



HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL

Grotty Christmas Lunch Sponsored by Barclays Bank



There are few restaurants anywhere to our knowledge that exude as much atmosphere as the Restaurant Des Grottes/Auberge du Moulin at Trans en Provence. The restaurant itself is situated in a vast cave at the side of the racing river Nartuby as it passes through the gorge. 37 of us gathered for this extravagant festive lunch and we were not to be disappointed, the major disadvantage being that many of us have to go on a diet before Christmas rather than after! Our thanks go to the staff at the restaurant for their service and attentiveness.

A tombola and raffle were held, the latter being to win a Barclay's Box choice of a gift to the value of up to 200€ and, in this case, the winner was Jill Cunningham who selected a prize of a *cafétière* which will be delivered by Barclays. A large variety of tombola prizes was also available and won by members, from a pottery hippo to a bottle of port. A beautiful watercolour painting by Ken Dewar was auctioned, and the total profit for the Welfare Fund from all these endeavours was €456.

Our thanks go to everybody who participated, donated prizes and made it such an enjoyable lunch, and especially to [Barclay's Bank](#) for sponsoring the event and for providing the Barclay's Box and two gifts for the tombola.

It should be noted that a small number of welfare beneficiaries took up our offer to attend as a festive guest of the BAV.

On a not-so-festive note, there were complaints from some quarters about the fact that there was only one bottle of wine between three people and any extra had to be purchased. We need to remind members that this was clearly marked on the event description, and that we feel as an organisation we cannot be seen to encourage people to drink more than the legal limit if driving. So the BAV policy is either to include a small quantity of wine in the price, or none at all.

Forthcoming Events

for your diary

Sales Dates

The official dates for the sales in the Var and Alpes Maritimes are **9 January to 12 February**

Committee Meeting

Monday 21 January

Coffee Morning in Montauroux

Tuesday 22 January

Breton Lunch at Lei Cigales, Villecroze

Thursday 24 January

Coffee Morning and Book Sale

Friday 22 February - Cotignac

Guided tour of Fréjus followed by

Provençal lunch at Les Micocouliers restaurant

Wednesday 27 February

AGM

Wednesday 20 March

Reminder!

Bréton Lunch - Villecroze

24 January at 12h00

We have arranged a special menu at Lei Cigales in Villecroze as below:-

*Apéritif 1 kir breton (cidre and cassis)
Une petite salade verte et tomate*

*Galette La bretonne: fromage râpé, œuf,
jambon blanc or*

*Galette La complète: fromage râpé, œuf,
champignon avec ail et persil, jambon blanc or*

*Galette La fromagère: fromage râpé, roquefort,
fromage de chèvre, crème fraîche*

*Dessert soit une crêpe au miel et noix or
une part de tarte au citron maison*

Inclus 1/4 de cidre ou de vin et un café

Prix par personne 19 €

Location: Lei Cigale is located at the southern end of the village on the Villecroze – Draguignan road facing the main car park.

Booking: Please complete the booking form and return by **7 January** to Michael Wharton, ***** , 83570, Cotignac.



www.baofthevar.com

See Forthcoming Events and the Latest News on our BA website

Coffee Morning in Montauroux

BAV member Sandie Docherty invites you to a Coffee Morning at her house in Montauroux on

**Tuesday 22 January
at 10h00**

There will be no charge but donations are welcomed for the Welfare Fund.

Her address is - ***** ,
83440 Montauroux

Please contact her for more information and directions:

Sandie 04 ***** or 06 *****

Coffee Morning and Book Sale

Friday 22 February

between 10h00 and 12h00

at the home of Billy and Jane Nesbitt

***** ,

83570 Cotignac.

Donations of **€10** welcome. **Contact** Billy at
04 ***** *****@gmail.com for
directions.

Guided tour of Fréjus and/or Lunch

Guided visit in English of ancient Fréjus, including Roman remains, 10h00-12h00 starting at the Tourist Office, 249 rue Jean Jaurès.
27 February.

€5 per person

Provençal lunch at Les Micocouliers restaurant, Place Paul-Albert Février, Fréjus (in cathedral square) **€18.50** excluding drinks.

Menu

Soupe de Poisson ou

Terrine de Lapin ou

Salade de Saint Marcelin

Brochette de Volaille Marinée ou

Daube de Boeuf ou

Filet de Dorade

Tarte Tatin aux pommes et glace vanille

Please complete reservation slip and return to Michael Wharton before **12 February**. You can opt for just the tour or lunch, or both.

