

INTER COMM

CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

MAGAZINE / REVISTA



VOL. 8 - Núm. 1 - AUTUMN / TARDOR 1998

CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

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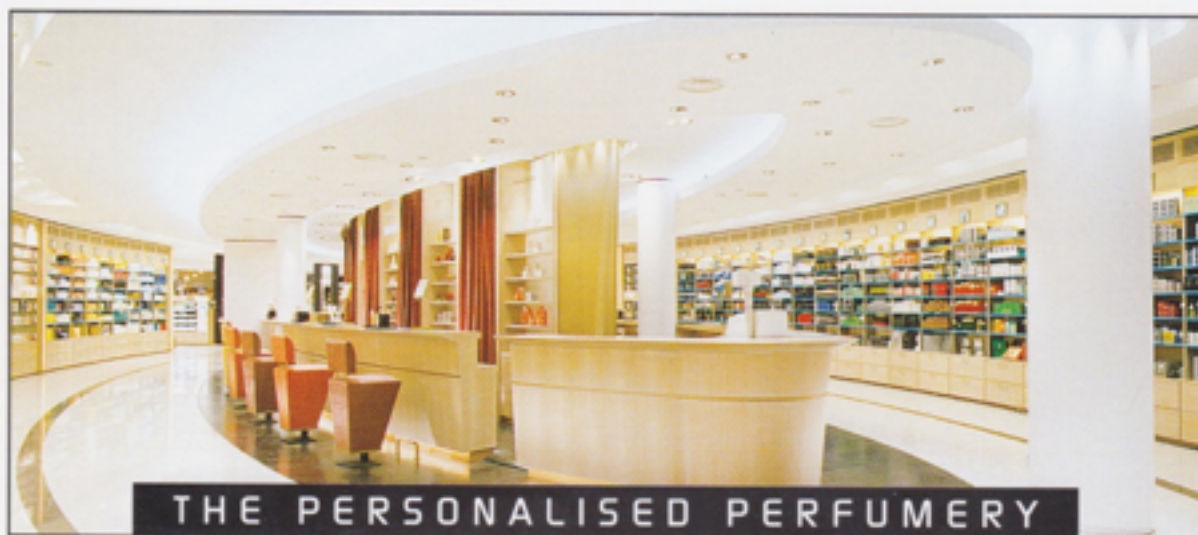
ALL THE ABOVE ARE MEMBERS OF THE CLUB BOARD.

COFFEE MORNING IS HELD EVERY WEDNESDAY (10.30 - 12.00) AT THE HOTEL PARIS-LONDRES, COME ALONG FOR A PLEASANT MORNING.

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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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INTERCOMM

Club Internacional d'Andorra

Quarterly Magazine

September 1998

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EDITOR: MARGARET SHAI DA

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NEWS FROM THE BOARD

Tony Hooper

Shortly after you receive this issue we shall be saying au revoir to **Dinah Baxter**, who as most of you know, is returning to live in England. Dinah has been a stalwart of the Club for a number of years and is going to be missed by all who know her. Her biggest contribution to the life of the community has been through her excellent work in organising Helpline. There are many who will always remember her for her unfailing support and help. On behalf of the Club I would like to wish her well in her new abode.

Because of the departure of Dinah we are now searching for a person with some kind of medical qualifications who would be willing to step in and organise Helpline. We have a large number of helpers who are willing to give their time and energies to assist those less fortunate than themselves but we do need an organiser who can pull all their efforts together. So, please, if you fit the bill, do come forward – the community needs you.

We are pleased to announce that **Hassan Shaída** has accepted our invitation to be co-opted to the Board. We know that Hassan has much to offer and we hope for a long and fruitful relationship.

You will know that Estil Nordic have closed. We must express our thanks to Jill and Linda who have printed the Newsletter, also acted



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as a distribution point, and as a post office for the Club for the past several years. The actual post box has been moved to Servissim's new office in la Massana. The loss of the services provided by Jill and Linda will mean that payment will have to be made for printing the Newsletter, and other secretarial costs will arise. One consequence is that we have had to purchase some equipment from Estil Nordic.

In November we will have arrived at the tenth anniversary of the initial stirrings of the Club. We intend to celebrate this tenth anniversary with a lunch in January that will mark ten years since the initial Coffee morning - which was the first public meeting of the Club. I intend to write a short history for the Winter (December) issue and would be pleased to receive any reminiscences, particularly from those have been members from the outset. ☐

EDITORIAL

Margaret Shaida

Last July, in the middle of the hottest spell of summer, I went down with bronchitis. It seemed most unfair to feel so ill when the weather was so beautiful. As I slumped in my chair, feeling quite sorry for myself, the door bell rang. A delivery lady was standing there, armed with a smile - and a lovely bunch of flowers. The card attached read: "From all at Helpline", and wished me good health and a rapid recovery.

I cannot tell you how cheered I was to receive these flowers. Suddenly I felt less isolated and miserable. From that day, I began to feel better! From that day too, I realised what a wonderful job Helpline does, quietly, unobtrusively and often unacknowledged. We are very fortunate to have such a group of dedicated people working for us in such times.

Obituary

As reported in the weekly newsletter in July, Colonel Richard Anthony "Tony" Davies, O.B.E. died at the age of 84, on Sunday, 21st June, in Dorset, England. A former resident of Andorra, and Church Warden, Tony was a regular soldier, serving in the Royal Berkshire Regiment, escaping at Dunkirk, then serving in many other theatres of the war, and being mentioned in despatches. He was also Colonel of the West India Regiment.

He was married first to Alys with whom he had three children, Carol, who predeceased him, and two sons, Richard and Derek. Barbara Prime, whom he married in 1975, was head of Public Relations for CISA in London, later becoming CISA's London agent. They bought a *borda* in Sispony, where they spent their holidays, eventually retiring here.

There is to be a donation in memory of Tony to the Parkinson's Society. Jan Coles is co-ordinating the collection of individual donations, which will then be sent as one cheque to London. Jan can be contacted at her home, Casa Gene Nova, Arans, Ordino. Telephone: 850156

Another bumper issue awaits you this month - thanks to a number of contributors. First, we have a photo taken in Andorra some twenty years ago. Michael Burgess thinks it may have been taken in Escaldes - but would like to hear from anyone who knew Andorra twenty years ago. You can read all about it in his letter to the editor on page 4.

