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CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

NEWSLETTER/BUTLLETÍ INFORMATIU



VOL. 3 - Núm. 3 - SPRING / PRIMAVERA 1994

CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

INFORMATION / INFORMATIU

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COFFEE MORNING IS HELD EVERY WEDNESDAY (10.30 - 12.30) AT THE HOTEL PARIS-LONDRES, ESCALDES, COME ALONG FOR A PLEASANT MORNING.
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THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE THOSE OF THE EDITORS AND/OR THE CONTRIBUTORS. THEY DO NOT NECESSARILY EXPRESS THE VIEWS OF THE BOARD OF THE C.I.A.

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COVER PICTURE BY TONY HOOPER

Members are invited to submit seasonal photographs for use on the front covers of future issues.

■ Un Club per a gent de totes les nacionalitats que viuen al Principat. Actualment hi ha membres de 25 nacionalitats. En aquesta varietat de membres la llengua més comuna és l'anglès. L'objectiu principal del Club és reunir a gent en un esperit d'amistat i companyonia. El Club ofereix als membres l'oportunitat de conèixer-se socialment i/o a través de les diferents activitats que els Grups organitzen.

■ A Club for people of all nationalities living in the Principality. Membership now covers some 25 nationalities. With this diversity the major common language is English. The main aim of the Club is to bring people together in a spirit of friendship and comradeship. The Club offers members the opportunity to meet socially and/or through the many diverse activities to be found in the Groups.

■ Un Club pour personnes de toutes les nationalités qui habitent dans la Principauté. Actuellement il y a des membres de 25 nationalités différentes. Parmi cette variété de membres la langue la plus commune est l'anglais. L'objectif principal du Club est de réunir les personnes dans un esprit d'amitié et camaraderie. Le Club offre aux membres l'opportunité de se connaître socialement à travers des différentes activités que les Groupes organisent.

INTERCOMM

CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER - SPRING 1994

EDITORS: Jacquie Crozier and Tony Hooper

EDITORIAL.

After a winter of snow, which this year seems to have covered all the country, our thoughts should now be turning to spring, although we may have to wait until almost midsummer before we see any real signs of its coming. Certainly we have had more snow this year than I can remember in my time in Andorra, and I, along with many of you who are skiers, have enjoyed the best conditions for several years, certainly for the past eight seasons. But let us not forget those to whom these conditions mean added difficulties. We hope that not too many members have had to face any insurmountable ones, but do remember that the Club is here to help if we can, or at least point you in the right direction, if you are faced with problems. No matter what you want to know, or who you want to contact, there is somebody in the Club who has the information you require. Contact any of the officers, and if we don't know the answer we will do our utmost to find someone who does. Despite the weather members have continued to enjoy events organised by the Club. A party of 20 members again joined the New Year's Eve celebrations at the Hostal Poblado to sample the excellent food and the camaraderie between various nationalities. More recently the Valentine's Day meal and cabaret organised by the Theatre Group was a huge success being sold out before advertising was really under way. We understand that because of the demand for places, the Group is trying to organise a repeat function in the near future.

NEWS FROM THE BOARD.

The Board had intended to announce the date of the 1994 A.G.M. in this issue of the Newsletter, but at this time we still have not received the new Statutes back from the Government. Since it would be necessary to call a further Special General Meeting after the A.G.M. if we were to go ahead without the Statutes it has been decided to delay the A.G.M. in the hope that they can be presented this year. By both the present Statutes and the new ones the A.G.M. can be held at any time in the first six months of the year. One aspect of the new Statutes, which we have outlined in a previous Newsletter, is that when they are presented ALL the present Board will be resigning so that we can start the new Statutes correctly. Most of those who will resign will be available for re-election, but not all. Now is the time to be thinking about who you want on the new Board. If we have an excess of candidates it will indicate a healthy Club! The Weekly Newsletter continues to be supported and the number sold each week is slowly growing. You all received a specimen copy with the last Newsletter. Those who do buy copies find that they are kept abreast of Andorran news without having to read Catalan. The Board would like to thank Clare Allcard for producing the weekly sheet whilst Jacquie was away. The Board believe that it would be a good idea to issue a list of members to all members for their personal use. Where we have the information this would include the interests of members and languages spoken. However the latter information is not available for all members since they did not indicate these areas on their joining form. If any elderly members, particularly those living alone, would like a contact telephone number, or wish to arrange for regular telephone calls, please give Dinah Baxter a call on - 36 9 80.

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PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FOR 1994.

This list contains the suggested activities from March to September 1994. We hope that all listed will take place.

March: A lunch in Andorra.

April: Overnight trip to Carcassone and a Cathar castle.

May: A dinner in Andorra.

June: Overnight visit to Ax-les-Thermes and the Casino.

July: Poolside Barbeque.

August: Overnight visit to Pageant at Foix.

September: Madrid, Prado Museum and Flamenco Ballet - 2 nights away.

Other possibilities under active consideration: White Water Rafting - Helicopter Hiking - Visit to Monserrat.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS.

THE INTERNATIONAL SINGERS

We all really enjoyed presenting our second Festival of International Christmas Music and it was wonderful to see the church so full. We were particularly grateful to our soloists, Roser Palomero, Thomas Preibach, Teresa Vidal and Nicholas Walter and to our pianist, Binnie Segal, who made all the difference to our own performance. As to dear Sheila Hooper, she was so determined to keep us in time she postponed her operation just for us. And what is more she got us to watch her while we sang. What more could one ask! Padre Roc also seemed very happy with the concert and promised that next year he would mention it to his congregation so the we attract more Andorrans. Yes, we are already planning for next Christmas when we hope to include post-concert refreshments. Now we are working on secular music such as "Memory" from Cats and a three-part version of "I Could Have Danced All Night" whilst we wait for some scores from Gilbert and Sullivan to arrive from Mallorca. Our numbers continue to grow and two weeks ago we

welcomed our first Catalan member, Maria-Teresa Raurell. As usual though, half the choir is away in such divers places as Australia, Bali and Mexico. This makes getting enough voices together to sing three parts a bit tricky so do PLEASE come forward anyone who loves to sing. You will be made most welcome. For the moment we are, sadly, an all women choir but if enough men volunteer to maintain tenor and bass parts then we will be more than happy to switch back to being heterosexual! If you would like more information please do not hesitate to ring Clare Allcard - 36269, or Sheila Hooper - 36154.

SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING.

