

**Hartford's French Connections -
A History of the Alliance Française de Hartford, 1898 to 2016.**

A long time you have been making the trip
From Havre to Hartford, Master Soleil,
Bringing the lights of Norway and all that.

Combien de fois n'as tu entrepris le voyage
Qui va du Havre à Hartford, ô Maître Soleil,
Rapportant des clartés de Novèrge et le reste.

Wallace Stevens
(opening lines from the poem "Of Hartford in a Purple Light")¹

Introduction:

The *Alliance française de Hartford*, Connecticut ("AFH") and its predecessors trace their beginning back more than a century ago to 1898. Building on this venerable legacy, AFH, today, sponsors and promotes appreciation for and dissemination of French culture and the teaching of the French language. It is a small, but active and vibrant, organization, run by U.S. citizens, resident in the Hartford area. Throughout the year, the AFH offers a full suite of French language courses, and organizes meetings, presentations, concerts, conversation and book discussion groups, and other cultural events all for the purpose of deepening and spreading greater awareness and understanding of French and Francophone culture and the French language and encouraging interactions and cultural exchanges with French-speaking peoples. The AFH is independent, autonomous, self-financing, and non-profit, run by a board of directors and managed by an Executive Director reporting to the AFH's board.

While independently established and run, the AFH is also a member of the U.S. national Federation of *Alliances françaises (USA)* ("FAF (USA)"), headquartered in Washington, D.C., serving the more than 100 separate, autonomous, locally based *Alliances françaises* ("AFs") with similar purposes spread throughout the United States. AFH is also a member of the *fondation Alliance française* (the "AF"), heading up a world-wide network of similarly autonomous AFs spread throughout the globe and based at the AF's world headquarters located at 101 *boulevard Raspail* in Paris.

In this history of the AFH, we describe, first, the FAF(USA) and the AF in more detail, then discuss some of Hartford's and Connecticut's important links with the French-speaking world, and follow with the story of the AFH, from its founding to the present.

La Fédération nationale des Alliances françaises aux États Unis (National Federation of AFs of the United States), the “FAF(USA).”

The FAF(USA) was established in 1902.^{2 3} It is the cooperative, lead service organization acting in support of the network of the local and autonomous AF organizations spread throughout the United States. Membership in FAF(USA) is open to any *Alliance française* chapter established in the U.S and paying the requisite dues associated with membership. Among its functions are the fostering of communication amongst the local AFs, assistance in the coordination of activities and the distribution of grants to the local AFs to support their activities, consistent with the organization’s overall purposes.

The Alliance française.

The international AF was founded in 1883 in Paris by a group of men of affairs, prominent in the French speaking world. Their motivating purpose was to create an organization to promote universal, humanist values and progress through education and, reflecting the spirit of the times, the spread of Western, and particularly French, civilization and values.⁴

At its founding during France’s Third Republic (1871-1940), the AF’s mission gave emphasis to extending France’s “soft power” during the age of the competitive scramble of the Great Powers for colonies and to establishing France’s leading role through the dissemination of French culture and language, following France’s defeat by Germany in the Franco-Prussian war. Over time, the AF’s mission has evolved from a focus on France’s “civilizing” mission prevalent at the time of its origin, to responding in an increasing manner to the needs expressed by the individual AF chapters expanding across the globe. During World War II, it acted, from its London branch, as an heroic redoubt of the French Resistance outside France against Nazi Germany. Today, its mission has broadened in scope, encompassing the globe-spanning Francophonie and students of the French language and culture worldwide in the present age of increasing globalization. Throughout, the AF’s mission and activities have been pursued progressively, responding to developments in the larger national and international communities within which the organization operates.

From its beginning, three central, enduring principles inform and continue to anchor the AF. These are, respectively: (1) the operation and governance of the organization through a non-governmental association of locally constituted chapters; (2) the substitution of competitive national militaristic aims, particularly prevalent at the time of the organization’s founding, with the promotion of universal values, as expressed in and through the French language, of culture and cultural interchanges; and, finally, (3) the sharing of the organization’s governance and activities with citizens of other countries, in addition to those of France.

Reflecting these purposes and principles, the AF provides under its charter that it “is an international movement... apolitical and non-religious that has as its mission the teaching of the French language throughout the world, organizing cultural presentations and showings, bringing together outside of France the friends of France and developing knowledge and appreciation of francophone culture. The [AF’s] goal is to encourage, through dialogue between cultures, a better understanding among peoples and a spirit of cooperation in a context of solidarity and respect. This movement brings together the activities of the *Alliances françaises* throughout the world and the [AF] Foundation.”⁵

Presently, the AF is active in 136 countries spanning the globe, with 836 separate local AF chapters, and over 500,000 students taking French language courses sponsored by the AF through its local chapters.⁶ The AF approves the articles of incorporation and bylaws of each local AF to assure compliance with certain general standards customary for non-profit organizations and for the purpose of verifying that the local AF generally conforms to the AF's overall mission.

In central Connecticut, AFH, on a smaller scale in its corner of the world, has sought and continues to seek to preserve and promote values dovetailing with those of the international AF. AFH, too, has evolved over the many years of its existence, changing with the times to address new challenges and opportunities.

Hartford's and Connecticut's connections with the French-speaking World.

A Friendship Predating the Birth of the United States.

In seeking to strengthen the knowledge and appreciation of French culture and language, AFH builds upon and contributes to a long, honored legacy of links, extending from before the founding of the United States, between the Hartford, Connecticut area and France and other Francophone regions, particularly Québec.

Rochambeau and Lafayette.

Hartford was the site of a crucial series of meetings during the American Revolution between General *comte* de Rochambeau of the French army and George Washington to plan the siege of New York City and collaboration between the French and American Revolutionary Armies. In 1781, Rochambeau and his army of 5,800 men crossed Connecticut from Rhode Island and into New York, stopping and lodging at numerous sites in Connecticut, including in Hartford, along the route of their march west and south.^{7 8} The army returned from the victory at Yorktown over the British in 1782, again crossing Connecticut along their route north. Connecticut continues to celebrate and recognize this event through, among other events, a march by the Connecticut Governor's Foot Guard held annually.⁹ The route followed by the French army's march is a national historic trail.¹⁰

General Marquis de Lafayette, a collaborator of Washington's, was a key player in solidifying France's support for the American Revolutionary forces and was an attendee and crucial intermediary at the meeting in Hartford between the Generals. He returned to Connecticut several times following the conclusion of the war and the founding of the Republic. A major celebration was held in his honor in Hartford upon his arrival several decades following the conclusion of hostilities, during (in modern parlance) a "memory" tour of the country as the last surviving general to have served in the American army during the Revolution.¹¹

Remembering Lafayette

Throughout Hartford's history, there have been numerous activities recognizing Lafayette and the fraternal bonds, exemplified by his life, between the US (and, by extension Hartford's residents) and France and the French people.¹² Commemorating the Marquis' historical importance, a statue of him in a place of honor was located inside the State Capitol building, followed by the erection in 1932, and dedicated on that year's Armistice Day, of an equestrian

statue of General Lafayette, now standing on Capitol Avenue directly opposite the State Capitol at the northern end of Lafayette Street.¹³

The Lafayette equestrian statue, itself, embodies interesting and significant cultural connections between Hartford and France.¹⁴ The statue was designed by Paul Wayland Bartlett (b. 1865, New Haven, CT, d. 1925), a prominent sculptor and designer of public statues and architectural decorations of public works of the period. Bartlett trained at the *École des Beaux Arts* in Paris under the direction of the French sculptor, Emmanuel Frémiet (b.1824-d.1910) and was strongly influenced by contemporary styles of French art and sculpture. Prior to the erection of the equestrian statue of Lafayette in Hartford (completed following Bartlett's death), he had designed and erected a plaster version of the statue paid for by funds raised by American school children as a symbol of Franco-American amity presented as a gift in reciprocity to France for the Statue of Liberty. The statue of the same design was erected for display at the Paris Exhibition of 1900, for which Bartlett had served on the selection jury. That statue stood in the Place du Carrousel at the Louvre in Paris from 1899 to 1908, when it was replaced by a bronze casting. A statue of the same Bartlett design was commissioned for erection in Hartford and, rendered in plaster, placed within the interior of the Connecticut State Capitol Building. The equestrian statue of Lafayette now standing opposite the Capitol building is a bronze casting from the same design. Bronze castings of the statue also stand in Metz, to commemorate American participation in the World War I in defense of France, and in Paris following its relocation from the Louvre, on the *Cours Albert Première* on the Seine River.¹⁵

Sign Language's French (and Hartford) Heritage.

The career and life of Thomas Gallaudet, largely spent in Hartford, is a further example of Hartford's French connections.¹⁶ Gallaudet was a life-long resident of Hartford and descendant of French Huguenots immigrating to the United States. He founded the American School for the Deaf ("ASD") in Hartford in 1817. ASD is the oldest and still continuing school for the hearing impaired in the United States and the birthplace of American Sign Language ("ASL"). Borrowing from the *l'Institut National des Jeune Sourd-Muets* based in Paris, France, which had pioneered the effort, Gallaudet, particularly through his work with the ASD, developed in the United States progressive teaching methods for the hearing-impaired, coupled with the systematization and use of ASL.¹⁷ Laurent Clerc, originally from the Izère department of France and a prominent educator at the Paris school, emigrated from France to Hartford at Gallaudet's invitation to become a central collaborator with Gallaudet, ultimately enhancing and extending Gallaudet's efforts.¹⁸ Given its inspiration and the influence of Gallaudet and Clerc in its development, ASL is closely related to French Sign Language, developed by Clerc and the Paris Institute.¹⁹ Gallaudet, Clerc and their legacy illustrate the participation of the Hartford community in the promotion of universal values and human advancement, influenced by France, French speakers and French culture.

French and Francophone Contribution to Hartford's Community and Built Environment.

From the 1850s onwards, Hartford became a magnet for thousands of French Canadians who migrated in successive waves, attracted by the work offered by Hartford's burgeoning manufacturing industry. In more recent times, Hartford has attracted migrants from other areas of the Francophonie including from French-speaking areas of Africa, Haiti and the French Caribbean. Today, over 300,000 citizens of Connecticut (or nearly 10% of the total population)

trace their roots back to French Canada or to France and are productive, creative participants in and contributors to the community.^{20 21} Hartford also continues to benefit from the valuable legacy reflected in its built environment strongly reflecting the cultural influences of French speaking lands, exemplified by Ste. Anne's church on Park Street.²² These structures were constructed, financed and used by the Francophone community in the region.

In recognition of the importance of Connecticut's Franco-American connections, in 2013 the State created, by an act of the legislature signed by Governor Malloy, a French-Canadian Day held on June 24th of each year, St. Jean Baptiste's day and the national holiday in Québec province. On that day in 2014 a ceremony commemorating the event was held at the State Capitol and a mass in French was celebrated at Hartford's Cathedral of St. Joseph.²³

The Francophone World plays a Prominent Role in Hartford's Economy.

The Hartford region and Connecticut as a whole, today, have very strong economic connections to France. France has consistently been the number one export market for Connecticut's manufacturing products and services. In 2014, the total value of Connecticut exports to France was US\$2.2 billion in manufacturing and US\$237 million in services.²⁴ Some 7,400 workers based in Connecticut are employed by French-owned firms.²⁵ The Hartford region also has strong economic ties with Québec province, growing in importance with the deepening of international manufacturing supply chains. For example, the trade relationship of the aerospace industry (the Hartford region's largest in manufacturing) between the Hartford metropolitan region and greater Montréal is the fourth largest (2010) among the top 10 metro regional trading pairs for the industry in North America.²⁶ The Hartford region's top regional international trading destination in North America for all industries was also greater Montréal, comprising US\$468 million in aggregate trade flows on an annual basis (2010).²⁷ These important economic ties help contribute today to the Hartford community's openness to and interest in French and French Canadian culture and the French language.

