



# British Association of the Var

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

September 2012

Newsletter

No 124

## Wines in the Var



Wines here range from *Vins de Table* and *Vins de Pays* to *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée*, now known as *Appellation d'Origine Protégée*. Var wines in this category are *Côtes de Provence*, *Coteaux Varois en Provence*, *Bandol* and *Cassis*. Quality has definitely improved in the last 20 to 30 years, when the term "Holiday Wines" was used for local rosés, much to the chagrin of the growers.

The *Côtes de Provence*, biggest producer of rosé in the Var has its HQ at the *Maison des Vins* at Les Arcs. It is composed of the Winegrower's Defence League (Syndicate) and the Inter-professional Committee which brings together the interests of wine merchants and producers whether individuals or members of co-operatives. They invite importers from abroad for presentations of local wines and also send delegations to wine fairs abroad and also in France, notably the *Salon d'Agriculture* in Paris. Professionals tend to have great confidence in medals won at the *Concours général Agricole* in Paris.

Many changes have occurred in recent years: machine harvesting, technical advances to do with low temperature vinification, anti-oxidation procedures, the advent of "Bio" wines, and the more frequent use of plastic corks which replace vegetable corks for conservation, but not for gentle ageing. Provençal rosé and white wines don't develop for the better with age and should be consumed within two or three years after vintage.

In the past every vat, cask or steel container was sampled by the Syndicate, analysed in their laboratory and tasted by a panel of three, an *oenologue* (wine specialist), a winegrower or co-operative representative and a wine merchant, broker, journalist or *sommelier*. Nowadays all over France, although of course all wines are controlled in the lab to see they come up to standards, they are randomly tasted by an independent organisation set up in each area. To be accepted as *Côtes de Provence* all wines must have at least 11° of alcohol, maximum sugar content 4gm per litre and the same quantities of sulphites, which apply to all regions but which differ for each colour - white and rosé being more fragile need greater protection whereas reds have tannins as a backup.

Every year is a new challenge for the vine-grower weather-wise; some people don't believe in global warming but it has been noticed that in the last few years the harvest starts a fortnight earlier than it used to and that wines which used to contain 12° or 12,5° of alcohol now easily arrive at 13,5° or 14°.

**Roger Clayton** (who worked at the *Maison des Vins* for 19 years)

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## Forthcoming Events

### Painting Group

Wednesday 5 September - Salernes

### Vendange Lunch

Saturday 15 September – Lorgues

### Committee Meeting

Monday 17 September

### Financial Planning Seminar

Wednesday 10 October - La Motte

### Chateau des Baux de Provence and the Carrieres de Lumieres

Saturday 27 October – Les Baux



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

See Forthcoming Events, photo gallery etc on our BAV website

## "What's On"

31 Aug–2 Sept: Montferrat Journées Equestres du Var (Horse Festival). 04 94 68 73 77.

1 & 2 Sept: Fête de Notre Dame, Cotignac

2 Sept: Historic Racing V de V Series, Circuit Paul Ricard, 83330 Le Castellet

<http://www.circuitpaulricard.com>

2 Sept: Foire à l'huile, Tavernes

4-13 Sept: Art Exhibition Irene Beroud-Blanc  
Chapelle St Pierre du Parage, 83460 Les Arcs S/A 10h00–12h00 & 14h00–19h00

<http://www.mairie-les-arcs-sur-argens.fr>

6-9 Sept: Polo Gold Cup, Polo Club Saint-Tropez,  
Route du Bourrian, 83580 Gassin

<http://www.polo-st-tropez.com/>

7-29 Sept: Exhibition La Resistance, Fort  
Napoleon, Chemin Marc Sangnier, 83500  
La Seyne sur Mer. 14h00–18h00 Tues–Sat

<http://www.la-seyne.fr/>

8 Sept: Journées des Associations throughout the  
Var for joining a large variety of clubs

9 Sept: Brocante, Cotignac

9 Sept: Fête de Miel, Entrecasteaux

15 Sept: Journées du patrimoine at most villages  
throughout the Var

16 Sept: Marché Artisanale, Cotignac

21-30 Sept Art Exhibition Creaco Sculptures  
Chapelle Saint Pierre du Parage, 83460  
Les Arcs S/A. 10h00–12h00 & 15h00–  
18h00 closed Monday <http://www.mairie-les-arcs-sur-argens.fr>

