

# Bulletin !

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

## Thought for the month:

There is no pleasure in having nothing to do;  
the fun is having lots to do and not doing it!

Wishing you all a very prosperous and healthy



Some *vide-greniers/brocantes* in this area – not many at this time of year but here are a few:  
[ ‘35’ = area; ± = stalls expected]

|                         |                                     |   |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Sun. 14 <sup>th</sup>   | Rennes (35)                         | ‘ <i>Les Puces de Rennes</i> ’ on Mail François Mitterrand (popular monthly street market on 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month), 9h – 18h; ±30 |
| Sat. 27 <sup>th</sup>   | Dinard (35)                         | <i>brocante médias</i> (DVDs, records, games) in Salle Polyvalente, 15 rue Gouyon Matignon; ±70   |
| Sun. 28 <sup>th</sup>   | Rennes (35)                         | <i>brocante &amp; bric-a-brac</i> in Halle Martenot, Place des Lices, 9h-18h; entry: 2,50€ (under 20s free); ±70                                  |
| W/e 27/28 <sup>th</sup> | Le Molay Littry (14) (NE of St. Lô) | <i>Puces Musicales</i> (musical instruments) in the Salle des Fêtes, place du Marché ; ±50  |

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

## ‘*La galette des rois*’ – a tasty tradition

A seasonal reminder that France celebrates Epiphany each year on the second Sunday after Christmas with the *galette des rois* – a traditional puff pastry cake filled with *frangipane*, a thick almond cream. This tradition traces its roots back to the Middle Ages when the last piece of the cake, often called the ‘piece for the poor’ was reserved and given to the first needy person knocking at the door. Inside is a little surprise – these days a *santon* (figurine) – and the person who gets the slice with *le santon* is declared the king and so crowned.

## Eating out

Over the coming months I will be featuring places to go for that Special Occasion, including the *l'Auberge de la Source* in St Cyr du Bailleul (50), *Le Beau Rivage*, Mayenne (53); *Le Grand Cerf*, Ernée (53) and *La Marjolaine*, Mayenne (53). This month:-

### *Auberge de la Source* in St Cyr de Bailleul (50)

This restaurant has lovely decor, welcoming and efficient staff and a choice of 3 menus plus *à la carte*. Traditional French cuisine with a modern touch, using best quality, locally sourced ingredients. The menus change every 3 months. Open for lunches: Wed. to Sun. 12h-14h; evenings: Wed. to Sat.: 19h-21h. For more info: [www.aubergedelasource.biz](http://www.aubergedelasource.biz)

If you have discovered a lovely restaurant, please do let me know and I can pass on the info to others.

### *Les Lumières de Laval*

For the past 20 years, *Les Lumières de Laval* have created an event that transforms the town - wonderful lights that enthral young and old alike. Until 8<sup>th</sup> January you can enjoy them from 7h30 until 8h, and 17h to midnight, along the streets and on the river near the *Château Neuf*. On New Year's Eve the lights are kept on all night. [www.laval-tourisme.com](http://www.laval-tourisme.com)

### Exhibition of Christian Dior in Granville (50)

Until 7<sup>th</sup> Jan., in celebration of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of this iconic house of fashion - the *Belle Epoch*-style, 19<sup>th</sup> century cliff-top villa '*Les Rhumbs*' at rue d'Estouteville in Granville - this exhibition throws new light on the great clothing designer's life. For more info: [www.musee-dior-granville.com](http://www.musee-dior-granville.com)

### Craft groups in *La Maison des Beaux Cadeaux*

*At La Maison des Beaux Cadeaux* at 8 Place de la Mairie in Gorron (53) will be the following craft groups in January and everyone is very welcome:

Thurs. 18<sup>th</sup>, 14h to 16h – Dolls House Group. Join like-minded people to discuss all things dolls-house! (Owning a dolls house is not a requirement). This is an informal group - and maybe you have items you have bought and would like to swap, or you make furniture or curtains for dolls houses and would like to share your skills with others? 3€.

Fri. 19<sup>th</sup> – Pampering and medical podiatry, also the ladies from London Chic and the House of Beauty. Full range of treatments available, by appointment. To book, please contact Val on 02 43 05 27 58 or 06 49 61 03 13.

Fri. 26<sup>th</sup> – Watercolours with Amanda Freeman. Create your own watercolour under Amanda's guidance. 12€, includes all materials and refreshments.

