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Calling all expatriates of any nationality! Have you moved overseas for a better quality of life for your family, to pursue a career opportunity or simply for a change of scenery to the place you always adored? If you have, then The Expat Survey wants to hear from you and this is the opportunity to make sure your voice is heard.

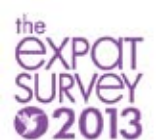
Whatever initiated your move, The Expat Survey invites you to share your opinions on a variety of different topics. While there are the usual questions requiring you to tick boxes, the research study breaks away from convention and enquires about your experience, whether or not expectations have been fulfilled, what expats miss about home and requests tips and advice for others contemplating a move to a new place. Your input will make a valuable contribution to understanding how those residing outside their country of origin can be supported, so that organisations and companies that specialise in servicing expatriate communities and individuals can understand their needs better.

In a world of rapid change and volatile economies, with the diversification and consolidation of businesses resulting in employment instability and mounting stress, many have chosen to move overseas in the belief that the grass is greener on the other side. For some a permanent move, for others temporary; in many cases for a lifestyle change, for others there has been no choice. Whether it has proven to be the best or worst decision you ever made, your feedback is essential.

The Expat Survey is the largest independent research study ever undertaken on migration and expatriate life. Led by the ex-head of research for BBC World, it does not share any information with third parties and has no links whatsoever to Governments. It is entirely independent and promoted, but not sponsored, by almost 100 publishers and reputable companies servicing expatriates around the world, such as the international accountancy firm Chantrey Vellacott DFK and the specialist expatriate insurance company Clements Worldwide.

Go to theexpatsurvey.com to find out more and complete the first survey, which has now gone live.

Those that complete all three surveys are automatically entered into a prize draw to win £1000, which you can opt to donate to charity if you wish.



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inside

Meadia

THANKS to our many new free distribution points that are helping us get to a wider and more active readership, this magazine and its website are doing better than many other media in today's troubled economic climate. We had imagined that the local but much bigger *Nice-Matin* was as robust but the plight of our colleagues at the daily gives us some reason for doubt. See page 5.

The Riviera's yachting community is energetic, affluent and generous, as shown on our Letters pages as reader John Balodis writes to us about CogsForCancer. We encourage you to support these charitable efforts whenever you can. On page 33 we say good-bye to a well-known member of the community Valerie Haxton, who dedicated her life to the church and the British Association and provided help and assistance to hundreds of expatriates.

Expats are often disenfranchised but with the French municipal and European elections both in 2014, resident Europeans are fully entitled to vote but must register before the end of the

year. For details go to page 32. If you would rather have a say about your life as an expat (and have a chance to win £1000) go to theexpatsurvey.com

For many of us living abroad, it's the little things from home that we can really miss over time. Fish & chips comes to mind and we've mentioned before that the Café de la Tour in Les Arcs serves a great plate. For residents in the 06 department, there's now a closer-to-home option in Cannes, across from the Forville Market fish stalls. Isabella Mohnsame-Wigmore is serving proper fish & chips (see page 39).

From hooking up a new size satellite for your English TV (page 17) to hooking up with a soul mate (page 24), this issue should keep you busy until November, when our Christmas edition appears. *Mike Meade*

Cover Photo: Nice Port @Riviera Reporter



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Photo: Rama

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Photo: Jeremy

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HIKE AS YOU LIKE P34

riviera reportage



“I HAVE NOTHING AGAINST BABIES ...”

IN early September, Singapore-based Scoot airlines announced the launch of “Scoot in Silence” – sections at the front of its cabins that ban anyone under 12.

This follows a No Children Allowed movement spreading across the globe. In Reno, Nevada, movie theatres began banning kids from any movie over a G-rating (like Superman) while a “heartless” Berlin café uses concrete

posts to block strollers from entering.

Closer to home, “Mamo”, owner of the restaurant Michelangelo in Antibes, just announced, “Look, I have nothing against babies ... but this is not a place for them. Strollers pose a fire risk and they take up space when we are busy.

“People come here to enjoy a meal. I’m not the only one doing it but I am probably the only one to talk about it

According to a poll conducted by the TV channel France 5, the percentage of French parents who admitted to using *la fessée*, smacking their child on the bottom.

64%

Source: Survey May 2012 as reported in *They Eat Horses Don't They?* (See page 22.)

– and put up a sign.” He smiles at the notice on the door (pictured), which ungrammatically bans pushchairs.

Another restaurant worker admitted that “if a caller mentions a stroller at the time of booking, I say that we’re full.”

But is it legal? Henry Mathey, president of the Antibes hotel and restaurant union says, “A customer can be refused because he’s not wearing a tie or has open toe shoes ... as long as the rules are clearly visible at the entrance of the establishment then it’s not illegal. People are free to eat elsewhere!”

le FLASH

KIDS GOING DUTCH ... THEN ENGLISH

THE world’s first Steve Jobs Schools – there are seven of them – popped up last year in the Netherlands. They use, you guessed it, the iPad in an elementary school environment to give every student access to a “virtual school”.

The idea originates from O4NT – *Onderwijs voor een nieuwe tijd* or Education for a new era – who have now announced plans of O4NT International, virtual education from 2014 with the first scholastic program to be launched in Dutch, soon to be followed in English, Spanish and German.

30%

of France's higher education budget goes to the *Grandes Écoles*, even though they only enrol 4% of the students

A company spokesperson, Noëmi Manders-Huits, tells the *Reporter*, “We will offer educational programs for children who also visit regular schools – in different countries. This will appeal to expats who want their children to keep up with the educational programs of their home country, or parents interested in complementing their children’s education with a more interactive and present-day approach to education. In time we will further develop the virtual school space to offer full-time programs.”

According to O4NT, special software has been designed to monitor the child’s development. Meanwhile children will have access to a wealth of educational apps that are already being used at the Steve Jobs Schools.

Cost of O4NT International program has not yet been determined.

LOCAL PIES GRAB A PIECE OF THE ACTION



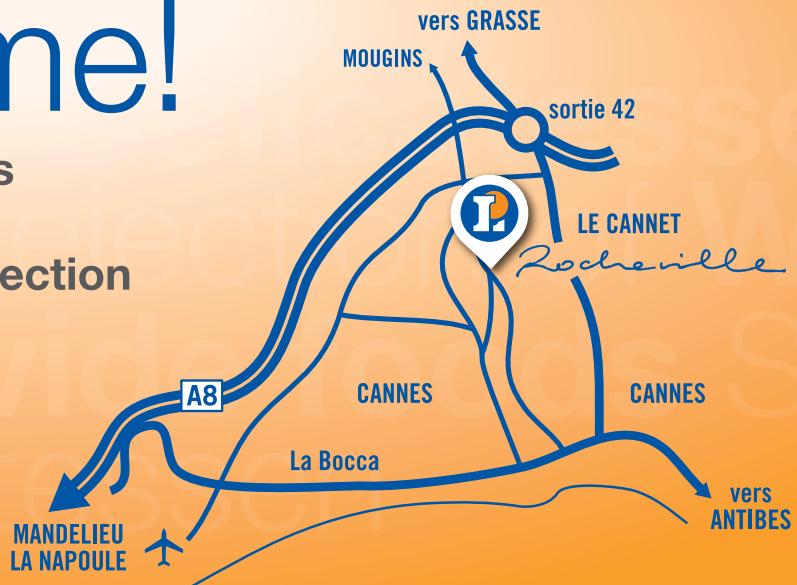
ACCORDING to the website TripAdvisor, Antibes was ranked the French city with the best pizza, while Nice came in second (Paris was 7th; Marseille 9th).

Addizionale, three Antibes and Nice pizzerias are among the ten most popular in the country: Les Amoureux in Nice (46 boulevard Stalingrad, in the port), and in Antibes, Pizza d’Or (10 rue Lacan) and Pomodoro (11 rue du Migrainier).

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FRANCE IN THE NEWS



Nice-Matin: just the facts

NICE-MATIN is a Riviera stalwart, as invincible as PanAm, *Newsweek*, *News of the World* or Kodak.

So the news that *Nice-Matin* is currently losing almost €1.5 million a month is troubling. For the period covering 2011 and 2012, the title reported combined net losses of over €17 million despite its €200 million turnover. In mid-September, WebTimeMedias editor and former *Nice-Matin* staffer Jean-Pierre Largillet alleged that *Nice-Matin* could even go bankrupt before the end of this year and

that any hope of survival would inevitably involve laying off at least 180 of their 700 employees at the route de Grenoble office.

At the time of writing, salaries and running expenses are covered by Group Hersant Media (GHM), the €156 million family-owned company that holds 75% of *Nice-Matin*'s €2.2 million capital. The remaining 25% is held by Bernard Tapie who has far bigger problems at the moment (see last issue).

The options are few and the Riviera's only daily newspaper will only be saved by either a massive injection of investment capital from a new or existing shareholder, or a buy-out.

An injection of capital is unlikely to come from GHM, who are still licking their wounds after the bankruptcy of their national classified free sheet, *ParuVendu*, and the loss of 3000 jobs.

As for a buy-out, in 2012 Lebanese businessman Iskandar Safa had shown interest in acquiring *Nice-Matin* but isn't thought to have renewed his offer more recently. It seems increasingly unlikely that any investor would come forward with a

solid offer until bankruptcy is declared and the paper can be bought from the administrators for a symbolic amount.

Even though the paper's daily print run has dropped to under 100,000 copies in 2012 from 133,000 in 2002, with municipal and European elections just around the corner (see page 32), local politicians are also concerned about the immediate future of the paper, one of the few local media capable of delivering their campaign messages to Riviera voters.

Not so high Hadopi

HADOPI was one of the most stringent copyright protection laws ever introduced. Heralded by the entertainment industry around the world as an example to follow, French downloaders of pirated software, e-books, films and music in principle could have been hit with heavy fines, cut off from internet access and even faced prison sentences. The Sarkozy government saw Hadopi as a necessary measure to stop the growing theft of "intellectual property". It seemed a good idea but it didn't work.



Why the French “like” a heist

HIGH profile jewellery heists on the Riviera this summer made international headlines to the indifference of many French. Seen as victimless crimes, the amounts involved were phenomenal but well insured and the methods – without violence and in plain daylight – were audacious. The French just love an Arsène Lupin.

But it was the modest robbery of a small jeweller near the Nice rail station on September 11th that unleashed feelings across the country. It wasn't the first robbery for Anthony Asli who, with previous convictions for assault and petty crime under his belt, left Stephan Turk's *bijouterie* La Turquoise on rue d'Angleterre

with an accomplice and loot in tow. Nor was it the first hold up for Mr Turk, who after “the robbers had punched and kicked him before forcing him to open his safe at gunpoint” allegedly shot the 19-year-old from Carros in the back with an unlicensed pistol on the street outside.

Mr Turk has massively won over a French public who are fed up with rising crime rates – the *Observatoire national de la délinquance* claims every 90 seconds a theft occurs in France while petty crime has seen a 17% rise from last year – cuts in police funding and Justice Minister Christiane Taubira's soft approach to criminals. (She has introduced measures to reduce sentences, increase parole

possibilities and coddle the guilty while ignoring the plights of victims.) Politicians such as Nice Mayor Christian Estrosi are lining up to express their sympathy for the jeweller, who under normal circumstances would have been kept in remand. Instead the 67-year-old has been electronically tagged and released pending trial, where he will face up to 30 years in prison if convicted of second-degree murder.

Within three days of the crime, a Facebook page set up anonymously in support of Mr Turk had gathered over 1.5 million “likes” and became one of the most popular French pages ever, surpassed only by a few pop stars. A page set up in support of the thief's family gained fewer than 4000 “likes” over the same period.

There is no doubt about the country's massive wave of public sympathy for the jeweller – a street demonstration in Nice on September 16th attracted between 800 to 1000 marchers – and many of the comments on the “Soutien au Bijoutier de Nice” Facebook page are certainly genuine. But are all 1.5 million legitimate? It's common practice for brokers to sell fake thumbs up for a few bucks. (The *Reporter* has always refused to purchase faux “likes” contrary to some local press pages we've noticed.) At this writing, over 800,000 of the Facebook followers were from authentic French Facebook accounts.

Mr Turk doesn't need support from Thailand, Poland and other Eastern European countries: Nice and much of France are already on his side. ■

With 60 employed agents, Hadopi was expensive to administer and had little effect. Only one serious prosecution was enforced and that was for a prolific uploader rather than a private downloader. He was eventually let off. Thanks to lobbying by the Pirate Party (their real name!), the EU ruled that internet disconnection without fair and adversarial trial was an infringement of a person's basic rights.

Piracy is still illegal but much harder to prosecute now that the Hollande presidency has wiped the Hadopi law off the French legal register. In France and the EU even thieves have rights.

But Hollande is seeking other ways to tax the digital economy. Google and Amazon make billions in France in competition with national retailers and pay little or no tax on their earnings. Other EU countries, including the UK, are in a similar quandary.

Socialist governments traditionally turn to tax before cutting state spending but this proposed digital tax “would be both unrealistic and economically devastating,” according to *Le Conseil National du Numérique* (French Digital Council) in a mid-September report ordered by Digital Economy Minister Fleur Pellerin. The new tax won't be in place until at least 2015.

A real kicker

AND speaking of taxes, one of Francois Hollande's first measures in presidential office remains his most controversial – a tax of up to 75% on high incomes. The threat of such an abusive tax rate has driven many high-earning businessmen – as well as a few film stars like Gérard Depardieu – to more tax-friendly countries. Depardieu claims he paid €85 million in tax over the five years before the hike but now pays

almost no tax to France from his Belgian and Russian bolt holes in an exemplary case of *trop d'impôt, tue l'impôt*.

The 75% rate will be deducted at source from 2014 and apply to 2013 earnings of over €1 million. Newly arrived expats will be excluded as they are exonerated from wealth tax for five years and the 75% measure is meant to be effective only for two years.

Minister of the Economy Pierre Moscovici has announced that he does not exclude the possibility of exonerating footballers from the measure in order to keep the best players in France; President Hollande, after all, is a keen football fan. An outcry from the business sector was immediate and unanimous. Why tax those who create employment and invest in the country while excluding footballers who do little more than kick a ball



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FRANCE IN THE NEWS

around – whatever their stats?

Every one of the top 20 players in the French Premier League is paid over €2 million a year. Some earn much more and their combined salaries in 2013 will be in excess of €85 million. With shrewd tactics such as deferring payments until the tax is rescinded, football clubs might be able to avoid some of the €63 million they'll owe in taxes but Hollande's self-affirmed message is unwavering: "I don't like rich people." The rich don't like him either.

Licenced to drive

WHAT'S long and pink and the envy of every French girl? Her boyfriend's driving licence. This long-running joke will slowly lose its punch line as France rolls out a standardised EU-model licence. Within the 28 member nations, the 130 different driving licence formats make policing difficult and licences easy to falsify.



The new credit-card sized format which costs 30 times more than the current paper licence will initially be issued only to new drivers. The use of a security chip could also store essential driver information like point loss, obligation to wear glasses when driving and even fingerprints.

From 2015 the existing 38 million paper models will gradually be replaced (until 2033!) in a process the Interior Ministry promises will not involve endless queues at the prefecture. *On verra ...*

It pays to take holidays

A SURVEY commissioned by UBS and NationMaster puts France with its 35-hour working week and long vacations among the most productive workforce in the industrialised world. In light of Mark Twain's famous "lies, damned lies and statistics", this should be looked at with some context.

Out of the world's 204 countries, France ranks 18th in terms of GDP per capita and manages to achieve this by working 16% fewer hours than the world average. In US dollars, an average Frenchman works 1453 hours annually and generates a GDP of \$36,500 giving a per capita per hour GDP of \$25.10. The average American works 1792 hours a year but only generates \$24.60 GDP per capita per hour for an average annual per capita GDP of \$44,150.

So the French create less overall wealth while putting in fewer hours, but each hour on the job creates more wealth than his American counterpart during the same 60 minutes. To some, this time the French spend not working gives them a better quality of life and a longer life expectancy with better average health during their retirement years.

An Ipsos Global and Reuters survey in developed countries showed that 89% of the French took all of their allotted vacation days. In America, where vacation

days are fewer, workers only used 57% of their holidays while this figures drops to only 33% in Japan. Yet the Japanese economy is suffering more than most.

Crying Wolf

IN 1992 wolves were re-introduced near Saint-Martin-Vésubie in the Parc Mercantour (see page 34), a short drive from the Riviera coast.

Last year there were 800 reported wolf attacks on flocks in Alpes-Maritimes, killing some 2400 sheep, and sightings have been reported just behind Grasse, as far north as Digne and even into Savoie. There have also been reports well into the Var.

Detractors claim this only represents about 0.02% of the country's 10 million-plus sheep population. And *France Nature Environnement* says over 200,000 sheep each year are killed by dogs in France and that the statistics should really be taken in perspective.

Shepherds now expect the state to take control of the situation, limit the wolf population and allocate over €3 million a year in compensation. Sheep farmers Daniel and Francis Laugier have even suggested that the national park instead buy their own flocks to "feed their wolves".

In August the prefecture authorised a limited cull and two wolves were killed in Duranus and Belvédère, not an easy job in the Mercantour's rugged terrain, which American expert Carter Niemeyer says is much harder for tracking wolves than in the Rockies where he re-introduced American wolves many years ago. ■

HEAT OR EAT?

