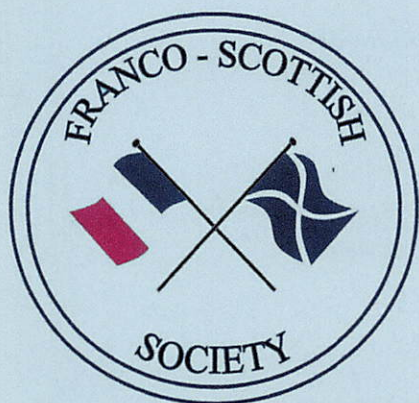


THE FRANCO-SCOTTISH SOCIETY



BULLETIN

2018 - 2019 - INCLUDING THE FSSS LECTURE

Décembre 2019 No 83

THE FRANCO-SCOTTISH SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND
2018-2019

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** See "Society News"*

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John Dott (*St Andrews Branch*)
Willis Marker (*Glasgow Branch*)
James Suttie (*Aberdeen Branch*)
Sheila Watson (*Aberdeen Branch*)

Editor's Note

Chères lectrices, Chers lecteurs,

Welcome to our annual Bulletin where members and friends of the Society have a chance to look back on the past year's activities not only in their local Branch but also in other Branches and in the wider cultural and educational context of Scotland, where the FSSS continues to support language learning and to extend joint educational projects.

We note with sadness the loss of our Honorary President, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, as well as the loss of several long-standing members of the Society.

Three years ago the FSSS Council, where all Branches are represented by two elected committee members, noted how much members valued shared activities, such as the AGM, the biennial public lecture and the exchange visit. It suggested holding an informal meeting of members after the annual AGM to enhance and encourage cohesion and exchange between the Branches.

Several suggestions emerged at the first meeting held on 25 June 2016. I would like to quote a few of these which you can keep in mind while reading this issue and judge for yourselves how far they have been put into practice. For example: *to share more speakers and in the case of those invited from France to enable several Branches to contribute to the costs; to encourage attendance from members of other Branches as guest speakers or visitors; to offer joint social events; to build on connections with other local organisations in the area who have similar interests, especially when talks and events offer a variety of topics of mutual interest.*

Personally, I think a positive picture appears. The Society can be proud of the way it continues to offer a programme of events promoting French culture and language together throughout Scotland while adapting to the changing environment. In this year's Bulletin, under the section "French Connections", as an illustration of the enhanced cohesion, I have chosen summaries of popular talks covering the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries and which have been given by several Branch members of the Society to others throughout the country.

Many thanks to all our contributors named and unnamed!

Bonne lecture et bonne continuation!

Anne-Colette Lequet

BRANCH ACTIVITIES 2018-2019

Aberdeen

The first meeting of the 2018-19 session, a talk by Marie-Christine Graham on the *Châteaux de la Loire*, took place at Albyn School with refreshments provided by the Branch in the Mackie Library. The headmaster has agreed to the Branch continuing to use the School. However, after a year without charge, a contribution is now required towards the Albyn Foundation, a charity which helps fund pupils from low income families. In October a successful joint meeting was organised with St Andrews Branch in the form of lunch followed by a *visit to the V&A Museum* in Dundee. The November speaker was John Cooper from Edinburgh Branch who spoke on *Autocracy and Democracy, Centralism and Individualism – a French Enigma*. The Garden Lounge of Midstocket Church was the venue for the *pre-Christmas quiz*, again devised by a member, Margaret Murray, followed by the traditional pre-Christmas buffet supplied by several members. In January, Neil MacLennan of Aberdeen University gave an excellent talk on *Wilfrid Owen's French influences*. Verity Walker and Richard Kausch came to Aberdeen as part of their tour of the Branches to promote Verity's first novel *Major Tom's War* which was very well received. Unfortunately, Elizabeth Bryant had to postpone her talk on *l'Architecture Romane* in March but fortunately a Branch member, Jan Hosie was able to take her place with a talk on the charity she supports in *Burkina Faso*. Colin Browning then gave a talk in French on the subject of *Marc Brunel, Ingenieur Civil* and following the Branch AGM on 14th May, Tom Wight spoke on *Thomas Blaikie, paysagiste*. Once again, this meeting was hosted by Total who provided a very welcome finger buffet.

A visit to Dunninald Gardens, Montrose, in May concluded the annual programme. This was preceded by lunch at the Hillside

Hotel and followed by shortbread and tea served in the Castle Hall from a gallon teapot. This year the 15 members who enjoyed the outing were slightly less fortunate with the weather but still appreciated the carpet of bluebells and the beautiful walled garden. The group was joined by family visitors from France which provided an opportunity to speak French. Unfortunately, the Castle, built by James Gillespie Graham in 1824, is only open during the month of July.

Membership is slightly down on last year being 35 members. Attendance is generally in the 20s. Sadly three long-term members died during the year; Sheila Watson, Gabrielle Craig and Jim Suttie, the last two both former officers of the Committee. A new member from the Institute of Linguists was welcomed on the Committee.

Other Activities: Rhona Bean, Honorary Secretary of the Branch represented the Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland at the prize-giving ceremonies for the FSSS Language Prize and the new joint prize in partnership with AMOPA (Association des Membres de l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques). She visited Robert Gordon's College, Aberdeen Grammar School and Cults Academy.

Alexander Gray Bequest: cheques from the Society's Education Fund were presented to two students from Aberdeen University to support them in their study time in France. Conor Haggerty is going for a year and Charlotte Leslie is dividing her time between France and Spain.

Dumfries & Galloway

The Branch did not produce a programme for the 2018-19 session since its membership had fallen below a critical number to guarantee a suitable audience to invite regular monthly speakers.

This Branch of the FSSS has experienced particular problems due to the wide area

covered and difficulty for travel at certain times in the year. However, FSSS Council has always felt that it is important for the FSSS to have points of contact and links throughout the regions and Dumfries & Galloway represents a large part of the country.

A subcommittee (Colin Browning , Catherine and Geoff Hare, Anne-Colette Lequet, Tom Wight,) has been set up to look into various ideas, models and possibilities for a relaunch of both cultural events and educational projects in the area. Possible links with other local societies are being looked at. A positive lead for a project with the Dumfries & Galloway Catering College is being pursued. A link has been established through a contact at Dumfries Academy who with the North West Community Campus and Dumfries Grammar School are keen for their classes to have access to various opportunities to promote language learning such as the *Open Day at Stirling University* and the *Annual Multilingual Debate at Heriot-Watt University*.

In June the Edinburgh Branch was happy to fund transport costs from Dumfries to the University of Stirling's Modern Languages Open Day.

Council was saddened to hear of the death of the former Chairperson, Cecelia Franklin and is very grateful to Wesley Paxton for the effort he has devoted to the Branch and for agreeing to remain a contact at this transitional point in time.

Edinburgh

The "Franco-Scottish year" started at the end of September 2018 with the now traditional *pot d'accueil* which was very well attended, with positive feedback on the convivial atmosphere. At its first meeting, the Branch invited Dr Clarisse Godard-Desmarest to give a talk on *Seventeenth Century French "hôtels": a comparative study of Paris and Edinburgh*. Dr Godard came from Paris to give the talk.

The second meeting was an introduction in English and French by Richard Mowe and his team on the 2018 edition of the *French Film Festival*. The feedback from attendees was again very positive. The November meeting included a talk in French by Dr Tony Lodge entitled *Y eut-il jamais un cockney parisien?* In December the entertainment for the *Fête de Noël* was provided by Walter Perrie, Margaret Bennett and Talitha MacKenzie. The evening was greatly appreciated by members for its informal professionalism. In January Dr Geoff Hare gave a most interesting talk on *Alphonse Daudet et son Tartarin sur les Alpes: roman satirique sur le tourisme moderne*. This was followed in February by two talks: one by Agnes Ness on *Impressionists in winter: snow effects* and the other by Verity Walker and Richard Kausch on *Major Tom's War*. The annual members' dinner took place in *Jules Verne Brasserie*, a French inspired restaurant in Edinburgh and In April Dr Kenneth Thompson gave a talk in English on the *Fortress villages of Corsica*, which members of the Geographical Society also attended. The year closed with the AGM and a *Quiz in French* in May.

In 2018-19 Branch membership stood at 45. The Branch which meets at the French Institute reached an agreement whereby members of the Institute can attend selected FSS Edinburgh Branch meetings free of charge and the room hire costs are reduced accordingly. The Institute also publicises the Society's events.

Members of the Branch were saddened by the sudden death in April of Reinald De Meyer, a member of the staff of the French Institute, who helped the Franco-Scottish Society (Edinburgh Branch) for over 30 years with its meetings at the Institute. He will be sorely missed.

Other Activities: The project "French language ambassadors in schools" continues to be supported by the Edinburgh Branch with 2-hour weekly visits by the Chairman to a local school to help

with the “conversation practice”.

In September 2018, the Chairman and Honorary Treasurer of the Branch were again guests of Luc Degonville, mayor of Manicamp, a past “guest speaker from France”. They gave a class in English to the pupils of the local primary school and revisited the Thomas Blaikie Square. M. Degonville and Manicamp are now working on a wider Franco-Scottish connection through the *European Network: In the Footsteps of Robert Louis Stevenson* which has projects in the region.

Alexander Gray Bequest: A request from the *Society's Education Fund 2018-19* was made on behalf of Ross High School, East Lothian, for £500 for a pupil whose family could no longer cover the entire cost of their daughter's June 2019 school trip to France (part payment had already been made by the family). Part of the *Lecture Fund* was once again used to receive the speaker from France, Richard Kausch, translator from Paris. The rest of the fund was used for tokens to speakers whose talks were in French.

Branch Funds: Again, support was given to the *French Film Festival* with a contribution of £250 and support to 5th and 6th year pupils from a school in East Lothian to hire a coach to attend the *FFF Educational programme* in Edinburgh. £130 were given for prizes to the *Concours de l'écriture* which included Edinburgh and Edinburgh Napier University. Edinburgh Branch committee members read the submissions, chose the winners and distributed prizes at a ceremony organised by Philippe Sibeaud and Sylvain Blanche at the French Institute. £100 was awarded to a young girl to cover part of the cost of fees for the *French DELF exam* prior to her stay in France. A request for £340 was granted to *Dumfries Academy* for transport to Stirling University for three schools in the region to attend a French Language event.

The Edinburgh Branch sponsored the *Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland Lecture* in November 2018 by providing £1500 to cover event costs.