24 Sept: Foire de la St Michel, Barjols

28 Sept: CAD Vocal "Magnificat" by John Rutter.  
Eglise, Flayosc. 21h00

29 Sept 7 Oct Les Voiles de Saint Tropez Sailing

festival & races <http://www.societe-nautique-saint-tropez>

Figanières, Place de Lirette un Jardin aux mille  
Senteurs (Scented garden). Open every  
day except Tues, 14h30-17h30. Free  
04 94 50 93 60

6 Oct: Barjols en Fête

### Académie Musicale De Villecroze:

FREE concerts are held in the former Chapelle  
Sainte Victor. Details can be obtained from  
[www.academie-villecroze.com](http://www.academie-villecroze.com)

21 Sept: Chanson Française, Juliette

5 Oct: Quatuor à Cordes, Alfred Brendel  
and Miguel Da Silva

19 Oct: Violon - Jean-Jacques Kantorow

### Literary Lunches:

29 Sept: 12h00. 26€ per person

Hugh Faulkner- Secretary for state in Pierre  
Trudeau's government and many other posts, will  
talk about his days in government in Canada, but  
especially welcomes questions from the floor.

20 Oct: 12h00. 26€ per person

Michael Nelson, former general manager of  
Reuter, will talk about Edward Lear's Bicentenary  
- "Fun on the Riviera". RESERVATIONS ONLY.

More details: [\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*@nordnet.fr](mailto:*****@nordnet.fr)

### Reminder!

## VENDANGE LUNCH

to be held by the kind invitation of Lindsay  
Phillips at Domaine St Marc des Omèdes,  
Lorgues

on **15 September at midday**

**19€ per head**

### Menu

*Tapenade and Gaspachio Soup*

*Roast Duck stuffed with a little pork, apricots,  
pistachios and thyme*

*Poached Salmon*

*Vegetarian Quiche*

*Garnishes*

*Choice of 4 desserts*

### Christmas Cards & Book Sale

Please bring your own crockery, cutlery,  
glasses, sunshade and sun cream. Full details  
can be found with last month's Newsletter. Only  
120 places are available so if you have not  
already done so, please book immediately.  
Send your booking form to: Lesley Honeywell,  
\*\*\*\*\* La Bouverie 83520 Roquebrune S/A.

## Mike Lorimer SARL FiOncial Planning Seminar



The Spectrum IFA Group Partner  
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Mike Lorimer - Orias No. 07032481

Mike Lorimer, a partner of the Spectrum IFA Group, will once again be holding his very popular Financial Planning Seminar, in conjunction with the British Association of the Var, at the prestigious conference facility of Les Domaines de Saint Andreol, Route de Bagnols-en-Forêt, 83920 La Motte-en-Provence on **Wednesday, 10 October**, registration from 09h00 onwards.

This seminar is part of Currencies Direct Le Tour de Finance who will present ways to save on exchange rates for international bank transfers, helping you get the best institutional exchange rates and saving you money.

A number of other interesting topics will be covered with French Tax Lawyer Stephanie Gasper giving us an update on the recent French tax changes implemented by the new government and how these will affect you.

Jeremy Ferguson, Director of SEB International, will once again be going over the many tax saving benefits for French residents of the Assurance Vie, ensuring that you get the best from your savings.

QROPS (Qualifying Recognised Overseas Pension Scheme) was brought about following changes to UK pension legislation on April 5, 2006. This scheme has been specifically designed to enable non-UK resident individuals who have accrued pension benefits in the UK, to transfer these out once they have left the UK.

Prudential International will give an overview of their very successful low risk Pru Funds and how it fits in with their Assurance Vie.

Standard Bank's Director, John Hall, will show us ways in which to protect our capital, giving a guaranteed and secure 7% return.

An up to date financial market overview on the global financial markets will be given by David Chapman, Director of the world's leading asset manager, Blackrock International.

The presentations will be followed by wine and canapés, when the visitors can relax and ask questions to all the respected speakers.

