

# RESTEZ CONNECTÉS

November 2022

E-newsletter of Alliance Française de Hamilton

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Alliance Française

Hamilton



Chamonix - Site officiel de Chamonix

## From the President's Desk

Alors que nous arrivons à la fin de 2022, je suis sûr que vous attendez tous avec impatience la saison de Noël et l'occasion de retrouver votre famille et vos amis. Cependant, avant la pause, votre Alliance vous offre deux autres friandises : notre assemblée générale du 3 décembre, et une projection du film comique français Santa & Cie à 19h le vendredi 16 décembre au centre de l'église de la cathédrale Saint-Pierre. Nous serions ravis de vous voir aux deux événements.



L'année a été chargée et le comité a fait de grands efforts pour élargir la gamme d'activités offertes et pour bâtir le profil de l'Alliance dans la communauté élargie. Avec Covid, espérons-le, en déclin, 2023 s'annonce pleine d'opportunités passionnantes. Notre AGA nous donne l'occasion de présenter certaines idées que votre comité a poursuivies. Notre nouveau site Web offre un nouveau look pour l'Alliance en ligne et, au fil du temps, vous offrira plus de ressources auxquelles vous pourrez accéder.

En terminant, ma dernière introduction au bulletin, je peux dire que j'ai eu la chance au cours des trois dernières années d'avoir votre soutien, et le soutien des comités successifs en des temps difficiles, exigeant de nouvelles façons de faire fonctionner nos activités de l'Alliance. Nous connaissons tous assez bien Zoom maintenant et l'apprentissage en ligne !

Andrea

## WHATS IN

- Past events
- AGM / Behind the scenes
- Film projection
- Play with Maxime Savoie
- Recipe
- Le marché de Noël de Strasbourg

## CONTRIBUTORS

Andrea Haines  
Emilie Duval  
Catherine Neazor-Brady

## EDITORIAL

Andrea Haines  
Emilie Duval

## GET FEATURED

We invite news, views, stories, comments and suggestions with appropriate photos and captions from all of you.

Please email your articles before 25th January for getting featured in the upcoming issue.



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# November Events

*We have been very busy since our last newsletter! Here is a snapshot of all the fun and exciting events your Alliance have organised for you!*

29 October

Eclats de rire lors de la projection du film  
Le grand Méchant Renard



5 November

Croissants, café et bonne humeur  
lors de notre Monthly breakfast.

5 November

Entre les deux, notre coeur balance! Rugby game France vs New Zealand.



19 November. Voyage virtuel à travers la France: Beaujolais nouveau, délicieux gâteau de Céline du Petit Choux, et jeux de société.



**SATURDAY 03 DECEMBER 2022 10am**

**TRUST WAIKATO - 4 LITTLE LONDON LANE, HAMILTON**

Believe it or not, we have reached that time of year again! It is our great pleasure that this year we can hold the Alliance Française Hamilton Annual General Meeting face-to-face instead of on Zoom!

It is the opportunity to share the achievements and challenges of the year when we report back to members, to explain the Committee's hopes and aspirations for the future, to get your feedback, and to seek approval for future actions we would like to take to help the Alliance grow to new heights. The following article by Catherine will give you a great insight into all this.

The AGM is also a fantastic opportunity for you to join the Committee as a regular Committee member and share your great ideas for the Alliance! Particular responsibilities are assigned taking account of capability, interest and availability, so Committee members contribute when they can, but other people have been able to take up the load in busy times. Many hands make light work, and fresh ideas brighten things up!

We are hoping many of you will be able to join us. There will be extra special festive pastries and coffee so you won't miss out on breakfast!

