

## ESTATE AGENTS

In all property matters,  
when facing a decision,  
consult us -  
Guy Griffiths and  
Su Downham



You have a lot to gain  
and nothing to lose

Now in new offices

*Roc Propletats, Ctra. General, La Massana, Principat d'Andorra - Tels.: 35 3 46 / 38 1 69 - Faxes: 36 6 74 / 37 3 55*

# INTER COMM

## CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

NEWSLETTER/BUTLLETÍ INFORMATIU



**VOL. 4 - Núm. 3 - SPRING / PRIMAVERA 1995**

# CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

## INFORMATION / INFORMATIU

<i>PRESIDENT:</i>	<b>SUE DOWNHAM</b>	83 54 72
<i>VICE-PRESIDENT:</i>	<b>DESMOND ALLEN</b>	83 60 43
<i>SECRETARY:</i>	<b>JOSEFINA MARTÍNEZ</b>	82 39 55

### *BOARD/JUNTA DIRECTIVA:*

	<b>DINAH BAXTER</b>	83 69 80
<i>Treasurer:</i>	<b>BRIAN DORE</b>	83 59 31
	<b>SOLVEIG FEILBERG</b>	83 71 18

### *Co-Editor, Intercomm & Group:*

<i>Co-ordinator:</i>	<b>TONY HOOPER</b>	83 61 54
<i>Committee Chairman:</i>	<b>RALPH HUSBAND</b>	84 34 59
	<b>ANN PRICE</b>	83 66 53
	<b>PETER PARKINSON</b>	83 53 94

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.

LES OPINIONS EXPRESSES PELS EDITORS EN AQUEST BUTLLETÍ INFORMATIU, O PELS LÍDERS DE GRUPS EN ELS SEUS INFORMES, NO SÓN NECESSÀRIAMENT LES DE LA JUNTA DEL C.I.A.

### COVER PICTURE OF INCLES VALLEY IN SPRING TIME

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 1995

EDITORS: Jacquie Crozier and Tony Hooper

#### EDITORIAL

Once again it seems a very short time since we started the last Editorial (no, we said that last time); time flies... (no, that was in the last Editorial too); better Spring weather will soon be here (no, that's been done to death). What about, we are once again running out of articles for Intercomm (true, but we've begged or nagged for those too often). No, what this newsletter really needs is a change of direction, fresh ideas - a new editorial team.

When the editors have run out of anything to say, when interesting, apposite articles and photos are not being submitted without prodding, then it is certainly seems that a change is overdue.

So, here's both a plea and a challenge. WANTED: an editor or editors with a reasonably sophisticated home computer, preferably one with Windows and Ami Pro, willing to compile Intercomm four times a year, then take the disc to the printer's, collect the copies and mail them to members (or if that seems too much, to act as guest editor(s) occasionally). For a start, as both editors are away in August and the beginning of September, perhaps we could have a new editor for that issue. The prospective editor(s) could see what was involved by following the stages from processor to printer of the Summer number, which has to be «put to bed» by mid-May, then they'd be on their

own. There are a lot of Club members with the necessary equipment (both intellectual and electronic). So what about it.

The AGM will be held sometime in the summer and that might be a good time to discuss the future of Intercomm. We need more advertisers as well as contributors if the magazine is to continue in its present form. No-one came forward in response to our appeal in the last issue for help with advertising. The editors continue to have to find advertisers themselves. So we hope that the prospect of sitting in the editorial chair will arouse more interest.

#### NEWS FROM THE BOARD

Like the Editorial, there is nothing new to report from the Board. Perhaps this means that things are running smoothly - we hope so. As mentioned in the Editorial the Club's AGM will be held in the summer - almost certainly late May. Notices and accounts will be sent as soon as possible.

Tony Hooper, who devotes a great deal of time and energy to the Club's business has been in Hospital and has had two operations. We are sure members would like to join with the Board in wishing him a speedy recovery.

## ESTIL NORDIC MOBLES

WE NOW SELL ENGLISH GREETINGS and CHRISTMAS CARDS

FITTED KITCHENS, BEDROOMS, SATELLITE SYSTEMS, CARPETS and CURTAINS  
GARDEN and OFFICE FURNITURE, BED LINEN, DUVETS and TOWELS

**EDIFICI ROSSELL, CTRA. GENERAL, LA MASSANA - Tel.: 838 301 - Fax: 838 302**



## NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

### NATURALISTS GROUP

The two indoor winter events were very successful and well attended. We have had to change the date of our week-end visit to the Camargue due to circumstances beyond our control. It will now take place on 11th/13th March. Spring will soon be here with better weather so if you would like to join us on one of our monthly outings please come along. Full details of the programme were in the winter issue of Inter-comm but if you would like a copy please contact Jacqui Crozier (835931)

### SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

#### Caldea

We have negotiated an increased discount for members. It is now 15%. Unfortunately the basic entrance fee has been increased to 1850 Pts

Everyone should have received an updated circular about activities over the next few months but just in case the post has not got to you here are brief details.

#### Thursday 20th April

Andorran Industry Tour - Guided visits to Andorran manufacturers. The group size is limited to about 20 so early booking is essential

#### 19th - 23rd May (San Isidro)

Madrid visit

#### Tuesday 20th June

Hot Air Ballooning along the Cerdanya Valley, c5000 Pts

#### Sunday 23rd July

Car Boot Sale - Arinsal

#### Thursday 17th August

Jeep Safari into the wilds of Spain.

#### May 1996.

Ann Price is considering leading a visit to Egypt including 6 days at the best hotel in Cairo, the Mena House Oberoi, next to the Pyramids, and 5 days cruising the Nile, flying from Barcelona for about 175000 Pts. Call her (836653) if you are interested.

Phone Ann Price or Desmond Allen (836043) for your reservation and either pay your cheque into Credit Andorra for «CIA Activities» account no A00081 or put it in an envelope addresses to Ann or desmond and give it to Jill at Estil Nordic in La Massana.

### DRAMA GROUP



Rehearsals are now in full swing for our Spring production, «Move over Mrs Markham» which we would like to present in early May. At present we are having problems finding a theatre with free dates. We have tried the new theatre in Andorra la Vella but this is not available so we are trying for our old venue at Escaldes but have not yet received formal confirmation.

The weekly workshops are being held in the new Servissim premises at Arinsal but again we are looking for a more suitable location.

**NEWS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL SINGERS AND THE SCOTTISH DANCERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGES 16 and 17**



**GARATGE  
NOVAVISTA**

Ferran URTEU ROCA

C/. Bonavista, 15 - Tel. 29 9 33 - ANDORRA LA VELLA

### ART i FUSTA

Three refined furniture shops, managed with an exquisite taste  
Traditional mountain furniture

FITTED CURTAINS, MATTRESSES, GIFTS, ETC.

LA MASSANA - CRTA. GENERAL - Tel. 35 7 48  
ANDORRA LA VELLA - PRAT DE LA CREU - Tel. 61 7 70  
ENCAMP - AV. PRINCEP EPISCOPAL - Tel. 33 0 31



## FONDUE PARTY AND DANCE SHOW

The Dance Show was a display of traditional Catalunyan Dances handed down, distilled and influenced over the years by travellers from other lands.

«Esbart», a new word to me, is a dance troupe and the Esbart Santa Anna, based in Escaldes-Engordany, is one of the leading troupes in Catalunya. From the polished and accomplished performance of the dancers, they obviously put a lot of time and effort into practising and rehearsing. I am certain all present enjoyed their expertise and their obvious enjoyment in letting us share their pleasure.

There were five dances in the programme, all quite different. The last dance - El Ball de Les Set Parroquies, - Dance of the Seven Parishes, being performed publicly for only the third time. The dance and the music included tunes and steps from the different parishes melded into the Dance, and involved fourteen Dancers - the last two joining in near the end to indicate the recent formation of the Seventh Comu. Without wishing to appear biased, I would say the couple representing La Massana were outstanding.

I hope dear readers (if any) will excuse my «going on» at length about the Dancers, but it is really for the benefit of the people who were at the table behind the pillar. Now, I trust, they will realise to some extent what all the stamping of feet and the sound of Castanets was all about.

Now to the Fondue, At the table we were on four had ordered cheese, the other four meat. Firstly the cheese(?) fondue. On the initial dip into the pot when the fork was retrieved, it appeared and tasted as if it had been dipped into diluted milk (ratio ten to one???) However, with perseverance and careful probing in the depths of the Pot an agglutination was discovered firmly attached to the base but was found to be infrangible without the aid of a J.C.B. and/or a pneumatic drill. Rather surprisingly no one had one of these pieces of «cutlery» with them. We were invited to share the meat. This is where the Kitchen pulled off a master stroke. One of the meats was Botifara which would appear to consist of approximately 120% fat, and after a very short spell in very hot oil left one with a very clean fork.