A question some of Britain's 115,000 expats living in France and Southern Europe may soon have to answer



FUEL poverty in the UK is a reality for some pensioners and the Winter Fuel Payment gives them the little extra they need to heat during the coldest time of year. Despite the WFP, an estimated 20,000 pensioners in the UK die every winter from cold.

Until recently, British expats in France who were retired, over 60 and qualified for the allowance before leaving the UK have been able to claim the allowance. From 2015, under the Government Spending Review's new "temperature test", the coalition wants to strip the WFP from expats in Spain, Portugal, Greece, Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus and France. George Osborne explains that granting the payment is not "fair use of the nation's cash" when

it goes to residents of "hot countries".

For anyone who has ever spent a winter in the north of France or the Dordogne – or even the backcountry of the Riviera – it's anything but "hot". Many parts of France are colder than parts of the UK so how did France get lumped in with much warmer countries? Apparently, the temperature in France's overseas territories in the West Indies and Indian Ocean were included when calculating the country's average temperature.

If you're concerned about this and would like to see the measure annulled before it takes effect, join the fight led by French expats Brian Cave (lefourquet@orange.fr) and Graham Richards (graham.richards@orange.fr). See petitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/52121

To contact the International Pension Centre from abroad call +44 (0)191 218 7777 or see gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/how-to-claim

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EASYJET certainly created a frequent-flyer culture for Brits living abroad, making it possible for us to pop home for a short visit more often than not.

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Private plates: an acquired taste or just poor taste?

THE British have a penchant for personalised number plates whether as a prank, a pretentious flaunt or a way to make a serious statement. If you can afford it, could you resist having the his-and-her numbers 2BE and NOT 2B side by side in your garage? Part-time Riviera resident and wealthy property developer and philanthropist Robert Bourne (he once bought and subsequently closed down the St Jean Cap Ferrat Zoo) has these Shakespearean plates parked in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, one of London's poshest neighbourhoods. It's



an appropriate choice for this lover of dramatic art – Bourne purchased the ailing Old Vic theatre and saved it, appointing Kevin Spacey as artistic director.

How about telling HMRC just what you think about their fiscal policy with the tag shown in the picture above? Pope John Paul II's popemobile once had the UK number VIP1 but it was sold on to Roman Abramovich for £285,000. Lord Sugar drives around with AMS1 on his Bentley and Vinnie Jones sports 100VJ.

Marketing personalised plates is big business and not only for the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) where UK domiciled cars must be registered. The DVLA sold the plate "D1" for a

record £352,000 but private sellers can do better.

A sharp businessman can make a good living from buying and selling rare numbers through car shows, auctions and dedicated websites.

Plate collectors don't part with their treasures easily. In 2008, Bradford businessman Afzal Khan bought the number "F1" on an old Volvo S80 for

£440,625 and it now adorns his rare Bugatti Veyron supercar. It's the favourite of his collection and he recently refused an offer of £6m for the number from an undisclosed purchaser. Kahn also owns UK numbers "4HRH" and "NO1". He holds the UK record for the price paid for a licence number but it's not a world record. A 25-year-old Abu Dhabi businessman Saeed Khouri is believed to have paid £7.1 million for the UAE plate "1".

None of this is possible in France but we're told that some Monaco plates can be acquired with enough influence and cash. Don't count on getting any single-digit ones though. Most of them are reserved for the princely family. ■

COMA SE DITZ ... EN OCCITAN?

The Rue to France continues with a visit to Occitania, courtesy of David Price

BY PJ HESLIN

FOR numerous American expats living in France, speaking the language is a challenge. Texan David Price in Avignon has gone one step further by becoming fluent in the regional dialect of Occitan, a language that precedes French.

Born in Bastrop, just outside Austin, David's enthusiasm for French started when he was fifteen years of age. Watching a PBS documentary on Hitler he thought, "This guy looks crazy but maybe he's very eloquent if you understand German." In an attempt to comprehend what the average German found so compelling about Hitler, David asked his parents if he could take German lessons. They said no but suggested Spanish or French since either

would be more useful. He chose French and that started him on a life-long road to studying and eventually living in France.

After graduating from Oklahoma University in 1999, he then took a post with the French Ministry of Education in Niort, before switching to tourism and working for Accor, the world's leading hotel operator, and then later for a small hotel in Avignon. While in Avignon he found himself leading tours for friends and business associates; he started to study the language and culture of Occitan along the way.

David's knowledge of Occitan would be impressive for a French person, never mind the fact that he is a native-born Texan. He

told me that Occitan pre-dates French and is one of the minority Romance languages.

For those at the back of the class

Once the Roman Empire crumbled in Western Europe, a regional dialect and culture spread from the Iberian Peninsula across the South of France to the border of northern Italy. Because of its geographical location, Occitania, or the *Pais d'Òc* as it's sometimes referred to, became a trading powerhouse with Occitan as the language of business.

Troubadours, travelling poet-musicians, also originated from Occitania during the 11th century. They sang about courtly love and spread the Occitanian language



At 39, David Price (pictured with Leila) has an international resumé that has taken him to Quebec, Ecuador, France and to another 22 other countries on four continents. He speaks English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Italian, and Occitan.

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and concepts of *convivencia* and *partage* (roughly translated meaning honour, chivalry and courtesy) as far as Italy, Spain and Greece. Without these Troubadours, we might not have the singer-songwriter of modern times. And where would the Seventies and Easy Listening radio stations be without singer-songwriters?

The Pope and other Catholic hierarchy felt threatened by the Troubadours' influence on the northern courts and also by the Cathar Movement which took hold in Occitania during the 12th and 13th centuries. Although Christians, Cathar beliefs were a direct challenge to the Catholic Church and at the beginning of the 13th century, the Pope organized a crusade against the Cathars. This religious war pitted northern French nobles against southern Occitania with the northerners coming up on top. Following this victory came the suppression of the Occitan language and culture.

Imagine all the Occitanian people

As David's fascination with the history and language grew, word of mouth spread of his regional knowledge and his impromptu tours generated more demand. He decided to put together a more formal organization that would benefit visitors and in 2004 he co-founded the Imagine Tours Association (*imagine-tours.net*) in Avignon. As an *Association loi de 1901* – see our website for how to set one up – this not-for-profit organization is sponsored by the PACA government with a specific goal to develop the language and culture of Provence and greater Occitania.

A Who's Who of Occitania

*Paul Cézanne -
Inès de la Fressange
Valéry Giscard d'Estaing
Henry IV of France
Christian Lacroix
Montgolfier brothers
Nostradamus
Georges Pompidou
Auguste Renoir
Audrey Tautou
Richard I*

Imagine Tours goes about this in several ways, from offering private cultural tours to providing services and free advice to potential visitors to the region, including for French and Occitan language schools. Members benefit from a range of cultural activities while partners, such as Radio Coupo Santo, are part of the association's many project initiatives.

David's experience with the French bureaucracy is very different from other expats that I've interviewed for *American Notes* who are trying to set up their own business. However, as Imagine Tours is a non-profit organization he says the biggest challenge is trying to find volunteers. Also the time commitment needed to run the association is considerable, especially as David and others who help have full-time jobs, and so co-ordinating schedules can be tricky.

But for this 39-year-old, helping others discover the region is truly a passion. "America's biggest misconception is that the French are arrogant. Generally speaking, Parisians are more so than French from other regions. When Americans come to the South of France they are surprised to find the people much warmer." He also enjoys smashing the myth of the fat and ignorant American through cultural exchanges via Imagine Tours. "Many French associate the policies of the American government with the American population and are surprised to find Americans interested in French culture, language and food."

Recently David received his ten-year residence card. He has been asked to run for local office and so and is contemplating applying for French citizenship, which he would have to have to get involved in politics. Since first coming to France, he's become alarmed by some of the changes that the country has gone through in the past ten years and would like to be able to do something about it through public office. Issues such as "security, litter, graffiti and a general lack of respect for the country" make him want to play a more active role in France's future. "It's a beautiful country and it's unfortunate when people don't respect it."

He's quick to add that despite some of the negative changes he's witnessed in France he would never move back to America. "I'd be bored to death if I lived in the US. Living here, I can experience something completely different in a matter of hours. It's intellectually energizing to live in a new country." ■

Drinking to distraction

A well-timed sale of vintage wines

BY MOLLY BROWN



Photo: Philippe Fitte/Realis

As part of SBM's 150th anniversary, guests dined *à la Alain Ducasse* in Place du Casino planted with 250 vines on a carpet of faux green grass.

MONACO has "a dynamic economy with healthy finances" according to the government's new magazine, *MC*. Government news and views of Monaco are now on TV, online and in print in French and English. Monaco's amended 2013 budget certainly gave cause for optimism with the deficit down by €11.8 million to €27.3 million. Revenues were higher partly due to better than expected tax revenues of €11.2 million (almost half the total receipts are from TVA on commercial transactions) and higher profits from Monaco Telecom (€12.4 million) with expenditures up by €16.8 million.

The Principality is in a festive mood with a joyous wedding at the Palace, lively celebrations and a record number of visitors this summer. Huge cruise ships arrived daily and yachts waited in line for one of the 750 berths available in Port Hercule, or in the smaller Port Fontvieille. A great many yachts had to be turned away and Monaco plans to add more berths in

the new land extension project at Larvotto. Monaco has become a popular destination for yachts cruising the Mediterranean, and restaurants, bars and nightclubs around the port had a swinging summer with music and lights for the International Fireworks competition, won this year by Spain, and a splendid regatta of more than 100 classic yachts, including some of the world's most beautiful 100-year-old classic sailing yachts, as the Monaco Yacht Club celebrated its 60th birthday with a Classic Week in true naval style. A quick scene change to the 21st century and 100 of the newest, largest superyachts jammed the port for the 23rd Monaco Yacht Show, a floating exhibit of the latest yacht designs which last year attracted a record 33,000 participants. Britain's Red Arrows flew in to open this popular event which this year launched the first Monaco Yacht Summit for owners and buyers at the Grimaldi Forum and a specially designed, limited issue of 50,000 postage stamps.

150 years, 150 wines, 150 days

SBM certainly do know how to celebrate in style. At their 150th birthday *Dîner à l'herbe*, brilliantly arranged in a Place du Casino planted with 250 vines, a carpet of faux green grass, guests wined and dined with Alain Ducasse's unique style and brilliance – it was haute cuisine at its highest. The unique idea of offering a selection of 150 Grands Crus de Bordeaux

Created in 1874, the Hotel de Paris wine cellars are "closed, dark, odour free, with humidity of minimum 75%; a stable environment (13 to 14 degrees) and ... sheltered from vibrations and noise."

from the Hotel de Paris cellars by the glass for 150 days from June 22nd to Nov 19th (Monaco's Fête Nationale) is marketing with imagination at €20-€50 per glass for the majority of wines and €190 for the most expensive (a rare 2000 Le Pin). At this moment of time, with pending demolition above and around these "ideal conditions" ... one can be excused for wondering if there is a hidden agenda for the sale of 150 exceptional wines ... perhaps to empty the area nearest the "vibrations and noise" of demolition of the Sporting d'Hiver ... or perhaps to raise money for their unpopular "modernisation" plan.

Art and artists

Meanwhile, in the Casino's Salle Garnier Opera Monte-Carlo opens the new season on a triumphal note as Plácido Domingo will direct the orchestra for Gian Carlo Menotti's two one-act operas, *Amelia al ballo* and *The Telephone* (Oct 24th-27th); celebrated diva Joyce DiDonato is in concert (Nov 13th) and Gianluigi Gelmetti directs Wagner's *Das Rheingold* (Nov 19th-24th) to celebrate Monaco's Fête Nationale.

Art galleries in the Principality have opened their autumn exhibitions. Maison de l'Amérique Latine displays art from young South American artists; Sem-Art Gallery shows the work of 12 artists from Galeire Bruno Bischofberger in Zurich until Dec 19th and internationally known American artist Nall, has relocated from Venice to Monaco and is showing his *Monaco Orchid Explosion* in his atelier at 6 Quai Antoine 1er, with an open house every other Thursday from 17h-20h. ■

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Yet more of the *incompréhensible* and *inexplicable*

BY PETER JOHNSON



EVERY year *la rentrée* brings with it a chill in the air: with the leaves changing colour and more taxes and social contributions than you can proverbially “shake a stick at”! This year is no exception. Tax bills will be raining down anytime soon, although income tax and *prélèvements sociaux* will be combined on the one form, instead of the crazy former system whereby income tax bills were sent out in September followed a month later by the social tax bill. How long did it take to work that one out? Still, a few jobs were preserved here and there ...

Auto-Entrepreneur: In the last issue I outlined the proposed changes to the Auto-Entreprise regime. Since then (on August 22nd to be exact) the proposals have been debated in

government and will be put to Parliament early in 2014. Several issues remain undecided, notably the upper ceilings of earnings under the new system.

Capital Gains tax: Again, in the last issue I mentioned the *volte face* on the time it takes to exempt a secondary residence from Capital Gains Tax. Earlier this year Hollande had increased it from 15 to 30 years but under pressure from public opinion, in July he announced that this period was to be brought down to 20 years. In fact the period will be 22 years and be applicable from September 1st. *Good news*, I hear you say. **But** (there's always a *mais* in the equation) the total exemption after 22 years will be on the 19% Capital Gains Tax **but not** the social tax (*prélèvements sociaux*) of 15.5%, which in turn will only be totally exempt after 30 years. Unbelievable taxation gymnastics, which brought this apt comment from a political commentator: “*By the way, by separating the tax base of social security contributions, our administrative elites have shown that no nation can compete with us when it comes to the incomprehensible, inexplicable ...*” I love it.

One slice of better news, however, if you sell your secondary home between September 1st, 2013 and August 31st, 2014 there will be an exceptional abatement of 25% of the taxable gain to be added to the duration of ownership. Go figure.

CSG on pensions: If you are a holder of an S1 form from another EU country you are exempt from the 7.1% CSG/CRDS levy on pension income. The logic is that the S1 grants you health cover in France because of the National Insurance you have previously paid in your country of origin, so – the argument goes – you are no burden on the French health care system.

However, the case of someone who has worked in both France and another EU country and thus receives both a French pension and a EU pension is a complex affair. The person's *Carte Vitale* is automatically issued by France and the French tax office therefore applies CSG/CRDS to ALL that person's pension income, including the foreign pensions. The only way out – if it's possible – is to renounce the *Carte Vitale* issued by France and re-enter the system via an S1. In the meantime, the situation remains grossly unfair. *Bonne rentrée!* ■

WHERE OH WHERE HAVE YOU BEAN?

But the French still think coffee-to-go is a big no-no

BY NANCY HESLIN



Olivier de Mendez, the Regional Director of Operations for Starbucks Coffee France, is an EDHEC Business School graduate. Amongst his various posts he spent 8 years in Dubai with a global communications agency and was Communications Manager at Microsoft France.

WHEN I moved to France, I rented an apartment in the Place des Arcades in Valbonne. Every morning, I would open my kitchen windows overlooking the 16th-century Square and, while the coffee percolated, observe my constituency below. I'd then pour my cuppa joe into a Starbucks Travel Tumbler before heading out to my battered 1991 Mini with its makeshift sneaker-cum-coffee cup holder. On that less than 10-minute walk, I would be met with gasps from the local villagers, mouths gaping as fingers in slow motion pointed towards me ... or I should say, in the direction of my thermos.

My French friends enlightened me: no well-respected French person would ever drink or eat on the move. *Un café* is to be had at *un café*. And, I was warned, never

order your coffee at the same time as dessert. Only after you've licked the *crème brûlée* dish can you order a coffee, but only an espresso. Otherwise you're a tourist.

With nowhere to go on the Riviera for a coffee-to-go hook-up, American residents and visitors over the years have suffered Starbucks withdrawal. And no wonder. As of 2012, there were more than 11,000 Starbucks across the US, and for travelling Americans there's been no shortage of the green-eyed lady abroad – in Turkey, Saudi Arabia and as of last year, in India, too.

Where you will not find a Starbucks is in Italy, even though Milan arguably “gave birth to café and coffeehouse culture” and inspired Howard Schultz in 1983 to transform Starbucks the coffee roaster into Starbucks the multi-billion dollar coffee kingdom. (The company posted a record Fourth Quarter and Fiscal 2012 Results of \$3.4 billion sales worldwide).

Starbucks Coffee France opened its first café in January 2004 on the Avenue de l'Opéra in Paris. There are now 59 Starbucks in the capital alone and the company employs 1056 permanent employees of nearly 60 nationalities. Last year, with reasonably low-volume fanfare, at least within the anglophone community, the company finally opened a coffeehouse at Cap 3000 in St Laurent du Var (where incidentally a McDonald's has just put up its arches). And by the end of September 2013, café number 86 in France is scheduled to launch in Nice Étoile.

There are two challenges facing the Seattle-based company in France. First, according to *The New York Times* in March 2012, “After eight years spent setting up 63 French Starbucks stores, the company has never turned a profit in France.” This is put down expensive rent along with complex and costly employment contracts, all of

which cut into a company's bottom line.

