

# Bulletin !

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

## Thought for the month:

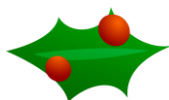
Christmas is a time when everyone wants his past forgotten, and his present remembered!

(Phyllis Diller)

Some *vide-greniers/brocantes* in this area [ '35' = area; ± = stalls expected]

Thurs. 5 <sup>th</sup>	Rennes (35)	<i>brocante</i> around <i>les Halles Centrales</i> , ±30
Sun. 8 <sup>th</sup>	Sourdeval (50)	<i>v-g de Noël</i> in <i>A la Belle Epoque</i> , ±30
“	Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)	<i>Foire Brocante St Nicolas</i> , 6h-19h, free entry
Sun. 15 <sup>th</sup>	Bellou-en-Houlme (61)	<i>v-g</i> at <i>La Chevalerie</i> , ±30
Sun. 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Granville (50)	monthly <i>brocante</i> in <i>Cours Jonville</i>
W/e 28/29 <sup>th</sup>	Dinard (35)	<i>Salon antiquité/brocante</i> , <i>Salle le Cossec</i> , ±30

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



## Some *Marchés de Noël* and Christmas Fayres

Sun. 1 <sup>st</sup>	La Bigottière (53)	Christmas Craft Fayre (see page 2)
“	Montsûrs-St-Céneré (53)	<i>Marché de Noël</i> in <i>Salle des Oréades</i> , ±30
“	Mesley-du-Maine (53)	<i>Marché de Noël</i> in <i>Place du Marché</i> , ±30
“	Louvigné-du-Désert (35)	<i>Marché de Noël</i> in <i>Salle Jovence</i> , ±30
“	Lécousse (35)	<i>Marché de Noël</i> , 10h-18h in <i>Salle Hermine</i>
Wed. 4 <sup>th</sup>	Briouze (61)	<i>Marché de Noël</i> , ±35
Sat. 7 <sup>th</sup>	Désertines (53)	at <i>Le Moulin de la Quentinière</i> (see page 3)
“	St Berthevin-la-Tannière (53)	Night <i>Marché de Noël</i> , parking <i>Salle des Fêtes</i>
W/end 7 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup>	Sourdeval (50)	<i>Marché de Noël</i> in <i>Salle des Fêtes</i> , ±100
Sun. 8 <sup>th</sup>	Fougerolles-du-Plessis (53)	Christmas Fayre (see page 4)
“	Gorron (53)	<i>Marché de Noël</i> , 9h-18h
Fri. 13 <sup>th</sup>	Granville (50)	<i>Marché de Noël</i> in <i>Place du Cours Jonville</i> , ±30
13 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup>	Domfront (61)	Evening <i>Marché de Noël</i> (see page 3)
Sun. 15 <sup>th</sup>	Commer (53)	<i>Marché de Noël</i> in <i>Salle des Fêtes</i> , ±100
Sat. 21 <sup>st</sup>	Ceaucé (61)	<i>Marché de Noël</i> in <i>Place de l'Eglise</i> , 14h, ±30

## Eating out

Traditionally, no recommendations this month, as many of us will be eating lots of Christmas dinners / lunches / seasonal snacks, etc., already! (for examples, see pages 2 & 4).

### Christmas Craft Fayre in La Bigottière (53)

On Sun. 1<sup>st</sup>, 10h-16h in the *Salle des Fêtes*, rue de la Mairie in La Bigottière (53) this Christmas Craft Fayre is in support of Grande Daze Animal Companion Centre. Entry: 50c (price to include entry to the raffle). Meet the special guest, Father Christmas, for 1€, which includes a gift!!! Meet and buy from local artists, crafters and small businesses. Find the perfect Christmas gifts and get them wrapped for you! Hot drinks, Christmas cake, Christmas pudding and mince pies will be available.

### *Repas de Noël* in the *Bar de la Mairie*, Gorron (53)

Melanie, at the *Bar de la Mairie* (opposite the Mairie) will be providing Christmas lunches on 3 days – 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>, 12h-14h30. Melanie cooks French food with a slight ‘English’ slant for the Christmas lunches, and provides 4 courses (including cheese) but you can choose how many courses you want, as each course is priced separately. For more info, and to book your table, phone 02 43 08 04 59 (Melanie is French with limited English but would be able to understand you when you are booking a table).

