

*Founded
1989*



*French
Association
3035*

December 2019 Newsletter



River at Parthenay
Photograph by Anne Amsden

***Events, activities, news
and reports for members***

A Very Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year to All

Christmas is with us again, one of many, and haven't we all seen changes over the years.

For me, two constants of the Christmas message strike me of import at this time and in this troubled world - love and hope should always be a guide.

**So I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and remember
Love for all peoples of this fragile planet. Martin**

GT Calendars 2020

We still have small stocks of Calendars available at the bargain price of € 5. Please reserve your copy if you have not already done so, at the forthcoming events. We regret an error in the printing of the calendar – Easter Sunday is on 12th April and not as stated!



Christmas Deadlines

Your newsletter has been prepared in advance of the normal distribution date to ensure that you can review and book some of the many events listed – especially those with lunch deadlines. The Christmas Lunches, both South and North are looking for your bookings as soon as possible please!

Annual Subscriptions

It is that time of the year to renew your subscription for another year of GT Membership. Remember, if you book by 1st January you save €5 on the annual fee. Unfortunately, the postal membership has had to be reviewed in light of the high costs of postage and printing,
but we hope you still think it good value. The Subscription Form is attached to the newsletter.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Lunch & Wine Group	Fri 6 th Dec	11.30 am	La Gaconniere
Southern Walk & Christmas Lunch	Sat 7 th Dec	10.30am	Grand Champ Lezay
Photo Group	Mon 9 th Dec	2.00 pm	Maziere en Gatine
Spice Club	Wed 11 th Dec	11.30 am	Menigoute
Northern Walk & Christmas Lunch	Fri 13 th Dec	TBA	Menigoute
First Reading Circle	Mon 16 th Dec	11.00 am	St. Jean de Sauves
After-Christmas Lunch & Mince Pie Special	Fri 27 th Dec	12.15 pm 3.00 pm	Martaizé St Jean de Sauves
Lunch & Wine Group	Tue 7 th Jan	11.30 am	Le Tallud
Library Group	Wed 15 th Jan	2-4 pm	Menigoute
Southern Walk	Thurs 16 th Jan		TBA
Northern Walk	Fri 31 st Jan	10.30 am	Le Beugnon
Northern Walk	Fri 28 th Feb	10.00 am	Exireuil

- Next Committee Meeting **Thurs 30th January 2020**
- AGM – Further details in January **Fri 21st February 2020**
- Final Copy Date December Newsletter Items **Tue 24th December**
(gtnewsletter79@gmail.com)
- for publication on **Saturday 28th December**

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Lunch & Wine Group **Fri 6th Dec** **11.30 am** **La Gaconniere** **Annette Green**



Please note the change of day for the Lunch and Wine Group for December which will be held at Annette's home, near Exireuil. The wines for the lunch will be from the French Mediterranean coastal region, with food from the same areas.

If you would like to join us or would like more information please contact Diane & Keith. If anyone needs directions to the venue these will be sent upon request. As there is a maximum number of 14 attendees, bookings are on a first come basis but in the event of oversubscription anyone who cannot be accommodated will be offered first refusal on the following meeting.

**Southern
Walk &
Christmas
Lunch**

Sat 7th Dec

10.30 am

**Grand Champ
Lezay**

**Maureen & John
Buckley**



There will be a short walk of about 4kms and a longer walk of just over 7kms. The terrain is mostly as flat as a billiard table and will be on minor roads and tracks. However, as sections of it could be muddy, suitable footwear should be worn.

The walk starts in the layby situated just east of Grand Champ on the D14 going towards Rom from Lezay. GPS reference 46° 16' 36" N 0° 01' 02" E. There are no toilets at the start. The walk will be followed by lunch at L'Assiette Restaurant in Lezay, which can be found to the left of the Mairie, with parking over the way.

The Menu for lunch at L'Assiette is:

Salade de saumon confit et sa marinade
Filet mignon de porc à la graine de moutarde
Assiette de fromages
Croquant poire / caramel

Lunch is 25€ which includes an apéritif, a bottle of wine for 3 people and a hot drink. If anybody has a problem with this menu please contact John Chard who will talk to the restaurant.