I can only assume that the kitchen and waiting staff at the end of a very successful course at the «Fawltly Towers Catering College» all passed with First Class (Hons) degrees presented by John Cleese and Manuel. All the ladies, Dancers and Guests received a posy -

the one that came to this household lasted two weeks. On behalf of those present, I would like to thank Ann and Demond for arranging the evening. I understand that they informed the Hotelier that we were not particularly grunted with his hotel,

J.A.M.S.

Footnote by Desmond Allen:

Thanks for the comment. This proves that those who write up Club activities do not accept bribes! Actually, most members enjoyed the meat fondu but several vegetarians were unhappy so we will not be using the Panorama Hotel again. The moral is to let me know at the time and I will try to do something about it - otherwise it is too late.

## SARDANAS

Boys looking gallant  
In red caps and sashes  
Lead out their partners  
Wearing black knee britches

Dancing in a circle  
Holding hands, toes dashing  
Red rose behind the ear  
Her white stockings flashing

The pace starts to quicken  
Soft silk shawl fringes fly  
Espadrilles all kickin'  
As frilly skirts whirl by

Rings and brooches sparkling  
Combs in her raven hair  
Red roses aglowing  
In the clear mountain air

Flags of the Fiesta  
Draped high up overhead  
Make a rainbow cobweb  
O'er the dancer's gay tread

The boys break the circle  
Walking their girls in pairs  
Around the flowery Plaza  
To sit laughing in the chairs.

Copyright 1982

Jenny Bogarde

## ANDORRA ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

*W. Eagle Clarke, F.L.S., one of the founding fathers of British ornithology in the last century, visited Andorra in the early 1890's with a «Mr. Basil Carter of Masham, Yorkshire... a young and promising ornithologist» and also a good shot, an essential requirement since at that time birds had to be shot to be identified. Indeed, Eagle Clarke ends his account by thanking M. Spuller, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of France, for «granting special permits to shoot specimens during the close season».*

*His detailed notes on which species were seen and where, as published in The Ibis, the journal of the B.O.U., are only of interest to the specialist (but make an intriguing comparison with today's birds) but his account of Andorra in general has a more universal appeal.*

In mid-May, after a short and enjoyable stay in Ax, «...an extremely pleasant little town», investigating the bird life of «this beautiful district», the pair moved on to «Hospitalet, a really miserable place, situated, as it were, on the very verge of the possibility of human existence. Over 4600 feet above the sea, overshadowed on the south, east and west by peaks or ridges never free from snow, and open only to the north, Hospitalet presents a sort of frost-bitten appearance which it is difficult to describe. On the 19th of May this village still wore a wintry aspect, for the few trees in the valley were leafless and the snow was everywhere close at hand. Indeed, save for the presence of a few gay alpine flowers, it was difficult to realise that one was in the south of Europe, and that the season was not what it seemed. Nor does the native contribute anything to make the place more genial, for the narrow crooked passages which pass for streets are ankle-deep in manure, or in filth cast from the windows of the bordering houses so frequently as to render wading through these «rotten rows» rather nervous work.

One of the main objects for visiting Hospitalet was to arrange, if possible, for a guide and mules to take us over the main chain into Andorra - 25 miles distant - which can be accomplished from this village by two passes, the Port de Framiquel and the Port de Saldeu, both at little over 8200 feet. On making known our desire to him who had been recommended to us as a guide, and to the landlord of the little auberge, we were at once informed that such a journey was quite impossible, both exclaiming «neige, beaucoup de neige!» so energetically and repeatedly that there seemed no other course open to us but to abandon our

plans. It was explained to us that the passes are not sufficiently free from snow to allow mules to traverse them until July, and that at the present time the snow lay both deep and soft from near the foot of the pass to its summit, rendering the journey, which is both difficult and long under most favourable circumstances, now quite impossible. Our would-be, but not disinterested, advisers suggested the long and costly journey, requiring a number of mules, via Bourge-Madame and the Spanish town of Puycerda and Urgel, and thus to approach Andorra from the south - a recommendation which we declined, and, much disappointed, we returned to Ax.

A day or two after we heard that a small party of Andorrans had crossed the mountains on foot by the Port de Saldeu, and on the receipt of this news we at once posted to Hospitalet in the hope that we might be able to accomplish a similar journey. After some conversation, during which the now familiar words «Neige, beaucoup de neige» were frequently introduced, perhaps to forewarn us, all was satisfactorily arranged for a start on the following morning. At 5 a.m. on the 20th of May, accompanied by our guide Minguel, and carrying a minimum amount of luggage for a week's sojourn, including guns and cartridges, we set out for Andorra. Our route at first lay through high pasturelands covered here and there by great sheets of snow. At 6000 feet the snow from the high enclosing mountains crossed the narrow valley, and the river, which we had hitherto been following, was lost under its mantle. All was now snow, except where here and there a high rock cropped out from beneath and formed a welcome object on which to cast and rest the eyes from the brilliantly sunlit and dazzling surroundings. Plodding along slowly with the snow up to our knees, but following as much as possible the track of the Andorreans, we reached the summit of the Port de Saldeu, 8303 feet, in good form, at 9.45 a.m.

The scene around us was of the grandest possible description. On every side were the numerous «pics»,

## MAGALI RAGOT

### ENGLISH SPEAKING DENTIST

Plaça Guillemó, 6-2 - Andorra la Vella

Tel.: 861 700

many of them over 10,000 feet, and their little less lofty connecting-ridges, which shut in so very effectually this little Republic of Andorra from the outside world. This high enclosing rim and its flanks, as seen from this stand-point, were entirely mantled with glistening snow, and presented a strikingly beautiful panorama, which we were fortunate in seeing under most favourable conditions, the day being brilliantly fine and the deep blue sky without a cloud.

A steep descent brought us to the hamlet of Saldeu, the most north-westerly in the Republic, near the head of its main valley, 6000 feet in altitude, and a miserable little place, still almost entirely surrounded by snow.

Before preceding further it may be well to make a few general remarks on this interesting country. The Republic of Andorra may be said to consist of an isolated valley in the heart of the Pyrenees, since it is cut off from France on the one hand and Spain on the other by a rim of lofty mountains, ranging in altitude from 8000 to 10,000 feet, and is approached on all sides by mule-paths only. It comprises a main valley - the valley of the River Valira - and several side valleys, two of which are of some importance, namely those of Urdino and Escaldes, and have led to Andorra being described as consisting of three valley, and also to its being known in France as «Les Vallées.» Not only, however, is this little State hemmed in by the Pyrenees, but lofty mountains everywhere dominate its interior, rendering it entirely an alpine region intersected by a few narrow valleys or ravines, and it has been said of it, on the highest authority (The Hon. James Erskine Murray), that it is one of the wildest districts to be found on the whole

chain. It is compact in form, has an area of about 600 square miles, and its greatest length from north to south is 17 miles, while it is about the same in width from east to west.

The complete isolation enjoyed by Andorra has not been without most remarkable results. Indeed, there is much that savours of the enigmatical and is without historical parallel in its status and relationships. Thus it is physically a part of Spain, since it is within the watershed of the Ebro; yet, politically, though its people are Catalans, and therefore of an Iberian race, the influence of France is paramount, and is sought and desired; while ecclesiastically it is under the sway of His Highness the Prince-Bishop of Urgel. Although an absolute cypher on the face of Europe, forgotten by or unknown to most, this insignificant Peasant-Commune can boast of being the oldest free republic in existence, since it has preserved its independence for twelve long centuries; disturbed, no doubt, but uninfluenced and unaffected by the vicissitudes of fortune experienced by its, in this respect, less favoured but powerful neighbours. Governed by unwritten laws, unfettered by national debt, almost untaxed and free from crime, without an army, a steam-engine, or a carriage-road, Andorra is indeed the «curiosite politique» which the great Napoleon is said to have called it, and which was possibly the reason that induced him to allow it to remain undisturbed. (Ed. note: Napoleon, it is recorded, was heard to murmur that Andorra was so incredible it must be preserved as a museum piece!)

The Andorreans are below the middle height, and we saw but few men or women possessing claims to good



# INVICO

1969 - 1994

We have now been in business 25 years and in this Jubilee year we have moved to new premises where we intend to continue our unrivalled service to expatriates of all nations. Come and see us whatever your problem concerning property or investments and we will do our best to help.

David & Judy Hill, INVICO, S.L.  
Plaça Rebés 1, 1<sup>a</sup>-2<sup>a</sup> (adjacent to Comú),  
Andorra la Vella. Tel: 820019 Fax: 860537

VENDA  
I LLOGUER

SATELLITE AERIALS  
T.V. - VIDEOS - Etc...

