Bibliotheque
Anglo-Francaise

October 2025
Vol. 3, Issue 18

The Librarian



A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Now the heat has waved goodbye we can all breathe again. Hurray!

At the last committee meeting we discussed footfall in the library and the number of volunteers to man the library. Numbers of both are gradually falling because of people moving, going back to Britain or illness. The library is an important resource to people and as mentioned in a previous newsletter, your library needs you. Most importantly and immediately, volunteers are needed to be “on duty” for two hours on a Tuesday and Thursday morning. This can really can be a very pleasant two hours with, hopefully, someone to chat to for a while, or some peace and quiet, or plenty of time to browse through the shelves. And there is a coffee machine, or you can get a take-away from the top of the road.

Please think seriously about using the library and about volunteering, and if you feel you could volunteer, call in at the library or contact the editor.

Hope to see you soon.

Sue

DISCLAIMER THE ENGLISH LIBRARY TAKES NO LEGAL OR OTHER RESPONSIBILITY FOR ARTICLES, REVIEWS, FINANCIAL ADVICE OR ADVERTISEMENTS PUBLISHED IN THIS NEWSLETTER. THE VIEWS OF THE CONTRIBUTORS AND REVIEWERS ARE PERSONAL AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THOSE OF THE NEWSLETTER OR THE ASSOCIATION. READERS SHOULD VERIFY ALL ARTICLES FOR SALE, TRADES PERSONS ETC. BEFORE PARTING WITH MONEY. THE EDITORS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT, REJECT OR EDIT ANY ADVERTISEMENT, ARTICLE OR REVIEW SUBMITTED FOR PUBLICATION.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Jungle Drums..... ..... 2– 4

Book Review..... 5

Gardening Corner 6

Never Learn to Type 5

I met David Bailey 6

Great Expectations (2)..... 7

AI Everywhere.....8

Notice Board - Festilitt 9

What's On In September..... .....10 + 11

Classifieds..... 12



LIBRARY HOURS

Open Tuesdays & Thursdays

10.00—12,00

Large Variety of books to choose

Tea & Coffee Available

Drop in for a chat

TIME TO PAY OUR DEBTS! - Thank You

This year's Fun Day for the children of the Bastide was "A Journey of the Five Senses". Fortunately we were still able to adapt the Library Stall of "HoopLa—Up-La" into this theme. We had a slight update of brightly coloured hoops to throw and larger targets which were placed on the floor instead of our normal table. The addition of a Bubble Machine meant that the "Littlies" who usually have to watch their elder siblings could join in the fun and catch the bubbles.





Both the children and the rota of Library members who helped all enjoyed the afternoon. A HUGE thank you from me to the volunteers

H.N.M.

EDITORS VERY SPECIAL NOTE

Since before I took over the Editorship of this essential organ of the Library we have carried a "What's On" section to keep us all aware of events and opportunities for entertainment that we might have otherwise missed. We could not have done it without the unfailing support of one of our regular contributors—Harriet Joynes.

Regrettably Harriet has decided to spend more of her time closer to family in the USA so this month's "What's On" will be her last contribution to our Newsletter.

I cannot let this moment pass without saying a profound "Thank You" to Harriet for her support of the Library and "The Librarian" and to wish her ever happiness in this next phase of her life.

Bon Voyage et Bon Courage!

Alan

FRENCH CONVERSATION GROUP - ACT NOW!!!

Inscriptions for the French conversation group will take place in early September at the USP (Université des Savoirs Partagés) office (next to the English Library) in order to begin the activity in October.

The group will take place at the Fleurines Hotel (in the bar room or in the breakfast room) every other Thursday at 1.30 pm.

We'll have to order a coffee to use the place. I plan to have one hour conversation to begin with and we could stay more if wanted...

USP asks us to join the association and the fee for the "atelier" would be around 50 euros for 10 sessions.

Please contact me if you are interested. I will organise an informal meeting in September to evaluate the french levels.

Geneviève Démonet demonet.ge@gmail.com

BROADEN YOUR FRENCH VOCABULARY

Salade de fruits :

Tomber dans les pommes = s'évanouir (faint)

Compter pour des prunes = n'avoir aucune valeur (count for nothing, for peanuts)

Couper la poire en deux = faire un compromis, partager équitablement (meet halfway)

Sucrer les fraises = trembler, par extension être sénile, gâteux (shaky hands)

Avoir la pêche (ou la banane) : être en forme, avoir le sourire (feel great)

QUIZ NIGHTS ARE BACK!!!

