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# INTER COMM

## CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

NEWSLETTER/BUTLLETÍ INFORMATIU



**VOL. 3 - Núm. 4 - SUMMER / ESTIU 1994**

# CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

## INFORMATION / INFORMATIU

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VICE-PRESIDENT:	Desmond Allen	36 0 43
SECRETARY:	Josefina Martinez	23 9 55

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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.  
CLUB ADDRESS: BOX 291, CRÈDIT ANDORRÀ, ESCALDES.

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 OF MEMBERS RAFTING

Members are invited to submit seasonal photographs for use on the front covers of future issues.  
Apology: The Spring photograph was by Pain Lack

■ 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: Jacque Crozier and Tony Hooper

#### EDITORIAL.

As I write this, summer seems to be with us, although my observations in the Spring issue that spring was likely to arrive about midsummer seemed to be justified over the Easter period when we "enjoyed" a snow fall equal to anything that had gone before this year. Perhaps it is wise to make the most of the good weather whilst it is here, since in Andorra anything can happen, and often does, and snow has been known to fall during every month of the year!

However now is the time for thinking about getting outside. The Club has several outings planned in the near future. By the time this appears the hardy members will have once more taken to the wild waters for another go at White Water Rafting. In early June there is a trip to Montserrat. The rest of the programme is set out on page 3. We try to keep all our members informed about these outings and events. So when a notice arrives in your post box do read it and contact the organisers as soon as possible. This makes their job so much easier, and all organisers need to know that their work is not in vain!

#### EDITORIAL.

Mentre escric això ja sembla haver arribat l'estiu, malgrat les meves observacions a l'última revista, que potser la primavera arribaria cap a mig estiu, cosa que semblava justificada després de Pasqua, quan vam gaudir d'una nevada com cap altra aquest any. Potser és bo fer el màxim de coses mentre tenim aquest bon temps, perquè sembla que aquí no passa res, i la neu ha estat caient cada mes de l'any!

Però ara és temps d'anar fora de casa. El Club ha planejat diverses sortides per a un futur immediat. Mentre aquesta revista us arriba a les mans, el membres més forçuts hauran anat, una vegada més, a les aigües braves, per una altra escapada de Rafting. A començament de juny, hi haurà una excursió a Montserrat. També farem una visita a Caldea per veure i provar les seves instal·lacions. La resta del programa està a la pàgina número 3. Intentarem informar-vos de totes les sortides i esdeveniments. Així que, quan la informació arribi a les vostres mans, contacteu, al més aviat possible, amb els organitzadors per facilitar-los la seva tasca i perquè ells sàpiguen que tot el treball que fan ocupant-se de tots nosaltres, no és un treball perdut.

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## NEWS FROM THE BOARD

One might think that the world would come to an end if we lost the use of computers, and perhaps it would. The Club could go back to recording its membership and accounts using those old fashioned things, pens and ink, but we try to keep up with the rest of the world, and fortunately our Treasurer, Brian Dore, adds to his already busy life by letting us use his computer for our records. But occasionally a computer fails to do what it is supposed to: when ours failed, we (Brian and the Board) found ourselves without accounts or membership lists. However rapid and efficient computers are when they function, getting them repaired is not so easy, nor is it rapid. After we had nagged Brian a bit, and he had expressed himself rather freely to spare-part suppliers, records were finally produced; and we find that our total membership is now just one more than this time last year.

Although there are many in Andorra who might join, but do not, our main source of new members is from those moving in from other countries, and we all know that fewer people have done that in the last two or three years. So whilst the Board thinks the Club ought to expand, in these years to keep a level membership is not too bad.

The introduction of our new Statutes, agreed by members at the last AGM, does not advance with computer like rapidity. As mentioned in the last issue it looks as though the AGM in June will have to be held before the new Statutes are confirmed and received back from the Government. So we may have to hold another general meeting a bit later on in the summer.

Maria Carme Ardiaca, has been the Club's official secretary for several years. In recent years the amount of work has been reduced quite considerably, and Maria has now decided to give up the job. We are grateful for the work she has done during her term of office. Until the next AGM, the Board has

co-opted Josefina Martinez to act as secretary; many members will know "Fina" from her earlier contacts with the Club and for her help on some bus trips.

## TREASURERS REPORT

Members will see from the accounts, which are produced below, that we have changed the method of accounting. This year the accounts have been produced on an "accruals basis". This means that the figures represent transactions applying to 1993 only, regardless of the year when the actual cash for the transaction was received or paid. In previous years the accounts included all cash received or paid during the year irrespective the year to which it applied. As a consequence of this change it has also been necessary to prepare a balance sheet. Because the 1992 accounts were prepared on a totally different basis it would be misleading to show the 1992 figures as a comparison in these account. Comparative figures will be shown in next years accounts. This change was recommended by our auditor. He also suggested that the accounts of all the Groups should be incorporated in the Club's main accounts. The board felt however that this should not be done as they consider that the funds of the individual Groups belonged to them and not to members as a whole.

Members will be pleased to note that the Clubs financial affairs remain on a sound footing despite there being no increase in subscription since our formation over 4 years ago. We do not anticipate any major increase in expenses during 1994 and the Board does not, at this stage, believe it necessary to increase subscriptions for 1995. The costs of Intercomm have been reduced during 1994, but more adverting revenue would be welcome. Do you know anyone who would like to advertise? If you can help please contact Tony Hooper or Jacque Crozier.



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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Fri 10th June	Day trip to Monserrat & Pryca - already announced & nearly full but phone for the last few places
Sun 26th June	CAR BOOT SALE at Arinsal Car Park, 10 am to 1 pm. Sellers - call <b>NOW</b> for information or to book a space.
Thur 14th Jul	Day trip by bus & rack & pinion railway through the dramatic Freser Gorge to the sanctuary of Sta Nuria, patron saint of winter sports.
Thur 21st July	Another chance for you or your grandchildren to try White Water Rafting
7th/10th July	Escaldes Jazz Festival
Mid-Aug	An evening BBQ in the mountains with entertainment
Mid-Sep	A repeat of the very successful PAELLA lunch at Engolasters.
16th/25th Sep	Ordino Music Festival
8th/30th Oct	Festival of Music & Dance, Andorra la Vella
Early Oct	Overnight trip to explore Tarragona one of the oldest cities in Spain with sights spanning 2000 years, from the birthplace of Pontius Pilate to examples of Caudi. We will also visit the Torres vineyards & the Vilafranca wine museum
mid Nov	A repeat of the 1992 fondu party & the colourful FOLK DANCERS of Esbart Sta Anna
pre Xmas	Shopping trip to Barcelona, plus Theatre Group Production plus Xmas Music by the International Singers