SALE  
AND RENT



Costes Teixidor - Bordes Roig, 7 - LA MASSANA - Tel.: 35 6 73



looks. Their general occupation is pastoral, and their flocks comprise sheep, goats, cattle, and mules. They are certainly an industrious race, and have pushed their cultivated patches far up the mountainsides, and, above Andorra town, have irrigated them by an effective and extensive system of conduits furnished with a sluice at each highland allotment. The women largely attend to all matters of cultivation, while the men, all hardy and experienced mountaineers, follow the more congenial and profitable profession of the contrabandier - a calling for which the nature and geographical position of their country is most admirably adapted. Matches and embroidered scarves, both subject to high protective tariffs in France, are the chief articles of the smuggling trade, and both are readily obtained from Spain.

To return to our narrative. We were now in the extreme north-west portion of the main valley of Andorra, which here extends in a south-west direction for a couple of miles, when the mountains close in. This uppermost basin varies in altitude from 6000 feet at Saldeu, its only hamlet, to 5500 feet where the valley narrows. Such portions of it as are productive consist of pasture; the high flanking mountains are, for the most part, barren, but those on the north-east side are clothed with pine-forest, which at the time of our visit was impassable, deep snow clothing it down to the river's margin. The long defile which succeeds affords much wild and romantic scenery. The river boils through a narrow rocky course, steep cliffs wall in the stream and its bordering mule-track, several fine waterfalls pour down the mountainsides, while on the grassy slopes beautiful alpine flowers and a profusion of gay butterflies add to its many charms. This passed, we found ourselves at Canillo, the second town of importance in the Republic, and at the head of the second basin of the series into which the valley of the Valira may be said to be divided. It is a small village situated among rich arable and pasture-lands, and just below it, on the west side of the river, a noble cliff forms a remarkable feature in the landscape. This section of the valley lies between about 4000 to 5000 feet in altitude, and the few woods that clothe its mountains are at a considerable elevation. About a mile below Canillo the fringing mountains again approach each other, and the valley becomes narrow and steep, with copice-growth not infrequent on its slopes. It widens out a little at the hamlet of Encamp, but again closes in above Escaldes, which is at the head of the main basin of the valley. This main basin of the Republic runs due north and south, and is, in comparison with the others, a fine flat valley - by some it is described as a plain - perhaps nowhere more

than half a mile wide and about three miles in length, but possessed of fine pasture-lands and woodlands. Here is situated Andorra (3400 feet), the chief town, where we arrived at 6 o'clock on the evening of the day we left Hospitalet after a rough journey of not less than twenty-five miles, entirely performed on foot. The hamlet of Andorra - for it savours of satire to dub it a city - is situated in the widest part of the valley, on its western side, a little above the river, and has a population of about one thousand. Its wretched houses are all jumbled together; indeed they might have been dropped from above, so delightfully irregular are they and presenting, as they do, all manner of angles to the labyrinth of narrow passages which do duty for streets in this vehicleless country, and which are redolent with every variety of unsavoury smell. The principal building is the Casa del Valle, or parliament house, in which the Council General meets, an ancient edifice resembling a barn with two small turrets, but evidently little cared for, since it is much dilapidated and the chief resort of the few Sparrows seen in the Republic. But unenchanted as the town may be, its surroundings are of an entirely different character. Below lies a broad valley of rich alluvial land, clothed with hundreds of acres of lovely white narcissus, at the time of our sojourn a mass of bloom, and a fine brawling river. Above, on every side, are snow-capped mountains, some of the flanks of which are scattered with barren rocks or present great naked cliffs; while others are clothed with pine-forest, while at lower elevations are shady woodlands. Thus Andorra was not without charms of the highest order, and the contrast between being within and without its walls reminded one that, in some respects at least, it is not in more remote climes that «man alone is vile».

To complete the sketch of the features of the main valley (to which and its enclosing mountains our ornithological rambles were entirely confined) it only remains to be said that about three miles below Andorra the mountains gather together again and form a fine defile. Below this is San Julia, the last of the Andorran hamlets, and close to the south-western frontier of the territory. It is situated in the last basin of the Valira, is overshadowed by high mountains and is the lowest land in Andorra, being 3000 feet above the sea.

The avifauna of Andorra is eminently Pyrenean, and possesses, it is believed, no single species peculiar to, or characteristic of, the regions north or south of the great dividing range.

Perhaps the most interesting of our observations related to the breeding of the Crag Martin (*Cotile rupestris*)

under the eaves of the houses in the centre of the town of Andorra. On the day of our arrival we were much surprised to observe several large pale-coloured Martins flying in and about the town. Several attempts were made to procure a specimen, but it was most difficult to avoid covering windows and other undesirable objects with the gun, and several snap-shots at the bird failed. Our stay in Andorra was not without its little trials, since residence there means dwelling among the peasants and conforming to their mode of life. However, apart from a dearth of cleanliness and its concomitants, we found Andorreans an independent but inoffensive race, and they allowed us much freedom and every facility that could be desired for the pursuit of birds. Our single unpleasantness, or series of unpleasantnesses, was experienced with him from whom we might naturally expected at least consideration, not to say protection, namely our guide and interpreter, whose services we retained when it was found that Catalan alone was spoken and understood by the Andorreans. Minguel, however, had seen too much of the world, and his peasant morals had not been improved thereby. Once an artillery-man in the army of France, he had served in Algeria and Tonquin, and now an ardent smuggler, he, no doubt, thought us fair game for petty plunder. This

led him to make out, in his own handwriting, ridiculously exorbitant charges for our accommodation at each of the places - Andorra, Canillo, and Saldeu - at which we stayed. Our protests were invariably contested by our servant, who, it is needless to say, was always on the side of our peasant-host. Finally he refused to accept the remuneration we had arranged to give him in return for his services.»

### TOBACCO - ANDORRA

In the valley the tobacco plants stand in the fields  
Like a green uniformed army in regimented rows  
Their huge leaves glistening after the torrential night  
rain Dwarfing the peasant patiently working his way  
Down row after row, cutting off their spear-like tops

Planting the tobacco - the only work available in spring-time

Backbreaking in its duplicity  
Of riches and poverty intertwined

In the cigarette packets of France and Spain  
And advertised by a lady in a sad black dress

Copyright 1982

Jenny Bogarde



### BARCLAYS INTERNATIONAL FUNDS

John G.WILLIAM, 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.

He can advise you on the full range of Barclays worldwide services and products including:

- International investment funds based in Jersey and Luxembourg.
- How to take the worry out of falling interest rates.
- Offshore Deposits Accounts.
- Portfolio Management.
- Money Funds.

c/o Barclays Bank Trust Co. Ltd.  
2, rue Alphonse Karr - 06000 NICE  
Tel. 93.87.96.89 - Fax. 93.88.58.95

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BANK WITH BARCLAYS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS SERVICE

## ANDORRA ALMOST HALF A CENTURY AGO

*At a time when its new Constitution, the reform of the legal system and a heady feeling of complete independence are changing Andorra irrevocably, it is fascinating to read about the old customs that have shaped the country and were still unchanged in the late 1950's. The following extracts are abridged from the chapter «Un Peu d'Histoire» in «The Road to Andorra» by Shirley Deane. The whole chapter is the most readable potted version of the country's history that I've come across. Ed.*

The Andorrans may be confused, but they are certainly not worried, by their uncertain status (as to whether their country was a suzerainty, a co-principality, a republic - or all three at once). All through the centuries, and particularly in our own, they have turned it to advantage, playing off one overlord against the other, and improving trade by granting right of way to hordes of refugees passing from Spain to France, or back again. In 1936 no less than eighty thousand refugees from the Spanish Civil War crossed Andorra into France, and during the Second World War an even larger number of Allied troops escaped from Occupied France into Spain through the Valleys. It is reported that in 1941 a member of the Andorran Parliament got up and prayed at a council meeting, «Please, God, go on giving us wars, not actually in Andorra, but as close to it as possible.»

The Germans reached the frontier, and threatened to occupy the country because it was being used as an escape route by the Allied forces. The Prime Minister of Andorra spoke very sharply to the Germans, agreed to keep Allied troops in his country only long enough to recover from their experiences (a pleasantly elastic period of time), but added that any German advance beyond the frontier would be firmly resisted not only by his countrymen but by Spain and the Pope. That, he said, was his last work, so the Germans went away.

In spite of their turbulent neighbours, the Andorrans themselves are a peace-loving people, content to keep

their own counsel, and get on with the serious business of making money. Nevertheless, in 1933, they had a little revolution of their own, supported by the French, but opposed by the Bishop, to extend the franchise, which up till then had been limited to the male head of each family. (Ed's note: This could be, and often was, senile old great-grandfather who was also illiterate which is why, to this day, voting «lists» are printed on different coloured paper. «Now remember, dad,» his family would say as he set out to toddle down to the town hall, «the blue paper, not the green!») In 1933 all males over the age of twenty-five were given the right to vote, but in 1941 France, under the Vichy government, withdrew its support from this revolutionary measure, and the old patriarchal system was surprisingly revived again, to remain ever since.

