

FRANCE – JUNE 2014

Lovely day leaving Newhaven and as I did loads of puzzles and joined Rick for a few games of bridge, the crossing passed very quickly. Although he did insist that we sit in a freezing cold room with just a lifeboat for our outlook. We cheated and used the motorway (22.90 euros toll) and stopped at Intermarche for diesel (1.299 litre/£1.05), things are a lot cheaper now we have a 1.23 exchange rate.



The sun was shining when we arrived in Saint Ellier which was looking very pleasant with all the newly laid roads and pavements. Some big weeds had somehow managed to survive my dose of weedkiller but it wasn't long before they were there no more. They've made a brilliant job of the drain on the kitchen side of the house and have planted a flower border alongside the church side wall. We're definitely missing Yves input as the garden across the road as the grass was chest high and two of the trees in the middle of the lawn have died. Apart from loads of dead flies and spiders the house actually felt dry and fairly clean. It was a huge change from our last arrival in February when everything was covered in a black mould. The lounge and kitchen looked great. Not any real scrubbing to do which was good news as I am without the champion scrubber!!! We said a quick hello to Gaby who was off to play boules with her parents. The granary is having a new roof .

Rick did an initial cut on the lawn and came in gasping for breath and was bitterly disappointed that there wasn't any beer especially as he was looking forward to a few bottles while watching the football. It's surprising how quickly it can get in that state -the garden that is. Rick's going to have to saw the trees up into bits, however, we can't take anything to the tip this time as we have the motorhome with no towbar and we're not allowed to have a bonfire. Fortunately, the grass is dry which is a bonus.





I fiddled about putting up the curtains and pushed my luck by asking Rick to carry Don's rug up from the motorhome. Later in the evening he relented and struggled up with it but after all that effort we are not sure that it looks right. The green part darkens the room and doesn't really go with the suite. It's a lovely big size but we somehow think that it looked better with more of the new floor being on show. We'll leave it here for Don and Helen to make the final decision. Don and Helen also donated a huge picture of fruit which looks amazing above the kitchen fireplace.



New bedside cabinets

We ate the first pickings of the year of our strawberries and raspberries, very yummy. I retired for the night leaving beerless, breathless Rick in the comfortable lounge watching the football and the last Jeremy Paxton show.

Thursday 18 June 2014 – cloudy but sunny late afternoon

Since January constant emails and letters have been exchanged between myself and the French Bank. After our Indian trip, when we thought we might never make it back, it was decided to make Julie an additional signatory. It must have all got lost in the Google translation as they wanted us all to sign a document that had to be witnessed by the bank. They thought we wanted to do a Power of Attorney. I have been trying to explain that it was not possible for Madame Waite to come to France and that is why we are off to the bank today with our limited French to sort it out. It's not easy to park the motorhome in a busy town but you do see more when walking. I have to say the French bank makes you feel quite important and both managers we have seen are young, polite and very handsome. Finally got our request over and the relevant forms are being posted to Julie today.

Spent the rest of the day in the garden; Rick gave the lawn opposite a second cut and the other one a first cut. There was so much grass that he turned into a green man, covered from head to foot in grass. We had to throw his socks away and I am covered in scratches from all the briar's. Perhaps we should consider paying someone to mow it for us occasionally. Bad news, England lost to Uruguay and that means we are almost certainly knocked out of the World Cup.

Friday 19 June – cloudy again but warmed up late afternoon



Carpets all cleaned – how very satisfying it is to see how much dirt comes out and they were absolutely filthy. Rick really wanted to do it as he loves machines but he finished a few odd jobs instead. He tackled the garden again. As it started to feel pleasantly warm I thought I would enjoy sitting in the garden but the sun was blocked by the skeleton of the two dead trees. Even though the chain saw only had very little fuel my “Knight in Shining Armour” managed to cut them down and let the light through. The garden looks very much bigger now and we are going to have loads of hazelnuts in the autumn.. The evening was spent planning our next couple of motorhome stops. I think we are still a bit worn out from the Open Gardens and refurbishing the extension at home as its hard to get motivated to start any new jobs. All a bit quiet and uneventful here, but hopefully the adventure starts tomorrow.

