

**INTER A COMM**  
**CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA**

Mrs K. Walker  
Box 4  
Crèdit Andorrà  
Sant Julia de Loria

**MAGAZINE / REVISTA**



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# CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

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<i>SECRETARY:</i>	JOSEFINA MARTINEZ	82 39 55
<i>MEMBER:</i>	PETER PARKINSON	83 53 94

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<i>COFFEE MORNING:</i>	SOLVEIG FEILBERG	83 71 18
<i>CO-ORDINATION:</i>	MARIA TERESA RAURELL	83 61 23

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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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CLUB ADDRESS: BOX 291, CRÈDIT ANDORRÀ, ESCALDES.

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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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### THE PERSONALISED PERFUMERY

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**PYRÉNÉES**  
GRANS MAGATZEMS



# INTERCOMM

International Club of Andorra

Quarterly Magazine

June 1999



Temporary Editor  
Brian Dore

After the turmoil of the last months I hope that the Club can now settle down and continue with its normal activities. As you all should know by now Tony Hooper has resigned from the Board and as President. Elections will have taken place by the time you receive this magazine and the Board will be seeking a new President. It is to be hoped that fresh faces will rejuvenate the Board and that we shall find many more members who will be ready to help with the many groups and activities which are arranged for their benefit. Unfortunately this will be a shorter issue than normal since I am only filling in temporarily because Margaret Shaída has resigned. Summer should encourage us all to take advantage of open-air activities and I hope you will all support our Sponsored Walk on 18<sup>th</sup> July either as a walker or helper.

Much of this quarter's magazine has been taken up by comic comments and jokes etc. This is because very few "real" articles were received. I am very grateful to those members who did send articles.

Please send in articles for future magazines, as although I shall not be able to edit it I am sure the Board will find a volunteer to do so. If you can it is a great help to send a computer disc so that your article can be downloaded without the necessity of retyping. It would be a disaster if after so many years of a steadily improving magazine it had to cease.

By the time you will have received this magazine the Club's Annual General Meeting will have taken place. Regrettably it will be my last as a member of your Board. I wish the Club and the new Board every success in the future.

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Britt Nielsen



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## Helpline

The following letter has been received from Veronica Baines:

Dear Members,

Now I have fulfilled my promised year as **HELPLINE** Co-ordinator, I wish to step down for personal reasons. It has been a very busy and tiring year, but also rewarding.

Lilias Grassie, after three years, has also decided to leave **HELPLINE**. Lilias wishes to have some leisure time to pursue her other commitments and hobbies.

I am delighted, however, to advise you that Samia Omar, already known to those who attend the regular Coffee Mornings, will be taking over from 1 July 1999 as Co-ordinator. To Samia, Lilias and I offer our sincere good wishes and trust that not only will Samia have the continued support and assistance from the present **HELPLINE** team, but that some new and enthusiastic volunteers will come forward.

Meantime, the enclosed stickers, bearing the **HELPLINE** phone no: 334 055, have been once more kindly provided by Sally and Peter Smith. These stickers should be either on or by your phone for quick reference.

Thank you to all **HELPLINE** volunteers and supporters and may **HELPLINE** carry on its good works under Samia's capable guidance.

Yours truly

Veronica Baines

Samia's telephone number is 837631. Please use this number for matters relating to general organisation only. If you need, help use the mobile phone number as set out below.

## HELPLINE PHONE NO. - 334 055

**HELPLINE**, with immediate effect, has one phone number. This is a mobile phone, which will be held by volunteers answering the calls.

Should the phone be switched off, an English speaking operator will give you the choice of leaving:

1. your message, or
2. the number you wish to be contacted.

**PLEASE THEREFORE USE THE FIRST OPTION:**

**SPEAK SLOWLY AND CLEARLY, GIVING YOUR PHONE NUMBER AND NAME, ENDING WITH A STAR (ASTERISK). (BOTTOM LEFT HAND BUTTON ON YOUR PHONE).**

The **HELPLINE** volunteer will then return your call.

However please note that in any medical emergency the number to call is 116 (if your own doctor is not available).

**HELPLINE** are pleased to inform you that we now have a selection of frozen, prepared meals ready to use for «meals-on-wheels» etc. "Take away» packs of 400 grams.

These dishes are priced at Pts. 650 for a savoury and Pts. 400 for a desert. For a «normal» appetite the dishes are sufficient for 2 meals but a hearty eater would be happier with one per meal.

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**HELPLINE** would also like to remind all our members that **HELPLINE** has for your use quite a substantial list of items, which can be rented for Pts. 500, per week. To refresh your memories, we list what is available

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SCREAMING PANIC BUTTONS  
HOUSEHOLD SHOES FOR SWOLLEN FEET  
POURING AID  
PLAYPEN  
BABY BATHS  
CAR SEATS  
CHANGING TABLE  
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Should you be in need of any of the above listed items, please contact Samia Omar 837631.

