

French House September 2019

Tuesday 3 September

Arrived at Saint Ellier on a beautiful day after an overnight crossing. The main purpose of this visit is to fit a woodburner in the kitchen, Rick and Don purchased one on Ebay for £200. For a few weeks now Rick has been popping in and out of the garage fiddling with it and ordering bits online.

I invited Lise and the Mayor's wife round for tea as Lise said how much she enjoyed it last time and it's what she considers to be very British. I served scones with cream and jam and also little cakes. The tea turned out far too strong, Lise enjoyed the scones but I think they were a bit too sweet for the mayor's wife. They didn't touch the cakes. I showed them my book that I am using for my French lessons. Currently I am learning the parts of a car, they went into hysterics and couldn't see why I was learning how to say "spark-plug". Then we talked about Brexit, religion, Teresa May and Boris. They once again collapsed with laughter when we told them about Teresa May running through the wheat field and Boris and the "letterbox" comment. Their parting shot was that my accent is really terrible!



Lots of sticks in the fireplace



Taking out the old grate – very heavy

Just after they left we set off on our new electric bikes about a mile and a half up the hill to Julie and Rob's. They were very pleased to see us and after a few glasses of wine we wobbled home.

Wednesday 4 September

Bit of a lazy start especially after being distracted with all the political goings-on. The MP's won their vote last night to avoid a no-deal, Boris is in big trouble. It took us 25 minutes to cycle to Carrouges which is about 15 minutes less than on a conventional bike. We paid a fleeting visit to the market and stopped in what used to be Madame Vidu's for a coffee. The Tabac has reopened and the hotel opposite the Post Office was displaying a Menu Board but there was no sign of life. While Rick was sorting out the woodburner I stained the new bedroom window and a couple of others. Nothing seemed to be going right for Rick with the woodburner mainly because he had ordered the wrong size registration plate. Rob dropped off something that he could use instead but he had to make a template out of a bit of plasterboard first.



More sticks than soot

Thursday 5 September

Things seem to be going from bad to worse for Boris and we thought Teresa May had it bad. Lydia's first day in Reception, she's a big girl now. I was determined to get Rick's head out of the chimney and a trip to Carrefour did just that. Rob and Julie came to us for a duck supper. We were told that Pre en Pail is pronounced "Pre en Pi", another example of my terrible accent. Bottle count needed in the morning.



First Fire

Friday 6 September



The shower and sink water flow in the new bathroom was poor. Rick took the tap and shower head apart and found they were filled with grit from the pipes. This will have to be done regularly until the grit clears.

Cycled 18.5 km's through Rouperoux into the forest. The electric bikes are really paying off as there were long, steep hills on the way. Rick put weed and feed on the lawn. We needed to move the old fire basket from where we had left it by the church door down to the back of the house. It was too heavy for us to lift but Rick devised a method of moving it by using two planks of wood. Monique who must be pushing 80 saw us struggling and rushed over to help. It took a lot of convincing that it was way too heavy for her but she insisted on standing on the plank to hold it down. It was still a struggle especially getting down the church steps. Unfortunately, once again we ran out of time and were either too busy or tired to make use of the recreation area.



Our last night at the house as we set off for Segonzac tomorrow to spend a couple of days with Graham and Susannah and then onto Milhars to see our friend Alan. This is our last visit this year and we are a little sad to say goodbye as we have had more interaction with neighbours here than at home. I returned the jam jar to the mayor's wife that she had filled with apple. Attached was a little thank you note saying that we look forward to returning again next year hopefully with an improved accent. She was impressed but I confessed I had used Google translate.

Monday 16 September

Well we are back in Saint Ellier! We had a fantastic time at Graham and Susannah's château in Segonzac and a gourmet time with Alan drifting from one meal to the next and a few nights in the motorhome in Monmarde, Naurelle, Les Pradeaux and Sonzay. However, the past week has been dominated by Rick's ticker playing up. Since he has not been drinking alcohol and caffeine it has stabilised a bit. For our last week we have decided to come back to the house instead of going home.

