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N° 155 February/March 2013

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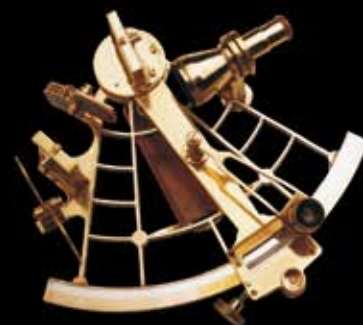
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Our thanks to those of you who answered our online survey and to the many readers who agreed to speak with me as I've been handing out *Reporters* at some of our distribution points over the past few months. Never have I taken as much time to meet readers as you go about your daily lives. I wanted to hear what you had to say openly and honestly. You did the talking, not me.

What you have told us overall is that most of you find the *Reporter* a good read but residents in the 25 to 55 year age group would like to see a wider range of topics, a younger editorial approach and more lifestyle subjects. "Less stodgy," as a parent outside the Mougins School told me as she took a *Reporter* "for my mum." You like profiles of local residents but would prefer more French people to be included. You want more pieces about things to do and places to visit in the region, especially for family outings. And certainly you want more about how to interact with the French with hard information about how to navigate the bureaucratic difficulties of living here. Above all, you don't want to read our opinions. You want content of a truly practical nature, especially for a young to middle-aged readership. One Sophia exec I met outside Brittain's in Valbonne put it more bluntly than most: "If I want opinion, I'll read *The New Statesman* or *The Spectator*. I don't need it from my local magazine."

Paradoxically, when I asked which section of the magazine you would read if you could only choose one, the most popular response (by far) was the Letters column. There is plenty of opinion there but it's yours, not ours. Reading what other residents have to say evidently appeals to you.

There's much you like about this magazine and we have no intention of changing those parts. You especially like the fact that our website complements the magazine, and over a third of readers – including some who read the paper edition as well – download the online PDF version and keep it on their computer or tablet for future reference.

Our advertisers especially need to support a magazine that addresses the very public they want to do business with. We've been giving them that all along, but we will now do it even better. So, without abandoning some of the content that has made this magazine as popular as it is, from this issue we are introducing many of the changes you've asked for. You'll notice new subjects with new writers alongside some of the names you already know.

The online survey is now closed but continue to tell us what you think by email or via our web forum. Make suggestions and criticize as openly and as frankly as you wish. This is your magazine, not ours. We just work here.

Our next issue appears before Easter. **Mike Meade**

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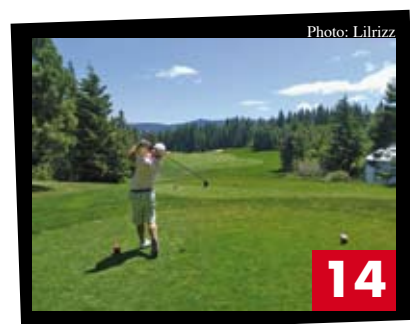
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Cover Photo:
Nice Carnival Roi du Sport
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RED PETROL

A while ago I went to view a diesel car that was for sale in one of those small ad papers you get at petrol stations. I asked my neighbour along as he works in a French garage and he was happy to give advice. He took one look under the bonnet and told me not to buy the car as it had been running on “red petrol”. I didn’t know what that was but now I do and I think everyone should be aware.

Diesel (*gasoil* in France) cars can run just as well on tractor fuel and even most heating oils. The only difference is the price. While normal diesel is heavily taxed at the pump, farmers have the right to buy untaxed diesel for their tractors as long as they are not used on public roads. Heating oil is also cheaper because it is considered a necessity whereas diesel for cars is not.

So it would be very tempting for anyone to fill up a diesel car with tractor or heating fuel. Of course, the French taxman has found a way of preventing this. A chemical additive is added to all tractor and heating fuel. This chemical coats parts of a car engine (fuel pump, filters, injectors) with a red trace that is impossible to remove.

Garages are required to report any car they service that shows this red residue.

The police do look for this also. If a roadside control shows that a car has been running on untaxed fuel (even only once) the car can be confiscated and there is a massive fine based on the presumption that every kilometre was driven on red petrol. So, if your car has 200,000km on the clock and consumes 1 litre per 10km, you will be fined €5000 plus €16,000 in unpaid fuel tax, and you will lose your car as well.

Caveat emptor, and a *grand merci* to Yves my wonderful neighbour!
James Hostell, on Reporter forum

DRIVING DILEMMA

I was driving home from shopping at just before noon on a July day on a main road in a small town in the backcountry of the French Riviera. I put my left blinker on to show I intended to turn left, and proceeded to do so. [...] The next thing I knew, a biker had jammed his brakes on and was flying through the air, crashing into my wind-screen [...] Five months later, just before Christmas 2010, a gendarme called and told me the biker had filed a complaint against me for involuntary injuries, that this was a penal offence and I could go to prison! [...] When the Summons was finally issued, there were two charges on it:

1) Involuntary injuries; and
2) Driving without a valid licence! [...] My driving licence was confiscated – completely unjustly, because I was only banned from driving in France, and I could still have driven in the rest of Europe. [...] My case finally came up before the Tribunal in Grasse – and the first thing that happened was that the Procureur had to admit my licence WAS valid! [...] After the driving ban was over, I had the devil of a job getting insured again.
Name provided, by email

Your email was far too long for printing here but the story is of vital interest to expat residents holding foreign driving licences. So your entire email is now on our web-site. Keyword “EULicence”. We understand why you have requested that your name not be published. M.M.

AND ANOTHER ONE...

“What we need is a little French runabout car to keep in Menton, then we can fly to and fro from England by easyJet and have a car at each end.” Simple, really. Well, that’s what we thought [...].
Colin Anderson, Menton

Quite a story, but too long for printing in full. The whole of this very well written piece is now posted on our website. Keyword search “FrenchCarStory”. M.M.



Photo: Anthony Charlton

OLYMPIC VICTORY?

With reference to the mention in your last issue (issue 154, page 36) it is true that many Olympic Games have turned out to be cash liabilities for the host country. But that is not always the case and those of us who have made personal financial investments around the London Olympics have every reason to be confident that London 2012 will do even better in the medium term than Atlanta 1996, a profitable Games which did much to restore the economy of that previously beleaguered city. Despite the bombing during those Games, Atlanta 1996 showed a cash profit from the day it closed due to astute management and the judicious influence of the high-profile advertisers that London 2012 also benefited from.

Most importantly, the government of Qatar has already filled in most financial gaps of the London Games as part of the agreement they were given for building the “Shard” from which you can see the Olympic Park they helped finance.

Your comparison with Sydney is illogical for several reasons. The main one is that the park locations in relation to the city centres themselves are very different. London had a run-down part of the city rebuilt at subsidised cost in favour of the capital’s



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taxpayers. The London Games were initiated under a Labour Government and Labour Council and took place under a Conservative Government and a Conservative Council. This bi-party cooperation was in every way conducive to the success of the games.

London 2012 benefited from 75,000 unpaid volunteers who did much of the necessary menial footwork. Access to this unpaid labour was not available to the Athens Games where the unions didn't allow it. Paris would have had a similar problem if it had been chosen over London for 2012.

As you say "the jury's still out" but many of us are very sure of what the verdict will be – enough so that we've put our investment money where our mouths are. If you're looking for white elephants in London,

the Millennium Dome is a much better choice.
*Jeremy Coswell-Rush,
on Reporter forum*

NO THANKS WE'RE BRITISH

I completely disagree with Giles Bradford's seeming endorsement of Americanisms into British-English in issue 154 of the *Riviera Reporter*. I lived there a long time and got to hear a lot of clear wrongs: "pocketbook" was my all-time nose-wringer, which to the rest of the world means handbag, while to us it means a small book that fits in the pocket. Other examples of pure US-speak are: "bring". There, especially on the east coast, it meant to take (go) as well as to bring (come) – in both directions – very confusing trying to figure which direction one was supposed to follow! "Soccer" is abbreviated from

AsSOciation Football (the working class communities played it) – so called because Rugby Football (played by the upper classes) preceded it but across the pond. "(American) Football" came into being 400 years afterwards with attempts to have everybody else change the world's favourite sports' name. Homely is a compliment given to a woman to say she's cosy and home-like but over there you could get slapped for it because it means "ugly". New York is factually a large state not a city. That's called New York City (it has five boroughs). New York-Newark airport is in the state of New Jersey. So on and so forth, all errors accepted as correct, some comic some tragic. The list is very long indeed and creeping "Americanese" into our language must be rejected outright because we will

slowly become the 51st state. To some, the UK already is.
Ivor S., Villefranche-sur-Mer

REPRESENTATION FOR EXPATS

As far as I know, the only country with dedicated MPs for their citizens residing abroad is France. I am Dutch and my wife is British and as French residents we have no one to represent our national interests, voting rights, pensions and tax considerations. Surely in a "United States of Europe" this should all have been settled long ago. What salvation can we hope for?
Dirk Rynsburger, by email

We have mentioned in recent issues the work of French residents Graham Richards and Brian Cave, who both campaign for British expat voting rights. We will post your email on our forum. Look there for answers from us and other readers. M.M.

MYSTERY OF AMOUR

For readers who struggle with the gender of French nouns (is *foie* masculine or feminine, for example) then here's a complication to know. The word for love (*amour*) is masculine when singular, feminine when plural. Why? Nobody knows. There are only two other words like that: *délice* (delight) and *orgue* (organ the kind you play in church).
Susan Williams, Menton

Do you have something to say? To send a Letter to the Editor see page 46 or go to forum. rivierareporter.com

THANK THE FATHER

I just read your online article on the Second World War, The Battle at Fayence. It was wonderful to see my father's name mentioned, Staff Captain Peter Heygate. I now live in Sydney Australia. I am planning a trip to Europe in June 2013, and Fayence will be on my list. Many thanks for a wonderful article.
Keith Heygate, by email

HEALTH IN AMERICA

I don't think that Mr Lonegran (Mailbag issue 154 and previous) understands why some Americans are opposed to Obamacare. It is a complex act and has not been fully explained in most newspapers and on TV. Soundbites equated Obamacare with socialism. Many Americans were opposed to Medicare when it was first mooted: now, most Americans are implacably opposed to weakening it! We also forget that veterans also have free medical care available. People take a while to get used to change.
Dr Sheila Rossan, by email

HEALTH IN FRANCE

Patrick Middleton was right to warn against too cheap *mutuelles* ("the cheapest most certainly won't be the

best") and to urge people to read that small print. When I first came here I took out a policy at an enticing €16 a month. I hadn't understood that this didn't involve the principle of *tiers payant* – that's to say, I had to pay for everything up front before getting anything from the *mutuelle*. It also turned out that they didn't reimburse the cost of so-called "blue label" (*vignette bleue*) pharmaceuticals, very commonly prescribed. I've since changed to another company, more expensive but much more generous when necessary.
Joanna Haskell, by email

DISEASED LIVER ... BURGER?

I've been following the very opinionated foie gras discussion on your forum and also the burger debate in the UK where some supermarkets have been selling beef burgers with up to 30% horsemeat in them. Then I saw this (below) and couldn't help but send a snapshot to you. It might be "quick" but at less than €3 what quality of foie gras is used?
Marcy Henderson, by email



APPETIZERS		SALADS	
Skewers of Mazzancolle* to the lemon with honey and seeds of poppy	€ 13,00	Mixed salad, fennel, tails of mazzancolle (fish) from San red oranges of Sicily	
Mollusks in stew *	€ 13,00	Mixed salad, tomatoes, asparagus, red onion Tropicana, a buttermilk, card salty	
Caponata of vegetables in wafer of Parmigiano-Reggiano	€ 10,50	OUTLINE	
Buffalo mozzarella (with egg plants, tomatoes with cremates of basil)	€ 11,50	Caponatina siciliana	
Raw ham San Daniele with fresh seasonal fruit	€ 11,50	French fries*	
Mixed of meat with artichoke to the embers (Raw ham San Daniele, salame, zuppa)	€ 12,00	Seasonal salad	
FIRST DISHES		CHEESES	
Rice with dandelion of sword-fish and tomatoes to the green pepper	€ 13,00	Tasting of Italian cheeses (caciotta marchigiana, pecorino romano D.O.P., pecorino sardo D.O.P.)	
Pasta with bacon, pumpkin, pecorino D.O.P., Saffron	€ 12,00	DESSERT	
Spaghetti with fillers of tomato, basil, capers, olives	€ 10,00	Seeds cold* to the mint with heart to the chocolate	
Tagliolini with sword-fish, olives and tomatoes	€ 13,00	Mousse to the pistachio* and almond	
Linguine allo scoglio*	€ 13,00	Pasta fillis* with cream of almonds and honey	
SECOND DISHES		Sherbert yields* of wood frozen to the vanilla	
Cool Fresh to the grate	€ 21,00	Sicilian cassata *	
Sword-fish* catanese	€ 18,00	Seeds cold to the nougat *	
Cutlets Lamb* with potatoes to the rosemary	€ 17,00	Our special ice-cream*	
Calf* with raw ham San Daniele, Parmigiano Reggiano	€ 17,00	FRUIT	
Filet* to the grate	€ 18,50	Fresh pineapple	
Filet* with salad, tomatoes, Parmigiano Reggiano	€ 19,50	Seasonal Fresh fruit	
bacon singier		Coffee	
		Liquors	
		Whisky	
		Cognac	
		Grape	

LOST IN THE DESSERT

We all titter from time to time at silly mistakes in badly-translated restaurant menus; it makes up for the humiliation of being offered the English language version instead of the native one. However, I entered the world of the surreal when given a menu on an Italian ferry (above) that featured "Seeds cold to the mint with heart to the chocolate" and "Sherbert yields of wood frozen to the vanilla" – the latter sounded like the new Sting album. Any reader with an idea of what these delights might be?
Russell Fraser, Cannes

ENGLISH INSIGHT SVP

I'm a final year French student at Trinity College Dublin. I am writing a dissertation on the assimilation of adult English-speakers into French society. I would like to interview adult native English-speakers (either Irish or British) via email to give me an insight into their lives. I'm particularly interested in people who own or work in an English-oriented business (eg Fish & Chip shop).
Rachel Hamilton, hamiltre@tcd.ie

Some Brits, of course, get very uncomfortable when talking the language of the Gauls. We were happy to offer Rachel this quote from P.G. Wodehouse (The Luck of the Bodkins): "Into the face of the young man who sat on the terrace of the Hotel Magnifique in Cannes there had crept a look of furtive shame, the shifty, hangdog look which announces that an Englishman is about to speak French." P.M.

Do good, feel good and it'll cost you nothing (at least if you're a pub quiz champion)

Yep, this is serious. Log on to *freerice.com*, just answer one of the multiple-choice questions on the site correctly (English vocabulary, math and ten grains of rice are donated to food programmes in such countries as Cambodia, Uganda and Burma by the UN World Food Programme. With around 50 grains of rice to the gram it only takes five right answers to fill a bowl. Millions of people have been fed this way since the scheme was launched in 2007. So log on now and Ben's your uncle!

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20 years ago

Talking out of the back of one's neck: Anyone who follows the news will be aware that the farmers are a key issue in French politics. They are notably militant in pursuing their interests. In June they virtually brought Paris to a stand still for 24 hours. In fact, they are battling against a terminal illness. Since 1945 they have been disappearing at a faster and faster rate. Today there are 1.2 million *paysans* – farmers and farm workers – in France. On one official estimate they will be down to 300,000 within a decade, victims of agribusiness and imports. They are fighting an essentially hopeless battle against world trade agreements and changes in EU farm policy.

But they recently found a new "ally". Just recently Prince Charles stood up in Paris and pleaded their cause. "France sets an example to us," he announced, "of civilised values underpinned by giving due importance to rural traditions which ennoble and enrich us but are not cost-effective in economic terms." Bullshit. Across the generations most peasants have stayed put because they saw no alternative; when they did they left for the town. Love of "rural traditions" is largely a middle-class (and princely) indulgence. The men fighting to continue producing rapeseed and sheepmeat do so because they see no other livelihood available to them. But that doesn't make them happy. Prince Charles might like to try out his theory on the farmer who told *Le Point*: "I've got a huge workload and a lousy income. I only wish all my kids could get off the farm."

Riviera Reporter,
February-March 1993

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French news & views

What's been happening on the Coast?



Nice Carnival runs from Fri Feb 15th to Wed Mar 6th. See our website for traffic information. You'll also find "Carnival – the DNA of Nice": a look behind the scenes of the city's famous festival.