"What's On" Guide

27 Dec-3 Jan St Tropez, Salle Jean Despas. Noël des Antiquaires – antiques and bric-a-brac. 10h00-19h00. Free. 08 92 68 48 28

1-6 Jan La Garde Freinet, Salle des Sports. Foire aux Santons. 04 94 56 04 93

1-6 Jan St Tropez, town centre. Animations de Noël – skating rink, climbing wall, little train. 08 92 68 48 28

1-6 Jan St Raphaël, town centre. Fêtes de la Lumière – skating rink, Christmas village, concerts, etc. 04 94 19 52 52

1-14 Jan Le Lavandou, port. Fête Foraine. 04 94 00 40 50

2 and 9 Jan Draguignan, 564 Chemin St Michel. Miellerie Mandard – visit to honey farm. 10h00. €2 inc. tasting. Reservation necessary through tourist office: 04 98 10 51 05

4 Jan Ramatuelle, Eglise. A Capella et Harpe Celtique – concert of Celtic music. 18h30. Free. 04 98 12 64 00

5 Jan Fréjus, cinema. Opera film. Les Troyens – Berlioz. 18h00. €21. 04 94 40 14 54

10 Jan Sainte Maxime, Cinema. Opera film. La Traviata - Verdi. 14h30 and 19h30. €18. 04 94 56 77 77

11 Jan Ollioules, La Serre aux Orchidées, 2201 av Jean Monnet. Guided visit. 15h00. €2. 04 94 41 04 01

11 Jan Draguignan, Cinema. Ballet film. Le Bougeois Gentilhomme - Molière. 19h00 €17

12 Jan Taradeau, Château Rasque. Fête de la Truffe. 04 94 99 52 20

12 Jan Callian, Moulin de Callian. Les Olivades – olive festival. 10h00-16h00. 04 94 47 75 77

12 Jan Les Arcs, Eglise St Jean-Baptiste. Ensemble Choral de Lorgues – concert. Free. 04 94 47 56 10

13 Jan Sanary sur Mer, Théâtre Galli. L'Ensemble Aeneas – chamber music with harp. 17h00. €11.80. 04 94 88 53 90

13 Jan Gassin, Salle de l'Espéridou. Pastorale des Santons. 15h30. 04 94 55 22 00

15 Jan La Motte, Hameau du Mitan. Jas du Mitan – guided visit of new winery. 10h00. €3 including tasting. Reservation necessary at tourist office: 04 94 45 12 79

15 Jan Draguignan, Cinema. Opera film. La Bohème - Puccini. 20h00 €19

15 Jan Hyères, Cinema. Opera film. La Bohème - Puccini. 20h15. €20

18 Jan Hyères, Eglise Anglicane. Quintette à vent azur – chamber music. 21h00 €5.50 04 94 00 82 41

19 Jan Fréjus, cinema. Opera film. Marie Stuart – Donizetti. 18h55. €21. 04 94 40 14 54

19 Jan Ste Maxime, Carré Léon Gaumont. Cuandoy Era – flamenco. 20h30. €25. 04 94 56 77 77

19 Jan Brignoles, Salle Polyvalente. Salon de l'Outil Ancien. All day. 06 71 43 01 69

19-20 Jan Barjols, village centre. Fête de la St Marcel, les Tripettes. All day. 04 94 77 15 23

19-20 Jan Draguignan, Complexe St Exupery. Salon Minéraux et Fossiles. 04 98 10 51 05

20 Jan Les Arcs, town centre. Fête de la St Sébastien. 10h00. 04 94 47 56 10

20 Jan Les Arcs, Château Ste Roseline. Journée de la Truffe. 10h00-18h00. 04 94 99 50 30

20 Jan Les Arcs, Point Info Tourisme. Cité Medieval du Parage – guided tours of old town. 15h00-17h00. €5. 04 94 23 37 30

20 Jan Fréjus, Forum Theatre. Marco Florès – De Flamencas. 17h00 €32. 04 94 95 55 55

20 Jan Sanary sur Mer, Théâtre Galli. Musique Russe – string quartet Améthyste. €19.80.

24 Jan-3 Feb La Seyne sur Mer, Chapiteaux de la Mer, Les Sablettes. 14eme Festival du Cirque. Times vary. €16. 04 94 00 25 70

25 Jan Les Arcs, Café de la Tour. Fish and chips lunch. 12h00. €10. Booking essential, by preceding Tuesday. 04 94 73 30 56

25 Jan Sanary-sur-Mer, Théâtre Galli. Garoswing – jazz. 21h00. 04 94 88 53 90

26 Jan Lorgues, Espace F Mitterand. Concert Symphonique du Nouvel An – Orchestre Symphonique Azuréen. 20h45. €15

26-27 Jan Bormes les Mimosas, town centre. Mimosalia – Mimosa Festival. 10h00-17h30.

