



## Newsletter February 2016

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### **Welcome to the February edition of your LBRA newsletter.**

Well yet another month has passed and what a fantastic month it has been weather wise. It was officially the warmest January in the Canary Islands for 55 years, and you can read more about that below. February is also our "Birthday month" we are 8 years old this month and we are very proud of this achievement. We would like to take this opportunity to offer a warm welcome to new members Azure Restaurant in Puerto Calero and Buggies Lanzarote who are also based in Puerto Calero, and we shall be finding out more about them in next month's newsletter. Our members coffee morning takes place this month details of which are below. We hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter and as always would welcome your comments and suggestions, and if you have any news, celebrations or events you would like to share with other members then please let us know.

## Happy Birthday to us! A Birthday message from LBRA President, Daniel Trigg



We are absolutely delighted to announce that the association is eight years old this month. Since the LBRA was founded we feel we have made a real difference in improving the situation for residents and business owners here in Lanzarote and for visitors to the island. Our membership continues to grow and the team are really excited that we can now offer more services to our members. We are very happy with the continued support we receive from the Cabildo and Ayuntamientos who appreciate the benefits we create on the island. By supporting our efforts they are helping to ensure the future harmony between locals and foreign residents who now call Lanzarote their home. In turn this will lead to the continued development and success of business across the island and the long term economic growth.

As always our members are the most important part of the organisation, and our commitment is to work hard on your behalf and take care of your interests. We have the knowledge, capabilities, enthusiasm and dedication to work on your behalf and with your support we will continue to do so. Best wishes Daniel



## Weather



As we mentioned in the introduction January was very warm and very sunny throughout the Canary Islands. The average temperature was around 21C, higher at times making it the warmest January since 1961. There was also a lack of rainfall which is similar to January 2012 and 2013, and AEMET marked it as significant that half of the driest months of January in the last forty years have been in the twenty-first century.

## Consumer complaints

We are often asked where it is people need to go to make a formal complaint about bad service etc. This is the office where you need to go it is located in the Cabildo and it is just on the left hand side as you enter the building. Of course if you have any problems then you can contact us for assistance.





## (FITUR) 2016 Madrid

FITUR is the annual International Tourism Fair that takes place every year during January in Madrid, and this year we were fortunate to be able to attend. There was so much to see this as year there were around 9,500 companies attending from over 165 countries. It was great to catch up with friends and associates from the tourism industry and of course make new acquaintances and contacts, and visit the numerous stands and see what others have to offer. Congratulations to Lanzarote and the Canary Islands on their excellent stands, showcasing the islands with quality and professionalism.



## How you can register to vote in the EU Referendum



British Embassy  
Madrid

We have received the following information from our contacts at the British Embassy in Madrid.

The British Embassy and Consular network in Spain is supporting a global campaign, led by the Electoral Commission, to encourage British citizens overseas to register to vote in the referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union. Some 283,000 Britons are registered on the padrón in Spain and many more are resident for all or part of the year. Yet just 11,000 were registered to vote in last year's UK General Election. Very many are simply unaware that they may be eligible to have their say in the EU Referendum. This is where you along with other partners with contacts in the expatriate community – can help raise public awareness.

The British Ambassador Simon Manley launched the 'Register to Vote' campaign at an event in Javea, Alicante province on 1<sup>st</sup> February. The Embassy has sent a news release to all the English-language press in Spain, with articles expected in many of the leading expat newspapers. We are also spreading the message via our 'Brits Living in Spain' accounts on Facebook and Twitter. We would be delighted if you can further help spread the word, so that expatriates become aware of their potential eligibility to vote.

At the General Election last year nearly 106,000 Britons worldwide were registered as overseas voters, three times more than at the previous Election in 2010. But that compares with estimates of 3.5 to 5.5 million Britons who live abroad. Very large numbers may be eligible to vote yet be unaware that they can have their say in this historic referendum.