One of our readers – an electronic engineer in his late thirties – got what he described as "the worst Christmas present ever". As the festive season loomed he learned that the Dallas-based bosses of Texas Instruments had decided to shut the company's Villeneuve-Loubet site, sending over 500 employees into what's likely to be a difficult search for a new job. "Okay," admitted our reader, "It wasn't a total surprise. Back in 2003 over 300 employees were laid off but we never expected the place would just close down." Local management offered a terse explanation: "Our markets have disappeared so what else could we do?" Meanwhile, the TI premises (spread over some 20 hectares)

which were opened over half a century ago are up for sale. Of course, the more than 500 TI employees who are looking for new jobs aren't alone in their misfortune. Across 2012 some one thousand firms in the Alpes-Maritimes went bankrupt or were clearly on the verge of that fate. Many others are likely to follow. As Gerard Perugini, President of the *Tribunal de commerce* in Antibes, has put it, "2012 was a very bad year and it looks like 2013 could be even worse." Only two sectors – tourism and perfume manufacture – are holding up reasonably well.

The downturn is eating away at almost every aspect of the economy. Retailers had a bad holiday season and remain gloomy. Employees of Nice's Virgin Megastore were told at the start of the year that, along with the company's more than two dozen other French outlets, it will be closing down; colleagues at cash-strapped *Nice-Matin* are wondering about their futures as their group is taken over by flamboyant tycoon Bernard Tapie. Continuing bad news about local business means that administrations at every level see a fall in their tax take. Nice, for example, faces not only a fiscal shortfall – both from company and individual taxation – but has to grapple with a situation in which a substantial chunk of the city's residents are categorised as "impoverished" and offer a continuing pressure on social services. Nevertheless Mayor Christian Estrosi has stated that local taxes won't be hiked in 2013. At the same time as municipal expenditure will be

cut major projects will continue, even if with some downsizing. These include the upgrading of the Prom', which is being proposed as a UNESCO world heritage site, and (good news for many) the extension of the tramway (Line 1) by 450 metres to allow direct access to the Pasteur Hospital, due to open in early 2014.

An elderly man in Nice, confused when using an ATM, left €400 in the machine. The next user took the notes to the nearest police station. Their owner was traced through the receipt and got his money back.

The beginning of January saw the first anniversary of the Métropole Nice Côte d'Azur. This administrative entity groups some four dozen Alpes-Maritimes' communes, from Cagnes-sur-Mer in the south to Saint-Dalmas le Selva in the north. The Métropole, of which Christian Estrosi is President, has attracted some criticism, especially on the Left, but its advantages are clear. As Jean Viard of Sciences-Po in Aix explains, "Mayors, in communes of all sizes, tend to be preoccupied with local issues from an electoral point of view. The Métropole looks at things in a broader way and also has the clout to raise money more easily." Some mayors have not concealed their ruffled feathers but others would confirm Viard's view. Gerard Steppel, mayor of Marie, the Alpes-Maritime's smallest commune (see *Reporter* 152) clearly makes the point: "With only 85 inhabitants we've got a very low tax base. Our antiquated water supply system was in a very bad way but we couldn't easily afford the necessary upgrade until the Métropole offered help."

A large-scale study has shown that since 1989 the sperm count of French men has been falling by nearly 2% a year. Explained researcher Joelle Le Moal, "It's likely due to pollution of various kinds. At the moment it's no threat to fertility but it can't go on forever."





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Business

Minding your own business

BY PETER JOHNSON

So what is new in 2013?

A flurry of cold, depressing bad news, like the weather. Almost comical stories of the wealthy leaving France to avoid the 75% tax on high incomes (over €1M), before the Constitutional Court overturned the measure early in the New Year. Will Gérard Depardieu and his pals return? Unlikely. To quote one of France's leading actors: "I am leaving because you consider that success, creation, talent, in fact anything that is different, should be penalized." So said Depardieu in response to Prime Minister Ayrault's opinion of him being "pathetic" for taking tax residency in Belgium (this was *before* Depardieu's Russian foray).

President Hollande seems not to care about the Constitutional Court and has vowed to drive through some other tax on the higher earners: "We will always ask for more from those that have the most," he declared.

Another personality to arouse controversy was Bernard Arnault (pictured), Chief Executive of the luxury goods group, LVMH, who is also moving to Belgium. In attempting to gain Belgian citizenship, could France's richest man be paving a way to enter the tax haven of Monaco by the "back door"? Rich French people often switch nationalities before heading to the Mediterranean



Photo: nicogent

Principality because French citizens there have to pay regular French taxes, unlike other residents.

It all looks shoddy for France's image to the outside world, coming hard on the heels of the spat with the Indian aluminium giant, ArcelorMittal. Before Christmas, ArcelorMittal had announced the closure of its plant at Florange in July 2012, giving a deadline of the end of the year for prospective suitors to come forward with offers to take the plant over. No one was forthcoming and there was even talk of nationalizing the plant. The whole world stood back in shock at the affront on private enterprise. Eventually the French government was obliged to stand aside and allow economic forces to dictate and private business to make its

own tough decisions (and let's not forget that Mr Mittal still employs over 20,000 people in France even with the loss of 600 at Florange).

One solitary bit of good news, which might have escaped the attention of most, was the settlement early in the year between employer and employee unions on means to "fluidify" the conditions of hiring and firing, allocating employees to parts of the economy that are actually working, rather than hanging onto them at places (like Florange) where things definitely are not. Employers have been saying for ages that they need to be able to take employees on under short-term contracts, rather than the kind of "jobs for life" that many French people assume is a God-given right. Employers also need to be able to act quickly and decisively, so if things have stopped working economically they can make staff redundant without protracted disputes with the unions. This "fluidifying" of the conditions of employment should eventually feed through into the unemployment figures, as structurally there will be more incentive to hire staff in the sectors of the economy that are coming out of the recession.

Unemployment is currently running at just over 12% and looks likely to worsen over the next 12 months with PSA, Renault, Virgin Megastores, as some of the big names making swathing cuts to their workforce. *Plus ça change* – as we enter 2013 – *plus c'est la même chose!* ■

The man who sees through walls

BY NICK KENT



If you really want to know what's going on in your home, then Stefan Mayer is the guy for you.

While qualifying as a yacht surveyor, the 38-year-old South African became fascinated by the possible uses of thermal imaging – heat-sensitive photography – in rooting out common problems in ordinary households.

Energy wastage does your pocket and the environment no favours, and even just one defective or badly-installed piece of insulation in your roof can make a big difference. His pictures show where the heat goes, and where the water is coming in.

It's early days for Stefan's Valbonne-based business, Astema Thermal Imaging, but Stefan is already discovering new and valuable uses for his craft.

"Solar panels usually have a five-year guarantee," says Stefan, who is married with three young children. "It makes sense to have a thermal imaging check on them as they approach the end of that period. This can show up defective cells in the panel, and a claim can be made for a replacement panel."

The positive impact on the environment that this new technology brings is a major motivating force for Stefan, a life-long lover of nature. The stark facts flow easily from him: "Water covers 75 per cent of the Earth's surface. Just three per cent of this is fresh water, as opposed to salt. Seventy per cent of the fresh water is locked in polar ice. That leaves less than one per cent for the human and animal population of the planet."

"Not only do leaks within a home waste precious water, they contribute to high humidity conditions, which in turn lead to unnecessary energy consumption through the full-time use of dehumidifiers."

Stefan turned his imaging skills on my apartment, revealing speedily and clearly problems of hidden water penetration I had no idea about.

Great – or not so great. So what do I do about it? A visit from a plumber doesn't sound like the worst idea in the world. Can Stefan recommend a reliable tradesman? He cannot.

"It's important that people see me for what I am – completely independent of any other business. The client can be sure I am not exaggerating problems in order to get work for an associated company. The technology is open to abuse by the unscrupulous, who can fiddle with the colour scales of the images in order to blow a small problem into a much bigger one."

OK, now for the nitty-gritty – cost. This was, almost uniquely in my experience as a resident of Cannes, a pleasant surprise. My apartment, at less than 100m², comes in at €150. And for that he'll find your cat that's got lost under the floorboards. Or a nest of rats, if there happens to be one you didn't know about. ■

For more, see infraredriviera.com



A freelance Thermographer, Stefan Mayer spent 15 years in the maritime industry as a Captain and Engineer after working as a civil technician in reinforced concrete and steel structure design.



Thermal imaging reveals significant heat loss through missing insulation panels.



Where is that damp coming from? Why are my heating bills so high? Stefan's magic eye reveals the truth; there's cold air leaking into your house.



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Shades of Green



I don't want to scare you but there are people out there, that for the sake of going green (we'll call them SUPER DARK GREENIES), have gone vegetarian, have sold their cars and only walk or ride bikes, don't heat their houses in the winter, have stopped using shampoo to wash their hair, or have stopped buying things contained in plastic, and so on ... They are hard-core and while maybe someday we can be like them, there are many shades of green! I myself am not sure I really want to go that far. I love salmon, and chicken. I love my Austin Mini and leather.

However after watching a TED Talk (see blog for link) I thought it could be rather simple to go from zero to half way with little effort and have a great impact at the same time. The idea is that rather than giving meat up 100%, why not just 25% or 50% or 75%. A very "Shades of Green" concept.

I know that he is talking about going vegetarian, but you can do it with showers, washing your hair, using your dryer, using your car, anything really. And even though he is talking about doing it for the whole week, since we are "light greenies" maybe we will try just the weekend.

Here's a little quiz to show the size of your Ecological Footprint.

Take the quiz: myfootprint.org/en

Share your results on my Shades of Green blog at forum.rivierareporter.com/blog

MelaNice, Shades of Green



YOUR GUIDE TO GREEN

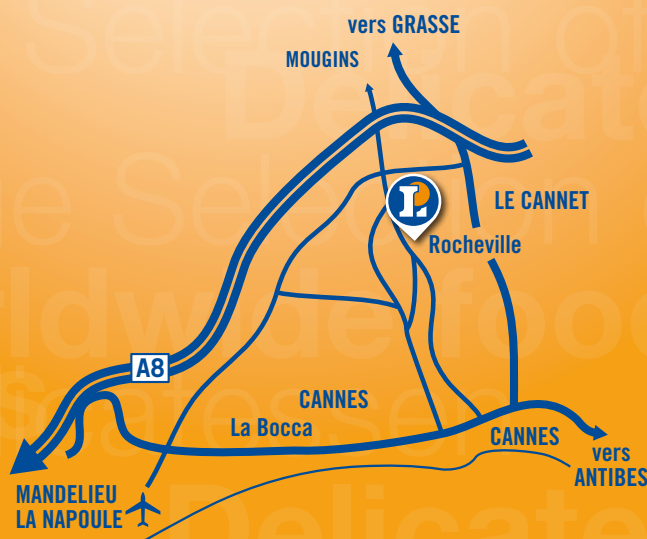
Greenrent (greenrent.fr) in Nice is the brainchild of niçois Albert Gasore and Jeremy Gravel (Bas Alpin), both in their mid-20s. A first in France, they rent electric or hybrid cars among the most innovative on the market at prices similar to traditional rentals.

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Internet options on the Côte d'Azur

Look before you login

BY HUW WILLIAMS



With today's demands to be constantly connected ... that pressing email to send, a Facebook update to make, or that latest product to search out and buy, a good internet connection is essential to keep everyone in the family or the office happy. Good internet connectivity also opens up possibilities for all those services that make life a bit more rewarding, services like watching catch-up TV or listening to your favourite radio stations from home, Skyping or FaceTiming family and friends. For those who have subscription TV in one country, they can watch and control their TV across the web by "place shifting". Other possibilities include, of course, watching over a property and remote monitoring the house.

There are many options when it comes to the availability of internet connectivity on the Côte d'Azur. The standard internet packages provided by telecommunications companies are the most readily available and are priced for the general public. The same is true of those supplied over the air but they tend to be slower, more variable in performance and have a data cap. For greater speed and or consistency, leased lines and fibre are available but they can come with a price tag. 3G has a patchy coverage, variable and relatively slow speeds, but 4G should be around the corner. Internet by satellite remains a possibility for those that want the speed of DSL but are not serviced by the standard ADSL packages available. The choice is yours.



Options with physical connection (via cable or copp)

• ADSL

The standard provision for domestic internet services is ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line), although cable can be found in larger towns and cities. ADSL and cable tend to be offered as part of a bundle of services, which may include television, inclusive calls and mobile phones. For ADSL, as

some of these services depend on the local telephone exchange, a modernised exchange is necessary and it is possible to de-group from France Telecom. Cable is generally independent from France Telecom. The speed available depends on the distance from the exchange and "contention" is the number of people sharing the capacity of the line. A combination of these factors affects the performance of the internet speed dramatically, and both ADSL and cable suffer from similar limitations. Speeds for ADSL are advertised at up to 28 Mbit/s download and 1 Mbit/s upload but in reality the provision is a fraction of this and it can change throughout the day. Cable promotes higher speeds but in reality suffers from contention and can drop dramatically in the evenings.

If ADSL is not working for you, a number of solutions are available.

• Leased line

The French Riviera offers a choice of leased line suppliers running SDSL (Symmetric Digital Subscriber Line). SDSL differs from ADSL in that it has an upload speed which is the same as its download speed. In addition, the bandwidth is dedicated and is typically supplied at 2 Mbit/s and generally does not come supplied as a shared service. The installation costs around 2000 to 3000 euros, including a survey, with a monthly charge of between 200 to 400 euros there after.

• Fibre

Fibre is generally available in large cities such as Nice, Cannes and Antibes, but coverage is still patchy. Special installations are possible outside the publicised areas but these come at a premium. Typical speeds are up to 100 Mbit/s. Outside the advertised areas installation typically costs 6000 to 8000 euros and 1000 to 2000 euros per month there after.

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Over the Air

• 3G

3G (3rd Generation) refers to wireless data and voice communication that we typically associate with mobile phones. 3G coverage tends to follow main roads or thoroughfares, so coverage is good in Nice, Monaco and Antibes, but is patchy in Cannes and the hinterland. The connection speed is greatly affected by contention, and expected speeds are around 0.2 Mbit/s, which, when compared to fixed-line speeds, seems slow. Most carriers in France also put a cap on the amount of data allowed to be downloaded per month – typically about 3GB. This is adequate for checking email on a phone but may be limiting, for example, if you wish to access the internet on a PC.

If you are looking for ways to improve mobile phone reception in your own property, one method is by using “femtocell” a solution available to SFR and Bouygues Telecom customers. You will need an ADSL connection to the property, and the femtocell device enables you to take the call over the ADSL connection.

• 4G

While 3G coverage and speed continue to improve, 4G (4th Generation), its successor, is in its infancy. Only small pockets of 4G are available in the region, but France is not alone here. 4G in the UK has only been rolled out to 17 cities but roaming between cells is still not possible, so it does not really meet its target of being a mobile data network yet. Some service providers

offer internet services using 4G, claiming up to 10 Mbits/s but again you would need to check if your area is covered.

• Public Wi-Fi

Public Wi-Fi networks are provided by companies like SFR or by metropolitan services. For example, you can find networks in most travel hubs like train stations, airports, as well as restaurants like McDonald's.

International travellers can use other Wi-Fi networks, such as FON, for example, or roaming agreements but generally this relies on you having a subscription to one of the networks that is affiliated to the available service.

These Wi-Fi networks may be an option if you live in an apartment or a house in close proximity to such a network but the service is not designed for heavy or consistent use. You are not guaranteed a service and you are subject to the vagaries of the level of service around you.

• WiMax/5Ghz/ Microwave

Private wireless connections can be supplied to villas and businesses. These are generally based on long distance dedicated pipes and provide

a guaranteed level of service and speed. Cost and coverage are similar to leased line/fibre prices.

• Satellite

Satellite is not just for TV; there are services available for internet, too. The more established services were designed for boats and can be very expensive, but in the last few years high-speed service providers are entering the domestic market competing with standard ADSL providers in price. The main advantage is that you can have high bandwidth internet practically anywhere as long as you can site a dish.

There is a difference in practical terms as your signal is bounced into space before it reaches you but in terms of speed the capacity is there. It is ideal for streaming video and using Skype. Like 3G there is a data cap imposed but this can go up to 50GB and there are download speeds of up to 18 Mbits/s. ■

Huw Williams has over 15 years experience working in IT with a focus on IP networking and Video over IP. He now specialises in IP Networking, Wi-Fi deployments and business IT services on the Côte d'Azur. See wirelessandweb.co.uk

Bon App!



Use this QR Code to access app links on our website.



Apps for Expats

BY MIKE MEADE

In 2012 over 60 billion apps were downloaded. That's almost 10 apps for every inhabitant of the planet, although there is, naturally, some disparity from country to country.

