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Classes for Children



Où est? Teacher Claire Hardy and members of the Children's class getting to know one another in their first lesson

The beginning of Term 1, 2009 brought great excitement as **children's classes** had begun for the very first time. Although the idea of having children's classes was first mooted in 2006, they did not get underway. They were back on the agenda in 2008 and this time progress was made with three classes commencing at the beginning of this year, two classes on Saturday mornings and one for children younger than pre-school age on Tuesday mornings. We are very grateful to Debra Burn (Regional Librarian) and the Rockhampton Regional Council for making the Toy Library at the North Rockhampton Library available for these classes.

Unfortunately our **teacher, Claire Hardy**, became seriously ill at the beginning of Term 2 and classes have had to be suspended. Claire is a highly qualified teacher trained in France and with experience in teaching in France and for Alliances in Dubai and other parts of the world. We wish Claire a speedy and full recovery.



A note from Debra Burn

Just a note to let friends at the Alliance know that I'm about to depart on my dream trip to France and Switzerland! I arrive in Paris Thursday 21 May, and for the first few days I'm **couchsurfing** with French hosts in Paris (see couchsurfing.com for an explanation of this!). Then down to Tours to study at **le centre linguistique pour étrangers** where I'm being hosted by Annick and Johny Delavigne (thanks to Nerida for recommending this course!). Then Vienne for a few days, then on to Genève where my sister lives, with several other side trips to France planned e.g. Chamonix and Carcassonne! I hope to be fully fluent by the time I get back (one can always hope anyway), and look forward to sharing my experiences with the Alliance on my return, after the July school holidays! There's a great book about couchsurfing called "Sleeping Around: Couch Surfing Your Way Around the World" written by an Australian journalist Brian Tahacker, available from the libraries.



From the editor

The success of Issue 1 of **le bulletin** has led to the decision to proceed with Issue 2. Following from the articles written by Nerida O'Hare and Gayne Kidd, I have already heard of others hoping to attend courses in classes in France. My special thanks to everyone who contributed to Issue 1. The focus this time is on **travel**. Most adult students enter classes because they wish to travel to France. However there are other French speaking destinations, some of which are much more accessible. In this and subsequent issues I hope to bring information on a variety of destinations via contributions of members and associates. If you are interested in **contributing to Issue 3** or in knowing more about the Alliance de Central Queensland and its activities, contact me on 4934 1363 or handleyrandp@activ8.net.au or Susan Yates on 0410 878 536. Issue 3 will be published in December so articles will need to be in by the end of October.

Pat Handley



Community Administration Services have kindly printed this issue of *le bulletin*

Nouvelle-Calédonie

Susan Yates

Nouvelle-Calédonie, with shops, restaurants and language that are authentically French, is only 1600 km NE of Brisbane - 2½ hours away!



Avec deux amies à Nouvelle-Calédonie

L'année dernière, tous les présidents des Alliances Françaises d'Australie ont été invités à visiter la Nouvelle Calédonie au mois de novembre pour participer au Premier Sommet de la Francophonie dans le Pacifique. Les billets d'avion, l'hôtel, la nourriture, presque tout était payé par le gouvernement français. Le séjour en Nouvelle Calédonie a duré une semaine. J'ai été agréablement surprise par le voyage de Brisbane à Nouméa, qui a duré seulement deux heures et demie. Nous étions logés dans un bel hôtel, Le Surf, en face de la plage à Anse Vata, à 10 minutes du centre-ville. On avait organisé pour nous une grande gamme d'activités. Nous avons passé une journée entière au forum, à échanger des idées sur notre travail en tant que présidents des Alliances Françaises et à écouter des conférences sur l'histoire de la Nouvelle Calédonie. Nous avons fait une visite au Centre Tjibaou, le musée de la culture kanak,

