

INTER COMM

CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

MAGAZINE / REVISTA



VOL. 7 - Núm. 3 - SPRING / PRIMAVERA 1998

CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

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THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS MAGAZINE ARE THOSE OF THE EDITORS AND/OR THE CONTRIBUTORS. THEY DO NOT NECESSARILY EXPRESS THE VIEWS OF THE BOARD OF THE C.I.A.

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Club Internacional d'Andorra

Quarterly Magazine

March 1998

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NEWS FROM THE BOARD

Tony Hooper

Although the Board did not receive many offers from volunteers to organise events during this year whilst Ann and Josefine have a sabbatical, we are pleased that a proposed programme of Social Activities has now gone out to all our members. Whilst most months have at least one event we would still welcome any offers from any member to organise any extra activities. We would particularly welcome any offers to organise "outdoor" activities (e.g. White Water Rafting).

In this issue you will find a calendar of local events for the next three months. Thanks for this must go to Maria-Teresa Raurell who has contacted every Comú and Information Office. We all know how difficult it is to obtain information about events until almost the last moment, and we hope that members will take advantage of this advance information.

Following receipt of the letter from the Associació de Dones Migrants d'Andorra, we have invited Miss Cohen to meet any members who would like more information at our Coffee Morning at the Paris-Londres Hotel on Wednesday, 25th March.



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EDITORIAL

Margaret Shaida

We have another full magazine this time - thanks to a number of members who sent me material for inclusion. We have several reports from participants in the activities last year. Brenda and George Bennett clearly had a wonderful time in Barcelona (see page 8) just before Christmas, and managed to give Raphael, the coach driver, some concern about the extra weight he had to bring back up to Andorra!

Despite the fact that Ann Price and Josefina Martinez are taking a break this year from organising the Activities, members of the Board have filled the breach. A complete schedule of the programme for this year can be found on page 4. But it is not too late if you can help out, particularly during May and June. If you feel you can organise just one small trip, it would add to the variety of the programme for this year. Do give it a thought!

Following all the news and reports on the renewal of residence permits, Alan Hadden went along to renew his with considerable trepidation. To his delight, he found it a simple, even pleasant, transaction. He has written to tell us all about it in order to allay any fears we might have in this respect.

All the CIA members who went on last October's "Activity" felt particularly saddened by the news of the massacre of tourists in the Valley of the Queens in Egypt. They had themselves been there only two weeks earlier, and they all felt as though they'd had a narrow escape. None of this sadness, however, is apparent in Isobel Bowen's report on the group's two-week visit to Egypt. This was clearly an enormous success, and we who remained behind can only stand back in

amazement at the "goings on" at the carnival on the last night on the boat. The full report appears on page 19.

We have another interesting article from Dee Lian, our resident herbalist. In this, he explains how an alternative medicine can help prevent the necessity for cardiac by-pass operations (see Page 12).

As Tony Hooper has already mentioned, Teresa Maria Raurell has gone to a great deal of trouble to bring us a guide to forthcoming events in Andorra over the next three months. This is a formidable job, and we are so pleased to be able to publish this information, enabling us to participate in the social and cultural life of Andorra.

We also have a short report (see page 15) from the Dance Group, who put on performances over the Christmas period at two residential homes for the elderly here in Andorra. Jackie Richards told me that it was a most heart-warming experience.

Calling all animal lovers! The Home for Stray Dogs and Cats in Andorra is doing a splendid job in caring for many stray, often abandoned, creatures. Christiane Magot called me to say that they are very short-staffed, and she would love to hear from anybody who can give them a hand - by exercising the dogs or generally helping about the home. Christiane speaks excellent English, so please give her a call if you can spare some time, even two or three hours a week (see page 15).

We do hope you will be able to help with the Newsletter occasionally as well (see opposite). The production of this very useful publication is a lot of work, and if we wish it to continue, I feel we must all pull together. From translation to stuffing envelopes, there is a job for everyone from time to time. Please help!



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LETTERS

OUR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

To all our Readers

We all appreciate the weekly Newsletter and take it for granted that we will receive it sooner or later. But perhaps we do not all appreciate the work that goes into producing it. **Jacque Crozier** spends between six and eight hours PER WEEK, just reading the local daily newspapers and selecting items of interest. She then translates them, puts them into good English, and types them all into the computer. Finally a sample copy is produced, which is then taken to Estil Nordic where **Jill** or **Linda** photocopy the required number of newsletters.

Then a member of the Club collects them to be mailed and spends at least two hours EVERY WEEK, folding the sheets and putting them into the envelopes. Lists must be checked to see that everyone gets their copy. The envelopes are then sealed and sorted into parishes. Still more people help by taking the envelopes to various post offices for mailing.

Once again, we ask all those who receive the newsletter by mail, to give us business-sized, self-sealing envelopes. It is very irritating (and time-consuming) to fold a few sheets into small sizes, and to have to lick the envelopes! We also understand that some members buy one newsletter and then make three or four copies for their friends. Do you really begrudge spending 25pts for all the work that goes into this production? No one gets paid a penny for all this work.

How many of us give even two hours a week to the C.I.A. let alone eight hours and more? If you read Catalan, how about offering to do the

newsletter occasionally, or offering to do the mailing for a few weeks?

Dinah J. Baxter

IMMIGRANT WOMEN

Dear Editor

I am working on a project with the Association of Immigrant Women of Andorra. This Association is in the process of formalising arrangements to open the first Battered Women's Shelter in Andorra. As you may be aware, domestic violence is a serious problem in our society and affects women of all nationalities. It is an especially difficult problem for immigrant women who are living in a foreign country with few friends or family and little ability to communicate in the country's official language.

Here in Andorra, three women were murdered by their husbands in 1996 and 1997, and countless others were physically and emotionally battered. The purpose of the proposed shelters is to help these women find a safe place for themselves and their children when they face the greatest risk of bodily harm, or even death.

The shelter project is in the early stages of development and requires support from the entire community in Andorra - citizens and residents alike. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss this project with members of the International Club and to investigate the various ways the Club could be supporters of the shelter.

(Miss) *Marlo Cohen*

Associació de Dones Migrants d'Andorra
C/. D'Emprivat, 6, 3-3 Andorra la Vella
(phone at work: 86400; at home: 839353)

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

ACTIVITIES

There have been very few volunteers to organise activities in 1998. The Naturalist

Group have agreed to organise a trip, the Art Group will hold an Exhibition in June and the Dance Group is planning a repeat of their hugely successful *Nit de Música i Dansa* in May. Our programme starts with a Dinner with Speaker on 2nd April.

Fortunately there will be a reasonable programme to be arranged by individual members of the Board. Full details of most events are not yet finalised but we give below a Calendar of activities that we hope will take place.

PLEASE support your Board and the volunteers by joining these activities.