For more information on this event please go to:

[www.mikelorimer.com](http://www.mikelorimer.com)  
04 93 74 73 35 or [info@mikelorimer.com](mailto:info@mikelorimer.com)

## Your Support

Sadly no-one attended the Open Day at the Mosaic Workshop in Salernes last month and, although August is a tricky month with visitors staying etc, we would ask you to consider the effort that goes into preparing an event for the BAV and the loss of revenue to the BAV if events are not supported.



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At first glance, it would appear that we have no shortage of competition, however, if you look closely, you will realise that we are the only company based here in the Var. You may also notice we are one of the very few British "certifié" (French qualified) advisers in the whole country.

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## CHATEAU des BAUX de PROVENCE and the CARRIERES de LUMIERES

The British Association and Carolyn Moulet of Riviera Tours, are collaborating to organise a trip to Les Baux, to visit the famous *Château des Baux de Provence* and the spectacular *Carrières de Lumières* with its 'nouveau spectacle' - the works of Gauguin and Van Gogh - on **Saturday, 27 October**.

It takes approximately 3 hours to get there (including a break for a comfort/coffee stop) and the coach will depart from the **Le Muy péage at 07h30 and from Le Cannet péage at 07h50**, which gives us plenty of time to explore and tour the Château on arrival (takes approx 1-1½ hours and an audio guide is included in the price). We can then wander round the lovely streets and shops of the village and choose a nice place for lunch - with the trip being before the real end of the season we should still have plenty of choice – or alternatively some might like to take a picnic. Visit [www.chateau-baux-provence.com](http://www.chateau-baux-provence.com) for more information about this incredible place.

The coach then takes us ten minutes down the road to the *Carrières de Lumières* for an amazing tour of the works of Gauguin and Van Gogh in a superlative setting – which used to be known as the Cathedral of Images – where the images are projected on the walls of the old quarry. See [www.carrieres-lumieres.com](http://www.carrieres-lumieres.com) for more information about this amazing spectacle.

We will probably leave at about 16h00 for a return between 18h30-19h00.

**The cost for this day out is 37€ per person and this price includes your coach transport and entry to both the *Château des Baux* and *Carrières de Lumières*.**

Going as a group means we benefit from a very special entry price for both the *Château* and the *Carrières* saving 5.50€ on the normal price, and coach parking fees are also included making quite a saving on the day, hence the very reasonable price of 37€ for a fantastic day out – only food and drink extra. **Bookings must be made by 30 September.**

PLEASE NOTE that this trip will depend on numbers so if you are interested then please let us know as soon as possible so that the coach can be booked and also the *Château* and *Carrières*.

## Chairman's Report

By the time you receive this report we will have passed most of the summer season and we will be looking to have more time to ourselves rather than entertaining visitors.

Have you booked for the Vendange Lunch at Lorgues on 15 September? If not please do so as there may be limited availability by this time. By early August we were already half full!

To my knowledge, it is several years since we have put on a coach trip and, like the proverbial London bus, not only have we arranged one, but two trips in October and November.

There are full details of the first, which is to Les Baux de Provence, in this month's Newsletter and this is potentially a delightful day out with a host of things to see including an audio-visual presentation on Gauguin and Van Gogh (which is only on until 6 January). As usual, places are limited by the coach so please book early.

This is then followed by a Christmas shopping trip to San Remo at the end of November when we only have 20 places available. Details will be in the October Newsletter.

Finally, we are still looking for willing helpers as cooks, putting on Coffee Mornings and on the Committee. Regarding the Committee I am happy to say that we have considerably reduced the time involved with the actual meeting from 'up to 7 hours' to a more realistic 2.5 to 3 hours. Please contact me at [chairman@baofthevar](mailto:chairman@baofthevar) if you think that you can be of assistance.

[chairman@baofthevar.com](mailto:chairman@baofthevar.com)

## Subscription Reminder

Just a quick reminder that **all subscriptions will be due on 1 November**. In next month's Newsletter will be further details and a copy of the renewal slip for Members to return with their cheques.

*The Committee*

### Bargain Basement

Sales and Wants ads are printed

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email your ads to:

[newsletter@baofthevar.com](mailto:newsletter@baofthevar.com)

## Siddall's Sponsored Coffee Morning chez Mitcham



9 August saw a delightful Coffee Morning held at the home of Maurice and Ann Mitcham in Villecroze. About 20 people gathered and enjoyed ever flowing coffee and pastries in a beautiful shaded location with the temptation of the adjacent shimmering pool.