We also have a number of reports on the various activities during the past three months. Karin Ostergaard sent in a report on Una Nit Musica i Dansa held last May (page



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12), while Gil Lamb's report on another successful Car Boot Sale (page 14) reminds us all of a busy weekend. Alan Hadden comments on a Magical Evening (page 10). He recalls the delightful evening of poetry and prose readings given by Ann Price and held in Dinah Baxter's Ordino garden, last July.


Clare Allcard tells us about an unusually busy season of the International Singers of Andorra (page 16). Their concert at Meritxell near Canillo must have been a particularly moving event, celebrating as it did the silver and golden anniversaries of long-wedded Andorran couples.

Georgina Tennyson tells us about her experiences on a TV show in Andorra, (page 22) and June Wong relates her story of a specially fraught journey to and from England (page 21). Their eventual return to Andorra from Barcelona was a particularly "newsworthy" affair.

The news of the activities of our Groups (see pages 5-8) always proves interesting. It is not just the wide range of groups that is so fascinating (from patchwork and singing to computers and painting), it is the full choice of tours and trips that are organised for our edification. The annual shopping trip to Barcelona is always a wonderful weekend, and you are advised to book early to be sure of a place.

Two new groups are in hand – the Patchwork Group has already held its first meeting, but it

is not too late to join in for a full winter of projects and advice. The Writers Group promises to be interesting new group, and could be directed towards all types of writing.

Don't forget, contributions and articles for this magazine are always welcome. The closing date for the next issue is 1st November. Call the Editor, Margaret Shaida on 860043. 

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A RECOMMENDATION AND SOME RECENT HISTORY

Dear Margaret

Sarah and I recently employed Canillo Serveis whose details we found advertised in the CIA Magazine. Claude Dépétris replaced our hot water tank efficiently and more importantly without leaving a "mess".

We would not hesitate to recommend Claude's plumbing/electrical capabilities to anyone needing this type of work. We understand that Claude's company has since extended its services to include the supply of Heating, Plumbing and Refrigeration Equipment, as well as decorating studios, apartments, houses, floor repairs, and carpet and window cleaning. Claude speaks only French, but his wife Claudine speaks very good English. All work costing more than 10,000 pts is subject to an estimate with no obligation on the part of the client.

Whilst writing, Sarah would like to enclose a couple of photographs (one of them reproduced on this page) given to her by her Grandmother who visited Andorra some twenty years ago. Unfortunately, Phil has forgotten the name of the hotel where she stayed. I think it may be possible to deduce that as Phil remembers



taking the photographs from her bedroom window and the pictures are of views over towards Escaldes, that the hotel could have been the Roc Blanc. Perhaps other members who have lived in Andorra for some time may be able to correct us or agree.

Kind regards,
Michael Burgess, Encamp

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NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

The International Singers d'Andorra

As you will read elsewhere, this has been an extremely busy summer season for us. We took part in five concerts - all with different programmes - in less than one month. Thanks to the Andorra la Vella *comú* and the help of Carmé Tinturí, we now practice every Tuesday down in their *Sala d'Actes*. Before our next concerts we hope to have our very own, easily transportable, electronic piano.

And so to the future. Our basic Christmas programme has been chosen. The dates for the Festival of International Christmas Music have been set for Saturday, 12th and Sunday, 13th of December (please note them in your diary). There is a chance we may also sing in the great monastery at Montserrat, Spain on the 20th December which is a most exciting prospect.

NOW WE NEED MEN! Yes, we are hoping to gather together enough men to join us at Christmas in one major piece from the Messiah plus a couple of shorter, well-known carols. So, any man out there who has ever sung in a choir, or who knows how to hold a part, do please contact us as we will begin rehearsals September/October and the more voices we have the merrier. Indeed, anyone, male or female, wishing to join us please telephone Clare Allcard 836269, Brenda Ross 836886 or Binnie Segal 836296.

THE ART GROUP

If any member of the International Club has more than a passing interest in art, this is a good time to join the group. Space has been a

problem but now some of the members have moved elsewhere, we could accommodate more.

If you have no intention of an overnight transformation into a Leonardo or Picasso, come and join us if you consider it an adventure and a joyful discipline. This will enable you to work together with a wide variety of others ranging from absolute beginners to those of considerable skill.

The Art Group was formed in 1989. Since 1992, under the guidance of Nina O'Brien, the Group experiments with growing confidence and effect - some more intuitive and naïve in their expressions than others but all are painting for pleasure. Life in Andorra does not have too many deadlines except for a few self-imposed ones. These are not painters in revolt suffering from social norms and afraid of social satire. Nor is there the pressing need to sell a painting in the Place Tetre, Montmartre, to pay for tomorrow's food!

Studio sessions are in Andorra la Vella, Tuesdays, or any other day by mutual agreement, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m..

The monthly fee is 1,000 pesetas which goes towards the rent of the studio. Any further information from Nina O'Brien, phone 837772.

ACTIVITIES GROUP

For all those members who have been feeling deprived of entertainment whilst Fina and I have been having our little period of R & R, we now have two excursions to offer plus the advance notice of our Christmas Shopping trip. The August and September excursions are in



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conjunction with Centre D'Esplai.

Saturday, 22nd August

Follow the Smugglers' Trail

Smuggling is very much the question of the moment here in Andorra. This excursion follows the trails used by the smugglers, crossing and re-crossing the borders. The scenery is magnificent, the terrain somewhat nerve-wracking, travel is by jeep. This is a whole day excursion, leaving about 8.30 a.m., returning between 6-7 p.m. Cost, including lunch: Members: 5,750 pts; Non-members: 6,000 pts.

This is sure to be very popular and numbers are limited, so call **Ann Price: 836653**, or book at Coffee Mornings, with payment to "CIA Activities".

