



# U3A Vall del Pop News4U

No 24  
Nov  
2011

## *NEW LOGO TO CELEBRATE OUR FIFTH ANNIVERSARY!*

As you can see from our spanking new header this month, our U3A now has a logo to call its own. Up to now, it has been a bit of a free-for-all, with any font style and any old bunch of grapes which takes the fancy that week being used for signage, leaflets, badges, etc.. Now, gradually, we shall have conformity in everything we do, and a bunch of grapes which bears a passing resemblance to those growing all around us. When you pay your subs in the next couple of months, you'll see the difference in the freshly-designed membership card.

Lots of other celebration events to look out for in this issue - including a birthday present for every single member in a one-off reduction in the membership fee!!



## Christmas Special !

## Dolce Divas Coming to U3A



What a special treat we have for our members at the next

General Meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December.

*Dolce Divas have been performing beautiful music in many different venues for many different clients since 2007 including weddings, funerals, birthdays and anniversaries as well as formal recitals in concert halls and churches. Their remarkable talents have been recognised by Ayuntamientos and Casas de Cultura in the Comunidad Valenciana which have contracted them for concerts and recitals as part of their commitment to cultural activities. Their exciting, extensive repertoire ranges from opera favourites and classical gems by Mozart, Fauré, Delibes and Rutter et al to ballads, romantic chill-out music and songs from the West End Shows.*

***THIS IS A PROFESSIONAL GROUP - PERFORMING JUST FOR US !!***

SEE MORE DETAILS ON THEIR WEBSITE - [www.dolcedivas.eu](http://www.dolcedivas.eu)



*We hope that you will all be able to attend  
this celebration Christmas meeting.*

**SEND ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER to [pands\\_thorpe@hotmail.com](mailto:pands_thorpe@hotmail.com) by the 6th of the month.**



## Are we in a mess?

*By Bob Welham, President.*

Every time I read the press or watch TV my attention is drawn to the state of the Euro zone and the fragile fixes that seem to be made on nearly a day by day basis.

I'm sure that eventually all will be resolved and the heads of Europe will learn to play nicely and possibly expel those free loaders from countries we barely knew existed but yet have had extensive bale outs.

Well that puts the euro zone to rights, now lets move on to things of a more tangible nature.

### **10 reasons why we enjoy living in Spain.;**

**The Spanish sunshine**, well most of the time as it is blowing a gale and we can rest assure that it is windier and wetter in Blighty. The sun helps you feel better, and it's free.

It's not a myth, but **Spanish people work to live**- so do as the locals do, enjoy the holidays.

**Spain is not far from the UK** and with cheap flights by Ryanair and Easyjet and the new one coming on stream Kamikaze Direct ,who could ask for more. It's cheaper than the Bristol to London train and as long as you take a vacuum flask, sandwiches and have gone to the loo before boarding the flight, good value for money.

**Menu del Dia**. We have all participated in this aspect of the culture and had change from 10 euros.

**Great landscape**-who could ask for better scenery than here in the Jalon Valley. ( Even the high winds may have blown the litter to the next valley).

**The pace of life** .....Isn't this why we moved to Spain?

**Spanish people know how to party**. We are just starting to know what they mean.....The wine from the Bodega in Jalon is so cheap, that you could bathe in it. Just a figure of speech and not a recommendation.

**Lots of thing are free to do**, get involved in and to visit. Most of us having our pensionista cards, find it even cheaper.

**Healthcare**... anyone ever stayed in Denia hospital. Its like staying at the Hilton.

- **But the best reason of all is being a member of the Vall del Pop U3A**, and in this celebration year 2011, the membership fee is only *5 euros*.

**Took me a long time to get to the punchline!**



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## *NEWS FROM THE TREASURER AND THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY*

WHAT FANTASTIC NEWS ! As a 5th birthday present to all members, the committee have voted to reduce the membership fee during the celebration year (pity we can't afford to do it permanently, but every little helps, as they say!)

Subs are due at the beginning of the year, but you can pay anytime now, if it is easier for you. Pay at the door at the next meeting (come at 10.15am.). Please download the renewal form from the membership section of the website if you can, and fill it up before you come. OR - you can sit comfortably at your computer and pay by bank transfer to "U3A Vall del Pop" (account 2100-6033-21-020003812), stating your name and membership number. Pick up your membership card at the meeting.

