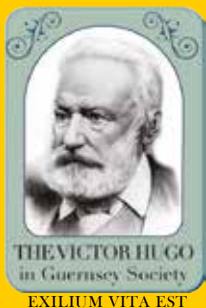


VICTOR HUGO Campaigner WEEKEND PROGRAMME



THE VICTOR HUGO IN GUERNSEY SOCIETY
FRIDAY 23RD TO SUNDAY 25TH JUNE 2023
WWW.VICTORHUGOINGUERNSEY.GG

Society



It was in 2015, following a series of very well attended lectures by Gregory Stevens Cox on the life and work of Victor Hugo - particularly during exile in Guernsey, that the idea blossomed of holding a Victor Hugo festival in St. Peter Port. The opinion of Gérard Pouchain and others was sought and in no time at all speakers were promised and an exhibition designed. Victor Hugo stamps, a Concert (Alan Lecompte) booked, a Victor Hugo Map of Guernsey designed and printed, a banquet arranged and a performance of “Toilers of the Sea” soon followed - all of it filling a week in April 2016.

So **The Victor Hugo In Guernsey Society** was formed. It appealed to islanders with French backgrounds, with historical and literary interests, with local history fascinations and particularly to a growing band of islanders aspiring to be guides for visitors. In no time at all the Society boasted over 100 members from France, UK, USA and of course Guernsey.

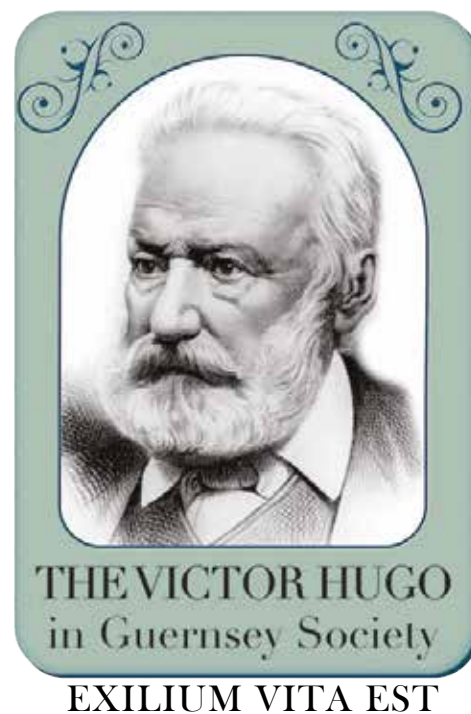
That first Festival was a great success and the Society immediately arranged a visit for 20+ members to Paris to see Hugo’s original manuscripts at the Bibliothèque nationale and Le Sénat and the archives at Place des Vosges.

Since those heady early years, the Society has organised annual conferences, education competitions, lectures, publications, performances, including world premières, and an excellent *Victor Hugo’s Guide to Guernsey*, written by Gérard Pouchain and published in French and English. It is true to say that the residents of Guernsey are now very aware of Victor Hugo and his 15 year exile.

