

LE BULLETIN

ISSUE NO 1

Useful Contact Information

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Can you spare some time?

Contact Norma Reay direct

French Lessons

One of our key objectives at the AAN is to help people integrate into french society. We help to facilitate this by linking with the cultural centre at Livarot. We now have four groups of students and cater for all levels of competence. A really important aspect for many students is that the classes are lively and entertaining. Students are supportive of each other and everyone gets the opportunity to participate. The costs are 50 euros per term.; there are also other options available in the Eure regions Please contact Norma Reay direct for further info.



Connecting through conversation

Like any organisation the AAN has to adapt to the changed environment we now find ourselves in. The demands of members have changed and in order to meet those requirements we have tried new approaches. For some weeks now we have been holding conversational sessions in Vimoutiers. As some of the regulars will know the venue has changed a few times as we became aware that some cafe/bar venues were a little too lively and people found it difficult to hear. No doubt this year we will learn more particularly as spring and lighter evenings approach. These groups simply would not work without the continual help and support of our French speakers namely Eliane Lavandon, Mitou Green and Geraldine Schmidt and we are very grateful for their help. The idea is to encourage French and English speakers to get together informally. It is always relaxed and friendly and you do not have to be a member to come along; albeit we hope that after people meet us they will want to join our association. Ultimately it is about being friends and supporting each other; through communication and mutual understanding. I will send you the list of dates scheduled for the next three months separately and hopefully you will be able to attend any one of them.

Handichiens Update

As you know Handichiens is our nominated charity and those of you who attended the AGM will have had the pleas-



sure of meeting Lego and his owner. Handichiens is a small charity which with our support and that of the local people and organisation/s is able to make a huge difference to people's lives. From members donations, our plastic pig collections and contributions we were able to make a further donation which will help purchase another puppy. It takes a minimum of two years to train a puppy as a helping hand and their range of skills are life changing for the recipient; in addition the dog has a significant and positive impact on the wider family group as life becomes more positive and increasingly independent. Handichiens are extremely grateful to us and with this bulletin I will also send you a copy of their letter of appreciation.

Look out for our flyers advertising the sessions; the next one being on **Wednesday January 24th from 7pm till 9pm at Le Soleil d'Or in Vimoutiers opposite the town hall.** I will send a reminder email to you all beforehand. Please try and encourage your friends (particularly those who are native French speakers and want to speak English) to come along.

Looking back

(AAN organised events are in green, members own in red)

Christmas lunch

This year we decided to try a different venue and reserved The Saint Pierre Mezidon-Canon for nearly 40 of our members.



To be honest it was not a straight-forward booking as I misunderstood the menu requirements; and between their English and my French there was initially; a little confusion. However with everyone's cooperation, patience and understanding the misunderstanding was resolved and forgotten by the time our Christmas lunch date arrived. I have been to this restaurant before and loved the menu choices and the overall atmosphere. The owners realise that comfortable chairs and spacious tables are important when having a meal with friends and the atmosphere and ambience is terrific, and the restaurant is spacious and comfortable, parking easy and the food and service superb; all in all a really nice restaurant.

Restaurant review with Shirley Kirk

Hotel La Ferme Saint Simeon
20 Route Adolphe Marais
14600 Honfleur telephone 02 31 81 78 00
contact@fermesaintsimeon.fr

Having recently had a "big" birthday, two of our very good friends decided to help soften the blow and treat me and the other half to a posh lunch and a cheap night in a hotel in Honfleur. The posh lunch was booked in what is probably one of the best hotels in the area, Hotel La Ferme Saint Simeon. It really has the wow factor and as it was a special occasion, we thought it only right to start with a bottle of champagne in the lounge before lunch. Well you only live once! A selection of canapés arrived with the champers and we were treated like royalty. It's worth mentioning that the lounge has a panor-

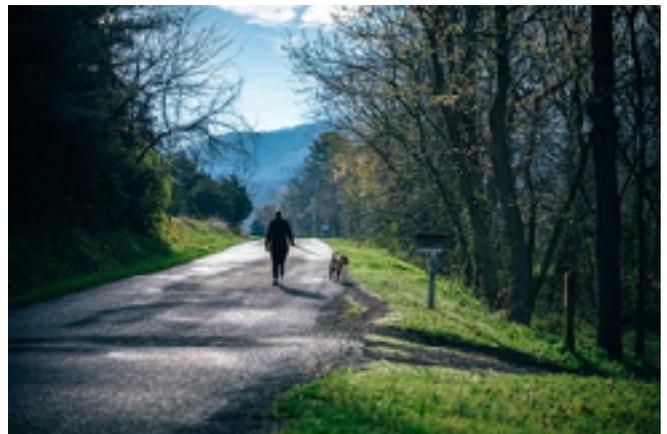
amic view overlooking the Seine estuary and on a day when it isn't raining, is stunning.