All of us who go Scottish Country Dancing on Sunday afternoons from 4.30 to 6.30 in the Sala Paroquia behind the La Massana Church, are thoroughly enjoying ourselves. We have a new, more powerful, cassette player, an enlarged collection of dance tapes and an ever expanding repertoire of dances. Five of these new dances are unique to Andorra as they have been composed by our teacher, John Gill. One of these new dances is called "The Hunter Reel" and is dedicated to the "Clan Hunter" whose chief, Neil Hunter, lives in Escas. The music for this dance is being recorded for us by an Irish Folk Band. Other new dances include a Strathspay "Wild Flowers", together with several jigs and a medley - Strathspay changing at mid-point to a Reel. During 1993 we welcomed many new members and look forward to many more joining us this year. Detailed instructions are given for each dance and, in four weeks, a total beginner will be able to cope happily with any dance. Fun is guaranteed. So all you need is a flat pair of shoes and a capacity for enjoyment. You will meet a warm welcome on Sunday afternoons at 4.30. Come on your own or with a friend and if you need some encouragement telephone: John Gill - 37109, Marjorie Temple 35655, or Clare Allcard - 36269.



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NATURALIST GROUP

After two lazy but comfortable meetings during January and February, when members showed their slides and videos taken in such diverse locations as Antarctica, India and Central America, the group is now out in the field again. As this goes to press, eighteen members are spending a long week-end visiting the Belchite Steppe Reserve and Gallocanta lake near Zaragossa, to try and see some of the rarer Spanish birds as well as watching the amazing spectacle of thousands of cranes preparing to fly across the Pyrenees on their way back to breed in Scandinavia. Saturday night is being spent in the Monasterio de Piedra, where during the last century, the monks transformed the valley below the monastery into a extraordinary landscape of cascading waterfalls, every one different. Walking round the beautiful park, one is never far from the sound of tumbling water. It is a green oasis in the bleak aridity of the Aragon steppes.

The next weekend trip outside Andorra is not until October, when the group will staying at Casa Guils, near Trepmp but between times, there will be regular monthly meetings within and around Andorra.

On April 14 the area to be visited is Sant Lorenc lake near Balaguer, a beautiful spot surrounded by rocky crags, where birds and spring flowers should be abundant.

May 19 is likely to be harder work, as this is a day to do some field work for the Atlas of Breeding Birds of Andorra.

Back in Spain on June 23 to Bar, along the Segre valley, for Mediterranean birds and flowers - not to mention all the butterflies found here.

July 21 is the date for one of the most popular walks; up the valley from Els Cortals, Encamp to look for marmots. There have been families showing off every time the group has been here, as well as superb alpine flowers beside the stream.

August 18 is planned to go up to La Rabassa, above Sant Julia where there are also marmots as well as mountain birds such as ptarmigan and superb views over most of Andorra.

September 15 will be another visit to the Lleida steppes where Little Bustard and Stone Curlew should be easy to see in small autumn flocks.

The October meeting is the weekend trip and the final meeting of the year is on November 17 when the group will be going to the lakes near Mont Louis in France for wintering duck and water birds.

The group would be grateful for any volunteers to help with the work on the Atlas of Breeding birds between mid May and mid July

For more details of any of these outings, telephone or contact either
 Jacquie Crozier 35931
 Brian Dore 42849
 or Ann Matschke 41279



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NEW ENGLAND IN THE FALL

Elizabeth Hopkins told me about the terrible winter, seven years earlier, when half of the pilgrims had perished as a result of disease or accident. The remainder had survived partially due to their own efforts and partially due to the generosity of the local Wampanoag Indians. The place was Plymouth, Mass., the year 1627 and Elizabeth was one of the survivors of the Mayflower. The next day I was one of the Famous Four Hundred And had been invited to Beechwood, in Newport, Rhode Island as a guest of Mrs. Astor. It goes without saying that neither I, nor any of my family, had engaged in trade for the past three generations or membership of the Four of Hundred would have been unthinkable. The butler pointed out that Mrs. Astor's house was not the largest in the area. The Breakers built for the

Vanderbilts, was twice the size of Beechwood, but they were involved in commerce. Mrs. Astor was the Queen of American society and had no need of ostentation such as that to prove it, although it must be mentioned that four hundred was the number of guests that she could comfortably fit into the ballroom of her New York home.

The incidents mentioned above took place in two of the "Living History museums" that we visited during a tour of New England. The Pilgrim Village is located about two miles from the Plymouth Rock and consists of a muddy main street lined by thatched wattle-and-daub houses. The "residents" are actors and actresses who play the part of passengers of the Mayflower still surviving in 1627. Prior to entering the village we were shown a video of the life



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and times of the period so that the sudden transformation into the 17th. century would not come as too much of a shock! The parts were played extremely realistically. One of the Pilgrims was tending his flock of sheep and goats; another had built a fire in his yard and was busy making charcoal, and two more were constructing a wattle hut. Others were making pottery, weaving, basket-making or otherwise occupied with tasks necessary for day to day living. The costumed interpreters spoke early 17th. century English in a variety of dialects and were very willing to describe their way of life and answer any questions about anything that happened after 1627.

The coach tour began at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York, and ended there twelve days later after having taken us about twelve hundred miles through seven states. I like coach tours for a number of reasons. You can sit comfortably in your seat, don't have to worry about getting an hotel at the end of the day, where to park, where to go. One disadvantage of a tour is that there always seems to be a certain someone who grabs the front seat of the coach and stays there. Hard luck for the late arrivals who get stuck at the back. However, the company we were with had arranged things differently and organised the seating so that each day we sat in a different seat. One took a turn at front, back and middle. Another disadvantage I find is that coach passengers are usually put in a special seating area for meals and given a fixed menu with little choice. In this case we were seated with the other hotel guests and had the choice of everything on the a la carte menu. What is more delicious than a whole boiled Maine lobster. I had it three times! There was no

central theme to the trip. Going to New England in the Fall evokes the beautiful colours of the autumn leaves, and we certainly saw plenty of those, and they were every bit as spectacular as we'd been expecting. One free afternoon our guide, Emily (a New Englander from New Hampshire) got those who were interested together to make postcards, bookmarks or whatever from sugar maple, sumac or other leaves which were arranged on cards and covered with transparent paper. Friends we sent them to were delighted with the results. One evening we were given a talk by a teacher from Gould Academy in Bethel, Maine, on the flora and fauna of the area. Included in this talk, which was illustrated by slides, was an explanation for the beautiful colours of the leaves in autumn. Every day we saw something different, from a visit to a maple syrup operation in Vermont to a walk along the Freedom Trail in Boston. We had lunch at the restaurant of one of the Trapp family of Sound of Music fame, we spent a couple of hours (and could have spent many more if we'd had the time) wandering round the Maritime Museum in Mystic Seaport, we went on a ferry across Lake Champlain, a boat trip to see the harbour seals in Boothbay Harbour and another to see the so called Camps (palaces would be a better description) along the shores of Lake Placid. We also learnt some of the New Englandese. We in the coach, and others like us at this time of year, are known as Leaf Peepers. People who are not from New England are known as Flatlanders, and Yankees are people who have pie for breakfast. Or so we were told! Forty-three of us were on the coach, about twelve Europeans and the rest Americans. By the end of



