

# Bulletin !

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

## Thought for the month:

Rules make a cage – but they also make a structure

Some *vide-greniers/brocantes* in this area [ $\pm$  = stalls expected] ‘35’ = area

Sun 1 <sup>st</sup>	Le Pas (53)	v-g, $\pm 80$
“	Montsûrs (53)	v-g in the Champ de Foire, $\pm 80$
“	Sainte-Suzanne (53)	<i>les Puces Suzannais</i> , $\pm 50$
“	Ducey (50)	v-g in Carrefour parking, $\pm 80$
Thurs. 5 <sup>th</sup>	Brécey (50)	v-g on rue Paul Lemmonier, $\pm 150$
Sat. 7 <sup>th</sup>	Agon-Coutainville (50)	v-g / brocante in Place du Marché $\pm 150$
Sun. 8 <sup>th</sup>	La Chapelle d’Andaine (61)	v-g, $\pm 400$ (see also page 2)
“	St. Geo. de Rouelley (50)	v-g / brocante, $\pm 50$
“	Saint-James (50)	v-g, and <i>Marché du Terroir</i> , $\pm 50$ (see p.2)
“	Briouze (61)	<i>foire à tout</i> , $\pm 80$
“	Chailland (53)	v-g on rue Saint-Germain, $\pm 50$
W/e 14 <sup>th</sup> /15 <sup>th</sup>	St Michel-des-Andaines (61)	v-g in the <i>Foire des Andaines</i> , $\pm 2,200!$
Sun. 15 <sup>th</sup>	Genêts (50)	v-g / brocante, $\pm 150$
“	Dol de Bretagne (35)	v-g, $\pm 150$
“	Laignelet (35)	v-g in the <i>terrain de football</i> , $\pm 150$
Mon. 16 <sup>th</sup>	Ceaucé (61)	v-g, $\pm 70$
Sun. 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53)	v-g / brocante, $\pm 80$
“	Granville (50)	monthly brocante/antiquités, $\pm 50$
Sun 29 <sup>th</sup>	Avranches (50)	v-g, rue Dr. Eugène-Béchet, $\pm 150$
“	Champéon (53)	v-g in centre ville, $\pm 250$

[[www.brocabrac.fr](http://www.brocabrac.fr) is constantly updated with brocantes / vide-greniers]

Special dates / public holidays:

Sun. 1 <sup>st</sup>	<i>Fête du Muguet</i> , also <i>Fête du Travail</i>
Thurs. 5 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Ascension</i>
Sun. 8 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Victoire 1945</i> (VE Day)
Sun. 15 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Pentecôte</i>
Mon. 16 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Lundi Pentecôte</i>

## Eating out

Highly recommended: 'Le Capri' Italian restaurant, 9 route de Saint-James in Fougères (35, see [www.alfio.fr](http://www.alfio.fr) for location) has smart décor, excellent service and a great menu with a good selection of antipasta, salads, pizzas, meat & fish, and desserts. Very popular, so reservation advised (02 99 94 22 10). Open daily (but not Sundays) 12h-15h & 19h-22h.

### *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 1<sup>st</sup> 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*

Between Easter and 1<sup>st</sup> Nov in these pretty gardens near Colombiers-du-Plessis (53) you can discover over 3,000 varieties of plants, trees & bushes. Entry: 5€ (2€ for people living in the 53 region). For opening days and times: [www.jardinsdesrenaudies.fr](http://www.jardinsdesrenaudies.fr). 3 events this month:

☞ from Sun. 1<sup>st</sup> until Mon. 31<sup>st</sup> there will be an Art Exhibition and Sale, with paintings by local artists in a variety of mediums - take a tour around the gardens and see the great selection of artwork;

☞ on Sun. 8<sup>th</sup> from 10h-18h is the *Marché de Printemps* (Spring market);

☞ from Sun. 22<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> June, 14h-18h: *Semaines de la Rose* (Weeks of the Rose);

New for 2016: *Salon de Thé Anglais* (English Tea Room). Open: in April - Sats. & Suns.: May & June: every Fri., Sat. & Sun.: 14h-18h.