2nd April

Dinner with Guest Speaker at Restaurant Can Pere:

Ursula Ure, one of our longest resident members, will speak about "Making a home in Andorra in the Fifties". This promises to be a most fascinating evening, and you are urged to make your bookings as soon as possible. The price will be 2,700 pts per person (3,000 pts for non-members) including a three course dinner at Can Pere with wine and coffee.

You should all have received a copy of the choice of menu and an application form which should be completed and sent to the Club (Box 291, Banc Credit Andorra, Escaldes or to Estile Nordic.

Tickets are also on sale at the Coffee Mornings at Paris-Londres Hotel, Escaldes.

A TRIBUTE TO ANGEL GUERRA

Angel Guerra, MBE, who died on 31st January, aged 69, had been the Honorary British Consul for just over two years. But he had acted as the unofficial, unpaid representative of the British Consulate in Barcelona here in Andorra since the 1960s. Many older residents will remember the help he gave them when they first arrived and there was no International Club or Helpline to offer advice. A great deal of his work then, as more recently, was dealing with commercial matters and his efforts did not go unrecognised; he was awarded the MBE in 1986. Other holders of this decoration living in Andorra will remember the pleasure Angel took in their meetings and dinners together.

Those of us who came into contact with Angel, found him unfailingly cheerful, always willing to give generously of his experience and time. Nor problem, however, trivial, was too much trouble. And for those in real trouble Angel was prepared to go down to the police station in the middle of the night if necessary. Nor did his work end at visits to the police; Angel spent hours dealing with officials here or on the telephone to Barcelona, the Foreign Office, the British police and relatives.

Both as a friend and as Consul, Angel will be sorely missed by the British community. All members of the CIA would like to express their deep sorrow at his death and their appreciation of the enormous amount of work he did for all of us in Andorra. We send our heartfelt condolences to his widow, Isabel, and all his large family.

Car Park - pitches 1,250 pts - proceeds to local charities.

September

Day trip with lunch to Parc Préhistorique near Tarascon-sur-Ariège.

7th May

Museums and Gardens of Ordino. This will include visits to the garden of Michael and Sue Payne followed by coffee, and a look at Dinah Baxter's garden. Then we shall move on to the Museum in Miniature, Museum of Icons, Casa Plandolit and the Philatelic Museum (if open). We shall finish with lunch at the Hotel Babot. Final details and price soon.

23rd and 24th May

Nit de Música i Dansa (Night of Music and Dance) at the *Sala d'Actes*, Andorra la Vella.

June

Art Group Exhibition

Early June

Proposed two-night trip to the Gers to visit Lac de Mielan, Auch and Condom with a boat trip on the recently restored River Baïse.

Late June/Early July

Car Boot Sale: On a Sunday morning at Arinsal

October

Tour of Local Industries (probably FEDA Electricity Plant, a Distillery, and a local chocolate or cake factory, followed by lunch.

November

Joint Naturalist and Wine Group visit to the Rioja area. Three nights in Logroño, with wine tasting and visits to bodegas or exciting birding areas with outstanding scenery.

December

Shopping trip to Barcelona.

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.

You can also look through the Club Scrap Book which includes reports and photographs of Club activities - an interesting record kept up to date by Caroline Colvin Smith. If you have photographs or reports for inclusion in the Scrap Book, please call Caroline.

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 home.

CIA SECONDHAND PAPERBACKS

Don't forget that Stella Madden keeps a library of paperbacks, available at 100 pts each. If you would like to buy (or contribute) books, please ring Stella on 837681 to arrange an appointment.

Each year, all the books are packed and taken to the Book Section of the "Church Fayre" for sale. Afterwards, the remaining books are returned to Stella's house for sale throughout the year.

Second hand paperbacks - in good condition - are always welcome. Please call Stella Madden. S.M.

INTERNATIONAL SINGERS

Our three Christmas concerts: at St Eulàlia, Ordino and Feners were better attended than ever, in part due to the excellent publicity generated for us by Caroline Colvin-Smith. Many thanks. The involvement of Catherine Metayer and her *Petits Cantors* should not be underestimated. I asked her for one solo soprano and she provided two, truly beautiful boy's voices - then added the choir's whole soprano section as a surprise for good measure! Our other three soloists: Gisele Pereira, Sheila Hooper and Serafi Milan were also very well received. And

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what a wonderful addition Barbara Melin is to our community. Without her expert piano playing we would have had no concert at all! Maria Teresa Raurell also deserves a special word of thanks for the quiet work she puts in as translator and liaison officer for the group. Finally, many thanks to all of you who gave so generously, allowing us to raise 126,508 pts for local charities.

And so to the months ahead. We hope to be singing in the third edition of *Un Nit de Música i Dansa* on 23rd and 24th May. Then there is the annual 'sing together' of all the Andorran choirs on 21st June, the International Day of Music. Great fun, do come along and listen. We have also been asked to sing at Pas de la Casa for their *Festa Major* on the 29th of June.

We are very happy to have welcomed several new singers in the past few months but, as always, are eager to welcome more. We rehearse every Tuesday at the new time of 4.30pm to 6.30pm. For more information do ring Clare Allcard 836269 or Brenda Ross on 836886

SCOTTISH DANCERS

This year has got off to a very slow start, however we are now in business and were happy to have twelve members at our first session. Amongst other dances we performed the Petronella, Monymusk, Wild flowers and Captain White, ending up with a spirited Strip the Willow.

Anyone can join, complete novice or expert, one of us will attempt to guide you through the steps. You'll need light, non-slip shoes and 100 pts to pay into the kitty for the rent of the room. We meet in the *La Massana Biblioteca* (next to the parish hall) between 4.30 and 6.30 on Sundays. For further information ring Brenda Ross 836886 or Clare Allcard 836269.

COMPUTER GROUP

The Computer Group has changed its fortnightly meeting day from Thursdays to Tuesdays. The time and meeting place remain the same: the Rutllan Hotel in La Massana at 11 a.m. Everyone is welcome. Common computer experiences are exchanged and problems discussed and resolved. Computer magazines are available for perusal, and advice given on programs and the Internet. For further information, please contact Stan Jones on tel: 836972 or via E Mail: sjoyjones@mypic.ad

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BARCELONA! CITY OF CULTURE AND SHOPPING

The annual Christmas shopping trip to Barcelona was the usual great success. A couple of the participants, Brenda and George Bennett, tell us all about it.

As fairly newcomers to Andorra, we were delighted to take the opportunity to go on the International Club's Trip to Barcelona on Saturday, 29th November 1997, without the worry of driving a car into the City, but also giving us the opportunity of meeting other members of the International Club.

