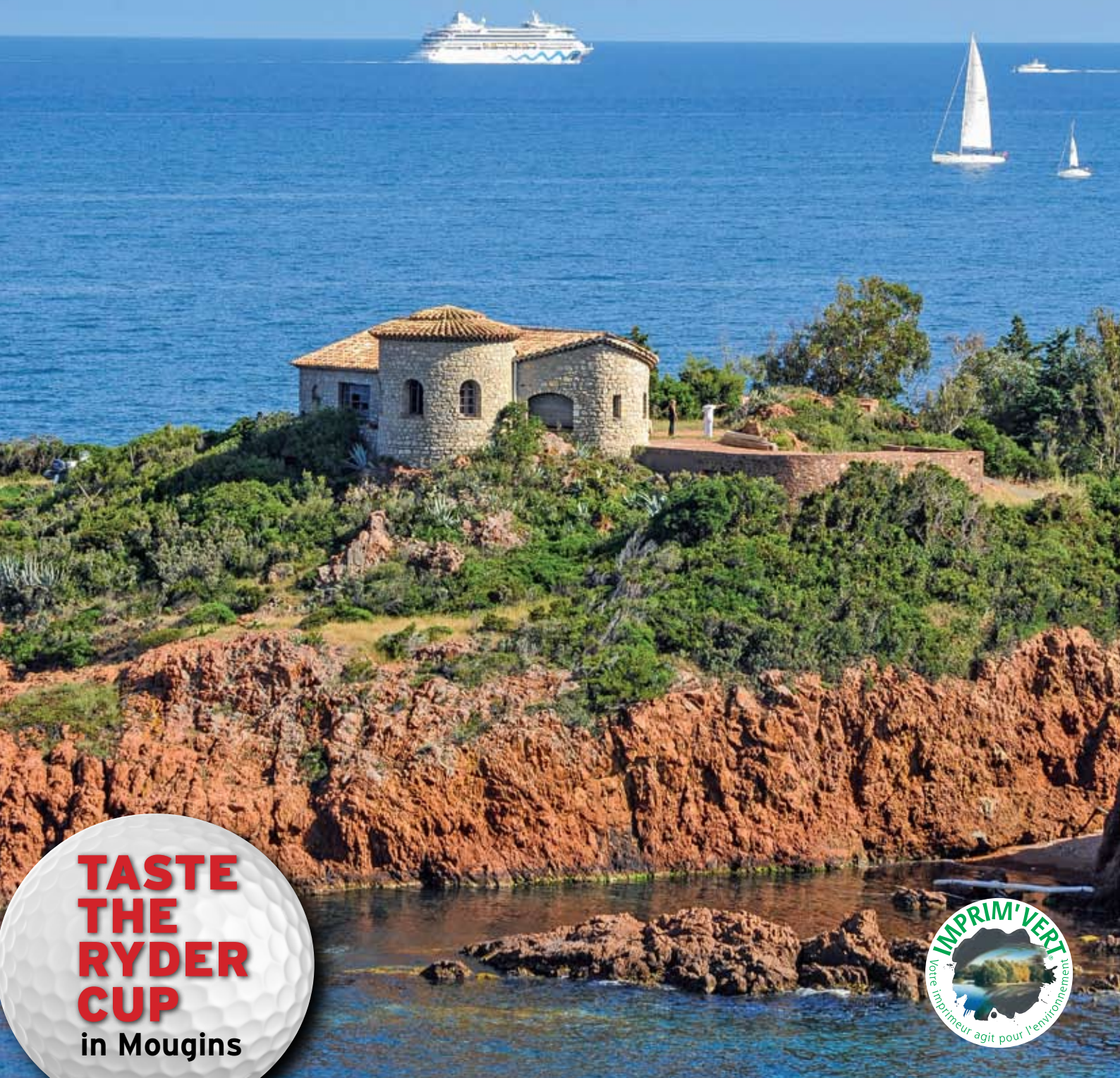


THE RIVIERA REPORTER

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No 157 June/July 2013



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inside: it's summer!

Meadia

THANKS to readers for your many comments on our new look. Most were positive and some of you made further suggestions that we've incorporated into this issue. This magazine is free and financed entirely by our advertisers without which you wouldn't be reading this.

Changing the design and bringing in some fresh content has expanded our readership and attracted new advertisers. The *Reporter* is a business, not a charity, and the layout launched last time saw our most commercially successful issue ever and therefore more sustainable as a free publication. With increased advertising interests, we welcome collaboration with independent English-speaking sales reps. If you are legally self-employed or a declared *agent commercial* in France and are willing to work on a commission-only basis send us an email and let's see if we can work together.

This is the second appearance of our innovative new golf supplement. Maybe it's because I am not a golfer (yet) that I had underestimated just how many British, Dutch and Scandinavian residents play at our 22 local courses, two-thirds of which now distribute the *Reporter*.

If you're not a golfer there is still plenty for you in the magazine. In this issue learn about changes to British television channels, how to get summer fit, earn your boating permit, avoid jellyfish, choose a summer rosé and look after your dog in the heat. On page 24 meet Swedish author and Inspector Wallander creator Henning Mankell (who'll be signing his new book at Heidi's Bookshop in Antibes June 12th, 14h30).

Our website has a particularly interesting addition: Margo's "Rambling Around the Riviera" blog. Discover her illustrated local anecdotes told with imagination and humour by clicking on Blogs at the top of our home page. *Mike Meade*

Cover Photo: Le Trayas © Riviera Reporter

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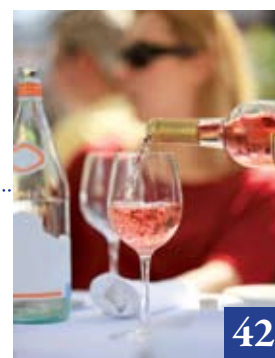
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RIVIERA GOLFER SEE CENTRE PAGES

riviera reportage



Photo: Slip Français

GIVING HIM THE SLIP

Le Slip français, a brand 100% made in France, has come up with a novelty for men: "underwear that smells good" they call *Indomptable* (invincible).

"The brief that smells good is a technological revolution!" enthuses

creator Guillaume Gibault. "We use a micro-encapsulated fragrance directly integrated in the cotton fibre. The scent is then released gradually over 30 washes when the underwear is in motion. This is a specially-developed scent with hints of musk and pear, with a side of both summertime and masculinity."

Le Slip français, which launched in September 2011, has sold 20,000

\$1 million
Value of Chopard jewellery stolen the second night of the Cannes Film Festival. The safe, containing the Red Carpet Collection 2013 to loan to celebs, was unscrewed from the wall of a second floor hotel room on Blvd Carnot. Where's John Robie when you need him?

pairs of underwear all named after French Navy submarines: for example, *Triomphant* (black) and *Intrépide* (blue).

"We see 90% of our sales online," says Guillaume. "These are all 100% French products: the elastic comes from Normandy, the cotton is knitted in the Lille area ... everything is assembled in the workshops in the Dordogne."

See leslipfrançais.fr

le FLASH

BOTTOMS UP

FRANCE is no stranger to strikes. Take La Poste: over the past five years, postal workers have had 214 days of *la grève*. Now Marseille bus drivers will stage a 24-hour walkout in June, but not over pay cuts or the retirement age. The 1600 RTM employees are protesting over "close-fitting trousers". The new uniforms have changed from yellow to lavender tops with Gendarme blue trousers, but what really has the union leaders up in arms is the "close fitting" slacks. CGT head Bernard Gargiolo commented: "We reject the bottom half of this new uniform."

Suddenly, topless doesn't seem so bad.

41%

**French backing for the EU,
down from 60% a year ago.**

Source: Pew Research Centre

BACK TO SCHOOL

IF you still believe speaking English loudly to the waiter at the café compensates for your lack of French, you might want to contact the University of Beausoleil. They are once again offering *Cours intensifs de Français Langue Etrangère* this summer. Evening sessions are 90 minutes Monday to Thursday from June 3rd-27th (€150), July 1st-25th (€150) and Aug 5th-24th (€90). For more call 04 93 41 90 92 or see universite-beausoleil.com/stages/fle.html

SIMPLY THE BEST

MENTON'S Mirazur made the World's 50 Best Restaurants list. Voted by 900 chefs, food critics and gourmets for the UK's *Restaurants* magazine, the two star Michelin eatery, situated next to one of France's oldest avocado trees, came in at 28th place. See mirazur.fr



TWO GLASSES OF BUBBLY A WEEK COULD IMPROVE MEMORY

HERE'S something you won't forget. A recent University of Reading study lead

by Professor Jeremy Spencer claims that phenolics found in champagne could slow down the onset of dementia and other degenerative brain disorders.

"These exciting results illustrate for the first time that the moderate consumption of champagne has the potential to influence cognitive functioning, such as memory," says Jeremy.

Rats were given champagne daily for six weeks. "The results were dramatic. After rats consumed champagne regularly, there was a 200 per cent increase of proteins important for determining effective memory," Jeremy claims. "We will be looking to translate these findings into humans."

Any volunteers?

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FRANCE

BEEES ON THEIR KNEES

MOST of the estimated 4 billion insect and animal species that have ever lived became extinct, and now bee "colony collapse disorder" is the big concern. Over-use of insecticides is the principle reason that the world's bee population is dwindling, spelling disaster for our food supply as these free-flying non-unionised workers are vital for pollinating our essential crops. The colony collapse is already heralding crop failures across America where the bee population dropped by almost a third over last winter alone.

The thirty professional beekeepers of

the Alpes-Maritimes are fighting this tendency with their 6000 hives, most of them in mountainous areas, and helped by a €100,000 aid package from the *Conseil Général*. Professionals keep bees for the excellent Provençal honey, enhanced in flavour by an abundance of wild herbs and lavender. At the same time, the bees pollinate various plants along the way back to the hive. One local measure that has improved bee production is putting off the roadside trimming of foliage until later in the season to give bees more of the environment they thrive in.

It's not all bad news. A recent UN study claims we are not yet tapping into an easily available and almost limitless source of nutritive food – the some 1000 edible species of insects. Caterpillars are as rich in iron and protein as their equivalent weight in beef. Insects don't disrupt the ozone layer with flatulence like cattle do. And grasshoppers are delicious when lightly roasted and sprinkled with chili sauce. They'd would go down well with a nice Provençal rosé. *Santé!*

The Var on the black

IT'S a risky business for scores of reasons but a struggling economy has meant an upsurge in *travail au noir* – working on the black. The Var has been especially affected as many unemployed at the end of their dole or those on particularly low salaries take on odd jobs (*petits boulots*) to bring in extra cash. As well as a growing number of moonlighters, there are hotels, restaurants and cafés that do not declare all of their staff, and even estate agents aren't immune to the practice in the Var.

The dangers for consumers are real. Not only do undeclared odd-jobbers mean that there is no legal protection against shoddy workmanship, but an accident can bring on unexpected – and disastrous – consequences. We know of a couple who were financially ruined when ➤



their undeclared gardener cut off his thumb with a chainsaw. Another family found they were uninsured because the fire that ravaged their villa was started in the kitchen by an undeclared cook. One British resident lost a valuable Picasso to water damage caused by an undeclared (and uninsured) worker who had incompetently repaired his roof. He is still trying to find the culprit "so I can hang his testicles where my Picasso used to be".

In sectors such as domestic services "black" workers constitute as much as 45% and 31% of families admit they are ready to take on an undeclared nanny or cleaner if their purchasing power continues to diminish. Many schoolteachers don't mind taking on undeclared private lessons to round off their incomes either.

Manuel Falaschi, URSSAF director for the Var, says his inspectors are especially concentrating on two types of payroll tax fraud: undeclared activity by overseas companies and abuse of the Auto-Entrepreneur system. Undeclared workers – and those who employ them – can face back taxes, a €45,000 fine and up to 3 years in prison. One property rental agency in Nice with an office overseas, mentioned in our pages a few years ago, recently found out that this is no idle threat.

The Flying Eye next door

WE know that they're used by intelligence agencies and the military but what's

with that aerial drone buzzing over the neighbour's garden? It could be the kid next door playing with his latest expensive toy but if the unmanned flying machine looks rather too large and expensive for that, chances are it's working for the Antibes-based "Flying Eye". The company has been importing, building, modifying and operating radio-controlled drones since 2009 but only recently started using them to film upmarket properties for sale on the Côte d'Azur. Brothers and Skema Business School graduates Alexandre and Grégoire Thomas operate a fleet of almost 100 drones which are mainly used for industrial, television or cinema production purposes. Now private sellers and estate agents can have their properties professionally filmed by one of the devices. Featured on the BBC and France2 television, Flying Eye will also handle the production of a promotional film aimed at selling a property. Alexandre claims that an Iranian buyer recently purchased a villa in Cannes Californie based solely on the drone footage and without visiting it first.

If you'd like an aerial look at the Royal Mougins Golf Resort (see page 26), see the drone-assisted video on Flying Eye website. Click on Portfolio at flyingeye.fr

Blowin' in the wind

THAT would be a *Legion d'Honneur* for American protest musician Bob Dylan. Culture Minister Aurélie Filippetti would like to pin France's highest civilian decoration onto one of her favourite celebrities but General Georgelin, head of the Legion's governing committee, doesn't see things quite that way. Dylan's pot-smoking history as a Vietnam War protester (the French were unceremoniously defeated before the Americans took a try) makes him an unsuitable candidate for the prestigious gong.

Right-wing FN leader Marine Le Pen has lent her moral support to the General and said that the Legion of Honour is meant to recognise figures who have extraordinarily contributed to French national interests in fields such

GONE PHISHIN'. Phishing (*hameçonnage* in French) is a hacking technique we have all faced in our Inbox. When opened, these fake emails redirect you to a fraudulent website with the goal of getting your personal data. If you think you've been a victim, La clinique informatique in Nice (lacliniqueinformatique.com) offers a few suggestions:

- to file a complaint, see pre-plainte-en-ligne.gouv.fr
- Info Escroqueries (Info Scams) 0 811 02 02 17, cost of a local call
- to report an email or website scam, see internet-signalement.gouv.fr



Flying Eye, set up by brothers who are both SKEMA Business School graduates, operate a fleet of nearly 100 drones used mainly for industrial, television or cinema production. Estate agents and private sellers are a growing clientele for this Antibes-based company.

Photo: Flying Eye



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Photos non contractuelles, G. Martinez.

as science and culture. "I like Dylan's music, but this distinction is a step too far," she reminded the nation on public television. Apparently Filippetti wasn't tuned in to that broadcast. She's pressing ahead with the nomination anyway.

Two nations of shopkeepers

EMPEROR Napoleon I famously described the UK as "a nation of shopkeepers". At the time this meant a higher tax base than France, allowing England to finance the Napoleonic Wars more sustainably. These days, despite the death of the great British high street (see elsewhere this issue) the small retail sector continues to survive in France, albeit not without difficulty. Supported by a series of legal measures (some of them initiated by Napoleon himself) many small shops still get by on the French high street. One such protective measure has been the prohibition of *vente à perte* – selling retail goods at below cost price. Except during authorised sales, this practice is expressly forbidden as part of successive government measures to offer small businesses some protection from predatory dumping by large retail chains, which in Britain has seen 98% of the trade sector going to only nine stores. To some extent, the French exception keeps the large/small retail balance in check – for now.

France is the only European country with such a law and Brussels' Eurocrats are getting rather testy about it. With their typical obsession for harmonisation at any cost, the European Court of Justice is seek-

ing to force France to implement a 2005 EU directive that theoretically permits any retailer to sell a product at a loss, including outside of sale periods. Small French shopkeepers see this as a final nail in their coffins as the big retail chains could easily price the *commerces de proximité* out of business. Inevitably, many independent city centre shops will be forced to close with foreseeable repercussions on community well-being and shoppers' choices.

Consumer Affairs Minister Benoît Hamon admits that Brussels might win this particular battle. In defeat he still wants to limit the number of products that a retailer can sell at a loss. Is this likely to appease the Eurocrats? Don't bet the survival of your local butcher on it.

Between the lines

IT doesn't quite have the reach of eBay or Craigslist but *leboncoin.fr* is by far France's leading classified website with 16 million monthly visitors, and almost 18 million ads in dozens of categories. As with all such sites, buyers especially should proceed with some caution; cons, scams and dodgy offers can sometimes find their way online. Most ads are legitimate but some are there only to entrap unwary surfers – such as invitations to dial a number that turns out to be a premium rate call, or to send money to an unverifiable address.

Practical jokers also find joy in "the good corner" and it's not always easy to separate the lampoons from the legitimate. Take a few (freely translated) examples: a parachute which has "never opened" with

only one previous owner ("deceased"); a porcelain lamp which could potentially be suitable as a dildo; a pair of dentures "only used for 17 meals"; a tombstone in excellent condition which has had "very little use"; a never worn wedding dress because "he ran away with a man"; an "almost digital" camera; a condom "used only once"; and a machine for bending bananas. Who said the French don't have a sense of humour? ■

Vive en France!

AN extensive survey of expatriates in France carried out in the early part of 2013 has smashed the myth of the foreign resident in France as being of a certain age with time and money on his or her hands.



- 47% of survey respondents were either employed or owned their own business and, although 36% are retired, 54% are between 29-59.
- 46% have been living in the same French region for more than five years.
- 53% of expats said language was the biggest challenge they faced when moving abroad, followed by missing friends and family (26%).
- 69% of respondents said that the most positive aspect of their move had been the quality of life, then learning about another culture (42%), becoming part of a new community (40%) and learning a new language (36%).

