

COMMISSION AMICALE: REPORT FOR 2001

**Presented to the States on 11th June 2002
by the Commission Amicale**



STATES OF JERSEY

STATES GREFFE

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Members of the Jersey delegation to the Commission Amicale

The Bailiff of Jersey

Senator P.F. Horsfall, O.B.E.

Senator J.A. Le Maistre

Connétable H.G. Coutanche of St. Lawrence

Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier

Deputy M.E. Vibert

Deputy R.C. Hacquoil

Deputy K.W. Syvret

Deputy J-A. Bridge

Co-opted member - Mr. M. Liston, Jersey Electricity Company Limited

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 In 1995, the States agreed to the establishment of 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. The Commission is comprised of elected representatives of the States and the Conseil Régional de Basse-Normandie and the Conseil Général de la Manche. It is co-chaired by the Chairman and by Monsieur. René Garrec, President of the Conseil Régional.
- 1.2 The Conseil Régional and the Conseil Général 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. Continuation of aims and objectives

- 2.1 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 encourage the development of cultural, sporting and commercial links with Lower Normandy and Brittany;
 - (b) develop the rôle of the Executive Officer in strengthening links between the two regions and receive written reports on the progress of work of the Maison de Jersey and monitor its contribution and effectiveness;
 - (c) work towards the development of political links with Lower Normandy and foster more positive views of the Island at a national level;
 - (d) address discrete areas of mutual interest between Lower Normandy and Jersey, particularly in the context of public health and building and civil engineering;
 - (e) facilitate the placement of the Primary School Assistants programme with Caen University and encourage educational exchanges;,
 - (f) support cultural initiatives between the two regions.

3. Membership

- 3.1 Connétable H.G. Coutanche of St. Lawrence and Deputy R.C. Hacquoil of St. Peter were appointed to the Jersey delegation of the Commission Amicale on 13th February 2001. The Jersey delegation's membership is drawn from different Committees to ensure that as wide a spread as possible of mutual interests between the communities of Jersey and Lower Normandy is represented.
- 3.2 The appointment of both Connétable Coutanche (Education Committee) and Deputy Hacquoil (Industries Committee) ensured throughout 2001 that the interests of those Committees were well represented and contributed to the reinforcement of cultural and commercial links.
- 3.3 With existing members, the interests of the Policy and Resources, Finance and Economics, Industries, Planning and Environment, Public Services, Agriculture and Fisheries, Tourism, Housing, Human Resources, Sport, Leisure and Recreation, Home Affairs and Legislation Committees together with Education and Industries Committees, the Committee for Postal Administration, the Jersey Transport Authority and the Comité des Connétables, ensured a wide and full representation throughout 2001.

4. Visit of States members to Conseil Général de la Manche, St. Lô

- 4.1 On 27th April 2001, 20 States members accompanied the Bailiff, Sir Philip Bailhache and co-opted member of the Commission Amicale, Mr. M. Liston, Managing Director, Jersey Electricity Company Limited, to the opening session of the newly constituted Assemblée Départementale of the Conseil Générale de la Manche at the Maison du Département in St. Lô.

- 4.2 The welcome was extended by Senator Le Grand, President of the Conseil Général in which he focused on the need for harmonious working relationships between La Manche and Jersey in order to establish and increase sound economic and touristic relations.
- 4.3 It was acknowledged that such links served to strengthen trust between communities and assuaged misapprehensions which might arise by the establishment of good relations between Jersey, La Manche and Brittany.
- 4.4 Issues debated were expansive and positive, comprising among other, taxation issues, budgetary controls, European grants, borrowing and repayment procedures, maritime and air links and employment exchanges.
- 4.5 Focus groups debated issues appertaining to social matters, trade, industry and the environment and tourism and communication and culture.
- 4.6 There was overall agreement that the visit had been most beneficial and an invitation was extended to the Conseil Général for a reciprocal visit to Jersey in 2002.