The coach picked us up at 7.00 a.m. and we collected the rest of our party from various stops along the way. After a coffee break half way, we arrived at our Hotel, the I'la on the Diagonal at around noon, a very pleasant and comfortable hotel ideally situated - next to Marks & Spencers! What a joy to be able to wander round M&S, especially the food hall, although compared to the UK it was quite small but nevertheless very enjoyable.

Tour of the City

The weather was warm and sunny and in the afternoon **Raphael** our driver drove us into the centre of the city, at the Plaza Catalunya where we split into groups, some to shop, others to go with **Ann** or **Josefina** on the Gothic Tour, to visit the Maritime Museum, or just generally exploring. In the evening the majority of the party went to Barceloneta (the fish port) to a Sea Food Restaurant where we enjoyed huge platefuls of mixed fish and watched the locals tucking into enormous quantities of food and wine.

The next day, Sunday, we again split up into different groups, some to visit the Gaudia

Cathedral, *Sagrada Familia*, something not to be missed.

Until you visit the Cathedral one cannot appreciate the amazing architecture. Gaudi was only thirty-one years old when he took over from the architect, Francisco de Villar. He had fallen out with the President of the Association of Devotees of St. Joseph who had commissioned the church which was to be dedicated to the Holy Family. Gaudi made the *Sagrada Familia* his life's work until his death forty-three years later when he was run over by a tram as he left the building site.

The other groups went to look at various galleries, and general sight-seeing. We took the Metro to the Rambla and had a lovely afternoon strolling down past the craft stalls, flowers and bird stalls and, of course, the "street theatre artists. How they can stand still for so long is truly amazing. In the evening **Raphael** drove us to *Pueblo Espanyol*, the Spanish village, where we enjoyed an evening of traditional Flamenco which was excellent. On our way back to the hotel, **Raphael** took us through the streets of Barcelona to look at the Christmas lights, and also some unexpected sights, we passed some "Ladies of the Night" dressed in very flimsy clothes showing off their wares. The gentlemen among us were very keen to get **Raphael** to tour round and round to find some more, but the ladies thought that the men had had enough excitement for the evening, so back to the Hotel for a night-cap and bed.

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(Above) Lillas Grassie, George Bennett, Caroline Colvin Smith, Diana Zammù and Horst Matschke relax after doing a great deal of shopping! (Left) from left to right: Ann Price, George and Brenda Bennett, Caroline Colvin Smith, Diana Zammù, and sitting Horst and Ann Matschke.

Monday morning arrived and we went SHOPPING! in M&S, *Corte Ingles* and other shops in the L'illa Centre before we left for Andorra in the afternoon. Raphael was worried that the suspension of the coach would not carry the extra weight of shopping (some of us got quite carried away) but there was another experience in store for us.

We had an unscheduled stop at the Farm Co-operative in Guissona, where the local farmers sell their produce. It was like a large Supermarket with meat, vegetables, dry goods etc. on display. The meat was very good value, especially the chicken and there was a large restaurant in the building. Well worth a visit if your freezer is empty.

A Lovely Weekend

We arrived back in Andorra in the evening, stopping at Customs to claim our VAT back (every little helps!) Everyone agreed it had been a lovely weekend, very stress free. We were particularly pleased as we had met and enjoyed the company of fellow residents. Raphael, our driver, was

excellent, nothing was too much trouble and it was so nice to have the coach at our disposal the whole weekend.

The success of the weekend was due to Ann and Josefina who did such a fantastic job in organising everything, and our thanks go to them. We are only sorry that this year they are having a "rest", but, ladies, we are looking forward to experiencing some more trips with you in 1999! Many thanks to you both.

 **viatges relax**



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RENEWING A PASSIVE RESIDENCIA

When Alan Hadden went to renew his Residence Permit, he was delighted to find how easy it was. Here he tells us of his experiences - which should hearten us all.

Towards the end of last year, a little while before my *Residència Privilegiada* permit was due to expire, I went one morning to the Immigration Office to check what was now needed to apply for its renewal. Went, I may say, with a touch of trepidation because of the many rumours about uncertainties and difficulties which have continued to circulate despite the helpful information provided by the Club and by ESRA.

The Office had been refurbished since last I had been there, much better signed, more staff in attendance - but still individual queues waiting to reach them, making a gamble of it to choose the one that seemed likely to move the fastest.

Luckily I chose well and soon found myself facing a most helpful young lady to whom I explained my need to renew my "passive" resident's permit. She wrote out for me the following list of what would be required:

- * One passport-size photo
- * A residence certificate from the Comú
- * My passport
- * The title deed or lease to my house or flat
- * Proof of having an income of not less than three times the country's minimum salary (then 108,853 pts a month)
- * An extract of my CASS points

With the list, she gave me a folder-cum-application form to hold the various pieces of paper, on the front of which I was to fill in the basic information needed - name, date and place of birth, passport number, date of issue, issuing authority, marital status, nationality, address, and date of entry into Andorra. There was space also for the names, birth dates and relationship of family members living with me.

It was really only a minor chore putting together the various pieces of paper required. The Comú, approached in the morning, had the Residence certificate ready the same afternoon; the bank provided a while-you-wait service for the letter confirming I had the necessary income (proof of receipt of a sufficient pension would also have been acceptable). The CASS provided, over the counter, a print out of my *puntes*, the record of my monthly quota payments.

I had photocopies made of whatever I didn't want to leave with the application (passport, title deed). The information duplicated what must already have been on record, basically from my original petition to the Episcopal and French *Veguers* following the former long-established pre-Constitution procedure, but bureaucracy's tentacles, with which we are all so familiar wherever we may have lived, seem increasingly to embrace us in Andorra too.

With all the necessary papers gathered together in the folder I returned to the Immigration Office the day before my old *Residència* was to expire. Again I stood in the line (rather longer this time), and turned in the folder and, a little sadly, my expiring *Residència Privilegiada* card, this time to a rather older but equally courteous and helpful woman. After checking through the information I'd provided on the cover of the folder and its contents, she issued me with a simple form authorising me to continue to reside in the Principality for a further thirty days - but without prejudice to the outcome of my application.

A month later I returned, half expecting to be told to come back in another week or two (Christmas, New Year and *Reyes* had intervened). But not a bit of it: the same pleasant woman consulted the computer, smiled, and directed me to the uniformed cashier. He took my temporary permit, thumbed through an index box of *Residències* waiting to be collected, extracted mine and smilingly handed it to me with the polite request "Ten thousand pesetas, please."

I do rather regret the loss of my *Privilegiado* status, but this is a distinction that has now been abolished and all authorisations are for a uniform three-year period.

The total cost? Five hundred pesetas for the Comú's certificate, as much again for the photo, say a couple of hundred for photocopying: around pts 11,200 in all.

Every case is, of course, individual, but if other people's experiences match mine the negative rumours about renewals should be ignored. How very pleasant it is to be able to think that, d.v., we shall now continue to be living in this hospitable Principality into the twenty-first century.