### For the more active we are also trying to fit in

- a visit to Caldea at a sensible price
- ballooning in Val d'Arans
- a Helicopter picnic
- canoeing at La Seu

**LET ANN PRICE (36653) or DESMOND ALLEN (36043) KNOW IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN ANY ACTIVITY**

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING/ ASSEMBLEA GENERAL ANYAL

Dear Member

You are invited to the Cub's Annual General Meeting which will take place in the hotel Paris-Londres, Escaldes on the **7th June 1994**

Aperciat soci

Em plau convocar-vos a l'Assemblea General Anyal que tindra lloc al hotel Paris-Londres, Escaldes el dia **7 de juny 1.994.**

### AGENDA / L'ORDRE DEL DIA

20.00 Arrival & cocktails / la convocatòria i coctels

20.30 Start of Proceedings / 2a convocatòria

President's Opening Address / La Presidenta obre la secció

Minutes of last AGM / Actas de Assemblea General 1.993

1993 Accounts (see June Intercomm) / Comptes 1.993 (ver Intercomm juny)

Report on Groups & Intercomm / Informe dels Grups i Intercomm

Activity Programme 1994 / Programa d'Activitats 1.994

Any Other Business / Precs i Preguntes

**Su Downham President / Presidenta**

International Club of Andorra/Club Internacional d'AndorraAccounts/Comptes 1993

INCOME/INGRESOS	General	Intercomm	Newsletter
Sales/Vendes			15300
Subscriptions/Quotes	530584		
Advertisements/Anuncis		320470	
Interest/Interès	41256		
	571840	320470	15300
	=====		

EXPENSES/DESPESESGrants to groups/Necessitats dels Grups:

Drama	1300		
Translations/Traduccions	14790	15815	
Printing/Impremta		527925	
Stationery/Paper	104490		
AGM Costs/Despeses JGA	7050		
Sundry Expenses/Varis	1878		4200
Photocopies/Fotocopies	19485		7240
	148993	543740	11440
Surplus/Superàvit	422847		3860
Deficit/Dèficit		-223270	
	571840	320470	15300
	=====		

Balance Sheet as at 31st DECEMBER 1993/Full del balanç - el 31 desembre del 1.993

	1993		1992
<b>Creditors:</b>			
Prepaid Adverts/Anuncis pagades	47984		157250
Prepaid Subscriptions/Quotes pagades	113083		108667
General	106428	267495	141685
			407602
<b>Accumulated Fund:/Fons acumulats</b>			
General	1185922		763075
Cookery Group/Grup de cuina	14232		14232
Wine Group/Grup de vins	5292		5292
Newsletter/Butlletí	3860		
Intercomm	-370510	838796	-147240
		1106291	635359
		=====	1042961
			=====
Computer/Ordinador		50000	
Debtors/Deutors		53200	46000
Bank & Cash Balances }			
Saldo-Banc i Efectiu en caixa }		1003091	996961
		1106291	1042961
		=====	=====

	General	Newsletter/ Butlletí	Intercomm
1992	763075		-147240
Surplus/Superàvit	422847	3860	
Deficit/Dèficit			-223270
1993	118522	3860	-370510
	=====		

## NEWS FROM THE GROUPS.

### INTERNATIONAL SINGERS.

We have continued to practice throughout the spring though our pianist, Binnie Segal, has been much missed. Happily she returns in June. We are continuing to sing in two and three part harmony, most recently working on "Memory" from "Cats", "I could have danced all night", "The Happy Wanderer", "Bless This House", and a lovely setting of "The Elizabethan Serenade". We are now getting our teeth into "El Rossinyol", a very popular and attractive Catalan song composed by the director of Maria-Teresa Raurell's previous choir. Maria-Teresa is our first Catalan member whom we are most proud to welcome, particularly as she possesses a beautiful soprano voice. We had hopes of putting on a small show this summer but, as always, too many members will be away. So we are concentrating our efforts towards a really good festival next winter. Our membership has now risen to 14 though it is very seldom that more than half of us are here at any one time which means that, as always, we are keen to welcome new members of any nationality. Present membership is drawn from eight different nationalities. So if there is anyone out there interested in joining do please ring: Clare Allcard 36269, Sheila Hooper 36154 or Pop Goldsteen 35621.

### SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING.

After an energetic winter during which attendance's varied from 6 to 28 dancers, the Scottish Country Dancing Group is about to take their summer recess. John Gill has continued to steer us with immense skill and patience through an extraordinary number of dances. And has managed somehow to make it all seem reasonably easy to boot. Not only has he been drawing from standard Scottish dancing books but he has also choreographed some new dances of his own with titles such as "La Massana", "Wild Flowers" and "La Andorrana". They are particularly popular for the beautiful way the movements flow from one to another. John's final creation, the "Hunter of Hunterston Reel" is at this moment being set to music. Much to our enjoyment, our last meeting was held in the hot sun in Sonia Hunter's garden. There we danced "The Bumpkin", a 17th. century dance discovered in an ancient copy of The Scottish Country Dance Societies first book of dances originally issued in 1923. During the winter the Group has raised more than 50.000 pts. for Padre Ramon's Children's Lunch Programme. We plan to start up again in the autumn. Hope to see you then. Clare Allcard.



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## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

Dear Editors,

### THE COLONEL BITES BACK

From afar it is only too easy to identify the many ailing British institutions overdue for decent burial, indeed it is not too hard in London itself.

Almost alone stand the armed forces which have escaped, and rightly escaped, the scorn heaped so liberally elsewhere. Today's high standards in the armed forces were harder to achieve during National Service particularly in the Army which was obliged to accept even the totally illiterate and National Service commissions were not the comparative rarities they were in the Royal Navy or the Royal Air Force. Even so, and not withstanding any failings of Lt. Col. Maitland, the army as represented by the drill instructor and the "map reading" sergeant clearly spotted certain less than officer-like qualities in one easily embarrassed National Service subaltern.

**John Donovan**

### **LIFE AT THE SHARP END.**

*(The following article is reproduced by kind permission of the Association of Former International Civil Servants, a United Nations Organisation, and the author, Karen Dreher. This permission was arranged by Maurice Pilkington, who felt that it would be of interest to our members.)*

Hardly a day goes by without some mention being made on the news, or in the papers, about UN Peacekeeping Forces. Such Forces usually comprise a large Military element, a small Civilian Administrative element, and usually, one or two Political Officers.