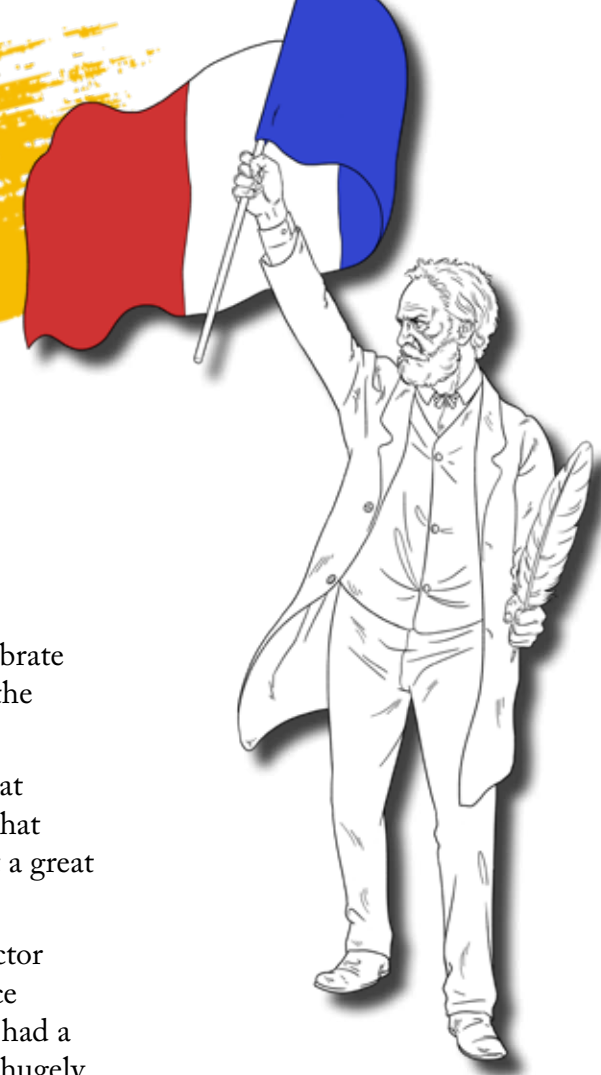
For the future, the annual “Weekends” will continue, and the Society has been given 18 months to see if a Victor Hugo Centre can be created in Guernsey in the old States Office on the seafront. A company has been established to prepare designs, evaluate all aspects of the proposal and to check the viability.

Future plans also see expansion into the wider, English Speaking world, promoting Hugo’s many valuable principles of individual rights, free speech, justice, free education for children, universal suffrage and the abolition of capital punishment. All of which are still being denied in many countries worldwide.

Roy Bisson
Honorary Secretary, The Victor Hugo In Guernsey Society



Welcome



The Victor Hugo in Guernsey Society was founded in 2015 to celebrate the links between Guernsey, an island in the English channel, and the world-renowned poet, author, artist and politician, Victor Hugo.

Victor Hugo was exiled from France in 1851 and spent much of that period of exile in Guernsey. In Guernsey he found a ‘strange fruit’ that could not be found growing in many other places and which meant a great deal to him and his family: freedom of the press.

As well as writing many of his most famous literary works here, Victor Hugo also worked hard to support the poor and oppressed in France and elsewhere from his base in Guernsey. His literary output often had a political and philosophical message. A master of rhetoric, he wrote hugely effective letters and speeches which were published in the Guernsey newspapers, whose editors were his supporters and friends. In this way his thoughts, criticisms and encouragements, expressed in Guernsey, found their way around the world.

He exhorted the oppressed to rise up and seek freedom from their oppressors.

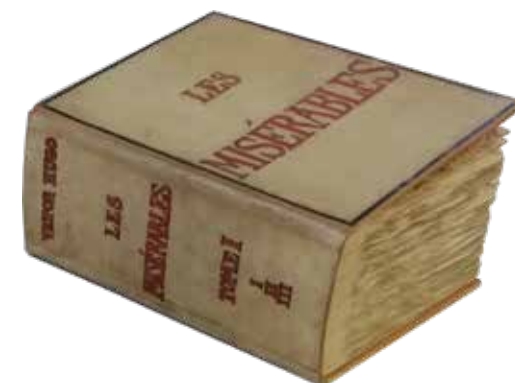
He also cared deeply for the poor of Guernsey, with his project to feed the poor children of the island, intended to be a model for the rest of the world, perhaps the best known of his good works here.

Every year the Society dedicates a summer weekend and a themed conference to Victor Hugo. This year the Society has chosen to highlight some of Victor Hugo’s political and humanitarian campaigns, including the earliest of his struggles and that perhaps closest to his heart, the abolition of the death penalty, exemplified by his fight, ultimately unsuccessful, to obtain a commutation of the death sentence passed on the Guernsey murderer Tapner in 1854.

Despite his reputation Victor Hugo fought for the rights of women, and, as one of our speakers will discuss, may even have been a feminist! Other talks focus on Juliette Drouet as an inspiration for his humanitarianism, his fight for freedom of the press, and his campaigns as represented in contemporary images.