QUITTING THE EU COULD SPELL EXPAT DISASTER

UKIP leader Nigel Farage, a former commodities trader, is not prepared to wait four years for an EU referendum.



Photo: Euro Realist Newsletter



BY most accounts Nigel Farage's anti-European UK Independence Party will be an influential player, maybe even a new coalition partner for a Conservative Party without David Cameron, after the next general election. Farage, very much the man of the moment in British politics, has refused outright any close collaboration with the Conservatives as long as Cameron holds the reins. His natural Tory ally would be Boris Johnson, a Eurosceptic who, for all his boyish charm and popular appeal, has yet to prove his suitability for high office.

The PM wants to try negotiating Britain's EU membership conditions before putting an in-or-out question to the country but many Tory backbenchers and UKIP clearly want out – or at least a pre-election referendum. And current popular opinion indicates the public would likely vote to quit the EU.

An EU withdrawal for British expats here could be severe. France is likely to take a vindictive attitude so life for *les rosibif* residents would be more of a hassle.

In practical terms, look back at the first issues of this magazine. At that time, Britons needed a *Titre de séjour* and queued for hours (or even days) at the Prefecture alongside an undisciplined mob of North African immigrants seeking papers. British

driving licences were not recognised for residents so Britons had to switch to a French licence within a year or take the French test. Professional qualifications were not mutually recognised so many professions were off limits and a working permit was not as easily granted.

More importantly, the French *Sécu* would not automatically cover either British visitors to France under the EHIC system or British retirees under EU agreements on mutual healthcare benefits. The principle *Riviera Reporter* advertisers of 25 years ago were healthcare insurers offering obligatory cover to expats who could only live here if they could prove they were solvent and had private comprehensive health insurance. Try getting that for an affordable price if you're over 65 and British.

What would happen to expats if Britain were to leave the EU but keep some economic and a few other ties? This half-in half-out solution is what Switzerland and Norway have now. Unless they are working legally in France, resident Swiss and Norwegian citizens need private medical insurance. Their driving licences are not valid in France and they must regularly queue for that tentative *Titre de séjour* at the Prefecture along with other non-Europeans.

Do you still hope Britain leaves the EU?

The lowdown on the high street

THE British high street is changing forever. Faced with ruthless competition from online sales, the big five supermarkets, chain stores and a multitude of tax-favoured charity shops, scores of retailers can no longer survive. Last year 7300 small shops were forced to close down; towns have been left without a single fruit and veg shop, butcher or independent baker. Especially visible are premises boarded up: one in six high street shop lies empty and over 7 million square feet of retail premises needs renters. Today's high street resembles a strip mall of betting shops, discounters, pawnbrokers, payday lenders, WHSmith, Boots, Greggs, Poundland and Costa Café.

There's a social cost to this. The butcher or baker was more than a place to buy meat or bread; it was a place for many, the elderly especially, to chat about the weather or the next village event. If Mrs Jones didn't come by for her sausages for a few days, someone would go by to be sure she was all right. There's no community service like this at Tesco or Waitrose. Cases of pensioners discovered ill or dying alone in their homes have been increasing in direct proportion to the closure of local businesses.

As Cary Cooper, a psychologist at Lancaster University told the BBC: "Seeing empty shops, seeing the kinds of shops that are now on the high street, doesn't encourage communities or families."

Freehold publicans are ever more rare as big breweries buy up the properties and impose their own brands at their own price on struggling leasehold landlords. Across the UK every week an average of 26 small pubs close their doors permanently as these traditional hubs of English village life are converted to private homes or Asian restaurants.

The soul of Britain is shutting down. It's one thing to read about it while sipping your cappuccino, it's another to see it first hand.

Can't we just do like the French?

SOME right-wing Frenchmen opine that radical Islamists will eventually take over France through the pregnant bellies of Muslim women. It's far more likely that the UK would be conquered first, if that were true. A more racially and religiously diverse nation than France, Britain is already well into an upturn in British-born Muslims. The last ONS census indicated that Islam is the nation's third religious belief after Christianity and "None", but it is also the fastest growing faith in Britain. Already, over half of Londoners define themselves as non-white or non-Christian and often both.

Whether they are immigrants or British born, most Muslims stay on for a comfortable life in one of Europe's most tolerant nations. They usually work and study harder than the more slothful indigenous young Britons and they tend to integrate well. Inevitably, however, there is also an extremist fringe who find Britain too unacceptable to adapt to, but too generous to leave. Abu Qatada, who has

breached bail conditions of a previous conviction for immigration law, is one of these.

For the past eight years successive British governments have tried to deport this preacher of hate. Abu Qatada has mounted a successful legal challenge against every threat of extradition to Jordan where he has been sentenced to life imprisonment on terrorism convictions. The right-wing British press wrongly lays the blame at the door of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and its legislation against deportation to a country suspected of using torture to extract evidence. France and other European countries have no such qualms about ridding themselves of radical foreign elements without contravening the ECHR.

The reason is simple. EU law does not keep advocates of terror like Abu Qatada in Britain but rather British law, under which free speech, however hateful, is well protected and under which a foreign suspect can remain in the country while his immigration appeal process is ongoing. French law has no such provision, so convicted hate crime and immigration abusers are often ousted upon their initial conviction – at times directly from the courtroom to the airport in a police van.

Home Secretary Theresa May would like to do the same but Britain's Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SAIC) isn't having it. May and her team are now drafting new deportation legislation that even Labour benches are likely to support. In March she also signed a fair trial guarantee treaty with Jordan and now, finally, Abu Qatada has agreed to voluntary deportation if the treaty is ratified.

Some speculate that this is yet another of his legal ploys but isn't this a clear case when it would be easier to do things the French way? ■

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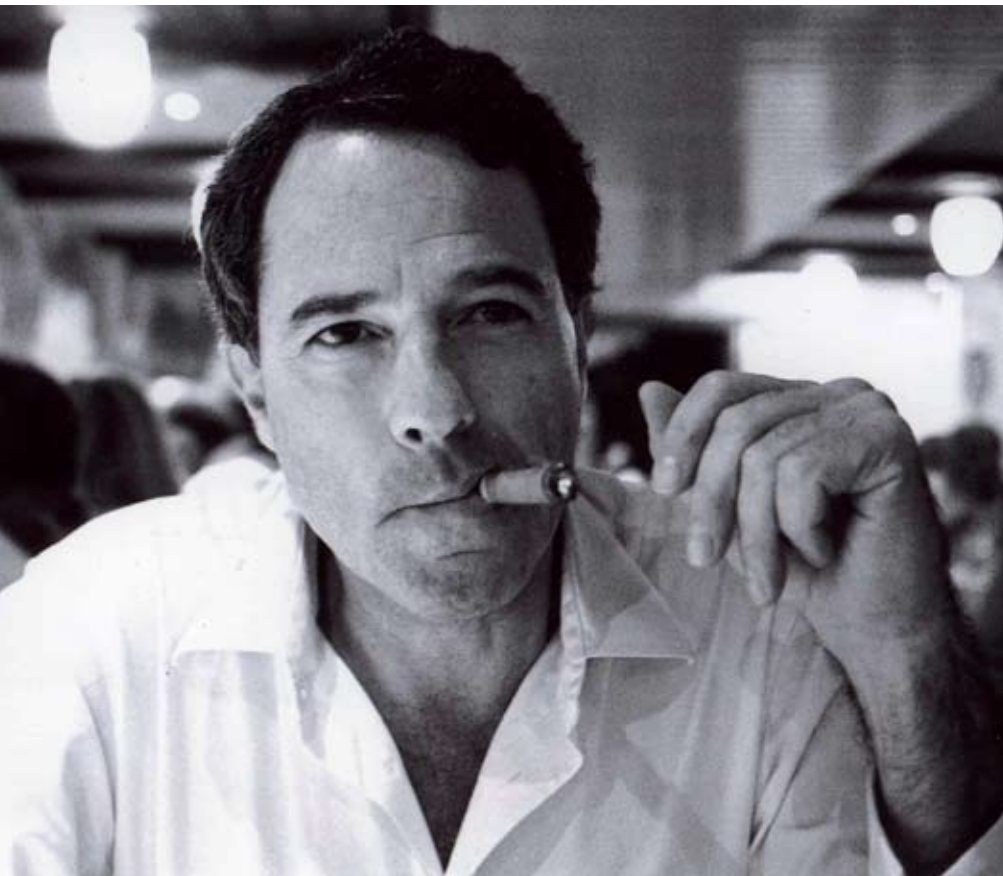
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EVERY MAN HAS TWO COUNTRIES

... or three if you're Charles Glass

By PJ Heslin



CHARLES Glass has had a career that reads like a movie script – war correspondent, interviewing hijackers and being kidnapped. These days the 62-year-old spends his time writing between France, Italy and Lebanon.

Born in Los Angeles, Glass had his first taste of expat life as a graduate student at the American University of Beirut in 1972. While studying philosophy, he did some work at the ABC news bureau alongside Peter Jennings; the two became close friends. The following year he became a full-time journalist working in the Middle East and from 1983 to 1993, the decade that saw the birth of Hezbollah and the Lebanese Civil War, Glass was ABC's Chief Middle East Correspondent.

We discuss how journalism has

changed since his start. Gone are the days of embedded journalism where news services would hire reporters, experts in the field, who could provide continuous analysis of a changing situation.

"With the exception of *The New York Times* and the BBC," Glass says, "most of the newspapers and television networks have reduced their staff overseas to save money, which means nowhere will be covered by the reporters who used to develop regional expertise. It probably helps to keep the American public ignorant about conditions in other countries and permit American companies and agents to act without public scrutiny."

Covering the 1985 hijacking of TWA flight 187 was one of his biggest stories. He broke the news that the hostages

were hidden in the surrounding suburbs which led to the Reagan administration calling off a rescue attempt.

A year later, while en route to Beirut with the son of the Lebanese defense minister Ali Bey Osseiran, two unmarked vehicles pulled in front and behind their car. As there had been several kidnappings in the region, Glass was not unaware of what was in store. He tried to make a run for it but received a blow to the head with a rifle butt. "I had my press card stating that I was American and I knew that wasn't good."

Kidnapped by Iranian-backed Shi'ite terrorists, he spent 62 days in captivity, hoping that as he was not with the CIA or the army his life would be spared.

Glass was moved to different locations and was only able to make his escape thanks to some slipshod kidnappers in the last apartment who did not secure a window. He made his way down to the street in the middle of the night and posing as a Canadian tourist in need of a doctor for his baby, found a motorist to drive him back to his hotel.

Despite the abduction, Glass stayed on to report in the Middle East, and his experiences have led to countless articles and four books.

I ask if he foresees any fundamental change in the area. "The Middle East suffers from the settlement at the end of the First World War, which drew borders than no one wanted across what had been the Arab portions of the Ottoman Empire. The area never had a chance."

Over the past few years, Glass has also written two books (both with HarperPress) about the Second World War: in 2010, *Americans in Paris: Life and Death Under Nazi Occupation 1940-44* and his latest release, *Deserter: The Last Untold Story of the Second World War*, an account of British and American servicemen who went AWOL.

He explains that the idea for *Americans*



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in Paris sprang up after seeing various war memorials in Paris and wondering how he would have reacted to the German occupation. "We'd all like to think we would've acted heroically but the reality is very different."

"Americans in Paris originated with a love of Paris more than an interest in the Second World War. There had been books on Americans who came to Paris in the 1920s and immediately after the war, but no one had looked into the subject of the 5000 Americans who remained in Paris during the German occupation. They had extraordinary experiences."

One of the most compelling stories is that of the Director of the American Hospital in Paris, Sumner Jackson, who, along with his wife and 15-year-old son, was an instrumental part of the Resistance hiding soldiers in the hospital and helping get them back to Britain. The SS arrested the entire family and placed them in a camp. His wife and son survived, but Dr Jackson died just five days before the end of the war.

Deserter came about when a French friend asked Glass whether many American and British soldiers deserted during the war. He discovered that about 150,000 American and British troops had indeed done so, and since no one had written about it – and the subject was somewhat taboo – Glass found the topic too appealing to pass over.

Curious, I wonder if he uncovered a pattern for

desertion in World War II. "There were as many reasons for deserting as there were deserters. Countless left because they had nervous breakdowns and could not take combat any longer, while others were disgusted with the military or their officers. Some were criminals, who saw an opportunity to make money on the black market."

According to Glass, many of the deserters were in the infantry and didn't think it was fair that they were in the thick of the action while ninety percent of the other troops never saw battle.

As for his next project, Glass is working on a book that deals with the Special Operations Executive (SOE), a top-secret branch of the British military that worked behind enemy lines in countries that the Axis powers had invaded.

Although Glass still travels to Lebanon for work, he has a house in the Bouches-du-Rhône because, as he says, "It's a good place to write as well as being tranquil and beautiful." He enjoys living in France for two reasons: the food and the "strangely efficient" French. While he believes that Italy is a mess and that the infrastructure of London is crumbling, he finds the infrastructure of Paris magnificent and feels that despite the crisis, "things still work in France". ■

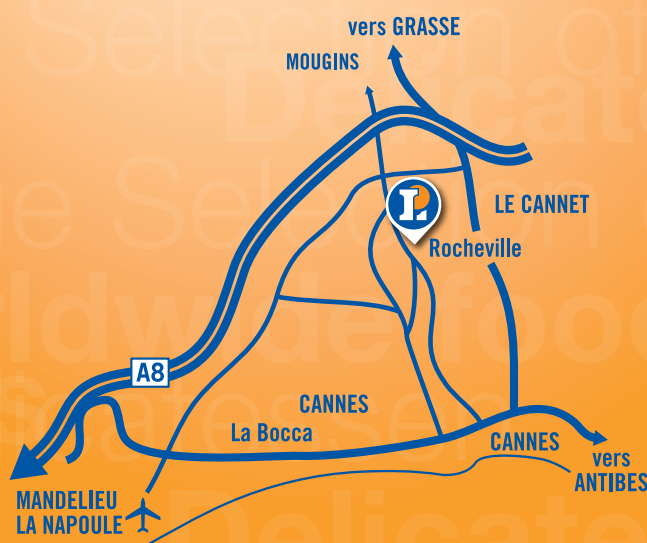
Deserter: The Last Untold Story of the Second World War is now available, and in Kindle Edition. For more on Charles Glass, see charlesglass.net



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Monaco Murmurs: INVEST IN SOMETHING YOU CAN ENJOY

By Molly Brown



Photo: David Shankbone

Elton John will perform as part of the Monte Carlo Sporting Summer Festival at the Sporting d'Été on July 24th.

THE idea of a government closing banks and taking a percentage of their clients' savings rang alarm bells around Europe, even in the Principality, where we are assured the banks are well financed and secure. Lumpy mattresses are uncomfortable and the stock market volatile, so where to put one's hard-earned savings? Why not invest in something you can enjoy ... a gleaming white yacht or the car of your dreams ... and Monaco is just the place to find them. Port Hercule will be awash with luxury yachts in September; and where else to find a sleek Italian-designed sports car, doors opening like an eagle's wings, in the coolest palest blue ... or a trendy racer in black with real gold stripes but at a Monaco car show. Bonhams' car auction, held in the Prince Rainier car museum during Grand Prix week, is a mecca for car lovers and collectors. We know diamonds are forever and man-sized watches are in vogue but for a high flier, why not a penthouse with an infinity pool? Tall buildings are the rage in the Principality ... the Odeon Tower is the tallest building on the Cote d'Azur ... and the property sector was up 31% last year, while the economy grew just 6.6%! Although the hotel and restaurant sector was up by 4.5%, the Italian economy is in dire straits and the decline in numbers of Monaco's most enthusiastic visitors to the Casino brought a downturn in the gaming sector. SBM are looking for ways to attract new clients from Asia, but Macau is tough competition and their employees fear that a construction site next to the Casino will hardly add to its allure, particularly at this time.

MORE LAND, MORE BUILDINGS, MORE MONEY

However, times are changing and a 5-hectare land extension between Grimaldi Forum and the Auditorium Rainier III has now been officially approved. If the SBM project were to be delayed and the timing was right, the rock, marble and cement from the Sporting d'Hiver "modernisation" project could be transported down the hill and tipped on to the beach, as a contribution to its foundations. Not a happy ending ... but fortunately, the work of some architects is recognised and preserved. The iconic E-1027 building in Roquebrune, over the border in France, also built in the mid 1920s, is undergoing restoration and friends of the building plan to make a film on the life and work of the Irish architect, Eileen Gray, who conceived and constructed this avant garde villa for fellow architect, Jean Badovici, to raise funds.

71ST MONACO GRAND PRIX

Meanwhile, the centre of town is in lockdown, surrounded by fences for the main event of the year, the unique, original Grand Prix. Except for K grandstands, tickets were sold out at Easter and the world's sports media have cameras everywhere. The circuit has been re-surfaced from the starting line to Place du Casino and the best way in and out of the Principality is by train, bus or helicopter. The Grand Prix this year is all about tyres. Pirelli were asked to spice it up with super soft tyres, but they will only last a few laps, so there will be many pit stops. McLaren hold the record for the fastest pit stop, changing all four tyres in 2.31 seconds. Unbelievable! Does Hamilton have a chance with Mercedes or will Vettel win through? Italian flags are flying; Alonso and Ferrari will be difficult to beat.