The Civilian Staff are responsible for looking after finances, procurement, civilian transportation units, direct communications with Headquarters in New York (UN), property control and other related tasks.

A description of daily life of a civilian staff member assigned to the UN operation in Somalia is given by Karen Dreher, a UN retiree who raised her hand at a call for volunteers and was sent to Mogadishu as Chief Procurement Officer.

Following are excerpts from her Somali journal, written for family and friends and published in the October '93 edition of the AFICS Bulletin.

"All the civilian UNOSOM staff who do not live in the (ex-US Embassy) Compound, where UNOSOM

has its Headquarters, have to commute between the Residence and the Compound by helicopter because it is too dangerous to go by road. A minibus picks you up at the Residence in the morning and takes you to the airport, and there you get the helicopter to the Compound. In the evening it is the reverse. Once in the Residence you are not supposed to leave it till the next morning to go to work, although people do go from one Residence to another in the evening, since at present all the Residences in use are in the same area and very close to one another. You ask an armed guard in your Residence to walk you over, and another to walk you back. Even with this precaution visiting is strongly discouraged, and you do so at your own risk.

The helicopters are Russian, piloted by Russians and all the signs are in Cyrillic script. They take a rather roundabout route between the airport and the big Compound because they fly out over the ocean to minimise the chances of being shot at. Each staff member who lives in a Residence is assigned to a specific schedule, you have to stick to it unless there is a major reason to change it. The great disadvantage is that if you want to stay and work late, you can't!

Also, at this time the Compound is dangerous since the Somalis have been shelling it. If the situation ever stabilises and the helicopters are no longer needed it would be possible to go back and forth by car. However, it does not look as if that would happen in the foreseeable future.

There are contingents from the following countries here; Australia, Belgium, Bangladesh, Botswana, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Kuwait, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria Pakistan, Romania, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, The United States (since departed) and Zimbabwe. It really is an international army - all under the flag of the United Nations.

All the buildings in the Compound are prefabs, like large containers. Very flimsy and jerry-built. The Embassy was completely looted, including having the pipes ripped from the outside walls, the electrical wiring also, and all the tiles torn off the walls and the floor. The prefabs are reasonably functional and do make it possible to operate. The Residences are like "Bed and Breakfasts". There is room service and very quick laundry service, and you get breakfast and dinner. There are eight of us in this Residence, two young women, one the chief secretary in Personnel,

and the other a Procurement Assistant, of whom I shall therefore be seeing a great deal, and five young men. We eat on an enclosed porch, which is very pleasant and cool, although we are somewhat bothered by the very delicate, long-legged pale yellow ants which scurry about on the tabletop. There is a living room with a TV, on which we cannot get the one programme available in Mogadishu, CNN, until we get an antenna, but there is a VCR so it can be used for movies.

The official work week is six days, with Friday the day off, but in fact many people simply work seven days a week as there is really nothing else to do. Quite a few people work six and a half days, and go to the beach on Friday afternoons, but this is not officially sanctioned since it is dangerous. It's dangerous because you could get shot on the way, and because there are sharks. The procurement post is very different from the two procurement posts I had in New York - to say the least. Here we buy an enormous amount of food for the troops - about 20,000 here in Mogadishu and surroundings and 225

civilians. The Moslem soldiers, of whom there are thousands, will not eat ham or pork, and the Hindu soldiers, of whom there will be shortly several thousand, will not eat beef. We buy 200 live goats a day! The Bangladeshis insist that the goats be either female (preferably) or, if male, under 10 months old. There is constant noise in Mogadishu. At the Residence there is always the noise of the diesel generator. The electricity system of the city has been totally destroyed in all the fighting, so that the only electricity is provided by generators, and there is a perpetual hum, a sort of muted background roar. Then there are all the helicopters, both the big Russian ones we commute back and forth to work in, and also dozens of military Blackhawks and Cobras. They fly a lot at night, very low and close, and make a lot of noise. Then there is the chanting of the faithful when they pray, actually a rather nice sound, and certainly very different from anything most of us are used to hearing.

A terrible tragedy occurred today. Four American soldiers were ambushed and killed. A land mine was



## 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.

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thrown in front of their vehicle and then they were machine gunned.... After the ambushing and shooting there were all kinds of rumours, mainly about mines being placed in some of the major roads. Since the place where the Americans were killed was quite near our Residence, we were naturally concerned, and our senior secretary in Personnel reminded us that we were at all times supposed to have a bag packed and ready in case we have to be evacuated, either to the Compound or, if things get really bad, to Nairobi. Many of the soldiers go out jogging in the early morning and at the end of the day; we often see them when we are being bussed between our Residence and the airport. They usually carry their guns whilst they are running, and it is a very peculiar sight to see them running along in their T-shirts and little shorts carrying a large gun. There is something oxymoronic about a peaceful, athletic activity being accompanied by a lethal weapon.

This is largely a phoneless existence. There are no phones in the Residences. Everyone has a little walkie-talkie radio and a call sign, and a good deal of communication is by radio. There is one person in each Residence who is supposed to keep his radio on at all times and alert the others in case there is a message from Security to seek shelter, or get ready to evacuate, or whatever. We all go around with our radios hung from our belts, and everybody is always saying things like, "Alpha Tango to Charlie Bravo, over". The Chief Procurement Officer, which I now am, is either Charlie Bravo or Charlie Pappa Oscar. This morning I saw a scene that made an impression on me similar to that made by the soldiers jogging with their guns. A female soldier was sitting in front her tent in fatigues doing, of all things, embroidery - peaceful images that belie the bellicose images of guns, camouflage uniforms, boots and bullets. The problems I am called upon to solve in this job are wild. Here is a sample from today. A nice young

captain from New Zealand came from the warehouse, where they stock things like garbage bags, soap, detergent, etc., to say that they were out of a number of items, including toilet paper, and could we get more immediately. The thought of 20,000 soldiers with no toilet paper makes the mind spin.

