



# Newsletter March 2024

N° 2024 - 03



## Anglo American Group of Provence

Published by the AAGP/Editor : Sharon LIGHTOWLERS

Distributed only to AAGP Members.

### Letter from the Board - March2024

It's official, spring is here, the days are getting longer and the nights shorter - the time to plan activities for outdoors as well as inside. At the end of the month we will be celebrating Easter and the first bank holiday since the new year.

This month we will be celebrating St Patrick's Day on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March with an Irish evening of music, games, an Irish quiz and, of course, food and drinks. For full details, read on.

On 14<sup>th</sup> March at 6.30 pm, Steven Ratner, an American law professor, will be giving a talk on international law relating to armed conflict and human rights. This is open to both members and non-members and seats at the conference are on a 'first come, first served' basis so please arrive in plenty of time to ensure your place. Again, full details are in this newsletter.

Although the majority of our members join (or re-join) at the beginning of the year in August/September, we do have several families join during the year. We would like to offer a warm welcome to all who have recently joined the AAGP and we hope that they have found activities and events to participate in. If any of you have ideas for something new, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

As you are aware, Chris West, our president, will be stepping down at the end of the AAGP year so we are actively looking for her replacement. Please do contact either Chris or any board member for details of the role.

Please do show your support for all our activities and events.

Wishing all our members a very Happy Easter.

Best wishes

*The Board*

#### **The Board 2023/2024 :**

President : Christine WEST, Vice President and Small Groups Coordinator : Jane STORR, Treasurer : Kathleen-Carmel KING, Secretary : Brigitte PONSARD, Newsletter Editor : Michel PARISOT, Social Events Coordinator : Karen Watson, Membership Secretary : Elizabeth GOERGEN, New Member Welcome and Special Projects : Elaine BLANC, PR and Website : Jane WILLIAMS,

#### **Associate Members**

Library: Sue BOUTIER, Newsletter: Sharon LIGHTOWLERS, Social Events: Cheryl WRIGHT

Marseille : Brigitte KRAUS, Activities coordinator : Catherine BOURDONCLE.

*The AAGP needs a new president as from next September.*

*If you are interested, for further information, please contact*

*Chris West : christine.west64@gmail.com / 06 74 53 13 54*



## OBITUARY

We share with you the sad news of the death of Rosemary Obadia on 30<sup>th</sup> January. Rosemary, along with her husband Adrian, was a long-standing member of the AAGP.

Our condolences to her husband Adrian and their sons David and Stephan.

## What's on in March 2024

**Important** : All activities will be organised to comply with the health regulations applicable on the day. Participants are required to comply with the regulations at all times.

**Cancellation policy for paid events:** Any cancellation **after** the specified deadline date will **NOT** be reimbursed unless a suitable replacement has been found.

**3 - Sunday 10:30**

**PETANQUE**

Venue : boulodrome de Puyricard



The boulodrome de Puyricard is on avenue Jacques de Régis (toward la route du Seuil).

Join us for some fun *pétanque*. No skills required.

Gilles will be in charge of the group, but please answer by email to Deanna if you are attending.

*Deanna*

06 76 39 15 52

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

**5 - Tuesday 14:00**

**CHESS CLUB**

**Calling All Chess Players**



**Venue : Chez Gilles Dreyfus, 18 allée Rosaki, route de Puyricard (D14 A), Aix-en-Provence**

Bus stop : "Rosaki" on bus number 11 is NOT in service anymore. You can get off either the stop before called Résidence Beaufort, or the stop after called Fusains; both stops are about 300 yards from Rosaki.

Come and join. All levels welcome, bring your chessboard.

Please let me know if you are attending.

