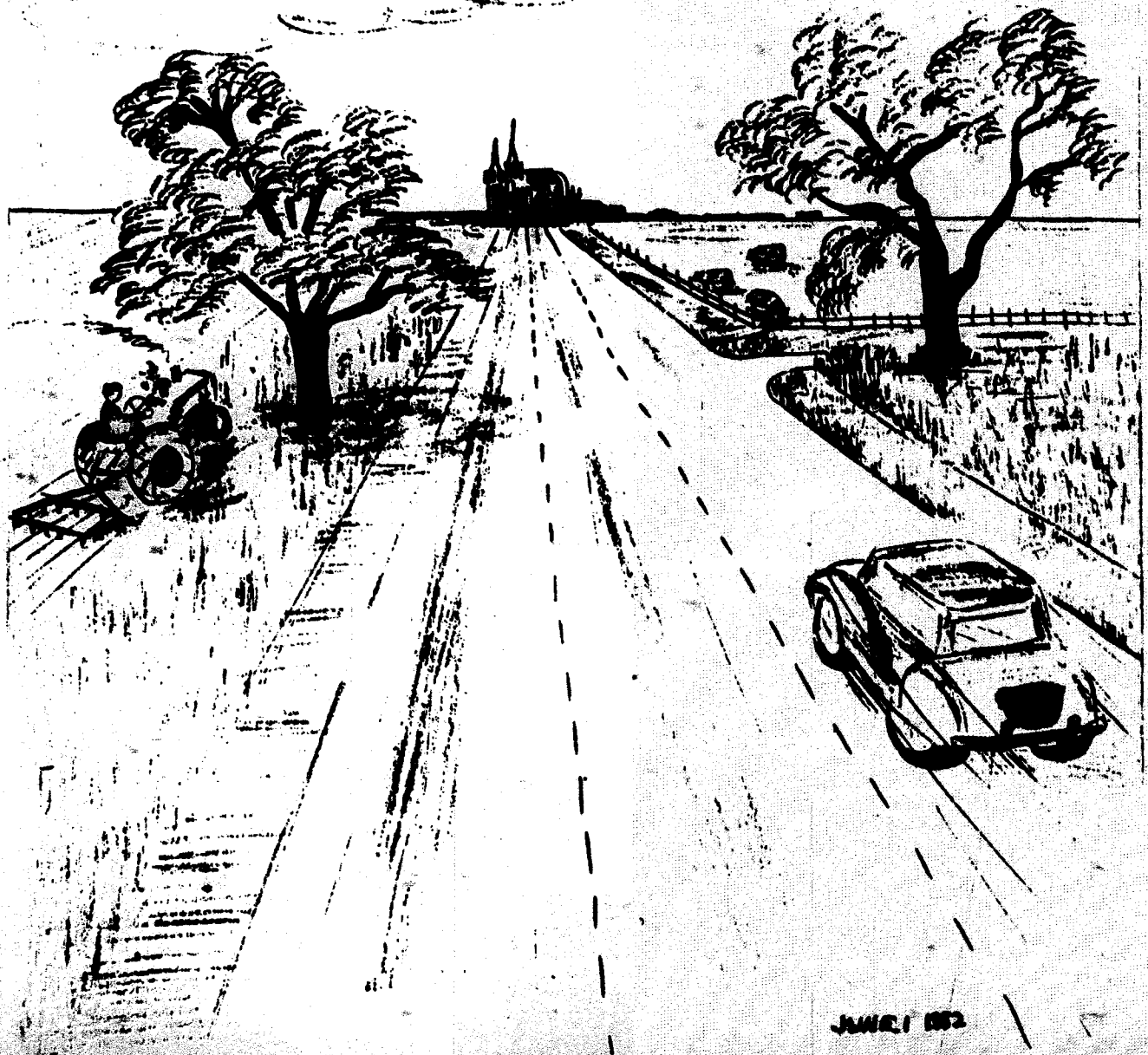


Welcome TO DREUX AIR BASE, FRANCE



JUNE 1 1952

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MISSION

To provide for the operation and maintenance of Dreux Air Base, France as a dispersed operating Base (DOB) and provide administrative and logistical support to all assigned and attached units as directed.

ENVIRONMENT

Dreux Air Base is located in the heart of the small farming district of North Central France. The nearest metropolitan centers are Dreux and Chartres which are 19 and 25 miles away respectively. Numerous farms and villages surround the base, and the rolling countryside offers year-round scenic beauty. There are no main highways serving this base, but many secondary roads radiate in every direction. Generally the secondary roads are rough and slightly narrower than those found in the United States. The main highways have from two to four lanes and are usually in good condition.

The base is conveniently located to many places of interest. Almost every town and village has a church or town hall of artistic and historical significance. To the north are the famous beaches of Normandy which played such an important part in the Allied invasion during World War II. The resort beaches of Deauville and Trouville can be reached by automobile in less than three hours. A short distance from Deauville is Le Havre, the great harbor where the large trans-Atlantic ships land their passengers.

Rouen, where Joan of Arc was tried and burned to death, is now a large modern city; not quite two hours from the Base.

