



Vol. 14, No. 1 (December 1985)

L'Elan

Bulletin de la Société Honoraire de Français

Notes from the Executive Secretary

December 1985

Dear SHF Sponsor & Colleague,

The annual meeting of the SHF held in New York over Thanksgiving during the AATF Convention was a chance for me to meet some old friends and to acquaint some future sponsors with the Société Honoraire de Français. About 25 teachers attended.

Robert Smawley and I were elected to another two-year term of office.

Many sponsors expressed a need to make more teachers aware of the existence of the SHF and to improve the visibility of the organization. I shall indeed send to all AATF chapter treasurers the necessary information on the SHF (including sample certificate, charter, etc.) which may be shown at fall and spring meetings of the AATF.

I am willing to write something on the SHF for the AATF National Bulletin, but I would like to include with this a

Notes from the Executive Secretary

"testimonial" from an SHF sponsor. How has the SHF helped your program? Please send this to me so I can include some hands-on advice.

The List of Member Schools will be included with the next issue of L'Elan. If you see a local school doesn't have a chapter, send them an extra copy of our newsletter!

Other ideas were shared and I'll try my best to help all of you strengthen the role of French studies in your school.

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Report from Wendy Moss

Wendy Moss, a student of Rita Morgan at R. L. Osborne HS in Marietta, GA, participated in the "Rencontres Internationales de Jeunes" this past summer. Here is her report:

"I'm so glad that you are giving me this opportunity to relate my experiences in France to you. I really loved Avignon. I wish I were in France now.

In such a short time, I fell in love with both the people and the culture. When I first arrived in Avignon, I stayed with a family who knows my French teacher. That family made me feel very welcome. I was introduced to the French way of family living. It was so different from the way we live here in the United States in that activities in France are more family oriented.

When I arrived at the lycée, I was very lost and a little frightened. The accent was a very strong southern one, and it was difficult for me to understand what was being said. It was very frustrating the first few days. I felt better after having met some of the Americans. I also met a man from Paris who helped me a great deal. I was still feeling somewhat uneasy when one of the people who taught the ateliers asked me to join him in a French game. It was so much fun.

I was disappointed with the program at first because I thought that it was disorganized. I realized later that it was not unorganized it was just not organized so that every minute of your day was planned. With so much time to myself I went exploring and I saw most of Avignon with the new friends I had made. Avignon was beautiful and I liked her much better than Paris.

One of the people I met took me to several movies. I saw several movies that were made in French. I also saw a couple of movies that were American and had either subtitles or were dubbed.

I found many wonderful friends in France, and I had some great experiences. One of the best memories I have was when we went to the Place de l'Horloge. After we had seen one of the spectacles, my friends and I sat in one of the cafés and we talked and watched the people walk by us. Another time we went exploring and found a fair. There were singers

Wendy Moss

and people selling clothes and jewelry. It was at that fair that I ate my first "French hamburger".

In Avignon I learned so much about myself and France. The most overwhelming idea that I discovered in France was that human beings are all so much alike. Sometimes politics, nationalism, and patriotism stand in the way of all countries becoming closer.

When I returned to the U.S., it was difficult adjusting to a fast paced life once again. Thanks to my experiences in France, my language skills have improved greatly. I went to the college that I plan to attend in the fall of this year. I took a placement exam in French and I exempted two classes. The language lab instructor was so impressed with my speaking ability that she hired me to tutor the beginning French classes. At Kennesaw College, I will be one of the few freshmen in the intermediate classes. I am certain that my trip to Avignon has contributed to my accomplishments at the college.

I had the most wonderful learning experience that I will probably ever have in my life. I will always have one foot in France and one in the U.S.

Thanks so much."

W.M.

Report from Malinda Carpenter

Malinda Carpenter went to Biarritz as part of the "Séjours Internationaux Linguistiques et Culturels." Her SHF sponsor: Mrs. Patricia Ruffind, Bucholz HS, Gainesville, FL. Here is her report:

"My stay in Biarritz this summer was great! There were three young boys in my family and two other foreign girls my age: one from Italy and one from Sweden. I spent a lot of time walking around the city, shopping, and going to the beach, but my most interesting experiences were talking with the parents and girls and playing with the kids.

