

Bulletin !

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

Thought for the month:

One of the advantages of being disorderly is that one is constantly making exciting discoveries

A A Milne

Here are some *vide-greniers* (v-g: attic clearance), *vide maisons* (house clearance), *brocantes* & *fêtes* in this area, but double-check beforehand, if possible, at www.brocabrac.fr in case of any last-minute cancellations ['50' = area; ± = number of stalls expected]:

Fri. 2 nd to) Mon. 5 th)	Le Teilleul (50)	<i>vide-maison</i> at 58 rue Guillaume Morel, 10h-18h
Sat. 3 rd	Sourdeval (50)	<i>vide-maison</i> at Les Boussardières, 7h-17h
"	St Mars-sur-la-Colmont (53)	v-g, 8h-18h, food & drink on site
W/e 3 rd & 4 th	La Ferté-Macé (61)	<i>vide-maison</i> in a warehouse at 19 route de Bagnoles, 10h-17h
Sun. 4 th	Dinard (35)	<i>brocante</i> in Place du Marché, ±70
"	Avranches (50)	monthly <i>brocante</i> , Place Valhubert, ±30
"	La Ferrière-aux-Etangs (61)	v-g / <i>brocante</i> in Place Henri Buron, ±150
"	St Michel-Thuboeuf (61)	<i>vide-garage</i> , 2 rue de la Grande Ferme, 8h-18h
Sun. 11 th	Bellou-en-Houlme (61)	v-g / <i>brocante</i> at La Chevalerie, ±150
"	Colombiers-du-Plessis (53)	v-g in <i>terrain de foot</i> , & entertainment, ±70
"	Pontorson (50)	v-g in Ecole Louis Pergaud, 8h-18h, ±150
"	St Mars d'Egrenne (61)	v-g in rue du Stade, 7h-18h, ±50
W/e 17 th & 18 th	La Dorée (53)	v-g in <i>Fête Champêtre</i> (see page 5)
Sat. 17 th	Betton (35, near Rennes)	<i>Brocante de la Cale</i> , in Pl. de la Cale, 9h-18h
Sun. 18 th	Louverné (53)	v-g in rue Nationale, ±150
"	Granville (50)	<i>Marché d'Antiquités Brocante</i> in Cour Jonville, ±30
"	Changé (53)	v-g in <i>Stade Auguste Dalibard</i> , 8h-18h, ±250
Sun. 25 th	Rives d'Andaine (61)	v-g in <i>Fête Saint Pierre</i> , Blvd Léon Petit, ±70
"	Saint-James (50)	v-g in <i>Fête Communale</i> , Place de l'Eglise, Villiers-le-Pré, 7h-19h, ±75

Eating out – “*Oh Rendez-vous*”

The newest restaurant in Ernée opened its doors in March: “*Oh Rendez-vous*” at 4 Place Mazarin (near the church) is the brainchild of Morgane Lancelin, 30, the manager and Marc-Antoine Vaillant, her partner. This is the 4th restaurant they've opened. The premises can accommodate up to 40 people, and will offer traditional cuisine with a worker's menu at lunchtime, from Tuesday to Friday, as well as a seasonal menu during the week and at weekends, including up to three choices of starters, main courses and desserts. Open for lunch Tues. to Suns, as well as Fri. & Sat. evenings, closed on Mondays. Contact no: 09 88 43 39 14; Facebook page: *restaurantohrendezvous*.

Les Jardins des Renaudies

In these pretty gardens at Les Mézerais, Colombiers-du-Plessis (53) you can enjoy the vibrant colours of the plants and flowers, the *ecomusée* (a look at country life years ago), an exhibition of paintings and you can even take a picnic to eat on the lawns. The main event this month:

Sun. 4th – *Rendez-vous aux Jardins*: the theme this year is ‘*Les musiques du jardin*’ (‘The music of the garden’). Open 10h to 18h, there will be a concert at 16h30 by *Chorales du Bocage*. In the afternoon you can meet some of the park gardeners, and the children can see the small animals. *The Salon de Thé* will be open in the afternoon. Entry for this event: adults 4€; 6-16s: 3€; under 6s free.

Cancer Support France Nord event

Sat. 17th at the Salle des Fêtes in Notre-Dame du Touchet (50): an ‘*Apéro Evening*’ in support of Cancer Support France Nord. Music by Jon & Annie, Adrian, King & Byrne and Nigel Orange. Tickets: 8€, includes provision of an *apéro* and a drink. There will be a bar plus additional snacks. Please do not take your own drinks or food. For more info and to book your tickets please email: nord@cancersupportfrance.org

Traditions and festive food of France

The annual *Fête de Saint Jean* (always on the 24th June) is traditionally accompanied by *grands feux* (huge bonfires) in the Christian tradition and commemorates the birth of St John the Baptist. It is still celebrated in more rural areas in France, and also in Spain, Hungary and the USA. The town of Uzès (30700) holds a garlic festival where stacks and bundles of bulbs pile up on tables and barrows, and cafés do a roaring trade. In some villages the highlight of the occasion is the crowning of the Garlic Queen, and the communal partaking of bowls of steaming garlic soup.

