

INTER COMM

CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

MAGAZINE / REVISTA



VOL. 7 - Núm. 2 - WINTER / HIVERN 1997

CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

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Club Internacional d'Andorra

Quarterly Magazine

December 1997

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EDITOR: Margaret Shaida
Published by Club Internacional d'Andorra
Typeset by Margaret Shaida
Artwork by Hassan Shaida
Printed by Impremta Envalira S.L.,

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

Tony Hooper

We are very sorry to report that Liliass Grassie has resigned from the Board for personal reasons. Since she became a member, Liliass has done sterling work for Helpline (including the very successful Recipe Book) and we are pleased that she intends to continue her work for Helpline, particularly in the field of fund raising.

We are pleased that Maria Teresa Raurell has agreed to join the Committee as a co-opted member, subject to approval by the Board. Maria Teresa has helped us on many occasions in the past, and is an active member of the Singers.

In the past few months all members have received information concerning the Passive Residents Law. We were pleased to be invited by the Immigration Department to meet with a senior officer, as they considered the Club to be a non-political organisation representing a large number of nationalities. It was in this spirit that we agreed to accept the invitation. The results of that meeting were sent to all members. However, a couple of printing errors crept into the original document - errors, we hasten to add, which do not change the information which we had been given. Please see page 24 of this magazine to see the corrections.

We are still looking for members to come forward to organise an activity during 1998. At the moment, we have three or four events planned, all



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being organised by members of the Committee. We do need your input if a full programme is going to be available next year.

An event which will occur whilst this issue is at the printers will be the two hundredth issue of the Weekly Newsletter. We hope that many members will have shared in the celebrations planned. The Board and the Club owe a deep level of gratitude to **Jacque Crozier** who started this venture and who each week enables our members to keep up with all the local news. Thank you, **Jacque**, and we look forward to many more issues. Thanks must also go to those people who have acted as guest editors when **Jacque** has been absent.

EDITORIAL

by Margaret Shaida

Next time you go down to the market in Seu d'Urgell, take a look around you - at the streets and houses. And why not pause for a moment and look in at the cathedral. You will be well rewarded - as **Gaye Keep** so eloquently tells us in her report (on page 9) on the Activities' tour to Seu earlier in the year.

The Activities Group also ventured along some of those narrow roads that wind up into the mountains off the main road to Barcelona. Their quest resulted in visits to a wool manufacturer and a cheese maker. **Gil Lamb** tells us all about it on page 14.

Do you sometimes think you're losing touch with modern art? Do you think the Royal Academy in London has gone mad with some of its exhibits it chooses to display as "art"? Then why not read **Nina O'Brien's** intriguing discourse on the question of art (page 20).

In addition, we have reports from the Groups, including the Naturalists' diary of events for the coming year. We also have a

restaurant review, when **Alan Hadden** looks at La Font d'Arans; **Peter Parkinson** tells about the day he spent with the old folk at the annual Festa Magna; and we have a poem dedicated to the memory of Diana, Princess of Wales, composed by **Jenny Bogarde**.

You will notice that, throughout the magazine, we have various pleas for help. With the departure of the stalwart Ann Price and Fina Martinez, we are left with a gaping hole in our social activities in 1998. So if you have any ideas for trips for the Club, please get in touch.

At this time of the year, I like to thank all those who have contributed such fascinating and intriguing articles and reports throughout the past year. Thanks also to the leaders of the Groups who send in reports of their activities during the previous three months, and their plans for the future. If you have any suggestions as to what you would like to see in YOUR magazine, then please drop me a line. My address is: Teulades V, No. 201, Els Vilars, Escaldes/Engordany. My telephone number is 860043, or you can fax material to me on 866540. I look forward to hearing from you!

Have you done all your Christmas shopping? If you, like me, you've hardly begun, then why not consider buying the Helpline Recipe Book. It's good value for money, easy to post abroad, and a fine memento of Andorra.

Last week I was given some advice, and I thought I should pass it on to you: "Always label the Christmas gifts receive. Then you won't give them back to the same people next Christmas."

I do hope you all have a peaceful and happy Christmas, and that this will be followed by an equally peaceful, prosperous and healthy New Year.

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NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

THE INTERNATIONAL SINGERS

We've Barbara Melin accompanying us and Serafi Milan and two of the *Petits Cantours* as our special guests so we are hoping that this year's Festival of International Christmas Music will prove a vintage one. Do come along and join us.

We have specially arranged for one performance to be held at 7.30pm on Sunday, 14th December at the Feners Church (opposite the fire station near the STA offices) for all those who live 'below the tunnels'. The church has excellent acoustics but our performances there have, till now, attracted a smaller audience which has the advantage of more room and no fear of standing. We're counting on you to fill the pews this year.

We will be at the Ordino Church at 4.30pm on Saturday, 13th December and, as usual, there will be refreshments after the concert, kindly prepared by Stella Madden and funded by your very own club. There will be a collection for local charities after both performances. For anyone who is unable to attend either of these we are giving a shortened, mainly Catalan, concert to

celebrate St Eulalia on 10th December at the St Eulalia Church in Encamp. The time has yet to be decided.

For further information ring Sheila Hooper 836154 or Clare Allcard 836269

HELPLINE

Many thanks to the Members who have been giving a week - and in some cases - several weeks manning the Helpline phone. Let us hope that this is now an established practice, the accepted running of Helpline and that Members will continue to give a week of their time to assist the regular organisers.

Please therefore contact Dinah Baxter, Lillas Grassie or Ann Price when you find you are free to take the Helpline calls for an occasional week. Guidelines are provided and in some cases it may be necessary to give practical assistance.

Our book of International Recipes continues to sell - albeit only a few per month but we are hoping that it will sell well again during the Christmas period. The book makes an excellent Christmas gift to

send overseas.

To remind you, the book sells at 1,000 pts. and is available at the Coffee Mornings, or from Estil Nordic or Restaurant Can Pere, and from Dinah, Lillas and Stella Madden.

Don't miss this year's CHRISTMAS CONCERTS

at the
Ordino Church
on
Saturday
13th December 4.30 p.m.

and at the
Feners Church
(opposite the Andorra La Vella fire station
near the STA offices)
Sunday,
14th December 7.30 p.m.



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As the Christmas season is approaching, this would seem to be the appropriate time to thank everyone who has in any way donated their time and expertise to Helpline and also everyone who supports us by way of financial and tangible donations. During the last year Helpline has added to their 'inventory' a microwave, a mobile phone, answering machine and a light-weight folding wheel-chair. We have also been given a selection of baby equipment to lend and thanks are offered to **Sonia Hunter** who stores our paraphernalia for us.