*Gilles*

[gilles.dreyfus@gmail.com](mailto:gilles.dreyfus@gmail.com)

06 75 59 82 43

**7 - Thursday 12:15**

## **LUNCH IN AIX (Fusion Sushi)**

Venue : Côté Sushi, 4 rue Tournefort, 13100 Aix-en-Provence

I stumbled upon this gem of a Peruvian-Japanese fusion cuisine restaurant and it was so good that I immediately booked the next "Lunch in Aix" there. I mean, who could resist sushi tacos with a side of fresh ceviche? Their capacity is a bit more limited than our usual, so sign up early or just try it for yourself! We already have five signed up before I even submitted this to the calendar editor, but we have room for seven more. My mouth is already watering just thinking about it!!

Please reserve your spot with me by Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, preferably on the AAGP Facebook page (see Events section).

*Valerie Belon*

SMS 07 49 75 93 49

**8 - Friday 14:30**

## **AFTERNOON TEA**

Venue : Au Comptoir du Livre, 47 rue des Trois Frères Barthélemy, 13006 Marseille

Métro ligne 2 arrêt Notre-Dame-du-Mont

<https://marseille.love-spots.com/adresses/ou-manger/cafes-marseille/180642-au-comptoir-du-livre.html>

Please let me know if you are coming by Monday, March 4th.

*Brigitte Kraus*

[bibik@free.fr](mailto:bibik@free.fr)



# 10 - Sunday 10:30

## RAMBLE

Venue : Gréasque, Complexe sportif

Coming from Gardanne on the D46 A or coming from Aix on the D46 follow directions for the town centre passing a *collège* and gym on your left. Then turn left into avenue Emile Zola, there should be a sign for the **Complexe sportif**, pass the town hall on your left. Straight after the post office turn right onto avenue du 8 mai 1945.

GPS 43.432114, 5.546868

The ramble is roughly 11 km and takes about 4 hours walking time. We follow the Roman road, and there's lots to see along the way including old mine shafts. The paths take us beside streams and through wooded areas, there's a pond where you can often see, and hear, frogs.

The paths are not difficult, but quite rocky, and in places climb from 288m to 392m. There are ruins to explore, old wells to see and lots of information panels on the area's mining history.

It's important to have good walking boots and comfortable clothes. Please bring a picnic and plenty to drink.

We plan to set off at 10:45

Please let us know if you're coming.

*Mary and Pierre Falconnier*

[Maryk3486@gmail.com](mailto:Maryk3486@gmail.com)

Pierre: 06 80 20 18 63 Mary: 06 74 67 04 30

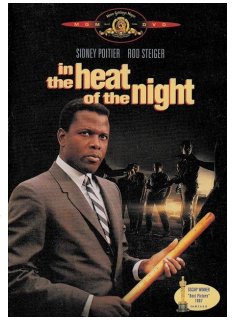


10 - Sunday 18:45

## CINÉ CLUB

Venue : Chez Deanna & Gilles, 18 allée Rosaki, route de Puyricard (D14 A), Aix-en-Provence

Having recently read of the passing of the film director Norman Jewison, we thought maybe we would show one of his great films.



He was best known for making films that addressed social issues. The most celebrated of those was *In the Heat of the Night* a 1967 American neo-noir mystery drama, one of his earliest features & his first Oscar-winning film.

Starring Sidney Poitier & Rod Steiger, it tells the story of Virgil Tibbs (Poitier), a black homicide detective who becomes inadvertently embroiled in a murder mystery in a small southern town in Mississippi. First he is accused of the murder of a prominent businessman when he is found at the train station about to leave town (after visiting his mother) & then is asked to help solve it.

Finding the killer proves to be difficult especially when his efforts are constantly thwarted by the town's bigoted sheriff (Steiger). Neither man can solve this case alone. Putting aside their differences & prejudices, they join forces in a race against time to discover the truth.

The film went on to win five Academy Awards, including best picture & best actor, for Mr. Steiger.

*In the Heat of the Night* is widely considered one of the most important films of the 1960s.

Join us for pizza, popcorn & discover the shocking truth.

Please **R.S.V.P.** early as places are limited.

*Deanna & Gilles*

Tel : 06 76 39 15 52

11 - Monday 12:00

## LUNCH IN MARSEILLE

Venue : Le Parpaing qui Flotte, 3 rue Gou-dard, 13005 Marseille

Tram T1 arrêt Camas

<https://marseille.love-spots.com/adresses/ou-sortir/bars-marseille/80238-le-parpaing-qui-flotte.html>

Please let me know if you are coming by Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup> .

