

Bulletin !

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

Thought for the month:

Retirement is waking up in the morning with nothing to do,
and by bedtime having done only half of it

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

Tue. 1 st	Ducey (50)	v-g in Carrefour Market car park, ±35
“	Le Pas (53)	v-g in <i>centre bourg</i> , ±50
Sun. 6 th	Bellou-en-Houlme (61)	v-g / <i>brocante</i> at La Chevalerie, ±150
“	Sourdeval (50)	v-g in ZAC Moulin Foulon, route de Ger, ±35
“	St. Geo. de Rouelley (50)	v-g / <i>brocante</i> (see page 3)
“	Montsûrs (53)	v-g Saint Céneri in the <i>Champ de Foire</i> , ±70
“	Montigné-le-Brillant (53)	v-g (the largest in Mayenne), ±300
Thurs. 10 th	Brécey (50)	v-g <i>de l'Ascension</i> , rue Paul Lemonnier, ±150
W/e 12/13 th	Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)	<i>Foire des Andaines</i> – 5km of stalls between Bagnoles and St Michel des Andaines, ±300
Sun. 13 th	Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53)	v-g, ±70 (for booking info, see page 3)
“	Betton (35)	<i>Marché des Créateurs, Etang du Betton</i> , ±70
“	Dol de Bretagne (35)	v-g in Ecole Notre-Dame, ±70
Sun. 20 th	Isigny-le-Buat (50)	v-g (look for posters), ±35
“	Fougères (35)	v-g behind the Château, ±30
”	Granville (50)	monthly <i>antiquités / brocante</i> , Cour Jonville
“	Pleurduit (35)	v-g / <i>braderie, centre-ville</i> , ±250
Mon. 21 st	Ceaucé (61)	v-g, down by the lake (see page 3)
“	Laval (53)	v-g in Carrefour car park (see page 5) ±150
Sun. 27 th	St Ellier-du-Maine (53)	v-g / <i>brocante</i> in the village, ±250

www.brocabrac.fr is constantly updated with *brocantes/vidé-greniers*, with any changes.

Special dates / public holidays:

Tues. 1 st	<i>Fête du Muguet</i> (see page 2), also <i>Fête du Travail</i>
Tues. 8 th	<i>Armistice 1945</i> (VE Day)
Thurs. 10 th	<i>Ascension</i>
Mon. 21 st	<i>Pentecôte</i>

Eating out

Another restaurant for that Special Occasion:

'*La Marjolaine*', at Le Bas Montaigu, Moulay (53 - just south of Mayenne town) is a Logis hotel and restaurant, in a château facing a 2 ha. park, with a terrace overlooking the river. There are *à la carte* and weekly *midi formules*, with regional specialities, and a *gastronomique* menu for evenings and weekends. For more info: www.lamarjolaine.fr

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

Le Jardins du Ridrel in La Ferté-Macé (61)

In these gardens at 26 rue des Ridrel, a path links different material (wood, brick, gravel) and you can discover a succession of pleasant spaces with vintage roses, acers, clematis and many other plants. Open 15th April to 15th Oct. Entry (cash only) 3€ (under 18s free). www.ornetourisme.com

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

☼ Tues. 8th, 10h-18h, is the *Fête de Printemps* with a *marché de terroir* (market with regional produce) demonstrations of cookery and floral art, sale of plants, pony rides, children's *entertainment* and bouncy castle

☼ Sat. 26th & Sun. 27th, 14h-18h: '*Week-end de la Rose*' – expo and sale of roses

☼ Sun. 27th between 14h & 18h: demonstrations of the art of Ikebana (Japanese floral art)

Refreshments can be obtained at the *Salon de Thé Anglais* (Tea Rooms) at 14h-18h on the Fri., Sats & Suns.

The Great British Book Sale

On Sun. 27th from 10h to 16h at the *Salle de Fêtes*, l'Épinay-le-Comte (61): over 1,000 English books for sale. all at 1€! Many different categories including crime, drama, science fiction, sport, biographies, cookery, gardening, history, romance - and lots, lots more. Refreshments available. Tea, coffee and loads of lovely cakes. Have a drink . . eat a cake . . read a book! All profits to go to the church restoration fund.

