

INTER COMM

CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

MAGAZINE / REVISTA



VOL. 9 - Núm. 1 - AUTUMN / TARDOR 1999

CLUB INTERNACIONAL D'ANDORRA

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INTERCOMM

International Club of Andorra

Quarterly Magazine

OCTOBER 1999

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EDITORIAL FROM THE BOARD

For the first time in its history, our Club has held a proper competitive election, as a result of which there are four new Board Members, of whom more later in this Editorial. This suggests that we have reached the stage of having a number of people sufficiently interested in the Club to want to put in the time and effort required to maintain the momentum and add to our activities. Voting was by post; the envelopes containing voting papers were opened in public at the Annual General Meeting and three people checked the counting of votes.

It is to be hoped that in future competitive elections will become the norm. Every year some Board Members come to the end of their mandate and may or may not choose to seek re-election.

At the time of writing, the end of August or six weeks after the Annual General Meeting of July 19th, the Board and Executive Committee have got back into the rhythm of regular meetings at approximately monthly intervals. **Ann Price** has been elected Chairman and the list of those elected to other offices will be found at the front of this magazine. We are without a President, following the resignation of **Tony Hooper**, but there is a consensus that the offices of President and Chairman ought to be held by two different people. We hope to appoint an Andorran President, whose role would merely be formal.

For the time being there is no Editor of the magazine. Remembering the French proverb, translated into English as "nothing endures like the provincial", it would not be surprising if the present arrangements were to last for several years. We have an Editorial Committee of six Board Members, with defined functions; some of us are away from Andorra for substantial parts of the year, so there will have to be quite a lot of helping each other during such absences. Another innovation is that we have an Advertising Co-ordinator, with specific responsibilities for selling advertising space and collecting the money due for it. Furthermore, we now have a Membership Secretary whose main function is to answer membership queries and process subscriptions and renewals.

Some of us feel that the magazine has been a bit too stolid, not lively enough, perhaps a little too introverted - like a school magazine. A policy of cautious change seems

in order for the content and format of Intercomm.

All of us in the Club owe a debt of gratitude to **Tony** and **Sheila Hooper**. Tony was Chairman and later President for a total of four years and a Board Member for several years before that. He was active in the Drama Group for many years, both on stage and behind the scenes. Sheila, too, was active in the Drama Group and, more importantly, with the International Singers, especially for *Una Nit de Música i Dansa*. Many of us will remember Tony's keen interest in model railways and the highly successful Hobbies Exhibition of 1997. We should also recall Tony's association with Meritxell Special School and his involvement in Andorran sport, in the wider context of integrating into Andorra. Tony and Sheila carry our best wishes for the future.

We have accepted with regret the resignation of **Josefina Martinez**, who ably filled the office of Club Secretary for several years, as well as putting in a great deal of work on Social Activities in conjunction with Ann Price. Also to our regret, **Veronika Baines** has maintained her decision to resign after having fulfilled her promised year as Helpline Co-ordinator.

We are sure that they will continue in active membership of the Club. We welcome as new Board Members, **Fiona Dean**, **Bent Dorning**, **Nina O'Brien** and **Samia Omar**, to use alphabetical order of surname. Fiona Dean will help Ann Price in the co-ordination and organisation of activities; those who took part in the recent sponsored walk will recall the wonderful spread Fiona laid on, with the delicious food so generously donated by her own Hotel Micolau and other Andorran restaurants and shops.

Bent Dorning is the linguist: speaking Danish, German, French, English and Greek. It is envisaged that he will take over the duties of Treasurer when **Brian Dore** moves to France.

Nina O'Brien is well known to many members as the leader of the Art Group for the past seven years: as a guide and source of inspiration rather than a teacher with its narrower implication.

Samia Omar is perhaps even better known, already active as co-ordinator of Helpline and in the running of coffee mornings.



"Your home away from home ..."

This year **The Traditional Danish Christmas Buffet**
will be held on **Sunday the 5th & Sunday the 12th** of December at **1 pm**.

Please be sure to reserve in advance by calling Tel. 835 640

We wish to take this opportunity to inform our clients that the hotel will be closed between September 26th and October 29th

Those of us who are now tackling the production of the Magazine have good reason for appreciating the efforts of **Margaret Shaida** as Editor of Intercomm for the past 3^{1/2} years. We are also grateful to **Hassan Shaida** for artwork.

We regret to announce with sadness, combined with sympathy towards his widow **Patricia**, the death of **Ross Cotteril**, who had lived in Andorra for many years. A petroleum geologist before his retirement, he developed a keen interest and profound understanding of computers long before the emergence of Internet. Those who knew him well in the Computer Group will remember a kindly man, always willing to help find remedies for problems.

As this goes to press, we also send our sincerest condolences to **Gill Furnston**, whose husband, **Sandy**, has just died after so bravely battling against a long and painful illness.