Contact telephone numbers are: **Dinah Baxter 836980; Liliass Grassie 838349; Ann Price 836653.**

SCOTTISH DANCING

We've been a bit slow off the mark this year with an unusual number of members gadding about the world but hopefully, by the time you read this, we will be meeting every Sunday afternoon between 4.30 and 6.30pm at the La Massana parish hall. Everyone, not just Scots, is most welcome. Bring comfy, non slip shoes to dance in.

For further information ring **Brenda Ross 836886** or **Clare Allcard 836269.**

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Gestoria

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THE COFFEE MORNINGS

Between forty and fifty members turn up each week to attend the Club's Coffee Morning. We meet over coffee every Wednesday morning from 10.30 to 12.00 noon at the Paris-Londres Hotel in Escaldes (on the main road through town). The hotel offers pleasant surroundings, ample parking, and a constant supply of coffee - and other drinks at a very reasonable price.

At least two members, often more, of the CIA Committee are on hand to offer advice and guidance on what the CIA can provide and help with. There is a notice board filled with information, offers of assistance, requests for help, and up-to-date news of Club and Group activities.

Bookings for the activities may be made at the Coffee mornings, and the Weekly Newsletter (giving an English translation of the news

contained in the local press as well as news of Club and other activities in Andorra and the environs) is on sale (a bargain at 25 pts. Each), which means you get it at least two days (and often a week) earlier than you would by post. English language magazines are often on hand for anyone to take.

It's a pleasant morning, and entrance is **ABSOLUTELY FREE.**

So why not come along and meet other Club members and catch up on the news.

WINE TASTING GROUP

The Wine Tasting Group welcomed thirty members and guests to their Summer wine tasting on 3rd September 1997. The theme for the evening at Anyos Sports Club was "Wines for your entertainment" and included wines from France, Germany and Spain.

As usual, the very useful notes describing each of the twelve wines offered, were compiled by Diana and Ivan Stansby. They indicated the origin of the wines and the grapes used, the prices and places where the wines could be purchased, including, rather surprisingly, a butchery in La Massana, and a suggestion as to the kind of food they would best accompany. Some wines were recommended as aperitifs or as wines simply to be sipped during an evening with friends.

After reading the notes, it was on to the tasting of six whites, including a sparkling *Cava*, a rosé and five reds. As you can see from the photograph, it was a convivial evening in an attractive setting, and most people, after working their way along the wine bottles from the light and fruity *Domaine du Tariquet* to the deliciously impressive *St. Emilion*, agreed that this was an evening to remember. It was good fun even for those "on the wagon", accompanying those who were not, or who had fallen off - an excellent non-vintage spring water alternative was also on offer!

We thank the organisers for their hard work and we all look forward to the first wine tasting next year. Come and join us! C.S.

ACTIVITIES

As you know, Ann Price will no longer be organising the activities next year. It is hoped that the tours will be planned by different people each month in the new year. If you have any ideas for a visit or tour and feel you would like to help, please call Ann (836653) or Tony Hooper (836154). Further news (of the activity in January?) will be announced in the weekly Newsletter.

DRAMA GROUP

At a General Meeting of the Drama Group held on 30th October 1997, we concluded with regret that it was not possible to put on our intended production in February 1998. We decided to put the Group into a state of dormancy, preserving its formal existence with enough financial resources for an eventual resurrection. Two thirds of our cash funds will shortly be donated in varying



Stan Jones and some merry friends at the Summer Wine Tasting at Anyos on 3rd September

amounts to our *Musica i Dansa*, International Singers, Art Group and Helpline.

Our wardrobe is to be redistributed, and we hope that most of it will be found useful. The scenery, to our regret, is just so much debris to be cleared away. Jackie Richards will retain our stock of plays, but not the script photocopies. Simon Binsted has been elected Group Leader in place of Hans Kiaer. Peter Parkinson will continue as Secretary/Treasurer.

May we express our deep gratitude to all, especially to Ron Richards - still in Andorra or elsewhere, who have contributed to the success of past productions as performers, managers, carpenters, organisers, advertisers - whatever - and by no means least, our spectators. P.P./H.K.

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ORNITHOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY GROUP

The Naturalists (as we are usually called) have been meeting regularly both inside and outside Andorra since the International Club was formed, normally on the third Thursday of each month. We walk, or sometimes drive, not to get anywhere in record time but to enjoy the countryside. Some members also like to photograph the scenery and the flowers. You do not have to be an energetic naturalist to take part in group activities but if you have difficulty identifying Andorra's flowers, trees, birds or butterflies, there is usually someone in the Group who can help (or at least produce a field guide). On the other hand, do not be put off if you cannot tell a daisy from a buttercup, or a robin from a blue tit, as there are plenty of others in the same position.

Members do not have to come to every meeting, just turn up when you like at the time and place indicated or phone one of the leaders if you need a lift.

Since most of our members have lived in Andorra for many years we propose to introduce more trips to France and Spain for 1998, as these proved popular last year. These will normally mean that we shall have to stay at a hotel for one or more nights.

THE 1998 PROGRAMME

15th January

VIDEOS AND CD/SLIDES:

South West America: "Deserts and Water"

11.0 at Cortal de la Solana, Anyos

(Weather permitting)

Drinks and light refreshments will be provided for lunch. Numbers are limited, so please phone beforehand if you are proposing to come.

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19th February

VIDEO AND TALK:

Maurice and Betty Pilkington will show a video on *Denali National Park* and talk about their visit to *Alaska*.

11.0 at Anyos Residencial 1-4, Anyos

20/21/22/23rd March

LONG WEEKEND:

Ebro Delta for seabirds, waders and a trip to the mountains just inland. We shall stay at a new hotel surrounded by rice fields in the Delta but within walking distance of the nearby village. It is normally pleasantly warm by March. Last bookings by 31st January.

16th April

A WALK

Along the river from Seu (Parc de Segre) towards Alas. Meet at Spanish Frontier 10 a.m.

15/16/17/18th May

A LONG WEEKEND:

By popular request, at Aiguamolls at which is probably the best time of year for birds. Last bookings by 31st March.

18th June

A WALK:

Sorteny for a wealth of flowers and butterflies. The best valley and time for alpine flowers.

16th July

A DAY TRIP:

To Nuria where we shall take the Rack and Pinion railway to this attractive alpine-like resort. In the high areas we hope to find Ptarmigan and other high altitude birds.

