

Bulletin !

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

Thought for the month:

Christmas is a time when everyone wants his past forgotten, and his present remembered!

(Phyllis Diller)

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

Sun. 2 nd	Avranches (50)	monthly <i>brocante</i> , Place Valhubert, ±50
“	Sourdeval (50)	v-g at 'A la belle Epoque', rue de Ger
Sun. 9 th	Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)	<i>Foire à la St. Nicholas</i> in <i>marché couvert</i>
Sun. 16 th	Bellou-en-Houlme (61)	v-g at <i>La Chevalerie</i> , ±150
Sun. 23 rd	Granville (50)	monthly <i>brocante</i>

Some *Marchés de Noël* and Christmas Fayres

Sun. 2 nd	Le Teilleul (61)	<i>Marché de Noël</i> from 10h
“	Montsûrs-St Céneré (53)	in <i>Salle des Oréades</i> , ±70
Tues. 4 th	Domfront (61)	on Route de Mortain
Thurs. 6 th	Pontorson (50)	in Place de l'Hôtel de Ville
W/e 8 th / 9 th	Flers (61)	10h to 18h in Place St Germain (see p.4)
“	Sourdeval (50)	in the <i>Salle de Rex</i>
Sun. 9 th	l'Épinay-le-Comte (61)	(For more info see p.2)
“	Gorron (53)	in Place de la Houssaie
7 th – 9 th	Alençon (61)	Also night markets (see p.3)
Fri. 14 th	Belgeard (53, S of Mayenne)	in the <i>Salle des Fêtes</i> , ±50
Sat. 15 th	Désertines (61)	at <i>le Moulin de la Quentinière</i> (see p.3)
”	Ceaucé (61)	Place de l'Église, 14h to 20h
Sun. 16 th	Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53)	Christmas market (see p.4)
”	Commer (53)	on rue de Bretagne; ±50
Wed. 19 th	La Ferté-Macé (61)	on Place Leclerc / rue d'Hautvie, ±80

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

Eating out : *Au Soleil d'Italie*

'*Au Soleil d'Italie*' at 183, Les Isles, St Hilaire-du-Harcouët (50) is a pizzeria/restaurant (on the road leaving the town, towards Mont-Saint-Michel). They offer several menus and a *midi ouvrier formule* (3 courses, wine/cider/soft drink included) for 12,50€, and there is a great choice of buffet *entrée*.. Open daily: 12h-14h & 19h-21h (but closed Mon. & Tues. evenings). www.restaurant-pizzeria-auseileiditalie.com

Christmas illuminations – a bird's eye view!

As every year, the Christmas decorations will be fantastic in all the villages around Domfront (61). This year, however, on the 4th, 12th, 20th & 28th December at 17h15 the Tourist Office is giving everyone the chance to see them in a different way – by climbing to the top of the spire of *l'Eglise St Julien* in Domfront. At least 10 villages and their illuminations should be seen from there. Attention: there are around 200 steps, so no high heels, and it might be cold up there! Contact: info@ot-domfront.com.

Les Arts du Feu de Rennes

From 13th to 16th at the *Mairie*, Place de l'Hotel de Ville in Rennes (35) will be the 14th edition of this Art & Crafts Exhibition and Sale. Around 50 professional artists and craftspeople from all over Europe with original works (32 ceramists, 5 glass blowers, 6 metal workers, 6 jewellers, 1 mosaic artist). This year's theme is «*Soif de couleurs*» ("A craving for colour"). More info: www.lesartsdufeu.com

Franco/Anglais Carol Service in Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53)

On Sun. 16th at 15h in the church in Fougerolles-du-Plessis will be the popular Franco/Anglais carol service, which will incorporate a children's nativity. Everyone is welcome. The service will be led by Père Jean-Marie Veron and Rev'd. John Young. This year there will also be a Christmas market in the village on the same day.

Event in support of Grande-Daze Rescue

Grande-Daze Animal Rescue is holding a Grand Winter Sale on Sun. 2nd at the *Salle des Fêtes* in La Bigottière (53). The Association only selling. On sale will be bedding, clothes for men, women & children, CDs, DVDs, books, nick-nacks, toys, costume jewellery, kitchenware, pictures, lamps, birthday & Christmas cards, gifts, home-made jams & chutneys, etc. Teas, coffees and gateaux will be available. Open to the public from 10h until 16h.

Christmas market in l'Epinaï-le-Comte (61)

On Sun. 9th from 10h to 16h in the *Salle des Fêtes* in l'Epinaï-le-Comte (between Gorrion and Passais-la-Conception) you will find fabulous hand-crafted gifts: pottery, paintings, decorations, lampshades, felt-work, needlework, cosmetics, photographs, honey & jams, and more - not forgetting tea/coffee and yummy cakes! Well worth a visit.

