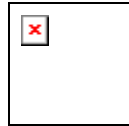


COMMISSION AMICALE: REPORT FOR 2000

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STATES OF JERSEY

STATES GREFFE

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The States established the Commission Amicale in 1995, following the closure of the French Consulate in Jersey in the early 1990s, with the aim of reinforcing cultural and commercial links between Jersey and France.
- 1.2 The Conseil Régional de Basse Normandie and the Conseil Général de la Manche opened an office, the Maison de Normandie et de la Manche, in Halkett Place, St. Helier, in 1996.
- 1.3 Following a period with a seconded officer in Caen, the regional capital, it was decided to establish a Jersey office there and the Maison de Jersey was opened on 15th July 1998.

2. Objectives in 2000

- 2.1 The objectives of the Jersey delegation for 2000, to be met in partnership with its French counterparts, other States' Committees and the private sector, were as follows -
 - (a) to open up talks with Brittany, after consultation with the Industries Committee, with the aim of increasing opportunities for trade between the regions;
 - (b) to promote, in conjunction with appropriate representative bodies, the production of a guide covering relevant aspects of conducting business with France in line with the request of the former Trade and Industry Sub-Committee;
 - (c) to develop a website as an information resource, and to seek to advertise e-commerce opportunities in Jersey and link into the Jersey Information Society Commission;
 - (d) to develop further links in the field of arts and heritage, for example, by the encouragement of choral groups;
 - (e) to encourage the further twinning of Parishes with French towns; and
 - (f) to endeavour to ensure that French students on work placements in Jersey of periods up to a limit of six months are exempt under the Regulation of Undertakings and Development (Jersey) Law 1973, as amended, so that exchanges of mutual benefit to students and employers alike can be pursued.

The Jersey delegation continued to -

- (a) maintain and improve the Maison de Jersey in Caen in order to provide advice and information about the Island and to continue to encourage the development of cultural and commercial links between Jersey and Lower Normandy;
- (b) further develop the rôle of Chargé de Mission to encourage strengthening links between the two regions;
- (c) receive written reports on the progress of work of the Maison de Jersey and to monitor its contribution and effectiveness;
- (d) address discrete areas of mutual interest between the Lower Normandy and Jersey, to include the development of commerce, educational exchanges, cultural events and political links;
- (e) facilitate the placement of the Primary School Assistants programme with Caen University; and
- (f) support cultural initiatives between the two regions.

3. Commission Amicale Jersey delegation activities

The Jersey delegation of the Commission Amicale, mutually supported by the Maison de Jersey in Caen, has achieved the following -

3.1 Education

- 3.1.1 The Jersey delegation continued to support, jointly with the Education Committee, four assistants from Caen University in local schools, two in the Primary Phase and two in the Secondary Phase. All assistants taught for a period of twelve hours a week, and reports from the Education Department advised that all assistants were well-organised, punctual and reliable and that the management of the pupils in their care was exemplary. The pupils' confidence to speak French had increased and the pronunciation of the language improved. The Maison de Jersey continued to facilitate the year's placements.
- 3.1.2 Former Connétable of St. Mary, E. Le G. Godel, on behalf of the Education Committee, and accompanied by Mr. David Greenwood, Assistant Director, Staff and Student Support Services, attended La Foire d'Exposition which is held annually in Argentan. During the visit, Monsieur Doubin, President of the Argentan Town Twinning Association, indicated that Argentan was keen to re-establish links with the Island, which had decreased since the school's exchange programme between Argentan and Jersey had ceased.
- 3.1.3 The Education Committee extended a reciprocal invitation to the President, Argentan Town Twinning Association, and the Jersey delegation hosted a visit for four members of the Argentan delegation on 7th and 8th September 2000. The delegation met the Bailiff, the French Consul, several States members, members of the Education Committee and a number of headteachers and teachers. During the visit, it became clear that there was a concern amongst Jersey educationalists regarding the continuation of the exchange programme, and it was agreed that the better way forward was to create an official twinning with one of Jersey's Parishes in order to continue the maintenance of an active cultural and educational programme.
- 3.2 Art, culture and heritage
- 3.2.1 The participation of French choral groups in Island events has been encouraged, and the Ensemble Vocale de Canisy, a Norman choral group from Caen, took part in the International Choir Festival 2000 between 27th and 30th October 2000.
- 3.2.2 The Band of the Island of Jersey sought support to renew links with Lower Normandy and opened the Foire de Caen on 15th September 2000, where it was extremely well received.
- 3.2.3 Meetings with Jersey artists and cultural organisations and their counterparts in Lower Normandy were undertaken to pursue areas of mutual interest with both commercial and research aims. This has led to greater co-operation between the Maison de Normandie, the Maison de Jersey and the Alliance Française.
- 3.2.4 A photography exhibition was initiated and held at St. James' Church from 20th November to 9th December as a collaboration between the Jersey Arts Centre and the Fond Régional d'Art Contemporain.
- 3.2.5 The Commission Amicale awarded a trophy for Class 307 of the French speaking section of the Jersey Eisteddfoc for the "own choice piece for ten year olds".
- 3.3 Trade and commerce
- 3.3.1 Two members of the Jersey delegation attended the Foire de Caen on 15th September 2000, and it was agreed that that delegation would seek to support this event in 2001. The fair receives over 250,000 visitors and could host Jersey businesses wishing to extend their markets to Lower Normandy.
- 3.3.2 Encouragement was given to the establishment of air links by Air Bretagne from Jersey to the proximity regions of Brittany and Lower Normandy with the airports of Caen-Carpiquet, St. Brieuc, Brest, Nantes and Paris.
- 3.4 Twinning
- 3.4.1 In May, St. Ouen was officially twinned with Coutances, making a total of seven Jersey Parishes twinned with communes in Lower Normandy. The Jersey delegation continues to believe that twinings are an effective means of promoting exchanges and encourages Parishes to twin with towns in France. This means that the following Parishes are now twinned -

