



JOSSELYN JOURNAL

SPECIAL EDITION SPECIAL EDITION SPECIAL EDITION SPECIAL EDITION

Hey Guess What!

Who me?

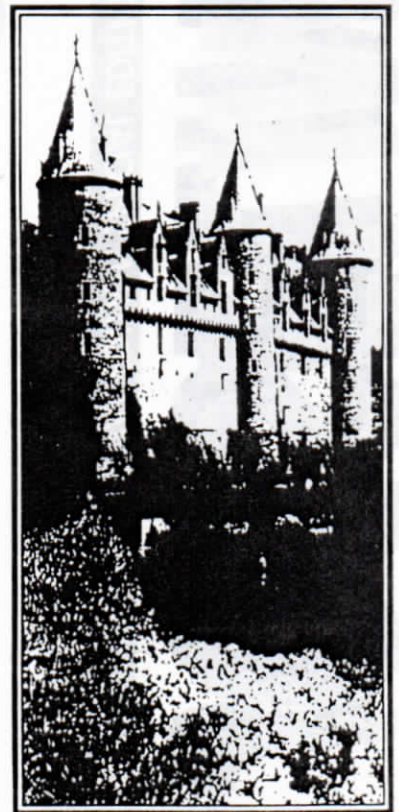
Yes you, What were you doing during the weekend of Wednesday 7 to Sunday 11 September 1994.

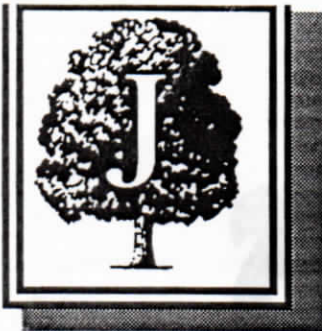
Nothing much, why, did I miss something?

You missed a very enjoyable visit with good company to see the Chateau Josselin in Brittany. It all started a couple of years ago when the newly formed Josselin Society had an idea for a visit that would interest their members.

Where was this proposed visit to, and what was the focus of attention?