'Pages' bookshop in Passais-la-Conception (61)

Suzanne McGregor would like her customers to know that the shop will be closed from Fri. 21st Dec. until Fri. 4th January 2019. Suzanne can be contacted at suzymcg@hotmail.com

Christmas Market at *Le Moulin de la Quentinière*

On Sat. 15th from 11h to 15h at *Le Moulin de la Quentinière*, Désertines (53), you will find home-made gifts, Christmas cards & gifts and local products, with *vin chaud* (mulled wine), tombola, competition games for the children, and much more. For more info e-mail lemouling@gmail.com or call 0768 821000.

English Church Service in Vitré (35)

The Protestant Evangelical Church, at 15 rue Théodore Botrel in Vitré, is having a second service in English on Sun. 2nd at 17h, taken by Pastor Patrice Niveaux (09 53 74 25 68)

Marché de Noël in Alençon (61)

From Fri. 7th until Sun. 9th in *le Jardin de la Maison d'Ozé* and *le Parc de la Providence*. Also evening Christmas Market from 7th until 14th (www.alencon.fr)

Cancer Support France Nord - events

Quiz Night: Sat. 1st in the bar '*Le Viking*' in Notre-Dame-du-Touchet (50). Doors open at 19h45 for a 20h15 start. Tickets are 3€;

Coffee Morning: Mon. 3rd from 10h30 to 12h30 at 23 rue des Acacias in Ambrières-les-Vallées (53);

Christmas Concert: Fri. 14th at 19h15 in the Church in Notre-Dame-du-Touchet (50), followed by mince pies & mulled wine in the nearby bar '*Le Viking*'. [see also page 4].

As always, if you have any questions about any of the events, to buy tickets, or if you need support in any way, please contact them at nord@cancersupportfrance.org

Something for all the family – in Flers (61)

Sat. 1st from 14h30 to 18h, in Place Saint Germain in Flers, will be an *atelier créatif*, giant games, horse & buggy rides (1€ per person, under 3s free), a giant bouncy armchair. Hot drinks and snacks will be sold by a local charity. At 15h a band will play while marching through the town. More info from the *Mairie* (02 33 98 44 40)

Exhibition of paintings in Passais-la-Conception (61)

Until 15th Dec. at the *mediathèque* (route de Bretagne, Passais), this is an exhibition of paintings by local artists, accessible during the *mediathèque* opening hours: Tues. 11h-12h & 15h30-17h30; Wed. & Fri. 15h30-17h30; Thurs. & Sat. 10h30-12h30. Closed Sun. & Mon. Free.

Ice Skating in Saint-Hilaire-du-Harcouët (50)

As every year, an ice rink will be formed in the *Salle des Fêtes*, rue Waldeck Rousseau in Saint-Hilaire from Sat. 22nd Dec. 2018 until 6th Jan. 2019 (but not open on 24th, 25th & 31st Dec.) Open from 14h to 18h. Tickets: 2€ for half an hour. Remember to take gloves and cover your arms. More info from the Tourist Office (www.st-hilaire.fr)

Entertainment & Concerts

♪ Sat. 1st at 20h30 in the *Forum de Flers*, rue du Collège, Flers (61): Concert with the chorale ‘*La Lyre*’: «*De la Guerre à la Paix*». Concert is free, but tickets must be collected from the Tourist Office in Flers (www.ornetourisme.com)

♪ Sun. 2nd at 15h in *l’Eglise Saint-Léonard* in Fougères (35): *Musiques Festives de Noël* with *La Maitrise Saint-Léonard* – Bach (*Oratoria de Noël*); Bizet (*L’Arlessionne*); Handel (The Messiah); Strauss (*Le Beau Danube Bleu*, *Marche de Redetzky*) and more. Tickets (25€, 18€, 8€ - students & under 12s) available from the Tourist Office, 2 rue National, Fougères (02 99 94 12 20, www.ot-fougères.fr)

♪ Wed. 5th from 18h30 to 20h30: *Concert des Orchestres du Conservatoire* in Flers (61) from the group “*Spectacle Vivant*”. More info from www.ornetourisme.com.

♪ Fri. 7th from 20h30 in *l’Eglise de Montsort* in Alençon (61): *Concert de Noël* with the *Syntonia ensemble* (violin, cello, euphonium, piano) playing a selection from Dvořák, Tchaikovsky, Brahms, Schumann, Chopin, Faure. Tickets: 2€ (contact@visitalencon.com)

♪ Fri. 14th at 19h15 in the Church in Notre-Dame-du-Touchet (50): Christmas Concert, followed by mince pies & mulled wine in the bar ‘*Le Viking*’.

♪ Sat. 15th at 14h in *l’Espace Colmont* in Gorron – the 4-man group ‘*Meme les Watts*’. Free.

Next ‘British Monday’ films in Gorron (53)

There will be 2 films this month in Gorron Cinema: ‘*Bohemian Rhapsody*’ on Mon. 3rd, and ‘*The Grinch*’ on Mon. 17th, both showing at 20h30. Tickets 5,50€.