Glasgow

The 2018-19 programme of monthly Thursday evening events took off in September with an enthusiastic performance of *songs in French* (Piaf, Brel) delivered by Flossie Malavialle accompanying herself on the guitar. The audience also had opportunities to take part in the singing. In October, Janine Adamson gave a most informative and interesting talk on *Paris Belle Epoque*. In November several members attended the FSSS Public Lecture in Edinburgh given by Dr Emile Chabal on *La Laïcité*, followed by a convivial buffet lunch at the Carlton Hilton Hotel. They very much enjoyed the event and found the lecture extremely interesting and delivered in a very lively and relaxed style. Later in November, Elizabeth Geary Keohane from the French Dept. at Glasgow University gave a talk on *Les films de Bruno Dumont* particularly focussing on *Le P'tit Quinquin*. Her talk linked nicely into the French Film Festival. Mid-December saw the annual Christmas party with the traditional welcoming *vin chaud*, this year prepared by Gerry for the first time as Janine, sadly, could not be present. The atmosphere was once again very jovial with seasonal songs and music by a talented former student of the Conservatoire, accompanied on the piano by her Spanish partner. A first-year student of French and Music also sang and played the guitar and the two guests shared a duet on *Les Feuilles Mortes*. The entertainment was followed by a delicious buffet brought by members. In January Tom Wight, National Treasurer and a regular guest speaker, took as his topic *Guillaume, duc de Normandie*. Jacqueline Munro-Lafon one of our oldest members who served many years in positions on the branch committee, was delighted to be named as an Honorary member at this meeting. The February meeting in common with other Branches, welcomed Verity Walker from Inverness to speak about her book *Major Tom's War*. She was accompanied by Richard Kausch who had worked as translator for the French version. The talk in March was delivered by

one of our newer members, Ian Robertson, who spoke on the *Work and Life of Robert Louis Stevenson*. The *Annual Members' Lunch* took place a bit later this year in May. Around 20 members enjoyed a delicious meal prepared and served by college students at the Anniesland campus of Glasgow Clyde College.

The afternoon *Quoi de Neuf* discussion group on the first Monday of the month still continues at the Alliance Française, attracting between 15 and 20 people providing a round-table format, to discuss a pre-arranged theme plus items of personal interest. It attracts a slightly different group to the monthly evening Branch meetings and offers a different conversation opportunity.

Membership stands at 61 and the Branch continues to attract new members.

Thanks, as always, are due to committee members who take on the various tasks to make the annual programme run smoothly and this year particularly to Colin Browning, who is standing down as Honorary Treasurer, and to Marthe Law, who is resigning from the committee.

Inverness

Membership is slowly growing with new faces every month although 2018-19 was a tricky year for the small Branch.

The Glen Mhor Hotel, where it meets, has taken over the Waterside Inn nearby, making it a very large hotel. Emmanuel Moine, the Manager of the hotel and Chairman of the Branch since its creation in 2014-15 wished to step down from this post. No-one stepped forward so for a few months the Branch continued to meet without a Chair. People were interested but all very busy since many members still work full time and often in tourism for the many cruise ships which now dock at Invergordon throughout most of the year. An interim committee was formed; Emmanuel Moine, Honorary Treasurer, Cecile Mettot Membership Secretary, Verity Walker,

Chair. They were confirmed in their roles at the June 2019 AGM. The new membership year begins from that point onwards.

In February the Branch hosted Verity Walker and Richard Kausch her translator as part of their national tour to discuss the translation of Verity's novel "Major Tom's War" into French as *Grande Guerre, Petits Destins* which should appear sometime next year in the French translation. In May an unusual night of smoked-salmon tasting was led by *Lionel Raguenet*, a French fishmonger living and working in Aviemore. His smoked salmon is delicious and he trained with Paul Bocuse – his life story is a fascinating one. A *Brexit Quiz* proved most enjoyable and in June a fabulously sunny *Boules and BBQ Night* followed the AGM. At the very least the Branch meets and eats together in French once every month and actively encourages young seasonal French workers to come along to the evenings.

Other Activities: Verity Walker was happy to represent the FSSS and present a runners-up prize for the AMOPA/FSSS *parlons français* competition to a senior pupil at Inverness High School. Staff there report serious concerns regarding the pressure on modern languages in secondary schools. It is hoped that the FSSS would consider any possible means at its disposal to alleviate the situation.

Future activities planned by the Branch include a membership French DVD library (based on swapping between members listed in a Facebook group), a new 'prom-voc' (promenade vocabulaire) concept planned for the summer months as a French-speaking picnic and walk, a boules evening with a BBQ and some French film nights lined up for the winter. A poster is being prepared which hotels and restaurants who use French staff can display to encourage young temporary workers to attend and encourage French speaking within the group.

Perth

The 2018 - 2019 Season included talks on: civil engineering (*Works of the Brunels - Father and Son*), architecture (*The Life and work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh*), history (*William Duc de Normandie - the Conqueror*), social history (*Secret places in Paris*), literature (*The literature of defiance in occupied France - Vercours and Eluard*). It also provided the opportunity to invite speakers from other FSS Branches.

Currently the Branch has an active membership of 30 who not only attend the meetings, but promote the society at every opportunity. The small committee looks after the day to day administration and works hard to ensure the development of the Branch which In June 2019 hosted the national AGM.

Members have been encouraged to deliver talks and there is now a core group of speakers who deliver high quality talks on a wide range of subjects. The *conférenciers* have also been invited to speak to other branches. Special thanks go to regular contributors, Walter Perrie and Marie-Christine Graham and to a new contributor, John Jessop. The practice of delivering the talk in French and adding slides in English works well and ensures that non-native and less fluent speakers are not abandoned. Meetings are held on Wednesdays at the Royal George Hotel, which provides a well-appointed location at a reasonable rate and opportunity to socialise after the event. It provides the venue for the Epiphany Lunch which gives longer standing and former members, who cannot drive in the evenings, the opportunity to attend. The Branch also runs a monthly *Causerie*, where between 10 - 12 people meet up and speak French with native French Speakers.

Links with the Community are maintained through the December meeting when the winners of the Alexander Gray Award report on their experiences in France and parents and teachers attend.

Other Activities: Over the last two years the talks have increased the Branch's interaction and reciprocal arrangements with other groups in the Perth area, who

share similar interests: the twinning associations between Perth and Cognac, "Friends of Cognac", Kinross and Gacé, the Perth Film Society and Perth College. The last two also host events which provide additional interest and opportunities to socialise with a wider circle of friends.

Alexander Gray Bequest: Awards from the *Education Fund 2018-19* were made to Rebecca Peedle and Eleanor Senior of Kinross High School.

Thanks are due to all the committee for its commitment and work. Especially to Joëlle Fabre, the new Honorary Treasurer, to Ginette MacWilliam for her support in organising the venue for the national AGM, to Chris Lindsay who ensures the smooth running of the events and last but not least to "Madame la Présidente" who can be proud of all in all, a good year and lots of reasons to be optimistic!

St Andrews

Membership currently stands at 29. The full programme of talks and events arranged for the 2018-19 session started at the September meeting when students representing Madras College, Waid Academy and Elmwood College, together with their teachers and course tutors were welcomed. These groups had received grants through the Alexander Gray Bequest and the reports they gave exemplified the use of the Education Fund. In October Odile Hughson, from the Edinburgh Branch, spoke about *La Royauté française en Ecosse* revealing how many close links there were over the centuries with France and the lesser members of the French royal family. Once again, a *Transgenerational Creative Writing Session* was organised by Dr Elise Hugueny-Leger from the French Dept. at the University. Some Branch members met up with representatives from the Languages Dept. together with students currently studying French for an instructive and interesting evening. The basis of the writing and discussion was based around the details of a favourite recipe from the participant's families. In November Cathy Guiader gave a talk on the life, time and influences of *Marie*

de Guise. Early in December, 20 members visited the Courtyard restaurant in Cupar for a *pre-Christmas lunch*. In January Joyce Duncan, the new President of the Loches / St Andrews Alliance stepped in at short notice due to ill health of the expected speaker. She presented the background to the development of the group, from its original concept of an Alliance, to St. Andrews becoming a full twin of Loches with signed Charters of Friendship. The committees are hoping to have joint projects and mutual invitations to members. February saw a second culinary outing hosted by the Hospitality Dept. at Elmwood College for an excellent French themed lunch. Members of the St. Andrews Loches Alliance and some previous members of the Branch joined the group. For the March meeting Paul Malgrati of the University of St. Andrews gave a talk on *Burns' Legacy from a French perspective*. Using two of Burns' well-known songs – *Scots wha hae* and *A man's a man for a' that* - he highlighted the similarities between them and the French revolutionary *Ça ira* song. Finally, in April, Prof. Sian Reynolds, French Dept. of Stirling University, spoke about *Les Enfants de la Révolution 1789* focusing on

the children who were born to families whose parents were executed. In May the Branch AGM was brought forward in order not to clash with the National AGM

Joint Branch Project: In October a meeting between members of the Aberdeen and St Andrews Branches was arranged. 22 members met in Dundee for lunch followed by a visit to the new V & A Gallery, which was a great success.

Alexander Gray Bequest: Awards were made from the society's Education Fund to pupils from Waid Academy to stay with families in Anstruthers' twin town of Bapaume, to pupils from Madras College to strengthen their links with the Collège Georges Besse in St Andrews' twin town of Loches, to HND students from the Hospitality course at SRUC Elmwood to visit France to improve their skills and knowledge of France and a further HND student was allocated funding to enable her to travel to France to work in a patisserie in Sainte Menehould, the twin town of Cupar, during her vacation.

SOCIETY NEWS

Lord Balfour of Burleigh

The Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland is saddened at the death on 18 September 2019 of Lord Balfour of Burleigh, former President and later Honorary President of the FSSS for many years. His presence at the Society's AGM and Lansdowne lectures over

the years, accompanied by Janet Lady Balfour, was always much appreciated by members. It was a gentle and easy end to a long and productive life. The Society presents its sincere condolences to all his family. An obituary will be published in the next Bulletin.

FSSS Public Lecture

The Franco Scottish Society of Scotland Lecture (previously the Lansdowne Lecture) is biennial and given in English on a French or Franco-Scottish theme. Traditionally it is

held in November either in Edinburgh or Perth or Glasgow in turn.

In November 2018 the Lecture, entitled "*Laïcité, religion and identity in contemporary France*" was given by guest speaker Dr Emile Chabal, University of

Edinburgh, at the Hilton Edinburgh Carlton.

Several months of organisation and planning were involved to enable a smooth running of the event followed by an optional lunch on the day. Attendees were members, guests of the various branches, VIPs and contacts from the judiciary, the world of education, religion and politics. The event is useful as a means of informing the general public of the existence of the Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland and its Branches. Members from throughout

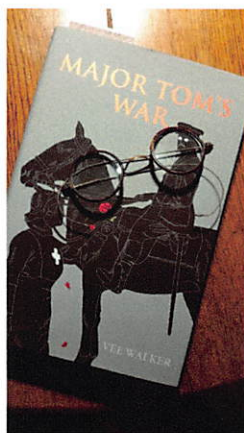
Scotland are able to enjoy an instructive and convivial day together.