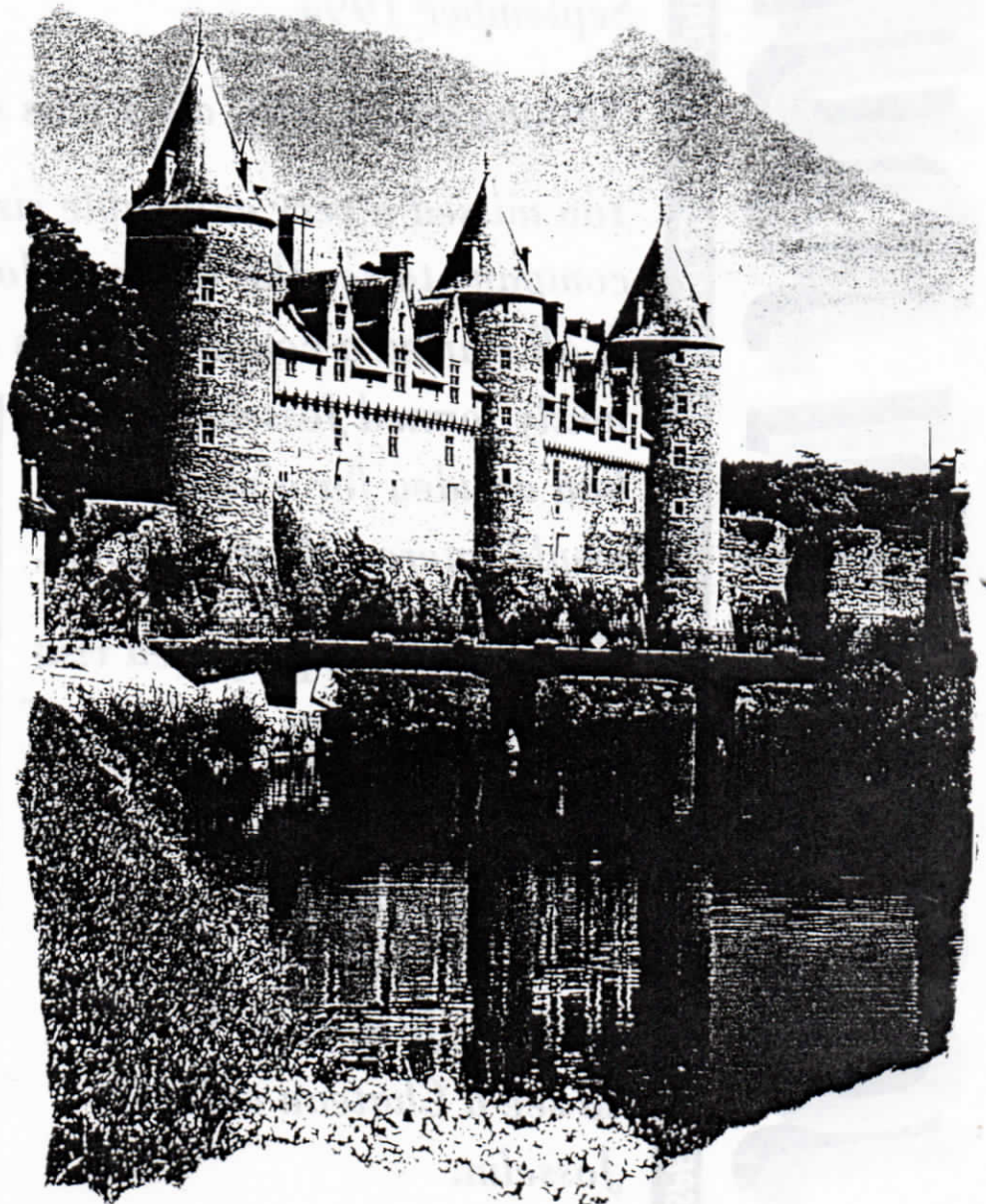
Well someone had the bright idea of Josselin members going to Josselin in Brittany, to see a Chateau called Josselin.





What a brilliant idea, and would you see Monsieur Josselin the owner, and confirm your connection with his family?

No, not exactly. You see the Chateau is owned by the Duke de Rohan, and has been in their possession off and on since Guethenoc in 1008 gave his second son the name Josselin, and it was him who gave his name to the castle that was being built then, and the town that grew around it.



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So, it's not even a surname?

No. Surnames of nobility were not commonly known way back in those days, and you would be known as Josselin of Rohan, Eustace of Boulogne, Jocelin of Bath and Wells etc, most being Christian names, but significant Christian names which were often handed down from father to eldest son.

I am confused. The idea you referred to was for a group of people of common surname, but with various spellings, who may have some connection to each other in the past, and have named their society with a spelling rarely seen in England, and the name of a Chateau in France which may have no connection with your surname?

In a nutshell "yes".

The mind Boggles, you had better enlighten me with a few facts, and maybe I will show more enthusiasm to any further visit.

OK but the visit turned out to be a thoroughly enjoyable few days, among Josselin Society Members from different walks of life, this produced an outstanding quality and feeling that we were all of one family, and we got on well together.

Let me add a little bit of background history about Chateau Josselin at this point, and I hope, the wiser readers out there will write and correct any errors by writing to your Society Chairman Bill, and not just complain to your partner that the old fool doesn't know what he is talking about. We will be that much better informed next time, and will encourage a reparte between members which will be printed in our newsletter.

I heard you say "Oh no, not another of his marathons".

Anyway back to the plot



In 1008 Guethenoc, Viscount of Porhoet, left his castle in Tro in Gulliers, 12 miles to where he built Josselin. It was possibly of wooden construction. Guethenoc was succeeded by his son, Josselin, who gave his name to it and the small town that grew around it. On the death the Duke of Brittany without an heir, his son-in-law, Eudes II de Porhoet who owned Josselin Castle, claimed rights to the duchy against opposition from King Henry II Plantagenet England who wished to promote a relative Duke of Brittany.

