

HISTORY

Historical Trip - 2004. The History Section's annual trips to France are becoming increasingly popular. Last year Brittany was our venue; a trip masterminded by Professor Gwyn Meirion-Jones, FSA, and Madame Catherine Laurent, FSA, and ably supported by Mary Billot. It surpassed all expectations of the 30 strong group shown in the picture in front of the imposing Chateau de Maille, the home of Monsieur and Madame Danguy des Deserts. In a follow up letter from Monsieur Danguy, he apologised for failing to supply enough of his delicious 'home grown' cider. The group was relieved he underestimated! We shall be returning to Brittany. However, this year Normandy is our venue, a weekend visit on the 18th and 19th September being organised by Bertram Bree. Saturday will be spent in Avranches visiting the city's renowned archives and museum. For Sunday a guided tour has been arranged to see France's architectural jewel of medieval history; Mont-St-Michel. A monastery which once had close and important ties with Jersey, including the



fief of Noirmont and lands in St Clement. Hotel Treize Assiettes in Avranches, with its gourmet menu, is the choice for our overnight accommodation. Bertram is well remembered for having organised the interesting and memorable Normandy trip in 2002. At the time of going to print only six of the 30 places remain available. Readers wishing to join the group are advised to contact Bertram Bree (Tel:854533) without delay.

Down Your Way Walks. Sunday, 23rd May, is the first of three walks planned for 2004. These events, promoted by the Société Jersiaise, the Committee of Constables and the Variety Club of Jersey commenced in 1995 and are now considered traditional. They appeal to people who value Jersey's

history, its old customs and traditional way of life. A relatively recent innovation to the events is the reviving of old customs and practices. Again we shall be raising our glasses at St Ouen in celebration of 'Oak Apple Day', the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660. It was Charles II who, once crowned, personally presented to Jersey the Royal Masse, in recognition of protection and services he received from the Island during the periods of his most dire need. At the Trinity event on the 4th July, youngsters will re-enact the tradition of 'faire braire les poeles' (to make pans bray). This is achieved by part filling with water a brass basin (a bachin) into which metal utensils are placed, then by the use of strong rushes attached to the bachin's side, wetted, and pulled

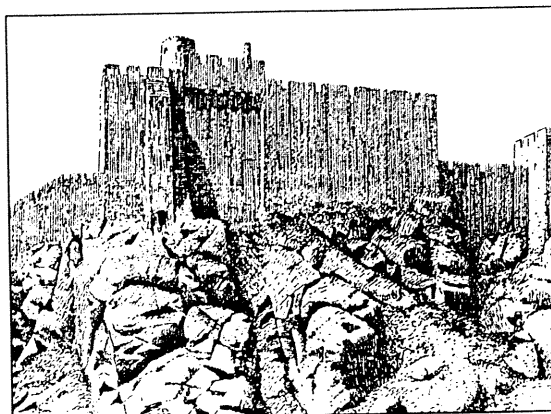
through the fingers, a most 'dolorous and terrific sound' is produced. St Clement hosts the final event, planned for the 26th September, but the custom to be revived remains a secret! At all these events parish hospitality will be at its best with a relaxed historical walk through leafy lanes in the afternoon, three miles in three hours, followed by the customary light supper! These occasions are invariably oversubscribed and interested readers wishing to attend are advised to apply early to the Variety Club of Jersey (Tel: 856937).

The Lloyds TSB Research Sponsorship. The focus of research for 2004 is DNA, both human and cattle. To maximise the results of the

DNA analysis, undertaken by University College London (UCL) for the BBC documentary, Blood of the Vikings, we need to find a new source of support and information as UCL have, understandably, moved on to new projects. Their contribution was invaluable for which the History Section remains indebted. There is, however, a wealth of published information readily available from another laboratory; Oxford Ancestors. Oxford Ancestors is a commercial laboratory established by Professor Bryan Sykes, a world authority on DNA and human evolution. Professor Sykes is the author of two books revealing genetic ancestries; The Seven Daughters of Eve, and Adam's Curse. Unfortunately UCL and Oxford Ancestors code the DNA types differently. To tap into this new information source we need to match the codings. The simplest way to achieve this will be to ask selected persons who know their UCL, DNA types, to each provide another swab to be analysed by Oxford Ancestors for code matching purposes. There is a need to involve at least eleven persons to secure the most

advantageous commercial terms and Lloyds TSB have generously agreed the sponsorship. The History Section is prepared to extend the opportunity to individual members wishing to have their DNA analysed at these advantageous rates, courtesy of Lloyds TSB. This offer is open to all comers irrespective of sex or their roots. Interested readers are asked to contact Frank Falle, (Tel 855117). DNA relating to cattle is more speculative but may have the potential of providing surprise results. Recent DNA analyses suggests that the origins of the Jersey Cows are most likely derived from the continent and less likely from the British Isles. The continental cattle with the highest butterfat are the French Partenaies of which the