This is a special year, for SBM is celebrating its 150th anniversary in grand style, beginning with a gala weekend in July. Guests are invited to a *Dîner sur l'Herbe* presented by their celebrated chef, Alain Ducasse, on a green carpeted Place du Casino, an orchestral concert in Salle Garnier, the opening of an exhibition of *Dangerous Luxury* by Fernando and Umberto Campana in the Sporting d'Hiver and an evening with Rod Stewart in the Sporting d'Été. Elton John, Rihanna, Deep Purple, Barbara Hendricks and Eros Ramazzotti are part of this year's exciting summer entertainment, but my summer treat is tickets for Monte-Carlo Philharmonic concerts in the inner courtyard of the Palace ... simply magic. ■

1.4%

increase of residents in the Principality for 2012, according to IMSEE's official figures which estimate an additional 507 inhabitants for a total of 36,136.



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LYING ALL THE WAY TO THE BANK

BUSINESS

By Peter Johnson



TAX time again and this year's declarations will be for many between gritted teeth following the high profile "confession" of Jérôme Cahuzac, the recently deposed Budget Minister who was also in charge of a crackdown on tax evasion. Well, guess what? Cahuzac lied to everybody ... the President, Parliament, and the French people, about his secret Swiss bank account.

Allegations about this account were dug up by Mediapart, a left-wing investigative website, stating that Cahuzac had held this account for 20 years or so, before transferring its balance to a new account in Singapore in 2010. Cahuzac had vehemently denied having such an account, – *les yeux dans les yeux* – "I do not have, and have never had, a foreign bank account," he insisted. For months Cahuzac stuck to his story, even after March when he was forced to resign from the government after investigating judges had begun an enquiry. The President and his former government colleagues backed him until April 2nd,

when he realized the game was up and he confessed that he had been lying all along. He claimed the offshore account held €600,000, but later rumours speculated on a figure closer to €15,000,000.

Wherever the money came from, did Hollande know about the cover up? Even if he didn't know, he should have done. Although Hollande has tried to dissociate himself from the scandal, his Presidency is at a new low in the ratings.

The economy has seized up and will doubtless move into recession, unemployment is at a new 14 year high and will get worse through 2013 and 2014, morale has collapsed as taxes keep rising and – in spite of this – France has no hope of meeting its budget deficit target and has admitted it will not get the deficit below the crucial 3% of GDP goal in 2013.

Hollande's attempt to clean up the tarnished image of the political world was to insist that his ministers made public their assets, which was both embarrassing and futile. How much remains hidden offshore in occult bank accounts like Cahuzac? No one knows, but the suspicion is that ALL politicians are cheats. So, do you feel happy about paying your taxes when you know what the wealthy can get away with?

You remember Hollande's 75% tax on incomes of over €1,000,000, which was declared unconstitutional and abandoned?

Well, back comes "Mr Handyman" Hollande with the bright idea that the tax should be paid by companies as a business expense, rather than by the individuals. This idea raises more questions than it answers. What about the self-employed, including lawyers, film stars, footballers etc? They will be let off say the government, as if their high incomes are somehow more socially acceptable.

And then came the inevitable confusion in communication when the chief of the French Football Federation said that football clubs would be exempt and he'd had this on good authority from the President himself. Not so, retorted the government the next day: football clubs will pay. Another example of Holland's messy and weak leadership, giving no clear direction or message.

And whilst the rich find ways of staying rich, the downtrodden and poor get ... poorer. Auto-Entreprises will now pay between 2% and 3% more in social charges in 2013, whilst only 6% of dividend income for company directors of SARLs will be eligible for social charges at 15.5% (the rest will bear full social charges, ie. 45% or so).

"Go on," I hear you think. "I might just start taking cash payments like everybody else." Yup, cash is back, and you can see why. ■

TV QUICK FIX IS A TURN-OFF

What's to be done as the main UK channels vanish from our screens

"WATCH BBC1, ITV, Channel Four and Five with our simple IPTV Box. Just plug into your router and get all these channels no dish required ..." This new IPTV box will not be available from HasEurope.com. Company Director Terry Sherlock explains below why they have taken this tough decision not to sell IPTV, even though their clients will lose BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and 5 come late summer 2013.

In Spain for many years clients have needed large dishes to watch *Eastenders* and *Coronation Street*. This was the first lead to illegal microwave re-transmissions of channels, and in some cases, done with Spanish approval for their networks. These changes in this "Wild West" TV landscape were painful for the viewer at times.

The latest re-transmission entry over the last year or so – IPTV – is not provided by your broadband provider but by private companies wanting to stream live TV over someone else's broadband network.

These companies claim to be legal but I have real doubts if this will prove to be the case when tested in the courts, and I have the following question, to which I cannot find answers, that would reassure me to sell and recommend this new way to watch British TV in France: These companies are streaming without the permission of the broadcaster, not just live but 7- or 14-day archived TV shows. In light of the European Courts ruling on March 7th 2013 (see box) can this really be legal?

"EU COURT OF JUSTICE: INTERNET LIVE STREAMING OF BROADCASTS IS PIRACY"

In its judgment of 7 March 2013, the European Court of Justice decided that simultaneous relay of broadcasts via the internet constitutes copyright infringement. This is true even where the potential audience of the Internet service is the same as that of the relayed TV broadcasting service. Under EU law, internet retransmissions of broadcast programmes are subject to authorisation by all copyright holders with respect to those programmes." *Source: EBU.CH*

Regarding this judgement of "broadcasting by a third party over the internet of signals of commercial television broadcasters – 'live streaming' – communication to the public", when your broadband provider sends TV over their network it is done in such a way as not to congest the whole system. These new IPTV providers are pushing multiple streams over the World Wide Web and this will surely cripple the network at some point in the future. You have to wonder how broadband providers like

Orange and SFR will react. They could:

1. Block your access to IP addresses.
2. Slow down connections that are using large amounts of data for streaming video over long periods everyday.
3. Charge you extra for breaching fair use policy.

The companies providing these IPTV services are not as reputable as Sky or Astra. Will they all survive over time, and if not, what happens to your IPTV box when they go under? It's money down the drain!

In our view the best option is to pick up the signal direct from the satellite. It'll take a few months from when the new satellite starts transmitting late August/early September 2013, as they test and alter the beam, but by January 2014 the size of dish should be clear, which may be somewhere between 1.2m to 1.8m.

In the meantime, services like BBC iPlayer are not blocking VPN so you could access these catch up services. Watching or downloading the odd show does not use large amounts of data like full-time viewing.

It will be interesting to see where this ends up. It's true that Napster, the illegal music sharing website, paved the way for iTunes. Maybe we will see something similar down the road with large providers like Orange looking at English TV.

For the moment at HasEurope we're using Sky Plus HD Box and Dish, technology we trust. ■



Bon App

APPS



AVOIDING JELLYFISH

JELLYFISH are a recurring problem along the Riviera coast in the summer (see page 35).

Jellyfish Report is a free

app (with ads) that tracks jellyfish within 10km of your GPS location or for any beach in its searchable international database, which it claims to update daily. The interface is rather clunky but the app works fine. Data depends on user feedback so share your sightings to warn others.

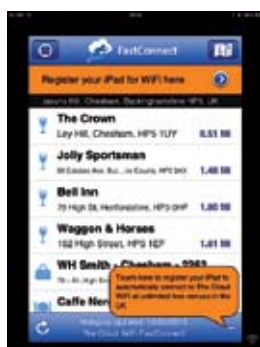


SUMMER MUSIC FESTIVALS

THE Monte-Carlo Sporting Summer Festival app developed by the SBM and CREM lets you search for musical events in Monaco by artist or date and book tickets from the app itself.

The *Nuits du Sud Festival* in Vence runs from July 12th to August 10th and you can follow dates, artists and even download paperless tickets from their free app.

For jazz and other musical events on the Riviera there are several free apps. *Nice-Matin* has the best one called "Sortir" offering searches by place directly on a map or by date.



WHERE'S THE WI-FI?

SUMMER means travel but connecting to the internet using 3G can be expensive, especially when abroad. It's always a good idea to have a couple of free Wi-Fi apps on your mobile device (you'll probably need more than one as there's no app that shows all free points in all countries).

For international travel, try Free

Wi-Fi Finder by JiWire, which shows 145,000 locations in 104 countries and covers the Riviera particularly well. It allows you to download and update its 26MB database for consulting offline.

When visiting the UK, try the free version of FastConnect. It draws on a very complete database, which covers most of Britain, but it isn't very useful in France except in Paris.

If you have an all-in subscription to a French mobile network (Orange, SFR, Free, Bouygues) you'll find that the best app is the one your network provides because all their own free hotspots are indicated. Or for French hotspots Wi-Fi Free France (€0.89) from iTunes is the best non-proprietary app. ■



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ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL

How the same-sex marriage debate split the nation

By Nathalie Giraud



Photo: Ericwaltr

THE Marriage for All bill, allowing new rights to same-sex couples, was backed by President François Hollande's Socialists and other left-wing MPs on February 12th, when it passed in the lower house (the National Assembly) by a vote of 329 to 229. Two months and ten days later, after a heated debate that even saw MPs in fisticuffs, the text was finally adopted by French parliament, and on May 18th it was signed into law by the President.

In 1791, after the Revolution, France was ahead of the times when it decriminalized homosexuality and so it's surprising to see that the so-called land of love and equal rights climb aboard the same-sex bandwagon much later than its neighbours like the Netherlands (where gay marriage has been legal since 2001), Belgium and Spain, or Argentina, South Africa, Canada and six American states.

And yet according to a 2012 INSEE poll, 70% of the French don't think it is important for couples living together to get married, and marriage dropped about 50% between 1970 and 2011.

Christophe Barbier, managing editor at *L'Express*, stated that marriage itself is an "obsolete institution," adding, "In the era of globalisation this norm is as artificial as it is inefficient, as

shown by the fact that divorce has become commonplace."

In times of perpetual crisis and economic gloom, certainly the country's government should be focusing on job creation and reforms, not wasting time on an issue that, according to a 2011 IFOP survey for *Têtu*, touches only 3% of the French population.

So what's the big deal? Even French celebrities have been weighing in on the issue. Chanel designer Karl Lagerfeld, who admitted to *Vice* magazine that he was opposed to same-sex marriage, spoke to *The New York Times*: "I'm against it for a very simple reason: In the '60s they all said we had the right to the difference. And now, suddenly, they want a bourgeois life. Why can't people who live together have the same security as bourgeois marrieds?"

While at one point 55% to 65% of the French claimed to support gay marriage, only about 50% favour gay adoption. Lagerfeld said that he was "less enthusiastic" about a child having two dads rather than two moms. "A child without a mother, that's a bit sad."

Catherine Deneuve said on the *Petit Journal du Lundi Soir* earlier this month that she was "perplexed" by marriage for all. "We marry a lot and divorce a lot, so I think in time this will be scary. There are very few children in school with a father and

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mother. I would have preferred to see PACS encouraging adoption by homosexuals."

Same-sex civil unions – *pacte civil de solidarité*, or PACS as it's more commonly known – have been recognised since 1999 in France. However this law does not carry the same rights as for married couples, nor does it provide for adoption or medically assisted procreation (MAP).

This is where things get controversial, and the reason why thousands of protestors have taken to the streets across the country (as well as wanting to express an overall disapproval of Hollande). For years, the idea of the nuclear family has been challenged with the rise in divorce. Just watch an episode of *Modern Family* to see how single-parent, extended or blended (*recomposé*) families have become the norm. And yet, in the case of adoption or say IVF for same-sex parents, when a child's psychological development is at stake, the myths around homosexuality seem to put people's backs up against the heterosexual wall.

Until 1973 – only 40 years ago – homosexuality was classified as a mental illness in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* published by the American Psychiatric Association.

How "normal" can a same-sex parent-child relationship be? Could a child's gender be skewed by same-sex parents? Or would a child adopted by two mums or two dads face bullying from his or her peers?

The American Psychological Association (APA) found that "same-sex couples are remarkably similar to

heterosexual couples, and that parenting effectiveness and the adjustment, development and psychological well-being of children is unrelated to parental sexual orientation".

As for a person's sexual orientation, the APA asserts that "most people experience little or no sense of choice about their sexual orientation".

However, some research indicates that bullying could be a problem when children become teenagers. Education will play a key role in addressing and preventing problems with these issues. To draw a comparison, not so many years ago it was children from divorced parents who were subjected to merciless teasing from their peers. We've come a long way.

There's no question that times are changing but the question isn't about marriage for all, but the capacity to redefine our laws and find better ways to interact. "All you need is love ..." the Beatles sang. But that was a very long time ago. ■

Nathalie Giraud has been a sex therapist and relationship coach for ten years and is frequently interviewed for TV, radio and print media.

The transcript of France's gay marriage debate from Friday to Sunday came to more than 240,000 words, pointed out *Le Monde*. About half the text of Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*.

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The future's bright. The future's German.

By James Hartley, Director, English Garden Group



IT was only a few days ago that I was in Germany looking for new and unusual trees and shrubs, having made my way up from Italy, via Belgium and Holland. Despite having German ancestry (a great-grandfather), I've never spent any substantial amount of time there and I wasn't really sure what to expect. In the event, it turned out to be a very pleasant surprise.

While even the best of the Italian nurseries make up for their shortcomings with an exceptionally good lunch accompanied by an excellent bottle of red, at the German nursery we visited there wasn't a sesame showered breadstick in sight. Instead it shunned such frivolous trimmings in favour of a suitably hearty Germanic meal of lamb chops and fried potatoes served in bowls notable only for their unusually large portion sizes. (As it turned out I later needed the fortification just to keep my eyes functioning there was so much to look at). That said, for what the meal lacked in finesse, it more than made up for in interest, with service provided by a wildly camp waiter in lederhosen and shorts so tight

they needed a licence. To Hans, our waiter, I salute you: to carry that off takes class.

As we drove through the nursery in the afternoon I sat in the back of the car slack-jawed – I'd never seen anything like it. Over the years I've visited all kinds of growers, starting way back when I was a student, travelling through the north of France for my thesis on horticultural production near Angers. Despite this, what I saw in Germany took my breath away: plants set out in lines with daunting precision, a level of cleanliness throughout the nurseries that bordered on clinical and a homogeneity of product and quality as I have never witnessed before. I already had a pretty good idea why Germany is so successful, but now I am absolutely sure: they value work and take pride in it. It's blindingly obvious.

While we were there, we stood and watched in awe as teams prepared the plants for transplantation. Only in Germany have I come across a nursery that has a specific group of people whose sole job is the preparation of the large shrubs

for transplantation, who do nothing else except prune one or two small branches and meticulously weave twine through the lower branches so that they are grouped and lifted to avoid damage when the plant is extracted from the soil. Nor have I ever seen the wrapping of the base of a large specimen shrub elevated to something approaching a religious ceremony: a team of three encircle each tree, equipped with hip-mounted twine bundles. You can see from the way that they work the respect for the value in the trees they are handling. Now this in itself is a beautiful thing: the workers in the field appreciate that the reason that the tree looks as good as it does is thanks to year after year of painstaking pruning to get just the right shape. Once again I was amazed at the Germans, not only do they work hard but there is an obvious respect at every level for quality work.

This had us talking about the difference between the nurseries we visit. As professionals, we can easily see the difference between nursery stock that has been handled properly and that which has not. A good nursery that grows a large amount of stock in their fields will dig up and replant the plants every two to three years. These plants will then either be containerised, replanted in another field or put back in the same spot to develop further – just turned a little. Why bother? This is one of the less obvious practices that makes the difference between a quality grower and "the rest" and it requires an understanding of how the roots of a plant work. Why is this important to the amateur gardener? Well, it's interesting, but practically it's also useful if you are familiar with how the roots of a plant function. You can care for it all the better after it is planted, watering and feeding it in the correct manner.

Know your roots!

The roots of a plant are thickest near the trunk, yet these are roots that do not actually do any "work". Instead these are simply conduits, transport channels linking the plant to its "feeder" roots at the



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tips, usually at or outside the outer edge of the canopy (known as the “drip-line” for obvious reasons). The dense roots at the outer edges of the root system are the ones covered in fine root hairs that lift the moisture and nutrients from the soil. It is also these hairs that are easily damaged by drought stress, poor plant handling, or, in the case of the growers, poor nursery stock preparation. Incidentally, these are easily damaged by compression: If you're carrying out any works at your house and the workers use machines – make sure they don't drive under the canopies of trees that you value. The compression of the soil in this area is often enough to kill these roots and although the tree will live on for a while on its reserves, it will slowly die over a period of one to three years as it runs out of nutrients. Pines and other

such trees with roots that are close to the surface are particularly susceptible to this. Likewise, when you water and feed established trees, focus on the ground under the edge of the canopy, as this is where the majority of these roots congregate.

The action of regularly lifting a plant is crucial in nursery stock production as it prunes the roots, forcing them to branch and increase in density nearer the trunk, just as pruning the branches does to the canopy above the ground. This leaves many more fine roots growing nearer the stem, and, in turn, allows the plant to cope with being containerised and then transplanted to your garden. Sadly this is not something that's immediately obvious. A plant that has been allowed to grow for too long in one place will extend its roots far from the base and when transplanted all of these

are lost. While it may then look healthy in the pot, you are buying a dramatically weakened plant, and one that has a much higher risk of struggling to adapt to its new home, a feature known as “transplant shock”. A plant lifted from a field of a grower who has been following good practices will be so much stronger and will establish much faster thanks to the dense root structure in its root ball. A tree with a stunning form is something special, deserving of the best treatment, and from what I saw in Germany, they're leading the way.