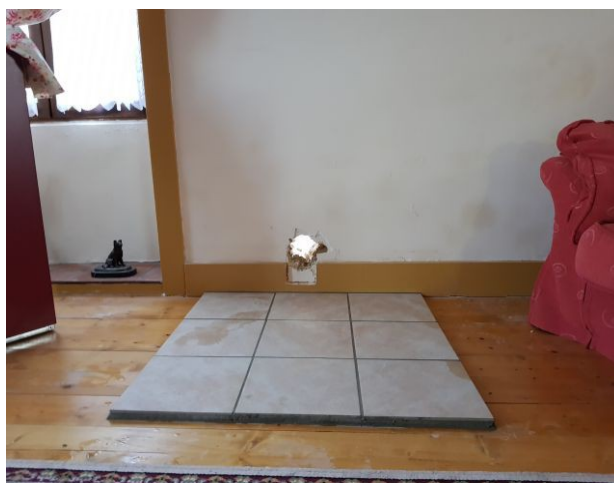


We stopped at Mr Bricolage and bought a pellet woodstove that we have been eyeing up for a while. The priority now is to get it installed but have to make a hole in the 18 inch thick wall first.

The house is really comfortable and the village is peaceful, it's a wonderful escape.

Tuesday 17 September

It a bit chilly today, perhaps we will have to light those woodburners earlier than we thought. I struggled with my French grammar exercises all day while Rick finished making his hole in the wall and laying a tile hearth for the pellet stove. Exchanged the stove's short pipe for a longer one and found the Action store that everyone is talking about. It's very much like the Chinese shops in Tenerife but much smaller, however, we still managed to spend £30. Still checking Rick's heart rate on and off all day, it's going down!



Wednesday 18 September

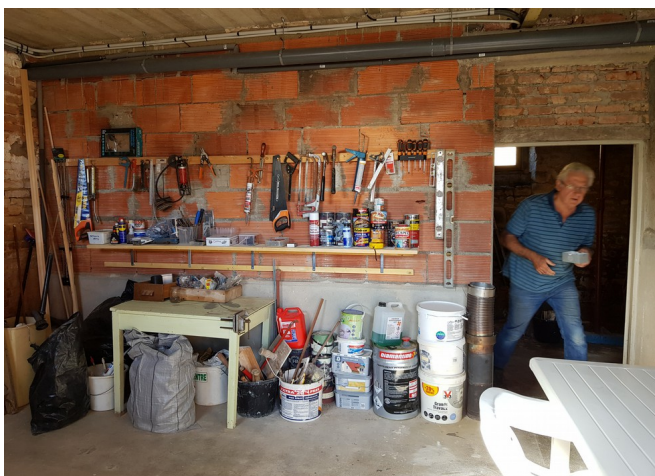
Rick made good around the pipe inside and out. Julie and Rob came round for drinks and the opening ceremony for the Pellet Stove.



Rob is helping translate as the instructions are all in French. Rick feeding the beast. I know it doesn't look very beautiful but we will be loving it in the cold weather.