qui a une architecture extraordinaire et de beaux jardins, et une autre visite à l'Université de la Nouvelle-Calédonie, avec ses magnifiques bâtiments tout neufs à côté de la baie. Nous sommes allés au théâtre, où nous avons vu des spectacles de chant, de poésie et de danse qui témoignaient d'un grand talent artistique. On nous a invités aussi à trois réceptions somptueuses: l'une à la Mairie au centre-ville, l'une à l'Aquarium, et la troisième dans les jardins du CREIPAC, c'est-à-dire au centre de l'enseignement du français à Nouméa, qui se trouve dans le bâtiment de l'ancienne prison coloniale. C'était une semaine pleine de découvertes et nous avons été charmés par la gentillesse et la chaleur de notre accueil. Je ne m'attendais pas à trouver des magasins et des restaurants si authentiquement français, ni à entendre parler un français si pur si loin de la France. Pour ceux qui désirent améliorer leur français et qui cherchent un peu de l'atmosphère française sans faire un voyage de 26 heures à l'autre bout du monde, je recommande très fort d'aller visiter la Nouvelle Calédonie.



Cheap accommodation in Paris

A visit to Paris shows very quickly that a lot of *Parisiens* make a good living from the visitors who make it the most visited city on the planet and thus there are few bargains. **But students** of the AF Ile de France (Paris) who stay in one of the hotels associated with the AF (Citea chain) for 4 weeks get a **50% reduction** on the 7 day regular tariff—from 57€ to 29€ /a night in 2008. This is for a 3-4 star room including ensuite and kitchenette, 10-15 mins by metro from the AF.

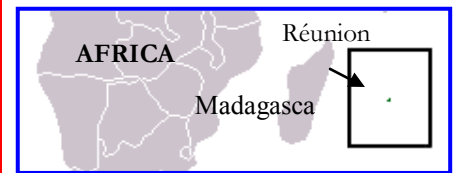
For the intrepid student from down under there are some other real bonuses. Almost all the courses are for 4 weeks and in the course of a month it is possible to get on quite friendly terms with most of the following: *les receptionnistes et les femmes de ménage, l'artisan boulanger, la propriétaire de la petite épicerie et les serveurs au restaurant au long de la rue*, who soon take you for a regular customer and are happy to chat a bit, especially about that far off paradise called Queensland.

Sayne Kidd



La Réunion

Kelen Barker



My husband and I visited La Réunion, **an overseas department of France**, on our ninth **house exchange**. This lushly tropical island with its rugged coastline and interior has people whose ancestors are from France, Asia, Madagascar and Africa. French is the official language but English is also spoken if you struggle with French. The people of mixed race speak Réunion Creole and have a charming architectural style.

Réunion's **economy** relies mainly on tourism, sugar cane and vanilla with its all pervasive smell. (Vanilla-flavoured rum is appalling).

Our apartment was a few minutes walk to the beach at St Gilles les Bains, a **resort** about an hours drive from the capital, St Denis. The beach is sandy but there are rounded, uncomfortable stones just as you enter the water. A most interesting feature of the island is the **very active volcano**, Piton de la Fournaise, on the SE side. The road to the top is narrow and exceedingly winding – the local drivers behave like reincarnated kamikaze pilots – so in a tiny, manual car our drive was a hair-raising experience' as was the one to **Cilaos** in the central highlands. Here there are lovely walks through unspoilt bush and it is much cooler than on the coast.

Local produce, with many unusual leafy greens, was invitingly displayed at **village markets**. The Creole **cuisine** was not as spicy as we'd expected. *Rougail*, a tomato-based sauce, is much used with various meats, whilst *magret de canard* features on many menus and rice comes with almost everything.

It is now possible to fly from Australia via Reunion to Paris.

PS If you are interested in house swapping go to www.homelink.org



Exploring Paris on foot

Pascale Levacher

As I'm getting organised for my next trip to France, I find that I'm spending quite a bit of time searching for nooks and crannies I've not yet explored in Paris. My last stay in Paris, for three days in 2007, was extremely enjoyable, interesting and cheap!