The mortars started early today, around 2.30 p.m. I had heard them off and on over the past few days, and have always thought the contractors were dynamiting, but no, it was mortar fire. A low muffled boom, at least from where I was sitting. So far, thank God, no one in the Compound has been hurt by mortars, but it is definitely an accident waiting to happen. We sometimes hear gunfire near the Residence, I can hear some now as I write this, but it has not so far proved to be anything we need worry about, so I don't. This place is a great boost to one's self-esteem and self-confidence because immediately you arrive dozens of people converge on you and tell you to solve their problems, and you really feel as if perhaps you could. I find myself making all sorts of decisions almost without second thought, and delegating all sorts of things, which I never had much chance to do in New York.

Well, I am going to stop here, since it is the end of my first week in Somalia. I hope I will have the stick-to-itiveness to continue with this journal, because everyone else I have talked to has said that they started out with the best intentions, and then fell by the wayside I am certainly going to try, because an adventure like this I will in all probability never have again. Thus far it is fascinating....."

**Editors note:** At the time of going to press with this issue there are more than 70,000 United Nation peacekeepers on missions across the world. A breakdown shows 34,000 in former Yugoslavia, 22,289 in Somalia, 6,754 in Mozambique, 5,216 in Lebanon, 2,519 in Rwanda, 1,269 in Israel/Syria, 1,235 in Cyprus and 1,187 in Iraq/Kuwait.

## SERVISSIM

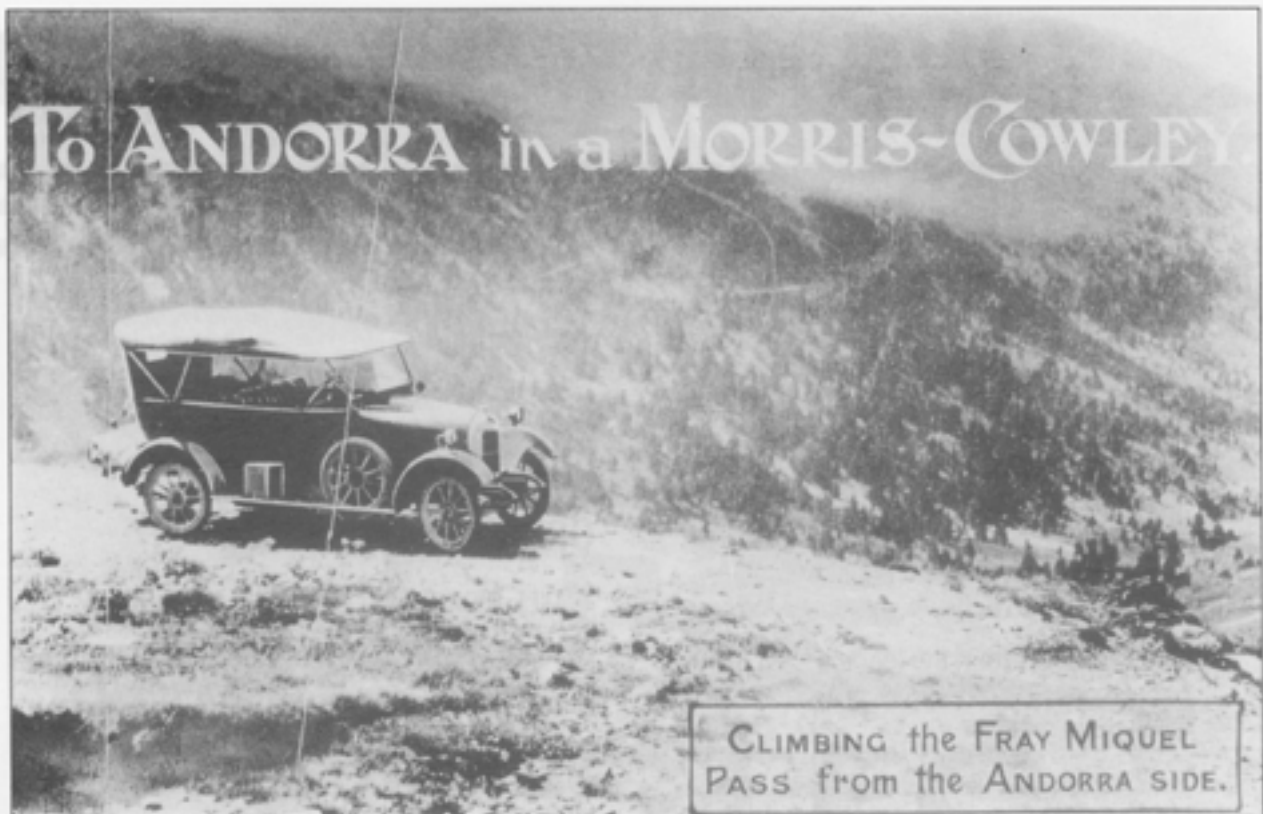
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**An unconventional trip over little visited country with a light car. By G.B.Mackenzie. First published by THE AUTOCAR, April 22nd. 1922.**

A reference to Andorra, by Mr. Freeston in The Autocar, reminded me that I had always wanted to visit the quaint little republic, and, as I found myself shortly afterwards in the Pyrenees with my Morris Cowley, I decided to take the first opportunity of doing so that might present itself.

Andorra lies up among the mountains of the Eastern Pyrenees, and the only carriage road which the little State boasts, with the exception of a small section which runs south into Spain, is one which has recently been made, and which parting from the French frontier, rises to over 8,000 ft. on the Fray Miquel Pass, and then drops down into a valley on the other side, to end in the tiny village of Soldeu.

Many people know the road exists, but few appear to travel it, and there was little information to be obtained from those I asked in Ax-les-Thermes, where I found myself, at the end of a long day's run in early September.

About nine o'clock the next morning I left this little town - which by the way was very much "on the make" - and started up the valley of the Ariege. Here the road is excellent and the going easy, while the views are everywhere very fine. It was interesting to

notice the new railway being built along this valley. It is one of the great new lines through the Pyrenees, and I picked it up again later in the day where it had emerged from a tunnel underneath the Col de Puymorens.

After about eight or nine miles of this easy climbing, the road turns sharply to the left, and one begins to rise up above the railway line and the river. This is the beginning of the real work, and though the gradient is nowhere severe, it is a long and heating second gear pull. Experience had already taught me that, whatever others might be, my engine was a thirsty little beggar in really hilly country, and I was no longer too proud to stop and give it a drink.

Although I started from Ax with a full radiator, I had to stop no fewer than eight times to refill during the day, and I reached my destination at Font Romeu with the water well below the safety point. As each time I filled up the radiator took quantities of water varying from about three quarters of a gallon to nearly a gallon and a half, it will be seen what demands the hill made on the engine.

