

FRANCE - October 2013



We took the Newhaven Dieppe route again because it was the most economical and they didn't charge for the trailer both ways. We intend to leave the trailer here so it gave us a chance to fill it up with our old pine table, dresser and chairs. Rick also fixed up his old chainsaw and hedge cutter which also could be left at the house. Isn't technology wonderful, as just outside Rouen Alan Facetimed and I could show him the passing scenery. We avoided the motorways which saved about 30 euros in tolls and made for a more interesting journey.



Wow, the village is in complete chaos as they have all the roads up while installing new drainage pipes after which the roads will be resurfaced. It's so warm that we don't need to light the fire or put the electric heaters on. Rick's feeling below par with aching legs and a sore eye. Gaby and Isabella took us to look at the Granary and told us that they intend to give it a new roof and double doors. We then all went back to Isabella and Pierre's house to toast the done deal. Pierre looks younger as he has been on a strict regime losing about 3 stone over 18 months and is no longer diabetic. We were impressed by his woodburner, it burns wood pellets and just needs a balanced flue. 50% of the cost of 4000 euros was met by a government grant. Everyone has been laughing about Rick getting locked in the church while using the internet, not sure if they all realise he was betting. I then retold the story of George and family getting lost in the forest and that made us all laugh again. I thought my geraniums looked good and that is because Pierre has been watering them.

I weeded the front and back of the house and Rick managed to mow the patch at the end of the village before everything was abandoned due to rain. It seems Rick may no longer need divine intervention for the internet as we are using my iphone as a hotspot. St Ellier Les Bois may not have any restaurants or shops but it does have excellent 3G, upgraded electricity and new drains !!!



It's been really nice having Sue and Martin next door. Martin is installing a kitchen and like us he is racing against time as we all go back to England on Wednesday. There's been quite a community spirit whereby they come and have a look at how we are progressing and we do the same. If either of us has to go to Alencon or Carrouges we see if there is anything they need.



Rick's made the church door watertight and I've almost finished painting the lounge. Unfortunately, I don't like one of the colours I have chosen for the doors so will have to finish them next time. Rick's cut down the old pear trees and cleared up the lilac tree that had fallen down but we are going to run out of time to have a bonfire. We're pleased we've all decided to replace the lounge floorboards as there is about 100 years of dirt, dust, woodworm and goodness knows what else under there. Having our old trailer here has cut down on the number of visits to Brico Depot as we have decided to get the boards now to give them time to acclimatise before fitting them. Yves is going to try and sell Don's old trailer for us. We also brought our old pine dresser and table over and they make the lounge look more homely.



Gaby clutching a rabbit that was running wild.- Rick doing what he loves best – well almost apart from drinking it

We've run out of time again and are looking forward to coming again in the Spring to finish off the floor. Even more exciting is that now we have some money in the kitty we can consider putting in a staircase to open up the loft area. Roll on Spring 2014.