In addition, Starbucks (much like the EU) is up against the Continental divide: each European country hangs on dearly to its own traditions. In the UK, most orders are to go – a big earner for the company – so Starbucks announced plans to install 500 drive-thrus over five years. By contrast, in France, the locals are not taking their coffee *à emporter*, instead opting to “sip where they sit”.

“French customers are demanding, and unlike other countries the coffee market in France is mature,” explains Olivier de Mendez, Regional Director of Operations for Starbucks Coffee France, in an email. “The French are big fans of coffee, espresso particularly. So Starbucks offers a range of combinations beyond the traditional espresso: a double ‘blond and brown’ or coffees from around the world.”

When asked for statistics such as how many customers per month are served at Starbucks Cap 3000 or how long the average French or foreign coffee drinker spends at a Starbucks café in France, Mr de Mendez says, “Starbucks does not provide this kind of data ... customers can stay as long as they wish.”

“We believe that we must be constantly innovative to stay ahead of our customers' needs. We have diversified Starbucks products, like Discoveries and bottled Frappuccinos, available in supermarkets since spring 2012.”

After a six-month test period in Switzerland, Corner Cafés – Starbucks-branded vending machines selling cappuccinos to chai tea lattes – is now, in partnership with Selecta, at companies in Germany, France, the Netherlands, Denmark and Finland.

So how does my first visit to a local Starbucks rate? At a friend's insistence, I finally visit Cap 3000 and am impressed. The staff smiled, fellow caffeine junkies were young, and prices are comparative. And, as my lactose intolerant pal pointed out, Starbucks is the only place other than Emilie's Cookies in Nice that serves soya milk. Cue gasp, gape, point. ■

Flying in the middle

EASYJET, the low-cost carrier introduced more than two decades ago by Stelios Haji-Ioannou, is already the second carrier out of Nice and by the end of 2014 will probably have knocked Air France out of the top slot nationwide. Once thought of as an airline for backpackers, while legacy carriers catered to business passengers, the orange beast is now branching out to attract business travellers.

EasyJet's new corporate customer plan is designed to attract frequent flying businessmen who want more flexible bookings, priority boarding and inclusive cabin and checked baggage allowances. For the moment the option is reserved for corporate clients only. On the Nice to London route the "inclusive fare" prices will be well above easyJet's lowest general public price and BA fares compare very favourably with the added advantages of reserved seating, in-flight drinks or food service and lounge access for Business, First Class passengers and Executive Club members.

While easyJet is offering more frills at higher fares, British Airways is "no-frilling it" on 9 short-haul routes from Heathrow and London City. A similar plan has been found successful on some Gatwick short-haul flights. Robin Glover-Faure, BA's head of short-haul, says that passengers only with cabin carry-on baggage can save £20 on round-trip flights if they don't check in luggage. The allowed carry-on baggage can include a decent-sized case (56cm x 45cm x 25cm) plus a handbag or laptop bag. If the test destinations prove positive, more flights will be added and we have every hope that Nice will be included in these routes.

Watchdog Which! has

published findings of its study into the cost of luggage on budget airlines and concluded that it's often cheaper to ship your luggage to your destination with courier companies than pay the luggage fees charged by some airlines. It is estimated that airlines around the world make approximately \$36 billion a year from ancillary fees for extra luggage allowance. In many cases, the fare to carry a suitcase or golf bag is greater than the passenger pays for his own seat on a budget carrier.

Up, pup, and away!

PUTTING a pooch on a plane can be a pain for all concerned. There's the crowded, noisy airport, the security checks, then all the strange noises and sensations of the actual flying. Now every dog can have his flying



day made easier thanks to K9 Flight School in Los Angeles, where they teach dogs "how to handle airport sights and sounds, security checks and busy gangways". At the Air Hollywood studios, where *Bridesmaids* was filmed, a five-hour course uses film sets and volunteers to reproduce the commotion of a modern airport and, in a simulator, the dog experiences boarding, takeoff, turbulence, landing, and disembarking (without the barking). Socialising your pet in this unique way will cost you \$349 (€260). Money well spent if it means avoiding the panic puddle at check-in. See airhollywood.com/k9 ■



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SOUNDS FROM HOME

BY HUW WILLIAMS

Good network connectivity in every room is needed to have online radio throughout the home



Photo: Revo

NOWADAYS, very few of us "spin a disc" or "chuck a cassette" in the tape deck. The music industry has been revolutionised, with the maturing of the internet and the development of digitised encoding.

Digitised encoding enables songs to be re-encoded on a PC or Mac into a file format so that they can be played on an ever-increasing number of devices. One of the earlier and more common formats was an MP3; today these can be bought online and downloaded directly to be played on car entertainment systems, TVs, mobile phones and media players.

Radio & internet radio

Accessing music and radio today can be a bit confusing, further complicated by living in a foreign country. There are radio stations available as a supplement to Satellite TV so if you have a dish tuned in to, say, the UK Satellite Astra 2, it's possible to get UK radio over the same

system. Other national radio stations can also be obtained through satellite.

The ease of broadcasting over the net has given rise to millions of online radio stations around the world, with a number of advantages over traditional "over-the-air" stations including the "listen again" option and podcasts.

Still, there are a few caveats to be aware of: some broadcasters only have rights to copyrighted material within a geographical region and will block certain content to meet these copyright conditions. For example, the transmission of BBC Radio 4 was restricted during the 2012 Olympic Games, affecting not just news and sports, but general programmes as well.

You may want to consider purchasing an internet radio, which you can tune into the vast array of stations globally plus most of these can also act as media players on your network. The media player functionality would allow you to

play the music you have stored locally on your network. This can be done with a standard PC or Mac, but the best option is to have a dedicated streaming device in the form of a NAS (Network Attached Storage), which stores your music and makes it available across your network.

There are a number of reputable brands of internet radio with varying functionalities: Revo (pictured), Pure, and Logitech all have similar feature sets but you need to compare to make sure they support what is important to you.

The alternative is to sign up with the new streaming sites and have access to millions of songs for a monthly fee so no local storage is needed.

Music: downloading and streaming

There are many websites that provide access to online music, by purchase and download, live streaming, stream-on-demand, or just recommendations to a community, although availability can change from country to country.

iTunes of course was the first on the scene and their model was simple: buy music online at a competitive price, and download it to a media player, likely an iPod. Apple provided easily manageable content to play on their iPods and other devices but content was protected by DRM (Digital Rights Management) which limited the number of devices the music could be played on. This was a move to protect the revenue streams of the artists and Apple, but if the device that downloaded the content was lost or broken, there was a risk of music purchases going AWOL along with it. These limitations have since been relaxed and now DRM allows for copies to multiple devices.

Competitors for the online market, like Amazon MP3 and Google Play, started with the services portal and added the device: Kindle.

Today though there is a whole new way to get access to your favourite songs

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- ☐ **OPTION B:** I will keep my system as it is for Sky channels (football, movies and USA programmes etc).
I can't have a big dish but I must have *EastEnders* so I'll watch it on my iPad/laptop using HasEurope VPN.
- ☐ **OPTION C:** I have a garden so a big dish (1.2m to 1.5m) is no problem to install.
I know it'll take a few months from the change for the signal to settle but want to get the right dish and the correct size. HasEurope.com will keep me up-to-date.
- ☐ **OPTION D:** I enjoy traffic jams, poor food and the NHS so I'll move back to the UK where my TV will work no problem!



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and that is to pay a monthly fee to be able to stream content on a regular basis. For a more extensive list of music online stores, see <http://goo.gl/Zh9qg>

There are websites that allow listening access to libraries of music for "free" or by a paid-for subscription. The French site Deezer, Spotify, Grooveshark and Pandora are a few examples but there are many others. Free accounts are limited as the artist has to be paid either by advertising or subscription.

This is a relatively new concept and reports from the music press indicate that not all musicians are entirely satisfied as to how much their work earns.

The paid-for accounts offer exceptionally good value to the consumer – in some cases making available over 20 million songs.

A few of these services, due to licensing issues, now restrict their services to a specific geographical region. For example, Pandora and Heart Radio are not available outside the US; Grooveshark is not available in Denmark and Germany.

Thanks to the internet, we no longer have to stay tuned to a particular radio station to hear our favourite tune, nor do we have to purchase a whole album just for one particular track. The problem isn't a lack of choice but rather too much. ■

Why size matters ... for tuning into English tellie



THE Astra 2E replacement satellite launch has been delayed, and so may not be fully operational by the end of October as first predicted.

Once it is up in space and fully functioning, Sky Channels like Sky One/News/Movies/Sports will be unaffected but when BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Five switch to this new satellite many viewers outside of the UK will be left with blank screens. A very weak signal will still be receivable in Europe but only by using a much larger dish. In fact, the further you live from the UK, the bigger the dish will have to be.

At the moment it's impossible to say which size dish is certain to work. Throughout the first year of operation the satellite operator will continue to tweak the signal,

dramatically affecting reception for some.

Terry Sherlock at *HasEurope.com* has started selling the "1 Metre Plus" dish, which works like a 1.2 metre dish and is already giving very good results. He expects it will meet the expectations of Riviera viewers after the switch.

Terry tells the *Reporter*, "Our clients who buy this dish in the early days will be the best judges as to how well it's working and we promise to publish every review, including the bad ones, on our website. Our strong hope is that the 1 Metre Plus will prove to be the dish of choice."

Should this remarkable dish not prove to offer any major benefits to expats, *EastEnders* and *Coronation Street* fans may be left staring at Sky TV. ■

Can you claim against this killer from the past ?

LOOKING to escape the cog in the UK corporate wheel, and the long train commutes and work days that went along with it, Steve Woods set up Woods Solicitors in 2003. He can walk to his Chester office and is able to spend time with his family. There's been no looking back. "I very much enjoy running my own company because it allows me to meet and develop a strong rapport with clients."

Steve Woods helps British expats with asbestos-related claims.



Since opening, Woods Solicitors (woodslaw.co.uk) has helped hundreds of British expats in New Zealand, the US, Cyprus, Portugal and Spain obtain compensation for asbestos-related claims.

Asbestos? Have we set our clocks back to the 20th century? Asbestos poisoning may no longer be the *cause du*

jour but according to the World Health Organization, an estimated 125 million people in the world today are exposed to asbestos in the workplace and more than 107,000 die from asbestos-related lung cancer. In France, scientists at INSERM (Health and Medical Research Institute) believe by the year 2025, some 100,000 workers will die from contamination.

Just last month, the Tour Montparnasse in Paris, the famous 210-metre skyscraper with the best views of the capital, had to evacuate workers and companies are deserting its office space due to a "significant number of exposures to asbestos dust".

"Even if you are no longer living in the UK," Steve explains, "if you have been diagnosed with an asbestos-related lung disease, you may be entitled to a claim and government benefits. We've seen a rise in enquiries from those who worked in the UK in the 50s, 60s and 70s and were exposed to the mineral either directly, like someone mixing concrete, or indirectly – the electrician working next to him. The problem is, of course, that forty years later, you may start to develop breathing difficulties and put it down to age."

In the UK, Health and Safety Executive

states that in 2011, "1985 new cases of mesothelioma were assessed for Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit and that the worst case predictions for males are that annual deaths will peak by 2016".

Also worrying is that the "numbers of newly assessed asbestosis cases for IIDB have increased more rapidly than asbestosis deaths in recent years".

As Steve, who has 25 years experience dealing with personal injury claims, points out, "An X-ray can show whether lung damage is the result of smoking or asbestos, although even medical professionals may not be readily looking for related illnesses when examining patients. Asbestosis, diffuse plural thickening and mesothelioma – a cancer that attacks the protective lining for many of the body's internal organs – are very serious illnesses that can be caused from contact with asbestos."

If you think this could be you, get in touch with Woods Solicitors with your concerns – and a few details like contact information, date of birth and your National Insurance number. From here, Steve will decide whether your case can be investigated, look in to your medical records and can come to France to meet with you.

But what's this going to cost? "In April 2013 there was a change in the 'No Win, No Fee' law in the UK," Steve says, "and now solicitors may charge up to 25% of the proportion of damages awarded to their clients. I'm not doing this. I want to reassure anyone contemplating contacting our company that there is no fee to our clients. In cases of those with asbestos related-conditions, compensation is given from the company that employed them, and 100% of the claim goes to the client." ■

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HEALTH

"Like looking for a needle in a haystack"

Why understanding your needs and your language is such a rare quality in a personal nurse

FOR years my friend Joanne looked after a man in his seventies who suffered from Parkinson's, plus heart and back trouble. He spent much of his time in the hospital-style bed installed in his apartment in Nice; there, his medical needs ranged from syringe-changing to regulating his apnoea machine to blood tests.

His biggest problem? He didn't understand French. His deficiency in the language made it next to impossible to get in-home care, even though he was covered by French social security with its impressive array of assistance. He simply could not communicate his needs. Even when agencies sent over an *aide soignante à domicile* with "good English", it simply wasn't "good" enough. Beyond "Yes" and "How are you?", medical terms got lost in translation.

Joanne's story is not unique; those looking for personal care assistance in English contact the *Reporter* regularly. It is frustrating to search for a qualified carer who speaks the language – like trying to find a handyman who shows up on time and finishes the job – and until recently there were none to be found.



Nursing assistant Shirley Harriman has lived in France for over 20 years.

But now we have nurse Shirley Harriman, expertise and experience at the ready. Leicestershire lass Shirley met her French husband in the UK. They decided to come to the Côte d'Azur in 1992, moving near to his family in Tourrettes-sur-Loup.

Shirley took her UK nursing qualifications to the prefecture where she received the equivalent diploma to work in France

as an *aide soignante*. She found work straightaway at the original Sunny Bank, the English-speaking hospital in Cannes.

"It was really difficult for patients if they didn't speak French," Shirley says. "At the time, French nurses didn't really have any bedside manner, but I've seen first-hand how this has changed."

Shirley then worked four years at the Maison de Mineur, a heart and lung rehabilitation clinic in Vence. "It's a brilliant concept. After open heart surgery, patients come here for a month of physiotherapy and are followed by a cardiologist."

Private care positions – end-of-life care in Mougins and assisting a disabled elderly gentleman in Monaco – plus a job at the Clinique Saint-Jean in Cagnes-sur-mer also contribute to this 53-year-old's CV; she has kept herself steadily employed over her two decades on the Riviera. An attractive and likeable woman, Shirley is completely integrated into the French community, but sees a need to help the English struggling with the language.

Shirley has this message for *Reporter* readers in need of qualified nursing assistance: "I am a very good personal carer and I have set up as a business and registered with the *Chambre de métiers*. I specialise in post-operative care, daily living assistance – including help with medication – and palliative care and I can meet with you anywhere from Monaco to Cannes to assess your needs." N.H. ■

Shirley can be contacted on 06 49 17 59 48 or harriman.shirley@gmail.com

THE VILLA IN THE RUE DES ROSES

BY NICK KENT



HER engaging smile lights up the elegant salon in which we are sitting. Martine Legrand has started talking about the love of her life, the villa in the rue des Roses.

It all started thirty years ago when Martine came to Grasse to work with the mayor on an urban planning project. Towns and what makes them tick has always been her work and, along with the aforementioned villa, her obsession.

"I felt an immediate attraction towards



Grasse, it was triggered by the impressive architecture," says Martine, a Parisienne by birth if not entirely by nature. "I will never forget my first visit to the Villa Fragonard, the model of the ideal house in what many people regarded as a sleepy backwater.

"But there was more to Grasse than just beautiful and interesting buildings, it was the spirit of the town that spoke to me. I had found a real, living town, with an organised, stratified society, so different from the life on the coast, and at that time it was an industrial centre, the industry being perfume of course.

"Grasse had grown wealthy, but a long time ago it had turned its back on the Côte d'Azur."

Past splendour. The south façade offers superb view (inset). Original panelling (bottom left) and a romantic staircase add to the charm.

Martine found the majority of *grassois* at that time were regarded by people on the coast as living in "a city apart", as she puts it. They were proud independent people.

Martine wanted a little part of this way of life, but what she finished up with was a mighty big slice.

"I was recently divorced and I didn't have much money, but my savings plan, the *plan épargne logement*, had matured, and I asked an agent to find me a modest apartment I could buy that had some history to it.

"He didn't find a modest apartment, but he did show me the villa in the rue des Roses. I walked through the imposing front door and was immediately captivated by the elegant sweeping staircase. I'm a cinophile, and I pictured the famous



movie actresses of the Forties sweeping down its marble steps – just so romantic.”

The villa had been built by a perfume industry family in the late 19th century. Its position on the hillside above and to the west of the old town gives it a breathtaking view over the towers and pinnacles of old Grasse to the sea and the Esterel mountains beyond. But the fabulous vista was incidental to the main purpose of the villa's situation. As I learnt from Martine, it was likely that the owner could have overseen what was going on around the factories scattered through the paysage below.

Martine fell in love with the villa, with the way it still wore its history. Most of the original features, from the fountain in the entrance hall to the peacock cage in the garden, had been preserved. Martine was determined to keep it that way. But there was a big obstacle standing between this highly motivated woman and her dream – money.

“It was six times more than I could afford,” she says.

But being the resourceful woman she is, Martine came up with a plan. “I told the bank that if they lent me the money I would turn part of the villa into flats and rent them to pay back the loan. That sort of thing was easier to do back in those days, the banks were prepared to take a risk.”