They say, we say – and why

“*Muet comme une carpe*” (lit. “mute as a carp”) - English equivalent: “as quiet as a mouse”. In the 17th century, Rabelais uses the simile “mute as a fish” which later became identified with a specific species. Why carp? Apparently because they stick their heads out of the water and open their mouths without saying a word!

Fête des Plantes – plant exhibition/sale in Bagnoles de l’Orne (61)

On Sat. 3rd & Sun. 4th, 10h to 18h, this popular annual event is organised by the Association ‘*Entre Ville et Jardin*’. The theme this year is “*Les Bulbes : des pepites pour le jardin*” (“Bulbs – gold nuggets for the garden”). Held in the *parc arboretum* of the château (look for signs), there will be around 65 stands, with artisans and moving musical shows, also children’s games. Entry: adults: 5€; 13s to 18s: 3€; under 12s free. More info from the Bagnoles de l’Orne Tourist Office (www.bagnolesdelorne.com)

Fontaine-Daniel (53) – an ancient and pretty village

Fontaine-Daniel was founded in 1204 by Cistercian monks at Juhel III de Mayenne’s request, who built an abbey and a pond to provide energy and offer fishing. The abbey was sold as public property during the Revolution in 1796. The abbey was bought by an engineer and merchant in 1806, who turned it into a cotton mill and in 1814, 920 people worked at the mill. Around the mill, buildings designed to offer housing to the workforce were built in 1832 as part of a social experiment that continued until the late 1970s. The mill company was registered under the brand name *Toiles de Mayenne* in 1806. It celebrated its 200th birthday in 2006 and survived the collapse of 98% of the spinning industry after expanding its production to include decorative fabric. Fontaine-Daniel opened its *epicerie-bistrot*-library in 2015, aiming to maintain an active social life in the quiet village.

Fête de Printemps : la cuisine au feu

In La Ferté-Macé (61) on Sat. 3rd, 10h to 18h in place Leclerc in *centre-ville*, the 3rd edition of this fête celebrates cooking, with cookery demonstrations by 4 noted chefs, a gourmet market, children’s workshops, exhibition of vintage vehicles and Cuban music.

Gorron weekly market – stallholder Daniel Machard retires

After 43 years running his vegetable stall in Gorron market, Daniel has retired and is replaced by Ludivine Raveneaux, age 20, who will also be at the other markets where Daniel has his stall – Ducey, St. Denis-de-Gastines, Louvigné-du-Désert and Ambrières-les-Vallées. He began selling his vegetables with his parents in 1980 – and still has many customers who bought from his parents! We will miss Daniel’s friendly face supplying his good quality produce. He was awarded the medallion of the town by *maire* Jean-Marc Allain.

Weekly evening market in Gorron (53)

On Friday evenings from 16th June until 28th July, from 18h at Place de la Houssaie in Gorron (near Elliotts Boucherie) will be a market with many local stallholders offering items for sale and advice on creative activities, artisans, local products, with entertainment.

Cheese of the Month – *Curé Nantais*

In 1880 in St. Julien-de-Concelles, a small village near Nantes, a priest named Pierre Hivert created a cheese: ‘*le Regal des Gourmets*’, which became a tribute to the holy man, the *Curé Nantais*. It is a soft, rind-washed cow’s milk cheese which can come in 3 shapes: a square model with rounded corners, a big round model aimed at the cutting market, and a small model aged with Muscadet. It is aged for 4 weeks in a wet basement and on spruce boards. It goes well with a Muscadet.

Entertainment & Concerts

Fête de la Musique – this is held all over the country in June – and these days it can be on different weekends. Mostly on the Sat. 24th (e.g. in Gorron), with many ending with a firework display - for example, in Saint-Georges-Buttavent (53) it will be on the Sat. 10th. A convivial evening with a great variety of music played around the towns.

Concerts by ‘*Vivace Chorale*’

There will be 2 concerts by the ‘*Vivace Chorale*’ in June: on Sat. 3rd at 20h in l’Eglise Notre-Dame-de-l’Assomption in Mantilly (61), and on Sat. 24th at 20h in l’Eglise Saint-Pierre de Vaucé (53). Entry is free, and there may be a collection.

Festival Fougères Musicales

There will be concerts at 20h30 in l’Eglise Saint Sulpice, rue la Bouteille in Fougères (35):
Entry: 22€, students & unemployed: 18€

Sat. 10th – Bach sonatas for violin and *clavecin* (harpsicord)

Fri. 16th – ‘Trio and Clarinette’: Beethoven piano sonata, Bartok, Messaien

Sat. 17th – ‘*Quatuor Dariet* (Dariet Quartet), including works by Schubert, Mozart

Fri. 23rd – ‘*Autour du chant*’ – piano, violin & cello: Ravel, Strauss, Faure, Debussy.

Something you didn’t know you didn’t know . . .