WE NOW HAVE 462 MEMBERS - THIS IS AN INCREDIBLE NUMBER TO HAVE ACHIEVED IN JUST 5 YEARS !  
A BIG WELCOME TO THE 8 NEW MEMBERS WHO JOINED US THIS MONTH. WE HOPE YOU HAVE FUN WITH  
OUR U3A !!

**PANTO? AT THE GENERAL MEETING?  
OH YES IT WAS !!**

**By Jean Watson**



At the general meeting on Thursday 3rd. November a single speaker, Candy Wright, producer of many an impressive pantomime at the Careline Theatre, was announced as star turn for the day. Candy's subject was "History of Pantomime".

Intriguingly, she appeared as a jester. Her prepared speech, some twenty feet long, was quickly abandoned as Candy was joined by a pantomime dame, then quickly by another dame, and another, and another. And another. And yet another. Six pantomime dames in full traditional costume filled the stage in Jalon town hall. Red, yellow, blue, purple dresses and wigs swayed on the platform with temperamental moments and jealousies being displayed if one got more attention than another.

Meanwhile, Punch and Judy, ran around the audience whacking people unlucky enough to be within range. In true panto style sweets were thrown to the audience. Of course, there was a charming principal boy in tights and jerkin, designed so that a woman on stage could show off their legs at a period when this would otherwise be frowned on. We must not forget the fairy in white costume and lilac wig, the brave (unnamed) volunteer from the audience. We all know who it was. Ooh, yes, we do.

We all laughed and applauded, feeling as if we were at a full pantomime production, but at the same time absorbing information about the history of pantomime, which began in the late seventeenth century with Mr. Punchinello, who evolved into Punch and Judy as we know it today. Pantomime has developed into today's form with principal boy and girl, the Dame, an animal such as pantomime horse or goose.

Thank you , Candy and team, for an entertaining presentation. We will be queuing up soon for our tickets to "Jack and the Beanstalk" in January.

## Dingbats

*Dingbats* are visual word puzzles from which a well known phrase or saying has to be identified.

For instance :

**ACRIML** - is obviously *criminal* (crim in al , see?) So what is this?

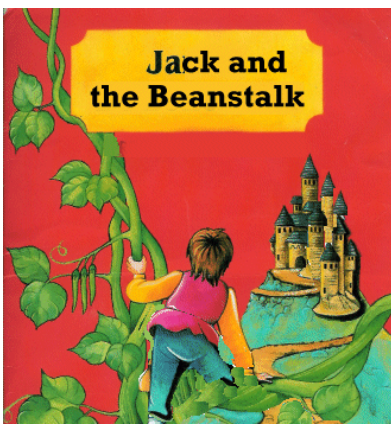
QOOOE2

Answer is somewhere in this newsletter written in blue .

### Jalon Valley Help Christmas Bazaar

The charity would be very grateful for contributions to their Christmas Bazaar which takes place in Jalon on Saturday 3rd December. They need bottles for the Bottle stall, anything from Shampoo to Champagne. Also Tombola items and Christmas gifts would be much appreciated. Good condition soft toys and any toys and games would be welcomed. Please take all items to one of the Jalon Valley Help Charity Shops in Alcalali or Jalon.

The Christmas Bazaar is on Saturday 3rd December, opened at 10am by Father Christmas! and held in Jalon in the Library/Pensionistas Centre, next to the Sports Hall near the Liber roundabout. This year there are lots of new attractions including entertainment, refreshments, mince pies, cava etc., a Christmas stall, sideshows, soft toy auction, toys and games plus raffle, tombola, books, etc. etc. Full details [www.jalonvalleyhelp.com](http://www.jalonvalleyhelp.com) Please come along and start December in a festive mood with Jalon Valley Help



Jack and the Beanstalk is now in rehearsal. It will play the Careline Theatre in Alcalali from Wednesday January 11 to Sunday January 15 with matinee performances on the Saturday and Sunday. Tickets for the evening performances are priced at 12 euros and 6 euros for children of ten and under; for the matinee performances the adult price is reduced to 10 euros. A 10% discount is available to group bookings of ten and over for the evening performances. The box office on 652 294 750 is open now.

