

## CITYLINK



### Chairman's Letter

**Anne Scicluna** writes: As I write, it seems the very hot weather has crossed the Channel from France and the rest of Europe and joined us here in Chichester. It is quite difficult keeping cool and Portsmouth Water has issued a warning that we should conserve as much water as we can as they are finding it difficult to supply enough for us all.

I do hope you enjoyed the last bumper edition of Citylink issued especially for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The issue reminded us of many past events over the life of our Association. I'm sure you will want to join me in thanking the editors and contributors for their efforts on this.

Since the last issue of Citylink, the Friends of Chartres took a stall at the Jubilee event in Priory Park, and through this we welcome six new members. I am sure they will enjoy being part of our Association and please make them welcome at our events. The Three Cities event, as part of the Festival of Chichester, was also successful. Local actor and RSC Associate Artist Edward Bennett was 'In Conversation' with Philip Robinson to an almost sell-out audience. This was followed by canapés and wine from France, Italy and Malta – and a lot of friendly chat.

One recent highlight was the annual Garden Party held at **Michael and Valerie Bevis'** home in West Way. A good number of members attended on one of those very hot July Sundays, but there was welcome shade from the gazebos on the lawn, and some lovely trees to sit under. The food and drinks brought by our members were delicious, and a nice spread between savoury and sweet. It was a great chance for members to catch up with one another. Thank you, **Michael and Valerie**, for hosting the event.



A very successful visit to Chartres took place in May when the Orchestra of Chichester University joined the Grand Choeur of Chartres for a series of concerts which were very well received. The Grand Choeur will return to Chichester next June with our exchange visitors.

We received from Chartres a plea from a 20-year-old young woman seeking an au pair post in the Chichester area, and also another letter asking if we might have a young person willing to undertake an eight-month post at a school in Chartres. This would suit a gap year student and would certainly help language learning on both sides. If you know of anyone interested, please let us know. We need some younger people to become interested in our twinning association.

Meanwhile, your committee has continued to work and plan an interesting programme for the coming few months. Watch out for the Fish and Chip Supper at Fishbourne Centre on 16th September, an Away Day to the D-Day Museum in Southsea on 5th October, Cine Club evenings on 16th October and 13th November. Finally remember to put the Christmas Soirée into your diary for 1st December in the Sherborne Room at the Bishop's Palace – a superb historic venue and always an enjoyable evening.

I hope to see you soon at one of the events. Meanwhile, I join the committee in wishing all members a happy holiday time. See you in the autumn.

### **The Présidente of the Amis de Chichester**

#### **Yvonne Chrétien**

Sadly, Yvonne caught Covid and has been unable to send us a contribution. Her computer is having problems with its hard drive and she finds it difficult to write using her phone (don't we all). She reports the weather is hot in Chartres.

## **Editorial**

Contributions to **Citylink**, including *Just for Fun* ideas, would be very welcome and should be sent to [foccitylink1959@gmail.com](mailto:foccitylink1959@gmail.com).

## **Recent Events**

### **Stephen Haigh writes:**

#### ***Edward Bennett 'In Conversation' – 20th June 2022***

The Three Cities Event - a celebration of the Chichester friendships with Chartres, Ravenna, and Valletta - was held at the Assembly Rooms as part of this year's Chichester Festival. The large room was nearly full to capacity—around 100 people attended the event. The evening started with a conversation between **Edward Bennett**, local actor and Royal Shakespeare Company Associate Artist and **Philip Robinson**, past Vice-Chancellor of Chichester University.