Saturday 20 June – much warmer as we travelled south.

It's a long journey down to Alan's and would be even longer if we hadn't taken the motorway (47.10 euros so far) but we will have time to take the slower route on our way back. It looks good weather at home for Ed and Mike on the “Round the Island” race. Mum, Elaine and Bo will have hit Benidorm by now too. Watch out all those dancing/disco's places, mum can't wait to join you! Tonight we stayed at Camping de La Roche, Saint Amand Montrond (17.10 euros). Nice little site by a canal and within walking distance of the busy town. It's not a pretty town but there are lots of shops (mostly closed by the time we arrived) and quite a few restaurants with music. The first one we tried was fully booked and we ended up at a very lively one with French songs and dancing. A crowd gathered across the road to watch. All a bit like a night out in Tenerife but in French with moules and frites to top it off.



Sunday 21 June – 30° plus

Today we had another 3.5 to 4 hour journey to Sarlat la Canéda. We went part way on the motorway (27.10 euros), however, it's much more interesting going through the towns and villages. Being a Sunday everything was shut and we hardly saw a soul, nothing new there. Where do all the French hide? Salignac-Eyviqes just before Sarlat looked a nice place to stay another time. It's noticeable that as you drive south it is much more affluent than the north especially Normandy. Initially, we noticed the more upmarket cars like BMW's and Mercedes but also the shops are selling modern clothes. Arriving at Sarlat we must have spent about an hour and a half looking for a campsite, recommended from the 2014 Caravan Club book, that had closed down two years previously. How very frustrating, we had almost resigned ourselves to staying in a car park Aire in Sarlat when we saw the signs to the 5 star Camping Indigo Sarlat Les Perieres. At last we had hit gold - a wonderful modern, wooded site with indoor and outdoor swimming pools and within walking distance of Sarlat. Lovely evening parked under the Orange Blossom Trees with the birds singing their heads off.

Monday 22 June



The glass is full of rain water

What a night !! Terrible storm with thunder and lightening and chain saws going at 3am. Of course we left our chairs and clothes outside to get soaked. The storm had cooled the temperature and freshen things up a bit. The couple opposite has a bit of trouble getting their motorhome out of the mud. This site is very pleasant with lots of cherry, walnut and orange blossom trees. It's a ten minute walk into Sarlat but a twenty minute walk back due to the steep hill and lunchtime wine. The old city was far bigger than we imagined with a relaxed air about it. The standard fare in this area is Fois gras and confit of duck with a few goose gizzards thrown in.



Lots of orange shirts around celebrating the Netherlands 2 nil win against Chile. A lovely relaxing day. Just found out that the storm brought down a tree that crashed into a caravan and car and that's why we heard the chain saws. There wasn't a breath of wind so we are not sure if the tree was struck by lightening or it was just the weight of the deluge of rain. A big branch has also broken off a cherry tree by reception. Better put the chairs away tonight.

Tuesday 24 June – very warm

Arrived at Alan's about 3pm and relaxed by the pool. Alan cooked us duck and sausages on the barbeque. Very relaxing.



Wednesday 25 June – comfortably hot



Cycled to Fennyrols to look at Iron Bridge and then a little way along the canal where we found a disused Mineral Spa. We then cycled onto Varen where we stopped for coffee and cider. We were taking guess as to how far we had cycled, Alan thought about 18 kms and when Rick went to check he found he hadn't started his Map My Walk – urhhhh. However, we felt the hard cycle ride had given us plenty of exercise and Alan had an afternoon snooze while we relaxed. I had some lovely birthday cards and perfume from Jen and books from Rick and Thyra. There were also loads of Facebook birthday messages which was really nice. We had our special 2007 champagne from the Arundel Wine Society at Sharon's in St Antonin. I absolutely love her higgledy de piggledy house, it 's up a narrow street full of really old houses and is absolutely adorable. Dinner was at La Corniche, a lovely little restaurant in the mountains, wonderful scenery, excellent service (we were the only customers) and great company. What a lovely birthday!