[www.carelinetheatre.com](http://www.carelinetheatre.com)

### Strictly Come Afternoon Tea Dancing

The afternoon tea dance on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November had many of us taking a nostalgic twirl on the dance floor at the El Cid Restaurant Benidoleig.

With a little imagination we transported ourselves back to the timeless elegance of the Golden Days of the Classic Tea Dances. Those were the days when the Palm Court Orchestras accompanied the dancers and also provided delightful music for just sitting and relaxing with afternoon tea. Helped by Jan and Vince (the leaders of the U3A Dance Group) we captured the essence of those days gone by.

Dances ranging from ballroom to latin and line-dancing to old-time kept most couples dancing, whilst encouraged by some fun dances, everyone was tempted onto the floor. Calories added by the amount of cakes consumed were quickly lost and three hours disappeared equally quickly.

What a delightful way to spend an afternoon! Our thanks to Jan for ensuring everyone could participate.

Should you wish to continue to enjoy dancing make sure that you join the Dance Group every Tuesday morning from 10.15 to 11.45 in the Multi-Usso Building in Alcalali.



★ *Christmas/Birthday presents for us or next year for UK residents? Sunglasses? Which are the best for the eyes? Cost only £12.00? Where? Go to Mail On Line dated*

(Thanks to Michael Bulleid for this one!)

**Did you know?**

★ *La Caixa bank are offering a savings bonds from the Valencianan Government which offers a very attractive rate of interest of 4.75%. To be launched within days. This involves tying up your money for a whole year. If you commit it for 2 years, the rate goes up to an even more attractive level.*

★ *NEW ONE-TO-ONE COUNSELLING SERVICE starting in January for members of our U3A. Money worries, Trauma, Partnerships, Loneliness, etc.. One hour sessions cost just 10€ to cover travelling. Tel 605230331. Absolutely confidential. British trained and qualified counsellor.*



Having had some atrocious weather over the last couple of days, we opened the e-mail from the U3A with some trepidation. "Important", it read, we had never received an e-mail from the U3A marked 'important' and feared the worst regarding our trip to Cocentaina. Oh dear, we were really looking forward to our visit to the All Saints Fair (Fira de Tots Sants). Ah, our fears were unfounded, the day was forecast to be dry.

Sure enough Monday dawned with not a cloud in sight as we boarded the coach in Jalon. The journey took about one and a half hours, but it passed so quickly and we were soon strolling down to the start of the fair.

Agricultural equipment, trailers and even a readymix concrete truck were some of the first exhibits we passed. Olive picking machinery, now that is something you never see at the Kent Show we agreed. Jewellery, garden tools, motorbikes, cooking utensils, there was something of interest for everybody.

The fair was huge and the organisers had very thoughtfully put markers up to guide visitors along the best route and ensure that all the exhibits were seen, especially the Arab market. This didn't work for us as there was so much of interest that we found ourselves constantly wandering off the route.

Apart from the temporary exhibits, there was so much to see; the Fiesta Museum with its Moors and Christians costumes, The Earl's Palace and The Archaeology and Ethnology Museum. So much, in fact, that we agreed we should come back another time to see what we had missed. The coach pick-up was at 5 pm and as everybody had plastic bags (some more than others), we all compared purchases with much ooing and aahing. It was quieter going back and a few people were seen sleeping, although insisted afterwards that they had shut their eyes to go over in their mind what a wonderful day it had been! We arrived safely back at the rastro carpark at 6 30 pm and disembarked to the usual warning not to leave anything on the coach. We checked, yes we had everything including a seahorse, an owl and a stainless steel bucket (with lid).

Last year's fair attracted 530,000 visitors and we could understand why. Next year is the 666<sup>th</sup> year of its existence so it is a must for anybody who missed it this year.



A big thank you to Sandra. (Guess which one she bought)

You may have seen this email doing the rounds - or perhaps not. Makes you think ....

#### **Advice from Moraira police ....**

"There are several things to be aware of. Gangs of thieves are now plotting different ways to get a person (mostly women) to stop their vehicle and get out of the car. There is a scam reported by the local Police where gangs are placing a car seat by the road, with a fake baby in it, waiting for a woman, of course, to stop and check on the abandoned baby. Note that the location of this car seat is usually beside a wooded or grassy (field) area and the person -- woman -- will be dragged into the woods, beaten and raped, and usually left for dead. If it's a man, they're usually beaten and robbed and maybe left for dead, too.

