

CITYLINK



Chairman's Letter

Michael Bevis writes:

I would like to begin by thanking **Julia Sander** for all the work that she has done as Chairman over the last four years. Although she has handed over the Chair, I am very glad that she has agreed to continue in her role as organiser of events and the exchange visit to Chartres in particular.

My thanks also go to **John Wilton** for his work as Treasurer. I am glad that he is remaining on the committee.

We had hoped to visit our friends in Chartres in April 2020 but that was postponed until the autumn - which turned into spring. We must now await events in France before making any plans.

With our events on hold for so many months we have tried to maintain our programme via Zoom. It is obviously not the same as meeting in person but it has had the unforeseen benefit that we have been able to speak to our friends in Chartres as they have been dealing with the myriad of changing rules of 'confinement' on their side of the Channel.

The Schools Art Challenge was organised very successfully for many years by **Ray and Margaret Brown**. My thanks to them as we seek new ways to get young people involved with the twinning.

I hope that in the coming months we will be able to devise a programme of events. This will help to revitalise the Friends and encourage more people to join as we seek to maintain our existing friendships in Europe and make new ones.

Chichester's twinning with Chartres was established long before the United Kingdom joined the then Common Market and I trust will continue long after we have left the European Union.

Letter from the Présidente of the Amis de Chichester

Yvonne Chrétien writes:

I have been asked to write a few lines about the activities of the Friends of Chichester during these last months. Since the beginning of this year, due to the pandemic, we have not been able to meet, except on zoom. I organize a such meeting once a month to try to keep in touch with our members. But is difficult as quite a lot of people say they are not interested in virtual meetings. Of course, it is not the same but in my opinion it is better than nothing. There is a french proverb which says « *faute de merles on mange des grives* » ! A few times we have also been on zoom exchanging with our friends in Chichester and that was very nice. We shall continue until we can really meet. We cannot be sure yet the exchange will be possible next autumn. We can only wait and see hoping it will at least be possible next spring. We all look forward to that. Take care of you all.

Editorial

Contributions to **Citylink**, including *Just for Fun* ideas, would be very welcome and should be sent to foccitylink1959@gmail.com. **Calling all "Tweeters"!** Our Twitter account has not been active since October 2020... we would like to ask a member who is a regular Tweeter to undertake to Tweet about the Friends' activities. Please get in touch if you can help.

Recent Events

Our usual events have been much curtailed during the pandemic but, thanks to zoom, on 21st January **Canon David Nason** gave a very interesting talk about the **Paris Opera**. Then, on 18th February, in place of the **Annual Dinner**, a social evening was held where several members gave short talks while participants enjoyed snacks and drinks in their own homes.

Report of 60th Annual General Meeting 18th March 2021

This year's AGM was held via zoom but this did not prevent the same number of members attending as last year. The meeting was opened and presided over by the Mayor, **Richard Plowman** until the new Chairman, **Michael Bevis**, had been elected. **Anne Scicluna** was elected as Vice Chairman, **Stephen Northdale** as Treasurer and **Rosie Speer** as Secretary. **Julia Sander** and **John Wilton** will continue as Executive Committee members along with **Clare Apel**, **Annie Barnes**, **Anne Louise Briggs**, **Paul Everett**, **Ellen Haigh** and **David Nason**. **Paul Everett** raised the issue of the voting rights of members who do not have internet access and an Extraordinary General Meeting will be arranged during the year so that members can be involved in the decision about an amendment to the Constitution. This will be held in person once restrictions allow, with a social event alongside. Following the meeting **Richard Plowman** gave a very interesting talk about his experience as Mayor during the pandemic.

Members' News

In this edition we celebrate the 90th Birthdays of two of our longstanding members:

Daphne Bowling

Daphne's French connection goes back to her French father who was born in Mauritius to a sugar plantation owner. Sent to England for his education, he married an English girl. Daphne was born in India, where her father was posted with the Army. Daphne remembers a visit in 1939 to St Cast in Brittany to meet her French Grandmere, at which point her father decided she should go to a French convent to learn French.

So, after her English education Daphne spent time teaching basic English at the Couvent l'Assumption at Mons, Belgium.

Once she was married, with her own children, Daphne arranged exchange visits for each child. This led one to taking a holiday job in the South and another to act as a guide to American tourists in Paris and the Loire. That daughter now has a villa near Cannes. In 1990 Daphne and her husband retired from Dorking to the coast and, as their daughter was a physiotherapist at St Richard's Hospital, they decided to settle nearby in Sidlesham. They then joined several local organisations, including the Friends of Chartres, so that Daphne could keep up her French.

Daphne and her husband exchanged with two couples over the years and had several visits to Chartres with reciprocal hosting here. Daphne also spent seven years as Secretary of the Association, with Diana Taylor as chair and Margaret Brown as Editor of Citylink.