### *Marché du Terroir in Saint-James (50)*

On Sun. 8<sup>th</sup> from 9h to 13h at Place de Gaulle in Saint-James: sale of artisanal items and foods, with musical entertainment, pony rides. More info at [www.saintjamestourisme.fr](http://www.saintjamestourisme.fr)

### *Annual Fête de la Nature*

From 18<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> this annual national event helps to bring thousands of people in contact with nature - 5 days with over 5,000 free events all over France to help celebrate World Biodiversity Day. More info at [www.fetedelanature.com](http://www.fetedelanature.com) or your Tourist Office.

### *Exhibition of sculptures by Louis Derbré*

Until 30<sup>th</sup> October at the foot of the Château in Fougères (35): to celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of celebrated sculptor Louis Derbré (many of whose works are outside in *l'Espace Les Touches* in Ernée), here are many reproduced sculptures. 4 denote Tolerance, the Future, Courage, Hope, and 6 of 'Mémorial de la Paix' which had been made for the 50<sup>th</sup> commemoration of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima - the originals were installed in the park-cemetery near Hiroshima. More info from [www.ot-fougères.fr](http://www.ot-fougères.fr)

### *La Chapelle-d'Andaine (61) – fête, foire & vide-greniers*

On the weekend of 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>: on Saturday, the *fête foraine*, with exhibition of vintage vehicles and sale of spare parts; on Sunday: *foire, vide-greniers* until 19h (± 400 stalls) and plant market. Free parking.

## 11<sup>th</sup> Big Breakfast in aid of Cancer Research

This year's Big Breakfast will be held on Sat. 14<sup>th</sup> at 16 rue du Grand Pré, Neuilly-le-Vendin (53) from 9h30 to 12h30. There will be bacon butties, a plant stall, cakes, bric-a-brac and a raffle. They have a surprise guest coming who will delight all fans of Star Wars, so don't forget to take your cameras. For more info contact Heather Marriott, tel. no: 02 43 04 58 70 or Jenny Richardson: 02 43 03 15 88.

## Weekend event in at the 'Flower Basket' in Rânes (61)

At 'Champvert', Launay Samson, Rânes, on the weekend of 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> they welcome Graham Proudlock, a specialist in *brocante & objets du jardin* (re-constituted stone, obelisks and vases); also on site you will find plants as ideas for gifts, and Cym cards for greetings cards. More info: tel. 02 33 35 74 51, email at [contact@flowerbasket.fr](mailto:contact@flowerbasket.fr), or [www.flowerbasket.fr](http://www.flowerbasket.fr)

## *Un châtaignier pour 13 bébés*

Each year since 1998 it has been a tradition in St Bomer-les-Forges (61, north of Domfront) to celebrate the number of babies born each year by planting a chestnut tree in the Bois des Bébés. In 2015, 13 babies were born and in March, armed with spades, the new parents gathered to plant the tree and also erect a metal structure representing a tree with 13 leaves, on which the names of the children and their birth dates are inscribed.

## *Fête du Village* with plant exchange in Lesbois (53)

On Sun. 8<sup>th</sup> in the *Fête du Village* will be cycle races and the sale of plants, decorative trees and flowers, also *l'Association Bonzai* with initiation into the art of bush trimming. The association Art'Bo opens its doors to show their artists' work. Open to all. Entertainment in the streets during the day.

## Cheese of the Month : *Carré Mirabelle*

This square-shaped artisanal cheese is slightly spicy and has fruity aromas – this is because it is dipped 5 times in plum brandy as it ripens! It has a similar texture to Brie, and it is made at the Abbaye de Vergaville, a Benedictine Abbey in the Lorraine which dates back to the 10<sup>th</sup> century and where they have been making this cheese since 1938. It is made from raw cow's milk and goes well with a dark beer.