One in five Britons now owns a tablet, with iPads leading the pack. Add BlackBerrys, Androids and smartphones to the count and you have a great many people for whom a mobile device has become as important to their daily lives as a landline or a car once was. Industry surveys show that iPhones and other smartphones are actually used 35% of the time to make calls. The remaining 65% is for apps functions. At the *Reporter* we use our mobile devices for GPS when we are out distributing the magazine and for consulting the Oxford English Dictionary and Roget's Thesaurus. Paper encyclopaedias are already dead; dictionaries won't be far behind. Press conferences can be recorded on our mobiles and breaking news from France, the UK or the US is followed live on an iPad and sent to our website.

For expats, mobile devices seem even more essential which is why this column has generated so much interest. So this time round we're targeting apps of particular practicality to expats (Skype or FaceTime are givens).

• French letters: a must in your pocket or purse



It's in French, and a pricey at €10.99, so you might want to wait until you really need this one but one day you will surely need to download 12,500 Courriers Types.

This app is a catalogue of letters in French covering just about every situation you may come across in your life as an expat in France. Administration, insurance, banking, law, education, health care, leisure and plenty more – all classified by category and theme, with search words to help find just the right one. English translations are not included but we all know enough French to seek out the letter we may need and we can always use Google Translate to make sure a letter is indeed the one that applies.

Type the destination name and address into the app and it will send the text in an email to you or to the addressee.

The down side: 12,500 Courriers Types is for iPad only. But you've always wanted a good excuse to get one so this is it.

• National Apps

Many governments now have apps that are of real use to their citizens living overseas.

For Americans:

- Find your Embassy
- FBI's Most Wanted
- What can I take on my flight?

For Britons:

- HMRC tax calculator
- UK Newspapers Plus
- Official Number 10 iPhone App
- British Airways on your mobile
- EasyJet mobile
- National Rail Enquiries for Android & iPhone

For other nationalities see rivierareporter.com, keyword *ExpatApps*

• TV and radio from "Home"

Most UK and US channels now have their own apps but very few let you view from overseas so you'll need VPN (see HasEurope on page 19). But once you have it, most mainstream channels have their own app. Canadians will want the CBC apps while Americans will want ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox or CNN for live updates from home. Google "television news apps for Americans" for the whole list of dedicated apps. Almost every

British mainstream channel now has its own app but the free BBC iPlayer is the must-have app for British expats.

For radio from anywhere in the world that you used to call home, VPN isn't needed. Our radio app of choice is TuneIn Radio (Free). There is also a "Pro" version (€4.49) with more options, including recording and pick-up-where-you-left-off functions.

• What's that in miles?



No matter how long you've lived abroad there are some units that you just don't get. Not only from the French to whatever but also from whatever back to the French measures you've become used to. When your dad in Manchester or Milwaukee goes on about snow in inches and his gas usage in miles per gallon, do you have any idea what that means? When you want to buy him French ski boots for his birthday but all you know is that he takes an English size 10, it's not much use at Decathlon. And what's a teaspoon of sugar in grammes?

You need HiConverter. It converts over 3000 units within 108 categories from petrol consumption to bra sizes. Paid €0.89.

iPad users might prefer the similar "Converter" although it doesn't convert bra sizes, which men in particular will find indispensable, what with Valentine's Day on the way (see page 22).

• Parlez vous app?



We had a look at translation apps here last summer but an impressive new one has come along since. Talk to the app and Translator will translate a phrase into any of 54 languages, show you the written translation and speak it out loud in the native language with a proper accent. It works, and a lot better than expected. I was able to carry on a conversation with a Portuguese lady with her speaking her native language and me speaking English into my iPad.

Translator claims to be a app but that only applies to the written part. If you want the speech recognition and talk-back it costs €0.89. *Bem valeu a pena.* ■

HOT APPS 2013

Foodspotting: This app wants to know where you're going, so its users can recommend dishes. Free. Windows Phone 7.5+

Shove Pro: You are Lars Speedwagon, stuntman and professional shover. Paid. iPhone.

Groove Coaster Zero: Tap your screen to the beat (think sci-fi Guitar Hero). Free. iPhone

Source: t3.com



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How to turn a cheap golfing holiday in Sicily into a rather expensive one

BY NICK KENT

Every year sees two bitterly-fought contests for the Ringpress Cup, myself and my former business partner John the only contenders.

These normally take place in Portugal, with John flying in from London and me from Nice. This year, however, we decided to escape the Algarve's overfull golf courses, oh-so-slow rounds and general lack of cultural highlights: we picked Sicily. The largest island in the Med is not well endowed with golf clubs, so instead of playing several courses, which is our habit, we plumped for one eighteen-holer with rooms, and crossed our fingers.

Before I give you the good news about this trip, and there's plenty, I'll give you the bad – my choice of route. With no direct flights from Nice, and feeling adventurous, I discovered I could catch a ferry from Genoa and pitch up in Palermo 20 hours later – so no car hire to pay. I convinced myself that the €220 for the cost of car and me (in a "Pullman Seat") was a bargain. The first thing I didn't take into account were the motorway tolls between Cannes and Genoa, the second was the Pullman Seat. Nothing wrong with the seat itself, just where they put it – about six decks below the waterline with no light or air, just loads of Italians plus bambini being very noisy. So it's a cabin for one please. A four-berth cabin just for me, some mistake? No, all the cabins are 4-berth, and so goodbye €90 each way.

The modestly-named *Suprema* (booked at aferry.com) left Genoa at 11pm, niftily skirted the island of Giglio and the wreck of the Costa Concordia, and arrived without incident (except for serving amazingly poor food) in Palermo at 7pm the following evening.

And the bills just kept on coming: a night out in this atmospheric city, plus a stay at the beautiful Palazzo Sitano hotel (hotelpalazzositano.it), a converted 18th-century palace on the main drag, Via Vittorio Emanuele. On Saturday, after meeting easyJet, it was a long drive to the slopes of Mount Etna and the Il Picciolo Golf Club (ilpicciolo.golf.com). We arrived after 11pm, but Giorgio is there to greet us – does he speak a little English or French, my Italian needs work? "G'day!" exclaims the swarthy Sicilian, who it turns out has spent 30 years Down Under.

"We've booked five rounds of golf, but we haven't reserved tee times," I say, remembering the queues on the tees in Portugal.

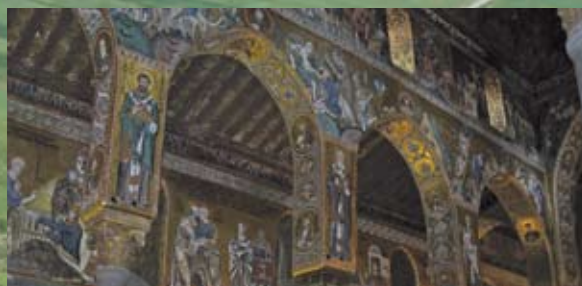
"No worries mate, you can start when you like – and play as much as you like."

He then showed us to our magnificent rooms, in fact a two-bedroom suite with a salon and massive terrace looking up the mountainside. And so started a golfing idyll, a very fine golf course, as green as anywhere is Surrey. We never had to wait on a shot for a group ahead as we usually had the place to ourselves; we ended up playing seven rounds plus a decider over 9 holes on one of the days. All this plus breakfast for €740 represents excellent value – on the ridiculously-priced golf courses that surround Cannes that wouldn't even buy you the golf.

And to make the exercise a little more sensible, when we go back in April (the first of many return trips I hope) John will be flying easyJet direct from Gatwick to Catania (35 mins away from Il Picciolo) and I'll be doing the same with Alitalia from Nice (a short change in Rome) for €230 return. ■



This close! A tee-shot on a Par 3 was nearly an ace.



Palermo is packed with wonder, including the Palatine Chapel of the Palazzo Normanni, a fusion of Christian faith and Arabic art in gilded mosaic.

Even in short days of mid-November you can golf, lunch and sightsee (cliff-huggingly quaint Taormina, pictured, is half an hour away, and delightful villages all claiming to have been locations for one of the *Godfather* movies abound).



TIPS @TRAVELLERS

• Although the SNCF offers some very good deals (if you can find them!), a place for unbeatable rail ticket prices is zepass.com where people whose travel plans have changed try to off load tickets that are not refundable.

A quick sale is their only hope. Any day you'll find hundreds of offers on the site.

• Air France (airfrance.fr) is launching "MiNi", with domestic flights departing from Nice-Côte d'Azur for

€51 and €99 return. Designed for passengers travelling without baggage so checked luggage will cost extra (€20). You can't choose your seat but you'll still have the same inflight perks: drinks, snacks and newspapers.

Pan Am: Remembering the great days

The first four days of November saw a remarkable coming together of former Pan Am employees in Monaco. I sat down with three 747 captains, two old-time cabin crew and a couple of familiar faces to me – those of Max Gurney, for many years Pan Am's rep in Monaco, and Jean Khalifa, who represented the company at Nice-Côte d'Azur Airport. These were just a handful of the some 500 ex-Pan Am people who had come to Monaco to celebrate with some slight anticipation the 75th anniversary of the company's first transatlantic flight.

This, to an outsider, seemed an extraordinary turnout. "No surprise to us," insisted Captain Don Cooper. "There was a wonderful spirit in the company. There's nothing like it in today's airline world – and it was like a big family. The idea of getting together was a given."

"We used to fly together far more than is usual these days," put in Captain Tommy Carroll, "when people often get to meet up for the first time at the pre-flight briefing. And then we had a rather hands-off management that just let us get on with the job. There was a great spirit then."



Pan American World Airways - Graduation 1962

I also met with Nancy Hult Ganis, the stewardess (her favoured term) who had come up with the idea for the ABC series *Pan Am* which, after much hype, bombed in the ratings and was quickly cancelled. "We felt very special, you know. We only flew outside the US, much of the time to high-end destinations such as Paris, Rome and Nice or to exotic

places like Liberia or Fiji. I suppose we felt like an elite – and we were: well-bred, well-educated, almost like diplomats." This didn't, lamented Nancy, come over in *Pan Am*. "The writers I talked to, young guys, just didn't get it. They seemed to think that what ABC wanted was *Desperate Stewardesses*. It was not like that at all." *P.M.*

A full version of
this article with
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Living with the enemy

On November 8th 1942 British and American Forces landed in North Africa. Just 72 hours later – on Armistice Day – Hitler decided to occupy that part of France which since 1940 had been a so-called “free zone”, administered by the collaborationist government of Marshal Pétain, based in Vichy. Initially the Mediterranean region was occupied by the Italians. Florence Pinglier kept a record of events which she later wrote up.

November 1942-September 1943

The arrival of the first group of Italian troops, parading slowly along the Promenade des Anglais, was a triumph. Their dream was coming true. Nice would be Italian forever!

They were greeted by hundreds of onlookers, mostly locals of Italian extraction who would have nothing to lose from the change. The rest of the population, like us, remained silent and discreet.

Most of the inhabitants were not persecuted by the Italians but we became aware that “suspect” men and women

were arrested, especially those believed to have shown sympathy, past or present, for communism. For example, bank records were inspected and those who had subscribed years earlier to the Soviet loan were immediately arrested. Rumour had it that the Italian Special Police at their headquarters in Cimiez were just as brutal as the Nazis. Members of the Gestapo were also present in Nice to help the Italians. Identity cards were frequently checked. That was an ordeal for me – my card stated “British by birth”. Luckily, I was only checked by the French police who stamped it without remark.

We spent the summer of 1943 in Roquefort-les-Pins. That was when things changed. After allied forces landed in Italy, the Italians sued for an armistice. Almost immediately we found the streets filled with German soldiers. Early on I had a frightening experience. I was alone in our house in Roquefort listening to the BBC news. The front door was open and suddenly I found two young German soldiers on the doorstep. Had they heard the news bulletin in English? Apparently not. One of them pointed to our vines and said in hesitant French they wanted to take some grapes. I explained they were not ripe. One repeated this to his companion, they saluted and withdrew. However, the pressure of German soldiers everywhere was very disturbing.

This occupation was so much more thorough than the Italian. Curfew, patrols day and night, arrests, stories of torture and executions – it was impossible to forget for an instant that we were at the mercy of the invader. Materially, things were bad and steadily got worse. Fresh food had almost disappeared from the markets: we queued to buy cauliflower leaves, the cauliflowers themselves being sent to Germany, with much other local produce. A large part of the provisions sent by train from Paris never reached Nice. Authorities of the towns on the route helped themselves to the food to feed their own people. Then with allied air attacks we had less and less to eat. Luckily, in April 1944 we were able to send our son Alain,



Italian occupation in France: Roll call for Italian troops before Italian officers.

Photo: German Federal Archives

Florence Pinglier was born near Newcastle upon Tyne in 1902. She became an English teacher and met her husband André when he came to her school as a French assistant. After they married she took a degree in French and when they moved to France obtained the necessary qualification to teach English in school (CAPES). The Pingliers moved to Nice in the early 1930s and both taught at the *Lycée hôtelier* there. After the war André founded the Nice branch of the Association France-Grande-Bretagne and was its President for many years. After his death in 1996 Florence moved to a retirement home near Paris to be close to her son Alain and his children. She died in 2003, just before her 101st birthday.





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then aged seven, to a farm in the Hautes-Alpes near Gap where he got plenty to eat.

The Germans were not the only enemy. A *niçois*, Joseph Darnand, created the *Milice*, a uniformed group who helped the Germans hunt down Jews, *résistants* and others seen as targets for persecution. We had one very frightening contact with the *Milice*. My husband taught English in a Nice high school. One day one of his pupils, a boy of 15 or 16, asked to interview us at home. He told us he was a *milicien* and was aware that we were pro-British and listened to the BBC. He had told his captain of this and had been ordered to warn us to change our behaviour or something bad would happen to us. Curiously, not long after he disappeared from school and we never heard of him again. But that was a bad moment. ■

In June 1944 news came of the allied landings in Normandy and then not long after in Provence. War was now on the Pingliers' doorstep and they decided to join their son in the Hautes-Alpes; it was there they welcomed the advancing American troops who gladly used their services as interpreters. By October they were at home in Nice to await the final days of the war.



Taxi!

There are some professions whose members are rarely boring: policemen, hotel managers and taxi drivers. A good example of an engaging cabbie is Raymond Gatti whose memoirs, originally published in French, have now come out in English as *War Taxi, Peace Taxi*, with the assistance of Estelle Tarallo-Sottile. Gatti, who was ninety in April and remains sprightly and articulate, recalls his experiences in the Second World War and as a taxi driver (mainly) in Cannes.

Born in Plascassier into a family of flower growers serving local parfumeurs, like many of his generation he found his life turned upside down by Hitler. During the occupation he was deported to Poland to work as a labourer but, with that native cunning he readily admits to, he wangled his way back to France and lay low until the allied landings in 1944. He soon got himself taken on as a driver by the American army (as an acting Master Sergeant, no less) and followed their push into Germany, among other things taking part, a horrifying

experience, in the relief of Buchenwald. His account highlights how the US military, more “democratic” than its European counterparts, struck a French observer. But there were surprises: GIs unlucky enough to pick up “the clap” were automatically given a dishonourable discharge.

After the war, following a spell as a hotel concierge, Gatti found his vocation as a taxi driver and much of the book opens up that occupational world as it was down to the late eighties. As a job, driving a cab could have its spells of boredom – just waiting around – but in a place like Cannes the consolation was meeting a lot of interesting people: Gatti welcomed aboard his Cadillac

the Windsors, Gary Cooper and Barbra Streisand (who kept him waiting six months to be paid) and many others. He got on especially well with Americans who were generous with tips and in one case persuaded him to move as a cabbie to Dallas for several months (nostalgia for the Croisette soon

brought him home).

Running through these pages is a deep feeling of gratitude to America and those troops who helped liberate the country, often at the cost of their lives. As Mayor of Plascassier, as he became after his retirement from the cabstand, he set up memorials to those men all along the neighbouring coastal area. As he said, “I did it because future generations must remember what America did for France.” **P.M.**

War Taxi, Peace Taxi can be ordered from lulu.com (Raleigh, NC) and is available for download on iTunes US.



Portraits from a Riviera Past: Vanished art of the Consul

First in a series of English on the Riviera, a look at James Charles Harris, British Consul, watercolourist and humanitarian

BY JUDIT KIRALY



Sir James Charles Harris with wife Geraldine outside their villa in Mont Boron, Nice.

Photo: Didier Gayraud

One of the most interesting British characters eminent in 19th century Riviera society was undoubtedly Sir James Charles Harris. Born in 1831 in Genoa, he was a descendant of two resident British families: Bird and Brame. Truly a European, speaking fluent Italian, English, French, Latin and good German, Harris received a classical education that included painting and was educated both in Britain and Italy.

