



COMMUNIQUÉ

The Newsletter of LA SOCIÉTÉ GUERNESIAISE

Spring Issue 2013 No.80

Guernsey's Local Research, Natural History and Conservation Society

AGM

The AGM will be held at La Trelade Hotel, St Martin, on Wednesday 27 March, beginning at 7.30pm for the purpose of transacting the following business:

- (a) To hear the report of the President, Mr Rodney Collenette.
- (b) To receive the annual statement of accounts.
- (c) To elect the officers and members of the Council. Rodney Collenette has agreed to serve a third year as President. Council's nomination for Vice—President is Pat Costen. Following the impending retirement of Peter Budwin, David Cranch has agreed to serve as Hon. Treasurer. Two Ordinary Members of Council are retiring: Prof. Nick Day FRS (who is not eligible for reelection) and Mrs. Sylvia Brouard (who is eligible for reelection). Sylvia Brouard and Lawney Martin have been proposed by Pat Costen and seconded by Kate Lee to fill the two vacant positions. The closing date for further nominations will be 13 March 2013.
- (d) To appoint auditors.
- (e) To consider any other matters or propositions affecting La Société. Any member who wishes to make a proposal at the GM should submit it in writing, supported by a seconder, to the Secretary to reach her by Wednesday 13 March.
- (f) To receive the annual report and accounts from Guernsey Environmental Services Limited.

A full agenda together with the minutes of the last meeting and a copy of the 2012 accounts will be available to all members who attend the AGM. Details of nominations for members of Council and all proposals for discussion will be displayed on the Noticeboard at Candie from Friday 15 March .

After a short break Marine Biology Section Secretary Jessi Jennings will do a talk entitled "Vietnam-Cambodia Cycle Challenge: raising funds for La Société Guernesiaise".

Subscriptions

Subscriptions for 2013 are 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 were due on January 1st.

If you are still paying by Standing Order kindly amend the amount in accordance with the above rates.

Transactions 2011

Members who receive our e-mails will be notified of the date from which the 2011 Transactions can be collected from the headquarters at Candie during office hours. This is expected to be towards the end of February. The Transactions will be available for collection by members throughout the month of March.

Please note the Candie Office opening hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday between 10am and 11.30am. Due to the high cost of postage we would ask that you do collect where possible.

Please remember that you can receive the Transactions electronically via our **website www.societe.org.gg** using a password that 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

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.

The Colin McCathie Reserve

Sometime last year the President was approached by the Directors of The Commercial Company of the Channel Islands Limited, (the Company), the owners of the Reserve (the Vale Pond), informing him that alterations had been made to the constitution of the Company which would enable it to be wound up, something not possible previously, and that it was intended that this should take place this year (2013), and that as part of the process, the Reserve was to be sold.

The Directors stressed that they were desirous that the property should pass to La Societe (LSG) and the members of Council were unanimously of the opinion that because of its ecological, historical and social importance it should not be allowed to pass into private hands. As a result it was agreed that LSG should purchase the Reserve for £95,000, being a price based on professional advice, adjusted to take into account services provided by LSG under a management agreement entered into in January 1981

As a condition of the agreement LSG has also happily undertaken to ensure that the title 'The Colin McCathie Reserve' shall remain in perpetuity. It has been agreed that contracts will be passed in April, with the monies initially being drawn from LSG reserves, which of course will leave rather a large hole, and at that time we shall be launching an Appeal in order to replace the funds, the total of which, with the addition of Conge etc. will be in the region of £100.000.

Besides donations it is intended to hold fund-raising events and in order to kick-start the Appeal Pat Costen is organising a "Never worn/hardly worn" clothing sale to be held in April (details below) and she is looking forward to your support both by way of your attendance on the day and also donations of some of what is estimated to be the scarcely used 90% proportion of the average person's wardrobe.

Finally we are greatly encouraged by the fact that already Peter Johnson, a former Secretary of LSG now residing in St Helena, has pledged £10,000, as has a member of the McCathie family.

