



# Newsletter January 2016

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## Welcome to the January edition of your LBRA newsletter.

It is amazing to think that 2015 is over and we are almost halfway through January. We hope you had a wonderful Christmas and New Years Eve and wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous 2016. We would also like to thank everyone that sent us Christmas cards and Christmas and New Year greetings, we were truly overwhelmed so thank you all so much. We would like to welcome our new members and thank them for choosing to join our association. We have lots of ideas and projects planned for 2016 and look forward to sharing them with you as we progress through the year. Our AGM will take place in March this year and we hope many of you will be able to attend. Further details will follow when available.

As always we hope you enjoy this copy of the newsletter and would welcome your comments and suggestions.



Our next members meeting and coffee morning is planned for the end of February and we hope you will be able to join us, date to be confirmed soon.

## MBE Honour

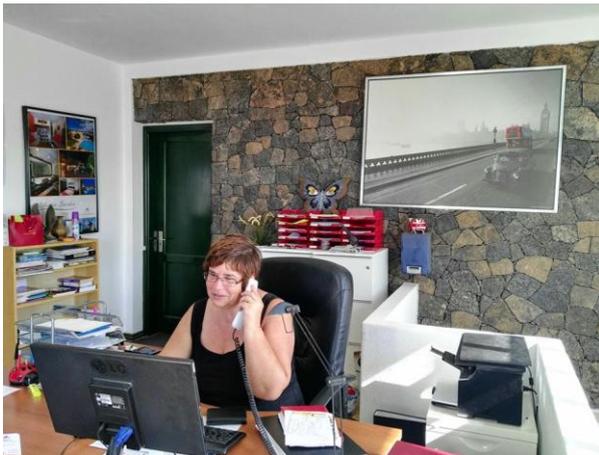


Huge congratulations to Susan Thain, how delighted and thrilled we were to learn that one of our members has been awarded an MBE in the Queens New Year's honours list. How wonderful for Sue and what a great achievement and well deserved recognition for the work Sue does. This was the official announcement that was made.

Susan Thain. Hon Consul (Lanzarote) and managing director of Lanzarote Weddings. For services to the British embassy and the British community in the Canary Islands, Spain.

Once again Congratulations Sue.

## Update from Academia LILS



Academia LILS in Puerto del Carmen has devised a new course of Spanish classes for children, the classes are structured for children aged 2 and upwards, for further details contact Martine.

Martine also has a new German range of health and beauty products available at the academy; they are all made from natural substances, competitively priced and suitable for most skin types. Martine is also looking for people who would like to earn an extra income selling these products, if you would like to find out more then please contact Martine. Click on the link for further details or telephone (0034) 928 528 454

<https://www.facebook.com/Martine-Vanderborgh-1521669731477943/?ref=hl>

## Santa Parade 2015



Well it's not often words fail us but in December we were overwhelmed with the response to the Santa Parade, the event was just amazing, we had asked for help in making it the biggest and best parade ever and everyone certainly took up the challenge and helped create what was a fantastic night that we hope was enjoyed by many. Huge thanks to everyone who helped organise the event.

Firstly LBRA members John and Irene and their team from Lanzarote Go Karting. John and Irene spent many hours in meetings and planning the parade, in addition they organised the carols and after parade entertainment, and of course put on a fantastic display of vehicles on the night. Martin from Colorworks who kindly donated all the promotional material. From Tias Ayuntamiento, Mayor Pancho Hernandez, Amado Jesus Vizcaino for all his co-operation and assistance, Francisco Aparicio, Ani Ruiz Bernal and Nerea Santana Alonso. Thanks also to Mike and Julie Cliffe Jones from Lanzarote Information, Sharron and her team from Highlander Too, Sue and Phil Brand for photography, Peter Starmer DJ and everyone that took part and supported the parade.



**Member Interview** This month we met up with LBRA member Sue Almond.



Sue is an extremely interesting person to meet and interview and over tea and biscuits we found out a lot about Sue. Sue has lived here almost 18 years and is the creator and founder of the Lanzarote Creative Writing Group and Writersend.com

We started with our usual question of when and how Sue came to be in Lanzarote, we always find this an interesting question and enjoy finding out what the reason or inspiration was that brings people to the island.