Thursday, 10th September

Au revoir, Dinah

Lunch at 1 p.m. at the Hotel Micolau in Arinsal for CIA Members and partners only, to say farewell to **Dinah Baxter**. Three courses + wine, water, coffee: 2,000 pts. **ONLY FIFTY PLACES AVAILABLE.** Call **Ann Price: 836653**

Thursday, 25th September

The Little Yellow Train

Le Train Jaune was once an essential local service, joining the many quaintly-named villages of Err, Llo and Ur between La Tour de Carol and Villefranche-de-Conflent. Today's tourists travel as in a previous age in open carriages, with time actually to see the beauties of the Cerdanya and the Tet valley, in fact all that dramatic scenery we usually view, white-knuckled and clutching a 'sick-bag' from wildly-weaving cars. The whole journey takes a little over three hours. Villefranche looks

much as it did three hundred years ago, though in fact it dates from 1092. The character of the town shows its frequent changes from Spanish to French domination. Today's traveller can enjoy not only the historical gems of Villefranche but also choose from an excellent selection of cafes and restaurants in which to sample French cuisine.

A very special addition to this excursion is a visit to the magnificent Grottes de Canelettes with stalactites, stalagmites and those formations the French call 'excentriques'. Also held within the caves is a very atmospheric performance of *Son et Lumière*.

This is a whole day excursion leaving about 8 a.m. and returning about 7 pm. Cost including return bus transport, the Little Yellow Train and entry to caves: Members 7,700 pts. Non-members: 8,250 pts. Book now to be sure of a place. Payment before 10th August. Call **Ann Price** on 836653.

Advance Notice

Saturday-Monday, 5th-7th December

Christmas Shopping, Barcelona

Same plan as in previous years, leaving Andorra early, arriving Barcelona before lunch.

First Day: Afternoon transport to central shopping area or Gothic guided tour with **Fina**, or the Maritime Museum and Museum of the City with **Ann**. Transport back to hotel. Evening - do your own thing - or be taken by bus to Barceloneta, the fish port, super 'fishy' restaurants.

Second Day: Choice of tour/visits to the main sights of Barcelona. If you have particular preferences, please say so when booking. Definitely included: the Ramblas for 'street theatre'. Evening: *Tablao Carmen* in Pueblo Espanyol for genuine flamenco and dinner.



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Third Day: Shop 'til you Drop. M&S are in the same development as the hotel – Corte Ingles just along the road. You, your suitcases and shopping will be collected in mid-afternoon. Back home in time for dinner.

Price for 2 nights room and buffet breakfast, 3 days bus transport, but not entries to museums and shows.; Singles: 29,000, doubles per person: 24,000; Non-members: +4,000 pts. Book now.

Pay in October. Call **Ann Price** on 836653 now.

Either Spring or Autumn 1999

Red Sea Diving

Based at the Deluxe Sheraton Hotel in the new purpose-built resort of El Gourma. Activities offered from the hotel include Scuba Diving and Snorkelling Trips. Diving instruction for all levels. N.B. you should be an adequate swimmer. Plus almost every water sport. You can imagine diving amongst the marine life and corals of the Red Sea is a truly unforgettable experience. Also offered are all the cultural and ethnic delights of both ancient and modern Egypt.

Cost including international and domestic flights, 7 nights half board: between £600-£700, sharing a double room.

Would any members interested in this proposed holiday, please contact **Ann Price** before 30th September 1998.

HELPLINE

Our participation in the Car Boot Sale last June was most gratifying, as was the wonderful evening of "Prose and Poetry

Readings" by **Ann Price** held in **Dinah Baxter's** garden in July (for a fuller report, please see page 10). As you will see from this, the evening was held in part to say farewell to **Dinah Baxter**, the organiser and chief "medical officer" of Helpline. Dinah is leaving us in September and her kindly expertise and advice will be sorely missed.

You will all have received your stickers with the Medical Emergency telephone number. These should be stuck on the telephone or in a prominent place nearby – you never know when you – or your visitors – might need them. These stickers were kindly prepared and donated by **Sally and Peter Smith**.

As you know, we are urgently seeking the assistance of a co-ordinator for the work of Helpline. It is a challenging job that could prove to be one of the most rewarding activities within the Club. Much of the groundwork has been done – contacts, telephone numbers, emergency services – and there is a large pool of willing helpers. If you feel you can help or would like to discuss the matter further, please call **Lilias Grassie** on 838349 or **Ann Price** on 836653. In the meantime, if you find yourself facing an emergency, please see the weekly Newsletter for weekly contacts.

And we still have copies of our "Helpline Book of International Recipes". It makes a marvellous gift, and costs only Pts. 1,000. Copies are available from **Stella Madden** (on 837681) or at the Coffee Mornings in the Paris-Londres Hotel.

The Red Cross Connection

As reported in our last issue, the CIA and Helpline have formed an association with the Andorran Red Cross to create the basis of an International Section within that Organisation.

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Helpline are keen to co-operate in the setting up of a "Panic Button System" here in Andorra. If you have not received an application form, please phone Liliass Grassie on 838340 or Ann Price on 836653. They can answer any questions you may have about the proposed "Panic Button Scheme".

WINE TASTING GROUP

Due to business and personal commitments the current organisers of the Wine Tasting Group will be unable to arrange a meeting until March 1999. However, if any volunteer would like to arrange a tasting prior to that date, we would be delighted! Contact 836210 or 838084.

THE COFFEE MORNINGS

Up to forty members (not always the same ones) turn up each week to attend the Coffee Morning. The Club meets over coffee every Wednesday morning, 10.30 to 12.00, at the Paris-Londres Hotel. The hotel offers pleasant surroundings, ample parking, and a constant supply of coffee and drinks.

At least two members (usually more) of the CIA Committee are on hand to offer advice and guidance on the activities of the CIA. Bookings for activities may be made at the Coffee Mornings, and the Weekly Newsletter is on sale (a bargain at 25 pts each), which means you get it at least two days (and up to a week) earlier than by post. English-language magazines are often on hand for anyone to take. It's a pleasant morning, and entrance is ABSOLUTELY FREE! So do come along, meet other Club members, catch up with the news, and find out what's happening around town.

THE COMPUTER CLUB

The Club now holds regular meetings every other Thursday, starting 13th August, at 11.00 a.m. at the Hotel Rutllan in la Massana. The hotel is just past the traffic circle in la Massana, on the left of the road to Arinsal. There is additional parking further up on the left.

