

SPRING 2015 EDITION

## World French Language Week

**The week of the French language was created in 1995 by the French minister of culture and communication.**

This week is celebrated worldwide on around March 20th in French speaking countries such as France, Switzerland, Belgium, and Quebec. French is spoken all over the world by over 220 million people and is ranked as the 6th most widely spoken language after Mandarin Chinese, English, Hindi, Spanish and Arabic.

The week of French language is comprised of different events and celebrations regarding French language and culture around the world. There are exhibitions, debates and orthographic competitions.

"This week is for the general public to celebrate the French language, which is the embodiment of a culture and a bridge between these cultures to all French speakers and lovers of the French language from around

the world." Semaine de la langue Française et de la Francophonie, [education.gouv.fr](http://education.gouv.fr), February 2015.

This year Stéphane has witnessed some celebrations done by schools of the Borough in honor of French language and culture.

"I appreciated all the performances I saw during this week and I think it is a good way to raise interest of learning foreign languages and culture for the children. The pupils enjoyed not wearing uniforms and dressing in French colours and, even more, eating croissants. Personally I liked all the songs, the presentations and the activities organised such as the Eiffel Tower competition and I loved the French Cancan dance performed by one school."

To find out more about the French language your French Ambassador invites you to read ['The status of French in the World' from the French government website.](#)



Hello and welcome to the Spring 2015 edition of our Twinning Newsletter.

**Stéphane Jamin**

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For more information of Twinning please contact the Ambassador from Angers in Wigan on 01942 489193 or [angers@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:angers@wigan.gov.uk)



## More photos from World French Language Week...





## Leigh French Circle

**Looking for a taste of French culture and language? The Leigh French Circle meets monthly in Lowton Church of England starting at 7.00pm.**

People from all over the Borough and of any level of French and any age are invited to practise their language skills during these French evenings. The Leigh French Circle group gathers every month in a friendly and comfortable atmosphere.

Stéphane says: "It is very important to practise, it may sound funny but even for me it is important. I sometimes struggle to find my words in French. Obviously, as I have been living and working with only English people for 6 months now, I speak and think in English all the time. It is not always easy to switch

from one language to another. The point is that language, like any other skill, is something that needs to be practised; otherwise you don't make progress or you can even regress. Whatever your level you need to practise and most importantly, don't be afraid of making mistakes, learn from them."

At every meeting the Leigh French Circle has a guest speaker who delivers a presentation on a theme of his/her choice. This presentation's aim is to give a subject to debate and to encourage discussion. Also the guest speaker is usually a fluent French speaker so the attendees can practise their listening skills, learn new idioms and benefit from a French accent.

In March, Stéphane was delighted to be the guest speaker of the Leigh French Circle and discussed "the river La Loire, its history and its role in France today."

The Leigh French Circle is always looking for native or fluent French speakers willing to volunteer to give a presentation. It could be about anything, sport, food, history, film etc. If you or someone you know would like to do it, please volunteer!

If you are interested in attending these meetings, give it a go! The next French Circle meeting will be May 21st. A fee of £4.50 per session is needed to cover wine, nibbles and room hire. Do not hesitate to contact your French Ambassador for more information.



## Literature, Technology and Twinning

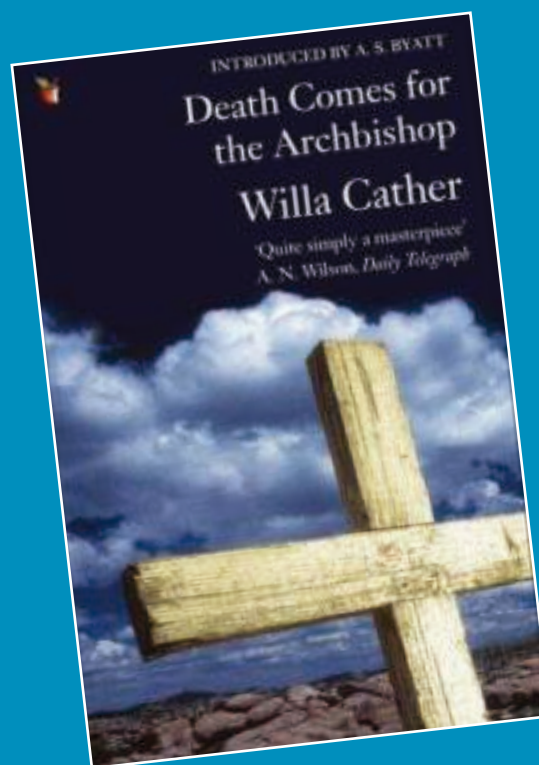
**Thanks to latest technology, two Libraries from Angers and Wigan were able to debate about a book in April.**

Standish Library and ELLIA – English Speaking Library in Angers – have been friends for a long time now and communicate on a regular basis throughout the year. In September 2014 Standish was even able to pay a visit to their friends in Angers.