CARLOS

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LA MASSANA

Principat d'Andorra

20th August

A WALK:

Val de Riu for summer birds and flowers.

End of October

A VISIT:

At last we have found a good contact for the bird ringing, which is done at this time of year in the Cadi, so we shall try once more to arrange for a visit to see this interesting scientific work. Exact date and details will be available nearer the time.



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November

A TRIP:

A joint Wine and Naturalist trip to the Rioja area. We shall stay in the capital Logrono with some good birding and many excellent *bodegas* nearby. Details to follow.

4/5/6/7th December

A LONG WEEKEND:

Gallocanta: wintering birds plus the amazing spectacle of thousands of cranes flying in to their overnight roost. We shall stay at a new hotel right in the village. Last bookings by 31st October.

CARRY your binoculars (ask to borrow a pair if needed), a waterproof, hat, sweater, your lunch and a drink; your passport for trips outside Andorra. Wear boots or walking shoes, and don't forget sun lotion, insect repellent and antihistamine cream if the time of year and region demand them. For further information, please contact one of the leaders listed below:

Jacque Crozier	835931
Brian Dore	835931
Ann Matschke	841279



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LA SEU D'URGELL

We've all been to the market in Seu d'Urgell, but when the Activities Group went there in August, Gaye Keep found that there was a lot she hadn't known about this historic city

The original city, Urgellia, dates back to Roman times. Situated on the hill where Castellciutat now is, it was the episcopal seat from AD527. This seat (or Seu) was moved to flatter ground where the current Santa Maria Cathedral now stands. In 1195 the city was besieged and the cathedral pillaged. Donations for art were used instead for defence. Thicker walls and the massive square towers of Saint Saviour and Saint Justus turned the cathedral into a fortress, and indeed it was often used for security and defence. Urgell, in the north of Spain, was one of the first areas to be left by the Moors, so the Christians set about church building with zeal.

On Sunday, 31st August, at 10 am, eighteen stout souls arrived at the HotelAVINGUDA in Seu d'Urgell for a tour of the town. It was fiesta time and the streets were draped in flags and filled with a small craft market in the Ramblas, but at that hour the town was still very quiet. Peré, our guide, was an enthusiastic fan of the Romanesque period and so brushed off Gothic and Baroque. Luckily there was enough of the Romanesque in La Seu to make an excellent and interesting tour.

Instead of writing an historical account, I offer these notes to help you (and your visitors) on a walking tour.

However, a guide is a great help. Peré Semente can be contacted on his mobile phone on 00 34 0972 0360.

We started our tour at the Seminary at the top of the town. Closed to visitors, we just peeked through the gates to see an E-shaped building (c.1860) which apparently has a good library and gardens. At one time, more than a thousand monks lived there but now it houses only three - from Columbia. The cost of keeping such large premises is enormous, but

the Church in Seu owns a lot of Andorra and is quite wealthy.

Walking on down from the Seminary, past the Parador (it's worth looking in to see the

cloisters which form part of their internal decor), we came to the fifteenth century church of Sant Domènec. This has been renovated and is now an art gallery and assembly hall (toilets also available). This was one of seven churches in the immediate surroundings of the Cathedral. Peré explained that wealthy patrons built churches to impress their contemporaries.

Then we went to the Cathedral of Santa Maria.

Consecrated in 837, today's cathedral (the third on this site) was rebuilt during the twelfth century. It is thought to have been designed by an Italian architect, Raimondo Lombardi. Hired in 1175 to complete the dome, he may well have worked on the cathedral before that time. Certainly, the coloured, patterned stonework on the front indicates Italian influence. However, the Cathedral has still not been completed.

The nave is 38m long and 8m wide. Thirty-five metres across the transept, it has an



Left to right: Joan Raurell Peruira, Florida Pedder, Dinah Baxter, Peter Parkinson, Maureen Hunt, Francine Hollenberg, Pieter Hallenberg, Val Cruikshank, Ann Price, Ken Spikings, John Hunt, Fina Martinez, Marie Teresa Raurell Pereira, Brian Keep, Gaye Keep, Samia Omar, Brenda Bennett, and Guide Pere stand in the cloisters in the Cathedral of Santa Maria

imposing height of 212m. The walls are at least 2.5 metres thick on the east side of the transept so that the two recessed apses on either side of the nave are not even noticeable from the outside. Eight broad pillars in the nave hold up the massive stonework required for the heavy roof. The pillars are impressive for their strength and solidity but the artistic line from the roof arches has been continued down to the ground to form rounded columns and the whole is offset with a whimsical touch of stone "bread rolls" used as decoration. These "rolls" or "eggs" are found throughout the cathedral. Eggs are also considered to be the symbol of life and resurrection.

A Theme of Arches

Above the altar is a stone cupola with four shell shapes set into each corner, the work of Lombardi. The transept has a high-level gallery with six arches (three on either side of the nave). This is unusual in Spain; only Girona Cathedral has a similar gallery. The arches are almost frivolous in comparison to the plainness of the walls within.

The arches theme is continued in the

central apse above the main altar with the addition of three narrow windows decorated with columns (these windows are also nicely decorated on the outside). Inside, there is a Romanesque image of Santa Maria of Urgell placed here in the thirteenth century. There is a modern vault to the left of the altar where some priests killed during the civil war are buried.

For a fee of 150 Pts you can visit the cloisters. For a further 150 Pts you can also visit the Diocesan museum, which is well worth while. On entering the thirteenth century cloisters, look back at the Romanesque arch where both "bread rolls" and heads are to be found - it is most unusual to have both types of decoration together. It is the most ornamental of all the cathedral doorways. On the east side of the cloisters, a row of pillars were removed by a zealous bishop in 1603 and replaced by ugly rectangular columns. Luckily they ran out of money, so the remaining fifty-one Romanesque arches survived.

On the west side, the pillars and stonework are all numbered. It seems an American millionaire (our group thought it might have been William Randolph Hearst) bought one side of the cloisters to dismantle and ship back to California. Fortunately, he was prevented.

Terror and Beauty

The decoration on top of the pillars should be inspected minutely to appreciate all the mythical beasts, griffins, vegetative and zoomorphic motifs, the occasional scene of terror for sinners (with people sitting in cauldrons) and the more positive and optimistic scenes showing flowers and lute-playing musicians, that appear there.

Off the cloisters to the south east is a small church dedicated to Sant Miguel. Built in the tenth or eleventh century, this is much older

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than the cathedral. It was probably built and restored when Saint Ermengol was bishop. It is very plain inside but the stonework is magnificent, like an old cobbled street. The windows are of alabaster. An intricate marble altar piece was found during renovations in 1950. The remains of a wall painting can be seen on the west wall. To see the rest you have to visit the Museum of Catalan Art in Barcelona.