Grouville	Port-Bail
St. Helier	Avranches
St. John	Le Teilleul
St. Martin	Montmartin sur Mer

St. Mary	Longues sur Mer
St. Saviour	Villedieu les Poêles
St. Ouen	Coutances

Discussions are continuing between the Parish of Trinity and Granville with a view to future twinning. The Parish authorities and individuals who have worked towards the twinning of Parishes and towns and maintained such twinings are to be congratulated on their efforts. The Chargé de Mission continues to maintain contact with the Norman twinings to provide advice and assistance as necessary.

3.4.2 Another successful Jeux Intervilles was held on 22nd and 23rd July in St. Helier with five pairs of the above twinned towns and Parishes partaking. There was also an exhibition of Norman products and visiting folk groups, and the weekend culminated with a “dîner dansant” held at Fort Regent, St. Helier for 600 guests. A press conference with the organisers of the Jeux Intervilles in Jersey was arranged at the Abbaye aux Dames with the regional media of Lower Normandy.

3.5 Maison de Jersey

3.5.1 The Maison de Jersey has been refurbished to cater for the increased demand it has been experiencing, and in order to respond to this demand an assistant to the Chargé de Mission was appointed in December 2000, for a six-month period. This would increase administrative support and maintain opening hours permanently from Monday to Friday.

4. **Activities of the Maison de Jersey in 2000**

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 The Chargé de Mission continues to make contact with many individuals and organisations within the public and private sector in Jersey, and the proximity regions in France, with regard to art, culture and heritage, education, employment, environmental issues, the building industry, ITC, the media, sport, leisure and recreation, incoming and outgoing tourism, trade and commerce, transport and general area such as twinings.

4.1.2 In 2000, the Maison de Jersey received a total of 425 enquiries and requests for assistance by individuals, private companies and government agencies in both France and Jersey. This constitutes a 15 per cent decrease compared to 1999, but with a significant increase in formal developments.

4.1.3 An address for an Internet site was allocated as www.maisondejersey.gov.je and discussions have been pursued with the Norman delegation and the Maison de Normandie to work jointly on this in both languages. Temporarily, the States intranet site for the Maison de Jersey was posted in the public domain, and it was decided that, for technical reasons, both the Maison de Jersey and the Maison de Normandie would develop two separate sites but continue working closely together regarding the content.

4.2 Education

4.2.1 The Maison de Jersey continued to receive a significant number of requests and provided assistance to promote Jersey school's business in France and French schools seeking to establish links with Jersey schools. It also ensured that existing arrangements operated efficiently.

4.3 Art, culture and heritage

4.3.1 The loan of photographic templates from the Bayeux Tapestry was facilitated for a publication by the Société Jersiaise.

4.3.2 Assistance was given to the Island Cultural Review regarding the means and benefits of cultural imports and exports which was included in the final strategy.

4.3.3 Assistance was also given to a Norman painter wishing to publish an English version of his collection of watercolours in respect of the Channel Islands. A publisher and distributor in Jersey was identified and the book, entitled ‘Carnet de Bord’ was published.