Never Worn/ Hardly Worn Sale

Sunday 21st April at Les Vauxbelets 2pm onwards

To launch the appeal for the purchase of the Colin McCathie Nature Reserve, also known as the Vale Pond, we are holding a clothes sale. Statistics show that women wear 10% of their clothes 90% of the time. That means that in all our wardrobes lurk clothes that fall into the following categories:

- Impulse buys
- Bargains that will fit if we lose a stone (but can't)
- Looked lovely in the changing room but not in the bedroom
- Outfits bought for a wedding that we can't wear again
- Serious mistakes

We want them all! We also want hats, bags, scarves, shoes, bling – anything that falls into any of those categories and fits the sale title i.e. never worn or hardly worn. Age doesn't matter. Think vintage!

We don't know the statistics for men's clothes; they're probably the opposite of women's. We would like them though, and children's.

Have a look now. Be firm. Don't waver. Don't change your mind. It'll be cathartic! Please deliver to any of the following, or call and we will collect:

 Pat Costen
 Tel. 264500 or Mob. 07781 440549

 Lawney Martin
 Tel. 237853

 Dorothy Le Conte
 Tel. 264847

 Julia Peet
 Tel. 238620

 Liz Collenette
 Tel. 249021

Round Table Christmas Fayre



Photograph Courtesy of Richard Lord

Pat Costen and I decorated our tables and sold stocking fillers, Société Christmas cards and books. Beatrice Clark kindly joined us in the afternoon to help on the stall. We raised £200 and are looking to increase that sum this year with ideas of a lucky dip, tombola and raffle.

Kate Lee Secretary

Diary Dates

Tuesday 16 April at 7.30pm at Candie Illustrated Talk by John Hares entitled The Historical Geography of Guernsey 1000-1350

Please note we have a laptop available for guest speakers as well as a flip chart and an overhead projector.

French Trip

Sadly we shall no longer enjoy excursions arranged by Charles David and we shall sorely miss his expertise in so many fields, last year's trip being no exception, however two years ago we had a very enjoyable trip organised by John Nicolle and the President and they have indicated that they would be prepared to arrange another this year if there is sufficient interest.

To that end therefore would any members interested in taking part please notify Rodney on 249021 or **e-mail rodney.collenette@cwgsy.net**. A venue has not yet been selected and any suggestions or preferences would be welcomed.

For the information of those who have not been on a trip before, they usually take place in early June from Wednesday/Thursday to Sunday, depending on Condor sailing times, and the cost is normally in the region of £400/500 per head.

Section Reports Archaeology

Excavation for the waste water tank at Belle Grève



Photograph Courtesy of John Lihou

A new wastewater holding tank being constructed inland from Belle Grève, not far from Le Chateau des Marais, has involved the excavation of a huge hole - some 50 x 40 metres, with a depth of around 5 metres. Last summer John Lihou carried out an archaeological watching brief at this site and his report will appear in next year's Transactions.

It is well known that a layer of peat lies beneath modern make-up in this area and the recent excavation revealed that below this is a significant depth of sand which must have built up as the area became separated from the sea. Archaeological material was recovered at around 3 metres below current ground level. This comprised a Neolithic pottery sherd, several pieces of wood (preserved by the waterlogged conditions) and a number of hazelnut shells. Two of the pieces of wood had been worked; one into a sharpened wooden stake while the other has cut marks made by an axe. These wooden objects have just been radiocarbon dated and are Bronze Age (c4000 years old). A sample of the overlying peat was also dated and this had begun to accumulate by the Late Iron Age (1st century BC). This information is very important in building a picture of this part of the island's past environment.