A Gift from the Pope

Next door is the Diocesan Museum which is a treasure trove of masterpieces. On the first floor (lift available), there are displays of thirteenth and fourteenth century frescoes from the Cathedral, and also some twelfth century frescoes from smaller churches in the diocese. There is a large papyrus consecrating the cathedral and given by the Pope in 837. It lists all the parishes in Andorra as well as many others in Catalunya. One of the most famous exhibits was the Beatus (tenth century) with its colourful illustrations of the Apocalypse of Saint John, written in Latin on vellum - but this was stolen in 1996 so now you have to be content with looking at a few printed sample pages offered for sale in the book shop.

There is a display of carvings and reliquaries (Arab vessels, an incensory, an ancient door knocker, a chalice, glass bottles, and a few samples of textiles) on the second floor. Off in one corner is an area devoted to

frescoes from Balltarga Church. Further on there is a fresco of the Last Supper, fourteenth century and painted on stone, from the church in Os de Civis. There is also a retable (an ornamental screen or panel) of the Virgin, showing scenes from the life of Christ. It was dated 1375 from Abella de la Concha, but our guide was not keen on it because it was not only Gothic but also too well restored and new-looking!

Emerging from the darkness, we rounded a corner into a brilliantly-lit area with a glorious gold painted backdrop from the church of the Pietat. Along with many other retables and saints from all ages along the walls. Also displayed are three beautifully embroidered capes and some tradesmen's tools.

A Magnificent Sarcophagus

As if all this weren't enough, on the floor below there is a silver, copper and gold sarcophagus designed by Pere Lleopard in 1755. The designs on the sides depict the life of Saint Ermengol who died at the end of the twelfth century. Apparently, Saint Ermengol built roads and bridges to Lleida, following the departure of the Moors. Unfortunately, while supervising the construction of a bridge, he fell into the river and drowned - his body being found some seventeen kilometres downstream.

The one-way system in the museum brings you back to the book shop. A useful purchase here is a book about the Cathedral and

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Diocesan Museum of Urgell (in English and other languages). It costs 2,000 pts. and has a picture of the cloisters on its gold cover.

From the museum (there is a toilet near the book shop) you walk back through the cloisters to re-enter the cathedral. Before leaving, look up at the Bell Tower. This, too, was only rediscovered in the 1950s.

Gothic and Baroque

The Cathedral went through many changes over the years with Gothic and Baroque additions and then damage in the Civil War in 1936. Renovations in 1951 restored the Cathedral to the Romanesque period, and the Gothic reredos (an ornamental screen covering the wall above the altar) were partially transferred to Barcelona. In 1956, the museum was opened to house the Cathedral treasures and to preserve the murals still to be found in abandoned mountain churches.

Fossils and Monkeys

As you leave the Cathedral, take a careful look at the floor on the left side near the lower step of the interior main entrance. There is a fossil like a sword fish bill embedded in the stone. Outside the cathedral, the columns around the main door on the left side have carvings of a monkey in a compromising position. Either side of him are a pair of dragons breathing fire - to indicate what may happen if you are tempted to follow the example of this couple. Beware!

Alongside these carvings are two figures which are probably lions; above the portal are another pair of lions fighting naked men. Above them all is an 8.40m frieze of human beings, animals and monsters. The Romanesque is all around you.

With the Cathedral's main entrance behind you, walk straight ahead, then turn to the right down a narrow passage. Here you will see a small entrance facing north - this is the original Andorra gate, the only remaining archway from the old walled city.

The Oldest Street

Turn back and go down the narrow street opposite, the Carrer dels Canonges, which is the oldest street in Seu. Tax collectors lived here, enjoying the security of the proximity of the cathedral. By the look of the houses, they lived quite well.

Further down on the Carrer dels Canonges No. 13 was a hostel for pilgrims en route to Santiago de Compostella. It has the traditional shell of Saint Jacques on the wall, and is now a private house. No. 19 on the next corner was the residence of the Moon Pope at Luna House. It has moon shapes on the wall and on pillars, and just under the roof are some badly worn gargoyles. The front of the building has been re-plastered but the side street offers fine views of the original building.

Cross over Carrer dels Canonges and almost immediately opposite, on the west side, is Carrer Sant Ermigdi. Look up and you can see a shrine mounted on the wall just below the rafters. La Seu is on a seismic fault line and many centuries ago the town was hit by a tremor and the earth opened up. But magically the tremor stopped just in front of the shrine, and the people were saved.

Walk back up Carrer dels Canonges to the next passageway and turn left to the Carrer Major. High up on the corner are some iron brackets. Each year, after Christmas mass, these are filled with birch bark and lit to remember the town's original form of street



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lighting. Another basket is on the corner of c/Major and c/Juens - which was the start of the Jewish quarter (near the tax collector's street).

An Unchanged Barber's Shop

Formerly, most of the streets were organised by occupation, so that bakers had their shops in one locality, tailors in another, and so on. The c/Major was built some two hundred years after the Carrer dels Canonges. Almost opposite the first iron basket on c/Major, at No. 28, is a very old and authentic barber's shop, Peluqueria, which apparently hasn't changed in centuries.

At the top of the c/Major (between shops 22 and 24) turn left and you will be in Carrer la Perdiu. House No. 1 at the end is reputed to be the oldest house in Seu, with exposed wooden rafters, around four to five centuries old. The second floor flat was for sale in August 1997 - but get the wiring checked out first!

The Cereal Measures

Return to the c/Major and walk towards the Cathedral. No. 14 has a very ornamental shop front decorated in wood. It is now a clothing shop and is the last of the shops not to have been updated. In front of this shop are the Cereal Measures.

La Seu has had a market since 1029, and the cereal measures used to be an integral part of the market. Grain was measured by volume and poured into a chamber, the top scooped level and then by opening a door at the base, the grain fell into a sack. There are three measures in one block dated 1379 and another three dated 1840.

That's the end of the tour, but you should walk all round the outside of the Cathedral to admire its strength and style. On the way, you'll pass through a couple of squares and end up near the Luna House.

Because it was fiesta weekend (the last weekend in August) there was Spanish dancing in the street and an aerial display at

the airport. Hordes of people were standing on balconies watching the festivities. Another date to note is the second weekend in August when the local choir puts on a son-et-lumiere performance in the cloisters of the Cathedral.