5. Channel Islands Electricity Grid: French - Jersey link

- 5.1 Discussions pertaining to the possibility of an electricity link between France and Jersey had commenced concurrently with the establishment of the Commission Amicale which had developed positively in a wide variety of areas.
- 5.2 The Jersey delegation accepted an invitation to attend the inauguration of the second interconnection of the electricity link between France and Jersey on 7th September 2001.
- 5.3 The inauguration was attended by senior politicians and by representatives of the Electricité de France (EdF), Réseau de Transport d'Electricité (RTE) and Jersey and Guernsey Electricity Companies.
- 5.4 The Director of RTE stressed the importance of economic and political and environmental links with both Jersey and Guernsey, amplifying that attention during the laying of the fibre optic cable had been given to the preservation of dunes, flora and fauna.

6. Tourism

- 6.1 The Commission Amicale was in June 2001 informed of an initiative which was being undertaken by the Conseil Général to launch a public relations campaign encouraging French visitors to travel to Jersey. This promotion will begin early in 2002.
- 6.2 The Commission Amicale supported a request for a contribution towards the cost of that campaign which the Tourism Committee identified from within its budget.

7. Education

- 7.1 The Commission Amicale has continued to monitor the situation regarding the Island's previous educational link with Argentan. It has been recognised that this link was maintained through the enthusiasm of a teacher who has since left the Island. Noting that Argentan continues to be keen to re-establish such a link, and that numbers of French children would be interested in establishing friendships with children in Jersey, the Commission Amicale has investigated a means by which this might be facilitated. This is currently undergoing further investigation by the Education Committee and Department.

8. Maison de Jersey

Overview

- 8.1 The Jersey delegation of the Commission Amicale has been enabled to fulfil its original aim of reinforcing cultural and commercial links between Jersey and France through the active involvement of the Maison de Jersey in Caen.
- 8.2 Involvement by the Executive Officer of the Maison de Jersey in the facilitation of projects since the opening of the office on 15th July 1998 has augmented and led to an abundance of liaisons in many areas between our two

communities

9. Staffing

9.1 Post of Assistant to the Executive Officer

9.2 On 4th January 2001, Mademoiselle Sophie Dujarrier took up post as the Assistant to the Executive Officer at the Maison de Jersey, Caen. The assistant was employed on a 35 hour week contract for a period of six months.

9.3 One of the main tasks of the Assistant to the Executive Officer is to welcome visitors at the Maison de Jersey and to provide information concerning transport, hotels and attractions in Jersey. Detailed leaflets are available and the assistant ensures that there is always a sufficient and varied supply available.

9.4 The Assistant supports the Executive Officer in dealing with all correspondence and filing of documents. She is also responsible for the production of a statistical analysis of visitors to the Maison de Jersey for reports to the Commission Amicale on a quarterly basis, and for the maintenance of internal records.

9.5 The Assistant also provides support for the Executive Officer in researching information which might prove beneficial to the Maison de Jersey.

9.6 The Assistant is currently analysing existing web sites in preparation for a future web site for the Maison de Jersey.

9.7 The appointment of the Assistant has proved extremely beneficial and has enhanced the range and amount of work which can be undertaken at the Maison de Jersey. Not only has the appointment facilitated longer opening hours but it has also enabled more beneficial use of the Executive Officer's time to arrange and attend meetings in different parts of the region. The contract of assistant was extended for a six month period until December 2001.

10. Post of Executive Officer

10.1 Mr. Damien Aoutin completed the term of his three-year contract to the post of Executive Officer on 30th June 2001. The Commission Amicale acknowledges his hard work and dedication to the establishment and development of the Maison de Jersey. He established a network of contacts and relationships which has laid solid foundations for the work of the Commission Amicale.

10.2 On 1st July 2001, Mr. Seamus Canavan took up the post of Executive Officer at the Maison de Caen on a one-year contract and has continued to offer a dedicated service to the maintenance and establishment of further links between the communities.