TO IRAN ON A MAGIC CARPET

Last autumn, Margaret Shaida was the guest speaker at the Club's dinner. Clare Allcard went along and sent us this report on the evening's activities

Perched on a barstool in the Font d'Arans, Margaret Shaida flourished her microphone with enviable aplomb. The rustic restaurant, owned by C.I.A. member Nicole Plaisance, was *gom a gom* (full to busting) with club members waiting eagerly to hear of Margaret's adventures in Iran. As usual, in organising the event, Ann Price had remembered everything - even coded aide-memoirs for our fading memories. The meal was excellent, starting with Font d'Aran's very own exotic salad, quite one of my favourite dishes, and followed by trout or lamb, both succulent, and ending with fresh fruit or tarte tatin.

Once coffee was handed round, Ann Matschke rose to introduce our speaker. She told us how Margaret had met Hassan while she was working at the BBC; how they married and moved to Iran and there set up their own newspaper, for which Margaret was women's editor. Margaret's first book was a pictorial history of Henley-on-Thames, her hometown; while her second, *The Legendary Cuisine of Persia*, won the much coveted Glenfiddich Award for the Best Food Book of the Year in Britain. (Later, of course, Margaret was to take over editing the C.I.A. magazine.) Now it remained only for our speaker herself to reveal all about the 25 years she spent living in Iran.

Revealing all, or almost all, in a mosque was just one of the adventures that faced Margaret when, as a young bride, she moved with Hassan to Teheran. She filled the restaurant with laughter as she evoked her initial difficulties coping with a different culture (something with which her expatriate audience could easily empathise). She told

of the narrow, chauvinistic, even racist, attitude of the British ex-pat 'oil' community and compared it with the wonderful hospitality of the Iranian people among whom 'A guest is a gift from God.' She warned us that saying 'No more, thank you,' to an Iranian hostess is not nearly enough to deter her enthusiasm. Only food left on the plate will reassure her that she has really satisfied your hunger. Clearly, it was not just Hassan that had captured Margaret's heart, despite a male-dominated culture which at times must have sorely tried her liberated nature. It also posed a problem: How to bring up two sons to understand that not all men are naturally superior to all women!

Several highly amusing anecdotes centred around prayer meetings and prayers. It was particularly interesting to learn that all-women prayer meetings were led by female mollahs. In other ways, Margaret told us, life in pre-Revolutionary Iran was very much like life in England. She went to work each day in the office, she wore mini-skirts when they were in fashion; indeed sometimes it seemed only that the deep blue skies of summer were different.

The Revolution finally forced the Shaidas out of Iran and back to England. They have returned several times but Margaret is happy to be settled in Andorra which combines the clear air and sunlit mountains that she loved in Iran, with the security and order that she once enjoyed in Britain.

A highly entertaining evening ended with warm applause and a vote of thanks to our speaker from Jacquie Crozier and one to our organiser from Gil Lamb.

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CHELATION THERAPY

Dee Lian, a Master Herbalist and member of the American Association of Drugless Practitioners, writes to tell us of Medicine's Best Kept Secret, condensed from articles in 'Townsend Letter for Doctors', August/September 1991, and 'Alive Magazine' No. 127

For over fifty years, chelation therapy has been the approved medical treatment for ridding the body of heavy metals. In World War II, sailors who absorbed lead while painting ships were detoxified by intravenous infusions of a substance called ethylene-diamine-tetra-acetate (EDTA). EDTA has also been successfully used to reduce mercury overloads in persons who have become ill as a result of the mercury in amalgam fillings in their teeth.

The EDTA joins with metals in the body, forming stable complexes which are then dumped out through the kidneys. By reducing the excess metals the production of free radicals (which damage the artery walls) is reduced, and the depression of the body's enzyme systems is reversed.

In the early years of chelation therapy, no one dreamed that EDTA had any function beyond its use to rid the body of heavy metals. But as time went on, more and more chelation patients reported improvements in general health - in their vision, hearing, memory, and other areas. In particular, heart patients often discovered that after chelation therapy they could walk better and further with less pain and without getting out of breath. After eight or ten chelation treatments over two or three months, they usually found that their angina pain had disappeared. Others with chronic or acute circulatory disorders also benefited. Documented reports tell of patients "terminally ill" from gangrenous limbs who recovered after chelation therapy.

So why hasn't your doctor told you about this? That's a good question. The process, and the results, have never been widely publicised. Perhaps it's "too simple". The patient relaxes in a chair for three hours while the EDTA solution drips slowly into a vein in the arm.

It takes time to change the medical mind-set. Not many years ago, the American Medical Association (AMA) scoffed at the suggestion that health had anything at all to do with the food we eat. The AMA scoffed at vitamin supplements and

pooh-poohed the idea that chemical preservatives could be harmful. For many years, the *Journal of the AMA (JAMA)* was largely supported by tobacco advertising. Cigarette manufacturers boasted in *JAMA* that a larger number of prominent doctors smoked their brand of cigarettes than smoked the brand of the competitors.

Many in the medical establishment still consider chelation to be "experimental" although there are over 3,500 articles in scientific literature documenting the improved body physiology and beneficial results of this therapy.

Physicians are cautious and conservative people. And, of course, they have a vested interest in preserving the status quo. The treatment of choice for heart blockages - bypass surgery - has become big, big business.

In the USA, about 250,000 patients have bypass surgery each year at a price tag of from \$50,000 to \$80,000 each. Cardiologists who recommend bypass surgery in a heartbeat are not likely to encourage patients to take a non-surgical treatment that can be done in a doctor's office at a cost of \$75 to \$100 a session. (In addition there may be costs of up to \$1,500 for tests to assist the doctor to decide if chelation can help your condition.) The downside is that medical insurance does not usually cover chelation therapy because it does not have the blessing of the various Medical Associations. They can't support it, they say, because it's "unproven"; its value has not been established by double-blind studies. That's true, it hasn't. But neither has bypass surgery nor angioplasty been validated by double-blind studies. And they never will be because the indisputable evidence is that bypasses and balloon angioplasty do not prolong life.

A report in the journal of the American Medical Association (August 1991) stated that coronary bypass surgery has a 1.9 to 9.2 per cent hospital death rate, depending upon the surgeon and the institution, and that the death rate increases by ten per cent for every year over age seventy. Patients also risk a five to ten per cent chance of

suffering a heart attack and two per cent chance of a stroke immediately after bypasses.

There is a thirty per cent risk of heart attack during the three year period after surgery and thirty per cent of bypasses plug up again within three years. Almost all of them by ten years. The surgery must then be repeated.

There is also a seventeen per cent incidence of organic brain syndrome caused by small emboli (clots) from the heart-lung machine. This can result in permanent brain damage, memory loss and personality change as well as mental impairment. The husband of the famous U.S. TV personality, Joan Rivers, developed these complications after surgery and found his life so miserable that he committed suicide.