27 Jan St Maximin de la Ste Baume, Couvent Royal. Fête de la St Vincent – Provençal wines. 10h00-18h00. 06 19 64 68 57

27 Jan Bandol, Théâtre Jules Verne. Gospel et chansons de films celebres 17h00. 04 94 29 12 60

27 Jan Aups, village centre. XXeme Journée de la Truffe Noire. 9h00-17h00

29 Jan St Raphaël, Palais de Congrès. Foté-Foré – acrobatic circus. 20h30. €26. 04 98 11 89 00

31 Jan St Raphaël, Espace Felix-Martin. Eric Lenigni – afrojazz. 20h30. €13. 04 98 11 89 00

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Before taking action in response to articles about law and finance in the Newsletter, please take advice from a suitable qualified person.

Chairman's Report

I hope that all of our members have enjoyed a wonderful Festive Season and that you all have a very happy and healthy New Year.

We have had an excellent year with a variety of events ranging from lunch at a trout lake to giant book sales, and coffee mornings to the *vendange* lunch. Similarly, the leisure activities range through card making, photography, boules, painting and mosaics. There is hopefully something for everyone.

This year we will endeavour to have more coffee mornings in order that members can 'drop in' and socialise freely. These do not have to be large gatherings but may be just a few local friends. Please let us know if you can assist by hosting a coffee morning.

We have the AGM coming up and we do need to look into the financial situation as, as of today, we are receiving monies but have had little call for financial assistance. This situation can, of course, change dramatically and, indeed, about 2 years ago the then Treasurer reported at the AGM that if the current outflow of funds continued then the BA would run out of money within 12 months. We would very much welcome all of your views on this and how we can expand the welfare assistance. Similarly, if you have any criticism or comment as to the running of the BAV we welcome your comments.

British Legion Poppy Appeal 2012

Andrew Buchanan of the local branch of the British Legion has written to thank BAV members for their financial support of the Poppy Appeal this year. The collecting boxes given to Neighbourhood Network groups raised a total of €353.19.

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Flood compensation

The 113 communes in the Var that suffered from heavy floods last year will be receiving over six million euros in compensation. Town leaders have resolved to rally together and put financial concerns aside in an effort to address the plight of thousands of local residents and met at Puget Ville for a general assembly on Saturday 1st December. The main concern was cost, but the meeting came to a positive close when the representatives agreed to supply a collective total of 6.1 million euros to clear up the damage. The local leaders now await financial assistance from either the regional or national general council in the form of tax revenue. A decision is also yet to be made on the distribution of compensation, as some communes were more affected by flooding than others.

The Var is not only dealing with the aftermath of flood damage, it is also setting up preventative measures. Residents in Draguignan are now able to register for an alert system which issues warnings about dangerous weather conditions. A total of 16,000 inhabitants have already submitted their contact details and can expect text messages or voicemails when a flood is expected. Check with the *Mairie* for details.

NEIGHBOURHOOD NETWORKS

Les Issambres

New Neighbourhood Network in Western Var

We meet **every other Tuesday** at 11h00 at L'Arpillon café next to Casino - 6 and 2 Nov. *Richard Tolaini*
04 ***** or 06 ***** *****@aol.com

To all Expats and English speakers who live in the areas of St Maximin la Ste Baume; Tourves; Brignoles; Neoules; Mazaugues; Méounes; Pourrières; Pourcieux; Ollières; Brue Auriac; Seillon Source d'Argens, to name but a few....

We plan to meet in St Maximin once a month on a Thursday, starting in February. We hope to find new and old friends who will join us for a coffee and a chance to chat in a friendly bar in the middle of St. Max. More information in the next Newsletter.

Diana Andre de la Porte

04 ***** *****@wanadoo.fr

Cabasse, Carces, Correns, Cotignac, and Le Val

Next meeting **Friday 25 January** at 10h30 at the Cafe de Cour, Cotignac but ring to check venue.