Thursday 26 June -cloudy but warm

Lazy day sending jokes (yes I have a mailbox full of them) and experimenting with a French course, also managed to read a whole book. Did a bit of weeding for Alan while they spent a long time at the shops, talk about woman shopping. Cycled to Varen (3kms each way, lots of hills) for bread and a coffee. Barbeque supper while watching the storm.



Repairing the windbreak



They blow the moles up here in France

Friday 27June – pleasantly warm

Rick washed the dead flies and dirt off the motorhome but the streaks are still proving stubborn. We then cycled to Miriam's house which is about two miles from Alan's. It's up for sale for about 120,000 euros. Unfortunately, her husband died before he had time to finish the project. There is loads of land leading to the top of the hills on one side and down the valley on another. We may

have been interested about 10 years ago but the thought of starting a project like that now seems overwhelming. The house needs lots of work. Such a lot of land, such a lot of work. Back at Alan's I had another go at the Michel Thomas French course, I seem to have forgotten almost all I have learnt in the past.



Went to little cinema in St Antonin to see "The Railway Man". They show an English speaking film with French subtitles about once a fortnight. The cinema was full of Brits who all seemed to know one another. The film was great, Colin Firth is such a good actor but it didn't leave you with a feel good feeling. Afterwards we met Sharon for drinks in the square and then ate in the bar we had drinks at the other night. This was followed by a nightcap at Sharon's. She was all prepared for the tabletop sale (vide grenier) that was taking place in the town the next morning. Murray through to round 4 at Wimbledon. The Brits seem to have lost interest in the World Cup now that England are out - we're supporting the Netherlands .



Saturday 28 June

The forecast for today wasn't good, lots of thunderstorms. However, they held off until the evening and we managed to have a relaxing afternoon at the pool. Rick finished fixing the windbreak. We cycled to Varen for the market. At breakfast I bit into my mouth ulcer by mistake and it brought tears to my eyes. Spent all day looking as if someone had punched me. Facetimed mum who was looking very well after coming back from Benidorm with Elaine and Bo.

We enjoyed our gin and tonics sitting on Alan's veranda watching the storm coming over the mountains. They have some fantastic storms here. It conveniently stopped for a while, leaving a double rainbow, as we set off for our evening meal at La Segular. It's only about a 15 minute walk from Alan's and is one of my favourite places there. It's amazing value; quarter a carafe of wine is 2 euro, half 3 and a litre only 4 euros – it's not bad either. I love the duck with fois gras.



Sunday 29 June



St Antonin

The storm has cooled the weather down and it was only about 17° this morning. Alan tried to palm us off with all the fatty stuff from his fridge as he is dieting for the next few days. He has a magic bin that seemed to open every time I looked at it, so much so he says I have worn the batteries out. We've had a great time at Alan's and it's now time to move on. As we left a few of the sunflowers in the fields around had started opening up their sunny faces. I expect they will all be out in a couple of week's time.



Today we are staying at the “Camping Municipal Le Breil” in Limoux (14 euros 70). It's a lovely setting by the river L'Aude. The square in the centre of the town was full of restaurants but the buildings were a bit uninspiring mainly because they had a pebbledash finish. We always arrive in the afternoon and of course everything is shut and seems lifeless. Limoux looks a busy town as there are lots of shops (all closed today) and a sprawling suburb, perhaps sprawling is a bit too big an adjective. After the ride into town there was lots of relaxing which was good. The campsite wasn't busy, there was a chap who had a motorbike opposite in a tent and next to him was a family with two teenage children in quite a small tent.