One regional French sport with a greater competitive edge than most is *gouren*, a traditional folk wrestling match from Brittany. Two barefoot wrestlers wearing a white shirt, called a *roched*, with a belt and black trousers (*bragoù*) aim to pin their opponent’s shoulder blades to the floor for victory. The perfect move during a 7-minute bout results in a *lamm* – instant victory – while one shoulder touching the floor earns 4 points.

Cinema in Gorron – English film

The next English (VO) film in Gorron cinema will be:

Monday 5th at 20h - ‘**To Catch a Killer**’ (billed as ‘*Misanthrope*’ in France)

Directed by: Damian Szifron, with Shailene Woodley, Ben Mendelsohn, Jovan Adepo.

– Baltimore, New Year’s Eve. A talented but troubled police officer (Shailene Woodley) is recruited by the FBI’s chief investigator (Ben Mendelsohn) to help profile and track down a disturbed individual terrorising the city.

The film starts at 8pm and tickets (5,50€) are available at the cinema (beside the church) from 7.30pm on the night. As always, the ‘*Bar de la Mairie*’ at the bottom of the hill serves pre-film refreshments, including a plate of cheese and/or meat with a glass of wine/beer, for 8€. [It might be advisable to check on www.gorron-cinemas.fr before setting off in case of any last-minute changes].

Fête Champêtre in La Dorée (53)

On Sat. 17th & Sun. 18th, in the *Stade*, 13 rue des Ecoles: *vide-greniers* and demonstrations of ancient trades, with horses and vintage tractors.

Exhibition of Contemporary Art

From 2nd June until 12th September, in Place aux Arts in Fougères (35), free cultural event. Info on opening hours and dates from the Fougères Tourist Office (02 99 94 12 20)

Vente festive exceptionnelle – ‘Le Tournevis’ (‘The Screwdriver’)

On Sat. 3rd at 10h in Louvigné du-Désert (35, on the D109), you will find the sale of second hand lighting, déco, crockery, furniture and also an *atelier créatif ‘Récup’* (creative workshop for recycling items). Also a tombola, games room. Drink and snacks available on site.

Fête de la Récup’ (Festival of salvage)

On Sat. 10th at 14h to 18h on Esplanade des Chaussonnières in Fougères (35) you can learn how to re-use objects in different themed workshops. (Take along a re-usable cup/glass). Free entry

Something for all the family – *Le monde miniature*

Hop aboard for a special train journey in Normandy! An incredible passionate family has built up this impressive model railway for almost 50 years. You just won’t believe the attention to detail it has, with more than 600 metres of railway line, 270 engines, 450 wagons, 650 buildings and 10,000 trees, not to mention 12 km of electric cabling! Try your hand at directing some model features by using the interactive control unit. Discover also the giant inflatable play area for children, travel on their mini train and also visit the old lime kilns. Go to www.lemondeminature.com for daily opening hours.

Exhibition: *Le Moyen Age en jeux* (games of the Middle Ages)

From Sat. 3rd at 14 Place Pierre Symon, by the Château de Fougères (35) you can discover a micro exhibition describing games and distractions of the Middle Ages [*dés* (dice), *échecs* (chess), etc] and their place in society. Tickets are included in the entry to the Château. More info from the Fougères Tourist Office (www.ille-et-vilaine-tourism.com)

Day of street artists in Lassay-les-Châteaux (53)

Sun. 4th, 9h-18h, in this 32nd competition of painters in the streets, you can watch the artists creating their masterpieces throughout the day. (www.mayenne-tourisme.com)

French etiquette

Just a reminder, and to inform newcomers: it is VERY important, when entering any business (shop, bakery, warehouse, bar/café, surgery, etc) to say ‘*bonjour*’, and you will normally receive a similar reply. Also, when leaving, you should say ‘*au revoir*’ (or repeat their parting comment, e.g. ‘*bonne journée*’). To omit this may cause offence in some cases.

Sport & Leisure Activities

Randonnee fraicheur (cool walk)

Thurs. 8th, departing at 20h from Place de l'Eglise in Montaudin (53) this is a cool evening walk around the area. More info from the Mayenne Tourist Office

Swimming pool in Bagnoles de l'Orne (61)

The outside swimming pool in Bagnoles de l'Orne has re-opened at the *complexe sportif* on Avenue de La Ferté-Macé. The pool is heated between 26° & 28° and there is also a 'beach' area for relaxing in the sunshine. It also has good accessibility for disabled customers. For opening hours and further details go to www.bagnolesdelorne.com or visit the Tourist Office nearby (02 33 37 85 66).

Randoguide : printed guide of walks in the area -

This is a booklet containing 10 leaflets with walks from 4.5km to 20 km in the Domfront *bocage*. Price: 5€ or 1€ per leaflet. Also available for cycling (*le Veloguide*). Available at the Domfront Tourist Office (www.ot-domfront.com)

And finally:

- Why do seagulls fly over the ocean?
- 'Cos if they flew over the bay, we'd call them bagels.

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Events by the day (not including vide-greniers)

June 2023

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