Photo Group

Mon 9th Dec

2.00pm

**Maziere en
Gatine**

**Steve Marshall
Roger Amsden**



We will be meeting at the home of Carol Andrews. Regulars please let both Carol and Steve Marshall know if you are NOT attending. Everyone else, please let us know if you will be attending.

We will be looking at the photo editor FastStone Image Viewer - free as a download if you have not got it and worth a look in advance. I recommend bringing laptops where viable so we can all see images and try out the editing options. Can I ask you to send me two sets of photographs: 1 image each for editing and up to 2 more images for the monthly competition - ideally using something you have recently learnt about your camera, otherwise just recent shots you like.

Spice Club

Wed 11th Dec

11.30 am

Menigoute

**Martin
Hughes**



The next pre-Christmas Spice Club will include festive dishes from anywhere along the Spice Trail, at Martin's home in Menigoute. To join in with this month's fun, please contact Joyce to confirm if you will be bringing a starter, rice or a pudding and whatever beverages you would like to enjoy over lunch.

**Northern
Walk &
Christmas
Lunch**

Fri 13th Dec

10.30 am

Menigoute

Martin Hughes



Our walk will take place from Camping Le Bois Pouvreau with lunch for walkers and non-walkers to follow at Les Voyageurs in Menigoute.

Meet in the car park for the campsite in the Bois Pouvreau at 10.30. This is accessed from the Menigoute to Coutieres road.

From Menigoute centre take the road down the side of the Pharmacie, there is a sign, for about 2 ½ kilometres then take the first left once out of the village and over the river Vonne. Again signed. The car park is down the track on the left after about 300 metres.

From Coutieres follow the road signed for Menigoute/IFFCAM/Camping Bois Pouvreau. The signs are quite small. Past IFFCAM on your left and take the second right, signposted Camping Bois Pouvreau, after about 1 km. The car park is on the left, about 300 metres.

The walk is in two halves with the first lasting about one hour. This is along tracks, paths and two short stretches along quiet roads. The second half is along quiet roads and paths and is about 50 minutes.

The nearest toilets are in Menigoute [by the church or by the cemetery]

Lunch will be taken at the recently reopened Les Voyageurs. The restaurant has been refurbished and is under new management. We hope that lots of non-walkers will join us to celebrate the approach of Noel, fun and games included. Non-walkers should be at the restaurant by 12.30.

Please email Martin Hughes to book your place on the walk and to give your meal choices from the menu below. Please advise your choice for each of the entree, plat principal and dessert courses. **Please place bookings by 6th December.**

A Kir and glass of wine are included in the meal price. Further drinks should be purchased individually. Please settle your individual meal/drinks direct with the restaurant.

For short walkers Martin's house will be open for coffee and biscuits prior to taking the short walk to the restaurant.

Kir
Entrées
Saumon Fume
Ou
Foie gras et chutney
Ou
Veloute au potimarron a la grenade

Plat Principal

Dinde farcie aux marrons, sauce airelle et ses legumes avec Pigs in Blanket

Ou

Filet de sole sauce beurre blanc citronne

Ou

Ile flottante aux cepes et morilles

Assiette de Fromage

Dessert

Christmas Pudding

Ou

Buche de Noel

Price per person : 25€ 1 verre de vin et café compris

FirstReading Circle

Mon 16th Dec

11.00 am

**St Jean de Kate Sangster
Sauves**



There is a change of venue for the December meeting. The First Reading Circle meeting will now be held at the home of Kate Sangster in St. Jean de Sauves followed by an early Christmas meal. The book for discussion is *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* by Anne Bronte, described by many as one of the first feminist novels and very popular when first

published.

We are having lunch at the Bacchus in Martaize and would like to invite all past members and their partners to join us. "Le Bacchus" restaurant is in Grand Rue, 86330, Martaizé. €12.00 for three courses (dessert or cheese) with wine included. Coffee and other drinks are extra. There are usually three choices of starter, two for main course and a choice of dessert or cheese. Fish is often not on the menu and any dietary requirements must be stated ASAP. We have to give numbers in advance so please let me Kate know by the evening of Sunday 8th December.