The AFH's founding.

As a leading organization for the promotion and appreciation of French culture in the Hartford region, AFH can trace its roots back to private organizations promoting the French culture and language located in the Hartford area, beginning prior to 1900. As early as 1898, a Club was founded in Hartford for the study of French language, history, art and literature. The club was initiated at a meeting attended by over 100 persons, all reportedly familiar with and conversant in the French language and literature.²⁸ The meeting participants were asked to consider the advisability of forming a French club for the purpose of studying the language, art and literature of the French people.

The French Circle (*Cercle français*), AFH's Predecessor, Launches its Organization at the Home of Charles Noel Flagg.

Mr. Charles Noel Flagg, the owner of the venue of the founding meeting, addressed the guests reading his essay entitled *Student and Art Life in France*.²⁹ Professor and Dr. J.J. McCook, a professor of European Languages at Trinity College in Hartford³⁰, was present and explained to the participants the organizational format of the *Der Verein*, a German culture and language organization in Hartford which Professor McCook had previously helped to form. Professor

McCook described the organization as a possible local model for the creation of a similar organization, instead dedicated to the French language and culture. The decision was made at the meeting to found the organization. A slate of officers was nominated and elected, comprised of leading citizens of the city, including Mrs. Morgan G. Bulkeley, Mrs. Gilbert F. Heublein, and Percy Bryant.

This initial meeting gave rise to a *Cercle Français* which held frequent talks and get-togethers and an annual meeting reported on in the Hartford newspapers.³¹

Professor McCook Plays a Central Role.

Professor McCook, key to the initial organization of the group in Hartford and remaining the central figure in the Hartford organization in its early years, also participated in the founding of the national federation of the *Alliances françaises* in the United States (today the FAF (USA)), bringing together local AFs established throughout the U.S. In 1902, a meeting of delegates from the local chapters was convened in New York City to organize a federation of AF's throughout the United States. Jules Cambon, the French ambassador to the United States, presided over the founding session in New York City.³² Lazare Weiller, the Alsatian politician,³³ and Maurice de la Gotellerie were also present, representing the French ministries of Finance and Public Instruction. James H. Hyde³⁴, the heir to the founder of the Equitable Life Assurance Society, from New York, was named the first president of the new national organization and Hartford's Professor McCook was named its first treasurer.³⁵

AFH - From its Founding to the Early 1950s.

During its first two decades of existence, the AFH's predecessor, sometimes calling itself the *Cercle Français*, convened meetings in the homes of various of its members in the evening, usually entailing a talk or presentation given in French by a visiting or local notable or scholar of the French language or observer of current events in France followed by refreshments and general discussion. Frequently the speaker at the AFH's predecessor's meetings was in Hartford by invitation to give a lecture at a nearby educational institution, particularly Trinity College. At other times, the lecturer was engaged by the international AF to make a tour of the United States giving lectures in various cities and stopping to give one to the AFH's predecessor, while in Hartford. The talks and lectures were frequently held at the mansions of members located on Prospect Avenue or nearby addresses. Perhaps reflecting the views of the time, the lectures focused on France largely to the exclusion of other areas of the Francophonie. The lectures were often reported on by the Hartford Courant. Members of the organization frequently came from or had married into one or more of Hartford's elite families.

Among the talks convened by the AFH's predecessor were a lecture by Gaston Deschamps about Victor Hugo;³⁶ a lecture by Léopold Mabileau speaking about *French Politics Since 1870* as part of a national tour sponsored by the AF;³⁷ a lecture by M. Frank Brentano, also touring the United States on a lecture tour about the Court of Louis XIV given at the mansion of Mrs. Morgan Bulkeley, a member of AFH's predecessor, and attended by 70 persons.³⁸ Professor McCook served as president throughout this period. Individuals of the organization also engaged in charitable activities with a connection with France.

In the 1920s, the organization continued its series of lectures and meetings held in French, structured around lectures or talks by visiting experts, now also focused on current international developments affecting France or the United States' relationship with France. Leadership of the organization during the decade was assumed by Louis Naylor, a professor of modern languages at Trinity College, and Mrs. Robert Gray. Lectures sponsored by the organization during the 1920s included two by Gaston Rion, entitled *Impressions of a Frenchman studying American History*³⁹; M. Arnold Van Genner, official lecturer of the FAF(USA), speaking about Northern Africa⁴⁰; a series of three lectures by Captain Morize (Professor of French literature at Harvard), speaking on *La Physiologie du goût*, by the French cooking author and expert in gastronomy, Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *Political Problems of France* and *Trends in French Thought*, respectively⁴¹; readings in French by Mlle. Maud Rey, attended by 50 persons;⁴² a return engagement by M. Morize lecturing on Anatole France;⁴³ and a lecture by Daniel Michenot on the peasants of southwestern France, held at the Asylum Hill Congregational Church.⁴⁴ At the discussion following one of M. Morize's lectures, the Courant reported that the professor discounted any ill-feeling reportedly then prevailing between France and the United States.⁴⁵

Lafayette and Columbus Cross Swords in Hartford.

The AFH's predecessor also engaged in advocacy regarding French related themes in the Hartford community. As a prominent example of this activity, the organization, as part of a coalition, publicly protested the name change, then under consideration by the City's government, of what was then called Lafayette Square to Columbus Green. The Green is a centrally located, small triangle of grassy lawn directly south of the State Capitol building and adjacent to the State Library.⁴⁶ Previously, the City, using funds raised by the Italian-American community in the City, had erected there, with great celebration and fanfare, a statue of Columbus. The City administration for a long time was unable to decide the issue passing it back and forth between the City's various commissions with jurisdiction, while contending with impassioned opposing pleas from the different communities in Hartford. On the one-hand, the increasingly important Italian-American community proposed and expressed itself strongly in favor of the name change, and on the other, a coalition, comprised by representatives of the Franco-American community, from AFH's predecessor and from Hartford's old line elite descending from the Revolutionary War Generation, opposed the name change. Finally, a rough compromise was reached, with changing of the green's name to Columbus Green, and the erection of the large equestrian statute of Lafayette, described earlier, occupying a prominent place directly opposite the State Capitol in the same vicinity and paid for from privately raised funds.⁴⁷

A Place for Discussion of Contemporary Controversies.

Controversial current international events then affecting France were also the subject of lectures, given in French, sponsored by the predecessor of the AFH. These included a lecture at Asylum Hill Church given by Raymond Lange, a journalist with the Paris paper, *L'Intransigeant*;⁴⁸ and a lecture by Suzanne Grinberg, reported to be the first women admitted to the French bar, at the Asylum Hill Congregational Church, concerning women's suffrage.⁴⁹ Other talks included one by Bernard Ray about Franklin in France⁵⁰, and by Léon Vallas about 17th century music at the Veeder mansion.⁵¹ Mrs. Louise Stutz Veeder, resident of the mansion and the wife of the prominent Hartford industrialist, Curtis Veeder, went on to head AFH's predecessor through to the early 1940s.⁵²

The Negative Effects of the Great Depression and World War.

Perhaps reflective of the difficult times faced by Hartford during the Great Depression and World War II and a change in reporting focus by the Courant away from the activities of non-governmental civic organizations like those of AFH's predecessor, few archival records could be found describing AFH's predecessor's activities during the 1930s and 1940s. During the war years, also, the FAF (USA) experienced an internal struggle at the national level in the United States between those partisans in the U.S. of General de Gaulle and the French Resistance, on the one hand, and those seeking to keep the organization "neutral" in the conflict between Vichy France and France Libre, on the other.⁵³ The availability of speakers to anchor events sponsored by AFH's predecessor, previously supported in part by the French government was drastically reduced as the competing French governments (in exile or in Vichy) did not and were unable to support the effort. This struggle over the direction of the FAF (USA) is reported to have adversely affected the membership of AF branches throughout the U.S. and presumably also affected AFH's predecessor. Following the conclusion of the war, the leadership, structure and personnel of the FAF(USA) was changed and renewed.

Marguerite Yourcenar's Presence in Hartford.

During the latter part of this period important events occurred connecting Hartford to the French speaking world, most notably the presence in the City of the writer and first woman elected to *l'Académie Française*, Marguerite Yourcenar (b. Brussels, Belg. 1903- d. Northeast Harbor, Maine, 1987). She lived in the City from 1940 to 1949 and taught at the Hartford Junior College for Women (later the Hartford College for Women and now merged into the University of Hartford ("UH")) and later at Sarah Lawrence College, after which she permanently relocated to Mount Desert Island in Maine.⁵⁴ Mme. Yourcenar initially came to Hartford from Europe at the invitation of her partner, Grace Frick, to escape World War II. However, evidently there was no direct connection between Mme. Yourcenar and AFH's predecessor.⁵⁵

Several Hartford residents did establish close ties with Mme. Yourcenar, after her move to Maine.⁵⁶ Prof. Dori Katz of Trinity College and a resident of Hartford was the translator for several of Mme. Yourcenar's books and, in recognition of Mme. Yourcenar's significance, the AFH sponsored a talk by Professor Katz discussing the writer and her works.⁵⁷

From the Early 1950s to 1980.

In 1952 with its membership already at 75, the AFH reorganized under new leadership with an ambitious agenda of expanding its membership and promoting French language and culture with regular lectures and meetings given in French by accomplished authorities and scholars. Prominent among the persons triggering AFH's renewal were members of the Hartford area's elite, including Mrs. Harold Holcombe and Mrs. Harold Holcombe, Jr.⁵⁸ Prof. Louis Naylor of Trinity College also collaborated with and assisted the organization.⁵⁹

Evolution from the French Circle to the AFH.

Meetings were held at area colleges or, echoing prior periods of the organization and in order to afford sufficient space for the events, at the mansions of several of the members. Annual

meetings were convened each May to elect officers. During this period, the organization consistently refers to itself as the AFH, no longer using the name *Cercle Français* or similar formulations, and appears to have adopted by-laws and followed the other formal requisites required of a legally established organization.

AFH co-sponsored many events conducted in French during this period, including film showings, coordinating with the French language departments of area colleges and schools such as Trinity College, St. Joseph's College, UH, and the Hartt School of Music (now merged into UH) and the then Hartford College for Women (now also merged into UH).