In 1168 King Henry II captured Josselin after a bloody battle, and destroyed it to break Eudes II's resistance. After several years exile, Eudes II returned and rebuilt Josselin.

1231- From this date Josselin passed in succession or marriage to the houses of Fougeres, Lusignan and France. Josselin played a major part in the One Hundred Years War.

On 26 March 1351 Combat of the Thirty took place. Jean de Beaumanoir, acting commander for Charles of Blois, left Josselin with thirty Breton and French knights to do battle with thirty Anglo-Breton knights led by the Englishman Bemborough, who was Captain of Ploermel for Monfords party and had been pillaging the area for a long time. The battle took place half way between Josselin and Ploermel, and was fought furiously to the last man standing. Beaumanoir was victorious, and returned to Josselin with eighteen English prisoners.

In 1370 the castle was exchanged, and the great Captain Olivier de Clisson who was related to the Dukes of Brittany the Penthièvres, and to the Lavals, and was very wealthy when he became the new owner. In 1380 Du Guesclin died and de Clisson was granted a knighthood, making him the most powerful man in France after the King. The second wife of Olivier de Clisson was Marguerite de Rohan, Beaumanoir's widow.

In 1407 de Clisson died in Josselin leaving his huge fortune to his daughter Beatrice and his son-in-law Alain VIII de Rohan. He was succeeded by Alain IX who married Mary of Lorraine in Joessline in 1450. Alain IX was a strong supporter of his brother-in-law Duke Jean V of Brittany, and the enmity between Rohans and Duchy of Brittany died away. The peace was short lived, and following the marriage of Alain IX's son Jean II to Mary of Brittany, the daughter of Duke Francois I, his relationship with his brother-in-law Duke Francois II was far from cordial, and he was forced to take refuge at the

court of France, where he was involved in many plots to unseat the Duke of Brittany.

In 1488 Duke Francois II is said to have had part of Josselin demolished as a punitive measure.

In 1491 Charles VIII married Duke Francois II's daughter Anne of Brittany, and as compensation to Jean II for his help in winning the hand of Anne (who he really wanted the marriage to his own son), Charles VIII granted the incomes from the estates of Dinan and Lehon, and the income from tax on strong drink for a five year period to Viscount de Rohan, to assist him in the restoration of his castles. Thanks to this the manor house was rebuilt including the Renaissance facade erected between 1490 and 1510. When Jean II died childless, Josselin Castle passed through the marriage to Rohan-Gie's a junior branch of the Rohan family. As a result of the marriage of Rene II de Rohan, and Isabeau d'Albret the protestant daughter of the King of Navarre, this Rohan branch was converted to the Reformed Religion and as Duke de Rohan became military head of the Calvinist movement, and was obliged to fight royal authority during the final stages of the Wars of Religion, which made an enemy of Cardinal Richelieu. As a punishment the cardinal ordered the demolition of Josselin in 1629, and it took two weeks to blow up the huge keep and south eastern corner of the rock foundation, also demolishing Rohan's castle at Blain the same time.

Henry de Rohan was at Court during this period, not aware of what was happening, until the cardinal came up to him and said, 'Your Grace, I have just thrown a rather good bowl along your skittle alley'.

In the 17th and 18th centuries Josselin Castle became derelict and in ruins, with the Rohans living mainly at court.

In 1760 the two great towers and the drawbridge flanking the first gate were demolished.

In 1776 the Duchess de Rohan allowed a cotton mill to be set up in the ground floor rooms to provide work for poor children. In 1835 Charles-Louis Josselin, Duke de Rohan, undertook the castles restoration, and major re-building was started to restore the outside to its original state, and refurbishing of the interior. 1880 -

from this date the work was directed by Henri Lafargue, who had worked on the restoration of the castle at Blois. In the early 20th century, the gardens were laid out by the famous landscape gardener Duchesne.

