

2012-2013: a busy and enriching year for Scituate/Sucy-en-Brie
Sister City Programs

On October 17, 2012, 40 students and 4 teachers from the Lycée Christophe Colomb came to Scituate and Cohasset. During their stay they visited key historical sites in Plymouth, Boston, Cambridge and Salem. In addition they spent a beautiful sunny day biking on Martha's Vineyard. The group was supposed to leave Massachusetts for New York City on October 28. Hurricane Sandy prevented that, leaving our correspondents stranded on the South Shore. Thanks to the generosity of Scituate and Cohasset host families and high school teachers, the group remained in the area much longer than planned, giving many the opportunity to experience Halloween.

Due to the winter storm "Nemo" twenty-seven students from Scituate and thirteen from Cohasset plus their teachers Patricia Jacquart, Erin Leonka (Scituate) and Beth Marat, Jeffrey Kotter (Cohasset) departed two days late for the second leg of the exchange in Sucy. The group arrived in Paris on February 11 and spent eleven wonderful, snow-free days in France. Shortly after their arrival, all participants of the exchange attended a welcome reception in the Salle des Mariages of Sucy's town hall that was hosted by the Sister City Committee of Sucy. During their stay in the Paris region, students attended classes at the Lycée Christophe Colomb and made daily trips on the train to visit various sites in the City of Lights. These excursions included organized tours of Notre Dame Cathedral (celebrating its 850th anniversary), the Latin Quarter, the Louvre, the Musée d'Orsay, Versailles, the Hôtel des Invalides where Napoleon is buried, the house of writer Victor Hugo, the Champs Elysées, and Montmartre. In addition, the students shared many memorable activities with their host correspondents and families, including ice skating in front of Paris' famous city hall. One evening the American students had a special dinner in a restaurant located on the Left Bank behind the Pantheon. This dinner was attended by all teachers involved with the exchange as well as administrators of the Lycée Christophe Colomb. A special surprise guest was Kelsea Hindley of Cohasset who participated in the 2008-2009 exchange. She spent the entire year at the University of Paris and credits her exchange experience four years ago with influencing her decision to do this.

Towards the end of their trip, American students spent three sunny days in Normandy, visiting Rouen, the World War II Memorial in Caen, the magical Mont Saint Michel, Omaha Beach, Arromanches and the American Cemetery in Coleville-sur-mer. The group arrived back in Boston on Friday, February 22.

Because Scituate and Sucy-en-Brie are sister cities, there are now and will be in the future many other opportunities beyond the student exchange for citizens of all ages to come together for a common purpose. In September 2012, eleven retired adults from Sucy came to spend ten days in Scituate as first time participants of our new program called "l'été indien" (Indian summer). They participated in many of the same excursions as the high school students while at the same time enjoying time at the beach and sailing along our coast. On a beautiful autumn evening shortly after their arrival in Scituate, our guests were invited to a reception at the Maritime Center hosted and attended by members of various governmental and cultural associations of our town, including selectmen, school committee, teachers, historical society and town merchants.

It was Scituate's turn to return to France in April, this time with fifteen retired adults led by Patricia Jacquart, recently retired teacher from SHS. From April 4-13, the group visited the chateaux, vineyards, wine cellars, fort and medieval pedestrian shopping district of Sucy, even having a fabulous lunch one day on the Marne River in a guinguette. During a Sunday visit of the Fort, our Scituate visitors took turns at target practice at the shooting range and Patricia Jacquart was inducted as a "dame de cour" (fair lady of the court) into the "Society of the Vineyards of Sucy", an organization that has its roots in the Middle Ages and is dedicated to promoting cultural activities. It was at the fort that we tasted the best wood-oven baked bread we have ever eaten. The rest of the visit involved many cultural excursions to Paris, only 17 kilometers away and easily accessible by train. Each evening saw many Americans and their hosts dining extravagantly in various homes in Sucy. After a delicious brunch on Saturday morning, April 13, our correspondents tearfully said goodbye to one another, as they promised to meet again in the near future.

Our final Sister City experience for this year took place for the third time in Scituate between July 15-28 when eighteen Sucy adolescents came

to Scituate for an English language home-stay program. The hosts were various families from the South Shore area that included Scituate, Cohasset, Hingham and Weymouth residents with children at Scituate High School and Notre Dame Academy. There were also several Scituate hosts with no children at home who were excited to have a new cultural experience. The weather was perfect for ocean-side activities. During their stay, the Sucy students received daily English lessons from Madame Kate Duffey at Scituate High School. In the afternoons, they toured Boston and Plymouth and spent several afternoons sailing, swimming, and rowing, thanks to the generosity of the Scituate Yacht Club, the Scituate Harbor Master, sailing members of the Scituate Rotary, the Cohasset Sailing Club and the Cohasset Maritime Institute.

This worthwhile educational event was a great success due to the many volunteers from Scituate and surrounding communities who so generously donated their time, energy, homes and expertise to the various programs we offered our Sucy friends. The committee especially wants to thank Scituate residents Kate Duffey, English teacher, Ellen Mulcahy, chaperone, and Cohasset High School teacher Beth Marat for their valuable participation.

The main event for 2014 will be an artist exchange that will take place in Scituate and Sucy. For details, check this web site next spring.