



## Dr. Stark Visits Duff Simbeck in Nimes, France

On 18 June 2026 during a trip to Nice, France, Tim Stark visited Duff Simbeck and his wife Rachel in Nimes, France. Tim and his wife Joan met Duff and Rachel to tour Pont du Gard (see **Figure 1** below) and historic Nimes. Duff, Rachel, and their two daughters are spending one year in Nimes to experience life in France and so Duff can study the French geomembrane market. They will return to Cortez, Colorado in early August 2026. Tim and Joan stopped in Nimes on their way to Nice, France for their daughter's wedding.

The Pont du Gard is part of a Roman aqueduct built in the first century AD to carry water over 31 miles (~50 km) to the former Roman colony of Nimes. The Pont du Gard is a Roman aqueduct bridge that crosses the Gardon River. The bridge has three tiers of arches made from local limestone (see **Figure 2** below) and is 160 ft high (~49m). The aqueduct formerly carried an estimated 11,000,000 gallons (40,000 m<sup>3</sup>) of water per day over 31 miles (50 km) to the fountains, baths and homes of the citizens of Nimes. The aqueduct has an average gradient of only 0.4 inches (1 cm) in about 600 ft (182.4 m), which would be difficult to achieve even today. It may have been in use as late as the 6th century..

Tim, Duff, and their spouses also toured Maison Carrée, which is the Roman temple of Nimes. This temple was built around 2 AD and is in excellent condition (see **Figure 3** below). After lunch in Nimes Old Town at Farmers Organic ([www.farmersorganic.fr](http://www.farmersorganic.fr)), they toured the Nimes Amphitheatre/Arena, which is similar to the Colosseum in Rome. The Amphitheatre was built in 70 AD, which symbolized the importance of Nimes (see **Figure 4** below).

Dr. Stark hopes to visit the facilities of all FGI members to better understand each member's business and how the FGI can provide additional benefit to them. The FGI is an exciting advancement in the geomembrane industry and allows the Institute to focus on all geomembranes that are flexible and can be factory fabricated.



**Figure 1. From left to right: Tim Stark and Duff Simbeck in front of Pont du Gard near Nimes, France.**



**Figure 2.** View of Pont du Gard from in River Gardon.



**Figure 3.** View of Maison Carrée in Nimes, France.



**Figure 4.** View of Nimes Amphitheatre, which is considered the best-preserved amphitheater from the Roman.