Sadly, Daphne's husband, John, died seven years ago but she has the close support of her four children and seven grandchildren. She is looking forward to the time when she can see more of them and this lovely photo is of her 90th birthday party last summer when the weather was reminiscent of the South of France!



Jim Payne

Born in 1930, Jim's childhood memories go back to deliveries being made by horse and cart. In 1940 he was evacuated to a farm but in 1941 was home again with nights spent in the air raid shelter. In 1943 he was evacuated again, this time to Lancashire. In 1944, and by now old enough to work, Jim was home in Dartford helping make bombed houses habitable. On VE day Jim was in the crowd outside Buckingham Palace joining the shouts of "We want the King".

After National Service Jim married and started work at the Prudential Offices in Holborn but attended evening classes. Later, after a move to Dorset, he became a technical instructor and subsequently a teacher. In his spare time Jim was involved in youth work and was a Group Scoutmaster.

Jim moved to Chichester following his divorce and quickly involved himself in local life, teaching at Chichester College and managing the Special Needs Unit. He also became a sailing instructor, helped restore the canal and was Vice Chair of Chichester Age Concern.

In 1995 Jim married Diana. Their reception was held in the City Council's Mayor's Parlour. Jim and Diana have taken part in many exchanges with three families: The Lachets, the Delisles and then recently with Martine and Francois Remy. Jim has very happy memories of exchanges. The candlelit visit to Chartres Cathedral Crypt stands out as a special moment.

Jim's commitment to the philosophy of twinning stems from his wartime experiences. Propaganda at the time stirred up strong feelings about the enemy. Jim felt that if people could meet face to face and form friendships then maybe the futile loss of life and property could be avoided.

The accompanying photo of Jim and Francois sums up the spirit of the friendship between out two beautiful cities.



News From Chartres:

Dominique Gallas has researched three Grandes Dames of the Eure et Loir:

Jeanne de France (1464-1505)



Jeanne was born in the castle at Nogent le Roi and was the second daughter of King Louis XI. That King was the last of the dynasty of the Valois and had no male heir.

She married Louis d' Orleans who became King Louis XII. Sadly, the new Queen was hunchbacked and lame. Her husband quickly divorced her to marry Anne, Duchess of Bretagne. Anne was young and with the marriage came new territory to add to France.

Jeanne de France retired to the city of Bourges, where she died. She was very religious and was canonised in May 1950.



Diane de Poitiers (1500-1566)

Diane was the widow of Louis de Brézé who was 20 years older than her. She became the favourite of King Henry II, who was 20 years younger than her. This favouritism lasted 20 years until he died aged 40. He built the castle of Anet for her where she lived until she died aged 66.

Madame de Maintenon (1635-1719)

Madame de Maintenon was born in a prison because her father was a gambler and she had a very miserable youth.

To escape, and to avoid entering a convent as a nun, she married a poet, Paul Scarron. He was much appreciated in Paris but had many health problems. However, due to him she met noble families living in Versailles near to the court of King Louis XIV and after Scarron's death she was asked to be the Governess of the children of the King and his favourite mistress, Madame de Montespan.

She caught the eye of the King and after the Queen's death, became his second secret wife.

He gave her a title and the castle of Maintenon which is close to Chartres.



Gascon Gastronomy

Data Manager **Paul Everett** shares another delicious recipe with us.

Saumon à l'aneth en papillote (Salmon with dill 'en papillote')

Ingredients: (serves 4)

- 40g butter (softened)
- 1 tbsp dill finely chopped
- Grated zest of one lemon
- 4 salmon fillets around 130 -150 g each
- 40ml dry white wine or dry vermouth
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 squares of baking paper
- Choice of vegetables

Preparation:

- Pre heat the oven to 210°C (Fan 200°C)
- Mix together the dill, softened butter and lemon zest.
- Fold each piece of paper in half, place each fillet of salmon skin side down on one side of the fold in the centre of the sheet.
- Season each fillet with salt and pepper, spread one quarter of the butter, dill and lemon zest mixture and pour over 10ml of wine.
- Fold the paper over closing the edges tightly leaving space for the steam to puff out the parcel and twist the open ends to seal the packet.

Cooking Method:

Place the 4 fillets on a baking sheet and bake for 15 mins, opening the parcel carefully check if cooked through. Serve with steamed asparagus or broccoli and baby new potatoes.

The City of Chichester twinned, since 1959, with the City of Chartres.

www.friendsofchartres.org.uk

Just for Fun

Ellen Haigh Writes:

In the last edition I asked if anyone had a better translation for “le bandeau deroulant les infos” for the running news banner on TV.

