

Support for English-speaking people touched by cancer in France

The Newsletter of Cancer Support France — Association N° W163000037

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PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS

Submitted by Sue Smith

Hello to you all.

Isn't it lovely to have the warmth of the summer sun back with us; it seemed such a long winter this year, and the spring seemed to take a long time to transition into summer over here in the far west. Now the vines look as though they were always this green, the sunflowers are growing at a fast rate and the first clutches of birds have already taken to the wing.

I feel I am beginning to settle in to my new position as President of CSF National but I still learn something new every week, which is good for the brain. I am getting to grips with which department is covered by which Association and have communicated with many of the local Associations too in one way or another. I am learning how each Association adapts to local needs and how they work with other associations, either CSF, or other groups.

QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE

Not long ago, this very special invitation popped into my email box...



*L'Ambassadrice du Royaume-Uni,
Son Excellence Dame Menna Rawlings
et Monsieur Mark Rawlings,
ont le plaisir d'inviter*

Madame Sue Smith

*à la Garden Party
à l'occasion du 96ème anniversaire
de Sa Majesté la Reine Elizabeth II
et sa 70ème année sur le trône*



PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS cont...

I should say that it isn't every day that a *Dame Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George* invites me to her garden and I was a little surprised until I realised that I would be there to represent Cancer Support France and all of its volunteers. The event was held in the *Ambassador's Residence* in Paris and was a very large affair which had been sponsored by various businesses. The invitees were not only from the British community in France but a great mix of other nationalities - French, American, Canadian, Irish and a variety of other accents were heard around the gardens. These splendid gardens are quite an oasis in the centre of Paris. If it hadn't been for the police sirens, which are a continual background noise in the city, we could have been in the countryside. It was a pleasure to have been invited and to have attended in recognition of the work of our Associations, especially in our 20th Anniversary year.



SHOUT OUT TO HELPLINES VOLUNTEERS

Everyone at CSF gives of their time in many different ways and to differing degrees but as President of a local Association, I had not appreciated the work of some of our National volunteers. I want to give a big 'shout out' at this time to the Helplines volunteers. These wonderful people are very often the first point of contact for our potential clients and as such, have no idea what they may be asked when they pick up the phone or open an email. They very often communicate with a client for several days or even weeks before passing them over to a local Association which all takes time and dedication and also, often a lot of research on their part. We are all aware of the work of our trained Active Listeners, language supporters and fundraisers, but our Helplines volunteers are often overlooked, so I am proposing a big cheer for all of them this month. Thank you Helplines!

ACTIVITY FOR LIFE

Anna Shackleford and her team at CSF Lot are bringing together the final details for the *2022 Activity for Life — 'A Lot of Cycling'*. Participants packs will be ready for distribution shortly. You can look forward to seeing some wonderful countryside this year along the beautiful Lot Valley as the event will centre around the picturesque village of Puy L'Eveque with sorties from there each day. Saturday morning will feature a walk as well as the cycle ride for those like me, who prefer feet to wheels. Further details below.

ACTIVE LISTENER CONFERENCE

As my predecessor, Pat Lockett, mentioned in the January 2022 edition of Touchlines, we are planning the first ever *CSF Active Listener Conference* later this year. Two Active Listeners from each Association will be invited to attend and there will be speakers from external associations. This is going to be a fantastic opportunity for our Active Listeners to share experiences, information, skills and plans which they will then be able to take back to their own Associations to see how best they can be utilised. Plans are still being made for this event which we hope will be held in October.

TRAINERS' CONFERENCE

As the new National Initial Training Course (ITC) materials are being finalised, the Trainers' Conference, originally planned for March but delayed, will be taking place later this year. Details will be sent from Carol Quinlan (National Training Liaison) as soon as they are available. This is another opportunity for all Associations to get together, share experiences and benefit from all the hard work that has been going on to bring the training course materials up to date.

How wonderful to see so many plans here and how wonderful that we can finally make them after a couple of years in the doldrums. I wish every one of you a happy and warm summer. Take care...

LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS ROUND-UP

CHARENTE-MARITIME - Submitted by Sue Smith, President

Sadly CSF Charente Maritime's big summer event was cancelled following an order from the *Prefecture* forbidding any outdoor events due to the excessive heat in mid-June. This was an enormous blow to us as it had been many months in preparation and was greatly anticipated. We hope that we will be able to offer some new events in the very near future.

However, our drop-in events are continuing although now with a brief pause for the summer. So please keep an eye on our web page and our Facebook page www.facebook.com/csfc for updates on when and where.