Mike Deane and Andy Lane re-pointing tombs



Photograph Courtesy of Phil de Jersey

In the autumn of last year the Section began a project to restore Rue des Frères Cemetery (St Peter Port). This historic cemetery contains the tombs of a number of local dignitaries such as Admiral Thomas Gosselin, at least three Bailiffs (Peter de Havilland, Robert Le Marchant and Jean La Serre), two Seigneurs of Sark (both Pierre Le Pelley), numerous Jurats, General Sir Thomas Saumarez and a variety of other military men, the historian F.B. Tupper, two Captains in the Royal Navy (Thomas Mansell and John Lihou, the latter also a rare Guernsey Fellow of the Royal Society), and – last but by no means least – the remarkable Mrs Margaret Ann Neve (1792 – 1903), who achieved the unusual distinction of living in three centuries and who remains the longest-lived inhabitant of the island.

A survey of the inscriptions was carried out in the 1980's by David Kreckeler and can be read in 'The Brothers Burial Ground 1719-1948' (published by the LSG Family History Section, 2008). The cemetery has been closed for more than thirty years on safety grounds and recently there was a proposal to clear away the tombs and make the area publicly accessible.

La Société favours enabling access to this historic cemetery, but not dismantling the tombs.

Guernsey Museum staff carried out a condition survey for all 132 tombs and found that, although a few are severely damaged, many require relatively little work to make them safe. With the support of the Town Constables, the Archaeology Section set about clearing vegetation from the tombs and also sought advice from the Wildlife Section as to how the cemetery could best be managed for plant and animal diversity.

We have since begun the job of stabilising the tombs themselves, this mainly involves repairing brickwork, pointing and rendering. The project is not confined to the Archaeology Section, and if you would like to know more or would like to get involved, please get in touch with the secretary Tanya Walls on 727614.

Astronomy

The last quarter of 2012 proved to be a success for events and weekly Tuesday evening meetings for members. I like to call Tuesday the Members' evening, as since there are no special events planned for a Tuesday we know we can just turn up and read the magazines, use the computer, listen or join in a conversation on an aspect of astronomy or if clear make use of the telescopes. But very importantly, this is also the evening that we welcome anyone with a similar interest in astronomy and who thinks he or she might like to become a member one day.

October 22nd saw our last open evening of the year. The weather was not kind to us, but many people came as it is becoming known now that we open the observatory, not just the telescopes. So we can still provide an entertaining evening if it is cloudy.

We enjoyed group visits in November. The De lisle Brownies came in early November and later the same month the Porsche Owners Club paid us a visit.

November 22nd we staged a talk at the Frossard Theatre by a visiting lecturer, Paul Anthony Wilson. Paul Wilson has a Masters degree in Astronomy and is presently working at Exeter University, where he is one of a small group of Scientists identifying Planets around other star systems. Paul is presently engaged in identifying the atmospheres of these planets. It was an extremely entertaining evening and we thank Ronez Ltd for their generous donation in covering Paul's travel expenses.

Certain members are continuing to improve the land around our buildings by removing brambles and their roots to make the mowing easier. The toilet facilities are also having an upgrade.

The only downside is our sliding roof which is in trouble again. The electric motor which moves it has burned out. We are looking for a replacement, but in the meantime the hand driven winch has come back into use.

To end the year in early December, eleven of us enjoyed a Christmas dinner at Jerbourg Hotel. The food and Staff made this an excellent evening to remember.

May I wish all readers of this Newsletter a prosperous 2013.

Frank Dowding

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 or email: gavsampson@cwgsy.net

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

Entomology

Any queries kindly contact Rich Austin on tel: 721915 or e-mail richmond.austin43@gmail.com.

Marine Biology

As the newly appointed section secretary I am eager to kick-start the marine biology section into action this year. I have a few ideas for the section that I would enjoy discussing with any members that have an interest in marine biology, and so would like to invite everyone to the first of what I hope to be monthly section meetings of 2013.

The meeting will be held at the La Société Guernesiaise office at Candie Museum on Tuesday 26th February at 7pm. The aim of this first meeting is to have a chat about what we would like to get from the section, activities and outings for the year, and how we can get more people involved. I welcome any new ideas, as well as thoughts from those involved previously with the section, or La Société in general, on things that have worked well in the past that we can assimilate into planning for this year.