Attendance varies between ten and fifteen persons. Over cups of coffee, we discuss various

computing problems. Brian Keep continues to give his help, and has written a leaflet on the way to configure a computer to access the net. Photocopies of this are available. In addition, there is a wealth of knowledge that only a group of users can share between the attendees.

The club now has a list of about seventy members who are interested in using computers. There are forty members who are active on the Internet, and there is a slow growth in their number. It is now possible to join the Internet and not be on the E-mail system.

The net continues to expand in Andorra, with the C.I.A. weekly news bulletin now available on the net at: bdore@andorra.ad. STA also provides an up-to-date telephone guide (which includes fax and mobile numbers as well as home telephone numbers) at: <http://www.laguia.andorra.ad>.

New members are always welcome. Contact Stanley Jones on jones.stanley@andorra.ad or on 836 972, or Gil Lamb on gillamb@andorra.ad or on 835258.

NEW PATCHWORK GROUP

By the time you read this, the Patchwork Group will have had its first meeting. Interested members should have received a mailing with information and future plans. It's not too late to join in. For further details, call Jill Furnston on 836060.

A WRITERS GROUP?

There appears to be considerable interest among members to form a writers group. Would all those who would like to join a new writers group, please get in touch with Ann Price on 836653 - she will effect introductions, provide guidelines, and start the ball rolling. ☐

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Restaurant Review

RESTAURANT BRETONA

A rare visit to Canillo for Jacquie Crozier recently turned up a splendid new find of a restaurant. Conveniently situated right opposite the wonderful Canillo Skating Rink and sports complex. Here Jacquie tells us all about it.

Canillo is not a town I visit very often but in the middle of June, Brian and I had occasion to spend the morning there. We wanted a cup of coffee and most bars and hotels were shut for their annual holidays: the exception being the Bretona, opposite the skating rink. The Belgian proprietor, who speaks English among her five languages, was friendly and as we were still there at 1 p.m., we decided to have a quick lunch.

A pizza seemed to fit the bill. There were about ten listed on the menu, at prices of between 1,000 and 1,300 pts. We chose the Norwegian with salmon and crème fraîche and the Seafood. Both arrived quickly and were delicious, obviously homemade with a thin, crisp base and plenty of cheese – an ingredient too often scrimped.

Noticing that the restaurant announced that its speciality was mussels (a favourite with us), we decided to return a few evenings later. We would be served a kilo of mussels, we were informed, cooked Belgian style. The mussels arrived in huge black casseroles, one each. The lid was removed to serve as a container for the shells, and the bowl was full to the brim with aromatic mussels, looking enough for four people. They were served with a mustardy dipping sauce, made from their cooking juices, as well as home-made mayonnaise. (There were also chips, but, given the size of the portions, I'm afraid these remained

untouched, so I can't comment on their quality!) If you wanted mussels as a first course, then a one-kilo portion (1,800 pts) would certainly be enough for two people.

Other Specialities

The menu of the Bretona is, sensibly, limited. There are salads, home-made paté and pastas for starters, all priced at about 1,000 pts. The hot goat's cheese salad was delicious and large enough for a light main course. There are other main courses besides mussels, of course: chops, trout, Steak Tartar were on the menu. Sweet pancakes for dessert are another speciality; there is also the "tarte" of the day, as well as various ice creams and lemon or chocolate mousse.

The wine list contains many French wines, although the "house red" at 800 pts was Spanish. The Bretona is a small, informal restaurant; it could perhaps seat 30 at a squash. The décor is simple but pretty – wood and white walls – and the atmosphere pleasant and friendly. The restaurant is curtained off from the small bar or one can sit outside on the pavement for lunch.

If you take visitors (or grandchildren) skating at the Ice Palace, the Bretona would be a good place to go for a meal afterwards. If you enjoy shellfish, then it is worth making a special journey. ☐

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A MAGICAL EVENING

When a charming champagne supper and a delightful poetry and prose reading by Ann Price was held in Dinah Baxter's Ordino garden in the cool of a summer's evening last July, Alan Hadden was enchanted. Here he tells us of a magical evening.

"Helpline invites you to a champagne supper and an evening of poetry and prose" ran the announcement, and on 11th July, Helpline supporters and friends of Dinah Baxter's met in her garden in Ordino to listen to Ann Price's readings, to thank Dinah for her many and great contributions to the community, and to wish her well when she is back in England again.

Champagne indeed it was, not cava, as people, some 45 in all, arrived and chatted in Dinah's well-tended garden with its wonderful views of the sweep of the mountains. Next, in Dinah's drawing-room, came Ann Price's readings, a well-chosen selection from works by American, British, Egyptian, Lebanese and Spanish poets, and of Judith Wood's "The Legend of Engolasters" from the Writer Circle's anthology "Andorra, Festivals, Traditions and Folklore".

Ann was roundly applauded after each piece and, at the end, thanked and rewarded with a



Ann Price reading poems and excerpts of prose from a group of international authors



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bouquet. What talent there is among us!

Next came a "thank you" to Dinah, not just for the evening's hospitality but more particularly for all she has done for the community through Helpline: for her compassion, ready availability and tireless energy – not least at the time of the Arinsal avalanche when visitors, not just the community, experienced her dedication to helping others. Helpline presented her with a print of a *borda* in Sispony to remind her with affection of her years with us here.

And so back into the garden for a buffet supper as night was falling, for conversation and reminiscences. What a wonderful way to support Helpline and to thank a much-loved tower of strength, **Dinah Baxter**. □

Many people contributed to the success of the summer evening of Poetry and Prose. **Clare Allcard** for preparing the pamphlet containing information and background to the numerous poets and authors; **Ann Matschke** for designing the invitation, **Lilias Grassie** and her team of workers for organising the food and drink; and last, but not least, **Dinah Baxter** for sharing her lovely garden.

ENGLISH DENTIST IN LA MASSANA

An English dentist, Dr. Robert H. Mummery, has set up in practice in La Massana. A long-time resident of Andorra, Dr. Mummery has worked for a number of years as a locum in Spain and France. Prior to that he practised as a consultant in Britain. His years of experience have spanned a total range of dentistry and oral surgery. Here, his clinic is fitted out with the latest equipment; he offers a denture repair service, and even acupuncture for the faint-hearted.



