



## Chairman's Letter

**Julia Sander** writes: Welcome to our new-look Citylink. After more than 20 years as Newsletter Editor - and over 100 editions - **Margaret Brown** has handed the baton over to a new editorial team. This new edition is very much a pilot. We are introducing a number of new features and look forward to your comments. Contributions from members are very welcome. One such is the report below from **Yvonne Chrétien, Présidente of the Amis de Chichester**, who is an honorary member of our association. She writes of her experiences under lockdown in France - like Yvonne, we too hope we will not have to go through it again.

It has not been possible to continue with our usual programme of activities during the lockdown, and now with the re-imposition of the *rule of six*, we have had to adapt our Autumn Programme (See page 8). Your committee is working on a new socially distanced programme and will keep you informed. I look forward to the day when we will all be able to meet again.

## Letter from the Présidente of the Amis de Chichester

**Yvonne Chrétien** writes: I was asked to write a few words about my experience of *confinement* in France. I think I am not the best person to do this as I am lucky enough to live in quite a big house in the countryside west of Chartres. I suppose it has been much more difficult for families living with children in small flats in town without even a balcony, or for older people alone in their flat or in nursing homes. There was no school for the children and no visits from the family permitted for older people.

For over two months we were allowed to go out only to buy essential things like medicine or food. We were advised to avoid going out every day. We had to wear a mask otherwise if there was a check, we would have had to pay a fine of 135 euros. I usually go shopping only once a week so it did not make a change for me. I live too far from the shops to go there every day.

But all my other activities as a volunteer stopped as well. That was more difficult for me to accept because that meant no contact with other people at all except by telephone of course. I live on my own without any family around and I felt the solitude more than usual because I knew I could not take my car to go to visit anybody even if I had wanted to.

But we were lucky as during that period the weather was particularly nice and I was able to work on the land part of the day. I had plenty of time to contemplate nature in the spring! Nevertheless, I do hope we shall not have to go through another *confinement*.

## Editorial

A new editorial team (**Ellen Haigh**, and **Rosie Speer**) has taken up the challenge of producing the Association's Newsletter: **Citylink**. We are including some new features, one of which is a short article in French (with a translation!) We hope this proves a popular feature. Our new Facebook page - **Friends of Chartres - Chichester's French Twinning Association**, is proving a rich source of content, as members of both the Chichester and Chartres Associations are posting interesting material. We would appreciate your comments on this new edition and suggestions for future editions. Contributions to **Citylink** would be very welcome and should be sent to [foccitylink1959@gmail.com](mailto:foccitylink1959@gmail.com).

## Members' News

### Thankyou Margaret!



**John Wilton** writes: **Margaret Brown** has been actively involved in the Friends of Chartres since 1990 and has now decided to take well-earned retirement from such active service.

Together with her husband, Ray, she joined the Association in 1989. Margaret was elected to the Executive committee in 1990 and has been editor of our **Citylink** newsletter since January 1993 (now totalling 109 editions. In 2005 she was elected as Vice Chairman and then became Chairman from 2008 to 2011. She then took on the vacant role of Secretary which she held until stepping down a few weeks ago.

In 2012, Margaret was awarded a Chichester City Council Civic Award for her contributions over many years to furthering friendship with our twin towns of Chartres and Ravenna. She will leave a large gap in the organisation of our Association, and I feel we are particularly indebted to her for editing **Citylink** for so many years and producing interesting and entertaining editions time after time.

Margaret and husband, Ray, (who remains a committee member) organised an annual Art Challenge over a 10-year period, in which thousands of schoolchildren in Chichester and Chartres participated and learnt about each other's cities. They have been enthusiastic participants in the annual exchange since 1990 and have many happy memories of exchanges in Chartres and Chichester. They will hopefully continue to do so for more years to come.

Thank you, Margaret, for all you have done for the Association over so many years!

### Anthony John French MBE 1932-2020

**Anne Scicluna** writes: It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of **Tony French** on 26<sup>th</sup> August.

Tony was a friend. He was a friend to many people and groups within the city. He was a personal friend and colleague of my own, as we served on the City Council together for more than forty years, until, due to his health, he very regretfully decided not to stand in 2019.

