

# So the pipe band came to the French mayor's rescue

BILL BRADFORD was enjoying a holiday in the French town of Aubigny sur Nere, which is twinned with his home town of Haddington in East Lothian.

Bill's been to Aubigny several times in recent years and had gone back the other week to enjoy Aubigny's Bastille Day celebrations.

Out of the blue, an anxious call came from the town hall.

The Mayor, Yves Fromion, explained celebrations over Bastille weekend had been thrown into confusion because a French pipe band had pulled out.

† Could Bill do anything to help?

Bill knew he had to think of something. Aubigny has had strong Scottish links for five centuries, ever since the French and Scots joined forces against the English.

## Surprise

So Bill, a piper in the Haddington Pipe Band, called drum major, Bill Bridges, asking if he could marshal the band for a surprise trip to France.

The drum major had just 24 hours after the mayor's SOS to get things arranged.

But he rose to the challenge and, with 11 pipers and drummers, flew to Paris then made a two-hour coach trip south to Aubigny.

They marched straight on to the stage with Bill, and thrilled the crowd with their playing.

Next day the Haddington band led the big parade through the town, then opened another concert in the evening.

No sooner had the sound of their pipes faded than they were back on the coach and heading for home.

But Bill says they were treated like pop stars after doing their bit for the Auld Alliance in its 700th year.

■ Our picture shows Bill Bradford (right), drum major Bill Bridges and some of the band members who answered the call to France.