The **hotel** we stayed at is in the Rue Saint André des Arts in the 5th arrondissement. It was clean, very well priced at 45 €/night including breakfast, and in walking distance from just about everywhere. We started our stay by walking to **Rue Mouffetard**, where **markets** are held everyday except Monday. Sunday is the biggest market day so we were lucky. We had a fantastic time sampling rustic breads, fresh stone fruits, berries and delicious patisseries, which we ate while strolling up and down Rue Mouffetard. We also bought some food for our next lunch and dinner (including a large chunk of 'poulet fermier' and some more bread).

Monday was spent walking through the **quartier du Marais**, looking at medieval architecture, magnificent **private mansions** (the Hotel Saint Saens), locating the **first brick house in Paris** (rue des Archives) and finally, discovering a village within the village, **Le village Saint Paul**, a group of antique shops and small boutiques scattered within

an enclosed courtyard, once the private gardens of King Charles V. Very close to the village are the remnants of **King Louis XII's fortified rampart**, built to protect Paris while he was at the crusades. I highly recommend the **Rue des Rosiers** for its authentic parisienne appeal and atmosphere. There are too many lovely spots in Le Marais to mention and it's really worth doing a little research before getting there!

On our third day, we crossed the Pont Royal and found ourselves in the **Louvre Precinct**. We then headed towards **les Tuileries**, went around **Place de la Concorde** and walked up

the **Champs Elysées** to look for some music at the Virgin Mega Store on the Champs. We had lunch on the top floor of the store, surrounded by very hip Parisians. Afterwards, we walked down **Rue Du Faubourg Saint Honoré** where a lovely gendarme explained to us that we were looking at the private gardens and residences of foreign ambassadors in Paris - rather heavily guarded but beautiful and so quiet! We walked on, not really knowing what would be next. We had the incredible good luck of catching a glimpse of President Sarkozy and his entourage driving around the Place de la Concorde. We soon found ourselves in **Rue de Rivoli** and narrowly missed sighting Arnold Schwarzenegger. The entrance to his hotel was teeming with men in black who answered our questions with emphatic 'nons!' and frantic reporters strapped to expensive looking cameras. Not too disappointed, we then explored Rue de Rivoli (it has some lovely **boutiques!**) and walked into '**Angelina**', the renowned 'salon de thé' which reputedly has the best hot chocolate in the world. We then walked on to arrive at the **Place des Vosges** and ordered a coffee in the first 'bistro' we could find. We left for Brittany the next day, absolutely charmed by our Parisian adventure....

Paris is best explored on foot and I have found many **websites about walking Le Marais, Montmartre, Pile de la Cité and other historical areas.**

You can buy plans of Paris in any newspaper stall. If you need to travel by tube, it is much cheaper to buy 10 tickets (a carnet) at a time. Also, the best way to reach Paris from Charles de Gaulle Airport is to catch the 'navette', the train that will take you straight to a few major train/tube stations in the centre of Paris (B3 line).

I'm heading back in June and am still researching my itinerary. I can't wait!



.AGM of the Alliances Françaises of Australia



Susan Yates, Pat Handley, Maryse Papin (Canberra) & France Licastro (Central Coast NSW) at AGM Dinner

This meeting (18 - 19 April) is the one time of the year when the 31 AF's of Australia meet to report on and share their experiences, and to plan for the future. Our delegates were Susan Yates and Pat Handley. Susan has regularly attended the AGM since the inception of AF de CQ, both in her capacity as President of our Association and as a member of the Federal Committee. It was Pat's first opportunity to participate and they both found it most worthwhile.

Booksellers specialising in French were available. Three small books with accompanying CD's and two subscriptions to monthly magazines were purchased for the use of students. As well, valuable contacts were made and we are in line to host a mini French Film Festival next year, with films supplied by the AF de Paris.

Susan must report on our activities each year. Her report began

Cette année s'est extrêmement bien passée. Nous attirons de plus en plus membres, nos cours sont très appréciés, et l'Alliance de Rockhampton a une excellente réputation

which should makes us all very happy!