Patients who undergo coronary bypass surgery do not usually live longer than those treated with medications, diet and exercise. Several US studies have shown that thirty to fifty per cent of bypass surgeries are done unnecessarily, but many individuals who are really doing quite well in terms of activity and quality of life quickly opt for bypass surgery after becoming frightened and seeing extensive blockage on their angiogram (picture of coronary arteries). How does bypassing a portion of the arterial tree, leaving all the other arteries more or less gummed up, make the patient healthy?

Today even the conservative AMA recognises that coronary bypass is of limited value.

On the other hand, numerous published studies show the value and safety of chelation therapy. Chelation therapy cleans out *all* the blood vessels.

It involves the introduction into the blood stream of ethylene, diamine tetra acetic acid (EDTA) a synthetic amino-acid, given as a slow drip over a period of three to three and a half hours in a doctor's office.

EDTA attaches to plaque in the artery wall and pulls it out, reducing the size of the plaque and increasing blood flow. Chelation therapy can be given safely providing kidney function is monitored carefully. Twenty or more treatments are usually required for moderate to advanced artery disease. Eighty per cent of individuals achieve good results with reduction or the elimination of angina. Approximately twenty per cent respond minimally. There have been no deaths reported through the use of chelation therapy in the treatment of circulatory disorders.

Over the last couple of decades or so, by word of mouth, by reports of enthusiastic patients, chelation therapy has attracted more and more patients. The word gets around, and doctors who perform this therapy treat many patients who drive hundreds of miles to have their weekly or bi-weekly sessions. According to documented studies, more than 400,000 Americans have been successfully treated by chelation therapy, and the results have been overwhelmingly positive.

Recommended reading:

Bypassing Bypass by Elmer Cranton MD, 267 pp

The Chelation Way by Morton Walker, 303 pp

Conversations on Chelation and Mineral Nutrition by H. Ashinead, 241 pp

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HERE AND THERE

On a bitterly cold day last year - on 13th December to be precise - Dinah Baxter, Liliass Grassie, Solveig Feilberg and Maria Teresa Raurell organised a very successful stall at the Saint Lucy's market held in La Massana church square. They sold preserves and jams, cakes, biscuits, shortbread, fudge and pickles - all provided by members of the International Club. At the end of a very cold morning, they managed to raise nearly 30,000 pts for Helpline funds.

More than a dozen CIA members took part in the Thirteenth Art Show of Andorra. This took place last month and was held, as usual, in the Government's Exhibition Hall in Andorra la Vella.

Most of the 86 participants submitted paintings, although there were also one or two pieces of sculpture and an engraved glass bowl by member Hassan Shaida. A large and rather lovely painting by Nina O'Brien, leader of the CIA Art Group, was hung opposite the entrance to the first hall. One of the most intriguing exhibits, entitled "Migration", was a series of rows of bare feet set out on the floor!

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(Above) Solveig Feilberg, Liliass Grassie and Dinah Baxter "man" the stall at St Lucy's Fair which was held in La Massana Church Square

I understand that an English woman made a surprise appearance on Andorra TV last month - apparently she had been seen driving on the wrong side of the road in Saint Julià de Lòria - causing a certain amount of confusion and trepidation - and also some amusement, once it was realised that she had caused no harm to anyone - although this appears to have been due mostly to the quick reactions of other drivers on the right side of the road!!



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Over the Christmas period, the Dance Group presented performances at the Residencia Solar Encar and the Residencia Clara Rabassa. The programmes were each thirty minutes long and included classical ballet, contemporary and jazz dance, and flamenco. Maite Castro Binstead and Jackie Richards were the dancers and the show and its items were introduced by Lorne Oehlenschlaeger who kept the continuity going brilliantly.

The residents in these homes and together with their staff were so very appreciative of our efforts and the atmosphere at both performances was tremendously warm and hospitable. At Residencia Solar Encar, we stayed for *Merianda* (afternoon tea) with *Cava*!! Through chatting to all the residents, we realised just how much our visit meant to these people, some of whom rarely go out or see fresh faces.

J.R.

STOP PRESS

It is with the deepest regret that we have to report the death of David Yeoman on 9th February 1998.

JEN INTERNACIONAL, S.L.

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Jackie Richards and Maite Binstead work out at the bar in one of their performances over Christmas at the Old People's Homes (see left)

Please let me have your letters, reports and articles for inclusion in the June issue of *Intercomm* by 10th May. Send them to

MARGARET SHALDA

The Editor,
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LAURA - A LIFE

When Laura Fecanin died last autumn, Clare Allcard sent us this "review" of Laura's life.

Laura Fecanin, once one of the most active members of the International Club, died on 14th November, 1997.

The tenth of thirteen children, she was born in Belfast in 1925. While she was still a small child the family moved to the Bronx, New York. Her father, a master cabinet maker, had once been employed on the world's most luxurious liners. The Depression hit them hard. From the age of nine, Laura went out to work after school. She also worked at home; for the girls of the Armstrong family were expected to clean the boys' shoes and make their beds. Something which still rankled sixty years later. Maybe it sowed the seed of her future strong support for equal rights for women.

On graduating from high school, Laura took various jobs. She met John while working as secretary on a massive construction site. It was love at first sight. They married within three months and stayed married more than 50 years. They built their own home in New Jersey and raised a family of six children. Laura became involved in various community activities: Girl Scouts of America, PTA school functions, League of Women Voters and Womens' Club. At the same time, helped by John, she went through night school, first at Pace University and then at Rutgers. A fascination with nutrition led her to study biochemistry. Then, at the request of her employers, American Airlines, she majored in business administration. By then she was secretary to the president of American Airlines. He asked her to head a committee studying the implementation of women's rights throughout the organisation. Later she became one of the first women to work in cargo handling and went on to become American Airlines' cargo handling manager

at JFK airport, then La Guardia and finally Newark. An all male preserve ruled by the Teamsters Union, they did their best to freeze her out. But our Laura wouldn't quit.


In 1987 Laura and John retired to Andorra where her second life began. She once told me that, having missed out on life during her childhood, she was determined to sample the lot now. And she did.

Laura could be seen on the Hash in summer, or slithering down the pistes in winter. She joined the yoga group, the bridge group, the drama group. She was one of the early members of the Singers and remained loyal to the end. She bought a piano and took lessons. She joined the writers group and produced one of her best stories for the Anthology. She was a wonderful, energetic person and a warm, staunch friend. Though timid when all eyes were on her, Laura was a person of strong character and views. Once she had had to address a meeting of 1,000 delegates on the subject of equal opportunities for women. She was shaking with fear, but she did it. So it didn't surprise me at all to learn that, when faced with cancer, she took her own way. Firm in her faith in nutrition, and firmly refusing all orthodox treatment, Laura headed for the Gerson Institute in Mexico.

