

CITYLINK



Chairman's Letter **Michael Bevis writes:**

Welcome to our winter edition of Citylink.

It really feels like the start of the Christmas season when we hold our annual Christmas Soirée and once again this year we were able to hold it in the historic surroundings of The Sherbourne Room at the Bishop's Palace where the story of the decoration of the room for the visit of Henry VIII, even if it never took place in the end, seems to bring our history alive.



On the last page of this edition you will see our programme for the coming months. We are looking forward to seeing paintings by Monet brought from galleries all over the world to the Courtauld Institute on 4th January.

Please do book for our annual dinner at Restaurant 64 at Chichester College on Thursday 23rd January where the students always show off the skills they have learned.

We are also looking forward to two further French film showings at the studio at New Park selected by Ellen Haigh. She always seems to be able to choose some gems!

The talk given by Richard Whincop a couple of years ago was very well received and so we are delighted he has agreed to speak to us again. This time his subject will be the French Impressionists, which I am sure will be interesting, whether you are able to join us for the Monet exhibition or not.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 14th March. We are planning some entertainment so it won't be just the formal business. On which subject – we will be looking for a Secretary of the Association. Although we have had volunteers to draft the committee minutes there is more – although not too much (!) – to being the Secretary and therefore the point of contact of the association.

EDITORIAL

This edition includes members' news and reports on events taking place since June this year. We have news of an excursion made by our friends in Chartres – mushroom picking, followed by a delicious lunch – a tradition we could consider introducing here. We also include memories of two long-standing members of the Amis de Chichester who died this year. Both of these articles illustrate the wonderful friendships which frequently develop from our exchanges.

As always, we would appreciate your comments on this edition and suggestions for future editions. Please send these to foccitylink1959@gmail.com.

News from Chartres

La cueillette des champignons



Jean Claude Grouteau writes:

Collecting mushrooms is a very popular tradition in France in Autumn for country people. And the Chartrains, as you know it, being country people, like to go out in the forest to pick those famous mushrooms that are so delicious with an omelette.

You probably wonder where are the forests around Chartres. When you come to visit us, you can see only corn fields. The answer is Le Perche. Located in the western part of Eure et Loir, this area is famous for the hills and the forests. So it's the right place to find mushrooms.

On Sunday, November 10th, 20 members of our association and some of their friends got up early and drove to the Forêt de Montecot. The weather was damp but warm, rain had fallen the day before. It could not have been better. With gummy boots, or wellingtons, (« wellies » as you call them), a raincoat, a knife or a stick in one hand, a basket in the other, everyone was equipped to gather the much anticipated crop.

But there was not that much. Our guide Dominique who had been to the forest many times before explained to us: « If you had come last week, you would have found much more ». But we were not really « bredouille » (this word is included just for the fun of hearing an English mouth struggle to say it), that is to say, we were not « empty handed ». As you can see from the photographs, there were a few of them. And others got the opportunity to collect holly with red berries for the coming Christmas.

By 12, it was time to proceed to a restaurant in the near-by town to share a lunch. After the usual and essential « apéro » scallop shells were the first course. Then oyster mushrooms as side dish with the meat for the main one. Why no mushrooms from the forest, I do not know. Maybe Dominique left nothing for the cook.

A dessert, some white and red wine to wash down (responsibly, as ever) and a « café » to finish. Just a usual 3 course Sunday lunch..... just to tease you. C'est la vie!



Members' News

Diamond Celebrations



Bryn and Astrid Davies



Graham and Jose Pound

Sixty years ago, on 22nd and 29th August 1964, long-standing members of Friends of Chartres, Astrid and Bryn Davies tied the knot in Sweden whilst Jose and Graham Pound did so a week later in Colchester.

Neither knows where all the intervening years have gone, but with six children and numerous grandchildren between them, they recently celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversaries respectively over a delicious lunch cooked by Astrid reminiscing over a few glasses of bubbles, before they celebrated with their families over the weekend.

