



British Association of the Var

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December 2010

Newsletter

No 103

More Success and plaudits for your British Association of the Var

I make no apologies for using the following quote which we received from Brigid Kennedy of **Anglo:info** provence for whom we acted as major community partner at the 'Best of Provence - English' event which took place at La Motte on Saturday 30 October. In an email thanking us for our efforts she wrote:

"I want to say that the British Association of the Var is the most professional non profit organisation we have worked with in Provence, and would happily work in partnership with you in future events. The help you and your members provided us prior to, and with the set up and the set down on the day, plus the wonderful choices of food you offered and the café atmosphere were outstanding. I can honestly say, the one thing I had no concern about was the areas you were taking responsibility for, as we had total confidence you would deliver and you did."



To all those members who helped us produce the results we give **a big thank you**. Not just from the Committee but from all the Members who make up our august Association. To underline our presence the 'cookies' were provided with aprons proudly displaying our new logo and their status. The team of Cookies stamped their mark on the venue. The day long supply of freshly cut sandwiches complemented by Teresa Watson's genuine homemade English sausage rolls, made with sausage meat specially brought over by a friend during the week, were a big hit. The homemade cakes and quiches which members had baked, all made for a very successful "Teddy Bears' Sandwich Bar." From prior to the show opening until its close at 16h30 there always seemed to be customers queuing and then taking their choice to one of the café tables we had provided. The real hit with stall holders was our constant food and drink trolley service and, just for the record, our very first early morning "trolley dolly" was Lesley Honeywell.

Shirley Wrigglesworth and Auriol Langen helped me man the British Association of the Var stand, with lots of large images of our new logo highly visible. During the day we enrolled new members, issued membership application forms and made some very useful new contacts. At the end of the day our sandwich bar generated over 500€ of surplus for our Welfare Fund, the calendars raised 130€ and the Christmas cards raised 204€. A very successful venture and all our aches and pains were made bearable by the compliments we received on your behalf; even the British Consul Simon Taylor acknowledged our contribution in his opening remarks.

Mike Milner

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Forthcoming Events

for you diary

December

VIAC Dinner Dance

Friday 10 Dec - St Aygulf

Committee Meeting

Tuesday 14 Dec

Traditional Christmas Carol Service

Friday 17 Dec - Grimaud

Happy Boules

Contact: Rob Flanagan
rob@baofthevar.com

Digital Photography Group

Contact: Mike Harper
*****@yahoo.co.uk

New Members

This month we welcome many new members as follows –

Roger & Jean Tasker, Sillans la Cascade
Stuart & Irene Cameron, Les Adrets de l'Esterel
Bill & Joanne Madden, La Motte
Pippa & Gérald Gomis-Maile, Mouans-Sartoux
Barrie & Catherine Mason, Bargemon
Rev Paul Topham, Le Muy
John & Janet Hewett, Lorgues
Ian & Catherine Bell, Sainte Maxime

Alan Runnicles

Following the recent death of member Alan Runnicles, Dawn, James and Antonia Runnicles would like to express their thanks to everyone for their cards, messages, love and support.

Bargain Basement

Sales and Wants printed free for Members

Email your ads to newsletter@baofthevar.com

FOR SALE:

Flat computer screen, Acer, 50x26cms. Used about 6 months. What offers? Collect from Grimaud. Tel: *****

V.I.A.C

Var International Aperitif Club invites Members of the BA to their
Christmas Dinner Dance

Friday 10 December

St Aygulf Hotel

Welcome Punch at 19h

Tickets: €45 per person for non VIAC members includes a 4 course dinner, wine, coffee and a live band for dancing!

For details contact: Anne Burnett by 6 Dec
***** *****@aol.com

Christmas Message

The Committee joins me in wishing you all a Joyous Christmas and very happy celebrations over the Festive Season with friends, family or on your own wherever you may be.

*With kind regards from Auriol,
Clare, Terry, John, Shirley, Mike & Rob*

AGM DIARY DATE

Some advance warning for Members: at the November Committee Meeting the subject of the AGM for next year was discussed.

A few venues are under consideration and it was decided that the AGM will be held mid-March. The meeting would be followed by a finger buffet luncheon; catering being provided by our own "cookies". The start time will be a more reasonable 11h in a central Var location, enabling more Members to attend. More precise details will be in the February 2011 Newsletter.

