

To benefit the Village Dans l'intérêt du Village

October 2007

Another 600 Euros to charity That makes 1,706 in total, so far

President's word

On October 18 we were privileged to present a further 600 Euros for the benefit of the less well off in Marseillan. This, when added to the 501 Euros in 2005 and the 605 Euros last year makes a total of 1,706 Euros so far.

That is seventeen hundred Euros the villagers would not have had except for the generosity of English speaking visitors to Marseillan.



We have no say in how the funds are allocated, but we were delighted to be asked along when 52 older folk, who live alone, enjoyed an afternoon to remember on Marseillan's *Memani*.

We sailed to the Canal du Midi and along the Etang past the bird sanctuary, through the oyster tables and past the young men free diving for clams. Afternoon tea (French style) was served and we returned to the "tune" of a great sing-song.

Some of the bolder citizens took the wheel to the "consternation" of everybody else! Thank you all, members, walkers and supporters, very much for your support. We hope to see you again, and look forward to an even more successful 2008.

Patricia

Photo shows Mmes Garcia & Salmonese receiving the cheque from Patricia

Where to from here?

This winter we are targeted upon research. There is such a lot that we need to know, to flesh out the basic facts that are now all assembled.

It is our aim to produce a book that will give not only the history of our lovely village, but also add the flavour of life as it was lived.

Preliminary interviews with older inhabitants has produced some interesting information that has until now never been recorded. We have found the villagers most eager to reminisce, and to produce documents and photos to illuminate their stories. Until Christmas this will be our main activity because we have a long list of people anxious to talk with us

Hopefully the book will be produced in French as well as English, and - perhaps - German.

The walks will continue, of course, the next are planned (as an experiment) for Christmas and Boxing Day.

Also we are actively seeking Sponsors from the village businesses. Currently we supply the English book stall with MH bookmarks, and the *Memani* with an English translation of their commentary - in which MH, of course, features.

Next season we hope to sign up traders who want to encourage visitors. There is an interesting proposal in hand, from the traders' association, to stage a three day Medieval Festival to co-incide with the Belle Scribote musical. We plan to be involved, of course.

So the first week of July should be an interesting time to visit.

Facts & Figures

MH was registered in December, 2006 following a successful first two seasons. It was created to provide information on Marseillan for Anglophones, and the tours have been enjoyed by people from at least 17 nations (including France).

100% satisfaction has been achieved, with all 553 walkers reporting. Membership has climbed to 36 - well on the way to the 50 that we feel will give MH a credibility in the world of officialdom. (There are also many willing supporters in Marseillan who have yet to actually become members.)

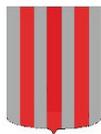
This year we have donated the same sum as before... we need to hold a reserve to ensure that we can publish *Marseillan, Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow*.

We also shall need funds for individual initiatives such as placing a plaque on the *Croix de la Mission*

	2005	2006	2007
Walkers	111	172	270
Books	-	26	39
Donations	501	605	600

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Village Updates

Marseillan, in common with many other communities across Europe has had to come to terms with the influx of "wealthy" people from outside the Midi. It is difficult for the Marseillanais to appreciate the charm that their village has for outsiders. But it is also impossible to understand why people choose to move to the village and then modify their property so that the visible culture of the ancient village is damaged.

There are far too many plastic doors and windows - even a satellite dish stuck on a wall in the ancient port !

We, of course, intend to influence such decisions... to encourage as much preservation as possible. (We have asked that the sat dish be removed.)

In the meantime here is an update on current happenings:

Rivegauche

This is the name of the development that will replace the ancient warehouse that faces the port. Demolition has started. An apartment block will take it's place. For details of the development go to www.garrigue.com.



Street Names

We thought it would be quite straightforward to produce a glossary of the origins of the street names in the ancient village ... but No! We first encountered the usual, and expected, avoidance techniques that our friends have perfected over the centuries. "Sorry, we can't help, try ... "

Persistence is necessary, and so is some creative thinking.

So far we have discovered the origins of all but four of the road names.

It doesn't help that the Maffre family has been centuries in the village.



Old Mairie

The old Mairie in rue Emil Zola is to be reconstructed. The facade, however, will remain. 11 apartments and one shop are planned.

PTT

Rumour has it that the PTT, by the traffic lights to be converted to 18 apartments. But the existing facade will remain.



New bridge

A pedestrian bridge is to be thrown across the pisse saumes (German canal) beside the Hotel Richmont.

Goodbye to the long trek round!

This should be the last part of the changes to the Marina, and the canal bank renovations. The canal banks have been repaired and grand new jetties built. The marina has been doubled in size.

No more flooding

After three years of construction, and considerable inconvenience, Marseillan Ville should soon be free from the threat of flooding. For centuries a main route for surplus water has been down bd. Lamar-tine to the port. But now the last stages of a huge project is in hand.

The final link is going into place across bd. Pasteur. No more flood boards!

Fingers crossed - that's the English cynicism coming through.

Nor that two Henris were mayor - one in the 17th and 18th centuries.

So which Henri is rue Maffre named for? Nobody (so far) knows.

To trace:

- * Achille Baille
- * P Bouisson
- * Charles Reboul
- * Vedel

Any and all help welcome!

We have had some interesting thoughts about the origin of rue de l'Amour. Was it a street of ladies?

FAQs

The Languedoc cross?

The cross dates back at least to 1100 when the Count of Toulouse adopted it. It is also known as the cross of Occitan. It has no Cathar connections. Not Christians the Cathars had no use for crosses.



How many clocks?

Actually - one. It may appear there are more, but that is because in Midi villages the clocks strike the hours twice. Once to alert you, then again so you can count the strikes. The half-hour is marked with a single strike.

Difficult between 12.30 and 14.00, but we are eating then so it doesn't matter.

The vendange ?

Vendange is declared in each village when their grapes are ready to be picked. For the period of the vendange the grapes have total priority on the roads. Do not get in the way!

Car numberplates ?

The French departements (counties) are numbered in (roughly) alphabetical order. Thus Herault is number 34.



Cars are registered in the departements and carry the departement number. The preceding numbers and letters are allocated in sequence.

Move home to a different departement and the car must be re-registered.

Soon a national system of numbering will be introduced. Then cars will need only to be registered once.

Road Fund License?

What RFL ? Only commercial vehicles pay for a RFL.

The windscreen stickers show the vehicle is insured, and for older vehicles, that the MOT is current. A circular sticker shows the car is "Green".

One gets known in a French village... Last evening an English speaking visitor asked directions of a villager outside our door. The Frenchman did not reply, simply rang our bell... and walked away!