Neither in 1933, nor at any other time, has the most rabid revolutionary suggested that the vote be given to women. None of the women I spoke to seemed to want it, either - not Senyora Juan, who would sooner milk the cows, and not ever her daughter, Maria, typical of the younger generation.

«Wouldn't you like to vote when you grow older?» I asked. Maria laughed.

«When I grow older, she replied firmly, «all I want is a good husband.»

A... serious crisis occurred in January 1959, when Spain closed its borders for a time to all Spaniards seeking to enter Andorra, in an effort to control the smuggling. This meant that Andorra was cut off for the winter from the outside world, for the road to France is closed by the snows. It also meant a lot of hardship for tradesmen and farmers in Andorra who rely entirely on the Spanish markets in winter time, and for the many Spanish workmen in Andorra who were cut off from their homes and families.

... Meetings are held at the capital in the Casa de la Vall, sometimes more grandly called the Palace of the Valleys. The door must be opened by an enormous medieval key, which is almost too heavy to lift.

### SERVISSIM

Gestoria Administrativa, Uloguers i Assessorament per a adquisicions de vivendes i negocis.

Rentals, Property and Business Purchase Consultants. Advice on Immigration. Andorra's leading professional information and assistance company for the foreign community.

Roc Escollis, 3 - 4 A, Av. Meritxell, 20 - Andorra la Vella - Tels.: 60 4 14 / 61 1 48 - Fax: 63 7 97





Keys play an important part in the government of Andorra. The archives and the country's treasures are kept in an old black lacquer cabinet, which can be opened only by six keys simultaneously. As each parish keeps a key, any plot to make off with the national funds would have to involve all six of them, which is unlikely. Nobody except the councillors themselves has any idea what the national funds amount to, for in keeping with the general financial caginess of Andorra, no written budget is kept.

«It is scarcely worth while for such a small country,» the councillors explain.

No doubt they have their reason.

There is an informal, almost homely, atmosphere about the House of the Valleys. It has a kitchen with enormous copper pots and pans, dating from the days before 1932 when the road was built, and when councillors plodded to meetings on mule-back, and had to remain in residence until their business was finished. Its cellar is Andorra's goal. It is no longer used for convicted prisoners, but only for those awaiting trial. The last convicted prisoner to be housed there was a doctor accused of performing an illegal operation. A special gaoler had to be appointed to look after him, which was - our landlord told us sadly - a big expense. And the gaoler took his duties lightly - he found it more friendly and convenient to leave the key with the prisoner, so that he could let himself in and out when he wanted to visit his friends, or buy himself a meal in a restaurant.

There is no judge in Andorra, but two of them visit it at intervals, one from Spain and the other from France. Accused men are kept in the cellar until a judge comes, and then, if convicted, can choose which country they would like to serve their sentence in. They generally choose France, where the gaols have a better reputation. Besides, there is a snobbish preference for all things French in Andorra - the language, the food, the wine and the education system, as well as the gaols.

Until recently the death sentence for murder was carried out in Andorra by firing squad. But about four years ago there was a scandal, when a young man from a village about Ordino murdered his elder brother. They were well liked in the district, and fond of each other - sharing a house and even a bed. But the younger liked to gamble at tombola, and the elder - seeing his hard-earned money squandered - finally refused him any to play with. The young gambler, in a fit of annoyance, stabbed his brother to death with a knife. He was sentenced to be shot, for convenience, in the Ordino cemetery, by the side of his own grave - in such a mountainous land, it is a nuisance having to carry corpses about. By law, it was a public execution, and anyone could go.

«But I didn't go,» said our landlord, who told us the story. «I knew the boy you see and didn't fancy it, somehow.» The six policemen who made up the firing squad knew the boy, too, and refused to fire. He had to wait for hours while they argued with their officer. Finally, at last one were persuaded to shoot, and the sixth was dismissed from the force. But everyone concerned was so upset that a special council meeting was called, and a decree passed that in future all executions must take place outside Andorra.

«Our country is too small for executions,» said Senyor Juan. «It is not easy to shoot a man whom you have known since he was born.»

Andorran murderers now have the doubtful privilege of choosing whether they will be executed in France or Spain, by blade or bullet. Fortunately, there are not many of them, or indeed any criminals at all. The Andorrans, apart from the universal lawlessness of smuggling, are - like most small communities, a law-abiding people.

Before the Second World War, it was not considered necessary to have a police force in Andorra. If a crime was committed, the mayor of each parish had the right to call on all the heads of families in the parish, like a feudal king summoning his barons. The head of every household was required to keep a gun for the service of the state. But by the time of his own boyhood, Senyor Juan told us, the system - which was so seldom needed - didn't work too well when it was. Some of the guns hadn't been fired for twenty years or so, and many families had lost or sold them, anyway. If a sudden call to arms was made, heads of families could be seen running about the mountains, trying to borrow a weapon from their neighbours. Often, if a gun was found, there was no ammunition to go with it. And if gun and ammunition by chance were brought together, the weapons were frequently in such a state of disrepair that they were more of a danger to pursuer than pursued.

«When I was young,» said Senyor Juan, «the heads of households and their guns were one of our favourite jokes. It used to annoy my father.»

But theoretically at least about three hundred men could be called upon in times of emergency. The heads of households formed a sort of permanent, amateur standing army. They were both the police force and the militia. *(The last time this militia was called out was, I believe, on the occasion of the French President's state visit some eight years ago when there was a terrorist scare and all the heads of households were called out to man roadblocks and ensure that no-one went near the President's route. He travelled along deserted roads. Some of the guns displayed then must have been family heirlooms! Ed.)*

After the war, when the new hydroelectric plants were being built to provide electricity for internal use and for export, hundreds of workmen poured into Andorra from France and Spain, and brought fights and strikes and disturbances with them. The growing tourist trade brought traffic problems, too, and eventually Andorra decided that a professional police force must be formed to control all these foreigners. It consists now of some ten or twelve men, but except on feast days or at the height of the tourist season they are seldom visible. Andorra is almost ashamed at the need for them.

Such laws as there are in Andorra are traditional by origin and application, and have existed unchanged for hundreds of years. Many of them are laid down in two ancient, hand-written documents - the *Politar* and the *Manual Digest* - copies of which are kept in the House of the Valleys and can be seen by arrangement. One of these laws is the *Visori*, or procedure to be followed if a corpse is found on the mountains. An «Honourable Bailiff» is summoned, and in the presence of the dead man's friends, orders him three times to stand up.

«Corpse, arise in the name of the Justice! Corpse, are you really dead?»

After a suitable silence to give the corpse time to respond, the bailiff turns to the assembled company.

«The corpse neither stands nor answers. He is dead.» I could not attend a *Visori*, as no corpse was found during my stay in Andorra; but those who have attended one say that the suspense throughout the silence is unnerving, like the moment in the marriage service when one is asked to show just cause why the happy couple should not be joined in holy matrimony. The ancient laws relating to the common ownership of wood are also laid down in the archives of the House of the Valleys. Wood can be neither bought nor sold, but gathered by anyone according to his needs. There are no reforestation schemes in Andorra, for the pine trees replenish themselves quickly enough to cater for the needs of the small population. Wood that is needed for the capital and for public buildings is carefully controlled, and cut in rotation from a different district each year. The villages look forward to their turn, for they are invaded by teams of *picadores*, or woodcutters, and *tiradores*, or wood-draggers, who are a welcome change from the monotony of village life.

Maria told us wistfully of the excitement of having the woodcutters in Anyos two years before - all those potential husbands running loose around the mountains. She helped her father run a little bar for them in the kitchen of the Casa Nova, serving beer and wine and coffee, and supper in the evenings. Unfortunately,

when the woodcutters moved on, the bar had to close until they came again in ten year's time. The villages of Anyos are not sociable and do their drinking at home from their own wine-barrels. Only in the year of the woodcutters can Anyos support a bar of its own.

## BARCELONA

It was a bitterly cold day with temperatures well below zero, pitch dark and at the unearthly hour of seven a.m. (or thereabouts) we each made our way to the appointed pickup stops, where the «simpatico Juanito» was waiting with his coach all nice and warm to transport us to Barcelona. En route we passed fields completely white with the heavy «Jack Frost» of the previous night, and very little traffic. Our first stop was at the snack bar on the service station just before the Cadi Tunnel, where we were able to have lovely hot coffee and croissants, which were most welcome.