Harris was a notable artist – mainly doing watercolours. Sadly, most of his works have since been disseminated all over the world or disappeared, like the album of watercolours of Nice he offered to Queen Victoria at the end of her stay in Nice. He

was one of the founding members of the Society of Beaux Arts of Nice and had exhibited his work in the Royal Academy of Arts in London. He donated shortly before his death an album to Holy Trinity Church. However, the whereabouts of this remains a mystery; as it was neither sold at an auction for charity nor can it be located.



Pont Vieux, 1861, Private Collection

In 1884, Nice became the centre of inventions and technical novelties, during the Nice International Exhibition. In the Royal Collection of Art there is a copy of a sketch Harris made of the Exhibition Pavilion. He sent frequent letters about the Côte d'Azur to various British journals and magazines and waged a private war against *The Standard*, when it published false cholera reports about Nice.

Harris was named British Consul in 1884. He was a Churchwarden, and a polite gentleman, but he could also lose his composure. He sent a letter to the Prefecture in 1896, in reply to an official request to have a copy of the balance sheets of Holy Trinity, not only refusing to furnish the required documents, but making it clear, that since the British Church draws no subsidies, it is simply not the Prefecture's business how they manage financially. The request was not repeated.

Consul Harris was President of several charitable Societies such as the SPA (*Société Protectrice des Animaux*) of which he was founding member and President, giving support to the idea of establishing public watering facilities for birds, dogs and donkeys. At the turn of the road, in front of the Chateau de l'Anglais on Mont Boron, we can still see the one financed by Queen Victoria, after Consul Harris mentioned the idea to her.

Harris was also an amateur Urban Planner: He didn't hesitate to criticize, but also made concrete suggestions by publishing a booklet in French *Decadence de Nice Comme Station D'hiver – Les Moyens de la Conjurer* in which he complained about the elegant society moving to Cannes from Nice. He also complained about the sewers – this was a recurring hygienic problem before the 1890s. The original *égouts* in Nice was nothing more than a trench in the middle of the road and the *fosse* was a septic tank, emptied by the peasants who used the contents for fertilizer.

As well, he wrote a historical paper – *Monaco: Pièces Historiques et Traités* – about the sovereignty of the Monegasque Prince. His real hour of glory came with the successive visits of Queen Victoria from 1895 while he was Consul. In May 1896, when he worked tirelessly to make sure that the visit was perfect in every way, James Charles Harris was amongst the first to receive the Victorian Order, later becoming KCVO for his services.

Harris's fundraising subscription in 1899, after the Toulon disaster, was very favourably received

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in French political circles and led later to the *Entente Cordiale* and more specifically to the *Fêtes Franco-Anglaises* of Nice (1912). Consul Harris was an essential precursor in the improving political relations and developing French-British cooperation that would stand the test of time during the First World War

In 1859 in Suttgart, Harris married Gerhardine von Gall. (She used the French version of her name in Nice: Geraldine.) The marriage was a success except for the tragedy of losing their two-year-old boy Monty. Harris suffered from severe asthma, and he died in 1904, in his villa Les Roches on Mont Boron, aged seventy-three. He's buried in the Caucade Cemetery in Nice. ■

This is an excerpt from Judit Kiraly's yet unpublished book The English Church of a French Resort. In the current issue of Nice Historique (FNAC, Librairie Masséna) you can find two of Judit Kiraly's recent articles on the Croix de Marbre suburb development and Holy Trinity Nice.



The mimosa: a flower at the heart of a local tradition

Within a few days of this *Reporter's* distribution there should be the first blooming of the mimosa, that wonderful golden flower which has become a symbol of the Côte d'Azur and has a tradition all of its own. But this flower which brings, as the locals say "a thousand suns" to the sometimes-greyish days of our late winter, was actually brought to Europe from Australia by an expat, Captain Cook. How it got to this region is not altogether clear. One claimant to the title of first importer is the nicely named Duc de Vallombrosa. Many readers, though, we imagine, will favour the cause of Lord Brougham, formerly Lord Chancellor of England, who settled in Cannes in the 1830s. It's in and around that town that mimosa first flourished. It now has a notable presence elsewhere, including around Ste Maxime, St Raphaël and Grasse – and, of course, Mandelieu and Bormes-les-Mimosas.

A quarter of all horticultural production in the Alpes-Maritimes consists of mimosa – that's some 550 tons or around one million blooms annually. This represents a turnover of €3 million a year. Ninety per cent of

the production goes for export (Italy, Scandinavia, USA, Canada, even Japan). Despite a buoyant market the calling of *mimosiste* is unattractive to younger *azureens* involving as it does hard physical work, especially during the winter harvest. Their number is down from 169 in 1990 to barely 70 today – and one in four is over 60.

And that local tradition? There are two ways to find out about it. One is to follow, in whole or in part, the 130km Route des Mimosas between Grasse and Bormes-les-Mimosas. This takes in eight villages, all of them interesting and memorable. Gassin, which is well into the Var, is rated (you won't want to argue) one of France's most beautiful villages; and then there's Pégomas where you can take your coffee with a *mimosette*, that's a brioche bursting with mimosa-flavoured cream. If you like festive events with lots of other people you should get along to the *Fête du Mimosa* in Mandelieu-La Napoule which has its 18th edition (actually, it can trace its history back to a rather modest start in 1931) between February 15th-24th. This is a spectacular show featuring some 12 tons of the golden bloom woven into floral sculptures illustrating the chosen theme (this year it's *Mimosa fête les Contes*). ■

To find out more see ot-mandelieu.fr or call 04 93 93 64 64

So you've decided this is the year you'll really give up smoking?

Don't think it's going to be easy



made: the undisputed benefits of giving up smoking and the undeniable difficulty of doing so. As to the first point, it's a no-brainer: in France

84%

chance of quitting successfully after being intensively advised by a doctor

Source: WHO

BY PATRICK MIDDLETON

The French medical magazine *Prescrire* recently carried details of a cross-national survey which followed nearly 4000 smokers in their attempts to abandon their habit. Their approaches ranged across everything from the use of nicotine substitutes through acupuncture to hypnosis and

even prayer. The depressing conclusion of the survey was that after twelve months no fewer than 90% of puff-ers had relapsed. That makes me wonder about the claim of those recent EU ads which announced a 30% success rate for an anti-smoking programme – iCoach – now officially sponsored by Brussels (see *exsmokers.eu*).

More effective, perhaps, is Smoquit, an online service to tobacco addicts – in English – that invites you to input how long you've been smoking and how many cigarettes you get through in a day. It then offers you an estimate of the years left to you before you're claimed by cancer.

In any discussion of this subject two points have to be

70,000 people a year die of smoking-related diseases (of which 40,000 are victims of cancer). Also disturbing is a recent research report from King's College, London, that showed that many of those who had smoked for at least four years suffered significant cognitive impairment affecting memory, planning and overall mental ability. As well as the avoidance of a major health risk, there's the "no-puffing dividend", as

Quitting timeline

AFTER 20 MINUTES blood pressure and pulse return to normal.

AFTER 24 HOURS lungs start to clear.

AFTER 2 DAYS body is nicotine-free, sense of taste & smell return

AFTER 3 DAYS breathing is easier, and your energy increases.

AFTER 2 TO 12 WEEKS circulation improves.

AFTER 3 TO 9 MONTHS coughs and wheezing lessen.

AFTER 1 YEAR heart attack risk is half that of a smoker.


AFTER 10 YEARS lung cancer risk is half that of a smoker.

Source: NHS

USEFUL WEBSITES

- help-eu.com • ash.org.uk
- nhs.uk/Livewell/smoking
- tabac-info-service.fr
- cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking





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✦ Mummy & Me Yoga	✦ Bootcamp classes	... and more	

money is made available for other purposes. In 2012 the average French smoker was funding his habit to the tune of €2214 a year. This should become a stronger motivation with the continuing rise in cost of cigarettes. A pack of Marlboro, France's most popular brand, now retails at €6.60 with a further €0.30 hike due this July. In fact, despite a continuing increase in the price of smokes, since 2005 the number of those lighting up has actually risen. According to recent Ministry of Health figures, some 26% of the French – 40% of those under-25 – are regular smokers. Of course, one factor which weakens the price disincentive is the widespread availability of cigarettes from sources other than the local *tabac*. Billions of *clopes* – to use the slang word – are smoked every year which have either been smuggled into France or legally purchased across a frontier. In Italy, for example,

that pack of Marlboro, costs just €4.60 (to compare prices see cigaretteprices.net). This may partly explain why the inhabitants of the Alpes-Maritimes and the Var are among France's heaviest smokers with an average consumption of 51 packs a year.

Ups and downs

Anyway, you've got the message: you sincerely want to give up smoking. You may even be influenced by the evidence against passive smoking and of the massive long-term pollution of soil and water caused by discarded cigarette butts. Here's the way to go. First, drop in at your doctor's office and tell him you want to escape your slavery to tobacco. He knows your medical history and can advise you in that context. Most likely he'll refer you to a specialist unit at one of our local hospitals. There's a list of these, city by city, for each region, at ofta-asso.fr

The *médecins tabacologues*



Want to have better sex?

A major benefit when you quit smoking is an improved sex life. Other advantages include higher fertility; younger-looking skin and whiter teeth.

Be a quitter!

**Wed March 13th:
No Smoking Day**
(nosmokingday.org.uk)

**May 31st:
World No Tobacco Day**
(who.int/tobacco/wntd)



who staff these units (often former smokers themselves) understand the nature of nicotine dependence and how hard it is to overcome. They begin with a lengthy personal discussion and then offer a therapeutic regime probably entailing the use of nicotine substitutes (the *Sécu* reimburses these up to a limit of €50) reinforced by ongoing psychological support. They will not be surprised if a patient relapses but offer ready encouragement to persevere. As one specialist, Dr Gerard Dubois, has put it, "Don't be put off by failure. There can be ups and downs but it's all worth it if you end up beating the weed. Yes, you may put on some weight in the early stages but that's no big deal. You've avoided a major health risk, after all." His colleague, Dr Anne Borgne of the René Muret Hospital in Sèvres, says: "Backsliding is an integral part of the process of overcoming the habit". ■

Valentine's à la française

Nearly 30% of the French believe that Valentine's Day shouldn't be ignored. Are you romantically inclined, too?

BY NATHALIE GIRAUD



Last Valentine's Day, Americans collectively spent around \$3.5 billion on a romantic evening even though 82% said they would've preferred an "experience" to a gift.

In the UK, a third of couples decided to forego gift giving all together last year to save money. Fortunately in France, where they still speak *la langue de l'amour*, 51% of women and 43% of men feel that February 14th is without a doubt "a day dedicated to love" and a chance to prove their commitment to a loved one. According to a survey published by Spir Communication, a third of French men (against 25% of woman) expected to spend between 60 and 100 euros on Valentine's Day, mainly on flowers or perfume (41%), followed by lingerie, clothing or jewellery (29%).

Whether you think this is just a commercial ploy to make you spend money or you're going to use the occasion to propose, here are the top ten common Valentine's gifts with a romantic, erotic, playful, kinky, juicy ... twist on tradition.

For a start, forget about "buying" a gift, and begin by thinking about what it is that you're giving. What is the message you would like to express? Whether a dream or declaration, affirmation or perhaps it's just to keep someone happy, it's the underlying thought that counts.

1. flowers

Opt for one rose and some (fresh) rose petals to spread on the bed or in the bath. Create a path to wherever you'd like to lead your partner.

♥ Créatif Fleurs, Antibes

2. chocolates

Create an assortment or get a set of rich body paint to spread on your lover as a gourmet treat. Some kits have a brush for teasing or a pen to write poems with.

♥ Pâtisserie Canet, Nice

3. romantic meal

Close your eyes, what do you see? Most likely a few candles over a nicely set table, scrumptious food, good wine – but most importantly, just the two of you, away from the kids, and the hustle and bustle. ♥ Louis XV, Monaco

Value this time together to connect as a couple. Why not even prepare a meal at home and be sure to include some powerful aphrodisiacs (oysters and ginger, for example but don't forget asparagus, avocados and figs).

14%

women who send themselves flowers on Valentine's Day

Source: statisticbrain.com

4. perfume

A powerful link to memory and emotions, the olfactory sense is one of our most primitive. Try a perfumed candle or better still a scented "massage" candle to set the ambiance and increase erotic and sexual awareness. Once lit, the oil will melt and can be used for a warm sensuous massage.

♥ Fragonard, Grasse

5. jewellery

A piece of jewellery is difficult to get wrong, but add a touch of poetry or a few simple words while offering this and the gift will be even more special.

♥ Thomas Sabo, Galeries Lafayette Nice & Cap 3000

6. cuddly toy

Just add sex between these two words to give some vibrations to your lives. There are a few couple oriented gadgets to engage into playful embraces.

♥ EasyLove, Villeneuve Loubet

7. lingerie

It's important to get the size right! So check first. And for the mischievous, why not add an edible candy G-string to the gift? ♥ Sage ou pas Sage, Nice



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8. *night in a hotel*

To make it a little more special, make the surprise preliminaries last longer with sexy SMS and short notes, revealing things you will do and how amazing and special your partner makes you feel.

♥ 3.14, Cannes

9. *a short break*

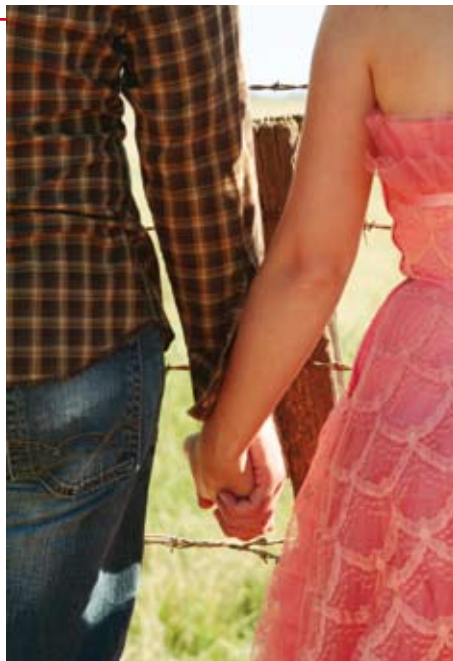
Once passed the initial flame, spending quality time as a couple is a rare and valued gift. Unglue yourselves from the phone, computer or TV and try taking a bath together, playing sexy games and erotic dares. Being "there" isn't enough, you need to pay attention to your spouse and this requires a conscious effort. (There are really helpful local seminars and workshops for couples to help deepen intimacy and feelings.)

♥ Hotel La Mirande, Avignon

10. *beauty treatment*

Usually given by a man, it's an appreciated and safe bet to take time and be pampered! In addition to this, you can create your own love coupon to your partner promising your full undivided attention, being at their service for a specified period.

♥ AYAME, Mougins



Looking for a man? Well, it's not too difficult if you don't mind the dung on his boots

A rather familiar figure within the expat community is the woman who's here from Norwich, Nijmegen or Norrköping hoping to find a man. It's not easy but there's a ray of hope. France's farmers offer a buyer's market to these looking-for-love ladies. According to Ministry of Agriculture figures one-third of *agriculteurs* are single and would do anything not to

be. As one man told a radio interviewer recently, "If I meet a woman and tell her I'm a farmer, she's usually off like a shot. They don't like the sound of the life: it means isolation and likely sharing in some very hard and boring work. But for the right kind of person it could be the right kind of life."

So if you're on the hunt for a man think about meeting a farmer. The simplest way is to go on one of the several dating sites. Among the most popular are *AtraversChamp.com* (France and Canada), *vachement.fr* and *www.agri-dating.fr*. Luc Gagnon, who founded the first of these three, explains, "It works like any other dating site but it's very specific and female members get informed very quickly about what sort of lifestyle it would lead to." Another possibility (involving heavy public exposure) is to get on the M6 show *L'Amour est dans le pré* (roughly translated: "the way to marriage is across the meadow"). This brings with it all the drawbacks of reality television (over 6 million viewers regularly tune in). Those who wish to take part are carefully vetoed and given a psychological examination. As she looked back recently on the show's seventh season producer Marie Genest insisted, "Most of the time things work out well with the encounter of town girls and country boys offering good entertainment. Having someone from the UK or the Netherlands would add something interesting to the mix." To find more see "Programmes" at *M6.fr*

**Don't
forget Fido
Every year
American con-
sumers spend
around \$367m on
Valentine's Day
gifts for their
pets. ♥ Star Dog
Boutique, Nice**



**Not the best gift. There's a 40% increase in
US divorce filings around Feb 14th.**

Please your squeeze with a DIY perfume

An offering of perfume might seem rather banal but less so if you can claim that it was you who created the product at Galimard's Studio des Fragrances in Grasse (5 route de Pégomas; 04 93 09 20 00). You can get through the whole business in a two-hour workshop under the helpful supervision of a Galimard "nose" (as the pros are called). You select and sniff from a range of dozens of essences and come up with a blend which is bottled, given a name and for €45 it's yours.

