

A History of the Alliance Française de Hartford, From its Founding to 2016

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Introduction:

The *Alliance Française de Hartford*, Connecticut (AFH) and its predecessors trace their beginning back more than a century ago to 1898. 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. Through the year, the AFH offers a full suite of French language courses, and organizes meetings, presentations, connects, 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. nation 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 AF's spread through the globe, and based at the AF's world headquarters located on *Boulevard Rouspail* in Paris.

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

The national Fédération des Alliance Française aux Etats Unis (Federation of AFs of the United States), the « FAF(USA).

The FAF(USA) was established in 1902. 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, civilized values.

At its founding during France's Third Republic, 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 a redoubt of the French Resistance outside France against Nazi Germany. Today, its mission has broadened and become more egalitarian 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. There 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 provided under its charter that is "as 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* through the world and the [AF] Foundation.

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. 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.

AFH, on a smaller scale in its corner of the world, has sought and continues to seek to preserve and promote values dove-tailing 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.

Connecticut's connections with the French-speaking World.

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.

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 sties in Connecticut, including in Hartford, along the route of their march west and south. The army returned from the victory of 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. The route followed by the French army's march is a national historic trail.

General Marqui de Lafayette, a collaborator of Washington's, was a key plyer 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. 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. 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 Armistic Day, of an equestrian

statue of General Lafayette, now standing on Capitol Avenue directly opposite the Capitol.

The Lafayette statue, itself, embodies interesting and significant cultural connections between Hartford and France. 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 Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris 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 both a symbol of Franco-American amity and as a gift in reciprocity to France for the Statue of Liberty. The statue was erected for display at the Paris Exhibition of 1900 and 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 had been commissioned for erection in Hartford and, rendered in plaster, was 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 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.

The career and life of Thomas Gallaudet. Largely spent in Hartford, is a further example of Hartford's French connections. Gallaudet and his legacy illustrate the contribution of the Hartford community to the promotion of universal values strongly influenced by France and French culture. 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. Borrowing from the *Institut National des Jeunes Sourds-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 American Sign Language ("ASL"). Laurent Clerc, a prominent educator at the Paris school, immigrated from France to Hartford at Gallaudet's invitation to become a central collaborator with Gallaudet, ultimately enhancing and extending Gallaudet's efforts. 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.

Hartford was also a magnet for thousands of French Canadians from the 1850s onwards 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 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. Hartford also continues to benefit from the valuable legacy reflected in its built environment, strongly reflecting the cultural influences of French speaking lands such as Ste. Anne's church on Park Street. 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.

The Hartford region and Connecticut as a whole, today, have 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's exports to France was US\$2.2 billion in manufacturing and US\$237 million in services. Some 7,400 workers based in Connecticut are employed by French-owned firms. 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 trade pairs for the industry in North America. 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). 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 the 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. 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. Mr. Charles Noel Flagg, the owner of the venue of the meeting, addressed the guests reading his essay entitled *Student and Art Life in France*. Professor and Dr. J. J. McCook, a professor of European Languages at Trinity College in Hartford, 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. The 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.

Professor McCook, key to the initial organization of the group in Hartford, and while remaining the central figure in the Hartford organization, also participated in the founding of the national federation of the *Alliance Française* in the United States (today the FAF (USA)), bringing together local Afs established throughout the US. 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, a French ambassador to the United States, presided over the founding session in New York City. Lazare Weillier and Baron de la Gotellerie were also present, representing the French ministries of Finance and Public Instruction. James H. Hyde, 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.

AFH – From its Founding to the Early 1950s.

During its first two decades of existence, the AFH's predecessor, sometimes calling itself le *Cercle Français*, convened meetings in various of the members homes in the evenings, 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 AF meeting was in Hartford by invitation to give a lecture at a nearby institution, particularly Trinity College. At other times, the lecturer was engaged by the international AF to make a tour of the United

States giving lecture in various cities and stopping to give one at the AFH, 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 were a lecture by Gaston Deschamps about Victor Hugo; a lecture by Leopold Mabileau speaking about French Politics Since 1870 as part of a national tour sponsored by the AF; 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, an AFH member, and attended by 70 persons. Professor McCook served as president through 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 AFH during the decade was assumed by Louis Naylor, a professor of modern languages at Trinity College and Mrs. Robert Gray. Lectures sponsored by AFH during the 1920s included two by Gaston Rion, entitled Impressions of a Frenchman studying American History, M. Arnold Van Genner, official lecturer of the FAF (USA), speaking about Northern Africa, a series of three lectures by Captain Morize (Professor of French literature at Harvard), speaking on *Le Philosophe de la Cuisine Autor-Française de Brillat-Savarin*, *Political Problems of France* and *Trends in French Thought*, respectively, readings in French by Mlle Maud Rey, attended by 50 persons; a return engagement of M. Morize lecturing on Anatole France,; and a lecture by Daniel Michenot on the peasant of southwestern France, held at the Asylum Hill Congregational Church. 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.

The AFH also engaged in advocacy regarding French related themes in the Hartford community. As a prominent example of this activity, AFH, as part of a coalition, publicly protested the name change of Lafayette Green, then under consideration by the City's government, 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. 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 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 greens' 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.

Controversial current international events then affecting France were also the subject of lectures, given in French, sponsored by AFH. These included a lecture at Asylum Hill Church given by Raymond Lange, a journalist with the Paris paper, *L'Intransigeant*; and a lecture by Susanne Grinberg, reported to be the first woman admitted to the French bar, at the Asylum Hill Congregational Church, concerning women's suffrage. Other talks included one by Bernard Ray about Franklin France, and by Leon Vallas about 18th century music at Mrs. Curtis Veeder's home. Mrs. Louise Stutz Veeder, the wife of the prominent Hartford industrialist, went on to head the organization through to the early 1940's.

