



Possible new Property Tax changes, a means test!

Living in the Var region, with its rich local traditions, markets, wines and, of course, the very affable way our neighbours welcome us into their communities to enjoy the fruits of the land and sea (not forgetting the splendid climate) is enriched by the apparently regular French government announcements which create press hysteria back in the UK. The degree of sensationalism being determined by the papers' attitude to France and how they feel us ex-pats could be affected.

About three years ago it was the safety measures concerning swimming pools. The original interpretation convinced many that it would be prohibitively expensive to ensure that private pools complied with the safety laws which would apply throughout France. Peer out of the plane window when you next fly over the region - pool numbers have not diminished. Then there was the French health insurance cover scare. Another story which, with the passage of time and the application of commonsense, was resolved. The predicted queues of untreatable British ex-pats outside hospital entrances did not occur.

The newest French proposal which was very recently splashed across newspaper headlines implies that ex-pat property owners face a big rise in taxes. Let's immediately reduce the number of those likely to be affected - it applies only to second home owners. So those who live here full-time and are *fiscally* resident can ignore the headlines. Then the effect can be diluted further, if you live outside France but your French residence is available for let during periods of the year. If advertised as such and the owner submits a tax return to the French revenue disclosing the income, then they are also not going to be affected by the PROPOSED changes.

The French parliament is only at the discussion stage on this proposed new piece of legislation. As our Hon Secretary Clare Brown stated when quoted recently in the Daily Telegraph, "There is a strong feeling among the French legal profession that this new tax will be challenged in the European courts and will not, therefore, be applied next year as proposed."

Let the dust settle and see what does eventually get through the French parliament. In the UK we tend to say that every cloud has a silver lining, but perhaps in the Var with our long sunny days it should read, "The Var holiday sun comes with a sting" because, at the end of the day, the new proposal is a form of wealth tax which will be applied to home owners not *fiscally* resident here.

Mike Milner

Forthcoming Events

for your diary

JUNE

Ascension Day Thursday 2 June

BAV at Lorgues Brocante
Thursday 2 June

Garden Party Lunch
Saturday 4 June

Digital Photography Group
Wednesday 8 June - Montauroux

Pentecost/Whit Sunday/Monday 12/13 June

Committee Meeting
Tuesday 21 June

GIANT BOOK SALE
Wednesday 22 June – Lorgues

Painting Group
Wednesday 29 June – Montauroux

BAV Welfare 'Helpers Day'
Thursday 30 June – Lorgues

Make your own Greeting Cards

Contact: Pat Powell
*****.co.uk

Happy Boules
Contact: Rob Flanagan
rob@baofthevar.com

Neighbourhood Network
See details on page 8

JULY

Country Lunch
Tuesday 12 July – Montauroux

SEPTEMBER

Vendange Lunch
Saturday 10 September - Lorgues



www.baofthevar.com

Don't forget - see Forthcoming Events
and Latest News on our BA website

New Members

We welcome six new Members -
Peter & Ros Storey, St Cyr sur Mer
Herman & Monika Brugman, Tavernes
Michael Pearce & Susan Redmond, Toutour

GIANT BOOK SALE

to be held at **Lindsay Phillips' home**
Domaine St Marc des Omedes, Lorgues

on Wednesday 22 June
10h30 – 15h00

This will be the largest Book Sale of the summer so please take advantage of this central venue to spend a while browsing, for easy summer reading.

Coffee and biscuits will be 'on tap' all day

Bring a picnic lunch and have a relaxed and sociable hour or two with Committee Members and friends under the trees.

Day Out on a Boat!

Not any old boat, but the one owned by our Member Lindsay Phillips. Not only is Lindsay responsible for the excellent wines that come from his vineyard Domaine St Marc des Omèdes, he also has a classic 36ft Motor Boat moored at St Maxime.



To try something different this summer with your guests or family charter this boat, complete with Captain Lindsay. Your party can total 8 people and it will only cost you 400€ for a day, excellent value. To make the day really memorable all you need provide is your picnic to see you through the day, Lindsay will provide the wine and his generosity is renowned on that score. For further details phone **04 94 67 69 17** or his mobile on **06 70 70 78 81**.