The Electoral Commission will be grateful for any activity that will make British expatriates in Spain aware that they may have the right to vote and that encourages them to register, quickly and easily, at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote).

### **News release**

**1 February 2016 – for immediate use**

### **Did you know you may be eligible to vote in the EU Referendum?**

#### **British Embassy launches expat awareness campaign**

If you have been on the electoral roll in the UK within the last 15 years then you can register to vote in the referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union.

The British Ambassador Simon Manley has launched a major campaign to make expats aware that they may be able to have their say in the EU referendum – provided they register to vote in good time.

Speaking at an event to launch the registration campaign, Mr Manley said:

"Interest among expats in the referendum is high but awareness that you may be eligible to vote is low. We want as many expats as possible to be aware that they can have their say.

"You can register to vote in a few minutes via the website [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) - and do encourage your friends, family and colleagues to do the same."

The British Embassy in Madrid is backing a global campaign by the Electoral Commission to encourage Britons who live overseas to register to vote.

Some 283,000 Britons are registered on the padrón as resident in Spain, but just 11,000 are registered to vote in the UK. So the vast majority of expats will miss out on having their say in the referendum – unless they take a few simple steps.

To register as an overseas voter, you must have been registered in a UK constituency within the last 15 years. All you have to do is visit [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) with your passport details and National Insurance number to hand, and the postcode of where you last lived.

You can choose how you want to vote: by post, by proxy (voting by appointing someone you trust to vote on your behalf), or even in person if by chance you will be in your UK local authority area on polling day.

All it takes is five minutes to register. And because overseas voters must allow enough time for their ballot paper to be posted from the UK, you should do it now rather than wait for the final deadline, at which point it may be too late to use a postal vote effectively.

Postal ballot papers will be despatched about a month ahead of the referendum - earlier than for the General Election last year - giving overseas voters more time to receive, complete, and return their ballot pack to the UK.

The Embassy will be campaigning through the expat media and a wide range of partners that work with British Consulates in Spain to pass on the 'register to vote' message.

Go to [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) and make sure you will be able to have your say.

If you are active on Twitter then do tell others that **#YourVoteMatters** and add the link <http://bit.ly/1RGrh5H>.

Find out more about the EU referendum at [www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk)

## Members Coffee Morning



Our first members meeting of the year takes place on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February at Kristian's Restaurant in the Old Town Harbour in Puerto del Carmen. We would like to invite all members to please join us and help celebrate our birthday, and yes we are buying the coffee! Kristian's is not normally open during the day and they are only opening especially for our members so please show your support and attend. If you could please confirm if you will be attending asap. It's just an informal gathering for us all to meet, have a chat and get to know each other and catch up on news. We shall be serving coffee at 11.00 and should finish by 12.30 latest, so please do join us, all members are very welcome and it would be great for us all to celebrate our "birthday" together.

**Member Interview.** Our member interview this month is with Martin and Elizabeth Holzke of SoftQualM and ISO in the Sun. Martin and Elizabeth were a delight to meet and considering they were due to move house the following day they were extremely accommodating and hospitable.



LBRA. Hi Martin and Elizabeth, thanks for taking the time to meet us, how long have you been in Lanzarote, how are enjoying it and of course why Lanzarote?

Martin/Elizabeth. We arrived on October 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 and we absolutely love it, our best decision ever, the climate is wonderful. Martin then continues, it was actually a sheer accident that we first came to Lanzarote, I knew about the Canary Islands but as a child I lived in North Germany so our holidays tended to be spent in more Northern Countries. A few years ago Elizabeth and I were on holiday in Malta and were approached by a holiday company, not time-share but a holiday club. Anyway we were offered a week's holiday in Lanzarote we said make it two and we will go. We arrived and found ourselves at Los Molinos in Costa Teguise and we just fell in love with the island. We came back at various times throughout the year to "test" the weather and found it perfect. We love the relaxed pace, the attitude compared to other islands is better and we find it an "anything goes" type of style. The heat is hot but not overbearing like other places we have visited for example Barcelona and Budapest which was too hot, but here it stays reasonably comfortable the whole year round. We spent six weeks here over the Christmas/New Year period in 2013 and that sealed the deal.