GASCONY—Submitted by Lisa Mawdsley

PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATION RAISES OVER €1300 FOR CSF GASCONY

This hugely successful event was hosted by CSF Gascony members, Joy and John Errey, at their home near Marciac in the Gers. Nearly 70 guests attended the lunch to celebrate the *Queen's Platinum Jubilee*. Unpredictable weather led to a last-minute change with the meal being served under cover but was superbly well organised by the Errey's and their team of volunteers including Gascony South Co-ordinator, Gwen Western.

The guests enjoyed a two course meal including the *Platinum Jubilee Pudding* and were entertained by guitarist and singer Terry Pugh aka *Outlaw*. The event raised over €1300 for Gascony. Huge thanks go again to Joy and John for their extremely hard work and long-standing support of CSF.



HAUTE-VIENNE—Submitted by Sue Ware, President

CSF Haute-Vienne has had a very encouraging Spring this year. We had a very successful Initial Training Course (ITC) at the end of March and now have three new Active Listeners and a translator, adding to our team. Two of them are already involved with translation and supporting clients.

We had a very successful Quiz Night in March organised by our treasurer and we also had a very enjoyable fundraising dinner and band event in May which was held in Azat-le-Ris. We were also very lucky with the weather.

We are holding a follow-up training day at the end of June so we feel that this year has been a turning point so far after Covid and all its restrictions; it is definitely a moment to celebrate. We have also received a rush of clients which certainly keeps us on our toes.



LANGUEDOC - Submitted by Hilary Galea

WALK FOR LIFE 2022

For the last two years, CSF Languedoc has adapted its traditional *Walk for Life* fundraising event to take Covid restrictions into account by calling on supporters to organise smaller-scale excursions over an extended period, rather than getting together at a chosen venue for one main event. We've been delighted with the response that this new format has generated, which has highlighted the loyalty and ingenuity of our supporters both locally and internationally.

This year, however, with the lifting of restrictions, we are pleased to be able to revert to our original format, which creates a great opportunity for the CSF Languedoc community to get together socially and raise funds for our Association.

On Sunday, 16th October our *Walk for Life 2022* will be held at the *Domaine La Sarabande*, in Cabrerolles. We are planning 10km and 5km walks through the prestigious *AOC Faugères* vineyards as well as a shorter walk for those who would like to attend the event without too much exertion! The walks will be followed by lunch at the *Domaine*.

As an option for people who cannot be at *Domaine la Sarabande* on 16th October, we are also inviting them to arrange their own *Walk for Life* with or without friends, wherever they are situated.

Further details and registration information will shortly be communicated to our members and supporters as well as those of neighbouring CSF Associations who might like to join us, so **SAVE THE DATE** in your diaries now!

Our thanks go to Paul and Isla Gordon, the owners of *Domaine La Sarabande*, who have so generously offered to host this popular annual fundraising event, now in its 12th year.

FOND FAREWELL

At the National AGM in March, Pat Lockett stood down as National President. She is making an even bigger change in her life and is returning to the UK to live. The good news though is that she will remain a member of CSF Lot and will be undertaking projects at a distance for both our Association and for National, so we hope she will be popping back over *La Manche* from time to time. At our Council meeting in April, Pat was presented with a John Lewis voucher to use towards setting up her new home in the Peak District.

