



To benefit the Village Dans l'intérêt du Village

December 2013

2013 A poor season

President's word

This season has been just about the worst since we opened the Visitors' Centre.

Anglophones were few on the ground - and they are, of course, our market.

To start with the Scandinavians didn't arrive in numbers, and they were not followed by the British and Irish who usually complete the spring - early season.

Then the mid-season was also quiet. Some Australians and New Zealanders and a few Irish and British, but not in the usual numbers.

June was appalling weather - but by then it was clear that our market was not going to pick up.

The French arrived in numbers, so the restaurants and traders had a good second half to the season, and the September/October period was good.

All-in-all, though, we were very quiet. Especially as a hotel barge that has sent its guests on walking tours was so short of customers that it had to economise. 34 tours vanished in a simple phone call!

Then the market is changing, and we are planning to try to change with it next year. There is free wi-fi in the village so people have their own internet access, and so our internet is used only to print boarding cards.

Sorry if this sounds gloomy!

The GOOD NEWS is that we were able to increase our donation to Secours Catholique to 500 Euros. This is thanks mostly to our faithful sponsors whose number increased this year to 19.

Happy Christmas.

Patricia

Merry Christmas



and
a
Happy
New
Year

British avoid fines

Nearly 500,000 British drivers will escape fines in France every year because the UK did not sign up to the European directive allowing cross-border penalties for motoring offences to be enforced.

The directive came into force on November 7 and France is continuing to press the UK to sign because of the large numbers of offenders.

He said that British offenders were easy to spot on traffic cameras because of their large number plates - but without a deal

to access vehicle registration details, penalty notices could not be sent to offenders' homes and the drivers go unpunished.

France is one of 24 countries to have signed up, but the UK, Ireland and Denmark have refused.

The UK transport Minister says that the UK opted out because of differences in the way offences are prosecuted. He said "we prosecute drivers for road traffic offences, the French prosecute vehicle keepers."

Drunkenness in Languedoc-Roussillon

One in six adults in L.R. drinks alcohol every day. A health study has found the region has France's highest rate of

drunkenness and cannabis use. Health group Inpes finds that there has been a drop in regular daily drinking but a rise in drunks.

Subscriptions

A lot of regular members didn't make it to the village this year - and so didn't renew their subscriptions... Please send your renewal to the address overleaf... it is only 10 Euros!

Baggage Firms

Connexion newspaper has surveyed its readers to discover baggage firms that can be relied upon as an alternative to taking luggage on a plane.

The most popular is www.parcel2go.com.
But

www.parcelsplease.co.uk was praised by several readers for its competitive prices.

www.carrymyluggage.com was recommended for giving good service in relation to the fee charged - however one reader said that the bag had to be sent several days in advance and the best delivery date may be the day after you arrive - so you may need to travel with a small pack of essentials.

The SNCF also has a delivery service if you are travelling by train. The luggage is picked up at your home and delivered to your destination, which does not have to be the town you are taking the train to, but should be nearby.

For details see baggages.voyages-sncf.com. It costs 35 Euros for one case up to 30kg (then 17 Euro per bag after that).

The service is also available on journeys to Germany Switzerland and Luxembourg, at 50 Euros per bag.

Spell Checker

Eye have a spell chequer,
It came with my Pea Sea.
It plane lee marks four my revue,
Miss Steaks I can knot see.
Eye strike the quays and type a whirred,
And weight for it too say,
Weather eye am write oar wrong,
It tells me strait a weigh.
Eye ran this poem threw it,
Your shore reel glad two no,
Its vary polished in its weigh,
My chequer tolled me sew...

The Boulevard

Work still (!) progresses. The latest date for opening is February - or perhaps March ! There will be no open fireplace but the kitchen will be state-of-the art.

New Twist Stopper



The cork industry has come up with a new-style stopper to replace the traditional cork on short-life wines.

Called the Helix, it "twists to open" and uses a special glass bottle with an internal threaded neck with a corresponding cork - so no corkscrew is needed.

Portugal's Amorim, the world's largest cork stopper maker, will have the new stopper-bottles on the shelves in France next year.

It is estimated that 71% of bottles will retain the conventional cork, although US wine critic Robert Parker feels that wine with corks will be in the minority by 2015.

Alternatives were aimed to stop "corked wine" but some say they do not allow enough oxygen into the bottle. Plastic stopper manufacturers claim that their products have moved on in the 12 years since their introduction - "our product is highly engineered and is far from being just a lump of plastic plugging up a bottle.

British wine expert Oz Clarke says "Don't be a cork snob. The only requirements are that the seal on a bottle of wine be hygenic, airtight, long-lasting and removeable".

Marks & Spencer

There have been major - unannounced - changes to the M&S website in the UK.

For years those living in France have been able to buy from the UK site and have the goods delivered to them in France.

But no more !

Instead they have to use the French website which, many claim does not carry the same choice, sizes or sell at the same price.

The really annoying thing is that M&S are continuing international deliveries to countries where they don't have a store, so it seems incomprehensible that they refuse to serve a long-standing and loyal customer who happens to live in France but chooses to shop in the UK.

Under pressure they will exchange British gift vouchers for French ones.

Famous last words:

Don't unplug it, it will just take a moment to fix.

Let's take the shortcut, he can't see us from there.

What happens if you touch these two wires tog-

We won't need reservations.

Don't worry, it's not loaded.

Contact

President: Patricia Worsam

Secretary: Nicolas Ghorra

Treasurer: Mike Worsam

BP29, 34340 Marseillan,
Hérault, France.

+33 4 67 77 38 64

marseillan.historique@sfr.fr