Nantaise is a breed. Calves of Partenaires cows are difficult to distinguish from Jerseys, particularly the Nantaise where their colour, soft looks, up-turned horns and black noses make them strikingly similar. It is a fact that Vikings were renowned herdsmen as well as mariners. For nearly a century from 843 AD, Vikings were based at Nantes strategically located at the mouth of the Loire (twice the region was ceded to them). Eventually they were expelled and in all probability some sought security and settlement in the fertile island of Jersey, bringing in boats their wealth in the form of Nantaise cattle. Their ability to carry animals across the seas is legendary as proven by their settlement of Iceland which before their arrival was devoid of cattle. This Viking theory seems more tangible than the suggestion that cattle crossed the 'land-bridge' from the continent to Jersey which remained open until destroyed by the great storms of 709AD.



Was Thomas Paisnel the builder of the medieval Keep and Middle Luard?

Autumn Lunchtime Talks. It may seem premature to bring to your attention the topics of the talks to be given this autumn by the members of the History Section. To ensure we are in accord with the heritage theme for this year - 1204 - relevant topics have been selected. The 30 minute talks will be delivered on the undermentioned Wednesdays, in the Members' Room, starting at 1.15 pm.

- 20th October Marie-Louise Backhurst. Identity and allegiance: so you think you are Jersey? An historical review.
- 27th October Alec Podger. The Maritime Situation in Early 1200s.
- 3rd November David Levitt. Eustace the Monk and Hostage Taking.
- 10th November Gavin Booth. The Development of the Castles and Fortifications Caused by the Parting from France.
- 17th November Frank Falle. Was Thomas Paisnel the Builder of the Medieval Castle of Mont Orgueil?

Frank Falle - Chairman

LA SECTION DE LA LANGUE JËRRIaise

During our monthly meetings members are already working on the final drafts of the translations and authors' notes for our publication of the first of an Anthology of Jërriais Literature which we think will be amusing, interesting and informative.

Having completed the typing of all of Carré's English-Jërriais Vocabulary and switched the word columns by computer, we are currently editing the final draft to produce a first Jërriais-English version of the Vocabulary. This also involves members of the Don Balleine who are adding words from Dr Le Maistre's Dictionary plus many of their neologisms, as well as the new words from our Preunmié Mille Mots.

Our meetings will continue to include language practice via readings and selection of poems for various events, principally La Fête Nouormande and the Eisteddfod. The first event will be held during the weekend of 3/4th July with La Fête Médiévale in Bayeux. Anyone wishing to attend or participate should contact the number below for a programme and details of the travel package costing £120.00 for the boat fare to Granville, coach transport and two nights at the Hotel Churchill in Bayeux. Alternatively, people can arrange to go independently with their cars via St Malo.

Another activity planned for our meetings is composition in Jërriais, to learn and extend our ability to write the language. Articles can be written on holidays, food, the parish, important events and experiences, and notable festival/celebration dates. L'Office du Jërriais is also asking for common phrases used by your parents and

grandparents when bringing you up, for inclusion in a phrase book for current use; all examples will be gratefully received.

The apple festival in the Autumn has a poetry competition as part of the event and we shall start early to try and submit various compositions concerning this delicious fruit, famous since biblical times!

In the summer, a local visit to St Aubin's harbour and surroundings has been planned to widen our vocabulary and use of the language.

Other projects we wish to start are a Scavenger Hunt or Chasse en Vouaituthe in Jërriais and English to be held near the end of June to raise funds for La Fête Nouormande here in 2005, and a compilation of an Anthology of Songs en Jërriais, all of which should take us well into the Autumn.

Finally, it is with much sadness that we heard of the passing of Aidan Smith. He will be sadly missed as he was such a kind and gentle man and helped us on many occasions. He was also very perceptive and erudite and has left us with lasting memories of what can be done to preserve and celebrate the sometimes forgotten facets of our culture. His initiative led to the Treasures of Jersey theme as seen in the bronze Jersey Cows and in his book, The Glass Rainbow about Bosdet's stained glass windows. If his inspiration can lead to a continuation of the series, this will be a fitting tribute to him for years to come. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Judy and their family.

John Clarke (Prèsident) Ralph Nichols (Ségrétaire)