Edward Bennett spoke of his early life in Gloucester, studying at Cardiff, later at RADA, and of his stage career—at one point taking over at the last minute the role of Hamlet from David Tennent who had been suddenly hospitalised. An interesting discussion followed about theatre arts education as Mr Bennett has initiated theatre education at the CFT and the RSC. At what age children should study Shakespeare and whether state school children would enter the profession in the future were topics he mentioned. His In Conversation was well received by the audience and ended with an appreciative round of applause. The audience chairs were then removed and the conversation continued while authentic wines were served and trays of nibbles circulated. Two anonymous wine tasters circulated all three association tables and sampled the wines served by each. Their unanimous final decision was the French wines to be the best of all. *(Editor's Note)* The number of circuits and glasses of wine sampled needed to make their final decision was not disclosed.



**Ellen Haigh writes:**

### ***Friends of Chartres Garden Party – 17<sup>th</sup> July 2022***

Last year's Garden Party was postponed because of wet weather and when we eventually met up, we sat and chatted in not the warmest of temperatures. Just as the party ended, the rain started. Chairs were gathered up and put inside and we hurried off after thanking the hosts. This year's event was the complete opposite—hot and sunny. As you can see from the pictures, we were wearing sunglasses instead of waterproofs. There was plenty of shade under the marquees and trees and a pleasant time was had by all, enjoying each other's company while relaxing with a drink and treats. Here are some pictures taken by **Julia Sander**. Spot the empty plates.





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[www.friendsofchartres.org.uk](http://www.friendsofchartres.org.uk)

**Jim Payne writes:**

*England, Europe and Chartres too...Jim Payne shares his memories of the 1953 Coronation and travelling around Europe in the 1950's.*

1953 is a very memorable year for me. We needed the fun and glamour of the Queen's Coronation. England was very nearly bankrupt by World War II and the whole of Europe was striving to rebuild its cities and societies. Certainly, my memories of the Coronation and the 1950's resonate with the country's situation today.

I slept on the pavement of Whitehall prior to Coronation Day and my overriding memory of the magnificent event is of the Queen of Tonga insisting on riding in an open carriage to share the crowd's discomfort in the rain.

I had been to Germany courtesy of the British Army and wanted to see more of Europe. My art college experience had seen me take an interest in architecture and its history. Chartres Cathedral with its 12<sup>th</sup> century rose window was high on my list. The English Cathedrals of Canterbury, St. Paul's, York, and Coventry I had visited already. In preparation, I joined the International Motor Cycling Touring Club in London and the day after the Coronation, I flew with two friends and two motorcycles from Lympne in Kent to Le Touquet in France.

(Editor's note: some of you may remember the car ferry service which operated from 1948 to the 1970's). As Britain was in financial difficulties, we were allowed to take £25 only in cash out of the country. We needed to do quite a lot of planning including obtaining petrol coupons from the Italian Embassy as they still had petrol rationing.



After our flight, we arrived in Paris with no problems and Dennis, who had served his National Army Service in Paris quickly found us accommodation and also tickets for the Folies Bergère, a wonderful show. Next day Chartres and the Cathedral and I am sorry to say I was disappointed. A large, gloomy building it was then. I am delighted to see it is now being cleaned both inside and out.

My second item to see in Europe was a Swiss glacier. I had an exciting ride up through the Dolomite mountains in cloud and then the highest mountain road in Europe, the Grossglockner in Austria. The campsite in Switzerland was OK but we could not afford the mountain railway. We drove to the village of Grindelwald and walked inside the glacier which was very good.

Keen to experience a mountain view we drove our motorcycles up the mountain following the train track. This entailed lifting our bikes over the railway lines and finally, we had to admit defeat and return to the village. It was my turn to buy the coffees but I had lost my wallet and passport. I reported the loss to the local policeman and he said,

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“No problem, it will be found.” My solution was to visit Bern and the British Consulate. After a thirty-mile journey to an unhelpful British Consulate eventually I got them to issue an emergency passport. I reported back to our helpful local policeman and was greeted with my wallet and passport. A railway worker had found them. I quickly extracted my remaining Swiss money and said, “Please reward the finder.” “No need,” replied the policeman, “I have already given him 10%.” What a wonderful idea! Next day a dash across France at over 60 mph and we safely flew back to England. Little did I know then that 45 years later I would be visiting Chartres as a resident of Chichester. I hope at some point to see the Cathedral fully cleaned and in its full glory.