The road winds up to the Col de Puymorens in a series of loops, and at last comes in sight of a blue

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direction sign, placed on the right-hand side by some private enthusiast, and pointing the way to Andorra along a little road which joins the main route at a height of between 5,000 and 6,000 ft. From here to the frontier of Andorra, a distance of roughly three miles, the road has been well built, but its present condition is decidedly bad. It is covered with loose stones, washed partially away in many places, and shows signs of great neglect. The bridges are alone excellent, and should stand almost for ever.

I had wondered whether my passport would serve to take me into Andorra, as I had not a special visa for the Republic; but I need not have troubled myself on that score. No band of uniformed Customs officials meets one when one passes out of France - no army of clerks seizes one's papers, to plaster them with uncouth and meaningless markings. One does not know, in fact, that one is at the frontier until, on crossing a little stream (it is still the Ariege), one finds that the road exists no more. There is a small stone hut near by, a few cattle are standing about, but no human being in sight - nothing but mountains in every direction, the road stretching behind, back into France, and a great silence.


I restarted the engine, which I had stopped on reaching the end of the road, and continued over the grass for a short distance, until I discovered some boulders placed to indicate the proper direction. Soon the grass gave way to a stony track, and here at last was Andorra's famous highway. One can see the scars in the hillside where it goes winding away up, and I lost no time in putting the car at it, and tackling what is easily the highest motoring road in the Pyrenees. If the surface on the French side had been bad, this was much worse. The road was a mass of loose stones and little boulders; in many places it was washed away to such an extent as to make passage almost impossible, and if not soon taken in hand very seriously, it will cease to exist as anything but a mule

track. A lot of time and labour has evidently been expended in the building of the road, and it seems strange that it should be allowed to go thus to ruin, though the people of Andorra may perhaps prefer it so. If I lived in Andorra, I think I should.

As soon as one starts on this track the gradient becomes stiff, and it was a first gear climb for the Morris for the next three miles, till at last, exactly at noon, the top of the Col de Fray Miquel was reached, and one could look down the other side of the valley, on to the rushing river far below, and on to the great chain of Spanish mountains beyond.

Andorra itself is nothing but mountains and valleys, rocky mountains that rise to 10,000 ft., covered on their lower slopes with rough grass, on which feed troops of horses and a few cattle and sheep; valleys black with pine trees, with occasional small fields near any houses. A rugged land, pleasant enough with its bracing air on a fine summer day, but a cruel, hard country in the winter. As soon as the top of the pass is reached, the road starts dropping down, and for about three miles the gradient is pretty severe; the next three miles to Soldeu are less steep, and were taken with considerable "coaxing" in second on the return journey. All along the high part of the pass I met nobody, but on getting down into the valley a house or two were to be seen, and one or two old women seated at the doors, while nearer the village men were working in the fields below close to the river. I eventually brought up at the entrance to Soldeu itself, and set to work to explore the few houses of which it consists. There were only one or two old people, and a few children to be seen in the village, and as the inhabitants do not speak French, and I had no Spanish or Catalan, our conversation was rather limited. They were very friendly, however, and directed me with considerable pride to the post office. You would never think it was a post office, except for the fact that there is a telegraph. There are

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no stamps for sale; your letter, if you wish to send one, will be carried into France, and sent off from the village of Porte. There were no dreadful "guichets", such as one finds everywhere in France, with little mobs of impatient people around each. Apart from the telegraph, there was only the post mistress, an attractive young woman with dark eyes, excellent teeth, and pretty little silver ear-rings. She seemed a trifle shy at first, and her French was of the slightest, but we did manage to make some conversation, and she told me one or two interesting things about the place. There only eight house, it appears, in Soldeu, and my informant reckoned that each would contain about seven or eight people. Everyone works on the land, either tilling it or looking after the flocks and herds and the horses. There is also a certain amount of woodcutting done; there were no proper shops in the village, and family appeared to provide for itself. When I praised the beauty of her country she shivered a little, and spoke of the long snowy winter; she had never been out of Andorra, and had been born and brought up in Soldeu. I finally suggested that few strangers arrived by road, but with this she did not agree. "Several," she told me, "had been over during the summer, most of them going on by mule to the capital, Andorra Vella." I left it at that. Evidently a policeman is not required to regulate traffic on this great national highway. The eight house of Soldeu lie on each side of an uneven, half-cobbled, twisting sort of lane. They are solidly but very roughly built of stone, and roofed with the same material. Some have little bits of crazy wooden balconies, but all appear to be very dirty inside.


Chickens run in and out of the doors, pigs lie before them, and I believe that the people of Soldeu live a life very similar to that of hundreds of crofters in the remote districts of Scotland and Ireland. But there was little to see in the village, and as I had a good distance to go before nightfall, I took leave of the place and its inhabitants to make the long slow climb over the pass.


On the way back I met one or two men riding donkeys; one old fellow was really picturesque, and seemed exactly the sort of brigand one reads of in story books. The only unusual incident on this climb, however, occurred when I was just wondering whether I should have to dismount to chase a flock of sheep from the road. Suddenly, without any warning, and almost, it seemed, from below my running board, appeared the shaggy, unkempt figure of a man. From where he had been lying he raised himself on his hands and knees, and then he "barked", barked as his own collie would have done, at the sheep, which immediately scattered and left me a free passage.


It was half past three before I reached the main road again, and then I continued my way over the Col de Puymorens (6,292ft.), and on to the little village of Ur, where I took a side road and arrived at last after a gradual climb of another 2,000ft. at Font Romeu. In all I had probably climbed about 11,000ft. that day, and both the car and I were ready for a rest, though, as a matter of fact, the car had run perfectly all the time. I was very proud of its performance, and have no criticism to offer except on the question of cooling.

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## ROUND AND ABOUT OUTSIDE ANDORRA

A very pleasant "find" for the Andorran is a nearby opportunity to experience life in a Catalan farmhouse and the utter peace of one of those remote hilltop villages we see and admire so often. Sandra and Richard Loder have made the Casa Guilla an extremely hospitable away from it all and have done much to keep the village of Santa Engracia alive. As the young migrate to the towns and their parents gradually abandon the rigours of peasant agriculture, these villages, so much a feature of the Catalan countryside, slowly die and crumble away. Many will too soon vanish, indeed, have already done so, and with them will die the culture of rural Catalunya.

