



ASSOCIATION FOR THE TRUTH ABOUT THE MURDER OF SOPHIE TOSCAN DU PLANTIER, née BOUNIOL

MEMBERS' BULLETIN No. 37 – 1st July 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF ASSOPH, JEAN-PIERRE GAZEAU

With the passing of time, and in the absence of any concrete or decisive progress from the two Irish police teams – the one in Bantry, County Cork, responsible for pursuing the investigation, and the one in Dublin, tasked with a thorough re-examination of the case – a serious risk has emerged, after so many years, of weariness and even abandonment in our pursuit of the truth about the events that took place between 11 p.m. on 22 December 1996 and 10:30 a.m. the following morning. And yet, we have a duty to persevere, particularly in the face of recent attempts – widely echoed in the media – to cast doubt once again on the guilt of Ian Bailey (1957–2024), efforts reignited by the recent release of Jim Sheridan's film. This duty is fully in line with Article 2 of our statutes, filed at the end of 2007: *our association's objective is that the truth be established and that justice be served. The association will use all legal means available in France, Ireland, Europe, and internationally, as well as any resources it can mobilise – both legal and financial – to achieve its aims.*

TRIBUTE TO GEORGES BOUNIOL, SOPHIE'S FATHER, WHO PASSED AWAY ON 30 DECEMBER 2024 IN PARIS



Some memories and reflections on Georges 1926 – 2024 Jean-Pierre Gazeau

A first memory of Georges goes back to 1953. I see him in his military service uniform. I remember him again at his engagement to my sister Marguerite (1953), and of course, at their wedding in Paris in 1954.

He, an only child, a Parisian born to parents from Lozère, encountered our sibling group – Marie-Madeleine, Michel (who passed away in June last year), and myself – all eager to discover the capital. He made us fall in love with the city, with its beating heart in Les Halles and its rue Montorgueil. The daily awakening of Les Halles, the belly of Paris, that sudden, deafening noise at 1:30 in the morning.

And then the wrenching pain of that night in December 1996. That intense, unrelenting grief, those inner tears, so rarely – too rarely – shown.

Georges, always reserved, masking his sorrow.

And all those years spent fighting for truth and justice, always with dignity, and despite the sorrow, preserving a sharp sense of humour – so typically Georges.

I write also on behalf of the many friends, in Ireland and elsewhere, who sent us countless messages of support and remembrance.

INVESTIGATIONS IN IRELAND: THE IRISH TRUTH REMAINS ELUSIVE

On the French side of the Channel, the situation is clear: Ian BAILEY was tried in absentia on 31 May 2019 by the Paris Court of Assizes and sentenced to 25 years in prison for the murder of Sophie BOUNIOL, wife of TOSCAN du PLANTIER. The court's decision was strongly substantiated. However, as he consistently refused to appear before the French justice system, and the execution of European Arrest Warrants (EAWs) was repeatedly refused by the Irish authorities, his sentence could never be confirmed – or overturned – through an in person trial, which would have afforded him all the legal guarantees of the French judicial system to which he was entitled.

On the Irish side, the investigation that began in December 1996 has now been ongoing for nearly 30 years, led by the Bantry Garda and reinforced by an experienced team from Dublin, the Cold Case Review Team. For these investigators, even though deceased, Ian Bailey remains a person of interest...

The civil parties – Sophie's family and ASSOPH – despite repeated requests and contributions to support the work of these teams, have to this day received no significant information about the possible results of the investigation, nor any indication of timelines or deadlines from the Irish authorities.

Our president, Jean-Pierre GAZEAU, travelled to Bantry from 21 to 24 May 2025 and held meetings over a day and a half with the lead investigators. The Garda provided no key information about the progress of the case or the timeframe for its conclusion... However, he was able to observe that notable work is ongoing: over 300 people have been interviewed, and DNA analyses are currently underway in the United States.

JIM SHERIDAN AND HIS FILM RE-CREATION: TRUTH MISREPRESENTED?

While the Irish investigations continue to stall, renowned Irish filmmaker Jim SHERIDAN has taken to the media stage with a film entitled RE-CREATION, promoting new theories suggesting the supposed innocence of Ian BAILEY.

Jim SHERIDAN's film, modelled after Sidney LUMET's 12 Angry Men, is expected to be released in September. It was screened in June at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York and has already caused considerable unease among certain members of the Irish public. Jim SHERIDAN is dominating the Irish media landscape – newspapers, television programmes – and now openly proclaims that he is 100% certain of Ian Bailey's innocence. In France, Libération has followed suit, publishing articles in support of Jim Sheridan.