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 the AFH, few archival records could be found describing the AFH's activities during the 1930s and 1940s. During the war years, also, The FAF (AFH) experienced an internal struggle at the national level in the United States between those partisans in the US of General De Gaulle and the French Resistance, on one hand, and those seeking to keep the organization "neutral" in the conflict between Vichy France and France Libre, on the other. The availability of speakers to anchor AFH events, 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 US and presumably also affected the AFH. Following the conclusion of the war, the leadership, structure and personnel of the FAF (USA) was changed and renewed.

During the latter part of the period important events occurred connecting Hartford to the French speaking world, most notably the presence in the City of the first woman elected to *l'Académie Française*, Marguerite Yourcenar (b.

Brussels, Belg. 1903 – d. Northeast Harbor, Maine, 1987). She lived in the City from 1949 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. 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 not direct connection between Mme Yourcenar and the AFH.

Several Hartford residents did establish close ties with Mme Yourcenar, after her move to Maine. Prof. Dor 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.

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. Prof Louis Naylor of Trinity College also collaborated with and assisted the organization. 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 of a legally established organization.

AFH co-sponsored many events conducted in French during this period, including film showing, 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, frequent talks by Prof. Naylor on diverse topics, a talk about André Gide by Marc Chadourne, professor of French at Connecticut College. In 1953, AFH elected Prof. Naylor president of the organization. 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. The organization also sponsored French themes 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. 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 Daughter of the American Revolution, a banquet and ball at the Hartford Club to commemorate the meeting of the General Rochambeau and Washington in Hartford.

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*, a talk by Mlle Janin May entitled *Le mariage de la Grande Mademoiselle, duchesse de Montpensier*, a talk by Dr. Philip Bankowitz (Trinity College) entitled *Is France Really Happy?*, Prof. Henri Peyre (Yale), on Albert Camus, *steRomancier et Moraliste* at Oxford School, Pierre Viala's recital of French poetry; Dimitri di Mancesco speaking on the theme, *L'oeuvre civilisatrice de la France dans le Proche Orient et l'Afrique du Nord*; 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; and a talk by Prof. Chadourne of Connecticut College, entitled *Beaudelaire et l'amour*.

The following individuals served for successive terms as Presidents of AFH during the decade of the 1950s: Mrs. E. C. Sutter, Mrs. Holcombe and Mrs. Holcombe Jr., Mrs. John Dunn, and Mrs. Albert Gastman (Trinity College); D. Newton, and Mme Simone LeFaivre.

During the 106-2, AFH continued to organize viewing 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 College, a talk by Jacques Wilhem entitled *Les Hôtels Parisiens*, a talk given by Michel Martin at the Hartford Seminary Foundation, entitled *Charles de Gaulle, Le Personnage vu à travers son Oeuvre*, 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 Food Guard. Guest of honor included the prominent French writer, Raymond Aron, and Prof. Germaine Gree. Illustrative of AFH'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, 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, a talk at the Oxford School by Gaston Mauge 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 writers, 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 Desbrières, the president and director of SNECMA (a French aircraft manufacturer, 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 coincident of letter and art in France*, and a talk entitled *Proust et L’Art* by Prof. Peyre.

Through the 1980s, AFH continued to hold regular meetings organized around a talk or lecture usually conducted in French on a French related theme at venues including members’ 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 attaches 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 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’Aventure Poétique de Rimbaud à Valéry* by a director of the internal 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, 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 Villebrune to Connecticut, with a visit to the State’s

Governor, a visit to the State Capitol Building, an address to the AFH, a meeting discussing France's foreign policy at the Oxford School and a visit to the statue of Lafayette accompanied by the Connecticut Governor's Food Guard. In 1964, Mr. George Ducas, the head of the FAF (USA) attended a meeting held by 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. 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 presented here as a sampling of the organizations ; a activities were: a presentation to the AFH at the Hartford College for Women by Robert Waterman (Prof. Trinity) entitled *The Literature of Negritude*; a lecture by Prof. Peyre entitled *Romantique, Malgré Lui* at the Howard Johnson restaurant; a talk by Professor Felix Freudman entitled *Certain Aspects of the Laugh in Molière* at St. Joseph's College; a talk by Prof. Jarlette of Central Connecticut State University ("CCSU") on the theatre of Zola; a talk by Bernard de Montgolfier on the Art and History the Castles of Bourgogne; a talk by Jean-Louis Barrault at Trinity co-sponsored by AF and Trinity College Modern Languages Department, another talk by Prof. Peyre this one entitled *France Après de Gaulle*; a talk by Prof. Pierre Deguise (chair of the French department at Connecticut College), entitled *La Manageaille Chez Balzac, Flaubert et Zola*; a talk by Dr. Isaac Yetiv (Prof. of French UH) entitled *The alienation among Francophone North-African writers in the years following WW II*; a lecture by Mme Anne Minor, director of Services Culturels at the French consulate in New York on *Don Juan* by Molière; a lecture by Philippe Roger (Yale) at Kingswood School on the topic *Jeunesse Française*; a talk by Mme Jan Bourgeau entitled *Trois Ans Chez les Canaques* at the home of Mrs. Schueuch, then president of the AFH; a talk by Paul Saintonge (Prof. emeritus at Holyoke College) entitled *Les Femmes Savantes; Women's Lib du Grand Siècle*; 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*; 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*; 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 XVIIIème siècle*.