The castle was turned into a convalescent home for the wounded during the First World War, and suffered greater misfortune when requisitioned by German troops in June 1944, and damaged when the bridge over the river Oust was blown up on 6 August 1994. After the war many rafters and the entire roof had to be replaced.

Of the castle built for the Viscount de Porhoet at the end of the 12th century and early 13th, only the large foundations at the southern most tip of rock remain.

That concludes the brief history of Josselin Castle. Any questions?

Yes. If you were not chasing around after Society Research, then what did you do over there, and how many were interested enough to go?

We had a blooming good time.

There were 12 finally staying in the Hotel de France, Anne and Dave Thompson, Ben, Brian and Ben's son Timothy Joscelyne from Braintree, Hugh and Celia Joscelyne from Bishops Stortford, Wayne and Jeanne Joscelyne from Canada and Richard and Raneer from Australia, and myself Chairman, (Bill).

Your committee had voted that members make their own arrangements for travel to Josselin, and hotel bookings were made by our Secretary Ann for three or four nights.

I gratefully accepted the offer of a lift from Dave and Ann and plans were made for them to motor down from Stoke-on-Trent, spend the night at my house, and leave Wednesday morning the 7th at 4.00 am, allowing sufficient time to catch the 8.00 am ferry from Portsmouth to Caen. It was fortunate we left ourselves plenty of time, as we ran into some fog which we didn't expect. I had no idea the crossing would take six hours, but fortified with a good breakfast, we found the time soon passed, looking around the shopping/entertainment decks, and relaxing in the comfortable reclining chairs in the lounges. It was all too soon for Ann, who had volunteered to do all the driving, to start the engine and drive off into France, trying to remember to drive on the wrong side of the road. Ann had obtained a map and route sheet which she was assured had very little

roundabouts. Wrong on both scores. She had to negotiate five roundabouts within the first five miles, and they were not very little. They must have sprung up like mushrooms in the night. Anyway she did very well, with soothing words of encouragement from Dave and myself, like, mind that idiot coming round from the left, and next turn off to the right, not this one the next. Too late we are on our way to Dinan instead of Rennes. By the time she had covered fifteen miles she felt confident enough to tackle any road hazard. In fact she was far more efficient than the navigator, who got confused with the road numbering, which changed from one number to another and back again within a matter of a few miles and also had different route numbers in green on the same route to confuse us (Guess who the navigator was? Well I had left my reading glasses in my suitcase!)

We eventually arrived at Josselin, allowing for the one hour adjustment, at 6.50pm, and after a little language difficulty at the reception desk, we booked into the hotel. Our rooms were comfortable with en suite shower, WC and wash hand basin, but one of our party had requested a room with a bath. He was quite surprised to find the bath was three feet long, and he sat with his knees under his chin. After refreshing ourselves, we went down to the restaurant for dinner, and after considering a couple at the next table for members of our party, we made ourselves known, only to find they were Swiss and nothing to do with us. But this did prompt Richard and Raneer at another table to introduce themselves, to the amusement of the other diners, who were quite aware by this time who we were and the nature of our visit. During our meal we were joined by Wayne and Jeanne who were enjoying a holiday in Europe. At last we had members with us who spoke fluent French, and we were not left in apprehension over what we had ordered from the menu. After an interesting and jovial evening we retired for bed about 11.30pm.



**PICTURED IN THE CASTLE COURTYARD, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:
HUGH & CELIA JOSCELYNE, WAYNE & JEANNE JOSLIN (CANADA), BILL JOSCELYNE,
RICHARD & RANEE JOSCELYNE (AUSTRALIA), ANNE THOMPSON,
BEN, BRIAN & TIMOTHY JOSCELYNE, DAVE THOMPSON.**