Monday June 30

Early start as we set off on the long route through the Pyrenees. Such dramatic scenery, vineyard after vineyard, valleys, mountains and tunnels through the rocks. It was a bit of a scary journey but worth it and then when we crossed the border to Spain where the scenery changed into acres and acres of olive trees. Surprisingly there were also lots and lots of apple orchards, I would have thought it too hot a climate for them. It seemed strange having to switch from French to Spanish this quickly and it was a first for us to drive into Spain. We had been lured into it by a couple we met in Sarlat who said they knew of a fantastic site just over the French border that overlooked the Bay of Roses. “Aquarius Camping” in Sant Pere Pescador is right on a fantastic beach and is definitely 5 star camping especially as it costs 38 euros a night which is the most we have ever paid. It's a huge sandy bay with sand dunes, wind surfing and volleyball. It's a bit windy though and everything is covered in sand. We have been so spoilt by Tenerife swimming pools. We cycled into the town – wrong timing again as everything was shut. It wasn't what we were expecting which was lots of noisy restaurants and bars. There weren't any “must go there” places and there must be absolutely nothing going on here out of season. We have a couple of beach bars near the campsite but they are not restaurants so we decided to cook in. I'm in charge of the salads and Rick's in charge of cooking the meats. Even though the wind dropped we ate inside. Everything is covered in sand, perhaps if it's not windy tomorrow we will be more comfortable.



The site is extremely well run by Germans and has vehicle registration recognition, information touch screens and watering systems everywhere. They're not stupid either as they only accept cash – no credit cards!

Tuesday 1st July



Bay of Roses

Well today has been a proper holiday day and we discovered why it seemed so windy, it's because there is wind surfing all along the bay and even wind surfing schools. It was a hot, hard slog cycling 5 miles to Plage De L'Escala but we found exactly what we were looking for – loads of restaurants and a buzzing seaside atmosphere. Sardines and a carafe of wine went down very well except where were the Canarian potatoes and sauces? – must be because we are in mainland Spain and not the Canary Islands. It's the start of high season and some of the sites are enormous, absolutely enormous. There are lots of huge motorhomes around, Rick checked out a few on the internet and some are worth in excess of £220,000. Why if you had that much money would you want to stay on a campsite, mind you it is the best one we have ever stayed on. We had a invigorating, refreshing dip in the sea but it was almost impossible to swim as the waves were big. Then it was sleep it all off time – a lovely day.



Wednesday 2nd July

We discovered a supermarket called Bonpreu just outside Sant Pere Pescador which was as cheap as chips. Diesel was 1.299 euros and the supermarket was really cheap – 79 cents for an iceberg

lettuce, we've never seen anything cheaper apart from Tesco's occasionally. Spain are more advanced than France on gluten free and this supermarket had quite a good range, some things I hadn't seen before. Feeling well chuffed we set off for our three hour journey to Laurens at the foot of the Cevennes. We headed for "L'Oliveraie" campsite which was about a mile and a half through the olive groves and vineyards to the old village. The campsite is mature and well run with friendly staff and immaculate facilities. Cycled though the Olive Groves and Vineyards to Laurens where we stopped for a strong beer for Rick (7.5%) and a diet coke for me. Laurens was hilly (of course) and it was on different levels as it floods at times. Not much there but there were some very interesting old ornate buildings obviously from a much more prosperous time.



Rick used his phone as a hot spot but I couldn't get any joy with my iphone and ipad so settled for finishing my third birthday book, a Lynda La Platt . Wifi is still a big consideration when choosing a campsite as although Rick is not betting live he is still having to set up his trial runs and that includes night racing in Australia.

Thursday 3 July



Somehow we have managed to have lost a day as debating whether it was Tuesday or Wednesday I find it is actually Thursday. Not sure what day I have missed out, I suppose that is what holidays are about. I'm having a lot of trouble with mozzies and tonight I am going to spray myself and take a lot more precautions.