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

On Sun. 22<sup>nd</sup> at 15h in the church in Fougerolles-du-Plessis will be the popular bi-lingual carol service, which incorporates a children’s Nativity. Everyone is welcome. The service will be led by Père Jean-Marie Veron and the Reverend John Young.

### Christmas illuminations in the villages

From 1<sup>st</sup> Dec. until 5<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2020, from 17h30 onwards, be thrilled by this great fairyland of Christmas lights in participating villages – visit by bus, car or on foot (Ceaucé, Beauchêne, Champsecret, etc). All free. More info from your nearest Tourist Office.

### Christmas illuminations – a bird’s eye view!

The Christmas illuminations will be wonderful in the villages around Domfront (61) and at 17h on Tuesdays 10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>, Weds (in English) on 11<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>, and Thursdays 12<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> the Tourist Office is giving people the chance to see them in a different way – by climbing to the bell-tower 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 wear sensible shoes, and warm clothing as it gets cold up there! (No children under 10 admitted). Reservation required - contact: [info@ot-domfront.com](mailto:info@ot-domfront.com).

### Alzheimer’s Orne - Christmas meeting

On Wed. 18<sup>th</sup> from 11h to 14h at the *Centre d’Accueil De Jour Alzheimer*, 25 rue Soeur Marie Boitier in La Ferté-Macé (61), this meeting is for anyone who is worried about living in France with Alzheimer’s. There will be a raffle which will be drawn at 13h – with the prize being a Christmas Hamper and delicious contents. For more info, contact Kevin Wright: [thewrightskmt@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:thewrightskmt@hotmail.co.uk); tel: 09 67 87 15 60

### *Marché de Noël at Le Moulin de la Quentinière*

On Sat. 7<sup>th</sup>, 11h to 15h at *Le Moulin de la Quentinière*, 8 La Quentinière, Désertines (53) you will find many gift ideas, Christmas cards, games, food available on site, tombola, competitions for children, artisan-made decorations, an *enchère silencieuse* (although not a 'hidden bid' scenario), and more! Entry 1€, under 16s free. For more info, go to [www.le-moulin-quentiniere.com](http://www.le-moulin-quentiniere.com)

### *Patinoire* (skating rink) in Fougères (35)

This year the rink will be at Place de la Douvre, near the entrance of *les Jardins Féériques*. Open at 14h to 18h30 on weekends from 14<sup>th</sup> until Sat. 4<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2020, and daily 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec. to 4<sup>th</sup> Jan. (not including 25<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup>). 3€. *Vin chaud* and hot chocolate available.

### New business - *Gourmand et Gourmet*

Opened in Nov. 2019 in Place du Marché, Ambrières-les-Vallées (53) this *épicerie* has a good selection of local (from Mayenne, also Normandy & Brittany) and artisanal produce. There will be beers, cheeses, locally grown fruit and vegetables, also tea, chocolate, coffee, cider, apple juice, wine, *terrines*, and some table decorations. Open: Tues. to Sat. 08h30 to 12h30 & 15h to 19h30.

### *Marché de Noël* in Ceaucé (61)

On Sat. 21<sup>st</sup> from 14h to 21h, you will find 30 stalls selling Christmas inspiration, with gifts, decorations and regional products. Snacks are available on site, and *Père Noël* will be appearing at 19h. A '*Soirée Sardines*' will be organised in the Salle Omnisports – tickets on sale in the local shops and businesses.

### *Marché de Noël Médiéval et Gastronomique.*

In Domfront (61) on 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> from 16h, this is a 3-day market selling medieval and culinary products. More info from the Domfront Tourist Office, 12 Place de la Roirie.

### "British Monday" films in Gorrion cinema

We're on a roll! There are 2 VO (*Version Originale*) films being shown in Gorrion cinema this month: On Mon. 9<sup>th</sup>: 'Le Mans 66', and on Mon. 16<sup>th</sup>: 'Last Christmas'. You can find the details on *Allo'cine*. As ever, pre-film refreshments are available in the *Bar de la Mairie* at the bottom of the hill, and for a light pre-film snack, Melanie can provide a plate with a selection of *fromage* or *charcuterie* and glass of wine for 7€.

### French people whose names are immortalised in history ... and language

This month:- Nicotine. The French penchant for tobacco is well known. It was Jean Nicot (1530-1600), the French ambassador to Portugal, who introduced tobacco to France in 1561 when he sent tobacco seeds and powdered leaves. Nicotine is derived from the flowering tobacco plant of the genus *Nicotiana*, named after Nicot.

