



# The American Club of Brussels News & Events

An International Club with an American Heart



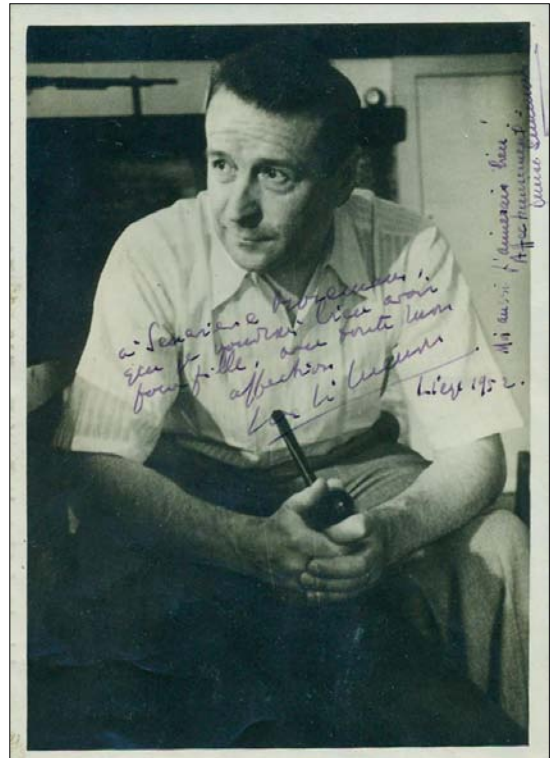
December 2011

## Last Call: Christmas Cocktail Party

The American Club of Brussels will usher in the Christmas season with a cocktail party on Thursday, December 15, at the new Museum of Letters and Manuscripts (MLM) in the heart of Brussels. This annual ACB event includes entrance to the museum, an English-language video-guide to the temporary exhibition, as well as cava, wines, and soft drinks accompanied by catered appetizers.

The MLM's inaugural exhibition is dedicated to the Belgian writer Georges Simenon – one of the most prolific writers of the 20th century. It uses manuscripts, typescripts, photographs, first editions, and more to provide a general overview of the life of the creator of Inspector Maigret, from Simenon's early days as a journalist in Liege to his conquest of Paris, and from his residence in the United States after World War II to his return to Europe in the mid-'50s.

The museum's permanent collection houses hundreds of manuscripts by important historical figures dating from the 12th to the 20th centuries. The scripts are displayed in five sections: literature, music, art, science, and history. Belgian artists Hugo Claus, James Ensor, Maurice Maeterlinck, and René Magritte are guaranteed places of honor for their letters and sketches. Other items presented include letters from exile by Baudelaire and Victor Hugo.



Join the ACB in raising a glass to a wonderful holiday season and to a happy ending of 2011. Afterwards, you can admire the Grand'Place with all its festive holiday decorations and the giant Christmas tree that dominates the square.

### Event Details

**Date:** Thursday, December 15

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

**Place:** Musée des Lettres et Manuscrits, Galerie du Roi 1, 1000 Brussels

**Price:** €25 for ACB and AWCBB members; €30 for non-members

**Sign up:** Reservations are due by noon on Monday, December 12 by email

([info@americanclubbrussels.org](mailto:info@americanclubbrussels.org)), online at [www.americanclubbrussels.org](http://www.americanclubbrussels.org), or by telephone to the ACB Office Manager (02/219.58.08). Payment to ACB at BE55427919588144 (KREDBEBB) will confirm your reservation. Be sure to mention "Christmas Cocktail" in the communications section of the virement. Cancellations are possible until noon on Monday, December 12. Participants canceling after this time, as well as no-shows, are charged the full cost of the event.

## First Friday Cocktails

Friday, December 2  
6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Renaissance Brussels Hotel**  
(ground floor behind the restaurant)  
**Rue du Parnasse 19, 1050 Brussels (Ixelles)**  
(walking distance from Place du Luxembourg)

Cash bar open to all. Newcomers to Belgium and prospective ACB members are especially welcome. Complimentary nibbles will be offered. No reservation is required. Bring a guest or two.

## Dates to Remember

- Friday, December 2: **First Friday** cocktails
- Saturday, December 3: Guided visit to the Flemish Miniatures exhibition at the Royal Library, Brussels
- Thursday, December 15: Christmas cocktail party at the Museum of Letters and Manuscripts, Brussels
- Friday, January 6: **First Friday** cocktails
- Wednesday, January 18 : Dine-Out at De la Vigne à l'Assiette, Brussels
- Friday, January 27: Final Friday cocktails
- Friday, February 24: Final Friday cocktails
- Saturday, March 10: James Bond theme dinner-dance
- Friday, March 30: Final Friday cocktails

## 2012 Membership Renewals

ACB membership fees for the coming Club year are due on January 1, 2012, and are effective until December 31, 2012.