RIVIERA FIT: Local steps toward healthy living

BY COLETTE KENT, FITHUB FOUNDER



Photo: Nick Kent

06 Sports

1044
official clubs

247,077
club members
(65% male;
35% female)

Most members
Tennis; Football;
Sailing; Golf;
Petanque

Age
46.9% under-18
53.1% 18+
55+ largest group

Source: CDOS A-M in 2011

We know that exercise should be an integral part of our lives. It boosts energy, relieves stress, releases feel-good chemicals in our brain, and builds the immune system. Fortunately, we live in what can only be described as a playground for the sports enthusiast, with a wealth of organised events and outdoor activities (for all speeds) at our back door ... but where to begin?

• Start slow

Often when people start exercising they go too hard, too fast and end up injuring themselves due to beginner enthusiasm. Build your fitness level gradually and give your body time to adapt to the changes that are happening.

• Build a foundation

I always recommend starting with exercises that focus on the “Core” – all the muscles from the shoulders to the hips that help to provide support and stability for your body. The majority of pilates exercises are on a floor mat concentrating on your mid-section, with great attention given to form. Yoga is similar but also increases flexibility to keep your muscles supple, helping to prevent injury.

• Plan your fitness

We all have busy schedules but think of this as investing time in both your physical and mental health. Make a plan in advance (perhaps Sunday evening) when you’re less likely to opt out at the last minute. Can you get up a little earlier? Is there any time at lunch or can you take a class on your way home from work (keep a set of workout clothes in the car)? Making a commitment to a friend or signing up for a class in advance is an even bigger incentive to show up!

• Be kind to yourself

If you miss out on a training session or class don’t beat yourself up or give up. Start anew the next day, take a deep breath and try again.

• Mix it up

Variety is the spice of life and that goes for fitness, too. Mixing up your routine not only keeps boredom at bay but also changes the muscle groups you’re using, preventing repetitive strain and injuries while building a more balanced body. Remember to include lots of stretching after a workout to prepare your body for your next session.

• Set a goal

Whether signing up for a race or making a pact between friends, goal setting keeps you on track and means you’re less likely to skip out on a session. Share your goal with others and that extra little pressure will further drive you. Give yourself a reward when you reach your goal and then set your next one.

• Have fun!

Fitness is really just playtime for adults and should be fun. With exercise, like quitting smoking (see page 20), if there’s no will, then there’s no way. Combine fitness with socialising: join friends or take a group class. Enjoy the feeling of getting fitter, stronger and boosting your confidence. You may even improve your French along the way.

Swimming is a low-impact activity that you can do your whole life, and you can exercise longer in water than on land without increased effort or joint or muscle pain. If the Med’s too cold, swim at your local pool. See locations and rates at guide-piscine.fr/alpes-maritimes



Get active locally

WALKING/HIKING

• **Easy:** A 12km return walk from the church in Nice port to the airport. An easy ramble or a power-walk on a flat, smooth path with spectacular views and lots of people watching.

• **Medium:** A wonderful 10km walk around St-Jean-Cap-Ferrat (careful in winter with rough seas). The path (with some steps) takes you around the edge of the Cap and past the lighthouse with stunning views of Nice, Beaulieu and Monaco.

• **Hard:** A hike from Eze-sur-Mer to Eze Village is a 3-hour round trip (430m height from sea level) with several hundred steps. The easy, smooth path at the start turns into a climb of old Roman steps and a magical, topsy-turvy, stony trail winding its way up to Eze Village.

RUNNING

• **Run & Style** (runand-style.fr) in Nice has a free women's run (with a couple of sit-ups thrown in) Tuesday nights at 7pm. There's music and great ambience – and all levels and ages participate.

• **Riviera Hash House Harriers** (rivierahhh.com) run (and walk!) every second Sunday of the month and attract a very international group. €5/run or €15/year. They are currently celebrating 25 years – see page 38.

SKIING

• For info on regional slopes see frenchriviera-mountain.com. Ligne d'Azur (lignesdazur.com) has a new daily service Bus 100% Neige so you can spend an entire day skiing in Auron, Isola 2000, Valberg, la Colmiane, Roubion and le Boréon. Book online for a special fare from €4.

CYCLING

• Cyclists have an ever-increasing network of designated bike paths (*pistes cyclables*) connecting Nice with St-Laurent-du-Var, Cagnes-sur-Mer, Villeneuve Loubet and Antibes. An active way of getting round is to jump on a **Vélo Bleu**. See "How to use a Velo Bleu" on the *Reporter* website.

• **Cycle Cote d'Azur** (cyclecotedazur.com) has Beginner Rides in English to give you the skills and knowledge to confidently ride in a group or on your own up and down hills.

CLUBS & CLASSES

• For a twist on yoga and pilates try Barbara McDonnell's **Ballet Tone** class (in English) in Nice (06 60 17 95 23). **Fitlane** (fitlane.com; see page 26) now has 7 fitness clubs in the region. **Touch rugby** in Sophia Antipolis and Antibes (sophiarugby.com) welcomes newcomers.



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The face behind the franchise

Ironman and Fitlane are well-known brands in the region. The guys in charge don't just talk the talk but run the race



Photo: Thierry Sourbier



Photo: Fitlane

Ironman France Director Yves Cordier, above. Hans Peter Franklin, founder of Fitlane, pictured right.

BY NANCY HESLIN

Walking along the Promenade in Nice last September I was startled to see the Ironman France equipment set up across from Jardin Albert 1er. The Ironman Nice event is in June, and the half Ironman in Aix-en-Provence had just taken place. When I learned that this was the scene of a movie (starring Alexandra Lamy, wife of *The Artist's* Jean Dujardin) I realised how the Ironman brand has crossed over into pop culture. "These days people have the Ironman logo tattooed on their leg," says Yves Cordier, Director of Ironman France, "and when you walk into an office, you see on one side of the desk a picture of the person's family, and on the other, an Ironman finisher photo."

Yves started swimming at the age of 12 and trained five hours a day outside of school hours to be able to compete in the pool at a national level. "This training gave me a rhythm that I've kept all my life – I get up early, and my days are busy and full."

At 18, Yves stumbled across the Nice Triathlon (4km swim, 120km bike, 32km run). "In 1983 there wasn't the choice of races like today. It was either athletics

or cycling. Without thinking about it, I bought a bike and soon started winning triathlons in France. What's unique in this sport, aside from the challenge of three disciplines, is that if you're injured you can still swim or bike."

Yves took over as Director for Ironman France, which is managed by Triangle, nearly a decade ago. "The Ironman is more than just a challenge – it's a dream and the phenomenon grows every year. Like the Vendée Globe, it attracts a lot of attention even though it's a one-man race. There are some sports that are just incredible feats. Ironman Nice has a 70% foreigner participation rate – about 64 nationalities. It's the South of France and thanks to the Tour de France, the mountains fascinate competitors so the course, difficult but achievable, attracts athletes from all over the world."

In 2011, Triangle added an Ironman 70.3 in Aix-en-Provence to the calendar. "We fell under the charm of Aix, which met all of our objectives in creating a Half Ironman. And we've just finalised our third Ironman 5150 which will hold its first edition on July 28th this year. It's taken years to find the right place but patience has paid off."

Training, as I learned firsthand from the Aix Ironman (see our website, keyword: AixIronman), is about enduring heat, distance, and pain. Yves points out, "Around 15% of Ironman participants are female. I greatly admire the level of women's training. They know themselves and where they are going. Their daily performance and workouts are just better organised." Of course, I remind Yves, that it's not just in sports that women are better organised.

Et Vous?



Fitlane's blue billboards with the now-famous Et Vous? slogan can be viewed everywhere along the Coast. A brilliant marketing campaign of two simple words, as explained by Fitlane's Marketing Manager Cynthia Fernandez: "It's an open-ended question without targeting a particular client profile, and it reflects our diverse clientele and wide-ranging activities." Plus



IronMan 140.6
Nice June 23
3.86km swim,
180.25km bike
42.2km run

Ironman 5150
Marseille July 28
1.5km swim
40km bike
10km run

IronMan 70.3
Aix Sept 22
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most nationalities and ages (even my five-year-old niece) know the meaning of these two words.

Fitlane hit the local health club scene in 2004, when founder Hans Peter Franklin opened a club in Mandelieu. Now, less than ten years later, Fitlane has become the largest chain in the country, covering 11,000m² in the Alpes-Maritimes.

20,000
number of Fitlane
members

For Hans Peter, the business of fitness is similar to that of a supermarket: a place for any age regardless of background or social status. As he told *Nice Matin* last year, "In the United States, 11% of the population has a gym membership, in France it's less than 3%. So is a French person different, or is it just that he's just not found a gym that interests him?" He added that he would open a new facility ever year if he could find the minimum adequate space needed.

With popular locations in Cannes, Cannes La Bocca, Sophia-Antipolis, Mandelieu and Nice St Isidore, two new clubs are scheduled to launch in 2013: in mid-February Nice Centre (7 rue Halévy, behind Casino Ruhl) and later in the year in Juan les Pins. You know what to expect when you walk into any Fitlane club

— it's a brand recognised for cleanliness and quality

Having made his mark in Hong Kong with a chain of clubs based on the American model, this Danish-born English businessman saw an opportunity in France and has revolutionised fitness clubs. "A gym has to be simple to join," Hans Peter said. "None of this pay the year in advance stuff but monthly direct debits. And a club shouldn't be located more than 15 minutes from where you live or work."

A Fitlane membership gives you access to all seven clubs, with more than 1300 classes a month, as well as the latest technological workout equipment, power plates and squash facilities.

And at last, a gym with a Western state of mind: it's open seven days a week. "Every day except Christmas and New Year's Day" Fitlane's doors are open 7am-10pm weekdays and 7am-8pm weekends and holidays.

And for Hans Peter, who ran a RacingThePlanet 250km endurance race over 7 days in 2011, what's his idea of fitness? "No one is too busy to find one hour a day for themselves. Book an appointment with yourself and mark it in your diary. After all, you wouldn't cancel an appointment with your banker so why would you cancel one with yourself?" ■

See fitlane.com for more info.



High tee

After two years of closure for the rebuilding of the clubhouse area, the Claux Amic Golf Club (9th hole pictured) above Grasse has re-opened. There have been a few improvements made to the course itself, but its mountainside location could not be bettered. The view down the Par 3 3rd, with the Lerins isles seeming to sit just above the green, is enough to put the most golf-obsessed player off his or her stroke. The 9th and 18th holes have been switched, a good move that means you can now appreciate one of the most spectacular Par 5s in France while not too exhausted. There's a special daily green fee rate of €55 until mid-April. See claux-amic.com

**For an
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Picture this

A practical column about photography on the Riviera

BY MIKE MEADE

When it comes to photographic opportunities, the Riviera is hard to beat. We have sea and mountains, town and country, narrow back streets and expansive hilltop panoramas. The light can vary from wafting summer haze to the clear stark brilliance that only the Mistral can bring. There's the madness of the Cannes Film Festival and the vibrant action of the Monaco Grand Prix. Sleepy backcountry villages and a sophisticated Principality are all outside our windows just waiting to be captured. We are indeed lucky people.

Most professional photographers are asked the same question time and again: "Which camera should I buy?" To be honest, the answer should usually be: "It doesn't matter." These days, I'd qualify that by saying, "You probably own it already." A mobile phone with a camera option will take you much further than you imagine if you make the most of it. Of course, there are situations where more sophisticated equipment will make particular jobs easier and better but don't underestimate the considerable capabilities of the simplest equipment.

Every professional knows that a good photo is mostly due to the photographer; only owing a small part to the camera. Alain Ducasse could prepare a meal in your family kitchen and it would be a



mouth-watering feast, maybe not quite up to one of his superbly-equipped restaurant kitchen dishes but delicious all the same. It's no different with photography. The person is more important than the equipment.

Some of the greatest photos were and still are taken with the most basic equipment – used in the right place at the right time, pointed in the right direction by someone who has learned to recognise when it all comes together to make a great shot. There's only one priority: to have a camera with you at that moment. Chances are that you do anyway. Just remember that mobile phone in your pocket.

Not convinced that a camera phone or basic consumer level camera can often replace professional gear? Look at the past few years of *Riviera Reporter* cover photos. A couple were professional stock shots, others were taken with a compact Sony Cyber-shot costing about €150 at Darty and some with my €5000 top end Nikon D700 equipped with one of the best professional lenses Nikon ever made. Can you tell which camera took which cover photo? I can't either.

This regular column will teach you how to improve your photos of the Riviera using local examples and some essential equipment every one of us has – our eyes and a finger to push the shutter button with. In many cases, that's all you really need. There'll be a different assignment every issue to see if you can surprise yourself in the world of photography. This is not a contest but if we get some exceptional entries we'll post them on our website or perhaps even in the magazine.

Photo Op #1 TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH FROM INSIDE YOUR HOME LOOKING OUT.

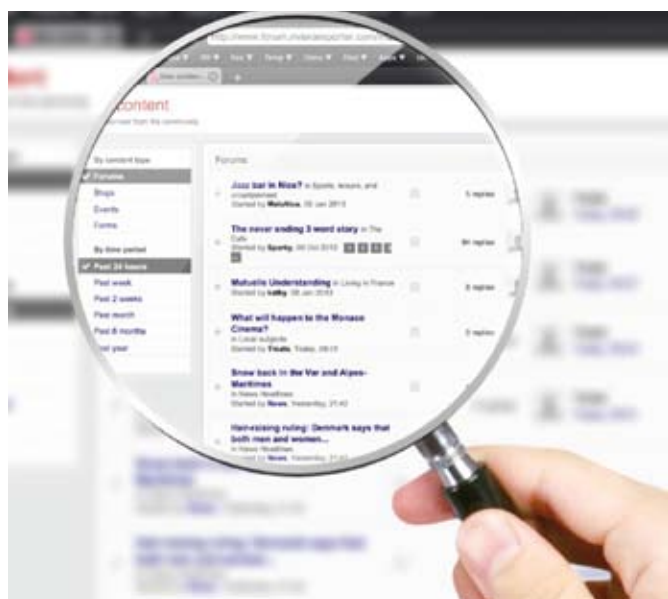
Perhaps showing the view, your street or garden, your cat on the doorstep or even that rain-drenched cobweb on the window. If you live in an apartment you might want to shoot down to the street, up to the sky or across to your neighbour's window boxes. You can shoot through a doorway or an open or closed window. You can show the frame of the door or window or not, it's up to you.

You must use a camera phone, iPhone or a consumer camera costing less than €150. No retouching except for optional cropping or adjusting brightness and contrast. Photoshop is out.

Email questions and your results to:
photos@rivierareporter.com

Oh what a site!

www.rivierareporter.com



tip



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- Every Wednesday morning next week's VO films between Toulon and Monaco are updated with dates, links to the IMDB, cinema maps and screening times. Keyword search for "VOfilms".
- *Reporter Blogger* MelaNice discusses environmental and consumer issues while CôteTails blogs about dog ownership in France. If you have a town or subject – from political opinion to a favourite hobby – you'd like to blog about, send us an email and we'll set up a *Reporter* blog just for you.
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Gardener's Notes: Beautiful things

BY JAMES HARTLEY

DIRECTOR, ENGLISH GARDEN GROUP



Grand designs: A view over the Orangerie towards Swiss Lake at Versailles.

Photo:Urban

Perhaps it's the cold weather, perhaps the days of rain, but for whatever reason there's no denying it: discussion at our office has definitely taken an esoteric turn recently.

Not infrequently I've found us debating what exactly makes a landscape beautiful. If I'm honest I'm not entirely sure what prompted such a discussion in the first place, but I've got a feeling that it's a by-product of spending years designing landscapes. For a budding designer the obvious starting point is to take inspiration from other beautiful things: existing great gardens, the wider landscape and art. However after a while, just designing beautiful gardens isn't enough any more. You realise that the beauty you are trying so hard to embed in your designs is largely a beauty that is often borrowed

from and measured against other people's standards and that to truly raise your game you need to look deeper to understand what it is within the landscape that triggers our appreciation of beauty. It dawns on you then if you can better understand the subtle ingredients in a landscape's beauty that you will better harness these in your work.

25% of Britons take more pride in the garden than any other part of a home.

I'm sure even those that would consider themselves as having little or no natural affinity with

gardens react in a similar manner as the rest of us garden lovers when they first see an outstanding landscape. It's something that talks to you on a deep subconscious level, that appeals to your sense of the aesthetic and just looking at it makes you feel good, raising your spirit and lowering your pulse.