Back by popular demand our winter evening Quiz nights will re-start in Friday 31st October , Halloween in Les Fluerines start-ing at 18.00 and for this night only please arrive by Broomstick and authentically dressed for the occasion. There will be a prize for the best "Fancy Dress" of the evening. Full details to follow from the organisers Lesley & David Sharrock



DISBANDMENT OF THE PHOTO GROUP

Owing to lack of interest in the group's activities, evidenced by zero attendance at recent events, it has been decided, reluc-tantly, to disband the group with immediate effect.

NW

FREE ONE FULL DAY FIRST AID COURSE — In French. Your chance to save a life?



SOCIETY CONTACTS

- **BRIDGE:**

  lesley.sharrock@gmail.com or pellalean@gmail.com

- **EDITOR**

  editor.elnbafvdr@orange.fr

- **MAILING LIST—ADDITIONS / CHANGES**

  davidg.sharrock@gmail.com



The Book Review By

Elaine Morgan

THE MAGICIAN'S ASSISTANT BY ANN PATCHETT

This is a straightforward story of redemption and human kindness. Patchett doesn't always give us those but she writes well and knows how to construct a story to keep you reading.

In this novel the main character, Sabine is the magician's assistant. As the novel starts she has just lost her husband who was the magician. Parsifal has died of AIDS as had his lover Phan before him. He married Sabine shortly before he died after 20 years of being together and yet not together. She adored him. Now she will inherit everything or will she?

Her lawyer gets in touch and forces her to rouse herself from her grief, get out of bed, dress and come to meet him. She then discovers that Parsifal was in fact Guy Fetters who has lied to her about his past. His parents did not die in a car accident and he has living family in Nebraska.

This living family bursts into her life wanting to know her and wanting to discover all about the son and brother who left them, never to return. Sabine is unsure if they know about his homosexuality as Alliance, Nebraska is not Los Angeles.

Her visitors are Dot, Guy's mother and his younger sister Bertie who was only 3 when he left. They are warm and kind and immediately assume that Sabine will be open to them. Much of the book consists of us getting to know these normal, warm people who have not led normal lives and they are well portrayed.

Naturally there are dark secrets and these start to emerge bit by bit, first in California and then in Nebraska after Sabine accepts an invitation to attend Bertie's wedding. Her visit is impulsive and her loving parents are unhappy about her going and don't understand her need to know about Guy's life before she met him. She is appalled by the cold and spends most of her time indoors gradually relaxing from mourning.

She meets Kitty who could be Guy's twin not just his sister. Sabine is drawn to Kitty and also her two sons. The whole family obsessively watch a video of Parsifal and Sabine performing magic on the Johnny Carson show.

At this point I began to suspect where the story might be going and you probably would too should you choose to read the book. The violence Dot and Kitty have suffered is the dark underbelly of the story but it has not diminished their ability to be decent people. The warmth they extend to Sabine heals her just as she is healing them by joining Parsifal and Guy into one person.

A less successful aspect of the novel was the dream sequences which added nothing and slowed things down. Only the last one was interesting and relevant. The ending of the book is very abrupt and I was unprepared for it.

GARDEN CORNER - RAIN AT LAST!

It has been a super month, finally lots of lovely rain, so the ground is moist and warm.

The garden has a new lease of life, the few remaining dahlias look absolutely super. The grass is now green and needs cutting, weeds and seedlings are rapidly appearing, I really need and want to spend time in the garden, not preparing for a few days away, so I am feeling very grumpy.

The tomatoes are rubbish, they have hated the cool temperatures and all that rain. Most are splitting and then going mouldy, the smaller gardeners delight are still worth picking. We are going away and suddenly we have 6 large heads of broccoli to eat but, a nice change from courgettes and beans.

The phacelia I sowed a few weeks ago has germinated, but any spaces now will be covered with cardboard and straw to protect it through the winter months. As soon as we get back I will sow salads and rocket in the greenhouse. We have a bucket full of bulbs to replant, so this year this should be an easy job, just not sure where to put them.