The lectures, by experts from France and the USA, are recorded and made available later to all. Our warm thanks go to our sponsors, supporters, and speakers for making this 2023 Victor Hugo Weekend possible.

Dinah Bott
Chair, The Victor Hugo In Guernsey Society



Speakers

Guernsey is lucky to be able to attract such illustrious and learned speakers to its shores, and on behalf of The Victor Hugo in Guernsey Society I and the Committee would like to thank our speakers for their generosity in giving us and the island their time and expertise. *Dinah Bott, Chair.*

Laura El Makki.

France - Laura El Makki is a French writer. She is the author of a podcast on France Inter, *Un été avec Victor Hugo*, turned into a best-selling book in 2016.

She has worked on H. D. Thoreau and the Brontë sisters, and has translated works by H. G. Wells. Her first novel is to be published next August. She lives in Paris.

Agathe Giraud.

France - Agathe Giraud is lecturer in modern literature, doctor of French literature and currently senior lecturer in performing arts at the University of Besançon.

Her thesis, entitled *The Other Legend of the Century*, concerns the creation and reception of Victor Hugo's *Les Burgraves* and is due to be published in 2023 by Classiques Garnier in their series 'Studies in theatre and the performing arts'.

Myriam Roman.

France - Senior teaching fellow in 19th-century French literature at Sorbonne Université, specialising in the novels of Victor Hugo, in particular *The Last Day of a Condemned Man* and *The Man who Laughs*, and matters relative to justice.

Her most recent publication: *Le droit du Poète. La justice dans l'œuvre de Victor Hugo*, Presses universitaires de Saint-Étienne, 2023.



Lise Lézennec.

France - Lise Lézennec is the scientific and cultural manager of Writers' Houses, in the Historical Heritage Department of Besançon City Council.

She is graduate in French literature, art history and museum studies.



Florence Naugrette.

France - Professor at Sorbonne Université, a member of the University Institute of France and of the Comédie Française Review Board, Florence Naugrette is the author of several books on the theatre, Romanticism, and Victor Hugo.

She is Editor of the digital archive of the 20,000 letters written by Juliette Drouet, and has just published her biography: *Juliette Drouet, compagne du siècle* (Flammarion, 2022).



Lisa VanDamme.

USA - Lisa VanDamme is the founder of VanDamme Academy, a private K-8 school in Orange County, California, where she has taught literature to junior high students for twenty years.

She is also the creator of Read With Me, a program meant to help people learn to love literature and connect emotionally with the classics.



Gérard Pouchain.

France - Lecturer and doctor in literature, Gérard Pouchain is an associate researcher of the University of Rouen-Normandie and associate professor of the University of Shaoxing in China.

A specialist in the caricatures of Victor Hugo, he is the biographer of Juliette Drouet and has published some of her letters and memoirs. He is also the author of several publications on Victor Hugo's exile in the Channel Islands.



Programme

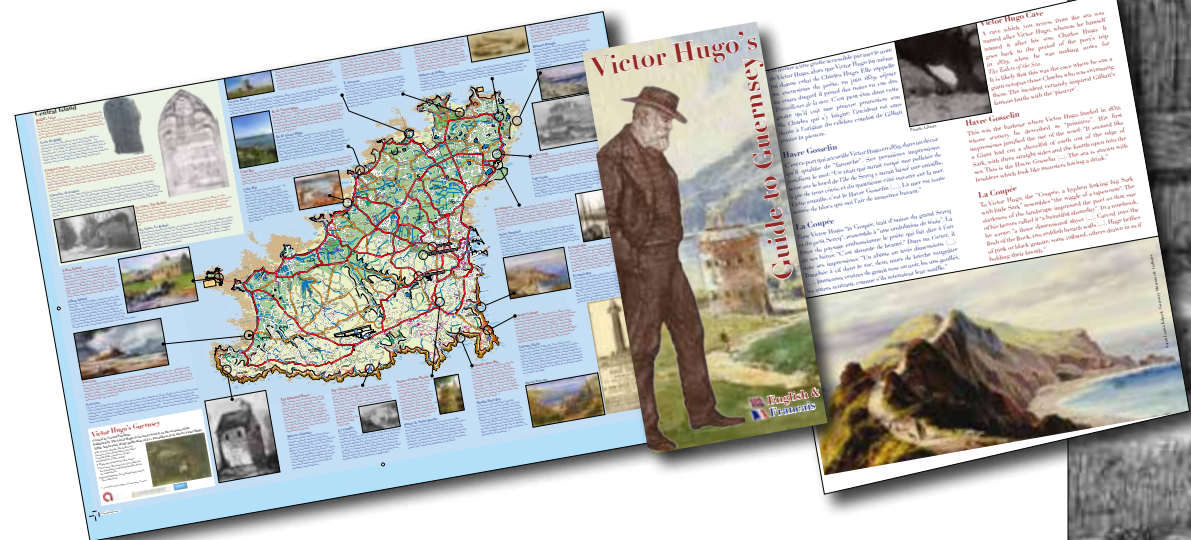
Programme for the Victor Hugo Campaigner Weekend 2023