Fête and craft fair in Saint Georges de Rouelley (50)

On Sun. 6th you will find an all-day *vide-greniers*, plant and wine stalls, art and model exhibitions, craft and produce stalls, children's merry-go-round. Food available - including a sit-down lunch (under a tent) or you can buy pancakes, sausage & chips and refreshments, and the Bar Saint Georges will be open Cycle races in the afternoon and English afternoon teas served from 15h.

'Nuit des Musées' at la Musée du Jouet

On Sat. 19th from 18h, the *Musée du Jouet* (Toy Museum) at 32 rue de la Victoire in La Ferté-Macé (61) will be open from 18h to midnight. This is a privately-owned collection that is not often open to the public.

Tasting of poiré in Domfront (61)

On Thurs. 10th to Sun. 13th in the *épicerie "l'Art de Mets"* at 9 Grande Rue in Domfront (61) you can sample the locally made *Poiré Domfront AOP* and local produce. More info from the Domfront Tourist Office, 12 place de la Roirie (02 33 38 53 97)

Balade sur les grèves (walk on the strand) near Mont-Saint-Michel

There are many guided walks here - for example, on Wed. 9th from 15h30 to 17h30 you can discover the architecture and history of Mont-Saint-Michel from its surrounding strand (obviously at low tide!). Tickets: 5€, under 6s free. Reservation necessary: 02 33 70 83 49) (www.normandie-tourisme.fr)

Vide-greniers in Ceaucé (61)

On Monday 21st this *vide greniers* will, for the first time, be taking place down by the lake. However the funfair will remain in the village. Do pop into the *Bar du Marché* on the crossroads, which will be open all day Monday selling freshly made cakes. They will also be selling English books and other things.

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

A cold snap in May - are the saints to blame? St Pancras, perhaps best known in Britain as a railway terminus, is a member of a trio known as the Ice Saints. The others are St Servatius and St Mamertus. Their chilly collective name comes from the traditional belief that their days - 11th, 12th & 13th May - bring cold weather and the last frost of the year. Some gardeners in France will not plant until the Ice Saints have gone. They are also well known in Germany, Poland, Austria and Switzerland.

The alleged mid-May cold spell was investigated by some pupils of Galileo, who diligently recorded the weather from 1655 to 1670. They reported a marked cold snap over the days of the Ice Saints, and later studies seemed to confirm their finding. In meteorological terms, the last winter cold fronts do tend to pass by around this period. A review of Kew Gardens data from 1941-69 showed that 13th May was usually the warmest day of the month, but was followed by a sharp drop in temperature. Whether unreliability and lack of punctuality are enough to dispel all confidence in the Ice Saints is left to personal judgement.

Vide-greniers in Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53)

On Sun. 13th this takes place from 6h to 18h, and for those wishing to reserve a space, reservation is obligatory and the first 5 metres are free. After that it costs 2€ per metre. The numbers to ring are: (day) 02 43 05 50 18 and (eves) 02 43 05 53 93.

Marché de Printemps et voitures anciennes

On Sat. 5th in Place Leclerc in La Ferté-Macé (61) at this Spring Market will be an expo of vintage vehicles, also florists, horticulturalists, an exhibition of bonsai, and a miniature railway under cover. www.lafertemace.fr

Entertainment & Concerts

Fri. 4th to Sun. 6th: 11th *International Concours Piano* in the Grand Nord Municipal Theatre in Mayenne (53, near the château). On the Sat. - listen to the candidates in the elimination stage; on the Sunday - the finalists. Everyone is welcome and you can vote for your favourite pianist. More info at the Mayenne Tourist Office (02 43 04 19 37). Free.

Fri 18th at 20h30 in *l'Espace Colmont* in Gorron (53): *l'Ensemble Instrumental de la Mayenne* with "*Le Son de Pinceaux*" Saxophones and clarinettes of the School of Music, playing works by Stravinsky, Respighi, Sibelius. Duration: 1hr 30min. 9€. All welcome.