***Editor’s Note:***

Many thanks to Jim for his contribution. I found the following information which follows on from Jim’s comments.

### **Controversial Cleaning**

Over the centuries, dust, smoke from candles and incense, and other pollutants coated and darkened both the exterior and interior of the church, giving it a sombre atmosphere. In recent years, renovation of the exterior has been largely achieved, and the lengthy, pains-taking cleaning of the interior is under way. Some lovers of the cathedral find the cleaning a shock: parts of the dark building they’ve known all their lives are now light as new. It doesn’t seem right to them. Others applaud the restoration, noting that the church’s purest state is the lightness it had when it was new, and that much of the stone statuary was originally decorated in bright colours. The most intense controversy seems to surround **Our Lady of the Pillar**, a small statue of the Virgin Mary revered by many. Dark-coloured for centuries, it is now lighter, as it was originally—but the change is extreme.



**Our Lady of the Pillar** statue before & after cleaning,

## Friends of Chartres Events: September-December 2022

Events can be booked by email to [focevents1959@gmail.com](mailto:focevents1959@gmail.com) or by returning the booking form provided with this edition.

### Friday September 16

**Social Evening  
with Fish and Chips**

**The Fishbourne Centre, Blackboy Lane,  
Fishbourne PO18 8BE**

**6.00-10.00 pm**



Try your hand at pétanque and test your knowledge on our quiz.

**Tickets: £13.50**

### Wednesday October 5

**Away Day to  
The D Day Story**

**Portsmouth PO5 3NT**



**Meet 11.30 am in Café at D Day Story for  
self-guided visit, to include talk on  
famous Overlord Embroidery  
Tickets £14.00**

Option of lunch at  
The Courtyard, Southsea Castle  
*Travel options will be discussed  
prior to the visit.*

### Cine Club Returns

**The Studio, New Park Centre,  
Chichester PO19 7XY  
5.30 pm**



**Sunday, October 16  
*Lost in Paris*  
Sunday, November 13  
*The Extraordinary Adventures of Adèle  
Blanc Sec*  
Tickets £5.00 per film**

### Thursday, December 1

**Christmas Social**

**The Sherborne Room, Bishop's Palace,  
Canon Lane, Chichester PO19 1PY  
7.30 - 9.30 pm**



**Numbers limited so book  
your place early**

**Tickets: £13.50**

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## Information Page

**President**  
**The Right Worshipful the Mayor of**  
**Chichester**  
Councillor Julian Joy

### Officers and Committee

**Chairman:** Anne Scicluna 789065

**Vice Chairman:** Michael Bevis 781016

**Secretary:** Rosie Speer

[focsecretary1959@gmail.com](mailto:focsecretary1959@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:** Stephen Northdale 822148

Clare Apel 783738

Julia Sander 527435

Anne-Louise Briggs 784346

Paul Everett 603513

Ellen Haigh 937027

David Nason 573716

John Wilton 788833

### Conversation Circles: September – December 2022

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.

#### Petit Cercle du mardi

##### 10.30 - 12.00 (First Tuesday of month)

Tuesday September 6

Tuesday October 4

Tuesday November 1

Tuesday December 6

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

#### Cercle Avancé

##### 5.00 – 6.30 pm (2nd Monday of month)

Monday September 12

Monday October 10

Monday November 14

Monday December 12

**Venue:** The Duke and Rye, West Street, Chichester PO19 1QU

#### Petit Cercle du jeudi

##### 10.30 - 12.00 (3rd Thursday of month)

Thursday September 15

Thursday October 20

Thursday November 17

Thursday December 15

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

If you would like to attend a conversation circle and have not done so before, call **Julia Sander 01243 527435**.