## *Parachutisme ascensionnel* (para-gliding)

On Fri. 20<sup>th</sup> from 9h to 10h30 at the *Centre Ecole de Parachutisme* at the *Aerodrome de Laval* (53) there is a 'discovery day' with flights for beginners to heights of between 10m and 40m. More info at [www.parachutismelaval.fr](http://www.parachutismelaval.fr). (A current medical health certificate is needed for this activity)

## 'Open Day' at the *Toiles de Mayenne* in Fontaine-Daniel (53)

On Thurs. 19<sup>th</sup> you can visit this harmonious village, 4km from Mayenne, which was born from the textile industry, and see the workers' cottages, their streets and gardens. High quality textiles are made here, and you can also discover the stages from the yarn to the finished articles. More info at [www.toiles-de-mayenne.com](http://www.toiles-de-mayenne.com). While visiting the village, you could walk by the lovely lake nearby, where there is also a bar/cafe/shop.

## Entertainment &amp; Concerts

♪ Sun 1<sup>st</sup> at 15h in the Salle de la Balderine in Saint-Baudelle (53): *Concert de Printemps* by *l'Orchestre d'Harmonie du Pays de la Mayenne*, incl. some 'James Bond' themes. Free.

♪ Sat 7<sup>th</sup> at 20h30 in the Salle Socio-Culturelle, 6 place de la Mairie in Meslay-du-Maine (53): the 19<sup>th</sup> *Festival 'Ateliers Jazz'* with the Hugh Coltman Quintet. Tickets: 13€ (under 12s: 5,50€, under 6s: free) from a Tourist Office. [www.festivaljazz-meslay.com](http://www.festivaljazz-meslay.com)

♪ Sat 7<sup>th</sup> at 20h30 in *l'Espace le Conquérant* in Saint-James (50) – '*La Folie des Années 80*' with Cookie Dingler, Débût de Soirée & J-Pierre Mader. Tickets 21€, at the door.

♪ Thurs. 12<sup>th</sup> (+ every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs. of the month) at 19h30 in the Bar '*la Palais*', 20 rue Daniel Oelherth in Laval (53): '*Les Boeufs Jazz de Palais*'. Free.

♪ Sat. 14<sup>th</sup> at 21h at '*Chez Phillipe*' in Montenay (53): popular rock band 'Bullfrog'. Meal at 19h – multi courses for 19€, followed by the concert.

♪ Sat 28<sup>th</sup> at 20h30 in the Basilique Notre-Dame in Mayenne (53): 'Missa Gallica' – a concert with *l'Orchestre Symphonique de la Haute-Mayenne*, and the choirs *Chantemayne* and *Bis Repetita* - soloists, and instruments ancient and modern. Free.

## Picnic in the Park at St-Symphorien des Monts (50)

On Sun. 29<sup>th</sup> from 16h to 19h in this Parc (near Buais) there will be music by the Landivy Ensemble, a Charity Auction in aid of Cancer Support France Basse-Normandie and classic car display. Closing date for tickets (6€) is 20<sup>th</sup> May – you can bring your own picnic and you will receive a complimentary *apéro* within the ticket cost. More info at 02 33 69 01 04, [csfbassenormandie@gmail.com](mailto:csfbassenormandie@gmail.com)

## English film night in Gorrion cinema

The English film in Gorrion cinema is on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May – **The Revenant** with Leonardo DiCaprio and Tom Hardy. [If you fancy a pre-film slurp, I will be in the Bar de la Mairie, at the bottom of the hill below the church, from 19h15].