Sun. 20th from 13h30 until 23h, in 5 areas around the village of Chailland (53): '*Un Dimanche avec Brassens*' – you can listen to musicians playing songs by Gainsboro, Brel, Trenet, etc. Free

Organ recital in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)

These monthly concerts, organised by *les Amis de l'Orgue*, are from 17h to 18h30 in *l'Eglise Sainte Madeleine*: Free, with donations accepted. More info: www.bagnolesdelorne.com

♪ on Sun. 13th: Jean-Claude Duval (head organist) with Roland Nadaus, poet

Horse & buggy rides in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)

On Sundays 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th May, between 14h and 18h15, let yourself be taken on a discovery trip of Bagnoles de l'Orne (61) with this unique experience which recalls the means of transport of the *Belle Epoque* (turn of the century). There is a maximum limit of 8 to 10 people on each trip. Reservation needed before 13h30 on the day, at the Tourist Office or on site from 14h, if space available. Tickets 6€, 4-12s: 3€, family (2 adults, 2 children): 16€. www.bagnolesdelorne.com

Something for all the family – Outdoor Activities Centre

At the 28 ha. *plan d'eau* in La Ferté-Macé (61, 6km from Bagnoles de l'Orne), you can enjoy sailing, windsurfing, fishing, electric boats, kayaking, horse-riding, pedalos, climbing, mini-golf, putting and swimming (with a small sandy beach) . There is a restaurant/snack bar and picnic area. Pets accepted. Open all year. Free access and parking.

Repas Gourmand in Lassay-les-Châteaux (53)

On Sat. 19th at 19h30 in the cellars of the remains of the Château de Bois Thibault, in these atmospheric settings you can enjoy a meal comprising: *an apéritif, Trio Terre Mer, Volaille Forestière, fromages de nos régions, café gourmand*, all for 18,50€. Reservations required before 4th May, at 06 38 52 50 87 or at assoculturelle.lassay@gmail.com

Showjumping at Le Pin-au-Haras (61)

This prestigious event takes place from Fri. 4th to Thurs. 10th at the *Haras National du Pin*. More info and location at www.haras-national-du-pin.com

Demonstrations of hydromodélisme in La Ferté-Macé (61)

In the afternoon of Sun. 13th at the *base de loisirs*, you can watch owners putting their remote controlled water craft through their paces. Free entry and parking

French Inventors : secateurs

Around 1815, a French count, Marquis Antoine Bertrand François de Molleville - in exile in England from the Terror of the French Revolution - invented a pruning tool that used a sliding blade, possibly influenced by the guillotine that had been chopping off his countrymen's (and women's) heads. The early types all appear to have 2 blades, one a thick narrow one with an obtuse edge, and the other a thin, wide cutting blade (the 'anvil' type appeared much later). However, it did not become popular amongst French wine-growers until the end of the 19th century, and in some rural areas not until after WW2.

Marché aux Plantes in Bazouges-la-Pérouse (35)

On Sun. 20th from 10h to 18h this plant market will take place at the "Recre'Nature" base de loisirs. For more info: www.ot-fougeres.fr. Free.

Vide-greniers at Carrefour in Laval (53)

On Mon. 21st (*Pentecôte*) - *vide-greniers* to be held in the Carrefour car park in Laval, with entertainment (concerts, etc). To book a space: 5€ for 2 metres. Registration possible on 2 days: Sats. 5th & 12th, from 10h to 18h in the gallery of the *Centre Commercial Carrefour*, Laval (06 09 09 77 04).

Temporary closing dates for 'Manges-tu?' in Gorron (53)

While work on the new tea room is being completed, the English produce shop 'Manges-tu?' will be closed from 12th May until 1st June. Also, on 2nd, 3rd & 4th of May the current entrance will be relocated to the rear of the building (signs will be in place) while hard-standing for wheelchair access by the entrance door is being installed.

Weekend of topiary at *les Jardins de la Ballue* (35)

This unique event, with demonstrations of topiary, will be held on Sat 26th & Sun. 27th at these gardens in Bazouges-la-Pérouse (35). More info at www.ot-fougeres.fr

Rallye International du Pays de Fougères (35)

From 25th to 28th the 24th *Rallye International* will be visiting Granville, Dinard, Antrain and Fougères. For the full programme: www.rallye-fougeres.org

Weekly markets in the *Calvados* (14) *département*

Day of the week	Location
Mondays	Pont l'Eveque
Tuesdays	Caen, Ouistreham, Thury-Harcourt
Wednesdays	Bayeux, Villers-Bocage
Thursdays	Condé-sur-Noireau, Le Beny-Bocage
Fridays	Deauville, Ouistreham, Vire
Saturdays	Bayeux, Ouistreham, Luc-sur-Mer
Sundays	Caen, Trouville-sur-Mer