Brigitte Kraus

[bibik@free.fr](mailto:bibik@free.fr)



11 - Monday 14:30

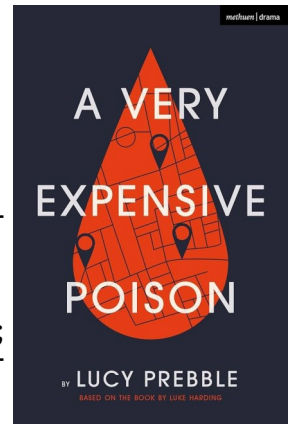
## PLAY READING GROUP

Our March play will be *A Very Expensive Poison* by Lucy Prebble.

Reading will start at 2.30 pm on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March; information on script and venue will be sent to signed-up readers nearer the date.

Please email [marcdympna@gmail.com](mailto:marcdympna@gmail.com) if you wish to attend or take part.

Dympna Donnelly



# 14 - Thursday 10:30

## BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Venue : Home of Brigitte Ponsart, 2670 rte de la Sainte Baume, Auriol

*The Lamplighters* by Emma Stonex presented by Brigitte Ponsart

Inspired by a haunting true story, this novel delves into the mysterious disappearance of three lighthouse keepers from a remote lighthouse located miles from the Cornish coast. The relief boat pulls up to the Maiden Rock lighthouse on New Year's Eve, 1972 to find an empty tower locked from the inside. Two decades later, the wives who were left behind are visited by a writer who is determined to find the truth about the disappearance. The author presents a story of isolation and obsession, of reality and illusion and what it takes to keep the light burning when all else is swallowed by dark.

Conversations about books continue over lunch. Join the group with your own picnic lunch. If you are carpooling, please don't forget a 5 euro donation for the driver to show your appreciation.

Let Nancy and Brigitte know if you plan to attend the Thursday gathering by Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>.

Nancy Ceridwyn 07 81 84 61 29 [nancy.ceridwyn@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.ceridwyn@gmail.com)

Brigitte Ponsart 06 87 01 05 89 [ponsartbrigitte@icloud.com](mailto:ponsartbrigitte@icloud.com)

*Nancy Ceridwyn*

# 14 - Thursday 14:00

## BOWLING

Venue : Bowling Le Bras d'Or, 23 bd. Charrier, Aix-en-Provence



Join us for some fun bowling. No prior skills required.

We usually play two games (10 euros including shoes).

Please email me or call 24 hours before.

*Gilles Dreyfus*

06 75 59 82 43

[gilles.dreyfus@gmail.com](mailto:gilles.dreyfus@gmail.com)

# 14 - Thursday 18:30

## TALK ON INTERNATIONAL LAW

**Venue : IAU (Institute for American Universities), CEF, 2 bis rue du Bon Pasteur, Aix-en-Provence**

After an enthusiastic response to the proposal by Karen Wildau to arrange for a talk by Steven Ratner, an expert on international law, this is now scheduled for March 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. Ratner is an American law professor from the University of Michigan law school here on sabbatical.

An expert on international law with an extraordinary career, the United Nations secretary general appointed him in 1998 to a three-person group of international experts to consider bringing the Khmer Rouge to justice. In 2010, he was a member of the UN's three-person panel on accountability in Sri Lanka which advised the secretary-general on human rights violations related to the end of the Sri Lankan civil war. Since 2022, he has been a member of the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia. Ratner also worked in the legal division of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva and in the office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in The Hague and has worked with the U.S. State Department.

Ratner will be speaking about the basic rules of the law of armed conflict and human rights, the key institutions that play a role in enforcing these rules, the difference between the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council and what these bodies can do to respond to human rights atrocities. And, of course, it will be fascinating to hear of some of his experiences with the Khmer Rouge, Sri Lankan and Ethiopian wars, not to mention his perspective on the current crisis in the Middle East.

