

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 21 JANUARY 2024

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The year 2023 saw the AFA return to a normal rhythm of activity to everyone's satisfaction. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all those who have contributed to the smooth running of an association that is very different from any other: the Committee, the Activities Leaders, but also the members who bring it to life.

The Committee met once a month at the Maison des Associations, except in July, to determine the outlines of the Association's operations. I sincerely thank the members of the Committee for their support and help. I would like to remind you that the work carried out within this framework is a voluntary activity that requires a great deal of time and energy. Some members live long ways from Royan but still attend all the meetings. I would particularly like to thank the secretaries, Ann Warden and Christine Martaguet, as well as the treasurer, Jonathan Smith, and his assistant, Lynne Hall, and the vice-presidents, Gwyn Cherriman and Claudine Sauge, for all their work over the past year. Without their active participation, being President would be an impossible task.

The Activity Leaders play an essential role in the smooth running of AFA and I would like to thank all those who have agreed to continue leading an activity or to take over an activity whose leader wanted to take a break. The Committee wished to organize a meal for all the leaders to thank them for their involvement and to forge and maintain links between the activities, which are all small internal groups, often with no connection between them. These are exchanges that it is necessary to maintain in the context of meetings for all members, such as conferences, dinners or lunches, picnics, concerts...

During this year, new activities have been created:

- The Theatre Club, whose show, directed by Janyvonne Pihouée, was a great success. It will continue in the coming year;
- CinéVo TeaTime, in association with Créa in St Georges de Didonne. After Annie Devestel, Pam Cauwel took over this relationship and negotiated the AFA's membership which enables members to obtain reduced admission rates. I thank her for that;
- The Club Dance, which was housed in a beautiful room in the Château de Saujon thanks to Dominique Richard's relations with Saujon town hall, did not survive a half-year due to a lack of men. It is regrettable that the male members of AFA did not feel involved in this activity.

WhatsApp groups have been set up for certain activities (Sunday walking, Theatre, Art Club, etc.), with the aim of keeping group members up to date with the activity.

For further information on our activities, see the website and the activity report.

Our membership is growing: 316 people at the end of the year, including 161 French speakers and 155 English speakers. AFA's presence at the Forum des Associations in Saujon helped to make the association known, which we are delighted about. The website, managed efficiently by Stephen Elliott, is also proving to be an excellent means of information and communication, particularly for new members, who can contact Hubert Vigouroux, responsible for welcoming them. AFA is in fact a bilingual association, with an international character, as the members are not only French and British but also Australian, North and South American, Belgian, and even Austrian... It is this whole mix that makes it so rich and gives it its exceptional character.

Our finances have remained very healthy thanks to the vigilance and skill of our treasurer, enabling us to keep the membership fee at 15 euros per person. Thanks to Jon for his efficient collaboration, which gives the President peace of mind. *See the financial report.*

I would also like to thank Chantale Feunteun, who was in charge of the membership for three years before being replaced by Lynne Hall and Hubert Vigouroux, as well as Christine Dale, thanks to whom the monthly programmes, an essential communication tool, can be sent to all members.

I would like to add two special events in 2023:

- The invitation from the British Ambassador to the reception of King Charles III and Queen Camilla in Bordeaux. Gwyn Cherriman, Vice-President, and myself, were proud to have been invited by name on behalf of the AFA;
- An invitation to present AFA on France Bleu La Rochelle.

It remains for me to say how proud I am to represent AFA and how much I enjoy meeting each of its members. I have one year left in my mandate, which I hope to fulfill to the best of my ability in the interests of everyone.

Annie Sadarnac
President of AFA