Here are the contact details again for English films in this area:

Fougères (35): [www.cinemafougeres.com](http://www.cinemafougeres.com); Mayenne (53): [www.atmospherescinema.org](http://www.atmospherescinema.org), Tinchebray (61): email Claude Maze at [maze.claude@orange.fr](mailto:maze.claude@orange.fr) (English spoken)

## Organ recitals in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)

Two concerts at 17h in l'Eglise Sainte Madeleine: Free, with a collection:

♪ on Sun 1<sup>st</sup>: Olivier Thuault, organist at l'Eglise Notre-Dame in Villedieu-les-Poëles, with works by Nicolaus Bruhns and J. S. Bach;

♪ on Mon 16<sup>th</sup>: Jean-Claude Duval and Alain Bouvet (head organist from Caen) with baroque and contemporary works. More info: [www.bagnolesdelorne.com](http://www.bagnolesdelorne.com)

## Première screening of a film in Couesmes-Vaucé (53)

On Thurs. 5<sup>th</sup> at 19h at the bar/restaurant 'Le Jardin de Froulay' in Couesmes-Vaucé, will be a première screening of the latest short film 'The Garden', written and produced by Zolascope. Contact: 02 43 00 93 79. All welcome. Map available on Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LeJardinDeFroulay/>

## Grande Daze Rescue Book Sale

Grande Daze Rescue are having a Book Sale on Sun. 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10h to 15h at Denise and Alan Belson's house: La Courtinière, St Aubin-fosse-Louvain (53) [directions: take the D5 leaving Gorrion towards Vieuvy. At the first crossroads turn right towards St. Aubin-fosse-Louvain, then the 5<sup>th</sup> turning on the right. They are the 1<sup>st</sup> house on the right]. 3 books for 1€; DVDs: 50c each; home-made jams and chutneys all at 2€ a jar. Coffee and biscuits. For more details contact Denise on 02 43 00 67 27.

## Town of the month – Saint-Céneri-le-Gérei (61)

This is a small village with just 120 inhabitants. In the 7<sup>th</sup> century an Italian hermit, Céneri (Serenicus) lived here and on his death his disciples built a monastery, which was destroyed in 903 by the Vikings. In 1044, Guillaume Giroie settled in the village and built a château, which was besieged (but not taken) by Guillaume le Conquérant (William the Conqueror) in 1060. The village is classed one of '*les plus beaux villages de France*' and since the 19<sup>th</sup> century has been an inspiration to artists from all over the world.

**Rencontre des Peintres:** This year on 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>, from 10h to 19h, *l'Association des Amis de Saint-Céneri* is holding its 30<sup>th</sup> *Rencontres des Peintres*. The village opens its doors to around 40 artists from all areas and they produce a real open-air art gallery, attracting each year more than 12,000 visitors. You can stroll from street to street and also meet the artists, have a picnic, see the different art workshops. A lovely setting for a wonderful event.

## Laugh and the world gets healthier

Laughing Yoga, the worldwide wellness craze, has spread across France with thousands enjoying the fact that laughing is good for you – and a forced laugh even better as other soon join in and laugh for real. Laughing sessions are planned at many of the 120 clubs across France ([www.clubderire.com](http://www.clubderire.com)). Dr. Madan Kataria, an Indian GP, popularised it in 2002, saying “you don't laugh because you're happy, you're happy because you laugh”. Benefits are said to include improvements to mood, cardiovascular health and fighting against long-term depression.

## Cafe Gourmand in Gorrion (53)

Amanda would like to let her customers know that she will be closed from Tues. 3<sup>rd</sup>, opening again on Tues. 17<sup>th</sup> May.

## Special stamps on sale in Normandie post offices.

To help promote the cultural, economic and tourism projects in the Normandie area, *la Poste* have re-issued a *carnet* (booklet) of 12 postage stamps showing paintings of impressionist artists of the end 19<sup>th</sup> / beginning 20<sup>th</sup> century, including Fauvism by Gaughin, Cubism by Cézanne and Expressionism by Van Gogh.

## Musée de Cidre in Melleray-du-Maine (53)

This family business welcomes the public with a guided tour to discover the history of cider and calvados, including a short film and tasting of their specialities, including apple and pear juice, Pommeau and Calvados. Open from April to Sept., Mon. to Sat., 14h to 19h (in July & Aug., daily 10h to 19h. Entry 4,70€, children 3€.