‘Ciné-opéra’ in La Ferté-Macé (61)

On Sun. 9th from 14h30 at the Cinema Gérard Philippe at 8 rue Saint-Denis in La Ferté-Macé the opera “*La Vie Parisienne*” will be screened live from Paris. Duration: 2hr 15min. Tickets: 6,50€; students: 4,90€, under 14s: 3,60€. For more info go to www.cineferte.fr or contact the Tourist Office in La Ferté-Macé (02 33 37 10 97)

Spectacle de Noël au Haras National du Pin

On Sat. 15th & Sun. 16th from 15h at the Haras du Pin, le Pin au Haras (61) – this is a spectacular show of horsemanship with a Christmas theme. Tickets: 12€, children 8€. More info at www.haras-national-du-pin.com.

Marché de Noël in Flers (61)

On the weekend of 8th & 9th, from 10h to 18h, in Place Saint-Germain (covered market) will be over 60 stalls with local artisan products, jewellery, decorations, creative workshops, with giant games and a visit from Father Christmas. www.ornetourisme.com

End of Year Quiz in the ‘*Bar du Marché*’, Ceaucé (61)

On Sat. 29th the monthly Quiz will have an ‘End of Year’ theme (i.e. it will generally refer back to events, and so on, of 2018). The format will be as usual: 4 rounds, including a music and picture quiz, plus the odd silly game! Free entry, snacks, and prizes for the winning and losing teams. Kick-off 20h in the *Bar du Marché* in Ceaucé. 02 33 30 04 28

Animations de Noël in Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53)

On Sun. 16th from 10h to 19h in the *Salle Polyvalente* in Fougerolles-du-Plessis: the *Comité des Fêtes*, to raise money for the village school, are presenting an indoor feast of Christmas stalls offering around 30 tables of hand-made gift items & decorations, a visit from Father Christmas and a brass band, with roast chestnuts, pony & carriage rides for children and a range of cooked snacks, teas, coffees and *vin chaud*.

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

Q: Can a shop in France refuse payment in small change?

A: No, the law (R.642-3 of the *Code penal*) says it is an offence to refuse to accept payment in coins which are legal tender. However, an EU law (regulation CE no. 974-98 of the Council of May 1998) which was put in to French law (*Code monétaire et financier* article R112-2) states that a shop may refuse this if there are more than 50 coins. The shop may also require another form of payment if they ask you to pay the exact price and you cannot. As a matter of interest, shops are also not allowed to refuse payment in notes, no matter how high the value (e.g. if someone pays for shopping with a 300€ note) and as long as the price to be paid is not more than 3,000€.

New Year's Eve Fireworks Display in Domfront (61)

On Mon. 31st at 19h – the annual firework display to celebrate New Year's Eve, followed by *vin chaud* offered by the town of Domfront. More info from the Tourist Office: www.ot-domfront.com. 02 33 38 53 97

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That's all for this month. As with the past 2 years, there will be no January issue of the Bulletin – as I will be soaking up the rays somewhere else!!!! [Tough job, etc., etc., . . . !]. But I shall be 'back in harness' for February!!

I wish you all a very *Merry Christmas* and a truly *Happy New Year*.



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

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Date	Event	Place	Page
Sat. 1 st	CSF Nord Quiz Night	Notre-Dame-du-Touchet	3
“	<i>Atelier créatif</i>	Flers	3
“	Concert with ‘ <i>La Lyre</i> ’	Flers	4
Sun. 2 nd	Grande-Daze Rescue Grand Winter Sale	La Bigottière	2
“	English church service	Vitré	3
“	<i>Musiques Festives de Noël</i>	Fougères	4
Mon. 3 rd	CSF Nord Coffee Morning	Ambrières-les-Vallées	3
«	Film ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’	Gorron	4
Wed. 5 th	Group ‘ <i>Spectacle Vivant</i> ’	Flers	4
Fri. 7 th	<i>Concert de Noël</i>	Alençon	4
W/e 8 th & 9 th	<i>Marché de Noël</i>	Flers	4
Sun. 9 th	Christmas Market	l’Epinay-le-Comte	2
“	<i>Ciné-opéra ‘La Vie Parisienne’</i>	La Ferté-Macé	4
13 th – 16 th	Arts & Crafts Exhibition & Sale	Rennes	2
Fri. 14 th	Christmas concert	Notre-Dame-du-Touchet	3
Sat. 15 th	Christmas Market	Désertines	3
“	<i>Spectacle de Noël</i>	Le Pin au Haras	4
“	Concert: ‘ <i>Meme Les Watts</i> ’	Gorron	4
Sun. 16 th	<i>Franco-Anglais Carol Service</i>	Fougerolles-du-Plessis	2
“	<i>Animations de Noël</i>	Fougerolles-du-Plessis	5
Mon. 17 th	Film: ‘The Grinch’	Gorron	4
Sat. 29 th	End of Year Quiz	Ceaucé	4
Mon. 31 st	New Year’s Eve Fireworks	Domfront	5