I don't believe in angels or miracles – not remotely. I do believe though in the power that beautiful plants in gardens have to bring us closer together, closer to nature and to something greater than ourselves. This is my religion, and I hope to see you soon in church. ■

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THAT TREE AND OTHER THINGS

By Mike Meade



Photos: Jilly Bennett

THE best way to develop a photographer's "eye" is to look at photos every chance you get. Study the ones you like or wish you had taken so you have some idea what your personal photographic tastes are and what is technically possible (almost anything is). It's amazing how many people wander past great opportunities wondering what to photograph, so set yourself a few simple photography projects that will help you notice things that are visually attractive or interesting but which you might not notice otherwise.

Some people choose tried and classic themes like doors, fences, flowers or animals but almost anything goes. Why not have several subjects on the go at once? As I travel quite a bit I prefer themes that I can find anywhere; bicycles and squashed beverage cans are two I favour at the moment. Have you noticed how

cans left on a road become flattened into photographically interesting shapes and colours? The changes are endless if you get into the habit of keeping an eye out.

You shouldn't have to look far from home for inspiration. Professional photographer Mark Hirsch drove past the same bur oak tree near his Iowa home every day for 19 years and had never taken a picture of it. Trying out the camera of his new iPhone (which he thought he'd never use) he snapped a photo of that tree one day in March 2012. Then he decided to take a very different photo of the same tree with that same camera phone every day for a year. He called his project "That Tree" (thattree.net) and he made a book of some of the 365 photos – and what a collection it is. He accomplished this without expensive equipment; nothing more than a phone camera, a daily stroll

and a well tuned eye. Anyone could have done it, but the story behind an interesting photo project is often analogous to the legend of Columbus and the egg.

Could you shoot the same subject somewhere on the Riviera for 365 days and come up with a very different shot every time? Of course. Try it for a couple of weeks by photographing the café where you have your daily coffee, the beach where you have your daily swim, your pet, your lunch, a member of your family or a plant in your garden. Choose a different time of day, change your setting and seek out an interesting angle each time. You might surprise yourself.

The Riviera offers endless possibilities for those who don't just walk past them. If you need convincing you could do worse than visiting the photo blogs of

Jilly Bennett (see mentondailyphoto.com and montecarlodailyphoto.com). She hasn't been a photographer for very long and rarely goes far from her home in Gorbio, yet Jilly comes up with captivating shots of Monaco, Menton and nearby Italy with remarkable regularity (like the two photos illustrated). She's not timid about trying new things and you shouldn't be either. After all, with a digital camera or Smartphone you no longer have to pay Kodak or anyone else to see the results of your clicking.

Polish amateur Pati Robins (probinsphotography.weebly.com) sets another good example of how to turn everyday scenes, people, animals and objects into interesting photos. She doesn't charge for her work and lets charities use it with prior permission. Pati now lives in Wales and supports charities like Many to One, Friends of Cardiff Dogs Home and Maximum Effort in support of wounded veterans. In 2011 she won the Guardian Best Picture award with a stunning self-portrait. The portfolio on her site is well worth studying. It shows just how much you can make of mundane subjects. ■

The golden hours

JUNE 21st is summer solstice, the day of the year when dawn and dusk linger the longest, which makes it the best time to make use of the "golden hours".

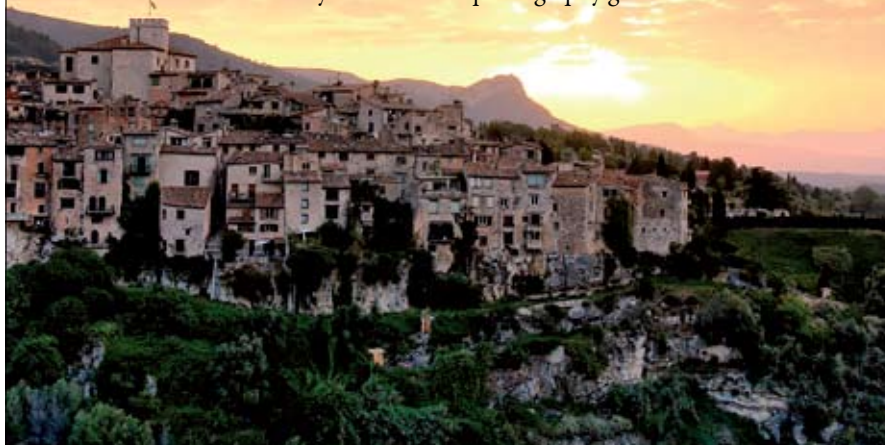
There are two golden hours every day of the year. The morning hour starts just before sunrise; the evening is the last hour before sunset.

What makes these times of day, sometimes referred to as "magic hours", so exceptional? For the most part it's the light that becomes richer and more vivid the further we are from midday.

Also, long and mysterious shadows cast shapes across the ground, landscapes, walls and faces and the sky is usually more defined as the rising or setting sun skims the clouds. A cloudless sky isn't bleached out by summer midday haze.

Entire books and websites have been devoted to photos taken at these hours.

The luminous Riviera is the perfect place to try taking pictures at these moments of day. If you need some inspiration do a Google image search for "photography golden hour".



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Shaping up for summer

From flab to fab in a few easy steps!

By Colette Kent, Fithub

THIS is the time of year when your thoughts turn to cleaning, which usually means organizing cluttered cupboards. However, maybe it's time to do the same with your body. After an unseasonably long winter of eating heavy comfort foods and layering clothing to cover yourself up, take advantage of the change of season to lighten your load and clear away the body's cobwebs.

Eating for a lighter you

During the winter months you are less active due to the shorter days, and then there's the festive season that's filled with eating rich food and more than usual drinking. Look out though if that holiday weight gain is still hanging around six months later! It's time to get serious. The days are longer and the brighter, warmer weather should inspire you to eat lighter. With the wonderful selection of vegetables and fruits in the Riviera markets you are spoiled for choice (so no excuses).

Here are some suggestions to help get you motivated:

- Start your day with a cup of hot water and lemon to alkalize your body. If your body is too acidic it becomes a breeding ground for sickness and disease.
- Drink more water throughout the day to flush toxins from your body but also to prevent dehydration with the higher temperatures.
- Vary your salad ingredients regularly to ensure that you're getting a great variety of vitamins and nutrients.
- Switch your winter soup for a summer smoothie, using seasonal fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Eat more fresh, organic whole foods and grains with less processed food on your plate. Organic produce limits

the use of synthetic materials (ie pesticides) during production, and certified organic produce is marked with a green AB symbol (look for it at the supermarket). At your local market chat with the stall owner, who may sell organic even if there's no AB sign. Organic produce is more expensive but I tend to buy *bio* if the fruit or veg has a thin skin, like carrots or apples, as pesticides more easily soak into the interior.

- Seeds contain an amazing amount of nutritional value for their size. Eat as a snack or add to salads or smoothie: sunflower (*tournesol*), pumpkin (*potiron*), flax (*lin*), chia.
- Talk to a qualified nutritionist to help guide you or attend a nutrition workshop and meet like-minded people.



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Get a move on

As you start to remove layers of heavy clothing you feel more exposed. In order to ensure you can bare your body with confidence start to rev up your exercise routine now to get your body ready for the beach.

- Plan your weekly exercise in advance.
- Ensure that you're getting variety in your exercise regime to build a balanced and toned body. That means cardio, strength and yoga (see *Reporter* 155).
- Incorporate more movement into your day: take the stairs, walk rather than drive to the café, add lunges while cleaning the floor or squats while pushing your child on the swing.
- Seek direction from a professional. Investing in group classes or a personal trainer to help plan a routine and make sure you're doing the exercises correctly is money well spent

Same old, same old ... not!

In life it's easy to get stuck in a rut, sometimes doing the same ol' thing is just more comfortable. This is all about new beginnings, so try something different and challenging to get your juices flowing.

I used to think that if I wasn't sweating bullets then I wasn't truly benefitting from my work out; the idea of relaxing in a yoga class was a cop out. However, when I eventually tried a yoga class several years ago, I discovered how truly challenging it was.

It was nothing for me to go for a run, a swim or a bike ride and just grind it out but when I got to the mat, I learned that I couldn't just power through yoga as I did in every other sport. I had to listen to my body, to use my "core" (the powerhouse of the body, comprising of the muscles from the shoulders to the hips). This was so foreign to me: being quite strong I could muscle my way through most sports and yet I found in yoga that you can't balance an inversion without learning to keep the body subtle. There's no clenching the jaw, or forced breath, it's about being in tune with your body.

I believe that we often shy away from the one thing we need most to push our limits. So for those of you out there who pound the pavement week in, week out, give your body a break and a challenge by trying a yoga

class (on the beach, if that's more of an incentive; see fithub.net for details). If the opposite is true and you like to take it easy in a slow-paced relaxation class, go for a hike or try a dance or cardio/strength class to mix it up. If you're like me and your mind races constantly, try to slow it down by practicing meditation, this is certainly something I need to work on!

Start fresh from today: switch it up, put aside any preconceived notions and just give it a try. You might just surprise yourself. *Bon courage!* ■



"I like to make a smoothie with apple, carrot, beetroot, ginger and a little water to get the consistency I want. It's also a great way to sneak healthy food into your children's diet and helps use up ripe fruit and veg!"

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HENNING MANKELL

Paradise after Wallander

By Nancy Heslin

HENNING Mankell sits across from me at Le Clemenceau in Old Antibes, sipping his red wine. The creator of Inspector Wallander, which was adapted into English to become an award-winning BBC One series starring Kenneth Branagh, divides his time between Sweden, Africa and, as of four years ago, the South of France.

The Swedish-born mystery and crime writer is a Johnny Cash of sorts, an intense figure in a black uniform, with lyrics, although his have no music, that hit you right where it hurts. Since 1973, he has written 40 novels (and children's books) selling 40 million copies, and translated into 45 languages.

"I left school at 15 to go to Paris. I knew I wanted to be a writer and at that time French literature was the capital of world literature, so that was the place you had to go. Nowadays, aspiring writers go to Berlin or London. I didn't know anyone and didn't have any money – nor at the time did I speak French – but I managed to stay for a year. It was my university of life.

"Things are different now. We all know that the internet is a good thing but we also must face its danger. Young people especially believe that information they can access very easily is the same as knowledge. It is not. Knowledge is the ability to critically look upon information and, if we lose that power, we will have a new generation with a lot of information who don't know shit about the world."

Mankell has had a home in Maputo, Mozambique since 1986; he is the artistic director at the Teatro Avenida. He tells me he's been invited to speak at the World Economic Forum in Cape Town in early May. "Fifteen years ago, I wrote an article in a major newspaper stating that if I were a businessman, I would put my money in Africa. The reaction was that it was not possible; the infrastructures are poor ... now all of a sudden people are interested but the Chinese were clever enough to have invested. The problem with Europe and the Western world is that they have lost initiative. African countries have every

chance in the world to be prosperous but for so long the only stories we read in newspapers are about how Africans are dying, nothing about how they are living."

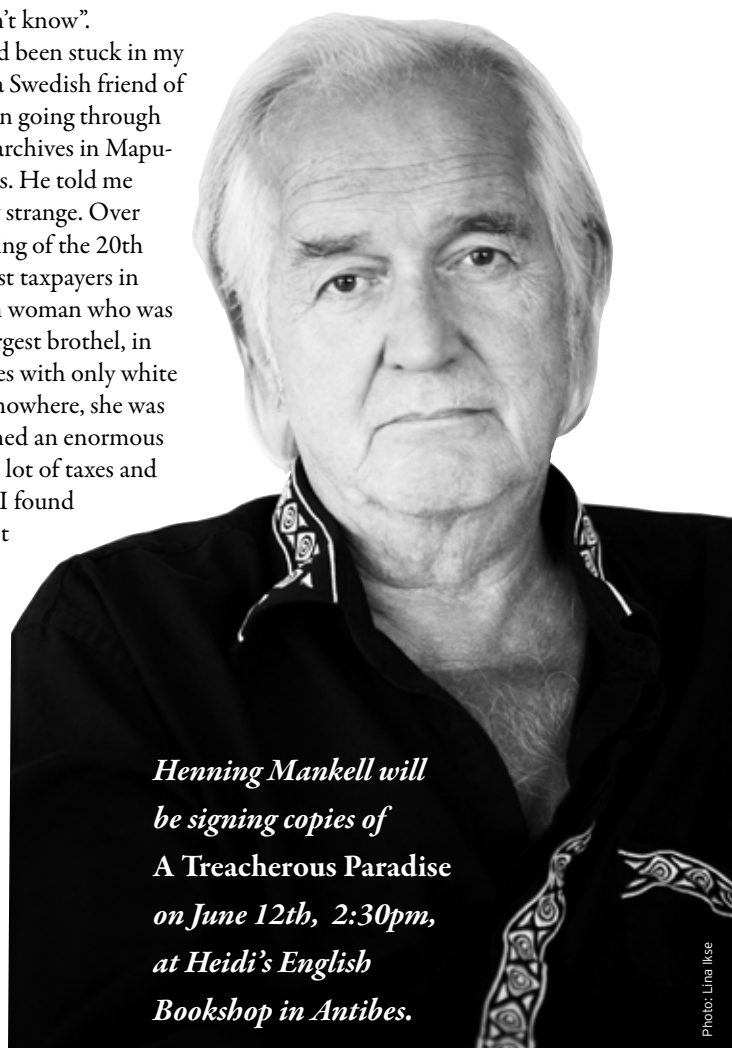
At the risk of pushing the banality envelope, I am compelled to ask, does he, like the rest of us, miss Wallander? "The idea is that the reader, not me, should miss him. You can't imagine the feedback – even bribes – I've had ... but you have to stop. The older you get, the more you have to be decisive about what not to do because whenever death comes, it will come and disturb you."

Mankell's latest work, *A Treacherous Paradise* (UK: Harvill Secker), due out early June, is a story based on something that has happened "with the little we know, and the lot we don't know".

"This is a story that had been stuck in my head for ten years when a Swedish friend of mine, a scientist, had been going through old Portuguese colonial archives in Maputo, specifically tax records. He told me he found something very strange. Over three years at the beginning of the 20th century, one of the biggest taxpayers in the system was a Swedish woman who was the owner of the city's largest brothel, in charge of black prostitutes with only white clients. She comes from nowhere, she was there for three years, earned an enormous amount of money, paid a lot of taxes and then ... just disappeared. I found this remarkable. She must have come on a Swedish ship, as Sweden was exporting a lot of timber at the time to Australia, and the last stop before the leap over the Indian Ocean was Maputo, but I found absolutely no traces of her life. Most likely she left and went into South Africa, where, at that time there was still a diamond boom. Maybe she lived to

an old age. It also gave me the possibility to talk about the very serious and profound contradictions in colonial times."

The 65-year-old takes his responsibility as an intellectual seriously. He is pessimistic, yet captivating. "We live in a terrible world where so many of our problems could have been fixed even fifty years ago. Obviously there's a very destructive contradiction inside human beings, and I'm not sure if there's hope. A drastic example: we know that in about 50,000 years we will have an enormous ice age and everything – the paintings of Rubens, the music of Bach – will disappear. The only thing that we'll have left behind is nuclear waste. This tells me: what is our civilisation thinking?" ■



Henning Mankell will be signing copies of A Treacherous Paradise on June 12th, 2:30pm, at Heidi's English Bookshop in Antibes.

Photo: Lina Ikse



WHAT A DRIVE!

"WE were inspired by the sense of freedom and joy you get from riding a sports car and we wanted to translate that experience to the golf car," says Mr Anders Lyng, the creative brain behind the limited-edition Garia Mansory Currus (pictured).

Golf round went on a bit too long and you're late for dinner? No problem with this little beauty – drive off the 18th and just keep on going. This golf buggy is "street legal" in Europe, and what's more, is great fun, although the green staff at your local course might not thank you for practicing your handbrake turns and dragster starts on the pristine fairways. Price €68,000.

THERE are two reasons why I passed up being a professional golfer. The first was my inability to hit a ball straight and long. The second was the prospect of spending most of my life waiting for the group ahead to clear the green.

Players who are relatively new to the game, having watched the Masters on TV, could be forgiven for thinking that it's perfectly normal to wait half-an-hour on the tee.

Well it isn't. And it comes to a pretty pass when a 14-year-old, the youngest ever player to make the cut in that great tournament, did so despite being docked a shot for not getting a move on.

Where I come from, Highgate Golf Club in North London, playing with a brisk rhythm is the norm. Three hours to get round was the mark for the low handicappers. Three-and-half hours is tolerated for players of lesser ability who, such as yours truly, waste some of the extra time looking for errant balls.

Brisk play does not mean rushing – if you do anything of a golfing nature too fast disaster beckons. But it does mean thinking. When I packed in work and came south I found that too many people who play golf (I don't call them golfers) in our idyllic surroundings seem to have left their brains as well as their manners in the locker room.

In the course of seemingly endless rounds at a selection of clubs in the Var and the Alpes-Maritimes, I had plenty of time to contemplate the causes of such *ennui*. National characteristics emerged. The French, although they know the rules of golf and its etiquette, are slow because they are generally selfish and have little

WHY ARE WE WAITING?

Slow play is the curse of modern golf

By Nick Kent

concern for other players. The Dutch are slow because they are tight-fisted and would sooner lose a limb than give up on a lost ball. The Germans are slow because they can't understand why the game is difficult to get right even with someone with an ordered brain, and they wish to discuss the matter endlessly with their playing partners. The Japanese are slow because they are delighted to be playing on a real golf course rather than a five-tiered driving range in Kyoto and they want the experience to last several days. The Yanks, the Scandies and the Brits (if not drunk) tend to be quicker, but as they are mostly of retirement age they seem to forget that other people may not have "all day".