LBRA. Is Lanzarote meeting your expectations?

Elizabeth. Yes, yes and yes and it's a yes from Martin as well.



LBRA. You were previously in Scotland can you tell us a bit more about that.

Martin. My work allows me to work anywhere in the world and I moved to Scotland from Germany in 2001. I met Elizabeth over Hogmanay 2007 and we later married. I have always been self-employed and Elizabeth quickly came on board and is now my "right hand person" while also starting her own business.



LBRA. So your business is SoftQualM which also runs ISO in the Sun, can you tell us more about that



Martin. Well we specialise in Information Security, Business Continuity and Risk Management. As previously mentioned the work I do can be based anywhere. SoftQualM began in Germany 25 years ago and when I moved to Scotland I took the business with me, very much the same as when we moved to Lanzarote. The business began in software development and training and then developed into the whole business which now includes security and risk consultancy as well training in those areas. They are all business linked and so work together nicely as a complete circle of services. Elizabeth looks after the general administration, paperwork and is also an invigilator for the exams. I am a UKAS Assessor in UK for those areas. Basically I audit the auditor which is the next level over what I also do which is train the auditors to the ISO standards that UKAS accredits. I still train and audit worldwide and I now also do a lot of remote online training to the United States and other countries from here.





The idea of ISO in the Sun is to give people the opportunity to enjoy training in a different style of environment. The cost for the delegates can be amazingly cheaper than attending a course elsewhere, even when factoring in flight costs. Accommodation here is less expensive, for example we recently had a delegate from the UK who found that by having his training here it cost him 3 times less than what it would have done staying in a London hotel with expensive travel costs. Delegates can of course arrange to bring friends and family and combine the stay with a holiday. We also find that attendees benefit from the relaxed surroundings, for example we normally factor in a one hour lunch break but often find that we spent longer chatting over tapas and the hour stretches to 90 minutes. No one ever minds that this means staying on later in the afternoon as for those delegates staying in the hotel they are already "home" and for any locals attending they do not have to face a torturous motorway journey in treacherous weather conditions. Here it's more a question of air con on or roof down? Well who could complain about that!

LBRA. How easy/difficult have you found setting up a business in Lanzarote? Any pitfalls or recommendations/advice you could offer to others?

Martin. Have to say we found it super easy to set up the business, obviously our business was already established but we did not really have any problems. My advice would be to use a good accountant and prior to your move come out and sit down with the accountant and discuss everything thoroughly and ensure you are ready for when you arrive, never try and do things on your own.

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

Martin. The main thing would be internet connection, the whole infrastructure seriously needs to be improved but apart from that nothing major, everything is nice just as it is.

LBRA. Best things about living in Lanzarote?

Elizabeth. Sun, sea, beach and the people, and Martin agrees. We swim in the sea every day, lie in the sun, combine this with tapas and vino followed by a siesta what could be better? Of course the cost of living is so much cheaper than the UK, so all things considered it's a great life. We try hard to integrate with the locals and to practice our Spanish with them, we have in fact just arranged to meet up and exchange language with the girl in our local coffee shop.

LBRA. Is there anything you miss from your previous life in the UK?

Martin / Elizabeth. The “rain” they both say and laugh and having to drive nearly 3 hours to the nearest airport, so no there is nothing we miss. Elizabeth recalls that she used to look forward to going back and shopping but no longer enjoys that as she has everything she needs here.

LBRA. How do you like to relax?

Martin / Elizabeth. Both laugh again, beach, swim, tapas and vino followed by a siesta. Elizabeth also enjoys washing as it is such a joy to be able to get things washed and dried in the same day, a novelty after Scotland where things could take days to dry! We also enjoy mixing with the locals and attending local fiesta’s etc. Martin is also an avid collector and connoisseur of single malt whisky.