### Emmaus Special Winter Sale, Fougères (35)

On Fri. 7<sup>th</sup> at *La Ferme de Paron*, Fougères – 9h to 12h & 14h to 17h. Lots of bargains!

## Entertainment & Concerts

Sun. 1<sup>st</sup> in *l'Eglise Saint-Léonard, Fougères (35)*: Concert by *La Maitrise Saint-Léonard* - 1<sup>st</sup> part: works by Mendelssohn; 2<sup>nd</sup> part: *Les Choeurs de Musique Anglais* – “Last Night of the Proms” of the Royal Albert Hall. Tickets: seated (pre-booked) 25€; at the door: 18€ (under 12s free). More info at [www.ot-fougeres.fr](http://www.ot-fougeres.fr)

Sun. 22<sup>nd</sup> at 15h in *l'Eglise de Romagné (35, near Fougères)*: gospel concert with ‘Free Gospels’. Free.

### *Animations de Noël* in Fougères-du-Plessis (53)

On Sun. 8<sup>th</sup> from 10h to 17h in the Salle Polyvalente you will find Father Christmas, horse & buggy rides, roast chestnuts, mulled wine, food available, lots of craft / gift stalls, singers and the Pontmain brass band. Entry free.

### *Des concerts pour Noël* (Concerts for Christmas)

On Sun. 8<sup>th</sup> at 16h (4pm) will be a joint concert with the English choir ‘*Vivace*’ and the French ‘*La Ritournelle Chorale*’ in *l'Eglise Saint-Julien* in Domfront (61) which has terrific acoustics. Entry is free and donations are welcome towards the restoration of the church.

Also:

On Fri. 13<sup>th</sup> at 19h15 ‘*Vivace*’ choir are singing at the Cancer Support France Nord Christmas concert in the church in Notre-Dame du Touchet (50). Entry is free, with a collection in aid of Cancer Support France.

‘*Vivace* Choir’ originally started as an English choir with 12 members in January 2017 in Saint Simeon, and has now grown to nearly 40 singers. The choir is now based at Passais-la-Conception and meets in the Salle there every Wednesday from 14h to 16h. Singing a variety of music genres in a variety of languages, but predominantly English, they welcome all nationalities and currently have English, French and Dutch members. New members are very welcome and you are not required to audition, or have previous knowledge of music (but it helps!) - just go along and have a chat with their Musical Director, Jo Basterfield.

Jo is also Director of *La Ritournelle Chorale*, a French choir that has been singing from Passais-la-Conception for many years. Singing more traditional French music, they also welcome new members and meet every Tuesday from 14h to 15h30 in the Salle in Passais.

### A.F.A.C.T.P Dinner Dance / *Soirée Noël*

On Sat. 7<sup>th</sup> from 19h30 in the Salle Polyvalente in St Martin-des-Landelles (50), A.F.A.C.T.P [*Amité Franco-Anglaise au Carrefour des Trois Provinces* - for more info see issue 150] cordially invite you to their Christmas Extravaganza! Put on your glad-rags for an evening of fine dining and dancing! You will be offered a *kir pétillant* on arrival, followed by a 4-course meal, by 2 chefs with 40 years’ experience. The meal will be accompanied by complementary wine on the table, with a cash bar for you to continue the festivities. After dinner there will be music from ‘Hot Rod 56’ - a mix of 50s rock & roll hill-billy style ([www.hotrod56.com](http://www.hotrod56.com)). For tickets, 28€, contact [afactpnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:afactpnewsletter@gmail.com)

### Christmas Pub Quiz in the *Bar du Marché* in Ceaucé (61)

On Friday 20<sup>th</sup> from 20h is the popular Christmas Pub Quiz in the *Bar du Marché*. Free entry, snacks and prizes. There will be General Knowledge, Music and Picture rounds, plus a silly game or two!

Also, a reminder that the *Bar du Marché* will be open on Sat. 21<sup>st</sup> for the *Marché de Noël* (see page 3) and Santa (on obligatory tractor) will arrive in the village about 18h, which is great for the youngsters (as well as the ‘oldies’!).