Mike Milner

British Consulate, Marseille

Simon Taylor

www.britishembassy.gov.uk/france

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Mike Lorimer - Orias No. 07032481

Chairman's Letter

We know that the summer season has arrived – the Cannes Film Festival is over, also the Monaco Grand Prix, the French Open Tennis is under way at Roland Garros, asparagus season is over, but cherries and strawberries are here, the pool is open, cleaned and warming up nicely, and after a glorious colourful Spring, the garden is beginning to dry out already as the sun reaches its summer heat. In other words we are ready for visitors!

The first of our summer lunches is at the beginning of the month in Aups, the 'workers' have been doing their usual planning for weeks now. Then on 22nd, after the numerous public holidays there is a '**Giant Book Sale**' in Lorgues, so there is no excuse for anyone to be short of reading matter this summer.

At the end of the month, Shirley is hosting a lunch for our very valuable 'welfare volunteers'. This is to be a social occasion but it will enable people to 'network' and share experiences without breaching confidentiality. It is a small way that we can show our appreciation for these loyal people who freely give up time to visit and help others.

Committee Meetings continue every month; there is not much to report. The last two were relaxed and easy with each of us reporting back on our various areas of responsibility. One change we did decide this month is to 'up' the mileage allowance that we refund. Originally it was set at 35 cents per km, then 36 cents for several more years. Now in recognition of the ever rising petrol prices and the rate permitted by the French *fiscal*, we will refund at 50 cents per km. This will make a considerably larger dent in our expenses.

Forward planning is always important! The Digital Photography Group is busy preparing for the Calendars for 2012. 6000 photos to sort through and negotiations have already started with the printer about layout.

Christmas cards will be chosen by the Painting Group and anyone outside that group who would like to submit a design for consideration should **please contact Pauline North soon**. We have to have the final choice by **20 July** as the printer also goes on holiday in August.

Both cards and calendars will be on sale at the *Vendange* Lunch on 10 September, and thereafter at every BA event until Christmas.

If you would like to hold a Coffee Morning or other event during the run-up to Christmas, **please do not hesitate to contact me**.

I will be away for most of the month but (unusually for me) I will be picking up emails.

Auriol Langen
*****@aol.com



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At first glance, it would appear that we have no shortage of competition, however, if you look closely, you will realise that we are the only company based here in the Var. You may also notice we are one of the very few British "certifié" (French qualified) advisers in the whole country.

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Welfare Team Report

The end of April saw John Collingwood become a 'victim' of the Welfare Team instead of the 'all round Carer' that we know. He has had his operation and is recovering well, and will be back in circulation very soon - I am sure you will all join me in wishing him a speedy recovery.

Thanks to the involvement of precious 'Helpers' I have been able to spend a few days this last month escorting a member to the UK for one last time to see a parent who is critically ill. It is unfortunate that they have a disability which does not allow them to travel on their own. With the assistance of the family all costs were covered. The difficult part was trying to make accommodation arrangements days prior to the Royal Wedding as we were based just outside London. But with patience and perseverance we managed to book flights, car hire and accommodation. This was an unusual request for the Welfare Team but we are always willing to go the extra mile if it is needed.

Pauline North and I have been organising the books for the numerous sales that we have had during the months of May and June and don't forget the **Giant Book Sale on 22 June at Lindsay Phillip's home**. Hopefully the weather will be good to us and you can bring a picnic lunch. The book sales are a vital form of fund raising for the Welfare Team to be able to assist those who need help. Don't forget we are here for visitors to the VAR as well.

Shirley and the Welfare Team
06 43 86 49 01

Dear Shirley,

We would like to express a heartfelt "thank you" to you and all the Committee Members involved for your help with the safety rails we needed for our front steps.

We have been involved in a lot of unexpected expense since we bought this house and discovered the roof leaked in six places and the electrical system was dangerous. We have tried not to ask for help up until now and even then we initially only asked for help with finding a suitable person for the work on the hand rails.

We feel very lucky to have such a helpful team of people to turn to.

Yours thankfully,

Ernie and Eileen Kimm

Hospital Wheelchair Use!

Please be aware that when you visit family or friends in hospital, if you or someone with you requires use of a wheelchair, for the visit, the hospital is very likely to refuse use of hospital equipment, especially wheelchairs.

The reason is simple; those they have loaned in the past are going home with the people who have borrowed them.

Therefore, remember to take your own wheelchair.