After- Christmas Lunch & Mince Pie Special

Fri 27th Dec

**12.15 pm &
3.00 pm**

**Martaizé & St.
Jean de
Sauves**

**Kate & Grant
Sangster**



Lunch and Mince Pie Specials only this year as after my accident I have not been able to plan the usual walk. However, if you wish to walk around Martaize before lunch I can email some routes for you to follow.

After-Christmas Lunch – 12.15 pm - Martaizé

As in previous years, this will be taken at "Le Bacchus" restaurant in Grand Rue, 86330, Martaizé and we have booked for 12.15. It is €12.00 for three courses with wine included, other drinks and coffee are extra. Please pay at the till as you leave. There will be two starters, two main courses and a choice of desserts or cheese.

Please read this bit! If you require fish or vegetarian as a main course we must know when you book as fish and especially vegetarian dishes are not

always included in the choices. Please book by Sunday 16th December.

Because a lot of people are away over the Christmas period and we are on the edge of our "catchment area" there will be plenty of room for your Christmas guests.

On the same day - Traditional Mince Pie Specials – 3.00 pm – St. Jean de Sauves

Grant will be running the by now traditional 'Mince Pie Specials' on his 'O' gauge railway layout the same afternoon. Come and play with and watch trains and have a cup of tea, mince pies and cakes. Non-playing partners, all other members and their visitors are welcome to come just for the chat and refreshments. There is no need to telephone beforehand if you are coming for the afternoon just turn up!

If you are coming on from the lunch please follow Kate and Grant from the restaurant.

Lunch & Wine Group **Tues 7th Jan** **11.30 am** **Le Tallud** **Diane & Keith Mousdale**



The first meeting of 2020 of the Lunch and Wine Group in January will be held at Diane & Keith's home near Le Tallud. The wines for the lunch will be from the Beaujolais region, with food from the same areas or anything

French.

If you would like to join us or would like more information please contact Diane & Keith. If anyone needs directions to the venue, these will be sent upon request. As there is a maximum number of 14 attendee bookings are on a first come basis but in the event of oversubscription anyone who cannot be accommodated will be offered first refusal on the following meeting

Library Group **Wed 15th Jan** **2-4pm** **Menigoute** **Martin Hughes**

The Library Group will this month be meeting at the home of Martin Hughes in Menigoute.



There are a wide variety of books available to browse and a cup of tea and biscuits to boot. Collect a selection of books to read during those quiet times on a cold winter's day

Northern Walk **Fri 31st Jan** **10.30 am** **Le Beugnon** **Eric and Michele Hansford**



The January walk will be a repeat of the walk in March 2019. If you missed that walk you won't want to miss a second opportunity to appreciate some of the best views in the Deux Sevres. Of course in order to enjoy the views it is necessary to climb a bit but none of the inclines are too challenging. There are some very muddy patches and it will be essential to have decent footwear.

We plan a long walk of around 8km and a short walk of 4km, on a mix of track and tarmac starting from the church in Le Beugnon, 79130 which has a small car park but there is more parking available at the Salle Nelson Mandela! Around the corner, or at the football field. There are toilets at the church. Non walkers are welcome to join Audrey at our house for a hot drink and a chat. Lunch will be at Chez Chantal in L'Absie at about 1pm. As usual they are offering a 4 course meal with wine for €15.00 I will need to know whether you want the meat, fish or vegetarian option. To sign up please email Michele stating your options by 26th January 2020.

Friday 28th Feb 2020. 10am. Exireuil Annette Green Date for the Diary!

Walk around Exireuil followed by lunch at the Château de Sauge, Saivres as featured in Channel 4's 'Escape to the Chateau'. Full details in next month's newsletter!

REPORTS ON RECENT EVENTS

Second Reading Group

Mon 28th Oct

Chapelle Thireuil

Report by Joyce Roberts



To our own amazement, we managed to have excellent discussions about two books this month: *The Eyre Affair* by Jasper Fford, which we highly recommend, and *The Words in My Hand* by Genevieve Glasfurd, as well as welcoming a tenth member to our book club.