## About our Alliance: A little glimpse behind the scenes...

*By Catherine Neazor Brady*

As some of you may remember, in 2018 Alliance Française Hamilton came close to fading out of existence. There were serious discussions about whether to create a separate French club outside of the Alliance network, or whether to wind it up altogether. There was no one willing to step forward as President or Treasurer. Fortunately, Persephone de Magdalene put her hand up as President, and her wife took on the role of Treasurer when the role became vacant part way through the year. For the last three years, Andrea Haines has been President, with a vision of rejuvenating Alliance Française Hamilton to offer a wide range of activities that would appeal to all age groups, and many different sectors of the community. This has been fully supported by people who have served on the Committee during that time.

In spite of Covid, we have organized a range of different activities that in the last three years have included amongst others: regular monthly breakfasts with facilitators for each language level, film festivals and evenings, petanque facilitated by the Cambridge club, a very successful Bal Populaire du 14 juillet that will become an annual event, baking competitions with external judges and fantastic prizes, cultural celebrations such as la Fete des Rois, La Chandeleur with La Recree French playgroup and participation in the national tour of French left-hand pianist Maxime Zecchini. There has been more, there are too many to list... Through that time we have seen hundreds of people attending different Alliance events.

We have also been able to maintain an extensive range of language classes through the ups and downs of Covid, and the challenges of swapping between face-to-face and online teaching. We have a team of French native-speaking teachers, and classes at all levels plus conversation classes. For the first time this year, we have introduced children's classes. Now that the borders have reopened there has been a highly successful study trip to Creipac in Noumea that we would like to see become a regular event. And we have maintained the newsletter you are reading.

Your Committee loves bringing you this range of different activities! However, we are at the limits of what can be achieved as a virtual organisation. We don't have a fixed base, and with all Committee members working full-time jobs, it is challenging to provide such a programme of events when it also includes finding a new venue for every event, organizing setup, transporting materials and then setting the venue back as it was before we leave. We pay rental costs for our venues, and there have been unexpected surprises such as Wintec increasing classroom rent the week before classes started after we had already set our prices for the year and enrolled students. It also limits how many people can find us – they either have to hear about us by word of mouth or stumble across our social media. Anecdotally, it can take 1-3 years for people arriving in Hamilton to find out about us.

The last census showed there are 1285 French speakers in Hamilton. We share a vision to have Alliance Francaise Hamilton become the active centre of French, Francophone and Francophile life in Hamilton.

At the Alliance Directors meeting in August, it was very clear that the Alliances which have premises have a huge advantage. They can focus on managing and growing their programmes without the logistical issues. Next year we will be welcoming a French intern with a specialization in marketing to work with us for 6 months to grow our presence and help develop our events programme. We have been working on a project dubbed "Operation French Quarter" which we will be presenting at the AGM. There is an opportunity to go into shared premises which will create a highly visible focal point for the French and Alliance community, and there are also viable options for standalone offices, although without such high visibility. We will circulate documents in advance of the meeting so we can have a full discussion with members.

This is an exciting opportunity and a huge undertaking. Managed carefully, we can cement Alliance's role as a vibrant and long-term part of Hamilton's cultural life. Please read all the information we will be providing carefully, and come to the AGM ready for some good discussion!

# What is next?

Keen on watching a French Christmas movie before jumping into end-of-year celebrations?

When all his 92,000 elves get sick, Santa must find a cure on Earth to save Christmas! Come and join us for the projection of *Santa & Cie*, a 2017 movie written and directed by Alain Chabat.

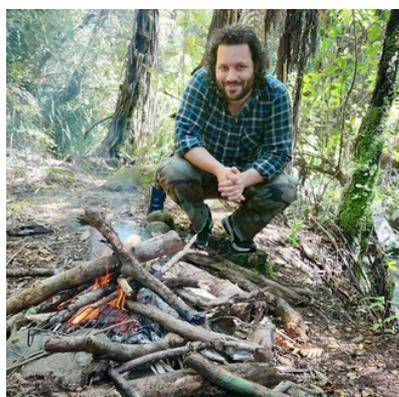
Date and time:

**Friday, 16th December, 6.00 pm**

Location:

**St Peter's Cathedral**

51 Victoria Street Hamilton



Our dear member Maxime Savoie is currently acting in an amazing play at Gaslight Theater, Cambridge:

## **Aladdin – The True-ish Story**

*"We present the true tale of Aladdin! You know, the one with the zebra. And the laundress, her two sons, the Empress, the magical ring being, the police, the creepy guy wanting to complete his lamp collection, the eco-warrior princess, the Egyptian god, the forgetful genie and his translator." (from Gaslight website)*

Only 3 dates left!