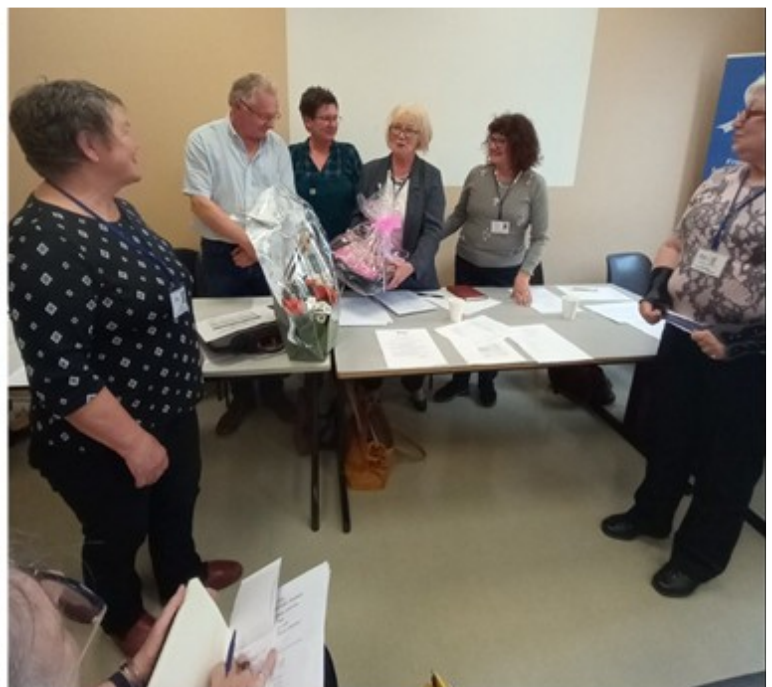
BONNE COURAGE PAT

NATIONAL AGM

We were honoured to be able to host – for the second time – the National AGM and development meeting at the *Maison des Associations* in Cahors on 16th and 17th March. A convivial dinner was enjoyed by all participants and both meetings were well-represented by members of the Lot, with Vice President, Philippe Mika and Trainer, Heather Moorhead joining President, Anna Shackelford, who also chaired the AGM. Pat Lockett was presented with a leaving gift and we all welcomed new President, Sue Smith of Charente-Maritime.



National AGM



National AGM presentation of gifts to Pat Lockett and Dave Wilson PR

SPRING MARKET

Well, once again the weather gods were not smiling on us but despite the adverse climatic conditions, we deemed the day a success! Big thanks go to Averil and Edmund McManus for their excellent, tireless efforts in organising the event, ably assisted by the *'Spring Chicks'* team of Letitia Evans, Pat Hoffman and Sue Giles.

LOT cont...

Some 29 stallholders took part, most of whom were returnees from previous markets and all were glad to be back at our event. We kicked the day off selling bacon butties and hot dogs thanks to Teresa McGill and Pat Lockett - a welcome treat for the stallholders who had been busy setting up since 08h00, as well as for the early-bird visitors; then Tony and Resa Hill supplied their traditional fish and chips at lunchtime and of course our Dream Team stall run by Judi Harding, Jackie Graves and Hanneke Sprong, selling homemade cakes was popular throughout the day. Many of our Council members turned up to help and support the day, as well as old friends whom we had not seen for a couple of years - so good to make contact after these recent difficult times.

Unfortunately footfall dropped off after lunch as the weather conditions worsened but after 2 years of lockdown, it was good to be back at our flagship event, and our coffers were boosted by over €1,000.00!



A selection of some of the 29 stallholders and the vast array of items for sale

LOT cont...

ACTIVITY FOR LIFE

This year, we in the Lot, will be hosting the National fundraiser and our Membership Secretary, Rachel Galloway, has been planning the routes. Here are her thoughts on the process so far...

A LOT OF CYCLING IN THE LOT

When it was first suggested that CSF Lot might host the annual *Activity for Life (Afl)* from 8th to 11th September for CSF National, I thought it might be fun to help to find the routes for the 4 days of cycling. It was just a matter of finding routes for two half-day and two full-day rides. We are spoilt for choice in the Lot. There are so many quiet, pretty roads and the Lot Valley has a well-marked 160km of cycle route.

Several months and many hundreds of kilometres later, the routes are taking shape and I have ridden along and through places that were otherwise just names on a map. Being on a bicycle means that you notice so much more - flowers, birds, plants, buildings etc. I have enjoyed the cycling enormously.

The main challenge has been to find routes that don't have too many hill climbs so that everyone can enjoy one or more of the rides on offer. Is a steep short climb preferable to a long steady climb? Once the top is reached there is always the relief of the downhill but attention needs to be paid to the state of the road surface and perhaps an unexpected sharp corner.

CSF Lot hope that the cycle ride will be a fun and pleasurable experience. We know there are riders coming who have done several of the rides. We are making each day's route a circular ride centred around Puy L'Évêque. So for those who need to find somewhere to stay, they can base themselves in the same place for the whole time. There will be a walk on the Saturday morning, followed by lunch with the cyclists.

If you are a cyclist and would like to join in one or more of the rides then please do contact us. Details are given below. The rides on Thursday 8th and Sunday 11th will be around 30km and on Friday 9th and Saturday 10th they will be around 55km. If you would like to, there will be the opportunity to join a group meal in the evening.

There is still plenty of time to dust off those bicycles (whatever the type) and get out for a bit of practice before joining us for a ride (or two)! We look forward to welcoming you along.