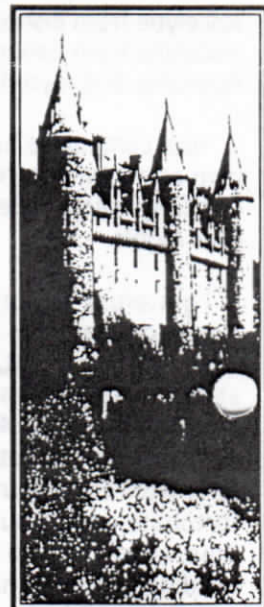


Thursday 8th - This day is the Pardon Day celebrated every year by a procession, with prayers and praises offered to "Our Lady of the Thorns" for her special healing powers (further information is available on request), for which many people with faith join the procession to be blessed and relieved of their suffering or handicap. The preparations started early, and following our breakfast at 9.00am of croissant, french sticks and jam, and coffee, we went to see the procession, which commenced at 10.00 am and was made up of many religious groups with banners followed by supporters and those hoping to be healed, and finally the ministers and choir from the local church bearing the statue to "Our Lady of the Thorns". The procession was accompanied by hymns and chants relayed around the town by speakers for the length of the service. As the procession moved off in the sunshine to circuit the town, it presented quite a colourful sight, and seeing our group join the end, and thinking I would obtain some good photos along the route, I hurried down steps to the river bridge, and road that passes between the river and Chateau. And there I waited. And waited. Many people were moving in the direction from which I had come, but you must make allowances for a nation who drive on the wrong side of the road. After some time and with the singing still issuing forth from the speaker system, I recognised the Swiss couple from the previous evening coming towards me and enquired how long before the procession reached here. I felt a right Wally when they explained the route no longer travelled south, but went north of the town. You have to laugh at this fiasco. The Chairman of the Josselin Society standing in the wrong place with camera poised to record a procession which he had travelled many miles to see, against a background of Chateau Josselin. Oh well it was a lovely day, and I re-climbed the steps and made myself comfortable at a table in front of our hotel, with a beer while I considered my next move, and watched the world go by. Sitting there in the sunshine and in view of the church doors, where I assumed the service was relayed from, I decided to wait until they all came out. While I waited Hugh and Celia arrived, followed by Ben, Brian and Timothy at 3.00 pm. They

had to leave their vehicles outside town due to traffic restrictions for the day. The service finally ended in the church and the congregation left, but the service over the speaker system continued, and I was advised the main service was being conducted from a church and open air gathering at the top of the main street. This group retraced their steps in procession after their service and arrived back at 5.30 pm. We all assembled in the dining room at 7.30 pm, and after a very nice meal, and taking of photographs, we retired for bed at about 11.45pm.

Friday 9th - We had breakfast and then split into small groups. Ann, Dave

and myself walked across the bridge to a small church of Chaple de la Croise, which was in the process of renovation inside, and therefore did not present a very good image to visitors. We met Ben, Brian and Timothy as we were leaving, who also were visiting the church. After wandering around the town, and along the river bank, we again bumped into Ben and his party. It was time for lunch, and as we were standing outside a cafe, we all had a meal overlooking the river. Dave was upset that he couldn't get a chip from Brian's late order and we left. We had all arranged to meet outside the entrance to the Chateau at 2.00pm, where Brian presented Dave with a wrapped present, a chip wrapped in a serviette for which Dave thanked him in true French fashion, to Brian's surprise and mock embarrassment. All good light hearted entertainment for the locals. The guided tour of Chateau Josselin was restricted to ground floor rooms, but considering the castle is on a steep hill, the living accommodation visited was high above the river, and quite impressive. We regrouped on the battlements overlooking the river for photos, and if the Rohan flag and mast could have fitted into a suitcase, they may have lost it. The meal that evening had been booked at the Hotel de Chateau on the other side of the river to the Chateau, but by the time we were due to leave our hotel for dinner it was raining quite hard, so Hugh offered us a chauffeur service in his eight seater Land Rover Discovery, for which we were very grateful. As darkness descended on Josselin, the flood lights along the river frontage were switched on illuminating the Chateau, and casting a perfect reflection on the river when the rain cleared.



After an excellent meal, we departed at 10.30pm to enjoy a refreshing walk back to our hotel, as the rain had now stopped. And so to bed.