Once a year the libraries choose a book they would all read and then set up a date for a video conference debate.

It is usually organised by the French Ambassador in Wigan and the English Ambassador in Angers and takes place in the Civic Centre.

This year they decided to discuss Willa Cather and her book “Death comes for the Archbishop”. More than 15 people took part in the debate which was of very good quality and, as always, in a friendly atmosphere. The success of this book discussion was so great that the libraries decided to set up another one for later this year.



“Once a year the libraries choose a book they would all read and then set up a date for a video conference debate.”

If you are interested in this debate you can get more information by asking your French Ambassador or by contacting the [Friends of Standish Library](#)



## Football and Friendship

**For the second year in a row Ashton Football Club from Wigan went to Angers in April.**

The manager Mike Bourne and his team went to Angers to pay a second visit to their friends from Sporting Club Angevin – SCA.

Overall about 60 children went to Angers from April 14th and came on April 17th. Their main activity was to play football. Even the parents had a game: French Dads vs English Dads and the same for the Mothers.

They also had the chance to discover Angers and its surroundings thanks to the kind planning done by SCA's manager.

The manager of the French football club, Mr Serge Alloend-Bessand said how friendly the atmosphere was: "Despite our language differences, we experienced moments of great friendship. The presents they brought touched us deeply. Also the events took place in a very good spirit. We – the Club- will do our best to come over to Wigan next year."



## Culture Box Exchange

### Swapping items for a taste of foreign culture

**A school from the Wigan Borough and a library from Angers decided to initiate a project to present their community to each other.**

Helped by the Ambassador of each town, the groups of children from 7 to 10 years old were asked to build a Culture Box. The aim of the Culture Box is to describe your country or your town to a foreign group.

The school of Shevington Vale started by sending the first Culture Box to Angers.

Stéphane and the group of 30 children picked items to represent Wigan. The kids were asked what was representative of Wigan and then had the chance to introduce themselves.

The library from Angers called ELLIA – English Speaking Library In Angers –which is very active in the twinning received the box in March.

“It was a very funny activity” said Stéphane, the children were excited as they saw a real meaning of learning a new

language with this activity. It was also exciting because most of it was a bit “secret”; we did not want the other children to know what was in the box. I hope they enjoyed the taste of Uncle Joe’s Mintballs!”

ELLIA recently said that they sent the other box to Wigan and the pupils are really excited to receive it!





## Another way to learn French

**The Ambassador has been involved with the Guides of Saint Mary's RC Church on Standishgate. About 12 girls from 10 to 16 years old will try to gain the Interpreter Badge.**

6 sessions will be delivered and the Guides will need to acquire basic knowledge in French to receive the badge from their Chief, Mrs. France Southern Cox.

Such knowledge includes introducing yourself, knowing the geography of France, being able to help someone in another language and learning about the news of the country.

In the words of the teacher:

"I have delivered 2 sessions so far and it is completely different to what I have been doing in schools. It is a really relaxed atmosphere. I could compare it to the Leigh French Circle. Children who come to this session know they are not in school and they are not going to be judged. They are having fun, they are not afraid of making mistakes and most of the time they want to show me everything they know in French, which is great. I just realised that the ones who say they are not good at French in the first place



turn out to be the best after a moment with them, when they feel more confident. I think some of them are better at languages than they think; they know more French at their age than I knew English when I was theirs."

## Quiz Night for the Mayor's Charity

**At the end of March the Twinning Office organised a quiz night in Saint Jude's Rugby Club to help raise funds for the Mayor's Charity, Cancer Care Unit at Wigan.**

People from the Borough were invited to test their knowledge of France and England during this quiz hosted by Ken and Irene Sinclair. Present amongst the 50 people who came to this friendly evening, were the Mayor of Wigan Phyllis Cullen and the Consort John Cullen who tried to win one of the nice prizes generously offered by the sponsors.

