



ASCI Newsletter

July 2017

Promoting International Partnerships



Delegation to SAUMUR

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Mission Statement: Asheville Sister Cities, Inc. promotes peace, understanding, cooperation and sustainable partnerships through formalized agreements between International cities and the City of Asheville, North Carolina. Website: www.ashevillesistercities.org

Message from the President

by Karon Korp



There are so many GREAT projects on our horizon! Our Saumur Delegates report a very successful trip and new friendships formed in June. The Wheelchair Project for our two Mexican sister cities is wrapping up its successful fundraising in July. We are preparing to welcome a NEW Sister City relationship into our program, Dunkeld – Birnam, Scotland, with a trip in August and group here in September. Students are expected to come from Karpenisi, Greece in September. We expect a Mayoral Delegation from Valladolid in October, and plans are underway for a delegation from Osogbo, Nigeria in November. AND, our fabulous fall event “Global Glitz” is happening November 4th and it’s going to be big FUN! All of this is possible because of a thriving organization made up of passionate members, and you make it possible! I urge you to pick a city, and get involved. Find out when they meet next and attend. Lend your voice. The more people we bring to the table, the more we make possible. It’s up to us to make this a different world!

ASCI Delegation trip to Saumur – fun!

by Allison Weems, co-organizer

Twenty-five members of Asheville Sister Cities have just returned from fabulous visit with one of our sister cities in Saumur, France. Mayor Marchand of Saumur and his entourage including Caroline Raboulet, Déléguée aux relations internationales et aux grands évènements rattachée au Maire, Sophie Anguenot, Déléguée à l'urbanisme, au patrimoine, au secteur sauvegardé, à la transition énergétique et au projet de rénovation Urbaine (PRU), Amélie Gibouin, Assistante Administrative, and Chantal Bessière, Responsable de l'Office de Tourisme, welcomed us with open arms.



While exploring Saumur and interacting with some of its 27,000 residents, we experienced la joie de vivre française (the joy of living French-style) on many different levels. Over 6000 people participated in the 7th annual Anjou Vélo Vintage bike festival, and we were the only Americans there, it seems. Those who didn't ride (like your editor), cheered us on and meandered around the vintage village and antique market. Representing Asheville with pride, 16 of us rode authentic vintage bikes (some definitely showing their age...) sporting outfits reminiscent of yesteryear through vineyards and along la Loire River. Of course, there were pit stops along the way including some that led us to bike through wine cellars including Ackerman, Langlois-Château and Bouvet Ladubay.

On Saturday, lunch was truly *au milieu de nul part* (in the middle of nowhere) among the vineyards, and we all found the Domain du Moulin de l'Horizon Rosé Cuvée Harmonie 2016 (an AOP Rosé de Saumur) very refreshing, so much so, that we rode off on our bikes with an extra bottle in our musette! We discovered local culinary delights like les galipettes (goat cheese stuffed mushrooms) and

les fouées (wood oven baked flat breads), served with rillettes (similar to pork *pâté*). . . all of which are delicious with Chenin Blanc and Saumur Brut.

For the wine lovers in our group, two highlights were an official delegation reception hosted by Mayor Marchand's office in our honor, what the French call *un vin d'honneur*. The featured sparkling wine, a Saumur Brut, is made from grapes that grow in the Château de Saumur's vineyard and is reserved exclusively for the Mayor's office official "business." On Wednesday, June 28, Thomas Meunier of *Vin Authentique*, whose imported wines are featured at Metro, led us to two of his favorite vineyards in the Saumur appellation. Our first stop was the Château de Villeneuve in Souzay-Champigny, a family *domaine* (estate) dating back to the early 1800's, now owned and operated by Jean-Pierre whose family has been making wine there since 1969. Here, where we learned about the two principal *cépages*, chenin blanc and cabernet franc, used in making the 2016 Chenin (white) and the 2016 and 2014 Cabernet Franc (rouge) that we tasted. Jean-Pierre, his wife Florence and his daughter Céline were gracious hosts who shared their passion with us. All three wines were available for purchase and delivery to Metro! Hopefully, those not on the trip will be able to purchase them too.