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## THE HIDDEN VALLEY

As we all know, here in Andorra there are 7 valleys. I need not tell you the names of them, for they are all so well known. But the "hidden one" is a secret one. I will not tell you where it is because we all agreed at a council meeting, that I had permission to write about it but never to disclose where it is. That must forever remain a secret, as it has been for as long as man can remember.

So why did the Elders now, decide for me to write this? Because we all feel a little guilty now that Christmas is here again, and shall we say, lay the cards on the table,

Let me begin at the beginning, it was old «Amadeous» an Andorran who was out herding his cows, and once again stomped into the entrance of this 8<sup>th</sup> valley. Half of the river went into this hole, at first it was dark in there but as his eyes adjusted, he could see a faint light further onwards, and where that light shone, there was green grass, he herded his cows in to the lush pasture. The light in there, came from a crack high above in the mountain, he ventured with his flock, further down, till he came to a cave so big, it was indeed the size of a small valley. There the whole place was lit up from several openings high above with the sun's rays coming in and warming up the beautiful tranquil setting.

Several of us in there, were quite startled by his intrusion, but we knew Amadeous from up above the ground. Old Amadeous had been here before, he told us, as a young boy, and

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seemed to approve that we lived here. How long have you been here, he asked, and Morris answered "a couple of us found it, let me see, he said, I think it was in 1985". Amadeous nodded his head, looked now at the odd looking boat laying at anchor in the middle of the underground lake, Amadeous knows little about anything floating on water. What's that he asked? A junk, something I took with me from Hong Kong, I used to live onboard it over there, for over 30 years, had a hard time parting with it so I had it dismantled, and shipped over here to Andorra, and it took me over 2 years to assemble it again. « Would you like to come onboard? » Oh no answered Amadeous, if I have to die, it will be on land. Preferably out in the meadows among the wild flowers not by drowning. Oh I am sorry, he said, I did not mean to offend you senior Morris it is just, that I don't trust boats. I must take my cows back up above again, and I can see that you people down here don't want me to tell, so I won't.

«But should he tell?» So this is why, I am writing you this story. Please, for your own sake don't hike all over Andorra to try to find where the river splits in half you might never find it, we are now 26, and some of us are members of CIA (I strongly mean Club Internacional d Andorra) you know us all, more or less so next time, look around, and smile. For this story is true.

And I here swear  
to tell the truth, the whole truth and  
nothing but the truth, so help me god

P.S. my name in code is, IITYWYGMAB

#### SNIPPETS ABOUT DOGS

Mum says dad is our best pet animal, because he: (1) growls like a dog (2) dresses like a peacock (3) drinks like a stud (4) eats like a fattened pig (5) is as funny as a panda (6) is as tall as a giraffe (7) is sly as a fox.  
But mum was only joking, of course.  
"Hey - did you know old Mrs Smith left her dog

£50000. Yeah - but he won't be feathering his nest; the budgie's contesting the will!"

Why do dogs turn in circles before lying down? Dogs normally turn three circles before lying down to sleep - but some animals turn around up to 12 times before settling. This in-built ritual is a legacy from the steppe wolves, thought to be the forefathers of the modern dog. Like all wild dogs, the steppe wolves trample themselves into a hollow when they want to sleep. This not only hides them from enemies, but also rids their bed of bothersome ants and other itchy creepy crawlies. The shallow hollows keep the wolves warm in winter and cool in summer.

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**Did you know;**

King Charles I's (1600-1649) Spaniel had its own seat in the Privy Council.

Dogs not only feel when someone is afraid of them, but also pick up the scent from their skin.

Dogs help to keep their owners healthy?

Stroking them lowers your blood-pressure, and walks keep you fit!

Dachshund-like dogs were painted in ancient Egyptian temples and tombs and in ancient Mexican carvings.

St Bernard rescue dogs do not carry flasks of brandy around their necks at all.

Since Roman times, the letter R is known in some places as the dog's letter because it sounds like a growl.

Many dogs that appear aggressive are in fact just frightened and need calming down.

An Alsatian's life-expectancy of 14 years is quite high? Very large dogs are already old at the age of eight!

The first organised British dog show was held at Newcastle Town Hall in 1859.

Why dogs bark at postmen? They enjoy the success! Your dog goes woof and the "enemy" runs!

A dog will always test its rank in the family to see if it has a chance of becoming the boss.

That Norway, about a thousand years ago, was said to have been ruled by a dog, King Saur I?

A bundle of dog hairs stuffed under the matrimonial mattress was also supposed to bring the couple bad luck!

Research in Austria has shown that pet-owning children are generally brighter and more sensitive than non-pet owners.

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**Jaume CORAL  
Jane WHITTAKER  
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Simon BINSTED**

Dog biting of humans or other dogs peaks between the end of April to mid-June, as more young dogs reach maturity then.