Brittany is to the west; where many beautiful cathedrals and chateaux can be seen. Throughout the year, there are many festivals during which the people dress in colorful, ancestral costumes.

To the South, the city of Le Mans is famous for its automobile races which attract the best competitors throughout the world. Chartres, 25 miles south of the base, has its ancient and magnificent cathedral. This cathedral is one of the largest and most beautiful structures of its kind and dates back to the XIIth Century. On each visit something of its gothic splendor will be discovered which was overlooked on previous visits. Still further south is the Loire Valley; which is famous for its many massive castles. These huge chateaux are illuminated at night and are a "must" for tourists to France.

Approximately 50 miles to the east is the beautiful city of Versailles, famous for the Palace of Louis XIV. This enormous palace, surrounded by exquisite gardens and fountains, stands as living evidence of the regal splendor enjoyed by the kings of France. Paris, served by modern highways from all directions, is about 65 miles east of the base.

THE PEOPLE

The Frenchman is by nature a "free soul". He probably has the most acute consciousness of his individuality of any person in the world. He espouses the arts, gourmanderie, fervent patriotism and an undying interest

in politics at any level. All this amounts to a state of mind known as Gallice, or simply an atmosphere and manner particularly French.

As a companion piece to all this, the Frenchman is endowed with a code of social ethics which compliments a sense of grace in all things. It may be said that the rare accomplishment of knowing precisely where the social amenities end and privacy begins has been admirably achieved by the Frenchman.

In observing the French in their daily living, Americans see any number of things which seem strange when adjudged by our standards. Among these, for instance is the French practice of taking time to greet the same person formally no matter how many times two particular individuals meet during the course of a day. This is not a waste of time, it is an indication of how strongly one man feels toward the right of another to be recognized as an individual entity. Observing the warmth and easy grace with which the tenth as well as the first greeting is given also gives an insight into the true depth of social custom inborn in Frenchmen.

Just as the individual is the true singular unit in French society, the family is its strongest group. The family circle is bonded together by a commonness of accord governed by a strong sense of responsibility to patriarchal authority. The Father is the head of the family in the truest sense.

An invitation to a French family event, such as birthday or religious celebration is a decided honor, and Americans fortunate enough to receive such should by all means accept.

It is a definite mistake to begin drawing economic comparisons between the earnings and standards of living of our own people and the French. This is not due to indolence or lack of vitality on the part of either party—it is instead a part of the economic facts of life which surround nations living in such close proximity one to another.

It must be taken into consideration that the relative geographic size of Europe delegates that some nations (not states within a nation) will be principally agricultural, while others will be industrial. No nation in Europe has a really strong element of both—at least not in the manner of the United States where great industrial output can be diverted into a producing means to swiftly and mechanically bolster the rural or more predominantly agricultural areas. Industrial revolution is come to France, but hindered by numerous facets, such a revolution cannot be expected to occur overnight.

When sharp inequities exist between the economic embellishments of two peoples operating within the same social sphere (such as ourselves, living in France and shopping among the French) it is too often a simple matter for one party to exhibit an attitude of condescension or superiority toward the other. Such an attitude on the part of Americans would destroy our present excellent community relations. It is paramount that Americans residing here keep in mind that we are the guests of the French government. A good guest does not insult his host or hostess.

Given an opportunity, the French will exert upon you, their American guest, the same captivating charm that endeared them to the world.

REPORTING IN

If you arrive in Paris by air or train, you will be met by a staff car from the base providing we know in advance the time and date of your arrival. Otherwise you will be taken to the Gare de Montparnasse; which is the only station from which trains depart for the city of Dreux. If you arrive after the last train has departed, you will be taken to a hotel and given further information on currency exchange and how to get to Dreux Air Base.

French transportation is divided into first and second classes and is relatively inexpensive. It is advisable to travel first class for "comfort's sake". The city of Dreux is approximately an hour's ride by train from Paris. Upon arrival in Dreux city, call the base (Dreux 794) and ask for the motor pool dispatcher. Don't be afraid of the telephone. The operators are quite accustomed to our accent. In French the telephone number is "SEPT CENT QUATRE VINGT QUATORZE" (set sawng cat-ruh van cat-orze).

Upon arrival at Dreux Air Base report to Base Headquarters (bldg. 145). During off-duty hours, first sign in and then go to the Billeting Office (bldg. 31) for lodging.

HOUSING

The housing problems have been greatly alleviated by the completion of the Guaranteed Rental Housing projects off-base, and housing is adequate in this area. There is no waiting period for these units at the present time. These projects are located in the surrounding towns, the closest being 9 miles and the farthest 19 miles from the base. There are four sizes: 2 bedroom small, 2 bedroom large, 3 bedroom small and 3 bedroom large. Each house is unfurnished with the exception of an electric water heater, a small electric cooking range, a refrigerator, and an oil burning central heating unit. Rental fees range from \$100 to \$120 monthly depending upon the size of the house. On the average, fuel is \$50 a month, and electric costs approximately \$20 a month. Water and Garbage collection are included in the basic rental fee. These units were built by a French concern for rental to American military personnel, and all requests for repair and renovation must be made to the French Resident Manager.