Social Activities

The Alliance Française, the largest cultural organisation in the world with branches in 136 countries, has two main aims: providing high quality instruction for students and making **French culture** known. Our social activities are designed to encourage the experience and enjoyment of French culture.

French films are high on the list and so far two films have been shown. In **February** we showed the very funny *Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis*, a satirical look at the stereotyping of people living in more remote areas. This night was made most enjoyable with a good crowd, a splendid supper and the **celebration of Janet Stephenson's birthday**. Janet's husband, Col, looks after the technological side of things for us - thank you Col. *Ily a longtemps que je t'aime* was shown by Rocky Flix in **April**.

This film was on a more serious note and the acting was superb. **Rocky Flix** is most supportive of us and always



schedules French films on a Thursday as our classes are on Wednesday, their usual night. The next French film to be shown is *l'heure d'été*, described by one reviewer as 'a subtle exploration of the connections between life and art' in the classic French film style. **Rocky Flix** is showing this film **9 July, 6.30 p.m. at the Walter Reid Cultural Centre**.

Our **weekly French conversation groups** continue to be well received. By popular demand we had **evening meetings** in March and May, both of which were well attended.

A **BBQ** on Mt Archer was enjoyed by a small group in **May** despite the inclement weather.

The most important event of the year is the **Bastille Day Dinner**, scheduled for **Friday 17 July at Kershaw House**.

It is open to members and their friends. A typically French 4 course meal will be served. The cost is \$50 for members and \$60 for guests. Tickets are available from *Health & Harmony*, 29 June - 13 July.



New Resources

As already mentioned new resources were acquired at the annual AGM. These are abridged stories accompanied by CD's which are graded for different reading levels.

- *Perceval* by Chrétien de Troyes - B1
- *Les misérables* by Victor Hugo - B1
- *Le mystère de la chambre jaune* by Gaston Leroux - B2

The 2 annual subscriptions are:

- *Notre temps* changed to *Vivre Plus* because the former was too strongly biased towards retirees.
- *J'aime lire* which is aimed at children but is also very enjoyable for adults.



Websites

Federation of AF's of Australia:
www.alliancefrancaise.com.au will allow you to view the websites of the capital cities as well as many other Alliances
Couch Surfing: couchsurfing.com
House swapping: www.homelink.org
For children: <http://www.tintin.be/>

Alliance Committee

President: Susan Yates (0410 878 536)
Vice-president: Pascale Levacher
Secretary: Pat Handley (4934 1363)
Treasurer: Nola Pontifex
Publicity Officer: Debra Burn
Committee: Dawn Kyreakou
Rebecca Mackenzie
Nerida O'Hare



Accessing French Language

Adult Classes

- Beginners, intermediate and advanced
- Wednesdays 6.30 – 8.30 p.m.
- Library, Glenmore High School
- Qualified fluent French speaking teachers

Private Classes

- By arrangement
- Susan Yates (0410 878 536)
- Bernadette Bernleitner (4933 0301, 0438 642 778)

Translation and Interpretation

- Bernadette Bernleitner
NAATI qualified

Classes Terms 1 and 2

This year began very well with thirty-five students and a very big beginners group, largely due to **favourable exposure** in the local papers. Many participate because they are planning to **travel** and a number are already in **France**. As usual Term Two numbers were lower with nineteen students. There have however been a number of enquiries for Term Three.

Last year **Bernadette Bernleitner** resigned from her teaching and committee positions with the Alliance to continue her studies. Her hard work and professionalism were very much appreciated. She continues to support us and attend conversation group.

Our new teacher **Fil Olsen** has been working with the beginners. Fil is from Glenmore High School. She studied French throughout High School and has a French major as part of her Teaching Degree. She has had considerable experience in teaching and speaking the language. Fil is of Italian background. She has travelled extensively in Europe and plans a trip to France next year.

Tongue Twister

Pauvre petit pêcheur, prend patience
pour pouvoir prendre plusieurs petits
poissons!