Feedback on this “first edition” since the Lansdowne Fund run out, was very positive. The topic and lecturer proved to be particularly popular and with over 100 attendees Dr Chabal kindly agreed to deliver his lecture twice in succession.

We thank all those who helped to make the day a success and the members of the Edinburgh Branch who funded the event.

The Annual Guest Speaker from France Lecture

The month of February sees this annual event which was initiated in 2012. The Alexander Gray Lecture Fund from the Alexander Gray Bequest provides Branches with the opportunity to bring lecturers from further afield for their programme of events. By pooling resources, they are able to invite at least one lecturer from France each year and often attract non-members to whom the particular topic is of interest.



The 2018-19 lecture; *Translating Major Tom's War: Grande Guerre, Petits Destins: la traduction*, was given by Richard Kausch, translator from Paris and Verity Walker author from Inverness.

The subject dealt with the challenges of translating a novel, written in English but set

largely in France, into French. The novel relates the story of Verity's grandfather Tom's experiences in France comparing them to those of Gaston Derome, the Mayor of Bavay, the town he accidentally liberates at the end of WWI. The lecture included some authentic material from the Occupation of Northern France 1914 – 1918 and was delivered bilingually as a “double-act”. This was much appreciated and made for a congenial presentation which considered, with humour and honesty, the good and bad points of working together on the translation.

The lecture was given on successive nights to Branches in Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness. The Society is always most grateful to the guest speaker who in fact covers many miles in a short period.

The February 2020 talk will be by Sylvie Decaux, maître de conférences, IUT Paris V Descartes, on the topic: *La librairie et l'édition indépendante*. She will be speaking in Perth, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews.

Le Concours de la Francophonie

In March 2019 the Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland was once again very pleased to sponsor the *Concours de la Francophonie*.

This French competition which the Institut français d'Écosse launched in 2016 to celebrate the international day of the French language is thriving in Scotland as a majority of children now learn French from P1.

The student-centered competition is designed to encourage creativity in French and to allow as many primary and secondary schools throughout Scotland to participate. Pupils/students are asked to film a short production: dialogue, song, play, report or any other activity in French. The competition is organised in two phases: Local Authorities choose their local champions and a National jury selects the winners.

Twenty-eight schools participated and semi-final entries were received from 14 Councils: Angus, Argyll and Bute, Clackmannanshire, Dumfries and Galloway, East Renfrewshire, Edinburgh, Falkirk, Glasgow, North Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire, Perth and Kinross, Shetland Islands, Stirling, West Lothian and several independent schools.

The winning schools in 2019 were:

P1/P4

East Bank Primary School (P1/P2)

(Glasgow City Council)

Craigbank Primary School (P2)

(Clackmannanshire Council)

P5/P7

Doune Primary School (P5)

(Stirling Council)

Strachur Primary School (P5/P7)

(Argyll and Bute Council)

S1/S3

Edinburgh Academy (S3)

(Independent School)

Braidhurst High School (S2)

(North Lanarkshire Council)

Special Prize for Creativity

Aith Junior High

(Shetland Islands Council)

The National jury included Louise Glen, Senior Education Officer, Education Scotland; Jim McDonald, Qualifications Manager, Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA); Philippe Sibeaud, Head of Studies and Education Attaché, Institut français d'Écosse.

The Consul General of France and Director of the Institut français d'Écosse, Emmanuel Cocher, and the Head of Studies and Education attaché, Philippe Sibeaud, were joined by Lord Brodie, Dr Geoff Hare and Catherine Hare from the Franco-Scottish Society and Sandra McLennan from TOTAL E&P at the award ceremony in the French Consulate in Edinburgh.

The competition is sponsored by TOTAL E&P and The Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland in partnership with the Alliance française de Glasgow, SALT, SCILT, the University of Edinburgh and TV5 Monde.



The 2019 AGM in Perth

Perth Branch of the Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland was host to the Society's national AGM 2019. It was held in the Norrie-Millar Studio of the Perth Concert Hall on May 31st 2019 – a very pleasant and well-appointed venue. The Society thanks the Perth Branch.

The event was well attended and was followed by lunch of soup and sandwiches served in the Concert Hall. The guided visit tours of the Concert Hall and Perth Theatre which were organised after lunch were enjoyed by the members of the Society.

The AGM was the occasion to elect a new General Secretary (Catherine Hare replaces Anne-Colette Lequet) and a new General Treasurer (Gerry Toner replaces Tom

Wight). Lord Brodie continues as President and Elizabeth Bryant as Vice-president.

Guided visit of theatre



A Taste of French “pour les jeunes”

As part of its remit to promote French language and culture, the FSSS is able to offer financial support for educational projects undertaken by young people throughout Scotland when these events meet criteria for donations left to the Society and its Branches. Below, reports on two events.

A French Language Day

On Wednesday 12th June, our Higher and Advanced Higher French class made up of pupils from Dumfries Academy, North West Community Campus and Dumfries High School, had the opportunity to visit the University of Stirling for their *Modern Languages Open Day*. Firstly, we attended a lecture by Dr Aedin Ní Loingsigh on “Contemporary French Society: Race, Religion and the Republic”. Following the lecture, we got to experience a university tutorial setting when we attended language workshops, practising our speaking, reading and writing skills with pupils from other schools. In the workshop we used examples from French literature to discuss the lecture topic in greater depth. In our final session, we heard from current and previous students who shared their experiences of

spending a year abroad as part of their course. I found the *Open Day* beneficial in helping me with my decisions regarding what to study and where to study as it gave us a taste of what it would be like to study a language in depth and also what the French course would be like at the University of Stirling.

(Macie McMillan, S5 Dumfries Academy)

This was a hugely positive experience for both staff and pupils. While the pupils were attending their workshops, secondary school teachers met with university colleagues to discuss the transition from school to university. We considered the various challenges that may arise and how best to support young people in the future. It was beneficial to get an insight into the content of the French course at the

University of Stirling and also to have the opportunity to meet with colleagues from across Scotland to share best practice. In addition to the workshops, Dr Beatrice Ivey took the time to show us around the "Experiences of Exile" exhibition currently on display at the university and share her latest research on this topic. Our pupils had a fantastic experience and very much appreciated the opportunity to immerse themselves in university life. On behalf of staff and pupils from Dumfries Academy, North West Community Campus and Dumfries High School we would like to extend our most heartfelt thanks to the Franco-Scottish Society, Edinburgh Branch for supporting us to attend this event.

(Ms J Kerr, Dumfries Academy; Mrs J Muir, North West Community Campus)

A French Language Week

S1-S3 pupils at Ross High School, in East Lothian, had the opportunity to travel to the Picardy area in France in June 2019 for a 5-day stay. We had a fantastic programme promoting French culture, history and language. After 16 hours on the coach, we were thrilled to arrive at the Château de Warsy. It was very hot in France that week in particular and we were staying in the grounds of the château in glamping pods.

The next day was all about *la Grande Guerre*. We had an early start and we visited the beautiful city of Albert and its 1916 Somme war museum. We also had a stroll in its grand gardens. We experienced other historical monuments in the area such as Thiepval memorial where we laid our poppy wreath and many pupils found their relatives' names on the stone pillars. We visited the Ulster Tower, the massive Lochnagar Crater, and Newfoundland memorial at Beaumont-Hamel. We were

even on Australian soil at Pozière War Memorial. Many pupils were surprised to see on the cemetery crosses how young the soldiers were who had fought in the Great War. To finish the day the pupils were involved in team building activities on the grounds of the château.

Wednesday was the day for *les sensations fortes* when we visited Parc Asterix which celebrated 30 years this year. Pupils were very impressed with the rides and they preferred it to Parc Disneyland. Most of us spent our time on the water rides, as we were desperate to get drenched, because it was so hot!

We experienced the local Thursday market in Montdidier where pupils were speaking in French buying jewellery, food and gadgets. Many disappeared to the bakery where they bought *des baguettes*. In the afternoon, we went to a local goat farm where pupils fed, milked and later tasted the goat cheese. It was delicious and many decided to bring some home as gifts for their families. At night we had a campfire and *nous avons fait rôtir des chamallows sur le feu de camp. Miam- miam!!*

It was time to go home on Friday morning but before heading to Calais we stopped at a snail farm. We were all very interested in finding out about the process of snail farming and especially in tasting the snails. We had five different dishes to sample and *les plats préférés* were the snail and pork sausage and snails in garlic butter!

Pupils were asked what they liked the most about the French Trip and their answers were very similar:

- being in France and using the language,
- being part of a team,
- trying different types of food they have heard about in class,

- experiencing French history that they have seen on the news and read about in school.

Thank you, Franco-Scottish Society for helping us make our French trip a reality!

(Linda Scott, French Teacher at Ross High School)



Thiepval



Albert



The Biennial Exchange Visit

Every two years members of the Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland join members of the Association franco-écossaise (AFE) based in Paris for an exchange visit to a region of Scotland or to a region of France. The last visit in **2018 (*Edinburgh and the Borders*)** took place in Scotland. The next visit is being organised by the AFE in the *Hauts de France* Region. Members will be based in Arras with excursions to neighbouring historic towns, well known galleries and museums as well as to a nature reserve in the Baie de Somme.

More information will be circulated to all members later.

Numbers are limited. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Please contact Tom Wight (t.wight@btinternet.com) if you are interested in joining the group on this visit to the **Hauts de France from 9th to 17th June 2020.**



FRANCO-SCOTTISH SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND PRIZES

The Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland Language Prize 2018-2019

The winner of the 2018-19 FSSS language prize, awarded annually to the most outstanding candidate in the SQA's (Scottish Qualifications Authority) Advanced Higher French Examination, was VALENTIN PYATAEV of ROBERT GORDON'S COLLEGE in Aberdeen.

The prize-giving ceremony was organised by Robert Gordon's College in December since Valentin was now studying at Edinburgh University. The Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland was represented by Rhona Bean, Honorary Secretary of the Aberdeen Branch who presented Valentin with his certificate and cheque for £200. The ceremony, attended by his parents, grandfather, head teacher, Simon Mills, headteacher of modern languages, Nadine Lamont, was an opportunity to emphasise the importance of language learning.