The French word for Poodle, "Caniche", is also associated with waterfowl hunting, as it means, "duck-dog".

Dogs can suffer from phobias and anxieties just as much as their owners do, so be patient with them.

A dog may form a bosom friendship with a feline sharing the household, but still hate every other cat in the neighbourhood.

Dogs love to be cuddled, because it reminds them of when they were warm and snug, as part of a litter of puppies.

A Scorpio dog will want to go everywhere with you, even if it means waiting, uncomfortably for you anywhere.

When a dog lies on its back, it's signalling surrender, but when a cat does the same, it's preparing to fend off attack.

40, 000 dogs were killed in London during the Great Plague, because it was feared they spread the disease.

Setters were probably the forefathers of the Irish Water Spaniel, used to retrieve game from icy rivers.

The first "Lassie" film appeared over fifty years ago, yet our Waa survey shows he's still top of the pups.

### **Tips to keep your dog happy;**

Your car may be in a shady spot when you park, but in 30 minutes the sun can shift, leaving your dog in blazing rays.

Teeth are very important to dogs and they like to keep them in tiptop condition. Have plenty of chewing toys around.

Never wake a sleeping dog by touching him. He may take fright and snap at you. Just call his name gently.

The best way to keep a dog from becoming jealous is to treat it with love and respect!

If you want to give your dog a treat, offer specially manufactured pet chocolates, not our destructive human ones.

Bath your dog only when he's really dirty. Too much bathing destroys the natural oils that the coat needs.

As dogs become older they also become less active, just like us. So don't allow your pal to develop "middle-age-spread"!

Always start your dog's training as soon as it's reached the right age. Pups are easier to train than adult dogs.

If your dog becomes hyperactive after meals, try changing his diet. He may be allergic to something in it.

Dachshunds and Bassets should always be kept lithe and slim, so their elongated spines aren't put under too much strain.

If you want an energetic dog, makes sure you have the time space and enthusiasm to exercise it regularly.

Make sure that your dog always has his collar on when he goes out, and that there is a marked nametag firmly attached.

Don't worry too much if your dog is something of a picky eater. Slim dogs are healthier than greedy eaters.

Rub petroleum jelly on your dog's paw pads before going on winter walks, it gives some protection against cuts.

A puppy with constant diarrhoea may be extra sensitive to protein. Try feeding it more grain.

If your dog seems a bit slow the day after a good hike, he's probably suffering from sore muscles - like you.

### **THE BRITISH HONORARY CONSUL**

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The Maltese are small and require great care. Their long white fur becomes dirty and tangled if not brushed daily.

If you feed dietary supplements to your dog never exceed the manufacturer's recommended dosage.

Train your dog not to play in muddy puddles - jerk him away firmly, and give a definite 'No!' command.

If your dog becomes a fussy eater, check to see if he's snacking between meals and ruining his appetite

If wooden items are being "eaten" offer a substitute chew, which your dog can really get his teeth into - like for example rawhide.

Shouting often falls on deaf ears, but a shrill alarm or banging a tin, can distract a dog from destructive behaviour

## NIGROMANCY

Two mad yellow eyes darted warily around, a gleaming ivory dagger jabbed savagely, a manic laugh rang out and the terror that stalks our winters was gone as suddenly as it had appeared.

It was a mild March evening and one of the «Blacks», the black woodpeckers that share a winter roost near my house, seemed to be making his farewell rounds until next December. For several winters now, two and sometimes three, black 'peckers have lodged in a long-dead poplar beside the river. This roost is a veritable apartment block. There are eight holes in it; the smaller, round ones were obviously used by Great Spotted woodpeckers until the Blacks took over. Each winter they make a new «pear-shaped» hole. Understandably, the smaller species now give the tree a wide berth, as the larger woodpecker has been known to pull a Great Spotted one out of its roost by the head, if it wants the hole. Only a red squirrel is brave enough to occasionally use a lower floor.

Almost unseen and unheard during the day, every evening when dusk was falling fast, the Blacks would appear. An eerie whistle, the «perched»

call, from a tree some distance away would herald their imminent return, then one by one they would sweep in.

Black woodpeckers, like the rest of their family, have a distinctive flight. Less undulating but more flopping than the smaller woodpeckers, the Blacks give the occasional single flap of their wings and then close them against their body. This, together with their long cream bill, oval bodies and pointed tails, makes them look rather like unsteady torpedoes hurtling through the air.

The older pair, familiar with the roost, usually flew in fairly quietly, the male several minutes before the female. The routine was invariable; they would fly to a nearby tree, give a quick whistle, then glide in a couple of swooping bounds directly to the roost, uttering their grating «cru-cru» flight call. The male and female normally used separate entry holes but the whole trunk must have been riddled with interconnected passages, as one or the other would sometimes emerge out of yet another hole.

