

Newsletter

December 2011

www.bordeauxbritish.com



WEBSITE VERSION of NEWSLETTER
(without contact details)



*Wishing BBC
Members
a very
Merry Christmas
and a
Happy and Healthy
2012*

December already ! and soon it will be Christmas. Your committee would like to encourage you to attend our yuletide events,. The first is on Saturday, visiting the Christmas Market, and of course our Christmas Dinner on 16th, but please note that urgent booking by 5th December is needed for this (risk of cancellation). We are also introducing a new 'Get rid of the Christmas excesses' walk on January 6th (also lunch !!) There are also a number of January events planned.

Upcoming BBC Events

Christmas Market, Lights & Supper : Saturday 3rd December

It is now too late to book for supper, but you could be lucky ! and if you are one of the nearly 30 who have booked you may appreciate a schedule reminder. The schedule gives options to meet at various times and places as follows :

- 6.30** Meet at the Grand Theatre and proceed to Marche Noel. Explore/buy/sample hot spiced wine
7.30 Return to the Grand Theatre for the walk up Cours d'Intendance to Place Gambetta turning left towards Porte Dijeaux. Walk back down Rue de la Porte Dijeaux (which becomes Rue St Remi).
8.00 Arrive at Le Wok

For 16 euros, Le Wok offers an 'eat-all-you-can' buffet, including a wide range of starters and desserts. For the main course/s, and part of the restaurant's attraction, is that you choose your raw ingredients and see it being cooked - with the sauce of your choice - at the 'wok station'. Wine, chinese tea/coffee is not included in the price.

To get there: Tram C stops at Quinconces, Tram B stops at the Grand Theatre, on Tram A you will need to change at Hotel de Ville and connect with Tram C. If you want an easy access parking after the meal, park in Place de la Bourse, turning left immediately after going through the ticket barrier. This parking area gives direct access to Rue St Remi.

You may like to precede this visit with one to the Church Bazaar, see 'Whats On' below.

To join us and enjoy a fun evening, please contact Gloria

Christmas Dinner : Friday 16th December 7.30 for 8.00pm

We have chosen a new venue this year, in a delightful small restaurant with an excellent reputation, Le Domaine des Tentations at Gradignan. Entertainment will include a quiz. The menu will be fixed with a vegetarian option, and will be 40€ for members and 50€ for non-members. This price is fully inclusive of the following five courses, plus Kir and amuses-bouches, ¼ wine and coffee:

Pétales d'artichauts au foie gras, vinaigrette balsamique
*

Ravioles de langoustine au citron vert
*

Granité au vin rouge
*

Filet de boeuf en croute au fumet des bois
*

Buche de Noel

English translation : Petals of artichoke with foie gras and a balsamique vinaigrette; langoustine ravioli with lime; red wine sorbet; fillet of beef in pastry with a woodland sauce (a sauce made with dried cepes, shallots, port and cream); chocolate Christmas log.

The restaurant holds a maximum of 50 people so it would be very helpful to know even at this early stage how many people would like to attend. Directions will be included in the December newsletter.

As many people like to stay overnight, there is a hotel, Le Chalet Lyrique, less than 1km away (a short stroll to aid digestion!). Double rooms at the weekends cost approximately 67€, 76€ and 79€ (depending on size and location) but we can have a further 10% discount if a minimum 10 rooms are booked. So again, early reservation for a hotel room would be advisable.

Please let **Eileen** know by 5th December if you would like to come to the dinner, and if you would like to book a hotel room.

Get rid of the Christmas excesses (Walk !) : Friday 6th January

I am organising a walk around the village of Martillac, South of Bordeaux. The walk will be about 9 km long and will take approx. 2 hours to complete. The idea is to have the walk in the morning starting at 10h00 from the church at Martillac and then retire to a restaurant nearby to have lunch.

Further details will be available nearer the time of the walk but those who are interested please contact
Piet

Visit to Centre Jean Moulin + Lunch Tuesday 17th January

We plan visiting the Jean Moulin Museum which has exhibits covering the incredibly brave people who joined the Resistance movements in France during WW II. In addition a special exhibition is in progress, called 'Survivre - Iberlen'/Genocide et ethnocide en Europe de l'Est. Rare and unedited documents/photos have been collated for this exhibition which runs until 8 April.

Jean Moulin (1899 - 1943) was appointed by Gen. de Gaulle to unify the five resistance groups in France. He was betrayed by one of his resistance colleagues and captured by the Gestapo under Klaus Barbie. Although he suffered tremendous torture, he never revealed his contacts. It is thought he died on a train bound for the East probably from his injuries sustained under torture though the Gestapo claim he committed suicide. His ashes are buried in the Pantheon in Paris which is the highest honour that can be bestowed on a person .