Examples of these activities included sponsoring a stage production of *Le Bal des Voleurs*, by Jean Anouilh;⁶⁰ frequent talks by Prof. Naylor on diverse topics;⁶¹ and a talk about André Gide by Marc Chadourne, professor of French at Connecticut College.⁶² In 1953, AFH elected Prof. Naylor president of the organization.⁶³ The organization began showing French language films at the homes of members and to collaborate, through Prof. Naylor's efforts, with efforts to assist French teaching in the public schools.⁶⁴ The organization also sponsored French themed parties, throwing an annual *Fête Champêtre* gala, with attendees dressing in regional peasant garb and featuring French dances performed by students from the Oxford school.⁶⁵ The AFH also sponsored recitals in collaboration with area schools of French music, lectures in French about issues affecting France and co-sponsored, with the Daughters of the American Revolution, a banquet and ball at the Hartford Club to commemorate the meeting of the Generals Rochambeau and Washington in Hartford.⁶⁶

Lectures and other events organized by the AFH, usually conducted in French, during this period included a talk by Jacques Guicharnaud (Yale U.) on the history of the *Comédie Française*;⁶⁷ a talk by Mlle. Janin May entitled *Le mariage de la Grande Mademoiselle, duchesse de Montpensier*;⁶⁸ a talk by Dr. Philip Bankowitz (Trinity College) entitled *Is France Really Happy?*;⁶⁹ Prof. Henri Peyre (Yale), on *Albert Camus, Romancier et Moraliste* at Oxford School;⁷⁰ Pierre Viala's recital of French poetry;⁷¹ Dimitri di Mancesco speaking on the theme, *L'oeuvre civilisatrice de la France dans le Proche Orient et l'Afrique du Nord*;⁷² a talk entitled *Les Très Riches Heures de France – poetry of Villon to Verlaine* given by Pierre Viala and co-sponsored by the Romance Languages department at Trinity College and AFH;⁷³ and a talk by Prof. Chadourne of Connecticut College, entitled *Baudelaire et l'amour*.⁷⁴

During the decade of the 1950s, Mrs. E.C. Sutter, Mrs. Holcombe, Mrs. Holcombe, Jr., Mrs. John Dunn, Mr. Albert Gastman (Trinity College), D. Newton, and Mme. Simone LeFaivre served successive terms as President of AFH.

During the 1960s, AFH continued to organize viewings of French films, lectures and talks usually conducted in French about French culture. In 1960, these included a showing of the film *Casque d'Or* at Trinity College⁷⁵, a talk by Jacques Wilhem entitled *Les Hôtels Parisiens*,⁷⁶ a talk given by Michel Martin at the Hartford Seminary Foundation, entitled *Charles de Gaulle, Le Personnage vu à travers son Oeuvre*⁷⁷, a lecture by Prof. Peyre on Paul Claudel, a lecture by Charles Dedeyan, and a talk by Germaine Gree.

AFH also participated in a 3-day conference held at the University of Hartford in 1960, which was attended by the French ambassador to the U.S. who gave the main address and was escorted into the lecture hall by the Connecticut Governor's Foot Guard. Guests of honor included the

pre-eminent French philosopher, sociologist, journalist and political scientist, Raymond Aron, and Prof. Germaine Gree.

Illustrative of AHF's activities during the decade, AFH sponsored a talk about French literature by Mme. E. Grande, a lecture by Mrs. Theodore Paulin about her stay in France, a talk by Mr. Norman Long speaking about the Experiment for International Living organization, a program in French music at Hartt, a lecture by Michel Beaujour about Simone de Beauvoir, and a lecture at the home of Mrs. James Goodwin on Contemporary Aspects of French Cultural Life by Edouard Morot-Sir, the cultural counselor to the French Embassy and the head of liaison to universities in the U.S and director of the Franco-American Fulbright Commission. AFH continued through the year convening, in addition, a talk at the Oxford School by Gaston Mauger about Joan of Arc as seen by the playwright Jean Anouilh, a further talk by Prof. Peyre, a lecture by Mr. Jean Bruller, a figure in the French Resistance and former president of the Congress of French writers⁷⁸, a lecture at Trinity by Pierre Capretz (Prof. of French at Yale who assisted in the development of modern language teaching materials as part of a national program in the U.S. – especially “French in Action” -- and an innovative program for teaching foreign languages established in Glastonbury), and a return engagement of Prof. Peyre speaking about Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

During this period, the AFH also helped in the planning of and co-sponsored a lecture by Henri Desbrueres, the president and director of SNECMA (a French aircraft manufacturer, now Safran Aircraft Engines, and at the time 10% owned by United Aircraft, a Hartford based enterprise, now UTC). Miss Joan Holcombe, president of the *Salon Français*, a junior affiliate of AFH, with several other students assisted as ushers. Activities in 1963, included lectures by Louis Plamplume (Professor of French at Vassar College) on Paul Claudel; a lecture about Voltaire's *Candide* by Georges May (dean of Yale University); a poetry reading and performance by Pierre Viala at UH; a speech by Mr. Marc Blancpain (General Secretary of the worldwide federation of the AF) entitled *Asie: Cette Moitié du Monde*; a lecture by Robert Clements entitled *The coincidence of letters and art in France*; and a talk entitled *Proust et l'Art* by Prof. Peyre.

Through the 1960s, AFH continued to hold regular meetings organized around a talk or lecture usually conducted in French on a French related theme at venues including member's homes, Trinity College, St. Joseph's College, the University of Hartford and the Hartford Seminary, often in collaboration with these institutions. Invited speakers included distinguished professors and scholars of French language and literature at nearby universities, visiting French scholars, dignitaries, cultural attachés from the French embassy, representatives of the FAF (USA) and the AF. AFH also sponsored performances of French music. A further sampling of specific talks or lecture topics and other activities held across the decade includes *The Thought of Father Teilhard de Chardin*, *Spiritual Revival in France*, *What does de Gaulle really want?* *Understanding France*, new wave films, a speech entitled *L'Adventure Poétique de Rimbaud à Valéry* by a director of the international AF, a talk addressing the topic *La Vie et les voyages de Jean de Verranzane*, a talk by a former participant in the French Resistance about Simone Weil, a discussion of French church architecture, a talk entitled *Sartre, est-il Marxiste?* given at Trinity, a talk about modern architecture in France, and the recounting of a visit with Dr. Albert Schweitzer.

AFH also participated in and co-sponsored events in the larger community in the Hartford area involving France. Thus, the AFH accompanied and helped organize a visit of M. de la Villesbrunne, the consul general of France in New York, to Connecticut, calling on the State's

Governor, touring the State Capitol Building, and giving an address to the AFH, attending a meeting discussing France's foreign policy at the Oxford School and paying a visit to the statue of Lafayette accompanied by the Connecticut Governor's Foot Guard. In 1964, Mr. George Ducas, the head of the FAF (USA), attended a meeting held by the AFH, at which he presented Mrs. James Goodwin, a president and director of the AFH, with a medal of the AF for her outstanding contributions to the national and local organization. The AFH co-sponsored a reception for over 100 people held at the Atheneum for Ostrom Enders upon his election as the first honorary consul general of France in the Hartford area.⁷⁹ The AFH also participated in and helped to sponsor an award competition for students of the French language from the Hartford area.

During the 1970s, AFH continued to sponsor frequent talks and lectures conducted in French about France and French culture by scholars and dignitaries, made charitable contributions of French language books to local libraries, and organized French themed parties. The venues were typically the facilities at nearby colleges and included the Howard Johnson's restaurant on several occasions. Among the speakers and topics addressed in the various talks and lectures and a sampling of the organization's activities were: a presentation to the AFH at the Hartford College for Women by Robert Waterman (Prof. Trinity) entitled *The Literature of Negritude*⁸⁰; a lecture by Prof. Peyre entitled *Romantique, Malgré Lui* at the Howard Johnsons restaurant⁸¹; a talk by Professor Felix Freudman entitled *Certain Aspects of the Laugh in Molière* at St. Joseph's College;⁸² a talk by Prof. Jarlet of Central Connecticut State University ("CCSU") on the theatre of Zola;⁸³ a talk by Bernard de Montgolfier on the Art and History of the Castles of Bourgogne⁸⁴ and a talk by Jean-Louis Barrault at Trinity co-sponsored by AF and the Trinity Modern Languages Department⁸⁵. AFH further sponsored another talk by Prof. Peyre, this one entitled *France Après de Gaulle*⁸⁶; a talk by Prof. Pierre Deguise (chair of the French Department at Connecticut College), entitled *La Mangeaille Chez Balzac, Flaubert et Zola*⁸⁷; a talk by Dr. Isaac Yetiv (Prof. of French UH) entitled *The alienation among Francophone North-African writers in the years following WWII*⁸⁸; a lecture by Mme. Anne Minor, director of *Services Culturels* at the French consulate in New York, on *Don Juan* by Molière⁸⁹; a lecture by Philippe Roget (Yale) at Kingswood School on the topic *Jeunesse Française*⁹⁰; a talk by Mme. Sabine Berritz, entitled *Les Salons Français depuis le XVIIe siècle jusqu'à nos jours*⁹¹; a talk by Mme. Jan Bourgeau entitled *Trois Ans Chez les Canaques* at the home of Mrs. Schuech, then president of the AFH⁹²; a talk by Paul Saintonge (Prof. emeritus at Holyoke College) entitled *Les Femmes Savantes; Women's Lib du Grand Siècle*⁹³; a talk by Mlle. Gervais, a native of Haiti and recently admitted as a lawyer to the New York bar, entitled *Haiti: L'Aurore d'une histoire Politique*⁹⁴; a talk by M. Philippe Almeras, director of the Franco-American Study Center in Normandy speaking on the topic, *La Situation Politique après de Gaulle et Pompidou*⁹⁵; and a talk by Mme. Marie-Claire Rohinsky (then at the University of Hartford and a major contributor to AFH's later development) entitled *Célèbres Voyageurs Français en Amérique au XVIIIe siècle*.⁹⁶

Other events included the presentation of an award to Louis Naylor (then becoming professor emeritus at Trinity) for distinctive service from the AF National Federation, presented by the AFH⁹⁷; a talk and demonstration in painting by an artist who studied at the *Académie des Beaux Arts* in Paris⁹⁸; a celebration of the centennial of Marcel Proust held at the home of Mrs. James Goodwin, including the serving of madeleines and including a talk by Mr. Albert Salvan (Prof. Brown U.) entitled *L'Amour, L'Échec et L'Enrichissement dans L'Oeuvre de Marcel Proust*⁹⁹; the showing of two French films, one on Le Corbusier and the other on Maeght,¹⁰⁰ at the

Hartford College for Women; an event including a public lecture on the music of Marcel Proust; a talk by Prof. Pierre Capretz (Yale)¹⁰¹; the holding of AFH's annual meeting in 1979 and including a *Fête Champêtre* at the home of Mrs. Harold Holcombe, Jr.; a talk by Jean-Jacques Sicard, secretary of the FAF(USA);¹⁰² and a talk entitled *France Today* by Gérard de Villesbrunne, the consul general of France in New York, held at the Governor's mansion.¹⁰³

Leadership roles in AFH were, increasingly, taken by French language teachers employed full-time at Hartford area secondary schools and universities, as well as, but with a reduced presence, by individuals from Hartford's elite families and others.¹⁰⁴

The Decade of the 1980s.

The Team of Mmes. Miller, Rohinsky and Weaver Begin a Program for the Teaching of French Sponsored by the AFH.

Beginning in 1981, the AFH took a new direction and engaged in a greatly increased level of activity, by offering a program of French language courses. This initiative was due to the leading and untiring efforts and great dedication of Mme. Gisèle Gagnon Miller and Marie-Claire Rohinsky (through the course of her career, Professor of French at the University of Hartford, Trinity College and CCSU), with the invaluable assistance of Françoise Weaver (Lecturer of French at Trinity College). The program consisted of beginner, intermediate and conversational classes in French during mornings or evenings four days each week for the Spring and Fall semesters.¹⁰⁵ Classes were initially held at the Unitarian Church on Bloomfield Avenue in Hartford and in 1982 moved to St. Thomas Seminary.¹⁰⁶ Besides serving as the spark for and director of the organization's French language program, Gisèle Miller served as President of AFH for nine years.^{107 108}

AFH continues to pursue energetically to the present this important effort, conceived of, started and sustained by Mme. Miller, Prof. Rohinsky and Mme. Weaver. This teaching activity has been and remains at the core of AFH's mission. The effort fills an important niche in the Hartford community evidenced by the continued active enrollment in the courses. It also permits AFH to raise its operating funds on a self-sustaining basis through the fees charged to the students.