The question is though: What is it in these scenes that elicits these reactions? Is beauty really as banal as a common cultural agreement on what is beautiful? Surely not. Is there a "true" beauty that supersedes all cultures and times and speaks to us on a deep subconscious level? Probably. I've come to the conclusion that the answer to those questions lies somewhere between the two.

In the beginning

Perhaps it's sad that so many enthusiastic young designers choose to go to school to "learn" garden design. Not only does this tend to impose stale principles of design but it also leads to a rather oversimplified paint-by-numbers approach to designing a garden. The accepted "rules" reflect arbitrary preconceptions such as "avoid straight lines" and deal only very superficially with the principles that underpin good design. I would go so far as to say that they are actually obstacles to becoming a truly good designer as they offer an easy escape from having to think it out for themselves and work out in one scene after another what is beautiful, and most importantly, why. I will accept, that when these

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1. Villa d'Este, Tivoli, Italy
2. Gardens Of Versailles, Versailles, France
3. Sanssouci Park, Potsdam, Germany
4. Schönbrunn Garden, Vienna, Austria
5. Ayrliess Garden, Whitford, New Zealand
6. The Taj Mahal and the Mehtab Bagh (Moonlight Garden), Agra, India
7. Classical Gardens of Suzhou (Humble Administrator's Garden), Suzhou, China
8. Isshidan Garden, Ryogen-in Temple, Kyoto, Japan



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guidelines are followed, it invariably leads to the production of a well-organised design, but think for a moment of all the truly groundbreaking gardens you've seen, and not just the ones by famous garden designers. There are gardens all over the world designed by totally untrained gardeners that are absolutely outstanding, and they have all one thing in common. The designer has managed to capture beauty, in some small way, in the same manner as that of an artist. This relationship between art and the landscape is not accidental: so many of the best landscape designers have a background in art that it is more than just coincidence. I remember being amazed that the iconic Gertrude Jekyll had no formal training in landscape design. What I found out later was that she had trained as an artist, and this magical combination is probably the best of both worlds. Being trained as an artist gave her the tools she needed to be able to interpret what it was that added beauty

to a landscape, and the absence of a training in the landscape design left her gloriously free from preconceptions and the constraints of the consensus on "good garden design" of the time. On visiting her gardens one realises that every element was selected and placed by someone with a deep understanding of the aesthetic.

Beauty as a principle

Beauty as a principle has puzzled philosophers over the ages, and it remains one of the discipline's most fascinating enigmas. Beauty and pleasure go hand in hand, and probably the most surprising aspect is that it is the very act of deciding for yourself what is beautiful that increases your awareness, sharpens your perception and, ultimately, your potential enjoyment of the scene. I'm always taken aback at what, in a large beautiful garden, a photographer will select to take shots of. In some cases a large garden will only produce a couple of usable

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spend in a lifetime

£20,000

on their garden

£2,681.88

garden tools
and equipment

£3,116.40

for compost alone

£301.23

annual maintenance
of lawn, flowerbeds,
shrubs, trees
and plants

50%

think a garden
is selling point
of a home

*Source: Honda Lawn
& Garden poll*

images, while a smaller garden might produce many. This alone is very telling.

Landscape design draws on so many areas to create beauty (and that is part of its fascination to me), but I've come to my own conclusion on what is the most important principle in creating a beautiful garden, and you might be surprised to hear that it has nothing to do with colour. For me, the best compositions are those that draw on well-crafted compositions of plants and structural elements, where the shapes and textures simultaneously contrast and support each other. While this certainly applies to the materials that are used in the garden, never is this so important than when dealing with the plants.

And when you boil it all down, that's really the essence of a beautiful garden: stop trying to grow flowers and focus on the plants. ■



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Monaco Murmurs

BY MOLLY BROWN



The French word *Boulingrins*, which dates back to the 17th century, refers to a decorative parterre of flowerbeds and fountains, as seen above at the gardens around the Casino in Monte-Carlo. Photo: © Monte-Carlo S.B.M.

If you arrive in Monaco at Jardin Exotique, the road takes you down to the Casino where there is a traffic light; you either turn right to go down to the port, left to Roquebrune Cap Martin, or across and down a small road through the Casino gardens to the Place du Casino. One of the drivers of the Bus de Soirée, whose job can be pretty lonely in winter time when there is no late night open air cinema and few tourists (he works at night so that he can go fishing in the daytime or tend his vegetable garden in the hills behind Menton) told me that on every tour he looks forward to stopping at the light and admiring the only really elegant view in Monaco, over the Boulingrins gardens and fountains to the floodlit Casino. It is just as magical in daytime; the sun shimmers through the leaves of the trees and the dancing fountains, the gardens are ablaze with brightly coloured flowers and the tourists flock to take photographs.

Catch the magic

Although there are wonderful views over the Principality from Jardin Exotique, the ramparts of the Palace, Oceanographic Museum and the Casino terraces, the view over these elegant gardens in the heart of Monte Carlo is special ... but it is soon to be lost. Take your camera now and capture the magic. The fountains are to be taken away as ... "Société des Bains de Mer has a new project to accommodate the shops from the Sporting d'Hiver and the Avenue des Beaux-Arts in ... while it carries out renovation work at the Sporting d'Hiver

and the Hôtel de Paris. Curved buildings will be erected around a winding, tree-lined alleyway in the middle of the Boulingrins Gardens ... These amazing, innovative structures will have a unique shape, echoing the curves of the garden ... and will make this new shopping area in the heart of Monte Carlo more attractive. They will be set up in the first half of 2014 for a period of four years."

Accentuate the positive

However, we must face the New Year in positive mood and rejoice that

the Monaco economy is in much better shape than the rest of Europe, and it will soon be Spring. There is no carnival in Monaco as in Nice and Menton to lighten the dark February days and the town is quiet, but Prince Albert's announcement of an entirely new plan to build a 5-hectare extension into the sea at Larvotto has spiced up coffee morning chat ... a nice change from banking and the economy. Speculation is rife and experts with inside knowledge abound. Practically speaking, when inheriting only a rock and a steep hillside, it makes sense to try to level it out and extend the border out to sea, but where will it be? Will it spoil our swimming or frighten the fish?

There may be no Mardi Gras but the ski slopes are in full swing, there is ice-skating on the port and the Monte-Carlo Ballet is dancing its way across Europe. The Monte-Carlo Opera season is in full swing with a brilliant production of Verdi's *La Traviata* delighting opera lovers, who now eagerly await Bellini's *La Sonnambula* (Feb 24-26) and a new production of Mascagni's *Amica* (Mar. 22, 24, 27 & 29). Les Printemps des Arts bring dancers from the Congo and the Royal Ballet of Cambodia, music of Bela Bartok, offer a musical mystery tour along the Cote d'Azur, and bring trios, quartets and nine Beethoven concerts to theatres in and around the Principality for a musical month from mid-March. ■



A unique and exciting evening of the spine chilling arias of opera's Bad Boys – devilish personalities from Gershwin, Ruddigore, Othello and Faust – by the great Welsh bass baritone and Deutsche Grammophon artist, Bryn Terfel on March 23rd at the Auditorium Rainier III.

Photo: © Mei Lewis / DG

Marriages Afloat

BY MICHAEL HEALY



Photo: Christine Rodway

“Marriages are made in Heaven”, and many would agree. In France they are also made only in the *mairie*. Anglo-Saxon countries vest in priests the power to celebrate marriages, though Registry Offices are an alternative to a church wedding; and various premises are licensed provided there is full access to the public. But a few years ago a dramatic improvement was offered: marriages by your Captain – offshore!

The *Reporter* revealed this in issue 117 (see “Married by Your Captain” on our website) for the benefit of the many Mega-yacht readers based here. Since the 1800s when the emigrant ships to Australia often took over nine months for the voyage, legal marriages at sea have been conducted only by captains of those cruise liners which have re-flagged to Bermuda (notably Cunard and Princess Lines) or Malta (Celebrity Cruises) – perfectly respectable ship- and yacht registers. Thousands of legal high-seas weddings have taken place since Bermuda adopted its Maritime Marriage Act in 1999, and Malta followed in 2008. This has all brought lucrative business to the cruise companies – fine, but why are the

luxury mega-yachts missing out? Many are already registered in Bermuda (like *Leander*, the British-owned flagship) or Malta (the famous sail-yacht *Maltese Falcon*) but we know of no yacht even enquiring about celebrating a valid offshore wedding as now permitted.

Certainly, yacht captains conduct “wedding ceremonies”, but everyone knows (hopefully) that there is no validity and the bride doesn’t receive any marriage lines. Yet mega-yachts are otherwise perfectly suitable, with double bunking in most of the cabins. Only one technical snag: unless built to especially elaborate rules, even the biggest yachts are restricted by Mediaeval laws to a mere 12 passengers, meaning only 10 guests plus the bride and groom. So, if you want 300 guests at your wedding, give the business to Celebrity or Cunard cruise ships which make every effort to capture this valuable marriage market. In every other way, a luxury yacht has the edge, and the Registrars General of Bermuda (*registry.general.gov.bm*) and Malta (*maltaweddings.com*) are keen to take bookings on behalf of romantic couples. Just no same-sex “weddings”. Go for it, charter brokers! ■

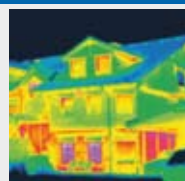
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News of Britain & the British

BY PATRICK MIDDLETON



Photo: adactio

Britannia hospital? No thanks!

When Brits are asked why they would like to live abroad – or, if they already do, why they don't want to return to the UK – an increasingly common answer is that they fear, and that's the word, falling victim to the low standard of medical care in their native country. That's no surprise to anyone who follows the media across the Channel with their endless flow of reports of neglect and incompetence in hospitals and especially when older patients are concerned. These cannot be dismissed as anecdotes about untypical incidents. They regularly evoke a chorus of confirming testimonies.

Just one example: the daughter of an 81-year-old retired merchant navy officer who had entered an NHS hospital for a minor operation related what happened when he contracted an infection – one of those notorious hospital bugs: "He was shouted at and belittled by nurses and when he soiled his sheets and asked for clean pyjamas they laughed at him." Recently the *Daily Mail* invoked the Freedom of Information Act to gather data on such cases from across the country that they used to construct a grim league table of "Britain's rudest hospitals" (warning: don't

France
safest place to live
as a Brit abroad
according to a
Foreign Office
report, based on
cases reported to
consulates.

**1500 cases of
violence**
in the UK there
against the person
per 100,000 of
the population.
Comparable figure
for France: 748

**5287 property
crimes**
per 100,000 of the
population, just
3436 in France.

(Year: 2012)

get sick in Leicester; two of the twelve worst were in that city). One nurse confided that the data collected understated the problem: "Many people don't complain because they are scared." Both doctors and nurses were fingered for their uncaring behaviour which sometimes proved lethal: in 2010, 43 patients starved to death on hospital wards, 11 died of thirst and 78 died of bedsores. The older you are the more likely you'll be abused by those white coated figures whose professional oath commits them "to first do no harm". Shockingly, the General Medical Council has found it necessary to issue a directive to doctors urging them "to treat elderly patients with respect and to ensure they could eat, drink and wash".

And worse even: a report commissioned by the Royal College of nursing found that "NHS patients got an unacceptable level of care from a growing army of unqualified healthcare assistants who have taken over nursing roles on wards". Untrained and ignorant,

their presence is a standing menace to the welfare of patients. No hospital system is perfect but in France there is no widespread dysfunction comparable to this. As one elderly man told us recently, "I've just been in a public hospital for an operation. I can't fault how they treated me. It was excellent."

"The roast beef of old England"

In the lifetimes of quite a few of our readers English food was regarded by many foreigners as quite awful and not so long ago Jacques Chirac, as French president, sneered publicly at how we fed ourselves (only the Finns, he claimed, ate worse). Of course, he was behind the times. Since the sixties there's been a big change: Brits have travelled all over Europe and beyond, Johnny Foreigner has crossed the Channel in huge number and, literally, revolutionised our tastes. Putting aside patriotic defensiveness, it has to be admitted that previously, except in

After the recent horse meat scandal, The Very Hungry Frenchman, chef Raymond Blanc of Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons in Oxfordshire questioned the British "hypocritical" attitude to food" claiming that they "like to pretend food doesn't come from animals". In France, he said, "there is an agreement between owner and animal – you look after it during its life, and when it dies it feeds you."

some upper class households and restaurants, English food was not very enticing. Why so? Historians of food usually offer two explanations: first, Britain industrialised earlier than other European nations and did so quickly; in France, much of the population remained in touch much longer with traditional kitchen practice (though the quality of *la cuisine paysanne* should not be exaggerated); second, in a development facilitated by a commitment to free trade, the UK came to rely on massive imports of processed food, especially canned (and later frozen) meat. Inevitably, traditional culinary skills were lost.

Across the last few decades not only have exotic dishes become familiar (until recently, Chicken Tikka Masala was the nation's favourite main course) but the menus of Old England, real or imaginary, were revived. Even in France there's a history (not always encouraging) of English-style eateries. I'm delighted to welcome a new arrival: Menton's English Teahouse (at 34 avenue de Gaulle). I've already eaten there a couple of times. They're especially proud of their roast beef, which from the later 18th century was regarded as a signature British dish, free of all those dodgy sauces favoured by the French.

AB on MC

I interviewed Anthony Burgess once when he spoke at the Princess Grace Irish Library. I recall two of his dicta quite clearly: first, Monaco was a very bad place to bring up a child – his son Andrea (aka successively André and Andrew) tried to commit suicide while living there; and second, the principality had “the most uncivilised expat community” he had

ever encountered. He related how, invited to address the Monte Carlo Club, a group of mainly superannuated businessmen, on being an expat novelist, “every question was about my fiscal position”. Odd that this bugged him. His moves from Malta to Monaco and finally to Switzerland were all motivated by a desire to avoid UK taxes.

Burgess died twenty years ago and a decade after it first appeared I've just read Roger Lewis' book about him. While making clear that the writer had a remarkable mind, he reveals a man who was much less attractive than I had imagined: vain, vindictive, a compulsive sexual braggart (though, it's suggested, possibly impotent) and with a rooted dislike for children and dogs. Above all, Lewis claims, he was an intellectual fraudster. This is especially true in his claim to be a polyglot and an expert in all matters linguistic. “The fact is his knowledge of foreign languages was limited to salutations, valuations and requests for the time.” When, for a TV programme, he tried to show off in a restaurant his “mastery” (his own word) of Malay, the few words he got out had the waitresses in fits of giggles. When he tried out his Welsh on the actress Sian Phillips she recalled, “It was scary. I thought he was having a stroke”. He also liked to claim that, although he had “no friends” in Monaco, he had been “very close” to Princess Grace. Unconfirmed, says Lewis, although according to Burgess, *Earthly Powers* was the last book she read. Apart from having “nasty neighbours” on rue Grimaldi, another standing grievance was that he couldn't get “decent sausages”... and HP Sauce. One thing cheered me, though: he gave an excellent eulogy at Benny Hills's funeral. ■

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American Notes

BY PJ HESLIN



Sigh

Another gun tragedy, another question in the form of a lecture about American gun laws from a non-American. I know for the rest of the world it's beyond common sense that the US does not adopt stricter gun laws. Despite President Obama's latest efforts to change them, I can guarantee you that nothing significant will change and here's why.

My sister married a man from Louisiana. His family and friends are all avid hunters and when they were first married I would, from time to time, have discussions about tougher gun regulations. We all agreed, for the most part, that gun violence was a problem and that something had to be done. Several of them owned more than one gun yet admitted that there is no practical reason for owning a semi-automatic weapon unless you want to turn a deer into a fine red mist. Their argument was not that the gun laws were perfect in America but that the government has no right to obstruct a constitutional right. Interfering with gun laws would be the first step in controlling citizen's private lives.

Most politicians stay away from gun laws for fear of losing votes. The notable exception to

this is Mayor Bloomberg who has made purchasing a handgun in New York City more difficult than winning an argument with a *fonctionnaire* at the Prefecture (see next item). Incidentally, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, New York has the lowest rate of deaths or injuries due to firearms in the country, so maybe tough gun laws really do work.

Even if the policy of owning guns was to change drastically overnight, the problem is the number of firearms in America. According to the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, the United States has 90 guns for every 100 citizens making it the most heavily armed society in the world. The number could be even higher since many states do not require owners to register shotguns. With literally millions of legal firearms in circulation, gun violence will remain a problem for several generations.

Certainly tougher gun laws would help but it's not the only solution since there are so many guns in circulation. A study published in the Association of Firearm and Tool Mark Examiner's Journal, microstamping ammunition is an effective tool for law enforcement. Perhaps stricter laws for

ammunition would help or even heavier fines for gun owners who do not safely store their firearms.