Shirley Wrigglesworth
welfare@baofthevar.com

British Association of the Var Welfare Coordinator

Shirley Wrigglesworth

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*Alas, alack, this year we have
Not gained one to our cast,
But some have left and so we fear,
The shows you've seen may be our last.*

*So come on all you gentlemen
And ladies of the Var
Have fun and learn your lines with us
And you may yet become a star.*

Please telephone:

Ivan *****
*****@notimetolook.eu

Painting Group

The next meeting will be on **Wednesday 29 June** in Montauroux. For further details and information about the Group **please contact:**

Pauline North *****
*****@orange.fr

Make your own Greeting Cards

I look forward to seeing my card making friends very soon, as well as some new faces. All materials will be supplied at a nominal cost to make several Greeting Cards. We will also be learning how to recycle some of your old cards.

Come along and have some fun while you work. No previous experience is necessary so don't be shy. If there is enough interest, there will be more than one location to choose from, either for a full or half day.

Please contact me for information on where and when, and, if you would like to host one of our workshops, please let me know.

Pat Powell *****
*****.co.uk

Digital Photography Group

At the end of last month we visited Carcès, a fine example of a typical *provençal* town. After an enjoyable lunch, the group set out to explore the historic medieval centre and in particular marvel at the many *trompe-l'oeil* frescoes found here. They are a spectacular feature of this town and when we met again last month, some excellent photos had been taken, showing the breadth of subject matter the *frescoe* artists had depicted.



Ile d'Or taken by Jean Powell

We are still keen to receive interesting and original Var-based photos for inclusion in our next Calendar. We have many architectural and scenic photos to choose from but we are currently short of the 'human factor'. If you have photographed any local festivities, artisans at work or people relaxing in the Var for example, please put them forward for consideration.

We next meet on **Wednesday 8 June** and again all BA members are very welcome to come along. For more details **please contact:**

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

Happy Boules

For further information and details of our next venue, **please contact:**

Rob Flanagan *****



Your key to the French Riviera

If you are looking to buy or sell a property in this beautiful part of France, please contact Pat Toohey in our Var office on 06 60 73 29 48 or pat@rivierakeys.com. We are always seeking new properties for our international clientèle and would be delighted to hear from you.

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Information Sheets

Members who are regular visitors to our website will have noticed that the section containing the "Information Sheets" has been empty apart from a note about being under review.

The Committee realised that it had a collection of 22 Information Sheets which went back to 2003. The range of topics was diverse and some of the members who had produced them were no longer available for consultation about changes to legislation or other source material which meant any advice contained was not current.

Looking at the options to rectify the obvious shortcomings it became clear that the BAV should not try to reinvent the wheel but provide Members and other website visitors with information about the links to sources which could provide the necessary assistance and information.

On our website at www.baofthevar.com and in the Newsletter we are providing details of three avenues to explore for assistance on more detailed topics. Initially, we recommend The Connexion, France's English language newspaper as one source. Their Help-Guides can be purchased at prices varying from 5€ to 11,50€ the highest price reflecting the complexity of the topic being dealt with. Their website link is on our website, or you can see their display panel in the monthly newspaper readily available at most newsagents at the beginning of each month.

An alternative source of information is the Angloinfo website and, again, our website has a link to it. It's information is free to all. The final link we have suggested is specific to death and burial in France and we provide a link to the Bereavement Support Network of the Var. They have three help-guides which can be downloaded for free as pdf files. Contact details for BSN can also be found on page 36 of the latest BAV Address Book.

If you experience difficulties locating a source of information on a topic then page 3 of the new Address Book lists the Committee contact details. Please contact one of us directly. We are certain that Members will appreciate we are all volunteers and some tasks are best left to the experts.

Mike Milner



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Finance Seminar

They say that all good things are worth waiting for and so it proved at the re-scheduled Kentington's seminar. About 40 BA Members and others gathered in early May for the Kensington's seminar which was held in their extremely spacious and airy offices in Villecroze.

Robert commenced the proceedings by illustrating that France continues to be a tax haven in all aspects of personal taxation and demonstrated how to fill in the various tax returns. This was followed by three further presentations covering investments and currency transfers. Perhaps their most challenging and at the same time, interesting talk, was by an economist with Collins Stewart, with some interesting conclusions and forecasts to the effect that gold is over-priced: inflation in the UK would drop to less than 3% early in 2012 after the effect of VAT dropped off and that the pound would then rise to 1.13.