## Something you didn't know you didn't know . . .

Maypoles are also a French tradition! Often the centrepiece of a British village fête, the ribbon-weaving patterns used in UK maypole dancing may have their origins in France where a maypole tradition is still continued in several departments today. The *arbre de mai* or *mât de mai* is a French custom going back centuries and dates further back in European pagan and Celtic fertility rituals for Beltane and the start of summer. In France it involves a tree being brought into the village, erected outside the *mairie* and decorated in ribbons or flags in the *mairie's* honour. Like other European countries, Britain had its own maypoles and dancing but they were banned under Cromwell and not restarted until the Restoration. In France, pictures show maypole dancers with ribbons performing at the court of Louis XIV and when the Revolution ended many religious traditions, maypole dancing (as pagan and thus previously suppressed by the church and the royal court) saw a revival.

### Memorial Day at an American cemetery

On Sun. 29<sup>th</sup> is the Memorial Ceremony at the *Cimetière Americaine* at Montjoie Saint-Martin (50).

### 'Bar de la Plage' at the Base de Loisirs in La Ferté-Macé (61)

After being closed for 6 months, this bar-restaurant by the *plan d'eau* is back in business and run by Emilia Lubanska, who until 2 years ago worked in the 'Toque Blanche' restaurant in Bagnoles de l'Orne. At this re-designed bar/restaurant will be snacks (sandwiches, burgers, *croque-monsieur*), salads, steaks, crêpes and ice creams. Open daily, 9h-20h.

A reminder that this 28-ha. lake has a stretch of sandy beach and a safe swimming area, and you can enjoy pedalos, sailing, wind-surfing and canoeing. On land you will find crazy-golf, archery, volley-ball, go-karts, putting green and pétanque pitch. For walkers: a 2 km circuit of the lake. More info: [www.lafertemace.fr](http://www.lafertemace.fr)

### Items for Sale or Swap in Bais (53)

On Sat. 21<sup>st</sup> from 8h to 16h at La Roncinière, Bais (on the D35, east of Mayenne) Trish Smart is having a *vide garage* selling household and bric-a-brac items, including tiles, taps, etc.

### Some weekly markets in the Calvados department (14)

Day of the week	Location
Mondays	St Pierre-sur-Dives, Pont l'Eveque, Vierville-sur-Mer
Tuesdays	Balleroy, Deauville, Ouistreham, Thury-Harcourt, Vire
Wednesdays	Bayeux, Honfleur, Trouville, Villers-Bocage
Thursdays	Conde-sur-Noireau,, Livarot
Fridays	May-sur-Orne, Ouistreham, Vire
Saturdays	Bayeux, Honfleur, Lisieux, Luc-sur-Mer
Sundays	Port-en-Bessin, Pont d'Ouille, Trouville

(It is wise to double check (at your nearest Tourist Office) before going, as these can change without notice)

## Sport & Leisure Activities

### Walking

Two walks organised by *St James Randonne*. 1,50€ for non-members. More info. from [www.saintjamestourisme.fr](http://www.saintjamestourisme.fr):

☞ Sun. 8<sup>th</sup> – walk from Saint James (50) to St. Brice-en-Coglés (35): depart at 14h from Place du Champ de Foire in Saint-James;

☞ Tues. 31<sup>st</sup> – full day's walk to Parcé (35): depart at 9h from Place du Champ de Foire. Take a picnic and stout walking shoes.

### Walk the Route of the Knights Templar

On Tues. 24<sup>th</sup>, this 10km walk around Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) is open to everyone over age 10. Reservation is necessary at the Bagnoles de l'Orne Tourist Office before 11h30 as a minimum number is required. More info: [www.bagnolesdelorne.com](http://www.bagnolesdelorne.com).