For lunch we selected the Menu Toutain at 55 euros rather than a la carte, as we wanted to stay friends! There were 4 courses and each one a delight, ranging from a delicate monkfish to beef cheeks in a consomme and superb dessert. The courses are impossible to describe and the lunch menu changes every week, so check out the website. The wine list, as you would expect was special, with some of the wines in excess of 3,000 euros! However, we didn't want to push our friendship too far and so we let them choose a suitable wine to go with the meal! It was certainly an experience to remember and worthy of that special occasion. There is a spa, bistro and sumptuous rooms. Failing that, take a coffee in the lounge bar and look at the sea.

Looking forward

**Winter Walk from Lisores to Livarot.
February date to be confirmed**

Time to blow the cobwebs off and get out and about. Having walked the old chemin de fer from Bernay through to Broglie I can recommend something similar. There a number of similar walks throughout the region and they tend to be easier underfoot; so we think it would be a good idea to meet up next month and walk our way through to Livarot; finishing at a cafe (or something similar) in Livarot for hot soup and crusty bread.



Return to the Pottery and Goat farm March (date to be confirmed)

There are a number of members (me included) who missed the previous visit and would like the opportunity to attend a demonstration visit. It is likely that we will plan this event for March time; **please let me know if you are interested in attending.**

Note : we are organising other events such as mentioned before: a visit to La Falaise and the Chateau at Crevecoeur; further information to follow. If you have ideas of places you want to attend email me direct and I will do the rest.

Other activities in and around Normandy

Bird Survey



Take part in the national bird survey without leaving home: just a pair of binoculars is required and your eyes and ears, It is a great way to look at the life in your garden; so prepare yourself for January 27 and 28 go on line www.observatoiredesoiseauxdesjardins.com and key in your findings.

Days out and flea markets

26th Jan: 'Ducamp dans sa ville' opening ceremony, Rouen, Seine-Maritime
Festival celebrating the work of modern artist Marcel Duchamp, who studied and worked in Rouen.

3rd - 4th Feb: 'La Saint-Pierre des Marins', Fécamp, Seine-Maritime
Street parade and boat blessing.

7th Feb: Honfleur Music Festival, Honfleur, Calvados
Music festival taking place in the beautiful old salt storehouse.

9th - 13th Feb: *Granville Carnival*, Manche
Normandy's longest running street carnival has just been added to UNESCO's list of "*Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*."

Until 20th Feb: *Sales - "Soldes"*, all over Normandy

Cagny (14) Sunday 21st and 28th January Flea market and attic clearance

Mondeville (14) Sunday 21st January : heated and covered boot fair

Argentan (61) Friday 26th & Saturday 27th January 32nd antique fair

Are you aware of the changes that are up and coming ?

1) A new technical test to judge whether cars are roadworthy is coming to France on May 20 2018, promising to offer a more rigorous inspection.

The test will form part of a new European directive that is aiming to make roads safer across Europe. It is hoped that making it harder for cars to pass the compulsory test will eventually lead to higher quality, safer vehicles on the road overall. Currently, five people every day across Europe are thought to die on roads due to vehicle mechanical failure.

Firstly, the new test - what is known in the UK as an "MOT" - will include more points for mechanics to consider - 123 pieces of criteria to check, to be precise - with at least three to eight more points than the current test requires, although only three more have currently been confirmed, Secondly, the results available will also change, with problematic cars forced off the road until fixed. Currently, garages can assess a car as "favourable" (no problem, fine to drive), and "unfavourable" (the owner has two months to make the necessary repairs and changes, and come back for a further check once this is done).

After May 20, there will be a third option, "critical".

The owner of the car will still have two months to make required repairs, but - and this is the biggest change - a "critical" car will not allowed be on the road until these repairs have been done. This is likely to apply to serious problems such as not having any brake fluid, structural problems like holes in the floor, or wheels not being properly attached.