Lake Placid Site of the 1980 Winter Olympics

the trip we knew each other quite well, and if I could choose companions for another trip I'd go along with the same party. That was about the only positive aspect that was not arranged by the company. All the rest, the luxury hotels, the superb food, the complete lack of hassle, the interesting and varied itinerary, the delightful guide, and the pleasant and competent driver were. For those interested the company we were with was called Tauck Tours. Our American friends informed us that they were well known in the States for their quality of service, which we can now heartily endorse. Tauck also run tours in Europe and their brochures are available through, as they say, most reputable Travel Agencies.

Maurice Pilkington

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

Dear Editors,

May I appeal to your readers for help in a cookery problem? Recently I bought in France two North African spices, but being ignorant of this type of cooking I don't know how to use them. One is RAS EL HANOUT, which in appearance, colour and smell is similar to the Indian spice mixture GARAM MASALA. The other is MLAUKHIA, a finely ground green (eau de nil) powder with a pungent smell, unlike anything that I have used before. I would be grateful for ideas on how to use these spices, or a reference to a North African cookery book.

Peter Parkinson.

MONSIEUR BOULOC'S HOLIDAY

He was "Tres serieux" we were assured, an artisan of high repute. I fear we were equally highly recommended to him as "Pigeons anglais" He arrived five minutes early, smelling of aftershave. A big man with black hair, and a heavy jewelled face. We toured the house discussing where the boiler would be, the tanks, the radiators and pipe runs. He made decisive notes on his pad and beamed reassuringly. It was evidently all a piece of French cake. Simple, "Clack Clack". It could be done "d'accord" as we wished. Perhaps a few more radiators here and there...He would calculate from our plan how big a boiler was necessary. The Quotation? No problem. In two days "Clack Clack". The work? He would fit it into his programme before he went on holiday at

the end of the month. Was it too good to be true? There was something about him that did not quite fit, Hands too clean for a plumber? Body too big to fit into those awkward corners, where blocked drains descend and jammed stopcocks lurk? But true to his word he reappeared without any warning two days later. It was unfortunate for him that we were just leaving with the builder to choose some old beams. So Boulloc delivered his quote and went away. We dissected the global figure later that evening. To see how he had achieved a total so frightening, even with a nought lopped off the end. We also studied some literature that he had left behind, on boilers and radiators - though without prices. And next day I checked on the cost of lesser items at a plumbers-merchant. I dislike haggling; but I dislike even more having my intelligence insulted So when Boulloc arrived to make his personal presentation, we were ready for him. We toured the house again briefly, then settled down in the comparative warmth of the caravan to discuss the quote. I nipped back to the house to collect my reading glasses. Jean-Pierre, the mason, looked up from his brick-laying. He's expensive, that one? and tapped his hip pocket. Mm, "bien sur", I nodded. Look at his Belle Amie in the car, declared his mate Jean-Claude. He put his hand up to his face, palm outwards, thumb and index-finger tips together, and smacked his lips. "Impeccable. She hopes that she is going on a tropical holiday with him soon", he said. How interesting, I mused, as Boulloc's ambition was revealed to me. As a warning shot I challenged the need for the size of boiler he had specified, whose output in kilojoules would have melted the house, let alone heated it. Boulloc conceded with a shrug. "If Monsieur does not want the very best" Keeping him on the retreat, I switched to a less expensive manufacturer too. Around 15,000 Francs pruned away. He twitched his little black moustache. One sensed that the third week in Tahiti with his Belle Amie had disappeared. "La Patronne", as she had become known to our workforce, next chastised his impudence for slipping in four extra radiators. Their removal lightened our bill by several thousand francs, but cost poor Boulloc useful holiday spending money. (Crayfish only every other night?) Boulloc looked uncomfortably hot, and rose from the table to take off his long green anorak, revealing a black cotton polo-neck shirt of "Grand Patron" proportions. He looked down at us. By now had not honour been satisfied? He announced that it would be possible to start next Wednesday. But we shook

our heads, and returned to the quote. In a spirit of sacrifice "La Patronne" abandoned her lovely cast-iron radiators, decorated with ivy leaves, and settled for modern steel panels. Boulloc's sympathy was real. The considerable difference in price had shrunk the amount of trade discount that he was hoping to pocket. He closed his eyes in long contemplation before consulting his price lists. His horizons shrinking, he mentally settled for the Caribbean instead of the Pacific. My turn now. I had measured how much copper pipe was needed for cold feeds, hot feeds, radiators and returns. It came to 200 metres. Boulloc's monetary total under this heading, divided by the appropriate price per metre (that I had discovered the day before), came to 450 metres. He was equally generous - to himself - with joints, elbows and Tee pieces. Enough for two of everything every metre of pipe run, like beads on a necklace. After I had made my point, he pulled a face to express infinite wisdom. Then he spread his hands and explained that in his experience it was better to provide for unforeseeable difficulties. He agreed to a reduction. With his pencil poised and eyelids lowered, he moved unwillingly from First Class to Tourist seating on Air France! The new total was still too high. We dispensed with the upstairs radiators, and reduced the boiler size again. Our target was in sight now. Boulloc's benefits reduced him from the

Caribbean to the Mediterranean shores. Tunisian sunshine perhaps, or Egypt..... The muscles of his face worked with inner tumult. On the last page, fine tuning now, I asked him to explain the function of the thermostats that remained. Most, it seemed, were to keep the - system from freezing in our absence. Thus did we arrive at the point where the central heating was primarily concerned with keeping itself warm, and the house as an afterthought. "Oh no!", in unison, "we will heat by electricity, thank you" The supply of domestic hot water would be provided by two wall-mounted units. Boulloc turned the pages of his catalogue increasingly slowly, the expression on his face moved from disapproval to sadness (Not a pension in St. Tropez again!) Finally he stood up, hands clasped in front of his stomach. The corners of his spaniel eyes dropped, his moustache too. His jowls trembled with emotion. In this tragic stance I sensed the graveside manner of an unfulfilled undertaker. "It is unworthy of this fine house", he pronounced. "Unworthy of my attention. Besides the water heaters are out of stock until the New Year. I am desolated to find that I cannot be of service to you" I went with him to his car, where he exchanged wan looks with his Belle Amie. "Thank you for your trouble", I said. "Mon plaisir", he replied. I waved and smiled, "Et Bonne Vacances!"