Club members enjoy champagne and dinner after hearing poetry and prose readings

FIRST MEETING OF ALPHA

The First Autumn Meeting of ALPHA will take place on Tuesday, 1st September at 4.30 p.m. in the home of Jo Hine, Urb. Clota Verda, 2nd Floor, Door K (Tel: 836280).

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UNA NIT DE MUSICA i DANSA

The two performances of Una Nit de Musica i Dansa, organised and largely performed by members of the Club afforded us two evenings of superlative pleasure. Karin Ostergaard gives us a comprehensive report to bring back some happy memories.

Of the two performances put on by the dance group of the International Club of Andorra on the 23rd and 24th May, we chose the latter, which started at 7 p.m. instead of the performance the night before at 10 p.m. (which is bedtime for some of us!). Unfortunately, there was a big traffic jam everywhere due to a severe accident near Santa Coloma and a sporting event in another part of Andorra. We made it on time, but many others did not, and the show started about twenty minutes late as a result.

After Simon Binsted's welcome speech in Catalan and English, the International Singers came out on stage, so very smart and uniformly dressed in long black skirts and white blouses which gave an impression of great elegance. The choir proved once more what a lot of serious practice they put in. They did a marvellous job entertaining us with a variety of songs, directed by the ever-competent Sheila Hooper and accompanied by the talented Binnie Segal.

Jackie Richards' dance performance afterwards was a strong and dramatic contrast that showed her great talent. The makeup, costumes and music were all of top quality. Although the printed programme and the "actual events" did not always coincide, owing to various "technical reasons" as explained by Simon Binsted, we managed to put two and two together. Sheila Hooper gave a wonderful presentation of her native Welsh songs, *Cancons d'Amor del Pais de Galles*. Giselle Pereira's exquisite voice had us all captivated when she sang Franz Lehar's *Dein ist Mein Ganzes Herz* and *Canco d'una poeta del segle XVIII*.



Jackie Richards charmed us all with her beautiful dancing and choreography

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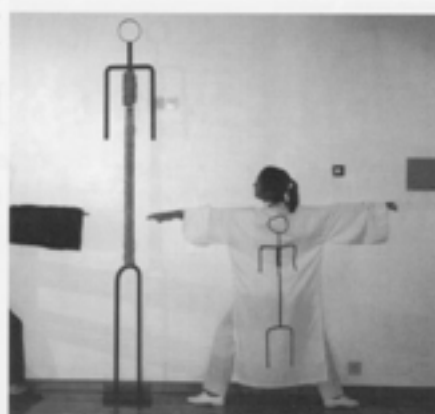
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Francisco Amat i el seu Grup gave us all a real treat by presenting us with an exciting programme of various colourful Spanish dances. Jackie Richards and Maite Castro were a unique pair in their interpretation of *Del Pare Venim al Pare Tornem* - excellent choreography by Maite. Serafi Milan's entrance spoke for itself - the audience showed how popular he is and his voice never fails to impress everyone. Binne Segal splendidly accompanied on the pianoforte many of the performers mentioned in this programme, but her biggest trump card came when she played solo. She was just terrific, and the audience showed their appreciation. Esther Esteve's *Red Indian Dance Show* took our breath away from start to finish, and her well-organised trio kept us spellbound. Judit Villardo, student of Esther Esteve, did a lovely solo dance. *Una Nit de Musica i Dansa* turned out to be a great success owing to the well planned programmes, with lots of variety and talented performers. Thanks are also due to all the people who worked backstage behind the scenes. Without them, this show could not have happened, and last but not least, how fortunate we are to be able to exercise these talents and enjoy them in this progressive little country, Andorra, which shows us such good will and gives us such great co-operation. The performances received the best-ever reviews in *Diari d'Andorra*. Indeed, there was genuine enthusiasm in the whole of the Andorran media for this biennial event. □



Jackie Richards and Maite Binsted pose with the sculpture that inspired Maite's choreography. The costumes were made by the multi-talented costumier Stella Madden

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Activities

THE 1998 CAR BOOT SALE

The annual car boot sale at Arinsal has become a fun event, greatly anticipated by both members and residents alike. This year, Gil Lamb has written us a report.

In the UK, car boot sales sometimes have the rather unpleasant connotation of being concerned quite largely with the disposal of stolen goods. Fortunately, this does not apply to the CIA annual Car Boot Sale in the car park at Arinsal, where it has been held annually for the past four years.

This fifth sale held on Sunday, 28th June, was an undoubted success. This was very largely due to the efforts of Caroline Colvin-Smith. She not only arranged for a record number of stall holders to be present, but also greatly improved its probable chance of success by the amount of PR work that she put in with the various Andorran publications as well as the Andorra Radio and TV networks.

An example of her efforts is that Charlie, an ATV personality, who takes part as light relief between items in the chat show "Punt i a Part" booked his own stall during the course of a live television programme. This was whilst interviewing Caroline in connection with publicity for the Car Boot Sale. Caroline tells me that five CIA members have recently appeared on this show.

This year fifty pitches were booked – a record by a long way – of which thirty-seven were taken by private vendors with the balance being occupied by charities. There was more than twice the number of shoppers too as in 1997.

As you probably know, the comparatively small charge for a pitch is all that it costs for anyone to sell at the Car Boot Sale, apart from all

the personal effort required. This charge (a mere 1,250 pts) goes to charity, which is really the object of the affair, rather than simply enabling us to sell our unwanted belongings! The CIA was able to give 46,250 pts to Carita Paroquial in la Massana. However, the charities present are not expected to pay for their pitch. One stall was giving its takings towards sponsoring a Third World Child, while another was collecting for medical research.

The market was due to start selling at 09.00 but by then there were so many prospective shoppers crowded round the entrance that Ann Price and Caroline relented and let them in early. Stan Jones assisted as a "policeman" at the entrance. He wasn't able to do much talking, as he had also been pressured into the job of blowing up balloons!

