

Bulletin !

An informal look at life in this part of France, with some snippets of local info and things to see & do.

Thought for the month:

If you want to be happy for a short time - get drunk;
 happy for a long time - fall in love;
 happy for ever - take up gardening

(Chinese proverb)

Here are some Christmas markets and fairs, with the recently updated Covid safety measures in place (masks to be worn for inside & outside gatherings, hand gel, social distancing and possibly safety passes):

Marchés de Noël - Christmas markets, and Christmas Fairs

3 rd to 5 th	Mayenne (53) –	on Quai de la République (see below)
Sat. 4 th	St Georges des Groseillers (61) –	<i>Marché de Noël</i> , 10h-19h
Sat. 4 th	Gratot (50) –	Christ Church in the Manche Christmas Fair (see p.2)
Sun. 5 th	l'Épinay-le-Comte (61)	Xmas market (see p.2)
“	Le Teilleul (61) –	<i>Marché de Noël gourmand et créatif</i> , 10h-19h
Fri. 10 th	Saint-Fraimbault (53)	<i>Marché de Noël</i> in Place de la Mairie, 18h30–22h
11 th & 12 th	Flers (61) –	in Place St Germain, 9h30-20h
“	Bellême (61) –	in Place de l'Europe, Salle du Porche, 11h-18h
Sun. 12 th	Montaudin (53) –	10h-18h in Salle des Fêtes, artisan products,
“	Ambrières-les-Vallées (53) –	in the upper town (to be confirmed)
Wed. 15 th	La Ferté-Macé (61) –	in Place Leclerc & rue d'Hautvie, 14h–20h
Fri. 17 th (16h–22h)		3 rd <i>Marché de Noël et Gastronomique</i> on
Sat. 18 th (10h–20h)	Domfront (61)	Place & rue Saint-Julien. Snacks available
Sun. 19 th (10h–18h)		on site
Wed. 21 st	La Ferté-Macé (61) -	in Place Leclerc & rue d'Hautvie, 14h–20h
20 th & 21 st	Gorron (53)	at <i>Manges-tu?</i> , 12 rue des Frères Lumières, 10h–15h

Marché de Noël in Mayenne town (53)

On Fri. 3rd (at 14h-21h); Sat. 4th (at 10h-18h) & Sun. 5th (at 10h-19h) is the annual Christmas market beside the river on the Quai de la République in Mayenne town. Organised by the *Lions Club de Mayenne*. there will be around 30 stalls with produce to taste and gifts to buy! Extra lighting this year;

Eating out - French Christmas lunches

At the *Bar de la Mairie* near the *Mairie* in Gorron (53), Melanie is serving her Christmas lunches at 12h–15h on 15th, 16th & 17th. Melanie serves a very good French Christmas lunch with an English twist – you can choose all or any of the 4 courses: *entrée*, main course, cheese, dessert, and she charges according to what courses you have. I have enjoyed them for the past 4 years and will certainly do so again this year. Reservations: 02 43 08 04 59

Christmas Market in l'Epinau-le-Comte (61)

On Sun. 5th, 10h to 16h: a Christmas Market in the Salle des Fêtes in L'Epinau-le-Comte, Passais-Villages. Lots of glorious gifts to buy and also plants, flowers, chutney, jams, soap, paintings, clothes, spices. Coffee & tea available and wonderful cakes to go with it! You can buy your Christmas presents and have a lovely day out. Masks and *pass sanitaires* will be required. For more info please contact Jane at janedalecaddick@gmail.com

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Rest in Peace, Kathy

Due to Kathy Barbour's sudden, tragic and untimely passing, a Memory Book in her honour is available to give Kathy's friends an opportunity to add their own sentiments.

There will be various opportunities made available to sign Kathy Barbour's Memory Book up to the end of the year 2021. If you, or you know of anyone who may like to contribute, please inform, request and share that Kathy's friends are aware and make their intentions known to Tuesday Friends, e.g. Euro Mayenne friends, the French teacher who gave Kathy lessons, students, anyone who was a friend of Kathy's. You are encouraged to share your memories, stories, pictures of Kathy and sympathies with the family within Kathy's Memory Book.

For those unable to contribute physically you are encouraged to email your contribution to the Memory Book, ensuring you include your full name, direct to finnlady@woh.rr.com where Eileen will ensure your message is included. If preferred, you may post your handwritten sentiments to Eileen Werkman, 32 Rue de Normandie, 53220, Montaudin. Contact tuesdayfriends@gmail.com for any further assistance.

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Christ Church in the Manche - Christmas Fair

Although a fair distance away, this Chaplaincy invites you to their traditional Christmas Fair at the Church Centre, Gratot: Hommeel, near Coutances (50) on Sat. 4th with Christmas craft items & floral decorations, tombola; café all day serving tea, cake, etc., and jacket potatoes with a choice of fillings. Covid passes will be required. For more info on their two churches (the other one is at Virey, 50) go to www.achurchnearyou.com/church/8341/

Brunch dégustation in Fontaine-Daniel (53)

On Sun. 5th at the *Épicerie*, 7 rue des Tisserands, 11h to 13h, under the pergola and on the terrace, you can taste wines, oysters (from Cancale - if possible, pre-order your oysters for tasting, 02 43 04 44 07) and cheeses. This co-operative *épicerie* was created in 2015 and offers a library space, the *épicerie* and *bistroquet* (giving info on concerts, shows, workshops, etc.). Normal opening hours: Tues to Sats. 9h30 to 13h & 14h30 to 19h; Sundays: 9h30 to 13h. Closed on Mondays.