After an amazing lunch featuring wines selected for each course, we strolled to our next vineyard stop in Montreuil-Bellay, Thomas' French village. At the Château de la Durandière, Antoine, the winemaker, led us through the production process of the infamous Crémant de Loire, produced respecting the same vinification *méthode traditionnelle* as Champagne. Our wine tour ended on a sweet, high note while appreciating the delicate Crémant Blanc and Rosé paired with chouquettes (delicate puff pastries glazed with sugar). Hopefully, both of these Crémant sparkling wines will be available for purchase at Metro Wines of Asheville.

Saumur delegation participants, a few appreciations of the visit by members of the delegation, and some favorite photos

Charlotte Bulkeley

Jessica Coffield

Ryan Coffield

Andrew Craig

Jackie Craig

Mike Eatman

Barbara Etsell

Julie Hettiger

Marissa Jamison

Gary Jay

Gail Jolley

Robyn Kesler

Hannah Kitt

Marjorie McGuirk

Rebekah Michel

Ken Nelson

Jacquie Nightengale

Jerry Plotkin

Susan Roderick

Annette Rogers



View of the Loire River and bridge from Le Château de Saumur

Jenny Ward
Allison Weems
Jeff Weems
Paul Wharey
Sheryl Wharey





Boat trip on the Loire River



Waiting in a typical narrow street



Château de Villandry
Lavandin (related to lavender) in foreground



Umbrella street, downtown Saumur



Villandry Garden of Love

alamy stock photo

What a livable small city, combining centuries of history with its chateau looming over the lovely Loire and lively streets filled with friendly outdoor cafés and boutiques. (Barbara)

Our group was welcomed everywhere by the community but especially by the mayor's staff. (Andrew)

Saumur, France is small, secure and smart! Far enough from Paris to remain serene but stylish. A great place for a weekend of R&R or a week to regroup. Don't forget to check-out the eclectic mix of shopping & restaurants. A must-do return visit! (Jacquie)

I had an absolutely incredible experience traveling to France with ASCI this past June. We were immersed in Saumur's culture through the Anjou Vélo Vintage Festival and our day trips to various vineyards and chateaus around the region were magical. The friendships I created with other Asheville

folks during our time abroad are friendships I will cherish for years to come. I am so proud to be a part of ASCI and I look forward to working together to continue to create ties with cities across the globe. *(Hannah)*

For me one of the highlights was the camaraderie of the group! Given the age range and diversity of almost strangers it was a delight to share the adventure of the Loire region. Ripe with ancient history it enables us to realize how young our nation truly is. (Julie)



I couldn't get over how comfortable I felt in Saumur. Having the opportunity to get to know the town and the people who live there was so special. (Robyn)

Saumur is filled with beauty in her scenery, architecture, food, wine, and the citizens themselves. I feel more than fortunate for being awarded with the opportunity to explore such an incredible place with artistry in every detail. *(Rebekah)*

I was truly surprised at how much we have in common with our "sister city", not only in the physical



aspects but also in the challenges we face. And I was thrilled with the cohesiveness of our delegation - given such a wide range of ages and backgrounds, it seemed everyone found time to interact, learn from and enjoy each other's company. A most worthwhile adventure! (Ken)

The generous invitation to participate in Saumur's annual festival by the mayor led to my favorite part of the trip! The vintage bike festival showcased the friendly and lively spirit of the French and gave me a greater appreciation for their c'est la vie philosophy. (Jessica, co-organizer)

This was the first time Jeff and I had traveled with a group. Admittedly, we were a little apprehensive. And would you guess, what we loved most about our trip? It was the diversity of interests, mix of personalities and the spectrum of ages of travelers in our group. Everyone brought a personalized sense of adventure which added to the beauty of the memories we created during our week together. This, I believe, is one of the main points of traveling with ASCI. What an affirmation of our common humanity! (Allison)



Saumur was a delight. Every time I went out to walk there was a flower box or garden shop that knocked my socks off. I got so many ideas to take home. We have the most beautiful Sister City in the world. (Susan)



Our Saumur stay provided a great deal of fun as it was very well organized and included a wonderful group comprised of interested and entertaining people. Saumur has a half-dozen sister cities—we're so pleased to be one of them!. Vive Saumur, vive la France, et vive l'amitié! (Jerry)

KARPENISI Committee news

Biography of Sophie Mills, new co-chair of ASCI's Karpenisi Committee

I was brought up in England and studied Literae Humaniores (aka Classics) at Oxford University. I taught there for a couple of years before landing a permanent post at UNC Asheville, where I am now

Professor of Classics and author of three books and many articles about ancient Greek literature. I made my first trip to Greece when I was 16. Since then, I have been back as often as I possibly can, and it has been a particular delight to go to Asheville's sister city Karpenisi and meet with the people there. Next year I plan to take an intensive modern Greek language course so that I can communicate more effectively with them. My other interests include singing at All Souls Cathedral, home-brewing and pigs. I live in West Asheville with my partner Amy and our six cats.



