

Bibliothèque
Anglo-Française



June 2026
Vol. 4, Issue 6

The Librarian

President's Message

I awoke one morning recently with a solution to something that had been going round my head for some time - where to plant a particular shrub that someone had given me. The way the solution suddenly presented itself to me made me think about the machinations going on inside these wonderful things called brains, which in turn brought to mind the Beano comic strip of the Numskulls.

However, an updated, and more adult, setting and characters seemed more appropriate. The brain would be Slough House in the Slow Horses series, the characters doing the bidding would be the mishmash of failed spies doomed to reside in Slough House for the foreseeable future. Jackson Lamb sends out his orders then sits back in his solitary office at the top of the house and the underlings do the research, until they come up with some sort of answer, or quite often, another question, whereupon he swears profusely at them, thinks again and finds and acts on a solution. Et voila, sorted.

P.S. In case you are interested, the shrub has been allocated its place, but is waiting in a cool(ish) corner until suitable weather arrives.

Sue

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chat**

JUNGLE DRUMS

Save the Dates—Quiz Night Autumn Season

For those of you with an extensive social life we propose to hold Library Quiz Nights on the last Friday of the relevant months, with the exception of December when we thought turnout would be low on the 25th!!

- ◇ Friday 30th October 2026
- ◇ Friday 27th November 2026
- ◇ Friday 18th December 2026

Fripaffairs Fashion show 2026

The Fripaffairs fifth (bi annual) fashion show was held on 5th June 2026 in the Parisot Salle de Fetes and was as usual a highly enjoyable and successful evening, During the evening the committee made a further donation to their chosen charity “MSF” of € 3000 bringing the total raised by them for their charities in the first 10 years of their operation to € 140,000. A remarkable figure to raise by any standard . From rags to riches!

Summer Hours at VdR Dechetterie

Be aware the the dechetterie in Villefranche de Rouergue has moved onto “Summer Hours” to avoid the worst of the heat and is therefore now open from 07.30 to 14.00 non stop.

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**The
Book
Review
By
Elaine Morgan**

“Calamity Club” by Kathryn Stockett

Stockett’s first novel “The Help” was a runaway success. In that story she satirised the white women of Mississippi in the 1960’s. This privileged group of women were obsessed with installing separate lavatories for their black servants – the Help. They saw no irony in having their children raised in close intimacy with the Help yet were horrified by the idea of sharing a bathroom with them. The novel portrays the secret rebellion of the Help.

“Calamity Club” is set in the era of the Great Depression in Mississippi. It also highlights some social issues but they are not so front and centre as they are in “The Help”. Here we have two narrators: Meg who is an orphan seemingly abandoned by her mother and taken to a grim state orphanage where she is mistreated: then there is Birdie who comes from a tiny town in the state and who, at the age of 24 have given up hope of marriage or escape. She is witty and funny and observes her fellow man with interest and irony.

Birdie and her family have fallen behind on their state taxes, like many other homeowners at that time. They face losing their house. They have lost contact with Frances, Birdie’s sister who has married money and not asked them to the wedding. So Birdie is sent to beg her rich sister for 250 \$.

Meantime Meg is trapped in the orphanage. She is clever and artistic but draws a picture of Jesus giving the finger, the meaning of which she does not understand but she is severely punished by being taken out of schooling and shut in a mouldy room with little to do.

We learn that Frances works as a volunteer in the orphanage which is run by a truly sadistic, hypocritical woman called Garnett. Frances is in thrall to Garnett and learning that the orphanage needs its books need sorting out she introduces Birdie. Thus Birdie meets Meg and the two stories converge,

The plot of the novel relies heavily on coincidence, but then so do most of those by Dickens. Stockett is adept at creating characters and suspense. Birdie is very funny and you want her and Meg to thrive and overcome the odds.

The social and legal highlighted are around a programme started in the US in the early 19C. This was the belief that promiscuous women, mentally ill people and many other categories should have their fertility controlled. Many were forcibly sterilised and women could be taken off the streets and examined for disease if they were thought to be acting promiscuously. Many of these draconian laws are still on the statute books.

Garnett is a female monster who represents the Anti-Vice League, as it was called. However Stockett balances her character by giving us several middle-aged white women who are compassionate and open -minded and who help Meg and Birdie.

It’s a great story. Maybe not as good as “The Help” but still highly entertaining.

THE HEAR AFTER

We all like having something new, but the gilt soon wears off the gingerbread if it starts going wrong or the after-sales service isn't up to snuff. However, I'm delighted to say I'm still delighted with my new hearing aids.

I deliberately chose battery-powered aids, as I just don't trust rechargeables. Mine use the almost universal type 312, available everywhere. From a shop, about 60-80 cents each; from Amazon, about 40 cents. In my old devices, battery life was about 7 days. In the new, around 6, but I do use them all the time. A trick I learned recently was that when fitting a new one, remove the brown sticker to activate it, then leave it 5 minutes before fitting, it prolongs the life. My aids sound a warning just before expiry.