Through the decade of the 1980s, AFH also continued to organize and offer a heavy schedule of lectures and talks, film viewings and music performances, as well as organizing a *Fête de Noël* party each year held at St. Thomas Seminary.

The Passing of the Organization's Baton Across the Generations.

Leadership roles in AFH were, increasingly, either filled by public spirited persons who had through their working careers some prior exposure to the French language and culture, were French language teachers employed full-time at or retired from Hartford area educational institutions, or residents of the area originally from France or Québec. There was a reduced participation from Hartford's old-line elite, representing a passing of the baton from the AFH leadership of prior decades. The membership broadened to include an eclectic mix of individuals all with an interest in French culture and language, and extending from retired persons of ordinary means, to students or others interested in visiting or studying in France, to professionals with a job-related or more general interest in the French language, to francophones from France

or elsewhere in the Francophonie and resident in the Hartford area, to active or retired teachers of the French language in the area's schools.

Examples of lectures, concerts and events sponsored by AFH during the decade include a lecture by Alfred Sauvy at St. Thomas Seminary¹⁰⁹; the showing of the film, *La Cuisse de Jupiter* at St. Joseph's College¹¹⁰; sponsorship of a French film series at St. Joseph's College;¹¹¹ co-sponsorship of a concert titled *One for Milhaud* at Trinity College¹¹²; convening a talk entitled *Dégustation des Vins* by Eric Lindquist¹¹³; the showing of the film, *Sans Toit, Ni Loi*, at St. Joseph's College¹¹⁴; a showing of the film, *Une Femme Sur Deux*, at St. Joseph's College¹¹⁵; the showing of the film, *Le Choix des Armes* at St. Joseph's College¹¹⁶; co-sponsorship of the theater production *Le Pain de Ménage*, a French comedy by Jules Renard at Loomis Chaffee School by the theater company, Claude Beauclair & Co.¹¹⁷; the sponsorship of a talk, entitled, *A Love Story – Héloïse's Myth through the Centuries*, by Claude-Anne Lopez at the Webster Library¹¹⁸; the showing of the film, *Le Destrait*, at St. Joseph's College¹¹⁹; sponsorship of the presentation, entitled *Traduire Marguerite Yourcenar: An Experience* by Dori Katz at the Hartford College for Women¹²⁰; the showing of the film, *Drôle de Drame* at St. Joseph's College¹²¹; the showing of the French film *Je suis timide, Mais Je Me Soigne* at St. Joseph's College¹²²; a showing of the film *La Folie des Grandeurs* at St. Joseph College¹²³; sponsorship of a presentation by David Ellison (Prof. Mt. Holyoke College) entitled *Lire Proust Aujourd'hui* at St. Thomas Seminary¹²⁴; sponsorship of a slide program and lecture by Christine Swinnen-Moran entitled *Ma vie avec Chagall – Virginia Haggard* at St. Thomas Seminar¹²⁵; and the presentation of the film, *French Cancan* at St. Joseph's College¹²⁶

AFH members, consulted in the preparation of this history, recall a continuing pageant of events and activities spanning the period and into the following decade, organized and sponsored, in full or in part, by AFH. Among the most notable were AFH's co-sponsorship of the 1776 bicentennial celebration at the Old State House, with the planning for the event undertaken at the home of Françoise Jackson, a member of AFH; events held with AFH participation and sponsorship at the Governor's Mansion during the administrations of Ella Grasso, and, subsequently, William O'Neill; AFH's organization under the auspices of Jeannine Zacharie and Marie-Claire Rohinsky of a major sale of crêpes at the Civic Center; the sponsorship of theatrical productions at the University of Hartford (Bernard Uzan's company) organized by Prof. Rohinsky; recitals at Trinity College (French Art Songs) and numerous lectures addressing French themes held at the homes of AFH members, including those of Marie-Claire Rohinsky and Françoise Weaver, as well as large outdoor receptions at the Holcombes' summer home, the Silas Deane Museum in Wethersfield, Elizabeth Park Pond House, and the backyards of Jane Colonno, Elie Palandre and Suzi Smith.¹²⁷

From 1990 to the Present.

In the beginning of the decade, through the efforts of a dedicated cadre of individuals, including, Gisèle Gagnon Miller, Marie-Claire Rohinsky, Françoise Weaver, Julie Lindquist and Suzi Smith, AFH took extensive steps to better organize itself on a more professional basis. In 1990, the AFH hired a part-time executive director and, particularly through Suzi Smith's initiating and sustaining efforts, began publishing and mailing a newsletter to its members, issued sometimes each month and eventually on a bi-monthly basis. The newsletter has been continuously

published since its inauguration to the present and remains a critical method for keeping members informed of the organization's activities.

Keeping up with the times and with the invaluable assistance of the late Board member Dick Perlot, AFH established its internet web-site¹²⁸ and later its social media addresses on Twitter and Facebook. It also switched entirely from "snail" mail to transmitting the newsletter in electronic format over the internet to the e-mail addresses of its members and other interested persons and to making it permanently available in accessible archives located on its internet web-site.

With the assistance of Suzi Smith, AFH's executive director at the time, AFH formalized its legal status in 1989 through the filing of papers with the Secretary of the State of Connecticut, establishing the AFH as a non-stock corporation under Connecticut law. The AFH also was granted tax exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code in 1993.

The Move to 233 Pearl Street.

While appreciative of the use afforded it of facilities at St. Thomas Seminary for its French language teaching programs, AFH undertook a search for a permanent home, with suitable office and class-room space. In 1993, it moved the venue of the classes to facilities at the Northwest Catholic high school.¹²⁹ Finally in 1995, the AFH was able to consolidate its offices and class-rooms through a lease of space located on the top floor of the Art Deco style building then recently renovated and owned and operated by Theater Works at 233 Pearl Street, in downtown Hartford. The location and opportunity had been suggested to AFH by Sonia Palkes, an AFH member and teacher from Glastonbury. As a non-profit organization, Theater Works wished to lease the space to other non-profit organizations such as AFH. The planning effort for finding permanent and suitable physical space for AFH's operations had taken nearly two years, successfully spear-headed by a committee lead by Garrett Weaver.¹³⁰ 233 Pearl Street then served as AFH's home until AFH's recent move to its current location in 2015. The Pearl Street location afforded AFH an office, a location for its library of French books contributed over the years by its membership and two class-rooms. The doors to several of the offices and the class-room were painted with facsimiles of famous paintings by French impressionist and modern artists in order to be consistent with AFH's cultural themes.

Increasing the Professionalism of the Organization.

As part of its planning efforts and at the urging and with the significant guidance of Suzi Smith and others, AFH arranged with the support of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to engage several consultants to assist the organization in preparing a formal strategic plan.¹³¹ The resulting plan included the following recommendations:

- formalizing job descriptions of AFH's employees,
- establishing a program for raising charitable funds and utilizing them for hiring additional individuals to help market the organization and the raising of funds,
- extending outreach to raise further funds for the organization
- acting to implement forward-looking budgeting, and to secure an independent financial audit of the entity and as funds are raised, significantly expanding AFH's French language offerings.

- creating an extensive set of committees with specific tasks.

The plan also established specific goals for the teaching program, educational and social activities, expansion of scholarship opportunities for area pre-college students, marketing, and public relations, fund raising and development and the establishment of a human resources committee and more formalized fiscal and administrative systems.¹³² The plan was ambitious and its full scope has yet to be implemented.

Establishment of the Harpin-Rohinsky Scholarships and the McFarland Awards.

AFH also formalized its scholarship grants and French language awards for Hartford area students of the French language, made annually. With the assistance and coordination shared by AFH with the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the Harpin-Rohinsky scholarship fund grant began in 2001.¹³³ The Harpin-Rohinsky scholarship was established by Professor Marie-Claire Rohinsky to honor Pauline Harpin, a beloved French teacher at Weaver High School in Hartford, following her untimely death.¹³⁴ Marie-Claire Rohinsky, now French Professor Emeritus at CCSU, had taught French literature and the French language at CCSU and served for many years as the very dedicated, volunteer head of AFH's French language program.¹³⁵

The book awards given each year by AFH to deserving students in the Hartford area were renamed in 2003 the McFarland book awards, in memory of Robert McFarland following his death in 2002.¹³⁶ President McFarland had been an insurance executive and, subsequently through a repurposing of his career, a high school French teacher. He served as president of AFH from 1997-1999. AFH continues to make these awards each year in collaboration with local school systems. Funds distributed for the awards are derived from charitable grants by members and others.

AFH Directors and Teachers Afford the Organization Their Great Energy and Engagement.

Since 1980, AFH has benefitted from relatively stable leadership. Transitions have occurred with relatively little disruption, with newly elected officers bringing added energy and insight to the direction of AFH. All officers serve on a voluntary basis with only the part-time executive director receiving compensation.

Serving effectively and with dedication as the organization's Presidents through the several decades following 1990 were Monique Hanson (1990/91); Elie Pallandre (1992-1996/97); Robert McFarland (1997/98 – 99); Julie Lindquist (1999/2000 – 2004/5); Debra Grehn (2005/2006 - 2009); and Silvia Bettega (2010 - the present). Serving as administrator/executive director were Suzi Smith (1990 – 1995/6); Tracy Sigman (1996/7 – 2001 and again from 2006-2008)¹³⁷; Jane Colonno (2001/2-2006/7); Anne Marie O'Connor (2009/2010); Harriet Canty (2010) and Larry Hall (2011 - the present).

Benefitting the AFH immeasurably and serving in succession as the directors of the French language programs offered by the organization were Gisèle Miller; Françoise Weaver; Marie-Claire Rohinsky; Alice Napolitano; Betty Perlot (2012-2016) and Linda Zabor (2016 to the present).

Among the French language teachers teaching in AFH's class room programs, and upon whom the ultimate success of the programs depends, were native French speakers, Gustave Afantchaio, Bintou Berube, Oliver Blanchardon, Corinne Borsotti, Isabel Evelein, Christine Greenwood, Sylvie Hau, Lieve Keeney, Laurence Kopec, Marianne Labergerie, Marco Lumbroso, Claire Millous, Sophie Perisec, Genevieve Rela, Carole Rothschild, and Dahmane Soudani, and others with extensive prior academic training in French and experience living in francophone countries. The latter included Silvia Bettega, Andrea Doane, Irene Domeisen, Jill Lundin, Bill Crochetière, and Jennifer Gardner.

In an effort to further AFH's out-reach to the community, AFH organized and sponsored for several years enrichment classes in French for several City public elementary schools.¹³⁸ AFH also helped to sponsor internship study stays through scholarships granted by FAF(USA) to Sharon Straka and Silvia Bettega in Paris at the AF's central offices.¹³⁹

AFH's more recent activities promoting French culture and language during this period can be illustrated by a summary of its sponsored events from typical years during each decade of the period.