ASSOPH must therefore prepare for the possibility that the truth will be publicly misrepresented. The question now arises: should we accept this risk, or not? Should we avoid entering a controversy that fuels media "buzz", or should we defend the truth by opposing the spread of fake news? This is the dilemma now facing ASSOPH.

We must, from the outset, approach this media initiative with caution, particularly given its disregard for both the French judicial process and the ongoing investigations in Ireland. As the President of the French Court of Cassation stated during the solemn opening session of the court on 15 January 2024:

"To those who feel entitled to voice opinions on high-profile cases, I say this: only the magistrates in charge of the case, who have a precise knowledge of it, are in a position to form a considered view upon which to base their decisions."

ASSOPH has therefore issued an initial five-point statement highlighting the odd nature of Jim SHERIDAN's approach. The association reserves the right to oppose, with reasoned argument, the dissemination of fake news relating to Sophie's murder.

Finally, ASSOPH will be reaching out to our friends in Ireland in order to closely monitor public perception of the film there.

Comments on *Re-Creation (Spotlight Narrative)* by Jim Sheridan and David Merriman, by ASSOPH

1. We fully acknowledge and respect Jim Sheridan's reputation as a gifted and accomplished filmmaker.
2. However, we regret that he has chosen to apply his talent to a project based on questionable interpretations of the Sophie Toscan du Plantier case.
3. For us - members of the group ASSOPH - the identity of the killer was established by the French Cour d'Assises in May 2019. Ian Bailey was found guilty in absentia and sentenced to 25 years in prison. Had he appeared before the French court, he would have been entitled to a full retrial with all legal rights to defend himself.

4. Ian Bailey passed away in January 2024. Despite this, he remains a person of interest for the Irish authorities. Two Garda units - the Cold Case Unit in Dublin and the investigative team in Bantry - are still actively working on the case in coordination. In particular, we await the results of new DNA analyses.

We believe it is ethically questionable to interfere with the ongoing Irish Garda search for truth by producing a fictional narrative based on assumptions that might be biased - or whose impartiality remains uncertain.

EUROPEAN ACTION ON EAWs: THINGS ARE MOVING

On 7 May 2025, following Ireland's unsatisfactory response to the European Commission's formal notice requiring it to transpose into Irish law the provisions of the European directive on the execution of European Arrest Warrants (EAWs), a reasoned opinion was issued to Ireland by the Commission.

Ireland is in fact required to respond effectively to the request issued in October 2020 for its legislation to be brought into compliance. Should Ireland fail to provide a satisfactory response by 7 July, the matter is expected to be referred to the European Court of Justice, and a condemnation of Ireland would then be highly likely.

CALL FOR MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS AND POSSIBLE DONATIONS

With the death of IAN BAILEY and following his sentencing in May 2019 to 25 years' imprisonment by the Paris Court of Assizes, the fight for truth and justice for SOPHIE is far from over. ASSOPH will still need to call upon its French and Irish legal teams to help pressure Ireland into ending its delaying tactics.

The fight for truth will also require responding to current attempts to rewrite a false narrative — one not based on facts — which some now appear eager to promote.

If you wish to support ASSOPH's fight for truth and justice in relation to Sophie's murder, you may pay your 2025 membership fee of €30 and, if you wish, make a donation.

Name : First Name : Phone : (...) Email : @

Address :

I wish to support the association and become a donor member by making a donation of:€

Date : Signature :

IMPORTANT

Bank cheques made payable to "ASSOPH" should be sent, together with the membership and/or donation form, to the **NEW ADDRESS** of ASSOPH : **ASSOPH - Chez monsieur Jean Pierre GAZEAU - 5 rue des rocs - 86300 - Chauvigny**

It is also possible to make a bank transfer to:

LA BANQUE POPULAIRE VAL DE FRANCE
IBAN : **FR76 1870 7007 3132 3214 5691 860**

Account holder: **ASS ASSOPH**
BIC : **CCBPFRPPVER**

It is also possible to pay your annual membership fee and/or make a donation via the website. <https://www.helloasso.com/>.
(More precisely to <https://www.helloasso.com/associations/associaton-pour-la-verite-sur-l-assassinat-de-sophie-toscan-du-plan-tier-nee-bouniol/adhesions/bulletin-d-adhesion>)

(PLEASE NOTE: Unfortunately, the prefecture has caused the website address above to lose the "i" in "association")