Please come along and have a say, or just come and listen to what is going on. Everyone is welcome, and I hope to see interest grow as the section progresses. If you have any questions or queries, please contact me on 07839 250558 or **email marinebiology@societe. org.gg** and I look forward to seeing you!

Jessi Jennings

Family History

At the Section's 25th AGM the following were elected to serve on the Committee for 2013.

Section Secretary Edith Le Patourel	Tel 721566
Hon Treasurer Chris Sackett	Tel 736262
Journal Editor Celia Nicolle	Tel 251947
Overseas Enquiries Maria van der Tang	Tel 248538
Membership Secretary Graeme Cox	Tel 254316
Media Officer Edith Le Patourel	Tel 721566
Assistant Secretary Mary Fuller	Tel 235837
Archivist Sheila Greenhough	Tel 247335
Birth Brief Co-ordinator Graeme Cox	Tel 254316
Newsletter Compiler Chris Sackett	Tel 736262

Following our move to Les Vauxbelets it has been decided to open the Section room, on a trial basis, for members' <u>personal</u> research. This will be on Wednesday afternoons in February starting on the 6 then 13, 20 and 27, 2 – 4pm. Entrance via main school drive, top door, first building.

Forthcoming Meetings:

Wednesday 20 February - A Talk by Graham Guille "A Fireman's Tale".

Wednesday 20 March - A Talk by Amanda Bennett, Chief Librarian of the Priaulx Library. Title to follow. Wednesday 22 May - Chris Oliver. Title to follow.

All meetings are held in Frossard Theatre, Candie starting at 7.45pm, unless otherwise stated. All welcome.

Edith Le Patourel Section Secretary

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

Juniors

Guernsey French

February: Date and time to be advised

Indoor session with Bill Gallienne at Frossard Lecture

Theatre

Marine Biology

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

Local History

Saturday 13 April: 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

Gouliot Cave

On 1 September members enjoyed a long-awaited trip to the Gouliot caves in Sark organised by Angela Salmon. After a coffee break on the Avenue we walked to the Duck Pond where we were met by Jeremy La Trobe-Bateman whose knowledge of the caves is outstanding and who had agreed to be our guide.







The walk down was uneventful and not as scary as some of us had anticipated.

Jeremy led us from one cave to another pointing out the wonders to be found down there, including a rather dismal grey weed, whose name I forget, but which, Jeremy told us, excites the experts.

The tide dictates the duration of any visit there of course and we eventually set off back up to the top where Phil de Jersey was delighted to see a well which features in an old family photograph and whose location had hitherto eluded him.



After a pint at the Bel Air we enjoyed a bouncy and spray-laden trip back to Guernsey.

Pat Costen

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

Ornithology

In my last report I wrote of the hope that Dartford Warblers would breed here again. Unfortunately no evidence was found to show that it happened. Over the rest of the year reports of rare or scarce birds continued to appear. April brought a Red-rumped swallow, seen several times at Rue des Bergers and a bittern seen at La Claire Mare.

In May a cuckoo was recorded for the first time in two years and a bee-eater stayed around Pleinmont for about a fortnight. A 'mega alert' went out on the 26th in the form of a Greenish warbler. This bird normally breeds in North-eastern Europe , so was a rare find. September brought, among others, an Upland sandpiper from N. America. We thank Phil Atkinson for his continuing excellent work on the Guernsey birds website which enables us to see photographs of many of these birds.

At our monthly meetings we have discussed a number of issues affecting birds including dogs and cyclists. It is legal to walk dogs in Saumarez Park, on L'Ancresse Common and around the Reservoir provided they are on leads. Mountain bikers are not allowed on cliff paths. Please, if you see any infractions of these, give the perpetrators a polite reminder, explaining the needs of wildlife.