The golf professionals I have met in France, and I include the men and women who run the clubs as well as those that teach the game, are of accord: when learning golf, etiquette should be up there on the syllabus alongside technique.

Ruined rounds and rocketing blood pressure would be avoided if every player made a habit of ...

- **Concentrating on being just behind the group in front rather than just in front of the group behind.**
- **Letting faster – usually better – players through, especially when your group is searching for a ball.**
- **Always playing a provisional ball if you are unsure where your shot finished – this applies to all shots, not just the drive.**
- **Working out rough club selection and shot type as you walk towards your ball.**
- **Before putting out, leaving clubs/carts on the side of the green nearest to the next tee.**
- **Not waiting until it's your turn before "reading" your putt.**
- **Picking up when the result at a hole is evident.**
- **Marking cards while another member of your group is teeing off at the next hole, rather than hanging around on the green.**
- **It all comes together if you think in these terms: don't *rush* your play, be *ready* to play.**

CROWNING GLORIES



IF you want to get a taste of what it would be like to compete in the first Ryder Cup to be held on French soil, then save up the *sous* and book yourself a tee time at Royal Mougins Golf Club.

The American Robert von Hagge created both Royal Mougins and Le Golf National tournament course north of Paris that will host the 2018 Ryder Cup. I've played the two, and they are both tough numbers, bunkers the size of beaches and plenty of water are the signatures. On both courses, each hole has its own distinct identity and difficulty.

When playing Royal Mougins, you come quickly to the hole that will stay in your mind long after you've played: the par-3 2nd. Each hole on the course has a fitting name and this one is *Le Saut de l'Ange*, the Angel's Leap. From the back tees, you look down a tree-lined gully to a postage stamp of a green protected by water and bunkers in front. If the mistral is blowing, you'll need a driver. Today there's no wind and we are mercifully not on the championship (black) tees, and the club's captain, a good-looking chap by the name

of Andrew Pearce, takes out an 8-iron.

You don't have to play off single figures to notch up a good score at Royal Mougins, but it sure does help. Suckered by fear into over-clubbing, I find myself playing my second shot from the edge of the 18th fairway. Scary, like being at the Masters, there is a grassy knoll between me and the green (thanks so much Mr von Hagge), and, just like the 12th at Augusta, the green slopes steeply towards water. I hit the perfect shot, killing the ball into the bank, it pops up and lands on the green, out of sight. I stride up the hillock and expect applause from my partner, instead he points at the water and rocks into which my ball has relentlessly trundled.

Do not mess with this golf course.

Royal Mougins Golf Club opened in 1993. It's a baby compared with the *Riv Rep's* last featured club, The Old Course at Mandelieu, but it has bedded in beautifully and looks and plays as if it has been around for much longer. It occupies a hidden valley, the *Vallon de l'Oeuf*, and the original character of the old terraced landscape has been preserved as a backdrop. At the

lowest part of the course, which has been privately owned by Rattan Chadha, founder of fashion label MEXX, since the end of 2003, runs a little river.

The "members" of Royal Mougins pay a large sum for the playing rights – *droit de jeu* – and an annual fee. Many are residents, owning one of the discreet villas nestling into the hillside, the most pricey of which would set you back at least five million euros.

Mr Chadha is not afraid to spend money increasing the value of his asset, and recent years have seen major investments in the on-site luxury hotel and the clubhouse.

I ask Andrew Pearce where he would like to see future spending.

"I have strong belief that there should be an investment in the youngsters, who are the future of the game," says the 53-year-old South African from Durban, himself the father of two girls and a boy.

"I would like to see a golf academy established at Royal Mougins to develop kids' talents and integrate them into the life of the club.

"I feel I have a mission to establish a

NEWS ... NEWS ... NEWS ...



THEY sound the same, but what is the difference between Golf Fee and Golfy, both “advantage” cards for golfers?

Golfy offers two cards that can be used for green fee discounts at 130 courses in 8 countries: the Indigo (€39) gives you 25% off, the Platine (€169) 30%. I paid for the latter, and so the card paid for itself very nicely a few times over. You were also able to collect “yards” on the card the more you played, and these could be transformed into free rounds, or in the case of my mate Steve, into another posh new driver that he can’t hit straight.

Golfy have now lost their foothold in the Alpes-Maritimes and the Var, and the green is clear for Golf Fee to step up to the mark. So what do they offer?

Available through an outfit called Plaisir Golf (plaisirgolf.fr) the Golf Fee card currently costs €119 per year, saving €30 on the “normal” price.

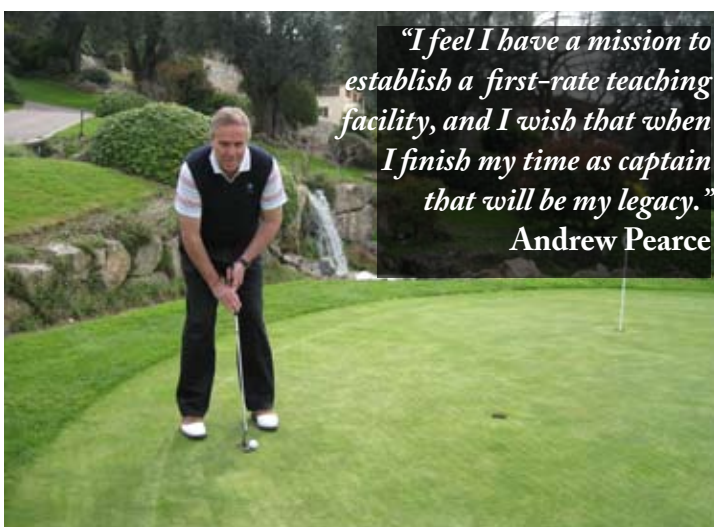
There are various benefits including reduced fees for lessons from pros who are members of the scheme but the real interest centres around the big discounts offered by “partner” clubs. Golf Fee’s headline offers are as follows:

On the local 18-holers: up to 50% off at Esterel Latitudes and St Maxime, 34% at Biot and 25% at St Donat.

On the local 9-holers: 25% of at Provençal and 20% at Victoria, both “Sophia Satellite” courses.

Regular players on these courses who are not members will soon save back the cost of the card, but only if the discount prices apply to the times and days they usually like to play. So before signing up for Golf Fee go to the clubs you use and see precisely what they are offering, and how long those special prices will last.

Perhaps *la crise* has forced local courses to look at getting more butts on buggies. We’ll see. I remember realising I was living in a *really* foreign country a couple of years back when I asked a golf director how he was coping with falling revenue from lower green fee numbers. He replied that he was putting up the price. **N.K.**



first-rate teaching facility, and I wish most fervently that when I finish my time as captain that will be my legacy.”

Andrew and his French wife settled on the Côte d’Azur after he decided that he’d had enough of the living-on-planes style of life that went with working for a major international corporation based in Holland. A big attraction for him in the great variety of sporting opportunities the area offers to a sportive family.

“It hit me one day at the club how privileged we are as a family to live here. Here I was playing golf in glorious weather as my son was wakeboarding and one of my daughters was skiing, all in the same department.”

As you might expect for such a high-end establishment, Royal Mougins has had more than its share of celebs gracing the fairways over the years. In the days when big names in the film world had a little more time for some civilized R&R, Michael Douglas and pals would fit in some hotly contested matches during the Cannes Film Festival. McLaren Formula One boss Ron Dennis and tennis star

Stefan Edberg have been regular players.

Famous golfers have had their highs and lows on the course, one of the most memorable incidents involving the Mrs Doubtfire of international golf, Colin Montgomerie. Reaching the top of the green on the eighteenth, which shares a huge green with the third, he faced a long putt to the hole situated at the bottom corner. The greens at Royal Mougins are excellent, and pretty fast in tournament trim. The ball finished in the lake front right. He was not happy, cursing the course, the conditions, anything and anyone but himself. As I said to Andrew when he told me the story, it couldn’t have happened to a nicer bloke.

As I finished my round with Andrew, putting all the way across the double green from a place I shouldn’t have been, I realised what makes this course and club special. It isn’t the clink of gold bracelets against a champagne flute on the terrace, the calm efficiency of the staff or the privacy that comes with privilege, but the pure golfing experience of playing a challenging course that can make you feel like a champ – or a chump. ■

YOU MAY NOT BELIEVE IT BUT ...

Good Golf is Easy



John Norsworthy, right, uses technology to deliver a simple message.

YOU find yourself in a dark, enclosed space with a golf club in your hand. A huge screen fills the far wall. Hidden cameras record your every twitch. A computer is ready to help your teacher analyse your faults.

Yes, it sounds like a nightmare. And it would be if the whole box of tricks wasn't being controlled by an affable British pro whose motto is simple: Good Golf is Easy.

In a lifetime of coaching, John Norsworthy has discovered that the simple approach is best, whether it be for someone who has never before picked up a club, or a low-handicapper wanting to shave a couple of shots from a round.

Although John, based at Golf Plus in Cannes, is proud to be using state-of-the-art technology to help golfers improve their game, he loves to quote the wisdom of some of the game's past greats. Sam Snead, for instance: "I play golf in the most simple way I know".

John believes that much of golf is

instinctive, and it is by working on this that he achieves great results, stressing the importance of using the skills that lie within – co-ordination, sense of feel, natural rhythm, plus "a good dose of common sense".

"Easy is an attitude that enables us to tackle even the toughest of challenges," says John. "And I have found that it applies particularly well to golf."

I put John and his technology to the test on my less-than-perfect swing. A couple of hits and the video reveals the appearance of what he calls the "chicken wing" effect – coming back to the striking area with the hands in the wrong position leads to a horrible-looking bent left arm and a topped shot. Clearly my instincts need some work.

An exercise. Stand upright. Club out in front, butt in belly button. Turn club to right. Turn club to left. Back to hitting the ball and my arm is straight at impact. Like, the man said – easy! "Practice the

belly-button drill for just a minute every day and see the results," says the coach.

John reckons his golfing gizmo cuts the time to teach a new golfer or correct faults by two-thirds compared with standing out on the range with just the pro's eyes and not your own on the faults.

"The problem with the 'old' way of teaching is that the 'pupil' can't readily feel or realise what faults the pro is trying to iron out."

Yes John, I've been there. "I'm not doing that am I?" is often the incredulous response in that situation. With the evidence of the computer image of the swing, plus on-screen pointers from John, the way forward is much clearer.

I had begun to understand why John is so attached to this quote from the "wonderful player and great teacher" Ernest Jones.

"Good golf is easy and easy golf is enjoyable. It is tragic that so many make of it such a labor ..."

AT HOME ON THE RANGE

To get the most from practice sessions, remember these points:

- Always do some stretching before starting the session.
- Start with small shots from a low tee before moving up to a longer club and longer shots.
- Hit ten balls with your feet together.
- For more advanced players, practice the 3-shape drill: try to hit 5 slices, 5 hooks and 5 straight shots.

John Norsworthy's book Good Golf Made Easy can be found at the English Book Centre in Valbonne, ISBN 9781908848000. Contact John on 06 80 74 42 86.



Passenger rights in the palm of your hand

THE European Commission has a free passenger rights app for air and rail travel (available on iTunes). Now if you're stranded at the airport you can instantly know your rights.

Meanwhile, the EU's recently-proposed new rules regarding flight delays, rerouting, compensation and baggage handling for air passengers, set to become law in 2015 upon approval by EU states, have been described as the "biggest shake up of air passenger rights since EU aviation rules were introduced eight years ago".

"It is very important that passenger rights do not just exist on paper," said EU Vice-President Siim Kallas. "The aim is to get passengers where they want to be as quickly as possible while giving the airlines the time they need to sort problems out."

Here are some key points:

- Passengers with delays of more than 12 hours will have to be rerouted by another carrier if their airline cannot put them on another of its own flights.
- "Extraordinary circumstances" for compensation has been clarified as natural disasters and air traffic control strikes, and not "technical problems" from a routine maintenance check.
- Airlines will be required to inform passengers about delays and provide an explanation within 30 minutes of the scheduled departure time.
- If a plane is boarded and sits on the runway for more than 5 hours, passengers will have the right to demand to be let off. If the delay is more than 1 hour the airline must provide air condition-

ing, use of toilets and water.

- Compensation after a minimum 5-hour delay (currently three) on any flight within the EU or international flight less than 3500km.
- Compensation for international flights up to 6000km after a delay of 9 hours; after 12 hours for longer journeys.
- Airlines will no longer be able to charge for correcting misspelt names on tickets.
- Passengers may not be denied boarding on the return flight of their ticket on the grounds that they did not take the outbound part of the return ticket.
- Musicians will be allowed to bring smaller instruments on board, while for transporting larger instruments there must be clear terms and conditions about the cargo hold.

For more see europa.eu

Not so easy cabin allowance


FROM July 2nd, easyJet is reducing cabin carry on sizes from 56cm by 45cm by 25cm to 50x40x20 for a total of just 40 litres (currently 63L).

EasyJet said on its website: "Thanks to our industry leading load factors (89 per cent) and seat configuration easyJet carries around 40 more passengers on each flight than our rivals. Because of this, overhead locker space onboard our aircraft is limited and so on busy flights we are not always able to fit everyone's cabin bag in the cabin."

From this date, you'll have to pay £25 to put your bag in at the check-in or be charged £40 at the gate ... per bag. ■



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we've got mail...



Photo: Para

HANDGUNS IN FRANCE

[Ref issue 155 page 36] Before leaving England I passed as a handgun instructor, range officer and coach. I am a registered and legal gun owner here in France and am dedicated to that Olympic sport.

The UK really cocked up – a person could join a club, get a card, go to the police within a week and get a permit for as many guns as he wanted. That's why they had problems at Dunblane and Hungerford. They were handing out permits without due process like Smarties in a school playground.

The UK introduced drastic legislation in the mid-80s by removing handguns and self-loading rifles from legal owners as a pretext to safeguarding the public. But subsequent gun related incidents increased, not because of registered owners but because of the many guns that were already out there. Firearm problems are mainly due to the illegal trade of arms by those outside of the sport.

It's important for the public to know that arms are not readily available in France to any idiot.

The French system for authorising handgun ownership is a lengthy process and requires a probation of one year minimum after which a club president allows continuation if one has shown responsibility, safe handling and shooting. Gendarmes handle the permit submission. Safe keeping facilities are required and responsible conduct is judged. A medical certificate is necessary and the prefecture will take as long as another year to grant the *demande d'autorisation de détention d'armes* issued for a specific gun in category 4. For military class 9mm semi- automatics,

a further period of safe conduct is obligatory and a similar process is put into place and eventually another permit is authorised for category 1 acquisition.

Now the EU is trying to curb the responsible and legitimate ownership by those of us who shoot as a sport at registered clubs. Our French Federation (*ffir.org*) is mobilising and will not submit readily to EU attempts to frighten the public.

David Rowe, Fayence

THE JUST VOTE

“No taxation without representation” is a political principal/catch-phrase dating back more than 250 years to a time when Brits abroad were taxed despite not having a vote, because the government needed the money. Surely justice requires the opposite to be a proper view, as suggested by my wife. The thought of honest socialist tax payers in the UK losing an election as a result of the Tory vote being swollen by the inclusion of a lot of overseas Brits who do not pay tax seems to me thoroughly immoral. I am certainly against Millipede's party, but I am a strong supporter of justice.

DEREK FLETCHER,
by email

Star
letter

WHY GO HOME?

Maybe I am out of touch with my country of birth, but I was taken aback by a recent report written by both the National Research and the Institute of Medicine that shows Americans are getting sicker and dying younger than their peer countries. Even the Chair of the report was shocked by the findings.

The panel looked at data from 16 peer countries, which included France, and determined that there are nine health areas that America lags behind other rich nations. They include: infant mortality,

homicides, teen pregnancy, drug-related deaths, obesity and disabilities. America finished 16th place in deaths from all causes while France placed fourth.

Interestingly though, France places 15th in Deaths from Injuries (just one place ahead of the US) and is 16th in deaths caused from nutritional deficiencies. I find this surprising, since for me the French I know eat very nutritiously, especially at the schools. But then again, in the US there is a two-tier eating system: the wealthy that eat well and the poor that eat fast food.

Essentially, it came down to the fact that Americans consume more calories, rely more on cars than other nations which contributes to obesity and car related deaths, have higher rates of drug abuse and are more likely to use guns in acts of violence.

I hope it's not true when they say France is always ten years behind the US.

Brent Moore, Antibes

SOME GET IT RIGHT

[Ref: Molly Brown's comments on traditional vs modern Architecture] It is on very rare occasions that we see architects designing a building that blends into and compliments its neighbours. We were very pleased to see, as it unveils, the "La Lestra" on Boulevard des Moulins in Monaco [pictured below].

The architect Fabrice Notari deserves to be applauded and complimented. He has created an aesthetical fusion between the classical and modern, with a lot of elegance and class.

Marc Ross, by email





THEOULE SUR MER

Charming house situated just across the road from the sea with garden and pool, sea views, lounge, dining room, open plan kitchen, summer kitchen with barbecue and pizza oven. Separate studio which could be accessed from the main house. Price €750,000 (Ref 2731 DPE-C-6)



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LETTERS

HELP FOR HAITI

Thank you for the great article on our Haiti project. I am very grateful that you took time to write this article about me and my school project. It really means a lot to all of the children. So far between last year's sale and this one I have raised enough money to build my water filter. I was amazed to find out how people can really care about this. Your article and a poster about our association encouraged people to donate even more. Lots of people

even offered to donate their things for our next charity sale. We attracted more customers and managed to show them how important donations can make a difference.