But Tony was so much more than that. He supported with great enthusiasm many local organisations – many of which he was instrumental in starting. These included, among others, New Park Community Association and the





## News from Chartres

Our friends in Chartres sent this photo of their annual stand at which they promote the city's twinnings. In addition to Chichester, Chartres is twinned with *Ravenna* (Italy), *Speyer* (Germany), *Evora* (Portugal), *Leon* (Spain), and further afield: *Sakurai* (Japan) and *Bethlehem* (Israel).

Chichester has some way to go to catch up!



### Le Voile de Marie

The information below is abridged from an article posted on the **Friends of Chartres Facebook page** (Login: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1573299596161742>) by **Dominique Gallas**, member of *Les Amis de Chichester*.



Le voile de Marie, offert en 876 par le roi de France Charles le Chauve, consacre Chartres au culte de la vierge et en fait une ville sanctuaire. Cette relique aurait été portée par Marie le jour de la naissance de Jésus, ce qui en fait une des reliques les plus précieuses pour les chrétiens.

Charles le Chauve détenait ce voile de son grand-père Charlemagne. En 1194, lors de l'incendie de la cathédrale, on le crut perdu à tout jamais. Mais, c'était sans compter le réflexe de prêtres qui ont pris le reliquaire où se trouvait le voile pour se réfugier dans la crypte.

C'est en 1712 que l'on ouvre le coffret où se trouvait la relique. À ce moment, on s'aperçoit qu'en guise de chemise, il s'agit en fait d'un tissu de soie d'un demi mètre de large et de 5,30 m de long. Morcelée à la révolution, un petit morceau est gardé dans la crypte, alors que la plus importante partie est exposée dans la cathédrale dans un reliquaire réalisé au 19<sup>e</sup> siècle. Une expertise réalisée en 1927 donne en datation le 1<sup>er</sup> siècle de notre ère. La technique de tissage correspond également à ce qui se faisait en Palestine à cette période.

### The Veil of the Virgin

The Veil of the Virgin, given to Chartres in 876 by the King of France Charles the Bald, consecrated Chartres to the worship of the Virgin and made it a city of sanctuary. It was said that the relic was worn by Mary on the day of Jesus' birth, making it one of the most precious relics for Christians.

Charles the Bald was given the Veil by his grandfather Charlemagne. In 1194, when the cathedral burned down, it was believed the Veil was lost forever. However, priests concealed the reliquary containing the veil in the crypt.

In 1712 the box containing the relic was opened. It was discovered that it contained silk fabric half a metre wide and 5.30 m long. The Veil was fragmented during the Revolution. A small piece is kept in the crypt, while the largest part is displayed in the cathedral in a 19th century reliquary. Tests carried out in 1927 revealed that the Veil dates back to the 1st century AD. The weaving technique is similar to that used in Palestine at this time.

## Our Holiday in France at the Time of COVID 19



**Chartres Cathedral viewed from  
Anne-Louise's hotel room**

**Anne-Louise Briggs** writes: Who would have guessed away back in January when we booked our ferry crossings with Brittany Ferries with the intention of driving to Austria through France and Italy that the world would be in turmoil as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic? We decided we would retain our reservations for the ferry but stay in France for three weeks, rather than travel further afield.

We set out on 4th August to drive to Arles for a week spending time in Gien, Dijon and Tournon-sur Rhone on the way down and in Millau, Vichy and Chartres on our return journey, Before we left we were regaled with warnings about the risks we were taking, but we decided nevertheless to go, taking with us boxes of face masks and many bottles of hand gel.

In all of these towns we were impressed by the fact that most people were wearing masks in the streets and markets; masks have to be worn in shops restaurants and hotels, and there were restrictions on the number of people allowed into shops at the same time. Social distancing rules were

different to those we have here; in some places it was a metre and a half, and in others one metre. Life seemed to be carrying on quite normally with pavement cafes busy and people going about their daily lives fairly normally.

In hotels we were given information about how the rooms, and indeed public areas, were cleaned and sanitised. Masks had to be worn in public areas at all times, but were removed when you sat at your table for meals. Staff wore masks all the time, which must have been uncomfortable in the heat. Different hotels had different ways of serving breakfast. Some took your order the night before and brought it out on trays in the morning. Others had buffets which were very strictly controlled, and one smaller hotel had a buffet, but took your order at the table and served it to you. We were very fortunate to have good weather throughout our holiday which meant that we were able to eat all our meals outside, except for Chartres where we ate breakfast at distanced tables indoors.