Simon Eveleigh of Siddalls spoke generally about financial matters such as *Livret A*, *Livret Développement Durable*, *Assurance Vie* and other financial tools and made himself available for private consultation if required.

Our thanks go to Ann and Maurice for the Coffee Morning and to Simon for his contribution.

As usual, the books and gift cards were available and were very popular and we also received a large number of new books. As a result we received a total of 235€, including Siddall's donation, for the Welfare Fund.

## Personal police protection in the Var

The Var government is offering a free service to residents who wish to go on holiday. Homeowners can now register their properties with the local police department and as part of their daily rounds, officers will observe the vacant property to ensure that it is not disturbed. The scheme is designed to reduce the number of burglaries in the department, and thus render it safer. Residents need only alert their local police station when their property will be vacant and for how long.

## Barking Mad

A large number of members have dogs, cats and other animals and also have regular trips away and have the dilemma as to what to do with the animal(s) while they are away, be it for a few days or a few weeks. It is often the case that the animals are more settled if they remain in their home. Equally, we have several members who are all too happy to dog or cat sit and so we would like to put both parties in touch with each other.

Please therefore let us know if you fit either description of wanting a dog sitter or that you are happy to dog sit, by contacting:

[chairman@baofthevar.com](mailto:chairman@baofthevar.com)

## Christmas and Greetings Cards

We always have a good demand for our own Christmas Cards and Greetings Cards and this year our members Fred Carpenter and Chris Long have kindly submitted delightful cards for the occasion. We are hopeful of having these cards available at the Vendange Lunch in Lorgues on 15 September. We look forward to your support in buying these cards. We also have a number of cards dated 2011 and 2009 which will be available at half price.

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## Please Note -

*We appreciate the support of our advertisers and encourage members to consider using their services; however, BAV cannot take responsibility for the quality of goods and services.*

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

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## NEIGHBOURHOOD NETWORKS

### Cabasse, Carces, Correns, Cotignac, and Le Val

We will meet on Friday 28 September at the Cafe de Cour, Cotignac. *Michael Wharton*

07 \*\*\*\*\* [\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*@cam.ac.uk](mailto:*****@cam.ac.uk)

### Grimaud/Cogolin

We meet twice monthly, 10h30-11h50 **2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday** - Clem Bar, Grimaud: **4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday** - Brasserie Leclerc, Cogolin at 10h30-11h50. *Pat Heal*

04 \*\*\*\*\* [\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*@vol.lu](mailto:*****@vol.lu)

### La Motte and Le Muy

We meet at the Bar des Cascades in the beautiful town square of La Motte at 10h00 to 12 noon on the **2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday** of each month - next meeting 11 September. Contact: *Alexandra Lewis-Smith*

04 \*\*\*\*\* [\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*@bbox.fr](mailto:*****@bbox.fr)

### Les Arcs, Le Luc, Taradeau and Vidauban

We meet on the **2<sup>nd</sup> Friday** of the month at the Café de la Tour, Les Arcs at 10h30 till noon. *Jim North*

04 \*\*\*\*\* [\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*@wanadoo.fr](mailto:*****@wanadoo.fr)

### Les Issambres

We meet **every other Tuesday** at 11h00 at L'Arpillon café next to Casino. *Richard Tolaini*

04 \*\*\*\*\* or 06 \*\*\*\*\* [\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*@aol.com](mailto:*****@aol.com)

### Roquebrune-sur-Argens - Village & La Bouverie

We meet at the L'Auberge d'Argens on the **1st Tuesday** of each month at 10h30-12h00. *Lesley Honeywell*

04 \*\*\*\*\* [\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*j@wanadoo.fr](mailto:*****j@wanadoo.fr)

### St Raphael & Frejus

No meetings until further notice. *Diane Jenkins*

04 \*\*\*\*\* [\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*@wanadoo.fr](mailto:*****@wanadoo.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](mailto:*****@hotmail.com)

## Fish and Chips in the Var

For those of you who miss this nostalgic taste of the UK, here are three venues to try where fish and chips are served. As with any restaurants mentioned in the Newsletter, we cannot be held responsible for the quality of the food or service.