**LBRA.** Hi Sue, thanks for taking the time to meet us, can we ask how long you have lived here and why Lanzarote?

**Sue.** I moved here on the 8<sup>th</sup> October 1998, and for anyone that knows me and knows how rubbish I am at remembering dates they will realise that it must have been a significant experience for me to be able to recall the date so easily. I came to take up a teaching post but it was an amazing and almost accidental journey that brought me here. The previous year I had holidayed in Fuerteventura with friends, and we enjoyed it so much we decided to return, however the agent could not offer us any availability and suggested Lanzarote instead, where's Lanzarote I asked, next door came the reply so we said okay lets go with it. Having discovered Lanzarote I loved it and instantly it found a place in my heart. During the holiday we happened to pass a school and a friend said you never know you could work there; we laughed and said if only. I had recently taken early retirement and was looking for part time or supply work in the UK. Back home I was meeting a friend for coffee one morning and as I was early and looking for a new post I stopped to buy the Times Education Supplement which I had never done before. At home later that day I opened the paper and staring at me in a large boxed advert was a teaching post for the British School in Lanzarote. It felt like fate and I just knew I had to apply. The wait to hear the outcome was excruciating and I felt ill and would have been heartbroken should I not have been successful. After a 3 week, 4 stage selection programme the post was mine and within weeks I was here starting my new life.

**LBRA.** Sue would you class yourself as an artisan, we know you paint, write, enjoy photography, poetry and other creative arts?

**Sue.** Gosh I had never thought about myself in those terms, I saw my early retirement as an opportunity to do things I had not fully had time to do before. I would consider myself a dabbler rather than an artist, and writing has always been my passion. In small ways I have fulfilled many of my ambitions by being in Lanzarote, for instance diving, so many things seem to be possible in Lanzarote, it's a magical island.

**LBRA.** Tell us more about the creative writing group and Writers End?

**Sue.** I started the creative writing group in 2005 so last year was the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary which I felt was a personal landmark, as many will know it's often difficult to keep things continuing in Lanzarote, so to reach and surpass the 10 years was amazing and I held a celebratory lunch party.



**10th Anniversary party**

I had always been a scribbler and a writing group had always appealed to me. It was actually another lady who suggested we form one, and that gave me the spur to get started. However just as our plans were taking shape she fell pregnant and decided to leave the island, so I carried on and here we are. I started with a course which developed and it continued from there. We meet weekly on a Friday morning in Costa Teguisse, the sessions are mainly stand alone but I do like to look back over previous work when possible. The reason for them being stand alone is that they are flexible, drop in drop out, we have a number of members who cannot attend every week due to various reasons, we also have a few "swallows" for those of you that do not know swallows are what we call people who do not live here permanently who move back and forth throughout the year. We welcome everyone, even if just on holiday for a week or two and we encourage others to join us.



Sue with a few members of the writing group.

Writersend.com is the website it explains more about the group, what we do and is a forum for members work. We have expanded the sections and as well as the group and individuals work it includes reviews, published authors work, various features including some on Lanzarote, articles, group activities and lots of good information and advice.

I also started a children's group which focused on writing and reading, it was very popular but due to personal circumstances I had to close it but if there was any interest for it in the future I would be happy to start a new group.

**LBRA.** You also published some short bits of history about Lanzarote?

**Sue.** Yes I originally wrote these for "Buzz" magazine and subsequently due to the interest published them on a blog and they are still available now if anyone is interested in reading them.

**LBRA.** You are also involved with a games group and book club?

**Sue.** Yes the book club originally started at the Book Shop in Costa Teguse, it has changed direction but still continues after 8 years, meeting once a month. The "games" group meet weekly and really developed from the book club, people I met at the book club expressed an interest in meeting others to play games such as scrabble, backgammon, cards etc. We would also like to introduce cribbage and would welcome anyone who wants to meet other game enthusiasts to join us.

**LBRA.** Best things about living in Lanzarote?

**Sue.** On the practical side the cost of living particularly for a pensioner is so much lower, no real heating costs, council tax is so much cheaper, there are so many benefits. The climate and being able to always have doors and windows open allowing plenty of fresh air is an important factor. I have lots of friends and because I am retired I have plenty of time to enjoy life to the full, meeting friends, eating out and generally enjoying the Lanzarote life style. It is strange and a true fact that when I was seven I bought a Spanish phrase book. I remember it well as I had to save up and it cost two shillings and sixpence and it had a mustard cover, the weird thing is that I had never met anyone Spanish or been to Spain, I could have chosen French or Italian but no, I knew I had to have this book and I think the feeling was rooted in me then that someday I had to learn the language and live in Spain.

Years ago I visited Andalucía and thought "I could live here when I retire", but the winter there is very different to Lanzarote, there they have lots of rain and it's colder and the evenings are darker. The lifestyle here really suits me and I love the traditional music, Flamenco has always been a favourite of mine even from a young age.