Michael Gale.



BARCLAYS INTERNATIONAL FUNDS

John GWILLIAM, the Personal Finance Manager (France) of Barclays Bank Trust Co. Ltd. is now permanently based in Nice, Alpes-Maritimes. However, following a number of requests from customers in Andorra, he travels to the Principality at least twice a year. Alternatively, if you are ever in the Côte d'Azur region he would be very pleased to meet you in Nice.

To arrange an appointment for his next visit, please telephone, fax or write to his office.

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A PRAYER FOR ALL THOSE WHO FEEL THAT THEY ARE GETTING OLD.

Lord, though knowest, better than I know myself, that I am growing older and will some day be old. Keep me from getting talkative and particularly from the fatal habit of thinking that I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everyone's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody; helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all, but Thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends in the end. Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips from my many aches and pains. My joys are increasing and my love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I ask for grace enough to listen to the tales of others' pain. help me to endure them with patience. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally it is possible that I may be mistaken. Keep me reasonably sweet. I do not want to be a saint. Some of them are hard to live with, but a sour old man/woman is one of the crowning works of the devil. Help me to extract all possible fun out of life. There are so many funny things around us and I do not want to miss any of them.

MUSICAL MEDICINE

Music's therapeutic effect on health is widely acknowledged. Indeed, not only is this so but there is even a Council of Music in Hospitals to organise music for the sick and handicapped, for many of whom it can mean more than speech. From earliest times music has been associated with religion and healing; in the ancient world it was closely bound up with temple worship and the healing practices of the priests. Pythagoras called this therapy "musical medicine". We hear of a physician in Rome who uses Bach fugues for indigestion, Handel for grief and

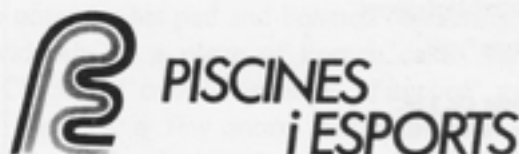
Schubert for insomnia. To this I dedicate these lovely words which I came across: "I am music, most ancient of the Arts. I am eternal, even before life began upon this earth, I was here, in the winds and the waves when the first trees and flowers and grasses appeared, I was amongst them. And when Man came I at once became the most delicate, most subtle and the most powerful medium for the expression of man's emotions. I have taught man gentleness and peace, and have led them on to heroic deeds. I comfort the lonely and I harmonise the discord of crowds. I am a necessary luxury to all men. I AM MUSIC."

Mary Eldridge

WE WANT MORE ROADS.....DON'T WE?

An article in the last issue of this magazine commented on motoring into Andorra in the 1950s. There are some earlier reports on the subject of roads and motoring in Bernard Newman's book on Andorra, published in 1928, and describing his visits here before that date. (However he was not an enthusiastic motorist, and clearly thought that the true way to visit Andorra was to walk, preferably from Ax-les-Thermes or Mont Louis; even Escaldes was only a forty minute walk away from the capital.) Newman relates that the Bishop of Urgel opposed a French proposal of 1893 to construct a telegraph line to Andorra la Vella, and adds that earlier this century "the French proposed that a road should be cut into Andorra, branching off the main road from Ax-les-Thermes to Bourg Madame. The Spanish

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party objected, on the grounds that it was undesirable to open the gates of Andorra to foreigners. Yet a year or two later the capital of the valley was connected to Urgel by road. Some of the dignity of Andorran independence is necessarily lost by these unworthy squabbles" So in 1928 Newman wrote that there were only two roads into Andorra (which will not surprise us today). From France, he wrote, "the road has been constructed in a rough and ready fashion as far as Soldeu, which you can reach if you have a good car and a very good driver. I would recommend no one who is not really a good driver to attempt the Embalire pass. There, a second's fluster or carelessness would mean disaster. From Soldeu a mule track leads to Encamp. The map shows first and second class mule tracks, and this one is shown as in the former class. From Seo d'Urgel the other road went as far as Encamp. There was a regular autobus service, three times a day, to Andorra la Vella, and even to Encamp. The bus service, be it noted, operates regularly during the summer months only; in the winter all routes are normally snowed up, and for lengthy periods are impassable for wheeled traffic. A friend of mine had the honour of driving the first "Baby Austin" into Andorra, to the intense surprise of the inhabitants...the passes, whilst

exacting, are by no means impossible. The Austin mounted them without failure". The friend reached Toulouse from London in six days, went to Foix on the seventh, and on the eighth (presumably in summer) drove to Soldeu, and back to Bourg Madame. Later he entered Andorra from Seo d'Urgel and stayed at Escaldes, "where there are two or three little hotels which are quite clean and reasonably comfortable, with pension terms of 12 pesetas a day and accommodation at other Andorran inns was not quite as bad as it had been painted."

Whilst in Andorra, Newman met the President and members of the General Council (Consell General). One member complained of the opening of Andorra. "But why did you allow the road to Seo d'Urgel to be built", I asked, "or even the road from Soldeu over the Embalire?" "Ah", he replied, "very few people in Andorra favoured either scheme. But France and the Bishop are very strong, and we could not resist". When Newman said that their grandfathers had resisted, the reply was, again, that France and the Bishop were now very strong. This, possibly prejudiced, view was not allowed to go unchallenged. Newman was unable to see the Bishop, as he was away, but "his chaplain received me with utmost courtesy....We discussed Andorra at



