

Report from Julie Wright, President AAGP

The Board decided to have just one report this year, incorporating into my report the reports they submitted on request and I will start by thanking the existing board and associate board members for all their work and support during this my first year as President:

Membership - New Members

I thank Lish, Membership secretary for her devotion and especially in chasing outstanding membership fees and compiling the Members Directory, which so many find an invaluable resource.

For 2024/2025 there were 448 individual members (which included 269 families and 35 children).

The AAGP continues to attract new members on a regular basis (30 new members since the last AGM). As New Members representative, Elaine reaches out to new members with an individual invitation to some of the bigger events. This has now become standard practice. The results are clear – 20% of those attending the AGM are new members. Many thanks for her efforts to reach out to our most recent members.

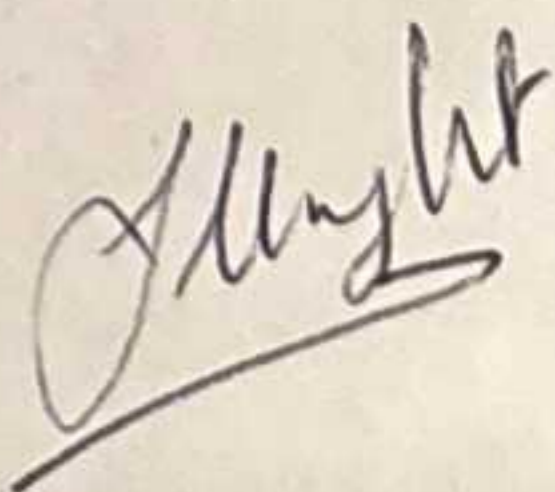
I particularly wish to recognise new members who are particularly active: such as Jean-Louis Morgenthaler and Michel Philippart and note with pleasure that the weekly coffee mornings and the evening “apéros” have proved popular with new members, and if these members have ideas for new events and activities they will have the full support of the board.

Social Events

Karen Watson, our events co-ordinator, had to resign from her position on the board because of work commitments and was unavailable for most of the year.. We thank her for all her hard work during her time as a Board member.

Cheryl Wright stepped up her work as associate board member with responsibility for events., in particular the Annual Picnic and this year's AGM & Welcome party.

The number of events organised over the last year has been impressive: the AGM and Welcome Party, the Annual Picnic, the Quiz Night, Burns Night, two Folk Evenings, a Beaujolais Nouveau Night, Wine Tasting, a talk on



Chocolate, the Library Book Sale, two talks on the Steve McCurry exhibition, regular coffee mornings and evening "apéros", and An Afternoon in Provence, a talk by Jennie Mayle.

This moving and extremely well attended event raised significant funds for Jennie Mayle's charity of choice the Fondation Frédéric Gaillanne, an association that trains guide dogs specifically for visually impaired young people.

Since this event Jennie has graciously accepted to become an Honorary Member of the AAGP.

Our thanks to all those involved in the organisation of these diverse events.

Small Groups and Advertising

The Small Groups are progressing very well. They are active and new groups include French Conversation, card playing, and modern poetry. The gourmet lunches are operating on an ad hoc basis. We note that the bridge group is losing some ground and members are encouraged to contact Elisabeth Goergen if they would like to be involved in this activity. A reminder that Jane Storr is your contact for ideas on a new group activity.

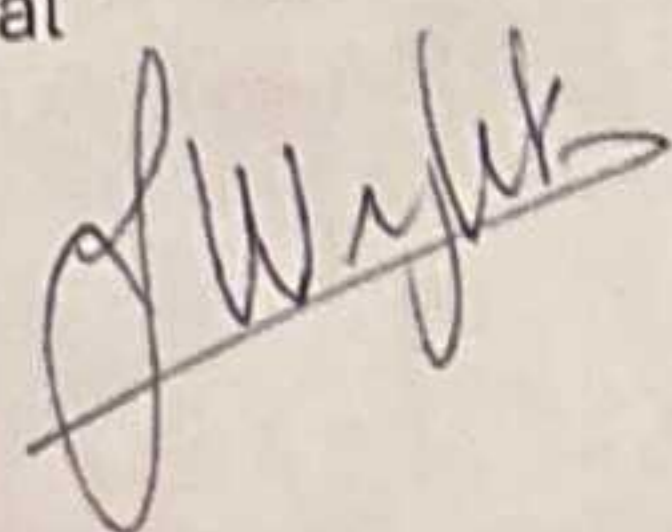
One of the Small Groups, the Marseille Group, is becoming a bigger player. Headed by Brigitte Kraus it holds activities at least once a week (mostly lunches, mostly regulars, but there are some newcomers). The Book Club affiliated to the Marseille group is extremely popular, so much so that it is now too large to be held in Brigitte's home.

A big thank you to Brigitte Kraus for her work with a highly active and growing group.

In terms of advertising, we have a reasonable level in the Newsletter, but more would be welcome. We encourage members to advertise their services in the Newsletter and to speak to others outside the AAGP who might be interested. Again, Jane Storr is your first contact.