One would hope that what happened in Connecticut would be too much for anybody to stomach. Sadly, despite the "Demand a Plan" video from stars such as Jennifer Aniston and Beyoncé, and former US congresswoman Gabrielle Gifford's gun control appeal, I'm willing to bet that no real change will take place. Three months from now, Americans will be involved in the same debate. Next time, though, I'm hoping Hollywood's elite put down their prop weapons before they shoot off at the mouth. See YouTube: Video Mocks Celebrities' "Demand a Plan" Gun Control PSA

...and sigh again

Next month I have to go back to the Prefecture to renew my *titre de séjour*. I thought I'd take this opportunity to give those new to the experience some tips. First off, go early – like grandparents going to the airport early. The building doesn't open until 9am but I like to get there a little before 6am (and even then I'm not first in line). The line designated to foreigners forms to the left of the revolving



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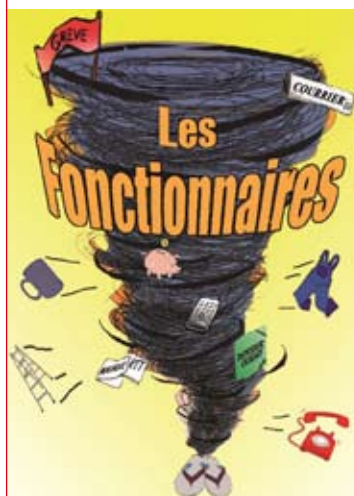
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door. The right side is for French administration like car registration, drivers license, etc.

Want to spend 24 hours with a fonctionnaire?



Les Fonctionnaires runs until March 3rd at La Comedie de Nice, 12 rue Auguste Gal. Tickets: €9-€19; see comedienice.com

I'd rather wait outside for a few hours than spend the day hanging around inside the Prefecture. Generally speaking, once a *fonctionnaire* sees my paperwork, I'm done in about fifteen minutes. If

you're not one of the first to be seen you have to wait for hours in a room that seems to be holding screaming baby auditions. Although watching a French civil servant bump heads with an irate applicant can prove to be entertaining.

Another reason to get there early is that they stop giving out tickets with numbers at 11am. If you don't make that cut you have to come back another day and wait again.

And know this: the concept of waiting in line has different meanings for different cultures. I'm not saying this to be insulting or sarcastic, it's a simple fact. So, don't take it personally or be offended when somebody tries to take your place or stand in front of you. Simply move back in front of them.

An important change to note from previous years: after your Prefecture visit they mail you your new *titre de séjour*, usually within three months. If there is a delay beyond three months, you need to go back to the Prefecture for an *attestation de remise*. (You will not receive a notice about this: just go and ask for it). Previously you could apply for this at window No. 1 where there is a much

For more on working in France, see

Applying for a French work permit as a non-EU

on our website

smaller wait time. Now you have to go to the dreaded window No. 2. This means you will probably have to get up really early again and go through the above steps. All I can say is take a book. I know this procedure because last year after trying to renew my card for the second time, I received a *convocation* from the Minister of the Interior (I'd been flagged at the Prefecture) and I had to show up at a specified time, with specified documents and my specified French wife ... to prove that ours was not a *mariage blanc*. A fascinating experience of which I wish I could share, but as I want to stay in the country, I'll move on.

Since I am preparing for my Prefecture visit I started wondering what kind of social assistance is available to a French immigrant such as myself. Presently, immigrants who are EU citizens can receive a yearly unemployment benefit of €2000 per adult and €1000 per child. Compensation to immigrants who want to return home can reach €300 per adult and €100 for each child. However, this past December, it was announced that these benefits would be reduced by 83% starting in March of this year.

Still this will be a better deal than in the US where legal permanent residents must pay into the Social Security and Medicare system for approximately 10 years before being eligible for social assistance.

I'm off to line up. ■

Lake Superior State University has come up with its annual list of words that should be banished since they are either useless, overused or misused. On the list I'm happy to see: bucket list, yolo and spoiler alert. Next year I'd like to add: Dude, gritty re-boot and Whitney Cummings. Any suggestions?

Faces & Places



*Riviera Hash House Harriers Christmas party.
We're as fun as we look.*

RHHH: On and On for 25 years

by Paul Stradling

The Riviera Hash House Harriers (RHHH) club is celebrating 25 years of running, walking and socialising on the Riviera, in March this year. The first run back in 1988 was attended by Mike Meade, Peter Johnson, Keith Meredith, Chris Griffiths, Richard Wilson, and many others who have gone on to be leading lights of the expat community.

Part of the worldwide phenomenon, the Hash House Harriers originally started by British expats in pre-war Kuala Lumpur, and spread throughout the globe as a genuinely international pastime with tens of thousands of active participants.

While each club differs due to local conditions and customs, the common culture of each club can be summarised by this section of the “constitution” of the KL club written c. 1950:

- to promote physical fitness among our members

- to get rid of weekend hangovers
- to acquire a good thirst and to satisfy it in beer
- to persuade the older members that they are not as old as they feel

In the Riviera Hash, who meet every other Sunday, wine and water are as popular as beer for refreshment but the emphasis is firmly set as a sociable gathering. It's a perfect way to discover more of the Riviera (see 25), enjoy a healthy walk or run and to meet up with people with many years experience of living in France.

Riviera Hash House Harriers 25th Anniversary Celebration, open to non-members as well as members old and new, is on Sat March 16th (run in Mandelieu, cocktails and dinner, with a disco, supplied by Mark Dezzani) and Sun March 17th (11am St Patricks Day Recovery Run).

For details of our next run/walk and for more on our anniversary event, see rivierahhh.com

The Azur Photography Group

By Mike Harper

In no other field has the digital revolution made its impact more dramatically and irreversibly than in photography. Everyone it

seems is now a shutter click away from taking a stunning photo and viewing the result on a PC within minutes.

The modern digital camera is crammed with a baffling array of “bells and whistles”, but how to get the best from all this wizardry and at the same time not lose sight of the basic principles of good photographic technique established in the days of the simple box camera.

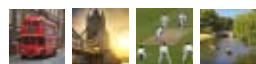
Convinced that this concern was not unique to me, I wrote a short article for the BA Newsletter in February 2009 seeking fellow expats with an interest in learning more about digital photography.

So on a decidedly wet and unpromising day in May that year, about ten of us met up at Café de la Tour in Les Arcs. In the photographic sense, we turned out to be a “mixed



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ability" group, ranging from highly competent amateurs to those for whom the digital camera smacked of the "dark arts", to be treated with great reverence, if not suspicion.

The principle of sharing whatever expertise we had was soon established and when one of our members generously offered her house as a meeting venue, the rationale and *modus operandi* became clearer, and we are now known as "The Azur Photographic Group".

Over the past three years, we have broadened our activities to include regular meetings every two weeks, hands-on workshops by visiting speakers, tutorials from individual members and taking advantage of the unique Provençal environment, outings to places of interest. Also in 2011 we produced a very successful calendar, which through the BAV raised a considerable sum for its charitable work.

New members are always welcome. Please contact: Mike Harper at mikeharper6@yahoo.co.uk

Home on the Grange

"How are you today? Isn't your son from England coming on a visit this week?" asks a nurse at Victoria in

Mouans-Sartoux one of the residents, a Brit who admits he's "not much good in French". "That's the case with quite a few of the people here," says Claude Cheton of Emera, the French company that runs Victoria in conjunction with the Sunny Bank Association. "When we launched this site – unique in France as a bilingual facility – we had to be sure our staff could communicate easily in English." To make sure of this, they've been put through tailor-made language courses especially designed to suit their working needs.

And so one December afternoon, a half a dozen of Victoria's staff received diplomas after successfully completing their language training. There was a gathering in the Sunny Space, a comfortable enclave on the second floor where English-speakers and others can get together and browse a display of magazines and newspapers, ranging from *The Telegraph* and *The Week* to the *Dogs Trust* monthly and the *Reporter* and at 5pm the presentation of diplomas took place in the main hall, followed by champagne and canapés. Proof once again of what Director Fabien Huchot identifies as the two keystones of life at Victoria: comfort and conviviality.



Victoria staff display English-training diplomas

Ray Angell, a Bomber Command veteran now well settled in there summed it up: "You know, nobody likes giving up their independent way of life but when it comes to that this is the place to be. It's a winner."

"In quires and places where they sing"

A couple of issues back we mentioned the Riviera International Singers which last December marked their 25th anniversary. Wolf Burg sent us some additional information which arrived too late to be used in our previous item about the choir (no: quires isn't a misprint as those at the front of the class will know).

"Beryl Arnould started the choir in 1996. Raising money for charity was the obvious goal. Soon the hall of Mougins School became our regular rehearsal room. In the early nineties things changed somewhat. We had the use of the *Salle des fêtes* in Valbonne and did a number of musical shows, including *Brigadoon* and *The Merry Widow*. That ended when we lost the *Salle des fêtes* and now our two high points are our summer and Christmas concerts. Beryl Arnould, by then retired, came back last December to conduct our 25th anniversary concert. I have to say that the choir has been a great success socially. Many long-term friendships have been founded ... and we've had four weddings."

february

SCOTTISH DANCING COTE D'AZUR

scottishdanceriviera@free.fr

Sat Feb 2: Burns' Night NIGHT
Live Music from Adam Brady,
Cannes

OPEN DES ARTISTES DE MONACO 2013

06 28 06 75 86 - lentrepot-monaco.com

Mon Feb 4-Fri Feb 22, 15h-19h:
Exhibition-competition
on the theme of "Le Fait
Divers" at Galerie L'Entrepôt,
22 rue de Millo, Monaco.
You can vote online.

CREM (CLUB DES RESIDENTS ETRANGERS DE MONACO)

club-residents-etrangeurs-monaco.com

Wed Feb 6 to Sun Feb 10:
Weekend in Vienna, Austria
CREM is pleased to propose its
members a Cultural Journey to
Austria "Discover the Imperial
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SARAH MORRIS MECHANICAL BALLET

04 92 91 50 30

Until Mon Mar 4, 10h-18h:
Exhibition of works by
American artist with a tribute to
Fernand Léger's experimental
film "Le Ballet Mécanique".
Musée National Fernand
Léger in Biot (closed Tues.)

FRANCE-GRANDE BRETAGNE, NICE

04 93 81 76 74 - www.fgb-nice.com

Thurs Feb 7: Guided tour of the
Palais Lascaris, rue Droite, Vieux
Nice.

ACCADEMIA FINE ART AUCTION MONACO

accademiafineart.com

Thurs Feb 7-Sat Feb 9: At 16:30
at the Hotel de Paris, Monaco.
Previews: Thur & Fri 10h-20h
and Sat 10h-14h. Jewellery, art,
paintings and vintage items.

VALENTINES' DAY IN THE CLOUDS IN MONACO

helaiirmonaco.com

Sat Feb 9 to Sun Feb 17:
celebrate Valentine's Day with a
Héli-Air private flight, including a
rose, champagne and chocolates.

GENTLEMEN DE CANNES

04 93 68 48 83

Sun Feb 10, 8h30: Annual cycling
competition on the Croisette (in
front of the Carlton Hotel).

ASSOCIATION CHINE HORIZON

chinecontact@wanadoo.fr
chinehorizon.com

Sun Feb 10, 12h30: Lunch to
celebrate the Chinese New Year
at the Restaurant China Park (30
bis, rue de France, Nice) with
live Chinese music. At the end
of the meal everyone is invited
to join in the Lion Dance with
our Chinese dancers. Cost €39.
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advance.

PRINCESS GRACE IRISH LIBRARY

pgil.mc/events

Tues Feb 12, 20h: Lecture by
Joe Joyce, writer, playwright and
journalist. The Guinneses - The
Untold Story of Ireland's most
successful Family

VIAC - viac.fr

Tues Feb 12: day trip to Cezanne
studio in Aix. See site for details.

HOLY TRINITY CANNES

04 93 94 54 61 - holytrinitycannes.org

Wed Feb 13, 20h: Ash
Wednesday Holy Communion

FRANCE-GRANDE BRETAGNE, NICE

04 93 81 76 74 - www.fgb-nice.com

Thurs Feb 14, 15h30: Tea, bis-
cuits, conversation and Scrabble
in either English or French at
Holy Trinity Church Hall, 11bis
rue de la Buffa Nice).

AMERICAN CLUB OF THE RIVIERA

americanclubriviera.com

Thurs Feb 14, 19h30: Valentine's
Day Dinner at La Maison Blanche
(soon to be called Villa Garibaldi)
in Nice. Couples, families, and
singles all welcome. All-inclusive
(menu, wine, coffee). Non-
member: €75, member: €65,
children €30. DJ and dancing
following the meal. Please
RSVP by Feb 7: secretary@americanclubriviera.com

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calendar](http://rivierareporter.com/calendar)

NICE CARNIVAL

0892 707 407 (€0,34/mn) - nicedcarnaval.com

Fri Feb 15-Wed Mar 6: "Roi
des Cinq Continents". Tickets
at Tourist Office, daily from
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MIMOSA FESTIVAL MANDELIEU

04 93 93 64 64 - mandelieu.com

Fri Feb 15-Sun Feb 24: "*Le
mimosa fête les Contes*"
and "Walks in the Mimosa
Region". Contact Tourist
Office. (See pg 19)

INTERNATIONAL CLUB OF THE RIVIERA

internationalclub.fr

Sat Feb 16, 19h: The Star
Spangled Banner! (Celebrating
the Food, Culture & Music of the
USA!) in Mougins. Reservations
and details on our site.

MENTON LEMON FESTIVAL

04 92 41 76 95 - fete-du-citron.com

Sat Feb 16-Wed Mar 6: Tickets
online or Tourist Office.

SUNNY BANK LA GRANGE

<http://www.sunny-bank.org>

Sat Feb 16, 10h-15h: Open
House at the Grange (815 ch des
Gourettes, Mouans Sartoux).

CARNIVAL NICE 10 MILE RUN

nicedcarnaval.com

Sun Feb 17, 8h30: Rock n Roll
10 mile run. At noon; *Bain
de Carnival* (Swim; free).

HOLY TRINITY CANNES

04 93 94 54 61 - holytrinitycannes.org

Every Wed, English library at
11h and Shepherd & Dog lunch
at 12h30. All are welcome.
Every Thurs, 10h: Keep-Fit.

AMIAI

Anne or Doug 04 92 97 50 72

Thurs Feb 21, 12h: Grande Bastide Golf. Aperitifs at noon followed by lunch at 13h. Please ring to reserve.

RADA (RIVIERA AMATEUR DRAMATIC ASSOCIATION)

09 53 73 56 70 - rada06@yahoo.com

Thurs Feb 21, Fri Feb 22 & Sat Feb 23, 20h: At the Mougins School, "Graves End" a thriller based on a real-life murder.

Admission: €10 (incl. a free drink). Three ways to book: by phone by email or from the English Book Centre (12 rue Alexis Julien, Valbonne).

CANNES HALF MARATHON

semi-cannes.org

Sun Feb 24, 9h45: Start La Pantiéro

COMMONWEALTH CLUB OF THE RIVIERA

commonwealthclubriviera.com

End Feb: a day at the races with a 3-course luncheon, Hippodrome, Cagnes sur Mer
Details on website.

march

ENGLISH PUB STYLE QUIZ

Jim North 04 94 85 22 06

quizedelatour@gmail.com

Fri Mar 1: The Cafe de la Tour at Les Arcs, a Reporter distribution point in the Var, is going to provide an English Pub Style Quiz for Brits or any other English speaking individual. A €10 plat du jour followed by a 50 question quiz and finally a light-hearted Play Your Cards Right. Prizes for winning team. Like the Café de la Tour's Fish and Chip lunch on the last Friday of each month, this will also be a regular monthly event. First quiz Friday 1st March, then Friday 5th April.

FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DES JEUX IN CANNES

festivaldesjeux-cannes.com

Fri Mar 1- Sun Mar 3: Games, tournaments, demonstrations.

YOUTH CLUB

John 06 09 51 10 95

john.cookson1@wanadoo.fr

Every first Friday of the month, 19h-22h30: At Holy Trinity Cannes. Table tennis, darts, board games and DVDs. Parents are most welcome to stay if they wish. Geoffrey's kindly sponsors the DVDs and Holy Trinity provides pizza, drinks and snacks. This Youth Club is open to all.

CATHOLIC MASS IN ENGLISH

Shirley de Jonk sdejonk24@yahoo.com

Sat Mar 2, 18h: English liturgy and hymns in English at St Paul des Nations Church (allée Georges Pompidou) Sophia Antipolis (Access 12). See www.ndsagesse.com

Also Sat April 6 (with Gospel Choir), Sat May 4, Sat June 1.

