

# Special Rotary Exchange



Dear Rotarians,

I wanted to make you aware of my family's recent trip to France. Although our trip was not arranged through your committee, it did take place due to Rotary and may qualify as activity during your 2006-2007 year.

From July 18<sup>th</sup> through July 27<sup>th</sup> the family of Lloyd, Susan & Laura Doré from Abbeville, Louisiana were hosted by the family of Patrick, Brigitte & Marie Bousquet from Abbeville, France.

In 1969 I was one of a group of 19 high school students from Vermilion Catholic High School that were part of a Foreign Study League tour that took a six-week tour through Europe. Through the cooperation of the two Abbeville Rotary Clubs (Daniel Broussard from Abbeville, Louisiana and Leon Fierain from Abbeville, France), arrangements were made for the group to visit Abbeville, France.

In 1999, while requesting information for a program to be presented to my Rotary Club, I wrote the Rotary Club in Abbeville, France. In my letter I asked if any of the French Rotary members had a daughter the same age as my daughter (Laura was nine at the time) and if they wished to become pen pals and to set up an exchange when they got older.

I soon heard from Rotarian Patrick Bousquet, who has a daughter named Marie. Since that time Patrick and I, Laura and Marie have corresponded and shared information about our hometowns. Patrick & I are both the same age, both very active in Rotary, and both have accounting practices.

In July the Doré family traveled to Abbeville, France and were hosted by the Bousquet family. During our visit we found the town and people of Abbeville, France to be very charming and hospitable. We all attended the weekly Rotary meeting, where Rotarians helped us feel comfortable.



The town and area surrounding Abbeville, France is rich with scenic sights and history. Like Abbeville, Louisiana the town of Abbeville, France relies on agriculture and small industry for its economic stability. We also visited La Coupole, Amiens, Rouen, Peronne, St. Valery sur Somme, Le Crotoy and Paris.

Chartered in 1184 Abbeville, France is located on the banks of the Somme River, 12 miles from English Channel and northwest of Amiens. Recently it was verified that Fr. Antoine Megret (the 1843 founder of Abbeville, Louisiana) is originally from Abbeville, France (born 23 May 1797). On May 2, 1918 an agreement was reached in Abbeville, France for the United States to enter World War I. Abbeville, France was heavily damaged in May of 1940 during the German World War II blitzkrieg and occupation of France.

When the Doré family returned to Louisiana, Marie Bousquet joined them and stayed three weeks as Laura's guest. On August 3<sup>rd</sup> Patrick and Brigitte joined us in Abbeville, Louisiana. The Bousquets found the town and people of Abbeville, Louisiana to be just as charming and friendly as their own area in France.

Patrick attended our weekly Rotary meeting and exchanged greetings and gifts with our President. We brought them to New Orleans and showed them various sights in this area.



Through Rotary, we have made some very good friends through our experience. Both families look forward to future visits in France and Louisiana.

Lloyd Doré, Abbeville Rotary Club