### Membership Categories and Rates

- Regular individual: €140
- Retiree (65+): €70
- Corporate: €550
- SME corporate: €275
- Young (under age 35): €70
- Students: €40
- Students at Boston University or Fulbright scholars: €30
- Non-resident: €35

Note that the spouse/partner of a paid-up member enjoys equal and full membership rights – except voting rights – without paying a second membership fee.

By popular demand, spouses/partners can now have their own email address and contact data registered in the Club database. Please send an email to [info@americanclubbrussels.org](mailto:info@americanclubbrussels.org), including the following information: your family name, first name, date of birth, email address, and the family name and first name of your spouse/partner.

## A Reminder: Membership Benefits

A number of special benefits are available to all ACB members. They are:

- A free, two-month subscription to *The Bulletin*;
- A free bank account for one year at the KBC;
- A free, one-hour consultation on U.S. tax matters with Deloitte;
- The ISB Advantage Card that provides discounts or special offers at shops, restaurants, and services in the Brussels area. Visit [www.isb.be/advantage](http://www.isb.be/advantage) for more information about the card.

If you are interested in any or all of these benefits, please send an email to the ACB Office Manager ([info@americanclubbrussels.org](mailto:info@americanclubbrussels.org)) indicating which ones you would like to receive. In the email, please give us your postal address, since the ISB Advantage Card can only be sent by regular mail, not email.

## Advance Notice

### January 2012 Dine-Out

The ACB has come up with a winner for the first Dine-Out of the New Year on Wednesday, January 18. De la Vigne à l'Assiette is a little corner restaurant on a quiet back street uphill from Avenue Louise. We'll have more about the menu and price in next month's *News & Events*, but in the meantime, it's enough to know what Fodors has to say about the place:

“When you take into account the high quality of the food and the wine list of this homely, no-frills bistro, the combination proves to be an exceptionally good value. The modern French cuisine of Chef Eddy Dandrimont is embellished with such exotic flourishes as star anise sauce, and crisp angel-hair pasta atop grilled salmon. The excellent wine list from all over the world refrains from the usual hefty markup.”

### James Bond Theme Dinner-Dance

Dust off your dancing shoes and get ready to party with the ACB. We're planning on a fabulous evening of wining, dining, and dancing on Saturday, March, 10, at the Renaissance Hotel in Brussels. The evening's theme is James Bond, and we will have the chance to dance (and sing along, if you are so inclined) to music from the classic Bond movies. You might even get to see a real Aston-Martin and Q. Black tie preferred. Details to follow in January's newsletter.

## Community News

### Community Help Service Concert

Over 300 young musicians and singers from St.-John's International School, the International School of Brussels, and the European Schools of Ixelles, Uccle, and Woluwe will come together for the second time in a concert organized by the Community Help Service. The concert features an exciting program to meet a wide range of tastes. Its aim is to raise community awareness and generate publicity for CHS and its Help Line. Proceeds will go entirely to supporting the cost of running the CHS 24/7 English-speaking Help Line (02/648.40.14).

#### Event Details

**Date:** Wednesday, November 30

**Time:** 7:30 p.m.

**Place:** Performing Arts Center, St.-John's International School, Drève Richelle 146, 1410 Waterloo

**Price:** €14 (adults), €8 (students)

**To book, contact:** [chs@chsbelgium.org](mailto:chs@chsbelgium.org) or call 02/647.67.80

## Canadian Pub Night / Soirée au Pub

Join members of the Canadian Club of Belgium on Friday, December 2, from 7:00 p.m. at de Valera's Irish Pub [Place Flagey 19, 1050 Brussels (Ixelles)] for friendly conversation, live music (from 9:00 p.m.), and a few beers. No reservation is required. This is an open event and everyone is welcome.

## *Christmas in Two Hemispheres*

This year's Children's Charity Concert features the musical version of *The Snowman*, Raymond Briggs' enchanting children's classic about a boy who builds a snowman that magically comes to life. The music will be performed by instrumental soloists of La Monnaie Orchestra with Mary Gow on piano, under the direction of Dirk Boiy. Ian Forrester QC will narrate in English.

The program also includes the world premiere of a brand-new opera for children, *The Baboons Who Live by the River*, written by the well-known Scottish author Alexander McCall Smith and composed by Tom Cunningham, a former Brussels resident. Set to jazzy and fun music, the opera tells the story of a baboon colony that lives beside a great river in Africa – a river that flows the wrong way, not into the sea like other rivers – but into the sands of a wide empty area called the Okavango Delta.