MG

I MET DAVID BELLAMY

In the 1990s, I was working for a Japanese pharmaceutical company in Oxford.

As part of our corporate social responsibility, we sponsored various activities. One of these was a project by the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust, BBOWT, to bring otters back to the Cherwell River.

Once prolific, these lovely creatures had been driven to near extinction, first by hunting, particularly in the 19th century, and then by pollution. PCBs, found in electrical equipment, would leach into rivers and watercourses and were especially harmful to wildlife.

Otter hunting was banned in 1978 and strenuous efforts to clean up rivers and streams were showing dividends. Salmon were seen once again in the tidal reaches of the Thames.

BBOWT's approach was to concentrate efforts on creating habitat for otters along the Cherwell's banks. One brisk winter afternoon, I tried to work off a nasty cold by cutting down brushwood to build a couple of holts, riverbank homes for otters. I spent the rest of the week in bed with a bad case of flu!

The project finale was held at Broughton Castle near Banbury and David Bellamy was guest of honour. I had never really warmed to his style and persona on TV, but in the flesh, he was a totally different man – passionate, committed and very knowledgeable. He was beside himself with joy as he announced that as a result of all our endeavours, otters had returned.

I wonder how many otters still roam the Cherwell's banks? Barely 30 years later, Britain's watercourses and seas are at danger level from millions of gallons of raw sewage pumped out by the water companies. The intended model that privatisation would bring commercial investment has not worked. The priorities are profit and shareholder dividends, not reinvestment in water infrastructure. Will we never learn?

NW

GREAT EXPECTATIONS (2)

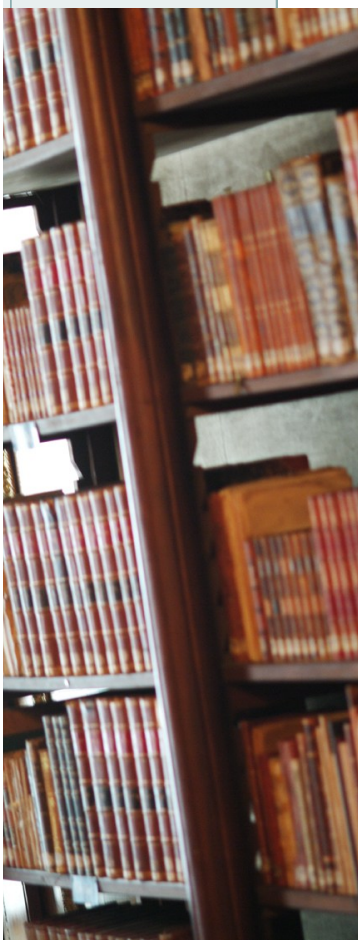


In September 2020 came the publication of a crime thriller “The Thursday Murder Club”. Richard Osman’s book tells the story of four pensioners who live at Cooper’s Chase, a luxury retirement village in Kent. They meet each Thursday to solve cold cases. When a property developer is murdered in the complex, they turn their attentions to a real-life crime. The inspiration for the novel came from Richard’s visits to his mother, who lives in just such an establishment.

After a 10-way publishing auction, Penguin Random House acquired the rights to The Thursday Murder Club and its sequel, The Man Who Died Twice, for a seven-figure sum. This debut novel became an instant best-seller. Less than a week after publication, it had been sold in 16 countries and in the week beginning 19 December, it sold 134,514 copies. It became the first debut novel ever to become the Christmas number one. The Guardian newspaper described it as ‘the fastest-selling crime debut in recorded history’. The Man Who Died Twice, The Bullet That Missed, and The Last Devil to Die, were published in the Septembers of 2021, 2022, and 2023 respectively. A fifth book, The Impossible Fortune, comes out in September 2025.

I was fascinated. Had Richard found a magic bullet? Was it the plot, the style or what? This had to be something really special and by reading it, I might improve my own writing. I was about to buy a copy, when a book club member chose it for our next meeting.

The plot was ingenious, the style light and very readable and depicted older people as being valuable to society, not has-beens marking time until their box. I thoroughly enjoyed the book, but for the life of me, I could not see the star ingredient that had propelled it to the top of the charts.