Tremp is now a mere two hour drive on excellent, completed, roads via Seu-Adrall, the Canto Pass, and Sort-Pobla de Segur. In scenic terms this drive is delightful. Fascinating to note that those poor villages we so often passed in the seemingly endless years of the modernisation of the Adrall - Sort road are now reaping the benefit of, one supposes, the sums in compensation for the bits the road now passes; progress is visible in new frontage, house improvement and - hate it as any Andorran must - that national symbol of the building crane. The villages come alive again; so much for the power of EC funding!

Santa Engracia is approached either from Salas de Pallars or from one and a half kilometres short of Tremp; both routes are "improved" dirt roads and are well signposted. Save in the heaviest rain both approaches are negotiable by a normal car and "green" petrol, once the bane of motorists in Spain,

seems finally a quest of the past - and Santa Engracia is a mere 10 kms. from Tremp.

The area is quite dramatically beautiful, a tortured, once sea bed thrust into scenic bluffs and cliffs of basic sandstone. Dinosaurs walked here and left their tracks in mud which is now a curious rock, nearby Isona is a dinosaur "park" and Santa Engracia knew them intimately. The village itself nestles on the very top of a sandstone bluff which rears above the valley - dramatic, unreal. From the font, heart of the village, an obvious car track leads along the foot of the bluff directly to Casa Guilla, a modern improvement to the village's non-negotiable street.

One feature which cannot have changed is one's welcome, which the Loders keep particularly alive. Casa Guilla is all hay loft, stable and still room on every level, nothing is quite flat. Electricity and plumbing make it habitable and after two days you do actually stop getting lost. The rooms are few, rustic and adequate and the shower rooms have hot water. There is a bar, sitting room, a communal dining room and a quite stunning terrace. No bird watcher needs to set forth at dawn, merely to devolve onto the terrace to overlook the 360 degree view. The Loders care about people, the sitting room has books and games, the dining room every local field guide. They care about moths and birds and flowers and produce any information you seek. And they can cook! Dinner is too ample and excellent. They have many regional contacts and cater for all interests. Casa Guilla is quite a find and its prices will happily surprise. Phone, and take a few friends or visitors along too.

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**Ann Matschke.**

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## SEPTANTE

Why do the French completely lose their heads after soixante-neuf?

Here is a modern, well organised and logical nation behaving in an archaic, chaotic and illogical fashion. What on earth is wrong with using Septante? Their french-speaking neighbours in Belgium and Switzerland do so. The Spanish and Italians follow the same romantic path - linguistically speaking. Don't they realise that tricks like this make it very difficult for us English to integrate into Europe? Why should the French retain idiosyncrasies like soixante-dix after we have swallowed their decimalisation? This is the nation for whom we gave up pounds, shillings and pence. For whom we are casting aside pounds (avoir du poids, at that) gallons and pints. To remain forever uncertain about our weight, petrol consumption and intake of beer.

Soixante-onze indeed! The people of Alsace may have been secretly pleased in 1871 when the Franco-Prussian peace treaty put them back into Germany. Even if they did have to put the cart before the horse in the German fashion, "Ein und seibzig" was much clearer. The date for the next thirty years would be simpler to write.

Decades ago we mastered soixante dix-neuf at school, and thankfully turned the page of our primers. What did we find...QUATRE-VINGT. "Please Sir, I think there's a misprint" Should anyone be surprised that in the playground, at the next Break, there was schoolboy talk of stupid frogs? A habit that lasted many a lifetime.

FOUR-TWENTY. Mon Dieu! Why do the French have to be different and start multiplying when they should be

adding up? An odd deviation for a nation who, under Napoleon, built the first straight roads in Europe since the Roman Legions disappeared. Was it something that Caesar left behind, like MCMLXXIX, that inspired this Galli-foolery? Consider for a moment the absurdity of asking a shop assistant for trousers with a waist measurement of four-twenty sixteen centimetres. That juxtaposition of old and new numeration is gobble-de-gook compared with thirty-four inches.

Apart from anything else it gives them an unfair advantage at Lotto. No expatriate, of whatever nation, can manage more than three cards, while our French neighbours have six or eight. Try watching your numbers and listening to the caller when he hits a sequence like "quatre-vingt dix-huit, soixante-seize and soixante-sept" when you have 88, 66 and 77 to cover up. You could suffer serious brain damage, let alone frustration, in establishing you failed to score at all.

I warn the French, give us Septante, Huitante, Neuvante OR ELSE! Or else what? Why sanctions of course A new range of multiplied numbers, calculated to put you Frenchmen back on your heels, where Mil neuf cent quatre-vingt quatorze finds me.

Garçon! Another bottle of the Krug. Deux-trente vingt-huit, please. And a prosperous Dix-neuf Neuvante-cinq to you all!

**Michael Gale**

**Editors note:** It has its uses. I always admit to being cinquante douze years old. It sounds less in (mangled) French than in English.

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## ON ON! ON ON! By "Eagle Eye."

The Hash House Harriers of Andorra while thoroughly enjoying themselves, do ignore certain traditions of international hashing. One of these is the giving of nicknames, and another the recording of events by a scribe. Eagle Eye has volunteered to show how this could be put right in the following description of an imaginary Hash.

Early arrivals at the meet included Rugby Relic, collecting kisses on both cheeks, and Father Christmas, back briefly to get more rhino horn for his patients in France. Two Virgins (new hashers) were temporarily dubbed Ginger Nut and Zebra. A sunny day, the renown of the two hares - Slim and Desert Fox - and the nearness of the venue contributed to a big turnout. Twenty seven and a half couple of hounds had assembled by 3.15 when Beau Brummel's rich baritone called for a Hash Circle.

The resultant polygon fell silent, though in the Nordic fringes Knapsack the Naturalist and Greenland Grizzly conversed throughout the formalities of welcome and advice from the Hares. A further disturbance came from that direction: "Oh, I'm not really late, am I?" "Yes", sternly from Desperate Dan. But Eskimo Nell just fluttered her eyelashes in reply. Even before the initial ON ON! was called Elder of the Kirk nipped down the road taking Abraham Lincoln and the Professor with him. But they were quickly overhauled by runners Tufty the Bantam, Rugby Relic, Old Hummingbird, Half a Dutchman and the springy strides of Blonde Bomber. They were followed by Beau Brummel (impeded by Max the Manxman), Will she, Won't she, Desperate Dan, El Macho and Also Ran. Keen walkers followed: King of Scotland, Wykehamist, Little John and Sherlock Holmes chauvinistically keeping in front of Gorgeous Granny, Little Mo, Kiwi, Warbler of Oz and Say

Cheese. Then a gap already to Bright Eyes, Current Dumpling and Sweet Sixteen, who led Davy Crocket, Homo Loquax and the overhung Champagne Charlie. Roving Eye with the sharp stick he uses to pick up things along the way, moved next to Virgin Zebra, and Ginger Nut was chaperoned by Father Christmas. As a further group moved behind village outbuildings one could only record the voices of Dolly Parton and Bubble and Squeak and the laughs of Lancashire Lass and Mona Lisa. Knapsack the Naturalist led his green party which now included Dolly Daydream. Finally the rearguard moved off, whipped by Little General, who only just stopped Cordon Bleu slipping back to kennels.