Besides my everyday activities of

Malinda Carpenter

going to the beach or shopping, my French parents took me on a tour of Biarritz and an old château there, the nearby city Bayonne, and a Basque museum there, and also Saint-Jean-de-Luz. I also spent a day in San Sebastian, Spain and went to a pelote match with the group of Italian students staying in Biarritz.

Finally, on the trip home, I got to spend a few hours in Paris, rushing around to see as many famous places as possible.

Thus, because of the different cultures and places I was exposed to, this trip was particularly interesting and informative. Thank you for making this wonderful experience possible. . . ."

M.C.

Report from Todd Reeser

Todd Reeser also participated in the program in Avignon. Now a student at Oberlin College, he was last year a student of Joanne Krohn, Marysville HS, Marysville, OH.

"The experience of the "Rencontres Internationales de Jeunes" this summer was one I will never forget. First and foremost as the greatest part of the experience were the people. The Festival of Avignon served as a gathering place for young people of many nationalities with whom I had incredible experiences. There was the conversation I had in broken English with a young man from Poland about his favorite pastime--sailing. I discussed Socialism vs. Capitalism with a young woman from Yugoslavia. I talked about Latin poetry with a student of the Sorbonne. A friend from Hong Kong and I conversed on the Communist influence there. I discussed the art glories of Florence with a British student. I heard stories of what it was like to be a tour guide in Egypt. I tried to convince a young Italian that she wanted to stay in Europe and did not want to live in New York City. I discussed the difference between French and American educational philosophies with a French student. The list goes on . . .

In addition to encountering new cultures with people of other countries, I also experienced la vie française with people of my

Todd Reeser

culture--Americans. A young southern girl and I experienced the joys of eating fresh-baked croissants at 6:00 a.m., after having stayed up all night. Four of us Americans enjoyed the beauty of Avignon for the first time with its beautiful Palais des Papes, medieval outer walls, and Rhône River, when we crossed this river at midnight to take in a view of this beautiful medieval city--a view that was so breathless that it will remain in my memory forever, a view whose beauty no photograph can ever capture. I experienced the rather amusing (yet embarrassing) trip to a topless Mediterranean beach. This was a new aspect of French culture we lived through together. Together we experienced the agonies of trying to follow a French play. Together we sat for hours in French cafés. Together we went shopping in French boutiques. Together, we went through days living à la mode française, and were captivated by this different method of living--this joie de vivre so well exemplified by the festival of Avignon.

Thus, the French term rencontre is a perfect word for the experience, for those glorious days in Avignon became ones when I met people from all over the world, met French culture, met an experience I will always cherish--one that will travel with me through the rest of my life. Hoping that all can have a similar experience,

T.R.

Report from Clifford Eng

Clifford Eng, also a participant in the Avignon program, reported his activities in the Daily Sentinel Tribune. We reprint the third part of the three-part series. His teacher at Bowling Green Sr. HS in Bowling Green, OH, was Marcie St. John.

"The workshop (atelier) I chose during a 10-day experience at the International Meeting of Young People in Avignon, France, was on Avignon and the region.

The first field trip was to the local

Clifford Eng

radio station. It was affiliated with the government-controlled national radio communications center. The other four field trips were to theaters around the area, including one established for problem children. Each site was unique.

Afternoons, we were free to choose what we wanted to do. One day I attended a talk show during which the director and actors of the Comédie-Française, the national acting company of France, discussed the play, "Macbeth," which they were putting on.

We also attended the play. It is very difficult to understand Shakespeare in English, let alone in French. But it was a large-scale production with many spectacular special effects.

The entire group went to a play based on Hindu biblical stories. We saw only the first of three parts, but it lasted three hours. Besides the unique plot of this piece, another special feature was the theater itself. Actually, it wasn't a theater at all, but an amphitheater that was built in a stone quarry a few miles outside Avignon.

Another highlight was a contemporary ballet called "Roatorio," a dance piece based on James Joyce's novel, "Finnegan's Wake." It was choreographed by the world-renowned Merce Cunningham, who danced in the piece as well.

One of the two final highlights of my summer study was a visit to Rasteau. On the way there, we stopped by the city of Orange to visit the famous Roman amphitheater and its arc de triumph. . . .