The unattached male took much longer to settle for the night; often flying from tree to tree giving repeated perched and flight calls and making several approaches to the roost. This could last for over half an hour, while the wood echoed with wailing whistles and wild, demented calls.

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There are other maniacs in my local woods, smaller but more colourful. The Green Woodpeckers' mocking "yaffles" in spring sound almost as unhinged as the Blacks' and the Great Spotted produces a variety of wild jeers and rattles. Wrynecks have a high-pitched, rapid "hee-hee-hee" that sounds truly idiotic. Woodpeckers are very noisy birds, far more often seen than heard and this is spite of their vivid plumage, which makes them visually the parrots of northern Europe.

Though not even distantly related to the Parrot family, they seem to have carved out a somewhat similar niche in the temperate woodlands. Both birds of the tree canopy, they appear especially «parrot-like» when a quick glimpse of yellow-green, scarlet or white enlivens the gloom of some dark evenings. They often behave like parrots too; seeming to play hide-and-seek with each other around tree trunks, indulging in head swaying and circling, jabbing their rapier bills at each other in mock attack, spiralling up trees and hanging head down to feed.

There are obvious differences, naturally, and not just in beak shape. Unlike parrots, 'peckers are solitary birds, never seen in flocks. I have seen a Great Spotted acting like a lone, large cockatoo among a flock of smaller, parakeet-like crossbills, all busily hanging upside down in an old pine tree and tearing off cones. The Great Spotted often wedges the cones into an «anvil» behind the loose bark of a tree, to extract the

seeds more easily. Black and Green woodpeckers live mainly on ants but they will strip the bark off trees as well as boring into dead wood to get other insect larvae, especially in winter. They have amazingly long tongues. Every schoolchild must remember cutaway diagrams of the Greens' curled sticky one that can shoot out to extract ants. The Blacks' is not so long, but it too is viscous with a horny, barbed tip. And then there is their drumming!

Anyone, who has been startled by the sudden, loud drumming of the Great Spotted, should listen to the pneumatic-drill bursts of the Blacks, which can be heard over a kilometre away. In March and April it echoes through the mountain forests. Disliking disturbance when the snow finally melts and farmers can again take the river-path with their livestock, the Blacks retreat to the heart of the dense conifers that clothe the higher slopes. Here they will excavate a nest hole in a large pine. For several years another couple shared a tree with a pair of Tengmalm's Owls that had taken over one of the woodpeckers' old holes, only an arm's length below. The owls were finally forced to go, leaving the Blacks in undisputed possession.

Aggressive, wary and enigmatic birds; they pose other puzzles. Why have no Black Woodpeckers been seen in Britain for over thirty years when there is now an army of birdwatchers on constant alert? Black Woodpeckers have been expanding their breeding range in lowland Europe all this century. They prefer mature woodland, with

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large nesting trees, but there are plenty of these in England. In the nineteenth century, several reports seemed to suggest that wild black woodpeckers were wandering around southern England and the Welsh borders.

Sedentary birds, they rarely move more than a short distance from their birthplace but some continental ones have flown nearly two hundred kilometres. They now breed in Denmark, Holland and near the Channel coast of France, yet there have been no accepted sightings in Britain this century.

Surely soon the Black Berserkers will extend their invasions across the sea like the Vikings of old and their drum rolls and crazed calls will ring out through English beech woods.

## **POINTS TO PONDER AND USEFUL INFORMATION FOR NEWCOMERS TO ANDORRA**

The following list of questions may seem odd and/or self-evident, but every one of them is relevant as has been proved by cases where they had not been addressed properly before an emergency arose.

Do you wish to apply for a Certificate of Residencia?

Have you registered with a doctor? So that in case of sudden illness you know which doctor to call and the doctor knows you.

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Do you have the telephone numbers handy of  
Fire, Police and Ambulance service?

Do you know who the administrators are of the  
apartment you live in? And do you have their  
telephone number and address?

If you own your property, do you have a  
Government registered escritura?

Have you thought of giving a spare house key to  
a friend/neighbour in case of problems in your  
absences from Andorra?

Do you have adequate household insurance and  
the telephone number of the Insurers or brokers?

Do you know where your Comu offices are?  
Do you know where the nearest Police Station  
is?

Do you know how to effect the yearly re-  
registration of your vehicle(s)?

Do you know how to obtain an Andorran driving  
licence?

Do you wish to make a Will in Andorra or a  
Codicil to an existing Will? In either case, be  
sure you achieve what you set out to do.

In case of sudden demise, is there clear  
information for your executors with regard to  
your wishes re burial/cremation and regarding  
the whereabouts of your assets?

