

ST ANDREWS-LOCHES ALLIANCE



President's Report, year ended 31st December 2020

2020 began on an optimistic note. Member numbers were increasing and the Alliance had planned its most ambitious programme to date. This was outlined to all those who attended the New Year's Drinks party which was held as has become the custom, at the St Rule Club. Almost 30 members attended and the programme for the coming year was outlined. Little did anyone realise at the time that this was to be the last social event of the year, indeed of the next eighteen months.

Lockdown and social distancing meant that none of our events, all of which involve members getting together, could take place. Events postponed and cancelled included a talk by Jean-Marc Murré, The golfers' return trip to Loches, the Café français at Craigtoun Park, The 'Bastille Day' Lunch at Craigfoodie, 'Look at Loches', the exhibition and Primary School workshops planned together with the Preservation Trust and the Café Cabaret, our main fundraising event of the year for which we had engaged Christine Bovill, a well known chanteuse. Understandably, school exchanges did not take place either. One exchange which did take place however was between the Photographic Societies in both towns. The two societies exchanged photographs electronically, first on the theme of water and then of skylscapes and in Loches there has been an exhibition of the combined photographs.

Members have been kept up to date with cancellations and aspects of Loches Alliance news by means of newsletters. All of these can be seen on our website. At this point I would like to thank Elizabeth for maintaining our website and keeping it up to date.

What of the future?

Restrictions are easing now and it looks as if we will be able to pick up our programme again soon. The staff at Craigtoun are always very positive and helpful and it may be possible to hold our Café français there at the beginning of June. We plan to decorate the café or marquee as it might be this year, the staff will serve a French themed menu and we will organise games and puzzles for primary school age children. The 'Bastille Day' lunch is unlikely to happen in July. Whether or not we manage an event of this nature later in the summer will depend on the circumstances at the time.

We are however planning to hold the 'Look at Loches' Exhibition in September and we are working now at full steam on the content, on organising the primary school workshops and on making it happen.

This year instead of reorganising our Café Cabaret from 2020 we are planning a similar evening in conjunction with the 'St Andrews Voices' festival. This has advantages for us as should the event be cancelled, 'Voices' will continue as a virtual festival and we will be able to work with them to have a virtual cabaret too.

St Leonards School and the Lycée Thérèse Planiol in Loches are planning an environmental project together which is an exciting development. This could potentially also lead to a school exchange and we look forward to being able to support them, financially or in any way we can. We will continue to encourage and support the exchange between Madras College and the Collège Georges Besse.

In the meantime, we have had a Zoom meeting between members in Loches and St Andrews. This proved interesting and informative and we look forward to having more opportunities to connect in this way in the future.

When SCO concerts resume in the newly refurbished Younger Hall, We expect to take over the running of the bar once more.

The committee:

Frank Quinault wishes to resign as Treasurer as he has many other commitments . I would like to take this opportunity to thank Frank very much for everything he has done in his role as Treasurer over the past 5 years. It has been most reassuring to know that our financial affairs have been in such capable hands. I am delighted that he has

agreed to stay on the committee. Elizabeth Gray has very kindly agreed to take on the role of Treasurer and I am very grateful to her for this. Irene Constable, John Matthews, Izzy Murdoch and I have all indicated that we are also willing to continue in post for another year. Members are invited to support or object to this either at the meeting or by email to me in advance.

We would also very much like to encourage any other member who would like to serve on the committee to let me or one of the committee know.

That ends my report for the year 2020. If there are any questions, these can be raised at the meeting or submitted to me by email and I will be happy to try to answer them.

Joyce Duncan

President

20 April 2021