Although organised for an AAGP audience, this conference is also open to non-members by invitation and on a “first come, first served” basis. Since places cannot be reserved, be sure to arrive in plenty of time. For all questions and any further information please contact me.

*Karen Wildau*  
kwildau@gmail.com

## 18 - Monday 10:00

### MORNING COFFEE

Venue : Les Gourmandines du Prado, 14 avenue du Prado, 13006 Marseille

Metro ligne 1 ou 2 arrêt Castellane

<https://lesgourmandinesduprado.fr/>

Please let me know if you are coming by Thursday, March 14th.

*Brigitte Kraus*

[bibik@free.fr](mailto:bibik@free.fr)



## 23 - Saturday 18:30–22:30

### ST PATRICK'S EVENING

Venue : Chez Karen, in Peynier - address and directions to follow on booking

Come and enjoy an **Irish evening** with Irish music, drinks, buffet style finger food, some themed games and an Irish quiz. The only requirement is to wear something green!



Price will be 15 euros a head.

As this event will have limited places, please email to reserve your place by **March 7th**. After this date there will be no refunds unless your place is taken by someone else. Non-members welcome if enough places.

*Karen Watson*

Karen.watson3@gmail.com

**25 - Monday 14:00**

## **MARSEILLE BOOK CLUB**

Venue : chez Brigitte Kraus, 99 cours Lieutaud, 13006 Marseille

Métro arrêt Castellane or Notre Dame du Mont - Tram T3 arrêt Rome Dragon

Tea, coffee, soft drinks, home-made cakes and biscuits for 5 euros.

This month's book is *How to Stop Time* by Matt Haig.

Please let me know if you are coming by Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup>.

Please note that the books for the following months are :

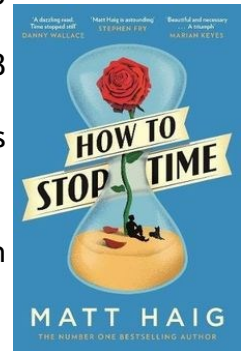
April : *The Motion of the Body Through Space* by Lionel Shriver

May : *The Dutch House* by Ann Patchett

June : *French Braid* by Anne Tyler

*Brigitte Kraus*

[bibik@free.fr](mailto:bibik@free.fr)



**27 Wednesday 10:00 to 11:30**

## **MORNING COFFEE IN SAINT-RÉMY-DE-PROVENCE**

Venue : La Maison du Bon Café, 4 boulevard Mirabeau, 13210 Saint-Rémy-de-Provence

This meetup over coffee is co-hosted by AAGP member David Carpita and/or Barney Lehrer from La Table des Amis de Provence as a joint venture of these two non-profit associations.

It is also market day in Saint-Rémy, another good reason to attend. Free parking all day at Libération just 300m walking distance from the venue.

No need to email or phone, just drop in.

*David Carpita*



**29 Friday 19:00**

## **EVENING DRINK**

Venue : POPU The Babel Community, 70 rue de la République, 13002 Marseille

Métro ligne 1, arrêt Vieux Port

<https://marseille.love-spots.com/adresses/ou-manger/restaurants-marseille/166862-popu.html>

Please let me know if you are coming by Thursday, March 22nd.

*Brigitte Kraus*

[bibik@free.fr](mailto:bibik@free.fr)



# LOOKING BACK

## FAMILY RAMBLE IN VAUVENARGES FOLLOWED BY COUSCOUS LUNCH Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February

The weather cleared just in time for our ramble on Sunday and we were blessed with blue skies and sunshine. There was a cold breeze but we soon warmed up as we did a gentle climb and were rewarded with lovely peaceful views over the valley, the newly planted lavender fields, and the village of Vauvenargues. It was a relatively easy walk as promised, mostly flat with some undulations!

Walking in a group is so congenial and the route was well chosen with wide paths. This gave us a chance to meet almost everyone (there were 17 of us and three beautifully behaved dogs) as we naturally formed small groups, changing places as we walked along, striking up new conversations.