Mike Milner

For next month's Newsletter

Please let us have your Advertisements, Articles and Reports for the January issue by

Friday, 17 December

Contributions to newsletter@baofthevar.com

or send to Mike Milner, Publicity,
*****, 83520 Roquebrune S/A



www.baofthevar.com

See the Latest News and Forthcoming Events on our BA website

Your Welfare Team

I am delighted to tell you that as a result of our Welfare Appeal we have some new members in the Welfare Team.

We continue to be dependent upon those members who have offered to do shopping, hospital visits and provide transport. If you have not been asked to help it only means that there have been no requests in your area. We will be in touch with you as soon as such requests come in.

If for any reason you are no longer in a position to help us, would you please let me know.

For some time now the Committee Members have often been asked what happens within Welfare? Without breaking the confidentiality ethos which we take very seriously, I am going to try to show you the type of situations that are covered by your Welfare Team.

The most common request we have is to visit people in hospital and rehab clinics. During the month we pay visits to the various hospitals in Gassin, Draguignan, Frejus and Toulon plus clinics in Frejus (2), Callas and Draguignan, Figanieres and Cannes. Unfortunately we were unable to go to Marseilles to visit patients there.

Other assistance includes helping someone who is unable to deal with paperwork and requires help with writing cheques and dealing with the post. Someone else has asked if there is anyone who would visit them in their home. Having lost their spouse they are feeling lonely and would like company. The other-side of the coin is that people ask if there is anyone that they can visit in their vicinity – there is usually someone that they can help.

Many hours are spent sitting in the various tax offices and social services offices to assist people with their French administration problems.

Some of the more difficult situations have included having to find accommodation for a visitor without funds, on the weekend before Christmas. A couple who normally lived in a caravan, which was leaking and they had no access to water or electricity – and again, no funds.

Last year seemed to be the year for garden and home based accidents. At one point we had eight people in various medical facilities at different stages of recovery.

With almost everyone receiving their pension from Newcastle in the UK, we are in contact with Newcastle by either phone or letter, to assist people in obtaining, transferring or sorting out problems with their pensions on a regular basis.

We were present at the AngloInfo day in La Motte manning the BA table. We talked to a number of people, both members and non-members from whom we were able to recruit 2 new Welfare team members. The recent recruiting campaign will bring our Welfare Team to 7. We are now closer to being better able to cover the vast area of the VAR but, if anyone is willing, it would be good to have someone on the coast.

With the future plans to make more people aware of who the BA is and what we stand for, we will be looking to recruit more people to cover the wider area within the VAR. Without the additional recruits it will not be possible to help those in need properly.

The Welfare team also make a point of attending most of the functions held to raise funds to enable them to carry out their work in helping people. We currently have 21 open cases on our books although we do not register every 'phone call or email enquiry we receive. Our travels take us to the four corners of the VAR, although at the moment not as far south at Toulon – yet! It is not unknown for us to have covered over 1000kms in a month to help those in need.

In addition to the Welfare Team, we have a team of members who are happy to help with the occasional shopping, hospital or visiting trip. You too are invaluable to the Team. We are aware that people's circumstances change and if you are no longer in a position to assist with visits etc, please let me know. If you have not heard from us for a while, do not panic – we know you are there and when we need help in your area we will be looking for you.

Shirley Wrigglesworth

***** or 06 43 86 49 01

welfare@baofthevar.com

Please note the Welfare email address on page 1 of last month's Newsletter was incorrect and we apologise for this error.

From the Chairman's desk

I am delighted to tell you that in November we held the last meeting of the Committee of the Var Branch and the first of the newly founded **British Association of the Var**. The organisation is finally registered and started operations as from 1 November 2010.

I hope you will all join me in recognising the enormous contribution made by Clare Brown in getting the new statutes together. In her 'former life' she set up new companies, but she admitted that never has she done anything so complicated, in so much detail, and all in two languages! Thank you Clare for your dedication!

A copy of the Statuts and internal Rules & Regulations will be circulated to all Members with the AGM papers next year. We all like to think we have covered all eventualities.