Getting there: The museum is in Pl. Puy Berland opposite the Cathedral St Andre. Entrance is free.

We propose meeting at La Mama restaurant, 21, Rue des Remparts (around the corner) for lunch at 12.15 for 12.30. Details, price, menu etc will be in the January newsletter. Please book with Norma

Invitations

ACT4 Events We have been contacted by ACT4 a French association which is 100 strong in Lyon and has recently opened a Bordeaux branch. They describe themselves as having a passion for the English language and culture and hold regular English speaking events in Bordeaux to which they would like to invite BBC members, they are also keen to introduce us to new restaurants! We in turn are initially inviting them to some of our events. For information on ACT4 please check their website www.act4.fr . If you would like to attend any of their events please contact Géraldine

Christmas Ball Members are invited to a Ball on 10th December - 7.30pm-1am at Salle de Fete in Sainte-Foy-La-Grande. Two dance bands for Boogie and Ballroom dancing, and a gourmet Buffet Supper, tickets cost € 28 pp, available from 06.81.46.19.83 (english spoken)

Whats on and Where

Cultural Institute Bernard Magrez The opening exhibition has started and runs until 14 January. The institute is in the centre of town not far from Bld Pierre 1er - directions etc (unfortunately only in French at present) can be found at the following page - <http://www.institut-bernard-magrez.com/informations-pratiques>. The opening exhibition shows modern art inspired by Picasso's painting "Lady Sitting" (1949)

The Musee des Beaux-Arts/Galerie des Beaux-Arts re-opened, after refurbishment, on the 24th November. They are showing work from their reserve stock, not previously seen, and new acquisitions.

Useful Bordeaux Cultural Websites

www.bordeaux.sortir.eu

www.bordeaux-tourisme.com

www.lepingalant.com

www.BilletReduc.com/Billetterie Site that sells all tickets with up to 80% reduction

www.Abacart.com Dîner spectacles in Bordeaux

www.box.fr A great site for info on entertainment

Church Bazaar : Saturday December 3rd: 2.30 -5pm

This is at the Lycée de l'Assomption opposite the British Consulate, the entrance is at 370 Boulevard Président Wilson. For three hours you will have the opportunity of catching up with old friends, as well as making new ones. Nibble some of the typically British or American delicacies at the tea-stall, replenish your stock of English books on the book-stall, pounce on some traditional marmalade or one of the other gastronomic delights from the Home Produce stall and choose some wine with which to celebrate the festive season in style at the Wine stall. What better way to initiate the Christmas period ! For further details, please get in touch with Anne. You could follow on with the Christmas market visit. (see above)

Carols by Candlelight : Saturday December 10th at 5pm

Don't miss the chance of hearing the Christmas story, listening to the choir and singing all the well known carols in the beautiful candlelit Chapel of the Lycee de l'Assomption, Boulevard Président Wilson, Bordeaux. The Carol Service is definitely not to be missed. If you arrive with less than a quarter of an hour to spare, you will have to stand for the entire service, such is its popularity.

Church Services in English

These will be held on Sunday 4th and 18th December at 10.30. On Saturday 10th there will be a Carol Service at 5pm (see above). There will of course also be a Christmas Day Service (Family Communion) at 10.30 ! These services will be in the Chapelle de l'Assomption, 370 boulevard Président Wilson, Bordeaux. For further details, including services throughout Aquitaine, see monthly Newsletter at **Chaplaincy of Aquitaine** web-site: www.churchinaquitaine.org or contact the Chaplain: The Revd Dr Paul Vrolijk (tel 05 53 23 40 73) chapaq.office@gmail.com

Info of Interest

The Tourist Office in Bordeaux has commissioned a new film on the city's history and development. The local company producing this have asked the BBC for help in creating the English sub titles. If you can help, please contact Karl

Useful Information for France Telecom/Orange subscribers. There is an English speaking Helpline which will help you sort out your problems. The number is **09 69 363900**.

Anti-cold call service operational from 1st December. If you are annoyed by the ever increasing interruptions from cold marketing calls, you can now log on to www.pacitel.fr . This will prevent the vast majority of cold calls from reaching you, but allows calls from businesses you normally deal with (eg your bank).

Have you got anything to offer ? Please send to the editor and we will publish it subject to availability of space.

Recent BBC event reports

Walk & Picnic at Vendays : Sunday 6th November

If not the longest, then the road to Piet's house is one of the straightest to be found in the lower Médoc, but I still managed to get lost! At the appointed hour our group of 9 assembled to begin the walk. A misty rain was falling, softening the light and accentuating the quiet fall beauty. Once properly shod and slickered we struck out. Two groups quickly formed, those following the 9 km loop Piet had prepared, and those opting for the short-cut version.