MONTE-CARLO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

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Sun Mar 3, 11h: Symphonic concert with clarinet soloist (Amadeus, Mozart, Weber and Beethoven) at Salle Garnier, Opéra de Monte-Carlo, conducted by Markus Poschner.

POSH PARAPHERNALIA

sunny-bank.org

Thurs Mar 7: Roll up to Posh Paraphernalia at Sunny Bank's The Grange 815 ch des Gourettes, Mouans Sartoux.

AMIAI

Douglas Goldin 04 92 94 02 47 -

douglas.goldin@wanadoo.fr

Sun Mar 10, 12h: Hippodrome Cagnes sur Mer Lunch and Racing. Entrance included in the price. Please reserve.

RIVIERA HASH HOUSE HARRIERS

www.rivierahhh.com

A club for non-runners, runs are every other Sunday.

COMMONWEALTH CLUB OF THE RIVIERA

commonwealthclubriviera.com

Mon Mar 11, 18h30: Cocktail dinatoire to celebrate Commonwealth Day. Details on website.

FRANCE-GRANDE-BRETAGNE NICE

04 93 07 67 04 - fgb-nice.com

Tues mornings: Café Franco-Britannique, informal bi-lingual conversation. And every Thurs, 13h45-15h15: French class at Holy Trinity Church Hall, 11bis rue de la Buffa, Nice.

OPEN DAY EBICA

04 93 64 32 84 - ebicaschool.com

Wed Mar 13: Open Day at EBICA (245 rte des Lucioles, Sophia Antipolis). Classes from Preschool to High School (ages 2 to 18), 2700sqm new campus, 5000sqm of garden, cafeteria, Science lab, Theatre, Art/Media facility, Computer lab, Playground, and so much more! Come and see the new campus!

VIAC - viac.fr

Thurs Mar 14: guided tour of Fayence & lunch. See site for details.

MONACO-IRELAND ARTS SOCIETY

+377 93 15 70 45

monaco-ireland-arts.org

Fri March 15, 20h30: George Bernard Shaw at the Auditorium du Lycée Technique de Monte-Carlo (ave de l'Annonciade; parking under the Lycée). For St Patrick's week festivities the Monaco-Ireland Arts Society will be performing extracts from the writings of G.B.S. The theme of the evening will be Bernard Shaw's provocative views on war. The programme will consist of the playlet "O'Flaherty V.C."; "Dear Liar" (a selection of the letters between GBS and Mrs Patrick Campbell) and the 1st Act of "Arms and the Man".

MONACO-USA ASSOCIATION

info@MonacoUSA.org

We meet once a month for a happy hour of social and business networking. Open to all members of the international community who would enjoy an opportunity to meet other like-minded English-speaking professionals. Email for more information on the association

TRADITIONAL TEA CEREMONIES

04 92 29 37 00 - arts-asiatiques.com

Every Sun, 15h: "Cérémonies du Thé" at the Musée de l'Art Asiatique, 405 Promenade des Anglais, Nice. (€10/adult).

ENSEMBLE VOCAL SYRINX

ensemblevocalsyrinx.com

Sun Mar 24: Cathédrale, Vence
Palm Sunday Concer, Requiem de Mozart.

EASTER SERVICES HOLY TRINITY CANNES

04 93 94 54 61 - holytrinitycannes.org

Thurs Mar 28, 20h: Maundy Thursday Holy Communion
Fri Mar 29, 12h-15h: Good Friday Meditation at the cross
Sun Mar 31, 9h: Easter Sunday Holy Communion
Sun Mar 31, 10h30h: Easter Sunday Family Communion

CURRY QUIZ NIGHT IN AID OF KENYAN KIDS

04 93 94 41 19

Fri Mar 29, 19h: Come along Good Friday and sample a home cooked warming curry with the trimmings in aid of our favourite charity, Kenyan Kids. At Sunny Bank Grange Mouans Sartoux. Important to book your team of up to 4 or yourself by ringing so we know how many plates of delicious good curry to provide. If you need directions to the Grange it's detailed on their site sunny-bank.org

OIL PAINTING FOR BEGINNERS

06 18 74 62 19 - jinsartstudio.com

Jin's Art Studio, Nice will open on Friday evenings and close at lunch-time on Sundays and will operate in 90min classes where clients are able to use the Studio oil paints, brushes and other equipment provided (an extensive range of oil paints and 300 brushes to use). This opens in July 2013 but you must reserve now.

COMMONWEALTH CLUB OF THE RIVIERA

commonwealthclubriviera.com

End March: Visit to the St. Cézaire caves. Details on website.

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For online access, go to www.riviera-reporter.com/directory

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.....	Lost & Found 04 93 21 31 11 - www.nice.aeroport.fr
NICE AIRPORT Busses and Shuttles	0820 423 333
AEROPORT CANNES MANDELIEU	0 820 426 666 - www.cannes.aeroport.fr
MARSEILLE-PROVENCE AEROPORT	04 42 14 14 14 - www.marseille.aeroport.fr
TOULON HYÈRES AEROPORT	0 825 018 387 - www.toulon-hyeres.aeroport.fr

ASSOCIATIONS, HELPLINES & SUPPORT (Some in French)

ABUSED WOMEN	04 93 52 17 81 (English) - 01 40 33 80 90 (French)
AIDS/HIV (SIDA)	Info Service 0800 840 800 - Testing 04 93 85 12 62
AL-ANON/ACA	English-speaking meetings for friends and families of alcoholics five times a week
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS	Desperate to stop? Meetings every day in English
ALZHEIMER ASSOCIATION COTE D'AZUR (Fr)	24 hour live helpline: 0820 200 257 - www.aa-riviera.org
AODVCL (AMERICAN OVERSEAS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRISIS LINE):	04 93 52 62 00
.....	0-800-99-0011 and when prompted 866-879-6636 - www.866uswomen.org
BEREAVEMENT GROUP MONACO	06 98 44 49 01
BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT NETWORK (VAR)	04 94 84 64 89 - 06 32 35 31 24 - www.bsnvar.org
BRITISH ASSOCIATION CANNES	06 65 38 05 29
BRITISH ASSOCIATION MENTON	06 31 18 89 57
BRITISH ASSOCIATION MONACO	+377 93 50 19 52 - www.bam-monaco.org
BRITISH ASSOCIATION NICE	04 93 59 88 65
BRITISH ASSOCIATION VAR Secretary	04 94 72 37 42
BUSINESS DEBTORS ANONYMOUS: Our 12-step program offers solvency solutions to small business owners. Meetings weekly in Cannes: Sat at 11h, rear of Holy Trinity Church, 2 rue du General Ferrié	06 77 56 08 93 - www.dariviera.org
CANCER SUPPORT GROUP IN ENGLISH	06 69 33 78 40 - cancersupport06@gmail.com
CHILD ABUSE (Enfance Maltraitée)	119 or 0800 054 141
CHILDREN MISSING (SOS Enfants Disparus)	0810 012 014

ASSOCIATIONS HELPLINES & SUPPORT CONT ...

COCAINE ANONYMOUS IN MONACO We use the Twelve Step Recovery Program; because it has already been proven that the Twelve Step Recovery Program works CA helpline number:	06 20 00 66 36
CROSSBOW INT'L CARE GROUP Sophia Antipolis	04 93 59 95 83
DEBTORS ANONYMOUS & BUSINESS DEBTORS ANONYMOUS Debts weighing you down? Over-spending and/or under-earning? 'Small Business' problems? Our 12-step program can provide a solution for you. Meetings held several times a week on the Côte d'Azur. Confidential enquiries. Phone Nice and/or Cannes 06 77 56 08 93	
DRUGS (Drogues Info Service)	0800 231 313
ENGLISH SPEAKING FREEMASONS Meet in Cannes..abbeylodge33@yahoo.com	
GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND - ECOLE DES CHIENS GUIDES (BIOT)	04 93 65 08 36 - uaso@wanadoo.fr
HEPATITIS C SUPORT GROUP	06 22 82 16 18
HOMELESS HELP	115 or 0800 306 306
LIVING WITH CANCER	04 94 78 88 26
NO PANIC	02 51 28 80 25
ORGAN DONATION (EGF)	0800 202 224
OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS	04 93 87 18 97
RAPE (SOS Viol)	0800 059 595
RED CROSS	0800 858 858 - Antibes 04 93 34 15 43
RIVIERA BUSINESS CLUB	www.bccriviera.com
ROYAL BRITISH LEGION NICE & MONACO	04 93 01 30 00
ROYAL BRITISH LEGION CANNES & EAST VAR	04 94 84 14 75
SOS HELP CRISIS LINE IN ENGLISH Feeling down? Call us up!	01 46 21 46 46 from 15h to 23h daily - www.soshelpline.org
SUNNY BANK Information & support for the elderly	04 93 47 94 20 - www.sunny-bank.org
TOUCHE PAS À MON CORPS In French, for abused women	06 62 32 62 50 - 04 93 00 35 72 - www.toucheapasamoncorps.com
UFC-06 QUE CHOISIR CONSUMER ASSOCIATION	04 93 62 43 72 - Fax 04 93 62 23 75, 20 Bd Raimbaldi, 06000 Nice

AVF (ACCUEIL DES VILLES FRANCAISE / Welcome Wagon - www.avf.asso.fr)

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BUSINESS FORMALITIES & JOB CENTRES

ANPE (INTERNATIONAL SECTION) 10 rue Shakespeare, Nice (appt only)	04 97 11 82 44 - contact.anglais@eei.com.fr / peei.nice@anpe.fr - www.anpe.fr
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Picard Bldg, St Bernard, Vallauris	04 92 38 98 91
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CHURCH & RELIGION CONT ...

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH CANNES Sun 10:30 am 4 ave Gén. Ferrié, Cannes (behind Carlton Hotel)	04 93 94 54 61
HOLY TRINITY ANGLICAN CHURCH NICE 11 rue de la Buffa	04 93 87 19 83
INTERNATIONAL BAPTIST CHURCH NICE 13 rue Vernier	06 64 96 94 22
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MONACO CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP 37 rue Grimaldi	+377 93 30 60 72
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CLUBS, SPORTS & LEISURE

AAGP	info@aagp-provence.com
AMERICAN CLUB OF THE RIVIERA	06 20 40 11 28 - bgintell@aol.com
AMERICAN SQUARE DANCING (Cagnes Sur Mer)	06 85 11 73 75
AMERICAN SQUARE DANCING (Vallauris/Sophia Antipolis)	06 60 50 89 45
AMIAIC (Alpes Maritimes International Aperitif Club)	04 92 97 50 72
BASEBALL Cavigal Nice Sport	04 93 65 77 55
BEACH VOLLEYBALL (ASPTT)	06 49 42 74 32 - beach@aspttnice-volley.com
BOXING - NICE AZUR BOXE	04 93 89 68 17 - www.niceazurboxe.fr
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CERCLE NORDIQUE (Scandinavian Club)	04 93 82 21 02
CRICKET Monte-Carlo C.C.	06 78 63 30 82
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COMMONWEALTH CLUB ..	04 93 68 12 03 - www.commonwealthclubriviera.com
DANISH BOOK CLUB	04 93 66 59 00
DANISH CLUB	04 93 58 00 28 - www.club-danois.com
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ENSEMBLE VOCAL SYRINX (Choir)	04 93 20 68 94
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FRANCE-GRANDE BRETAGNE Nice	04 93 81 76 74 - www.fgb-nice.com
FRANCE-GRANDE BRETAGNE Toulon	04 94 30 69 77 - www.afgb-toulon.net
HASH HOUSE HARRIERS (RIVIERA)	www.rivierahhh.com
INTERNATIONAL CLUB OF THE RIVIERA 04 93 72 11 89 -	info@internationalclub.fr
INTERNATIONAL LUNCH CLUB (VAR) ..	06 45 99 45 76 - barry.kalish@orange.fr
INT'L WOMEN'S CLUB - PROVENCE 04 94 73 63 93 -	kirstenoggy@gmail.com
INT'L WOMEN'S CLUB OF THE RIVIERA	06 21 46 54 93 - www.iwcr.org
INT'L WOMEN'S CLUB OF THE VAR	04 94 76 50 12 - www.iwc-var.org
IRISH ASSOCIATION	06 83 46 59 37 - majamitch@yahoo.fr
LE KIDS CLUB	04 93 82 44 43 / www.lekidsclub.com
KIDOO LAND	04 93 64 53 54 - 06 10 54 48 11 - www.kidooland.com
MAISON DE L'EUROPE 06	06 65 38 05 29 - maison europe06@yahoo.fr
MONACO BOOK WORMS	+377 97 77 00 91
NORWEGIAN CLUB	04 93 12 17 73 - www.club-norvege.com
THE ODD GROUP (Painting)	04 93 35 48 33 - +377 97 70 79 46
OXBRIDGE SET	06 62 64 54 05 - halfordoxbridge@yahoo.co.uk
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RIVIERA AMATEUR DRAMATIC ASSOCIATION (RADA)	09 53 73 56 70
RIVIERA EXPAT GOLF SOCIETY	06 62 60 77 56 - www.regsgolf.com
RIVIERA HASH HOUSE HARRIERS	06 22 47 39 10 - www.rivierahhh.com
RIVIERA INTERNATIONAL SINGERS 06 17 81 15 08 -	riviera-international-singers.com
RIVIERA REBELS Country & Line Dance Club	04 93 70 36 01 - riviera-rebels.fr
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SWEDISH WOMEN'S CLUB (SWEA)	04 93 35 50 61
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VIAC (Var International Aperitif Club)	www.viac.fr - secretary@viac.fr

EDUCATION

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CANNES Holy Trinity Church, 4 ave General Ferrie	04 93 75 57 47
MENTON St John's Church, 31 ave Carnot	04 93 57 68 04
MONACO Princess Grace Irish Library	+ 377 93 50 12 25 - www.pgil.mc
MONACO St Paul's Church, 22 ave Grande-Bretagne	+377 92 16 76 91
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SAINT-RAPHAËL St John's Church, ave Paul Doumer	04 94 82 40 48
VALBONNE Bibliothèque Pour Tous "English Corner" 23 rue Gambetta	04 93 12 95 12
VENCE 9 rue Sainte Luce (behind the Cathedral)	09 63 43 86 57

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Drivers licences	04 92 42 32 28
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.....	Water Info 0801 147 147 - Emergency 0810 769 769
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.....	EDF (Electricity) 0810 333 083 - GDF (Gas) 04 94 41 41 00
.....	Water Info 0801 147 147 - Emergency 0811 900 700

RADIO

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Feb/March: Jan 3rd
April/May: Feb 23rd
June/July: April 23rd
Aug/Sept: June 23rd
Oct/Nov: Aug 23rd
Dec/Jan: Oct 23rd

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be sent by post or email:
info@rivierareporter.com

Unless specifically marked
"not for publication", letters
may be published in our
Letters pages and may also be
added to our website forum.
Names are withheld when
requested but please note
anonymous letters will not be
considered.

Sometimes when people want
specific information or offer a
suggestion, a quick telephone
call would be useful. So if you
think we might need to talk
to you, do give your number
please.

RELEVANT ARTICLE CONTACTS

Air France	3654
Astema Thermal Imaging (Stefan Mayer)	
.....	06 16 19 68 50 - stefan@infraredriviera.com
Golf Claux-Amix, Grasse	04 93 60 55 44
The Grange	04 93 47 94 20 - sunny-bank.org
Greenrent	09 83 80 98 16
Internet, Huw Williams ..	06 28 05 22 35 - huw@wirelessandweb.co.uk
Prefecture Alpes-Maritimes	alpes-maritimes.pref.gouv.fr
Riviera International Singers	riviera-international-singers.com
Valentine's	
AYAME, Mougins	04 92 92 08 00 - ayame-beauty.fr
Créatif Fleurs, Antibes	
.....	04 93 74 99 30 - creatif-flowers.com/nos-services.html
EasyLove, Villeneuve Loubet	04 93 08 71 19 - easy-love.fr
Fragonard, Grasse	04 93 36 44 65 - www.fragonard.com
Hotel La Mirande, Avignon	04 90 14 20 20 - la-mirande.fr
Louis XV, Monaco	+377 98 06 88 64
Patisserie Canet, Nice	04 93 96 46 06 - patisseriecanet.com
Sage ou pas Sage, Nice	09 63 24 34 05 - lingerie-nice.com
Star Dog Boutique, Nice	04 97 03 27 40 - http://jophicotedazur.com/
3.14, Cannes	04 92 99 72 00 - cannes.com

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are directly linked to in the
"From the magazine" section
of our web forum.**

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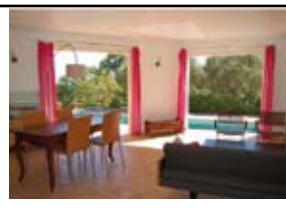
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