It took genius to achieve what Martine achieved. The

three flats were converted from discreet and little-used parts of the building, but the historic core of the villa, with its grand entrée, imposing salon, *fumoir* and the rest remains as it was.

The past has caught up with the singular Martine. She suffers from a bone disorder, and although for much of the time she can walk without aid, on many occasions she has found herself in a wheelchair. Now in her middle sixties, Martine realises that the great house on the hill is too much for her.

“Of course I am sad, I love this place so much it will be heartbreaking to leave. I just hope I can find a buyer who shares my passion for keeping these beautiful old things as they were meant to be kept, someone who cherishes a link with the past that today still speaks to us so clearly. An artist perhaps, a writer, an architect ... someone with imagination and a feeling for the old ways combined with a flair for creative and sensitive decoration.”

The villa is no museum. It cries out to be lived in, enjoyed, to keep a dream alive. ■

The villa, with a large terraced garden and pool, is divided into 4 apartments, each with a separate entrance.

The master apartment:

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THE FRENCH: FACTS WITHOUT FRICTION

BY NANCY HESLIN



Author Piu Marie Eatwell says it's "time to re-think the clichés" about the French.

WHEN I read the press release that accompanied Piu Marie Eatwell's book *They Eat Horses Don't They? The Truth About the French* (UK: Head of Zeus) – "she worked as a lawyer, a BBC television producer and a teacher" – I admittedly found myself author profiling, putting Eatwell in the Julia Stagg (see last issue) "not everyone that moves to France has a story to tell" category.

I couldn't have been more wrong. Eatwell's investigative non-fiction into 45 lifestyle myths about the French is the bowl of porridge that's just right, flanked by the

unimaginative and often poorly-penned Mayle-lit (too hot) and the overly-academic histories of France (too cold), both of which styles have inexplicably – and far too numerous – found their way onto expat book shelves and e-readers.

Born in Calcutta and raised in the UK, the Oxford-educated Eatwell has lived in France for over ten years, long enough to observe "the behaviour of a country we have stereotyped for hundreds of years".

"The myths that annoyed me most, and which really

inspired the desire to expose them in this book, were those that 'French women don't get fat' and 'French children don't throw food,' she tells the *Reporter*. "It seemed to me that not only were some expats making a great deal of money churning out these (incorrect) assertions, but that they were also making non-French women feel inadequate. Not only are we all fat and ugly, but we can't raise children either – after all, French kids recently came bottom out of a recent European survey for discipline in class."

Eatwell doesn't waste one word over the 322 pages, and even though she cites over 280 footnotes, her delivery is seamless.

"I really wanted to get away from the whimsical, jokey tone that has characterised this type of 'expat' book about the French up to now – but it had to be entertaining and fun to read, as well. The editor and I hit on the idea of including lots of snippets of information and quotations, along with illustrations, to give it a quirky feel, while still keeping the

serious content."

The French myth subject matter is current and diverse – anything from plumbing to sex, from holidays to music (the chapter on French Pop Music is Irredeemably Naff really is enlightening) – and provides a great deal of "Oh, so that's why" to any expat living here who's asked the question *mais pourquoi?* At the end of each chapter, the myth is exposed as true or false, but you won't want to skip the pages in between. This book is essential for those who often find themselves deeply embattled in the "centuries old, love-hate relationship between Britain and France" yet lack the hard evidence to prove their point. And it would be an ideal book to have on hand for visiting family and friends, who'll secretly take pleasure to know that "French women are increasingly getting fatter, and that French children do have tantrums over eating their *steak au poivre*". ■

An interview with Piu Marie Eatwell can be found on RivieraReporter.com

An inside look

- 49% of the French dream of living in the suburbs.
- In the 1950s, only 10% of homes in France had a bath or shower; only 58% had running water.
- There are over French 31,927 villages under 2000 residents.
- "Paris Syndrome" – encountering "canine excreta in the streets, dirty toilets, brusque waiters" – is a psychosis to which Japanese tourists in Paris are peculiarly susceptible, resulting in the hospitalisation of several dozen a year.

From They Eat Horses Don't They

VIRGIN TERRITORY

The 27-year-old French woman who gave up sex



OVER the past 12 years, I moved to France, set up my own business, became editor of this magazine, took a TGV with Tom Cruise from Paris to Marseille, my dad died, my mom had cancer, I visited Santa Claus in Lapland, became a French citizen, got married and did an Ironman. In this same period of time, Sophie Fontanel (pictured), journalist, and editor at *Elle France*, gave up sex.

The Art of Sleeping Alone: Why One French Woman

Suddenly Gave Up Sex (UK: Scribner)

uncomplicatedly documents the author's self-imposed celibacy at the age of 27, an apology to mistreating her body with the promise to abstain from relationships until her mind and body have cleared the lines of communication.

"I'd had it with handing myself over. I'd said yes too much. I hadn't taken into account the tranquillity my

body required," she writes.

Fontanel's monochromatic observations of a sex-obsessed world – "We live in a culture where people would rather die than admit to having felt listless about sex at one point in their lives" – spin around her circle of acquaintances in Paris while offering no spectacular revelations or even juicy narrative.

Her friends feel the need to save her ("What it boiled down to was that I should live like them") and she eventually feels excluded from society as a singleton but still, she questions, "When was I ever happier than during my few months of respite?"

In one discussion there's even a reference to the ghastly *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus*, a throwback to male versus female banality from yesteryear. But this doesn't matter. Sex makes a great headline and curiosity keeps the reader turning the 153 pages to see how it all ends.

This is not a laugh-out-loud book (she is French after all) but what stays with the reader is the elegance of the writing.

It's lovely stuff, even if her stream of consciousness strays occasionally.

In *The Art of Sleeping Alone*, especially for expat women who are known to spend long stretches of time apart from their spouses

and who live in France, the passages are worth reading.

Initially published in French (*L'envie*), this is Fontanel's first translated book in English, and I expect it won't be her last. *N.H.* ■



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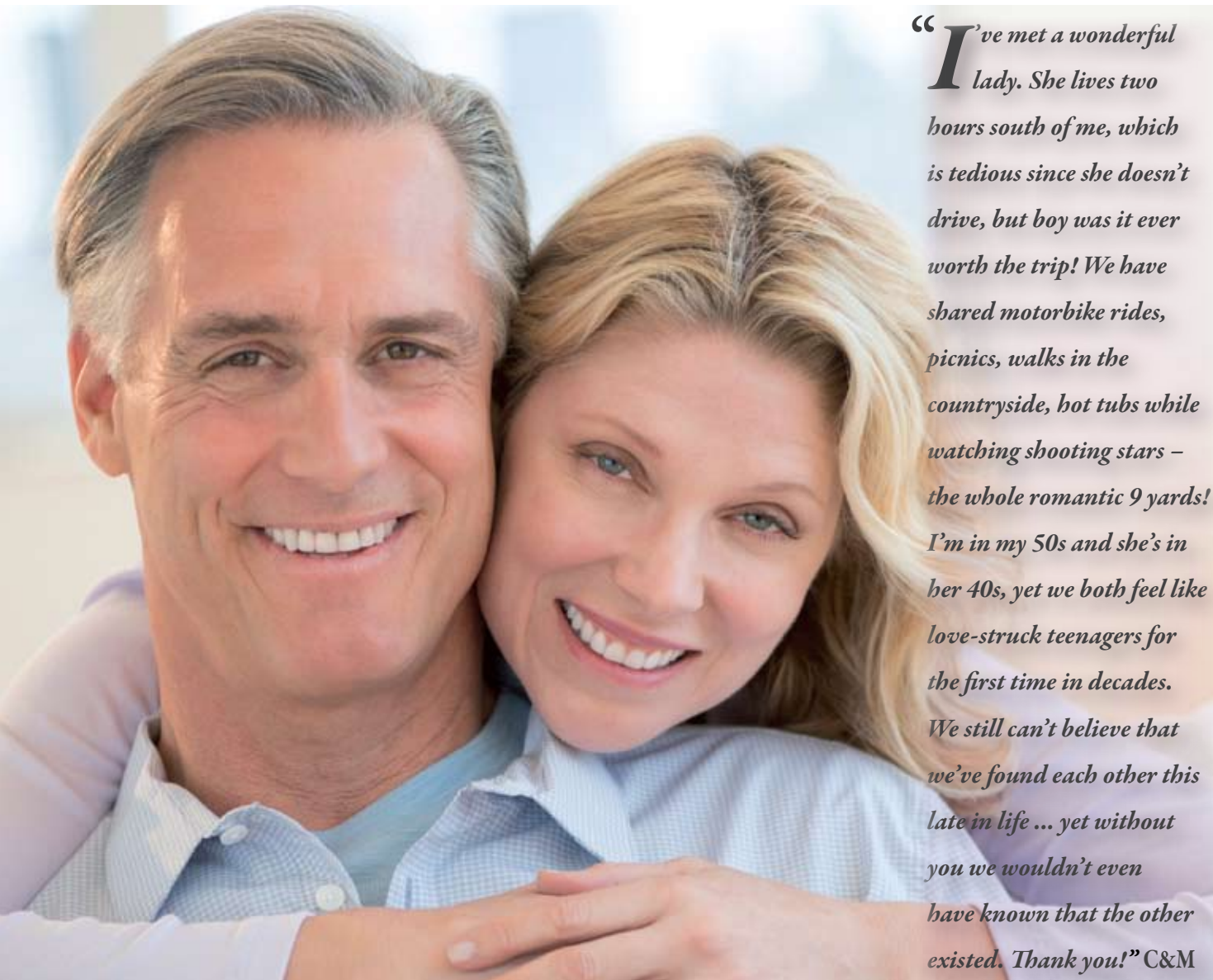
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“I’ve met a wonderful lady. She lives two hours south of me, which is tedious since she doesn’t drive, but boy was it ever worth the trip! We have shared motorbike rides, picnics, walks in the countryside, hot tubs while watching shooting stars – the whole romantic 9 yards! I’m in my 50s and she’s in her 40s, yet we both feel like love-struck teenagers for the first time in decades. We still can’t believe that we’ve found each other this late in life ... yet without you we wouldn’t even have known that the other existed. Thank you!” C&M

Making a difference in the dating game

BY NANCY HESLIN

FOR many *célibataires* living on the Côte d’Azur the dating pool is painfully empty. Single people don’t just up sticks and move to the South of France, which means any new blood is usually “spoken for”. Then there are the divorced and retired, who either seem to have a lot of baggage or a lot of white hair.

There are websites like *meetic.fr* – “one of Europe’s most popular internet dating services” – but none of my friends who are members on these types of “international” sites has ever had a normal date, and by normal I mean the potential soul mate shows up. Of course, there’s a choice of

clubs along the Coast where Romeo or Juliet may cross your path – like archery (page 36), on the golf course (page 25), or at an art outing (page 45) – but the fantasy of marrying a French person usually neglects the red flags: cultural differences, inability to communicate ... and even food appreciation, which typically means what lovingly goes up must spiral down.

Brit Karen May, 54, was a widow for three years when she decided to try and meet someone. “I joined international dating sites which were ... interesting!”

Karen, who has lived for nearly a decade in Provence, tells us. “Let’s just say that

requests for erotic afternoons were not unusual – no sex please, I’m British!”

“I did meet some great guys though, mostly French, but what I really missed was the silly shared humour, the culture I grew up with. I searched for a reputable site that had fellow English speakers and couldn’t find one. A friend suggested I start one and after much research – I did.”

Karen launched *Expatdatingfrance.com* for English-speaking expats in France.

“Most dating sites are partnerships or affiliates meaning they buy in their population. I have to be commercial but I decided to build a reputable and trustworthy site with no advertising, no gimmicks and no hard sell.”

Expatdatingfrance.com has been online for less than a month (at time of print) and already has 600 registered members.

“It’s remarkable how the site has taken off. We’ve even had our first success story [see above],” Karen says. “I’ve even been asked if I can start up in Spain.” ■

HOW LOW CAN YOU GO?

With the pips squeaking at a deafening volume, we're all looking to save money these days.

But before you decide there are cheaper hobbies than golf and put your clubs on eBay, the good news is that most of the golf clubs in our region have realised that they now have to compete for a dwindling number of rounds played each year, as belts are tightened in the face of la crise. Let's look at how you can save significantly on the cost of a round around the region.



GOING LOCAL

The course owners don't like the idea, and neither does the FFGolf, the *Fédération Française de Golf*, but "local associations" are growing because they offer affordable golf at good courses. It works like this: you gather a bunch of pals together and enrol them in a local association, say the Trou-sur-Mer Golfing Association. Maybe you advertise to swell your core group.

You go along to your favourite course and propose a sort of golfing timeshare, you buy, say, 8 memberships for use by your association, which has 40 members. As part of the deal with the golf club, each member of the association is restricted to one round per week.

Now the maths as it applies to your club. Effectively, each member of your

association is paying one-fifth of the golf club's individual membership fee of, maybe, €3000. So €600 for a potential 52 rounds per year, the resulting figure makes Wakefield Municipal look expensive. And then your association can approach more than one club ... interesting, isn't it?

LAST MINUTE BARGAINS

Bookandgolf (bookandgolf.com) are the last-minute wonder boys. If the clubs they work with have tee-times free, the price drops as that time get closer. Taking a mid-September day as an example, if you could play at 15h and didn't mind hanging on to book until midday, then bingo! The price drops at both Golf de l'Estérel and Sainte Maxime from €75 to €40, a tasty 40% reduction.

THE LATE SHOW

Many clubs offer a good discount, usually 25%, for players with good eyesight who don't mind starting late. At St Donat, for instance, you'll pay €58 to play this justifiably popular course after mid-afternoon. It's a good plan to ask for a reduction on the 9-hole rate for this time of day, that way you'll know you'll be able to get round without needing a torch for the scorecard.

THE BEST FOR LESS

Yes, it may be millionaire golf at the fabulous Terre Blanche near Fayence, but try this November offer for a special occasion: golf for two plus a night in a superior suite plus brekkie for €508. **RG**

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Taulane, one of the courses we play regularly

A CLUB IN THE BIG COUNTRY



Da da da da, Da da da da da ...

The vast vistas that greet the visitor to the Golf de St Endréol have the effect of producing strangled sounds from the throat of Riviera Golfer, as he attempts a rendition of the soundtrack to *The Big Country*.

As the morning sun hits the magnificent Rocher de Roquebrune and makes its red rocks glow, you feel transported back to the early colour Westerns, expecting a posse of pesky 'injuns to break cover from behind a Mojave mesa, or for John Wayne to cry "Take 'em to Missouri, Matt!" from the saddle.

Although called a "resort course", St Endréol, north of Le Muy in the Var, belies the label that often describes a pushover *parcours* for hackers on holiday. During RG's latest visit, the well turned-out players staying at the new hotel on the property were there for some serious golf.

It has some of the best holes in our region, including the awesome Par 3

13th, an elevated tee-shot over all-the-way water that gets more terrifying as you move back from the red tees to the white. It also has one of the most difficult and frustrating, the uphill Par 4 17th, with the green perched on a cleft in the cliff seeming to retreat as you approach it. The very good news for us golfers of moderate ability is that this is shortly to become a Par 5, keeping the overall Par 72 for the course as the modified 11th hole drops down a stroke to a Par 4.

St Endréol, like Terre Blanche near Fayence, is a modern resort with more to it than golf. A 2000m² spa opened nearly ten years ago, followed by a 50-room hotel in 2008. There's a restaurant and villas, to buy and rent. Frédéric Thuboeuf, a pleasant Parisian, is the general manager of the whole shoot.

"St Endréol was planned to have nine phases, we are currently in phase six [including the new hotel] and about to start on phase seven".



St Endréol's General Manager Frédéric Thuboeuf looks at ways to attract new members and golfers

When St Endréol opened in 1992 it was jointly owned by French interests held by Suez and the Japanese company Kajimi. The financial storms of the early Nineties washed away the French and left the Japanese holding the expensive, but very promising, baby.

Millions of euros later, and the Japanese are still investing in the project, but have



switched their focus from quantity to quality. They are keen to build the seven high-end villas, €1.5 million a pop, that will discreetly line the magnificent undulating fairway of the ninth hole. This development, although very upscale, mirrors what has already occurred on the domaine, where more than 200 villas nestle unobtrusively around this hilly area on the edge of the Argens plain.

“The Japanese insist that there is a minimum of 50 metres between the golf course and the boundary of any new property, often it is 100 metres,” says the 48-year-old Thuboeuf. This avoids the claustrophobic experience of playing on some Spanish courses, where you sometimes feel as if you are driving the ball down a street with houses looming on either side, often protected by hideous giant nets. Golf for sardines.

A little further down the line, St Endréol’s owners will be obliged to build the housing for local people insisted

upon by the mayor of La Motte, the commune into which the domaine falls. Some of the present members and owners are prepared to wait a long time for this particular phase to become reality.

The club membership number is small, around 250, as you would expect from a course whose focus is more on guest players. There are many northern Europeans among them, fewer Brits than before that little hiccup involving Lehman Brothers in September 2008, after which there was a rush to sell as the pound sterling plunged to parity with the euro.