Newsletter

Speaking of the Newsletter, this continues to be a favourite with members and a big thanks goes to Michel and all the newsletter team. Several



members contributions were highlighted on the front page and I invite more members to come forward with their art and photography.

AAGP Communication & Website

The webmaster team has increased to three people – Tim Williams, Christine Chang and KC King, which gives more flexibility.

The website is currently being updated/fine-tuned, and any feedback or input is welcome. For information, the web-building software is Xara.

The team has had good feedback on the large print version of the newsletter. Members who wish to move over to the electronic version of the Newsletter should contact Elisabeth Goergen.

There had been some difficulties encountered in receiving electronic editions of the Newsletter, but these have all been resolved case by case.

Otherwise, all is progressing well. For the next few weeks there will be an overlap of the old and the new passwords for access to the Members' section of the website.

Library

The library is open twice a week at the AAGP headquarters at Pont de L'Arc and run thanks to a dedicated team of ten volunteers, led by Sue Boutier and Cathy Kirby.

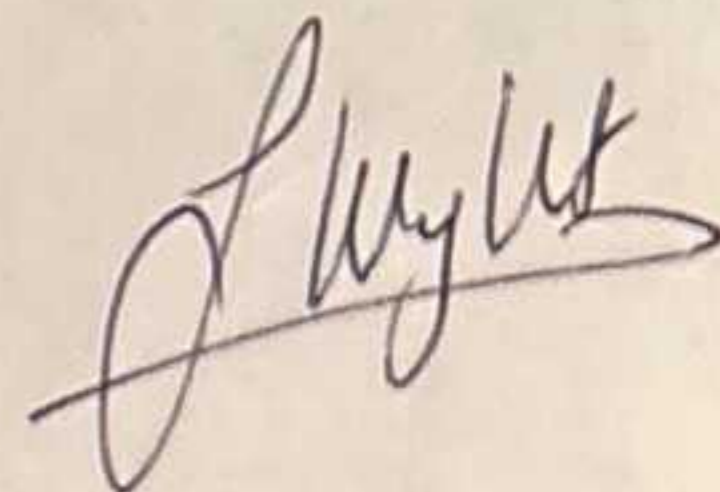
It welcomes 100 regular readers, has over 1000 books, and some DVDs.

200 books have been acquired over the last year thanks to donations and purchases.

Last year's book sale was a huge success and a good source of income for the AAGP. A book sale for the coming year has not been scheduled, but the teams is looking into ways of continuing this tradition.

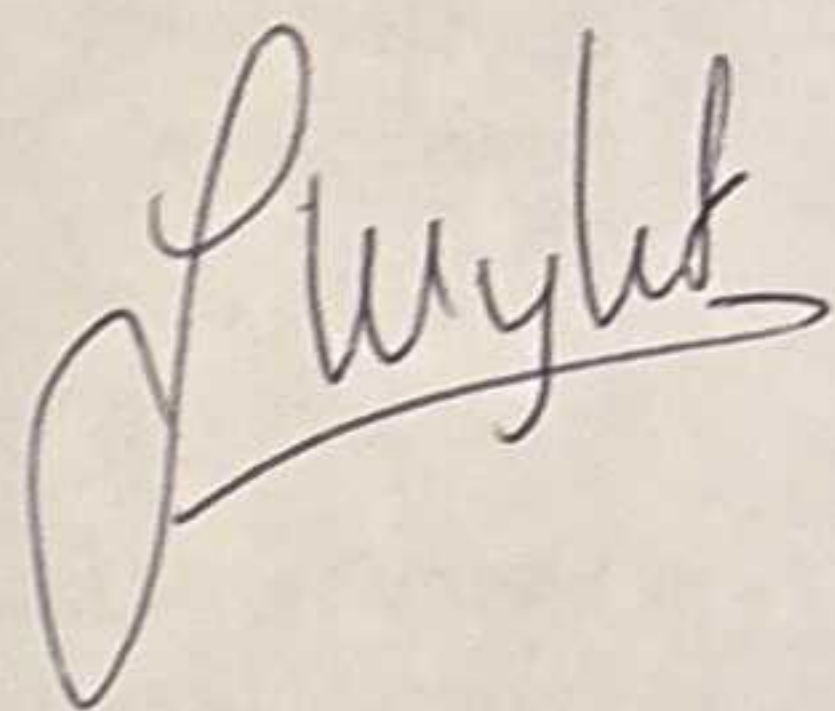
The New Board

I sincerely thank the outgoing secretary Brigitte Ponsart, for her support and dedicated work over many years. She is unable to attend our AGM but has been presented with a gift in appreciation of her work. She is wished well in her new life in Fréjus.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Wright', located in the bottom right corner of the page.

And I am now happy to propose Jean Louis Morgenthaler for the full Board position of Social Events Coordinator. The position of Secretary remains vacant for the time being.

And finally, I thank you all for your wonderful support throughout the past year.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "L. Wright". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored paper background.