We arrived in the outskirts of Barcelona about 10.30 a.m., where we drove directly to the perfume factory of PUIG, there Josefina had kindly organised a tour. We were treated to a most interesting tour of the factory conducted by English speaking guides who were very helpful and informative. We then drove to the famous Marks & Spencer's and it was voted we should spend one and a half hours there, which proved to be a very popular decision. We were able to deposit all our «precious» purchases in the safety of the bus, which then continued to Plaza Catalunya in the centre of Barcelona. Here we each went our own way, some to shop in the Corte Ingles and Galerías Preciadas, and others to the Museum of Textiles and Historical Spanish Costumes. We had to meet at 6.15 p.m. near the Cathedral, for the return journey. So a quick visit to the cathedral and then a leisurely visit to the Christmas market which had the real festive atmosphere, selling all sizes of trees, loads of holly and every kind of decoration imaginable. Arriving punctually we were weary and footsore but content. The journey home was comfortable but with bad patches of eerie fog causing some poor visibility. We stopped just outside Ponts, where we enjoyed a satisfying four course dinner, and then continued home, arriving just before midnight. A big thank you to Desmond who looked after us so well, and to Ann for all the work she put into it before her departure to the U.K., to Josefina who also contributed to the share of the work. It was a wonderful day.

**Diana Zammit**

*As a contrast we give an outsiders view of the shopping expedition. As the author says, «All based on hearsay.»*

## SPARKS AT MARKS

Every week-end throughout the year, hordes of *Barcelona bandits* scale the heights of Andorra's natural ramparts in search of merchandise at bargain prices.

As winter draws on, just before the solstice, a mysterious journey is undertaken in the opposite direction. A determined group of rugged Christmas mercenaries; Anglo-Saxons, Celts, members of the Nordic tribes and their assorted allies undertake a well-planned pilgrimage to visit that mecca of the material, Barcelona's very own *Marks and Spencer*. Where the request for a packet of three will result confusingly in six, hopefully natural fibre, matching socks.

A cold pre-dawn start allowed time to reflect: «the early bird may often catch the worm, but rarely has a decent breakfast».

A brief diversionary foray into a Catalan perfumery and the assault teams were ready for the serious business of the day.

The expeditionary force divided into two parts, unlike Gaul. The well-trained SAS (shop after shop) made an immediate full frontal attack on *Marks and Spencer* before lunch, and the intelligence corps who dug into defensive refreshment positions in local hostelrys to test the kitchen's strengths before they committed themselves to the main action.

The emporium fought back; some of the price tags bore the slightly cheaper English prices as well as the Spanish. If their command of the language had been sufficient, Catalan or Spanish not English, the more observant of the marauding band of doughty shoppers would have made their views known to the management.

Instead they fell back on the mainstay of expatriate life all over the globe. Vociferous complaint amongst themselves, concerning the unscrupulous tricks of the wily local, or foreign, merchants.

After ninety minutes of unequal combat, the assault force withdrew. Spoils of war clutched in distinctive green plastic bags. Injured wallets and purses, with their spent credit cards, helped back to the waiting transport by the walking wounded.

They skulked their way back to their mountain lair. The guerrillas; *chef d'équipe* took a different route to evade the possible pursuit and bivouacked, for a celebratory meal.

*Marks and Spencer*, would remember the 1994 raid by the CIA and wonder why, with such a name, it was not lead by American expatriates.

Copyright 1995

J.S.Donovan



## PALMS

Joyful, in a long procession  
Through ancient church their palms held high  
Plaited, looped, with gay bright ribbons  
Every colour you could tie,  
Babes had rosarys made of sugar  
Pink and white sweet beads they fly'  
Little boys wave tinselled banners  
Grannies dressed in black pass by.

Down the church steps go the families  
Fiesta dressed in little groups  
Braving out the freezing weather  
Taking photos for the books  
Some carry branches of the laurel  
Girls hold scented blossoms white  
Symbols of the reawakening  
Of the Springtime Spirit's might.

Copyright 1983

Jenny Bogarde





## UNCLE RONNIE IS DEALT A BUSTED FLUSH

«Your Uncle Ronnie is always putting his foot in it,» said his wife Kate.

And his size twelve shoe, with fourteen stone behind it, could leave a big impression. He was well-meaning but accident prone. The more so because he tried very hard to avoid life's little disasters. The first of these calamities that he recounted to me, concerned a mishap at a dinner party. «I met the Lindsay-Mulligans», began Uncle Ronnie, «as the result of being drawn against Desmond in the Winter Knockout.

He was a fierce player, with a dangerous whippy hand action. It let him down eventually. After I beat him we walked in from the fifteenth green. We changed, and by the time I got to the bar he and the steward were waiting for the heads to settle on two pints of draught Guinness. So he had ordered two club Jamieson's to be going on with. A very generous chap, and very Irish too. He could always be relied upon to do the unexpected; like cooling his wife's feet with a stream of soda-water, when she complained at a club dance that her feet were hot and sore!

We became good friends and soon got an invitation to dinner at his place.

'There'll be four couples', his wife Fiona told Kate. 'and Black Tie please'

He had a late Victorian house outside Knockholt. Stained glass panels in the front door, black and white tiles on the hall floor and big rooms with high ceiling.

«Good meal, wasn't it Kate», said Uncle Ronnie in an aside.

«Oh, dear me, yes», agreed Kate. «Fiona was an inspired hostess. Her food always looked and tasted delicious. You got through the meal without too any mishaps, I recall. Apart from getting angry with that socialist»

«Huh!. That lecturer. Des told me afterwards he only asked him because he knew it would stir up a good argument, and enliven his evening!

As it was a proper dinner, the ladies left to take coffee, liqueurs and a natter in the drawing room. While the men

stayed around the table, putting the world to rights over port and cigars. It turned out that Desmond was an Accountant, who specialised in bankruptcies and liquidations. He told some good stories about the roguery that goes on.

Well, eventually we got up to join the ladies. On my way I went to the cloakroom. I pulled the chain to flush the lav. It had one of those high old-fashioned cisterns. Nothing happened, so I pulled a bit harder. The next thing I knew I was left holding a very handsome china handle; painted with pink roses, I remember with a yard of brass chain dangling from it.

I looked up and I could see the problem, but not quite reach it. So I thought I would go and tell Des. Then I thought that would all be rather embarrassing. But I certainly couldn't just leave it. So I lowered the seat cover and gingerly stood on it. Then I freed the cistern lever where it had got stuck in the slot in the lid. I heard the water hissing in to fill up the cistern, and was busy rewiring the chain to the lever when IT happened. Suddenly with a tremendous crack!»

«It was like a gunshot» broke in Kate, continuing

«We were sitting talking politely - a bit too politely actually, as a certain 'feeling' had developed between two of the ladies. when this loud bang and clatter came from the direction of the hall. All the conversations stopped, and in silence we waited, aghast. The silence in the drawing room went on and on; waiting for some break in the silence outside. I felt myself blush because Ronnie was the only one absent. The others exchanged furtive looks. Fiona opened her mouth to say something to Desmond, but he shook his head at her.

At last we heard the unmistakable whoosh of the lav flushing. Desmond roared with laughter, we giggled and the tension was broken».

«What happened» resumed Uncle Ronnie, «was that the damned plastic seat cover broke. I landed on my feet. One on the floor, and one stuck halfway down the pan It took me a while to recover from the surprise, and finish of the job of repairing the old Niagara.

I cleaned up a bit and went to face the drawing room. Seven heads turned enquiringly towards me. Kate knows better than to say anything at these moments.

RADIO VALIRA  
**RV**  
LA RADIO D'AQUÍ  
93.3 Mhz.  
98.1 Mhz.

RÀDIO VALIRA

'Sorry Desmond', I started off, 'er, a little local difficulty. Er, only trying to help, you know! Put it right in the morning'.

We went home soon afterwards.

Next morning I went to the plumbers' merchant and bought a lovely solid pine seat and lid. Kate tied a pink ribbon on it, and together we delivered it to the Linsay-Mulligans. Unfortunately they were out - so we left it, quite unwrapped against their front door.

A day later Kate found a little book called 'The Specialist' outside our front door. Inscribed on the flyleaf was 'With love, and in case you need it, D & F'. It was a humorous tale of an Irish Privy maker.

We had the Lindsay-Mulligans to dinner latter that summer. After the coffee Desmond took his cigar into the garden. A minute later I spotted him emerging from behind the rhododendrons.

'You could have used the second bathroom, Des', I said, a little embarrassed.

'Oh no, Ronnie. No. I didn't want to take any chances!' ».

**Michael Gale**

### **An evening at the Restaurant Jabugo**

Once more we must extend our sincere thanks to Ann Price and Desmond Allen, who organised the memorable evening which took place on Tuesday, the 24th January at the Restaurant Jabugo in Sant Julia.

The evening was made memorable by the most fascinating and interesting talk given by Clare Allcard.

