

Bailiff's Speech for Fête Nationale

14th July 2010

Mr Honorary Consul, Chief Minister, Constable, Ladies and Gentlemen

1. As you have mentioned, Mr Honorary Consul, the reception for the Fête Nationale last year was the first function which I attended following my being sworn in as Bailiff. It hardly seems possible that a year has passed since then but I am delighted to be here again today.
2. As the Honorary Consul has pointed out, it has been an eventful year. I would like to touch upon just three of the matters which he has mentioned.
3. Firstly, Jersey was honoured to receive the Tour de Bretagne for two days in April. Perhaps because of our historical links, we tend sometimes to concentrate more on our links with Normandy than with Brittany. The Tour was an opportunity to cement relations with the people of Brittany, which is of course an area of France which Jersey people tend to know well and visit regularly.
4. Secondly, the Tour des Ports; this always a wonderful event. The sight of 100 or more yachts approaching or leaving St Helier harbour is a magnificent spectacle and the dinner in the evening is invariably a very happy affair with copious quantities of wine being consumed in the spirit of friendship, as I know from past experience! I am delighted that this year the race started from Jersey.

5. This year marks the 15th Anniversary of the Maison de la Normandie in Jersey and the corresponding Bureau de Jersey in Caen and a reception is to be held on 9th September in this very room to celebrate that anniversary. I believe that both offices have made an important contribution to the close links between Normandy and Jersey which continue to develop. I understand that the new President of the Conseil Regional de Basse Normandie, Monsieur Laurent Beauvais and Senator Le Grand will be attending on that occasion and we shall be very pleased to welcome them. I know also that, through the good offices of the Constable of St Ouen, Mr Ken Vibert, it is hoped that a delegation from Jersey will visit Basse Normandie in the reasonably near future. Speaking of the Constable of St Ouen, I endorse the congratulations of the Honorary Consul upon his recent award of “L’Ordre des Palmes Académiques”.

6. On the recent visit of President Sarkozy to London to mark the 70th Anniversary of Charles de Gaulle’s famous wartime broadcast from the BBC, the British Prime Minister Mr David Cameron said that the anniversary was “*A reminder that Britain and France are not just neighbours in the geographical sense but also in the emotional sense*”. That is of course even more true of the Channel Islands which lie so close to the French coast and have so many historical links with France. The French community in Jersey remains much valued and I am delighted to be present today and to have the opportunity of proposing a toast:-

“Vive La France”