Memories of Friends

François Rémy

Jim Payne writes:

François Rémy was a stalwart of the Chartres - Chichester Twinning, always ready to make that extra effort to make the twinning a success.

To many people he was a comedian popping up in unexpected places to inject some humour into the proceedings but there was a more serious side to him. Out of concern for everyone's safety, he would take action. On our visit to Lewes last year, he did just that, directing the busy traffic so that we could board the coach safely.



Directing the traffic in Lewes

François and Martine as cancan dancers

He was a skilled photographer and was acknowledged as the official photographer for our group, producing a photographic record of exchange visits. In conjunction with his wife, Martine, he also excelled in producing highly entertaining sketches at a very professional level which the Chichester group found it very difficult to equal.

Certainly, a man of many parts or as Shakespeare would say: “*One man in his time plays many parts.*” Medically he was he was a successful physiotherapist. In photography he reached a professional standard. He was an excellent communicator with well-developed social skills. Certainly, the artistic planning and execution of theatre were another highlight.

He possessed another skill, however, not yet mentioned: *Boules*. I remember feeling frustrated after a lot of practice in his lovely back garden when I had finally managed to block access to the *cochonnet** only to see him precision bomb my well-placed boule out of sight.

Yes, a man of many talents. The world needs men like François Rémy and he will be sorely missed in all our proceedings.

Vive la France and thank you for the memory!

Jim and his wife Diana were partners of François and Martine Rémy for many years.

For those unfamiliar with boules, the cochonnet is the small white ball players aim at when they play.

Marie-France Delaloy



John Wilton writes: We were very sorry to hear of the death in July of Marie-France Delaloy, wife of Marc Delaloy, our exchange ‘twins’ over many years. We were not aware that she had been unwell, and it came as a great shock to us.

We first met them in May 1993, when we took part in the exchange for the first time, just after I ended my term as Mayor of Chichester. We soon found out that Marc and I had quite a bit in common, as I was an architect, and he was an engineer. Marie-France spoke reasonable English – better than our very rusty school French.

The following May they came to Chichester with the exchange for the first time. Over the next few years, we saw them several times. In 2016 when I stayed with them in Chartres, I got to know their eldest grandchild, Hippolyte, who was keen to practise his already good English. We spent quite a while discussing the EU and the imminent Brexit referendum, and subsequently kept in touch by email.

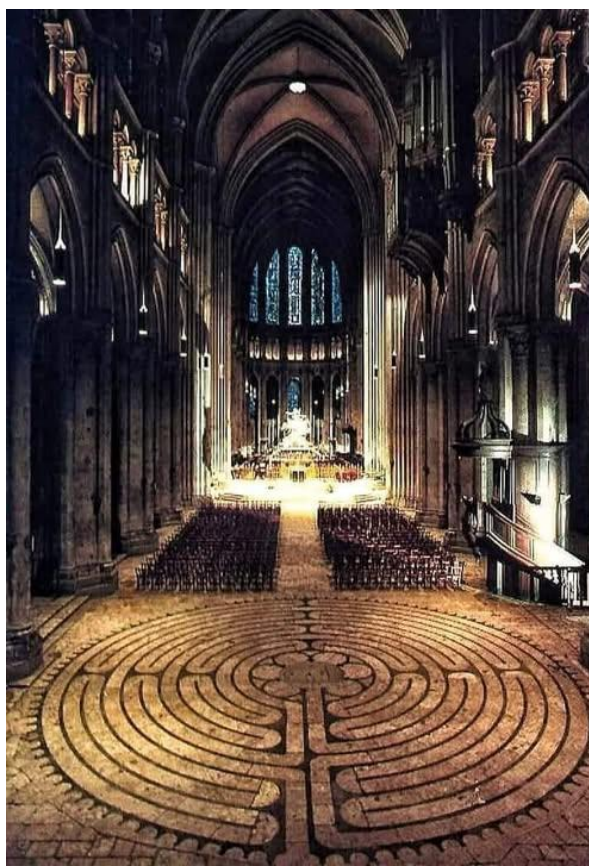
After studying politics at university, Hippolyte spent a year in Washington doing a Masters degree and later ended up in 2022 in Philadelphia, where my son Tom and family have been since 2005, studying for a PhD at Temple University. I visited my son and family last September and was able to meet up again with Hippolyte, whom they had invited round for dinner.