With maps and yes, GPS, in hand or pocket, we went out to meet nature. Nature, in the form of a wild pig hoard, had already wrought havoc in Piet's garden, but in broad daylight we felt we were safe and thus ventured out. On sandy forest roads we wandered. Activities included walking, mushroom collection, walking, talking, walking, map consultation and some more walking. All of which brought us back to Piet's house in just under two hours, or just over! In either case we did arrive back a good half hour before those who had taken the short route! They had been to the river where a kindly and wise old fisherman turned them around and pointed the way back . . . or so I understood their story. In fact, I think they were just trying to keep us from knowing exactly where Milou found this most amazing mushroom soon to be recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records!



Back at Piet's house, where mushroom was not on the day's menu, Piet treated all walkers to a full sit-down lunch featuring his now famous beef bourguignon. Among other things, Milou had prepared a pear tart and brought chocolates and if it had not been for the necessity of some to catch the last ferry to Royan we might all still be at Piet's! Our thanks to Piet for organizing this walk and for inviting us to share a hearty meal around his table, and to all who contributed something of themselves (I guess that's everybody!) to making this such a pleasant day. And let's hope Piet gets that new fence up before the "sangliers" come back to do some more gardening.

Report and photos by Elizabeth

Royal British Legion Remembrance Service : 13th November

Mike and myself represented the members of the BBC on a glorious, sunny morning at the Allied Military Cemetery in Talence. We, as a club contribute € 100 to the funds of the Royal British Legion, and also pay € 27 for our wreath.

The Rev. Bramwell Bearcroft, Assistant Chaplain of Aquitaine, conducted the service. Piper Jack gave a rendition of the European Anthem, and trumpeter M. Richard, the Reveille and Last Post. 20 representatives of the Union des Anciens Combattants were on parade with their standards.

Eight wreaths were laid on behalf of the following associations :

The Mayor Ajoint of Talence
The Prefecture

Her Majesty's Consul,
The Chairman of the RBL South West France,
The Royal Naval Association
The Royal Air Force Association
The Deputy US Consul General
The Bordeaux British Community

Next Year 11th November falls on a Sunday. The RBL Service will be followed by the French Remembrance Service in the main Cemetery of Talence.

Report by Graeme

Visit to Smicotom Recycling Centre : Friday 18th November

Our rendezvous was the recently refurbished l'Embellie Restaurant in Listrac-Médoc where a distinguished group of twelve BBC members had a sumptuous lunch. This was washed down by local Médoc wine plus a chilled red (nouveau) Gaillac d'Or that was so new it had only arrived into the restaurant the day before.



We then drove a short distance up the road to the recycling plant run by Smicotom, near St Laurent-Médoc, where all the waste from the yellow-lidded bins is separated by conveyors belts into paper, cardboard, magazines, water bottles, plastics, aluminium and cans.

This separation is mainly done by machines but towards the end of the process, there is a small team of ten people who sort by hand in order to separate the plastic products that have slipped through the machine process. Each of the products is then pressed by a compressor and tied into a large bundle and stored in the yard outside ready to be transported for appropriate industrial use. For example, *boules* are made from recycled cans in northern France.

My two over riding memories of the visit are

The Pickers – I did not envy their job standing in a noisy environment picking the products from a constantly moving conveyor belt from 8.30am until 4.30pm with only a 15 min break in the morning and an hour off for lunch.

The Cleanliness – the depot was kept clean and tidy with no undue smell. It was like *déchetteries* in the Médoc, which are kept tidy with pride. This depot was kept spick and span with not even unwanted paper against the perimeter fence as is the case in sites that I have experienced in the UK.

Thanks for our esteemed President for organising the visit which was a little bit different to the norm. We saw at first hand why the French are streets ahead of the UK in recycling. Considering the topic was rubbish, it was all very interesting.

Report by Anthony, Photo by Piet

Lunch +Wine Trade Talk : Tuesday 29th November



Many thanks to Graeme for having organised a lovely lunch at the Restaurant Chapeau Rouge, Cours Chapeau Rouge on Tues 29th Nov. About 30 members, including a few new faces, attended the lunch at this pleasant restaurant near the Grand Theatre in the centre of Bordeaux. We all arrived just after noon for a chat in the upstairs room before the three hour, three course lunch.



