

ENTENTE CORDIALE

- a Frog in France



THE ARTHUR BEAN MEMORIAL RALLY 2015

On the 6th June 1944, in the skies above a small farm in Normandy, a life and death struggle took place. In this case, the result was a Spitfire crashing to ground in farmland. That farmer's son, Monsieur Lepetit, witnessed the action and saw the plane come down.

This was the day of the Normandy landings.

The brave pilot was sadly killed.

Moving forward 40 odd years and the farmer's son is now the farmer - with his own son. Together with volunteers and history enthusiasts, the wreck of the plane were dug up. Inside the cockpit, the remains of the pilot were found. Remarkably, within the pilot's flying jacket pocket, an in tact tailors receipt, from Wadebridge in Surrey, was found.

A great deal of research was carried out, in the UK and it was discovered that the pilot, Arthur Bean, had been a pupil at Charterhouse School. The school became enthusiastically involved and arrangements were made for the pilots body to receive a proper burial. It was decided that he should stay in France and he was subsequently buried in a War cemetery, a few miles from the crash site.

A memorial was erected, in the lane, near to the crash site. Standing more than 2 meters tall, it is a spitfire, banked in flight, and sculptured from parts of the original plane.

3 years ago, the grandson of the original farmer, Eric, who had become a classic car enthusiast and the proud owner of a restored Hotchkiss, decided to organise a memorial rally, to the pilot - Arthur Bean.





Charterhouse School, which has it's own Classic car and Military vehicle Club, make an annual visit, to attend the Memorial Site and join up with the rally attendants, for lunch, at a nearby Chateau.



Many of you will know Malcolm and Dianne Lorraine, who are lucky enough to live in Normandy. Mo and I were fortunate to be invited, by them, to join them on this years Memorial Rally.

Each of the participants, in the 2015 Arthur bean memorial Rally, received a superb miniature spitfire, made from that same Spitfire aluminium which, I am sure you can imagine, was a very proud moment.

The event was an interesting 3 day Rally, visiting 2 Chateaux, a French Naval Boatyard, the railway station which was specifically built for the Titanic's passengers and an airship hanger - and of course, lots of opportunity to tour round the Cherbourg peninsula's beautiful countryside and taste the wonderful delights of La Belle France.



Big Hanger - BIG!



Titanic's Franch Passenger Terminal