Another spectacular journey as we are back in the Midi-Pyrenees area and had to cross the world's tallest bridge the "Millau Viaduct" which spans 2460m over the Tarn River. At times we were about 900 metres above sea level and after passing huge rocky mountains we would come across scenery that looked very much like the South Downs. Having been caught out previously on the minor roads by overhanging cliffs and sheer drops we have tended to keep to the motorways and stay at campsites not too far from them. I don't think we have missed out on too much as the scenery has been amazing and I am not having a panic attack every few minutes by being on those windy, hair raising roads.

Today we are staying at "Camping Village Le Coulagnet" in Marvejols. Of course we once again arrived during siesta and there wasn't anyone about. We took advantage of the free wifi which was only only available near reception, other sites have been wanting to charge us 6 euros a day. This site was under 15 euros with loads of facilities by a river and near the town and yet here we are at the beginning of the high season and there were just a couple of caravans and motorhomes there. We have seen very few Brits on the campsites or roads.



We cycled into the fortified city of Marvejols to look for a restaurant for the evening. There was the usual square, quite small and a distinct lack of restaurants. Something a bit different from other

town or cities we have visited was that there was piped happy, popular music being played through speakers in the main square and roads leading off. As we couldn't find a suitable restaurant it was off to Carrefour for some steak and prawns. Another ill begotten night !

Friday 4 July

We woke up feeling quite chilly and I had to fight a swarm of flies off. As soon as I opened the motorhome door they all flew in and it was even worse once I sprayed fly spray everywhere. Last night I covered myself in tropical strength insect repellent and I don't seem to have woken up with any new bites but now I have had the flies to contend with.



We are heading to Chatel-Guyon which is a thermal town just outside Clermont Ferrand. Clermont sits on the plain of Limagne in the Massif Central and is the capital of the Puy-de-Dome area . It's surrounded by volcanoes the most famous being the dormant Puy-de-Dome. We didn't want to stay too near the city as it's very large with sprawling industrial zones. The whole of this part of France is famous for it's spas and mineral waters – Volvic and Vichy are nearby. In Alan's part of France, the Midi Pyrenees, there were references to “Therms” everywhere. Just as we stopped for lunch the sky's opened and it absolutely tipped down. It was still pouring when we reached our campsite (Camping De La Croze 15.90 euros) and after checking all the weather forecasts it looked like it was set in for the next week. Fortunately about 5.30 pm it cleared up and we were able to cycle into the town. Chatel-Guyon was full of grand, imposing buildings of a by-gone era. Many of them are now 2 star hotels and look a little run down. However, people still come to the town to take the waters to treat digestive and rheumatoid conditions. It started to pour again as we watched the French/Germany match. We were surprised that the French weren't overly excited, maybe as they lost 1 – 0 . Afterwards we ate spit roasted pig and listened to a live band. It stopped raining just in time for us to cycle up the steep hill back to the campsite.



Rick has had a bit of a problem with his tackle today. The pants I bought him are too large and he had to keep getting off his bike to tuck it all in. He was worried that everything down there was going to be rubbed sore especially as we had such a hard ride up and down the hills – cycle clips needed!!!

Saturday 5 July

Warming up but a 3.5 hour drive. We initially took a “B” road, then an “A” road as we needed fuel and a supermarket. Avoiding the motorway for a while makes for a much more scenic but stressful journey. At one time we had a fully panoramic countryside view followed by gorges which makes for a rocky, mountainous scenery. The views are fantastic and it was a shame that the weather was so bad yesterday when we were going through the volcanic area. No big supermarkets to be found until we almost reached our 10 euro campsite at Mennetou sur Cher. It very pretty here as we are between a canal full of water lilies and the River Cher. An added bonus is the fortified city that dates from the 6th century.



Sunday 6 July

We arrived at St Ellier in time to watch the Wimbledon final between Federer and Djokovic. Douglas and his friend Michael turned up just as Djokovic had his match point. They had been using the house as a base for their weekend at Le Mans. A few drinks, a tough steak and a very enjoyable evening.