New shop ‘*Self-Tissus*’ opens in Mayenne (53)

Nadia Giorgi, originally from Corsica, is opening a materials boutique at 515 rue de la Peyennière, Mayenne town (not far from Noz). This 300 m² boutique (one of her 30 shops, mostly in Brittany) is the second one in the *département*. You will find a great variety of materials and accessories, also sewing machines. Open Mon. to Fri., 10h-12h30 & 14h-19h, Sats. 10h-19h (non-stop).

Fun Théâtre Communautaire with ‘The Sunshine Boys’

Fun Théâtre Communautaire (FTC) is producing a ‘radio broadcast’ style presentation of ‘The Sunshine Boys’ on Fri. 3rd and Sat. 4th at 19h45 in the *théâtre (salle multiculturelle)* in Passais-la-Conception (61). This is an FTC English-language presentation - it is Neil Simon’s incredibly funny Broadway and West End play about an ageing Vaudeville comedy duo and their reluctant reunion after 11 years apart. More information can be found on www.funtheatre.fr

Tickets are 7€ each. Numbers will be strictly limited, providing our audiences with a better viewing/listening experience and ensuring good social distancing. *Pass sanitaires* will be required. Sales are online only – available from www.thelittleboxoffice.com/funtheatre. Doors will open at 7.00pm, with a bar prior to the performance, during the interval and following the performance. Performance time will be approximately 2 hours including the interval.

Cheese of the Month – *Livarot*

This cheese was first documented in 1690 and by 1693 it was popular in Paris. Named after a village in Normandie, its nickname is ‘the Colonel’ as it is bound with strips of rush or paper reminiscent of a colonel’s stripes. Both the smell and taste of Liverot have lessened over the years but it is still very strong tasting. It should be very ripe when chosen – a finger should sink into the crust. The rind is washed and coloured with *annatto* and sticks to the fingers. The cheese has no elasticity and feels heavy on the tongue, having a spicy flavour as it dissolved in the mouth. Over 4 million are produced each year. Wines to drink with it: a young Pommerol (red); Tokay or Pinot Gris d’Alsace (white).

Concert de Noël with ‘Interzone’

On Thurs. 9th, 20h30 - 22h30, in the Salle Gérard-Philippe in La Ferté-Macé (61): 2 talented musicians with modern & traditional, oriental & nostalgic music. Tickets: 10€, children and unemployed: 5€. More info: www.culture.orne.fr or at www.ornetourisme.com

Vivace Choir Christmas concerts

Vivace Choir, based in Passais-la-Conception (61), are performing two concerts at Christmas, to which everyone is welcome:-

On Fri. 10th they are singing at 19h15 at the CSF (Cancer Support France) Carol Concert in the church at 18 Le Bourg, Notre-Dame du Touchet (50). Entry is free but there will be a retiring collection in aid of CSF. Masks and a *pass sanitaire* or a negative test are required to enter the church. They would love you all to join them for drinks and mince pies afterwards at '*Le Viking*' Bar just across the road from the church.

On Sun. 12th at 15h30 they will be singing at l'Eglise St. Julien, 5 Place du Commerce, Domfront-en-Poiraise (61). Masks are required to enter the church. Again entry is free but there will be a retiring collection in aid of the church restoration.

Cabaret evening - 'RE-LIVE THE MUSIC'

On Sat 4th at 20h in '*Le Viking*' bar/restaurant in Notre-Dame du Touchet (50), The Gemini Association present a Cabaret Evening: RELIVE THE MUSIC, featuring songs from their productions of "Sounds of the Sixties" and "Rock 'n Roll Years". Entry is free, but tickets must be reserved in advance from normandymusic@yahoo.com, at the bar '*Le Viking*', or 02 33 59 20 11.

Christmas concerts in Mayenne (53)

Two concerts on Sat. 18th at 16h30–18h and 20h30–22h, in Rue Volney, Mayenne (53) by *l'Orchestre Symphonique de Haute Mayenne*: a programme around winter and the passing of the seasons. Tickets: 5€ if pre-booked; 7€ at the door. Contact 06 45 88 00 95 or ask at the Mayenne Tourist Office (www.mayenne-tourisme.com; 02 43 04 19 37).

Cancer Support France Nord - Christmas Quiz Night

On Fri. 17th at '*Le Viking*' bar/restaurant in Notre-Dame du Touchet (50) is their Christmas Quiz Night, starting at 20h. Entrance to the quiz will be 5€ per person. No need to book. If you would like to eat then you need to contact the *Le Viking* direct; tables are of 6, but if only 2 people come they can make up full tables. Why not wear something red – or even Christmas jumpers!