11. Statistics

11.1 The table below details the number of days the Maison de Jersey was open to the public during each quarter, the total number of enquiries received, and the percentage of those enquiries related to tourism and employment issues.

1st Quarter (January to March)

Days open to public	64
Total number of enquiries	178
Percentage tourism-related	between 43.59% and 80.49%
Percentage employment-related	between 2.56% and 13.41%

2nd Quarter (April to June)

Days open to public	60
Total number of enquiries	238
Percentage tourism-related	between 70.11% and 79.41%
Percentage employment-related	between 5.88% and 10.34%

3rd Quarter (July to September)

Days open to public	64
Total number of enquiries	188
Percentage tourism-related	between 59.57% and 87.50%
Percentage employment-related	between 1.38% and 10.63%

4th Quarter (October to December)

Days open to public	57
Total number of enquiries	109
Percentage tourism-related	between 47.61% and 61.90%
Percentage employment-related	between 4.76% and 17.39%

12. Activities supported and/or promoted by the Maison de Jersey

12.1 Trade with France

12.2 Communication, consultation and collaboration has been ongoing throughout 2001 with regard to trade links with France. A representative of an aggregate business, Carrières de l'Ouest had expressed a wish to develop business with Jersey.

12.3 The Commission Amicale supported the establishment of a group entitled "Trade with France", established by the Industries Committee, the aim of which was to explore opportunities for improving two-way trade with France.

12.4 The interest of the Normandy region's construction industry representatives to explore work opportunities in Jersey developed with such substance that the Maison de Jersey facilitated a visit to Jersey of such representatives. This proved successful and engineers and architects from the Public Services department met the French delegation. Consideration was given to differing building regulations, the rapid development of materials used in the French construction industry and the means by which the French might compete to undertake building projects in Jersey.

12.5 Facilitation of communication between the Fédération de Travaux Publics, the Fédération Française des Bâtiments and the Public Services Department continues through the Maison de Jersey.

13. Tourism

13.1 The Maison de Jersey organised a visit for a delegation from the Jersey Tourism Committee to France on 17th July 2001. The Jersey representatives met officials from the Upper and Lower Normandy Regional Councils and discussed matters of mutual interest. Following this initial meeting, the Jersey delegation met Monsieur J.P. Viallaneix, Deputy Mayor of Caen and Madame Anne Brunet, Economic Development Officer for Caen. The meeting proved extremely useful in developing relations with the Mairie de Caen.

14. Health

14.1 The Executive Officer made preliminary enquiries of hospitals in Bayeux and Caen to ascertain the interest in discussing the viability of partnerships with Jersey.

14.2 The "Centre Hospitalier Privé Saint-Martin de Caen", an internationally renowned teaching hospital with a policy of promoting the speaking of English confirmed its interest in forming a partnership with Jersey. The Executive Officer continues to facilitate contacts between the Health and Social Services Department and institutions in France.

15. Education

15.1 The Maison de Jersey received a request from Monsieur J. Rengnault, Mayor of Longues-sur Mer and Deputy of Port-en Bessin to establish partnerships between schools in Jersey and those in Port-en Bessin and Bayeux. This has been monitored and the Executive Officer has apprised both Education authorities of his willingness to assist in the development of such partnerships.

15.2 There have been further requests from Caen to twin with schools in Jersey. A meeting between the Executive Officer and the Education Department and Jersey schools has resulted in the organisation of a number of school trips to Normandy in 2002.

15.3 The Executive Officer assisted with the training of the French assistants working in Jersey schools from September 2001 to May 2002. This included the preparation of lessons, target setting and evaluation of performance over both the long and short-term. Assistance with accommodation, time-tabling and liaison with the Education Department and the University of Caen was also undertaken.

15.4 The Maison de Jersey offered support for a student writing a thesis on the relations between Lower Normandy, south of England and the Channel Islands for a PhD in Economy. Another student is also being assisted by the Maison de Jersey.