The driver will have an exceptional 24 hours' authorisation to drive a "critical" car, but only to allow it to be driven to a garage to begin the necessary work.

Lastly, the new test is also likely to take longer than the current process, and will cost more - with estimates suggesting the average will be around €65 per car.

2) Bid to clamp down on speed, in a bid to reduce accident by “acting on drivers’ behaviour”. (look out for further information on changes regarding alcohol and phone use abuse whilst driving)

The most obvious change announced by Prime Minister Edouard Philippe to “effectively decrease the number of severe accidents” will be the already-announced speed limit cut from 90kph to 80kph, on main roads where the carriageways are not separated by a physical barrier. This will come into force from **July 1**, affecting more than 400,000km of roads across the country, as reported by [Le Monde](#).



Fraud Warnings

Many of our members have reported scam telephone calls; please be aware of the continued and persistent groups of scammers that exist; please do not disclose personal information. Your bank, tax office or credit card companies will not contact you in this way for personal information; one of our members reported the following scam : -

'Ive just had a phone call from someone claiming that I've won 1000€ of bons d'achat in Intermarché's lucky draw (tire au sort) and giving me a code number and a telephone number to call (tout de suite!) to claim them. The lady was very pleasant and even spoke English.

I Googled "Intermarché tire au sort" and of course it's a fraud. At best they keep you on the line for ages when you call back (it's an 08 premium rate number) and at worst they get you to choose goods to be delivered to your address, which they've then got, though the goods never arrive, or try to get you to give bank account details.

A few French Idioms

Keep a low profile (Raser les murs)

To be at the end of your rope (Etre au bout du rouleau)

To be scare or have the jitters (Avoir les jetons)

Its raining cats and dogs (Il Tombe des hallebardes)



I have been sent this extract regarding EU citizen rights: I have now enrolled with the British embassy in Paris for updates; as we near the 2019 deadline I think it will be useful to find out as much as we can about the Brexit agreement.

Citizens' Rights Agreement



Dear Jennifer,

Today, EU citizens in the UK and UK nationals in the EU have more certainty about their future following an agreement on citizens' rights between the UK and the EU Commission. Since the outset of the negotiations, the Prime Minister has been clear that safeguarding the rights of people who have built their lives in the UK and EU was her first priority.

[Today's agreement](#) delivers that commitment and follows months of negotiations with the EU. It will help the millions of EU citizens who have made their lives in this country, as well as UK citizens living in the EU, plan for the future as valued members of UK society.

It means that EU citizens living lawfully in the UK and UK nationals living lawfully in the EU by 29 March 2019 will be able to stay and enjoy broadly the same rights and benefits as they do now.

The agreement includes that:

- Close family members will be able to join after the UK has left the EU. This includes spouses, unmarried partners, children, grandchildren, dependent parents and grandparents. Children born or adopted outside of the UK after the 29 March 2019 will also be covered.
- People will be able to be absent from the UK for up to five years without losing settled status, more than double the level of absence allowed under current EU law. There will be the same reciprocal protection for UK nationals living in the EU.
- Professional qualifications (e.g. doctors and architects) will continue to be recognised where these are obtained before the date of the UK's departure from the EU.
- It will be easy to apply for settled status and there will be a full right of appeal.
- Those EU citizens who already hold a valid Permanent Residence document will be able to have their status converted to settled status free of charge.

This agreement also provides certainty on healthcare, pensions and other benefits. It will mean that EU citizens who have paid into the UK system can benefit from what they've already put in and continue to benefit from existing coordination rules for future contributions. Those covered by the agreement will be able to continue to receive healthcare as they do now.

There will be a transparent, smooth and streamlined process to enable EU citizens to apply for settled status starting in the latter half of next year for two years after the UK leaves the EU – from 2018 to 2021.

You can read more about settled status and citizens' rights [here](#). We will keep you up to date with more details, including the cost, opening date of the scheme and documentation you are likely to need, in the first half of 2018. It will be much simpler and quicker than applying for Permanent Residence, so **EU citizens do not need to do anything at this stage**.

This page will be kept up to date with the latest information: [Status of EU citizens in the UK: what you need to know](#).

We will write again to update you next week.

FINALLY

DONT FORGET THAT MEMBERSHIP IS NOW DUE FOR RENEWAL PLEASE SEND YOUR CHEQUE TO MITOU GREEN (LE HAUT BOURG 61120 CROUTTES)