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

Martin / Elizabeth. Timanfaya, Orzola, La Graciosa, Puerto Calero and the Submarine Safari, La Geria and anywhere off the beaten track where we can show them the real Lanzarote.

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

Martin / Elizabeth. Most people are surprised by what we actually do. For example the business we have and the amount of travelling we do for work, travelling extensively throughout Europe and worldwide. Whilst we are keen to develop our business in Lanzarote we do not want to lose what we already have and that’s the freedom to travel and work.

Elizabeth. I make homemade sweets, in particular delicious fudge. In Scotland this was my business for many years, making sweets and fudge, handmade chocolates and selling them at fairs, markets and exhibitions. I also had many private commissions for weddings, celebrations etc and am keen to start this side of the business again in Lanzarote. Martin would often be away working maybe in America or Germany and could arrive home and within hours would be donning his apron and helping me at an exhibition, and he actually really enjoyed it.





LBRA. 5 words to describe Lanzarote?

Elizabeth had to answer this one as Martin could not contain his reply to 5 words, his description was a novel in itself, haha

Elizabeth. Mysterious, Inviting, Small (but not crowded) Beautiful, Friendly.

Thank you both so very much, I have to say we laughed our way through most of this interview as Martin and Elizabeth are both extremely warm and entertaining people and it was our pleasure to meet them, and we wish them good luck with their new ventures in Lanzarote.

If you would like to contact Martin or Elizabeth then call, email or skype

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## Social Media



Our presence on social media is now attracting large audiences. If you would like to share any information via our social media pages then please contact us. These are typical figures that we are reaching daily on individual posts and remember this is just for one picture or video on one page and we have 8 pages plus our instagram, twitter and blog accounts etc.

[15,772 people reached](#)

[21,274 people reached](#)

[22,039 people reached](#)

Some further figures for Facebook only - all pages during January

Impressions: 1.0m - by 399,374 users

New fans this month: 796

Total Likes: 11.94k

People talking about content: 2.98k

To follow our blog and read and watch our latest Video blogs just click on the link <https://lanzaroteassociation.blogspot.com.es/>

## Creative Writing/Visiting Guest Speakers

Many of you showed a great interest in the interview we did last month with Sue Almond and we therefore thought you might be interested in two events Sue has organised.

Visiting speakers on two forthcoming dates and anyone is welcome to join the group if you would like to meet them:

Harry Dunn has written two novels featuring his hero, Jack Barclay. He visits Lanzarote regularly and has done much of his writing here. His background is in media and he promises a few anecdotes from those days as well as his experience of writing and getting published.

26 February: HARRY DUNN, author.

NB Change of venue. The Clock House Tavern, Costa Teguse is opening specially for us at 11.15 am. It is hoped that as many as possible will stay for lunch afterwards and friends and anyone interested in meeting Harry would be most welcome to join us.

04 March. (Sue away in UK.) Visiting speaker, author ISABEL BLACKTHORN at the usual time and venue, 11.15am Dicken's Bar, Costa Teguse. Isabel is the author of 'The Drago Tree' a novel set in Lanzarote where she lived for a while in the 1980s.

There is no charge for either session, just buy a drink at the bar and enjoy.

Please let Sue know if possible if you wish to attend, just for an idea of numbers, particularly for 26 February where lunch will be available at the Clock House. Email [sue\\_almond2004@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sue_almond2004@yahoo.co.uk)

You may be interested in reading the writer's end latest book review on the Danish Girl

<http://writersend.com/2016/02/10/2006/> LATEST BOOK REVIEW ON [WRITERSEND.COM](http://WRITERSEND.COM) PLUS FILM TRAILER.Both beautifully crafted and sensitive.Click on link:



We hope you have enjoyed this edition and as always would welcome your comments and suggestions.

Best wishes

Danny, Silvia, Rita and the LBRA Team

**Together**  
we make a great team!

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