

Bulletin !

An informal look at life in this part of France and a selection of things to see and do

Thought for the month:

Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day.
Teach a person to use the Internet and they won't bother you
for weeks, months, maybe years.

Some *vide-greniers/brocantes* in this area [± = stalls expected; '50' = area]

Mon. 1 st	Ducey (50)	v-g in <i>Carrefour Marché</i> car park, ±70
“	Montigné-le-Brillant (53)	the largest v-g in Mayenne, ±300
Sat. 6 th	Lessay (50)	v-g in the <i>Champ de Foire</i> , 14h-19h, ±300
W/e 6 th / 7 th	La Haute Chapelle (61)	<i>vide-cave</i> & v-g at <i>le Pont de Caen</i> , ±70
Sun. 7 th	Montsûrs (53)	v-g at <i>Foirail</i> , ±150
“	St Geo. de Rouelley (50)	v-g, ±70
“	Sourdeval (50)	monthly braderie in Moulin Foulon, ±150
Mon. 8 th	La Chapelle d'Andaine (61)	v-g, route de Geneslay, ±300
Sat. 13 th	Fougères (35)	<i>bric-a-brac</i> , 30 Ave de Normandie, ±50
W/e 13 th & 14 th	Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)	v-g in <i>Foire des Andaines</i> , ± 2,000 (see p. 2)
Sun. 14 th	Laiglelet (35)	v-g in <i>Terrain des Sports</i> , ±70
Sun. 21 st	Pleurduit (35)	huge v-g & shop clear-out, <i>centre ville</i> , ±250
“	Fougerolles du Plessis (53)	v-g / <i>brocante</i> , ±70
“	Montenay (53)	v-g in Place Louis Derbré, ±50
“	Briouze (61)	v-g in <i>Foire des Rogations</i> , ±70
Thurs. 25 th	Brécey (50)	v-g in rue Paul Lemonnier, ±70
Sun. 28 th	St Ellier du Maine (53)	huge v-g / <i>brocante</i> , ±300
“	Vire (14)	v-g / <i>brocante</i> near <i>Porte Horloge</i> , ±100

Visit www.brocabrac.fr which is constantly updated with *brocantes* / *vide-greniers*, including any changes.

Special dates / public holidays:

Mon. 1 st	<i>Fête du Muguet</i> (see page 2), also <i>Fête du Travail</i>
Mon. 8 th	Armistice 1945 (VE Day)
Thurs. 25 th	Ascension

Eating out

‘*L’heure de la Galette!*’ at 18 Place Charles de Gaulle in Louvigné-du-Désert (35) has been recommended to me for its delicious *crêpes* and *galettes* (and other choices available). Open Tues. to Sats. 9h30 to 21h30. Access for the handicapped. [‘TripAdvisor’ rated the best restaurant in the town, out of 5]

Fête du Muguet (Lily of the Valley)

On 1st May it is traditional to offer friends and family *le muguet* to bring luck and joy. This tradition was started in 1561 by King Charles IX - but some say only the sprigs which have 13 flowers bring luck! May 1st is the only day when people are allowed to sell *le muguet* in the streets without having the authority to operate as a business

Les Jardins des Renaudies

Events at these lovely gardens at Les Mézerais, Colombiers-du-Plessis (53) – for opening dates and times go to www.jardinsdesrenaudies.fr

☼ Mon. 8th, 10h-18h, is the *Fête de Printemps* with a *marché gourmand et artisanal*, sale of plants, cookery demos, pony rides, children’s *maquillage* (face painting), bouncy castle

☼ 20th May to 5th June, 14h-18h: ‘*Semaines de la Rose*’ – expo and sale of roses

☼ Sun. 21st between 14h & 18h: 2 demonstrations of the art of Ikebana

Refreshments can be obtained at the Tea Rooms at 14h-18h on Fri., Sats & Suns. The *Salon de Thé Anglais* is open again and they are supporting *Leucémie Espoir* in Angers, which helps to make the stay a little more pleasant for people having hospitalised treatment in Angers over a length of time. They are also supporting Cancer Support France Nord.

Fête des Voisins

On Fri. 19th this event is celebrated through the regions. It is a *fête* for getting to know your neighbours - invite them round for a chat and an *apéritif* and they may do the same. This is celebrated around the world in over 36 countries with over 30 million people joining in!

Foire des Andaines

On Sat. 13th & Sun. 14th this is the huge *brocante / vide greniers* held along the road between Bagnoles de l’Orne (61) and St. Michel des Andaines (61) with 2,000 stalls, stretching for 6 kms. Definitely not to be missed, but if you are a bargain hunter you have to get up early as it starts at 4 a.m! Advice – take a trolley, or similar, for those purchases that need to be carried back to your car!