1926 WOLSELEY ON TRACK TO GRAU ROIG (Photograph supplied by Chris Balfour)

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great length, and I found that he had every detail of its history and constitution at his fingertips. He was very sympathetic with the Andorrans, and remarked that the Bishop was determined to protect them against French aggression. This struck me as being something of a coincidence, for in Perpignan I found that the French officials were very sympathetic with the Andorrans and fully determined to protect them against Spanish aggression". Newman looked to the future:- "The question of the construction of the road between Encamp and Soldeu will probably agitate Andorran politics for some years to come....If the road were completed, Andorra would be open to the world....and Andorra's seclusion would be gone for ever. The passes of the Pyrenees suited to motor traffic are so few that they are much used. And in the case of war between France and Spain the path would offer an irresistible temptation. It is often asserted that the Andorrans have opposed construction of roads because it would interfere with the smuggling traffic. This is picturesque, but absurd... The smuggling traffic in cattle has been facilitated considerably by the construction of roads. the principal route, whether it be metalled road or mule track." And there are other dangers: "The unbeaten tracks of the Pyrenees are not without their minor dangers, I have never yet encountered a bear or wolf, but have met snakes in plenty. Once I was bitten by a small viper when ten kilometres from the nearest house. That was one of the few occasions when I wished that I were not alone.....An old man in Massana showed with pride the skin of a bear which his son had killed. But within a few more generations the bear and the wolf will be extinct in the Pyrenees." Nevertheless, tourism existed: "Since it is so easily reached from the Spanish side, rich Spaniards from northern Spain pay flying visits in their cars; a visitor is no novelty - the capital will have as many as a dozen a week." Perhaps we would do better without a road through Andorra?"

In the next issue there will be a further article describing journeys on these roads taken from the "The Autocar" of April 1922.

R.H.

WHO WAS JOAN OF ARC?

The official version, widely known, is that Joan was a simple shepherdess, divinely inspired, who roused the French to fight the English after the demoralising defeat of Agincourt in 1415, was captured, and after a dubious trial, burned at the stake in May 1431, aged 19. The alternative version, which has a certain amount of documentary support, is that she was a princess of France, and as such could not be tortured; that someone else was burned in her place; that she lived on until 1446; and that at the time of her "official" death she was 23 not 19. Some time in the late 1940's I saw a production of Shaw's "Saint Joan", with Ann Casson in the name part; I do not remember who else was in it. I judged the play to be excellent theatre, but political nonsense, contrary to power psychology. Joan as portrayed by Shaw could not have caused such military and political events. So what was wrong? By chance I came across the memoirs of a fifteenth century Italian writer, Silvius Piccolomini, who in 1458 became Pope Pius II, two years after the end of the trial for the rehabilitation of Joan. "Some believe that there was a profound political intention beneath this device of creating a virgin who claimed to have been sent by God.

.....Was this the work of God or the intervention of man? I should find it hard to reach a decision on that point. The phenomenon of Joan deserves to be recorded, though in the future it is likely to be looked upon more with wonder than belief". If such a man could record honest doubt, it is hardly surprising that Joan was not canonised until 1920. Then I read the surviving report of the trial of 1431, which in the English translation runs to about 35,000 words, obviously a very summary version of the actual trial. At the end of my reading, the official version of Joan made no sense at all, though I knew nothing then of the alternative version of her life. Consider the following questions, and Joan's answers taken from the trial report, but out of sequence:

Q. Are you in a state of grace?

A. If I am not, may God put me in it. If I am, may He keep me there.

Q. Did St. Michael appear to you naked?

A. Do you think that Our Lord does not have what is needed to clothe him?

Q. Have the Saints forbidden you to tell the truth?

A. Do you wish me to speak of the affairs of the King of France? By my faith, you may perhaps force me to say by mistake things that I have sworn not to reveal. Then I should have perjured myself. Is that what you want?

A simple shepherdess of nineteen answering as by a miracle, or an intelligent, slightly older, upper-class woman with a well trained mind? The latter, in my opinion. A normal trial, or a show trial in which neither the prosecution nor the accused would go outside certain prearranged limits? Again the latter in my opinion. But the whole story still made little sense to me. It went to the back of my mind until 1983 when I read in "The Economist" a review of a French book, "Jehanne la Pucelle. L'Histoire, Les Documents" by Florence Maquet. That book contains the alternative version, referred to briefly in the first paragraph above. The story of Joan began to make sense, without precluding the possibility of some kind of divine intervention, or at least of a very strong belief in it. So I read a few more books to crosscheck within limits; biographies of Henry V and Henry VI of England; of Charles VI and Charles VII of France; of John the Fearless and Philip the Good, Dukes of Burgundy; of Charles, Duke of Orleans, one of the greatest poets of France; V. Sackville-West on Joan of Arc; histories of France and of England in the first half of the fifteenth century; a technical treatise on the penetrating power of arrows from the longbow through armour of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. My verdict was in favour of the alternative version over the official one, on a balance of probabilities, though not beyond reasonable doubt. This is how I see it, based largely on Florence Maquet's book supplemented by others referred to above. Charles VI of France was crazy, believing for long periods that he was made of glass, therefore very fragile. The two eldest surviving princes born to his queen, Isabeau of Bavaria, were undoubtedly fathered by him, as was his daughter Katherine, wife of Henry V and mother of Henry VI of England. (Henry V as portrayed by Shakespeare is a long way from the real man.) But it seems to be generally accepted that the third surviving son, Charles of Ponthieu, later Charles VII, was really the son of Louis Duke of Orleans, younger brother of Charles VI. By his marriage to Valentina of Milan, Louis of Orleans was the legitimate ancestor of

Louis XII and of Francis I, Kings of France. He was also the father of the Bastard of Orleans, John of Dunois, a successful general who appears in Shaw's play. And, according to Florence Maquet, Louis of Orleans and Isabeau of Bavaria were the parents of Joan of Arc, born in November 1407. Officially, the queen gave birth to a stillborn son Philippe, buried at St. Denis. Later in November 1407, Louis Duke of Orleans was assassinated on the orders of his first cousin, John, Duke of Burgundy. A few days later the baby Jeanne was escorted to Domremy, to live with her adoptive parents, Jacques and Isabelle d'Arc. Some twelve years later, the two eldest sons of Charles VI died and Charles of Ponthieu became Dauphin, heir apparent. There seems little doubt that in 1419 he organised the assassination of John, Duke of Burgundy, in revenge for the murder of his real father, thus antagonising the next Duke, Philip. In 1422 Charles of Ponthieu married Marie d'Anjou, daughter of Yolanda, Duchess of Anjou, a Spanish princess and the moving spirit of French resistance to the English. In the same year Henry V of England and Charles VI of France both died. Queen Isabeau had already declared her son Charles of Ponthieu to be illegitimate - which of course he was - and supported her grandson, the baby Henry VI of England, as King of France too, but the promoters of French resistance had other ideas. Meanwhile, Yolanda of Anjou had begun organising the education of Jeanne d'Arc far away to the east in Lorraine in a manner appropriate to a princess, without yet understanding how to use her. Joan's visions began at the (real) age of thirteen. Were they faked or real? I prefer to believe some of each. The war continued for a few more years. In February 1429 John of Dunois, beaten by the English at the "Battle of the Herrings" near Orleans, announced that a virgin would come from the marches of Lorraine to raise the siege of Orleans. Joan was ready. She believed in her visions, and was able to convince a group of eminent churchmen of her religious orthodoxy. Philip, Duke of Burgundy, was persuaded to stop helping the English besiege Orleans, which Joan liberated quite easily. Her reputation was made. In July 1429 Charles of Ponthieu was crowned Charles VII at Reims. Maybe Joan was no longer useful, politically, though she could still inspire soldiers to fight the English. In May 1430 Joan was captured at Compiègne - I think that she was abandoned by the French royal troops - and handed over to the Inquisition and later to the English. Her trial began in February 1431, ending in May 1431