Rhona Bean and Valentin Pyataev



The Competition "Parlons français" organised by AMOPA-Écosse and FSSS

After several years of sponsoring this competition Total-UK withdrew its support in 2017. AMOPA-Écosse was therefore very pleased that the Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland agreed to support the competition which henceforth will be run in partnership by the two organisations. Six schools took part in 2019, entering the impressive number of 31 candidates. The geographical distribution of the schools was much the same as in previous years: Inverness Royal Academy in the north, three schools from Aberdeen in the north-east, Douglas Academy, Milngavie, in the south-west. Again Robert Gordon's College, Aberdeen, presented some very strong candidates, and two of them won first and third prizes respectively. Congratulations are due to all the schools and pupils who took part in the competition. They all showed a good standard of spoken French.

As well as helping with the presentation of prizes and certificates at Robert Gordon's College, Rhona Bean, Honorary Secretary of the FSS Aberdeen Branch, presented certificates at Aberdeen Grammar School and Cults Academy, Aberdeen. Verity Walker, Chairperson of the FSS Inverness Branch, presented certificates at Inverness Royal Academy, and Gerry Toner, who organised the

competition for the eighth year in succession, presented certificates and the second prize to Craig McColl at Douglas Academy, Milngavie.



Alex Brown-Grant (1st prize) and Kirsty Oldham (3rd prize), with (from left to right) Rhona Bean, Franco-Scottish Society, Philip Bennett, AMOPA-Écosse, and Nadine Lamont, Head of Foreign Languages, Robert Gordon's College

(Philip Bennett, Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques)

Additional Comments on the presentations in Aberdeen

As mentioned in Philip's report, I had the pleasure of joining him at Robert Gordon's College for the presentation of prizes and then arranged visits to Cults Academy and Aberdeen Grammar School. At Cults, the pupils were taken out of their class to have their photographs taken with the head teacher. The visit to Aberdeen Grammar School took the whole period in which the pupils were encouraged to ask me questions in French about where I had learnt my French and what my involvement was with the Franco-Scottish Society. We shared a cup of tea together before going outside to have the photographs taken by one of the School staff and there was an opportunity to tell the four students about the Alexander Gray Bequest and Education Fund. Alexander Gray had been a longstanding member of the FSS Aberdeen Branch.

Since my visit to the School, Bereket Berhane, the Head of French, has approached the Branch to ask if we would be prepared to lend our support to a debating competition that he would like to set up for his Advanced Higher pupils and we have agreed to do so. He first became aware of the Society when he attended the talk by Verity Walker and Richard Kauch on "Major Tom's War".



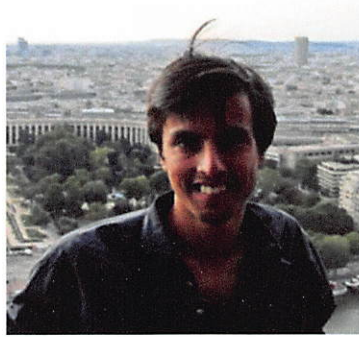
Cults Academy



Aberdeen Grammar School

(Rhona Bean, Honorary Secretary FSS Aberdeen Branch)

THE FRANCO-SCOTTISH SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND LECTURE



Every two years an eminent speaker is invited to talk in English on a theme of Franco-Scottish interest before an audience made up of members, guests and the general public. The event is held in turn in Edinburgh, Perth or Glasgow in November.

From 1988 this biennial lecture was funded from a generous gift from the 8th Marquis of Lansdowne (1912-1999), former President and Honorary President of the Franco-Scottish Society and was known as "The Lansdowne Lecture". The fund is now exhausted and the lecture has been renamed "The Franco-Scottish Society of Scotland Lecture" and is part funded by sponsorship.

The 2018 lecture was financed through donations from former members of the FSS Edinburgh Branch and given in the Hilton Edinburgh Carlton Hotel on 10 November by **Dr Emile Chabal**, Reader in History at the University of Edinburgh.

Below: a shortened version of the lecture

Laïcité, religion and identity in contemporary France

French secularism (*laïcité*) has been the subject of intense controversy in the last three decades. Some see it as a sophisticated form of state racism; others argue that it is a necessary foundation for citizenship. But most discussions of *laïcité* lack historical depth and give little sense of its diverse origins.

At best, *laïcité* is deployed in the English-speaking press to make a point 'for' or 'against' a supposedly 'French' way of dealing with religious, ethnic and cultural identities. At worst, *laïcité* is manipulated or twisted out of shape by those who want to use it as a way of limiting the rights of minorities, especially Muslim minorities.

Even in France itself, this has happened.

Yet, whatever you think of *laïcité*, it is deeply embedded in French history and it is helpful therefore to get a sense of how *laïcité* has become such a widely discussed term. The best place to start with this is the so-called 'headscarf affair', which erupted in 1989 and forms the basis of the recent history of *laïcité*.

The story began when three schoolgirls were suspended from a secondary school in Creil, a distant northern suburb of Paris, when they refused to remove their headscarves in class. The issue was reported in the national media and, within a few

weeks, it had become a major controversy. All manner of intellectuals, academics, politicians and public figures weighed into a debate about whether the head teacher had been right or wrong to suspend the three girls.

Some accused the head teacher of excessive zeal, arguing that there was no need to stigmatise the girls in this way; others said that, not only had the head teacher been right, but that there should be legislation to ensure that the head teacher would have a law to back up his decision. The case became such a media event that, eventually, the Education Minister – the Socialist Lionel Jospin – referred the question to one of France’s highest legal bodies – the *Conseil d’État*. They too gave an ambiguous answer and avoided recommending legislation while reaffirming the French state’s commitment to keeping the school a ‘secular’ space.

This ambiguity is as far as it got for many years, but the polemic did not die down. Political and academic figures continued to talk and write about the ‘headscarf problem’ for the next decade. While some sociologists maintained that legislation was a bad idea as it would stigmatise those who did choose to wear the headscarf rather than help them integrate, other intellectual and political figures – of both the right and the left – argued that it was important to legislate on the issue.

For many French feminists, legislation would have the benefit of giving those who were coerced a legal recourse to which they could turn if they needed. For many French teachers, legislation was seen as a good idea because it would allow teachers a clear and unified line when dealing with these cases in school: they argued that a case-by-case approach was open to many manipulations. And, finally, many people argued that

legislation would help protect France’s concept of secularism – *laïcité*.

Eventually, the uncertainty became intolerable. In 2003, the right-wing President Jacques Chirac, who had just been re-elected for a second term, decided to set up a public commission to investigate the question of whether to legislate on the headscarf and other religious symbols in public spaces. The Commission auditioned a very wide range of social and political actors before producing a report that made a number of proposals to deal with the problem of religious expression in schools. The government then successfully passed legislation which took up only one of the Commission’s proposals – the one to ban “ostentatious religious symbols” in state schools.

Still, the issue refused to go away. Nicolas Sarkozy – a more militantly right-wing President – was elected in 2007. Knowing that a tough stance on immigration was popular with his core electorate, he began various campaigns to ‘rehabilitate’ and ‘strengthen’ French national identity. His government reopened many of the questions about citizenship, nationality and secularism that had been mostly closed since the 2004 legislation was passed. Part of this attempt to revisit these questions involved a new attack on the ‘burqa’.

Notwithstanding the significant confusion amongst the political class over what kind of Islamic dress they actually wanted to ban, the idea of legislation once again received cross-party support. Even if many recognised that the issue was being instrumentalised for political causes, the fundamental principle of a ban was upheld and forms of Islamic dress that fully covered the face in public spaces were ruled unlawful.

The headscarf affair remains a matter of

debate today. For instance, in the last few years, the *Rassemblement National* (formerly *Front National*) has loudly embraced *laïcité* in its attempt to denounce the growing presence of Muslims in France. And, in a separate development, a handful of local mayors in south-eastern France in 2016 implemented a ban on the so-called ‘burkini’ – a form of ‘modest’ swimsuit suitable for Muslim women. The ban was quickly overturned by the *Conseil d’État*, but it served to maintain a focus on forms of Muslim dress as a major political flashpoint.

If these bare facts are useful for understanding the foundations of contemporary *laïcité*, they still leave open the question of interpretation. To put it simply, what does the headscarf affair actually *mean*?

The answer is, of course, that it could mean many different things, but it is useful to distinguish three interpretations that have come to dominate public and academic understandings of *laïcité*:

1. The ‘identity politics’ interpretation;
2. The ‘religious’ interpretation;
3. The ‘political’ interpretation.

The first of these should be familiar to those who are not French or who have spent significant time in the Anglo-American world. This interpretation posits that the headscarf affair has very little to do with secularism, *laïcité* or ‘integration’, which is what many French people say. Instead, it is a symptom of France’s ‘postcolonial’ predicament. For France, this colonial legacy comes in two forms – first a religion (Islam) and second an ‘ethnicity’ (‘Arab’). Despite the fact that in no case does the initial legislation from 2004 single out Islamic dress, it is well understood that it is Muslims who are being targeted. Moreover, the headscarf affair revealed France’s deep sexism, especially pointed in the case of Muslim women, who suffer from the double stigma of being women and Muslim.

Thus, attempts to ‘universalise’ the question of the headscarf into a feminist or international issue are simply smokescreens:

in fact, what the French state has done is fix ethnic and sexual discrimination into law. Advocates of the identity politics interpretation argue that legislation to ban the headscarf is not only discrimination, but also state intervention in a domain where the state has no place.

The second interpretation of the ‘headscarf affair’ – the religious interpretation – takes seriously the French concept of *laïcité* and its assertion that religion should not play any role in the public life of a society. Rather than see French secularism as simply a by-product of French racism and France’s inability to deal with the legacy of its empire, it becomes a key part of France’s modern history. The headscarf affair and the legislation that has accompanied it are part of a long history of attempts to guarantee the ‘neutrality’ of the public space, which began with the increasingly militant attempts to limit the influence of the Catholic Church in the late 19th century which resulted in the separation of Church and State in 1905. Even with this legislation, it took until the 1970s for the influence of the Catholic Church in France to diminish. The battle to rid France of its religious legacies was extremely long, complicated and divisive.

We should not be surprised, then, to find that Islamic dress poses a particular problem for the French. It is not only about racism; it is also that many French people genuinely find excessive expressions of religious affiliation and commitment unacceptable. Moreover, many French people consider that it is the job of the state to enforce religious neutrality. Whereas in Britain or America, it is felt that the state has no place interfering in people’s religious practices, this is not the case in France. In the same way that the French are more willing to accept state intervention in the economy, they are also more willing to accept intervention in their religious lives.

Finally, the political interpretation of the headscarf affair puts the accent, not so much on postcolonial questions or on the limits of secularism, but on the *problem of citizenship*.