Michael Wharton

07 ***** *****@cam.ac.uk

Draguignan, Les Arcs, Le Luc, Taradeau and Vidauban

We meet on the **2nd Friday** of the month at the Café de la Tour, Les Arcs at 10h30. As there is no Neighbourhood Network in Draguignan at present, some members from there have been attending the one in Les Arcs and we extend a welcome to anyone else who would like to come. *Jim North*

04 ***** *****@wanadoo.fr

La Motte and Le Muy

A pre-Christmas celebration took place, along with our coffee and croissants, with the addition of home-made mince pies baked by two of our clever chef/members (also much enjoyed by local customers at the Bar des Cascades!). We thank all our members and visitors for their support and enthusiasm this past year, and look forward to seeing you in 2013 at our next meeting on **Tuesday 8 January** at 10h00 at the famous Bar des Cascades in La Motte. We would like to take this opportunity to wish everybody a very merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year.

Alexandra Lewis-Smith

04 ***** *****@bbox.fr

Villecroze, Salernes, Tourtour, and Entrecasteaux

We meet on the **4th Tuesday of the month** at 10h30 at the bar Cercle de l'Avenir in Villecroze. Please check the venue, we may rotate to another village.

Ann & Maurice Mitchem

04 ***** *****@hotmail.com

Storage needed

The BAV needs storage facilities for its equipment, including tables and chairs – **can you help please?** Requirements: Garage space, room or dry outbuilding 15m² with access for a box van. Please reply to the Newsletter - newsletter@baofthevar.com

MEMBERS' GROUPS

Painting Group

Please contact me for details of our next venue and information about the group:

Pauline North

04 ***** *****@orange.fr

Happy Boules

For details about our meeting times and venues **please contact:**

Rob Flanagan

06 ***** *****@hotmail.com

Digital Photography Group

The early December meeting was a full day event on the theme of 'photographic portraiture'. In the morning, using the recently acquired lights, a studio was set up and with the help of two photogenic and patient in-house models, members had the opportunity to release the inner 'David Bailey' within them.

In the afternoon, with the help of Sandie's dependable and versatile Mac, together with the wizardry of Photoshop, we were able to enhance the earlier photos to add a certain professional gloss to them.

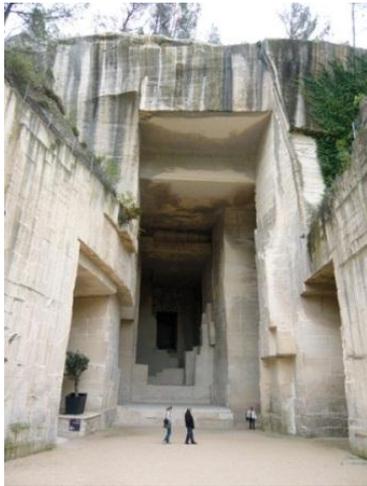
Between these two activities, Mike Meade, the founder and editor of the 'Riviera Reporter', gave a wide-ranging talk about his previous career, including life as a professional photographer and his current role. For details about the group **please contact:**

Mike Harper

*****@yahoo.co.uk

Les Baux-de-Provence – a trip to Heaven and Hell in one day!

Only five of us in two cars set off very early in the morning for the 180 km drive to see the sights in this amazingly lovely city high above the surrounding countryside. The journey there was very good, the weather clement and the approach fantastic so we were parked ready to enter the 'Carrières de Lumières' immediately the doors were opened.



The fantastic moving light display that greeted us, with musical accompaniment, in the cathedral-like rocky surroundings was from the 'painters of colour', Gauguin and Van Gogh. We were completely surrounded by the changing paintings, lights and music - as though fully immersed - and the 40 min show was so hypnotic we watched it 3 times in succession. The wheelchair friendly facilities allowed one of our party to tour 'free of charge'.

The tickets for this audio-visual journey to the heart of the intangible works of art also gave us free access to other buildings and exhibitions in the city. After a wonderful lunch high above the surrounding countryside, lowering clouds blocked our view so we toured the Grimaldi exhibition and then some trekked up to the ruins of the old [Chateau des Baux de Provence](#), with umbrella held high, and we clambered around the fortress remains before.

We then started back on the journey through hell. The rain had started in earnest and once on the motorway it continued getting worse and worse until we were driving through an impenetrable and dangerous full deluge all the way home. However we brought back with us a real sense of having been privileged to see something very special, a must-see for everyone if they can!