With an admirable courage - and typical stubbornness - she kept to the Gerson diet and treatment for 18 long months. It was no easy option. Just juicing the fresh, organic vegetables took six hours a day. But always beside her was her beloved John, her devoted companion and friend. Though her life had sometimes been hard, Laura was never bitter. Indeed, full of enthusiasm, she made quite certain that she lived every moment of life to the full. We miss her.

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FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES IN ANDORRA

Thanks to *Maria Teresa Raurell*, we give below a list of the events being organised in the various comus during the next three months. Further information from "Un Mes a Andorra" or at Tourist Information Offices.

ANDORRA LA VELLA

7th March - Teatre Communal at 22.00

"La Kabra tira al Monte" (Spanish).

3rd April - Teatre Communal at 22.00

"Klowns" A show for all the family

23rd April

Saint George's Day - Sale of Books and Roses

8th May - Teatre Communal at 22.00

"Chaise Longue" - Mont Plans presents her show with musical accompaniment by Laura Teruel (Catalan monologue and tangos and music hall songs.

23rd and 24th May - Sala de Congressos

"Una Nit de Musica i Dansa" organised by CIA.

CANILLO

7th and 8th March - Soldeu & El Tarter

Snowbike Competition.

23rd April

Saint George's Day - Sale of Roses

ENCAMP

19th April - 18.00 and 22.00

"Universal Sardana Day" Celebration

ESCALDES/ENGORDANY

23rd and 24th May

Meeting of Weavers and Lacemakers

LA MASSANA

1st March - Parish Hall at 17.00

Carnival - Fancy dress competition for children.

28th March - Parish Hall at 22.00

Concert of *Petits Cantors*

23rd April - Communal Library in the afternoon

Saint George's Day Celebration

23rd April - Parish Hall at 22.00

Saint George's Day Theatre

25th April onwards

"La Massana Comic" - Poliesportiu of l'Aldosa, exhibition of collaboration and other activities.

9th May - Parish Church at 22.00

Concert Coral Sant Antoni



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ORDINO

3rd March - Auditori Nacional at 21.30

Carnival Concert - Works by Mozart, Schöeder, Bizet and the Chamber Opera "Il Maestro di Cappella" by D. Cimarosa Orquestra de Cambra d'Andorra.

16th March - Auditori Nacional at 22.00

Concert Irish Music by La Lugh

19th March - Auditori Nacional at 22.00

Concert IV0 Pogorelich, piano

21st March - Sala Polivalent

X Anniversary of the Library

29th March - Auditori Nacional at 20.00

Concert Amati Ensemble of Munich and Coral Salve of Laredo (Spain)

15th April - Centre Esportiu

Tenpin Bowling, Spring Championship

17th April - Auditori

Spring Concert by Orquestra Nacional de Cambra d'Andorra, Music from films.

19th April

Mountainbike competition

29th April - Auditori

Concert by Le Garden, a very original ensemble.

13th May - Auditori

Concert "Homage to Narciso Yepes" by O.N.C.A. and Petits Cantors with H. Achucarro, piano, Ll. Claret, chello and I. Yepes, Director.

SANT JULIÀ DE LÒRIA

3rd March - Auditori Rocafort at 22.00

Catalan Cinema by "Centre de Cultura Catalana"

18th March to 5th April - Centre Cultural

XV Years of the Arts School Exhibition

20th March - 21.00

Theatre organised by French Embassy

27th March - 22.00

Theatre "Fum, Fum, Fum" (Catalan)

8th - 26th April - Centre Cultural

Sculpture Exhibition by Miquel Vila

24th April - 22.00

Theatre "Misery" (Catalan) A. Claror

29th April to 17th May

Painting exhibition by Ma Rosa Renom

9th May - Auditori Claror at 22.00

Theatre "Paraules Encadenades" (Catalan play)

25th May - 7th June, Centre Cultural

Club Fotogràfic Lauredià: Photographic exhibition Marato 98.

The deadline for the next magazine is 10th May 1998. Please send articles, reports and/or letters directly to: Margaret Shaida, Editor, Teulades V, Apt. 201, Escaldes/Engordany, or by fax to 866540

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AN EGYPTIAN TOUR

Ann Price organised a second tour to Egypt as part of the Club Activities last year. Here, Isobel Bowen describes her experiences in this fascinating and ancient country.

Six of us set off from Andorra with Ann on the cold and drizzly morning of 24th October. Two weeks in Egyptian sunshine was a very appealing prospect. At Barcelona we were joined by Doreen and Liz from Almeria and we expected to meet Dinah at Cairo airport. Our flight arrived on time but it coincided with a number of other arrivals so that there were crowds and seeming chaos.

The Pyramids

Our first expedition next day was to see the Pyramids of Giza. There are three magnificent pyramids and a number of smaller ones, all built round 2,500 BC. They are vast structures, rising out of a completely desert landscape. The Great Pyramid, the tomb of King Cheops, had looked large enough when viewed from the hotel grounds, but it was awesome when we came close and looked up. It is no longer permitted to climb up the outside as it is regarded as too dangerous, but some of us climbed up inside. The ascent was long and steep and rather airless but we persevered up to the King's chamber which is lined with granite but nothing is left inside except the sarcophagus. The Sphinx looked smaller than I had expected; it is said that the face was damaged by the Mamelukes using it for target practice some 600 years ago.

The Step Pyramid at Sakkara which we visited the following day is lovely. As the blocks used are smaller than those used at Giza, it is easier to imagine how it might have been constructed with the use of ramps. It was at Sakkara that Dinah and Maureen were brave enough to ride a camel. There are photographs to prove it.

The Solar Boat Museum, close to the Great Pyramid was well worth seeing. It shows the 100-foot pit where the dismantled boat was found as recently as 1954. It has been carefully restored and looks most elegant. No nails were used to hold it together - only pegs and ingeniously knotted ropes. Hendrik, the engineer in our group was able to explain how it all worked. The boat was probably used in the king's funeral to carry the sarcophagus. It was a "solar" boat because it was believed that the king, being also a god, would use it to go

through the sky with the sun from east to west and then go under ground from west to east to rise again.

The nineteenth century Manyal Palace of Mohammad Ali was a contrast to the antiquities. It is a handsome and spacious Ottoman building, much of it lined with beautiful blue Turkish tiles. Nearby there is a hunting museum housing a somewhat distressing collection of stuffed animals, e.g. a long row of heads of small deer. On exhibit in doubtful taste was a golden necklace which had belonged to Queen Farida. Instead of jewels it was decorated with the heads of small birds.

The Egyptian Museum was a place in which we would gladly have spent more time. Ahmed quickly took us on a tour of the lower floor, giving us a bird's eye view of the history of Egypt. I was intrigued by statues of couple where the wife was always pale in colour and the husband much dark - perhaps because he was presumed to spend more time out of doors. Then we went upstairs to marvel at the fabulous reassures from the tomb of Tutankhamun.