4.3.4 Further assistance was given to the Mont Orgeuil refurbishment project with the sourcing of specialist French builders for heritage sites of this nature.

4.4 Trade and commerce

4.4.1 A wide-ranging variety of enquiries were forthcoming, ranging from import/export formalities to trade opportunities in various sectors, including agriculture, fishing and retail. Assistance was sought mainly in exploring market conditions and developing trade.

4.4.2 The Maison de Jersey continued to receive a significant number of requests to find employment in Jersey. These related mainly to seasonal posts in the hospitality sector, but some were for employment of a more permanent nature and French candidates generally had experience and relevant qualifications.

4.4.3 Work placements for French students were identified in the tourism and marketing sectors.

4.4.4 Facilitation for Jersey and French businesses seeking to employ or place French employees in Jersey took place. This was mainly in the retail and hospitality sector and involved liaison with the French employment services. Employment enquiries constituted an estimated 15 per cent of all enquiries.

4.5 Environment and building

4.5.1 In close collaboration with the Environmental Adviser, Policy and Resources Department and relevant Guernsey representatives, research was undertaken regarding the proposed modifications and procedures to be followed by the Island in expressing the viewpoints in respect of public enquires regarding the nuclear recycling installation at La Hague. Subsequently, the Maison de Jersey initiated and organised a meeting between Jersey States members and the President, Public Enquiries Commission, so that the Island's concerns were officially recorded.

4.5.2 Research was undertaken regarding the proliferation of seaweed pollution and its management in France, and collaboration was initiated between the relevant French agencies and the Public Services Department.

4.5.3 Initial approaches were made with the Lower Norman Building Federation and arising issues addressed, such as tendering processes and legal requirements. Work was undertaken to ensure a clear understanding of the opportunities which could result from encouraging French building contractors to work in Jersey in the public sector.

4.6 Media

4.6.1 Information was provided to various local and national media such as newspapers, television channels, radio stations and travel guides and meetings facilitated for interviews on specific topics. Most enquiries related to current affairs such as the impact of storms, port blockades, fishing and tourism.

4.6.2 A press conference was arranged with the regional media of Lower Normandy for the organisers of the Jeux Intervilles in Jersey.

4.7 Telecommunications and information technology

4.7.1 Facilitation for the JEC/CIEG joint venture was provided to enable the laying and use of a telecommunications network between Jersey and France. Research was undertaken with the relevant French authorities, and meetings were held in order to explore potential future opportunities for e-business and pursue the applications to secure a public telecommunications network.

4.8 Tourism

4.8.1 An estimated 55 per cent of all enquiries related to tourism, and members of the public had been informed of transport and leisure opportunities.

4.8.2 Assistance was given to French tour operators and Jersey businesses wishing to expand their businesses and potential markets.

5. Commission Amicale projects for 2001

5.1 The Jersey delegation is keen to build on the successes of creating links with Normandy, and to respond to the needs of industry and commerce, by separately extending its area of influence to include establishing links on a

more formal level with Brittany.

5.2 The Jersey delegation has approved the following additional projects for 2001 -

- (a) the development of the Internet site to provide information in French and English, and to provide appropriate information regarding areas such as employment, trade and tourism opportunities and relevant links to other sites;
- (b) produce pamphlets in areas such as employment and conducting trade;
- (c) subsequent to consultation with the Industries Committee, aim to build on the successes of creating links with Lower Normandy, by separately extending its area of influence to include establishing links on a more formal level with Brittany;
- (d) to continue to facilitate and support initiatives which establish links between Jersey and Lower Normandy and Brittany;
- (e) to monitor progress at the Maison de Jersey and consider the extension of the contract of the assistant to the Chargé de Mission; and
- (f) to continue with the work begun in previous years.

6. Conclusion

6.1 The Jersey delegation continues to see value in forging links between Jersey and its near neighbours, for mutual benefit, in line with the aim of reinforcing cultural and commercial links between Jersey and France.

There has been enormous benefit derived from there being an officer based in France to interface with relevant organisations. It is now evident that maintaining contacts in both cultural and commercial areas with the proximity regions of France is extremely beneficial. The development of the Maison de Jersey also develops the potential to advise, provide assistance and to facilitate as appropriate, in both the private and public sectors in Jersey.

For the next period, the Jersey delegation hopes to begin talks with Brittany, with which there are strong transport links, to improve trade between the two regions. In this area, as in all areas, the Jersey delegation sees its rôle as being that of a facilitator. In the event that opportunities for developing trade or commerce emerge from these discussions, such opportunities should be taken forward, as is seen fit, by the relevant Committees.