(It is wise to double check before going, as these can change without notice). Next month: the weekly markets in the *Ille et Vilaine* (35)

Sport & Leisure Activities

Events in advance of the 2018 *Tour de France*

On the run up to the *Tour de France* on 13th July, in the town of Fougères (35) there will be an event on the 13th of each month. In May it is the ‘*Défi Pinterie*’ – for all lovers of a challenge! On bicycles, tandem, hobby-horse – whatever you like – to race up the steep *rue de la Pinterie*. There will also be a *bourse aux vélos* (sale of bicycles) and a repair workshop. More info at the Fougères Tourist Office. (02 99 94 12 20)

Walking (more info at www.hautemayenne-tourisme.com)

☞ Sun. 13th: a morning 7km walk, organised by *les Randonneurs de la Colmont*, of the circuit of the Château de la Pihoraye in Montaudin (53). Leave Gorron (if car sharing) at 8h35, or at 9h at Place de l’Eglise in Montaudin. 2€ for non-members.

☞ Wed. 16th: *les Randonneurs du Bocage 53* invite you to discover Ernée and its outskirts. This 8-10km walk will depart at 20h from *Terre Rouge*, route de St Denis de Gastines.

☞ Thurs. 17th: an 8–10km evening walk around St Berthevin la Tannière (53) and the surrounding area. Meet at 20h in the car park of the *Salle Communale*.

☞ Wed. 30th: discover the village of Larchamp (53) and the surrounding area with an 8–10km walk. Depart at 20h from the car park of *l’Eglise de Larchamp*.

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

Late item for April: Next ‘British Monday’ film in Gorron

On **Monday 30th April** at 20h30: 'Red Sparrow' – thriller / espionage, starring Jennifer Lawrence, Joel Edgerton. [forbidden for under 12s]. The film starts, as always, at 20h30 and tickets are available at the cinema that night from 20h. A refreshing drink (and also a light meal, on prior reservation with Melanie - 02 43 08 04 59) can be enjoyed beforehand at the *Bar de la Mairie* at the bottom of the hill.

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That’s all for this month. Just a note – you may think I’ve made an error, but certain French words are shown in the plural, even if only one is featured – for example: *vide-greniers* and also *salle des bains*. So I’ve not gone completely mad (yet!).

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

May 2018

Date	Event	Place	Page
Mon. 30th Apr.	English film: 'Red Sparrow'	Gorron	6
4 th to 6 th	<i>International Concours Piano</i>	Mayenne	4
4 th – 10 th	Show jumping	le Pin du Haras	4
Sat 5 th	Spring Market & vintage vehicles	La Ferté-Macé	3
Sun. 6 th	Fête and craft fair	Saint Georges de Rouelley	2
Wed. 9 th	Guided walk on the beach	Mont-Saint-Michel	3
10 th to 13 th	Tasting of <i>poiré</i> and local produce	Domfront	3
Sun. 13 th	Demos of <i>hydromodélisme</i>	La Ferté-Macé	4
“	Morning walk – 7 km	Montaudin	6
“	<i>Defi Pinterie</i> – steep hill race	Fougères	6
“	Organ recital	Bagnoles de l'Orne	4
Wed. 16 th	Evening walk: 8–10 km	Ernée	6
Thurs. 17 th	Evening walk: 8–10km	St Berthevin-la-Tannière	6
Fri. 18 th	<i>Ensemble Instrumental de la Mayenne</i>	Gorron	4
Sat. 19 th	<i>Nuit des Musées</i> at the Toy Museum	La Ferté-Macé	3
“	<i>Repas Gourmand</i>	Lassay-les-Châteaux	4
Sun. 20 th	Music: 'Un Dimanche avec Brassens'	Chailland	4
“	<i>Marché aux Plantes</i>	Bazouges-la-Pérouse	5
25 th – 28 th	24 th <i>Rallye International de Fougères</i>	Different towns	6
26 th & 27 th	Weekend of topiary	Bazouges-la-Pérouse	5
Sun. 27 th	The Great British Book Sale	l'Epinay-le-Comte	2
Wed. 30 th	Evening walk: 8-10 km	Larchamp	6