In other words, what is at stake in debates over *laïcité* is who can be a French citizen and what being a French citizen means. It is worth remembering that the headscarf affair erupted at the same moment as two other major events: the fall of the Berlin Wall and the bicentenary of the French Revolution. The fall of the Wall marked the beginning of the end of Communism in Europe; it was widely seen as a moment that would usher in a new kind of politics – less murderous and less divisive than that of the Cold War. And the bicentenary of the French Revolution was the occasion for a wide variety of debates about where French politics was going.

One of the responses to this general reassessment of world politics and French politics was a renewed interest in the nation. With the rise of the far-right party the *Front National* in the 1980s, it seemed to be

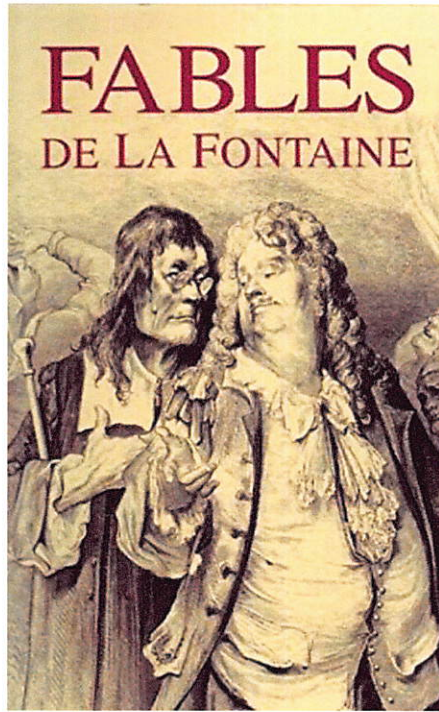
important to reclaim the values of ‘citizenship’ and ‘nationality’ away from the far-right. In this interpretation, then, the headscarf affair and all the debates that went around it were not simply about racism or religion. They were also – and above all – about the limits of the nation.

As will be clear, each one of these interpretations is well supported by the evidence, and it is possible to make excellent arguments around each one. I will leave it to you to decide which one you find more convincing. Nevertheless, I hope that this short summary of the lecture I gave will help move our collective discussion beyond simplistic claims about *laïcité*. Indeed, I firmly believe that *laïcité* is nothing more than a particularly French way of answering some of the most intractable challenges of modern, democratic and plural societies.



(Dr Emile Chabal, Reader in History at the University of Edinburgh)

FRENCH CONNECTIONS



Jean de La Fontaine; Livre 5, fable XII

THE TWA MEDICOS

Aul' Doctor Gey-Bad went tae see a man was richt
no weel,
forbye the man was bein seen by doctor Gey-Guid.
This hinner was hopefu', tho his colleague chiel
held the puir saul tae jine his ancestors was bid.
Each doctor bein sae at odds o notions for a cure,
their patient peyd the ransom peyd tae Nature;
this proved aul' Gey-Bad's verdict had been soon',
tho baith could triumph owre the maladie aa roon,
for ane cud say: 'He's deid, as was by me fore-
tauld!',
- the tither'd say: 'Ye'd hearkend me, the man wad
no be cauld!'.

Les Médecins

Le médecin Tant-pis alloit voir un malade
Que visitoit aussi son confrère Tant-mieux.
Ce dernier espéroit, quoique son camarade
Soutînt que le gisant iroit voir ses aïeux.
Tous deux s'étant trouvés différents pour la cure,
Leur malade paya le tribut à nature,
Après qu'en ses conseils Tant-pis eut été cru.
Ils triomphoient encor sur cette maladie.
L'un disoit : » Il est mort ; j'avois bien prévu.
- S'il m'eût cru, disoit l'autre, il seroit plein de
vie. »

(Translation into Scots by Walter Perrie)

JOHN LAW DE LAURISTON ET LES PREMIÈRES BANQUES DE FRANCE

John Law de Lauriston fut baptisé à Edimbourg le 21 avril 1671, il mourut à Venise en 1729. Son père, William Law acheta le domaine de Lauriston, près de Cramond en 1683. Il était orfèvre à Édimbourg et entretenait des liens familiaux avec une grande partie de l'aristocratie écossaise. À l'époque, les orfèvres fonctionnaient en effet comme banquiers. D'après son contemporain, Lord Hailes, le fils John était très beau, un dandy connu sous le nom de *Beau Law*. C'était un jeune audacieux riche, un élégant.



John Law (1671-1729)

John commença ses études à Édimbourg et partit ensuite à Londres, où il étudia les mathématiques, le commerce et l'économie politique. C'est un jeune homme doué pour les mathématiques, accro aux jeux de hasard et qui jouait gros jeu.

En 1694, après avoir tué un adversaire lors d'un duel, à cause d'une histoire de femme, John est condamné à mort à l'*Old Bailey* et s'enfuit à Amsterdam. A cette époque, Amsterdam est la cité la plus avancée du monde pour le développement des systèmes bancaires. La V.O.C., (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*), a accaparé le marché des épices, des porcelaines, des étoffes en soie et d'autres trésors de l'Extrême-Orient. Les actions dans la V.O.C., société privée, étaient commercialisables, c'est-à-dire, disponibles à quiconque. Les riches bourgeois d'Amsterdam avaient créé la *Wisselbank* pour faciliter les prêts entre eux. C'était une façon de faire accroître la masse monétaire et donc d'augmenter les opérations de la V.O.C. Les rentes

extraordinaires de la V.O.C. ont créé aux Pays Bas l'économie la plus riche du monde. En Hollande, c'est l'âge d'or. Law a étudié de près toutes ces opérations bancaires.

En 1705 John est revenu en Écosse où il fit publier son ouvrage : *L'argent et le Commerce considérés - avec une proposition pour l'approvisionnement de la nation avec de l'argent*. Il a même persuadé le parlement écossais de considérer son système. Malheureusement, John avait mal-choisi le moment: c'était juste après la catastrophe de Darien et les parlementaires n'en voulaient rien savoir.

Le problème économique le plus urgent de l'époque était le manque d'espèces. Le rôle de la masse monétaire, par rapport à l'économie en général, n'avait pas été bien compris. Sans assez d'argent en circulation, l'investissement se tarissait. En France, les guerres sans cesse du Roi Soleil et leur suite de pestes, de famines et de dépeuplements, avaient ruiné le pays: « après 1689 les guerres ont rendu nécessaire toute une série de dévaluations, qui sont des vraies banqueroutes déguisées. » (*Georges DUBY, Histoire de la France : tome 2*)

À la suite de son échec en Écosse, John a passé une décennie en Europe continentale en essayant de persuader les souverains à adopter son système. En

Phillipe d'Orléans
(1674-1723)



France, Louis XIV ne voulait rien savoir d'un protestant, mais c'est à Paris que Law fait la connaissance du duc de Chartres, qui allait bientôt devenir le Régent d'Orléans.

Philippe d'Orléans, neveu du roi, soldat distingué ; intelligent,

grand travailleur, fasciné par toutes les découvertes des sciences nouvelles, par l'alchimie, par les mathématiques, fut aussi grand sensualiste et libertin. Philippe et John s'entendaient bien dans leurs intérêts scientifiques, dans leur sensualité, dans leur vision d'une économie renouvelée et d'un système social réformé.

En 1716 John reçut la permission d'essayer son plan en France. Qu'est-ce que c'était exactement, ce système de Law ? Il visait à créer un tout nouveau système financier. L'idée d'une banque qui émettrait une monnaie nationale en papier était inconnue. Law proposait : 1) une banque d'État, 2) une monnaie nationale en billets de papier, 3) que cette banque consentirait des prêts à des particuliers, à quiconque fournirait la garantie nécessaire au moyen d'un dépôt en espèces. Donc, le système qui jusque-là avait émis de la monnaie en forme de pièces en or, en argent ou en cuivre au nom de la Couronne, deviendrait une entreprise commerciale.

Mais Law était plus ambitieux encore : il voulait relier cette banque commerciale à une société à but lucratif qui émettrait des actions négociables sur le marché libre, échangeables contre des billets de banque. Son innovation la plus marquante consista à lier cette société aux structures de l'économie française ; elle ouvrirait la possibilité de spéculer sur cette économie. Avec les rentes de ces affaires, il proposait de réduire la dette publique et en même temps, de renouveler l'économie par une augmentation énorme de la masse monétaire : « Avec l'essor de la Finance, c'est une nouvelle société qui apparaît, une mentalité qui change. » (G.Duby)

Le gouvernement français était lourdement endetté ; la dette nationale se montait à 77 millions de livres et le revenu pour les deux prochaines années était déjà dépensé. Donc, le programme de Law avait pour le Régent un attrait évident. En 1716 Law fonde la *Banque Générale*, autorisé à émettre des billets payables en espèces à des poids fixes pendant vingt ans. Le poids fixe assure les investisseurs qu'il n'y aura pas de dévaluation par décret royal, comme

avant. À partir de 1717 toutes les taxes devaient être payées en billets de la *Banque*. La même année, en achetant la société privée qui possédait déjà un monopole sur tout le commerce français avec la Louisiane et le Canada, John fonde *La Compagnie d'Occident*. Avec les rentes prétendues de *La Compagnie*, Law visait à convertir la dette royale en une équité privée et rentable.



Billet de la Banque centrale signé par John Law

En 1718 la *Banque Générale* connut un grand succès, versant 40% de dividendes en papier-monnaie. En août, le parlement, visant Law en tant qu'étranger et protestant, déclara qu'aucun étranger ne pouvait administrer les finances du pays. Pour protéger la régence et son ami, Philippe riposta. Dans une lutte aussi compliquée qu'acharnée, il se servit du parlement et des princes légitimes pour écarter les bâtardes de Louis XIV. Ensuite il bannit le parlement. Mais restaient encore les princes légitimes (Condé et Conti) qui haïssaient Philippe et la maison d'Orléans. En décembre la *Banque Générale* se transforma en *Banque Royale*. Quatre mois plus tard *La Compagnie d'Occident* se transforma en *La Compagnie perpétuelle des Indes*, reprenant tout le commerce colonial de la France. La demande pour les actions explose. Le problème ; la *Compagnie* n'est pas encore rentable. Les actions de *La Compagnie*, émises à 500 livres, se tenaient à 3,000 livres. En profitant, beaucoup de gens empochèrent des fortunes faramineuses.

Au cours de la même année Philippe accorde à Law des droits exclusifs sur les pièces de monnaie. Le jeune Voltaire écrit : « La moitié de la nation a-t-elle trouvé la pierre philosophale dans les papeteries ?