1992. Great Diversity in the Offerings of AFH.

In 1992, for example, the AFH organized French language events extending from social events, including French language happy hours once a month at the Max on Main restaurant; a 14 *juillet* picnic; a Fête de Noël; regular wine auctions guided by Eric Lindquist; and a travel club meeting about trips to Bretagne; to more serious cultural events, including holding a semi-monthly Club de Lecture; evening soirées at members' homes to hear Ralph Darbo presenting his work; *Etonnez moi Monsieur Hugo*; and Michel Sarda, presenting a talk entitled, *Grands Projets de Paris*; showings through the year of numerous French language films followed by discussion held at the Cinestudio or the Goodwin Theater, both at Trinity College (in partnership with Cinestudio); and sponsoring a lecture by Marie-Claire Rohinsky, entitled *Jean Des Esseintes, héros "fin de siècle"*; a lecture by Michel Maffesoli entitled, *Le Fait Culinaire Comme Révélateur Dans Nos Sociétés*; and a lecture by Louis Jean Calvet, entitled *La Francophonie*. AFH participated in French language events touching on the political, meeting with a delegation of Tunisian governors at an event organized by the World Affairs Council. AFH also co-sponsored musical concerts and other cultural events with area institutions, including a performance by Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal; a concert by Lucy Therrien of French Canadian music; a concert by Serge Kerval; a discussion of the Bayeux tapestry at the Wadsworth Atheneum directed by Dr. André Chedville and the performance of *Les Fables de Fontaine* by the Compagnie Claude Beauclair at Trinity College.¹⁴⁰

2002. AFH's activities during the FAF-USA's Centenary Year.

A decade later in 2002 by way of further example, AFH continued with its extensive and varied activities, in addition to sustaining the on-going French language teaching programs. In that year, the AFH sponsored alone or with other organizations four conferences entitled *The Culture of Haiti*, *La Grande Mademoiselle*, *La Tunisie vue par Maupassant*, *Gide* and *Les Belges et les Belges*. AFH also sponsored the showing of eight French language films over the course of the year. AFH organized several trips, lunches and dinners entailing French related themes and conducted in French, including a French Art discussion, a Music Brunch, a Gallic Gala, a

conference about Québec/Connecticut, and talks about Josephine Baker, and *La Matière des Rêves*, and a conference about Victor Hugo.

AFH also threw celebrations throughout the year, including a party in honor of the 100th birthday of the FAF (USA), the annual *Beaujolais Nouveau* celebration held jointly with the West Hartford Art League, a 14th of July celebration/picnic and a *Fête de Noël*. Under AFH's auspices there were also French conversation get-togethers monthly on a Tuesday, and separately on a Thursday at locations in Hartford and bi-weekly on Saturday at Mozzicato's café, in Hartford's south-end neighborhood (the latter, a tradition extending to the present). Other activities undertaken by AFH during the year included a Soirée de Tennis, a nature walk, a concert by Josée Vachon (a noted Québécoise chanteuse), a cooking class, a vernissage and a guided trip to Québec City.¹⁴¹

2012. Current Developments Are on the Menu.

Moving into the next decade and further illustrative of the AFH's on-going activities were those undertaken in 2012. In that year, AFH sponsored talks by Marie-Dominique Boyce, entitled *La Reprise des Québécois en Nouvelle Angleterre*; by Patrice Tassy, entitled *Le Cinéma Français en Musique*; by Dr. Florence Marsal (UCONN) about the French writer, playwright and mathematician, Jacques Robaud; by Sharon Straka entitled *Tour de Dessins Degas*; and, in a return engagement, a talk entitled *Litterature Mediavale* by Dr. Marsal; a talk by Prof. Tiki (UCONN) entitled *La Politique Africaine*; a discussion led by Sharon Straka about the film *Rules of the Game/Règles de jeu*, following its showing at Real Art Ways; a lecture at the Hillstead Museum by Paul Hayes Tucker, entitled *Claude Monet-Seeking Significance in the Giverney Gardens*; a talk by Yurah Robidas, entitled *La Culture Québécoise*; a talk and later discussion moderated by Sharon Straka about the film, *Himalaya - L'enfance d'un chef* immediately following its showing at AFH's offices; and a talk and discussion again moderated by Sharon Straka, entitled *La Grande Séduction/Seducing Dr. Lewis* at the Real Art Ways.

During the same year, the AFH offered its full program of French language courses, sponsored the continuing bi-weekly French conversation get-togethers at Mozzicato's, and held its annual meeting with musical accompaniment, a 14 *juillet* (Bastille Day) celebration and the annual *Fête de Beaujolais Nouveau*. AFH also sponsored trips to Québec City and the Gaspésie region of Québec, to the Frick Museum in New York City to see the exhibition of Renoir, *Impressionism and Full Length Paintings*, and a trip to Bard College to see the opera, *Le Roi Malgré Lui*. It also presented the film, *Une Vie de Chat*.¹⁴²

To the present.

From the beginning of the last decade of the twentieth century and continuing to the present, AFH's programming of lectures was and is not limited to cultural or literary matters, but includes conferences and events addressing matters of topical importance affecting both France and the United States and benefitting from insights gained from a comparison of the two countries. By way of example, AFH sponsored the visit of Lanfranco Virgili, an urban planning expert from France, to the Hartford area. During his stay in Hartford, Virgili gave a talk on urban revitalization, spoke to the Hartford Courant's editorial board and gave an interview broadcasted on community television.¹⁴³

The Theater Production of Feydeau's *Feu la mère de Madame*.

Also illustrative of the creativity of AFH's teachers and AFH's flexibility and ambition in supporting their efforts was the presentation in French of a play by Feydeau by a class of AFH advanced French students, first in Hartford and then in St. Élie-de-Caxton, Québec¹⁴⁴ at the invitation of St. Elie's municipal government. Sylvie Hau, an AFH French teacher and a native of France and life-long devotee of French theater, conceived of and taught numerous courses during this period in French theater at AFH, each course culminating at the semester's end in the performance by the students in French of the play studied during the semester. In spring 2014, after the completion of such a course at AFH, Sylvie and her students in the AFH's "Petite Troupe Theatrale" traveled to St. Élie, lodged at homes of St. Élie's residents, presented the play at the Town's municipal center to a large audience, and were rewarded by a standing ovation by the audience at the end of the performance.

Through these most recent periods of AFH's operations, AFH has maintained its membership at approximately 200 and enrolled in excess of 50 French language students in its language teaching programs through the several seasonal semesters during the year.

The AFH moves to New and Refurbished Quarters at 75 Charter Oak Avenue.

Critical to AFH's operations is the convenience and suitability of its physical quarters and location. After nearly ten years of occupancy by AFH of its space at 233 Pearl Street, the directors of Theater Works approached AFH to indicate that, because of space constraints facing its own growing organization, they had a need for the space utilized by AFH. To accommodate the desire of Theater-Works to take back the space, in 2015 the AFH Board of Directors established a planning committee, undertook a search of suitable alternative properties, and decided to and negotiated the move of the organization's offices and class-rooms to newly renovated quarters at the Connecticut Non-Profit Center at 75 Charter Oak Avenue in Hartford.¹⁴⁵ Silvia Bettega, AFH's President, Larry Hall, AFH's executive director and board member, assisted by Phil Sussler, played critical roles in arranging the move. Board member, Dick Perlot, employed his technological expertise to install upgraded new internet connected large screens in each of the new class-rooms. Thanks also to a contribution from AFH's former president, Julie Lindquist, AFH was able to engage the artist, Georges Annan Kingsley, to complete a painting on the door to its new offices of a scene in Paris in the style of Matisse, echoing the flamboyant French post-impressionist influenced door paintings at AFH's former residence on Pearl Street.¹⁴⁶

AFH Continues its Broad and Diverse Offerings, including 11 Language Courses and Establishing Additional Connections with the Francophonie.

Also in 2015, among its accomplishments, AFH co-sponsored, as is customary, the annual French film festival at Cinestudio on the Trinity College campus. Other events were the annual Beaujolais Nouveau celebration and a talk by M. P. Nobou and his wife, Ernestine Nobou, about Côte d'Ivoire at AFH's annual meeting. AFH established Twitter and Facebook accounts and had the new quarters of the organization fully ready for use by the students in its French classes for the beginning of the 2015 Fall semester and convened a house-warming celebration in honor

of the move.¹⁴⁷ The AFH also organized a trip of a number of its members to Newport, Rhode Island, to greet the arrival during its tour of the U.S. East Coast of the French tall masted sailing ship, the Frigate *L'Hermione*. The ship is a modern replica of the vessel of the same name that brought General Lafayette to the United States in the 1700's.

Illustrative of AFH's interest in current events, AFH also arranged for a meeting, with the participants packing the large class-room at AFH's (now former) offices and featuring a discussion led by Dahmane Soudani and Narcisse Tiki, helping to explain the context and implications and honoring the victims of the, then recent, tragic Charlie Hebdo massacre which occurred in Paris in early January, 2015.

Furthering its programming of activities in 2015-2016, AFH again offered its extensive series of courses in the French language through three semesters, Fall, Winter and Summer. It also held meetings, chaired and arranged by John Soares, of AFH's *Club de Lecture* to discuss the recently published books, *Le Chapeau de Mitterand* by Antoine Laurain and then *Soumission* by Michel Houellebecq, with get-togethers scheduled for the Fall to discuss the books *L'Élégance du hériçon* by Muriel Barbery and *Meursault, Contre-Enquête* by Kamel Daoud. AFH also showed the film, *Les Héritiers*; participated in and supported Trinity College's Cinestudio's annual April in Paris film festival; held a talk by Karen Humphreys (Professor of French language and culture at Trinity College) about Fashion in 19th century France¹⁴⁸; sponsored a presentation by Patrice Tassy on contemporary music in France¹⁴⁹; and had a talk by Sara Kippur (Assistant Prof. of French at Trinity College) entitled *Le texte et son double: quant l'écrivain est aussi le traducteur*. AFH also sponsored a trip to see the showing of the art of Louise Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun at the Metropolitan Museum in New York.¹⁵⁰

AFH's French instructor, Dahmane Soudani, introduced an innovation during the winter semester, 2015-2016, by utilizing intercontinental Skype communication between the class-room in Hartford and speakers based in France. Dahmane experimented initially with this method of communication during his course in 2013 about *fait divers*, with a Skype interview conducted with the French journalist, Pascal Schnaebeler, discussing recent news events in France which M. Schnaebeler had covered for the French media. Prof. Soudani expanded on this effort in 2015-2016 in a course he then offered focused on the life and works of Victor Hugo. The Skype speaker for one session was Émilie Thivet, the director of the historic patrimony of the City of Besançon, France, and of the Victor Hugo home located in the same city. M. Hugo was born in Besançon, the capital of the region of Franche-Comté. Mme. Thivet spoke about the history and legacy of the great writer with the class.

Mr. Soudani continued and expanded the use of Skype during the following summer semester; over multiple sessions, the class interacted in real-time through Skype with various expert storytellers based in different regions of France, who each presented regional folk tales and then described the language, particular customs and rich history of their respective regions.^{151 152}

AFH continues to sponsor the long-standing bi-weekly French conversation meet-ups at Mozzicato's Café in the South End of Hartford. It also continues the annual grant of academic awards to a deserving student of French from the Greater Hartford area from the Harpin/Rohinsky scholarship fund and awards to over 15 students in secondary schools in the regions through the McFarland book awards.¹⁵³ There were 55 students attending AFH's French

language classes in the Spring semester in 2016. Over 11 classes, each meeting once per week during the semester, are programmed for the fall semester, 2016.¹⁵⁴

Conclusion

AFH is a small, but vibrant, organization with over one hundred continuous years of history serving the community of French speakers and persons interested in or engaged with the French language and culture resident in the greater Hartford, Connecticut region. AFH offers today a broad programming of courses in the French language held at convenient times after work for course participants. It also continues to sponsor, on its own or in collaboration with other institutions in the City, on-going lectures, talks, visits, music performances, and celebrations frequently conducted in French and reflecting or influenced by the French language and culture and francophone themes. Most importantly, over the many decades of its operation, AFH depends upon, benefits from, and is renewed by the intelligence, energy, engagement and contributions of the many individuals, now over many generations, participating as its officers, its directors, its teachers, and its members.