At the first check two false trails swallowed up Rugby Relic, Tufty the Bantam and Blonde Bomber, leaving Old Hummingbird to fly into a good lead. Leading walkers were joined by Leprechaun and could still see the bobbing backsides of Desperate Dan and Also Ran not far ahead. The main field streamed unimpeded and mostly unaware past the first check to face 100 metres of steeply sloping grass. This took its toll on many; Will She, Won't She? and Half a Dutchman needed a breather, and were caught on all-fours. Experienced hounds were locked in wordless gasping conflict with the slope, while the young entry such as Wykehamist forged easily upwards. Virgin Zebra, well dressed but badly shod, slipped and brought down Roving Eye, then killed this promising encounter by wingeing. Meanwhile a flanking move by Father Christmas took him and Ginger Nut on a longer but easier route soon to be followed by Arabian Distiller, Bubble and Squeak, Belle Star and Apple Pie. Most hounds forsook the direct scent hereabouts to rely on forward calls of ON ON! Knapsack the Naturalist took a wet route close to a marshy watercourse favoured by orchids. Viking's Daughter photographed a golden beauty for later identification,

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and Dolly Daydream got stuck in mud over her ankles, needing the help of Man of Lapland to pull her out. Into the forest at last the slope was gentler but the path was barred by a pole to deter straying cattle.

Old Hummingbird hurdled it cleanly' Tufty the Bantam nipped underneath with Max' Beau Brummel and Blonde Bomber vaulted it then Rugby Relic took it like an Irish bank. The weight of Also Ran using the same technique brought the pole crashing down so that Desperate Dan could shuffle through the gap. Fully warmed up, several stripped off a layer of clothing, Little Mo fanned herself, Aqua-carter took a drink, Eskimo Nell undid two more shirt buttons, Also Ran had sweated off a kilo and Roving Eye (Zebra abandoned) put on a natty towelling browband. The second checkpoint did little to close up the pack, but El Macho overran the end of the false trail and disappeared. The same fate befell Half a Dutchman and Sweet Sixteen (so they said later!)

The rearguard halted here to find Paunceous Pilot crash-landed on a log, his adverse power-to-weight ratio no longer providing enough lift to climb further. Little General press ganged him - "We need a man. You'll do". Into the Garden, with inside information from Slim, spotted this week's "Route Napoleon" shortcut home, and Cordon Bleu and Queen of Trumps needed no persuasion to follow on down. Snow White, whose new boots seemed to be pinching, also turned back. She did the RIGHT THING - told Lancashire Lass in front, and then returned along exactly the same trail. Hearing noises off the path, she paused and spotted Dolly Daydream diverted by the sight of a red squirrel, and separated from the naturalist's care. She took her safely home.

The trail led out of the trees at last, and was marked through rocks and scrub by occasional chalk arrows and strands of puce paper. Seemingly just above - but oh! so far away - Desert Fox sat on a rock at the

summit turning point shouting "ON ON! You blind wimps". First past him was Old Hummingbird closely pursued by Tufty the Bantam and Rugby relic. A long gap then to Beau Brummel and Blonde Bomber, who led Desperate Dan and Also ran by a distance. El Macho appeared from an uphill direction, having navigated for some time by sonar.

The Professor came next, courteously greeted by Desert Fox, and after consulting altimeter, pedometer, chronometer and pulse rate, computed his lactic level and decided not to tackle the runners loop. King of Scotland came to the same decision after seeing the smirk on Desert Fox's face when he said, "It's not much of a loop really". He went on remembering "birdies" with Wykehamist and Sherlock Holmes. Abraham Lincoln and Little John, having overreached themselves, sat down for a rest. Complete with dogs and sticks they stared across the scree like herdsmen who had lost their goats. Will She, Won't She's? cheerful way had put fresh sparkle into Champagne Charlie, so they broke into a jog together with Leprechaun and his freshly picked bag of toadstools. Homo Loquax went by arguing for Deutschmarks, Davy Crockett will hedge in Yen, Gorgeous Granny wondered about her Danish Bonds but Roving Eye preferred Canadian dollars.

Desperate Dan spotted other runners on a winding trail below him. Beaten for speed, he resorted to hillcraft to cut off two hairpins and lessen the deficit. In the afternoon's finest display of foolishness he went straight down the 45 degree scree like a Gurkha rifleman. Ten minutes later the last of those who "should know better" or "eternally young at heart", depending on your point of view, had turned their glowing faces homewards. No more false trails; a few more recruits to the Downhill Only Club as Half a Dutchman and Sweet Sixteen had some catching up to do. In a thick covert besides the way a female voice trio, whose blushing cheeks shall be discreetly

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veiled in anonymity, rendered "Pennies from Heaven". Lower down Father Christmas, corduroyed shoulders bowed under the weight of his Hippocratic Oath, Ministered to the stricken Ginger Nut Virgin, who had been bitten over the heart by a discerning hornet. He applied a soothing compress of moss and fern to the place as some hashed by with stiff upper lips. Mona Lisa's offer of help was turned down. "Throw a bucket of cold water over him", shrieked Lancashire Lass. Lucky that Her Indoors was not around to misunderstand the tender scene. The returning Desert Fox passed slowly through the pack in his scout car, having picked up Zebra Virgin (never again!), Eskimo Nell (late for the Peluqueria), Olly's Pet (slowed to a halt) and, squeezed in somehow, Knave of Erts (nicotine withdrawal symptoms). He went past tantalising remarks: "...no, fold the cream into..." (cooks) "...cut half through his..." (?) "... nice sense of timing..." (sportsmen) "...she'll have to choose one of them..." (gossips) "...right up the kyhber..." (motorists?); past the old lags with centenarian hats at jaunty angles quietly anticipating their first cold drink; up to Little Mo, Warbler of Oz, Say Cheese and Kiwi who like to finish well up the field even though hashing is not competitive.