These units are assigned in accordance with the individual's date of departure from the Zone of Interior. Where two or more individuals have the same date of departure, rank or date of rank determine assignment to quarters in that order. Personnel presently eligible for the Guaranteed Housing are Airmen First Class, with a minimum of seven years service, all non-commissioned officers, commissioned officers, and civilian employees in the grade of GS-9 and higher.

Economy housing is extremely difficult to find and in most cases does not meet American standards. When adequate housing can be found, extensive repairs and renovations are often necessary. Very few French houses have in-floor toilets and bath facilities. Most houses are rented furnished. The critical housing shortage in France has made rental fees soar, and they vary from \$50 to \$150 a month. There are a number of house trailers on the base but at the present time their future status is uncertain and they are being used as transient quarters and key personnel only.

WHAT TO BRING

What household goods to bring to France is dependent upon many things; most important is the type of available housing in which you wish to live.

The electric current in most areas is 220 volts, 50 cycles; except the one which operates on 110 volts, 50 cycles. In order to prevent damage to your appliances which operate on 110 volts, it is necessary to use a transformer to lower the voltage. Transformers are available in the Base Exchange. Lower power cycles do not affect the performances of most appliances except electric clocks; devices and motors operate slower. For this reason, electric clocks and phonographs which operate on 60 cycles are of little value. Most major repair firms can provide conversion kits for 50 cycle current, however, this should be done before leaving the States.

There are few privately owned houses in this area which have wiring to accommodate the amount of wattage required by an electric dryer or cooking appliance.

In guaranteed rental units, the power is adequate if too many appliances are not in use at one time. If you plan to bring a gas dryer or electric clothes dryer it must be converted to use butane or propane gas. It is advisable to have this conversion made prior to leaving the United States.

Dreux Air Base now has Armed Forces Network Radio operating on the FM frequency of 95.0 MC. AFN includes many broadcasts here in Europe as well as retransmissions from the United States and keeps an up-to-the-minute newscast available. You will find the AFN Schedule similar to commercial stations in the United States.

Although Armed Forces Television Networks have been forecast for France, they will probably be far in the future before it is in actual operation. American television sets must be converted to receive Paris telecasts.

When refrigerators are included in a furnished house on the economy plan as is the case in the Guaranteed Rental houses, they are quite small and may not meet the needs of a large family. With the use of a transformer, American refrigerators operate normally. American electric clothes dryers operate slowly due to the reduced cycles of the current.

Air cooling systems are of little value in this area since the temperature rarely remains high enough to make such units practical. The weather is generally cool and damp. The winters are similar to those of the Middle West in the United States while the summers are relatively cool with a few hot days. Humidity is abundant in all seasons.

Although the Base Exchange carries a variety of clothing for all seasons, you wish to purchase your wardrobe in the States. Be sure to include sufficient rain clothing, as it will probably be your most frequently worn item.

You are authorized to ship certain items as hold baggage dependent upon weight and size. This baggage may accompany you or in most cases, arrive at your destination approximately a week or two later.

Since your household goods will normally not arrive in France until 30 days after being picked up by the Transportation Officer at your

It is suggested that you ship in your hold baggage those items such as cooking utensils, linens, silverware, baby needs and clothing which will permit comfortable living while awaiting your household goods.

Because of weight and size of limitations on hold baggage, care should be taken that only those items for which you will have immediate needs be checked. The Transportation Officer at your present station will assist you and you may obtain more information concerning the limitations.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

Dreux maintains a Class "B" Dispensary for outpatient care and first aid needs. Medical care is furnished by a 100 bed hospital, specialty in internal medicine, general surgery, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology at Evreux, approximately one hour by car from Dreux.

Those with illnesses that cannot be effectively treated at Evreux are evacuated to the hospital at Wiesbaden Air Base, Germany.

A closely monitored immunization schedule is carried out at Dreux Dispensary for all personnel assigned to the base. This schedule is an important safeguard to the health of all personnel.

Dental care is available on the base for all military personnel and on an extended basis for dependents of military personnel. It is encouraged, however, that dependents have any major dental problems corrected prior to leaving the United States.

There are competent and reputable physicians and dentists in the larger cities surrounding the base, and of course, in Paris. Medical and dental care from civilian sources at Government expense is not authorized except in emergency cases.

Illnesses or injuries requiring immediate hospitalization can be handled at Dreux hospitals temporarily until such time the patient can be moved to a permanent hospital.

EDUCATION

Dependent schooling in France is virtually identical to education in the United States and is arranged to make the transition from American to French schools as easy for the student as possible.

The Dreux Air Base Dependent School is for children in grades one through eight.

Many dependent children attend local French schools where the scholastic standards are quite high. Naturally, the language barrier is a handicap at first but is quickly overcome especially by the very young children. The University of Paris, popularly called Sorbonne, is an excellent university where one can seek degrees in the social and scientific fields. Les Beaux Arts in Paris is a reputable college offering courses in painting, sculpture, and architecture.

Dreux-Porville Air Base Education Services Office makes available to