



# BROOKLYN\_BORN

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## An unexpected voice from France

Wednesday, November 18, 2015

A few days ago while I and the rest of the world, were reeling from the horrific events in Paris, I received a surprise email from a stranger.

As some of my spark friends know, my travels include walking in the footsteps of my Dad, a sailor during WWII, who kept a diary and took many pictures.

From France, Alain wrote:

"On your blog [www.brigs.us/Europe-Apr-2015/index-LeHavre.htm](http://www.brigs.us/Europe-Apr-2015/index-LeHavre.htm) I saw the pictures you took while visiting Le Havre in May 2015.

I am able to give you some information (I was a young boy in 1945, living in a destroyed Le Havre).

The picture taken inside a church was not precisely referenced, and you have tried to find this church. You visited Eglise Notre Dame (in the heart of Le Havre) and you have concluded the picture is not Notre-Dame Church. You are right. In fact the picture had been taken in Eglise Saint Francois (Saint-Francois church), 350 yards East of Notre Dame. You missed it, as this church is slightly hidden past narrow streets. But you were very close, as it is 150 yards North of the small fish market you visited."

On Monday my DD (Hayburner1969) and I visited a nursing home. Our regular program includes scripture reading and reflection and a LOT of singing, not only hymns but also songs of their youth, especially the 1940s.

We reflected on the events in France and how the world seemed a very scary and dark place right now. However, they lived through a time of great evil before and they reminded me that in the end good did triumph.

Alain continued his comments on my blog and attached current pictures of Le Havre, locations that I just missed as I walked the city. War destroyed his city once, but it was rebuilt. Evil was defeated. We must believe that good will triumph again.

Note: I am not a pacifist. We must be vigilant and take the steps necessary to fight terrorists. However, we must take care not to condemn anyone just because they share a common heritage with the evil-doers. Once we locked in internment camps those who had the same ethnicity as our attackers. Once we turned away refugees from the war and returned them to their eventual deaths. History now judges those WWII actions harshly.

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**SWEDE\_SU**

i so agree with your sentiments about not lumping everyone together - we must learn from our mistakes of the past and not repeat them.



how wonderful to have heard from someone who knew about the places where your father had been!

2025 days ago



**PHEBESS**

How wonderful to have heard from Alain, and received all this info!



I think I'm with Camus: "There are truths worth dying for, but none worth killing for." I'm not sure if I could live with myself if I killed someone. Fortunately, I haven't had to find out.

2030 days ago



**MARYJEANSL**

How really neat that he contacted you and gave you information you didn't have. What a wonderful 'rest of the story.' Perhaps you'll be able to go back again at some point and visit the correct church.



2031 days ago



**POINDEXTRA**

How wonderful that Alain was able to give you that information. And, I wholeheartedly agree with your last paragraph.



2031 days ago



**ONEKIDSMOM**

Amen for not lumping everyone of the same ethnic heritage in the same basket! There are good and evil among every "classification" you might apply. Generalization/avoidance/profiling is a natural human reaction to danger: we avoid plants known to cause a rash, for example. But to turn our backs on real suffering by innocents simply because their skin color, the shape of their face, or their accent reminds one of the attackers? Would be sinking to the level of those who hate all of US because of the nation of our origin!



Surely we're better than that!

2031 days ago



**DOVESEYES**

Thanks for a wonderful blog.



2031 days ago



**LIVEDAILY**

That is so neat that a stranger reached out to you to tell you where the picture had been taken, and where you could find the church.



2031 days ago



**ALEXSGIRL1**



2031 days ago



**MILLEDGE2**

How wonderful that a stranger reached out to fill in some blanks in your story! And, yes, we need to be careful to keep compassion as our guide in these troubled times or we risk becoming people we do NOT want to be!



2031 days ago



**HELEN\_BRU**

What a lovely thing for someone to take the time and to do. There is also an important message in what he says.



**THANK YOU!**

2031 days ago



**CD4114015**

I so agree with other posts but THANK you for sharing this! It left us ALL reeling!  
2031 days ago



**LYNDALOVES2HIKE**

Well Said! I Agree

2031 days ago



**GINIEMIE**

I've been missing your blogs, I think. Life has been getting in the way here, but I'm glad to see you have a French Connection, who knew what you were looking for and was able to send explanations on how you missed it. God Bless Alain for his taking the time to help you resolve a mystery.

I want Peace, but we must also show Mercy. I don't believe that all people from any race/religion/nationality are good or evil. I believe that we need to be discerning of whom we allow

in, but we should be very careful of banning all people based on their nationality.



2031 days ago



**WILSONWR**

That was so nice of Alain to share that with you. I am with you 100% on your last paragraph. We must rid the world of these terrorists, but we can't condemn people just because of common nationalities. The Japanese internment camps in WWII are a black eye on our history. I would hope we would learn from our mistakes...

2031 days ago



**TRAVELGAL417**

I love Paris and am one with them. I am a travelling soul since I was 18. You can enjoy

traveling, but must always be aware.



Prayers go to those in Paris.

2031 days ago



**WATERMELLEN**

What a heartwarming coincidence.

And I agree entirely with your sentiments: we are ALL pacifists I suppose in so far as we would wish for peace. But wishing alone won't achieve it: the peace we have has been purchased at a high price, and we will have to continue to defend peace in myriad ways.

2031 days ago



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