Book club was a lively affair, and TTMC generated a wide-ranging debate. Everyone had enjoyed it, but likewise, could not pinpoint that magic quality. The consensus was that Richard, who wrote the book before Covid appeared, had struck a chord with a public desperate for some light-hearted escapism in the depths of a pandemic. Rather like Fifty Shades of Grey, it was the subject-matter that appealed, rather than it being a great literary work.

The Netflix film debuted on TV on 28 August 2025 and we marked the date in our diaries. It boasts a star-studded cast including Helen Mirren, Pierce Brosnan, David Tennant and Celia Imrie and is directed by Christopher Columbus, whose credits encompass Home Alone and the Harry Potter series.

My wife and I switched on the TV and settled down for some enjoyable viewing. After ten minutes, she said to me:

‘What do you think of it so far?’ ‘Very slow.’ ‘It’s not just me, then.’

After 40 minutes of disjointed scenes, trying to work out where the hell the plot had reached and distinctly lacklustre acting, we hit the ‘Off’ switch. We were not the only ones underwhelmed. The media reported that many Netflix fans had given it the thumbs-down and the film review magazine Empire opined that it was ‘As disappointing as a stale scone’.

The point I am making is that from time to time, someone creates a smash hit worth megabucks. You expect a truly special experience and to find the fairy dust, yet somehow, end up disappointed.

NW

AI - Is Artificial Intelligence everywhere?

You might have noticed that Ai is in the news a lot recently. It is creeping into our lives often without us realising. Even if we wish to avoid AI, it's there whether we want it or not. When you read an article or description or look for information on a product or item, the chances are it could have been written by AI.

Books, newspapers articles, scientific journals, instructions, blogs, social media posts, advertisements, the list goes on & on, you name it and it can be written at least in part if not totally by AI.

Artists & designers are using it for ideas, models, layouts, posters, pictures & paintings. It's used in the film & video industry. You've all seen fake reels of well known politicians. Students are using it to write their essays & homework. Which apparently is making their brains lazy. Doctors are using it to help with diagnostics.

So what is it? How has this happened? What can you do about it? Is it any use or help for you? Will it dominate our lives & make it impossible to know truth from lies? Can you opt out or are you automatically in? A lot of questions & how will we find the answers? Ask AI perhaps? What exactly is Ai? AI, or Artificial Intelligence, is the science of creating machines and software that can perform tasks which normally require human intelligence. These tasks include learning from experience, recognising patterns, understanding language, solving problems, and even making decisions. As the first Large language models (LLM) to gain public notice, OpenAI's ChatGPT is probably the most used of the major AI models. That means many people are helping train it through their daily prompts and queries. Every time you use your computer or smart phone the words you type are fed and analysed and usually kept for future use. You Google solar panels & next thing you get lots of ads for … solar panels of course. But with great power comes great data-sucking demands. All of the major large language models (LLMs), including ChatGPT, Claude.ai, Google's Gemini, X's Grok, Microsoft's Copilot and Meta.ai, rely on tiny bytes of information or petabytes of data, some of which comes from users like you.

What can you do about it? You can try to opt out of web sites keeping your information. Use Incognito windows or tabs which are apparently private i.e. none of your browsing history, cookies and site data, or information entered in forms are saved on your device. Is AI any use or help for you? It can be useful if you need information on a particular subject but you probably need to verify whether it's is accurate. People who have used chatbots for help have sometimes been steered in the wrong direction with tragic consequences. Will it dominate our lives & make it impossible to know truth from lies? AI is becoming part of our daily lives While it brings convenience, it also raises concerns. With AI able to generate convincing text, images, and videos, it can sometimes blur the line between truth and lies. It can be difficult to separate fact from fiction.

The EU wants to make sure that AI systems used in the EU are safe, transparent, traceable, non discriminatory and environmentally friendly. AI systems should be overseen by people, rather than by automation, to prevent harmful outcomes. Read more here: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/en/article/20230601STO93804/ eu-ai-act-first-regulation-on-artificial-intelligence Can you opt out or are you automatically in? Completely opting out of AI is becoming harder but is still possible. While AI features are often already contained phones, apps, and online services, you can choose products and services that prioritise privacy and disable AI in settings. To help you disable AI in many of the well known social media and search sites check out the help and information from The Media Copilot Use the following link: https://mediacopilot.substack.com/p/how-to-protect-data-chatgpt-claude meta-ai?open=false

NOTICE BOARD

HOME OF LOCAL INTEREST / ADVERTISING



A cracking line up for Festilitt 2025!