**Café de la Tour, Les Arcs** - 04 94 73 30 56  
35 Boulevard Gambetta, facing the main square.  
Last Friday of the month at noon, all year round.

**Le Château Restaurant and Brasserie, Chateaudouble** - 04 94 70 90 05

Place Vieille. On their current menu but this may change so ring to check, and for opening times as it is a seasonal restaurant.

**L'Arbousier, Lac St Cassien** - 04 94 95 25 00  
On the shore of the lake with wonderful views.  
Every Friday evening.

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**SPECIAL DISCOUNT FOR MEMBERS OF BRITISH ASSOCIATION**

## Modernisation plan for Les Arcs railway station

A large-scale project has been started to improve facilities at Les Arcs station, including the main building and the adjacent freight building. A car hire service will be added, along with other commercial outlets, and possibly also a police station. The work will cost six million euros and will take two years to complete.

## Entrecasteaux Castle Lunch



About 20 members met at Entrecasteaux Castle on a hot summer's day where we spent about an hour visiting and viewing the castle being guided by the owner. He gave us an enthusiastic tour explaining the history of the castle and the fact that it was ransacked between the 1950's and 1970's when it was in public ownership and that he had spent the last few decades re-equipping the castle with appropriate furniture, paintings etc from the era and even discovering the original doors in a shop about 5km away. It was a fascinating tour explained in 'français' and enjoyed by everyone.

We then went along a long un-made-up road into the middle of nowhere only to find a small car park alongside a lake with a timber shed at the side. There were numerous bare-chested and pot-bellied fishermen around the lake. This was to be our lunch venue but things got better and better when the superb gourmet lunch was served. It is impossible to understate how good the meal was and we do not want to offend those that didn't book, but there were 23 who attended the lunch and everybody was full of praise for the restaurant which also has the understated name of "Snack de l'étang". We will almost certainly be going back next year. As a finalé a nearby fisherman caught a 9 kilo perch which was then put back in the lake.

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## MEMBERS' GROUPS

### Handmade Cards Workshop

More workshops are planned for September and October. If you are interested in hosting one of these fun sessions, either morning or afternoon, please get in touch with me.

We usually make three or four cards, depending on the time available. I will provide all the materials at a nominal cost of 10€ per person.

*Pat Powell*

[\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*@\\*\\*\\*\\*.co.uk](mailto:*****@****.co.uk)

### Happy Boules

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

*Rob Flanagan*  
06 \*\*\*\*\* [\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*@hotmail.com](mailto:*****@hotmail.com)

### Painting Group

We will be meeting on **Wednesday 5 September** at Jane Emery's home in Salernes - **please let Jane know** if you are coming. A beautiful venue for one of the last *plein air* sessions this year.

*Jane Emery*

04 \*\*\*\*\*

### Digital Photography Group

For more details about the group **please contact:**

*Mike Harper*  
[\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:*****@yahoo.co.uk)

### British Association of the Var Welfare Coordinator

**Ann Mitchem**

04 \*\*\*\*\* or 06 43 86 49 01

[welfare@baofthevar.com](mailto:welfare@baofthevar.com)

## House for sale

Period restored village house in centre of Ampus – 630m alt, 20 mins from Draguignan – with courtyard and small garden. Ground floor: workshop, kitchen, living room, bedroom with shower room. First floor: bedroom with bathroom, bedroom with shower room. Second floor: Partially converted attic with pipework for shower room. €150.000. Please ring:

06 \*\*\*\*\* for viewing

## Gardening Tip

We all know that there are proprietary products available for weed-killing and these can be extremely expensive. However, have you tried spraying weeds with white vinegar? Unlike the usual products that may take several weeks to take effect and cost 28€ per litre or more, white vinegar costs only 0.30€ -0.40€ per litre and the effects can be seen within 24 hours. Go on – have a try and save yourself some money.

It is also an effective lime-scale remover around taps and in kettles – leave some kitchen roll soaked in vinegar on the area to be cleaned for an hour or so, then wash off. For kettles, fill the kettle two-thirds full, bring to the boil then put about half a wine glass of vinegar in and leave for an hour. Rinse well and boil with clear water before re-using.