If you would like to have more information please email me at: - lot-membership@cancersupportfrance.org



Beautiful Puy-l'Évêque reflected in the river Lot



From a cycle route overlooking the Lot valley from Bélaise

Since the removal of most of the Covid restrictions and the arrival of Jane Beck as President, CSF Sud de France has come out of the blocks at speed in 2022. A host of events and activities have been put in place and we are looking forward to renewed momentum and interest in CSF after the difficult times that we have all been through.

In May, we organised a number of one-off events, including a *Bien-Etre* walk at the beautiful coastal location of Leucate in the Aude, a vide-grenier in association with *La Ligue* at Saint-Cyprien Plage and a Quiz Night in the small picturesque village of Eus in the Pyrénées-Orientales. Going forward, we are planning a Mid-Summer Fair, an Open Garden Picnic, our regular annual September *Walk for Life* event (as part of CSF's wider *Activity for Life* planning), a Party by the Lake as part of our 20th anniversary celebrations, a Ceilidh and a *Bien-Etre* day. Our thanks go, as always, to our team of volunteers who donate their time freely to make these events so successful.

The vide-grenier at Saint-Cyprien Plage is an example of our successful liaison with *La Ligue* locally. Philomena, our liaison between the two organisations locally and her team of Catherine, Christine, Derek, Maggie, Norman, Mike, Mary, Miranda, Morag, Shonie, Frank, Val and John ran our stall on 15th May. The weather was beautiful, everyone enjoyed themselves, and the team performed wonders to attract people's interest whilst also extending people's knowledge of our Association and its aims.

Our quiz night held in the *Maison de Temps Libre* in Eus welcomed 50, a mixture of French and English people. The questions were on all aspects of France - history, geography, food etc. There was a tombola to raise money jointly for CSF and for the *Croix Rouge*. A cold buffet was served and of course, there was a bar. Laughter and noise were everywhere and there was a unanimous request that we hold another quiz next year. A fantastic success by Maggie and her team of volunteers.

Our regular events are back at full steam, with drop-ins, coffee breaks and book exchanges running across the 5 departments that we serve. We are so grateful to all the active volunteers who donate their time to make these a success.

We have been able to start liaising and working with other associations again after a difficult period through Covid. For example, our relationship with *Toulouse Oncopole*, in partnership with the CSF Gascony Association, continues to flourish. We have also recently taken part in the annual conference of the *Institut de Communication et d'Information sur le cancer (ICIC)*. We last attended this event before Covid, so it was a delight to be back again after two years of restrictions.

ICIC's annual conference is designed to inform and share information about cancer. *ICIC* is a part of the *Réseau Oncopol*. The conference is free to everyone and attendees include doctors, nurses and pharmacists as well as '*le grand public*'. Everyone attending can ask questions and the speakers aim to make their talk accessible to those with limited medical knowledge. The aim is to inform on developments in treatment and support and in that way take away the fear of the 'cancer' word.

Some patient associations are invited to have a stand, purely for information purposes, and CSF Sud de France has been lucky enough to be associated with this event since it began in 2014. It was a delight to be back again this year after two years of Covid cancellations. Being an Anglophone Association, it is true that not many English speakers attend a medical conference in French! However, we renewed contact with other patient support groups, like *La Ligue contre le cancer*, exchanging flyers and bringing each other up to date, and we spoke to many people including medical staff about the work of CSF.

In addition, of course, we were able to benefit from the conference itself. One session on '*onco-genetics*' was followed by the personal experience of a patient who had benefited and opted for preventive surgery. Not an easy decision and her testimony was emotional. We learned of new advances designed to alleviate suffering, if not extend life, for those with secondary bone cancer as well as being brought up to date with other advances. For me, the most interesting session was about the development of '*oncologie humaniste*', in other words, treating the whole person rather than just the illness. The speaker explained that as medical knowledge advanced, specialisation led to an emphasis on the malady and its cure. The patient, as a human being, was forgotten or at least played second fiddle and took no part in his or her treatment or decisions.

SUD de FRANCE cont...

It is through conferences like this, which involve the public in a frank discussion, that it is hoped change will occur. Roll on next year and another chance to share in this event.

Finally, a plea. We always need additional volunteers from the Ariège, Aude, Pyrénées-Orientales, Tarn and Tarn-et-Garonne departments to help us in our work. The commitment is always matched to the time you are able to give; some volunteers help at one event a year, some on a monthly basis, some are more heavily involved. If you feel you could donate some time, please contact sud-comms@cancersupportfrance in the first instance for further information.

www.sud-de-france.cancersupportfrance.org/events



Sud de France ICIC Printemps, Perpignan



Sud de France vide-grenier 2022

I thought I'd take a look at what is going on around the world to help and give pleasure to those who have had or are going through cancer. Here is one that I'm sure many of our members might be interested in...