15.5 The Maison de Jersey is frequently asked for help by teachers and students engaged in academic projects.

16. Employment

16.1 The Maison de Jersey has produced a guide to seasonal employment and work experiences in Jersey. Although available at the Maison de Jersey, this guide was distributed at the employment fair in Coutances, together with other promotional material about Jersey.

16.2 The Executive Officer has met with representatives of the Caen and Regional Chambers of Commerce to identify and consider areas of mutual interest. Two Jersey companies received assistance in seeking French wholesalers to export Jersey produce and/or import French-made goods.

17. Culture

17.1 *Choral/Musical Groups:* The possibility of De Caelis, a Baroque ensemble, appearing in Jersey for a concert and also four groups willing to play at a theme evening at the Maritime Museum were identified for the Jersey Arts Trust.

17.2 *Fairs:*

1. The Executive Officer attended the opening of the Salon des Vacances in Caen. This fair attracts industry professionals, with Jersey on that occasion being represented by Alizés - Emeraude ferries.

2. The Executive Officer has also conducted research regarding the many fairs held in Normandy, Brittany and Paris in order to assess the potential benefits of Jersey's participation at such. The outcome of this research showed the Foire de Caen as the most prestigious and beneficial.

17.3 *Photography:*

1. The Maison de Jersey assisted with a request from Jersey Heritage Trust regarding the availability of material relating to photography in the 1850s and in particular to artists who may have photographed Victor Hugo during his exile on the Island.

2. The Maison de Jersey facilitated a workshop and an exhibition of works of Mr. Ronnie Weiss, photographer, musician and teacher in the FNAC (Fédération Nationale des Achats pour cadres).

17.4 *Films:* The Executive Officer attended the Dinard Film Festival and made good contacts whilst discussing the possibility and potential benefits of using Jersey as a film location.

17.5 *Library:*

1. There has been a developing interest in collaboration between the Library Services in Caen and Jersey with discussions having taken place on Victor Hugo, access to Les Fonds Normands, exhibitions pertaining to Jersey which might be circulated to interested libraries in Lower Normandy, inter-library borrowing and work experience placements.

2. Jersey Library is pursuing a proposal to twin with La Bibliothèque de Caen, through the Maison de Jersey.

18. Media

18.1 The Executive Officer was interviewed by BBC Radio Jersey regarding the Foot and Mouth outbreaks in France.

18.2 The Executive Officer, having negotiated with the President, ATTAC (Association pour une Taxation des Transactions Financières pour l'Aide aux Citoyens) was approached by French media who were seeking to balance the views expressed by that organisation.

18.3 The Maison de Jersey facilitated the preparation of a report on Jersey and a visit to the States Chamber by a team from France 2 Television.

18.4 In collaboration with the Conseil Régional's attachée de Presse, Emmanuelle Trilly, articles relating to Jersey have appeared in the regional press.

19. Sports

19.1 *Athletics:* The Executive Officer met with Caen Athletic Club and the Athletic Association of Brittany. There

is a keen interest in forming a partnership with Jersey which would enable Jersey athletes to compete in regional championships. A suggestion has been made that both Caen and Jersey could inaugurate the stadium in Caen once renovated.

19.2 *Swimming:* 1. A successful meeting took place between the Jersey Swimming Association and the Service des Sports, Caen.

2. The Maison de Jersey has written to the Mayor of Caen and the Service des Sports on behalf of Swifts Swimming Club with the intention that a long-term collaboration might ensue. An invitation to Jersey swimming clubs has also been extended to participate in the regional championships in Caen.

3. The Maison de Jersey also organised a week-long training camp for Tigers Swimming Club in Caen and the coach of Caen Entente Nautique has volunteered to assist in the facilitation of Jersey's swimming clubs participation at meets in France.

19.3 *Football:* The Maison de Jersey has investigated the interest in Normandy in playing against Jersey opposition. This had been requested in particular by Mondeville (14120) and Douvres (14440).