Marc and Marie-France last stayed with us in 2017. We had a memorable dinner at our house with Jim and Diana Payne and their ‘twins’ Francois and Martine Rémy.

They were unable to come to Chichester for the 60th anniversary exchange in 2019 due to Marc’s health problems so I visited them in Chartres with the mini-exchange. It was a memorable visit and little did I know then that that would be the last time I would see Marie-France. She was a dear friend, and I will miss her greatly. Our condolences go out to Marc and the rest of the family.

A full version of John’s article can be found on our website: www.friendsofchartres.org

Chartres: A Miniature Pilgrimage



The labyrinth in Chartres cathedral is one of its best-known features and even inspired our local author, Kate Mosse, to write her first best-seller, *Labyrinth*. Many cathedrals feature a labyrinth on the floor of the nave, often known as the "Road to Jerusalem". "For those people who are unable to travel to the Holy Land, this is a pilgrimage in miniature.

The faithful walk it on their knees so that the "journey" is not too quick or too easy. As it takes an hour on average to reach the centre, the labyrinth is also called a "league", which is the time it takes to cover this distance on foot (around four kilometres).

At two hundred and sixty-one metres and fifty centimetres, the Chartres labyrinth is the longest.

With its meandering paths and numerous dead ends, this labyrinth symbolises the path of life, from birth (the entrance) to death (the exit).

Only a few labyrinths survive today; most were removed by clerics in modern times to prevent children from playing in them during Mass. In 1778, a Reims canon even allocated 1,000 pounds to this task!

An 11th-century manuscript from the Library of Venice shows a drawing of the Chartres labyrinth accompanying a Greek text. Probably the most famous. 15th-century pictorial reproduction of the Chartres labyrinth depicts Theseus in armour slaying the Minotaur at the centre of the labyrinth.

The floor is cleared in Chartres cathedral every Friday morning to allow people to walk the labyrinth. During the mini-exchange in 2019, several members of our group took advantage of this opportunity.

Answers to Quiz (page 11)

1. Bay of Biscay 2. Corsica 3. 16th (1503-1566) 4. Hermès 5. And God Created Woman/ *Et Dieu... créa la femme* 6. Nord 7. Sorbonne 8. Voltaire 9. Cannes 10. Victor Hugo 11. The Terror 12. the last person to be guillotined 13. Ajaccio 14. Countdown 15. 18 16. Georges Pompidou

Events June – December 2024

Four Cities Event: June 24



Julia Sander writes: It has become a tradition for Chichester's twinning associations, the Friends of Chartres, Ravenna and Valletta, to come together once a year to host a shared event. This year we were joined for the first time by the newly formed Friends of Speyer. We had the privilege of hearing Tom Brown, Head Gardener at the West Dean Estate, in conversation with Phil Hewitt, Arts Editor at the Chichester Observer.

At West Dean, Tom looks after the 100-acre estate, which includes a 5-acre walled garden and 13 Victorian greenhouses. He had the daunting task of replacing gardeners Sarah Wayne and Jim Buckland, who had restored the gardens after the 1987 storm, thus becoming something of a local legend.

Arriving in May 2019, Tom had barely time to find his feet before going into lockdown in March 2020. Almost overnight, he found himself alone in charge of the gardens as his team of gardeners and volunteers stayed at home. During this time, it was impossible to maintain the whole garden. In fact, as Tom said: "Mother Nature became head gardener."

Being on his own for a few months allowed Tom to understand the garden more fully and plan how he would manage it once lockdown was over and his team returned. Rather than replicate what had been done before, he decided to become more experimental, looking forward rather than backwards to Victorian times. This, Tom feels, is in tune with the philosophy of Edward James, the unconventional owner of the estate, who died in 1984.