Mr Thuboeuf was surprised to discover that there were hardly any members aged between 20 and 40. He thought that new blood was needed, realising that the “rack rate” for membership of €3250 was too much for younger players. So he boldly introduced a new fee structure, so that now players between 22 and 28 years old pay a yearly sub of €1450, from 29 to 35 €2350. The Thuboeuf youth policy

is working, slowly. The interview pauses momentarily as Riviera Golfer wonders if he can age down ... no, knocking 30 years off might be a tall order.

As mentioned on the previous page, there are many ways to reduce the cost of golf, and St Endréol, with a normal green fee of €75, has experimented much in this area. “Twilight” golf after 15h30 comes in at €49, as does starting in the midday heat in summer.

They remain loyal to the Golfy card, which entitles the holder to one free round per year plus 25% off the costs of green fee with the standard card (€99 per year) and 30% off with the Platine card. That means that if you just used the standard card at St Endréol, after only three rounds you’d have paid for the card, and each time you play after that you’ll pay €56.25, very reasonable for a course of this quality.

So saddle up the pony and mosey on down to Le Muy, one of the great spots in the world to ride off into the sunset. ■

CHIP AWAY AT THOSE WASTED SHOTS

Head pro at St Endréol Jean-Louis Cassella swings into action with **RIVIERA GOLFER**



JEAN-Louis Cassella is the big, gentle guy with the honour of being head pro at St Endréol. He is fortunate to have an excellent driving range at his disposal – nice big hill to shoot down, the kind of thing I like – a large practice putting green plus a green for chipping and bunker work. I caught up with him with a wedge in his hand, and he demonstrated the “chip classique” (Pic 1) with the wrists straight on the backswing, and the “spinner” (Pic 2) with the wrists cocked, a higher shot with some backspin.

“It is very important that on both shots the position of the wrists on the follow through is exactly the same (Pic 3) – absolutely fatal to let the right hand get involved in the shot once you have commenced the downswing.”

Jean-Louis also emphasised the importance of avoiding the common fault of crouching too much over the short shots. “It is far better to stand relatively upright. Do not drop the wrists somewhere down by your knees. You may think you are giving yourself more control, but all you will do is cramp up your swing action

so much you’ll end up stubbing the club into the ground.” What the pro at my London club referred to as “dunching”.

Moving on to the putting green, we were joined by delightful Jocelyne Pichan, who hails from Réunion. She is a key member of the all-conquering Ladies’ team at St Endréol. Why did she choose this particular club?

“Unlike some of the courses in this area, which can get very cold in winter with frozen greens, St Endréol is playable all the year round,” she tells me.

Although she doesn’t need a lot of help, Jean-Louis stressed the importance of balance and the correct pendulum action of the shoulders (Pic 4). “Keep your eye over the ball, keep your head still, only turning it when you hear the putt drop.” Nice thought, nice sound!

He commented on the excellent position of Jocelyne’s left wrist on the follow through, following the ball to the hole (Pic 5).

A lesson with Jean-Louis costs €40 for half an hour. Contact him on 06 10 52 48 85 or email jeanlouiscassella@hotmail.fr



GREENS AND THE GREENS

THE place of the modern golf resort in the natural environment is a controversial subject. The St Endréol management were recently caught in a dilemma over the view from the magnificent clubhouse. In the 21 years since the course had opened (see page 26), the stunning view up the 9th and 18th fairways had become obstructed by trees.

The management wanted the view back, to satisfy guests who like to take photos from the clubhouse terrace. But there was an outcry from many members over the woody sacrifice. A local law forbids the axing of certain types of tree, but the offending *arbres* were not protected and the sound of the chainsaw shattered the peace.

But in 2007 another bit of golf course

hardware saved many thousands of trees. A huge forest fire spread rapidly towards the golf course, cutting through thousands of hectares of pines. Normally, the huge sprinkler system that keeps the green and fairways of St Endréol lush is turned on at night, but on that day the greenkeepers turned them on and the blaze was kept in check.



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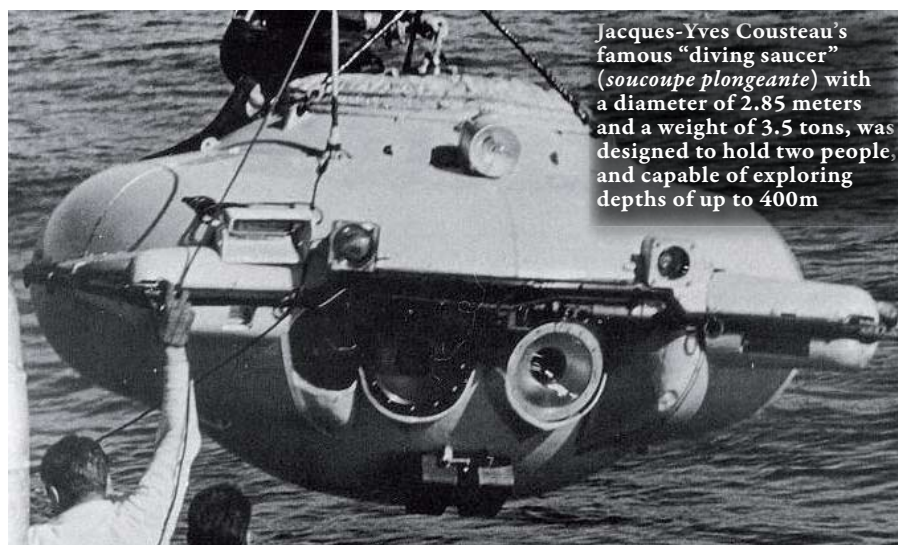


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MONACO UNDERWATER

BY MICHAEL HEALY

YACHTING



Jacques-Yves Cousteau's famous "diving saucer" (*soucoupe plongeante*) with a diameter of 2.85 meters and a weight of 3.5 tons, was designed to hold two people, and capable of exploring depths of up to 400m

THE superb 2013 Monaco Yacht Show (Sept 25th–28th) showcased some very high-tech explorer submarines, now an essential "toy" for gigayachts, which already have everything else. Among the deep-diving submarine owners are Richard Branson, Tom Perkins, Paul Allen and Roman Abramovich, who can afford to explore a new world beyond the financial reach of the rest of us, down to 1000 metres and all in the comfort of normal surface atmospheric pressure. However, the real Monaco pioneer submariner was Jacques Cousteau, whose 2-man submarine *Denise* (1959-1996) was operated worldwide from the famous *Calypso*.

The International Submarine Races

(*isrsubrace.org*) have been run biannually since 1989. The event features human-powered submarines designed and built by university engineering students, driven by one or two scuba divers inside the vessel. A Canadian team won in 2012 at over 7 knots, with Britain's Bath University coming 3rd. This year 19 teams raced 21 submarines June 24th-28th in the USN facility in Bethesda, Maryland, won again by the University of Quebec, while many other prizes were offered for innovation etc. The world speed record over a 100-metre course is 8.03 knots (faster than my yacht!) held by Quebec. So why not a Monaco Underwater Grand Prix, pedalling from the "old" Yacht Club de Monaco

across to the new one, to celebrate the opening of the new Club in June 2014?

Human power (7 "volunteer" sailors) was also used in the first submarine to sink an enemy ship in 1864. During the American Civil War the Confederate States submarine *Hunley* sank a Union warship with her spar torpedo off Charleston, South Carolina. But the *Hunley* also sank, the brave crewmen perishing probably from oxygen starvation, since they were found all at their posts 136 years later.

A more successful submarine attack shook Monaco on Dec 14th 1943, when the Royal Navy's HMS *Untiring* torpedoed and sank the German Naval Auxiliary ship *Prudente* that was loading mines alongside what is now Quai Kennedy. Just where I kept my yacht for 10 years! A shot like that would not be possible nowadays, thanks to the new floating mole Quai Rainier III – part of Monaco's sea defences! And in 1964 an accident killed one of the two port divers whose prosperity came from laying the seabed moorings (*corps-morts*), which yachts still need for berthing stern-to. The victim was Jacques Boissy, whose hobby was his one-man electric submarine. It appears he did not take all necessary precautions for his lead-acid batteries, and the vessel imploded, killing him instantly.

Monaco later had its own submarine 1992-1994 – the *Comex Seabus* that embarked 45 tourists from Quai Kennedy. But underwater visibility outside the harbour was often poor for viewing the seabed and poor promotion meant not enough seats were sold; the enterprise was shipped to the Bahamas where it also failed. As the *Reporter* cleverly announced in 1994: "*Seabus Goes Under*"! ■

we've got mail...

COGS FOR CANCER

I'D like to bring to your attention a charity cycle ride called CogsForCancer in aid of Cancer Research UK, taking place from Antibes to Palma this October by 8 riders based in and around the yachting industry. They aim to take around 5 days to do the 800km trip and arrive in time for the 25th Pinmar Golf tournament.



We have already managed to raise a considerable amount [€73,628 at time of press] and our target is 100K.

We intend to have a presence at both the Cannes and the Monaco yacht shows on the Yachting Pages stand, as Steve Crowe of YP is also one of our riders. The others are Adrian Long, Lee Mutch, Robbie Maguire, John Clark, Ben Young, Sarah Dawson and Wayne Jones.

We are the second highest fundraisers for CRUK on Just Giving (soon to be first)!

Please visit our website cogsforcancer.org for more information.

John Balodis, by email

MYSTERY MAN

WHILE on a visit to Grasse I tripped and fell heavily in the middle of the road. A motorcyclist immediately stopped and came to help me. I was in a bit of a state of shock and just lay there, the guy put his arms under mine, looked me straight in the eye and such was his strength I just seemed to float upright. Thoughts that I may have damaged something left me, such was the confidence the young man inspired.

As I recovered with a milkshake in McDonald's I realised he had taken off before I could say thank you, but I hope he reads this and realises how grateful I am to a gallant stranger.

Jill Garty, Arbroath, Angus, Scotland, by email

QR-ITE REMARKABLE

I'VE noticed that the *Reporter* has embraced the QR technology, which seems to be everywhere these days. Your readers should know about UrgentCode which is a valuable use for QR because it protects children or other vulnerable people in case of accidents.



You just go to urgentcode.com and enter your phone number and other vital details. Then you are given a QR code which your child or elderly relative can keep on his person. If he becomes lost or injured, scanning the code will allow police, hospital or other emergency services to contact you immediately. You can enter up to 3 contact numbers and the UrgentCode service is entirely free.

Lars Andreassen, by email

Star letter

SECOND IN COMMAND

I'VE never understood references to a French Deputy Mayor and have always assumed that means the person who seconds a mayor but the term also seems to apply to some mayors themselves. Are some of them also their own deputy?

Judiib Harlow, by email

Mais non! A *Deputy Mayor* (député-maire) is someone who holds the office of mayor as well as that of a parliamentary deputy. There is also a *Senator Mayor* (sénateur-maire). M.M.

BAG MAN

HOPEFULLY I have found the €1.50 reusable solution to the easyJet one cabin-bag-of-any-kind rule. I flew easyJet round trip from Nice by putting everything in the Duty Free bag in this picture. All the check-in staff did was talk between them about "le nouveau sac duty-free". It really is a huge bag.

Nikki Cantor, by email



FLAG IN DISTRESS

THE Union Jack is upside down and has been for some time on the war memorial where the Cannes exit joins the motorway at Mougins. This is where de Gaulle, Churchill and Roosevelt are featured. I have been unable to get it "fixed". Any ideas?

Michael Grantham, by email

It's a common mistake and I've seen it committed on passing yachts along the Riviera and also in the UK, many people don't know how to fly their own flag. The horizontal asymmetry is even less obvious to foreigners. Maybe just go to the roundabout in the dead of night and inverse it yourself? Few people are likely to notice. M.M.

WHEN'S IT OUT?


I ASKED to be advised when the *Reporter* is available online but heard nothing from you.

Chris Jaylet, by email

We found your email but it initially got lost amongst the hundreds of others we get daily because you didn't put "Advise Issue" in the subject, so our filters lumped it in with the general emails. We knew that over 5000 readers download the PDF of each *Reporter* from our site but we weren't quite prepared for the massive response to reader JaneB's suggestion for this. Anyone who sends an email to info@RivieraReporter.com with "Advise Issue" as the subject is sure to be notified of each new uploaded PDF. M.M.


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LETTERS

QUIET TIMES

I HAD been reading your article in Issue 158 and felt that this “embraced the ordinary”. Our group had been hiking up at Cipieres and then had an al fresco lunch in a delightful little potager garden in the village. Near the end I suddenly spied these three sitting on a bench happily chatting in the late afternoon sunshine and gazing up towards the Cheiron mountain. To me it epitomised the pleasure of living here!

Jillian Reeve, by email



THE AUDE TIMES

L.A. Publishing has launched *The Aude Times*, an English-language magazine,

which focuses on Aude in the South-west of France. The *AT* is a free monthly magazine available throughout the Aude and online and will offer articles, opinions and regular columns for those living or visiting the Aude.

The Aude Times follows *The Hérault Times* (launched June 2012) and will also offer an interactive website (theaudetimes.com) and social integration.

This is a natural progression following the wonderful success of *The Hérault Times*. We are very happy to be expanding into this beautiful part of the Languedoc and we can't wait to explore it more.

Emma Foulger, Editor

We wish you the best of luck publishing a magazine in such a beautiful part of France. M.M.

THIS SHOULD HELP YOU OVER THE HUMP

YOU often comment in your magazine that the French are known to be humourless. When explaining some symptoms I've been experiencing recently to a pharmacist in Valbonne,

he gave me a dietary supplement, the box of which I have taken in a photo.

Cara Holman, by email



THE FIGHT GOES ON

I have been advised by Harry Shindler's Solicitor, Charlotte Oliver of Italian law firm Oliver & Partners, Rome that Harry's appeal against the recent decision by the ECHR (oliverpartners.it/shindler-v-united-kingdom) concerning the abolition ➤

of the 15 year voting rule in the UK, which automatically disenfranchises UK citizens now living abroad, has been filed with the ECHR.

Oliver & Partners confirmed that they have applied for Harry's case to be referred to the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights to be reconsidered by a panel of 17 judges, and are now awaiting a decision on the referral. Charlotte Oliver commented, "These cases are rarely referred to the Grand Chamber, and only when there has been a clear misinterpretation of the Convention in the first decision or when there is a point of public importance. The fact that the Vice Commissioner Viviane Reding has said publicly that she would

give her full backing to the campaign of expats to preserve their voting rights, and that is a fundamental issue in the 2013 EU Year of the Citizen, in my view is enough evidence of how very significant this issue is. We are very optimistic that the case will be referred to the Grand Chamber."

Graham Richards, by email

WRITE TO US

Letters to the Editor can be sent by email to info@rivierareporter.com or by post (see page 50). 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.

One mot time

Bertrand.

A name for an ungrateful so-and-so. The original expression was "*Fais du bien à Bertrand, il te le rend en chargeant (en t'accablant)*" – Do a good turn for Bertrand and he'll pay you back by over-loading you. In the backstreets of Marseille this was rendered in Provençal as "*Fai de bèn a Bertrand, te lou rend en cagant!*" – Do a good turn to Bertrand and he'll pay you back by crapping on you.

Yes you can ... but will you vote?



Photo: Rama

IN 2014 there will be two important ballots in France – *Les Municipales* and European elections – in which Britons, like all other EU nationals in France, can indeed vote. Reader Eileen Ferrand reminds us: "Don't forget if you want a say in what goes on in your town or village, voting is

the way to make your voice heard."

The right to vote is a bone of contention for a number of expats: some of us are completely disenfranchised while others are not. And yet for those expats who have the right to vote, either in their home country or in France and sometimes in

both, the fact is that most don't bother.

Americans, like the French and several other nationalities, never lose their right to vote in national elections when they move abroad. French expats even have MPs to represent them and Peter Johnson launched an HM Government petition (epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/43238), which he hopes will gain enough signatures in support of MPs for British expats. (There is a similar e-petition for maintaining the winter fuel allowance. See epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/52121)

Expat Britons lose their home country vote once they have been living abroad for more than 15 years. This is something that Votes for Expat Brits (votes-for-expat-brits.com) would like to see changed. The campaign is active in ten countries and French residents account for 30% of their supporters. The recent suppression of the Winter Fuel Allowance for expat pensioners living in France certainly has something to do with this figure.

For next year's elections, resident Europeans must register before Dec 31st, 2013 (but you're advised to do so before Dec 15th). You need to fill out in capital letters a CERFA 12670*01 form (download online at formulaires.modernisation.gouv.fr/gf/cerfa_12670.do). Once filled in, take it along with a photocopy of a valid ID card or passport (less than one year of expiry date) plus proof of residence (a recent EDF or water rates bill, *taxe d'habitation*) to your *mairie*. You will be sent your electoral card by post, which you'll need to take with the same ID presented upon registering. ■

A wonderful baker whose life was dedicated to helping expats



Valerie Haxton (right) with her friend and colleague Dani Carew

ONE of the most valuable personalities in the British community on the Riviera, Valerie Haxton passed away September 10th, aged 77, at the regional cancer centre in Nice, the Centre Antoine-Lacassagne, after many months of increasing suffering. She was given the last rites by her favourite chaplain Fr Walter Raymond of St Paul's Anglican Church, Monte-Carlo.