"It was a very nice evening for the Twinning Office who was glad to help the Mayor's Charity. I certainly

could not have done it without the kindness and generosity of people from the Borough. I have a lot of people to thank for this evening and it would not have been possible without them. I am thinking especially about the sponsors who kindly gave prizes for the quiz, Gallimore's who offered the sandwiches, all the volunteers and Saint Jude's Rugby Club.

I personally had an amazing evening, and found it funny how people knew more about France or Angers rather than the history of Wigan or England. I hope we will be able to work together with the Mayor for more events like this in the future."



## Becoming an Ambassador

**If you are fluent in spoken and written French this job opportunity may be for you!**

The Twinning Office is now looking to appoint the next Ambassador from Wigan in Angers, a once in a lifetime work experience opportunity in France. You will be representing your community in the historical city of Angers. Working with local communities, you will have the opportunity to work with different organisations such as sport groups, libraries, schools, individuals, etc.

If you or someone you know would be interested in this exciting new opportunity, you will be able to apply from May 18th.

For more information about the post visit [yourcounciljob.co.uk](http://yourcounciljob.co.uk) with the keyword "Ambassador" or you can contact your French Ambassador in Wigan.

## Time to be curious

The famous Angers' fair were back this year for the 86th time from April 17th until April 21st. All those curious about Angers and its surrounding areas were invited to enjoy the exhibition. Overall, 400 shops are in place day... and night! This year the Angers' Fair opened its door to

a "nocturne". Indeed the major novelty this year is animation. There were dancing contests as well as cooking contests, concerts and shows.

People were allowed to enjoy the fair and stay until 10.00pm.

This year French celebrities attended the event such as

Philip Candeloro – French figure skater – and Noemie Honiat – finalist of the French cooking TV show "Top Chef".

This event attracts a lot of visitors every year. In 2014 more than 50,000 people came to the fair and even more are expected this year.





## A foretaste of the Tour de France

From April 6th until 10th fans of cycling were able to enjoy the well-known cycling race in North Western France under the name of "Sarthe-Pays de la Loire". Overall, 16 teams – 6 of them professional – took part in the 700km race.

For all cycling lovers the next rendezvous will be in Saumur near Angers, where the "2015 Anjou Velo Vintage" – "retro bicycle touring" - has been confirmed.

More information:

<http://www.anjou-velo-vintage.com/en/>



The next main sporting event in Angers will take place in June with the "**Tout Angers Bouge**" celebration, literally "The entire city of Angers exercise".

All sports are represented and the entire community of Angers is invited to enjoy practising or discovering a sport with other people. More than 4,000 people took part in the event last year.

More information:

<http://www.angers.fr/actualites/photos/tout-angers-bouge-2014/index.html>

We forecast a lot of sport in Angers in spring!

## Tout Angers Bouge

## On your Ambassador's agenda

### May 20th - 21st:

The Kermesse Festival will be held in Wigan Youth Zone. The Kermesse is a French tradition held at the end of the school period towards May or June. During this time every school organises a show with dances, songs or theatre, to raise cultural awareness the Twinning Office will organise a Kermesse with 18 schools of the Borough.

### May 28th – June 4th:

A conference on the Green Spaces will be organised with the towns twinned with Angers. France, Poland, Italy, Netherland and England will discuss how they manage their endangered areas in their respective towns. You can still sign up for this event held in Angers by contacting your French Ambassador.

### June 28th:

A landscaping class from Angers will be visiting Wigan and learning from technicians how they manage places such as Mesnes Park, Haigh Hall and the DW Stadium.

### July 7th:

Famille Rurale visiting Wigan. Famille Rurale is a group of 25 young people from 10 to 17 years old whose interest is discovering new cultures. They have done several trips in the past to Greece and Romania and have enjoyed communicating with local communities. They are looking forward to visiting Wigan at the beginning of July. They have contacted Wigan Youth Zone to plan their trip.

### July 11th:

Exhibition for the Delegation. The French Delegation will be visiting Wigan during the Jazz Festival on the week of July 11th. The Twinning Office have liaised with local artists from Wigan and Angers to set up an exhibition during this period of time. If you think you could be of any help, please do not hesitate to contact your Ambassador.

## Looking for?

Looking for: a linguistic opportunity; improving your French; a summer stay; an internship; a host family?

Get in touch with your French Ambassador, he will be able to help you and get in contact with someone in Angers.

AND don't forget to like our Facebook page! Angers and Wigan Twinning

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