Learning my way round the new kit was not difficult. To switch off, open the battery compartment one notch; to switch on click shut firmly – and I mean firmly! If you've got it right, a chime sounds as you insert the aid. A small multi-function bar at the rear controls volume up and down with a short click and change of function with a longer one. Four modes are on offer. Normal mode is the default on switching on, but there is also noisy environment, answering the phone and listening to music. If using a mobile, you can answer and end a call as well.

The improvement to my hearing is still as sharp and life in a noisy room is way better, but will never be perfect.

At the two-week checkup, I asked how to clean the ends, and that's when I got a surprise. My old ones had large domes which needed the wax removed, and micro tubes that fed the sound into the ear and could block totally. What I took to be micro tubes on my newbies are actually miniature wires connected to micro speakers. Cleaning is a simple matter of using special 'cotton buds' in the speaker outlet after removing the dome. I guess that if you look at them, they're just an amplified version of an ear bud. Domes have to be changed every 1-2 months and the wires last 4-5 years. The checkup included testing against my hearing chart. The chip in each one records usage and the tests revealed I use mine an average of 9 hours a day.

After 30 days, I returned for a final check and to pay the bill of €1900. I was given a cleaning kit, spare domes and two packs of batteries, plus a discount card for €150 that I could use or pass to a relative or friend. However, the best was yet to come. My invoice showed a zero balance to pay! The shop had applied to both CPAM and my mutuelle after my previous visit and been reimbursed in full. Now that's what I call service.

All in all, it's been a seamless and thoroughly pleasant experience.

NW



GARDENING CORNER



It is already too hot and looks likely to get even hotter. The gardening is now restricted to the cooler mornings and evenings, but really there isn't much to do, apart from watering. We don't water the flower garden and most of the vegetables have a goutte à goutte system. I have now put up shade netting over the salads and squash, which again reduces the need for water. I do water the pots and salad by watering can. Remember a good soak is far better than little and often. If the water runs off, let it soak in and return to rewater. Sometimes it is useful to make a hole and insert a plant pot beside the plant and water into the pot.

I continue to dead head, but any serious cutting back needs water. Many roses will repeat flower, but it is a good idea to give a rose fertiliser and a very good watering. One job which I will certainly do whilst it is hot is to apply vinegar to the weeds in the gravel. We used to buy vinegar for exterior and add salt and a bit of washing up liquid and spray on to the weeds which then burnt up with the hot sun. This new vinegar hasn't been so effective. The recipe on the container says to add water to the vinegar. We shall try again and double the amount of vinegar. Use up any vinegar mix in the sprayer and rinse well as the vinegar doesn't do the seals on the sprayer any good.

This year I haven't had the time to tie in or take off many of the side shoots from the tomato plants. However, this will help to shade the ripening fruit as the hot sun can scorch, but I am noticing less fruit has formed. There is evidence for this, so I don't think I am likely to get tomatoes very early this year. Normally, I like to pick my first tomatoes at the beginning of July. We are now digging potatoes, so we might not yet have tomatoes, but our normal weekly summer treat is egg and chips, eggs from our chickens.

The garden does look a bit sad but the romneya is thriving, it loves the heat and doesn't mind the dry.

MG

Gallavanting Gourmets!!

An unusual one this month as both the supplier and their client fit the title of this piece.

"La table de mirabelles"

Les Mirabelles,

3732 Rte de Caudesaygues, 82160 Caylus

06 36 17 19 74

I came across Sam & Heather, the proprietors of this enterprise, at the Fripaffairs Fashion show where they provided the drinks and buffet service for the evening. The choice was excellent, the food delicious and the prices reasonable.

They offer specialised dining experiences at their property near Caylus or an outside catering service for events both large and small. Imagine an anniversary or wedding celebration in a favourite place or a dinner party at home with out the hassle of trying to be in the kitchen and the conversation at the same time!

During the winter they offer a Spice Club "take away" facility when they are not occupied with the "good weather" options.

I would strongly advise you to visit their website, www.lesmirabelles82.com, available in both English and French for full details of their offering.

Bon appetite

G.G.

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

HOME OF LOCAL INTEREST

DATES TO NOTE IN JULY

Our pick of this month's vide greniers. Don't forget to take your sun hat and a bottle of water and check out the tourist office websites and www.vide-greniers.org for more. If you are travelling far, double check the night before on www.vide-greniers.org...indeed also worth doing for last-minute additions. Much mocked, keen vide grenier goers know these events are a lovely way to explore new villages and often combine with local fetes, especially around fruit-producing time.