These are just a few of the many exciting events that I was so fortunate to be a participant in. I truly enjoyed the program, but the thing I treasured most was making friends with over 70 young people from 16 different countries.

As a matter of fact, I felt like an ambassador of goodwill meeting with other ambassadors.

C.E.

Un écolier en 1920

Editor's note: I wish to share with all of you a short recollection of school life in

Un écolier

1920. It was written by Raymond JACQUES, a retired teacher and principal who now lives in Badonviller (Meurthe-et-Moselle).

Un écolier en 1920

"C'est lundi. Il se lève. La maison est calme. Seuls, les bruits de la maison qui s'éveille. On entend des pas dans la cuisine d'où monte une bonne odeur de café. Il fait sa toilette, sur l'évier de la cuisine. Revise ses leçons. Il est un peu fatigué. Il est allé la veille jouer au ballon avec des copains, puis ils sont allés au cinéma: muet, le pianiste à part. Pour 0,50F il a vu un film de Charlot et le 8° épisode de Fantomas. Cependant il est renté pour dîner et a eu le temps d'étudier ses leçons. A 9 heures, il était couché.

L'estomac garni, la cervelle rafraîchie, il enfile son tablier noir, le relève devant et le noue par derrière, c'est plus commode pour jouer au cheval, ou au train ou à saute-mouton; il ajuste les bretelles de son sac à dos et part en courant pour l'école en faisant jaillir sur le pavé des étincelles de ses semelles cloutées. Et il entre dans la cour où il trouve le maître, pantalon rayé, veste noire, col dur à coins cassés, et déjà la baguette à la main. Un coup de sifflet, et tout le monde s'immobilise dans la position où il se trouvait; un deuxième coup de sifflet et on se met en rangs, et c'est le départ pour la classe, au pas cadencé, en chantant le chant du départ, ou mourir pour la patrie, c'est le sort le plus beau; n'oublions pas que nous sommes au lendemain de la Grande Guerre.

Et c'est le déroulement d'une journée bien remplie: les tables, les résumés, et les règles de grammaire qu'il faut réciter par coeur, sous le regard sévère du maître qui vous domine du haut de son estrade. Auparavant, l'écolier a rangé ses affaires dans sa case; pas de crayon à bille si pratique, mais une plume Sergent-Major, ou Henri, fichée au bout d'un porte-plume en bois qu'il trempera dans un encrier en faïence encastré dans un trou de la

Un écolier en 1920

table-banc et rempli d'encre violette. Gare aux taches qu'il faudra effacer avec la gomme à encre, au risque de percer le papier. Autre objet indispensable: une ardoise, une vraie, avec, au bout d'une ficelle, une petite éponge sur laquelle on crache, quand ce n'est pas directement sur l'ardoise, pour effacer la craie. Après la leçon de morale ou d'instruction civique, on entame les plats de résistance: la terrible dictée, et les problèmes de robinets qui débitent tant de litres à l'heure dans une baignoire qui fuit. Et gare aux défaillances; c'est le coup de règle bien ajusté sur les doigts joints, ou le piquet, à genoux pendant une heure. La mémoire joue le premier rôle, et les règles et les formules répétées jusqu'à ce qu'elles jaillissent spontanément, pareilles à des reflexes. Même les réponses aux questions susceptibles d'être posées au Certificat d'Etudes sont apprises par coeur. Méthode énergique, mais efficace. N'est-il pas écrit dans les Evangiles, "Tu enfanteras dans la douleur"? Et, le soir, après l'étude, l'écolier retrouve la chaude intimité de la maison où l'électricité n'a pas encore fait son apparition. Après le repas c'est la veillée sous le bec de gaz, ou autour de la table ronde au milieu de laquelle trône la lampe à pétrole. Pendant que les adultes bavardent, parlent des problèmes de l'après-guerre, ou des inventions modernes, en particulier des automobiles qui roulent à des vitesses folles: plus de soixante à l'heure, ou tout bonnement passent en revue les habitants du quartier, les enfants, leurs leçons rabachées une dernière fois, s'occupent à dessiner ou à lire. Leurs auteurs préférés sont Victor Hugo, Jules Verne, Erckmann-Chatrian, plus tard, Alexandre Dumas; ils rêvent qu'ils sont Edmond Dantès ou d'Artagnan, ou le Capitaine Némé; et sur le papier, il dessine le Nautilus, et, sur la carte, il refait le tour du monde, ou combat les Indiens avec Buffalo Bill. Ils ont à leur disposition de nombreux illustrés, ancêtres des bandes dessinées: Les Belles Images, la Jeunesse Illustrée, l'Intrépide; pour les filles: Fillette, la Semaine de Suzanne, et j'en oublie. Soirées enrichissantes, fructueuses,