London-born Valerie arrived here over 30 years ago from Canada with her husband Jim whom she met while working there. They quickly became involved in church affairs (Jim was Treasurer of Holy Trinity Nice) and both took a leading part in saving that church from closure in the 1990s.

More recently Valerie was much involved with St Paul's and the Anglican Diocese in Europe. But a wider public

knew and appreciated her for many years as the inspiring Chairman of the British Associations in the Alpes-Maritimes and the Var – which took her full attention after the death of her husband. Yet she still found time for much direct welfare work in the community.

Valerie dedicated her life to the Church and the British Association and provided help and assistance to hundreds of expatriates. To this day, the kitchen you see at Holy Trinity Church Nice was installed and donated by Valerie. She baked the most wonderful carrot cake!

Valerie is survived by her brother Albert, who lives in Nice. Cremation was on September 14th; and a requiem service will be held for her in Holy Trinity Nice (11 rue de la Buffa) on Wednesday October 9th at 10h30. ■

It's a date

Car Boot Sale on Sat Oct 12th, from 10h-16h, at Church Hall, Holy Trinity Nice, 11 rue de la Buffa. Clothing, handbags, shoes, linen, toys, CDs, DVDs, white elephant items, books, bric-a-brac and baked goods. Coffee and tea will be on sale throughout the day.



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WALKING WITH GIANTS

Now's the perfect time to explore the magic of the mighty Mercantour mountains

BY NICK KENT

WINTER doesn't usually bite very hard before December in our region, and that's a great plus for the walker seeking a mountain hike in the autumn.

Although spring is a delightful, flower-strewn time in the pre-Alps, the high routes are not practicable – this year I was being turned back by snow and ice in early July in the Mercantour.

Although you must keep a close eye on the *météo*, a calm spell in October and November opens up the magnificent high heart of the Maritime Alps for walkers of all abilities.

Here I have selected four walks, each starting from the ski resort of Isola 2000, with its easy access by road and abundant

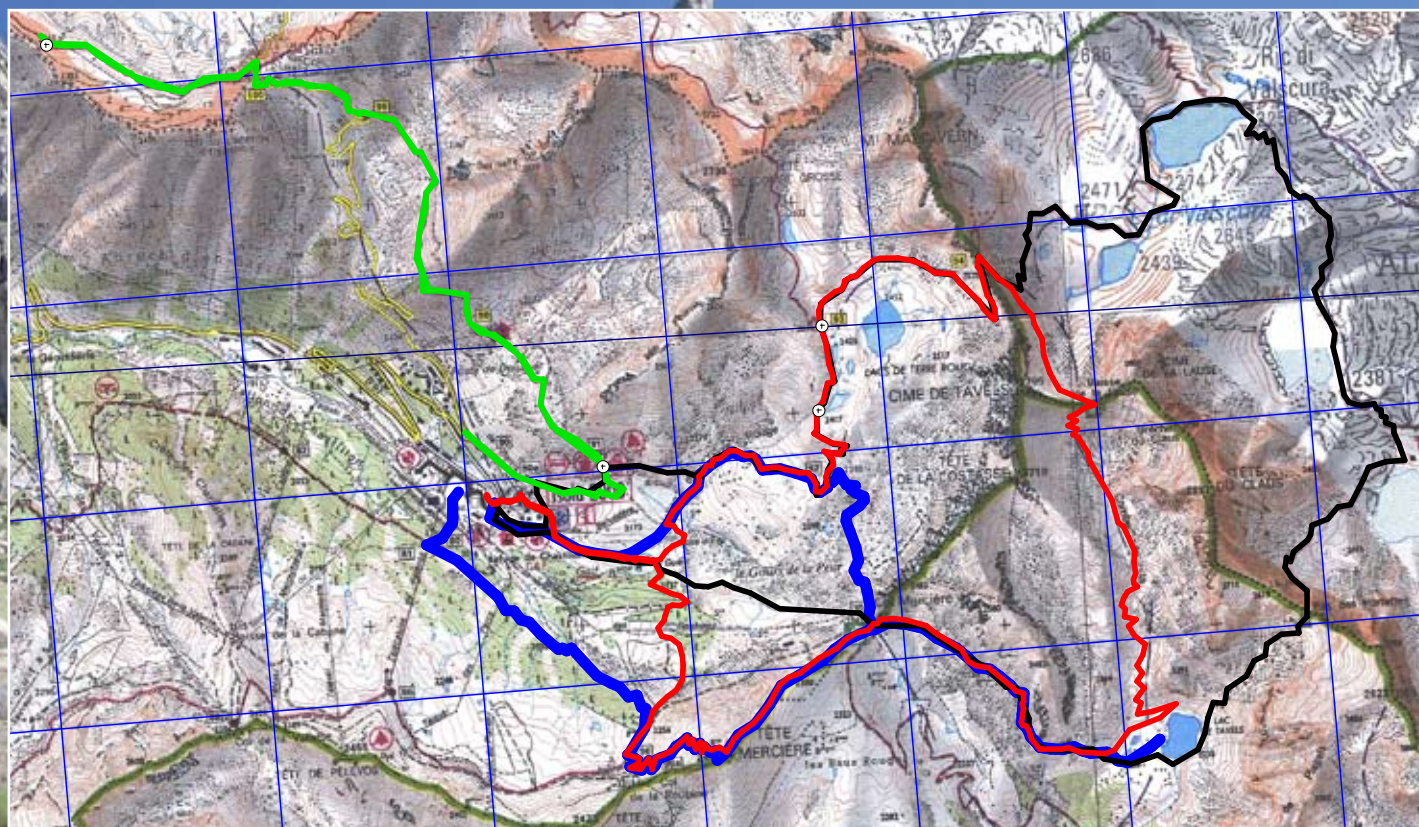
free parking – the departure point is from the car park behind the Hotel Le Druos. Isola 2000 looks horrible enough when its buildings are covered in a scenic blanket of snow, and in summer it really is an eyesore, but you'll soon be out of sight of the resort and in the wildly beautiful world of the Mercantour, one of the first national parks in France.

Walk A is a comfortable ramble for all ages. Walk B is a bit more challenging, and C is distinctly *sportif*. Walk D is a famous *grand boucle* for the hardened hiker, the reward will be the discovery of many beautiful lakes.

For all levels you will need good walking shoes and socks. The essentials

for the rucksack are light waterproof gear, a fleece, gloves and hat, plenty of water, a basic medical kit, a "tin foil" survival blanket, a back-up supply of dried fruit, a whistle, sunglasses and sun-cream and the appropriate IGN (*Institut Géographique National*) map, available from Decathlon.

You should study the route before you set off, plotting it on your map against the illustration on these pages. Walking poles are not compulsory, but they do spread a certain amount of the effort of climbing to the arms, and for some walkers they are an invaluable steadying and shock-absorbing asset in the descent.



Walk A

An aller-retour from Isola 2000 to the Lausette ridge via the famous Col de la Lombarde.

Time (with breaks): 5 hrs
Height gain: 370m
Length: 12.5km
Map: TOP 25, 3640 ET

LEAVE the main parking area at Isola in the direction of the Col de la Lombarde. In just over 30 minutes you will reach waypost B91. Next stop is B98 then B99, after which you reach the ridge, an impressive 2362m above sea level, and a wonderful picnic lunch spot. Return to Isola 2000 by the same route.

Walk B

A circuit taking in one mountain top and the Lac de Tavel.

Time (with breaks): 6 hrs
Height gain: 750m
Length: 11.4km
Map: TOP 25, 3640 ET

FROM the car park head for waypost B80, then B81 after which you are *hors piste* for a while until reaching B96, then 96a. After that you climb to the Tête Mercière at 2491m with its superb views. Start the descent as marked towards the Lac de Tavel. The hidden jewel is your lunch stop. The return loop features a deal of up and downs until you reach the Col Mercière and commence your descent back to the resort.

Walk C

This hike takes in the Lac de Tavel, but the loop back to Isola 2000 is via Combe de la Lause and the Baisse de Druos, in the shadow of the magnificent Mont Malivern, which often wears a characteristic "quiff" of cloud.

Time (with breaks): 6.5 hrs
Height gain: 980m
Length: 14.5km
Map: 3741 OT

FROM the car park head via the reservoir for way-posts 96, then 96c, and climb to the top of Tête Mercière and breathe in the view before dropping down to the Col Mercière and from there traversing then descending towards the Lac de Tavel (north side). Climb up to the Baisse de la Lause and pause for lunch before traversing to the Baisse de Druos (waypost 94) and from there, drop back down to Isola 2000.

Walk D

A circuit taking in some beautiful and remote lakes, and another country.

Time (with breaks): 7 hrs
Height gain: 1150m
Length: 15.5km
Map: 3640 ET

THIS spectacular adventure takes you via the Col Mercière (waypost B95) down to the Lac de Tavel before a stiff climb to the Pas des Portettes, then a tricky, stony descent into Italy for lunch by the Lac des Portettes. Continue along a remarkable paved "road" built through the rocks by Italian soldiers, passing more lakes, until you reach the fabulous Lago Vallescura. From there, climb up in zigzags to the Baisse de Druos and then wind your way back down to Isola 2000 via waypost B93 and B92.



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TAKE A BOW FOR LA RENTRÉE

BY NICK KENT

"THE first thing they'd do when the French captured an English archer was to chop off his fingers," muttered Yannick Bour darkly.

I suppose I should have known better than to mention Agincourt, but in a chat about the history of archery it was bound to come up eventually. I changed the subject to *Robin des Bois* – Robin Hood – and the smiles returned.

Tir à l'Arc is growing in popularity, and after the lassitude of summer it provides an excellent way to get back into sport without damaging too many joints. I visited the largest club in the region, the Compagnie d'Arc d'Antibes, at Trois Moulins, near the Antibes autoroute exit.

"I find that archery is a sport that is very 'zen'," says Yannick's attractive and engaging wife Evelyne. "The main quality one needs to summon up from within is a sense of calmness, also of concentration. You will not do well at the sport if you are too *crispé* – tense."

Along with this pair, I was enjoying a delicious lunch at their "canteen" with archery instructor Jean-Pierre Levy and hot-shot bowman Pierre Preti. It is certainly to the club's advantage that the hungry archer can end a session of twanging with first-class scoff at Sophocle, nestled in the pinewoods in what is to all intents and purposes an upmarket industrial estate. Back in the UK it would be salmonella and chips from Fred's Burger Van.

The club's home is an impressive, purpose-built facility opened by the Antibes council four years ago. The *compagnie* was founded at the end of the Second World War, the first sheaf of arrows fired are displayed above the bar in the clubhouse.

After the team gave an impressive demonstration of long-range shooting using the new-fangled *arc à poulies* – called a compound bow in the UK – I was invited to try my hand at the "classic" bow. I was grateful that Jean-Pierre had me stand about 10 metres from the target; with my eyesight it would be difficult to hit a double-decker bus at the 80 metre-plus range the pros can use.

With the emphasis firmly on smooth, steady movement when drawing back the bowstring, I let fly with reasonable results.

It was pleasing to find that at least some of the arrows had found their mark.

Bows are graded according to the height and physical abilities of the archer, a weakling like me generating around 10 foot-pound force (Yes! All measurements in archery worldwide are imperial, so it's all *livres* and *pouces* to the French) against the supposed 200 of the medieval longbowman.

As an apprentice archer progresses through the sport, a fascinating world of technique and technology comes within his or her grasp. The new pulley bow is more like a machine than the simple wooden weapon of Henry V's day, complete with telescopic sight and power-enhancing mechanics, and can despatch an arrow with unbelievable force and precision.

Archery competitions take many forms, and a handicap system similar to that used in golf means that players of different levels can enjoy an interesting bout. Further down the line, the archer can take part in *tir en campagne*, which involves hitting targets at various heights and positions in a natural setting such as a forest. Hunting game with the short bow is also an option.

The first step along to road to mastering this precision sport is to contact the club via the number below and book a free try-out session. If after that you want to take a shot at becoming a competent archer, then expense will not be a hurdle. Club membership, which includes the compulsory licence, costs €137 for a year. All equipment can be hired at a reasonable cost, and excellent tuition is available from the friendly and dedicated *initiateurs* of the club, which is accessible for the disabled and has special facilities and training available for those with limited mobility.

This being France, you will need a certificate from your doctor to say that you have no medical condition that could be effected by archery – I am sure one of these is required if you enter a tiddlywinks competition. ■

To book a trial session, or for any other information, either consult arc-antibes.fr or phone 04 93 65 97 17 and leave a message, one of the club officials will contact you.



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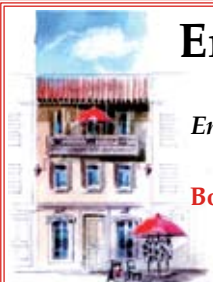
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Cook d'Azur



Lemon & Thyme Duck Legs

Those late night dinners on the terrace are faint memories but fear not. Autumn is the season of mellow fruitfulness and, as Katie Bills proves, it certainly beckons delicious cooking. This recipe can serve as a cosy meal for 2 or dinner of 10, along with a seasonal and healthy side of beetroot.

INGREDIENTS

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 4 duck legs (adapt to suit) | 6 beetroots, bulbs intact |
| Juice of 4 lemons | Handful of kale per person |
| 20ml rapeseed or vegetable oil | Thyme leaves, salt and pepper, to season |
| 4 large sprigs of thyme | |

Squeeze the juice of four lemons plus 10ml of rapeseed oil into a metal paella dish or roasting dish.

Mix together and add bunches of thyme with the leaves on the stalks so they don't burn while cooking.

Coat duck in the juice, placing the legs skin-side up on top of the thyme to allow flavours to infuse while they cook. Season with salt.

Place on the top rack of a 200°C oven for about 20 minutes, then reduce heat to 150°C and let cook for a further 40 minutes. When ready, the meat should tenderly come away from the bone.

With the beetroot bulbs intact, wash, top and tail them, then simply cut into halves or quarters. Arrange in a metal roasting tin and season with oil, salt, pepper and thyme leaves.

Cook for about an hour at 200°C (put them in at the same time as the duck), until a knife can easily pierce the beetroot.

Finally, steam kale for 2 minutes, then drain and season with oil salt and pepper.

Serve with a full bodied Pinot Noir to toast the autumn season.

PAIN-TASTIC!

French bakers battle it out for the best baguette

SOME advertising is pure genius, striking an immediate chord with the public. The American *Got Milk?* campaign, which has been running since 1993, falls into this category. So it's no wonder the French have used it as a model to try to get the *les français* back on the breadwagon.

The slogan *Coucou, tu as pris la pain?* (Hi, did you pick up the bread?) has been plastered on billboards in 130 cities across the country.

Average bread consumption in France is down from a whole baguette per person in 1970, to just half in 2012. (In 1900, a typical French person ate three baguettes a day.) Even so, the French remain very attached to bread, and their baker. There

are more than 32,000 *boulangeries* in France; every second 320 baguettes are sold (that's 10 billion a year).

The French TV channel M6 is taking a road trip across the country to discover France's Best Bakery. Each episode, three expert bakers will defend heritage and tradition while demonstrating a flair for creativity.

Two local *boulangeries* have been nominated. In Mougins, Christophe Boutes runs La Mouginoise at 4 chemin de Saint Barthélémy (04 93 75 81 83). He offers 29 types of bread, and his VIP bread lovers include

Brad Pitt, so watch out for Brad Pitta.

Kevin Le Meur is a globetrotter and claims to be the inventor of bread with activated carbon. His Menton bakery – Au Baiser du Mitron at 8 rue Pieta (aubaiserdumitron.com) – reflects his travels to Canada, Russia and Sweden, where in 2008 he opened a bakery that was ranked among the best French bakeries abroad.



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LE FISH & CHIPS

ACROSS the way from the Forville Market fish stalls in Cannes, a chatty Welshwoman is serving a dish that has slipped through the fingers of French chefs for generations: proper fish & chips.

Isabella Mohnsame-Wigmore (her husband's Swiss) had the idea of opening a real chippie when she read an internet plea from a Cannes-based Brit who was suffering withdrawal symptoms from his favourite dish.

"This chap wanted to know where he could get real fish & chips, and at the time there was nowhere, so I thought I would provide the answer," says Isabella.

"Back home in Cardiff, I enrolled with the NFFF, that's the National Federation of Fish Friers, and took their course recommended for new fish & chip shop owners."

Being the determined and hard-working lady that she is, 50-year-old Isabella passed out of the NFFF with colours flying. She moved full-time to her flat in Cannes, then as the day approached for the opening of Le Fish and Chips at the end of July, a crisis of confidence struck.

"I brought my NFFF tutor to Cannes from the UK to make sure I was doing everything just right," recalls Isabella. "After the opening things seemed to be going well, but when my 'consultant' said he was heading off because

I was doing everything correctly, I got the jitters and pleaded with him to stay a bit longer.

"But he was adamant that I'd made the grade."

Isabella's self-belief has grown, along with the plaudits from her English and French customers. But why does her fish fly?

"The most important thing is to use the right kind of cod. Mine comes from the North Atlantic, the French down here use cod from Portugal. There is a big difference between the taste and texture of the cod from cold waters and those from warmer seas.

"Another plus is that I use a proper range with the traditional large 'bath' of oil; I know it sounds funny to say it but it seems that the fish come out better when they have some room to swim around. The French *friteuse* doesn't seem to do the same job at all. I use only rice bran oil from Thailand, which has no cholesterol."