There was a great variety of things for sale, and although it wasn't possible to say

that there was everything from a needle to an anchor on sale, it wouldn't be far off the mark. There were second-hand clothes, ski wear, books, home-made cakes, jams and chutneys, stamps, cold drinks, old postcards, artificial flowers, toys, costume jewellery and much more besides. There was furniture and some brand new door mats. I resisted buying one last year, but succumbed this time. The Andorran Charities present were very well supported. I bought six raffle tickets, and was agreeably surprised to find one of the tickets was not blank, which fact entitled me to a delightful hamper. I was very lucky, because the



Karin and Sven Ostergaard chat to Clare Allcafrd at the Car Boot Sale last June

bag of blank tickets was enormous. Thank you to all the unlucky donors!

The press, radio and TV were present with photographers. Having given us excellent pre-sale coverage, they did equally well after the event. One newspaper stated that "this market has become one of the important dates in the Andorran Festive and Social Calendar – a great opportunity for all the communities to come together in a very pleasant ambiance".

Since the event, Caroline tells me that she has been getting several calls a day from people who had selling pitches to tell her how much they had enjoyed themselves and how well they had done. They said that they certainly would be back next year. She has since received a charming letter from Mossen Joan thanking everyone for their work and donation. There have also been several enquiries from local residents concerning joining the Club. Perhaps we shall yet find Catalan being spoken at the Wednesday coffee mornings.

There cannot be much left in the attics and garages in Andorra after this event! ☐



A debonair Dinah Baxter mans the Helpline stand at the Car Boot Sale, while Ann Matschke copes with a large crowd of interested purchasers at her "Association for Defence of Nature" stand.

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A SUMMER SEASON WITH THE INTERNATIONAL SINGERS D'ANDORRA

With three concerts in two days, our international singers came of age and proved their ability to cope with all manner of situations. Clare Allcard tells us all about it.

So, how do you like the "d'Andorra"? It seems about time we acknowledged that the native English-speakers of our choir are no longer the majority; tidily outnumbered by Catalan-speakers (3-4), French (3), Japanese (3) Brazilians and Dutch (2 each) and German (1) to say nothing of our Welsh-speaking conductor!

The summer season started a few days prior to June 20th, when all the choirs from Andorra were to celebrate the International Day of Music and pay homage to the composer, Natàlia Solà Salvà. (She has run a private music school for children in Andorra La Vella since 1958.) Catherine Metayer, director of the Petits Cantors, had most generously offered to guide the Sant Antoni Choir and ourselves through a rehearsal of *La Goja de Perafita*, the piece by Sra. Solà Salvà which we were to sing, *en masse*, on the night. Wow! What an experience! The way Catherine cajoled music out of us was amazing; the myriad different techniques she used to improve our voices; and the way she herself could sing bass with the men and then soar to the pure notes of a soprano. We finished practising well after midnight, full of admiration for her rare gift.

Binnie Segal, our pianist, was away on a well-deserved holiday in Canada so Barbara Melin once again magnanimously agreed to play for us. Then, suddenly, poor Sheila Hooper, our conductor, was struck down with appendicitis. Barbara stepped in, pouring her energy, enthusiasm, hard work and wide musical knowledge into the choir, so that we left each rehearsal (and there were many!) exhausted yet

elated by all we were learning. At the concert, held in the National Auditorium, Barbara gave a virtuoso performance, at times even playing the grand piano with one hand while conducting us with the other! The Ordino Auditorium is a wonderful place to sing and we had a glorious



The International Choir of Andorra in the beautiful cathedral of Mèrtzell

time, especially at the end when 200 or more singers, aged from 6 to 76, crowded onto the stage to sing *La Goja* followed by the Andorran National Anthem.

But there's no sleep for the wicked. Edward and I were up early next morning in order to be down at the Escaldes car park for the Singers' very first television show, starting at 10.14am. Edward had spent the previous day completing four wooden benches for the back row of the choir to stand on. (Quite a revolution. We no longer bury our voices in the coiffeurs of those in front.) Now we had to load the benches and the piano, very kindly lent to us by the Sharp family, into the car and then negotiate the expensive

exhibits at the Car Fair to reach the ATV tent. Thanks to **Caroline Colvin-Smith**, the club's publicity organiser, several of our choir members are becoming quite adept at handling the media. **Maria Teresa Raurell**, in particular, has made a number of radio and TV appearances on our behalf, accompanied, on one occasion, by **Gisele Pereira** and **Deborah Hodges** but this was the first time we, as a choir, had been asked to perform.

They said they wanted four songs lasting a total of ten minutes. We Singers arrived fully toggled out in our 'uniform', a trifle battered after the previous night, a trifle nervous we'd make a hash of it, only to discover that it wasn't a 10 minute performance that they wanted but four songs scattered over the next couple of hours! (I'm told that some technician also forgot to switch on our recording mike for the first song but there, you can't win them all.) Meanwhile, the new blouses wilted, and so did we; which was a pity as we were due at the Sanctuary of Meritxell, along with piano and benches, at 4pm for a 5pm mass to honour Andorran couples celebrating their silver and golden wedding anniversaries.

The austere beautiful church of Meritxell was packed. Our part came after the religious ceremony was over. Our programme: 'Dieu Vous Unit', 'Els Tres Tambours', 'I Could Have Danced All Night' and 'You'll Never Walk Alone' had Love as its theme. Standing in one corner, we faced the great glass wall of the church and sang up to where we could see the high mountain pastures bathed in afternoon sunlight. It was a most moving experience. At the end we were each given a posy. We had just completed three concerts in less than 24 hours.

The performance at Pas de la Casa was the Singers first full-length secular concert for years. We had been invited along to help celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of their church



(top) The choir, led by Sheila Hooper, prepares for its concert at Pas de la Casa. (directly above) Sheila receives a bouquet from the Mayor of Encamp, while Jean Axted and those near her look at the plaque

of Saint Peter. From the outside, the church looks quite ordinary but inside it is enchanting. The central feature is a circular marble altar with the pews arranged around it in a welcoming semi-circle. Light filters in through large, stained-glass windows and the acoustics are probably the best of any of the churches we have sung in so far, doing full justice to our four soloists: **Deborah Hodges**, **Leela Herriman**, **Gisele Pereira** and **Sheila Hooper**.