Details in this programme may be adjusted without notice.



Friday 23rd June:

All day **VICTOR HUGO TOURS** of St. Peter Port and Guernsey
Many members of the Society are qualified Hugo guides and they are available to show visitors the many places referred to by Victor Hugo in his notebooks and novels.
Even if you decide to explore alone, be sure to have your VH Map and VH Guides. They have been prepared by members: Gérard Pouchain, Gregory Stevens Cox and Roy Bisson.
Delegates will have them in their packs, otherwise £2 each from the Information Bureau and the Society.



- 17:30 **VIN D'HONNEUR** At Les Côtils.
This event has become quite an important gathering of all Islanders, not only interested in Victor Hugo's life and works, but in the many projects being undertaken by the Society – not least of which is the Victor Hugo Centre Project (see page 8).
- 19:30 **CELEBRATION SUPPER** At Les Côtils
An annual 3 courses dinner with surprise entertainment.
Menu: Vegetable soup
Roast Chicken with vegetables and roast potatoes.
Fresh fruit salad with Guernsey Cream.
Dietary requirements can be catered for, please call 727793.



Cosette by Emile Bayard

Saturday 24th June:

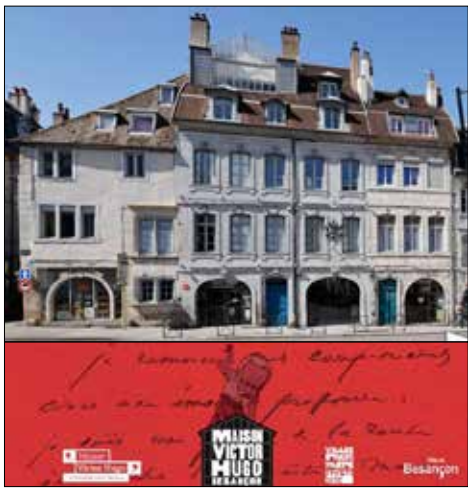
09:00 **REGISTRATION** in the Harry Bound Room,
Coffee & tea available all day.