**LBRA.** What if any changes would you like to see in Lanzarote?

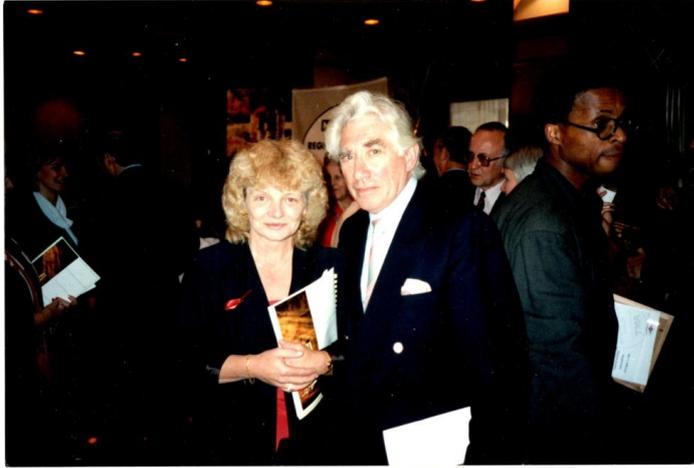
**Sue.** Well I am not sure that I want to see many changes, I always said are we seeing the last of the best? When I first came here it reminded me of England in the 50s, but I knew that with time and media involvement such as the TV changes would be inevitable. I liked the quaintness of it and its traditions, like Midnight Mass in Teguise, I remember going and during the service they opened the western doors and a troop of young people came in all in outfits and I thought how wonderful that in this day and age young people are willing to dress in costumes and learn traditional instruments like the timple. Carnival is another good example of people uniting to celebrate in time honoured traditions. I have never felt any resentment from locals to my being here and have always felt welcome at local fiesta's, many of which are not advertised but when we attend they seem pleased that we go and enjoy their events. There will have to be some changes we all know that the health service is under strain and it is difficult for the younger population to find work and I only hope that the local youngsters do not start to resent "immigrants" taking their jobs.

**LBRA.** I expect you have had lots of family and friends visit, where do you like to take them?

**Sue.** Love showing off the Manrique foundation and centres, Puerto Calero is also a favourite, driving through the Geria region and eating at inland Canarian bars and restaurants. I simply love the traditional and local places that offer authentic menus.

**LBRA.** Anything that would surprise people to know about you?

**Sue.** Well I was a professional Theatre Judge for the TMA regional theatre awards for 3 years. This allowed me to watch some wonderful productions and meet some great actors. These included amongst others Frank Finlay, Timothy West, I saw Timothy in a superb show that his wife Prunella Scales had directed, David Yip, Dora Brian, John Thaw and his wife Shelia Hancock, but really too many to mention. Another thing that people may not know about me is that when in my early 20's, with 2 small children and a recent house move, my husband was killed in a car crash, you can imagine the impact this had of our lives. Of course I had great family support but had to work, I started working in a university library, which was ideal with my love of books. It was there that I realised that I needed a job that would offer us all financial security. I considered doing a teacher training course but having worked in the university felt it would suit me better so I did my degree after which I did a one year teacher training post grad which launched my career. In life you find that one thing can happen that changes the whole picture, mine changed when I became widowed and a whole new picture emerged, I really loved university and for me teaching was a vocation not just a job. It was very rewarding and I enjoyed seeing the students when they made new discoveries, particularly on field trips and the theatre.



Sue pictured with Frank Finlay

LBRA. 5 words to describe Lanzarote?

Sue. Spiritual, varied, romantic, diverse, welcoming.

LBRA. Any plans for the future?

Sue. Circumstances have made it necessary for me to spend more time in England so last year my partner Steve and I bought a Canal Boat, which had always been another of my ambitions. We spent most of last summer on it and plan to do the same most summer months, and we are looking forward to some exciting times on the water. I would never give up my base here but we are both hoping for some new adventures.

LBRA. Wow Sue what can we say, well done for all the amazing things you have achieved, huge admiration and what an inspiration to others, and we wish you every happiness for the future and look forward to receiving our Canal Cruising invite. If anyone would like further information about the creative writing group, games, book club or children's group then please email Sue on [sue\\_almond2004@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sue_almond2004@yahoo.co.uk)



## Life in Spain



An interesting article published in El Pais newspaper particularly if you are planning a permanent move to Lanzarote or Spain. Just click on the link.