Customers can take away Isabella's fish & chips or eat them *à table*, which of course the French prefer. Either way there's nothing fishy about the friendly welcome and the modest price (€7.50).

Le Fish and Chips, 2 Marché Forville, Cannes, is open for lunch and dinner Wed to Sat. A plate of fish & chips costs ,€7.50 Tel: 04 93 99 55 94. Parking Forville is 2 mins away, first hour free. ■



THE BOOZE CRUISE IN OUR BACKYARD

BY NICK KENT



THE wine harvest has been safely gathered in, and now it's time to take a tour around one of our region's greatest resources, the vineyards of the Var. Provided the driver leaves the degustation to the others, this is a delightful way to spend one of those clear, still autumn days this area enjoys. A tasting note for the reserved English: do not feel you are obliged to buy after you have tasted at any particular vineyard. You are there to please yourself, not the owner.

Start point is the Provence wine HQ at Les Arcs, La Maison des Vins (*maison-des-vins.fr*), a terrific resource offering all the info you will need to bespoke your own wine tour. In the *vinothèque* you will be astonished as you are presented with a choice of 800 Côtes de Provence wines. To narrow things down to manageable numbers, each week the sommeliers of the

Maison des Vins select 16 wines which you can taste for free. The excellent restaurant is open all year, except on Sunday and Wednesday evenings and all day Monday.

The co-op at Taradeau is a great example of what can be done to cheer up the cave co-operative tasting experience. They don't have to be dark and chilly places where you have to taste through chattering teeth. This light, airy and beautifully presented co-op shop should not be missed. Look out for their superior 3-litre boxes of red. The Cuvée Les Grain rosé is a simple Vin de pays du Var, good value at €3.20 a bottle. See *vignerons detaradeau.fr*

Over towards the sea, the Domaine des Planes (the D7 between St. Aygulf and Roquebrune-sur-Argens) is run by the

Rieder family, who are passionate about their organic approach to winemaking. It's a beautiful place, open for tasting Monday-Friday 9h-12h30 and 14h-18h. Saturday: 9h-12h30 and 14h-18h30. Closed on Sunday. For more visit *dom-planes.com*

A British winegrower of distinction, Betty Cundall is at Château des Chaberts at Garéoult (*chaberts.com*), not far from Brignoles. She produces Coteaux Varois en Provence wines that are regularly featured in the best of the French wine guides – the *Hachette Guides des Vins* – and her Prestige 2011 white praised in the 2013 edition.

The Domaine du Bercail (*domaine-du-bercail.com*) at Puget-sur-Argens is an excellent and inexpensive lunch stop. They do good work here as part of the



Menu Fish & chips

with Mushy peas

9,00 €

Fish & chips

7,50 €

Mon to Sun
11h30 to 14h30
Wed to Sat
18h-21h30

2, Marché Forville - CANNES
☎ 04 93 99 55 94

P PARKING FORVILLE 1ST HOUR FREE

ADAPEI scheme, getting people with mental disabilities in to life's mainstream through work programmes backed up by medical treatment. Their Demoiselle rosé is light and delicate, accompanying a self-service *plat du jour* that costs around €10.

The area to the north of Le Muy is a happy hunting ground indeed for the itinerant wine-guzzler. One of the stars of the area is the lovely Chateau de Rouët (chateau-du-rouet.com), which nestles against the red cliffs of one of the Estérel outliers. The Côte de Provence rosé from this domaine, which has been producing wine since 1840, is a quality act, dry but with a deep, satisfying flavour. Take the chance for a head-clearing walk around the lovely Gorges du Blavet, not far from Chateau Rouët on the road to Bagnols-en-Forêt.

Both the Château des Demoiselles (chateaudesdemoiselles.com) at La Motte and nearby Château Ste Roseline are under the same ownership and are impressive establishments that have *la visite* down to a fine art, though give them a miss if you see coaches in the car park, it's popular with big groups. ■

Can Do!

THE *Reporter* tasting team will normally drink wine from anything, but a can – not so sure. A faulty red wine can sometimes taste



“metallic”, so the association wasn't great when we were presented with the Winestar *cannettes* featured last issue. But no worries, as they say in Oz where they first came up with the idea of putting wine in tinnies, like the beer. The red Corbières was faultless and had a real taste of the sun-kissed South, the white from the same appellation was lively with good fruit. A good way to turn a snacky lunch into a civilised meal, more practical and lighter than a bottle for the picnic hamper. If they're not in your supermarket yet, order online at winestar.fr

MR PIGGY GOES TO MARKET

MY little snout does a dance when I smell the first ceps in the autumn market, but my jaw drops when I see the price. Hovering at just under €40 a kilo, the top quality ceps are too much for the Piggy bank to bear, so the advice is to head just across the border into Italy, venture to the nearest village in the Ligurian foothills and you'll be rewarded with top quality and reasonable prices (although the name of the fabbest of funghi will have changed from cep to porcini).

Last October I bought a 500g beauty in Ponte di Nava, the grocer lady seemed loathe to part with it. “Che bello!” she cried, pressing it to her cheek.



It tasted out of this world and cost €7; in Marché Forville, Cannes, it would have been almost thrice the price.

Grapes and figs will both fall in price as the season progresses, expect *les raisins* to drop from €5 a kilo peak to €2.90, with figs available at below €5 a kilo.

Look out for the mini-aubergine, the piccolina, now available. These little beauties have excellent flavour and texture and cost €1 per 100g.

Château des Chaberts

A.O.C. Côteaux Varois en Provence

A.O.C. Côteaux Varois en Provence

Chateau des Chaberts, 83136 Garéoult Tel: 04 94 04 92 05 Website: www.chaberts.com

THE TRUFFLES ABOUT TRUFFLES

American Lisa Pepin chronicles life on a Luberon farm

July 27, 2013

EARLIER in the year, in my typical American fashion, I shared with my husband my enthusiasm about how wonderful all of our tour guests had been so far. And staying true to his duty as a Frenchman, he brought me back down to earth by reminding me that although we had been fortunate, not all tourists were going to be as lovely. Eventually, he said, there would be a bad apple. You can't please everybody, after all.

Well, with four months of summer truffle tours under our belts, I feel I am in the position to officially disagree with him. Without exception, our groups have been absolutely delightful.

First there was the affable American doctor whose slippery loafers sent him tumbling down a hill. He popped back up immediately, shouting, "I'm okay! And don't worry. I'm not going to sue!" He then set about picking up all the truffles he had dropped to ensure nothing was lost.

Shortly afterward arrived the elegant young woman from Hong Kong whose truffle-hunting attire fashioned a silk top and lace shorts with flip-flops. When the uneven Provençal terrain proved too much for her footwear and one broke beneath her, she gamely took them off and braved the sharp, weedy terrain barefoot. Back at the house, she surveyed the bottles of truffle oil on display and asked, "Do you really give half the profits to orphans? In that case, I'll take ten, please."

And then came the Australians. The truffle hors d'oeuvres and Champagne portion of the tour (punctuated with instructions on how to properly clean, store and cook with truffles) lasted an epic three hours as we opened bottle after bottle of bubbly, and shared our passions for wine, food and travel. They invited us to dinner at their rental house the next day, and to visit with them in the

Dordogne the following week.

Another group of Australians surprised us by returning home and promptly mailing a thank you letter with photos of their time at Les Pastras, as well as a newspaper article about truffle-hunting Down Under. We were so touched, I actually got a little misty, almost as misty as when the wife of a prominent American department store owner hugged me goodbye and said, "I feel like I made a friend today."

Those "bad apples" may be on their way, but I prefer to remain optimistic.

August 1, 2013

WE promise guests dramatic tales of success and sabotage on our tours, but sometimes I'm afraid we over-deliver. Occasionally they leave concerned, rather fearful for our wellbeing. This may be because of the following true story, which happened to the friend of a friend.

At his local café, he was enjoying a pastis while listening to the locals talking about truffles. It's a well-known fact that many hunters will train their dogs to sniff out truffles, if they can. And since they already have the legal right to walk on to any unfenced property in France without permission or supervision, why wouldn't they?

Well, it seems that this particular man had heard enough, for nothing pleases a Provençal farmer more than topping someone else's story. He reached in his jacket and pulled out a truffle weighing 150 grams. He deftly avoided questions about where it came from and gratefully accepted free congratulatory drinks from his so-called friends.

Many drinks later, he felt sufficiently flushed with alcohol and goodwill to reveal that he had an even larger truffle in his jacket pocket. He placed the 250-gram truffle, nearly twice the size of a baseball, on the café table. And not much after, he admitted to his admirers that he had

found it on his very own property.

The next morning, bleary-eyed and hungover, the man woke to find that someone had come to his land in the middle of the night and spitefully taken a chainsaw to every one of the truffle oak trees on his small but prosperous grove. This was clearly the work of poachers who already had an ample supply of their own but wanted to eliminate the competition. Loose lips do indeed sink ships in a very dramatic way when it comes to truffles.

August 6, 2013

OUR modern lives are filled with stimuli – visual, auditory and tactile – but as Proust (and his famous madeleines) will attest, our sense of smell is the one that tugs most at the heartstrings. It is also the least meaningfully engaged on a daily basis.

We try to submerge city folk from around the world in the full sensory experience of the countryside during our tours. And even those who have been to Provence before come away enchanted. It's one thing to have a dish in a restaurant that features fennel, bay leaves, rosemary or sage; it's quite another to brush past the plant and detect the aroma perfume the air as you walk by. Or what about the incomparable olfactory explosion that takes place when you rub the surface of a fig leaf?

Recently, we hosted a group of six who had been to Provence numerous times. They had visited the lavender fields northeast of Bonnieux and assured us that they didn't need to stop and smell our lavender. But Johann insisted. Those famous purple fields are beautifully coloured, but they actually contain lavandin (not lavender), which has a more vibrant colour but is exponentially less fragrant. Amazed, they enthusiastically smelled everything else he recommended on the tour, thanking him repeatedly for a genuine lavender experience.

August 16, 2013

AS the summer truffle season draws to a close, we are focusing our attention on upcoming events. Our annual November 1st olive-picking party, formerly attended only by friends, will now be open to paying guests (up to 8 in total) who will take part in a traditional olive harvest as it has been done in France for hundreds of years.

No tree-rattling machines shake the fruit to the ground here. Each organic olive is picked by hand. And in accordance with tradition, we serve our workers a hearty lunch of *daube*, saffron potatoes au gratin, ratatouille, cheese and dessert, with all the local wine they care to drink, naturally. Then, after another few hours of picking olives in the Provençal sunshine, we gather for a Champagne toast to celebrate our efforts. For more info see lespastras.com or to reserve email directly: pepin@lespastras.com

The response to this idea has been predictable. My expat friends are

enthusiastic and full of questions. Can my family join in? How many places are available? How soon can we book? Johann's French friends are full of questions, too. Are you serious? People are going to pay YOU to pick your olives? Has the whole world gone mad?

August 23, 2013

WE assumed that night-time raids by *sangliers* would be the most serious threat to the success of our truffle tours. As it turns out, the distinction goes to ... summer rainstorms. They never seem to fall on a day when we don't have a tour scheduled. But when we do, the sky grows dark and menacing, then bursts forth with one of those impressive thunderstorms that rattles the shutters and knocks out the power. Three tours had to be cancelled due to inclement weather, and with most holiday itineraries scheduled to ensure not a minute is wasted, only one group was able to re-book and take the tour another day. Murphy's Law applies even in France, it seems. ■

TRUFFLE TIP# 8

If you are using truffles to make an omelette or risotto, store them in Tupperware with the uncracked eggs or rice overnight. The next day, you will find that the aroma and flavour of the truffle have permeated the rice and even the shell of the eggs! For more see Caring for Your Truffles on RivieraReporter.com

Photo: Adi Bukman Photography

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A BRUSH WITH THE IMMORTAL

To Nadia Farmer, to paint is to “rub shoulders with the gods”

BY NANCY HESLIN

SITTING in Place Rosetti in Vieux Nice, the striking Nadia Farmer sips her café crème thoughtfully as she recalls her earliest memory, at the age of two, of drawing with her father; her first still life painting would be sold at auction for 100 rand (about €100 in today's value) when she was just 14.

Nadia was born in Johannesburg to a Jewish French mother and South African-Scottish father.

“My parents were both gifted artists. Mom grew up outside Paris, until her father, a mechanical engineer, decided to emigrate to Rhodesia, which is now Zimbabwe. My mother went to art school in Johannesburg.

“My father, Martin Eric Farmer, had the most renowned art gallery in the southern hemisphere at the time – the Collectors Gallery – as well as the Trust Liquidators auction house and the prestigious Hyde Park Gallery. He was also an art critic. This was a life he carved out for himself: an extremely good-looking and talented man, he was super bright with a university degree in Art and had such integrity, such magnetism.”

Nadia clearly inherited his charm.

Her parents divorced when she was 13. “I was sent to boarding schools and art schools, with weekend home visits. Rebelling against my father during these years, the second happiest day of my life was when I left school, which I hated. It was like prison.”

At 18, she went to California to study art but soon returned to Johannesburg and for three years was a stringer for BBC and ITV, and did a few documentaries

for CNN. Alongside her boyfriend, she also produced TV commercials through their independent company.

Within five years, the couple married and started what would become a very profitable electronics business.

“Essentially we were a wholesaler importing anything to do with electronics – from cordless phones to fax machines. This was the early Eighties remember, so it was a completely unrivalled market at the time.

“We entered into computer telephony and went to New York to learn how to make cheaper international calls so companies in South Africa could make these calls through us. Now of course there's Skype.”

Nadia walked away from it all – both the business and her husband – at the age of 38, and launched her own company importing telephony hardware and software, which she sold for a good chunk of change in 2005.

“After selling the business, I booked a trip to Russia, Scandinavia and Europe but along the way I met a Norwegian and so I moved to Norway for four years.

“We broke up and I found myself back in Johannesburg, but I just couldn't stay there. It was too restrictive – you can't even go for a walk – and I remembered all my lovely visits to Nice so I came here last year.”

Like numerous others, 2008 reduced Nadia's champagne and caviar lifestyle to a more humble playing field.

“I don't know if I'll ever completely forgive myself but in

“I paint in my head and then replicate it on canvas using acrylics, acrylic inks and watercolours.”

Nadia Farmer



reality I had put the things that were most important to me, like painting, on the back burner. Despite the fact that I lost nearly everything, I have felt more grounded in recent years and have been much more creative.

"I couldn't *not* do art. It's always been a passionate part of my life to which I've devoted a great deal of time not just to what I create, but how I see the world: identifying design, appreciating style, looking at colours. Painting makes me feel like I'm rubbing shoulders with the Gods.

"Norway influenced my art as it led me into abstract as business owners commissioned sizeable paintings of this style. I would spend a few hours speaking to them, to get a feel for what they wanted from their art. I never had an unhappy customer."

Nadia's father died when she was 21. "One day he woke up with a sore throat and eight months later he died from Hodgkins's disease." They never discussed whether he wished for her to follow in his footsteps.

"I'm considering opening a gallery but for the moment, it's baby steps. Business is about instinct so I need to be observant of the galleries here, how they work, before making the right – or wrong – decision. So for now I'll stick to building up a client base locally and working with designers to sell my art. My paintings are very well priced, anything from €100 to €600. The cost of a dress in Cannes." ■

Nadia can be contacted on 07 62 09 11 50 or at nadiafarmer@gmail.com



Image: Nadia Farmer

Les Aventures de la vérité

DISCOVER one of the region's major 2013 exhibitions: *Adventures of Truth – Painting and Philosophy: A Narrative*. Curated by French philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy, this thought-provoking show brings together major works from around the world to address the question: "What is truth in art?" Spanning 15th-century icons to contemporary cutting-edge installations, the result is one of the most controversial and talked-about exhibitions of the year.

The English Book Centre is pleased to have local art expert Mary Lynn Riley leading this event on Monday October 28th. Mary Lynn will present *Adventures of Truth* as an introductory art history course, reflecting on the evolution of a painting's role in society and its interaction with philosophy and thought.

Included on this bespoke tour will be works by artists as diverse as Bronzino, Basquiat, Warhol, and Abramović, as well as modernist and surrealist masters such as de Chirico, Kandinsky, Klee, Mondrian, and Pollock.

The visit will also offer the opportunity to enjoy the permanent works at the Fondation, including the world-famous Miró labyrinth and sculpture garden, the chapel with its Braque stained glass windows, and the Giacometti courtyard, each contextualised by Mary Lynn's knowledge of the Maeght family's fascinating history.

The ticket price for this unique experience is €28 (optional group lunch at the Fondation's Café F is not included in price). For more details, and to book your place, please contact before Oct 14th the English Book Centre: 04 93 12 21 42 or englishbooks@wanadoo.fr

The image shows a screenshot of the Côte d'Azur website (http://www.cote.azur.fr) and a promotional flyer for the Côte d'Azur VIP Newsletter. The website features a blue header with the text "Côte d'Azur" and "Toute la côte d'azur de Menton à St Tropez". Below the header are navigation links: Home, Horoscope, Webcams, Accommodation, Tourism, Real Estate. The main content area includes a "Reservation Hotel" section with a search form, a "Special offers on hotels" section, and a "News" section. The flyer on the right is titled "CÔTE D'AZUR VIP" and lists various services and offers, including a "RESTAURANT" section with "L'ÉTOILE D'AZUR" and a "SPA" section with "LA SPAZONNE DES LUNES". The flyer also includes a "Stay in touch!" section with the text "With the brand new Côte D'azur V.I.P. Newsletter" and a "Webstore" section with the text "10 rue de France 06000 Nice" and "04 93 05 90 00".