Coach trip to San Remo Market



The intrepid usual suspects from the BAV, together with a coach full of other nationals, got up at the crack of dawn on 24 November in order to join the extremely well organised annual Riviera Tours day trip to San Remo.

We arrived in good time to spend the whole morning wandering around the extensive and varied markets (and, indeed, spotting vegetables not seen locally), the port and the beaches in extremely fine weather.

On the way back we called in at Eurodrink at Ventimiglia in order to pick up a variety of drinks, some not familiar in France. We arrived back at about 18.30 having had a very full, enjoyable and tiring day out. Our thanks go to Carolyn of Riviera Tours for the organisation.

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HEALTHY COMMITTEE?

What a couple of months it has been! Ann started off by breaking her femur; John has had bronchitis and a fall hurting his face; Ian has had emergency heart surgery whilst on holiday in Geneva and as for your Chairman read on ...

I have been asked to produce a note for the Newsletter which is as follows:-

Firstly, I should like to thank all of those members who have sent their good wishes and given offers of support directly to myself or through Esther - these have been humbling and a great morale booster.

In my 30's I was diagnosed with poly cystic kidneys which damages the kidneys over time. I was hospitalised in April 2011 with severe kidney pain and then put on dialysis for five hours three times a week. I then had a nephrectomy in August removing a 4.5kg kidney! I was subsequently put on the list for a transplant in December and told that due to my O+ blood type I should wait 18 - 24 months.

So imagine my surprise when, at 18.45 on 9 November 2012, I was about to set off for dialysis and I received a call from the hospital in Marseille saying that they may have a kidney match. We diverted the taxi to Marseille and, after tests, they carried out the operation at 11h00 the next morning.

Everything went extremely well and I had a swift recovery. However, this entailed total solitary confinement for 10 days and no personal possessions for the first 5 days with no visitors, but I was allowed a smart phone which allowed me to stay in regular contact with the Committee, listen to music and radio.

After 10 days I was allowed 1 masked visitor and after day 15 I was permitted to walk around the hospital grounds. Stir crazy are not the words for it! Apart from missing my family it was akin to being imprisoned even with bars at the window!

On exit there is a strict regime and weekly visits to outpatients for 3 months and then at reduced intervals. I cannot fault the care of the hospital staff but the food leaves a lot to be desired! A British friend, who was hospitalised, complained about the food and the response was 'perhaps the chef's an Englishman'!!

And the moral is - If you are UK based, please carry a kidney or other donor card and let your relatives/partner know of your intentions. If resident in France there is a 'presumption in favour of donation' so no card is required but carrying one is recommended, and again, keep your relatives informed of your wishes. There are over 7000 people in France awaiting kidney donation only, so you will help somebody change their lives for the better.

Increased postal charges

La Poste has said its postage rates will increase by 2.8% on average from 1 January 2013, 18 months after the last rate change. The rate for 20g priority letters will increase from €0,60 to €0,63, with a one-cent rise for the 20g *Lettre Verte* (Green Letter) to €0,58.

La Poste launched its *Lettre Verte* product a year ago, as a more economical and environmentally-friendly letter service, which keeps carbon emissions down by avoiding air transport, other than Corsican destinations and mail going overseas. The letter generates 30% less carbon emissions than a priority letter. The company said it has been delivering 50 million green letters a month this year.

More details can be found on the La Poste website or on leaflets available from the post office. www.laposte.fr

Houses for sale

Period property, centre of mountain village of Ampus, 20 minutes from Draguignan, altitude 630m, all services: on main bus route, telephone, internet etc, resident doctor and auxiliary medical services. 6 rooms, 3 bedrooms, loft, workshop, open plan kitchen. 2 houses joined with central courtyard and terrace. 130.000 Euros, price negotiable. For more details: 04 94 47 24 05 or mobile 06 29 77 48 49. Viewing on request.

Beautifully restored and charming village stone house in the hamlet of Mentone, near St. Antonin du Var, surrounded by vineyards and forests. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms each with WC. Provencal kitchen. Living room with stone fireplace. Cellar and small shed attached. New wooden shutters.

For viewing or further information **contact:**

Matias 06 *****
or *****@yahoo.fr.