On 2 November I attended an EGM in Nice of our former parent organisation where they unanimously agreed to a change of name and also confirmed the appointment of Richard Davison as Chairman of the British Association of the Alpes Maritimes. I also, as approved at our last AGM in February, handed over the cheque for €20,000: the agreed partial refund of the funds we received from a 'share-out' several years ago.

Back to our meeting: we welcomed John Collingwood back from his lengthy sojourn in rehabilitation in Marseille. He looks younger than ever after his holiday!

We were disappointed to learn how many Members had not yet renewed their membership, and therefore will not be receiving December's Newsletter. If you get to hear adverse comments or complaints, you know the reason why. However, we are delighted at the positive response to this year's limited range of Christmas cards and the new Calendars which are all nearly completely sold out.

We were all a bit tired but exhilarated after the AngloInfo show in La Motte, and have already started looking at next year's events. However, after the lack of support for the Carol Service and lunch last year, we have not planned one this year.

If you are travelling by road in December, please take care, other drivers with a drink inside them are far more dangerous than you are!

Auriol Langen

Neighbourhood Network

The idea is that local Members, both couples and particularly single residents, should meet, say every second week, to keep in touch.

An email around the group, to meet in a local café, each paying for themselves, a brief reply, particularly if you can't make it, and the whole group is aware of how each other is. If anyone has a real problem, perhaps it needs escalating to the Welfare Team, but for help with shopping or getting to a doctor or a hospital appointment, even a lift to a BA event: surely it can be worked out locally within the community.

A group like this is working very successfully in Les Issambres under the leadership of Joan and Brian Taylor. All the local members are contacted by email a few days before the get-together is planned, all reply, most turn up, some don't or can't come but they are all aware of how each other are doing.

Are there any other volunteers in the membership who would like to organise an informal group like this within their local village or commune? Think of the floods disaster last summer, such informal groups would be of real benefit to everyone; checking up on one another and also letting the Welfare Coordinator or any Committee Member know of problems, as well as that everyone in their area is OK.

If you would like to organise a small group like this, please contact Shirley Wrigglesworth or myself, and let's get going – being in touch with one another and showing concern for each other.

Auriol Langen

Donations

With Christmas coming we are often struggling to find an original gift to present to friends and loved ones. In this case, why not give a gift to the BA? We can issue a thank you note to the intended recipient of the gift.

Please forward any donation to Terry Joyce, The Treasurer, BA of the Var, *****, 83670 Tavernes and advise the name and address of the recipient.

Rob Flanagan

NOVEMBER EVENTS

Coffee Morning in Montauroux

Having promised to hold a "Coffee Morning" on 3 November, I kept my fingers crossed that enough people would turn up to make at least one pot of coffee . . . Thankfully I had no need to worry as BA Members and friends made a splendid effort and we had the added bonus of some bearing gifts of home-made "scones, tarts and biscuits".

The day proved to be warm and sunny so we were able to utilise the terrace to display the books and the living room for the Calendars and Christmas cards. With everyone moving around it was good to see people socialising but difficult to see how well we were doing in the sales department.

There was no need to worry as a tremendous effort was made by all and in total, we raised 429€ for the Welfare Fund. 110€ on Calendars, 86€ on Books, 161€ on Christmas cards and 72€ on coffee etc. I was more than happy to make several pots of tea and coffee, and would like to thank everyone who came along and showed such generosity.

Sandie Docherty

Lunch at the Auberge du Grand Chêne



A new venue for an excellently planned gourmet lunch; 28 BA Members enjoyed the ambience of this family Restaurant. The log fire burning and the welcome greeting and aperitif ensured that the lunch got off to a good start.

It was good to welcome some members who had travelled from the other side of the Var, as well as those who had not had to travel so far.

Entertainment was provided in the form of the coach party in the next room. During their meal the party leader occasionally ran up and down waving her serviette. Meal finished, the group broke out into dance; one BA Member defected and joined in! Perhaps a result of the excellent wine served with the meal which, for those not driving, flowed well.

Thanks to Clare and Ellis for organizing this successful event.

Tricia Steel

Successful Quiz



Friday 19 November saw 35 budding "Eggheads" travel to Café de la Tour, Les Arcs for a lunch followed by a BA Quiz afternoon. Nine teams participated and after some ten rounds of questioning answer sheets were swapped and marking took place.