when someone alleged to be Joan was burnt at the stake. Then Princess Joan - if such she was - disappears from history for a few years. From the trial the English wanted a verdict of witchcraft and sorcery, with the aim of invalidating the coronation of Charles VII. They didn't get it from the jury of French churchmen, only the politically harmless verdict of heresy, which was what the French wanted - still implying death by burning to the offender, unless she was a Princess of France. She reappears - or at least the "false" Joan does in 1436, marrying the Chevalier Robert des Armoises, and shortly afterwards rejoining her old comrade in arms Gilles de Rais in military operations against the English. He was judicially murdered in 1440 for all sorts of imaginary crimes - in fact, for being politically inconvenient, in my opinion - and Joan was retired. She died, naturally, in 1446. And in 1450 Charles VII paid his debt to Joan by initiating the successful legal process for her rehabilitation. One of many cases where the historical reality is more complex, more interesting and, I think, more credible than the conventional myth. I've made a dramatisation of it, too complex to be staged. They deserve remembering, Joan herself, Charles VII, the shadowy Yolanda of Anjou, the Dukes of Burgundy, the Dukes of Orleans,and all the rest. (Editor's note: And don't forget whoever it was who did die at the stake carrying the name of Joan of Arc!)


Peter Parkinson


THE COLONEL AND I.


He did not officially welcome me when I joined the regiment in Germany. The senior subaltern did that. Making it clear the he, the Adjutant and Lt. Col. Maitland thought little of National Service officers, and less of those who had "come up through the ranks". This last stricture was as inaccurate as it was unfair. I had really arrived after a swift rebound off the bottom rank! It was the army which had first given me the status of P.O., along with a dozen others in my intake at Catterick. Those of us who had collected some O's and A's at school. We found out on day two that this meant Potential Officer, and by day three that this status set you up as a prime target for sharp treatment from the basic training staff. After a week I failed to respond to a shout of "Oi, Lofty". Again "Oi, Lofty" rang out behind me. Merely curious, I turned round to find that it was I that was being addressed. I doubled smartly back and crashed to attention; to be charged with failing to obey the order of a superior officer. Remonstrating that "I have never been called Lofty before in my life, Corporal", was hopeless. Worse, I was addressing a sergeant, and added insubordination to my crimes. This sergeant turned out to be our drill instructor, and baited me for weeks thereafter, to which I reacted. His report easily squashed my chances of success at the Unit Selection Board for further Officer training. So they made me a Wireless Operator/Loader and sent me out to a Royal Tank

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Regiment in Germany. I spent a happy summer there on exercises, first as a crew member then as tank commander, for which post I was elevated to the rank of acting unpaid Lance Corporal. I must have done well enough, because that Colonel recommended me for the next Officer Selection Board. A month later I was at Mons Officer cadet School, Aldershot, and subsequently commissioned into Col. Maitland's Royal Tank Regiment. We left barracks for about two weeks every month for tactical training on Luneberge Heath, a separate tented camp was set up for each squadron of twelve tanks, their crews of four men plus the supporting troops of Headquarters, Quartermaster, and transport lorries. One day we joined a Brigade exercise and attacked across the heath, aiming to encircle our "enemy". We had needed another set of maps for this new area, after the "Orders Group" mine was covered with chinagraph marks showing the movements planned. But it was twenty years since the Wehrmacht had made my map and landmarks had changed. Old pine woods had been cut down and new ones planted in different places. Some farms, fields, and tracks had gone, others appeared elsewhere - unmapped. I was soon to lead my troop sadly astray. Feeling suspiciously lost and lonely in this battle, I halted outside a wood on high ground to look for a landmark to re-orientate on. I dismounted and conferred with my sergeant. We were sorting out what to do when a figure emerged from the wood and made violent shooing away motions. Looking more closely at the wood I could see camouflaged tents and vehicles in there sprouting tall wireless aerials. The figure was my Adjutant. I was happy to go, but in which direction? An Umpire drove up in a scout car flying a yellow flag on his aerial. "You are silhouetted on the hilltop", he began telling me. "Enemy artillery has put down a barrage of H.E. in this area, and everyone outside the tank is dead". He then spotted my Adjutant and what was in fact Regimental H.Q. in the wood. He went back to

his scout car, spoke on the radio then returned to us. "The senior umpire has ruled that R.H.Q. here has also been destroyed, and that all radio traffic must cease". I made to leave hastily. I had found out from my sergeant's map (strangely more up-to-date than mine) where to go. The Adjutant stopped me until he had told the Colonel of their fate - and why! The Colonel appeared, purple in the face, to inform me in strident tones both where I had come from, and where I should go. The first was physically impossible. The second not on my map! An unkind fate brought us together again face to face, and, one might say, cheek to cheek. Two days later, just after breakfast, the Colonel was making an early round of his squadron leaders. I was otherwise occupied, perched on one of a pair of "Boxes, thunder, Officers for the use of" Then the Colonel, caught short, availed himself of our facility, which that week was unfortunately devoid of any interior partitions. His arrival through the opening in the hessian outer screen provided me with what has remained the most embarrassing moment of my life. I was completely paralysed. He looked at me and through me as if I did not exist, and went on to behave as if I was not there. In barracks the Colonel seldom came to the Mess at lunchtime and never in the evenings. So I was spared his company until a Guest Night in that autumn, when we entertained a mixture of senior and junior officers from other regiments in our garrison. All Majors and above left after the meal, either to go to their own married quarters or to join another party with their wives at the Colonel's house. Those remaining became more noisy and boisterous, since a "Bull's Blood" - 2 Courvoisier + 1 Cherry Heering - cost tenpence and a beer fourpence. A game of mess rugby was arranged between ten of the RTR and ten guests. As the guests were a man short I was nominated to become an honorary member of the 4th/7th. Royal Dragoon Guards. Chairs were pushed aside to the walls, but the leather sofas became both the "25" line and an obstacle to be surmounted