If you would like read an entertaining piece about a recent trip to Greece by ASCI members, try this link:
<http://news.unca.edu/features/sister-city-karpenisi-greece>

NEWS FROM THE SAN CRISTÓBAL COMMITTEE

We wish safe travels to several members who will be leaving for San Cristóbal soon. BJ Tankersley will be spending 3 weeks in Chiapas with granddaughter Sydney and friend Mattie. Paul Worley, wife Melissa Birkhoffer and daughter Alaina, will be in San Cristobal for a school year for a Fulbright Scholarship that Paul has received. With these active committee members on the ground, current connections can be updated and new relationships can be formed.

Our long-time friends, Ines Paniagua and Alejandro Bermudez, along with new Club Rotario President Enrique Nandanyapa, (all 3 were actually in Asheville for our 2005 International Congress for our Sister cities), have been instrumental in locating those in need for the wheelchairs, providing storage for the chairs upon delivery, and assisting with arrangements for distribution. Thank you! We look forward to seeing them later in the year.

Hiram Marina, wife Lauren Ferrell and son Dante will be arriving in Asheville for a 4 month stay. Hiram hopes to provide theatre performances for our community while here -- starting with a one-woman show – “**Frida Kahlo.**” Details will be coming soon.

Our sincere thanks to the Valladolid Committee for sharing these successful efforts for the Wheelchair Project! Congratulations to all!

ASHEVILLE SYMPHONY / ASCI SAUMUR EVENT

In partnership with the Saumur, France Committee of Asheville Sister Cities, the Asheville Symphony hosted ASCI on April 22 for the *Passion* of Chopin. Any ASCI member or person interested in joining ASCI was invited to the Member Reception following the symphony performance. With an attendance of around 25 people associated with ASCI, the event helped recruit new members to ASCI and establish a partnership with the Asheville Symphony. A big thank you to all who attended!

Dylan Clark joins Boundary End Center as resident archivist

On June 16, the Valladolid and San Cristóbal de las Casas committees of ASCI held a joint meeting at Boundary End Center, a non-profit anthropological research library and conference center located in Barnardsville, NC. Boundary End was founded by a Maya archaeologist, Dr. George Stuart, who worked for many years with National Geographic and was a friend and supporter of ASCI. He was also a leading advocate for making the history, archaeology, and culture of the Americas accessible to everyone. Today, we strive to keep George Stuart's dream alive by hosting conferences and meetings, artist and writer retreats, and visiting scholars at the library with interests extend well beyond Maya culture. We also offer field workshops with tours in Mexico and Central America by renowned archaeologists and publish two journals called *Ancient America* and *Research Reports on Maya Hieroglyphic Writing*. During the June meeting, the ASCI committees participated in a behind-the-scenes tour of the center with Dylan Clark, a Maya archaeologist who also teaches in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at UNCA and is a member of the San Cristóbal and Valladolid Committees of ASCI. He joined Boundary End Center as the resident archivist at the library in March, and currently works with the Stuart family to help catalog and conserve the collection, as well as promote the educational center through community outreach and collaboration. For more information about Boundary End Center's publications, events, and opportunities to support the mission, please check out: boundaryend.com, follow us on Twitter @BoundaryEnd, or contact us at [boundaryendcenter\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:boundaryendcenter(at)gmail.com).



ASCI's newest sister city: Birnam/Dunkeld, Scotland

by Ken Richards

And the record is not complete until we recognize the efforts of the committee who brought this new sister city relationship into being. The group consists of PBR's Fiona Ritchie host of *The Thistle & Shamrock*; former Warren Wilson College prexy Doug Orr and wife Darcy along with past ASCI president, Rick Lutovsky.

The Birnam-Dunkeld Bridge crossing the River Tay.

The culmination of their work to establish the sister city relationship will be with the first signing in Scotland on August 20th. The Asheville delegation



will be hosted by families and experience a weekend of festivities as part of the signing by Mayors and councils of Birnam/Dunfeld.