At the finish Tufty the Bantam's fitness won followed by a well lathered Rugby Relic and third Old Hummingbird, still chirpy even after carrying his perch all the way round. Also ran gained an honourable fourth place and lost another kilo. Blonde Bomber and Beau Brummel gave up somewhere and joined the walkers course and Desperate Dan reported to the stewards for dangerous conduct. The Professor claimed line honours for the walkers, though Sherlock Holmes denounced him for "lifting" and the Watch Committee censured Father Christmas for exposing his bedside manner. After the runners had changed their shirts and hidden their knotty drumsticks in tracksuits, the Master called for a Circle. Desperate Dan and Champagne Charlie called

for more cold beer, and Bubble and Squeak called, "Over here". Then Hares were applauded, SCBs condemned and haberdashery awarded to a veteran of 75 hashes and a tyro of 25 starts. How much better if this was done with the full ceremonial of Down Downers, choruses of "She's a hasher so they say", "Why was he born so beautiful?", and the ultimate accolade of "He may be a joy to his mother". The cold beer ran out, Roving eye made an announcement about unisex shirts that was democratically shouted down by those listening, and in a huff co-opted Gorgeous Granny and Belle Star as fashion advisers. The chatter continued, the warm beer ran out and the Naturalist walked in. Sadly, as so often, the party had to break up then, just as it was gaining impetus. For here there is no regular weekly Hash Bash (meal), the oldest tradition, and the original reason for having a Hash at all.

## Travels with a Doggie

In this centenary year of the passing of Robert Louis Stevenson into that great wide travel expanse in the sky, it seems appropriate to pen a piece on the pleasure and pain of travelling with a four-legged friend. Unlike Stevenson, we don't usually travel with a donkey, our time isn't spent beating our poor beastie into a quicker pace and we don't have to throw out provisions when our animal's pack isn't properly balanced. Instead, we have dogs to keep us company, cars to keep the right speed and caravans to carry our belongings. But that doesn't mean that our trips are any less affected by our animal's welfare than on Stevenson's 12-day walk in the Cévennes mountains in 1879. Here are a few hints that may help you and your furry friend to have a healthy holiday in 1994.

We can't just tie our beast outside for the night like RSL's donkey. It is recommended in fact, that

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We can't just tie our beast outside for the night like RSL's donkey. It is recommended in fact, that animals not be allowed to sleep outside, particularly at night, since that's when mosquito-biting is at its peak. And mosquitoes can and do infect dogs with "leishmaniosis", a nasty illness that can kill if not treated, is very expensive and time-consuming to treat and for which there is no cure or preventive vaccine. Humans can get this disease too, but amongst dogs, leishmaniosis is now a worrisome epidemic in Spain, common in France's coastal areas and there have been a few cases in Andorra.

There is no guarantee that sleeping indoors will protect your dog from mosquito bites, but short of a frenzied attack on every flying insect in sight, there's really not much else one can do. The official veterinary advice is "be vigilant". (And keep that swatter handy for some quick and deadly swipes!) Then there's the infamous tick that transmits a very serious malady for dogs, pyroplasmosis. Again, mainly in the southern regions of Europe (and that includes the Dordogne, Aquitaine, the Gers, Ariège and Provence in France, and of course, Spain). A local couple who spend time in the Auch region, noticed on their return from a trip last fall that their two dogs were increasingly lethargic and sickly. They went off to the vet hospital here in the nick of time and an intensive treatment for pyroplasmosis saved them both.

In the Dordogne, locals will tell you that if you find a tick on your dog, NEVER pull it out yourself (you will likely leave the tentacles embedded under the skin and you'll then be in double trouble), but use an ether solution from the pharmacy. Then get your dog lickety-split to the nearest vet for an antidote injection, preferably well within 24 hours. Again, vigilance is the key, and daily physical inspection of your dog, especially shoulders, armpits, neck and stomach.

And last, not least, but most bizarre, there is the caterpillar. You've probably seen large filmy "webs"

in some pine trees that are quite common in the Gers region, in Andorra and in Spain. They're made by "processional caterpillars" which join together to look like one big furry thing. These creatures go from branch to branch, making what looks like a plastic bag. From these "bags" or "webs" drops a powder that is highly irritating to humans as well as dogs. However the real danger to dogs and "orally-inquisitive" children, is the toxicity of the powder or the caterpillar itself if it comes into contact with mucous glands (i.e. if a dog or child licks or eats either). One of the two unfortunate dogs who got pyroplasmosis last fall near Auch, ate or licked one of these caterpillars in March and has suffered serious after-effects. So keep yourself and your dog well away from these webs and the caterpillars that build them.

Before you despair of these natural threats and decide to lock yourself and your pet in your house and never venture outside again, there is some good news about what you can control: fleas. 'Tis the season and early protection will prevent those critters from finding a warm cuddly home on your dog! Flea powders are highly recommended by Andorran veterinarians, but there are good sprays and pastes available, even an internal insecticide for tough cases. And there is one travel danger to your dog that is entirely in your control. Dr. Maria Louisa Roquet from Clinica Prat de la Creu says sadly that every summer dogs are brought to her in a dreadful state of heat prostration after being left in cars. Some survive, most don't. She begs owners not to leave a dog in the car in warm weather, not even with the windows down "that much", because dogs suffer much faster from high heat than do humans. No dog should be left in a car more than a few minutes and never in direct sunlight.

So, should one travel with a doggie in light of the dangers out there? Of course. He/she could catch the same illness sitting in the backyard at home in Andorra. But for outdoors in Spain and France, it is

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necessary to pack your vigilance and common sense along with the flea powder, rabies' certificates and maybe some mace for mean dogs. Then have a good time. When you've done the best you can, remember the eloquent words of Robert Louis Stevenson:

*For my part, I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel's sake. The great affair is to move; to feel the needs and hitches of our life more nearly; to come down off this feather-bed of civilisation, and find the globe granite underfoot and strewn with cutting*

*flints. Alas, as we get up in life, and are more preoccupied with our affairs, even a holiday is a thing that must be worked for".*

And ultimately to be enjoyed more fully because of the canine company we keep, with whom "walkies" often opens up a world of wonderful sights, sounds and people we'd never experience otherwise, and for whom we must take a little more care than Stevenson did in 1879. Safe journey!

**E. Brown**

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