**DO NOT STOP FOR ANY REASON.** Ring the Police AND REPORT WHAT YOU SAW, BUT DON'T EVEN SLOW DOWN.

IF YOU ARE DRIVING AT NIGHT AND EGGS ARE THROWN AT YOUR WINDSCREEN, DO NOT STOP TO CHECK THE CAR, DO NOT OPERATE THE WIPER AND DO NOT SPRAY ANY WATER BECAUSE EGGS MIXED WITH WATER BECOME MILKY AND BLOCK YOUR VISION UP TO 92.5%, AND YOU ARE THEN FORCED TO STOP BESIDE THE ROAD AND BECOME A VICTIM OF THESE CRIMINALS.

THIS IS A NEW TECHNIQUE USED BY GANGS, SO PLEASE INFORM YOUR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES. THESE ARE DESPERATE TIMES AND THESE ARE UNSAVOURY INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL TAKE DESPERATE MEASURES TO GET WHAT THEY WANT."

# Canary Island Cruise – 14<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2011. By Pat Thorpe

55 members of the Jalon U3A met up early on 14<sup>th</sup> October to go on a cruise of the Canary Isles. We caught a coach from Jalon to go to Malaga where we stayed in a lovely four star hotel for the night.



The following morning we were all delivered by the same coach to the ship – **Adventure of the Seas.**



The ship was huge, with over 3800 passengers and 1200 crew. It had 11 restaurants and cafes, as well as more than a dozen bars. It also had three swimming pools and six Jacuzzis. There were numerous other ways to pass the time including a climbing wall, a pitch and putt and a roller skating track. There were many ways to entertain oneself of an evening with theatres, a casino and even an ice rink. The shows at these were amazing, whilst the ice show took one's breath away. With this luxury at hand we set sail.

Our first stop was Madeira. This was a beautiful island. Very green and very mountainous with lovely views. There was a cable car from the port to the top of Sao Roque Monte where the views were truly stunning.

We sailed that evening and arrived the following morning at Tenerife. This is the largest and the most populous and arguably the most popular of the Isles. There was a beautiful park in the capital Santa Cruz, as well as the double of the Hemesferic in Valencia, designed by the same architect, Santiago Calatrava. From Tenerife we travelled next to Gran Canaria. This has a lovely capital, La Palmas, with nice shops, and many nice bars and restaurants.

Our final destination was Lanzarote. What a surreal place, with the black "soil" and volcanic geology. A tour was laid on to Timanfaya, where the participants were treated to Geysers and Fiery abysses. After we left Lanzarote we spent the next day cruising back to Malaga and then home. On board ship we were treated to a most amusing show in the Lyric theatre. This brought to an end a lovely week on a lovely boat with so many good friends and memories as well as delicious food with marvellous service.

*SEE THE FULL REPORT OF THIS EXCITING EXPERIENCE, PLUS MORE PICTURES, ON THE WEBSITE! THE WHOLE HOLIDAY WAS SO SUCCESSFUL, THAT THE NEXT ONE IS ALREADY AT THE PLANNING*

## "MEDITERRANEAN MAGIC" CRUISE 2012 !!

**1<sup>st</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> September 2012..... 13 nights, 14 days.**

Jalon to Barcelona by coach -  
- Overnight stay in hotel.  
Cannes, France.  
Florence, Italy.  
Rome, Italy.  
Athens, Greece.  
Kusadasi, ( Ephesus ) Turkey.  
Santorini ( island ) Greece.  
Naples ( Pompeii/Capri ) Italy.  
Barcelona. Back to Jalon by coach.

*Price to be confirmed but will be **APPROX** 1,200 euros per person for an inside cabin. Outside view cabins and Balcony cabins will also be available at extra cost. I do not have the prices for these yet and as soon as they are available I will of course inform all interested parties. Please note all prices given will **INCLUDE** the transport, hotel and all port taxes and tips pertaining to the cruise. The cruise company is Royal Caribbean and the ship The Serenade of the Seas. It is a smaller vessel than this year's holding approx 1,300 less passengers. Total passengers for the Serenade are 2,500.*

We predict a great deal of interest in this cruise and we only have limited places. If you are interested please email Derek and Anne [themartyrs103@gmail.com](mailto:themartyrs103@gmail.com)  
To reserve your place. Deposits of approx 25% will be required by the end of the year. A reserve list will be drawn up once the cruise is full.