Coming in February: macramé, mosaic and much more. For more info, email Anne Bush ([bush.anne64@gmail.com](mailto:bush.anne64@gmail.com)), see the Facebook page, or call into the shop!

### Event in support of Cancer Support France Nord

On Fri. 26<sup>th</sup> from 19h: Quiz Night at the Day Centre on route de Buais, Notre-Dame du Touchet (50). For more info contact Cancer Support France Nord on 02 33 69 01 05.

### *Spectacle Equestre de Noël at the Haras du Pin*

From 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> Jan. at 15h30, at this ‘Versailles of the Horse’ will be an exceptional exhibition of horsemanship: ‘*Les rênes magique*’ (the magic reins) at Le Pin-au-Haras (61). More info at [www.haras-national-du-pin.com](http://www.haras-national-du-pin.com)

### Bi-lingual workshop / atelier: detox your kitchen pantry and heal your body

In 2018 Maria Martel will be holding her workshops from 10h - 12h on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sat. of each month at 10 rue Alain Gerbault in Gorrion (53). Learn how to detox your home (including your kitchen cupboards) naturally with simple DIY recipes for household cleaning and helpful tips to avoid indoor toxins in household products, air and water – and get healthy! Each person will learn how to clean the house: bathrooms, toilets, kitchen granite counters, bedrooms, etc., naturally and will take home their own home-made samples and recipes. You can book for Sat. 6<sup>th</sup> January by contacting Maria on 06 61 71 90 00.

### Exhibitions in La Ferté-Macé (61)

- 📖 Until 16<sup>th</sup> January: paintings by Laëtitia Féraud in the Salle Rousseau, Cour du Grand Turc in La Ferté-Macé (61). [www.tourisme-lafertemace.fr](http://www.tourisme-lafertemace.fr)
- 📖 From 16<sup>th</sup> until 31<sup>st</sup> Jan.: ‘*Artisanat Syrien*’ – examples of Syrian crafts by Mme Shet, at 11 rue de la Victoire, La Ferté-Macé.

### New *brocante* site in Gorrion (53)

On just one weekend per month, G D Arielle will be opening their *brocante* in the old *Meubles du Menhir* warehouse on rue des Frères Lumières. The owner, Pascal Martin, organises house clearances and there are some different items each time. This month it will be on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Also, on 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> they will be in the large warehouse in Le Teilleul (on route de Domfront – on the bend in the road on leaving the town in the Domfront direction). For any info, phone 02 33 51 62 10 (French spoken)

### Grand Sale and English Breakfast

On Sun. 28<sup>th</sup> from 10h to 15h in the *Salle des Fêtes* in St Aubin-fosse-Louvain (53, near Gorrion), Grande Daze Animal Companion Centre are hosting a Grand Sale and English Breakfast. You can find some good bargains and enjoy a delicious traditional English breakfast. For more info contact [www.grandedaze.com](http://www.grandedaze.com); also on Facebook.

### Cheese of the Month - *Valençay*

Named after a town in central France, *Valençay* is shaped like a pyramid with the top cut off. Originally the shape was perfectly pyramidal but Napoleon, visiting the *Chateau de Valençay* on his way back from a calamitous campaign in Egypt, saw the cheese and angrily chopped the top off with his sword! It is still made following the traditional method and when the cheese is firm enough it is covered with salted charcoal ash which allows *Valençay* to keep its flavour for a long time. As it matures in a ventilated cellar at 80% humidity, a natural blue mould covers the cheese. Moist and firm, it has a soft, delicate & nutty taste. Good on crackers, on a cheeseboard or even with jacket potatoes. Wines to go with it (white): Sancerre or Chablis.

## Entertainment & Concerts

Fri. 12<sup>th</sup> at 20h30 in Centre Culturel Juliette Drouet in Fougères (35): *Carrousel des Moutons* – Belgians Dirk and Fien give a fascinating show of dexterity, with a piano acrobat, a broom trapeze, and other eccentricities! Tickets: 12€, children 6€; duration: 1 hr.