Clare took us to her difficult early years, told us how she made a decision that would alter the whole course of her life. A decision that has brought her so much happiness. The incredible experiences she encountered, and how with husband Edward's help, she learned to take up an important post on his boat, to become «First mate, Wife and devoted Mother».

This talk is one that must be repeated, so that other members of the Club will have the opportunity of listening and enjoying, Clare's story.

One must make mention of the diner, which began with a tasty prawn cocktail, followed by a splendid chicken soup.

Many of us could have called «halt» there, for we knew that a dessert was to be served, about all we had room for. Some did manage to get through the course; all waited for the cream topped trifle, which was truly up to standard.

A most entertaining, and enjoyable evening, our sincere thanks to Clare Allcard who helped to make it so.

**Binnie Segal**

### **No! Not the Jabugo but Tarragona.**

This photograph arrived too late for the last issue.



**If you produce articles for INTERCOMM on a word processor or computer, it would save a great deal of time if you would forward your disc as well as a print out of the article. In most, but not all cases, we can import your article direct from your disc to the computer. This saves retyping the whole article. Your disc will be returned when it has been processed. Please keep up the supply of articles and letters.**

**Your efforts are greatly appreciated by our readers.**

**RECIPES-New Variations on Neighbouring Dishes**

Almost every cook has their favourite cookery writer whose well-thumbed volumes, liberally grease spattered, they turn to when inspiration fails but it is always a pleasure to discover a new writer who seems to be on the same «wavelength» as oneself; whose ideas on food and cooking agree with ones own.

One recent discovery who fulfilled the above requirements is Nigel Slater, whose first book «Real Fast Food» may be known to readers. His latest, «The 30-Minute Cook» is again for those who cannot or do not want to spend more than half-an-hour preparing a meal but he has travelled further afield and brought together in this book the best of the world's quick cooking, with over 250 recipes from India, Thailand, Turkey, Morocco as well as Europe. It is all «real» food; no convenience, packet or frozen stuff here. The vegetable section is especially good with plenty of unusual ways of using aubergines, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, beans, spinach, among others. There are long sections on Pasta, Fish and Shellfish, lots of ideas for chicken but as he says «Over the last few years I have taken to thinking of vegetables, chicken, game and fish before considering (red) meat.»

It is difficult to choose one recipe to give you the flavour of this book and Slater's somewhat irreverent style but try the following:

(All his recipes are for 2)

**Herbed Salmon with Garlic Cream sauce**

*450g/1lb salmon fillets, about 2.5cm/1 inch thick  
6 tablespoons chopped herbs: tarragon, chervil, dill and parsley  
50g/2oz butter  
1 clove of garlic, squashed flat  
4 tablespoons creme fraiche (low fat is fine) or double cream.*

French chefs have an affinity with fish, butter and cream that I occasionally aspire to. This is a simplified version of the sort of herby, buttery, creamy sauce that is often served with fish in France. Little boiled potatoes, complete with their tender skins, would be my choice of accompaniment. And a few green beans.

Cut the salmon fillets into pieces across their width, about 4cm/1.5 inches wide. Scatter the chopped herbs on a plate and roll the salmon pieces in them, pressing down on them to make them adhere to the fish (*Fresh herbs are available all the year round from the chiller in the vegetable department in the Pyrenees*)

Melt the butter in a shallow pan over a medium heat and add the garlic. When the butter starts to foam, place the herbed fingers of fish in the pan. cook for 2-3 minutes or just until the fish becomes opaque. By now the butter will be slightly brown in parts and fizzing wildly. Stir in the cream or whatever and leave to melt in the butter. Season with black pepper, and salt if you wish.

Just before you scoop the fish out of the pan squeeze a little lemon juice into the sauce: it will lift its flavour and prevent the sauce from becoming cloying.

(«The 30-Minute Cook» is published by Michael Joseph at £16.99 hardback)

Now for a recipe from Andorra's other neighbour. «A Season in Spain» by Andrew Grant-Adamsom and his wife Lesley, will be published next month by Pavilion Books (£12.99). Here is a recipe from it as printed in the «Financial Times»

Veal has had a bad press lately but the ternera or vedella sold here is not the milk white veal from very young calves whose transport to the continent has been so opposed by animal-rights protesters. The red veal on the meat counters here comes from yearling animals

**SHAW & CO. LIMITED****STOCKBROKERS**

Contact :

**MARTIN SMITH MSI**

4, London Wall Buildings

Bloomfield Street

LONDON EC2M 5NT

**Telephone + 44716383644 FAX + 44713742010**

Member of The London Stock Exchange

Member of The Securities and Futures Authority

Member of The London International Financial Futures and Options Exchanges



raised in the same way as all Spanish cows are. Beef can be substituted for veal in:

### **Estofado de Ternera**

*1 kilo/2.25lb of red veal*

*1 large onion*

*250g/0.5lb tomatoes*

*250g/0.5lb of green peppers*

*One head of garlic*

*50ml/3 tablespoons of olive oil*

*10ml/2 teaspoons of lemon juice*

*Half a cup of wine*

*Bunch of herbs (bayleaf, two stalks of parsley and a sprig of thyme)*

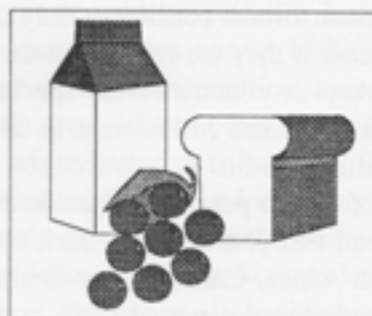
*Heaped teaspoon of pimenton dulce (or paprika)*

*salt and pepper*

Cut the veal into 1 inch cubes, slice the onion, cut the peppers into strips and roughly chop the tomatoes. Char the head of garlic under the grill or over a gas flame and separate the cloves from their skins. Put all the ingredients into a pot with a close fitting lid, bring to the boil and after the tomatoes have cooked down, add water to just cover the meat and vegetables. simmer for two hours (or until the meat is cooked). Add salt and pepper to taste. The sauce will thicken during cooking but more water may need to be added.

I cooked this in the Alpujara with the robust local rose, but a fairly light red is fine.

In Spain estofado is cooked on the top of the stove because most ovens are virtually uncontrollable. However, cooking can easily be completed in a slow oven (170C, 335f, Gas 3)



### **Lemon, Onion and Parsley Salad from Morocco.**

Peel a ripe lemon, making sure to remove all its bitter pith. Dice the flesh and then toss it with finely chopped sweet onion, a little salt, coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley and 4 diced ripe tomatoes. Anoint with olive oil. Serve with fish.

**Tomato and Basil Salad.** Sweet, slightly tart tomatoes. Olive oil. Shredded basil. That's it. Oh, and some crusty bread for the juices.

EMPRESA DE DESENVOLUPAMENT ANDORRA

E.D.A., S.L.

SOCIETAT LIMITADA

**BRITT NIELSEN**

ESTATE AGENT

FOR SALES AND RENTALS THROUGHOUT ANDORRA

Tel.: 837 169 - Fax: 837 439

## **HOSTAL POBLADÓ**

*menú i carte - spécialité paëlla*

Tel.: 835 122

ARINSAL

**viatges relax**



Carrer Roc dels Escolls, 12 - Tels.: 22 0 44 - 22 0 55

Tx: 217 AND - Fax: 27 0 55 - bp. 43



**Excursions**

for all your bus trips  
in - and outside Andorra.  
Special prices for clubs.

**Juanito MARTINEZ**

Tel.: 23 6 53 - Fax: 62 9 36

## FINANCIAL MATTERS FROM THE U.K. PRESS

Members may be aware that a new Pensions Bill is due to come before the U.K. Parliament this year. Its main purpose is to equalise the pension ages of men and women at 65 and to tighten the regulation of company pension schemes in the wake of the Maxwell scandal. At present British pensioners only qualify for the annual increase if they are resident in the U.K., the «Common Market» or countries with special arrangements. It seems that some M.Ps. want to take the opportunity to alter the bill to «unfreeze» the state pension rights of British pensioners outside these areas. This would mean that pensioners in such countries as Australia, South Africa, Canada, New Zealand would in future be entitled to the annual increase. Hopefully this would also include Andorra. There seems to be some confusion as to whether the proposal will give entitlement to past increases to pensioners whose pension has been frozen at, for example, 1980 rates.

The reports seem to indicate that there is a chance that the Government might be forced to accept the proposal since over 150 M.Ps. (including 60 Conservatives) have signed a Commons motion calling for the law in this respect to be changed.