Law est-il un dieu, un voyou ou un charlatan qui s'empoisonne avec la drogue qu'il distribue à tout le monde ? » Le cours de l'action atteint 9,000 livres et l'enthousiasme devient manie : on pouvait acheter des actions pour une petite prime et payer plus tard en versements échelonnés. En décembre, pour être admissible à une charge publique, John devient catholique et il est désigné Contrôleur Général des Finances. En charge maintenant de la dette nationale, de toutes les taxes indirectes et des monnaies, il aurait bien pu dire : *l'Économie, c'est moi !*

En 1719 certains spéculateurs commencèrent à encaisser leurs réserves de papier. À Paris l'inflation double les prix de l'année précédente. Law avait doublé la quantité de papier-monnaie puisque les actions étaient convertibles en papier-monnaie à la demande : l'exportation d'or et d'argent fut interdite.

C'est à ce moment de crise que Law commit une erreur majeure ; craignant une perte de confiance, il institue un prix plancher inconditionnel de 9,000 livres pour les actions. Les actions et les billets sont convertibles, de sorte que tout le monde a échangé des actions contre des billets à ce taux ; plus il y a de billets en circulation, plus l'inflation augmente. Law a créé une spirale négative.

Le deux mars 1720, le Prince de Conti sape fatalement le système ; il se rend à la Banque et insiste pour avoir ses 14 millions d'actions en or. Le lendemain, Condé, à son tour, demande ses 25 millions en or. Ils ne visaient pas uniquement à effectuer des rentes énormes, mais à saper la régence.

Le petit peuple des grandes villes, comme Paris, ne participait pas beaucoup à cette économie monétaire. Il vivait ou mourait selon le prix d'une miche de pain. Le résultat - plusieurs émeutes à Paris, Law est rejeté, La *Banque Royale* est fermée. Mais

personne ne savait quoi faire et en juin Law est rappelé. A l'été 1720 c'est la catastrophe ; la peste bubonique est en plein essor à Marseille, il y a encore des émeutes à Paris, Law fait plusieurs dévaluations - ce qui conduit à une panique



Le krach

générale.

Quand Law avait créé la Bourse, il avait en même temps créé la possibilité d'un krach boursier, ce qui venait de se passer. En décembre, le système s'effondre ; Law démissionne et quitte Paris.

C'était une bulle classique. Le système ancien, désastreux, est restauré. Cependant, l'expérience de Law avait revitalisé le commerce en France et au-delà ; même Voltaire a écrit : « Enfin, s'il y a beaucoup de fortunes particulières détruites, la nation devint plus commerçante et plus riche. »

Bien que la plupart des plus petits actionnaires ait récupéré leur argent au cours des années suivantes, la France n'a pas réussi à réformer ses systèmes fiscaux et sociaux. *La Compagnie des Indes* connut un grand succès ; John Law était brillamment en avance sur son temps mais, avec le recul, trop ambitieux, trop gourmand, trop pressé. Comme la France ne pouvait se réformer partiellement, il fallut qu'elle explose entièrement à travers la Révolution.

(Walter Perrie, Perth)

THOMAS BLAIKIE: A SCOTTISH GARDENER AT THE FRENCH COURT

Thomas Blaikie, the Scottish gardener who was to become acquainted with King Louis XVI of France and his wife Marie-Antoinette became a subject of interest after the publication of Blaikie's diary in 1935. In 1981 an exhibition dedicated to Blaikie was organised in the Museum Cernuschi in the Parc Monceau in Paris where Blaikie worked for the cousin of Louis XVI, the Duc d'Orléans, who later became Philippe Egalité before being guillotined in 1793 during the Reign of Terror. In 1982 a commemorative garden was inaugurated on Corstorphine Hill

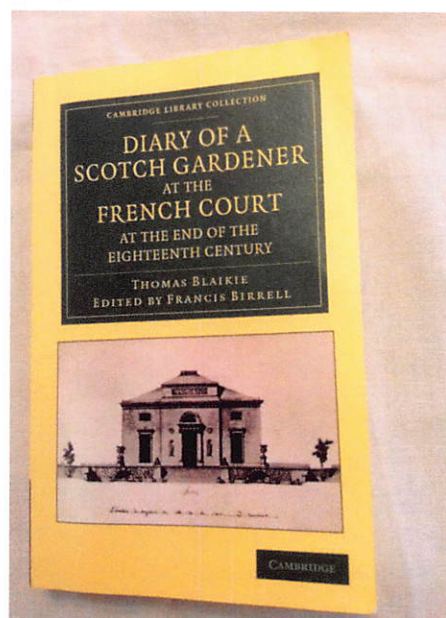


on the spot where Blaikie's parents' house stood. This is now in the grounds of Edinburgh Zoo. In 2001 Patricia Taylor published a book entitled *Thomas Blaikie, the Capability Brown of France*. Because Blaikie had worked in Manicamp, a village in Picardy, for the Count de Lauraguais who had earlier employed him to landscape à l'anglaise the garden of his château in Mont Canisy (now Deauville), Patricia Taylor contacted the Mayor of Manicamp, Luc Degenville, who, in turn, contacted the Franco-Scottish Society (Edinburgh Branch). As a result, in 2016 a square was named in Blaikie's honour in the village.

There has been renewed interest in this "son of Scotland" and in 2019 I gave talks in Corstorphine, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Paris, Chauny and Edinburgh giving details of Blaikie's long life and influence on the design of gardens of the French aristocracy at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of

the 19th century.

As a Scotsman keeping a diary of his exploits in plant gathering in the Alps and his work in Paris before and during the French Revolution, Blaikie has left us a vivid and candid picture of the period. The events after the conclusion of his diary are equally enthralling reminding us that *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose* in politics and in everyday life.



Thomas Blaikie was born in Corstorphine in 1751. His father was a gardener and his mother a domestic, both employed by John Dickie, an Edinburgh merchant, who had bought a large part of the south-facing slope of Corstorphine Hill. Blaikie's father later bought some land and became a smallholder supplying the Edinburgh market. Blaikie was "partially" educated at the local church school where the masters were post graduate theology students with knowledge of Latin. Blaikie helped his father with gardening and became skilled enough to train with Dr John Hope, Director of Edinburgh's then recently founded Botanic Gardens. As an apprentice, Blaikie would have been sent by Dr Hope to gather plants in the Grampians – an experience which would serve Blaikie well later. He became a master gardener and like many Scottish

gardeners of the period, went to work in London. At this time Scottish gardeners were appreciated for their education and skills – and especially because they undercut the wages of the English gardeners!

Between 1775 and 1776 Blaikie was employed by John Fothergill and William Pitcairn to collect and record rare species of plants in the Alps. It was there he met Voltaire and was accompanied by Michel-Gabriel Paccard who was later to become famous as the first man to reach the summit of Mont-Blanc. After briefly returning to Britain, Blaikie was given the opportunity to work on the gardens of the Comte de Lauraguais in Normandy.

From 1778 Blaikie passed into the employment of the Comte d'Artois, younger brother of Louis XVI, later to become Charles X. Blaikie designed the gardens of Bagatelle – the object of a bet between Artois and Marie-Antoinette - in collaboration with the architect François-Joseph Bélanger .

Whilst continuing to work for the Comte d'Artois, Blaikie created a garden for Sophie Arnoud, the famous opera singer and a mistress of Bélanger. In 1780 the Duc d'Orléans employed Blaikie to design some of his gardens including those at the Parc Monceau.

The French Revolution financially ruined Blaikie. His previous aristocratic clients were unable to

Sophie Arnoux



pay him or had been guillotined, he received no more contracts and in 1792 his house was pillaged with the loss of 50,000 francs and his well-stocked wine cellar. As a result, he was forced to return to work as a bailiff for the Comte de Lauraguais “exiled” in Manicamp during the Revolution. For a short time he was under house arrest as an alien and enemy of France in Chauny, near Manicamp. Despite being a prisoner, he was able to work for the local châteaux owners designing several gardens in the region. After the Revolution, he returned briefly to Paris to work as a consultant for Josephine de Beauharnais at Malmaison. In 1826 Blaikie was awarded a royal pension of 600 francs per annum which he received from the new Duc d'Orléans, the future Louis Philippe.

During this time, Blaikie made two brief visits to his family in Scotland, one of these coinciding with that of George IV in 1822. Blaikie was invited by the Scottish Gardeners to join in the festivities at Dalkeith.

However, family relations were far from amicable and Blaikie returned to France where he died in 1838 at home in Paris, rue de Vignes. He was survived by his wife Letitia. They had no children.

His grave could be visited at Montmartre cemetery until 1961 when the cemetery concession ran out.

When I gave a talk in Chauny (Aisne), an article appeared in the press on Blaikie and on his presence in the area. *(See overleaf)*

(Tom Wight, Edinburgh)



Parc Monceau, Paris 1750

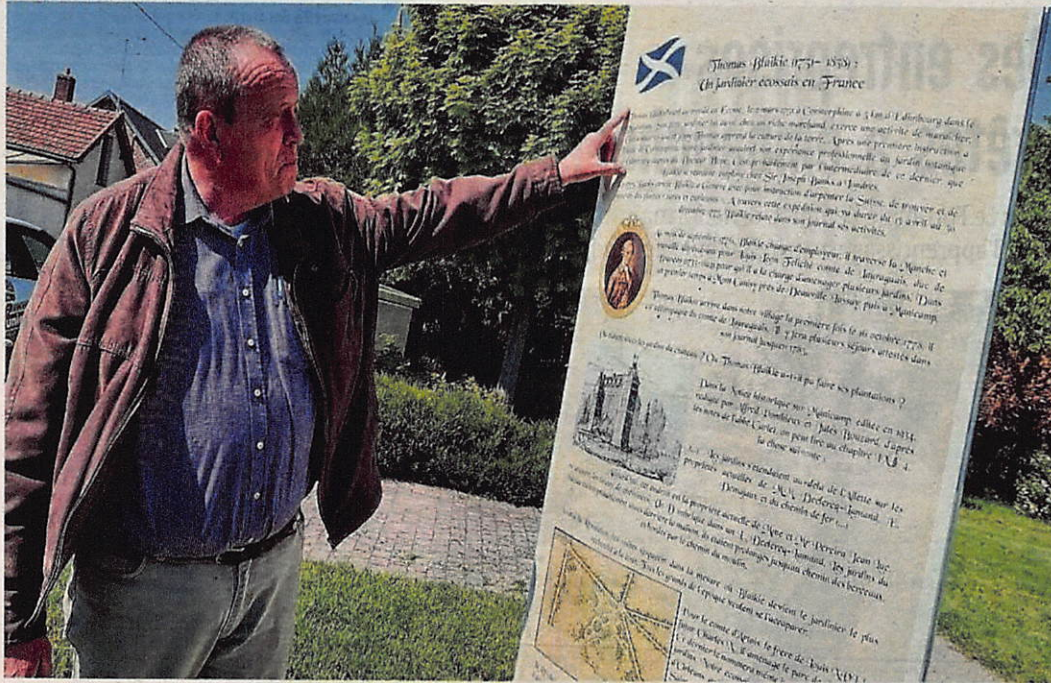


Le comte de Lauraguais 1760



Chateau de Manicamp 1835

PATRIMOINE



Luc Degonville veut faire sortir de l'ombre le jardinier écossais depuis des années. Il a fait poser un panneau retraçant son histoire dans un square de Manicamp.