Yes, Sheila had valiantly returned from convalescence the night before to conduct us. Sadly, due to family illness, the concert's organiser was away at the crucial moment so the promised posters, programmes - and audience - failed to materialise. But we were honoured to have Encamp's Consul, or mayor, and their Councillor of Culture present. At the end of the performance, the Mayor presented the choir with a commemorative silver plaque (our first), and

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Sheila with a gorgeous bouquet of flowers. We were then invited to drinks and *tapas* at a nearby hotel where a few loyal camp followers assured us it was the best concert we've given to date.

And so to our final concert which was held at Santa Maria del Fener Church on 15th July. Binnie had returned to play for us and this time we joined the Fairwater Comprehensive School Senior Choir from Wales. Roser Jordana of the Sindicat d'Iniciativa had generously - and bravely - lent us their magnificent Andorran silk standard for the occasion, (the first time it had been allowed out of the office). We draped this over the lectern to show

off its splendid embroidered coat of arms while Sheila provided us with a splendid Welsh flag complete with fiery red dragon. We felt so proud as she welcomed and sang to the Fairwater Choir in Welsh. After our joint concert, they presented us with a carved Welsh loving spoon, which made a charming end to a very busy and happy summer season.

(For information about our future plans please see the short piece in the Groups section, particularly the bit about MEN.) ☐

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HERE AND THERE

Overheard at the coffee morning:

It was just after the last CIA visit to Egypt, and everyone who'd been on the trip was still full of their adventures. We were particularly taken with this tale:

"We'd just got off the boat at Kom Ombo, and all these Egyptians were mobbing us, trying to sell us kaftans. They seemed to know we all needed something for the fancy dress dinner on board that evening. Well, one of the vendors was very persistent. He didn't speak much English, but I told him his price was too high.

"He just grinned back at me, slapped his hip pocket twice, and said it was 'Asda price'".

We were all sorry to hear about Estil Nordic closing down. Jill and Linda had contributed so much to the smooth running of the Club, organising the photocopying of the weekly newsletter, selling copies of Club publications, and willingly acting as a "post box" for members.



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To Dinah Baxter

You leave with memories of meadows high and mountains;

Seasons of green and white;

Walks by crystal streams with flowers bright.

You are taking another step on Life's busy road

We are here, you are there in pastures new,

But with vistas of a different hue.

In quiet moments, recall Confucius:

"Nothing is forever"

And gently sit and meditate

To the tranquil sound of "One Hand Clapping".

Mike Lovatt, 11th July 1998

Andorra has been much in the news over the past few months. Last May, London's *Financial Times* had an interesting article on tobacco smuggling and the measures Andorra, France and Spain have taken to curb the activities of the smugglers. It seems that more than five hundred people of twenty-three nationalities had been arrested at the time of writing. This is not a new problem, and indeed the article was illustrated with a print of Goya's "The Tobacco Guard". Goya, you will recall, died in 1848.

Rather more entertaining was a feature in London's *The Sunday Times* of 17th May concerning the "Love Pill". Maurice Chittenden of the Times wrote that now that the

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snow has gone from the ski slopes, a new breed of visitor has arrived in Andorra in search of a "very different peak performance".

Yes, dear reader, he was writing about Viagra – the sex pill about which there have been so many jokes. According to *The Sunday Times*, "Britons have been driving up to the chemists in

Andorra to buy packets of the diamond-shaped pill". It goes on: Andorra's chemists "are under siege from middle-aged men wanting to purchase Viagra".

Well, I have to admit, I haven't seen any queues outside my chemist – but I have found myself looking at middle-aged male tourists in a rather speculative way. I had always assumed they came to Andorra for the summer activities of hiking and hunting, and for the blissfully cool climate. This year, I am beginning to wonder...

Don't forget to read the small print of any document before signing. Remember: "What the big print giveth, the small print taketh away".

A few words of wisdom:

"Wear Out, don't rust out."



A photo of the group of Club members who toured the village of Ordino earlier in the year. A full report was given in the June issue of Intercomm.

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FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

Maria Teresa Raurell would like to thank all the people in the various government departments, comus and tourist offices who have assisted her in the compilation of this list the details of activities being organised in the various comús during the next three months.

8th September – National Holiday - Day of Our Lady of Meritxell, Patron Saint and Protectress of Andorra

*.. Amb l'òbol dels fidels – grans de sorra -
hom bastí im santuari – blanc joiell –
I la Mare de Déu de Meritxell
Fou la Regina de la Vall d'Andorra...*

*...With the gift of the faithful, a grain of sand,
A sanctuary was built – a white jewel,
And the Mother of God of Meritxell
Was the Queen of the Valleys of Andorra...*

"Clixés d'Andorra" by Joan Vaquer

Andorra la Vella

From September to December

"Temporada de Testre" (Theatre Season organised together with the Comú of Sant Julià). Ask for special programme in the Sindicat d'Iniciativa.

OCTOBER

23rd, 24th and 25th October

XX Fira d'Andorra (Annual Commercial and Food Exhibition) in the Carp Park near Parc Central.

26th October

Saint Vincent's Fair (Exhibition and competition of cattle and horses) in the old bullring.

NOVEMBER

Early November

Diada del Bacalla (5th Competition for amateurs and 6th for professionals for Codfish Dishes) – exhibition and possibility of tasting

Probably the third weekend of November

1st Concert of the Temporada de Musica i Dansa of Andorra la Vella, in the Sals d'Actes, of Plaça, Poble.

Canillo

SEPTEMBER

7th September, afternoon

Exhibition of the Meritxell Sanctuary in the cloisters of Meritxell.

8th September – National Holiday

11.00 High Mass in the Sanctuary by the Cor Nacional de Petits Cantors d'Andorra.

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13.00 Sardanes in the cloisters.
18.00 Concert by the Petits Cantors.
19.00 Evening Mass in the Sanctuary.
24.00 The doors of the Church will be closed.
Free bus service all day from the main road to the Sanctuary and back.

OCTOBER

Mid-October

Horse and Cattle Fair, and Handicraft Fair.

NOVEMBER

1st November - All Saints' Day

17.00 "Castanyada" (festival of chestnuts and panellets {traditional small cakes}) in the Plaça Montaup.

Encamp

SEPTEMBER

Through the month of September

Several activities will be organised for children and young people, organised by Unió pro-Turisme of Encamp. Every day "L'Hora del conte" in the Comú's Library (Miss Júlia tells a short story or a fairy tale to the children).