Although we have had to spend two weeks in quarantine following our return from France, we feel that it was well worth taking our holiday, which we enjoyed tremendously, and we were fortunate to be able to have Sunday lunch in Chartres with our French exchange partners, Jean-Paul and Sylvie Hernandez, who have recently moved from Challet to a lovely new home in Mainvilliers.

### **How well do you know Chartres?** (Answers to questions on page 3)

- 1 The area surrounding Chartres is **Beauce**.
- 2 The area is known as **The Granary of France**. It characterised by wide vistas of fields where wheat and other grain crops are grown.
- 3 Construction began on Notre Dame de Chartres in **1145** on the site of an earlier cathedral which had burnt down. Chichester Cathedral was founded in **1075**, when the seat of the bishop was moved from Selsey.
- 4 The distance around the Chartres Cathedral labyrinth is **260 m**.

## Uppark's French Connections

Due to the pandemic the talk by Uppark Volunteer Guide, **David Bridges**, followed by a visit, has been postponed until next year. To whet your appetite **David** has this to say:

'Uppark has many varied French connections from the Battle of Agincourt (1415) to a house steward (2020).

Ford, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Tankerville had Uppark House built c1690. His ancestor, John Grey, was in Henry V's army and fought at the Battle of Agincourt (1415). He was made Earl of Tankerville in 1418 and also granted the Comte of Tancarville in Normandy.

Sir Matthew and Lady Fetherstonhaugh (née Sarah Lethieullier), moved to Uppark in 1747. Sarah's Lethieullier ancestors were Huguenot refugees who emigrated from Valenciennes to England in 1605 to avoid religious persecution.

During 1749/51 Sarah and Sir Matthew went on a Grand Tour to France and Italy. Sarah kept a diary of the journey. Her opinion of French men is fascinating.

If Sir Matthew and Sarah's son, Sir Harry were alive today he would be a member of the Twinning Association such was his enthusiasm for France. His French connections started when he was young as his French exercise book shows. They continued during a Grand Tour (1775/6) and further visits in 1802/3, 1819 and 1824. His purchases included furniture, clocks and Sèvres porcelain. In 1785 one of his guests during the horse racing was the Duc de Chartres. Moget, Sir Harry's French chef's cooking was much admired.

During the 1930s Uppark had another French chef, Pascal, who 'provided a cauldron' to wash curtains in during conservation work undertaken by Margaret, Lady Meade-Fetherstonhaugh.

Keeping the link with France going one of Uppark's current House Stewards comes from La Baie du Mont Saint Michel in Normandy.'

It was disappointing that David was not able to deliver his talk, which was scheduled for June this year. The talk was to be followed by an Away Day to Uppark. Rather than present his talk by Zoom, David felt that it would be preferable to deliver it in person. We hope very much that we will have the opportunity to hear from him next year.



### Meet the butler!

*David in role as Uppark butler*



Sèvres biscuit centrepiece dated November 1816

## Just for Fun, from Ellen Haigh

As we all know, there are lots of colloquialisms and idiomatic phrases in conversational English which confuse non-native speakers and lead to some interesting misunderstandings. I remember hearing the words *bloke* and *innit* which confused me until they were explained. Well, the same goes for non-native French speakers of course. Try translating the phrase, *bats in the belfry* (*chauves-souris dans le beffroi*) a phrase using animal identification and ecclesiastical architecture to describe a crazy person. The French equivalent is *avoir une araignée au plafond* (to have a spider on the ceiling) and was first coined by Parisian prostitutes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the way.

Here are some idiomatic French expressions which can confuse us when translated literally. I remember when I heard the first one about feet in plates which came from a young Frenchwoman. She would tell me others and I would respond with English ones leaving us both laughing but enriching our understanding of each other's language.

### **Mettre les pieds dans le plat.**

**Literally:** To put the feet in the dish.

**Equivalent expression:** To put one's foot in it.

### **C'est simple comme bonjour!**

**Literally:** It's simple as hello!

**Equivalent expression:** Easy peasy, lemon squeezy! / Easy as pie!

### **On n'est pas sorti de l'auberge**

**Literally:** We've not left the hostel.

**Equivalent expression:** We're not out of the woods yet

*Auberge* used to be a euphemism for jail which would explain why it's so difficult to escape.