The changing climate has presented gardeners with new challenges. There is a need to find plants that can cope with alternate periods of drought and of heavy rainfall. At West Dean, use of fertilisers, pesticides and irrigation is discouraged and alternative methods such as no-dig and mulching are being introduced.

Tom's love of gardening stems from a love of the outdoors, of seeing plants evolve and grow and the opportunities he finds for creativity in planning and nurturing a garden.

Refreshments: One of the joys of travelling to our twin cities is the opportunity to enjoy local foods and wines. After the talk given by Tom Brown, guests were able to sample canapés and wines from France, Germany, Italy and Malta. French wine proved very popular and our colourful range of snacks was much appreciated.



City Gala: June 29

Chichester has something to be proud of now that the long-awaited twinning with Speyer has been established. Our city is now twinned with three of Europe's most beautiful cathedral cities: Chartres, Ravenna and Speyer, and in addition maintains a friendship link with Malta's capital city, Valletta. This is perhaps unique in Britain for a small city like ours.

To celebrate this important achievement, the four twinning associations joined to create a European corner at the City Gala on June 29. Each association created attractive displays about their links with their twin cities and laid on activities to engage visitors to the Gala, especially children. The Friends of Chartres were kept busy all day answering enquiries and running a children's quiz, for which the prize was a family ticket to the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum. Frenchman for the day, Stephen Northdale, drew a lot of attention.

A number of people dropped by at our stand to share their memories of school exchange visits to Chartres. What a pity that such visits are no longer practicable due to safeguarding requirements. All four associations are looking into how we can form closer links between young people in our twin cities. Any ideas you may have would be welcome. Please send your suggestions to foccitylink1959@gmail.com.



Summer Garden Party: July 28

Friends gathered in Michael Bevis' garden on a beautiful summer afternoon for our annual Garden Party – thankfully the weather was a little cooler than the previous year, where guests sweltered in the shade. Delicious cakes and sandwiches were provided by guests and Michael and his family laid on teas and coffees. Thank you to Michael for letting us use his lovely garden for this event.



Fishbourne Social, September 8

A social evening with a fish and chip supper was held at the Fishbourne Centre on September 8. Members tried their hand at Boules and took part in a quiz after supper. If you missed the quiz, the questions are on our quiz page (Page 11) for you to have a go.



Chichester Singers Visit Chartres: July 2024

A link was formed between the Chichester Singers and the Grand Choeur du Conservatoire de Chartres in 2019 for the 60th anniversary of our twinning with Chartres. Plans for a return visit were put on hold because of the pandemic, but this year, a small group from Chichester travelled to Chartres to take part in a concert there. Catherine West, a member of Chichester Singers, sent us this article.

Catherine West writes: Il a fait très chaud avec un ciel bleu. Nous avons mangé des crêpes et bu du cidre pétillant. I think we all improved our French – certainly our Français!

We also visited the city and had an excellent guide in the cathedral who explained the history and stories behind the 12th and 13th century glass. We visited museums and walked the streets and took a train ride around the Illuminations at 10.00 at night, singing "One wheel on my wagon" with every male pointing at the flat tyre – ba-bump, ba-bump. Maybe Chichester could try that for a visitor attraction.



We also visited Maison Picassette, a tiny house completely covered in mosaics.... and I mean completely, even chairs and tables and pots and pans....true recycling of china and bottles.

Then there was the singing. St. Aignan, the church where we sang, was beautiful and full. The 30+strong orchestra from the conservatoire was mostly " ados", i.e. teenagers with very proud parents in the audience. Excellent generally although I wished someone had taken the horn player's horn away, and the timpani were just too loud.

The clothing and timing were, shall we say, somewhat haphazard but very French and good humoured. It goes without saying that the food was excellent. Mmmmmm!

We were supposed to attend a reception at the Mairie organised by the Amis de Chichester, but Macron's unexpected election prevented it. Tant pis!

Quiz Page

Les Bizareries de la Langue Française

How would you translate these?