We hope that you will join us on this new Odyssey !!

Anne and Derek.

**FOR SALE**

Russel Hobbs JUICELADY



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( Jalon area )

**FOR SALE - POOL TABLE**

Full Size excellent condition



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WOODEN DINING  
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EXTENDIBLE.  
PLUS 4  
MATCHING CHAIRS  
GOOD  
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15€  
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New 90 pounds

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VERY COMFORTABLE WITH WIDE SEAT. LIGHT TO USE. FOLDS  
EASILY WITH ATTACHMENT FOR CARRYING WALKING STICK.  
VERY CLEAN. LITTLE USED.  
200 EUROS OR NEAR OFFER. CAN DELIVER.  
96 648 1069 OR 669 585 248**

### SAVE MONEY ON YOUR GATES AND GRILLS !

Our latest discount opportunity is from this father-and-son team at [www.gatesandgrills.com](http://www.gatesandgrills.com). They can do any bespoke work, including automatic gates with video and voice intercoms. Ring 636 109 766. All details are on the website as usual. Don't forget that there are lots of other local companies who will give us great discounts at the flash of the membership card.!



**WANTED ....**

TRAMPOLINE - ANY SIZE.  
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### ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR THE NEWSLETTER ?

If you have anything you would like to share in the newsletter, let us have it in an attached **Word** document, about 200 words or less, by the 6th of any calendar month. Send to

**Did you know?**



Salad with TASTE of the raw vegetables, not decorative; private consumption. Do not dice them, taste disappears: leave them in chunks; taste will surprise you; watch your teeth/dentures.



Just Google "Spanish word of the day". Collins and Dictionary.com can send you a free Spanish word every day with translations and lots of examples for its use. Excellent way to continue to learn Spanish. No scam!

*KNOW YOUR COMMITTEE ! Continuing our monthly delve behind the scenes, this month we look at the Group Co-ordinator and his assistant ...*

Hi I'm Harry

Born in the baby boom years, or bulge years as my wife calls it, I have been bulging nicely ever since. As a teenager I was on top of mountains, under them (pot holing). I was on, in and under the sea and loved sports of any type: diving, rugby and boxing in particular.

My PR (pre-retirement) life started after Uni where I worked in software development and projects for two international companies (now both defunct). I was involved in communications research for some 13 years. I still remember my team's euphoria when we connected multiple computers switching data at high speeds through out the UK. That technology is now old hat. I like to delude myself that it was the forerunner of the current systems we have today.

A short spell in consultancy led me to form my own communications consultancy company, which I ran for some 18 years. At the time the City was a heady place where international banks and oil companies had money to spend. In addition we worked in the Construction environment, Transport, Hospitals, Schools and Energy Companies to name but a few.

The opportunity came to retire early, which I took, mindful of the fact that I had read somewhere, that for every one year of early retirement, you hope to add 2 further years to your lifespan, am looking forward to my eighties.

I offer organisation skills and more importantly, believe that Groups should have the opportunity to develop themselves, whilst staying within the supportive framework of the U3A.

Harry Roskoss - Group Co-ordinator



Hello, I am Jean Watson, at present assistant group co-ordinator in Val del Pop U3A.

I first came to the Costa Blanca in 1994, arriving on our 33ft. Nauticat, a motor-sailer, in Calpe in early November. We had come down through the French canals and along the east coast of Spain. (there is a long story here, but not today). The plan was to spend the winter near Alicante, and eventually to make our way to the Greek islands. However, my husband and I liked this area so much that we decided to stay. We lived in Calpe for nine years, then decided to move to the Jalon Valley, which we did just over six years ago.

Living in Spain, we were able to indulge in our many hobbies, which included model ship building (his hobby, not mine. Glue and sticky stuff in general and I do not mix. It might explain why I have not joined the card making group), model railways, reading, writing, knitting (mine, not his). oh yes, and self-indulgence.