Are you and your spouse, partner, children, and  
executor equally conversant with all  
arrangements regarding the household, and  
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Do you know the English Speaking points of  
contact such as: The International Club of An-  
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## ACTIVITIES GROUP VISIT TO CRETE

Ann accompanied a small party of Club members to Crete in mid April and with her usual, apparently effortless ease, overcame all that was thrown at her - and us. It snowed - of course! Thus the bus was late; so were the planes. Ouzos for a flagging group in the grimly functional between-regions of Athens airport. A bright, helpful bus courier from Iraklion to our Elounda hotel, and that really was cheering at midnight after an 8 am start. Rooms which had somehow grown to luxurious proportions - with our own pool - a most courteous welcome, a cold meal laid in each room at 2 am. And flowers ... Bless you Ann.

The island is not easily seen without personal transport and we had hired two cars, which we drove ourselves. They made us appreciate what luxury we nowadays take for granted. Few of us boast particularly special vehicles, but my goodness are they modern in comparison to Cretan cars. We turned on half crowns rather than sixpences, developing impressive muscles, and willed the poor little beasts up a lot of hills, crammed into them with less than comfort. But they sufficed.



*Elounda*

What must one most see in a mere week on an island whose recorded history began with the Minoan and ran on through Doric, Roman, Byzantine Greek, Venetian and Turkish? Clearly that which was the nearest and historically more

important, Elounda being an hour's drive east of Iraklion. Clearly Knossos.



*Part of the ruins at Knossos*

Arthur Evans spent his own fortune on the part-restoration of this apparently greatest of the Minoan palaces, which had been twice destroyed by earthquake and built again. It is still quite impressive though it suffers today from too abundant tourism - what great site does not? The Iraklion museum remains one of the world's greatest simply because it houses such a wealth of the Minoan period.

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Its treasures, depicted in every early civilisation art book one opens, are almost old friends which we could enjoy among galleries relatively free of other people.

The island is extremely beautiful. It is very mountainous, its peaks still snow clad in April, its valley floors tranquil. The coastline is a splendid succession of small towns with boat-filled harbours and often quite long empty stretches against the blue of the Mediterranean and the sky.

There is much new development but it is still relatively small and localised, by no means as awful as the Spanish costas. The rocky hillsides bore a wealth of flowers, a pleasure to the eye and to the photographers among us.

The approach to the Lasithi Plain is mountainous but the flatness of the valley bottom suggests that it may once have been a lake. Its tourist attraction, apart from its natural beauty, lies in a multitude of irrigation pumps activated by windmills whose sails are said to be a unique spectacle. Alas the pumping system has been largely electrified and today's windmills extend their bare poles towards the sky. Legend has it that Zeus, greatest of the gods, was born here at the Dhiktaen Cave. And flowers .. flowers everywhere.

We dined daily and simply at some harbour taverna, sampling the foods of Greece. We came to delightful inland stops, such as the monastery of Moni Toplou which, despite its frequently violent history, imparts a feeling of great tranquillity. The Doric settlement of Lato nestles between two hilltops and was inhabited from 700-300 BC. We spent a peaceful and satisfying morning wandering its acropolis and remaining walls. The ruins of Gournia were outshone by fields of magnificent poppies.

On our final day most of us took a boat from Elounda to the island of Spinalonga. At the northern end of the sea channel to Elounda



*Spinalonga*

The Venetians had built a fort, which was handed to the Turks by treaty fifty years after they had taken the rest of Crete. After their departure in 1903 the island was used as a leper colony. The lepers were left to themselves, with some, monks and nuns, and were presumably supplied from the mainland. The last lepers left in 1957, the disease having become treatable. It is a strange, somewhat eerie place which seems to demand quiet. Even the builders working on the restoration of the Venetian houses seemed to go about their work respectfully.

The very end - wishing we could stay another week - leisure from driving, time to ourselves. To walk across the dry hillsides redolent with herbs; to hunt those final photographs; to linger among the craft shops. That we all did want another week is a tribute to Ann. And to Crete, which is a quite special place to experience.

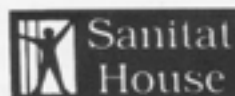


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## DESERT ISLAND IDYLL

Somewhere in the southern ocean there are beautiful deserted islands in the middle of nowhere where the following people were stranded after a shipwreck:

2 Italian men and 1 Italian woman  
2 French men and 1 French woman  
2 German men and 1 German woman  
2 Greek men and 1 Greek woman  
2 English men and 1 English woman  
2 Bulgarian men and 1 Bulgarian woman  
2 Japanese men and 1 Japanese woman  
2 American men and 1 American woman  
2 Australian men and 1 Australian woman  
2 New Zealand men 1 New Zealand woman  
2 Irish men and 1 Irish woman

One month later on this absolutely stunning desert island in the middle of nowhere, the following things had occurred.

1 Italian man killed the other Italian man for the Italian woman.

The 2 French men and 1 French woman are living happily together having lots of sex.

The 2 German men have a strict weekly schedule of when they alternate with the German woman.

The 2 Greek men are sleeping with each other and the Greek woman is cleaning and cooking for them.