A Note on Primary Sources.

The primary source material for the period prior to 1990 reviewed in the preparation of this report came from the digitized, searchable data-base of Hartford Courant articles available on the internet. For this period, the Courant was the best and, in many cases only, primary source for the AFH's events and activities. Thanks are due to the Town of Glastonbury's Welles Public Library and the State Library for providing internet access to the Hartford Courant data-bases in a friendly environment. Thanks are due particularly to the Glastonbury Library for its effective air conditioning during an extended heat spell hovering over central Connecticut in August, 2016, while the report was being drafted. Also consulted and invaluable were the AFH's regular bi-monthly newsletters beginning in 1990 and continuing to the present, with issue number 166 (Nov./Dec. 2016) as of the date of completion of this history most recently transmitted to the public. Other primary resources consulted and of assistance were those found at the Trinity College library, the University of Hartford library (the repository of the books and documents of the former Hartford College for Women), and resources at the Connecticut Historical Society and the Wadsworth Atheneum.

Contributors, Acknowledgements and Disclaimers.

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Dahmane Soudani prepared and drafted, with great patience and skill, the French version of this essay and is a co-author. In doing so, he conducted independent research, in many cases helping to correct and add to the English version. In addition, Dahmane's editing and translating skills contributed greatly to the improvement of the original version in English.

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End Notes to the Text

¹ The full poem richly merits reading. It has engendered much commentary about its possible multiple meanings. See, e.g., Bart Eeckhout *et al.* eds., *Introduction: The Lights of Norway and all that in Wallace Stevens: Across the Atlantic* (2008). Wallace Stevens resided in Hartford for most of his adult life. The French language translation of the poem is available at <http://mapage.noos.fr>.

² See generally the FAF(USA)'s web-site at www.afusa.org for a further description of the organization's purposes and activities.

³ See also, Alain DuBosclard, *Histoire de la Fédération des Alliances Françaises aux États-Unis: L'Alliance au Cœur* (1902-1997) (2013).

⁴ Pierre Paul Cambon (1843-1924), a French diplomat and a chief of staff to Jules Ferry, was the initiating founder. Among the other founders of AF were internationally prominent individuals, including Philippe Joseph Louis Berthelot, Jean-Jules Jusserand, Ferdinand de Lesseps, Louis Pasteur, Joseph Ernest Renan, Jules Verne, Félix Charmetant and Armand Colin. See generally, *Alliance Française, AF, 130 Years* (2013). See also AF's web-site at www.alliancefr.org for further detail regarding the organization and its history. The reader is also referred to the recent worthy historical examination of the AF international organization by AFH's own Larry Hall, with a particular focus on AF's operations during World War II in support of the French Resistance from its relocated base in London and the variations in the response of the various French cultural organizations in the United Kingdom and the United States, including the FAF(USA), to *la France Libre*. Larry's essay, completed as a thesis in satisfaction of the requirements for a master's degree, is entitled *Oui ou non? France Libre and the reaction to Charles de Gaulle's June 1940 appel by Alliance Française and other Francophile groups in the U.S. and Great Britain* (2016), hereafter, referred to as *Hall (2016)*.

⁵ The writer's translation of AF's charter (the "statuts") from the original in French.

⁶ See again, *AF, AF, 130 Years* (2013).

⁷ *Connecticut Markers on the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail* (declared as a national historic trail by an Act of the US Congress). The locations of the meeting were the Old State House and Jeremiah Wadsworth's house (the latter, now the site of the Wadsworth Atheneum).

⁸ Robert A. Selig, *Rochambeau in Connecticut: Tracing His Journey*, Historical and Architectural Survey (1999) (sponsored by the State of Connecticut and the Connecticut Historical Society); Robert A. Selig, *Rochambeau's Cavalry: Lauzon's Legion in Connecticut 1780-1781, The Winter Quarters of Lauzon's Legion in Lebanon and its March through the State in 1781, Rochambeau's conferences in Hartford and Wethersfield* (2000).

⁹ See, e.g., AFH Newsletter ("AFH NL") (Nov./Dec. 2005) (Gen. Pascal Vinchon, Defense Attaché at the French Embassy gives a talk, co-sponsored by AFH, in honor of the 225th anniversary of the march of Rochambeau's army through Connecticut).

¹⁰ National Park Service *et al.*, *The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Road, Statement of National Significance* (2003).

¹¹ See generally, John Foster, *A Sketch of the Tour of General Lafayette on his late visit to the United States in 1824* and particularly pp. 142-146 for his visit to Hartford. Lafayette's tour in the US extended over 6000 miles, entailing travel throughout the country as it then existed, with celebrations and memorials held along the entire route. Not to be outdone, Hartford, upon Lafayette's visit, arranged for the pealing of bells and cannon volleys of welcome, followed by large celebrations held over the multiple days of the General's visit reportedly attended by thousands,

the installation of commemorative arches, the mustering of veterans and militia, the presentation to Lafayette of a commemorative medal, Lafayette's address to the legislature and reception of laudatory greetings and speeches from the State's most prominent officials. A group of 800 pupils, including students from the American School of the Deaf described below in more detail, presented Lafayette with a medal and an inscription stating "*Nous vous amions, General Lafayette.*" See also, Hartford Courant ("HC") (Sep. 5, 1915), p. X2, *Lafayette Was Here 91 Years Ago, Yesterday; Illustrious Frenchman Cordially Welcomed to Hartford in 1824; Had Been Here in 1780 – Met by Horse Guards* (describing the 1824 visit).

¹² See, e.g., HC (Sep. 7, 1919), p. 19, *Honors are paid to Memory of General Lafayette; Wreath put on Bartlett Statue at Capitol, Birthday and Marne Anniversary, Speakers Tell of America's Debt to Frenchman* (Celebrations held in 1919 of the anniversary of Lafayette's birthday include flying the French flag at the Capitol, commemorative speeches by City and State politicians and from the Franco-American community in French, a concert by a French chorus, a baseball game between U.S. veterans and an all French team, athletic contests, dancing and a band concert). The Lafayette statue referred to here was located inside the State Capitol building and is different from, although of the same design as, the statue located outside and now on Columbus Green and discussed further below. Further afield but echoing the same or similar connections during this period with France and particularly with Lafayette's legacy, a group of Americans organized the Escadrille de Lafayette to fly military airplanes on behalf of France during World War I. The ace pilot of the squad, Raoul Lufbery, lived for a period in Wallingford, Connecticut. Drury, *World War I Flying Ace, Raoul Lufbery*, Connecticut History.

¹³ The statue originally stood outside on a traffic island, now removed, directly in front of Bushnell Auditorium and to the southeast of the State Capitol. It was later relocated to Columbus Green facing north towards the Capitol, near its original location but on the opposite side of Capitol Avenue from its former location. HC (Mar. 30, 1979), p. 7, *Moving of Lafayette Statue Necessary for Construction*.

¹⁴ Alden Gordon et al., editors, *Hartford's Outdoor Sculpture, Exhibits* (April, 1981), Austin Arts Center, Trinity College, pp. 8-14. In addition to his commissioned work throughout the U.S., Bartlett designed many of the statues and reliefs and architectural decorations, many fabricated in France, inside and on the exterior of the State Capitol building. *Id.* Bartlett was a contemporary and friend of Charles Noel Flagg, who assisted in the founding of AFH's predecessor. *Id.* Charles Noel Flagg was the State's commissioner of sculpture responsible for commissioning much of the exterior decoration of the State Capitol and was instrumental in arranging for Bartlett's participation. See endnote 29, *infra*, below for further discussion of Charles Noel Flagg.

¹⁵ The statue was moved from the Louvre to the *Cours Albert Premier* to make way for the erection of I.M. Pei's glass canopy.

¹⁶ Thomas Gallaudet (b. 1787, Phila., PA, d. 1851, Hartford). The Gallaudet family's history is a particularly prominent illustration of the ties existing between France and America, and the advancement and positive contributions made to life here by French immigrants and their descendants, echoing that of other immigrant communities in the United States. Gallaudet's paternal great-grandfather, Pierre, reportedly born in Mauzé d'Aunis (near La Rochelle in France), immigrated to America shortly after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in 1689, coming here with the exodus from France of a large part of the Huguenot community fleeing anti-Protestant pogroms initiated following the Edict's revocation. Gallaudet's father was a personal secretary to George Washington. Gallaudet's son, Edward, was the first president of Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., the pre-eminent school for the hearing-impaired in the United States and named after Thomas Gallaudet.

¹⁷ See e.g., History of ASD at www.asd-1817org/page.cfm?p=1160.

¹⁸ Laurent Clerc (b. 1785, La Balme, France; d. 1869, Hartford). For a discussion of Clerc's life and accomplishments, see Loida R. Canias, *Laurent Clerc: Apostle to the Deaf People of the New World*, Laurent Clerc National Education Center. <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/Library/MSSDLRC/clerc/>.

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ James Myall, *Franco-Americans in New England: Statistics from the American Community Survey* (prepared for the Franco-American Taskforce for the State of Maine, Oct. 24, 2012).

²¹ *See generally*, L. Flamion, Secretary of the CT Sec. of the State's Ethnic Advisory Council, *French-French Canadians*, HC (Jul. 28, 1985).

²² Ste. Anne's is distinguished by its beautiful interior and exterior and French-language script carved into its pediments and appearing in its stained glass windows. Ste. Anne's parish was founded in 1889 to serve a French-speaking congregation immigrating to Hartford primarily from Canada. The current church building was dedicated in 1926 and was designed by the architect, Henry Ludorf, in the Italian Renaissance inspired French style. A. Marceau, *A History of Ste. Anne's Roman Catholic Parish* (2010). Ste. Anne's continues to offer a French language mass on Sunday morning. Ste. Anne's was constructed in the then center of the Franco-american community in Hartford, the area called Frog Hollow. Reflecting the continuous change and renewal of American society, the church today also serves the current predominantly Latino community of the neighborhood, as the descendants of the Franco-american community, with its increasing economic success, have followed the path of other immigrant groups in the United States, moving on to the suburbs of the region to be replaced in its former central city neighborhood by more recently arriving immigrant communities moving into the City.

²³ Madeline Stocker, *French Canadians Celebrate Their Heritage*, CT-News Junkie (June 24, 2014). Governor Grasso had earlier in 1979 created the Advisory Committee on Francophone Cultural Affairs reflecting the importance of the French-speaking and French Canadian descendant community in the State. HC (Sep. 21, 1980), p. B7.

²⁴ Business Roundtable, *How Connecticut's Economy Benefits from International Trade and Investment* (no date); International Trade Administration, *Connecticut Exports, Jobs and Foreign Investment* (Feb. 2016).

²⁵ *See* end-note 24.

²⁶ The Brookings Institution, *Metro North America: Cities and Metros as Hubs of Advanced Industries and Integrated Goods Trade* (2013), p. 29 (total annual trade (2010) between the two metro areas for the aerospace industry was US\$293 million).

²⁷ *See* end-note 26 above.

²⁸ HC (Feb. 7, 1898), p. 7.