Session 1

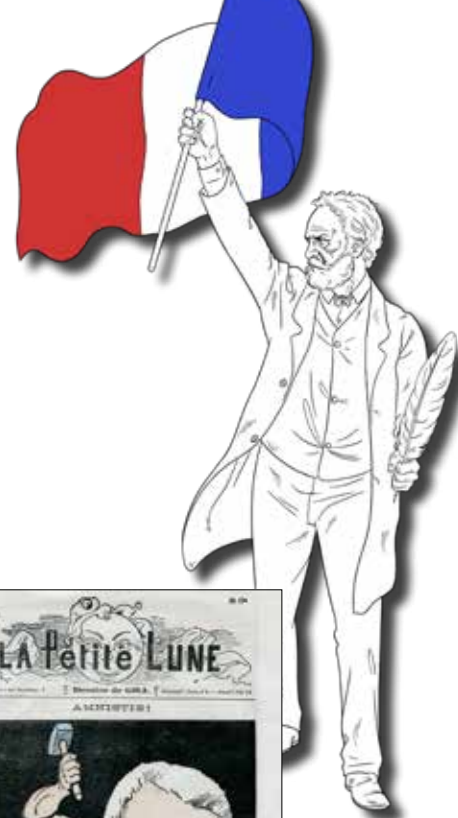
- 09:30 **LAURA EL MAKKI** - France -
Victor Hugo, a voice for the vulnerable.
Victor Hugo, by fighting injustices, was a strong advocate of the weak. Not only does he explore the cracks in people's lives, he has also revealed the extraordinary strength of human nature, giving a voice to the voiceless—turning 'les misérables' into heroes.
- 10:30 **AGATHE GIRAUD** - France -
Victor Hugo ... feminist?
During his lifetime Victor Hugo fought for the rights of women and his writings (which we will be discussing) have long been invoked to support that cause. Nowadays, however, attention is sometimes drawn to Hugo's own private life as demonstrating the opposite of that same struggle, an argument by which his 'appetite' for women would serve to prevent readers from naively placing faith in his message. This lecture will examine the ambiguities inherent in this contemporary viewpoint.
- 11:30 **MYRIAM ROMAN** - France -
How Victor Hugo fought against the death penalty in and from the islands of Jersey and Guernsey.
Victor Hugo fought against the death penalty his whole life. Our focus is on his campaigns during his time in Jersey and Guernsey, not only on behalf of Tapner, executed in Guernsey, but also for the American Abolitionist John Brown and for the condemned of Charleroi. For the poet Guernsey represents a central core or echo chamber, from which he can address a world-wide audience. We will see how he uses his art to express his fight, through descriptions, drawings and imaginary scenes in his novels.
- 12:30 **LUNCH**
A light finger and sandwich buffet.



Victor Hugo



Programme



Saturday 24th June:

Session 2

- 13:30 **LISE LÉZENNEC** - France -
The Victor Hugo Museum at Besançon.
The world-famous writer Victor Hugo was born in the house at 140 Grande-Rue in Besançon on 26 February 1802. Since it opened in September 2013, the Victor Hugo House has focused on presenting the battles fought by this deeply committed man using contemporary staging with a strong emphasis on multimedia exhibits,
- 14:30 **FLORENCE NAUGRETTE** - France -
The Campaigner's Companion: how Juliette Drouet awakened Victor Hugo to social issues.
Juliette Drouet, (*centre picture*) an orphan from a life of poverty, was a prostitute turned actress who gave up her career to spend her life on the sidelines as the partner of Victor Hugo. Using her own life story as example, Juliette appealed to Victor Hugo and urged him on to a greater awareness of the burning social issues that run through his work and motivate his political engagement: child protection, the war on poverty, the decriminalization of prostitution, and equality between men and women.
- 15:30 **LISA VANDAMME** - USA -
Hugo, Rostand, Hernani, and the fight for freedom in art.



In his *Preface to Cromwell*, Hugo campaigned against Classical dogma and for freedom of expression in art. His play *Hernani* would become a literal battleground between aesthetic ideals. But Hugo's campaign transcended aesthetic theory. It was a fight for nothing less than the Romantic spirit, and many who followed, Edmond Rostand notable among them, heard the clarion call.

*The Battle of Hernani on 25/02/1830
Drawing by Paul Albert Besnard*



Juliette Drouet dressed in the rôle of the Princess Négroni in Hugo's Lucrèce Borgia

- 16:30 **GÉRARD POUCHAIN** - France -
Victor Hugo, the campaigner, in pictures.
Although many 19th-century personalities attracted the attention of cartoonists, Victor Hugo is undoubtedly the most caricatured of them all. From the 1830s to his death in 1885, around a thousand caricatures tell the story, through a distorting prism, of his literary life and his political activism.