Nicolas Paltbey, email

(Pictured below in cap, next to mum Kate)

HE REALLY CAN SEE THROUGH WALLS

I recently had a water/damp problem at my villa and read your article in the February/March issue entitled "The man who sees through walls". I contacted

Stefan Mayer of Astema Thermal Imaging and it was the best thing I ever did. He immediately detected an underground water leak using thermal imaging.

He was extremely helpful and prompt in dealing with the problem and returning phone calls and emails. He even went "the extra mile" and of his own accord met the plumber at the property in order to show him the exact location of the underground leak.

His charges are reasonable and I now have detailed plans of my villa showing all my underground and buried pipe work, which is very helpful. He does not recommend any companies to carry out the repairs so you know that he is completely independent and giving an accurate report. What a find and all thanks to an article in *Riviera Reporter*.

Anna Moore, by email



HALF AND HALF FORMULA ONE ON BBC

I have just picked up the April/May 2013 edition (p. 34). What happened to Formula One on French television? "In fact, now that Formula One is no longer

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broadcast on BBC or on any free-to-air French channel”.

Since 2012 Formula One has been broadcast 100% on Sky, however the BBC still broadcasts these races. According to the BBC website, “The BBC will be providing live coverage of nine races in the 2013 Formula One season across all its platforms, for the remainder, there will be extended highlights on television..”

Philip Suter, by email

BBC only broadcast live nine of the nineteen 2013 F1 races. Barcelona was broadcast but Monaco was not. The only way to follow the entire season live is by subscribing to Sky Sports F1 on satellite or VPN; or Canal+ in France. Replays and race summaries are broadcast on several channels but only after each race. M.M.

THE ONCE BEAUTIFUL GAME

Until now France had escaped much of the violent behaviour we have so often seen at British, Dutch and even Polish football matches. Several recent incidents and the lamentable destruction in Paris Trocadéro after the PSG match seem to suggest France is also following the trend. Could it be that the problem is not with each country but with the sport itself? Nowhere do we see such behaviour over rugby or cricket matches.

J.R.Weaver, by email

FRIENDS OF FELINES

We all know the picture: a gentle stroll through a picturesque mountain village in France, followed by a nice lunch on a sunny town square underneath century-old plane trees surrounded by age-old buildings with shuttered windows and ... stray cats. Lots

and lots of stray cats, the smell of urine, yowling, mating season, and inbreeding.

Until 1999 the only answer that the French government had for this problem was euthanasia, which does not stop cats to proliferate at an alarming rate, so those that get destroyed are just replaced with litters of new kittens. Fortunately, in stepped Leslie Frasier, based in St Etienne de Tinée, with her veterinary medicine background.

In 2006 Leslie started the association *Les Chats du Mercantour* and has since captured over 1300 stray cats in 29 villages. The association gets help from the local government to fund part of their work, but they depend heavily on tax-deductible donations, sponsors, foster and adoptive families and volunteers. To give an idea of the costs involved: to capture, sterilise, tattoo, treat and release one cat costs on average €133. On top of that, there is a lot of travelling (petrol costs) involved, as some villages are 80km from the nearest vet.

Leslie is always very keen to hear from anyone who adopt or foster kittens and adult cats that are sterilised, tattooed, tested and de-wormed.

In order to help, volunteers of *Les chats du Mercantour* (leschatsdumercantour.com) are holding a charity sale on June 1st and 2nd at the Michelin star restaurant Les Bacchanales in Vence. Numerous high quality items, such as unique pieces of Biot glass will be sold at this beautiful setting at very reasonable prices.

If *Reporter* readers want to help, we're looking for volunteers between May 31 to June 3. Any assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Babette Boot, email

ROUND REFLECTIONS

Here is my entry for your last photo op challenge [pictured above left].

Liz Darley, by email

RECENT COMMENTS ON

forum.rivierareporter.com

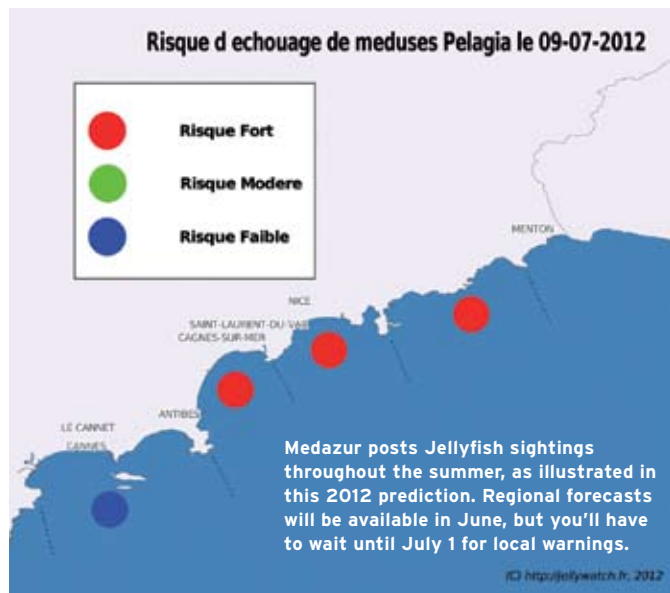
- **Brunch in Nice:** "apparently brunch is becoming more popular here on the Riviera".
- **Scam dish TV alert:** "I still have no bill for my €360 and my dish still does not get Ch 5."
- **Wasps! Help:** "what works best for trying to keep them away?"
- **Anonymous calls:** "A member of our family has recently been the victim of an anonymous caller making false but serious accusations."
- **Overcharged for water bill:** "I have been overcharged for the last 6 years."

WRITE TO US

Letters to the Editor can be sent by post (see page 50) or email to info@rivierareporter.com. Unless specifically marked "not for publication", letters may be published in our Letters pages and may also be added to our website forum. Names are withheld when requested but please note anonymous letters will not be considered.

THE MENACE OF THE MÉDUSE

By Michael Healy



OF all God's creatures among us, some seem less admirable than others: snakes, wasps, cockroaches, and moths. In the nautical field, the *méduse* (jellyfish) romps home unchallenged ... by several lengths. The villain along our Riviera coasts, the *Pelagia noctiluca* (mauve stinger), stings thousands of bathers every year. Finally modern science and computer modelling are being harnessed, financed by the *Conseil Général*, to combat this age-old menace. If nothing were done, our vital summer tourist industry could be threatened with out-of-bounds beaches and infested yacht anchorages. Yacht cooling-water intakes can also become obstructed by these unwelcome creatures. The Oceanographic Laboratory of Villefranche-sur-Mer is investigating jellyfish habits, and how to predict the movement of swarms near our beaches, since it will never be possible to eradicate them.

P. noctiluca is actually increasing its activity, apparently because increased pollution run-off from the land provides more plankton to feed on, while over-fishing is reducing the number of predators like swordfish, sunfish, tuna and turtles. Changing these factors would be a very long-term aim, but forecasting risky areas gave promising results in a trial campaign in summer 2012, ending September 7th. From mid-June, 48-hour forecasts with maps will be issued daily based on measured sea-currents, wind, plankton count, temperature, salt level and pollutants. Go to medazur.obs-vmf.fr and click on "Previsions-d-echouage". These bulletins will also be available for iPhones and iPads with the new *Jellyfish Report* app (see page 15). People are encouraged to report sightings by SMS from anywhere along the Coast to improve data input.

Should prediction fail, many local beaches (and mega-yachts) will try to protect bathers with anti-jellyfish nets, but these are expensive and liable to damage, so a sharp lookout is still necessary. Wear a mask and snorkel (and even a *combinaison* – a wet-suit – which protects from stings) and KEEP CALM. If stung, apply vinegar or seawater – not fresh. No ice or rubbing, consult a pharmacist if needed, and keep an antihistamine handy. ■

RIVIERA REPORTER SUMMER SEASIDE FIREWORKS 2013

For updates see www.rivierareporter.com



..... JUNE

- Sat 1 Bormes les Mimosas
- Fri 21 Port Grimaud (Fete de la musique)
- Sat 29 Marines de Cogolin (7th Festival de la Mer)

..... JULY

- Thurs 4 Cannes (Azerbaijan)
- Fri 5 Cagnes sur Mer (Hippodrome), le Lavandou
- Sat 6 Monaco (Canada)
- Fri 12 Cagnes sur Mer (Hippodrome), Port Frejus
- Sat 13 Agay, Antibes (Pontheil Beach), Beaulieu sur Mer, Bormes les Mimosas, Cagnes sur Mer, Cavalaire, Golfe Juan, la Figueirette, Roquebrune Cap Martin, Saint Laurent du Var, Villefranche sur Mer
- Sun 14 Bandol, Cannes (Greece), Juan les Pins, le Lavandou, Menton, Nice, Port Grimaud, Sainte Maxime, Saint Raphael, Saint Tropez, Theoule
- Fri 19 Port Frejus, le Lavandou
- Sat 20 Cagnes sur Mer (Hippodrome)
- Sun 21 Cannes (Italy), le Lavandou
- Fri 26 Cagnes sur Mer (Hippo), Port Frejus, Mandelieu, le Lavandou, Monaco (Spain)
- Mon 29 Cannes (France)
- Wed 31 le Lavandou

..... AUGUST

- Thurs 1 Juan les Pins
- Fri 2 Port Frejus
- Sat 3 St Jean Cap Ferrat (Nuit Venitienne)
- Sun 4 le Lavandou
- Mon 5 Bandol
- Wed 7 Cannes (Hongkong)
- Thurs 8 Juan les Pins, Villefranche Bay (Passable), Marines de Cogolin (Nocturnes Literaires)
- Fri 9 Port Frejus, Mandelieu, le Lavandou, Monaco (Italy)
- Wed 14 Agay, Cagnes sur Mer, Roquebrune Cap Martin, Saint Raphael, San Remo
- Thurs 15 Cannes (Portugal), Cavalaire, Juan les Pins, le Lavandou, Menton, Nice, Port Grimaud, Sainte Maxime, Saint Tropez, Theoule
- Fri 16 Cagnes sur Mer (Hippodrome), Dramont, Eze bord de Mer
- Sat 17 Bormes les Mimosas
- Wed 21 Bandol, Monaco (China)
- Fri 23 Cagnes sur Mer (Hippodrome), Mandelieu, le Lavandou
- Sat 24 Antibes (Bague Beach), Cannes (France)
- Fri 30 le Lavandou

Plus many "private" fireworks whose details are kept secret, notably on Cap Ferrat. Errors and Omissions excepted – no liability taken for disappointments; check locally!

Michael Healy ©Riviera Reporter. Reproduction authorized with credit: "Riviera Reporter".

A SWELL WAY TO SAFE BOATING

By Nick Kent



Phil Godwin (pictured right, on the left) at Oceanpro in Beaulieu can help you get the Royal Yachting Association's National Powerboat Certificate - Level 2, known in France as the *Permis Bateau*.



MAYBE you're looking to buy a boat, or, more likely in these difficult times, you're looking for the next best thing – hiring one.

Either way you'll need you know the ropes – lines, as seamen call them – before you cast off into the beautiful blue yonder.

To some people, a sailing boat is the only craft that will get you close to the “real” experience of working with the elements of water and wind. Our part of the Med, however, is powerboat city, and not just because it provides a more certain route to looking flash and moving fast.

The winds off the Riviera coast are fickle; you can forget the steady westerlies of the Solent. It sounds like a great idea to sail off to the charming Corsican port of Calvi, but under canvas you could spend a month getting there.

Down in the pretty and understated port of Beaulieu-sur-Mer, Bristolian Phil Godwin and his crew at Oceanpro are ready to launch you on a safe and sensible path to enjoying life on the water.

Oceanpro offers a range of courses, from teaching a crewman on a big yacht how to instruct the pampered guests on driving jet

skis to training up a sailor for the responsibility of skippering. I joined a couple of other guys for the two-day course leading to the Royal Yachting Association's National Powerboat Certificate – Level 2, which incorporates the old Level 1 in the syllabus.

Armed with this bit of plastic, you'll be able to hire a family powerboat in any of the ports along our fabulous coastline – it is the recognised equivalent of the French *Permis Bateau*.

William, one of my crewmates, summed up well Phil's approach to the learning curve we were both on. “He's calm, he gives us time for the instruction to, pardon the expression, sink in. Best of all he's not full of b**** and anecdotes, as many skippers are.” Clearly, this wasn't William's first time afloat.

The Oceanpro way is to re-instil the old Boy Scout catchphrase “Be Prepared” into heads that have perhaps become overconfident or lazy over the years. So the first stop is the port's *Capitainerie* for the weather chart, too much wind forecast and we'll not be able to take one of Phil's smaller craft – a RIB, Rigid Inflatable Boat – out

to sea. While there, check for any notices giving *avis de navigateur*, this will pinpoint any special dangers or temporary trouble spots.

All is well, winds well below the “go off and do something else” threshold that arrives with Force 6 on the Beaufort scale.

There are checks to be made to the safety equipment and the big outboard engine, but these, though vital, are not too time-consuming. Lifejackets must be worn at all times, these I found had come a long way since I donned a cumbersome foam contraption to do my day skipper sailboat course on the Orwell many years ago. We are provided with nifty little red numbers that look like they have been designed by Ermenegildo Zegna and inflate when they come into contact with salt water. Neat.

The berth of our Oceanpro craft is snugly situated in a *coin* of the old port, and extracting the boat without incident is the first challenge. There are drills at turning in tight spaces, and I get found out in a way that I suspect would trip up many other drivers of automatic cars. At the helm, your left hand is on the wheel and your right is on the throttle (I am sure there are

left-handed versions available). Driving a car, I would pull the automatic lever back to go forwards, on the RIB it's more sensible, you press forward to go forward. With me at the wheel we didn't know if we were coming or going for a bit, but you soon get the hang of it.

Controlling the craft in port, particularly its speed, requires concentration and watchfulness. If you go above 3 knots you'll get nicked by the floating gendarmes, and the punishment can be draconian: up to €3750 in fines and six months in the slammer.

Over the two days out at sea we practiced planing – the RIB has a conventional hull under its inflatable sides – a thrilling experience as you concentrate on holding a compass bearing while tearing along at 17 knots. Over and again we took it in turns to come alongside the “man overboard”, learning correct direction to approach depending on the wind and sea state. A pleasant and unexpected surprise in a craft this low and nippy was how dry we all stayed even in choppy seas.

Basic navigation tuition took up a little shoretime, after which we were out in the deserted, sunlit bay once again to put theory into practice. The same applied to recognising

signals on other boats and what buoys tell you about where you should and shouldn't be heading. The RYA course manual is yours to learn and keep – remember homework? And at last I can tie a proper knot. Phil, who lives in Nice with his wife and backroom boss Sally and their children aged 8 and 7, quoted Nelson: “The Devil himself would make a good sailor, if he could only tie a bowline and look aloft.”

At the end of the course Phil had a clear message: OK you have passed the course, but it is essential that you get out on the water and practice what you have learned. That's not so difficult. I calculated that a day on the water for four in a good hire boat would work out about the same costwise as a round of golf. And it's a lot more relaxing.

A phrase of Phil's will come to mind every time I set out to sea: “You have to make an effort to be aware.” So important as that soporific wave of euphoria washes over you at the end of an idyllic day on the miraculous Mediterranean. ■

This course costs €495 for a single person, or €445 each per couple. Contact Phil at info@oceanpro.co.uk or on 04 93 53 65 95. See also oceanpro.co.uk


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Yachting in Action for those who want to work onboard in the deck or interior department. Seven essential courses are covered over a two-week period, and graduates get the STCW95 basic safety training certificate, VHF radio licence, Powerboat and Jet Ski licences. Limited spaces left for the course beginning July 22nd.

The Young Engineer course is a basic engineering knowledge for boats, cars and pleasure craft, teaching students how petrol and diesel engines work and what to do when they don't.

For more see bluwateryachting.com



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BE AWARE OF THE HOT DOG

Our grooming expert EILEEN GEESON brings you the best advice to keep your pet free from trouble in the heat



DOGS can suffer in the hot weather and every year pets left in cars or other enclosed areas die. Even left at home we need to be sure there are safe, cool areas for our dogs to rest and shelter from the heat. Heavily coated dogs can quickly overheat and dehydrate, particularly when exercised in blazing heat.

Even dogs from hot countries, such as the Basenji, naturally bred to withstand higher temperatures than some other breeds, will still seek shade in the heat of the day. Free supply of water should always be available in any weather, but particularly when the temperature rises.

One aspect of welfare we can do something about is the grooming of the different coats. From the thickest coat of the Chow Chow to the silky fineness of the Yorkshire Terrier and the thick wool of the Poodle, there are certain ways in which we can help to keep our pets cool.

Coat types vary in the pedigree and crossbred dog; here are some recommendations for keeping the dog cool.

- Water should be given in small amounts and frequently.
- Trimming, hand stripping, and clipping coats helps keep the dog cool as does the removal of dead hair in the thicker coated breeds.
- Shaving to the skin is not a good idea as a certain amount of hair can protect skin from sunburn.
- Hot weather can irritate and promote skin problems with scratching and itching making matters worse. Mites or "walking dandruff" can easily be picked up from dry grass. The blood sucking "tick" is one parasite to watch for; the sooner the tick is removed the less likely it will cause disease.

The hand stripping of some breeds like the Airedale Terrier or the Wire Fox Terrier not only makes them look smart, it helps to keep them cool and maintain an even

temperature. If we remember that with a normal temperature of 101.5°F – which is naturally higher than ours – the dog is warmer than we are at all times. In hot weather this can be fatal if the dog does not have enough water and fresh air and the natural ability to pant to cool them or they have restricted breathing through short noses and flat faces of breeds like the Pug.