Thursday 19 September

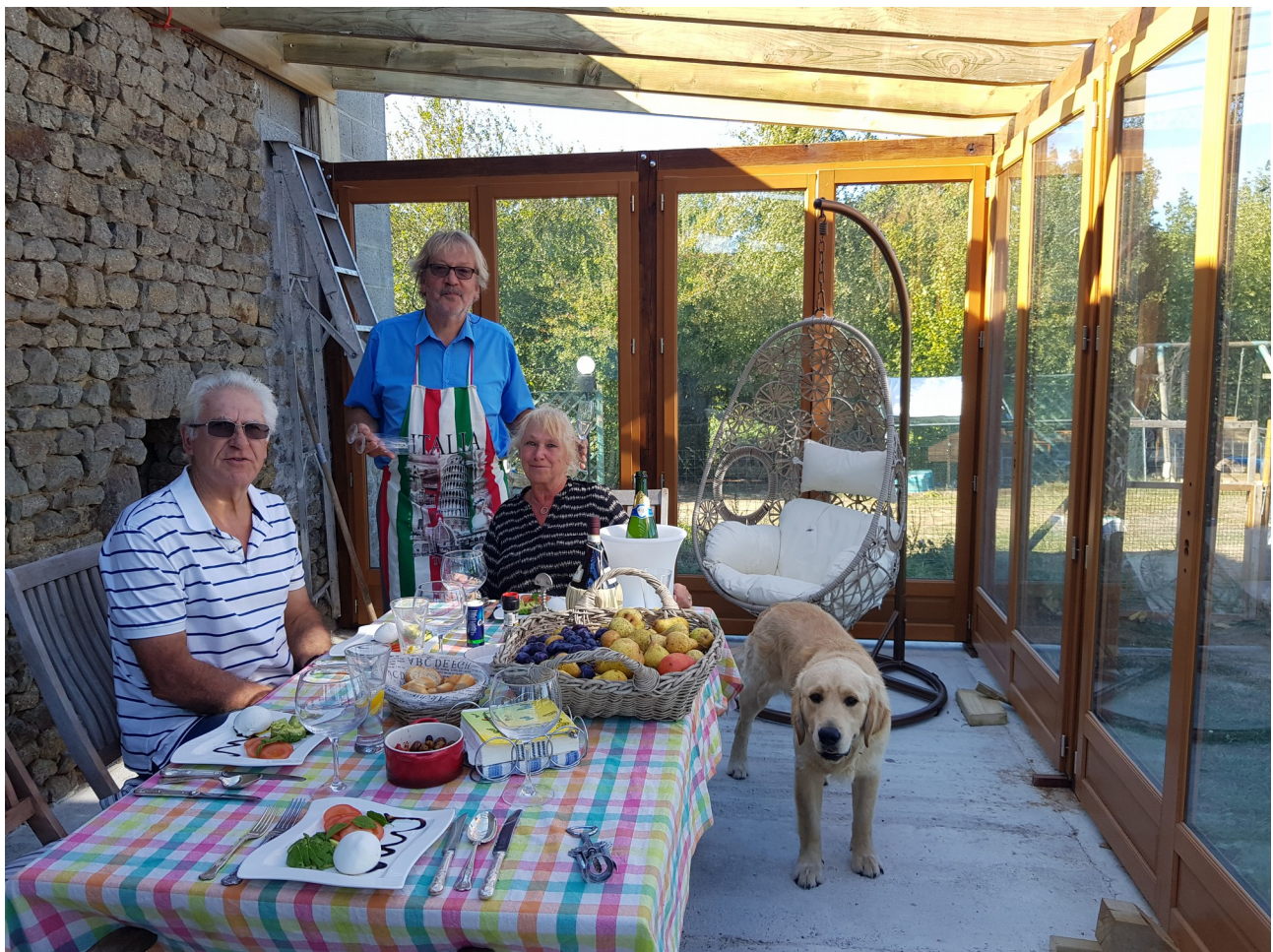
We got up this morning to a total mess in the kitchen, we had way too much to drink. More checks on the Samsung watch needed but he seems to be okay. A very successful visit to Lise who telephoned the roofer and arranged for him to come on Saturday to have a look at capping the chimney, she will act as translator. Bit of a dodgy moment for Rick as Lise has a kitten, I mentioned that Rick was allergic and she immediately threw the poor thing out the window. We had a good sort out in the workshop and cellar and did a few odd jobs.



New shelves in the workshop and cellar

Friday 20 September

Rob and Julie invited us for a fabulous Italian themed late lunch that went onto the evening. As Rick is allergic to cats we were going to have it outside but it was too windy so we sat in their conservatory that Rob was building. He hasn't finished the roof and one of the kittens must have sensed Rick was wary and landed on his shoulder.



Saturday 21 September

Great success, the roofer actually turned up and is set to cap the chimney next week. Lise checked my French homework and concluded that my written work was okay but my accent is still terrible.



Just finishing off a few jobs and having a bit of fun after.



This is our last visit this year and its been a really good one. Lise has been a great help and having friends just up the hill is brilliant, not sure our livers could take much more than a couple of week though. Rick's racing heartbeat was a concern but it has settled down, got to get rid of the Samsung watch, the constant checking was stressful. Winter visits are now a reality as a woodburner in the kitchen and pellet burner in the lounge should ensure we are cosy. Looking forward to Spring 2020.

Job List

Replace Woodburner Register Plate

Finish painting around Woodburner (order more black spray paint)

Fit Blackout Blind in Small Bedroom

Fit new window and windowsill in 2nd Bedroom

Fit Blackout Blind in 2nd Bedroom

Fill in cracks in kitchen steps – new bag of lime cement in workshop.

Fill in round the edge of the floor in loft

Screed loft windowsills

Tile Stairs balcony 2.7 x 1.0