Balades en calèche (horse & buggy rides)

The season starts for this popular way to see a town or village. For example, in Bagnoles de l’Orne (61) they are on Sundays from April to Sept. (+ Thurs. 25th May) [for other towns the dates may differ]. Departures from the Tourist Office between 14h & 17h45. Tickets: 6€, ages 4-12: 3€; family (2 adults & 2 children):16€. Tickets need to be reserved before 13h30 on the day. More details from the Tourist Office (www.bagnolesdelorne.com).

Exhibition of paintings

In May there will be 2 exhibitions of paintings by Joe Morgan and his students:

☞ on Sat. 20th & Sun. 21st, during the *vide-greniers* in Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53) at the former *école maternelle*, now called the *Maison des Associations*.

☞ from 3rd until 28th at *L'Autre Café, La Roche Qui Boit*, St Laurent-de-Terregatte (50).

For more info or directions, contact Joe at joseph.morgan@sfr.fr or tel: 02 43 13 06 72.

Le Jardin du Cassel in the bay of Mont-Saint-Michel

Situated in an exceptional natural setting, 25km from Mont-St-Michel, this 3,600 sq.m garden at Le Cassel, Isigny-le-Buat (50) is a creation full of subtlety. The mixed borders, rose garden and water features work well to infuse a feeling of peace and serenity. There is a small shop selling unusual garden decor items in wrought iron, as well as flowers from their greenhouses. Open from 18th May until 31st Aug., on Thurs. Fri., & Sats., 15h-18h. Animals accepted on a lead. www.lejardinducassel.e-monsite.com

Something for all the family :

Parc de Loisirs de la Colmont in Gorrion (53)

Between April and October there are many activities here beside the river Colmont: swingolf (putting green) with also foot-golf, disc-golf and tir (archery) au golf; accro-branching and other tree-based activities; kayaks, canoes & mini-rafts; paintball; picnic area. More details at: www.parcloisirscolmont.wixsite.com/gorrion and Facebook.

Marché de Printemps in La Ferté-Macé (61)

On Sat. 6th from 9h in Place Leclerc (*centre ville*) will be a sale of flowers, plants, shrubs, bonsai, and an expo of vintage cars. There will also be a miniature railway under the covered market. More info from the Tourist Office (www.tourisme-lafertemace.fr)

Foire Saint Thomas in Lessay (50)

On the weekend of 6th & 7th at this large agricultural fair there is plenty for everyone. On the Sat. 6th is the *fête foraine*. On Sun. 7th the big day starts at 8 a.m. with a sale of horses, donkeys and various farm animals. There is a *brocante / vide-greniers* in the *champ de foire*. Over 500 exhibitors offer everything from solar power to used tractors. A very popular event, which attracted over 30,000 visitors last year.

Many garden centres are open on Sundays in May, e.g.:

☼ *Olivier Guiard*, the small garden centre in Ambrières-les-Vallées (53, on the road from Gorrion, off the roundabout before the town) will be open on Sundays in May, 9h30 to 12h. There is a good choice of plants, roses, clematis, etc., and items for the garden.

☼ *Heulot Horticulture* at La Secourie, Route de Juvigné, Ernée (53) open 8h30 to 12h30.

Demo of *hydromodélisme* (model boats)

On Sun. 14th at the *base de loisirs* in La Ferté Macé (61) this afternoon you can watch the many model boats on the lake, organised by the *Club Hydromodélisme Fertois*. www.tourisme-lafertemace.fr

Entertainment & Concerts

Sun. 7th at 16h at the Château de Sainte-Suzanne (53), org. by the Assoc. '*Musique Pour Tous*': flautist Ivan Bellocq & harpist Pauline Haas with the music of the Incas. Free

Tues. 9th at 20h30h in *l'Eglise* in Gorrion (53) there will be a concert: '*Histoires Sacrées*' by the *Angers Nantes Opéra*. (3 soloists, and musicians of the *Stradivaria Ensemble Baroque de Nantes*). For more info go to www.hautemayenne.tourisme.com and www.gorrion.fr

Sat. 20th at 20h30 in l'Espace Culturel Colmont in Gorrion (53): concert by the 35 musicians of *La Lyre Gorronnaise* orchestra, with *l'Ensemble de Trombone de Mayenne*. Free

Festival '*Jazz sous les pommiers*'

From Sat. 20th to Sat. 27th in Coutances (50) this is the biggest jazz festival in Western France. Over 100 different events keep the 60,000 spectators entertained. A real must for lovers of jazz.