The 2 Bulgarian men took a long look at the ocean and then at the Bulgarian woman and then started swimming.

The 2 English men are waiting for someone to introduce them to the English woman.

The two American men are contemplating the virtues of suicide while the American woman keeps on bitching about her body being her own, the true nature of feminism, how she can do everything that they can do, about the necessity of fulfilment and the division of household chores, how her last boyfriend respected her opinion and treated her much nicer and how her relationship with her mother is improving. But at least taxes are low and it is not raining.

The two Japanese men have faxed Tokyo and are waiting for instructions.

The two Australian men beat each other senseless while the Australian woman is checking out all the other men and calling them "wankers".

One New Zealand man is having sex with the New Zealand woman, and the other is searching the island for sheep.

The Irish began by dividing the island into North and South and immediately set up a distillery. They do not remember if sex is in the picture because it gets sort of foggy after the first few litres of coconut whiskey, but they are satisfied that at least the English are not getting any.

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## **The Handicraft Stall at the November Church Fair, St. George's Church, La Massana**

The running of this stall would not be possible were it not for the people who throughout the year knit and sew typical 'bazaar items such as toys, tea-cosies, Christmas gift items, Christmas stockings etc.

The majority of these items are made from donated wool, materials and trimmings. Any amount of wool can be used; the smallest ball of wool may make a flower on a toy's hat and it might be just the colour needed! Remnants of material are useful for such items as aprons, tea cosies, tablemats, doll's clothes etc. A small piece of lace or ribbon may be sufficient to trim a doll's dress or gift-bag. A lot of stuffed toys are made, and getting enough stuffing without having to buy it can be a problem. An excellent source of stuffing is sleeping bags, duvets and pillows with washable synthetic filling.

If you have any of these you no longer want please phone - **Stella Madden tel: 837681.**

Finally, if you knit or sew and would like to help (those who knit a lot of these items would welcome help in the stuffing and sewing-up stage) please telephone - **Brenda Ross: tel. 837886.**

## **LETTERS to the EDITOR**

On some of my furniture designs I use false books to conceal cupboards or secret compartments.

The titles, usually humorous, are taken from the library at Chatsworth House and other sources. In order to augment my supply of titles may I suggest a «Literary Competition» for your next issue. Members could submit their titles before the subsequent issue for judging by the Board and I could give a bottle of champagne to the winner. Let me know what you think of the idea.  
Ian Sharp

### ***Some examples***

*Lisping Lover by Keith McKwick*

*The Church Militant by Canon Ball Travelling by Tube by Jocelyn Daly*

Entries to Box 291 Crèdit Andorrà Escaldes

When submitting an article for publication in the INTERCOM, we were surprised and saddened to learn that Margaret Shaida was no longer the Editor.

In losing Margaret the Club has lost a very experienced and capable Editor, who freely devoted her expertise and time to the magazine. She has frequently received fulsome praise and thanks from the CIA in the pages of the Club Magazine.

We would like to express our thanks for all your past work, Margaret.  
Stella and Don Madden

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## Silly Signs from England

### In a Laundromat:

Automatic washing machines: please remove all your clothes when the light goes out

### In a London department store:

Bargain basement upstairs

### In an office:

Would the person who took the stepladder yesterday please bring it back or further steps will be taken

### Outside a farm:

Horse manure 150p per pre-packed bag 20p do-it-yourself

### In an office:

After tea break staff should empty the teapot and stand upside down on the draining board

### On a church door:

This is the gate of heaven. enter ye all by this door. This door is kept locked because of the draught. (please use side door.)

### English sign in a German cafe:

Mothers, please wash your Hans before eating

### Outside a second-hand shop:

We exchange anything - bicycles, washing machines etc. Why not bring your wife along and get a wonderful bargain?

### Outside a new town hall which was to be opened by the Prince of Wales:

The town hall is closed until opening. It will remain closed after being opened. Open tomorrow.

### Outside a photographer's studio:

Out to lunch: if not back by five, out for dinner also.

### Outside a disco:

Smarts is the most exclusive disco in town. Everyone welcome.

### On a Beach:

Quicksand. Any person passing this point will be drowned. By order of the district council.

### Notice sent to residents of a Wiltshire parish:

Due to increasing problems with litter louts and vandals we must ask anyone with relatives buried in the graveyard to do their best to keep them in order.

### Notice in a dry cleaner's window:

Anyone leaving their garments here for more than 30 days will be disposed of.