Very thick coats of the Spitz breed dogs, Akita, Pomeranian, Keeshond and others can be very debilitating, and a good brush and comb, removing dead hairs will enable the skin to be aired and kept cooler. Comb these breeds with a medium spaced metal comb to remove the unwanted hair. The dog will feel lighter, brighter and cooler. Spray in cold water as you groom to help cool and allow for easier removal of dead hair.

Dogs with curly coats can get quite matted if dead hair is not removed with brushing and combing. The comb is an essential tool to prevent matting or felting. Heavy felt can form close to the

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR DOG HAS HEATSTROKE

- Pay attention to the symptoms and respond quickly.
- Get into the shade. Apply cool water to the inner thighs, stomach and foot pads of the dog.
- Use running water. A tap or hose, but never submerge your dog in water, such as in a pool or tub – this could cool the dog too rapidly, leading to further complications like cardiac arrest.
- Use cool – not cold – water. Using ice or extremely cold water slows blood flow, thus slowing the cooling process.
- Don't cover the dog. Sitting with the wet dog in a car with the air conditioner blowing is an ideal cooling situation.
- Keep the dog moving. The circulating blood tends to pool in certain areas if the dog is lying down, thus preventing the cooled blood from circulating back to the core.
- Allow the dog to drink small amounts of water. Cooling the dog is the first priority. Hydration is the next.
- Avoid giving human performance drinks. If you can't get an overheated dog to drink water, try offering chicken- or beef-based broths.

Source: dogchannel.com
Dog Heatstroke Survival Guide



skin and will need to be split apart with fingertips before removing with a mat breaker and/or the end of a comb.

The Poodle is one breed of the thick curly-type coated dogs that generally benefits from being clipped. The Lamb trim is popular in many countries for the pet dog of many breeds, but in hot weather a shorter "sporting" clip can be adopted. In Britain it is accepted that this breed can be exhibited in the show ring in any traditional trim, but in any country where rules apply a Poodle must be in the Lion or Continental trim, it can be kept cooler by having the "continental" style of trimming which gives the rear legs, underneath, and front legs access to fresh air. Unless the dog has become accustomed to being shaved close and thereby grown a thick protective layer of hair, it is not a good idea to shave them close when the weather is too hot as sunburn will more than likely result.

Silky coated dogs are perhaps more suited to hot weather, but here again good grooming with the removal of dead and loose hair will improve condition and help to keep the dog cooler. Many of the silky coated breeds kept as pets rather than exhibited in the show ring, such as the Australian silky and the Yorkshire terrier are clipped to about 5cm of coat for easy maintenance and a cool look.

Dogs with pale or white coats often have brown or pink skin that can easily suffer sunburn. Don't ever feel hesitant about using sunscreen on the top of

bare patches around the muzzle and on the delicate pink area behind the nose.

Summertime is a blessing, but care must be taken with our dogs to ensure they are protected from heat exhaustion, which in many cases is fatal. At home, travelling or working the dog needs our thoughts on ways to keep cool. A little thought can save lives.

If you suspect that your dog is suffering from heat exhaustion (see box) – look for dry mouth, heavy panting, reduced skin elasticity and sunken eyes – immediately call the vet for advice. ■

TIPS FROM LA TOILETTEUSE

- Regular brushing with a slicker brush (*carde brosse*) is the best way to keep all coats in good condition as it removes dust and dead fur, which reduces skin irritations, especially in hot weather; on coarser-coated dogs, a Mars King Coat is perfect for removing excess fur.
- Use Frontline or a similar monthly treatment, either by spray or pipettes, against flea and tick infestation. Also essential is protection against leishmaniasis caused by mosquito bites. A scallibor collar or inoculation at the vets is advised.
- Never spray water on a Bichon, Coton de Tulear or Poodle when grooming as it will only mat the coat.

Karen Fraser, Toilette à Domicile
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Honey, where did you hide the truffles?

By Lisa Pepin

American Lisa Pepin and her French husband Johann have an 11-hectare organic farm in the Luberon. They each have days jobs, but come the weekend they change into gentleman farmers planting trees, tending to bees and giving truffle tours.

March 10, 2013

TODAY we were out the door at 8am in search of olive trees. A friend who rides her horse along the back trails of this area tipped us off that there might be wild trees growing on a hill overlooking the village. It's expensive to buy an olive tree from a nursery; we've transplanted 320 wild trees onto our property over the years and it hasn't cost us a thing.

Jackpot! There are indeed trees growing there, but a storm knocked over a huge old oak, which is now blocking the path and making car access impossible. I tried to look inconspicuous to anyone who might have passed by while Johann went back home to collect a wheelbarrow.

It's not as if we're stealing. In fact, since the big freeze of 1956 it's legal to transplant

olive trees from the wild for cultivation. That being said, we would just like to avoid the conversation that would inevitably occur if someone came across us:

"What are you doing? What a good idea, I think I'll come back with my own shovel."

This is why we head out early, before the French have had their big Sunday lunch and digestive walk.

March 18, 2013

THERE was a fire in the vineyard next to our property today. The *pompiers* came to investigate but aren't sure how it started, especially considering that it was raining quite heavily when it happened.

This is the third fire in less than a year. The first two were over the summer, the result of a downed powerline, and each destroyed a part of one of our olive groves. One was planted by Johann's grandfather in the early 70s and the other was here before the family even bought the house. Our tree expert estimates that they're at least 80-years-old.

Today's fire died out before it reached our newest grove of olive trees, the oldest of which is just three. This is a lucky break because Johann's grandfather (who is now 90) gave this house and land to Johann when he turned 18, and he is

terribly proud of our new grove along with our clever and ecological way of obtaining the trees. Seeing it burn would have done what the Nazis couldn't while he was in the French Resistance ...

March 23, 2013

OUR shipment of truffle trees came in today. Unlike olive trees, these can't be transplanted from the wild. Their roots have been given a healthy dose of truffle spores, which makes it much more likely that truffles will grow from them in five to ten years, though it's not guaranteed. And at €15 for a "tree" that is only about five inches high, it's an expensive gamble when your goal is to fill several hectares.

The soil has to be just right, both in composition and in pH level. These saplings need to be planted six metres apart and in a south-facing area that gets as much sunshine as possible. In fact, unlike other types of fungi, such as mushrooms, the truffle likes a warm, dry environment, which is why it does well in Provence, particularly at the top of a hill, where rainwater will drain away from them.

Even if you get everything right though, you still may not be lucky enough to find truffles when the tree matures. And then there's a good chance that a *sanglier* will



find them before you do. But the truffle's most deadly predator is man. We went in with a friend on this particular bulk shipment, and this is his second of the season. His first planting went into the ground on a Saturday afternoon and by Sunday morning, someone had pulled them out and made off with all 65 trees.

The tree thief either didn't know that truffle trees cannot be transplanted – once in the ground, they need to stay put if they are going to produce – or maybe he took them out of spite. Either way, our friend is €1000 out of pocket.



March 31

TODAY we found a new path to some wild olive trees that is actually wide enough for the car. We got to work digging out the first of the trees when suddenly we heard voices. Thinking it was hikers and wanting to avoid conversation, we decided to lie low until they passed. Out of the woods came three cyclists, quickly followed by a group of five, then still more. They kept on coming until finally we remembered seeing signs advertising a big mountain bike race today. We hid in the bushes for an hour, shaking our heads at the ridiculousness of it all.

April 6

WHEN our British neighbours bought their house more than ten years ago, they were surprised to find locals from the area at the property on moving day. They weren't there as a welcoming committee, but to make sure the former owners hadn't left anything behind. *Anything*. They took light bulbs, doorknobs, potted plants, the garden hose and even went so far as to dig up some of the rose bushes in the garden.

Now in the market for a smaller house, they recently told us that they would be putting the property up for sale. In respect for tradition, they invited us to come by and dig up all the olive trees before they leave. And since we are big believers in tradition, we agreed.

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Katie Bills combines delicious asparagus with eggs for an indulgent brunch, light summer supper or a starter

WINE'S WORST ENEMY

IT'S tricky to find a wine that goes well with asparagus as it has a sulphur compound (methyl mercaptan) that gives the wine a metallic taste.

Tip: When serving these green spears, try "cool-climate wines" (like those from northern France) made from grapes that ripen slower and therefore produce higher acidity and more complex flavours. This helps bring food, even asparagus, to life.



EGGS EN COCOTTE WITH ASPARAGUS WRAPPED IN PARMA HAM

INGREDIENTS

Asparagus spears (around 5 per person)
Thinly sliced Parma ham
2 medium fresh eggs
2 tablespoons of crème fraîche
Fresh chives and pea shoots to garnish
Quality extra virgin olive oil
Sea salt, Black pepper

For the asparagus

Cut slices of Parma ham into thin strips.
Wrap diagonally around the asparagus spears until they are covered, and lay on a baking sheet. Lightly brush with olive oil and black pepper.
Bake under the grill for between 8 to 10 minutes, or until slightly crisp.

For the Eggs en Cocotte

Place one tablespoon of crème fraîche in a buttered ramekin, followed by one egg.
Repeat again to make sure the eggs and crème fraîche are spread out. Season with sea salt and black pepper.
Finely chop chives and scatter over the top of the dish with the pea shoots.
Place the ramekins in the oven and bake at 190°C/375°F for about 15 minutes, according to your preference for eggs. The whites should be firm to the touch and the yolks soft.

Mister Piggy goes to market

Your guide to what's in season from Dominique Piette, stallholder at the Marché Forville, Cannes and his friend Mister Piggy

- Market shoppers have been looking in vain for the delicious local **cherries**; the cold and wet spring has decimated the crop.
- **Strawberries** need sun, sun and more sun to restore their flavour.
- **Broad beans** have come down in price and can now be found for around €2 a kilo. The smaller ones, *fevettes*, which are delicious eaten raw with salami, are still around but will set you back €6 or so a kilo.
- Local **peas** remain expensive at up to €7 a kilo.
- Don't miss out on the excellent **new potatoes**, the Amandine variety are plentiful and are priced to sell.



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SOBERING THOUGHTS FOR THE WINE TRADE

The French have a drink problem – they're not glugging back their national tippie in the way they used to



THE latest surveys show that the number of wine drinkers in France is declining at a rate that is alarming vineyard owners and supporters of the traditional way of life in the country.

In 1980, about half the French population drank wine almost every day. That figure has slumped to 17% now. At the same time, the number of people who never touch the stuff has doubled to 38%.

Some might say that the 1965 figure of average wine consumption showed a nation of excessive boozers, with 160 litres going down the hatch every year. But now that figure will soon drop below 30 litres if the trend continues, which is likely.

It has emerged that French society's attitude to wine has changed radically through the generations. Those now in old age grew up with wine as a part of everyday life, always present on the table. The middle-aged still drink wine, but see it as a treat, spending more on average than their parents on a bottle of wine,

but not drinking it with every meal. The young generally shun wine, only starting to sip in their mid-to-late twenties.

Cultural commentators have pointed out that the once sacred French values of respect for tradition, conviviality and the appreciation of the finer things in life are in mortal danger.

Journalist Périco Légasse is adamant. "Wine should not be a trophy product that we roll out to celebrate the grand occasions or to show off our social status. It is a drink intended to accompany the meal and provide a complement to whatever is on our plate," he says. "Wine has gone from being popular to being elitist."

If you go back in time, you will find that elitism in wine is nothing new. Although drinking (very weak) wine was widespread in areas with vineyards simply because it was safer than water, the working class didn't get truly hooked on the stuff until the First World War saw men in the trenches stiffening their

courage with huge quantities of *pinard* – a very cheap and rather nasty wine.

After the war, previously wine-free areas such as Brittany, Normandy and Picardy saw a boom in the *bar à vin*, and the wine-drinking habit became universal until the rot started to set in the Sixties.

The main factors contributing to the decline in wine drinking are:

More people work in offices and forswear wine at lunchtime for fear of nodding off in the afternoon.

Mushrooming car ownership and the alcohol control it implies.

A rise in popularity of beers and mixers, particularly among the young.

A rising Muslim population.

Denis Saverot, editor of the magazine *La Revue du vin de France*, becomes heated as he gives his view of where the blame lies for the decline in wine.

"It is our bourgeois, technocratic elite with their campaigns against drink-driving and alcoholism, lumping wine in with every other type of alcohol, even though it should be regarded as totally different," he says.

"Recently I heard one senior health official saying that wine causes cancer 'from the very first glass'. That came from a Frenchman. I was flabbergasted. In cahoots with the health lobby and the politically correct, our elites prefer to keep the country on chemical anti-depressants and wean us off wine.

"Just look at the figures. In the 1960s, we were drinking 160 litres each a year and weren't taking any pills. Today we consume 80 million packets of anti-depressants, and wine sales are collapsing. Wine is the subtlest, most civilised, most noble of anti-depressants. But look at our villages. The village bar has gone, replaced by a pharmacy."

In the view of this militant wine lover, the country is following the undrunk wine down the drain. ■

In the pink

Our pick of the region's best rosés

IF red wine is, in the words of Leclerc Cannes Rocheville caviste Michel Roulcois, a wine of the earth, then rosé is a wine of the sun.

In our region, the amount of sunshine in a growing season determines the taste and strength of the rosé. This type of wine is made from red wine grapes, typically Cinsault, Grenache and Syrah, which after crushing are left in contact with the skins for as little as an hour to give the rosé blush.

A point to bear in mind when shopping for the "local" rosés (the lion's share grown in the Var) is that the posher wines, Bandol, for instance, are governed as to the proportion of the various grape varieties that can be used to make the wine of that "controlled area" – *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée*. Therefore, these "greater" wines will generally have less variation of style and taste between years – something that does not apply to the Coteaux Varois, for instance, which can vary proportions, and therefore greatly alter the wine (for good or bad) from vintage to vintage.

We've come up with a selection from Leclerc that caters for most tastes and budgets.

For a house wine, the **Coteaux d'Aix-en-Provence Terres Ocrées Méditerranéen** (€3.23) takes some beating. Light and refreshing, it's a perfect drink for everyday. A plus is the screw top, so common now in British supermarkets but still an anathema to most French wine drinkers, who seem to have an addiction to corks. We struggle to understand this, as with modern screw tops the wine is less at risk from cork faults and keeps better when opened. This was the only screw top bottle of "proper" French wine we could find in Leclerc.

Along with the Coteaux

d'Aix, the Coteaux Varois, although considered lesser wines than their Côtes de Provence neighbours, can produce delightful lighter-style wines, such as the **Domaine St Jean Le Vieux** (€5.05).

On the St Tropez peninsula, the wines have, we find, a little taste of the sea about them – **Ramatuelle Rosé** (€5.70) is cheap for a drinkable Côtes de Provence wine.

Moving across the Var, **Château de Brigue Côtes de Provence** also represents good value at €5.75.

Rising toward the €7 mark, an important threshold for the budget-conscious wine lover, comes **Domaine du Bercaill l'Opale** at €6.50. This vineyard at Puget-sur-Argens works with handicapped adults, teaching them skills to improve their chances of leading independent lives. It's a great place to visit for a wine tasting followed by a simple but delicious (and cheap) lunch – best to book on 04 94 19 54 09.

New to us and a discovery worth sharing is the wine of Sainte Victoire – covered by the Côtes de Provence appellation but inhabiting a micro-region at the foot of the great mountain of Cézanne. **Le Cengle** is €6.80 a bottle.

Château de Berne is a well-known and well-made Côtes de Provence, the reputation reflected in the price of €8.30. There is no need to make the wine stand out by sticking it in a square (and therefore heavy) bottle, but they did it anyway.

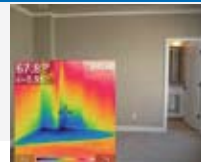
For our last recommendation we change gears and appellations and present the first-rate **Bandol Ray-Jane** (€11.48), a rosé of some style to accompany a high-class fish supper. ■

Prices, quoted at the time of going to press, may vary.

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DEFYING GRAVITY IN MOUGINS

By Pippa Jane Wielgos

PHOTOGRAPHY has been top of France's political culture for a number of years. This is evident in premier shows such as *Les Recontres Arles Photographie* (July 1-Sept 22), and Paris Photo (Nov 14-17), which had its inaugural show in Los Angeles at the centenary of Paramount Pictures this April.

This summer the 18th edition Prix HSBC pour la Photographie, created under the aegis of the Fondation de France, will show the work of two little-known photographic talents at the Musée de la Photographie André Villers in Mougins, June 29-Sept 16.

The two artists selected from the ten nominees include Cerise Doucède, a former student of the École de Photographie SPEOS Paris (2009-2010), whose work has been described as “defying gravity” in a series of dreamlike surreal images against backdrops of unperturbed human presence, and Noémie Goudal, a former student of the MA Photography from the Royal College of Art, 2010, who juxtaposes nature and culture, or, as she puts it, the organic as “invaded” by the man-made.

Oliver Lécine, Director of the Musée de la Photographie André Villers, was selected by the iconographic world-recognised photographer of Picasso, André Villers, to run the museum and is in charge of developing its prestigious fine art exhibitions policy. M Lécine commented: “The HSBC prize enjoys a hugely prestigious international reputation. Besides the outstanding quality of the photographers, the prestige of this prize brings international attention, on which one should speculate and visit.”

He paid tribute to the legacy of André Villers, the museum founder and a close personal friend of Picasso. Villers together with other seminal 20th-century photographers documented the personal side of Picasso's life, along with leading European modernist artists and creative personalities who visited Mougins during the formative period of post-war European modernism.