The ramble was just enough to give us a good appetite and the couscous meal did not disappoint. Although the sun was making an appearance from time to time, we all agreed it wasn't warm enough to sit outside and ate indoors by a welcoming fire.

The meal was absolutely delicious! Perfect Moroccan comfort food. On each table, a large tagine filled with chickpeas and vegetables, couscous (of course!) and an impressive spread of mouth-watering slow-cooked lamb, saffron chicken, and rather moreish sausages, all complimented beautifully by some local wine. There was lots of laughter (and tears if you ate too much spicy sauce!). By now we all were all very relaxed in each other's company. Such a lovely way to spend the day.

*Susie Kenny-Smith*

**Lunch in Aix - La Tomate Verte**



# LOOKING BACK



**Family Ramble and  
Couscous lunch in  
Vauvenargues**



# LOOKING BACK

## BURNS NIGHT Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January

Why would a mixed bunch of English-speaking expats living in France meet to celebrate a Scottish writer born in 1759? Surely not because we all love haggis, nor because we're all expert dancers, far from it. But Robert (or Rabbie) Burns, born 25<sup>th</sup> January 1759, has become a cultural icon, and celebrations of his birthdate have become the opportunity to highlight Scottish language and culture.

So 50 of our members enjoyed a super event at the Domaine du Moulin de l'Arc. The evening kicked off in style with a whisky punch and apéro snacks, followed by generous helpings of smoked salmon. Star of the evening of course is the haggis, which is treated with great reverence. Paraded in to the accompaniment of pipe music, this steaming dish is then the object of the famous *Address to the Haggis*, delivered in style by Maryna Blankenstein. It is then carved and served with lashings of mashed potatoes and 'neeps' or turnips, in this case lovely *boules d'or*. Of course there is whisky to raise a toast to the haggis, and plenty of wine with the meal. Atmosphere guaranteed by piper Andreas Hartmann who showed off his set of bagpipes allegedly played before Burns himself.

Burns wrote poems, ballads, songs and political tracts variously in the Scottish language, sometimes in English, or in a Scottish dialect version of English. His work has lent itself to many literary works such as Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* and Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, while his poem *My Love is like a Red, Red, Rose* was apparently a huge influence on Bob Dylan's musical style. But on this occasion we weren't there for the literature, we were there for the fun. Dinner was followed by traditional dances: *Strip the Willow*, *Dashing White Sergeant*, the *Gay Gordons*, *Barley Bree*. And the good news is ... you don't need a partner! Many of the dances are line dances where everyone gets an opportunity to swing and twirl.

All this requires a huge amount of preparation, so many, many thanks to Lish Goergen for all the prep and worry. Sourcing real Scottish haggis is no mean feat and sometimes even the best laid schemes '*gang aft agley*' but Lish pulled out all the stops to acquire it. Mistress of the dancing was Marjorie Desorgues. Congratulations to those of you who turned out in traditional dress to add to the atmosphere, but kilt and sporrans are optional, so don't be deterred from joining in next year. Warm thanks once again to organisers Lish Goergen, Marjorie Desorgues and Maryna Blankenstein.

The evening closed with all of us holding hands and singing *Olde Lang Syne*, by ... you guessed it, none other than Rabbie Burns.

*Valerie White*

(Photos on back page)

## Professional associations (English speaking)

The Bereavement Support Network offers individual support, by phone or video, to English Speakers in France who are grieving, those who are terminally ill and to their carers. We also signpost people to resources, information and additional help. You can access us either by calling 06 24 50 22 74 (M-F, 9-5) or 24/7 at our website [www.bsnvar.org](http://www.bsnvar.org)

Cancer Support France provides emotional, linguistic and practical support for English speaking people in France touched by cancer. They are also able to provide information on existing residency applications for UK nationals resident in France prior to 31 December 2020.