Concert de Noël in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)

On Sat. 11th, 16h to 17h30 in the church at 9 Place de l'Eglise - '*Les Santons à la crèche*' by the Ensemble '*Bel Accord*' – a trio of singers & piano, giving popular Christmas carols and works by Debussy, Franck, Rameau. Free, with collection. Masks required. Tickets & info: 06 71 73 18 20 or ask at the Bagnoles Tourist Office (02 33 37 85 66)

Christmas concert at *l'Eglise Saint-Front*, Domfront (61)

On Thurs. 9th at 19h30, Emma Mory and the chorale *Domf'Amiré* will be giving a Christmas concert in the church. Any donations given will be go to *l'AFM (Assoc. Française contre les myopathies* [neuro-muscular diseases]

The holly and . . . the ivy!

Ivy is great as it is the last garden plant to flower (beginning at the end of September and sometimes continuing into November) – a late feast for bees, and the berries are a treat for thrushes and blackbirds in February. It is also good to use it as a garden ‘floor’ through which early bulbs can thrust while keeping their flowers clean – one favourite is ‘Glacier’ with its classic arrow-shaped leaves, dark green centre with crisp, frosty white at the edges.

Christmas illuminations in Laval

The town of Laval budgeted 338,000€ to make Laval shimmer and shine with their illuminations, until 3rd January. There will be a nightly show by the society ‘*Spectaculaires*’ from 17h to midnight until 3rd Jan. The new 32 metre high *grande roue* (big wheel) in the Square de Boston, which was opened for the switching on of the lights ceremony on 27th November, is a great place to view all the illuminations from its 24 gondolas.

Candlelit visit to the Château of Carrouges (61)

This popular candle-lit event is on 21st to 23rd, from 17h–19h – at nightfall, in a fairytale atmosphere, a visit to the areas not normally open to the public, such as the bedroom of the last Count and the family chapel. You can experience what life was like in the château when the only lighting was candles! Tickets: 6€, children free. For more info, go to www.chateau-carrouges.fr or email: chateau-carrouges@monuments-nationaux.fr

Some weekly markets in the *Ille et Vilaine* (35)

Days of the week	Location
Mondays	Combourg, Vitré
Tuesdays	Antrain, Dinard
Wednesdays	Tinténiac
Thursdays	Bazouges-la-Pérouse, Dinard
Fridays	Pleurtuit, St Malo (Intra-Muros)
Saturdays	Dinard, Dol de Bretagne, Fougères
Sundays	Cancale, La Richardais

(It is wise to double check before going, as these can change without notice).

Christmas organ concert in Ernée (53)

On Sun. 19th at 15h in l’Eglise Notre-Dame, 14 Place Voisin, Ernée: traditional Christmas music with organ and trumpet. More info: www.ville-ernee.fr

“*Noël au Balcon*” parade through Mayenne town (53)

On Sun. 5th, from 15h to 18h30, a quartet of musicians with flute, saxophone, tuba and drums, will be parading through the town of Mayenne starting from Place Georges Clemenceau, with traditional Christmas favourites, including ‘*Douce Nuit*’ (‘Silent Night’).

Sport & Leisure Activities

Piscine (swimming pool) in Gorrion (53)

The pool was re-opened mid-November, after major works on the structure and pool, costing around 859,000€. Individual swimming lessons will be starting on 1st December, as well as school lessons, with Aquagym and Aquabike on the 6th. Group swimming lessons, given by *le Club Nautique Gorrionnais*, will also begin from 1st: on each Wed.: at 17h for the very young, 17h50 for adolescents and 18h50 for adults. For more info: www.bocage-mayennais.fr and in the December issue of 'Gorrion Infos'.

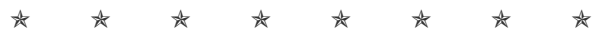
Randos en semaine (week-day walks)

Tues. 7th - an 8km walk. departing at 14h from Place de l'Eglise in St Mars-sur-la-Futaie (53). 2€ if not a member. More info: 02 43 05 07 35

Tues. 7th – an 8km walk, departing at 14h; meet at the parking of the Salle in St Ellier-du-Maine (53). 2€ if not a member.



And finally: Do you remember back when we were kids and every time it was below freezing outside they closed the school? No, me neither.



That's all for this month. Just a reminder, please, to keep in touch once a year or so, as if I don't hear from someone for over a year (i.e.12 issues) I tend to think they have either moved, or changed their email address without letting me know (which often happens) so I take the name from my list. But a simple 'hi' now and then will keep you on it!

Wishing you all a

VERY MERRIE CHRISTMAS

Judy Skinner

e-mail: judithsk@free.fr

Events by the day (not including Christmas markets / fairs)

December 2021

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“	8km walk	St Ellier-du-Maine	6
Thurs. 9th	Concert by Emma Mory	Domfront	4
“	<i>Concert de Noël</i> by 'Interzone'	La Ferté-Macé	3
Fri. 10th	Vivace Choir concert for CSF Nord	Notre-Dame du Touchet	4
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