### Sign on motorway garage:

Please do not smoke near our petrol pumps. Your life may not be worth much but our petrol is

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Notice in health food shop window:

Closed due to illness

Spotted in a safari park:

Elephants please stay in your car

Seen during a conference:

For anyone who has children and doesn't know it, there is a day care on the first floor

Notice in a field:

The farmer allows walkers to cross the field for free, but the bull charges

Message on a leaflet:

If you cannot read, this leaflet will tell you how to get lessons

Outside a Repair Shop

We can repair anything. (please knock hard on the door - the bell doesn't work)

By a Farm gate

Beware! I shoot every tenth trespasser and the ninth one has just left

Outside an Office toilet

Toilet out of order- please use floor below

## SCHOOL EXCUSES

Which ones did you try when you were at school?

My son is under a doctor's care and should not take p.e. today. Please excuse him.

Please excuse Lisa for being absent. She was sick and I had her shot.

Dear school: please excuse John being absent on Jan. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, and also 33.

Please excuse Gloria from gym today. She is administrating.

Please excuse Roland from p.e. for a few days. Yesterday he fell out of a tree and misplaced his hip.

John has been absent because he had two teeth taken out of his face.

Carlos was absent yesterday because he was playing football. He was hurt in the growing part.

Megan could not come to school today because she has been bothered by very close veins.

Chris will not be in school cus he has an acre in his side.

Please excuse Ray from school on Friday. He has very loose vowels.



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## ARINSAL

Please excuse Pedro from being absent yesterday.  
He had (diahre) (dyrea) (direathe) the shits.  
[words in ( )'s were crossed out.]

Please excuse Tommy for being absent yesterday.  
He had diarrhiea and his boots leak.  
Irving was absent yesterday because he missed  
his bust.

Please excuse Jimmy for being. It was his father's  
fault.

I kept Billie home because she had to go  
Christmas shopping because I don't know what  
size she wear.

Please excuse Jennifer for missing school  
yesterday. We forgot to got the Sunday paper off  
the porch, and when we found it on Monday, we  
thought it was Sunday

Sally won't be in school a week from Friday.  
We have to attend her funeral.

My daughter was absent yesterday because she  
was tired. She spent a weekend with the marines.

Please excuse Jason for being absent yesterday.  
He had a cold and could not breed well.

Please excuse Mary for being absent yesterday.  
She was in bed with gramps.

Gloria was absent yesterday as she was having a  
gangover.

Please excuse Burma, she has been sick and  
under the doctor.

Maryann was absent December 11-16, because  
she had a fever, sore throat, headache and upset  
stomach. Her sister was also sick, fever and sore  
throat, her brother had a low grade fever and  
ached all over I wasn't the best either, sore throat  
and fever- there must be something going around,  
her father even got hot last night.

## THE ART GROUP EXHIBITION

30<sup>th</sup> September until 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1999

Nina O'Brien

The Art Group plans an exhibition of paintings  
in the Sala Polivalent, Ordino, by kind  
permission of the Comu d'Ordino. After the for-  
mal inauguration, with a cocktail reception  
Thursday September 30<sup>th</sup>. At 6 P.M., the  
exhibition will continue until 3rd October. Any  
previous members of the Art Group are  
encouraged to exhibit their artworks. All  
International Club members, their friends and  
whoever may be interested, will be welcom at

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the opening reception and during the week of the exhibition, open daily 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. and 4 P.M. to 8 P.M. The previous exhibition in Ordino in 1996 was a great success attracting not only members of the International Club but many Andorrans, tourists and non-Club member residents of Andorra. The Art Group was formed in 1989 with various attempts of «teachers» trying to follow «schooltype» methods. Such an approach cannot be successful since numbers present at studio sessions can vary a great deal, depending on individual travel plans. Also, levels of previous training of typical members varies from those trained traditionally to A Level drawing to others with little or no formal training but feeling the urge to create. Since Nina became Group Leader in later 1992, members have been encouraged to develop their own ways, which vary from creative «modernism» to more photographic reality. The role of the Leader is less to «teach» but more to guide, assist, encourage and constructively criticise. Under this

concept, the Group experiments with growing confidence and intuitive effect but all are painting for pleasure. These are not painters in revolt suffering from social norms and afraid of the social satire of the discomfort and squalor of the «left bank artist». Nor is there the pressing need to sell a

painting in the Place Tetre, Montmartre, to pay for tomorrow's food! This exhibition, therefore, is not exactly the Salon des Refus where Manet exhibited his «Dejeuner sur l'herbe» in 1883. We have no parallel to the early impressionists whose work was often violently criticised and officially ignored. We can now create without the fear of antagonising our patron, the state, the church or powerful individuals or groups. 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 members have moved elsewhere, we could accommodate more.



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If you have no intentions 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 beginner to those of considerable skill. Studio sessions are in Andorra la Vella, Fridays or any other day by mutual agreement, 1 P.M. to 4 P.M. although members may use the studio at any other day or time if they wish. The monthly fee is 1000 Pesetas which goes towards the rent there is no charge for any guidance or tuition. Any further information from Nina O'Brien, phone 837772.