Tel: 08 00 24 02 00

Email: [helpline@cancersupportfrance.fr](mailto:helpline@cancersupportfrance.fr)

Website: <https://cancersupportfrance.org>

SOS Helpline France for English speakers (similar to Samaritans)

Tel: 01 46 21 46 46 (3pm to 11pm daily)

Website: <https://www.soshelpline.org>

The Samaritans: UK based with overseas lines (not free):

Tel: 00 44 330 094 5717 or 00 44 8457 90 90 90

Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

Counselling in France - a website which includes a range of English (and other languages) speaking therapists and counsellors all over France.

Website: <https://www.counsellinginfrance.com>

Red Cross Helpline in English

Tel : 07 86 28 11 99 open 09:00-17:00 Monday to Friday.

Email: [English-helpline.st-lois@croix-rouge.fr](mailto:English-helpline.st-lois@croix-rouge.fr)

# LOOKING AHEAD

**Important** : All activities will be organised to comply with the health regulations applicable on the day. Participants are required to comply with the regulations at all times.

**Thursday 25th April 10:00**

## **GUIDED NATURE WALK**

**Venue : ST PONS PARK, GEMENOS**

The walk is 4 km, the area is flat, lots of stops along the way. It is a beautiful and interesting setting, with lush greenery, remains of small-scale industrial activities (wood, coal, pine resin, ice, lime, cade oil, cereals, and a horizontal water wheel).

The Cistercian Abbey built in 1205 and run by nuns was the fourth of the "Provençal Sisters" (along with Silvacane, Sénanque, and Le Thoronet). In 1426 the nuns moved to Marseille but St Pons retained a religious function until the revolution.

The guide (the same as last time when the area was closed due to strong winds) charges a flat rate of 250 euros. Please let me know before **15<sup>th</sup> March** if you are interested in taking part. Based on the number of participants (20 maximum) we will calculate the price per head, to be paid beforehand.

There are tables and benches near the car park where we can eat our picnic after the walk.

Sorry - dogs are not allowed in the park.

*Maud Hansson*

[Deffends@hotmail.com](mailto:Deffends@hotmail.com)

**And here are some more dates for your calendar. All information will follow in later editions of your Newsletter and/or on the One List.**

**Saturday May 25<sup>th</sup> 18:00- Folk Evening & Singalong with E2G - Elaine, Michel, & Rod - at Aix les Platanes.**

Booking will open four weeks before and will be announced with all details in your April Newsletter and on the One List.

**Monday May 27<sup>th</sup> 14:00 to 17:00 - Flower Arranging Workshop, hosted by Mei Yee Lam at her home in Cadenet.**

This is the second time Mei Yee has hosted this event which was a great success in 2022. For simply 10 euros and something sweet to share during « tea-time », participants will learn how to make an arrangement which they will take home with them. Numbers will be very limited so watch the April Newsletter and the One List for opening of reservations.

# Regular events

## **Bridge**

On Tuesday 14:00  
Contact Lish GOERGEN

## **Library**

Wednesdays and Saturdays 9:30 - 11:30

Maison des Associations, Mairie  
Aix-Sud  
75 route des Milles, Pont de l'Arc.  
For more information, refer to :  
[www.aagp-provence/library.php](http://www.aagp-provence/library.php)

## Useful Info

**Contact the editor :**  
[newsletter@aagp-provence.com](mailto:newsletter@aagp-provence.com)

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« The members' version is only accessible by password, which is in the Members' List Booklet. The AAGP is not responsible for the contents of any published advertisements, nor for the quality of goods, services or products being offered for sale or otherwise. »

### **Look before you book !**

*If you are planning an event, please contact our calendar coordinator FIRST to check that your date doesn't clash with another event.*

### **Ideas for organising a new activity or an excursion ?**

*Please contact Catherine BOURDONCLE, our activities coordinator at [cbourdoncle13@gmail.com](mailto:cbourdoncle13@gmail.com) at least one month in advance of your event and before you advertise it.*

### **Important**

*The civil liability insurance held by AAGP does not exempt participants in AAGP activities from holding personal civil liability insurance valid in France.*

# LOOKING BACK



BURN'S NIGHT