Another interesting item concerns the ability to draw cash, direct from a U.K. bank account, from overseas cash machines, using ordinary debit cards. It has been possible, for over ten years, to draw cash with a credit card. The scheme works through an arrangement known as Cirrus linked to the Mastercard group. To use the scheme you must have the Cirrus logo on the back of your debit card. Cards issued recently will automatically have this. If it does not you can ask your bank to issue a new card. You can then draw cash from any automatic cash machine showing the Cirrus logo. The scheme applies to about 45 countries ranging from Argentina to Iceland and includes all major European countries. Barclays, Lloyds, Midland and National Westminster Bank all participate in the

scheme but with differing regulations. At present, according to the report, the scheme is not operated by the other U.K. banks. The report does not make clear the position of charges, if any. Charges are made at varying rates by all the banks if you use your credit card to obtain cash from an Automatic cash machine. It seems that any charges using a debit card might be less than those applicable to a credit card since the withdrawal is charged directly and immediately to your U.K. bank account.

## SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING

The Scottish Country Dance Group goes from strength to strength. On December 11th we gave our first public display. Joining with the La Massana Sevilliano Group, we helped the La Massana Llar to celebrate its 5th anniversary. To a packed hall of people whose ages spanned some eighty years, 16 of us formed two sets of 8 and danced the Petronella, Monymusk and Lamb's Skinnet. We then invited the audience to join in a Highland Reel and had great pleasure in including the new priest of La Massana, Mossen Juan, among the dancers.

This year we have learnt many traditional dances though often our favourites are those choreographed specially for us by our excellent teacher, John Gill. His dances are easily recognised for the beautiful way one formation flows naturally into another.

So far this season we have raised over 20,000 pts for local charity. At the last meeting we had 21 dancers of several nationalities. Ages ranged from 10 to well over 70 and dancers included both beginners and old hands for, as far as Scottish Country Dance goes, it is a matter of the more the merrier so do come and join us. We dance in the La Massana parish hall every Sunday between 4.30 and 6.30pm. Anyone wanting more information do not hesitate to phone John Gill 837109; Marjorie Temple 835655; Clare Allcard 836269 or Laura Fecanin 836869.

### JEN INTERNACIONAL, S.L.

REAL ESTATE  
ANDORRA LA VELLA - PRINCIPAT D'ANDORRA  
Tel.: 827 026

(English/French/Spanish spoken)

**WE SELL XALETES/HOUSES/FLATS  
LAND & COMMERCIAL PROPERTY**

### ARINSAL

**PUB  
RESTAURANT**

**BORDA  
CALISSA**

Open every evening except Tuesday  
International Menu  
Specialities: Steaks & Curries  
Private Functions by arrangement

Tel.: 835 535 Terry or Beth

## THE INTERNATIONAL SINGERS

Well, our Third Festival of International Christmas Music played to an Ordino church packed with both foreign residents and local Andorrans. Judging by the applause the concert met with the audience's approval thanks in great part to our wonderful pianist, Binnie Segal. Spurred on by our conductor, Sheila Hooper, The Singers sang carols in a record eight different languages with several welcome breaks when we could sit and listen to solos from Teresa Vidal, Thomas Preibsch and Seraff Milan a promising Andorran tenor who hopes to make a career in opera. Concert over, everyone enjoyed socialising outside the church over cake and wine expertly organised by Stella Madden and her international team of helpers. The concert raised over 70,000 pts for a local family in grave need.

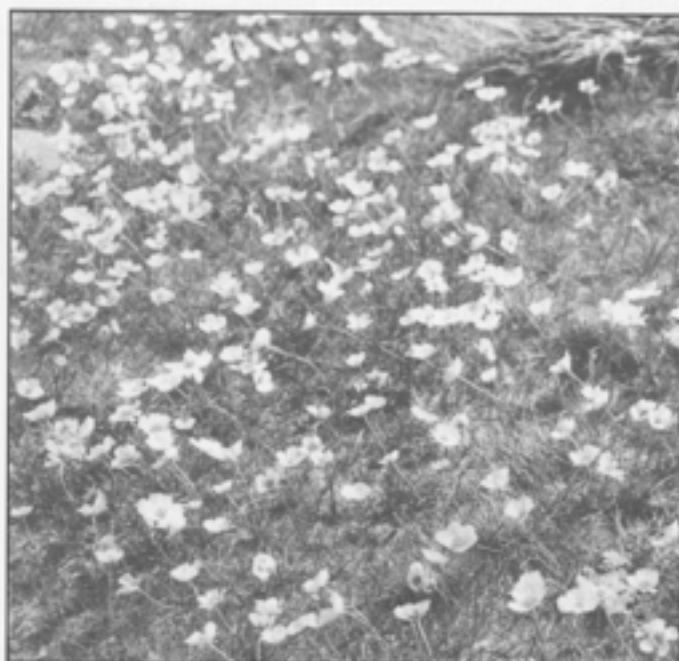
Now we are sending out our own S.O.S. We urgently need a TEMPORARY pianist. Binnie is going to be away for a couple of months and we need someone to accompany us from 4-6pm each Tuesday. You don't have to be brilliant, we will understand if you are rusty but PLEASE will anyone who can play the piano, or who has played it in the past, contact Clare Allcard at once. Otherwise the group will be faced with the depressing prospect of trying to sing three-part harmony to Clare's inaccurate, one finger tap-pings on a child's laptop keyboard. And I promise you, it really is depressing! We are also, as always, looking for new voices to join us. Due to people being away it looks as if we may not be able to give a concert in June as we had hoped. However we have a firm commitment to produce a concert of secular music for this time next year.

So please, pianists and singers contact, Clare Allcard 836269 or Sheila Hooper 836154

## EARLY SPRING FLOWERS

### Yellow and White Deceivers.

Some of the more common flowers that people come across in Andorra surprise them. «That can't be a buttercup!» they exclaim. But it can! The Pyrenean Buttercup is not yellow but white (perhaps more accurately it should be called a Lardcup). It only grows on damp slopes above 1800m. and appears within days of the snow melting, spreading over the winter-drab grass like another snow fall. There are two other white buttercups that grow in Andorra: the Parnassus-leaved Buttercup looks very like the Pyrenean but only grows among the rocks in la Rabassa, above Sant Julia while the Aconite-leaved Buttercup does not look like one at all, having branched clusters of white flowers on the top of tall stems; it grows near streams and is plentiful in the Incles valley.



PYRENEAN BUTTERCUPS

*Teixidó*

Direcció: Maria Teixidó  
Disseny: Josep Roig

Andorra's largest selection of curtain material  
We design - measure - make and hang to your  
complete satisfaction

Free estimates in your own home without  
obligation to buy

AV. VERGE DEL PILAR, 1 - TEL.: 826 736 - ANDORRA LA VELLA



Of course there are yellow buttercups here as well but some flowers that look like large yellow buttercups aren't anything of the kind. The clumps of large golden «buttercups» on stream banks early in the year are Marsh Marigolds (nothing to do with garden marigolds, they are still members of the buttercup family). And the plump, rounded yellow flowers, like an unopened double buttercup, that carpet meadows in May, are Globeflowers. The large pale yellow flowers with feathery leaves that grow in Sorteny are the Alpine Pasque Flower. The silky plumes of the seed head, like a tiny feather duster, appear after flowering and remain all summer. Both these are also members of the buttercup family.

Some of our «daffodils» are white, too. Most people know the sweetly scented Poet's or Pheasant's-eye Narcissus that grows in such profusion in damp meadows but though most people know that the «grandalla» is Andorra's national flower, many do not know why. The six petals represent the six traditional parishes (yes, there are now seven but the Andorrans have not yet been able to breed a hybrid with the correct number of petals) while the red and yellow of the trumpet are the colours of the Catalan flag. There are yellow daffs, too; the little Wild Daffodil or Lent Lily (Wordsworth's host) grows higher up the mountains.

The rarest of these early yellow flowers is the small, slender Wild Tulip which grows near the entrance to Sorteny. Its a deceiver too; tulips belong to the Lily family!

Lastly, two more common bamboozlers. The small, yellow «dandelions» that are in flower now on stony roadside verges and waste ground are not dandelions but Coltsfoot. (Both are members of the Daisy family!) Their large, round leaves, the size and shape of a foal's hoof, will appear much later, long after the flowers have turned to «clocks».

The small yellow «buttercups» that are one of the earliest flowers to be seen on grassy banks, even



WILD TULIPS

flowering in winter, are (you've guessed it!) not buttercups but Cinquefoils, a tiny member of the Rose family. Tormentil is the name of a common one that grows everywhere. And, yes, there are white ones too, flowering later and higher up the mountains. That's only a start. If you want to find out more about Andorra's beautiful plants, join the Naturalists on some of their outings. You'll see some of these flowers on March 16 at Les Bons and a lot more on April 13 along the river at Seu d'Urgell.