“André Villers not only has a very

close relationship with the museum and artistic legacy of the area, but he became one of the greatest portrait photographers of many of the artists, including Picasso, that have lived or visited the area,” said M. Lécine. “André

Villers has made a significant donation to the museum. This comprises not only a unique primary collection of his own photographs, but also the work of other influential 20th-century photographers by asking friends such as Robert Doisneau,



Image: Cerise Doucède



Image: Noémie Goudal

Musée de la photographie André Villers in Mougins hosts the HSBC Prix pour la Photographie with work by photographers Cerise Doucède and Noémie Goudal.

Images reproduction courtesy of HSBC Prix pour la Photographie.

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David Douglas Duncan and Lucien Clergue to contribute."

Winners of the Prix HSBC pour la Photographie were chosen from a panel chaired by Peter Boyles, CEO of HSBC Continental Europe and Head of Commercial Banking Europe, and which included Dr Emmanuelle de l'Ecotais, who co-specialises in early photography and is a Man Ray expert in charge of photography of Modern Art of the City of Paris Museum. ■

Pippa Jane Wielgos studied art at Bath Academy of Art and journalism. Her specialism is art research and photography.

The Principality of Seborga transformed into a cultural reservation



Wahshungah study by Chris Pappen (Kaw)

ENDORSED by the British Museum and supported by the Principality of Seborga, *Indigenous Brilliance*, a major "hit and run" exhibition on contemporary American Indian Art, takes place June 9th-23rd. Twenty-five artists from 15 tribes will be exhibiting paintings, drawings, sculptures

and crafts, many of them for the first time in Europe. This is a multi-media event with stand-up comedy, poetry, musical performance, digital art, activism and documentaries.

For more see rivieralife.tv/riviera_life_IB.htm or contact Mark Dezzani on +39 329 0116 932.



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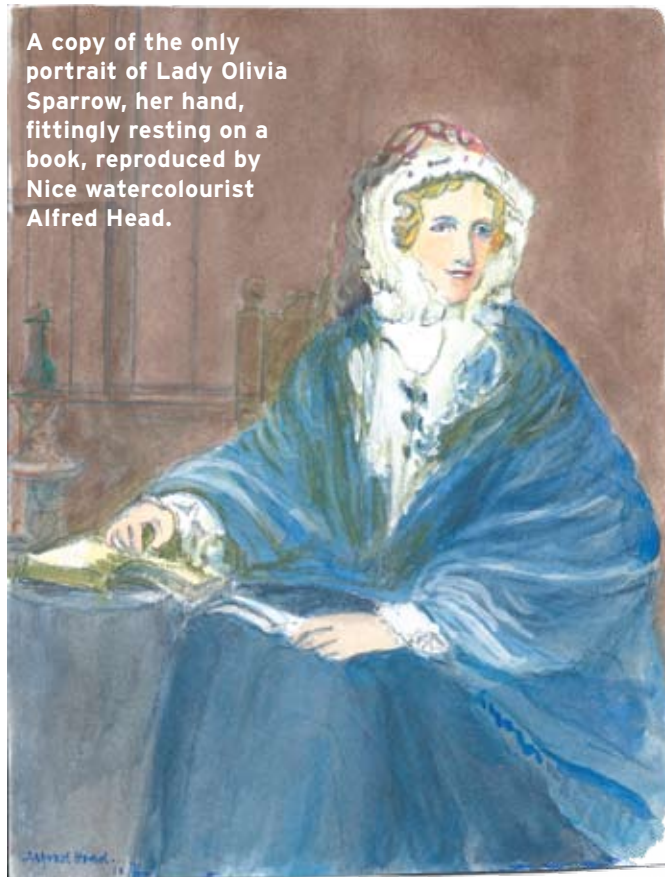
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FROM A RIVIERA PAST:

THE WILL OF IRON WITH A HEART OF GOLD

By Judit Kiraly



A copy of the only portrait of Lady Olivia Sparrow, her hand, fittingly resting on a book, reproduced by Nice watercolourist Alfred Head.

THE recent passing of the Iron Lady, reminded me of another unusual woman of an earlier era also known for her determination, power and decisiveness. The comparison must stop here, as the lady who is subject of this article was also known for her ... exceptional generosity.

Lady Olivia Acheson was the daughter of the Earl of Gosford, a wealthy landowner. She was baptised in 1775, received an excellent education at home and in 1797 married, in Dublin, Brigadier Robert Bernard Sparrow of Worlingham Hall, Suffolk. In six years of marriage she had three children, sadly losing her first baby. In 1805 her young husband died age 32 from a fever at sea, leaving behind an immensely rich and very attractive young widow. Her beauty was legendary even in her older years, as was her grace and generosity.

She received many offers of remarriage, but refused them all, preferring to dedicate herself to her children and her two intellectual vocations: religion and education for the poor and the blind. Her wealth was considerable, but unfortunately it could not provide what was most important to her children: good health. Her son John was suffering from tuberculosis, and her daughter Millicent had a strange neurological problem causing fainting spells and unconsciousness, possibly epilepsy.

Nice was not suitable for her fragile children so Lady Olivia

built a large villa (no longer there) in 1817-18 in Villa Franca (Villefranche), which had an easy approach by boat. Since her villa had to have access by land too, she enlarged the seaside path to Nice and made it suitable for coaches, at her own expense. She was also a contributor to the construction of the first portion of the Promenade des Anglais, planned by Reverend Lewis Way to provide work for the poor in Nice. The beggars soon fled and the work was completed by professional *cantonniers*.

In the early 1800s the aristocratic British residents were just starting to establish the colony of the *Croix de Marbre* suburb of Nice, which was far from the old town and situated near the seaside, around the Road to France (today called the *rue de France*). They started to plan for the first Protestant church in this very Catholic town that still belonged to the House of Savoy. It was Lady Olivia who managed to secure the Royal Patent from the King of Savoy through her cousin in Turin to build a Protestant chapel in Nice.

The cost of the chapel was largely financed by Lady Olivia who gave the astounding sum of £300 and Millicent £100, roughly a third of the cost of the land purchase and construction. The yearly (!) wage of a lady's-maid was about £10 at the time. The chapel had the rather curious specification in the Royal Patent that it could have no exterior indication that it was a ... chapel.

Lady Olivia needed a place of worship for she suffered a great loss during the spring of 1819 when her son John died at Villefranche aged only 19. She continued to winter in Nice and spent the rest of the year on her estates in England and Ireland.

In Villefranche, she built a school for underprivileged girls, but the locals forbade them to enter and so the school never functioned. She started the first library by donating 300 books to the church in Nice, and this was the start of the English Library.

In 1834 (three decades before the Education Act of 1870), Olivia opened a school in Leigh for poor girls who were rarely taught to read in that era. But she didn't stop there; she believed in providing the blind with means of earning a living, educating them and providing a dignified life, not just survival through begging. Lady Sparrow employed the blind Reverend J.W. Burke as a domestic chaplain at Brampton. This remarkable man worked hard to teach and train the blind within the Association for the Welfare of the Blind, receiving contributions from many winter residents in Nice.

Lady Sparrow's family life was not what she deserved. Her daughter Millicent, Duchess of Manchester, died in 1848 after a long illness and her husband claimed that shortly before dying, she rose from her bed to tell him to cancel her previous will (in which she left everything to her children) and make himself sole beneficiary. A long lawsuit followed, but Lady Olivia couldn't prove that the Duke of Manchester was lying, and thus her grandchildren lost most of their inheritance. She lived to the unusually great age of 85, died on her estate in 1863, having buried both of her children, but not her faith. ■

may

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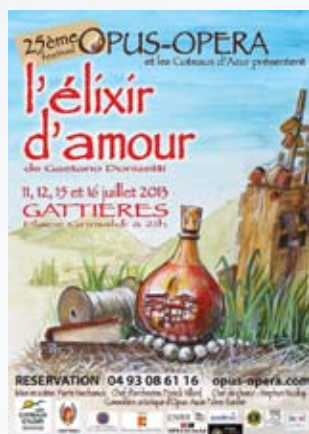
Fri May 31 and Sat June 1: at Theatre Antibea, home of the Red Pear Theatre. Donations upwards of €20, all going directly to Cambodia where we have helped build three schools, a soon-to-be-opened clinic and a guesthouse! Please contact to reserve. *Tuesdays With Morrie* is the stage adaptation of the No. 1 International bestseller, directed and produced by Breda Cashe and performed by Terry Byrne as Morrie Schwartz and Andy Murray as Mitch Albom. As *Variety* says "You'll laugh. You'll Cry".

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The organisers all work on a voluntary basis, and are also putting on a series of "apéro-opéra" evenings in neighbouring villages started in May, with more in June and July.

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june

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Wed June 5, 20h30: *Ristretto* directed by Errol Girdlestone at Spéracèdes village church. An *a cappella* concert of English choral music by Dowland, Weelkes, Pearsall, Gibbons etc. Free entry.

POSH PARAPHERNALIA

sunny-bank.org

Thurs June 6, 10h-15h: Posh paraphernalia, library, bric-a-brac light lunch and refreshments at Sunny Bank's The Grange 815 ch des Gourettes, Mouans Sartoux. Other dates: June 13, 20, 27, July 4, 11, 18. Sat June 15, 10h-15h: Open House with two course lunch and refreshments at the Grange. Also July 20.

BOOK SIGNING VALBONNE

04 93 12 21 42
englishbookcentre.com

Fri June 7, 9h30-12h30: Kim Defforge signs copies of her new book. Come enjoy a glass of wine! English Book Centre at 12, rue Alexis Julien Valbonne.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE QUEEN'S CORONATION

Betty 04 93 99 48 83

Fri June 7, 16h: The Association France Grande Bretagne Cannes will be celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Queen's Coronation with champagne toast tea at the prestigious Carlton Hotel in Cannes. All are very welcome. Please telephone Betty.

INDIGENOUS BRILLIANCE

+39 329 0116 932
indbrill@rivieralife.tv

June 9-23: The Principality of Seborga is hosting *Indigenous Brilliance*, a major "hit and run" exhibition on contemporary American Indian Art. A multi-media event with stand-up comedy, poetry, music, digital art, activism and documentaries.

★ HENNING MANKELL BOOK SIGNING

04 93 34 74 11

Wed June 12, 14h30: At Heidi's English Bookshop in Antibes, Henning Mankell will be giving a talk and signing his new book *A Treacherous Paradise* (due out early June) and his back list. Drinks will naturally be served.

STITCH N BITCH

04 93 12 21 42

englishbookcentre.com

Thurs June 13 & Thurs June 27, 14h: A very friendly group with a range of abilities, all types of stitchery (knitting/crochet/any type of needlework) all levels and walk-ins welcome. Meeting above the English Book Centre Valbonne.

JUMPING INTERNATIONAL DE CANNES

jumpingcannes.com

Thurs June 13-Sat June 15: British riders Tina Fletcher, Ben Maher, Nick Skelton, Alexandra Thornton and Michael Whitaker compete with the world's best riders at Stade des Hespérides, 50 avenue de Lérins, Cannes. Free entry in daytime; evenings €25 Thur, €27 Fri & €30 Sat.

VIAC - viac.fr

Thurs June 13th: Visit to the Caves of Villecroze. Details on website.

SWEDISH ART MONACO

06 38 91 08 83 - galerieoscar.com

Fri June 14, 18h30-20h30: Galerie Oscar introduces Swedish artist Lisa Rinneuvuo and her work at Zest restaurant in Port Hercule, Monaco.

AMIAc

Kim 04 93 01 20 37 - 06 45 95 02 28

Sat June 15: Mas Peyrebelle Valbonne. Please phone to reserve. Interested in joining the Club? Contact Secretary Doug Attwood on 04 92 97 50 72.

SUMMER SOLSTICE

internationalclub.fr

Sat Jun 22: Annual International Club of the Riviera Party hosted by Rose Bouyx in Rouquefort Les Pins. Details to follow on website.

FESTI'VENCE/ ENSEMBLE

VOCAL SYRINX

ensemblevocalsyrinx.com - vence.fr

Sun June 23, 17h: Festi'Vence outdoor festival on the steps of the Mairie de Vence Ensemble Vocal Syrinx conducted by Francesca Tosi.

NICE IRONMAN

ironmanfrance.com

Sun June 23: 3.8 km swim, 180km bike, 42km run.

LA TERRASSE DES ARTS CHATEAUNEUF DE GRASSE

06 82 90 30 08

Fri June 28, 20h30: An evening of opera with singers from The Opera Academy of Copenhagen directed by Friedrich Gurtler. Call for information and reservations.

PROM PARTY NICE

08 92 70 74 07 - nicetourisme.com

Sat June 29, July 14, Aug 11 & Aug 15, 21h30: the Promenade des Anglais becomes a huge dance floor with free concerts to dance, listen and hang out! On July 14 and August 15 there is also fireworks at 22h. On June 29, the Prom'party joins the great home of the Tour de France in celebration beginning this weekend.

july

ENGLISH AND FRENCH LANGUAGE SUMMER ACTIVITY CAMPS

06 47 95 29 33 - actionkidsclub.com

July 1-14, July 14-27 and July 28-Aug 10: English and French language activity camps for ages 5-14. Kids have a great time while improving language skills. Focus on 'hands-on' participation.

NICE JAZZ FESTIVAL

nicejazzfestival.fr

Mon July 8-Fri July 12: At Place Masséna and Jardin Albert 1er.

MONACO FÊTE

PICASSO

grimaldiforum.com

Fri July 12-Sept 15, 10h-20h: Espace Ravel du Grimaldi Forum. Thurs until 22h. Entry: €8.

53RD JAZZ À JUAN FESTIVAL

jazzajuan.com

Fri July 12-Sun July 21: Contact for ticket info.

VIAC - viac.fr

Fri July 12th: Garden Party. Details on website.

FIREWORKS

100TH TOUR DE FRANCE

letour.fr



4TH STAGE NICE

Tues July 2: After the 100th Tour de France starts in Corsica on June 29, the 4th stage will be 20km team time trial in Nice.

5TH STAGE CAGNES/MER

Wed July 3: The race kicks off from Cagnes-sur-Mer and heads toward Aix-en-Provence, then Montpellier ... before finishing July 21 in Paris.

DINNER CRUISE

internationalclub.fr

Sun July 14: Dinner Cruise to watch fireworks in Cannes. Details on website.

RIVIERA OPERA GALA, BASTIDE ST MATHIEU

04 97 01 10 00 - 06 79 31 62 25

Wed July 17: Italian opera arias and choruses plus part of *La Bohème*. This is a reprise of the show that has been such a success each year. Opera, gala dinner, wines and champagne on the starlit terraces of Bastide St Mathieu, Grasse. Tickets €150 per person; or tables of 10 for €1350.

AMIAc

John 04 93 65 00 58

Thurs July 18: Les Relais des Pinedes Mouans Sartoux. Please phone to reserve. Interested in joining the Club? Contact Secretary Doug Attwood on 04 92 97 50 72.

MONTE-CARLO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA CONCERT SERIES PALAIS PRINCIER

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Thurs July 18, Sun July 21, Thurs July 25, Sun Aug 4, Thurs Aug 8. 21h30: Symphonic concert by the Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra at the Cour d'Honneur, Palais Princier. Tickets from €19.

TED DEXTER TROPHY CRICKET MATCH: ICR V ENTRECASTEAUX CC

internationalclub.fr

Sat July 20: Annual Ted Dexter Trophy Cricket Match. Picnic Lunch. Details on website.

INTERNATIONAL FIREWORKS

COMPETITION CANNES

festival-pyrotechnique-cannes.com

Thurs July 24- Sat Aug 24, 22h: Six evenings of pyrotechnic rivalry at the Baie de Cannes.

WE ARE THE WORLD

internationalclub.fr

Sat July 27: International Club of the Riviera highlight. Details on website.

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LOOKING FOR PROPERTY? See the Realty Report on page 51

Apartment for Sale. 2 room apt. 55m² in Le Cannet in small building. Residential district, very good state. €180,000. Call 04 93 69 42 69 (Fr).

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MISC

THE FRANCE-GRANDE-BRETAGNE ASSOCIATION

IN CANNES holds French and English classes from beginners to advanced including conversation every Saturday from 6th October 2012 from 2pm to 5pm followed by tea and biscuits. We also organise a social event every month. We are on the first floor of the Maison des Association Cannes, 9 rue Louis Maille, in Cannes (behind the train station off rue d'Alsace). Cannes. Parking free and available. More info: Iris on 04 93 97 86 32 or Odette on 04 93 49 37 01

HANDS-ON COOKING CLASSES IN OLD NICE

Looking to build your repertoire of Provençal recipes? Nice-based food writer Rosa Jackson offers market tours and hands-on cooking classes in English for visitors and residents. Discounts are available for residents who sign up for several classes.

For more information, see www.petitsfarcis.com

English American Library, 12 rue de France, Nice. Open since 1862, it's one of the oldest libraries on the Riviera, and the largest English-language library in Southern Europe. Open 10-11 and 3-5 Tues to Sat. Closed Sun and Mon. 20,000 volumes of fiction, non-fiction, DVDs & English press. Tourist €6/week or €26 for yearly memberships. See: www.nice-english-library.org

The English Book Centre in Valbonne has a Stitch n Bitch, a very friendly group with a range of abilities. Next meetings are June 13th & 27th at 14h, above the shop. Tues 10h30-12h: English improvement sessions. Thurs 10h45-12: French improvement sessions. Walk-ins welcome for any of these groups. Contact the English Book Centre to confirm: 04 93 12 21 42 - www.englishbookcentre.com.

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