Only ten points separated first to last and much to my relief having got three teams tied for the lead the "Spring Chickens, Finger Lick' in Good" team snatched the competition with a clear three point margin, so saving the need for a tie-break round. The entry fees came to 105€ and that sum was split equally between the winning team and our Welfare fund.

The winning team having accepted the justified applause offered by the other teams, declined to accept their cash prize and generously donated the proceeds to the Welfare Fund. An action warmly applauded by all. It is planned to hold another Quiz in late January or February in Lorgues, more details in the January Newsletter.

Mike Milner

MEMBERS' GROUPS

Happy Boules

Having decided to hold the Boules Group every Monday afternoon rather than fortnightly, we seem to have been jinxed with the weather and as a result 3 of the last 4 meetings have been cancelled.

On the assumption that things can only get better we continue to invite all newcomers to a variety of locations around the central Var area.

If you wish to join us **please email:**

*****@hotmail.com

Digital Photography Group

With summer long since a distant memory and the tourists departed, the group decided it was time to forsake the comforts and coffee provided by our host Sandie and venture forth. Fréjus was our chosen destination and the early November weather was perfect. The town was an important roman port, has a fine cathedral and baptistery and more recently, an artists' quarter dating from medieval times – so much to be photographed and enjoyed.

Sadly we had not anticipated that the ancient roman amphitheatre would be turned into a very modern building site as part of the 'reconstruction' work being carried out there. This disappointment aside, the narrow streets of the old town and other historic attractions provided the ideal backdrop for our members to hone their photographic skills.

The visit was rounded off with a welcome and convivial lunch at one of the local *brasseries*. At our next meeting we hope to display a selection of our photographic endeavours from this visit. In addition, Alastair has kindly agreed to take us through the use of the manual setting on our digital cameras. It will certainly encourage us to get away from the usual default setting of 'automatic' and see what can be achieved by extending our scope.

For more details **please contact:**

[Mike Harper *****
*****@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:MikeHarper*****@yahoo.co.uk)

Painting Group

We all had a fabulous day of painting and chatting last month at the stunningly beautiful home of Maggie Green in Montauroux.

Fourteen of us sat down together for a 'gourmet standard' bring and share lunch. The sun shone all day and we were able to paint and eat outside - in NOVEMBER! Some beautiful artwork was produced, making use of the golden autumnal light. We hope you can join this friendly bunch of VERY mixed ability painters next time.

Stella Reynolds

Services at St John's for the Var St John the Evangelist - Ave Paul Doumer, St Raphaël

Holy Communion is held every Sunday at 10h30 followed by refreshments and a monthly lunch

Sunday 19 Dec, 18h Carol Service

followed by mince pies and mulled wine

Sat 25 Dec, 10h30: Christmas Day Celebration Communion with Carols

Grimaud Parish Church

1st Thursday of each month at 11h00
Eccumenical Service

Friday 17 Dec, 19h Carol Service

Please ring 04 94 95 45 78 for details

www.sjevar.com

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Church of England

You are very welcome to join us on the
1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at 11h00
for a service of Holy Communion

We also have a Bring and Share Lunch afterwards

For further details about this or
any other pastoral needs

Please ring Cécile or Jean 04 94 47 74 26

Prasada, 294, RD37, 83440 Montauroux

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Rev Peter or Shirley Massey at

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www.arc-en-provence.com/oasis

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at Notre Dame des Anges

Avenue des Quatre Pierres LORGUES

'Strictly Come Singing'

Christmas Carols in Lorgues Wed 22 Dec 12h

followed by a Bring & Shared Lunch

CHRISTMAS EVE COMMUNION

24 Dec 17h

Contact Peter or Shirley Massey 04 94 73 93 37
or Renee Plaskitt 04 94 76 69 86



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FEELING POORER THESE DAYS?

Saving is a real headache these days, with poor exchange rates, high taxation and low interest rates; it's difficult to know where to turn.

UK banks will not understand your financial position in France and associated issues that may come with French residency. They will probably not offer you the best rate of exchange available when you move money to France, worse still it is unlikely they be able to guide you on tax efficient solutions for your money, meaning you will be paying far more tax than necessary.

There is a solution! Let one of our French based, qualified and regulated consultants guide you. We are also qualified in the UK, meaning we understand what you have, what you need and how to steer you in the right direction, making sure you hold on to your money.

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