### **Where vultures fly again The Naturalists' visit to the Cévennes National Park**

Circling lazily high above the sheer cliffs were perhaps a dozen Griffon Vultures, their broad-wings short-tailed silhouettes unmistakable. Much closer, another bird soared towards them dark and with even larger wings - a Black Vulture. Lower still, a Short-toed Eagle was hovering above the hillside, waiting to swoop on an unsuspecting snake. We might have been in the southwest of Spain, where such sightings are commonplace but we were sitting at a roadside café above the Gorges du Tarn in southern France where the sight of vultures still produces a surprised thrill!

Griffon Vultures have been gradually re-introduced to the Cévennes region of France over the past 18 years, 40 years after they finally became extinct in this, their last stronghold in France. More recently a few Black or Monk

Vultures have joined them, the first to fly in France this century. Today there are some 200 Griffons and 20 Black Vultures breeding and flying over the gorges north and east of le Rozier, just outside the boundaries of the Cévennes National Park where the Gorges of the Tarn and the Jonte meet. This year 75 pairs of Griffons nested and 50 chicks were raised. The Black Vultures only managed five nests with one chick and one pair of Egyptian Vultures bred. Vultures can be seen almost anywhere over the Park but the gorges near le Rozier are definitely the best location.

It was scenes such as the one above that made me suggest that the Naturalists Group should visit the area, which we did this June. We were not so lucky in seeing Black Vultures but enjoyed the superb views over the gorges and the vast landscapes of the Causse de Méjean.

The Causse, a high, stony desert, can be reached from a very minor road twisting up from le Truel or the D986 running north-west from Meyrueis which roughly bisects it. It is a wonderful place in early summer, ablaze with wildflowers and butteries and exciting steppe birds such as Stone Curlew, Montagu's Harrier, Tawny Pipit and numerous larks, shrikes and buntings.

The vast skies and landscapes make the Causse a place apart and when we finally spotted wild horses, then we knew that this country was indeed different! Near the tiny hamlet of le Villaret, some wild Przewalski horses have been freed as a first step towards their eventual reintroduction in Mongolia. In spite of Wojciech's instruction, none of us succeeded in pronouncing the name properly!



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They also help graze the steppe now pastoral farming is in decline. Picturesque old stone buildings, witness to a more prosperous past, are scattered across the steppe; Hoopoes make their homes in them nowadays. Far, far older are the caves or "avens", underground caverns with spectacular stalagmites and stalactites that lie beneath the limestone plateau and the feathery *stipa* grass that covers much of it. The most famous, which we visited, is Aven Armand, though only Susan and her daughter Sophie were brave enough to go down it. The rest of us stayed firmly above ground and watched Cirl Buntings and Red-backed Shrikes while listening to Quail calling out "wet-my-lips" in the fields beyond.

In the summer, between June and September, the volunteers at the Belvédère des Vautours organise various walks in the evening. We took one of these, specifically to see vultures and steppe birds, but the birds were not being very co-operative that evening! I think we all felt sorry for our guide, a pleasant young man doing his National Service as a Park Warden. However, Ann did find us a strange Lizard Orchid with its long «tails» and the views over the Gorge de Jonte were lovely.

We stayed in the picturesque village of Meyrueis, just south of the Gorge de la Jonte. The name means "amid rivulets" and it was certainly pleasant to walk along the riversides and amongst the 17<sup>th</sup> century houses in the evening after dinner. Isabel and Frances explored most of the village at this time.

Our hotel, the Hotel du Mont Aigoual, one of the "Logis de France", can certainly be recommended. The owner was friendly, the rooms comfortable and the food excellent. It was a pity none of us had taken our swimming costumes as there was a heated pool in the pretty garden which stretched up the hillside behind.

The higher parts of the Cévennes, around Mont Lozère and Mont Aigoual, are different again. If the Causse has affinities with the Sahara then the mountains can feel like the Arctic! The birds here are reminiscent of alpine regions: Firecrest, Crossbill and Crested Tit can be found among the conifers, Chough and Raven call above the slopes and a Golden Eagle may soar overhead at any time. Mont Aigoual is the highest peak in the Cévennes and snow may still be lying in late May. A meteorological observatory has been established here for over a hundred years and from it almost a quarter of France can be seen on a clear day, from the Pyrenees to Mont Blanc, and from the Massif Central to the Mediterranean. We drove there on our last morning but it was too hazy to see very far – as is probably the case on 355 days of the year!

Parts of the Cévennes are almost as wild and unspoiled as when Robert Louis Stevenson and his donkey Modestine walked through them 120 years ago. They deserve to be better known as one of France's great natural areas - and you can still hire a donkey to carry your rucksack and picnic if you are feeling lazy!

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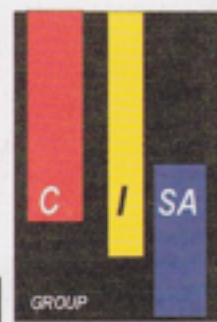
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