Till 30 September

Exhibition about Jacques Cousteau, in the Comú's Exhibition Hall.

3rd and 10th September

22.00 Sardanes, Plaça dels Arinsols

5th September

12.00 Unveiling and blessing of the new image "Mare de Déu de l'Oratori" - a work in ceramics (made by artist Ramon Argilés) which will be placed in the small oratory on the old path of Les Bons to Meritxell, in the presence of the authorities of Encamp and other parishes.

18.00 Competition of Sardana Dancers, Plaça dels Arinsols

21.00 Popular Dinner followed by Sardanes, Plaça

dels Arinsols

6th September

10.00 and 16.00

"Aplec" Sardanista (meeting of Sardana Dancers) and sardana performed by three cobles (the Sardana orchestras), and at

22.00 Sardana performed by one cobla.

8th September

Dawn Mass and Singing of the Goigs in the Sanctuary of Meritxell.

11.00 People of Casal del Poble of Encamp and the aged people resident in Solà d'Enclar will attend the High Mass and singing of the Goigs in the Sanctuary of Meritxell.

19.00 Sardanes in Plaça dels Arinsols.

OCTOBER

Exhibition of Catalan Contemporary Art, and other exhibitions in the Comú's Exhibition Hall.

During the first week of the month, the people of the Casal del Poble will go on an excursion to Platja d'Aro (Costa Brava) together with the people of the other Casals of Andorra.

31st October

Evening: popular "Castanyada" in Pas de la Casa.

Evening: Indoor Football Competition, Encamp's Centre Esportiu.

Escaldes-Engordany

7th September

First day of registration with schools of Culture and Sports.

From 12th September

XII Tennis Open, Pistes Poliesportiu Prat del Roure.

14th September

First day of Schools of Culture and Sports

OCTOBER

From 4th October

Final of XII Tennis Open, Pistes Poliesportiu Prat del Roure.

NOVEMBER

Hallowe'en works in the Ludoteca of the Centre Social i Recreatiu.

La Massana

SEPTEMBER

13th September

18.00 XIV Popular Cross Race

Casa Guilla

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OCTOBER

31st October

22.00 Popular "Castanyada".

NOVEMBER

14th November

20.30 Concert in honour of St. Aciscle and St. Victòria by Coral San Antoni of la Massana, in the Parish Church

21.30 Popular dinner with sausages and "allioli de codony" (mayonnaise of pounded garlic, quince and olive oil) and cake, followed by ball in La Closeta's Hall.

15th November

16.00 Games for children (pinata, sack races, "cucanyes" (greasy pole climbing))

Ordino

SEPTEMBER

4th-5th September

"Festa Major" of La Cortinada and Arans

7th to 30th September

Exhibition of the VIII Painting Competition of Ordino, at Meeting Hall of Centre Esportiu.

12th September

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21.30 Concert of Meritxell by Lluís Claret, cello and National Chamber Orchestra of Andorra, in the National Auditorium of Ordino.

16th September

"Festa Major" Ordino (St. Corneli and St. Cebrià).

19th September

1st Concert of the XVI Festival in the National Auditorium: Narciso Yepes Tickets for all concerts of the Festival available from Credit Andorra (10% discount with Tarja Magna and Carnet Jove)

21.30 National Chamber Orchestra of Andorra and Maurice Andre, trumpet, Nicolas Andre, trumpet, and Beatrice Andre, Oboe. 3,500 pts

20th September

12.00 Concert by Serafi Milan, tenor, and Marina Vallcorba, piano, in Ordino's Parish Church, probably 1,000 pts.

22nd September

21.30 Concert by Barbara Hendricks, soprano and Steffan Scheja, piano, in the National Auditorium, 4,500 pts.

26th September

21.30 Concert of Gospel and Spiritual music, Eddie Hawkins Quartet, 3,500 pts.

27th September

18.00 Concert by Orquestra Simfonica del Valles, conducted by Salvador Brotons. Music of Films, 3,500 pts.

21.30 Concert by Jordi Gendra, flute, with piano accompaniment, with collaboration of the IAEM (venue to be announced), probably 1,000 pts.

29th September

"Festa Major" of Ansalonga.

OCTOBER

3rd October

21.30 National Orchestra of Lyon, conductor Emmanuel Krivine, with Alicia de Larrocha, piano, 4,500 pts.

12th to 16th October

III Tenpin Bowling, Autumn Championship, at Centre Esportiu of Ordino. Trophy by Banc Agrícola i Comercial d'Andorra.

18th October

VII Gastronomic Demonstration of Andorra.

28th October

21.30 Concert by Keiko Imamura, soprano and Mami Kino, piano (traditional Japanese songs and opera arias). Organised jointly by the Ministries of Culture and Foreign Affairs.

31st October

p.m. "Castanyada" in front of the Centre Esportiu.

NOVEMBER

5th November

21.30 Concert by Joan Manuel Serrat, poet, singer and composer, who will present his new record "Sombras de China" and will also sing his best known songs in Catalan and Spanish.

7th November

21.30 Concert by Jose Udaeta, Auditori Nacional.

16th to 20th November

III Tenpin Bowling, Autumn Championship at Centre Esportiu of Ordino. Trophy Banc Agrícola i Comercial d'Andorra.

22nd November

21.30 Concert of Santa Cecilia in Auditori Nacional at 21.30 by Orquestra Nacional de Cambra d'Andorra, and Orquestres Infantil i Jovenil de l'Institut d'Estudis Musicals.

28th November

21.30 Concert by "Stars of Faith", one of the best and well known female groups of Gospel and Spiritual singers, in the Auditori Nacional.

DECEMBER

6th December

21.30 Concert by Orfeon de Nostiara, conducted by José Antonio Saint Alfaro. The Orfeon is considered the best symphonic choir of Spain and one of the best in the world. Traditional Basque songs, Sarsuelas' themes and opera choruses.

Sant Julia

From September till December

"Temporada de Teatre" (Theatre Season) organised together with the Comú of Andorra la Vella. Ask for special programme in the Sindicat d'Iniciativa.

9th to 27th September

Exhibition of Paintings by Victoria Johnson, in the Hall of the Centre Cultural de Congressos Lauredià.

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