²⁹ Charles Noel Flagg (b. 1849, d. 1916) was a much beloved artist, architect and civic leader in Hartford. *See*, HC (Nov. 14, 1916), p. 8 (tribute to CN Flagg by JJ McCook). Flagg studied painting from 1872-1882 in Paris. In addition to his important work in the commissioning of the exterior decorations of the State Capitol building described earlier, he painted the official portraits of the governors of Connecticut of the period and portraits of numerous other Hartford notables, including Mark Twain, who, reportedly, was a billiards playing companion. He produced and directed plays in French put on by the *Cercle Français* as well as gave numerous lectures about French art and culture. Influenced by his experience in the *ateliers* of Paris, he formed in Hartford an informal group of art students for regular sessions of painting, drawing and collaboration, later leading to more formal organization as the City's Municipal Art Society, and then the Connecticut Art League. Several important modern artists traced their development to Flagg's teaching. HC (July 26, 1982), p. E1E (discussion of Milton Avery). He also played a leading role in preserving Bullfinch's Old State House building in Hartford, which had been slated for demolition. *See generally*, e.g., HC (Dec. 13, 1938), p. C10; (Dec. 25, 1928), p.3; (Nov. 11, 1916), p. 8; (Nov. 16, 1907), p. 16; (Mar. 10, 1906), p. 12.

³⁰ Professor McCook was a leading citizen of Hartford. He served with distinction as a professor at Trinity College for several decades until retiring in 1923 (d. 1927). He also served along with his many brothers with the Union forces during the Civil War. His home is the Butler-McCook homestead now preserved as a museum on Main Street. McCook Hall at Trinity College is named in honor of him and his family. Among his other accomplishments, Professor McCook was a rector in the Episcopal Church, conducted some of the first systematic sociological studies on social conditions in the U.S and was an early and nationally prominent advocate for the poor and the homeless. Bill Ryan, *19th-Century Reformer's Way with the Homeless*, NY Times (May 8, 1994); *Book Review: The Fighting McCooks: America's Famous Fighting Family*; HC (Jan. 13, 1927), p. 1 (reporting on the funeral service and testimonials in memory of Dr. McCook). His connection with and prominence in the founding of the FAF(USA) may have sprung from an acquaintance with the major figure in creation of the organization, James Hyde, which was brokered by Dr. McCook's brother, who was a leading partner in the law firm that represented the Equitable.

³¹ HC (Dec. 6, 1901), p. 8.

³² Jules Cambon (b. 1845, d. 1935) was a nationally prominent French civil servant and diplomat. He was the brother of Paul Cambon (b. 1843, d. 1924). Paul Cambon, as noted earlier, was a major French politician, official and diplomat and a central figure in the founding of the Alliance française.

³³ Lazare Weiller (b. 1858 , d. 1928) was a prominent French inventor, industrialist and politician. He had detailed knowledge of the United States resulting from several investigative tours he made of the country sponsored by the French government. At the time of the FAF (USA)'s founding, Weiller and la Gotellerie were participating in a French government commission making a tour of the United States to investigate and report on the country's commercial practices. Chicago Tribune (Dec. 7, 1901), p. 4.

³⁴ For any detailed discussion, Mr. J.H. Hyde's life and career is beyond the scope of this essay. By way of abbreviated summary, as an executive and heir to the founder of the Equitable, he began his professional career as a titan of the American economy and initiated and presided over the FAF(USA)'s founding meeting in 1902. He was later charged in 1905 with causing a fraud on the Equitable triggering a major financial scandal, in part due to allegations of self-dealing and excessive expenditures on a Louis XIV- themed costume ball but also due to a struggle for control of the company with incumbent management and a board of directors including E.H. Harriman, Henry Clay Frick and Augustus Belmont. Mr. Hyde then relocated to France. Perhaps seeking to recover his reputation, with the advent of World War I he converted his Paris home into a Red Cross Service hospital and acted as an organizer and driver for the American Field Ambulance Service. For his efforts, he was commissioned a Captain in the US Army when the US entered World War I and assigned as an aide to the director of the American Red Cross in France. He later directed the Harvard and New England bureau of the University Union in Paris, under whose auspices he arranged for scholars visiting from the United States to lecture at French universities. For his efforts during WW I, he was awarded the Grand-Croix of the Legion of Honor. He ultimately returned to the US upon the invasion of France by Nazi Germany and died here in 1959. *See generally*, Patricia Beard, *After the Ball: Gilded Age Secrets, Boardroom Betrayals and the Party that Ignited the Great Wall Street Scandal of 1905* (2004); FAF(USA), *Le Cinquantenaire de la Fédération de l'Alliance Française aux États-Unis et au Canada (1902-1952)*, pp.31-32, 75.

³⁵ HC (March 4, 1902), p. 1; New York Daily Tribune, *Lovers of French Organize: Delegates of the Alliance Française Form a Central Organization* (March 5, 1902).

³⁶ HC (Feb. 25, 1901).

³⁷ HC (Feb. 2, 1903), p. 5.

³⁸ HC (Dec. 3, 1904), p. 8.

³⁹ HC (Feb. 27, 1921), p. 8.

⁴⁰ HC (Nov. 1, 1921), p. 15.

⁴¹ HC (Dec. 13, 1922), p. 17; HC (Feb. 21, 1923), p. 15 (the lectures were given at the homes of Beatrice Cook, Mrs. John C. Wilson, and Mrs. Charles Talcott, respectively).

⁴² HC (Dec. 15, 1925), p. 12

⁴³ HC (Jan. 10, 1925), p. 15.

⁴⁴ HC (Dec. 14, 1926), p. 5.

⁴⁵ HC (Mar. 5, 1927), p. 6.

⁴⁶ HC (Oct. 14, 1927), p. 17.

⁴⁷ HC (Oct. 12, 1926), p. 1, *Presentation of Statue to Feature Day, Italian Citizens of City Dedicate Columbus Statue this Afternoon in Lafayette Park, Colorful Parade Precedes Event, Band Concert, Fireworks and Dance in Evening Top Off Celebration – Banks and Offices Close*; HC (October 7, 1927), p. 1, *Fight Name of Columbus for Green*, (Resolution introduced with Board of Alderman to change name to Columbus Green; opposed by Connecticut Historical Society); HC (Oct. 9, 1927), p. 2A (*Lafayette Green and Columbus*); HC (Oct. 19, 1927), *40,000 ask for change of Park Name; Petition to Designate Triangle Columbus Green supported by every Italian, Aldermen Told Several Protests Also Prepared Plot Has Gained Historical Significance Suddenly and Officially is Nameless D’Esopo Says*); HC (Jun. 9, 1929), p.2, *Hartford Friends Discuss Proposed Soldier’s Memorial; Vote to have equestrian statue of Lafayette placed in Park*; HC (Oct. 27, 1931), p. 2, *Permission granted to erect statue; Council acts on resolution to place figure of Lafayette within Intersection at the Capitol*; HC (Jan. 10, 1933), p. 1, *Lafayette Square Officially Named Columbus Green*.

⁴⁸ HC (Nov. 14, 1928), p. 24. During this period, M. Lange made frequent tours of the United States, and while on tour giving lectures on current events in France. *See, e.g.*, Pittsburgh Gazette (Jan. 13, 1936), p. 12; Brooklyn (NY) Eagle (Oct. 29, 1934).

⁴⁹ HC (Dec. 5, 1928), p. 8, *Alliance Française to Hear Distinguished Frenchwoman*, letter to the editor of Mme. Jules Ruerat.

⁵⁰ HC (Nov. 23, 1928), p. 2; HC (Nov. 25, 1928), p. 17.

⁵¹ HC (Oct. 31, 1931).

⁵² Mrs. Louise Stutz Veeder played an important role in the history of the AFH, leading the organization during the middle years of its history. She was a native French speaker born in Lucerne, Switzerland, who came to Hartford to teach French at Hartford Public High School and later became the spouse of the industrialist, Curtis Veeder, the founder and president of the manufacturing company, now the Veeder-Root Manufacturing Company. The impressive and stately Veeder mansion is today the Connecticut Historical Society’s building on Elizabeth Street in the West End of Hartford.

⁵³ *See also*, Alain DuBosclard, *Histoire de la Fédération des Alliances Françaises aux États-Unis: L’Alliance au Cœur (1902-1997)* (2013) ; Hall (2016), pp. 52-62.

⁵⁴ HC (May 7, 1980), Colin McEnroe, *Former City Writer Joins the “Immortals”* (reporting on Mme. Yourcenar’s election to *l’Académie Française*); HC (Aug. 9, 1981), Jordon Pecile, *When France’s Immortal Lived Among Us*.

⁵⁵ Mme. Yourcenar did participate in and contribute to the cultural life of the City during her stay, forming a close bond with Chick Austin, the then director of the Wadsworth Atheneum. The Atheneum produced, with Austin directing, a dramatic play authored by Yourcenar. She is reported to have experienced frustration with the City’s society and cultural scene. This reflected her incisive and often acerbic powers of observation and, perhaps also, her sense of isolation as an exile during World War II living with limited means in a small U.S. city and distant from the mainstreams of French culture. HC (May 7, 1980) (C. McEnroe quoting Yourcenar in describing her time in the City as follows: “A few good families set the tone [speaking of Hartford]... One was reactionary, chauvinist and Protestant, with a nuance of charity and worldliness”). *See also*, correspondence of Marie-Claire Rohinsky (August 16, 2014). The AFH has the strong hope that its activities, over its long history and particularly in the present, work in some small way to dispel the circumstances giving rise to Mme. Yourcenar’s impression of the City.

⁵⁶ HC (Jan. 24, 1988), G. Condon, *Friends recall ‘old world’ traits of Yourcenar* (reporting, upon the announcement of Mme. Yourcenar’s death, the recollections of her by Donald Harris, dean of the Hartt School of Music, and Dori Katz, a French professor at Trinity College and translator of several of Mme. Yourcenar’s works; both Harris and Katz first became acquainted with Mme. Yourcenar, following her relocation to Maine).

⁵⁷ In 1988, the AFH sponsored a Conference, entitled *Traduire Marguerite Yourcenar: An Experience* by Dori Katz at the Hartford College for Women. HC (Oct. 25, 1988), p. D4.

⁵⁸ Members of the Holcombe family founded and managed the Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance Co. among other enterprises. John M. Holcombe, the grandfather of Harold Holcombe, was born in Hartford, and married Emily Seymour Goodwin, herself an heiress of Hartford’s Goodwin family. Mrs. Harold Holcombe, Jr. referred to in the text, was a native French speaker and grew up in Noumea, New Caledonia, meeting her future husband while he was stationed in the South Pacific during World War II and returning with him to Hartford upon conclusion of the war. HC (Mar. 1, 2014), *Obituary of Helene Jeanne Holcombe*.

⁵⁹ HC (Mar. 9, 1952), p. D6.

⁶⁰ HC (Apr. 3, 1953), p. 25.

⁶¹ HC (Oct. 12, 1952), p. D9.

⁶² HC (Jan. 14, 1954), p. 11.

⁶³ HC (May 7, 1953), p. 13.

⁶⁴ HC (Nov. 11, 1953), p. 17 (film showings); Hartford Courant (Oct. 14, 1953), p. 27C (AFH joint sponsorship with the American Association of Teachers of French, Connecticut Chapter of conference on teaching the French language held at Trinity College).

⁶⁵ HC (May 15, 1954), p. 9.

⁶⁶ HC (Aug. 7, 1955), p. D2.

⁶⁷ HC (Oct. 19, 1955), p. 16.

⁶⁸ HC (Nov. 15, 1955), p. 12.

⁶⁹ HC (Oct. 25, 1956), p. 16.

⁷⁰ HC (Oct. 27, 1958), p. 7.

⁷¹ HC (Feb. 6, 1959), p. 21.