### Change of ownership in Bagnoles de l’Orne (61)

‘*La Potinière du Lac*’, 2 rue des Casinos (near the lake) is now run by Mathias and Tiphanie, both of whom used to work in this popular restaurant. There will still be the tastes of Savoy in a family atmosphere. As well as set menus and *à la carte*, there is also fondue, raclette, tartiflette and local specialities. Open: Weds. to Sundays. 02 33 30 65 00

### Latest ‘ping call’ scam – advice from the Gendarmerie

Phone calls purporting to be from *gendarmes* that ask people to call a particular number are a scam, authorities have warned. The *Gendarmerie de Nord* has issued the warning over so-called ‘ping calls’ which are messages intended to convince victims to call a premium rate phone line based in Mali. “If you receive a call on your fixed or mobile phone trying to sell you a particular product, or if you are asked to call back an unknown number, you are a victim of a ‘ping call’”, warns the Northern *Gendarmerie*. “Never call back an unknown number” *gendarmes* said. If you receive an unsolicited message you can send an SMS with the one-word message ‘spamvocal’ to 33700 or connect to the site <https://www.33700.fr/>

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

By popular request, repeated here are the 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

Next month: weekly markets in the Mayenne (53) region

## Christmas entertainment in the streets of Fougères (35)

On 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> along many streets of the town, there will be afternoons of festivities – music, pony rides, street theatre groups, a brass band, expo of 2CVs and classic cars; *vin chaud* (mulled wine) and *crêpes* – and in the *Quartier du Beffroi: Père Noël* can be seen climbing down from the church bell-tower! More info from the Fougères Tourist Office.

### Contact info for some Tourist Offices

Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)	02 33 37 85 66	<a href="http://www.bagnolesdelorne.com">www.bagnolesdelorne.com</a>
Domfront (61)	02 33 38 53 97	<a href="http://www.ot-domfront.com">www.ot-domfront.com</a>
La Ferté-Macé (61)	02 33 37 10 97	<a href="http://www.lafertemace.fr">www.lafertemace.fr</a>
Flers (61)	02 33 65 06 75	<a href="http://www.ornetourisme.com">www.ornetourisme.com</a>
Fougères (35)	02 99 94 12 20	<a href="http://www.ot-fougeres.fr">www.ot-fougeres.fr</a>
Gorron (53)	02 43 30 10 50	<a href="http://www.gorron.fr">www.gorron.fr</a>
Laval (53)	02 43 49 46 46	<a href="http://www.laval-tourisme.com">www.laval-tourisme.com</a>
Mayenne (53)	02 43 04 19 37	<a href="http://www.hautemayenne-tourisme.com">www.hautemayenne-tourisme.com</a>
Vire (50)	02 31 6628 50	<a href="http://www.normandie-tourisme.fr">www.normandie-tourisme.fr</a>

And finally,

At a restaurant in Boulogne, a man was surprised to find *crevettes avec avocat* offered as an hors d'oeuvre. It was translated as “barrister with shrimp”! (double meaning - look it up!)

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That's all for this month. Wishing you all a very



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

December 2019

Date	Event	Place	Page
Sun. 1 <sup>st</sup>	Christmas Craft Fayre	La Bigottière	2
“	Concert in <i>l'Eglise Saint-Léonard</i>	Fougères	4
Sat. 7 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Marché de Noël</i> at Le Moulin de la Q	Désertines	3
“	AFACTP Dinner Dance	St Martin-des-Landelles	4
“	Emmaüs Special Winter Sale	Fougères	3
Sun. 8 <sup>th</sup>	' <i>Vivace</i> ' & ' <i>La Ritournelle Chorale</i> '	Domfront	4
“	<i>Animations de Noël</i>	Fougerolles-du-Plessis	4
Mon. 9 <sup>th</sup>	English film: 'Le Mans 66'	Gorron	3
11 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup> , 13 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Repas de Noël</i> at <i>Bar de la Mairie</i>	Gorron	2
Fri. 13 <sup>th</sup>	' <i>Vivace</i> ' concert in aid of CSF Nord	Notre-Dame du Touchet	4
13 <sup>th</sup> , 14 <sup>th</sup> , 15 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Marché Médiéval et Gastronomique</i>	Domfront	3
14 <sup>th</sup> , 15 <sup>th</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas street entertainment	Fougères	6
Mon. 16 <sup>th</sup>	VO film: 'Last Christmas'	Gorron	3
Wed. 18 <sup>th</sup>	Alzheimer's Orne - Christmas meeting	La Ferté-Macé	2
Fri. 20 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Pub Quiz	Ceaucé	5
Fri. 21 <sup>st</sup>	Gospel concert	Romagné	4
Sun. 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Franco/Anglais Carol Service	Fougerolles-du-Plessis	2
“	Concert in the church	Romagné	4