Sun. 21<sup>st</sup> from 16h at *le Quai des Arts*, rue de la Feuille in Argentan (61): “*Le Chant de la Terre*” – *l’Orchestre Régional de Normandie* with works by Gustav Mahler. Tickets: 22€, 17€ or 12€. More info at [www.quaidesarts.fr/le-chant-de-la-terre](http://www.quaidesarts.fr/le-chant-de-la-terre)

Fri. 26<sup>th</sup> at 20h30 in the Centre Culturel Juliette Drouet in Fougères (35): “Toss’n Turn” – a concert of Irish dance and music with trio Toss, Marion & Sylvestre. Tickets 5€. More info at [www.ot-fougeres.fr](http://www.ot-fougeres.fr)

## Courses for Irish music and dance

On 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> at Pole Jean Chaudeurge, Flers (61), these courses are open to all, at all levels (beginnings to experienced). There will be 3 different workshops: 🌀 Irish melodies; 🌀 Irish percussion; 🌀 Initiation to the traditional Irish dancing. Organised by the *Conservatoire de Musique de Flers*. Free. More info at [www.ornetourisme.com](http://www.ornetourisme.com).

## English films in Gorrion (53)

The Cinema Committee in Gorrion are organising ‘British Monday’ when, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month, films in English (VO - Version Original) will be shown. The January film:-

Monday 8<sup>th</sup>: *Battle of the Sexes* – the true story of the 1973 tennis match between World No. 1 Billie Jean King and ex-champion and serial hustler Bobby Ribbs.

Also, on Mon. 22<sup>nd</sup> will be ‘Wonderstruck’, a mystery drama - the story of a young boy in the Midwest is told simultaneously with a tale about a young girl in New York from 50 years ago, as they both seek the same mysterious connection.

[Advance Notice for February: On Monday 12<sup>th</sup> Feb. will be ‘Star Wars – the Last Jedi’]  
For more info on these and other films, go to [www.allocine.fr](http://www.allocine.fr)

Again, before the films, from 18h30 a light meal is available in the Bar de la Mairie in Gorrion for those wishing to make more of a night of it. For 15€ you will get the meal and the ticket (5,50€) for the film. For reservations phone Melanie on 02 43 08 04 59

## French Inventors:

### René Laënnec – inventor of the stethoscope

Born in Quimper, Brittany on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1781, by 1816 he had qualified as a doctor. One day he was examining an overweight lady but was unable to hear her heartbeat clearly, so he rolled up some paper to help him hear and also found it preferable to placing his ear directly on the chest. His first instrument was a hollow wooden cylinder, 25cm x 2.5cm, which he later refined to comprise 2 detachable parts, giving it a name from the Greek ‘*stethos*’ (chest) and ‘*skopos*’ (examination).

He died in 1826 and decades later the stethoscope was improved with 2 further innovations – rubber tubing and binaural earpieces.

## Lest We Forget

*La Petite Chapelle Saint-Michel* in Mortain (50) is located on the hill of Montjoie which, at 323m, is the highest point of the town and on a clear day you can see Mont-Saint-Michel. The first chapel was built in 1613 but did not survive the Revolution; the present chapel was built in 1852 and restored in 1955. Today it is a place of remembrance of the battle in August 1944 where many soldiers lost their lives - it was held by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the 120<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the 30<sup>th</sup> American Division 'Old Hickory' and they were surrounded for 6 days and nights by the SS, who could not take it. Parking is at the top of the hill and you take a peaceful walk along the avenue to see the memorial. [www.mortain-tourisme.fr](http://www.mortain-tourisme.fr)

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

In the 9<sup>th</sup> century the town of Angers, on the river Loire, was repeatedly attacked by the Normans. In 867 they seized the town and occupied it for 6 years. To drive them out, Charles the Bald and the Duke of Brittany revived the stratagem by which Cyrus took Babylon 1,500 years before: they dug a canal north of Angers into which they intended to divert the waters of the Maine. Appalled by the prospect of seeing their boats left high and dry, the Normans hastened to negotiate and finally abandoned the town.