**British Association of the Var
Welfare Coordinator**

Ann Mitchem

04 ***** or 06 43 86 49 01
welfare@baofthevar.com

Portable DVD Player

It has been decided by the Committee to purchase a portable DVD player for use free of charge by members in hospital or confined to bed. This should be available immediately. In this respect we wish to build up a small collection of DVDs and we would ask members to pass to Ann Mitchem any DVDs that they may have no longer any use for. We then propose to make available a list of those DVDs so that patients may order specific DVDs or categories of DVD.

CALLIAN

Le Pradon Anglican Church

Fellowship of the Ascension
You are very welcome to join us in
our new church home at

Le Pradon Maison de Retraite Callian.

We meet on the **1st and 3rd Sundays** of
the month **at 10h30** for Family Communion
or Morning Prayer.

We also have a Bring and Share lunch afterwards.

Please ring Hilary 04 94 47 70 67 for details
or visit our website

www.lepradonanqlican.org

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#### St John's for the Var

##### St John the Evangelist

##### Ave Paul Doumer, St Raphaël

Rev Keith Bretel

Holy Communion is held **every Sunday at 10h30**  
followed by refreshments  
and a monthly lunch.

#### Grimaud Village Church

1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month at 11h00

**Please ring** 04 94 60 87 05 for details

[www.sjevar.com](http://www.sjevar.com)

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The ARK, LORGUES

L'Oasis Christian Fellowship

Every 2nd Sunday at 11h45 at

Arc-en-Provence, 1801 Chemin des Pailles

and **every 4th Sunday at 11h45** at

Notre Dames des Anges Maison de Retraite

We have a Bring and Share lunch afterwards.

For details or directions **please contact**

Rev Peter or Shirley Massey 04 94 73 93 37 or

06 87 94 04 83 www.arc-en-provence.com/oasis

The Var Tuesday Club

meets every 3rd Tuesday

see www.vartuesdayclub.org for details

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The Bereavement Support Network of the Var (BSN)

This organisation exists to support not only the
bereaved but also those who are terminally ill,
and their families and friends. If you, or someone
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free support, then please contact:

Sandra - 04 94 84 64 89 or 06 32 35 31 24

info@bsnvar.org or www.bsnvar.org

for further information.

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For next month's Newsletter

Please let us have your advertisements, articles
and reports for the February issue by

Tuesday 15 January

All contributions to:

newsletter@baofthevar.com

or to Shirley Rowson, *****,

83920 La Motte.



A light-hearted start to the New Year! - **EATING IN THE UK IN THE FIFTIES**

Pasta had not been invented.
Curry was a surname.
Olive oil was kept in the medicine cabinet.
Spices came from the Middle East where they were used for embalming.
Herbs were used to make rather dodgy medicine.
A takeaway was a mathematical problem.
A pizza was something to do with a leaning tower.
Bananas and oranges only appeared at Christmas time.
The only vegetables known to us were spuds, peas, carrots and cabbage.
All crisps were plain; the only choice we had was whether to put the salt on or not.
Condiments consisted of salt, pepper, vinegar and brown sauce if we were lucky.
Soft drinks were called pop.
Coke was something that we put on the fire.
A Chinese chippy was a foreign carpenter.
Rice was a milk pudding, and never, ever part of our dinner.
A Big Mac was what we wore when it was raining.
A Pizza Hut was an Italian shed.
A microwave was something out of a science fiction movie.
Brown bread was something only poor people ate.
Oil was for lubricating, fat was for cooking.
Bread and jam was a treat.
Tea was made in a teapot using tea leaves and never green.
Coffee was Camp, and came in a bottle.
Cubed sugar was regarded as posh.
Figs and dates appeared every Christmas, but no one ever ate them.
Coconuts only appeared when the fair came to town.
Jellied eels were peculiar to Londoners.
Salad cream was a dressing for salads, mayonnaise did not exist.
Hors d'oeuvre was a spelling mistake.
The starter was our main meal. Soup was a main meal.
Only Heinz made beans.
Leftovers went in the dog.
Special food for dogs and cats was unheard of.
Fish was only eaten on Fridays.
Fish didn't have fingers in those days.
Ready meals only came from the fish and chip shop.
For the best taste fish and chips had to be eaten out of old newspapers.
Frozen food was called ice cream.
Nothing ever went off in the fridge because we never had one.
Ice cream only came in one colour and one flavour.