Stephen Northdale replied:

My friends in Béziers call it a “flash d'information en continu”, but hey, they are from Occitanie and their accent is derided by the Parigots!!

Incidentally, they told me that when François Hollande organised the merger of 22 regions into the present set-up, Midi-Pyrénées` and Languedoc-Rousillon would be merged and it was initially proposed that the new combined entity would be called “Sud de France” or SDF in short. They dropped that very quickly

in favour of Occitanie on the grounds that SDF had 2 completely different meanings. *

Thanks to Stephen for the above information.

*SDF - sans domicile fixe. And in case you are wondering....SDF is masculine and can be either singular or plural. Le SDF = a homeless person. Les SDF = the homeless. Could be considered disrespectful, so use une personne sans domicile fixe.

The above led me to think about other French acronyms that one might come across and below is a list you might find useful. The list is just my browsing on the Web. Now I digress...some people think acronyms should be pronounced like a word as with **SMIC** (Salaire Minimum Interprofessionnel de Croissance) which means minimum wage. Others think acronyms can be pronounced as individual initials e.g., **TGV** (Train à Grande Vitesse). Some pedants call the latter initialisms. However, I am all inclusive in the list below.

les WC - pronounced vay-say by the French and not double -vaysay. Water-closet (toilettes). Borrowed from the British and always plural.

le SAMU – Secours d'Aide Médicale d'Urgence. Paramedics would be the better translation rather than ambulance.

HLM – Habitation à Loyer Modéré. Can be singular or plural and means low-income housing/council housing.

HS – Hors Service. Out of service/out of order.

AB – Agriculture Biologique. If you see this on a package, the product is organic.

FAQ – Another borrowed English acronym which translates Foire Aux Questions.

NF- Norme Française. Found on product labels that show they are up to French standards.

la **SPA** – Société Protectrice des Animaux, the French RSPCA. If in lowercase, then it really does mean a spa or hot tub.

There are thousands of French acronyms which you will see everywhere and I could write pages of them. They play a role in French life as ideas and long names are expressed more efficiently. You know the acronym **SNCF**. Who would want to say Société Nationale des Chemins de fer Française each time when referring to the French train service? There are plenty of French acronyms about and I hope I didn't make you feel **HS** about them.

Information Page

President
The Right Worshipful the Mayor of
Chichester
Councillor

Officers and Committee

Chairman: Michael Bevis 781016

Vice Chairman: Anne Scicluna 789065

Secretary: Rosie Speer
focsecretary1959@gmail.com

Treasurer: Stephen Northdale 822148

Clare Apel 783738

Julia Sander 527435

Annie Barnes 377150

Anne-Louise Briggs 784346

Paul Everrett 603513

Ellen Haigh 937027

David Nason 573716

John Wilton 788833

Friends of Chartres Programme of Events

Summer 2021

Tuesday 8 June 11:00am -

Coffee Morning Venue TBC

Wednesday 14 July 7:30pm - Venue
TBC

Uppark: the French Connection
A Talk by Volunteer Guide, David Bridges
Venue TBC. Cost: **Free, donations to**
Uppark Gardens Path Project.

Thursday 15 July

Visit to Uppark House and Gardens.
Details TBC

Sunday 25 July Garden Party 3:00 -
5:00pm

123 Cedar Drive, Chichester. PO19 3EL.

Friday 27 August 6:30 - 10:00pm

Quiz and Fish and Chips. Fishbourne
Centre. Cost: **£13.50 Please advise if a**
vegetarian option required

A Booking Form/Reply slip is enclosed.

Members receiving the ECitylink are
asked to reply by email to

foccevents1959@gmail.com

BACs Payments: 20-20-62 a/c 90403822

Name and event as reference.

Conversation Circles: May - September 2021

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.

We hope that from May onwards it will be possible for us to resume holding socially distanced meetings in COVID secure venues, as we did throughout the summer and early autumn. If not, the conversation groups will meet on Zoom. Login details will be sent out shortly before each meeting.

Petit Cercle du mardi

10.30 am to Noon (2nd Tuesday of month)

Tuesday, May 11

Tuesday, June 8

Tuesday, July 13

Vacances

Tuesday, September 14

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

Cercle Avancé

5.30 - 7.00 pm (3rd Monday of month)

Monday, May 17

Monday, June 21

Monday, July 19

Vacances

Monday, September 20

Venue: The Rainbow Inn, St Paul's Road,
Chichester PO19 3BW

Petit Cercle du jeudi

10.30 am to Noon (4th Thursday of month)

Thursday, May 27

Thursday, June 24

Thursday, July 22

Vacances

Thursday, September 23

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

Note: We have arranged the meetings so that they are spread more evenly throughout the month.

If you would like to attend a conversation circle and have not done so before, call **Julia Sander**
01243 527435.