### Golf Course : *Golf de Vaudreuil*

In a very historic area, at 26 Avenue de la Haye, 27100 Le Vaudreuil (off the A13 south of Rouen) this is one of the finest 18-hole courses in France with one of the most beautiful clubhouses in France. Designed by English architect Fred Hawtree, it satisfies the most discerning of golfers. [www.golfduvaudreuil.com](http://www.golfduvaudreuil.com)

### Weekly markets - in the Orne (61)

By popular request, repeated here are some weekly markets:-

| Day of the week | Location   |
|-----------------|--|
| Mondays         | Briouze, Remalard, Vimoutiers (afternoon)  |
| Tuesdays        | Alençon, Athis de l'Orne, Bagnoles de l'Orne, Couterne, Argentan, l'Aigle, Passais-la-Conception.    |
| Wednesdays      | Bagnoles de l'Orne, Carrouges, Flers, Le Mêle-sur-Sarthe, Le Theil-sur-Huisne, Longny-au-Perche      |
| Thursdays       | Alençon, Ceaucé, La Ferté-Macé, Putanges-Pont-Ecrepin, Bellême, Bretoncelles, Trun, La Ferté-Fresnel |
| Fridays         | Argentan, Domfront, Bagnoles de l'Orne, La Chapelle d'Andaine, Ecouché, Condé-sur-Huisne, Courtomer  |
| Saturdays       | Bagnoles de l'Orne, Flers, Gacé (afternoon), Tinchebray, Bretoncelles, Mortagne-au-Perche, Rânes     |
| Sundays         | Alençon, Argentan, Ceton, Courtomer, Mortrée   |

(It is wise to double check before going, as these can change without notice). Next month: weekly markets in the Manche (50) region

## Sport & Leisure Activities

### *Badminton – Master de Basse-Normandie Vétérans*

On Sat. 13<sup>th</sup> & Sun. 14<sup>th</sup> at the *Communs de Château*, Allée Allois Monnet in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) is *the Lique de Basse Normandie de Badminton*. Open to players aged over 35 and Veterans (licensed at FFBaD). Free.

### Ice Skating in Tinchebray (61)

Until 7<sup>th</sup> Jan., from 13h45 to 19h you can skate on the specially constructed temporary ice rink in the yard of l'Ecole André Breton on the Boulevard du Nord.

### *Capfl'O* Aquatic Centre in Flers (61)

To help shift those gained festive-kilos, this swimming complex is at 'Les Closets' in Flers (61). Good accessibility for the handicapped. Entry: Adults (over 13) 5,50€; 4 to 12s: 4,30€; under 3s free. For location and opening times go to [www.flers-agglo.fr](http://www.flers-agglo.fr); also on Facebook: flersaglo.tourisme.



And finally, a line from the great Tommy Cooper:

Police arrested two kids yesterday - one was drinking battery acid, and the other was eating fireworks. They charged one and let the other one off.



That's all for this month. As I will be in Australia from mid- Jan to early Feb., there will be no Bulletin in February! [Well, in over 10 years of producing them, it is only the fourth one I've missed!!]

I hope you enjoy this issue.

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

January 2018

| Date                                | Event                                     | Place                  | Page |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------|------|
| 4 <sup>th</sup> to 7 <sup>th</sup>  | <i>Spectacle Equestre</i>                 | Le Pin-au-Haras        | 3    |
| Sat. 6 <sup>th</sup>                | Detox workshop                            | Gorron                 | 3    |
| Mon. 8 <sup>th</sup>                | Film: Battle of the Sexes                 | Gorron                 | 4    |
| Fri. 12 <sup>th</sup>               | ' <i>Carrousel des Moutons</i> '          | Argentan               | 4    |
| 13 <sup>th</sup> & 14 <sup>th</sup> | Badminton Masters                         | Bagnoles de l'Orne     | 6    |
| “                                   | Courses for Irish music and dancing       | Flers                  | 4    |
| “                                   | Brocante (newly opened)                   | Gorron                 | 3    |
| Thurs. 18 <sup>th</sup>             | Dolls House Group                         | Gorron                 | 2    |
| Fri. 19 <sup>th</sup>               | Pamper Day                                | Gorron                 | 2    |
| Sun. 21 <sup>st</sup>               | Concert : ' <i>Le Chant de la Terre</i> ' | Argentan               | 4    |
| Mon. 22 <sup>nd</sup>               | Film : Wonderstruck                       | Gorron                 | 4    |
| Fri. 26 <sup>th</sup>               | Quiz Night – CSF Nord                     | Notre-Dame du Touchet  | 2    |
| “                                   | Toss'n Turn – Irish music & dance         | Fougères               | 4    |
| “                                   | Watercolours with Amanda Freeman          | Gorron                 | 2    |
| Sun. 28 <sup>th</sup>               | Grand Sale and English Breakfast          | St Aubin-fosse-Louvain | 3    |