None of us had ever heard of yoghurt.
Jelly and blancmange was only eaten at parties.
If we said that we were on a diet, we simply got less.
Healthy food consisted of anything edible.
People who didn't peel potatoes were regarded as lazy.
Indian restaurants were only found in India.
Brunch was not a meal.
If we had eaten bacon lettuce and tomato in the same sandwich we would have been certified.
A bun was a small cake back then.
The word "Barbie" was not associated with anything to do with food.
Eating outside was a picnic.
Cooking outside was called camping.
Seaweed was not a recognised food.
Pancakes were only eaten on Pancake Tuesday.
"Kebab" was not even a word never mind a food.
Hot dogs were a type of sausage that only the Americans ate.
Cornflakes had arrived from America but it was obvious they would never catch on.
The phrase "boil in the bag" would have been beyond comprehension.
The idea of "oven chips" would not have made any sense at all to us.
The world had not heard of Pot Noodles, Instant Mash and Pop Tarts.
Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days, and was regarded as being white gold.
Lettuce and tomatoes in winter were only found abroad.
Prunes were medicinal.
Surprisingly muesli was readily available in those days, it was called cattle feed.
Turkeys were definitely seasonal.
Pineapples came in chunks in a tin; we had only ever seen a picture of a real one.
We had never heard of Croissants and we certainly couldn't pronounce it.
We thought that Baguettes were a problem the French needed to deal with.
Garlic was used to ward off vampires, but never used to flavour food.
Water came out of the tap - if someone had suggested bottling it and charging more than petrol for it they would have become a laughing stock.
Food hygiene was all about washing your hands before meals.
Campylobacter, Salmonella, E.coli, Listeria, and Botulism were all called "food poisoning."
The one thing that we never ever had on our table in the fifties elbows!

My Village - Les Arcs

John and I first met many years ago in the ski resort of Les Arcs in the Savoie and we were amused to learn that there was another Les Arcs in the South of France. We never dreamed for one minute that we would be living here years later. 13 years ago we were initially looking to buy a house close to our friends in Gonfaron but found a house here by accident advertised in a local newspaper and we have been here since.

Les Arcs is a medium-sized village of approximately 6500 inhabitants with all the necessary shops and services and although it has increased in size over the past several years, our mayor wants to restrict the population to around 8000 inhabitants, thus keeping it a cosy and manageable village. The location is great. Les Arcs has its own train station with direct services to Paris and beyond, is just 5 minutes to the motorway, barely 30 minutes to the coast and 90 minutes to the nearest ski resort.

Les Arcs is probably best-known for its well-preserved medieval village, with its vaulted passages, cobbled lanes, ancient doorways and 12th century Saracen tower. It is a bit of a steep walk, but once at the top there are extensive views over the Arvens valley. Once every 2 years, the village is host to a medieval festival which takes place over a long weekend in July. There is a medieval market, pageants through the village, street performances and an evening show with a hundred actors and animals re-enacting scenes from the past. It is a fun weekend and the villagers enter into the spirit by dressing up in costume.

It is also renowned for its wines and has several good vineyards, including the historical Sainte Roseline which takes its name from the saint born in the village to the De Villeneuve family who were the rulers of Les Arcs in the 13th century. So many vineyards to explore and wines to taste but if you do not have the time to visit them all, you can go to the excellent *Maison des Vins* on the N7 and choose from a selection of 800 wines.

Les Arcs is a pleasant place in summer. Several free concerts are on offer and the centre is closed to traffic on those evenings, allowing people to sit and enjoy the music and a drink or two without the noise of traffic. Throughout the year there are indoor music events and plays in one of the schools. The Maures are a great place for walking or mountain biking and there are some

spectacular sites to discover, such as the standing stones and dolmens dating from the Bronze Age, just a few kilometres from the village. There are also traces of ancient settlements closer to the village. The village museum '*La Maison de l'Histoire des Arcs*' is an interesting place to explore its rich past.

Coming back to the 21st century, our new hypermarket Hyper U with its mall attracts shoppers from all over the Var and it forms part of the Bréguières business and logistics park which has created around 1000 jobs. It was designed with the objective of minimizing its impact on the environment.

All in all, Les Arcs is a lovely place to live and a very central location.

Pat Toohey

Yet another scam

An e-mail is sent purporting to be from EDF or other official sites, claiming that the latest bill is overdue and asking for immediate payment. There is a link to click which is said to go straight to EDF, on which you are asked for your bank details. This link is false and goes instead to the scammers who then have all the information they need to clean out your bank account. Beware – always check out these demands directly with the company mentioned before parting with any valuable information.

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