FROM A RIVIERA PAST:

The British Colonel of the Indian Army with a street in Cimiez named after him

BY JUDIT KIRALY, ENGLISH-AMERICAN LIBRARY OF NICE

Torre di Cimella



The photo of the villa is from Didier Gayraud's book: *Les Belles Demeures...* with his kind permission

THE greatest challenge in the case of war or major disaster is finding and evacuating the injured, since the dead (unfortunately) can wait. Today we take emergency vehicles for granted, although the ambulance is a fairly recent invention of the 19th century.

Florence Nightingale “invented” modern nursing care, but it was the British Army, notably the Indian forces, that organised medical transport by a new breed of specialist Transport Officers. The subject of this article is one of these officers, a remarkable man who settled in his retirement in Cimiez who has the double distinction of having an avenue and a villa named after him.

William Edwyn Evans (1818-1896) entered Addiscombe Military Academy at the early age of 15, following family tradition. In the Evans family, the men went to India and, to prepare for this, Addiscombe was the best training. Evans learnt not only about discipline and warfare but he acquired essential engineering and organising skills, too. He sailed for Bombay and spent the following 26 years with the Royal Bombay Fusiliers in the most dangerous of military situations. He served in India, where his elder brother's family was massacred during the Bombay riots, but also partook in – and was one of the few who survived – the risky taking

of Aden and went on to the further horrors of the Crimean War. He was awarded the military Legion d'Honneur.

In 1861, Evans retired at the ripe age of 43. Soon after he married a beautiful and very rich “secret” fiancée, who had patiently waited for years to marry him.

Caroline Ann Griffith (1827-1909) was heiress to an impressive fortune. Her father was a lawyer, who spent most of his working life buying and developing land in London. His daughter was well versed in property dealings, buying up sections of the hillside on Cimiez, starting with 7 hectares, then amassing *parcelles* (lots) until she owned a large section of the Cimiez hillside. Queen Victoria enjoyed her *promenades* in Carrie's garden during her spring visits.

The Colonel knew exactly what they wanted for their villa, and chose a very young man, the 21-year-old Aaron Mes-siah, as his architect to build the *Torre di Cimella*, his version of an Italian Renaissance villa. The name refers to a Roman-built military tower, that once stood on the hillside. The original construction was later expanded and several times enlarged; it was one of the first villas in Cimiez to have water pipes and a sewage system, as well as electric lights and heating in addition to the monumental fireplaces.

The Evans marriage was excellent: they shared the same ideas about life, art and charity and Carrie's great fortune made of them a pillar of Nice society, though they never had children as she was over thirty when they married. His health was not good, having suffered from a “fever” caught in India that was probably malaria although he was surprised to read his own obituary, as the death of a visiting brother Henry was reported as his own, before the newspaper retracted and apologised.

Perhaps because of his own frail health and all the suffering he had seen, Evans was particularly sensitive to the illness and pain of others. He accepted the Presidency of the Nice *Asile Evangelique*, a medical charity set up for non-Catholics in this very Catholic town; in those days most hospitals were religious institutions. He contributed very generously to the expenses of the *Asile* and was active in the management issues, too.

At his funeral in Holy Trinity, in the presence of the Mayor and the *Préfet*, the huge crowd admired the Line of Honour by members of the local *Pompiers*, who thanked him for his advice and pecuniary help to the Fire Brigade. It made front-page news, not only in the local papers: *The Boston Globe* reported it as the passing of one of the “Last Great Anglo-Indians”. He and his wife donated and left enormous sums to various charities, medical, social, military orphanages, both at home and afar.

Carrie Evans remained in Nice after the death of her husband, and as noted in one of her obituaries, nobody was turned away from her door without help. She survived her husband by 13 years and left to her two nieces the villa and a fortune estimated in today's value at about £23 million.

At the Caucade English Cemetery in Nice, the Evans' faith is clearly demonstrated at their grave. Instead of being buried side by side, they chose a linear design to be face to face, like they lived: in a clear, straight line. ■

The author wishes to thank Dorothy Ramser for her help with genealogical research.

october

FALL LANGUAGE LESSONS

06 08 36 67 58

jacque.berben@wanadoo.fr

Every Mon & Tues, 16:15: With the Association France États-Unis at Hôtel Brice in Nice. Jacque Berben (Mon) and Andrew McCloskey (Tues). For details please contact Jacque.

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH CANNES

04 93 94 54 61

holytrinitycannes.org

Tues Oct 1, 19h30: 10-week Alpha Course introduces key ideas and experiences of the Christian faith, and tries to answer important "questions of life." All welcome, no specialist knowledge of the Bible or theology is required. The course will be run in English and a study booklet and supper will be provided.

KEEP FIT

04 93 94 54 61

holytrinitycannes.org

Every Wed, 11h: English library with lunch at 12h30. Every Thurs, 10h: Keep-Fit.

POSH

PARAPHERNALIA

04 93 47 94 20- sunny-bank.org

Thurs Oct 3, 10h-15h, smart 2nd hand clothes & accessories, 2nd hand books, bric-a-brac, light lunch. At 815 chem des Gourettes, Mouans Sartoux. Future dates: Thurs Nov 7, Thurs Dec 5.

CAFÉ DE LA TOUR ENGLISH QUIZ NIGHT

Jim North 04 94 85 22 06

quizdelatour@gmail.com

Fri Oct 4: Better than watching daytime TV during the eight months out of holiday season. We will run every month on first Friday until and including May 2014. Menu options €10-€12; dessert €4.50. Please contact us for details.

25TH FESTIVAL DU LIVRE MOUANS SARTOUX

lefestivaldulivre.fr

Fri Oct 4-Sun Oct 6: See website for programme details.



VALERIE HAXTON MEMORIAL SERVICE

Wed Oct 9, 10h30: Valerie Haxton passed away Sept 10, aged 77, at the regional cancer centre in Nice, after many months of increasing suffering (see page 33). A requiem service will be held at Holy Trinity Nice at 11 rue de la Buffa.

ANNUAL ENGLISH THEATRE PRODUCTION "THE LAST ROMANCE"

06 21 20 60 10 - internationalclub.fr

Sat Oct 5, 19h30: The International Club of the Riviera proudly presents our annual English Theatre Production, in association with the Sandyford Little Theatre Company of Dublin, Ireland, *The Last Romance* in the Jazz Comédie Club (8, rue Scaliero, Nice). An ageless story by Joe Di Pietro about taking a chance on love. With live Opera Music it is a beautiful play that mixes heartbreak with its humour and opera with its laughter. Tickets: €15. All proceeds in aid of the Theme Charity of the ICR.

LIZ ELLARD EXHIBITION

lizellard@hotmail.fr

Until Oct 25: drawings and lino prints by Welsh artist Liz Ellard, along with French artists, Hermina Billy, Richard Mas, and Tanagra at Mas d'Artigny, St Paul de Vence.

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE TCD SOUTH OF FRANCE AUTUMN LUNCH

Rosemary Halford

+44 20 7435 4318

Sat Oct 5th: At the Escourtin Restaurant Moulin de la Camandoule, Chemin de Notre Dame, Fayence. The 17th century Moulin de la Camandoule has a beautiful garden and views and enjoys a reputation as a well-reviewed Michelin restaurant. We have eaten there regularly and have never been disappointed. In summer there is a simple menu by the piscine but the main restaurant with its 2 red Michelin forks and Maître Restaurateur takes over in the autumn and serves excellent meals. €47/person in advance by cheque payable to Rosemary Halford.

AMIAc

Douglas Goldin 04 92 94 02 47

Tues Oct 8: Blue Lavande restaurant, Valbonne. Please ring to reserve.

MIKE LORIMER FINANCIAL PLANNING SEMINAR: "LE TOUR DE FINANCE"

04 93 74 73 35 - mikelorimer.com

Wed Oct 9, from 9h: In conjunction with the BA of the Var, at the prestigious conference facility of the Les Domaines Saint Endréol, Route de Bagnolis-en-Forêt, La Motte-en-Provence. A number of topics will be covered with French tax lawyer Stephanie Glasper giving an update on the recent French tax changes and how these will affect you. Are you getting the best exchange rate on your Sterling/Euro transfers? Currencies Direct will give some ideas to ensure you beat bank exchange rates. Assurance Vie: once again we will be going over the many tax saving benefits for French residents of the Assurance Vie. QROPS (Qualifying Recognised Overseas Pension Scheme) provisions enable non-UK resident individuals who have accrued pension benefits in the UK, to transfer these to other jurisdictions once they have left the UK. Investment Market Update: a representative of one of the world's leading investment companies will provide an up-to-date overview of global financial markets. The presentations will be followed by wine and canapés; visitors can relax and ask questions to all the respected speakers. For more information please contact Mike Lorimer.

SUNNY BANK AGM

sunny-bank.org - 04 93 47 94 20

Thurs Oct 10, 15h30: AGM followed by a reception (SB Members only).

CAR BOOT SALE

06 95 50 86 80

Sat Oct 12: 10h-16h: Clothing, handbags, shoes, toys, CDs, DVDs, white elephant items, books, bric-a-brac, baked goods. Coffee, tea, on sale throughout the day. At Church Hall, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, 11 rue de la Buffa, Nice.

5TH ANNUAL ICR TEXAS SCRAMBLE GOLF TOURNAMENT

06 21 20 60 10 - internationalclub.fr

Sat Oct 12, 8h30: At the Victoria Golf Club in Valbonne. Sponsored by Club Vivanova and Mitton International Wines, and open to all. Registration will close Thurs Oct 10 or after the first 24 confirmations are received, whichever comes first. Fee for tournament participants: €68/ person which is all inclusive: green fees, aperitif, 3-course lunch with wine and coffee. Spouses, guests and well wishers are welcome to join us for the day for €35, which includes aperitif, lunch & awards ceremony. All participants will receive gifts from sponsor.

PROVENCE ETATS-UNIS

provencetatsunis.com

Sun Oct 13, 18h: Olivier Leroy. Sun Nov 17, 18h: Yves Dupuis Pizzo. Sun Dec 15, 18h: Tony Petrucciani. All performances at the Salle des Fêtes, Bras.

CANADIAN CLUB DE MONACO

lorense.della.nave@orange.fr

Mon Oct 14, 19h: Thanksgiving dinner (venue TBD), preceded by AGM.

OPEN HOUSE AT THE GRANGE

04 93 47 94 20 - sunny-bank.org

Sat Oct 19, 10h-15h: Themed lunch, plus 2nd hand books, clothes & bric-a-brac. 815 chem des Gourettes, Mouans Sartoux. Future date Sat Oct 16.

ANGLO-AMERICAN PRESENCE ON THE FRENCH RIVIERA DURING THE JAZZ YEARS

06 08 36 67 58

jacquie.berben@wanadoo.fr

Mon Oct 21: a presentation in English by Paul Tracy, who is organizing a wine tasting afterwards. No charge for members, €5 for non-members, at Hôtel Brice in Nice.

VIAC - viac.fr

Tues Oct 22: Wine visit and lunch. See website details and booking.

PROFESSIONAL YACHTING ASSOCIATION

info@pya.org

Thurs Oct 24: AGM at the Salle du 8 Mai, Antibes. Please email for more information.

A MORNING AT THE FONDATION MAEGHT

04 93 12 21 42

englishbookcentre.com

Mon Oct 28: With Mary Lynn Riley and the English Book Centre, join the special visit to the Fondation Maeght in Saint-Paul-de-Vence as we discover one of the region's major 2013 exhibitions: *Adventures of Truth - Painting and Philosophy: A Narrative*. See page 45 for details.

RADA:

ENCHANTED APRIL

09 53 73 56 70 - rada06@yahoo.com,

Thurs Oct 31, Fri Nov 1 & Sat

Nov 2, 20h: Play by Matthew

Barber at the Mougins School.

Tickets: €10. Call or email to

purchase or drop by the English

Book Centre in Valbonne.

november

VIAC - viac.fr

Sun Nov 3: AGM and lunch.

See website for details and booking. Please also note date of Fri Dec 6 for dinner dance.

AMIAC

Laurie Cockburn 04 93 56 34 92

Wed Nov 6: AGM and lunch.

Le Caveau restaurant, Cannes.

Please ring to reserve.

CLOTHES & BROCANTE

04 93 47 94 20 - sunny-bank.org

Every Thurs, 10h-15h: Books and "Not So Posh Paraphernalia" (clothes & brocante), we also have a range of men's clothing.

Donations of good quality clothes, accessories, etc are very welcome and can be delivered every Thursday. 2nd hand books are also accepted but please, no hardback fiction.

Before bringing books please call 04 93 47 94 20 on Thurs between 10h-15h. 815 chem des Gourettes, Mouans Sartoux.



THE LOW BUDGET MEN WITH GUEST STAR DOREEN CHANTER

lowbudgetmen.com

Wed Oct 23, 20h: At Stars n Bars in Monaco; entry is free. During the evening the CD *Crossing Lives*, the DVD *Live in Nice* and tee-shirts will be on sale. All proceeds go to the association 20 000 Vies for the purchase of Automated External Defibrillators. Your donations during the evening will help to buy yet another defibrillator and save lives. See the website for more info.

SADECA FURNITURE, HOME AND DECORATION FAIR

salondumeuble-nice.fr

Sat Nov 9-Sun Nov 17, 10h-19h: With 12,000 m² of exhibition space at the Palais des Expositions in Nice, an opportunity to see the very latest trends in furniture and decor.

NICE-CANNES MARATHON 6TH EDITION

marathon06.com

Sun Nov 10, 8h: 42.195km run from Nice's Promenade des Anglais to the Boulevard de la Croisette in Cannes.

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH CANNES

04 93 94 54 61

holyltrinitycannes.org

Sun Nov 10, 10h30:

Remembrance Day Service.

Sat Nov 23, 9h30: A Teaching

Morning on "Jesus, His life

and work". Lunch provided.

Please contact to reserve.

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04 92 00 20 80 - salon-chocolat.com

Thurs Nov 15-Sun Nov 17,

10h-20h: Come admire and taste all sorts of chocolates and other wonderful products. A large number of French and foreign professionals will be on hand to show off their creative recipes and combinations of luxury products, and to run workshops for food-lovers of all ages. On the Promenade des Anglais at Beau Rivage.

DOG AND CAT SHOW

Sat Nov 23-Sun Nov 24:

10h-19h: At the Palais des Expositions in Nice, get advice from French breeders, see both well-known and rare breeds.

THANKSGIVING DINNER

06 08 36 67 58

jacquie.berben@wanadoo.fr

Thurs Nov 28, 12h: At the

Koudou (28 Promenade

des Anglais, Nice) with the

Association France Etats-Unis.

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holds French and English classes from beginners to advanced including conversation every Saturday from 5th October 2013 from 2pm to 5pm followed by tea and biscuits. We also organise a social event every month.

We are on the first floor of the Maison des Association Cannes, 9 rue Louis Maille, in Cannes (behind the train station off rue d'Alsace). Cannes. Parking free and available. More info: Tel. Iris on 04 93 97 86 32 or Odette on 04 93 49 37 01

English American Library, 12 rue de France, Nice. Open since 1862, the largest English-language library in Southern Europe. Open 10-11 and 3-5 Tues to Sat. 20,000 volumes of fiction, non-fiction, DVDs & English press. Tourist €6/week or €26 for yearly memberships. See: www.nice-english-library.org

The English Book Centre in Valbonne. Tues 10h30-12h: English improvement sessions. Walk-ins welcome. Thurs 10h45-12: French improvement sessions. Walk-ins welcome. Contact to confirm: 04 93 12 21 42 - www.englishbookcentre.com.

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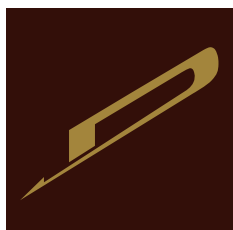
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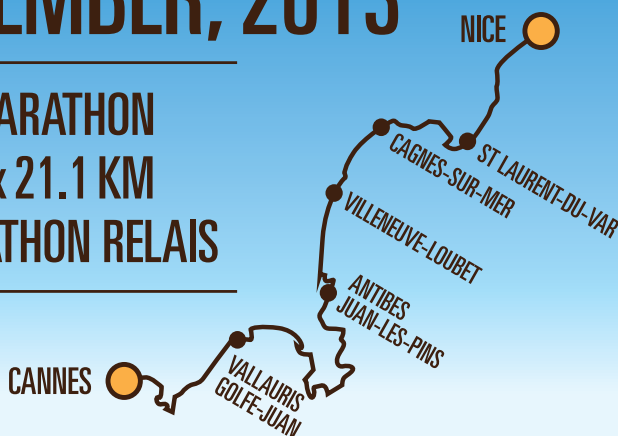
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