There were interjections of numerous questions and a continuing interaction between the attendees and the speakers, demonstrating the amount of interest in the subject matter. This resulted in the seminar over-running considerably. A sumptuous buffet was provided.

Our thanks go to Robert and Christine Kent for putting on such an interesting seminar.

Rob Flanagan

Bereavement Support Network in the Var (BSN)

For help please contact Sandra
04 94 84 64 89 or Sue 06 48 46 93 21
email: info@bsnvar.org
website: www.bsnvar.org

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Book Sale & Coffee Morning

A beautiful sunny morning accompanied the first Coffee Morning and Book Sale hosted by Members Peter and Shirley Rowson. The event was well attended and the majority of those attending finally sat in the shade outside chatting and admiring the pool and surrounding gardens.



Somehow as the picture confirms, Shirley Wrigglesworth and Auriol Langen managed to find a couple of tree stumps to conduct their discussions on. The book sales generated 140€ and the coffee and donations jar contained 60€. A big **thank you** to our hosts for the venue.

Mike Milner

Coffee Morning and Book Sale at St Maximin

Thank you Diana and Michael for making us so very welcome to your lovely home for coffee and delicious cakes. Chairs and tables set out under umbrellas with colourful cloths and flowers, the pool sparkling in the background, the garden bright and pretty with the roses at their best, warm sun and blue sky.

This is life in the south of France at its best!

We were particularly delighted to welcome Simon Taylor, the British Consul from Marseille, who circulated.

A small raffle raised 24€ at 60 cents a ticket, the books were popular, a few cards, a small 'brocante' stall and many generous donations quickly added up to a grand total of over 350€.

Auriol Langen

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'Bring and Share' Lunch

Under a blue *provençal* sky a small group of BAV Members met to enjoy a Saturday lunch.



An early show of summer heat meant we could sit out and appreciate Terry and Jane's house in Tavernes. A good spread of food and some excellent wine completed the afternoon.

Thank you to them for providing an event on this side of the Var.

Tricia Steel

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08 20 20 02 57 aa-riviera.org

Neighbourhood Network

La Motte and Le Muy

Meeting details - second Tuesday of every month at 10h until noon for coffee at the Bar des Cascades in La Motte. This is located in the centre of La Motte across from the Mairie. Please let me know if you are planning to attend. Thank you.

Alexandra Lewis-Smith *****
*****@bbox.fr

Les Arcs:

Contact:

Jim or Pauline North, *****
*****@wanadoo.fr

Meeting details – please get in touch with Jim.

Les Issambres:

Contact:

Joan or Brian Taylor, *****
*****@aol.com

Meeting details – every other Tuesday 11h at L'Arpillon café next to the Casino on the main road.

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.

Grimaud Village Church

1st Thursday of each month at 11h00
Ecumenical Service

Please ring 04 94 95 45 78 for details
www.sjvar.com

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MONTAUROUX CGA Prasada 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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L' Oasis Fellowship, Lorgues every 2nd Sunday at 11h15

Arc-en Provence 1801 Chemin des Pailles
Bring and Share Lunch

and every 4th Sunday at 11h15

Notre Dame des Anges - Bring your own Picnic
For details and directions contact
Rev Peter or Shirley Massey at
04 94 73 93 37 06 87 94 04 83
www.arc-en-provence.com/oasis

For next month's Newsletter

Please let us have your Advertisements, Articles and Reports by **Monday 20 June**. All contributions to newsletter@baofthevar.com or send to Mike Milner, Publicity, *****
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***** *****@wanadoo.fr

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Maureen Davies *****

FOR SALE: The contents of a two bed roomed apartment, plus other household items. Many Boys Toys including a convertible car, an Opel Twin Top. For a list of items **please email** *****@aol.co.uk to view items, by arrangement, for collection after 18 June. All items fairly priced as all must go.
Joan Taylor ***** Mob: *****

FOR SALE: One Punch Bowl with 12 cups, plus 12 extra cups. Buyer's payment will be donated to BAV Welfare Fund. **Contact:**
Ruby Stamp *****

FOR SALE: Canon Laser Shot Printer LBP-1120 black and white. 25€. Please get in touch for more details. **Contact:** *Ian Powell*
***** *****@aol.co.uk