## For next month's Newsletter

Please let us have your Advertisements, Articles and Reports for the September issue by

### Saturday 15 September

Contributions to: [newsletter@baofthevar.com](mailto:newsletter@baofthevar.com)  
or to Shirley Rowson, \*\*\*\*\*,  
83920 La Motte.

## 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 you know, could benefit from our confidential, free support, then please contact: Sandra – 04 94 84 64 89 or 06 32 35 31 24, email [info@bsnvar.org](mailto:info@bsnvar.org) or go to our web site [www.bsnvar.org](http://www.bsnvar.org) for further information.

## Committee Members

**Chairman - Rob Flanagan**

[chairman@baofthevar.com](mailto:chairman@baofthevar.com)

**Secretary - Michael Wharton**

[secretary@baofthevar.com](mailto:secretary@baofthevar.com)

**Treasurer - Lesley Honeywell**

[treasurer@baofthevar.com](mailto:treasurer@baofthevar.com)

**Welfare Officer - Ann Mitchem**

[welfare@baofthevar.com](mailto:welfare@baofthevar.com)

**Events Secretary - vacancy**

[events@baofthevar.com](mailto:events@baofthevar.com)

**Publicity - vacancy**

[publicity@baofthevar.com](mailto:publicity@baofthevar.com)

[newsletter@baofthevar.com](mailto:newsletter@baofthevar.com)

[webmaster@baofthevar.com](mailto:webmaster@baofthevar.com)

**Members –**

**John Collingwood** [john@baofthevar.com](mailto:john@baofthevar.com)

**Ian (Angus) Mackintosh**

[\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*@wanadoo.fr](mailto:*****@wanadoo.fr)

### 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.

16 September, 10h30 Harvest Service followed by lunch.

22 September, 17h30 Choral Evensong with visiting choir

### Grimaud Village Church

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

**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 at

04 94 73 93 37 or 06 87 94 04 83

[www.arc-en-provence.com/oasis](http://www.arc-en-provence.com/oasis)

**The Var Tuesday Club** meets 3rd Tuesday again

after a summer break, see [www.vartuesdayclub.org](http://www.vartuesdayclub.org)

for details

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### 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 at 04 94 47 70 67 for details

or visit our website at

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



# British Association of the Var

*Putting people and social needs together since 1998*

*Association Loi 1901 No: W831001750*

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

## September 2012 Newsletter Supplement

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### **Pets**

From 1 January 2012 tick treatment and blood tests to prove the effectiveness of the rabies vaccine are no longer necessary for pets entering the UK from EU countries. Rabies vaccination is still required at least 21 days before travelling. From that date also tapeworm treatment only applies to dogs. See [www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/pets/travel](http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/pets/travel).

### **TVA**

There will be a rise in TVA (VAT) from 1 October. The majority of items will be subject to tax at 21.2% instead of 19.6%, and renovation, restaurants, tourist rentals, etc will increase from 5.5% to 7%.

### **The Festival of the Sausage/Foire a la Saucisse – Le Val, near Brignoles**

In 1628 Louis XIII took time out from the siege of La Rochelle to sign the letters patent to allow the commune of Le Val to slaughter pigs at the end of summer and that developed into the festival that is held every year on the first weekend of September. In 1939 it became a commercial fair enabling people from the area to buy the first sausages and pork puddings of the year. After the war, with the advent of freezing for foodstuffs, the nature of the fair changed and it became the Rabelaisian celebration that it is today.

Taking place on Saturday and Sunday, 1st and 2nd of September, the 383rd festival includes a ceremonial procession with the Confrérie de Sant Antoni dou Porquet (the brotherhood of St. Anthony, patron saint of butchers) in their medieval costumes as well as a pageant with Louis XIII and his court and Cardinal Richelieu with the consuls of the valley. There are bands, street festivals, and markets of all kinds of meat products as well as other regional produce including wines. The triumph of Bacchus is recognised with fifes and drums – there is a high mass to St Anthony, pig roasting, Provençal groups parade around and 3,000 hot meals are served on the streets to those who have booked in advance via the tourist office. Dancing and fireworks finish the celebrations.