Our "two hour" tour, which started at 10 am, didn't finish until 1.30 pm, and we repaired to the Hotel Avenida for a paella lunch.

Many thanks to Ann and Josefina for another excellent tour. Despite the proximity of La Seu and the many times we have visited the market and town, we all learned far more about the place than we had ever expected. ☐

Editor's Note - Reports, such as this one from a participant of the Activities, have proved of great interest to our readers. I do hope that the organisers of next year's Activities will remember that this is one of their most important jobs - after getting the participants safely to and from their destinations!

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OUTING IN THE SEGRE VALLEY

Back in the summer, the Club went off on a tour of small industries in the Segre Valley. Here Gil Lamb tells us of his experience.

Most of us were collected in La Massana by bus around 08.30 on the morning of Saturday, 20th September. It was a beautiful sunny day, which augured well for the trip. We were not disappointed.

From La Seu d'Urgell, we turned left on to the Puigcerda road, going along for 11km before turning right over a high, narrow bridge across the River Segre. Immediately on the left was the *Fabrica Llanera del Pont d'Arseguel*, at the foot of the road leading up to the village of Arseguel.

This is a factory run by a family which processes wool from the sheep to the finished

From there we went back towards La Seu for 5km, then turned up to the right into the hills, on a very steep and winding road, which was remarkably well surfaced and, as we saw later from a notice at Estimariu, was in course of completion. Joan Spiller told me that she had come up the same road many years ago when she first came to Andorra, and it was then a really rough mountain tack which could never have been traversed by a large bus. My rather old Michelin map shows this road with a dotted red line down it, which indicates *recorrido ddificil o peligroso*.

The road went on up in the hills past the village of Estimariu. After 10km from the main road, we reached our destination, Bescaran, a village on a very steep hillside which levelled off a little at the top. Here there was a pleasant bar/café where we sat in the shade of two trees on a lovely sunny terrace with a fantastic view.

Some hardy souls had got off the bus at the bottom of the village and walked up to the

Taller d'Escultera i Ferro, owned by Philippe Lavalill, in the centre of the village. We

lazier (or more infirm) people took the bus to the top, and walked down to the *Taller*. The bus waited for us all at the bottom.

In the *Taller*, the craftspeople (politically correct!) produced a variety of art forms, from paintings to cast ceramic sculptures. Some of our members found them sufficiently attractive to buy.

The village seemed to have been partially rebuilt in recent times. Some of the houses were possibly holiday homes for wealthy Barcelonians. The road was quite something, with gradients of about 1 in 3, made of concrete, with diagonal grooves for drainage and to give a grip to types in slippery weather.



From left to right: Gil Lamb, Pat and Peter Shephard and Florida Peddar at the Taller in Bescaran.

article. For me, as an engineer, the set-up in this day and age was unbelievable. Some of the machinery was reputedly over 150 years old, and one gained the impression that this was no fairy tale. It was driven by overhead shafts through flat leather belts which I thought had become extinct many years ago. What was rather frightening was the complete absence of any guards around rotating wheels and gears, belts at head level and reciprocating parts.

A young lady showed us around and explained the various processes, and finally we saw the finished products which included knitted items such as socks, jerseys and scarves, some of which were bought by our group.



From left to right: Barbara Melville, Samia Omar, Henrik Feilberg, Gil Lamb and Joan Spiller relaxing outside the Teller at Bescaran

It was very hygienic and clean, painted white, with overalled personnel. It is one of a group of 33 craft cheese-makers in Catalunya. It makes a variety of goats' milk cheese, including mature ones, which will keep for a long time; fresh ones for eating in short order, cottage cheese, and cheese preserved in oil. I think all of us took some home.



From left to right: Ken Spikings, Val Cruikshank, Dinah Baxter, Samia Omar, Fina Martinez, Joan Raurrell Pereira, Ann Price, Florida Pereira, George Bennett, Brenda Bennett and Gaye Keep having lunch at the restaurant in Estamariu

From there, we went back down to Estimariu where the bus parked just off the main road. We walked half a kilometre along a narrow village street to a very pleasant old inn which had been refurbished - *Restaurant Cal Teixido*. The place had plenty of *ambiente* with very pleasant serving staff. Good food, not to forget the wine which we all enjoyed, having developed a great thirst. Our host very kindly gave us each a key ring as a memento of our visit.

After lunch, fairly replete, we managed to walk back to the bus which took us into La Seu and then on towards the Embalse de Oliana. This road went up steeply into the hills at the side of the Embalse, but only for a short distance. We stopped at *Formatges Castell-Llebre* owned by Germin Tordesillas i Casals. This small cheese-making factory was an eye-opener after the previous factory we had seen.

From there we went back to Col de Nargo and turned off left into the town, where the bus parked. We walked up a fairly steep hill to the Museum de *Raiers*. "We" did not include the writer who, with one or two others, repaired to a local hostelry to refresh ourselves.

The Museum is at the end of the old *Roser Romanic* Church in the middle of the old quarter of the town. It houses, so I was told, a small log boat used by the *rai*ers, and an exhibition of the tools that they and the *lenyataires* (woodcutters) used in their trades, along with many fine photographs and illustrations.

It seems that in Catalan, a *rai* is a raft, and the *rai*ers were the men who transported timber from the Pyrenean forests down to the coastal plains and the sea, by making rafts of the logs and guiding them down the river. In the 19th century there were over 150 inhabitants of

Coll de Nargo involved in this work. There were two important centres - Coll de Nargo and Pont de Claverol (on the *Rio Noguera* which flows into the Segre about 10km north of Lleida).

The return of the *raiers* to Coll de Nargo was done by *espardenyant*. An *espardenya* is a rope-soled or canvas sandal which means that they returned on foot. The last *rai* went down the Segre in 1932 by which time the roads had been improved and there were better methods of timber transport. It seems that the reservoir dam was constructed about that time.

Incidentally, this method of floating rafts of timber is still found in Thailand, where tugs control huge rafts of teak logs coming down the wide, slow-flowing River *Chao Phraya* into Bangkok.

It is good to know that the old traditions have not been forgotten today. The inhabitants of the Coll de Nargo celebrate the ancient trade with a commemoration around the third Sunday in August each year, when two *rais* go down the Segre river.

We had an uneventful drive home, after an interesting day, very well organised by Ann Price. ☐

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STOP PRESS

It is with the deepest regret that we have to report that **Laura Fecanin** died of cancer on Friday, 14th November 1997. We understand that her husband, **John**, will be returning to live in Andorra.