UN JARDINIER DE RENOM RÉFUGIÉ DANS LE CHAUNOIS

CHAUNY Il a côtoyé la Cour royale mais aussi Voltaire, Thomas Blaikie, jardinier du XVIII^e, passé par le Chaunois, sort de l'ombre grâce au travail du maire de Manicamp et d'un ami écossais.

A SAVOIR

- **L'histoire du jardinier écossais** Thomas Blaikie est liée à celle du Chaunois. Ce précurseur des jardins à l'anglaise, a séjourné à Manicamp et réalisé plusieurs jardins dans les environs.
- **Une conférence** lui sera dédiée vendredi 24 mai dès 20 h 30 à la salle Victor-Leduc à Chauny.
- **Deux livres** racontent son histoire : « Sur les terres d'un jardinier. Journal de voyages (1775-1792) » traduit par Janine Barrier, ou encore « Thomas Blaikie, the capability Brown of France (1751-1838) » de Taylor Patricia.

C'est un pan de l'histoire locale que Luc Degonville, maire de Manicamp, tente de mettre en lumière depuis de nombreuses années. L'Élu qui est aussi professeur et passionné d'histoire, sera enfin exaucé vendredi prochain. Une conférence est organisée à Chauny sur l'histoire de Thomas Blaikie, jardinier écossais qui a connu son heure de gloire auprès de la Cour royale avant de devoir fuir la Révolution en trouvant refuge dans le Chaunois, à Manicamp. L'homme est un véritable artiste paysagiste au parcours rocailleux. Tout débute en 1775, lorsqu'il est envoyé en Suisse pour trouver et rapporter des plantes « rares et curieuses ». Il rencontre alors Voltaire. Un an plus tard il est

débauché par le comte de Lauraguais pour qui il aménage plusieurs jardins. Présenté à la Cour, il côtoiera de près la royauté et notamment Marie-Antoinette, ou le comte d'Artois, frère de Louis XVI. Il réalise les jardins de la folie de Bagatelle à Paris, du parc Monceau, du parc du château du Raincy, ou encore une partie du hameau de la Reine au Petit-Trianon à Versailles. Ainsi, on lui doit les prémices des jardins à l'anglaise en France. Mais la Révolution pousse le jardinier à fuir Paris, il se réfugie alors à Manicamp. Il y réalisera les jardins d'un château, aujourd'hui disparu. Il aurait aussi œuvré à Arrancy, Chauny (pour les Jardins du maire de l'époque), Pommery et Saint-Quentin.

«C'est important, car dans ses notes il parle de Manicamp et puis c'était une sommité dans son art !»

Luc Degonville

Une histoire peu connue qui lie Manicamp à l'Écosse depuis plusieurs années. Dans les années 2000, la Franco-Scottish Society a, en effet, accordé une aide de 400 euros pour baptiser un square du village du nom du Jardinier. C'est finalement en 2016, qu'un panneau est érigé au milieu d'un petit parc au cœur du bourg, en présence du président de la so-

ciété écossaise, Tom Wight. Le début d'une belle amitié entre Luc Degonville et l'historien écossais, « Il m'a invité à l'époque à venir en Écosse parler de notre commune. Je suis allé à Edimbourg, au consulat, à Perth et à Inverness », se remémore l'Élu. Depuis le panneau trône toujours au milieu de la verdure, il rappelle l'histoire de ce jardinier du siècle des Lumières. « Pour moi c'est important, car dans ses notes il parle de Manicamp et puis c'était une sommité dans son art ! », lance Luc Degonville qui conte l'histoire de Thomas Blaikie à ses élèves. Vendredi 24 mai, il sera bien sûr à la conférence qui sera donnée par son ami écossais Tom Wight. ■

VIRGINE GUENNEC

LES BRUNEL, INGÉNIEURS CIVILS BRITANNIQUES ET FRANÇAIS



Marc Brunel 1769-1849



Isambard Brunel 1806-1859

Je m'intéresse depuis toujours à la famille Brunel et plus précisément à celle d'Isambard Kingdom Brunel, l'ingénieur civil victorien qui est bien connu en Grande Bretagne sinon en France. Son père, Marc Brunel, était lui aussi ingénieur civil distingué et d'une compétence aussi grande que celle de son fils. En lisant un livre à propos du fils j'ai été frappé par le fait que tous les deux, père et fils, avaient des liens importants avec la France ainsi qu'avec la Grande Bretagne. J'ai donc décidé de faire des recherches à leur sujet pour en découvrir plus et pour ensuite faire une conférence sur eux auprès de quelques groupes de notre association. Vous trouverez ci-dessous un résumé de cette conférence, et surtout relatif aux aspects français de leurs vies.

Isambard Brunel est né en 1806 en Grande Bretagne. Son père avait une grande estime pour l'enseignement français, surtout en matières scientifiques. Isambard a été donc éduqué à Caen et a ensuite poursuivi ses études au Lycée Henri IV à Paris. Malheureusement Il n'a pas pu continuer ses études formelles en France à cause de sa nationalité étrangère. Mais il est quand même devenu apprenti chez Monsieur Breguet, maître horloger français, un homme qu'Isambard a toujours considéré l'égal de lui-même, un honneur rare ! Après cet enseignement Isambard est rentré en Grande Bretagne à l'âge de 16 ans pour aider son père qui avait toujours de nouveaux projets, entre autres la construction d'un tunnel sous la Tamise à Londres.

Isambard est renommé pour beaucoup de projets dont la grande majorité a bien réussi et a souvent battu des records. Il a conçu et fait construire le premier chemin de fer entre Londres et Bristol qui a permis aux voyageurs un parcours de 4 heures. Il a

conçu le *Clifton Suspension Bridge* à Bristol qui à l'époque avait la portée la plus longue au monde. Les navires qu'il a conçus ont chaque fois battu des records et présentaient des aspects novateurs, tels que la construction de la coque ou encore la grandeur. Il a enfin utilisé une coque à double revêtement avec des compartiments étanches, entièrement construits en fer. Son dernier bateau, *The Great Eastern*, était le plus grand bateau au monde jusqu'à la fin du 19^e siècle et à cette époque le plus grand objet mobile jamais construit.

Ce qui est surprenant est qu'Isambard a été décoré de la Légion d'Honneur. Il aurait mérité un tel honneur pour ses efforts à aider la guérison des soldats blessés pendant la guerre de Crimée, y compris les soldats français. Isambard avait conçu, fait fabriquer en kit et fait transporter en six mois des hôpitaux de campagnes d'une conception et d'une qualité bien supérieures à ceux du passé. Le taux de mortalité avait fortement baissé grâce à des aspects tels que les WC, la ventilation ou

encore les toits en métal luisant pour renvoyer la forte chaleur.

Isambard est mort en 1859 à l'âge de 53 ans, mais reste encore un héros de la Grande Bretagne.

Marc, le père d'Isambard, a mené une vie encore plus extraordinaire. Il est né en 1769 à Hacqueville, une petite ville en Normandie proche de Rouen. Son père et ses ancêtres étaient fermiers prospères. Marc était le deuxième fils, donc au lieu d'hériter de la ferme il devait devenir prêtre selon l'usage à cette époque. Mais au séminaire à Rouen il était évident qu'il s'intéressait plus aux maths, au dessin et à la menuiserie. Il a donc commencé des études en matières maritimes et ensuite il est devenu élève officier de marine. Il a passé six ans au large durant lesquels il a appris l'anglais. Ensuite il est retourné à Rouen en 1792 en pleine période révolutionnaire.

Étant monarchiste, il s'est caché pour éviter les partisans de Robespierre. Il a eu quand même l'occasion de rencontrer Sophia Kingdom, une jeune orpheline britannique qui travaillait en tant que gouvernante. Ils sont tombés amoureux, mais Marc a dû s'enfuir de la France et Sophia s'est retrouvée emprisonnée, étant soupçonnée d'être espionne comme les autres Britanniques. Elle est retournée en Angleterre après la chute de Robespierre alors que Marc avait trouvé une ville plus sûre, New York. Il est devenu citoyen américain et ingénieur en chef de la ville, y faisant des travaux civils importants.

En Amérique Marc a fait la connaissance d'Alexander Hamilton, le conseiller de George Washington et son ministre des finances. Hamilton lui a remis une lettre d'introduction au chef de la marine britannique après quoi Marc est retourné en Angleterre. Là il a retrouvé la patiente Sophia qui l'attendait et peu après ils se sont mariés.

Ayant un esprit vif, bien qu'il n'ait pas été un homme d'affaires, Marc Brunel s'est mis à quelques projets. Il a mécanisé la production de poulies pour la marine pour permettre à celle-ci de faire des économies.

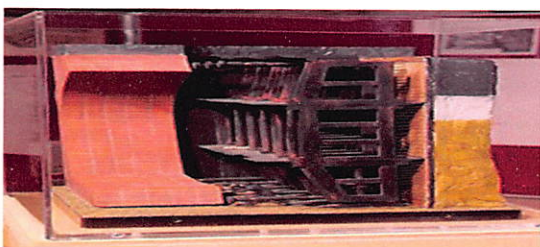
Le tsar de Russie qui admirait les machines-outils tenta d'encourager Marc à se rendre en Russie, mais Marc estimait qu'il avait déjà trop voyagé. Mais une chute en pénurie ayant suivi son projet de fabrication en masse de bottes militaires, il se retrouva avec un entrepôt plein de bottes non vendues en conséquence de la fin de la guerre napoléonienne. Sophia, toujours fidèle, accompagna son mari dans une prison pour débiteurs. Ayant fait savoir qu'il irait en Russie, Marc a été sauvé par le duc de Wellington qui a fait en sorte que le gouvernement britannique règle les dettes de Marc pourvu qu'il abandonne tout projet de quitter le Royaume-Uni.

C'est à ce moment-là qu'Isambard est rentré de France après quoi tous les deux ont commencé à travailler sur le projet qui serait le couronnement de la carrière de Marc ; la construction d'un tunnel sous la Tamise - le premier tunnel au monde sous un fleuve navigable.