Stats from Climping back to St Ellier = 1702 miles
£336.11 fuel and £110.20 tolls – using 1.25 exchange rate

Monday



I gave Michael a tour of the village that took all of five minutes – he thought it was a pretty village but way too quiet for him. Douglas was very impressed with the changes that have been made to the house since his last visit. It was rewarding that he noticed that the kitchen had been re-decorated and he also admired the new lounge floor. He thought the house was now very comfortable and felt more like a proper home than a holiday home.

We've missed the annual village fete that took place the evening before we arrived. However, Douglas and Michael didn't hear any noise even though over 190 people attended,

Rest of the week

Rick keeps telling me how much he would have been up had he been going live with his racing. The teachers up the hill have their "Petit Maison" up for sale. Surprisingly, there is a bit of life in the village. The family who live opposite have moved back in after having to live in Ferte Mace for a while as the man of the house lost his driving licence. Although he is Romanian he has lived in France for many years but has never applied for a French Driving Licence and some time back he was stopped by the French police. Not sure how many children they have but I have been trying to practice my French on the teenage son. I'm getting on very well with the audio French course but when faced with someone I am at a loss of what to say. "Can I reserve a table for two for tonight" doesn't come up very often with neighbours. I tried to ask him if he was watching the World Cup and who was he supporting. I didn't do that well as he helped me out by replying mostly in English. While I was outside painting the railings the other day a very bearded man passed by with a carriage full of children pulled by a donkey. He was also accompanied by another donkey and some dogs. I'm not sure what happened to them as I didn't see them come back. I was all prepared to ask in

French if I could take their photo but I am not sure if you are allowed to do that these days. The village now has a one way system and we have hardly any traffic passing by the kitchen door. Now that the schools have broken up for the summer there have been a few children playing in the street - almost unheard of at home now. Gaby says there are now more than 50 children under 11 living in St Ellier. Also, the other evening there were a group of men playing Boules. Pierre, like many other French men goes fishing at the weekends. I have exchanged pleasantries with his wife Isabelle and the lady from the Epicere but am completely stuck as what to say afterwards. I keep saying "Il fait beau" but they look at me a bit strange as it always seems to be threatening to rain or is raining.

We found there was free wifi at several of the campsites we visited but you had to enter a French address. They didn't seem to accept "1 Place de L'Eglise" but did accept "The Bourg". As a result we had our first real French letter delivered to the door by the Post Lady. It was Rick's logging in codes for the free wifi.

Madam Vidu's in Carrouges is once again closed, no surprise there! There is a notice in the window saying "Lease for Sale" - "Bail a Cédar." We've eaten twice at Au Père Tranquille in St Denis s/Sarthon which is about 15 minutes away. The set menu starts at 12 euros and it's not bad. We met a couple from New Zealand there who were on a two month European trip. There was also a French family with three children there who found us extremely amusing. We've eaten extremely well and I made my best ever Bouf Borguignon one evening. Unfortunately, since being back in St Ellier the weather hasn't been good enough for a barbeque. One day we had a couple of terrific rainstorms that well and truly tested the new drainage systems.



This means "Slow down, children playing"



St Ellier Chapel – all restored

Lounge Skirting Boards

Unfortunately, the glue Rick used on the last visit wasn't strong enough to keep them attached to the wall. He has had to drill at intervals through the granite and it took him almost a day and a half to do this and to fill in the top and bottom. I have given them two coats of paint. We somehow made a mistake with one lot of the mastic and got a silicon one instead. Rick didn't realise this and put it on and I couldn't paint over it. Will touch it all up when we finish the rest of the skirting by the new stairs once they are installed. We had to keep going to Alencon to get more mastic as it's surprising how much we needed.

Kitchen and Church Door and Bathroom Window

I started to use our sander on the top of the kitchen door but I was precariously perched on a ladder and the sander was heavy, especially working above my head. After buying a cheap new sander Rick finished it off for me. I've been working on those doors for years and have tried everything – paint stripper, hot air gun, brute force with sandpaper and scrapers but the electric sander was brilliant. Rick also took the kitchen door off to take a bit of the bottom where it has dropped. He will cut a bit of wood to fill in the gap at the top. The door by the steps was sticking so he took that off too.