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Restaurant Review

LA FONT D'ARANS

A short drive from Ordino up the El Serrat Valley brings you to pretty restaurant. Alan Hadden tells us why it's one of his favourite restaurants in Andorra.

Many readers will already know La Font d'Arans, particularly since it was chosen as the venue for the Club dinner on 20th November at which Margaret Shaida was guest speaker. But for those of you who have not yet visited this friendly restaurant, where club members Christian and Nicole have been welcoming their guests for upwards of ten years, now, here are some impressions of what you can expect.

Some five kilometres above Ordino on the road towards Arcalis, you'll find La Font d'Arans set back a little on the right-hand side. There's plenty of room to park in front of the restaurant and in the adjoining side road.

The ambience is warm and friendly, enhanced by a welcoming fire in winter, cooled by old-fashioned ceiling fans in summer.

Mme. Nicole will greet you and show you to your table. She'll ask if you would like an aperitif, bring you the *carte*, and then tell you (in Catalan, English, French or Spanish - your choice) what that day's off-menu specialities are. M. Christian prides himself particularly on his duck dishes, and the house's *foie gras* and smoked salmon are prepared by him on the premises.

After you have ordered, madame will bring a small complimentary plate of *hors d'oeuvres*, and then the pleasure is to come.

There are two fixed-price three-course menus, both with a good choice of dishes, and the less expensive one is inclusive of the house wine. Should you order à la carte, house-smoked duck *magret* is my favourite among a

choice of six cold starters (if you like your starters hot, seafood with saffron in a cream sauce may appeal); trout and a special cod dish are available, and of the meats, *filet de boeuf*, *escalope de veau* and, of course, duck *magret* and the duck *cassoulet* are popular. From a choice of ten desserts, try the house-made two-flavoured Bavarian cake - delicious.

The wine list offers a good choice of French, Spanish and Portuguese reds, whites and rosés at surprisingly reasonable prices. We found the *Marques de Caceres Reserva '86* a very pleasant accompaniment to the *magret* and *filet* we ordered on our latest visit.

The restaurant can seat upwards of forty people, and it is admirable how the patron and patronne manage with only Patrick helping in the kitchen - perhaps the twenty-odd years they spent in the restaurant business in Chicago provided a sound foundation.

The cost? Two people lunching or dining and taking the basic three-course menu will have plenty of change from Ptas 3,000; with the newly-introduced pricier menu, from Ptas 5,000. Our most recent bill, not stinting ourselves in any way, was under Ptas 7,500. A very pleasant evening and very good value.

La Font d'Arans is open for luncheon from 1.00 to 3.30 and dinner from 8.00 to 10.15 pm from Tuesday until Saturday after luncheon. There's a devoted clientele, and it's probably a good idea to book (tel. 850830), particularly for New Year's Eve when a special all-in dinner is planned at around Ptas. 7,500 a head. □



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HERE AND THERE

When Val Cruikshank was on holiday in Canada last summer, the radio was on in the background. She was only half-listening when, suddenly, she overheard the presenter refer to a couple of recipes taken from the *splendid* CIA Cookery Book. She was absolutely astounded! She could barely believe that "our very own" CIA Helpline Cookery Book had attained such international fame. It was only later that she realised that the CIA Cookery Book under reference was in fact a recipe book produced by the Culinary Institute of America!

As you may know, the Culinary Institute is in Hyde Park on the banks of the River Hudson in upstate New York.

Did you manage to get down to the Pyrenees Department Store during their British Month during October? They had a splendid array of British foods and goodies, including Christmas crackers! (If you didn't get there, then don't fret - all items unsold have been distributed throughout the various departments of the supermarket.) However, I was much amused to see that the film they showed (on a television screen above the display) had nothing to do with food, but showed a person who is thought to symbolise British humour: Benny Hill and his companions being chased round a park-like garden by a bevy of young beauties. All I needed was a chair to sit on while I watched!

The Editor welcomes contributions and reports, which may be sent directly to Margaret Shaida, the Editor, Intercomm, Teulades V, Apt. 201, Els Vilars, Escaldes/Engordany.. Tel: 860043 or fax to 866540. Deadlines for the magazine are 1st February for the March issue, 1st May for the June issue, 1st August for the September issue, and 1st November for the December issue. I look forward to hearing from you, and thank you for your help!



A CHRISTMAS PUZZLE

A QUESTION OF LOGIC IN THE VILLAGE SHOP

Uncle Charles runs a corner shop in Storbury, an old-fashioned combination of a sub-post office and a general store, and he knows all his customers by name.

From the clues given below, can you work out who came in yesterday morning, what business they each transacted at the Post Office counter, and what other item each bought?

- Clue 1:** Mrs Smith wasn't the customer who posted the parcel.
- Clue 2:** Mrs Robinson, who bought a book of first-class stamps, isn't Mary.
- Clue 3:** Joan collected her pension from the Post Office counter; the customer who bought a postal order also purchased a round of bacon.
- Clue 4:** Rose Jones bought something edible from the general store.
- Clue 5:** Uncle Charles sold Mrs Brown a 60-watt light bulb; the customer who asked him for soap powder wasn't Edna.

(Answers are given on page 24)

FESTA MAGNA FOR THE OLD FOLK

The annual day-long festival for the "senior citizens" of Andorra was held last month. Peter Parkinson went along and joined in the festivities. Here, he tells us what a thoroughly enjoyable day it was

The fifth annual *Festa Magna* for the Old Folk of Andorra took place this year on 11th November. The actual date varies from year to year, and has so far been late in October or early in November. It already has a significant place in the Andorran official calendar as witness this year the presence of the *Cap de Govern*, of the Minister of Welfare, both of him made speeches after lunch to the 800+ old folk present.

Entertainment and Dancing


We were collected by 'buses from assembly points in our parishes between 1030 and 1100 and driven to the Church at Meritxell for a service. Afterwards by bus to the Social and Sports Centre in Encamp for lunch at 13.30, followed by entertainment and dancing. When the Ordino contingent left about 1845, the fun was still going on. Some prefer to arrive and depart by car rather than using the 'buses. Seating was by parish at round tables for ten people; there were separate tables for old folk living in special residences.

Previous *Festa Magnas*, after the religious services, have been held in the large marquee at the back of the Escaldes car park, but this year there were too many of us. There cannot be many buildings in Andorra capacious enough to seat 800+ for a meal. I missed the first *Festa Magna* but have been to the last four. Attendance by members of the Club has roughly doubled from 1994 to 1997, but there are still very few of us. This year I identified thirteen, including myself, of whom certainly

three and perhaps four or five were "first-timers". Certainly, all of us enjoyed the occasion.