[http://elpais.com/elpais/2014/12/17/inenglish/1418816737\\_691083.html](http://elpais.com/elpais/2014/12/17/inenglish/1418816737_691083.html)

## New hotel for Matagorda?



It looks like Matagorda could be getting a new 5 star hotel. An application for a 254 bedroom hotel has been submitted by Hibiscus Hotels. The 18,520 plot is between the Jameos Playa Hotel and Sol Lanzarote. For further details click the following link for the full article that appeared in the Cronicas Lanzarote.

<http://www.cronicasdelanzarote.es/Tias-recibe-solicitud-de-licencia-de-obras-para-un-hotel-de-cinco-estrellas-en.html>



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## Bite Size Histories of Lanzarote

Our member interview this month is with Sue Almond and in it we mentioned the "Bite size pieces of history" that Sue wrote and produced about Lanzarote and we thought you may like to look at a couple. Just click on the links below.



<http://writersend.com/2014/06/06/bite-size-histories-lanzarote-chapter-5-industrial-evolution/>



<http://writersend.com/2014/04/13/bite-size-histories-lanzarote-chapter-1/>

## Social Media



Are you following our latest blogs, if not click here and view them...

<http://www.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Flanzaroteassociation.blogspot.co.uk%2F2016%2F01%2Fmake-sure-to-follow-us-on-social-media.html&h=eAQHd1eSx>

<https://www.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DroNwKMrz8Q&h=eAQHd1eSx>

## Tourism news



Well we all know that 2015 was a bumper year for tourism in the Canary Islands and in particular for Lanzarote. The islands have always been popular but with problems in other areas of the world holiday makers have looked at alternative destinations. The forecast is that tourism will continue to grow in Lanzarote and the figures for 2016 are expected to exceed those of 2015. So far we have had a very mild winter and this has helped satisfy visitors who may normally have holidayed in long haul destinations.

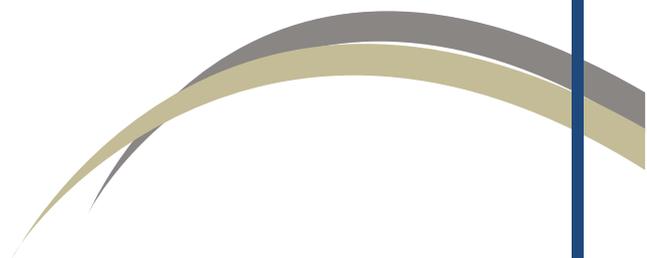
From our social media pages and the interaction we have had with many visitors it seems that Lanzarote has become a firm favourite for many and once again had been **Voted the most Popular Winter Sun Destination by the Irish Travel Industry**. Well done Lanzarote.

For information of all winners and categories just follow the link <http://irishtravelindustryawards.com/previous-years-winners/2015-winners/>

## Holiday Rentals

Our hope is that this year will be the one that brings a satisfactory conclusion to the holiday rental situation. As you know at the moment we are still awaiting an announcement from the Canarian Government on their decision and if they are going to make amendments to the decree unfavourably passed last year.

For those of you that followed the suggestion we made over two years ago to appeal via a solicitor to the high claims court to be allowed access to inspection books and claim forms it seems like this has been a successful route and we expect to hear shortly that they will be available for collection from the Cabildo, and we shall keep you updated on this process. Meanwhile we continue to work hard on your behalf and have a number of high profile meetings planed to discuss the situation and hopefully bring about changes.



# Together

we make a great team!

We actively encourage our members to work together and support each other wherever and whenever possible. May we please remind you that our Business Members are all qualified, reliable, established companies and offer a great range of services, from Photographers, Insurance Brokers, Estate Agents, Wedding Planners, Bars, Printers, Restaurants, Property Management, Language Schools and many other types of businesses. If you would like to network with fellow members then please let us know.

## Language Exchange



### **New Venue**

Need to practise your Spanish / English? Why not join one of our free intercambio idiomas / language exchange sessions held weekly in Puerto del Carmen and Playa Honda. Everyone is welcome to join us, however some level of English/Spanish is required as these are conversational sessions not teaching classes. We are a friendly group and look forward to welcoming you. See below for weekly times and new venues.

Tuesday - Highlander Too, Montana Tropical, Puerto del Carmen - 5.30pm (starts Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February)

Wednesday - Liquid Bar, rear of Deiland Centre Playa Honda - 5.30pm

In addition L.I.L.S. Lanzarote's International Language School in Puerto del Carmen will be hosting free intercambio sessions between 10.30 and 1.00 on the first Saturday of every month.

If you are interested in attending then please contact us.

We hope you have enjoyed this edition and as always would welcome your comments and suggestions. Have a great year!

Best wishes

Danny, Silvia, Rita and the LBRA Team



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