October 10th & 12th

The Parisot literary festival takes place on Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 February and this year they have a fabulous programme of author talks, all of which are free of charge, along with a huge and bargain second-hand book sale (most books for only 1 or 2 euros).

They are thrilled to welcome the Booker Prize winner Alan Hollinghurst, recently knighted for his services to literature. He will be talking about his latest novel Our Evenings, narrated by a mixed-race actor in his seventies, looking back over his life, personal and professional, through decades of significant social change, from his youth in the fifties. It's a sensitive, nuanced portrait of not just one man's life, but of a shifting society, right up to the Brexit referendum.

Another well-known name joining them is Lindsey Hilsum, Channel 4's international editor, who will talk about her book I Brought the War with Me and reflect on her 40 years of experience as a war correspondent. In her book she shares memoirs from the frontline of conflicts all over the world paired with extracts of poetry that she says act as a "vaccination against despair". Given all that is happening in the world right now, this couldn't be a more timely and appropriate talk to attend.

History lovers will enjoy hearing Hanna Diamond, professor of French history at Cardiff University, talking about the war time escapades of actress and jazz singer Josephine Baker, the first woman to be buried in Le Pantheon in Paris. During WWII, Baker used her fame and the access it gave her to spy for the Free French movement, particularly in North Africa. Hanna's biography, Josephine Baker's Secret War, tells her compelling story.

And there is more great fiction too. Evie Wyld will talk about her 4th novel, The Echoes, which explores the life of Hannah, a young Australian woman in London and how troubling elements of both her family's and her country's past keep bubbling up, despite her best efforts to escape them. And Gurnaik Johal, will present his debut novel, which interweaves the lives of six distant relatives, scattered across the globe, all of whose lives have been shaped by the mythical holy river of the Saraswati.

The full programme can be seen on www.festilitt.com

L.S.

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

HOME OF LOCAL INTEREST

DATES TO NOTE IN OCTOBER

VIDE GRENIERS—SUNDAYS

5th. Capdenac Gare, Rignac
12th. Foissac, montbazens
26th Villefranche, Figeac

FISH & CHIPS

10th ~ Fish and chips @ Cesaree Gare VF
Pre book with "Cod-en-bleu" to ensure satisfaction!!

EVENTS

Festilitt 10th and 11th October. Parisot Village.
1st - 5th at Najac. Le Bruit circus & music
Saturday 4th Apple Pressing in Foissac at la Recylette
Saturday/Sunday 4th/5th book salon at salle des fetes de la Madeleine
Friday - Sunday 10-12. Festlitt in Parisot
Friday 14th. More apple pressing at Bernussou near VF Leclerc

CONCERTS

Thursday 9th - Cuarteto Tafi at the Theatre in Villefranche 8.30 pm
Saturday 25th. 8.00 pm Chateau Bournazel, baroque concert

4 salles pour le cinéma

QUERCYNEMA

Caylus, Parisot, Saint-Antonin, Varen

OCTOBRE 2025	CAYLUS	PARISOT	VAREN
 Didi VOSTFR	Sam. 04/10 16h		
 Eddington VOSTFR	Sam. 04/10 18h30		
 Fantôme utile VOSTFR	Dim. 05/10 16h		
 La femme qui en savait trop VOSTFR	Dim. 05/10 18h30		
 Le Roi Soleil			Ven. 17/10 20h30
 Shaun le mouton : la ferme en folie			Sam. 18/10 17h
 F1 le film			Sam. 18/10 20h30
 Islands VOSTFR			Dim. 19/10 17h
 A Normal Family VOSTFR			Dim. 19/10 20h30
 The Roses (la guerre des roses) VOSTFR		Mar. 21/10 17h	
 Nino		Mar. 21/10 20h30	

7€ PLEIN TARIF
5€ TARIF RÉDUIT (ADHÉRENTS, ÉTUDIANTS, + 65 ANS)
4€ TARIF SUPER RÉDUIT (-DE 18 ANS, CHÔMEURS, RSA, AAH)