The *Festa Magna* is open to all resident Old Folk. In previous years postal invitations were sent out by the Ministry of Welfare, but this year reliance was placed on posters put up two weeks in advance. I believe that to qualify you need to register yourself with the Ministry of Welfare and obtain a *Carta Magna*. To actually attend a *Festa Magna*, go to your local *Llor* or *Comu* and get your ticket. It isn't quite free, but at one thousand pesetas can scarcely be called expensive.

Integrating into the Community

Try it next year. You'll have a lot of fun. Don't worry if you can't speak Catalan, there will be people at your table who understand French or Spanish. It's a good way of integrating into the community of the country in which we have chosen to reside. Your local *Comu* will tell you what to do. 

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IS ART A STRAIGHT LINE?

In this fascinating discussion of the definition of art today and in the past, Nina O'Brien says that to be a true artist, maybe it's better if you can't draw a straight line!

"I can't even draw a straight line." I have heard this rather personal statement for a long time. However, these days in Andorra I hear it more often than before. "Is art a straight line?" People who draw straight lines are mostly architects and draughtsmen for their renderings. I had to take advanced courses in perspective drawing for my Master's Degree in interior design. I was obliged to draw a lot of straight lines and I hated the entire procedure. It was so different to my previous Master's in Fine Arts. Then, we were drawing for hours but never a straight line.

How do we define Art? Art means different things to different people. There are art philosophy books - full of rules and clichés which in our lives here in Andorra and elsewhere are totally out of context.

Is Art, whether a picture, a piece of music, a poem or sculpture, an outward showing of inward nature - an objective presentation of subjective reality? As such, does Art involve straight lines? To me, all the prevailing doctrines have been inherited by us through the ages. Of course, there is a war between the certain definitions. Purists separate "the fine arts" from "liberal arts" - music, literature, dance, etc.

EXPRESSION OF HUMAN FEELINGS

Here my context is the kind of art commonly known as artistic or unartistic. Using art in the restricted sense, perhaps one could say that all art is the creation of

perceptible forms expressive of human feelings. As such, does art have to be a copy of objective reality? The Pocket Oxford English Dictionary defines art as "skill, esp. applied to design". This definition reduces art to photographic realism. Is such an expression of human feelings and emotions? "Beauty" is supposed to be in the eyes of the beholder. If we agree, then there is no problem in defining art. A straight or curved line, ugly or beautiful, a realistic copy of nature or an abstract rendering of what one sees is beautiful.

PROFICIENCY REQUIRES PRACTICE

I come across many individuals who enter a studio or an art class, especially at adult level, expecting to do wonders. Since proficiency in any form of art requires practice, time and patience, they get depressed when wonders just do not happen. As adults, they have been to exhibitions and museums showing the works of time and patience of the masters. When their rendering does not conform to that of the masters, depression sets in.

As an adult one has the mind of an adult and the hand of a child. However, a child has a different vision. He sees things according to his mental age and experience. He has no inhibitions until someone teaches him the "adult concept of art" - how to draw straight lines.

The art seen in museums predates the camera. The role of the "artist" was to record the people and scenes. The camera does a much more accurate job today. I often wonder



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whether art and its different interpretations have caused a lot of anxiety in people. Is the museum or classic concept of art, regardless of the reason why it was produced or how it was produced that was handed down to us like all other traditions concerning all walks of life? After all, we are programmed from the day we are born to recognise this "thing" is a cat and that "thing" is a dog. Even the animals are programmed by us or by their peers. Programming can often override the basic creative instinct.

ROYAL ACADEMY "SENSATION"

To go beyond tradition, the moment one steps out of the guided orbit one is shunned. In the past, even the scientists were burned at the stake as heretics. I don't know how many of our readers have seen or heard of the "sensation" at the Royal Academy of forty-two young artists from the Saatchi Collection. The Collection has been described as "the scary art of our time". "It is shocking, revolting and even witty, but is it art?" says Stuart Wavell. Security guards were apparently slow when a fusillade of ink and Fortnum and Mason eggs splattered the controversial Myra Hindley portrait.

Let us not forget Chris Ofili, whose work "The Holy Virgin" has generated controversy and sheer disgust.. Or the "Great British Living Room" in the piece called "Ghost" - a room straight out of Coronation Street of 1968 which barely seems to justify its exhibition.

EXALTED IMAGE OF ART

Is it Art? Everyone is pondering. Does it have to be depicted in the classic style just because The Royal Academy exhibits these works? This particular collection, apparently meant to be shocking, does not conform to the exalted image of art as assumed through the centuries. Many of the works do not even employ the traditional art media.

Why do we have to call "it" art if none of the exhibits are, conventionally speaking, "artistic"? In the entire history of art, shocks are nothing new. The nudes of Michelangelo's great works in the Sistine Chapel caused a stir at the time. However, at any time it is difficult to determine whether a new art form is a valid

development in "Art" or merely a shock technique for publicity to bring a quick return for a piece of rubbish.

THE IMPRESSIONISTS

The world was shocked by Monet when he painted as "Impression: Sunrise" - it was a picture of a harbour seen through the morning mists. One of the critics found his title particularly ridiculous and he referred to the whole group of artists as "the impressionists". He maintained that these painters did not proceed by sound knowledge and thought the impression of a moment was insufficient to be called a picture.

Earlier, Manet in 1863 had paved the way. Eventually, many like Van Gogh, Cezanne, Matisse followed with more new art forms. Piet Mondrian (1872-1944) developed a total abstraction from earlier beginnings by Kandinsky. The total abstraction from Mondrian was to build up his pictures of simplest elements of straight lines and pure colours.

BREAKS FROM TRADITION

However, it is quite possible that a picture which contains nothing but two squares may have caused its maker more worry than it caused an artist of the past to paint a Madonna. The painter of the Madonna knew what he was aiming at - tradition as his guide and a limited number of decisions to make. All these breaks from tradition are reflected in the accepted "great artists" of today when the works of Picasso, Dali, Miro, et al sell for millions.

The need for art grows out of the basic human urge to lead an aesthetic life. Apparently, the art of "today" and the "recent past" does not quite conform with the traditional concept of aesthetic of beautiful. This means to define art today, we have to define beauty. According to some, "Beauty is just expression". Often believed "art is the creation of forms, expressive human feelings", meaning perhaps that art does not have to be visually beautiful.

AN ARTIFICIAL GAP

In my opinion, the exalted position assumed by art through the centuries stands in the way of freedom from traditional conceptual shackles. Thus, the urge to create something

which is a part of normal life and appealing to human senses is stifled. There is an artificial gap between ourselves and the galleries.

