



WRINGTON

THE FRENCH CONNECTION



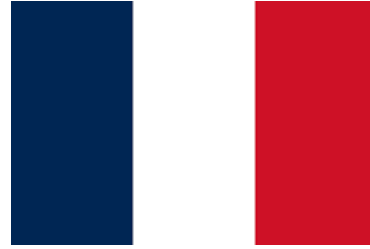
VILLENEUVE-
LÈS-
BÉZIERS

Welcome to your *June* newsletter



Photo: courtesy of Trip Savvy

NEWS FROM FRANCE



France has announced its first car battery plant, sited at Lens in northern France, less than 40 miles from the British coast. This is part of President Macron's plans to 'reindustrialize', and to reinvigorate that area of France, already being dubbed 'battery valley'. The factory, which will create thousands of new jobs, will be owned by ACC, an equal partnership of Stellantis (which owns Vauxhall, Citroën and Peugeot), Total Energies and Mercedes-Benz. France, Italy and Germany are combining to subsidize a series of these new factories, to the tune of £7bn, across all three countries. This leaves the UK lagging well behind, leading our own triumvirate, Stellantis, Jaguar/Landover and Ford, to lobby the government to renegotiate with the EU. The only UK hope at the moment is close to home: Tata steel, which owns Jaguar/Landover, are investigating the possibility of opening a plant in Bridgwater.

'France is a paradise where the people who live there think they are in hell'. How bad are things really in France? The answer is, according to statistics, pretty good for most people. Yet a catastrophic mindset persists. Thanks to John Adams for this interesting and perceptive article on the French national psychodrama: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/commentisfree/2023/may/01/france-gone-to-hell-politics-nostalgia>

NEWS FROM VILLENEUVE



The drought warning is sustained in Villeneuve, and in the whole region of Hérault. People are being asked to save water wherever possible.

The local magazine of Villeneuve lès Béziers is available to read, in French, here <https://www.calameo.com/read/005462676a07ad0b6151d>

CULTURAL NEWS

It's the **Cannes Film Festival**. Lots of fun to be had, and some controversy, of course. Catch up here! <https://www.france24.com/en/tv-shows/encore/20230526-cannes-2023-the-festival-s-top-red-carpet-moments>

A hand-made wooden 2CV is going up for sale in France. Cabinet-maker Michel Robillard took 5,000 hours to make the car, which is beautifully hand-crafted out of walnut. It may fetch as much as €200,000. See it in action here:

<https://www.euronews.com/video/2023/06/01/this-fully-functioning-handmade-wooden-car-is-going-up-for-sale-in-france>

The Pompidou Centre in Paris is showing its age. In 2025, the world-renowned national collection of modern art will close for five years, to undergo major renovations that will cost more than £125m.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/chrisobrien/2023/05/27/paris-pompidou-centre-will-close-in-2025-for-five-year-renovation/?sh=2f10ed8d60fb>



PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

The programme published below is also fully available on the website, and thanks to **our administrator, Anne-Marie Savory**, on social media: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, with links from the website. <https://www.facebook.com/people/French-Connection-Wrington-Twinning-Association/100089579449000/>

<i>June</i>			
Tue 6	CineClub 4: <i>Paris brule-t-il? Is Paris Burning</i>	6.00-6.50 Zoom Film to be seen in advance individually.	john@wrightontwinning.co.uk for Zoom link to join discussion
Tue 13	Conversation Group LUNCH	12.30 Woodford Lodge	
Thur 22	Conversation Group	3.00 Langford Inn	
Thur 15	Wine and cheese: social evening and discussion of plans for twinning events and visits 2023-34.	Doors 7.15 Start 7.30 Wrighton Bowling Club clubhouse	Hold the date. Some ideas will be circulated in advance but also welcome on the night
	Boules	<i>Detail to come</i>	Contact Frank@Wrightontwinning.co.uk
	Virtual Villeneuve: meet the twin	<i>Detail to come</i>	Contact: jane@wrightontwinning.co.uk
<i>July</i>			
Tue 4	Cine Club 5: <i>Fahrenheit 451</i>	6.00-6.45	Zoom
	Boules		Contact Frank@Wrightontwinning.co.uk
	Virtual Villeneuve: meet the twin		Contact: jane@wrightontwinning.co.uk



FRENCH CONVERSATION

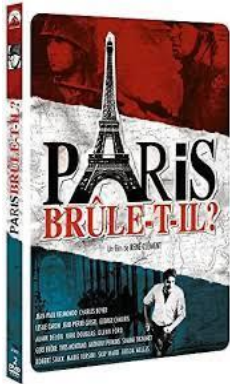
Come along for some friendly and lively conversation in French. All levels are welcome, and the Langford inn is a comfortable, relaxed place to meet and share. Dates for the conversation group in June are:
Tuesday June 13th, 12.30pm, Summer Lunch at Woodford Lodge

This is a lovely event and a good chance to meet the regulars in the group. We speak English for the most part, as this is a social occasion. If you would like to join us, please contact Margaret Hancock (see below) as soon as you can.

Thursday June 22nd, 3pm, Langford Inn

For more information, please contact Margaret Hancock at margaretdivonne@gmail.com.