*.. AND SOME NEWS FROM THE GROUPS ABLY SUPPORTED BY HARRY AND JEAN .....*

**FLY FISHING** - NOVEMBER 23RD IS AN OPEN DAY FOR BEGINNERS, WHERE EVERYONE IS WELCOME. CONTACT PETER RYAN (965973287) FOR MORE DETAILS AND BOOKING. COST €20 INCLUDES 4 TROUT.

**CARD MAKING -**

**MORE AND EVEN MORE PROFESSIONAL !**

Clare, Rena and Sandra were on hand at the last meeting to display some of the beautiful cards our Card-Making Group are able to create. Those members who snapped up some unique cards have purchased mini works of art !! The group are grateful to the U3A for helping them to buy some brilliant equipment this year, which has opened up new opportunities in their crafting.





Our Travel and Culture People always have a whole variety of events organised for us – check the website for the latest news. Find “Upcoming Events” and hover over the event which interests you – then click for more details

VALL DEL POP USA EVENTS

- Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November** – An evening’s bowling followed by an optional meal at Monroe’s. Cost €6 for the bowling.
- Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November** – The musical “Fiddler on the Roof” by the Footlights Theatre Group. Tickets are €12.
- Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>. November** – A day trip to Orihuela starting at 8:30.
- Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November** – Noel Coward’s brilliant Blythe Spirit at the Rafol Theatre, Pego. Tickets are €12 from Derek and Anne.
- Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December** – Javea Players present The Wyrd Sisters at the theatre Gata de Gorgos. Tickets are €12 from Derek and Anne.
- Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December** – Prepare to sing your hearts out at the Christmas general meeting.
- Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December** – Quiz night at the Bar Nou, Senija. Starts at 7:30 with tickets at €10 from Derek and Anne.
- Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> December** – The Benidorm Christmas special at the Hotel Bali. 4 days/3 nights and includes full board and the Christmas gala meal. Book your tickets at €285 for a double room from Alfarooms.
- Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> January** – Time to stock up after Christmas with the trip to Murcia to shop to your heart’s content at Ikea and Primark. Coach leaves the Rastro car park at 8:30.

FUTURE U3A  
GENERAL  
MEETINGS

- December 1st** – Christmas entertainment, mulled wine and stollen !!
- January 12th** – Dennis Arthurs on the recent cruise to the Canary Islands.
- February 2nd** – Eric Olveston on his African charity bike ride.

Three men in a boat

**CARELINE THEATRE - ALCALALI**

“Aspects of Musicals” is an evening of songs from London and Broadway shows and takes place on Wednesday, 30th November, at the Careline Theatre, Alcalali at 8pm.

Starring Rob Sweeney and Gill Henry, well-known singers in the bars and restaurants in the north of the Costa Blanca, the show features songs from musicals such as Aspects of Love, Chess, Les Miserables, West Side Story, Jekyll and Hyde and Phantom of the Opera. Booking on 965 577 461, - no concessionary rates or credit card facilities and tickets must be collected at the theatre box office before 7:45pm on the evening of the performance. More details about the artists and the featured musicals can be found on a website designed especially for the show – [www.aspectsof musicals.com](http://www.aspectsof musicals.com) – where you can even listen to Rob Sweeney singing one of the songs from Les Miserables.

DICK HANSCOMBE (GREENFINGERS OF RTN) IS COMING TO GIVE A TALK + Q&A SESSION ON THURSDAY NOVEMBER 17TH AT 2.00PM.

FOOD AND DRINKS WILL BE SERVED, IN AN INFORMAL AND SOCIAL SETTING.  
TICKETS WILL BE 5 euros pp. TO HELP COVER COSTS. PLEASE PHONE OR EMAIL IF YOU WISH TO BOOK A PLACE.

VENUE; BOB AND SANDRA’S HOUSE  
19a PTDA BARRANQUET, PARCENT; TEL.966 405 453.

**Carol Singing in Jalon**

Jalon Valley HELP members will once again be Carol Singing around the Christmas Tree on the Plaza (Market Square) in Jalon on Monday 19th December from 7pm to 8pm. They hope that again this year lots of people will come and join in, singing the traditional Christmas Carols that everyone knows and loves. Full details of this and all events planned [www.jalonvalleyhelp.com](http://www.jalonvalleyhelp.com) Come along for a great evening and start to Christmas in the valley.