Saturday 10th - we were woken quite early by activity outside the hotel, and looking out of my window found the noise was due to erection of traders stalls, as today was market day. After breakfast Dave, Ann and I spent an interesting couple of hours looking around the stalls, while Hugh drove Celia, Jeanne, Wayne, Ben, Brian and Timothy down the excellent dual carriageway of the N24 to the South Brittany coast. They first visited the picturesque town of Pont-Aven and enjoyed a crepe lunch on the harbour front. Following this, the party visited the Museum of Art, dedicated to the local artists colony about the turn of the century. Most notable painter with several pictures displayed was Paul Gauguin. Richard and Raneé had followed in their car to Pont-Aven, and they all enjoyed a conducted tour by Wayne around a number of attractive inlets, eventually (with some back seat driving) they arrived at Concarneau, where they had tea at a pavement brasserie in the town centre. This fishing port is famous for its old walled village where numerous specialist and souvenir shops huddle together, and several purchases were made. Time was getting short, so Hugh put his foot down, and with the power and comfort of the vehicle, the miles flew by and the party arrived back at Josselin in time for our evening meal booked at the Blot Brothers Restaurant De Commerce, where we had a long table adjacent to sliding glass patio doors, and looking down on the river and Chateau. During the evening a memento card signed by us all was presented to Ann our Secretary by myself, with our thanks for organising our hotel accommodation. Richard enjoyed identifying possible connections between his family and the Braintree family tree, which if proved through a White Notley connection, would link together eight of the party present. We returned to our hotel about 11.45 pm in time to pay our bills (as we were leaving early the following morning), and enjoyed a brandy night cap with thanks to Hugh, and following a request that I write in their visitors book, we all retired for bed.

Sunday 11th - breakfast 7.30 am. Dave was most upset that there was a phantom croissant snatcher, and he did not get one (In my defence there was only one when I joined them and no more of the beastly things arrived, and by the end of the day I wished I hadn't scoffed it). It certainly caused a lot of fun during our return home.