The Citadel

The Citadel, with its commanding position on a hill, was commissioned by Saladin in the twelfth century. It is surrounded by extensive fortifications and there are many civil and military buildings within the walls, also the splendid Mosque of Mohammed Ali, also known as the Alabaster Mosque. We took off our shoes to enter the Mosque and Ahmed gave us a most interesting talk on the Islamic religion as we sat on the floor.

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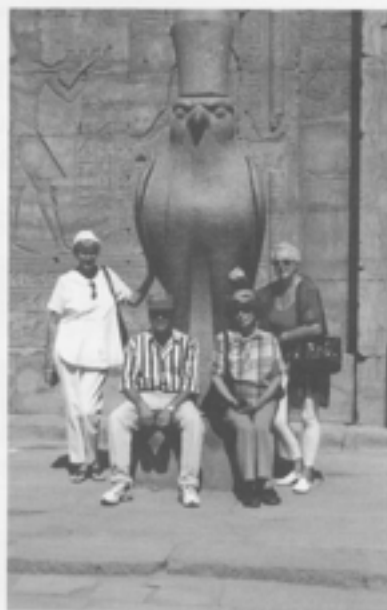
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(Top left) Gathered in the courtyard of the hotel in Cairo, from left to right: Dinah, Liz, John, Lillas, Solveig, Henrik, Doreen and Isobel.

(Top right) A visit to the Pyramids at Giza: John, and Maureen, Doreen, Liz, Dinah, Henrik, Solveig and Isobel.

(Left) Maureen and Dinah ride a camel near the Pyramids, and (Right) Liz, Dinah and Doreen pose with Ahmad, the guide, in front of the two-crowned Horus.



(Below left) A trip on a felucca at Aswan on the way to the botanic gardens near Aswan: Ann, Isobel, Ahmad and the boatman on the left, with Solveig and Dinah on the right of the boat.

(Below right): Ann watches closely as her hand is carefully decorated with henna by a Nubian woman.



There are fine views from the Citadel hill but it was too hazy that day for us to see the Pyramids. Apparently the fort was never used for any military purpose except when Napoleon fired on the city.

Our visit to Coptic Cairo included the beautiful church of St. Sergius, dating from the fourth century; the crypt below is said to have sheltered the Holy Family during the flight from Egypt. We also saw the Ben Ezra Synagogue with its fine ceiling and the Hanging Church. The Coptic Museum is in a handsome building with fine wooden "arabesque" ceilings. It houses many pieces of classical stonework, often adapted by the Christians by the addition of a cross. Upstairs, there were textile exhibits, icons and silverware including a pleasing Aladdin lamp with shell-shaped handle to reflect the light.

Welcoming Drinks

Other interesting visits in Cairo were to a perfume showroom, a papyrus showroom, and a carpet factory-cum-school. In each, we were welcomed with a refreshing drink of coffee, Pepsi cola or similar, or mint tea, and sometimes hibiscus tea to which I took a liking. We were shown how papyrus is made by peeling off the outer stalk and then cutting wafer-thin slices from the stem. These are then placed horizontally and vertically on a flat surface so that they overlap; then a sort of rolling-pin is used to squeeze out most of the water and the sheet is put in a press for several days. The process is essentially the same as when it was first invented. We were of course able to buy some of the products shown.

The visit to the souk or bazaar gave an opportunity to take some colourful photographs as well as a chance to try our bargaining skills. Hendrik's knowledge of Arabic was a useful asset

here. But before going to the souk we visited the lovely fourteenth century merchants' warehouse where we watched demonstrations showing how intricate designs were cut on brass and copper flatware and how inlays of silver were added. Another craftsman was making boxes and other articles decorated with pearl shell. Yet another was doing wood-turning to make the delicate little pieces which are used to make latticed screens, e.g. for the "drinking places" which adorn so many Moslem buildings and used to keep water relatively cool before the days of refrigeration.

A Visit to the Bazaar

Then on to the souk - full of people, colour and noise. There were all kinds of brass-work, jewellery, leather goods (so that Liliás could buy her photograph frames), and clothing including belly-dance outfits. The vendors were eager to sell but there was no harassment such as I remember on my previous one-day visit to Cairo many years ago.

As for entertainment, a real highlight of the tour was the performance of the "Whirling Dervishes" which took place in a lovely old building. The musicians, in long white robes, trooped in and formed a line at one end of the hall. They played Egyptian folk music which was very rhythmic, sometimes hypnotic. The musicians came forward and danced singly or in groups of two or more while the others continued to play. They were very dignified and moved smoothly with grace and style. Then another dancer entered, dressed in a vividly-coloured tunic and wide over-lapping skirts. He did the real whirling dance, spinning ever faster and faster. It was astonishing how he could spin on and on in the same direction without getting dizzy and out of control. There were more variations of this dance, and other dances using tambourines. As well as a dance this is a ritual and

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has religious significance. It was a moving and memorable experience.

More frivolous was the dinner cruise on the Nile. A good buffet meal was served while the boat glided along the river passing all the bright lights. Entertainment included a pianist, singers and a belly-dancer and also Doreen and Ahmed dancing the macadema.

Horrendous Traffic

Cairo is a fascinating city but hot and dusty and very noisy. The traffic was horrendous but somehow collisions seem to be avoided - just! Many of the buildings were very decrepit and there were many signs of poverty, but the people were mostly smiling and cheerful. It is amazing that they look as clean as they do since so much washing is hung outside in the dusty atmosphere. There were pathetic little donkeys and skinny horses pulling loads that were too heavy for them and it was not uncommon to see some goats being escorted along the pavement. There were women carrying large baskets of fruit on their heads, and I saw one of these with two live geese in her hands. Later, at Edfu, I was to see another woman with a heavy basket and balancing two cardboard trays of eggs on her left hand (six dozen?) I hope she didn't stumble.

On Wednesday, 29th, we made an early start to fly to Luxor. Although we knew that about 94% of the land Egypt is desert, this is realised more clearly when one looks down from the air on the barren sandy and rocky desert with the narrow strip of fertile land on each side of the river. Luxor is a pleasant town with plenty of green to be seen and the air was so much cleaner and fresher than Cairo. We boarded "The Nile Romance" and prepared to enjoy our six-day cruise.

That afternoon we went by caleche or horse-drawn gig to visit the recently-opened

Mummification Museum. This was well laid out and very interesting. We saw exhibits, diagrams and explanations about the mummification process, including the materials and instruments used.