20. Commission Amicale projects for 2002

20.1 An invitation has been extended to the Conseil Général de la Manche to visit Jersey during 2002 for a reciprocal visit to that paid by States members to St. Lô in April 2001. It is the intention of the Commission to operate a similar programme to enable sharing of ideas and the development of mutual understanding. Members will be informed of dates for their diaries at such time as these have been confirmed.

20.2 The Jersey delegation is keen to build further on the established links as detailed above. It is acknowledged that this will involve much time-consuming work on the part of the staff at the Maison de Jersey.

20.3 The Jersey delegation also aims to identify further groups and associations which might be interested in making target-orientated links between our communities.

20.4 Interest has already been expressed by a group of archivists from Calvados who wish to spend a week working in Jersey and a leading French bank intends to visit the Island in spring 2002. In addition work is being undertaken with the association of Lady University Graduates, together with Bridge Clubs, Hockey Clubs, and Walking Clubs all of which are considering trips to Jersey in 2002.

20.5 The Fédération de Travaux Publics and the Fédération Française des Bâtiments have extended an invitation to the Public Services Committee/Department to visit France to observe work being undertaken on some sites.

20.6 Through the Maison de Jersey, it will assist with the promotion of La Fête Normande to be held in Jersey on 3rd to 9th June 2002. The President of the University of Caen has expressed her desire to attend a promotional evening for this event and her willingness to contribute to the continued cultural association between the Island and the University of Caen.

20.7 It will endeavour, through the Maison de Jersey to maximise sporting and cultural contacts at all levels and all ages.

20.8 Furthermore, the Maison de Jersey will endeavour to organise a number of theme evenings in Normandy featuring Jersey artists, dancers and musicians.

20.9 To continue to facilitate school excursions and exchanges and actively encourage such visits in collaboration with the Education Department.

20.10 The Executive Officer will make regular contributions to Radio Normandie F.M. in order to fulfil the aim of raising the profile of Jersey by increased exposure through regional French media.

20.11 Involvement will be intensified with government agencies in Normandy and Brittany whose interest is to develop trading links with international partners. It should be noted that the Executive Officer has the full support of the Jersey Chamber of Commerce in this undertaking and anticipates continuing good working relationships in this matter.

20.12 Development of links with Brittany will continue to occur, through the Maison de Jersey which currently pays

frequent visits to Rennes, St. Malo and St. Brieuc. Work with French customs at St. Malo has been ongoing together with offering advice to importers and exporters with regard to French law. The Maison de Jersey has assisted with the procurement of Breton musicians to perform in Jersey. Sporting links between the Island and Rennes and St. Brieuc have also been facilitated. With regard to educational matters, the Executive Officer of the Maison de Jersey accompanied the Educational Safety Officer on an inspection visit of activity centres in Brittany which will host six Jersey schools during 2002. An excellent rapport with the activity centre at Mur de Bretagne has been developed which should prove beneficial to Jersey pupils, teachers and administrators.

20.13 To monitor the progress made with the above matters by the Maison de Jersey.

21. Conclusion

The Commission Amicale would like to extend its particular thanks to those Committees and organisations which offered financial support during 2001, this having enhanced the operation of the Commission Amicale through its office in Caen to promote even greater liaisons between Jersey, Normandy and Brittany.

The Jersey delegation continues to see value not only in its rôle as facilitator of forging links between Jersey and its near neighbours, for mutual benefit, but also in maintaining and building upon those liaisons already achieved. The success and diversity of this is recorded by a selection of headlines in both Jersey and French regional local newspapers below.

Enormous benefit has been derived from such links and in particular from there being an official based in France with assistant support. The Jersey delegation believes that the good work of its officials at La Maison de Jersey is being increasingly recognised by Committees of the States and hopes that this will develop to an even greater extent. There is an abundance of excellent work already started and it will be the focus of the Commission Amicale to encourage and facilitate the deepening of such links for the benefit of our communities.

The Commission Amicale would like to take this opportunity of thanking all Committees which have maintained links or established new links and for their willingness to explore opportunities with our near neighbours.