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before a try could be scored in the fireplace at one end, or under the snooker table at the other. We lined up to play with jackets off, shirts unbuttoned and sleeves rolled. Some Dragoons and Horse Gunners, who were adorned in Mess Kit, had to remove their spurs. The struggle that ensued owed more to the Eton wall Game than rugby, but two breakaways did produce a try for each side. The conversion attempts were unsuccessful. At one stage - having been forcefully ejected from the scrum - I was about to rejoin it, when a RTR player broke away with the ball, and started to scale the sofas. I launched myself into a try-saving tackle on behalf of the guests, which brought down the sofa on my opponent's ankle. In reality the victim was our star wing three-quarter due to play in the semi-final of the Divisional Cup in two days time. It was typical of my luck that two visiting Colonels and ours should arrive to see whether it was time to "blow the final whistle". Col. Maitland saw the battered ankle swell and his chance of winning the cup diminish at the same time, all due to the actions of an Unmentionable. We never met again in Germany, which was just as well. He was said to be extra morose about failing to gain promotion, and consequently having to ~ make a go of civvy-street~ in the job his brother-in-law had offered him. We each left the army at the same time. A year or so later I was working in Bryanston Square, London, and my lunchtime stroll had taken me to the Edgware Road. There, half in the showroom and half on the pavement, was a line of second hand cars for sale. Beside one, with his left arm on the roof, and his right hand putting a cigarette to his mouth stood ex-Col. Maitland. It didn't even need thinking about. "I'd like a test drive in the Mark Ten, now, if I can." "Of course Sir", he said without really looking at me. We bumped off the kerb and drove around for ten minutes. I sensed him looking at me, to try and place where we had met before. I stopped and got out of the car. He followed. "Nice bus, Sir", he ventured, "did you like her?" "No, I'm not interested", I replied. "Pity Sir. Shall we go back then?" "No thanks. This is my office here, unless I've made another gross error of navigation, Colonel". Before I turned and went inside I saw that I had scored again. His eyes widened in recognition, and his jaw tightened in anger as he remembered that he had just twice called me "Sir".

Michael Gale.

DO-IT-YOURSELF.

As many of us know, insulation standards in Andorra are not adequate. When I moved to Andorra six years ago I purchased a flat in an older block. It was a lovely light flat with lots of windows and French doors. All the windows and doors had peisiannas which were set into a cavity in the brickwork above the doors and windows. We were frozen. On occasions it was warmer outside the flat than inside. So I set to investigating why we were so cold. By taking off the wooden cover of the peisianna inside the flat I found the reason. The flimsy board of 6 mm. (1/4 in.) plywood was all the protection that was between the inside of the flat and the exterior. No wonder that we were shivering. It was quite impossible to make the flat warm.

My solution to the problem was to buy some polystyrene about 2 cm. (1 in.) thick and cut it to the size of the aperture. A tight fit was necessary. The polystyrene was gently eased into the aperture ensuring that it did not touch the peisianna mechanism. The wooden cover was then screwed back into place. Also, where the straps for opening or shutting the peisiannaa pass through the wall is another source of draught. A little rockwool or glass fibre pushed into the gap greatly reduces the draught. The difference was immense. The flat on occasions was so warm that friends asked if the heating was on. It was a cheap and effective way of keeping us warm with the added bonus of greatly reducing the heating bills.

H. Spiers.

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200 g. (7 oz.) Plain flour.
1/2 teaspoon Salt.
1/2 teaspoon Ground cinnamon.
1/2 teaspoon Bicarbonate of soda.
650 g. (1.25 lb.) Cooking apples.
4 fl.oz. Sunflower oil.
100 g. (4 oz.) Caster sugar.
1 1/2 Eggs.
50 g. (2 oz.) Raisins.
35 g. (1 1/2 oz.) Chopped walnuts.

Method:

Oven temperature: Gas 4/350 F./180 C. Pre-heat the oven. Sift together flour, salt, cinnamon and bicarbonate of soda. Peel, core and slice the apples. Beat the oil and caster sugar together until well blended. Add the eggs and beat until creamy. Stir flour mixture into the oil and eggs mixture. Add the apple slices, raisins and walnuts. Grease and line base of 22 cm. (9 in.) ring shaped tin. Bake for 1 - 1 1/4 hours or until sides come away. Cool in the tin before turning out. Serve plain or with ice cream or whipped cream.

Home Made Bread.

For those for whom the words "Home made bread" strikes terror in their hearts this is a quick and easy recipe that has never failed me. Quick bread.

Ingredients:

22 g. (1/2 lb.) Flour - white or brown. (I prefer half and half)
1 teaspoon Cream of tartar.
1 teaspoon Bicarbonate of soda.
1/2 teaspoon Salt.
1 teaspoon Caster sugar
1/2 pint Milk or water

Method: Mix all ingredients together. Knead with a bit of extra flour if necessary and put in a greased tin. Moderately hot oven for 45 mins. For anyone with a combi microwave, put on the microwave and 375 C, for 15 mins. A super addition is to throw in some sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, and pumpkin seeds in whatever combination that you fancy. The sunflower seeds turn green in the bread - so do not worry. .

H.Spiers.

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NIGHT OUT ON THE JUNGLE

Fed up with boat chores and cooking, Sylvie and I decided to abandon Edward and "JOHANNE" on the west coast of Malaysia and set out in search of "Adventure". Travelling by local transport, we would go to where Malaysia's largest river, the Pahang, empties into the South China Sea. There we would find a boat and a guide to carry us up river, past great swathes of virgin jungle back towards the west coast and home. Perhaps we would even realise our ambition to catch a glimpse of Malaysia's shy forest dwellers the Orang Asli, or Original People.

These dwindling tribes, sometimes called 'primitive', are thought to have arrived in the peninsula's forests some 4,000 years ago. Their main source of income remains jungle products. Their main protein comes from wild game which they hunt with blow pipe and poison dart, knife and cunning trap. Living at one with nature, they take only enough for their needs, watching with dismay as their sacred forests are mown down by an alien people greedy for timber and heedless that they are destroying not only the forest and the soil but also the whole way of life of a wise and ancient race. Hitching a final, fifty mile lift on an empty logging truck we arrived at our destination to find the Pahang River a slow, muddy affair with one major drawback ... no boats. So. We would walk.