Le grand projet a commencé en 1824. Marc est devenu l'ingénieur en chef avec Isambard comme un des adjoints. Le tunnel était censé relier *Wapping* sur la rive nord de la Tamise, à *Rotherhithe* sur la rive sud. Pour commencer on creusa deux puits verticaux, un sur chaque rive. Marc décida de placer un large anneau de métal sur la rive sur lequel il a bâti le mur rond du puits. L'anneau s'enfonçait dans la terre molle tandis que le poids du mur augmentait. Entre-temps des ouvriers malchanceux devaient creuser la terre de l'intérieur pour vider le puits et encourager l'anneau de s'enfoncer encore plus loin dans la rive. On a enfin bâti les fondations des puits à la profondeur requise. De nos jours il y a un musée qui se trouve à Rotherhithe à côté d'un des puits où on peut descendre dans une grande espace qui sert de salle des fêtes.



Mais comment creuser le tunnel pour la traversée souterraine de la Tamise ? Pour cette étape du projet Marc a créé le bouclier. Cette machine a été fabriquée en



Le bouclier

métal avec plusieurs compartiments (à droite sur l'image) dans lesquels travaillaient 36 mineurs qui creusaient la terre à la main avec des pioches. Une fois qu'une masse suffisante de matériaux était retirée du front du tunnel, le bouclier pouvait être déplacé un peu vers l'avant à l'aide de pistons hydrauliques. Ensuite des maçons suivaient le bouclier pour tapisser les parois du tunnel avec des millions de briques. Le projet a connu beaucoup d'inondations et des ouvriers blessés et morts. À cette époque la Tamise était un cloaque et dans le tunnel l'eau qui s'infiltrait avec les gaz en plus nuisait à la santé des travailleurs, y compris à celle des Brunel.

L'argent pour les travaux s'est épuisé, mais avec l'encouragement du duc de Wellington le projet s'acheva en 1843

presque 20 ans après son début. À l'inauguration du tunnel, il y avait 50,000 spectateurs et un an plus tard le tunnel avait accueilli 2 millions de piétons. Dans le tunnel il y avait des étals et d'autres divertissements, mais il n'y avait pas de carrosses ni de charrettes à cause du manque d'accès puisqu'il n'y avait pas eu assez d'argent pour construire les rampes nécessaires. La reine Victoria et le prince Albert sont venus admirer l'œuvre qu'à l'époque on considérait la huitième merveille du monde. Beaucoup de gouvernements s'y sont intéressés.

La France a décoré Marc de la Légion d'Honneur tandis qu'il est devenu chevalier du Royaume Uni. Il est mort en 1849 à l'âge de 80 ans, mais son chef-d'œuvre a survécu jusqu'à nos jours et existe toujours comme la plus vieille partie du plus vieux métro au monde et n'oublions pas que les trains à vapeur y roulaient encore jusqu'en 1913, malgré le manque de ventilation.

Dans la ville natale de Marc Brunel dans l'Eure, il y a un monument à sa mémoire, mais à part ça il semblerait que de nos jours il soit méconnu en France et qu'ici malheureusement la majorité de Britanniques ne connaisse que son fils Isambard.

(Colin Browning, Glasgow)



Monument à Marc Brunel à Hacqueville



Statue d' Isambard Brunel à Londres

OBITUARIES

GABRIELLE CRAIG née Neton (1930 -2019)



The Aberdeen Branch of the Franco-Scottish Society is very sad to record the loss of Gabrielle Craig. A member since at least 1959 when I moved to Aberdeen, and was welcomed into the Society by

Gabrielle and her husband Albert. They had met when she was the French Assistant at Inverness Royal Academy and both were members of the Society from their move to Aberdeen.

Gabrielle came from Grenoble where she grew up during the war – taking messages on her bike for the Resistance at times. A risky task for a teenager!

Her English studies led to the year in

Inverness and thereafter to her marriage and subsequent life in Scotland, the rest of it in Aberdeen.

For many years she was a part-time lecturer at Northern College; taking conversation classes with the students who were training to be teachers of modern languages. Her professionalism was of the highest quality – the students responded to her breadth of interests and lively mind.

She and Albert took part in several of the FSS' visits of France and welcomed its return visits from the Association Franco-Ecossaise, something she continued to do after her husband's death. She was a faithful and regular presence at all our meetings until very shortly before her death, and together with her family, we shall all miss her.

(Jean Ironside, Aberdeen)

JOHN DOTT (1930- 2019)

John Dott, a loyal and well-respected member of St. Andrews Branch, died in Cagnes-sur-Mer, Côte d'Azur in France on 22nd April 2019.



John was a pharmacist by profession. He and his wife Hazel joined the St. Andrews Branch in 1995 and left in 2010 when they moved to

Cagnes-sur-Mer. Both John and Hazel (who predeceased him in 2014) had been active members of Franco-Scottish Society: John was Chairman from 2004 to 2009 and afterwards Honorary Secretary, and Hazel was Honorary Treasurer for a number of years.

John's love of France started at the age of 17 when he attended the Scout Jamboree in Paris in 1947. There he met Sam Taylor (later Professor at St. Andrews University and a member of St. Andrews Branch). At the Jamboree he also met Edith Piaf and developed a great love of her music.

Many happy visits to his French host family from this time or timeshares in Chamrousse with his wife and daughters were to follow.

These trips were an occasion to research the origins of the surname Dott and ascertain two possible origins: *d'Aouste*, a village in the Drôme or *de Ott*, both Huguenot names which became anglicised to Dott. In view of his love of French wine, John tended to favour the *de Ott* version and visited several Domaines Ott vineyards hoping to find a family likeness.

John had many interests and played an active part in North Fife in various roles; a founder member of the Rotary Club of North Fife, a member of the Fife Conservative Association, a North East Fife District Councillor, Chairman of Newport, Wormit and Forgan Community Council and St Andrews District Commissioner for Scouts. While John was happy living in France, he never lost his interest in what was happening in the area.

John was a friendly, kind and helpful man who will be missed by his family and many friends from different walks of life.

(George Taylor, St Andrews)

WILLIS MARKER (1928-2019)



Willis was a longstanding member of the Franco-Scottish Society who served on the committee of the Glasgow Branch, taking on various roles including Vice-President. In addition to his work on the committee, he joined the regular excursions to France where he made many long-lasting friendships among those in the Association Franco-Ecossaise.

He fell in love with France in his younger days while teaching English as an *assistant d'anglais* in Nice where he formed life-long friendships with his French colleagues there.

Born in Greenock in 1928, he was rapidly whisked off to England by his Scottish parents due to his father being a tax inspector and thus being moved around the UK for fear of succumbing to bribery. He eventually came back to Scotland in 1967 when he joined the staff of Jordanhill College of Edu-

cation in the History Department. There he moved up through the ranks and finally became an Assistant Principal of the college.

In Scotland he was able to enjoy one of his many interests: hill-walking. With his wife Anne he completed the ascent of the 277 Munros, hills of over 3000 feet. His other interests were reading, politics, theatre, music and opera. The latter inspired him to learn Italian as there were no surtitles when Scottish Opera was launched.

Having joined the National Trust for Scotland, Willis took a leading role in the formation of a local centre, becoming President and also Secretary as well as creating a popular walking group.

After a fall in 2018 he was no longer able to tackle walks away from the area round the home and his hearing and sight were beginning to fade which made him very sad. However, he was able to reflect on a good life well lived and died with his wife of sixty years and his two children by his side on the 22 September.

(Anne Marker, Glasgow)

JAMES SUTTIE (1934 – 2019)

The members of the Aberdeen Branch are sad to announce the death of Jim Suttie, a former Honorary Treasurer and Chairman.

Jim grew up in Angus and after studying agriculture at Aberdeen University he spent his entire working life as a pasture specialist in different parts of the world, not returning to Aberdeen until his retirement.

Madagascar was one of some 15 or so countries which benefitted from his expertise, and it was there that he perfected his French. He continued to have a strong interest in the geography, economy and culture of France and its

former colonies.

Members of the Aberdeen Branch appreciated the talks he gave, and, in particular, one about his experiences in Mongolia which he visited as a consultant after his retirement.

His last position was with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation in Rome, - a posting which his wife must have found more congenial than some!

Whichever part of the world he was in, his sharp powers of observation and sense of the human, the ridiculous and the humorous enriched his life and that of those around him.

(Annabel Stewart, Aberdeen)

SHEILA WATSON née Duncan (1926 -2019)



Aberdeen Branch members were saddened to learn of the death of Sheila Watson who died in Edinburgh last year aged 93. Sheila was born in Torry, Aberdeen and achieved two degrees at Aberdeen University; an

MA in the 1940s and a degree in History of Art in the 1990s - when she was 66!

Sheila married at King's College on 23rd December 1951 and a week later was in Tunisia with her husband James, who was a geologist. There she became close friends with Jacqueline de Pozzo whose husband's family owned Moët et Chandon. On her last trip to Paris in 2014 Sheila's U3A travelling companions were most impressed when a car was sent for her and she spent two nights at Jacqueline's château near Giverny. While in Paris she had a trip down the Seine in a bateau mouche followed by lunch at Fauchon's - Sheila always did things in style!

Living in Tunisia, she improved her French immensely by being involved with local people and in Pakistan she went to Urdu classes and set up a small school for servants' children. In Holland, she learned Dutch.....and in her 80s she returned to German classes - there was no end to her talents.

Sheila travelled widely with her husband between 1951 and 1967 when sadly James died. She returned to Aberdeen and was a social worker for many years but continued to travel extensively to countries such as Egypt, Libya, Ukraine, India - too many to mention. Her travelling companion, Rosemary described her as tolerant, highly entertaining, and with a thirst, not just for knowledge, but for life.

Last year, a few months before she died, she gave a talk on "The love of my life" to our French conversation class - we were all agog - but of course, it was Art.

Most importantly Sheila's real joy was in people, her family, her friends and her colleagues. Her life was enriched through her interest in others. We miss her terribly.

(Irene Cormack, Aberdeen)

NEXT EXCHANGE VISIT

Franco-Scottish Society - Association Franco-Ecossaise

9th June 2020 - 17th June 2020



Région
Hauts-de-France



THE FRANCO-SCOTTISH SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND

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INVERNESS

Verity Walker

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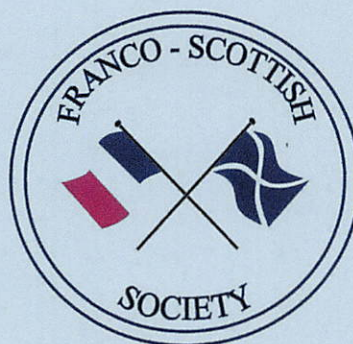
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