Organ recital in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)

These monthly concerts, organised by *les Amis de l'Orgue*, are at 17h in *l'Eglise Sainte Madeleine*: Free, with a collection. More info: www.bagnolesdelorne.com

♪ on Sun. 14th: Alain Bouvet (head organist at *l'Abbatiale St-Etienne* in Caen) with works by Vivaldi, Bach and Mendelssohn.

English film night in Gorrion cinema

There are no English (VO) films organised for the first half of May, but after 15th May the program for the next 2 weeks will be available on www.gorrion.fr. I will send out the details, when I get them, to those on my 'Cinema List'.

Event in support of Cancer Support France Nord

On Sat. 27th at 12h30: an Italian-themed meal at the home of Stevie & Kerry Miller: 'Les Loges', 2 rue de la Voie Romaine, Orval-sur-Sienne (50) – for directions please phone them on 02 33 46 90 74. The cost is 15€, which includes 3 courses & wine or beer and a welcome drink. Since numbers are limited please reserve a place with Peter Dickie on 02 33 46 50 28, or email: padickie@gmail.com!

Tourisme en Normandie-Maine

Le Parc Naturel Regional Normandie-Maine has a new dedicated website which has details of accommodation, restaurants, interesting sites, itineraries and entertainment in the area: <http://tourisme.parc-naturel-normandie-maine.fr>

Regional exhibition of the *boulogne français*

On Sun. 28th at the *plan d'eau (base de loisirs)* in La Ferté-Macé (61) this exhibition of the breed is organised by the *Club de Boulogne*. www.tourisme-lafertemace.fr

Exhibition of portraits

From 15th May to 30th June at the Tourist Office in Domfront (61), 12 Place de la Roirie (near the Château), Marie Claire Brunet will be showing her portraits of children. Free.

Lest we forget : local history

More about the people who were actively involved in the local *Résistance*:

Françoise Paris, the eldest of 5 children, was born on 13th May 1901 in St Pierre-des-Landes (53). She married Michel Rousseau and they had 6 children. The Rousseau family did not hesitate when asked to help hide refugees and anyone hunted by the Germans, including 3 members of a Jewish family. Françoise and her 4 brothers welcomed and hid all these people - their farm, *La Domaine*, became a place of sanctuary. Michel Rousseau was involved in several dangerous operations, including transporting weapons with his horse and cart. For safety their 2 youngest children were sent away to live in Ernée. Early in June 1944 the tension grew as the people at '*La Domaine*' took part in 'Operation Black Forest' in the woods between Larchamp and La Chapelle-Janson, but they were ambushed. Michel Rousseau escaped the trap, but some *Résistance* members were killed, others wounded, taken prisoner, tortured and shot. The situation was critical - the family prepared to flee and René Justin re-located the network to '*La Chatterie*' in Montenay. The fear of discovery lasted until August 1944 when the first US forces liberated the region.

Sale of good quality second-hand clothing and accessories

On Sat. 6th from 11h to 15h at 'Pages' bookshop in Passais-la-Conception (61) there will be a sale of good quality, pre-loved, ladies and gents clothes & accessories, organised by the 'Wining Women of Normandie'. For more info contact Polly on 02 33 64 49 12.

Traversée Découverte de l'Ilot de Tombelaine

On Thurs. 18th, 16h-19h, this is a guided crossing of the bay of Mont-Saint-Michel to the *Rocher de Tombelaine*. Ideal with young children. Animals accepted. Discover the bay – its flora and fauna, traditional activities, legends, etc., departing from 4 places (details at www.traverseebaie.com and from the Saint-James Tourist Office (02 33 89 62 38).

'Prestige' car expo in Vire (14)

On Sat. 13th in Place du Château in Vire, from 10h to 18h, at the 8th edition of '*Les Bielles de Mai*' you will find an *expo de voitures de collection et prestige*. Entry: 2€ (under 12s free). For more info for exhibitors, phone 02 31 66 28 50.

Salon des Collectionneurs et foire à tout/brocante

On Sun 14th, 9h–18h, at St. Germain de Tallevende (14, south of Vire) in the Salle des Fêtes and through the town. Around 75 exhibitors expected.