VIDE GRENIERS/BROCANTES

Thurs 2 July	'La Grande Friperie' a la Maison des Jeunes Citoyens. Clothes for adults and children. Worth a look if you are in Villefranche to support this effort by young people. the 'Maison' is up where the school buses meet (Place de la Liberte)
Friday 3 July	First of regular vide greniers in the Place St Jean (also on 17th and 31 July) Weather permitting, a nice place under the trees for a look round and a coffee
Sunday 5 July	Big vide grenier at La Madeleine organised by the Rugby Club
Sunday 12 July	Cajarc - Vide Grenier /Brocante organised by PTAs of local schools
Tuesday 14 July	Limogne (big) Privezac
Sun 19 July	Villeneuve - big VG as part of the Fete Medievale.

HOT AIR BALLOON FESTIVAL—Najac and Villeneuve D-Aveyron

Scheduled for the week-end of the 3rd, 4th and 5th July this year. Starting at Villeneuve and then closing at Najac on the 5th

For full details check the Villeneuve Mairie's web site as these events are weather dependent.

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

HOME OF LOCAL INTEREST

FISH & CHIPS

10th July @ Cesaree, Gare, VdR

21st July @ Café Maison, Parisot, - Film Night

Pre book with "Cod-en-bleu" to ensure satisfaction!!

MARCHES NOCTURNES —Villefranche de Rouergue & Najac

These Rites of Passage for visitors and residents alike are back again this year and are an ideal diversion for your visitors during the summer.

Villefranche de Rouergue

Every Sunday evening from the 5th July to the 6th September inclusive (weather dependent) from 18.30, Full details of the Villefranche marie website , including different music each night!

Najac

Every Wednesday evening from the 1h July to the 2nd September inclusive (weather dependent) from 18.30, Full details of the Najac marie website .



NOTHING RECEIVED IN TIME FOR PUBLICATION

?? CLOSED FOR THE SUMMER??

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

HOME OF LOCAL INTEREST

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

6—25th
JULY
2026

CONCERTS

19, 21 and July 2026

FURTHER INFORMATION

WEB SITE www.operabastide.com

E-MAIL Jeremy@operabastide.com

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Orphée et Eurydice
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bastide

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***14th edition of FESTILITT
October 9-10-11, 2026***

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Justin Fairley - Garden Maintenance & Small Projects Contact: jvfairley@outlook.com or Mob 07 85 17 86 52

Learn French in a friendly, fun atmosphere at So'Happy School in Villefranche. All levels/all ages. Qualified, motivated teacher with excellent OFSTED reports and 15 years experience. Small groups: 18 Euros/1h30 lessons; individual lessons: 22 euros/hour. Contact Sophie on 07963050236 or sohappyschool@gmail.com

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Nicholas Powell— "D Origine", Architectural Salvage Yard
160 Rue de jonquekes, 46260 Limogne en Quercy
Contact 06 20 55 10 40

The Writing Desk can swiftly turn your ideas into sharp, punchy script. As an author and experienced freelance journalist I have spent many years creating features for business and lifestyle magazines. For great words and a fast service, contact Nigel on: 05 65 65 81 53 nigelwild@hotmail.co.uk

DOMESTIC SERVICES

Gardener and/or cleaner available. Contact Ruth Patterson on 05 65 34 37 88 or 07 80 45 50 46

We have Small bales of straw suitable for larger animals for sale. Contact Bridget Blunsdon on 0 6 40 46 48 87

LETTINGS

Olive Tree Cottage, Bed and Breakfast:

Self-contained Chambres d'Hôtes in Martiel, suitable for 2 adults, large pool and garden, ample parking. Booking via Airbnb or direct on 0565 29 44 96

Holiday apartment to rent in La Herradura, Andalusia, Spain.

A light and spacious 1 bedroom apartment (sleeps 4) with large terrace, sea and mountain views. Only a 7 minute walk to the beach & restaurants. Monthly winter lets available. Please visit <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089978104205>

Holiday apartment to rent in beautiful Nerja, Andalusia, Spain

Apartment Aqua Marina is a modern 2 bedroom ground floor apartment with terrace and spectacular sea and Mountain views. Superb location only a 3 minute walk to the beach and a short walk to the restaurants and shops of the old town. Monthly winter lets available See: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090122020875>

For further details on both these Spanish properties contact: Lynne Harding 06 65 50 95 37 or lafrage.harding@gmail.com

SOCIAL

FripAffaires, a charity shop based in Parisot (82) raises funds for Médecin sans Frontières and Restos du Cœur. Situated at the Pole Medical, next door to the pharmacy, open Tuesday & Wednesday 2-6pm and Friday & Saturday 10am to 12.30pm. Donations always gratefully received



If you would like us to include a small ad in any of these columns, please let us have the details by emailing us at the address below. If you have any questions or comments (complementary or otherwise) please don't hesitate to contact us on the same address. editor.elnbafvdr@orange.fr