The Eyre Affair was a 'great choice for a summer read' which we agreed was 'completely nuts', 'weird and wonderful', 'daft and funny'.

This futuristic novel differed greatly from *The Words in My Hand*, set back in Descartes' day, in France. We thought it gave 'good insight into life for women in the 1600s' but that its 'ending was disappointing', as if it were finished by another author.

Lunch & Wine Group

Tues 5th Nov

Exireuil

Report by Julia Murray



The November lunch and wine met Chez Green on yet another wet and stormy day. The theme was Bordeaux wines based on the merlot grape and we were treated to 4 tasty examples, accompanied by a variety of French dishes. Apparently the people of Bordeaux spent so much time and energy developing their vineyards, they had little left over to devise recipes to match!

Our starters were all suitable for our vegetarian members: a roasted red pepper and butternut squash pâté, a delicious mushroom soup and a pepper tart. The cheese course of Morbier, Tomme des Pyrenées, Roquefort and Goats' cheese worked very well with the Bordeaux wines. Desserts were a fruit Pithiviers and a tarte aux pommes. We were well and truly spoilt.

Our thanks go to Diane for the organisation, Keith for the informative explanation and his delicious selection of wines and to Annette as our hostess.

First Reading Circle

Thurs 7th Nov

Craon

Report by Lyn Chamberlin



A very small select group of readers met to discuss the merits of 'Magpie Murders' by Anthony Horowitz. This was a book in two parts written by a prolific 'young' writer (in comparison to the readers!), who has indulged in many crime and mystery stories both in book form and on the TV. The book centres around a publisher who is given a novel to read, but it lacks the final two chapters. Whilst trying to source the unknown ending, the author meets his maker and the two murder mysteries run alongside one another to meet at the final conclusion. The book was an intriguing concept and very addictive, although there was a definite love/hate relationship between our group of critics and the characters within the two tales. The afternoon was finalised with tea and cakes and discussions about the many other books which we have been read during the past few weeks.

GT Quiz

Thurs 7th Nov

Menigoute

Report by Newsletter Team



Seven teams of Get Together's finest quizists descended on Les Amis in Fomperon to contest the autumn quiz.

What with Wooden Spoons, Connection Canadienne to the Fab Four, intellects and knowledge were pushed to the limit to answer a century plus of questions on conundrums, music, visuals along with general knowledge and a new round of all answers beginning with the letter Q.

After a titanic struggle that went to the wire the winners from the Les Voyageurs team [Hansfords and Greens] were presented with wine. All participants were rewarded for their efforts.

An 'in absentia' prize was given to James Green for answering the May quiz question as to the Euro election voting results.

In the interval Les Amis provided a very enjoyable meal.

All thanks to Jonathan and Martin for asking and setting the questions

The Photo Group

Mon 11th Nov

La Motte St. Heray

Report by Martin Hughes



Fifteen of us met at Jackie's house before she and Jeremy move a few kilometres South.

The first part of our meeting saw us splitting into three groups, delving into the more complex features of our cameras.

Modern cameras are so sophisticated these days that it pays to look into the preprogrammed apps to help take the best photographs. e.g. Animals, children, sport in motion etc.

After coffee, tea, biscuits and plenty of cake we had our usual

critique of photos taken to demonstrate our interpretation of light, shade and shadows and elected Roger's photograph as the month's winner.

Many thanks to Jackie for her generous hospitality and Steve, Roger and Howard for leading our groups.

Spice Club

Wed 13th Nov

Scillé

Report by Joyce Roberts

We had a fun inaugural Spice Club meeting, involving delicious Indian dishes and desserts. Beginning with two types of yummy samosas, we then tucked into a range of curries and rices. The wild rice, nan breads, brinjal bahji and biryani were very much appreciated! Everyone's food and conversation melded together beautifully and we are looking forward to next month's festivities!