Monthly *Foire aux Moutons* (sheep fair)

On Thurs. 4th at Gavray (50) from 14h30 in the *champ de foire*, this busy fair takes place on the 1st Thursday of each month, with over 300 sheep in the covered market (up to 600 in summer). In August there is a parade of sheep from 9h. For more info.: www.gavray.fr

Fête de la Randonnée - two walks on Sat. 13th:

☞ meet at *l'Eglise de Rouellé* (61) at 14h for an 11km walk to *la Fosse Arthur*;
 ☞ depart from Notre Dame sur l'Eau (the church in lower Domfront, 61) at 18h for a 4km walk. Both are free, but you need to register your place at the Domfront Tourist Office (02 33 38 53 97)

Sport & Leisure Activities

Rando VTT de la Colmont - 21st edition

On Sun. 28th there is a bike ride in the area around Brecé (53). The bikes depart from Brecé between 8h and 10h. Or, you can join the 13km *randonnée pédestre* (walk), departing from Brecé between 9h and 10h. More info and details of 14 other circuits in the area: www.mayenne-tourisme.com

Walk near Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)

On Tues. 9th from 15h to 18h30, a 9.7km walk: '*La Vallée de la Cour*'. Reservation at the Bagnoles de l'Orne Tourist Office (02 33 37 85 66). 4€, under 12s free. [No dogs, for security reasons]. Remember to wear stout footwear, take a bottle of water and rain-wear!

Horse riding near St-Hilaire du Harcouët (50)

At Loges-Marchis (50), the *Centre Equestre* of the Agricultural College of the Bay of Mont-Saint-Michel offers horse riding all year round. More info: www.st-hilaire.fr

[Remember, for all sporting activities, you need a current health certificate from your doctor]

Advance notices: –

☞ **June:** a Hog Roast on Sat. 17th from 19h30 in support of Grande Daze Animal Companion Centre, at La Grande Gaudinière, La Bigottière (53). Tickets (15€, children: 5€) are available from now, and early reservation advised as selling fast. For more info and tickets: Jenny (02 43 02 96 35) or Denise (02 43 00 67 27; belson.alan@orange.fr)

☞ **August:** Summer Garden Party on Sat. 26th at the *Château Jasmine* in Passais-le-Conception (61) with arts & crafts, workshops, music, and many other activities. They are currently looking for sound system creators, procession bands, costume artists, musicians – and support from local people. If you are interested, more info can be found at www.chateaujasmine.com. More details of the event will be in the August Bulletin.



That's all for this month. Please feel free to recommend any restaurants you have enjoyed, as I can't get round to them all myself (although I do try!!)

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Events by the day (not including *vide-greniers*):

April 2017

Date	Event	Place	Page
Mon. 1 st	<i>Fête du Muguet & Fête de Travail</i>	All over France	2
Thurs. 4 th	<i>Foire aux Moutons</i>	Gavray	5
Sat. 6 th	Sale of clothing and accessories	Passais-la-Conception	5
”	<i>Marché de Printemps</i>	La Ferté-Macé	3
W/e 6 th / 7 th	<i>Foire Saint Thomas</i>	Lessay	3
Sun. 7 th	Concert at the Château	Sainte-Suzanne	4
Mon. 8 th	<i>Fête de Printemps</i>	Colombiers du Plessis	2
Tues. 9 th	Concert: <i>Histoires Sacrées</i>	Gorron	4
”	Walk : ‘ <i>La Vallée de la Cour</i> ’	Bagnoles de l’Orne	6
Sat. 13 th	<i>Fête de la Randonnée – 2 walks</i>	Rouellé & Domfront	5
”	Prestige car expo	Vire	5
Sun. 14 th	Organ recital	Bagnoles de l’Orne	4
”	Demo of model boats	La Ferté-Macé	3
”	<i>Salon des Collectionneurs / foire à tout</i>	St. Germain de Tallevende	5
Thurs. 18 th	Discovery crossing of Mont-St-Michel bay	Several departures	5
Fri. 19 th	<i>Fête des Voisins</i>	All over France	2
W/e 20 th / 21 st	Exhibition of paintings	Fougerolles-du-Plessis	3
Sat. 20 th	Concert by <i>La Lyre Gorronnaise</i>	Gorron	4
Sats. 20-27 th	‘ <i>Jazz sous les pommiers</i> ’	Coutances	4
Sun. 21 st	Demos of the art of Ikebana	Colombiers-du-Plessis	2
Sat. 27 th	Italian-themed meal in aid of CSFN	Orval-sur-Seinne	4
Sun. 28 th	Regional expo of <i>le bouldogue français</i>	La Ferté-Macé	4
”	<i>Rando VTT de la Colmont</i>	Brecé	7