17:00 **Session ends**

- 19:30 **A 3-COURSE SUPPER GUERNESIAIS**
An evening that explores Guernsey French in words and music and its connections to Victor Hugo, with a supper of traditional local recipes.
Menu: Scallops served with puree or tian of crab and avocado.
Traditional bean jar, ham hock, haricot beans, butter beans, and vegetables served with boiled potatoes. *Vegetarian bean jar option.*
Gàche Melée

Sunday 25th June:

ACCOMPANIED TOURS OF HAUTEVILLE HOUSE

- Visit Victor Hugo's extraordinary home in Hauteville. Owned and managed by Paris Musées, it has recently been extensively restored, work that revealed previously unknown details of furnishings and artwork carried out by Hugo himself. The tour takes almost one hour.
- 10:15 French language tour
10:30 English language tour

- 12:00 **LUNCH AT THE CORNERSTONE.**
A final meal together and a chance to say farewell!





The States of Guernsey has agreed in principle to provide this former States Office for this project demonstrating the Island's enthusiastic support for the provision of a Victor Hugo Centre.

Victor Hugo Centre Guernsey

The proposed Victor Hugo Centre will be a gateway attraction for Guernsey and a focal point for international interest in Hugo's life, work and legacy. Victor Hugo, Guernsey's most famous resident, is globally recognised and remembered for his literary work and his visionary advocacy for human rights, freedom of expression, the dignity of the individual and universal education. Every generation reinterprets his work, as exemplified by *Les Misérables*, and his social outlook has contemporary relevance.

The island of Guernsey fired Hugo's creative imagination. Guernsey's people, landscape and dramatic sea inspired Victor Hugo, and continue to inspire a

diverse creative community today. As a privately funded and self-sustaining interpretation centre museum, education hub and flexible exhibition/performance space, the centre will showcase and promote the promising young talent in the Bailiwick as it informs, educates and entertains islanders and visitors alike.

The States of Guernsey have agreed in principle to provide the former States Offices (*Visitor Information Centre*) for conversion into the Victor Hugo Centre, provided that the project is privately funded. The ground floor will become the flexible exhibition and performance

space; the first floor will be the interpretation centre museum; and the top floor will be the education centre for school children.

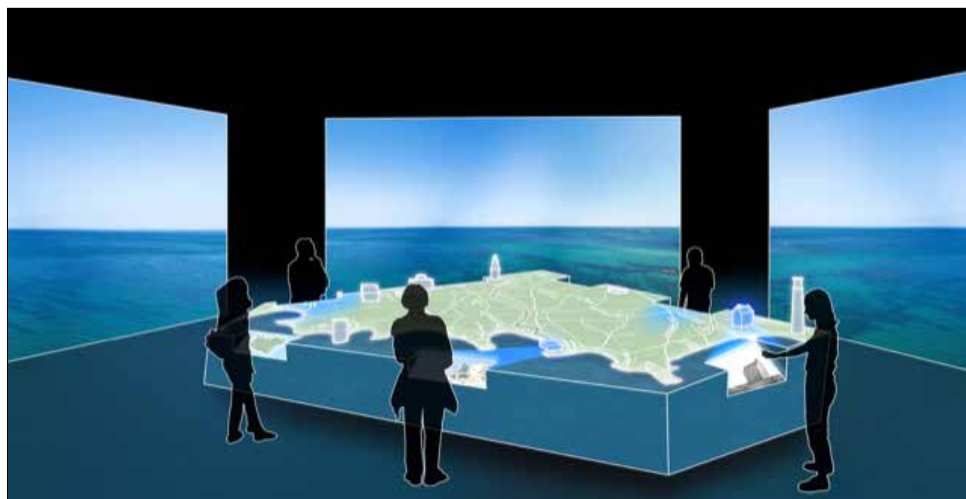


The Victor Hugo Centre will be a celebration of Guernsey's history and a confident investment in Guernsey's future. Victor Hugo, who called himself 'the dreamer', wrote, 'Utopia is tomorrow's truth'. With your help we can transform the dream of the Victor Hugo Centre into reality and create a lasting legacy for future generations.

We would welcome your support. Please follow us on social media, like and comment on our posts, share and encourage your friends to do the same.

The Victor Hugo Centre is on Facebook and Instagram

Find more information on our website: <https://vhc.gg/>



An artist's impression of how visitors to the Centre might be able to interact with a model of Hugo's Guernsey and become immersed in his creative writings, works, thoughts and actions.