The guest speaker, William , who has been in the Bordeaux wine trade for over 50 years, gave a brief talk at the end of the meal, covering the changes he has experienced in the industry over this time. He talked about the difficulties facing entry level wines, whilst the top 80-120 Chateaux fly ever higher in the luxury brand market. Despite its unique character, Mr Bolter thinks that the structure of Bordeaux's distribution, with Chateaux mostly selling through negociants rather than directly, is likely to continue. Many

thanks to Mr Bolter for his reflections, and we wish him much success with his own wine making project.

Report by Sarah, photos by editor

Quiz Night with ACT4 : 22nd November at Charles Dickens Pub

Four members met with Gerladine the president of ACT4 Bordeaux, and five of her colleagues to participate in an English pub quiz. We split into two teams of five and had an enjoyable evening. Neither the ACT4 group nor ourselves stayed until the end as the progress of the quiz was very slow. ACT4 are a group of English speaking French people who are keen to mix with native English speakers and it was the feeling of our group that there could definitely be an interaction between us. BBC cards were handed out and it is hoped that we will be recruiting some new members from this lovely younger group.

Report by Gloria

BBC Information

Membership Secretary:

We have had quite a good response to our appeal in last month's newsletter to pay your membership contribution to the BBC.

However, sadly to say, there are still a number of members who have, perhaps, not read their newsletter or have forgotten to put their cheque in the mail.

I wish to remind you that those members who have not paid their membership fee by 1st January will no longer receive a copy of the monthly newsletter.

Therefore, I would appeal to all members who have not paid, to send your cheque (made out to the BBC) to the membership secretary as soon as possible.

Recruitment

To keep an effective and dynamic membership we all need to continue to recruit new members. Your committee is continuing to improve our PR, and taking a number of initiatives, but the most effective way to keep growing is word of mouth – and the more mouths the better ! So if you hear someone speaking English in our region, please introduce them to our BBC. Be prepared with BBC business cards (available from committee members).

Greetings from the C..... (Estapona, Spain)

Michèle and David C..... wish all BBC members a very enjoyable Christmas and a healthy New Year. Thank you for all your friendship and the enjoyable events so many people organised over the years (especially les R.....), We look forward to seeing you on our visits back to beautiful Bordeaux.

www.bordeauxbritish.com Our BBC website is our major shop window, enabling English speakers in our region to easily find us, please help to promote it!

Members Adverts

Mislaid DVDs Michèle and David C..... cannot find two DVDs they had in France: "Mama Mia" and "Love Actually". If any BBC member borrowed these, please let us know so that we can sleep soundly again! Thanks

Horse Radish Plant offer. I have just harvested our horse radish and I have quite a reasonable number of baby side roots which I am saving to replant in the spring. I had to import the parent plants because they are very difficult to find here. If any BBC members are suffering from horse radish deprival, I can offer a medium term solution, since they usually take a couple of years to settle

in. First come first served. Pickup from Port Sainte Foy before Christmas please. They need to be kept in the fridge for planting out in March.

Members Recommendations

We have a very good ophthalmologist who speaks excellent English and wondered whether other members would be interested in having her details. She is based in Ambares et Lagrave and is a great Agatha Christie fan! If you are interested please e-mail me on

If you are looking for an authentic Turkish restaurant in Bordeaux, David and Michele recommend the "10 Janissaires", at 10 Cours Victor Hugo. This is about 50 metres from the city end of the Pont de Pierre/Place Bir Hakim. The owner and staff are Turks, the food is fresh and delicious. The restaurant offers tables outside , a bit noisy but you see life in all its colours, but the newly arranged arched interior is typical lovely old Bordeaux stone. Our tip: don't choose the Turkish wines, the Turks still haven't got it right, but the food is great! We had generous three-course choices with drink for about €25 each.

Long term members of the BBC may remember some memorable evenings and meals at the Villa Primrose Tennis Club in Bordeaux. Maurice Perot has now moved to Gradignan. It is a charming restaurant set amongst trees and a park next door to a Moulin and one of the stopping points on the route de Compostelle. Anyone wishing more details please contact Deirdre . Please note this this is the venue for our Christmas Dinner this year.

If you are trying to sell an unwanted possession in France, have you tried www.leboncoin.fr I have had excellent results, Eileen B....

Are you really missing British style, bacon, sausages, pork pies? Contact Deirdre

Looking for a good B&B in the Virsac area? Very convenient for the A10. Can be recommended by

If anybody has a computer problem that can't be sorted out by a friend or BBC member, the name and phone number of a very helpful computer professional who does home visits is available from Lionel

If you would like to place an advert or recommendation here (members only), please send an email to the editor - Phil C..... at If you have advertised please advise when the advert is no longer relevant

Next Newsletter

The editor needs your copy by 29th December