Un écolier en 1920

reposantes, agréables. Le livre est son meilleur ami, et il s'endort, la tête pleine d'idées et de choses merveilleuses, où il n'y a ni gangsters, ni vamps; les personnages s'expriment correctement et ne montrent pas comment on cambriole une bijouterie en perçant le plafond du magasin, ne balancent pas non plus des "bastos" dans le buffet à en attraper des coliques de plomb.

L'écolier de 1920 ne connaît pas encore la radio, ni la télé, ni la chaîne HI-FI, ni le lecteur de cassette, ni le magnétophone, pas même le cinéma parlant ou en couleur, moins encore la télématique.

Ses petits-enfants auront l'ordinateur à l'école, écouteront sans se lasser les rockers sans chercher à comprendre ce qu'ils hurlent en anglais (heureusement pour eux) et, adolescents, lorsqu'ils iront danser dans une discothèque, ils ne sauront pas qu'ils ont retrouvé les gestes que, depuis des millénaires, les hommes dits sauvages exécutent lors des cérémonies sacrées."

R.J.

Next time: "Soixante ans après"!

New Chapters Since July 1985

McColl HS (1750), McColl, SC, Mrs.

Patricia Lawrence

Portsmouth HS (1751), Portsmouth, RI, Mr.

Richard Thibault

Joliet Catholic HS (1752), Joliet, IL,

Mrs. Suzanne Kosmerl

Huntsville HS (1753), Huntsville, AL,

Ms. Karen Mitchell

Cape Henry Collegiate School (1755),

Virginia Beach, VA, Mrs. Ellen Willner

Metuchen HS (1757-, Metuchen, NJ, Ms.

Cynthia Schneider

Bella Vista HS (1758), Fair Oaks, CA,

Mrs. Jacqueline Merchant

Marlington HS (1759), Alliance, OH, Miss

Linda Hempstead

Archbishop Wood HS for Girls (1760), War-

minster, PA, Dorothy Burke Kozak

(continued on p. 7)

Initiation Ceremony

(Since jobs change hands and papers sometimes get lost, I am reprinting here the Initiation Ceremony for the Société Honoraire de Français.)

"La Course du Flambeau"

The group forms a circle, an old member next to a new one. Each new member is then introduced to the organization. In order to familiarize new members with the purposes and duties of the Société Honoraire de Français, the Constitution is read. This is followed by a report of the activities of the chapter. Then the ceremony, "La Course du Flambeau," takes place. The following passages are read, first in English, then in French.

"The transmission or handing on of the torch is a ceremony which used to take place in Ancient Greece. For this solemn occasion the citizens lined up at equal distances one from the other, forming a sort of chain. The first one in line lighted the torch at the altar, ran to transmit it to a second, who transmitted it to a third, thus from hand to hand, each citizen ran without a backward glance, keeping alive the flame which he was to hand on to another. Plato recognized in this running with a torch the image of the succeeding generations of life.

We, who shall be leaving you in a few months, transmit to you the torch of our enthusiasm and our motto: "L'homme qui sait deux langues en vaut deux!" (See note below.)

"La Course du Flambeau est une cérémonie qui avait lieu à Athènes dans la Grèce antique. Pour cette solennité, des citoyens s'espacèrent formant une sorte de chaîne. Le premier allumait un flambeau à l'autel, courait le transmettre à un second, qui le transmettait à un troisième, et ainsi de main en main, chaque citoyen courait, sans un regard en arrière, préservant la flamme qu'il allait remettre

Initiation Ceremony

à un autre. Platon a reconnu dans cette Course du Flambeau l'image des générations de la vie."

A lighted candle is then passed around the circle, and as it goes from hand to hand, the motto is repeated by each member.