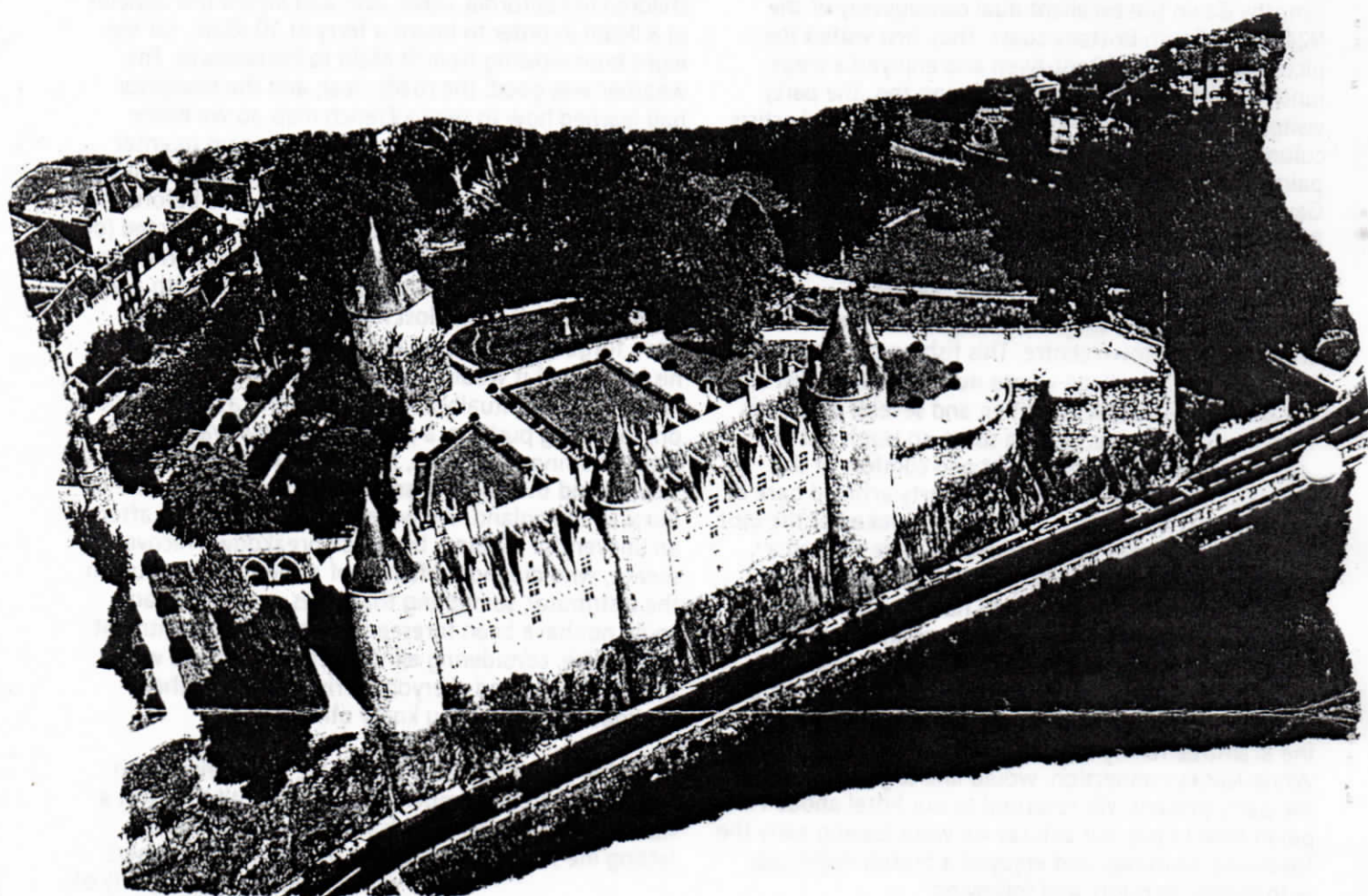
We all said our farewells, with Dave Ann and myself leaving for England that morning, Ben, Brian and Timothy having a late evening crossing, Hugh and Celia continuing south, in order to take part in an organised walking marathon, Wayne and Jeanne to continue their holiday in Europe, and Richard and Raneé to see her children in California. Dave, Ann and myself left Josselin at 8.00am in order to board a ferry at 10.45am, for the eight hour crossing from St Malo to Portsmouth. The weather was good, the roads clear, and the navigator had learned how to read a French map, so we made good time to join the queue of cars lining up to enter the port. Dave and Ann's car had been given the full VIP expensive treatment, lavished on it with love before the holiday, so that carefree motoring could be expected (or could it?) It appears that their car decided it didn't want to leave France without Dave's croissant, and with a sigh from the engine room, lost motivation. This is where Dave forgot his croissant, and would have given away his last Rolo if it would restart, but it kept repeating "NON". We eventually boarded the ferry as last vehicle on, following pushing, a professional tow wagon with a piece of string that broke, before we were safely stowed and the doors closed behind us, and we were on our way to England. We were met at Portsmouth after an uneventful crossing, by Dave's breakdown recovery service, who diagnosed failure of a computer module in the distributor, something that gives no warning and could not have been foreseen. It was a disappointment at the time, considering all their efforts, but all well that ends well, and everyone arrived safely at their destinations (unless you know otherwise.)

I think everyone had a good time at Josselin and it was nice to meet members, who were until then just a number and a name. Thank you Anne and Dave for letting me share with you, and thanks to all members, who with me, made up our party of twelve.

You out there, does this explain our pilgrimage to Josselin?

~~~~~  
*Eh what? Could you go over it again*

**Chairman Bill**



## OUR THANKS

We hope you have enjoyed this Special Edition covering the enjoyable trip to Josselin, many thanks to all those who supplied pictures.  
Goodbye for now.

This Special Edition is published in addition to the Josselin Society Newsletter. Articles, pictures etc, for publication should be sent to the Editor: Peter Josling, 61 Golden Dell, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL7 4EE

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