For the more casual visitors, both the village bars have tables right across the main square from where you can watch most of the action and take in the marvellous atmosphere or you can walk round the numerous market stalls sampling the food and drinks. Well worth a visit!

### **Home Security**

Each summer there is a spate of burglaries in the Var when criminals come to the area to take advantage of unsuspecting tourists (and residents) who allow the relaxed holiday mood to take over from normal common sense when it comes to security. Due to the heat, doors and windows are left open; visitors not used to shutters forget to close them; valuables, such as all the electronic equipment we now carry around with us (and that's just the children!), are left on terraces or in the car. Some of these burglaries take place when the house is occupied, either at night or during the day when people are at the pool.

So can we please remind you to make full use of any locks, shutters, automatic gates or alarm systems you have. If your pool is not directly adjacent to the house, lock the doors and close the windows when the house is unoccupied. Close the shutters at night and when you go out (which also helps to keep the house cool), fit extra bars to the shutters for long absences, fit good locks to the main entrance door especially if it is not visible from the road, and heavy duty padlocks to garden fence gates or anything that gives access to the rear of the house. Take a good look at your house or apartment from a thief's viewpoint and you may be surprised at its vulnerability.

## **Operation Clean up Med**

Once a shining jewel that united Europe and Africa, the Mediterranean has taken a beating at the hands of humans, falling victim to pollution, over fishing and ultimately carelessness. Now, a new six year project led by the Agence de l'Eau wants to restore the waters to their former glory with a cash injection of 600 million euros.

Operation Clean Up starts next year and will run until 2018. The organisation wants to revitalise the famous sea and improve its marine ecosystems while tackling the issue of pollution.

Chemical contamination - originating from cities such as Marseille and Nice, the Rhône river, and coastal industries - is responsible for 88 per cent of all pollution in the Mediterranean according to the latest figures from the *Agence de l'Eau* (Water Agency) and the *Direction Interrégionale de la Mer Méditerranée* (Inter Regional Management of the Mediterranean). Three quarters of the agency's annual 100 million euros will be dedicated towards reducing the presence and impact of pollution in the sea while a portion of the left over money will be spent on an awareness campaign targeted at those living near the Mediterranean sea.

Another major issue in the Mediterranean is the accidental transportation of non-indigenous species that, while flourishing in the sea, have a knock on effect on existing marine life. Everything from foreign fish and crustaceans to invasive algae and coral species have made their way into the Mediterranean and are taking over the ecosystem. The preservation of some of the Mediterranean's favourite residents is also at the top of the list for the agency, with the protection of dolphins, whales, seabirds and turtles ranking highly in the initiative's priorities.

## **UK Winter Fuel Payment**

Many UK pensioners living in France may now be eligible for this year's winter fuel payment. Following a ruling by the European Court of Justice, the UK has had to ditch rules which previously stated that you needed to qualify for the payment before leaving the UK in order to claim while living abroad. This meant reaching age 60 by, or before, a certain "qualifying week", usually in September of the year of the claim. This ruled out people who became resident outside the UK before age 60. Also excluded was anyone who left the UK before the winter fuel payments were introduced in 1998.

Under the new rules, the only requirement is that a claimant should be of suitable age and "have a genuine and sufficient link with the UK", for example, you have lived or worked in the UK for most of your working life. This year, under the new rules, the age requirements to qualify are that you should have been born on or before 5 July, 1951 in order to claim the payment for winter 2012/13. Claims can be put in up until 31 March next year and the payments are £200, or £300 (per household) for people aged 80 or more on or before 23 September this year. The amounts dropped as of last winter, from £250 and £400 in winter 2009/10.

You may wish to note that the Newcastle Dept of Works and Pensions number is 0044 191 218 7777. When you call have your NI numbers ready - and be prepared for some delay in talking to an individual. They will send you the forms in September to claim for the winter of 2013! It should be possible to download the new application form from the DWP or Direct UK Gov site later this month - the current form on the website is being changed to reflect the rule changes. On the government web site it states that people living in the EEA and Switzerland may qualify so it is up to each person to apply to the International Dept of Works and Pensions on the above number. However, the UK government is still trying to stop the payments being made to those living in warmer climates.