The ceremony may then be continued as the chapter desires, perhaps with a talk by the principal or some distinguished guest, or a few words from the sponsor or a chapter officer. At the conclusion, the Marseillaise is sung.

Note: Chapter No. 25 uses a motto of its own: "Toujours mieux." It is possible that other chapters may wish to substitute a motto of its choice. The alternate motto of the Société Honoraire de Français may also be adapted by chapters to suit their purposes.

This ceremony was originated by Chapter 25 at the Bennet High School, Buffalo, New York.

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Educational Insignia Department
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Sterling Silver @ \$18.25
Yellow Gold Electroplate @ \$13.10
Quality Pins Only (no guard attached)
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Sterling Silver @ \$10.65
Yellow Gold Electroplate @ \$7.15
Quality Charms Only
1/10 10K Gold Filled @ \$14.00
Sterling Silver @ \$10.65
Yellow Gold Electroplate @ \$7.15

New Chapters

- Clearwater HS (1761), Clearwater, FL, Mrs. Brenda Nelms
Immaculate Heart Academy (1762), Westwood, NJ, Mrs. Maryann Schroeder
McMinnville HS (1763), McMinnville, OR, Mrs. Madeline Bishop
Porter-Gaud School (1764), Charleston, SC, Mrs. Patricia Hopper

Creative Writing Contest

Are your students ready for the Creative Writing Contest this year? We shall again offer five prizes, starting with a twenty-five dollar cash award for first-place.

If you submit pictures/drawings, please be certain they are done in black ink. I think I shall be able to reduce them in size to fit into the newsletter if you submit on standard sized paper.

Limit compositions to 200 words, please.

Observe the following rules:

1. Entries must be submitted by the chapter sponsor.
2. A sponsor may submit a maximum of three (3) entries for his chapter, but only one entry per student.
3. Mark all entries clearly with name of student, high school, city, and state. Also, please indicate the level of French in which the SHF student is currently enrolled.
4. Please send copies since I cannot return entries to you.
5. Prizes may also be distributed to individuals submitting original works of art, providing the conditions stated above are met.
6. Deadline for all entries is:

March 1, 1986 (postmarked)

Creative Writing Contest

7. Please send entries to the Executive Secretary who, along with the SHF President, will select winners:

Dr. Stephen Foster, Ex. Sec., SHF
Dept. of Foreign Lang. & Lit.
Old Dominion University
Norfolk, VA, 23508-8526

Sister Societies

Many of you write during the year requesting addresses of our sister organizations; here they are:

Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica
Frank M. Figueroa, Sec.-Treas.
Collegium of Comparative Cultures
Eckard College
St. Petersburg, FL 33733

Delta Epsilon Phi (German)
Mrs. Kathe Wilson, Sec.-Treas.
5975 S.W. 91 St.
Miami, FL 33156

Trivia/trivia

Many high school teachers tell me that their students enjoy making questions for and playing Trivial Pursuit at club meetings and in class. L'Elan would like to open its pages to questions prepared by students (with answers, s.v.p.). If we share enough of these, each school will have a starter set. Please send to the Executive Secretary your questions in the following subject areas:

Langue et culture

1. La conjugaison des verbes (don't forget to make them progressively harder!)
2. La France du passé (history, literature, customs, etc.)

Trivia/ trivia

- 3. Locutions françaises et proverbes
- 4. Grammaire (anything from interrogative pronouns to "si" clauses)
- 5. La France contemporaine (food, cinema, politics, etc.)
- 6. Vocabulaire (cognates, "faux amis," opposites, feminine forms, etc.)

Each class can make its own gameboard and playing pieces.

Let's hear from you!!!

Gold Seals

These self-sticking seals are again available from the Executive Secretary: 40 for \$5.00, postpaid.

Dr. Stephen Foster, Executive Secretary
 Société Honoraire de Français (A2234)
 Dept. of Foreign Lang. & Lit.
 Old Dominion University
 Norfolk, VA 23508-8526

- Clip & Save -

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 Société Honoraire de Français
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Office phone:
 (804) 440-3954
 (Only I will answer, so keep trying.)

Dept. of Foreign Lang. & Lit.:
 (804) 440-3973
 (Messages only, please, for blank certificates or leave your phone number and I'll call you back.)

Don't forget the time zone!