VIATGES

PANTOURS

YOUR TRAVEL AGENCY IN ANDORRA

Plaça Ribés, 11 - Tel. 20 4 00 - Fax. 61 4 01 - ANDORRA LA VELLA



VINTERNACIONAL

QUALITY WINE MERCHANTS  
WHOLESALE - RETAIL  
RING FRANÇOISE PIGOT FOR LISTINGS

Av. Fiter i Rossell, 30 B, Baixos 1a.  
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY  
Tels.: 63 8 31 - 63 8 66

## MALACCA - A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME

A square-rigged Portuguese training ship lay quietly at anchor in the roadstead. Between JOHANNE, our Baltic Trader, and the town itself, Indonesian sailing craft waited with sails furled for the tide to turn and carry them and their cargo into the tiny port of Malacca.

Only two, half-finished skyscrapers spoil the illusion of a journey into the past. Viewed from the sea, Malacca's profile had changed little since those other Portuguese sailors first landed on her quayside in 1509. Soon some eighty languages could be heard along the water front as merchants from across the globe converged on Malacca, one of the world's richest trading ports, to barter for all the riches of the Orient.

Now only a handful of small coasters join the Indonesian craft anchored off the town. Too large to enter the river, they unload their cargoes of flour and animal feed into a chain of massive wooden barges whose bows sport menacing, all-seeing eyes.

As to ourselves, we had decided to break our cruise north from Singapore to visit this, Malaysia's most historic town.

Entering the silt-laden Malacca river by dinghy, I watched, hypnotised, as bubbles of evil-smelling gas welled up from the river bed to break across the black water ahead of us. Certainly no place for a swim.

The next moment my qualms were forgotten. For on either side of us lay rank upon rank of Indonesian sailing sloops, their gracefully swooping hulls swaying gently in our wash. From jauntily raked masts, rainbow-coloured sails hung drying like butterflies wings in the sun. Perhaps there were as many as thirty vessels there, some as long as ninety feet. Most were laden with mangrove poles, much sought after in Malacca as durable foundation stakes for houses. Farther up stream, charcoal was being unloaded in wicker scoops from cumbersome Chinese junks, direct heirs of Malacca's glorious past. None of these shallow draft boats have engines and those first European colonisers would feel quite at home in Malacca port today. But a two minute stroll away and I suspect the bravest navy of yore would tremble.

'Red Square', standing on the edge of dockland, was once the heart of colonial Malacca. Most of its buildings were built by the Dutch after they ousted the Portuguese in 1641. The pink-washed Stadhuis, now a museum, is thought to be the oldest surviving Dutch building in South East Asia. Even I, twentieth

century born and bred, felt alarmed by the traffic seething round the square; lorries and buses vying with Mercedes and gaily-painted trishaws, the whole interlaced by motor bikes and Kamikaze pedestrians. To escape I crossed over a little humpbacked bridge and plunged into Chinatown. In the 15th Century an ambassador was sent from Peking to Malacca with a present of 500 beautiful maidens to grace the Sultan's highly sophisticated court. Since then the Chinese population of Malacca has grown and prospered and intermarried with the local Malays. Unlike later immigrants, these Straits Chinese took Malay for their native language while evolving many customs strictly their own.

The streets of Chinatown are lined by well-proportioned shop-houses, at once solid and graceful. On the ground floor the shop's contents often spill out onto the pavements. Above, wonderfully curved, ornamental roofs crown the family home as it juts out over the pavement, shadowing and protecting it. And what a treasure trove of ancient crafts shelter below. Peering in one doorway I watched as books were painstakingly bound, though with scant concern as to whether the pages thus joined together were photocopies of expensive foreign textbooks or the fallen leaves of some cherished paperback. Further on, blacksmiths worked *al fresco* with only a raised platform to divide them from the street. We needed new metal angles for our cargo hatches. In minutes a smithy was pounding a bar of fire-reddened steel across his anvil. Minutes more and a pile of cleats lay ready for collection ... as soon as the metal was cool enough to carry away.

In other doorways men squatted, Eastern-style, to stain modern rattan furniture in popular dark shades. Nearby avaricious 'antique' dealers, suddenly finding the richly carved Straits furniture in high demand, were equally hard at work with soda and water trying to remove layers of stain and paint from the choicest screens and display cabinets. The prices, too, were choice, well into four figures if the buyer was a foreigner.

For Malaccan's suffering financial difficulties there are rooms full of ancient money-lenders. Dried leaves dangle above the lintel to bring good fortune to those who enter. Inside all is discreet shadow. Low stone platforms either side of a central aisle stretch into the distance. Here the money-lenders sit cross-legged with sloping desk tops on the floor in front of them ... waiting. I never actually saw a client inside. With major banks now stealing many clients, business is slow.

Not so with the coffin makers. The Chinese go in for magnificent coffins. Both ends and lid are curved and all is made of wood several inches thick, as if determined to do battle with some cosmic storm. Beside them in the street lies a glittering, tinselled canopy for the hearse. In the same road live the makers of those paper models burnt at Chinese funerals. These artists will create, out of the finest tissue paper and wood, anything the departed might want in the next life: cars, houses, boats, even a theatre. And further down the street, near Malaysia's oldest temple, the Cheng Hoon Teng, are more shops selling joss sticks and Hell money, household shrines and giant candles five inches across.

Almost opposite stands the Tanguera Mosque, a strange blend of Arab and Chinese architecture with the minaret not unlike a pagoda. Throughout Malaysia the Muslim Malays and Chinese Malaysians exist in uneasy truce. So many traditions of one culture are anathema to the other. Malay schoolgirls go by, like miniature nuns, their white veils tightly framing hot faces while heavy turquoise skirts reach down to brush their trainers. They cover their mouths and noses protectively to avoid the evil fumes of pork as they hurry past a mobile Chinese food stall. The same stall where Chinese schoolgirls, clad in shorts and T shirts, chatter over bowls of the forbidden food.

Close by, fishing boats with purple-painted superstructure, nuzzle the banks of the river after unloading their night's catch at the main market. Hillocks of fish, prawns and squid lie on ground made muddy by recent rain. Men shout to each other across the open space. Nearby the high roofed market gives shelter to a hundred little stalls each with its fresh fruit or vegetables neatly displayed. There is much picking up and inspecting, selecting only the best before an obligatory haggle over prices clinches the deal.

Another haggle procures a trishaw, the modern bicycle version of the old rickshaw which might have drawn our Portuguese sailor back to his ship. I still

feel a little ambivalent about using trishaws. They conjure visions of sweated labour and mines. But in towns where they are common transport, the wiry men who peddle them would soon be unemployed if everyone succumbed to Western squeamishness.

I imagine our Renaissance Portuguese would himself be much more troubled by the multitude of rumbling, fume-breathing machines and terrifying small boxes blaring forth Musak.

However there is still one corner of Malacca where he could relax. Down by the sea, a little south of the port, are to be found the last remnants of the old Portuguese colony. Over the past four hundred years they, too, have intermarried with Malays to build a unique culture with its own patois, Christao. A language based on 16th Century Portuguese, it would probably be more comprehensible to those sailors of yesteryear than to the young cadets anchored in their training ship off Malacca today.

As I climbed back into the dinghy and headed once more for JOHANNE, I looked back to where, perched on top of a hill facing the sea, stood the little church of St Paul; the church where the body of St Francis Xavier, first Christian missionary to the East, lay buried for nine months in 1553. According to legend his body never decomposed despite the heat and can even now be seen in a church on the island of Goa off India's west coast.

Then, as now, St Paul's Church was painted white to act as a beacon first for the Portuguese then Dutch and finally British colonisers. Now it serves the sleek Indonesian sailing boats as they ply their trade across the Malacca Straits bringing foundation stakes for the future prosperity of Malacca.

Sadly though, that future may be threatened. When we left there was a plan afoot to drive a coastal highway right through the centre of Malacca's little port, destroying for ever her links with the sea and an illustrious past.

Clare Allcard

# DAMONT

MOBILIARI

A complete new interior in the style of your choice.  
Come and see our selection of furniture and gifts  
Special ideas for special people

C/ VERGE DEL PILAR, 6 - ANDORRA LA VELLA - PRINCIPAT D'ANDORRA  
TEL.: 864 664 - FAX: 821 872



# WHY NOT ADVERTISE IN THIS MAGAZINE ?

DO YOU KNOW ANYONE WHO WOULD  
TAKE A FULL-COLOUR PAGE ?

*FOR DETAILS CONTACT*

**JACQUIE CROZIER (835 931)**

OR

**TONY HOOPER (836 154)**



**CISA**



CONSTRUCCIÓ IMMOBILIÀRIA, S.A.  
Edifici La Cabanota - P.B.  
LA MASSANA - (Principat d'Andorra)  
Tels: 35 2 28 - 35 0 55  
Tèlex: ANDOCISA 292 AND  
Fax: 35 0 35

***CISA — The People for Property in Andorra***