Nous portions les portions.
Les poules du couvent couvent.
Mes fils ont cassé mes fils.
Je suis content qu'ils content ces histoires.
Cet homme est fier. Peut-on s'y fier?
Ils résident à Paris chez le résident d'une nation étrangère.

How well do you know France?

This quiz was set at the Fishbourne Social on September 8.

- 1 What was named by Romans as *Sinus Cantabrorum* and also, *Mare Gallaecum* and *Golfe de Gascogne* in modern French
- 2 In which region of France would you find *Napoleon Bonaparte Airport*?
- 3 Best known for his book *Les Propheties*, in which century did Nostradamus live?
- 4 Which high fashion luxury goods manufacturer has a logo consisting of a 'Ducal carriage with horse'?
- 5 Brigitte Bardot became world-famous in 1956 after starring in which controversial film?
- 6 Which is the most populous and most northern French department?
- 7 The University of Paris is better known by what name?
- 8 Francois-Marie Arouet is better known by which *nom de plume*?
- 9 Located on the French Riviera, which city is famous for its annual film festival, and also hosted the G20 conference in 2011?
- 10 Which French author lived in exile in Saint Peter Port, Guernsey, from 1855 until 1870?
- 11 What name was given to the period of violence that occurred after the onset of the French Revolution?
- 12 Why did Hamida Djandoubi unfortunately become famous on 10 September 1977?
- 13 Was Napoleon born in Ajaccio or Nice or Naples?
- 14 "Des Chiffres et des Lettres" is the original version of which game show shown on British Channel 4?
- 15 How many King Louis ruled France?
- 16 Who succeeded General De Gaulle as French president in 1969?

Answers on page 6

Information Page

President
The Right Worshipful the Mayor of
Chichester
Councillor Sarah Quail

Officers and Committee
Chair: Michael Bevis 781016
Vice Chair: Anne Scicluna 789065
Treasurer: Stephen Northdale 822148

Members
Clare Apel 783738
Anne-Louise Briggs 784346
David Nason 573716
Julia Sander 527435
Peter Tudge 023 9273 2538
John Wilton 788833

Friends of Chartres **Future Events.**

Saturday January 4: All day
Visit to **Monet Exhibition**, Courtauld
Institute (*fully booked*)

Thursday January 23: 6.00 – 9.00 pm
Annual Dinner
64 Restaurant and Bar, Chichester College

Sunday January 19 and Sunday
February 16: 5.30 pm
Cine Club
The Studio, New Park Community Centre

Wednesday February 26: 7.30 pm
Impressionism: talk by local artist
Richard Whincop
The Old Court Room, The Council House,
North Street, Chichester

Thursday March 13: 7.30-9.30 pm
Annual General Meeting
Jubilee Hall, New Park Community Centre

*Details of these events and how to
book will be circulated in advance.*

Exchange visit

Friday May 2 – Tuesday May 6

This year we are due to receive a visit from the Amis de Chichester. They will arrive early evening on May 2 and leave in the morning of May 6. A programme of activities will be arranged which will be circulated soon.

For further details about the exchange and conversation circles, contact **Julia Sander:** focevents1969@gmail.com

Conversation Circles

Groups meet monthly for lively, informal conversation in French. We welcome new members, whatever your level of French at Petit Cercle meetings. For the Cercle Avancé, you need to be reasonably fluent to contribute to the conversation, but we are happy for you to listen if you wish to improve your French.

Petit Cercle du mardi
10.30 am to Noon

Tuesday, January 7

Tuesday, February 4

Tuesday, March 4

Tuesday, April 1

May: no meeting due to French exchange

Tuesday, June 3

Venue: The Coffee Bar, Festival Theatre,
Oaklands Park, Chichester PO19 6AP

Cercle Avancé

5.30 – 7.00 pm

Monday, January 13

Monday, February 10

Monday March 10

Monday April 14

Monday May 12

Monday June 9

Note: We have changed our venue to **The Chichester Inn**, 38, West Street,
Chichester PO19 1RP