It was very pleasant to glide along the river and watch water buffaloes and other animals grazing or swimming. Also of course we looked at villages along the way with people living and working on the land much as they would have done in past centuries. Many cattle egrets were to be seen also grey herons and pelicans. One day, Dinah spotted a purple gallinule. To some members of our party, the actual cruising was the most enjoyable part of the tour. Liliás, who had seen the temples before, did not waste her time but spent some happy hours on the top deck knitting a snowman for the Christmas Fair calling forth the comment from Doreen, "You should be knitting a pharaoh, not a bloody snowman!"

The Dendara Temple

The first day after our arrival, we sailed down river to Qena where we visited the Dendara Temple. This was built mainly by the Ptolemies and completed by the Romans. It is a large complex surrounded by ruined walls. We looked at the temple of Hathor, wife of the falcon-god, Horus. She is always portrayed with the face of a woman and the ears of a cow and sometimes with a pair of horns as well. The main temple is very impressive, with massive pillars all with the face (and ears) of Hathor on all four sides at the top. From the roof there are magnificent views.

That evening, everyone from our boat, and many others too, were bussed to Karnak for the "Son et Lumière" show which was a magical experience. The size and majesty of the great columns of these temples are quite breath-taking. As we moved slowly through the courts and colonnades, we heard the story of the many kings



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Above, at the last night on the boat, are Henrik, Lillas, Ann, Doreen, Ahmed, Liz, Dinah, Isobel and Maureen - and reclining at their feet, Cleopatra herself, Solveig. Above right, are two ladies from Helpline, Lillas and Dinah, who look as though they could do with a spot of help themselves. Apparently they were waiting to unveil themselves at Caesar's banquet!

and queens who had contributed, over some two thousand years, to the construction of these great temples of Amon. The show ended by the "sacred lake".

On 1st November we rose very early so that we could visit the Valleys of the Kings and Queens before the crowds and heat became oppressive. We started with the temple of Queen Hatshepsut. The morning was cool and peaceful and the scene was very beautiful. It is horrifying to think that this was where the terrible shooting took place just over two weeks later. This was very sad for the victims and their families and it must be a severe blow to the tourist industry on which so many Egyptians depend for their livelihood.

The Valley of the Kings

We visited two tombs in the Valley of the Kings and admired the well-preserved wall paintings. Unfortunately it was on the stony ground here that one of the tyres of John's wheelchair was punctured. However, the resourceful Ahmed quickly found someone to repair it. This was a chair lent by Helpline and was a godsend, enabling John to keep up with the group and to take part in most of our activities.

The "workmen's village" not far from the royal tombs gives some idea of how more humble people would have lived. The artisans had to live, segregated, in this place for many years so that they would not reveal the secrets of the tombs.



We visited the temple of Horus, the falcon-headed god at Edfu. There is a fine statue of Horus, wearing the double crown of upper and lower Egypt. He looks angry because he is searching for his wicked Uncle Set to take revenge for the murder of his father, Osiris. All this is told on reliefs. The next day we visited the Graeco-Roman temple at Kom Ombu; this was dedicated jointly to Horus and to Sobek, the crocodile god. Some Egyptian gods were revered because they were good and benefits could be expected. Others such as the jackal, Anubis, and the crocodile, Sobek, had to be propitiated because of the harm they might do. There were mummies of crocodiles in the Kom Ombu temple but they were rather small and dried up.

Our last-but-one evening on board was "Egyptian Night" and almost everyone came to dinner in a *gallabiya* or other exotic outfit. Ann and Solveig had each bought a *gallabiya* the previous evening from boat traders who tossed their wares in plastic bags up to the top deck for inspection. After some bargaining, the money or rejected article, was tied up in the plastic bag and tossed down. For dinner we had some rather good Egyptian fare and later, some of the groups put on a little show (see page 20). Ours was devised by Ann and showed a very original version of the meeting of Caesar and Cleopatra - the latter being attended by some Spice girls and by Solveig (the Danish pastry) in a glamorous belly-dance dress.

After reaching Aswan we were taken to see the Lower and Upper Dams and Lake Nasser. We went on to the granite quarry from which so much stone was taken down the River to be used in temples and tombs. We were shown the giant

obelisk which remains attached to the rock, and unfinished because it was found to be flawed. Next we went by motor boat to the island of Agilkia where the beautiful temple Philae was re-erected. It had already suffered flooding after the building of the lower dam, and would have been completely submerged when the High Dam was built.

We went for a felucca sail while in Aswan and this was delightful. We saw the house and mausoleum of the old Aga Khan and then landed at the Botanical Island. This has tropical trees and plants including teak trees in flower, also cassias, papayas, various acacias and a large variety of palm trees. After sailing a little further, we landed and walked to the Nubian village. This is one of forty-four villages which were evacuated and the inhabitants re-located when the Upper Dam was built. The villages now lie under Lake Nasser.

The Nubians

The Nubians are good-looking people and charming. They showed us some of their houses which have brightly coloured patterns painted on the walls, inside and outside. The rounded ceilings are attractive and are said to keep the houses cooler. The people make baskets, bead necklaces, wooden dolls, printed cloths and other things to sell to tourists. Another skill was demonstrated by a young woman who painted an intricate design on Ann's hand and wrist; it will wear off!

By Thursday, 6th, we were used to early starts and by 8 am we were on our way to Aswan airport to fly to Abu Simbal. The temples of Rameses II, the great king who ruled for about sixty years in the thirteenth and twelfth centuries B.C. and of his first and favourite wife, Nefertari, were not built but hewn out of solid rock. We marvelled at the four colossal statues of the king which sit in front of his temple. They demonstrate his enormous wealth and power (as well as vanity) and were intended to deter any threats from neighbouring states to the south.

An amazing rescue operation was carried out by the Egyptians with the aid of UNESCO to save the temples from the rising waters of Lake Nasser. More than a thousand numbered blocks were cut out of the rock and re-erected on higher ground. Almost as fascinating as the temples themselves was the tour "backstage" into the great concrete dome supporting the artificial mountain, so that we could see from the back how the work had been carried out.

A great Success

This was the last item of our programme and we could relax and prepare for the journey back to Andorra. We all felt that the tour had been a great success and were very glad that we had seen some of this remarkable country. Ann did a wonderful job, with the able assistance of Ahmed, in the planning and organisation of our travel accommodation, and sightseeing, and it is greatly to their credit that everything went so smoothly.

We found the Egyptian people kind and friendly everywhere we went. As tipping is the custom of the country we had to work hard to keep adequate supplies of small change, but services were very readily and indeed graciously performed - sometimes services which we hadn't realised we required: Maureen and I were taken aback when a cloakroom attendant insisted on turning on the taps for us and even pressing the soap dispenser!

Finally one of the greatest pleasures of the trip was the company. The group was a good size and we enjoyed getting to know each other better. There was always a lot of laughter, especially when Doreen or Liliás was around and the phrase "Oh really" will be a reminder of these days for some time to come. □

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