The signing in Asheville by Mayor Manheimer will be at Highland Brewing Company on September 10th at 4 pm. Representatives of Birnam/Dunkeld will attend as well. This is a Sister Cities event for all members and for the city of Asheville.



The ASCI Board wishing our exchange student **Andrea Rivera** a fond farewell.

WHEELCHAIR PROJECT COMPLETE!

ASCI former PR/Media Chair Lori Davis with very good friend Elliot at the Tourist Baseball game, where the wheelchair project was announced and celebrated by members of the Mexican Committees.



Lori and Elliot wearing the wheelchair emblem shirts, designed by Kiki of Mexico.

THE TWO MEXICAN COMMITTEES – VALLADOLID AND SAN CRISTÓBAL – WISH TO THANK ALL WHO DONATED FUNDS TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF THIS PROJECT.

Both committees have worked hard to raise awareness in our community for this tremendous need in our two Mexican sister cities. The order is being placed and chairs will

be shipped in late fall to Mexico.

Valladolid Sister City Committee members and Club Rotario de San Cristobal have both contributed time and energy to identify those to receive the chairs. **OUR THANKS TO THE ASHEVILLE BREAKFAST ROTARY CLUB FOR PARTNERING WITH US ON THIS PROJECT.** Fifty-two individuals and eight Rotary Clubs have made this possible. **SINCERE THANKS TO ALL.**

VALLADOLID COMMITTEE REPORT

The Valladolid Committee will be busy through the remainder of 2017! In August we will welcome two more high school exchange students, Claudina and Silvana, who will live with local families and experience their sophomore year in high school as students at Asheville High School. Katie Ryan, local coordinator for the Sister Cities High School Homestay program, is finalizing details now and vetting the families. This has been a highly successful program for the past two years and we look forward to meeting these two young women soon! More details soon about a welcoming dinner for them!

We will be hosting a delegation from Valladolid October 11 – 18. The full committee will be meeting very soon to begin planning for this. This is a mayoral delegation, meaning the mayor of Valladolid and several city staff will be part of the group. We may have as many as fourteen delegates, so our main need right now will be home hosts. If you are interested, even if you are not currently part of the Valladolid committee, let Sybil or Gaby know.

We will be contacting the full committee with details of our meeting date, but look forward to a fun evening starting with a cooking lesson with Gaby followed by a working meeting.

Sybil and Gaby, Co-chairs, Valladolid Committee
Sybil Sybil.argintar(at)yahoo.com
Gaby gabrieladaragonez(at)gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE!!

November 4, 2017 – GLOBAL GLITZ!

WHAT: ASCI's big FUNDRAISING EVENT.

WHERE: PACK'S TAVERN

HOW MUCH: \$45 IN ADVANCE; \$50 AT THE DOOR, CASH ONLY

President - Karon Korp	Karon(at)ashevillerealtygroup.com
Vice President	
Secretary – Alice Keller	gakeller(at)gakeller.com
Treasurer – Jackie Craig	appcraft(at)bellsouth.net
Past President – Andrew Craig	kurmugon(at)bellsouth.net

**Feeling international?
If you like ASCI's activities and our sister cities,
Contact a committee chair!
BECOME A MEMBER!**

ASCI CALENDAR OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

ASCI Board Meeting	3 rd Thursday of each month – 5:30 pm <i>In Parks & Rec Bldg, 72 Gashes Creek Rd, Asheville</i>
Birnam-Dunkeld Committee	time and date TBA <i>Rick Lutovsky – rlutovsky(at)gmail.com</i>
San Cristóbal Committee	2 nd Thursday, 5:30 pm <i>Lori Davis – loel.davis(at)gmail.com</i>
Saumur Committee	4 th Monday of each month – 5:30pm <i>Jessica Coffield – jeallen8(at)gmail.com</i>
Karpenisi Committee	1 st Monday <i>Sophie Mills – smills(at)unca.edu</i>
Valladolid Committee	4 th Wednesday of the month – 6:00pm <i>Gabriela Aragonéz – gabrieladaragonéz(at)gmail.com</i>
Osogbo Committee	Aug 14, 6pm, Battery Park Book Exchange, Grove Arcade <i>Sandra Frempong -- sandraf (at) letsexploreafrika.com.</i>
Vladikavkaz Committee	Time and Date TBA – Contact Committee Chair. <i>Constance Richards – schtanzi(at)aol.com</i>

If you have a particular interest in a committee, please contact the chairperson to confirm time & place.



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