Charity making 'knitted knockers' as alternative to NHS prosthesis



Knitted Knockers UK is a group of volunteers which makes cotton artificial breasts for women who have had mastectomies or lumpectomies.

The group, made up of about 500 knitters and support staff, provides prostheses free of charge. The charity - which dealt with more than 2,700 requests for its products in 2016 said it relies heavily on fundraising as it costs about £10 to produce each item.

Knitted Knockers UK was founded in January 2014 by Joanna Dervisoglu, from Birmingham, who knitted for the parent group in the USA. It came about after she received a request from a woman who had had a double mastectomy.

Volunteer Mrs Dwyer from Baildon, near Shipley, started volunteering with the charity in April and described being a 'Knockerette' as "*inspirational and rewarding*". She said: "*It's a lovely group to belong to, and the ladies are all really supportive.*"

Talking about the work of the charity, she said some women found it difficult to wear the gel prostheses available on the NHS. "*Some find them too heavy and irritating,*" she said. "*The knitted knockers are lightweight, much more comfortable and they don't move around.*"

The charity, which has members all over the UK and Ireland, also makes 'Aqua Knockers' for women to wear when swimming.

Original article published by BBC News 16.03.2017

To find out further information, *Knitted Knockers UK* are contactable here: - www.knittedknockersuk.com

Facebook: - www.facebook.com/knittedknockersuk

Instagram: - www.instagram.com/knittedknockers

The advertisement for AQUAS knitted knockers features a light blue background. At the top, the website URL "www.knittedknockersuk.com" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Below this, the registered charity number "1161125" is displayed in a smaller font. The word "AQUAS" is prominently featured in a large, blue, serif font. Underneath, the text "Knockers made in an Acrylic yarn And stuffed with scrunchies Ideal for swimming Available in all sizes" is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom left, there is a small instruction: "Visit the website to order on the Aquas order form". On the right side, there is a small logo for Knitted Knockers UK, which includes two knitted balls and the text "Knitted Knockers UK" and "Made with love and filled with hope".



Knitted Knockers is also available across France. Information for contact details: - www.knittedknockers.org/international-provider-view/?country=france

Facebook: - www.facebook.com/KnittedKnockersFrance Instagram: - www.instagram.com/knittedknockersfrance



We remember our
Founding President,
Linda Shepherd
1953-2017

Also [Here](#) to Help...

Cancer Support France are proud to be in partnership, affiliated to or supported by the following associations and groups: -

In partnership with:

En partenariat avec:



www.prostatecanceruk.org



www.be.macmillan.org.uk



Beating blood cancer since 1960

www.bloodwise.org.uk



www.breastcancersupport.org.uk



www.thebraintumourcharity.org



www.cancerresearchuk.org



www.pancreaticcancer.org.uk



www.targetovariancancer.org.uk



www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk

If you have been affected by any of the issues raised in this newsletter, please don't hesitate to contact your regional CSF branch. All telephone numbers and email addresses can be found on the back page of TOUCHLINES. *Ed.*

USEFUL INFORMATION

Association Siège Social

Espace Clément-Marot
Cancer Support France, Box 25
Place Bessières, 46000 Cahors

National HELPLINE

Telephone: 0800 240 200 (FREE from a landline)

(Your call is taken on an answerphone and is free from a landline - there is a short message in English - we will reply to you as soon as possible and normally within 24 hours)

Useful Contacts

President: Sue Smith
president@cancersupportfrance.org

Treasurer: Jean Winter
treasurer@cancersupportfrance.org

Email: helpline@cancersupportfrance.org

Website: www.cancersupportfrance.org

forum.cancersupportfrance.org

CSF FORUM - Visit the CSF website and take a look at the FORUM, packed full of information and interesting conversations - maybe even meet new friends...

LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

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Charente Plus (16)	Denise Bloom	06.45.35.32.30	csf.charenteplus@gmail.com
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Lot-et-Garonne (47)	Cindy Sheppard	06.70.64.68.82	helpline@cancersupportfrance.org
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Vienne & Deux-Sèvres (79, 86)	Jacque Kelly	0800 240 200	vienne-president@cancersupportfrance.org

Touchlines

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touchlines@cancersupportfrance.org

Please send photographs as separate JPG files - NOT embedded in your editorial. Thank you.