Friday 25th - 7.30pm start

Saturday 26th - 2.30pm start

Saturday 26th - 7.30pm start

Click [here](#) for more information





## Ingredients

• For the sponge cake :

4 eggs

100g sugar

100g flour

10g cocoa powder

• For the filling:

3 eggs

130g black chocolate

50g sugar

• For the chocolate icing:

100g black chocolate

10cl fresh cream

## Instructions for the cake:

1. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees.
2. Separate 3 eggs. Keep the last one.
3. Beat the yolks and the full egg with half of the sugar (50g). Add the flour and beat until the dough is homogenous.
4. Using an electric mixer, beat the egg whites until soft peaks form. Add the rest of the sugar. And beat for 15 seconds. Fold that mixture with the previous one.
5. Evenly pour the mixture into a baking sheet.
6. Bake for 10 minutes.
7. Invert the baking sheet on a clean tea towel that you have dusted with cocoa powder to prevent any chance of sticking. Carefully peel off the plate and roll the cake in the tea towel. Let cool.

## Instructions for the filling:

1. Break the eggs and separate them.
2. Beat the yolks with the sugar.
3. Using an electric mixer, beat the egg whites until soft peaks form
4. Break the chocolate into pieces and melt it with the butter. Stir in the egg yolks and mix together.
5. Fold half the beaten egg white mixture into the chocolate mixture, then add the rest, folding gently so you don't knock the air out.
6. Let cool in the fridge for 1 hour.

## Instructions for the icing:

1. Unroll the biscuit, spread the chocolate mousse and gently roll it up. Cut the ends.
2. Break the chocolate into pieces and melt with the cream in a pot on low heat. Stir from time to time to help it melt. Leave to set in the fridge, the ganache will become soft. (Be careful, if you leave the ganache too long in the fridge, it will become hard. You must watch it and use it at the right time).
3. Spread the thickened ganache all over your shaped cake.
4. Lightly drag a fork through the ganache so that it resembles tree bark.
5. Leave it in the fridge until ready to serve!

# Marché de Noël de Strasbourg

By Emilie Duval

The Christkindelsmärik, or "market of the child Jesus", is the name given in Alsatian dialect to the traditional Christmas market in Strasbourg. Born in 1570, it is one of the oldest in Europe and was for a long time the only one in France.



La Foire de Noël (du Petit-Jésus), à Strasbourg, Édouard Riou, 1858

In the Middle Ages, the *Klausenmärik* (or St. Nicholas Market) is located around the cathedral and is usually held around December 6. There are booths of candle makers, gingerbread sellers and other sweets, alongside shops of herbalists, saddlers, thrift shops and haberdashers.

In 1570, when Strasbourg went through the Reformation, the Lutheran preacher Johann Flinker opposed the worship of saints and consequently banned the Market of Saint Nicolas. It is replaced by the *Christkindelsmärik* - "Baby Jesus Market", which is held three days before Christmas.

Since then, the market has constantly grown: over the years, it has become bigger and bigger, and has changed its location several times.

This year, the market is held from 25 November to 24 December and hosts 393 "chalets" throughout the city. A municipal commission ensures that the products offered remain in line with the magic and flavour of Alsatian Christmas traditions: wooden toys made in Alsace, pottery from Soufflenheim and Betschdorf, craft beers, Advent wreaths and Christmas baubles in blown glass from the Art international center in Meisenthal, etc.