Southern Walk

Thurs 14th Nov

St. Soline

Report by Fred Oram



A small group of our members met up at the church in Sainte Soline for our monthly walk, There were 16 of us for the walk which started off at 10:30 from the church for a short preamble around the fields surrounding this quaint and typical French village. The sun and blue skies had been requisitioned and both duly turned up for duty, so all were pleased. It was a very easy walk, no hills or forest tracks and

fortunately despite the rain we have been having over the last month or so, it was wet but not flooded. Only 3 of our members chose to opt for the short walk which was approx. 4 kilometres, the remaining 13 of us ploughed on to complete the 'long' walk for a total of approx. 6.5 kilometres. Following the walk we all met up at Le Petit Moulin for a lunch of fish and chips, which despite taking a little longer to be served than would be expected we were all served at the same time and the food was hot and very tasty. Overall a successful sojourn with all participants having had a nice day out. Thanks to Fred and Jane for the organisation and to Simon and Sara at Le Petit Moulin for the catering.

Non – GT News

Service of communion with carols – Pompaire, Sunday 22nd December at 11.00am

For several years quite a lot of folk from GT, CSSG and Reaction have attended the Carol Service at Parthenay or more recently Pompaire. Sadly we shall not be able to hold this service this year. We shall, however, be holding a service of communion at Pompaire and all will be made very welcome. Should anyone ask please let them know. Geoff Cornwall.

Reaction Theatre's Keynotes Choral Group will be holding Carol Concerts at the following venues:

Sunday 1st Dec Christmas Market at Terves - exact time yet to be established.
Sunday 8th Dec Amailloux Church - 3.00 pm
Friday 13th Dec Fenioux Café des Belle Fleurs - 8.00 pm approx.
Saturday 14th Dec Le Retail Church - 3.00 pm
Sunday 15th Dec Coulonges Church - 3.00 pm

All churches very nice, good acoustics and warm !

Opera and Ballet at the Cinéma Le Foyer de Parthenay

I, rue Denfert- Rochereau, 79200 Parthenay 0549640530 <http://cinema.foyer.cc-partenay.fr>

For those of you who enjoy the excellent Royal Opera House performances of ballet and opera I alert you to the following programme:-

'Don Pasquale' (Op) Donizetti 24th November 2019 (with Bryn Terfal)

'Coppelia' (Bal) Delibes 26th January 2020

'The Sleeping Beauty'(Bal)Tchaikovski 16th February 2020

'Fidelio' (Op) Beethoven 19th April 2020

'Swan Lake' (Bal) Tchaikovski 17th May 2020

Tickets are 13€ and this includes drinks and nibbles in the interval.

All performances are on a **Sunday afternoon** and start at **15h.** Submitted by
Jonathan Townsend

Terves English Christmas Market

This will be held in the Salle at Terves on Sunday 1st December from 10.00 until 17.00
There will be many artisan stalls as well as mulled wine, cake, crepes and of course fish & chips. Father Christmas will be there with Mother Christmas and a few elves so the children can visit him and receive a gift. There will be lots of entertainment throughout the day including The Ukulele Band, The Children's Choir, Keynotes Choir, Backpackers and Ex-Pat Radio, Come and enjoy the fun

> See the Facebook page: Terves Christmas Market"

Chateau de Sauge

We have two new members Paul and Donna Newman who featured on 'Escape to the Chateau, DIY' this last week. Part of their plans that they have already completed is to establish an English tearoom, which is open Fri-Mon from 10am to 5pm. They would love to welcome all members and their contact details can be found on www.chateaudesauge.com Martin Hughes

New Book in Publication by GT Member, John Henstridge

I am pleased to say that having had my book 'Soul Train' successfully edited, it has now been published on kindle. A free app for kindle is available from Amazon to enable reading on mac, pc or tablet. A free look inside taster is available before you buy - please spread the word, John Henstridge "

Cancer Support Deux Sevres

aims to improve the lives of people affected by Cancer in Deux Sevres

CSDS direct number is 06 40 77 27 35

or contact Cancer Support France on freephone number 0800 240 200

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17 Gendarmes

18 Pompiers (Fire Service – also trained for Medical Emergencies)

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Don't Forget to Download the 'In Case of Emergency' Leaflet off the Get Together website,

gettogether-france.org, move your mouse to 'information', then click on 'Useful Links'.

You will find the ICE leaflet at the top of the list. Why not keep a copy by your phone and in your car.

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