CLASSIFIEDS

LOCAL TRADERS AND SERVICES

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Alan G. W. Mackay - Civil Funeral Célébrant, English Speaking. Dignified, personal, respectful, memories. Contact: 05 65 29 88 54 / 06 89 33 82 45 or anglocelebrant@orange.fr

Andrea May, for a stress free property journey. Buying or selling your home or know someone who is? Refer them to me and upon completion receive Euro 200 as a thank you.. Andrea May Enterprise Individuelle 06 48 69 72 20. Siret 987 513 157 RSAC RODEZ

Ben Naismith, Arborist. Tree and hedge cutting at competitive rates. Tree pruning, reductions, felling, trimming and logging. Contact ben-naismith@outlook.com or T: 0786807434

Creative design including web sites, logos, and graphics. Websites fully hosted and monitored including ecommerce, blogging, gîte/rental bookings integration & email. Contact will@outrighthosting.net

English - French translations of documents and interpreting during meetings. Help with French administration and/or with official French letters. Also one to one French lessons or French conversation, contact Jacynth Crozier, Tel. 06 30 31 13 00 contact@crozier-traductions.com http://www.crozier-traductions.com

Justin Fairley - Garden Maintenance & Small Projects

Contact: jvfairley@outlook.com or Mob 07 85 17 86 52

Learn French in a friendly, fun atmosphere at So'Happy School in Villefranche. All levels/all ages. Qualified, motivated teacher with excellent OFSTED reports and 15 years experience. Small groups: 18 Euros/1h30 lessons; individual lessons: 22 euros/hour. Contact Sophie on 07963050236 or sohappyschool@gmail.com

M & K Construction Professional English Builders & Renovators All types of building work : roofing, groundwork, carpentry, masonry, decorating 40 years of experience. Free estimates Tel +33 0673299095. mandkrenovation@gmail.com Facebook: M & K Construction

Nicholas Powell— "D Origine", Architectural Salvage Yard
160 Rue de jonquekkes, 46260 Limogne en Quercy
Contact 06 20 55 10 40

The Writing Desk can swiftly turn your ideas into sharp, punchy script. As an author and experienced freelance journalist I have spent many years creating features for business and lifestyle magazines. For great words and a fast service, contact Nigel on: 05 65 65 81 53 nigelnwild@hotmail.co.uk

DOMESTIC SERVICES

Gardener and/or cleaner available. Contact Ruth Patterson on 05 65 34 37 88 or 07 80 45 50 46

Experienced gardener specialising in natural organic design and maintenance. Affordable and flexible - References available. Contact: Kathryn: 05 65 65 78 01 or montagnac@hotmail.co.uk

We have Small bales of straw suitable for larger animals for sale. Contact Bridget Blunsdon on 0 6 40 46 48 87

LETTINGS

Olive Tree Cottage, Bed and Breakfast:
Self-contained Chambres d'Hôtes in Martiel, suitable for 2 adults, large pool and garden, ample parking. Booking via Airbnb or direct on 0565 29 44 96

Holiday apartment to rent in La Herradura, Andalusia, Spain.
A light and spacious 1 bedroom apartment (sleeps 4) with large terrace, sea and mountain views. Only a 7 minute walk to the beach & restaurants. Monthly winter lets available. Please visit https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089978104205

Holiday apartment to rent in beautiful Nerja, Andalusia, Spain
Apartment Aqua Marina is a modern 2 bedroom ground floor apartment with terrace and spectacular sea and Mountain views. Superb location only a 3 minute walk to the beach and a short walk to the restaurants and shops of the old town. Monthly winter lets available See: https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090122020875

For further details on both these Spanish properties contact: Lynne Harding 06 65 50 95 37 or lafage.harding@gmail.com

SOCIAL

FripAffaires, a charity shop based in Parisot (82) raises funds for Médecin sans Frontières and Restos du Cœur. Situated at the Pole Medical, next door to the pharmacy, open Tuesday & Wednesday 2-6pm and Friday & Saturday 10am to 12.30pm. Donations always gratefully received

If you would like us to include a small ad in any of these columns, please let us have the details by emailing us at the address below. If you have any questions or comments (complementary or otherwise) please don't hesitate to contact us on the same address.
editor.elnbafvdr@orange.fr