The Malays warned against the project. They were clearly afraid of the Orang Asli. But, as the Aslis' main crime appeared to consist of eating wild pig, contrary to Islamic law, I foresaw few problems.

Coming upon an abandoned logging track slashed, like an open wound, into the heart of the jungle we set off with high hopes. This was it. Adventure beckoned. We were facing the forest alone.

The track offered no shade. Inexplicably our packs grew heavier and heavier as we dripped, then drooped under the equatorial sun. Then we heard our first jungle noises. An unnecessarily large mouth was munching bones in the bushes to our left. My

unseeing, 'tourist's', eyes flickered back and forth, frantically trying to pierce that unfamiliar maze of jungle green. Stomachs turning to mush, we tiptoed past. Next, on the right, a deep rumbling sound. My head whipped round. Good God! A rogue elephant with indigestion - or was it distant thunder?

And then, horror of horrors, we, the intrepid adventurers, came across a herd of water buffalo wallowing in a swamp by the road. Now I knew as well as anyone that you have but to catch the eye of an angry buffalo for it to lower its horns and charge. (I knew because Sylvie had been charged twice by the same beasts while on a solo cycling trip round Sri Lanka.) Huddling to the far side of the track, we crept by, eyes carefully averted.

My heart was still thumping when, a few minutes later, the track stopped. Just like that. In front of towering jungle.

If it hadn't been for the water buffalo I might have turned back. We had hardly any food and no weapon for protection. And who knew, perhaps the Malays were right to be afraid of the Aslis with their silent blow pipes and poison darts? However, Sylvie was all for going on, lured by the romance of a moss-strewn log which spanned the stream ahead.

So we took off our flip-flops and picked our way across the bridge. On the far side we each selected a stout stick with which to ward off snakes, tigers, elephants et al and, tramping noisily, set off down the jungle path towards the river. Soon we came to a clearing.

"Ssh! What's that?" Sylvie hissed.

We stopped, breath held in excitement. Was this to be our first encounter with 'Primitive Man'? Listening, I, too, heard a distant sound:

"Radio Malaysia! Going full blast!"

The occupant of the one-roomed hut by the river must have had quite a fright when she looked out to see two white women sweating near her door.

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However she laughed most reassuringly when asked, via a Malay dictionary, about the local prevalence of tigers. Unfortunately my queries about elephants received no such confidence-boosting response.

Nevertheless, we took off along a beaten path beside the river until, by mid-afternoon, we came to a small Asli settlement or kampong. Catching sight of us, the young girls of the village fled into the surrounding forest to hide.

Then a tiny old man approached. Almost as small as an African bushmen, he had exquisitely fine features, nut-brown skin and a beatific smile. Behind him, older women stood in doorways, watching shyly. The old man indicated that no, there were no boats. So we smiled in turn and carried on, escorted to the village boundary by two young men.

That river path was surely enchanted. Logs served as bridges across numerous streams while the strong tropical sunlight, filtered and tamed by the leaves, gave to everything a flickering lightness. Eventually the path petered out at a wooden house overlooking the river.

A young Asli, dressed in nothing but shorts and a huge knife, approached and told us politely but firmly that: no, there were no boats; no, the path did not go any further and yes, we would have to turn back to reach the next village.

Fortunately Sylvie and I had lived for some time in the East so we once again smiled our friendship and sat down on the river bank to wait.

Half an hour later the young man returned and invited us into the house. There, encouraged by an old crone chewing betel-nut, we chatted and laughed until eventually our hunter suggested that we go another two miles with him to his kampong and then, in the morning, he would find a boat to take us further west.

Accepting eagerly, we were soon launched on a headlong scramble through the jungle. The forest trail, just wide enough for one foot at a time, brought

back childhood dreams of tracking with heroic Indian Braves. Unfortunately, flip-flops, ideal for a boat trip, turn into impossibly slippery boards when mixed with mud. While we slithered and fell our guide bounded ahead. We had no time to admire the jungle; simply keeping the man in view and ourselves upright took all our concentration. For, without our Asli friend, we could never have traced that barely discernible path, despite knowing it was there.

An hour later we reached his small river kampong. Like the Malays, the Aslis build their graceful houses high above the ground to protect themselves from wild animals, floods and evil spirits. The floor of the largest house was made of split sticks. The walls were sheets of bark pegged to a framework of poles. Only the roof had a little corrugated-iron mixed in with the palm-frond thatch. Most satisfactory. All as one would expect in the home of 'Primitive Man'.

But when we climbed the steps and entered the cool interior we found bright linoleum covering the stick floor and a new household god, television - powered by a car battery - in pride of place.

As for that epithet 'primitive', later contact with the Orang Asli, who have no word for 'theft' or 'murder', showed me that they have much to teach us about being civilised.

Our own first need was to wash. Despite tales to the contrary, the Asli are meticulously clean - and we stank. Not only that, but, during our mad dash through the jungle, Sylvie had fallen foul of a couple of leeches. Happily gorged, they had dropped off leaving blood flowing copiously from her foot.

Followed by every child in the kampong, we made our way to the special washing raft on the river. There we squatted, discretely wrapped in sarongs, while a crowd of Orang Asli watched, fascinated at the odd way the Orang Puteh (white people) washed themselves.

As darkness fell everyone gathered together on the floor of the main hut. Outside jungle sounds closed in

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around us while, inside, guttering flames from tiny oil lamps threw grotesque shadows on the barkwood walls.

After a meal of rice and fried boar skin, Sylvie and I collapsed exhausted on the floor while a few feet above our heads the 'god' blared forth. Much later the night was punctuated by an old man coughing bronchitically, while beneath the house the ill-tempered kampong dogs fought incessantly. In the end it was with some relief that I heard the cocks

crow and saw dawn seeping through the palm-frond roof.

Suddenly, from far off down the river, came the sound of a sputtering outboard. Grabbing our rucksacks and shouting hasty goodbyes, we rushed to the river's edge and, with the help of our Asli hunter, managed to thumb a lift.

Slowly the cool morning mists, hanging low over the water, soothed our ragged nerves after what had been a long, exhausting, night out on the jungle.

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FOOTNOTE.

Have you heard about the antipodean member who, whilst waiting in London for his wife to return from an errand of mercy on the other side of the world, became homesick for Andorra. So he decided to take a package ski tour to La Massana, where he stayed at the La Massana Hotel. From his window he could actually almost look into his own apartment. Good on yer, mate!

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