Gardens

Gravel weeded and weed killer sprayed on those weeds too small to pull out.

Grass mowed three times and under control. Don may be coming over in a months time and we may come back for a few days in the autumn so perhaps we may be okay for this year but we should consider paying someone to mow the grass about once a month during the growing season next year. I'm very pleased with my pots of geraniums as quite few survived the winter and I hinted (by sign language) to the village gardener that it was okay for him to water them. The lady from the Epicerie came over to admire them and I managed a few French words but it was difficult. Rick's cut down the two dead trees and next time we have a car with a trailer here they and some trees we cut down last year can be taken to the tip. We're not allowed bonfires.



Windows, Doors and Ironwork



I have stained everything apart from the bedroom windows and painted all the ironwork. I have also painted underneath the outside balcony as it was dark and dirty. I couldn't do the second coat as it rained all day on Sunday. The balcony floor needs some floor paint as the surface is porous at the moment – job for next time.

Kitchen Splashback



Although Rick grumbled about my choice of tiles for the splashback, it looks good. He also siliconed around the sink unit as the chipboard surface the tiles are sitting on is dropping a bit where over the years they've got wet. Rick has taken off one of the bedroom windows and scraped off the old putty and re-puttied it. Run out of time, this and the other bedroom window is a job for next time. Put putty on the list.

Television

The television usually comes on automatically when the electricity is switched on. If it doesn't, switch it on with the Hitachi controller. A message comes up "Please confirm Signal". You then have to press the left hand top button of the small black controller while pointing it at the small black "Goodman" box underneath the television. You have to wait a few seconds for it to activate.

Sunday 13 July

It's poured with rain again during the night and now it's slowed down to a fine drizzle. The village is packed, yes completely packed as they have a special service at the church. We can't believe where all the people have come from and the church bells are going like the clappers. Rick has really impressed me by cycling to Ciral for his bread. I wouldn't consider tackling it as it seems to be a

series of uphill, okay for coming back I suppose. He took what was he thought a short cut but involved another huge hill, overall it took him 46 minutes to cycle 6.34 miles.

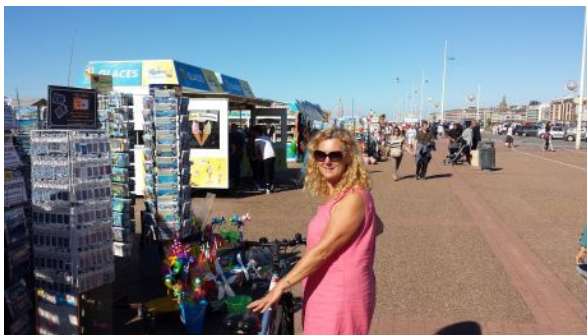
The rain eventually stopped about 5.30 pm and we went and had a guided tour around the Carrouges Château – very much bigger and more interesting than we anticipated.



It's our last evening at the house and also the final of the World Cup Football between Argentina and Germany. Should you somehow have missed the result, Germany won on penalties.

Monday July 14

We headed for Dieppe as we have a 7am crossing to Newhaven tomorrow morning and we wanted to try staying in an Aire near the ferry. It was Bastille Day and the sun was shining at last. There were plenty of places in Dieppe to park our motorhome for 7 euros a night and lots of restaurants to choose from to enjoy a final meal.



View from the ferry of Aire where we slept

It's been a great and varied month but not too sure if June is such a good month to be away from home. We've missed our strawberries, raspberries, black and red currants and returned to a jungle of a garden.

We are still in the holiday mode as the weather at home is wonderful and each day we have been cycling to Climping beach and swimming in the sea which has been fantastic! There's Glorious Goodwood, picnics, Arundel Festival and Rudgwick Music Festival and a week at Sandy Balls in The New Forest to look forward too. There is also the possibility of Rick's betting programme coming good !