We thank Vic Froome and Jamie Hooper for organising improvement works at the Colin Best, Rue des Bergers and Grande Pré nature reserves, enhancing our enjoyment of the birds. Subscriptions to our section help to make the aforementioned possible, so, why not come and join us at Candie on the first Thursday of the month at 8pm, a warm welcome awaits.

Nancy Ogier

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**

WEA Guernsey

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

The Guernsey Botanical Trust

The Victorian Walled Kitchen Gardens in Saumarez Park are being restored by the Guernsey Botanical Trust. There are two daily volunteer sessions, between 10:00 and 13:00 and between 13:00 and 16:00 nearly every day. Everyone is welcome to attend as many of the sessions as they wish, on a regular or an adhoc basis.

Work varies by season and volunteer skill, from watering plants to digging trenches and repairing roofs! Tools and guidance are available, but if you prefer to bring your own tools / share your knowledge and experience we'd be happy to see you.

Join one of the most popular gardening clubs on the island, meet new friends and explore other gardens. Learn traditional growing techniques and help us to bring Guernsey's horticultural history back to life.

For further details contact **ivan@guernseywalledgarden.org.gg** or telephone 07911 719115.

Next Event: Fund Raising Quiz at La Mare de Carteret School on Friday 22 February, 7 for 7.30pm, teams of 6, £8 per person. To enter a team or for more details, email aileenbernie@cwgsy.net or phone 244429.



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.

NCCPG Events Spring 2013

Tuesday 12 March at 7.30pm at Les Cotils, lecture by Troy Smith, the head gardener At Bodnant Gardens. on 'The Garden in Winter' based on Bodnant's newly opened Winter Garden. Special South African bulbs will also be on offer.

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

Saturday 13 April 9am - 12 noon NCCPG Plant Stall at the Sausmarez Manor Farmers Market.

Monday 29 April at 6.30 for 7pm NCCPG/Art Fund lecture by Steve Desmond on 'Lutyens & Jeykll - the Odd Couple' Entry to non-NCCPG & Art Fund members £16 including drinks

Bank Holiday Monday 27 May. at 10am at Sausmarez Manor NCCPG Giant plant Sale. Entry free

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

Tuesday 19 February

Illustrated talk in FRENCH by Corinne Joy: "Cambodia". 8 p.m. Frossard Theatre.

All welcome – free of charge.

St. Peter Port Magazine

Keith Pike, Douzainer for St Peter Port, is producing a biannual magazine for St Peter Port called "The Townie". It is hoped the first issue will be delivered/available in May.

If anyone would like to submit an article on any subject to do with St Peter Port/ History/of Interest for inclusion then kindly e-mail Keith Pike on **kpike@cwgsy.net**

Articles that are not published in May will appear in the other issue as we are trying to get a stock pile of articles for now and future use.

The Friends of the Priaulx library

Thursday 14 March

Talk by Eric Grimsley 'Military towers on Guernsey' Number 5 in the Friends of the Priaulx Library's lecture series.

Eric's talk will give an insight into the Island's vulnerability to attack and the lengths that the military minds went in order to protect Guernsey.

Commences 7pm in the Frossard Lecture Theatre, Candie Gardens. Admission by ticket only available from the Priaulx Library in mid February. Free for FOPL and £5 for non-members.

Wednesday 26 June

Talk by Bruce Parker. Working title 'My research for my book Elizabeth College' Number 6 in the Friends of the Priaulx Library's lecture series.

Commences 7pm in the Frossard Lecture Theatre, Candie Gardens.

Admission by ticket only. Full details in the next Newsletter.



Environment Guernsey is the wholly owned company of La Société Guernesiaise. • 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 Offic	cer 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	Rich Austin	721915	
Climate Change	Andrew Casebow	722245	climate.change@societe.org.gg
Entomology	Rich Austin	721915	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	marinebiology@societe.org.gg
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 Priaulx 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	Dr Harry 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

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