CINÉ CLUB



The **June** meeting will be on **Tuesday 6th at 6pm** on **Zoom** to discuss **Paris, Brûle-t-il?** Made in 1966, it is a Franco-American production directed by René Clément, with a star-studded cast of co-writers: Francis Ford Coppola, Gore Vidal, Jean Arenche, Pierre Bost and Claude Brulé. It is about the liberation of Paris in 1944, by the French Resistance and the Libération forces, and the cast list seems to include everyone from Jean-Paul Belmondo to Orson Welles. The story is based on a book of the same name by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre. *The film is available on Amazon and Paramount Plus, and as a DVD.*

Our meeting on July 4th at 6pm on Zoom will discuss François Truffaut's film **Fahrenheit 451**, also made in 1966, and starring Julie Christie (who plays two characters), Oskar Werner (who played Jules in *Jules et Jim*) and Cyril Cusack. It is based on a novel by Ray Bradbury. It was Truffaut's first film in colour, and his only film not in the French language. The setting is a dystopian future, in which the government dispatches 'Firemen' to destroy all literature, in an attempt to prevent revolution and conscious opposition. At the [27th Venice International Film Festival](#), *Fahrenheit 451* was nominated for the [Golden Lion](#).^[5] *Fahrenheit 451* is available on Netflix and as a DVD.

Please note there is no longer a universal log-in for French Connection and Wrigton Twinning Zoom meetings. You will be sent an invitation to join, and a link, shortly before the meeting. If you are NEW to Ciné Club and would like to join in, please let John Adams know (jradams@gmail.com) and he will send you the Zoom invitation. Current members will automatically be informed

Recipe of the Month

On 15 June at 7.30pm there will be a wine and cheese evening in the Wrington Bowling Club clubhouse. For this newsletter, therefore, instead of a recipe I'm going to highlight three cheeses that come straight to mind when thinking *Mmmm. Fromage là là.*

Comté would be my choice of cow's milk cheeses. It comes from the Franche-Comté region of France, in the east, bordering on Switzerland. It is made from unpasteurised milk and, surprisingly (given that it is not so well known here) it has the highest production of all of the Appellation d'origine contrôlée cheeses in France. If you don't know it, it's a semi-hard cheese, aged for 12 months. It is most similar to Gruyère, but has a more buttery flavour with more hazelnut. A piece of Comté, enjoyed on its own, is a real treat—in fact I've just had to break off from writing this to go and eat some!

Selles sur Cher is an unusual and interesting goat's cheese. It is made in Western Sologne and has a thick, soft texture, like clay. It tastes salty, goaty, some say a bit grassy, and the older it gets the more nutty the taste. It's made from full fat goat's milk and dusted with wood ash, which inflects the flavour if the rind is eaten. (See **Le Mot Juste** below for its meaning)



The greatest sheep's milk cheese in France is, of course, **Roquefort**. What a sensual feast, at its best, this is. Made from unpasteurised, full-fat sheep's milk, *Penicillium roqueforti* is introduced before the cheese is pressed, which produces dense blue veining in the white curd. The flavour is tangy, salty and complex, and once acquired, never acquitted.

There is, all of this said, a very fine sheep's cheesemaker in Wrington, **Holmwood Cheeses**. They make exclusively sheep's milk cheese, and a full range from curd cheese, feta ('**Pickled Ewe's Milk Cheese**') and halloumi ('**Hello Ewe**') through to their signature **Old Demdike**, a hard cheese, and its companion, **Tibb**. They also make some delightful small, soft cheeses, in disc and heart shapes, and a wonderful soft cheese called **Lamb Leer**. Highly recommended.

Homewood Cheeses open every Friday at their unit in Ubley, but phone first in case they are away for a special event:
Unit 4, The Old Sawmill, Ubley, Bristol, BS40 6PE 01761 463498

Wine of the Month

I'm going to suggest something a bit unusual. We are definitely into rosé weather, and I found this the other day:



Saint Mont Rosé, Les Bois Mathieu, Plaimont 2022 (the new vintage just become available) is a rosé from Gascony, and is a blend of four grapes: pinenc, (local to this region), cabernet sauvignon, tannat, and a little cabernet franc. It has the light, refreshing dryness that we want from a rosé, and the red fruit flavour is gentle, but there is a fullness in the mouth as well. It's probably at its best served as an aperitif, but would go well with a tomato salad, and of the cheeses mentioned above, would probably match the *Selles sur Cher*.

Le mot juste

La Selle is one of several words in French that mean poo, but are used to describe cheese. *La Selle* means a saddle, and *se mettre en selle* means to mount a horse, to get back into the saddle; but the meaning moved over in the mediaeval period to include stools and motions. So *aller à la selle* means to go to the stool, to have a motion.

Another such word is *crottin*, meaning horse dung, usually applied to goat's milk cheeses, and describes the round lumps that both some cheeses and most horse faeces share. I suppose this unflattering application to cheese comes from the pong that some of them can emit. And this is not just French cheese. A friend of mine recently bought, from Bath Guildhall market, a Cheddar. The cheese stall there is run by a Frenchman. She asked him for his strongest Cheddar, whereupon he pointed to one, saying 'it's this one, but you won't like it'. Miffed by this implication of cheese wimpishness, she tasted some and bought it. She then went on to do some charity shop browsing, as her family ethos is only to give presents that have been 'pre-loved'. Not until she got to the third shop did she realize that the off-putting smell she encountered in each shop was nothing to do with second-hand objects, it was emanating from her!

Lindsey Shaw-Miller, Newsletter Editor, The French Connection.