



To benefit the Village  
Dans l'intérêt du Village

January 2011

## 2011 A hopeful year

### President's word

Good-bye 2010, you won't be missed!

Hello 2011, what do you have in store?

It is very easy to be pessimistic, what with all the economies being announced by governments.

Let us hope that the spring weather, and finding that things are not so bad as all that, will at least halt the pessimism - even start a recovery.

An English language French paper has just run a long piece about the housing market. It clearly shows that this is a time to buy.

Mortgage rates are as low as 3%, house prices are depressed, people need to sell and so will bargain. And the pound/euro rate is very good at the moment.

So we expect to see a recovery in the housing market, if only from the Euro area. But we are told that Russians are becoming interested... an unexpected development!

For MH we are hopeful that the Marseillan type visitor will come much as usual. We don't attract small families, our market is the more securely placed, slightly older people. And, of course, we greet many English speaking visitors from - to date - 28 different countries.

Every year we have a meeting with the Mayor to share our concerns and interests, and I have been invited on to the Visitor Planning Committee.

We have made several suggestions as to how to attract the British. We wait to see if they are taken up.

So our hope for 2011 is a return to near normality. But will this be fulfilled?

Patricia

## Boxing Day Special



Each Boxing Day we have traditionally organised a walk on the assumption that many British will expect something to happen - and be disappointed.

In France Christmas is just Christmas Eve evening, and the Day itself.

Back to work on the 26th.

So far we have been very pleased with the turnout just to walk the old village and have a cup of coffee.

So for 2010 we decided to be more ambitious. We organised a Special that included a Walk, coffee, aperitifs, lunch of cottage pie, jacket potatoes, salad. Followed by trifle and then mince pies and christmas cake. Quite a spread. And all home made by Madame President.

Unfortunately the weather hit us just as it affected millions across Europe. The normal seasonal visitors just did not travel.

Nevertheless we had a reasonable turnout - entirely thanks to the Tuesday Club who meet weekly in Pezenas and who reserved 10 places.

The day was horridly cold, lovely blue skies, but a vicious north wind meant we had to struggle from wind break to wind break, and shelter where we could.

Despite the worst ever weather we still maintained our 100% satisfaction rating. People do enjoy the walk, or, more properly the commentary.



## Village Christmas



Once again our village was overtaken by the Christmas Spirit.

The whole of the centre was filled with kiosks selling everything from hot crepes to mulled wine, from speciality foods



to fancy jewelry. We had a fun fair that took over the Place de la Republique, and we even had a snow machine to bring a real feeling of a white Christmas (which, thank goodness we did not get).

There were four processions with Father Christmas in a very lifelike sleigh with four reindeer and three elves propelling the whole ensemble. It was great to see the little kids response.

Can't imagine where it came from but part of two processions was a huge nodding polar bear, at least 6 metres high, attended by penguins with colourful scarves and hats. An amazing sight.

A main feature was, again, the locomotive. It is beautifully constructed on a lorry chassis and is to all intents and purposes the real thing.

It pulls its own carriage and, of course, all the big-wigs get to ride in there and to wave at us mere mortals who are standing in the cold.

That is the only problem. It is a great celebration, but in mid-winter one has to be very keen to spend the time to go round all of the attractions. But there is no doubt that the kids loved it and that makes it worthwhile.



## Snippets

### Traffic

We have yet another new roundabout junction. This time on the road to Marseillan Plage

Just outside the village a road split off into the vineyards. Well now it is a complex road junction involving a tricky roundabout.

So to go on the lower road one has to negotiate seven traffic calmers (big ones!) and on the upper road a tight roundabout.

It wouldn't be so bad but they are designing all our new roads and junctions so there is no clear line. One has to steer through. What it will cost in brake linings, clutches and shock absorbers we shudder to think.

The makers must be rubbing their hands with glee!

### Lights

We had beautiful new lights for Christmas. All the main roads had bright silver lighting, and the Hôtel de Ville was bright with silver.

The fountain was a cascade of strips of silver lights, the whole thing was an inspiration that made Marseillan the best lit village in the area.

### Church square

Soon work will begin on re-making the square by the church to match what has been done in the rest of the centre.

### Mayor's Bridge

The narrow bridge over the canal du midi is being replaced.

So far only preliminary work has been done but to judge from the levelling marks we are in for a big, long job!

President: Patricia Worsam  
Secretary: Nicolas Ghorra  
Treasurer: Mike Worsam  
BP29, 34340 Marseillan,  
Hérault, France.  
+33 4 67 77 38 64  
marseillan.historique@sfr.fr