Shop

Available from the Society bookshop & online.

Victor Hugo and the Sea

Gregory Stevens Cox

A5, 112pp.
Colour illustrated.
£12.99

At the start of his exile, Hugo set himself a grand project - to study the ocean. He befriended sailors and fishermen, learned about sea creatures, studied charts, researched lighthouses, donated life-saving equipment, and grieved for the dependants of drowned sailors. He wove his observations into *Toilers of the Sea* and *The Man who Laughs*.



Victor Hugo's St Peter Port

Gregory Stevens Cox

A5, 128pp. Colour illustrated. £12.00

Follow Hugo as he buys pens, ink, paper, pottery, porcelain. Meet the postmaster who tried to swindle him. Enter the church where he witnessed a baptism. Tread the streets that Hugo knew and immortalised. "This guidebook succeeds brilliantly .. familiar places become more interesting as do routine walks through the Town."



Victor Hugo Explores Guernsey

Gregory Stevens Cox

A5, 144pp. Colour illustrated. £12.99

In his years of exile, Victor Hugo walked the length and breadth of Guernsey and made 350 carriage drives exploring the country parishes. We follow him as he discovers the land of Gilliatt, the Haunted House at Pleinmont and the picnic stop at Moulin Huet which inspired Renoir. This book relates the routes that Hugo took, to his writings.

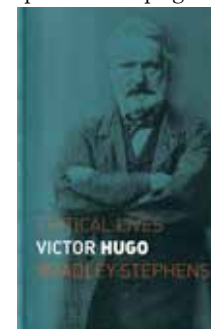


Critical Lives - Victor Hugo

Bradley Stephens

13 by 20cm, 224pp. Illustrated. £12.99

Hugo combined a long creative life as poet, dramatist and novelist with political campaigning against authoritarian rule and for social justice - especially for abolition of the death penalty. This pocket-sized book places this leading Romantic in the cultural and political context of his time, with summaries of his major works, from *Notre Dame de Paris* to *Les Misérables*.



Victor Hugo's Map of Guernsey

Gérard Pouchain

50 by 94cm, 2 sided. Colour illustrated. en/fr £2.00

A modern island map to guide you to all those spots mentioned by Hugo in his notebooks and stories. With detailed St. Peter Port section.

Victor Hugo's Guide to Guernsey

Gérard Pouchain

10 by 23cm, 48pp. Colour illustrated. en/fr £2.00

A superb guide to Hugo in Guernsey in English & French complete with Timeline and Victor Hugo's thoughts on Guernsey.



Victor Hugo - The statue by Jean Boucher

Gérard Pouchain

A5, 68pp.
Colour illustrated. £10.00

Praised by contemporaries for its informal yet true-to-life representation, Jean Boucher's statue in Candie Gardens depicts Victor Hugo on the move, thinking deeply, exactly as islanders would have seen him walking the cliffs and byways. How did this French monument come to be erected in Guernsey?

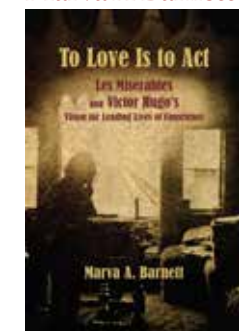


To Love Is To Act, Les Misérables

Marva A Barnett

15 by 23cm, 212pp. Illustrated. £12.00

Les Misérables reflects key themes in Hugo's own turbulent life and times. The novel is dominated by the contest between the opposing world-views of Valjean and Javert, and continues to fascinate a modern audience.



