the group, please contact Angela Salmon on 721163 or through the GCV.

Website: www.gcv.org.uk.

The Guernsey Botanical Trust

The Guernsey Botanical Trust is restoring a Victorian Walled Kitchen Garden at Saumarez Park, Castel. Volunteers work on Wednesday afternoons and Saturday mornings. A stall selling produce, crafts and preserves is open Saturday mornings from 9am - 12 noon.

Please contact Ivan Le Tissier

Mobile Tel. 07911 719115

Email: ivan@guernseywalledgarden.org.gg.

if you would like to become a volunteer gardener or crafter.

Website: www.guernseywalledgarden.org.gg.

6 October from 10 to 2 'Souper Saturday'

The garden will be open and homemade soup will offered.

The sunflower maze may still be open if dry and the crop lasts - otherwise sunflower heads will be on sale for bird food.

WEA Guernsey

Full details of all courses are listed on the Association's **Website: www.wea.org.gg.**

Old Mobile Phones

La Société is now able to recycle mobile phones. This initiative helps protect the environment and reduces the use of limited resources.

Any money raised will be used for local conservation purposes. If you have an old phone you no longer use, you can pop it through the letterbox at Candie.

The Friends of the Priaulx library

Guernsey's Generals of the 19th Century

The latest Newsletter from the Friends of the Priaulx Library majors on two stories about Guernsey's famous Generals of the 19th century, namely Major General Sir Isaac Brock written by Olly Brock and Major General John Gaspard le Marchant written by the Joint Services Command and Staff College Library.

Both were born in the mid eighteenth century and both died in battle in two different theatres of war in 1812.

Brock was 43 when he died at Queenston Heights on the 13 October 1812 and is a Hero of Upper Canada. The bicentenary of his death will be remembered in Canada with many events.

The Guernsey Brock Bicentenary Committee of John Silvester, Evan Ozanne and Olly Brock will also be organising three main events on Guernsey to commemorate Brock's death.

Gaspard Le Marchant was 46 when he was killed at the battle of Salamanca on the 2 July 1812. He was one of the finest cavalry Generals of his generation and established the Royal Military Academy at High Wycombe and Harlow that eventually became Sandhurst.

Legacies and Donations in Lieu of Flowers

Members are reminded that it is relatively simple to leave money to La Société in a will.

All that is required is a codicil to a member's will which can be arranged by an Advocate or Solicitor.

Money or property can be left for general use, or if desired for a specific purpose.

They are also reminded that donations in lieu of flowers can be made in memory of members who have died.

Le Cercle Français

Wednesday 10 October:

Le Cercle Français. Talk in ENGLISH by Sir de Vic Carey: "Adieu la Normandie - the disappearance of Norman customary law from our laws of inheritance". 8pm Frossard Theatre.

Tuesday 6 November:

Le Cercle Français. Talk in FRENCH by Richard Harding: "Monaco - its Motorsport, Money and Mediterranean Mystique" (illustrated by images on screen). 8pm Frossard Theatre.

Wednesday 30 January 2013:

Le Cercle Français. Illustrated talk in FRENCH by Bill Gallienne: "The value of Archives as an historical record". 8pm Frossard Theatre.

Tuesday 19 February 2013:

Le Cercle Français. Illustrated talk in FRENCH by Corinne Joy: "Cambodia". 8pm Frossard Theatre.

All welcome – free of charge.

NCCPG EVENTS AUTUMN 2012

Saturday 6 - Saturday 20 October between 10.00am and 4.00pm daily in the Lower Greenhouse, Candie Gardens:

NCCPG Nerine Festival.

Hundreds of nerines will be on show, with a selection for sale.

Wednesday 7 November at 19.30pm at Les Cotils: Julian Sutton from 'Desirable Plants' nursery in Devon will give a talk on "Adventures with Strange Perennials"

All are welcome, members free.

Entry to non-NCCPG members £5 at the door.



Environment Guernsey is the wholly owned company of La Société Guernesaise. • We manage La Société's nature reserves and undertake numerous land management contracts for various States of Guernsey Departments, the National Trust and private individuals. • We also run the Guernsey Biological Records Centre and provide an environmental consultancy service.

For all aspects of conservation advice and contracting, please contact us.

Guernsey Tobacco Factory, La Ramée, St Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 2ET
Tel: (07781) 166924 • Email: jamie.hooper@cwgsy.net • gsybiorec@cwgsy.net

Officers and Council Members

Officers:

President	Rodney Collenette	249021	president@societe.org.gg
Vice President	vacant		
Secretary	Kate Lee	235380	secretary@societe.org.gg
Honorary Treasurer	Peter Budwin	716134	treasurer@societe.org.gg
Membership Secretary	Denise Thoumine	723003	membership@societe.org.gg
Editor of the Transactions	Richard Hocart	254693	editor@societe.org.gg
Reserves Committee Chairman	Jane Gilmour	700024	
Land Management & Conservation Officer	Jamie Hooper	266924	
Volunteer Co ordinator Reserves	Anthony Stagg	722351	
Archivist	Pat Costen	264500	
Librarians	Jean & Gavin Sampson	234430	

Section Secretaries:

Archaeology	Tanya Walls	727614	archaeology@societe.org.gg
Astronomy	Frank Dowding	255215	astronomy@societe.org.gg
Botany	Vacant		
Climate Change	Andrew Casebow	722245	climate.change@societe.org.gg
Entomology	Charles David	238978	entomology@societe.org.gg
Family History	Edith Le Patourel	721566	
Geology and Geography	Andrew Dorey	252123	
Historic Buildings	John McCormack	720303	mrjam@cwgsy.net
History & Philology	Bill Gallienne	265529	history@societe.org.gg
Junior	Pat Costen	264500	
Marine Biology & Zoology	Jessica Jennings	07839 250558	
Nature Conservation	Denise Thoumine	723003	
Ornithology	Vic Froome	254841	ornithology@societe.org.gg

Associated Groups:

The Alderney Society & Museum	The Secretary	823222	
Alderney Wildlife Trust	Roland Gauvain	822935	
Bat Group	Pat Costen	264500	
Guernsey Conservation Volunteers	Angela Salmon	721163	
Friends of the Priaux Library	Gavin Lanoe	246715	
La Société Serquaise	Jo Birch	832788	
National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens (Guernsey Group)	Tattie Thompson	239444	
Lé Coumité d'la Culture Guernésiaise	Hazel Tomlinson	255891	
Guernsey Meteorological Observatory	Martin Crozier	237766	
WEA	David Le Conte	264847	
The Guernsey Botanical Trust	Ivan Le Tissier	07911 719115	

In addition to the Section Secretaries being Council members, other Council members are:

J. Hooper (co-opted), Miss Jane Gilmour (co-opted), Mrs Sylvia Brouard, Ms Judith. Keen, Richard de la Rue, Michael Deane and Richard Lord, Miss Jessica Jennings and Adrian Nicolle. Any member of La Société who is interested in joining one of the Sections or groups should contact the relevant Section Secretary.

Office Hours: The office at Candie is normally open between 10.00 and 11.30am on Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays.

Tel: 01481 725093

Published by La Société Guernésiaise
Candie Gardens, St. Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 1UG
Email: societe@cwgsy.net
Website: www.societe.org.gg
Design, production & printing:
IPS Ultraprint Ltd.

© La Société Guernésiaise