### Learn to dance the flamenco!

Another chance to learn this expressive dance! On Sun. 29<sup>th</sup> from 10h to 12h30 in the Studio de Danse, Centre d'Animation in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61). 30€. More details from the Bagnoles Tourist Office. [www.bagnolesdelorne.com](http://www.bagnolesdelorne.com)

### Some horse-riding centres (also ask at your Tourist Office)

📄 'Ranch de la Faucoudière' in Domfront (61) (02 33 38 11 08 and on facebook).

📄 'Le Haras des Perchers' in Passais-la-Conception (61) (06 08 24 07 10)

📄 'Haras de la Tour' in Juvigny-sous-Andaine (61) (06 50 89 39 96)

### Vélo Route en Pays – cycling circuits

At the Domfront Tourist Office you can ask for this 'topoguide' to discover 5 circuits of 14km to 30km around Domfront, and at [www.ot-domfront.com](http://www.ot-domfront.com) you can *télécharge* more.

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

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That's all for this month. Any feedback from restaurants (or any events) that you have enjoyed is very welcome. I do try and check out the recommended items in the Bulletins but it is not always possible. Well, I can't be everywhere at once - although I do try!

*Judy Skinner*

La Croix des 4 Epines

53120 Gorron

tel: 02 43 30 29 06

*e-mail: judithsk@free.fr*

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

May 2016

Date	Event	Place	Page
Sun 1 <sup>st</sup>	<i>Fête du Muguet</i>	All over France	2
“	<i>Orchestre d’Harmonie du Pays de la M.</i>	Saint-Baudelle	4
“	Organ recital by Olivier Thuault	Bagnoles de l’Orne	4
Mon. 2 <sup>nd</sup>	English film ‘The Revenant’	Gorron	4
Thurs. 5 <sup>th</sup>	Première screening of film ‘The Garden’	Couesmes-Vaucé	4
Sat. 7 <sup>th</sup>	Hugh Coltman Quintet (jazz)	Meslay-du-Maine	4
“	‘ <i>Les Folies des Années 80</i> ’	Saint-James	4
W/e 7 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup>	Graham Proudlock at the ‘Flower Basket’	Rânes	3
“	<i>Foire, fête</i> and vintage vehicles	La Chapelle-d’Andaine	2
Sun. 8 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Marché de Printemps</i> (Spring market)	Colombiers-du-Plessis	2
“	Walk to St Brice-en-Coglés	Saint-James	7
“	<i>Fête du Village</i>	Lesbois	3
“	<i>Marché du Terroir</i>	Saint-James	2
Thurs. 12 <sup>th</sup>	‘ <i>Les Boeufs Jazz de Palais</i> ’	Laval	4
Sat. 14 <sup>th</sup>	‘Big Breakfast’ for Cancer Research	Neuilly-le-Vendin	3
“	‘Bullfrog’ at Chez Philippe	Montenay	4
14 <sup>th</sup> /15 <sup>th</sup> /16 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Rencontres des Peintres</i>	St Céneri-le-Gérei	5
Mon. 16 <sup>th</sup>	Organ recital	Bagnoles de l’Orne	4
Thurs. 19 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Toiles de Mayenne</i> ‘Open Day’	Fontaine-Daniel	3
Fri. 20 <sup>th</sup>	Paragliding ‘discovery day’	Laval	3
Sat. 21 <sup>st</sup>	Items for Sale or Swap	Bais	6
Sun. 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Grande Daze Rescue Book Sale	St Aubin-fosse-Louvain	5
Tues. 24 <sup>th</sup>	Walk the route of the Knights Templar	Bagnoles de l’Orne	7
Sat 28 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Orchestre Symphonique de la H/Mayenne</i>	Mayenne	4
Sun. 29 <sup>th</sup>	Picnic in the Park	St Symphorien-des-Monts	4
“	Learn the flamenco!	Bagnoles de l’Orne	7
“	American Cemetery Memorial Ceremony	Montjoie Saint-Martin	6
Tues. 31 <sup>st</sup>	Walk to Parcé	Saint-James	7