### **Être dans la galère**

**Literally:** To be in the galley

**Meaning:** To get yourself into a mess  
This expression was first invented by Molière.

### **Mettre les points sur les i**

**Literally:** Put the dots on the i

**Meaning:** To make things clear

### **Pleuvoir des cordes**

**Literally:** to be raining ropes

**Meaning:** It's raining cats and dogs.

You can use this idiom to say it's raining a lot. You may also hear "tomber des cordes" (to fall ropes). I have heard my mother-in-law say it's raining stair rods (and who has stair rods nowadays?)

### **Il (ne) faut pas pousser mémé dans les orties !**

**Literally:** One shouldn't push grandma in the nettles!

**Meaning:** One shouldn't exaggerate

### **Pisser dans un violon**

**Literally:** To pee in a violin

**Meaning:** To waste your efforts

A very graphic image for sure. Not an expression a violinist would appreciate.

### **Ça ne casse pas trois pattes à un canard.**

**Literally:** It doesn't break three legs to a duck.

**Meaning:** It's nothing special.

Very curious this one...I have yet to see a three-legged duck.

### **Chacun voit midi à sa porte.**

**Literally:** Everyone sees noon at his door.

**Meaning:** To judge a situation based on your own subjective criteria. We all see what we want to see.

And I shall end with a puzzle that has confused me for years. There's nothing more complicated than saying hello in France. Does one say *Salut* or *Bonjour*? Is it a handshake or a *bise*? And if it's a *bise*, how many of them — one, two, three or four? Do you start with the right, or with the left side? All of this is now academic post Covid-19 of course. Do the French now practice the Ghanaian elbow bump? Right or left elbow? And how many times?

## Information Page

**President**  
**The Right Worshipful the Mayor of**  
**Chichester**

Councillor Richard Plowman

**Officers and Committee**

**Chairman:** Julia Sander 527435

**Vice Chairman:** Anne Scicluna 789065

**Acting Secretary:** Rosie Speer

07875 840430

**Treasurer:** John Wilton 788833

Clare Apel 783738

Michael Bevis 781016

Annie Barnes 377150

Anne-Louise Briggs 784346

Ray Brown 783776

Paul Everrett 603513

Ellen Haigh 937027

David Nason 573716

Kiran Katakani 07810 216189

### **Friends of Chartres** **Programme of Events** **Autumn 2020**

**Tuesday September 29**  
**Travels in France with a Sketchbook**  
*Postponed*

**Thursday October 22: 11.00 am**  
**Friends Coffee Morning**  
The Coffee Bar, The Festival Theatre,  
Oaklands Park, Chichester PO19 6AP

**Thursday November 29: 7.30 pm**  
**On-line Quiz**  
*Login details will be sent closer to the event*

Due to the restrictions imposed during the COVID pandemic we have had to change our programme. Further activities are in the pipeline and we will keep you informed as they develop.

### **Conversation Circles**

Groups meet monthly for lively, informal conversation in French. We welcome new members, whatever your level of French at Petit Cercle meetings. For the Cercle Avancé, you need to be reasonably fluent to contribute to the conversation, but we are happy for you to listen if you wish to improve your French.

From June to September, we met outdoors in Oaklands Park. From October onwards, the Petit Cercle will meet in the Coffee Bar at the Festival Theatre. There is enough space here for us to socially distance. If we are more than six, we must sit at separate tables. The Cercle Avancé will meet at the Rainbow Inn. There is a large area where we can sit at a suitable distance from one another. Both venues are COVID secure.

#### **Petit Cercle du mardi**

**10.30 am to Noon**

Tuesday, October 6

Tuesday, November 3

Tuesday, December 1

**Venue:** The Coffee Bar, The Festival Theatre,  
Oaklands Park, Chichester PO19 6AP

#### **Petit Cercle du jeudi**

**10.30 am to Noon**

Thursday, October 8

Thursday, November 12

Thursday, December 10

**Venue:** The Coffee Bar, The Festival Theatre,  
Oaklands Park, Chichester PO19 6AP

#### **Cercle Avancé**

**5.30 - 7.00 pm**

Monday October 12

Monday November 9

Monday December 7

**Venue:** The Rainbow Inn, St Paul's Road,  
Chichester PO19 3BW

For further details, call **Julia Sander 01243 527435**.