### Event Details

**Date:** Saturday, December 3

**Time:** 2:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

**Place:** Centre Culturel d'Auderghem, Boulevard du Souverain 183, 1160 Brussels (Auderghem)

**Price:** €15, €12 (>14)

**To book, contact:** [bxlsnowman2011@gmail.com](mailto:bxlsnowman2011@gmail.com) or call 02/662.17.27

## Interested in Fine Arts and Architecture?

If your answer is yes, then BRIDFAS may be for you. The goal of the British Decorative and Fine Arts Society of Brussels (BRIDFAS) is to stimulate an understanding and enjoyment of the arts through illustrated lectures and visits to exhibitions. All talks are delivered in English by experts in their field.

The next lecture, *Victor Horta and the Masters of Art Nouveau*, will be held at 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 7 at the Maison Communale, Avenue Paul Hymans 2, 1200 Brussels (Woluwe St.-Lambert). Welcome drinks will be offered starting at 7:30 p.m. For more information, visit [www.bridfas.org](http://www.bridfas.org).

## The Brussels American Community Chorus

The Brussels American Community Chorus will sing at the Brussels Christmas Market on Saturday, December 10, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the old Vismarkt near the entrance to the Ste.-Catherine/St.-Katelijne metro stop. This will be a program for people of all ages, with a mixture of special holiday music and Christmas carols. Admission is free.

For more information about the Brussels American Community Chorus, contact [Lamdm@attglobal.net](mailto:Lamdm@attglobal.net) or call 02/757.06.21 (ignore change in dial tone).

## *The Brussels Carol Concert*

This year's traditional Christmas carol concert features Philippe Lambert conducting and Mary Gow on piano. The chorus of international singers will be joined by a large children's choir from several schools in the area.

### Event Details

**Date:** Sunday, December 18

**Place:** Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles, Rue de la Régence 30, 1000 Brussels

**Time:** 5:00 p.m.

**Cost:** €15 (adults), €10 (>15)

**Contact:** Tel: 02/662.17.27; [brusselscarolconcert@gmail.com](mailto:brusselscarolconcert@gmail.com)

## The Brussels Bookswappers Club

Every fourth Wednesday of the month, booklovers get together to swap books that are gathering dust on their shelves. Come along with any number of books you wish to exchange for other titles left at the club by its members. Fiction as well as non-fiction is welcome, and there is a special section for children's books. You are encouraged to bring books in English as well as in other major languages.

A team of Meeters & Greeters will welcome you and explain how the system works. There is no membership fee. The venue is the brasserie Les Enfants Terribles [Chaussée de la Hulpe 190, 1170 Brussels (Watermael-Boitsfort)], near the International School of Brussels.

The next book swap is on Wednesday, December 28 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., followed by a sit-down dinner and dance. Please register for this special Christmas event. For further details, contact Karen at [abkinfo@skynet.be](mailto:abkinfo@skynet.be).

## Short Courses in English Literature

Kate Macdonald, Assistant Professor of English Literature at Ghent University, is offering a new series of short courses in English literature in central Brussels beginning in January. Each course will meet five times at two week intervals, and will involve lively discussions, structured thinking, writing (but only if you want to), an essay for grading, and feedback at the end of the course. Classes will be limited to 20 students.

Course 1: British Political Fiction from 1900-1950, includes works by Erskine Childers, Constance Maud, Rose Macaulay, George Orwell, and Nancy Mitford.

Course 2: American Women and Work, includes works by Louisa May Alcott, Edith Wharton, Willa Cather, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, and Barbara Kingsolver.

### Details

**Dates:** Course 1 meets Tuesday, January 17, Tuesday, January 31, Tuesday, February 14, Tuesday, February 28, and Tuesday, March 13; Course 2 meets Tuesday, April 17, Tuesday, May 1, Tuesday, May 15, Tuesday, May 29, and Tuesday, June 5

**Time:** 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Place:** Swedish Church and Cultural Center, Avenue des Gaulois 35, 1040 Brussels (Etterbeek). Métro Merode (lines 1 & 5), trams 81 & 83, buses 22, 27, 61 & 80

**Fee:** €75 for each course

**Sign up:** email Kate at [kate.brussels@yahoo.com](mailto:kate.brussels@yahoo.com)

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[www.americanclubbrussels.org](http://www.americanclubbrussels.org)

**The American Club of Brussels** is one of the oldest American clubs in Europe, founded in 1921 to foster Belgian-American relations. Although our members comprise more than 20 other nationalities from all walks of life, the ACB retains its American flavor. Some of us are long-time residents in Belgium. Many of us are newcomers. We all enjoy ourselves and the club's wide variety of social and cultural activities.

The ACB is a great way to expand your circle of friends and to discover more of the delights of Belgium. Try us.