⁷² HC (Apr. 13, 1959), p. 13, Lecture given at the home of Mrs. Henry Sage Goodwin. Dr. Di Mancesco was the minister counsellor of the Royal Romanian Legation in London during World War II and later secretary to the Paris Peace conference in 1946 and then went into permanent exile following the seizure of power in Romania by Russian backed forces.

⁷³ HC (May 1, 1959), p. 13.

⁷⁴ HC (Oct. 5, 1959), p. 12.

⁷⁵ HC (Jan. 12, 1960), p. 10.

⁷⁶ HC (Feb.. 6, 1960), p. 3.

⁷⁷ HC (Mar. 8, 1960), p. 10.

⁷⁸ M. Bruller (b. 1902, d. 1991) was an important French essayist and novelist and a co-founder of the significant French publishing house, *Éditions de Minuit*. He wrote under the pseudonym *Vercors* in support of the French Resistance during the Nazi occupation of France.

⁷⁹ HC (Oct. 4, 1967), p. 9 (City Businessman Named Honorary French Consul (French counsel general, Michel Legendre presenting the award is quoted to say "'close ties' between France and Connecticut prompted the appointment").

⁸⁰ HC (Mar. 15, 1970), p. 5E.

⁸¹ HC (Apr. 5, 1970), p. 8E

⁸² HC (Oct. 20, 1970), p. 21.

⁸³ HC (Dec. 1, 1970), p. 11.

⁸⁴ HC (Feb. 14, 1971), p. 9E.

⁸⁵ HC (Apr. 11, 1971), p. 6F.

⁸⁶ HC (Apr. 11, 1971), p. 8E (Prof. Peyre was reportedly introduced to the attendees by Prof. F. Jarlet, then president of AFH).

⁸⁷ HC (Oct. 18, 1971), p. 18.

⁸⁸ HC (Mar. 11, 1972), p. 10

⁸⁹ HC (Nov. 12, 1971), p. 13E.

⁹⁰ HC (Feb. 14, 1973), p. 40.

⁹¹ HC (Mar. 12, 1973), p. 14.

⁹² HC (Oct. 8, 1973), p. 12.

⁹³ HC (Feb. 10, 1974), p. 5E.

⁹⁴ HC (Feb. 16, 1975), p. 5E.

⁹⁵ HC (Nov. 2, 1975), p. 7E.

⁹⁶ HC (Apr. 12, 1976), p. 22.

⁹⁷ HC (May 9, 1970), p. 9.

⁹⁸ HC (Nov. 8, 1970), p. 2E.

⁹⁹ HC (May 13, 1971), p. 50.

¹⁰⁰ HC (Sep. 20, 1971), p. 21. Aimé Maeght (b. 1906, d. 1981) was a prominent art dealer and major collector of the works of Matisse and other contemporary artists.

¹⁰¹ HC (Feb. 20, 1979), p. 20.

¹⁰² HC (May 22, 1979), p. 32.

¹⁰³ HC (Oct. 16, 1979), p. 38.

¹⁰⁴ For example, the officers and board of directors in 1960 were reported as Mme. Simone LeFaivre (President), Mrs. Theodore Paullin (VP); Mrs. Yvonne LaBrecque (Sec.), Mr. Howell Richards (Treasurer) and directors, Mrs. James L. Goodwin, Mrs. Henry Goodwin, Mrs. Robert Paul and Professor Louis Naylor. HC (June 16, 1960), p. 31. .

¹⁰⁵ HC (Aug. 22, 1980), p. C28; HC (Dec. 18, 1980), p. C2; HC (Aug. 3, 1988), P. 6; HC (Jan. 13, 1989), p. B4.

¹⁰⁶ HC (Jan. 19, 1983), p. C4.

¹⁰⁷ To the great regret of this writer, he did not complete the first draft of the history in time for Gisèle to review and comment on it, as she passed away in the spring of 2015. Gisèle had kindly volunteered to participate in its review. Appreciation for Gisèle's invaluable contributions to AFH only grows with the research done in preparing the draft.

¹⁰⁸ AFH NL (158) (Jul./Aug. 2015), p. 3 ((In memory of) Gisèle Miller, by Françoise Weaver). Gisèle, a native French speaker, was born, raised and educated in Montréal, came to New York City to serve as a cultural affairs officer of the Province of Québec and later moved to the Hartford area with her husband.

¹⁰⁹ HC (Oct. 1, 1986), p. KC4.

¹¹⁰ HC (Feb 18, 1987), p. B4F.

¹¹¹ HC (Apr. 1, 1987), p. D3F.

¹¹² HC (Apr. 10, 1987), p. C4.

¹¹³ HC (Oct. 15, 1987), p. E26C.

¹¹⁴ HC (Oct. 27, 1987), p. E41.

¹¹⁵ HC (Feb. 7, 1988), p. G6.

¹¹⁶ HC (Mar. 5, 1988), p. C41.

¹¹⁷ HC (Mar. 24, 1988), p. J17.

¹¹⁸ HC (Apr. 17, 1988), p. H4F.

¹¹⁹ HC ((Oct. 6, 1988), p. 12.

¹²⁰ HC (Oct. 25, 1988), p. D4.

¹²¹ HC (Nov. 10, 1988), p. G15.

¹²² HC (Dec. 11, 1988), p. H6F.

¹²³ HC (Feb. 2, 1989), p.14.

¹²⁴ HC (Feb. 23, 1989), p. E16.

¹²⁵ HC (Mar. 3, 1989).

¹²⁶ HC (Apr. 9, 1989), p. H2E.

¹²⁷ *See, e.g.*, Correspondence from Marie Claire Rohinsky (Sept. 9, 2016).

¹²⁸ The address of AFH's web-site is www.alliancefrancaisehtfd.org. Sadly, Dick Perlot passed away during the preparation of this essay. He will be sorely missed by AFH and the AFH community.

¹²⁹ AFH NL (19) (Sep./Oct. 1993).

¹³⁰ AFH NL (30) (Aug./Sept. 1995) (Members of the planning committee in addition to Garrett Weaver were Muriel Nicolas, Elie and Candy Pallandre, Marie-Pier Brooks, Carole Proom, Peter Holland, Debra Grehn, Barbara Tucker, Jonathan Lipson, Beatrice Hacot and Suzi Smith). Elie Pallandre, then AFH president, was also an important contributor to the effort.

¹³¹ AFH NL (Dec. 1998) (Annemarie Reimber of the HFPG conducts two planning sessions with the AFH Board); AFH NL (80) (Mar./Apr. 2002)(hiring authorized of F. Harley, supported by a grant from the HFPG, to develop a strategic plan); AFH Strategic Plan (Nov. 2002) developed with Felicity Harley.

¹³² AFH Strategic Plan (Nov. 2002).

¹³³ AFH NL (76) (Jul./Aug. 2001).

¹³⁴ AFH NL (99) (Jul./Aug. 2005); AFH NL (74)(Mar./Apr. 2001) (Pauline Harpin obituary notice).

¹³⁵ As mentioned in the text, Professor Rohinsky was a distinguished professor of French at UH and CCSU and a key organizer of AFH's French language teaching program. She greatly contributed to AFH, in addition, through her numerous lectures and presentations or events she organized reflecting her wide scholarly interests, sponsored or co-sponsored by AFH and conducted in French about France and French culture. In addition to the talks discussed in the text, Professor Rohinsky gave, in collaboration with Kenneth Lloyd-Jones, a talk about Montaigne: further lectures, including *A la rencontre de Misa Sert, égérie et mécène des Ballets Russe* (AFH NL 120 (Jan./Feb. 2009)); *Impressions littéraires des rivages normands* (AFH NL 115 (Mar./Apr. 2008)); coordinated an event at the Hartford Stage, entitled *Jean-Paul Sartre, Music and Theater* (AFH NL 106 (Sept./Oct. 2006)); and offered further talks entitled *Histoire et memoire de l'esclavage* (AFH NL 106 (Sept./Oct. 2006)); *Les Conquerants viennent de l'ouest: deux Américaines à Paris* (AFH NL 71 (Nov. 2000)); *Des Lendemain qui Changent: Les Français et L'Union Monétaire* (AFH NL 50 (Oct. 1998)); *Marie Chaix écrit la collaboration* (AFH NL 38 (Jan./Feb.1997)); *Causerie au coin de la cheminée, L'image, le texte, et le divertissement au siècle dernier* (AFH NL 28 (March/April 1995)); *Vichy, Haut-Lieu de la Memoire* (AFH NL 19 (Sept/Oct. 1993)); and *Napoléon Bonaparte et sa légende, en chanson* (AFH NL 15 (Jan/Feb. 1993)). Professor Rohinsky was born in Normandy and, as a child, experienced the invasion of Normandy by the Allies.

¹³⁶ AFH NL (86) (May/June 2003)(awards granted annually will be renamed in honor of Bob McFarland; tribute to Bob); AFH NL (not numbered) (Jul./ Aug. 2002)(obituary).

¹³⁷ Tracy Sigman was a French major at Lake Forest College and spent a semester studying at Dijon University. Following graduation, she taught English as a second language in Cameroon with the Peace Corps. She came to the Hartford area and participated in many area civic organizations. AFH NL 34 (May/June 1996). Tracy sadly passed away in 2009 after serving in exemplary fashion for 12 years as AFH's executive director through several consecutive and non-consecutive terms. AFH NL (123) (Jul./Aug. 2009).

¹³⁸ AFH NL (72) (Dec. 2000).

¹³⁹ AFH NL 57 (June/Jul. 1999).

¹⁴⁰ AFH NL (Nos. 9-14) (1992).

¹⁴¹ AFH NL (83) (Nov./Dec. 2002).

¹⁴² *See generally*, AFH NLS (Nos. 137-142) (2012).

¹⁴³ AFH NL (8) (Nov./Dec. 1991); HC (Oct. 31, 1991) (Tom Condon, *U.S. Cities Could Learn from the French* (summarizing the conference highlights).

¹⁴⁴ St. Élie-de-Caxton is a small town in the Québec country-side near Trois-Rivières. It is a significant place in the francophonie, as it is the setting for many of the stories performed by Fred Pellerin, a native of the town and an accomplished *conteur/chanteur* and well known personality in Québec and France. Particularly of importance in arranging for and organizing the tour to St. Élie were Philipp Kallenberger, Pilar Figueras and François Beaudry, residents of the town. *See*, F. Beaudry, special reporter, *Feu la mère de Madame: Une Pièce de Theatre Réussie*, Le Journal Municipal de St. Élie-de-Caxton (Muni-Info) , v. 25, n. 3, p. 10 (June 2014).

¹⁴⁵ AFH NL (158) (Jul./Aug. 2015), pp. 1, 2.

¹⁴⁶ AFH NL (161) (Jan./Feb. 2016), pp. 1, 2.

¹⁴⁷ AFH NL (160) (Nov./Dec., 2016), p. 1.

¹⁴⁸ AFH NL (161) (Jan./Feb. 2016), p. 2.

¹⁴⁹ *Id.*, p. 3.

¹⁵⁰ AFH NL (162) (Mar./Apr. 2016), p. 3.

¹⁵¹ AFH NL (162) (Mar./Apr. 2016), p. 4.

¹⁵² AFH NL (164) (Jul./Aug. 2016), p. 4

¹⁵³ AFH NL (164) (Jul./Aug. 2016), pp. 3 and 4 (reporting on the McFarland book awards and the annual grant from the Harpin/Rohinsky Fund for the Academic Year 2016-2017).

¹⁵⁴ AFH NL (164) (Jul./Aug. 2016), p. 7.