



To benefit the Village Dans l'intérêt du Village

November 2011

2011

A quiet season

President's word

The season was long, hot (very) and sunny... but once again the absence of the British was very noticeable.

We had Canadians, Americans, even two Brits from Bali and lots from New Zealand. But comparatively few from the UK or Ireland.

We did, however, check up our 30th country from which we have had visitors - Bali, of course.

Things have also been quiet on the house market. There are many houses - of all types - to choose from, but only a very few have actually sold.

Our Estate Agent tells us that many people, both French and English speakers, have enquired not many have actually bought.

Apparently they have been upping their demands from their original thoughts as they found that the market was quiet - but sellers have to get a reasonable price and it seems that most buyers don't appreciate that.

One potential buyer for our village house offered 10K below our asking price AND wanted us to pay the legal fees for the transfer (some 8K). Obviously we couldn't afford that deal but it just shows how unrealistic some buyers have been.

The village is undergoing the final tranche of renovation, as is reported elsewhere.

An interesting thing, though, is that even the Deputy Mayor doesn't know what the end result will be. She is just as much in the dark as the rest of us.

Secretive, these French bureaucrats!

Patricia

Presentation



The Secours Catholique is a national charity with local branches within regions. It exists to help the less-well-off with financial assistance.

We are supporting Secours Catholique because that way we can be sure that donations from our visitors do remain in the village.

This year we established a new record being able to donate 750€. Up from our usual 500€.

Our funding comes, as you know, mainly from donations from visitors.

With the new Visitors' Centre last year we incurred some costs, but this year virtually everything was in place and so we made a larger surplus.

In the Centre we have internet access that paid for itself, about 500 books for

exchange or sale, a range of tourist literature and guides and we sell our own book *Marseillan, Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow* and a guide to Marseillan that contains all events as well as advice on pronunciation, and translations to help in the shops and restaurants.

Then there are, of course those who take our walking tours.

This year our overall figures were:

Visitors:	1,009
Tours:	28
Walkers:	241
Sponsors:	19

Our sponsors are important to us for two reasons. Firstly because their continued support confirms their support of our activities. Secondly because their contribution covers all our basic costs.

The Third Tranche

The centre of the village is again in turmoil with the commencement of the third (and last) part of the works.

At the moment work is confined to the crossroads where the traffic lights were. Yes, were. It looks as though a huge roundabout is planned but as Patricia has said even the Deputy Mayor doesn't know what is planned.

Most people are really puzzled because a roundabout would have to be enormous to allow the big lorries - with trailers - to negotiate it.

In the meantime we have only a single carriageway in Boulevard Lamartine with alternate traffic movement.

On Market Days there is no traffic at all until after 13.00!

So the diversions are horrendous.

The remainder of the centre to the west of the church square also has to have a facelift - when that will begin we again haven't been told. Nor do we have a completion date. The traders are not pleased. They have put up a huge sign at the village entrance 'Business as usual'.

The Mayor's Bridge

The new bridge has been open since September, but only on temporary road surface. The cycle track is still loose stones and the manhole covers stand 15cm proud. Obviously waiting for the tarmac.

The old bridge has been demolished - shame - but in fairness the new bridge is not the monstrosity projected in the plans we were shown by the then mayor, Williams Meric.

There is still much work to do, however. The approach roads need considerable work and then there is the tow path to completely rebuild.

As has been previously reported the routes to the Plage are now restricted both by speed and carriageway.

It is incredible how in the course of a few months our driving freedom has been curtailed. Now for much of the roads to, in and around the Plage it is single carriageway and the traffic moves at the speed of the slowest.

Regional Developments

The Region has announced its plans for the next five years as part of its long-term budget to meet the expected increase in Languedoc Roussillon's population.

Some 750,000 are expected to come to the region in the next 20 years - and most of these will be elderly. (As previously reported the region may become the FloriDoc of France - i.e. akin to Florida with its large retirement community.)

The Hérault is expected to attract the most incomers with a year-on-year growth of 1.6%.

Current initiatives include:

A TGV line extension from Nimes to Perpignan.

A massive drainage project to prevent the regular flooding.

Laying fibre optic networks to make broadband available across the region.

Creation of Enterprise Villages to focus regional activities.

Reforming and revitalising the whole coastline.

Doubling the research budget to favour the most competitive enterprises - especially those in hi-tech.

Provision of laptops to all Lycée pupils.

Driving instruction for all apprentices.

A 1€ fare on regional buses.

Help for seniors to prolong their active life. Suitable enterprises will be created.

Provision of social housing.

The Number One Priority is to develop the region's economy.

In brief

Green stamps

A new green stamp has been introduced. Priced at 57 cents it will take two days for delivery and not use airmail.

The red, first class, stamp (60 cents) continues with next day delivery

A9

The A9 where it passes Montpellier is to have an additional 3 lanes because the present arrangement is an accident black spot.

Wine

This has been a bumper year, quality is excellent and production in Languedoc-Roussillon is forecast to rise by 21%.

Airport Beziers Cap d'Agde

Manchester flights are due to start in March 2012.

This year passenger numbers have leapt to 135,000.

Garages must make your car work...

...is the decision of the Court of Appeal. Now a garage that agrees to repair your car must produce a 'result'.

Make life simpler

Log in to www.ensemble-simplifions.fr to vote on suggestions for improvement. or submit your own. The aim is to have a list of 100 simplifications by the end of the year.

Speeding penalty proposals

Breaking speed limits by small amounts may soon be less heavily penalised.

The proposal is that those who exceed the limit by less than 10km should face a fine of 135€ and also not lose a point.

Drink-drivers would lose eight points instead of today's 6 six.

Canal du Midi trees

Due to contamination by fungus thousands of trees that line the Canal du Midi are to be replaced. Some 2,000 have already been felled.

There are 42,000 trees lining the banks of the canal and all are at risk.

Replanting has started in the Aude towns of Villedubert and Trèbes.

Guide to Marseillan & Languedoc

A 'Lazy guide to Marseillan' is now available. 17€. More next time.

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