Cotton Bags

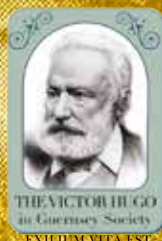
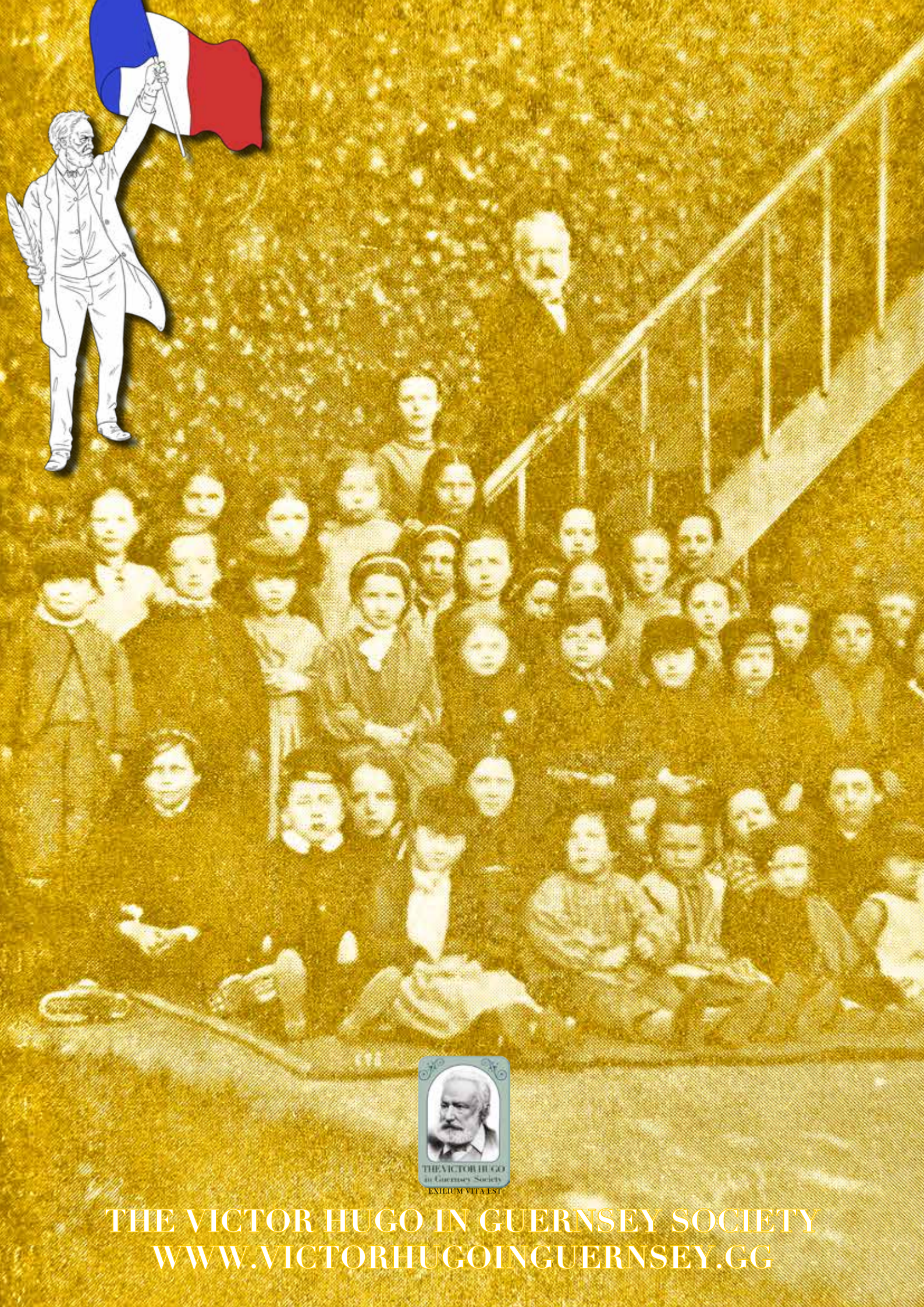
43 by 38cm, 2 sided. Colour printed. £3.00

Environmentally produced in India by Supreme Creations.



How to purchase these and many other publications about Hugo.

An ever expanding selection of books about Victor Hugo, particularly in exile in Guernsey will be available from the Seminar Bookshop during the "Weekend". Alternatively, they are available online: www.victorhugoinguernsey.gg.



THE VICTOR HUGO
in Guernsey Society
EXILUM VITA EST

THE VICTOR HUGO IN GUERNSEY SOCIETY
WWW.VICTORHUGOINGUERNSEY.GG