Art is for everyone or can be for everyone. In the layman's view, a work of art is associated with a building, a book, sculpture, music, painting, etc. Its existence is dissociated from human experience. The halo of admiration and sophistry that surrounds art makes it hard for a person to attempt it. Ordinary human experience is a great source of aesthetic enjoyment, though this is hardly ever recognised by the average person. Some of today's visual arts - the sensational news story, jazz music, the comic strip and the movie - are not recognised as "art". In the usual conception of art it is separated from the objects and scenes of everyday experience - the "museum concept of art". People look to the gallery or the museum as a repository of art, unaware that daily environment satisfies the demands of aesthetic life.

ART ON A HIGH PEDESTAL

I suppose the fallacy of separating art from real life is that it places art on a high pedestal above human experience. The objects of a bygone age and given a place of honour in our museums today were, in their own time, interactions of daily living. Museum collectors are filled with glee to rescue such items of daily life as domestic utensils, rugs and mats, spears and bows and above all a poor painting of great grandfather or a stag at bay! These items are then labelled as examples of "art".

The idea of the Athenian Greeks that art is an act of the production and imitation of an object. This points to the intimate relation of art with daily life. Often these works were highly idealised to appeal to the subject's own sense of dignity and importance. Historical movements have contributed much to the

promotion of the compartmental image of art. For instance, the spoils of Napoleon, now in the Louvre, testify to the modern segregation of art from nationalism and militarism.

A COMMON EXPERIENCE

Divested of their original essence, many objects have been gradually elevated to the status of being specimen of art. These works no longer belong to the social milieu in which they perform a significant purpose. They are objects remote from life, isolated from experience and thus dubious in use and function. Since they are distant, they form a common experience as an emblem of taste of our inherited culture. For example, the painting of the great Sistine Chapel, contracted by Pope Julius II, was executed by Michelangelo. In spite of its size, grandeur and years of toil it did not receive an exalted position just then. It is through the centuries that the world learnt to admire what was done then.

I do not wish to give the impression that we should not appreciate our great artistic past. However, an attempt to copy it is a dismal failure. A real advance in art may be negated and discouraged by well meaning criticism by a teacher, friend or relative because it does not conform to the classic image of the galleries and the museums.

Art of today should not be based on seeking ideal beauty, classic grace, or perfect proportions attained by laborious draughtsmanship. One should not expect to create the serene ideal madonnas of Raphael, the heroic breed of people created by Michelangelo or the exquisite angels and divinity of Leonardo da Vinci. Great expectations of oneself are really depressing. The artists of today are no longer kept and patronised by the court, church or wealthy businessman. It is not possible to spend years on one project. However, this does encourage

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spontaneity, creativity and originality.

What I hear all the time, "Oh it looks awful". Here we go, my heart sinks. People spend a lifetime doing something other than art. As far as their art is concerned, their work is naïve like a child or the primitives. Artists like Matisse, Paul Klee, Chagall and even Picasso, after spending much of their lives learning classical techniques, decided to paint like a child. It is easier for those without the classical training to create original and naïve works.

Art, as taught at school, can be to the detriment to original expression. Art teachers at school are rarely artists - more technicians. No teacher can teach creativity. In later life, the techniques learnt at school often hinder originality and the very basic creative instinct. With or without training, or obvious creativity, patience is the bridge to artistic fulfilment. □



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WHITE ROSE OF ENGLAND

*White Rose of England, Princess of light
You went to your death, on a dark dreadful
night.*

*A crash through a tunnel, chased by the Press
Who photoed the injured, amid all the mess.*

*Your lover died with you. Poor Dodi, outright,
His ring on your finger, a diamond so bright.*

*The mourners brought flowers, their tears
showering down
Deep grief of a Nation, throughout London
town.*

*The wings of your loving, compassion for all
Caress you eternally, floating starlit your soul.*

*In a tomb on an island, surrounded by lilies
Now peacefully resting, away from all worries.*

*Lovely Queen of our hearts, mid courageous
despond.
Your thirty-six years, brought you two sons so
fond.*

*Diana, the hunted; Diana, the fair,
Your family are grieving, with awful despair.*

*No tears can return you, the lost golden years
Nor care for your children, or calm their sad
fears.*

*Your laughter will cheer them, Your
mischievous smile
Will inspire for ever, not just for a while.*

*White Rose called Diana, your petals full
blown.
Are collected to perfume, the seeds you have
sown.*

Jenny Bogarde © September 1997

AMENDMENT TO NOTE CONCERNING THE LAW ON PASSIVE RESIDENTS

Please note that the following correction should be made to the Notes that were sent to all members last September concerning the meeting held between a senior officer of the Andorran Immigration Department and members of the CIA Board:

On Page 2 under Section B. III concerning Minimum Requirements for Residence Permit Renewals; and under 5.(b)

...must confirm:

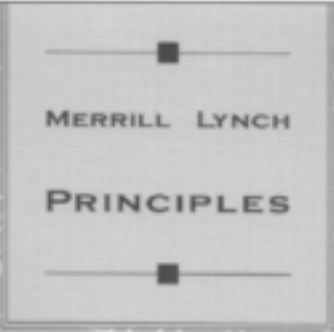
- (i) full insurance cover
 - (ii) validity of insurance and period covered
 - (iii) validity in Andorra
6. An income of 300% of the current local minimum salary
 7. Proof that any dependant is still supported by the family's principal residence permit-holder.

Please accept our apologies for this omission. We hope it did not cause any inconvenience.

ANSWERS TO CHRISTMAS PUZZLE

Rose's surname is Jones (clue 4), and Joan collected her pension (clue 3), so Mrs Robinson, who bought the stamps and isn't Mary (clue 2), must be Edna. From Clue 5, her other purchase can't have been soap powder, nor the light bulb, which was bought by Mrs Brown, so, since it was the lady who bought the postal order who also bought bacon (clue 3), Edna Robinson must have bought potatoes. Therefore, from clue 4, it must have been Rose Jones who bought the bacon, and also the postal order, and, by elimination, Mary must have posted the parcel, and Mrs Smith must have bought the soap powder. Thus, Mrs Smith can't be Mary (clue 1), and must be Joan, who collected her pension, leaving Mary as Mrs Brown who bought the light bulb. Therefore:

Edna Robinson bought stamps, potatoes
Joan Smith collected pension, soap powder
Mary Brown posted parcel, bought light bulb
Rose Jones, bought postal order, bacon



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