Several important Club activities are the subject of articles in this issue, but it is appropriate in this Editorial to write a few words about some of them and others, which are ongoing or specific. Those of us involved in the **Charity Walk** watched the tremendous storm of the previous afternoon and wondered anxiously whether this event was going to be washed out by adverse weather: in fact, the weather was favourable, though there were still piles of hailstones by the roadside. The **International Singers** have had an extremely busy season and are now very much in demand for a variety of special events and

ceremonies all over Andorra. The **Car Boot Sale** is now a recognised event in the calendar, with parking unobtrusively well organised to ensure its smooth running. There is perhaps a tendency to take ongoing activities, such as **Helpline** and the **Coffee Mornings**, for granted, which is a sort of compliment – spare a thought for those who put in a lot of time and effort to make them happen, for the benefit of all of us.

Three years ago the **Art Group** held an exhibition of their work in the Sala Polivalent, Ordino, which was a considerable success among Club members as well as in the wider sense of attracting Andorrans and other resident non-members. This year they are holding another exhibition, which will be over by the time this Magazine is published.

The Editorial Committee really welcomes contributions to the Magazine. These could take the form of articles, letters, photos, reports on favourite restaurants or beauty spots, crossword puzzles, etc. We are always on the lookout for material, so if you have something that could be suitable, even if it is only at the stage of an idea not completely worked out, get in touch with one of us, either by telephone or at the weekly coffee mornings. Contributions for the next issue of Intercomm should be left in the **Club letterbox at the Servissim office in La Massana by latest 2nd November and addressed to the Magazine Committee.**

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MAGAZINE POLICY

It will be self-evident that both text, whether editorial matter or contributed articles, and advertising must be in conformity with the Statutes and Rules of the Club. The Statutes refer to "gatherings of a linguistic, cultural or leisure nature", and to exclusions from its objectives of "any class, political or social revindications". The "aim of promoting ——— friendship between the different nationalities" implies the necessity of avoiding controversy in certain areas, in

particular religion and politics. Under Andorran law, Board Members are responsible for the content of the Magazine, so they must exercise a measure of discretion in what can be accepted both for contributed articles and for advertising. We are confident that all members will realise that the Editorial Board must reserve the right to edit, in the widest sense. This may in practical terms be minimal, provided contributors will bear this statement of policy in mind.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Group activities, including the coffee morning, are organised for the benefit of Club members only. However, subject to the group leader's approval, non-members may be present on up to three occasions after which we must ask them to take out Club membership

THE ACTIVITIES GROUP

N.B. FOR THE CHRISTMAS SHOPPING TRIP AND THE MILLENIUM LUNCH, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO BOOK EARLY.

***Christmas Shopping in Barcelona.
Sunday 5th December to Tuesday 7th December.***

Your perfect chance to stock-up for a very special Christmas – hassle free.

Same plan as previous years:

First day: Leaving Andorra early, arriving in Barcelona before lunch. Afternoon transport to central shopping area or a tour of some of Barcelona's amazing museums with Ann. Transport back to hotel. Evening: do your own thing, or be taken to Barceloneta, the fish port to eat in one of the super 'fishy' restaurants.

Second day: Bus tour and visits to the main sights of Barcelona and to Sitges in the afternoon. Evening: join the group for an Italian dinner or do your own thing.

Third day: 'shop 'til you drop'. The hotel is in an excellent shopping mall which includes Marks & Spencer and Corte Inglés is just along the road. You, your shopping and suitcases will be collected at lunch time. On the return journey we visit the co-operative at Guissona, which is excellent for meat. Back in Andorra in time for dinner.

Note: This year, inevitably, the Barcelona hotels have increased their prices from mid-November till February! **Price for 2 nights, room and breakfast, 3 days bus transport, but not entries to museums – Doubles per person: 26.500 pts.; Singles: 31.500 pts.; Non-members + 4.000 pts.**



***CIA New Year Millennium Lunch.
A Danish Style Buffet at the Hotel Arinsal.
Friday 7th January – 12.30 for 1.00.***

The International Club has many Scandinavian members, so this event is in part a recognition of their contribution to the Club. We are going to take this opportunity to invite **Tony and Sheila Hooper** to be the Guests of Honour in appreciation of their many years of generous support of the CIA. We hope that **Josefina** will also be able to join us to receive the thanks of the members.

Price: 3.300 pts. per person. Non-members + 500 pts. Includes welcome drink, buffet lunch, wine and coffee.

February (end): Puigcerdà Sunday Morning Market – Late lunch at Restaurant La Muga.

March: Codorniu Cava – The visit includes the Wine Museum, manufacturing and ageing process.

April (end): Gardens of the Costa Brava – Visits to three very different gardens, staying in Sant Feliu de Guixols. 3 nights, 4 days, half-board.

Note: Reservations for this tour must be made by end January to ensure group rates.



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May: Prague – This tour is in the planning stage, but it is hoped to include 4 days in Prague: 3 visiting the countryside and some of the Medieval towns. Travel will be by bus with at least one overnight stop each way. More details and approximate price in December. A minimum number of 20 and maximum of 28 will apply. **Note: Would any members interested in this tour please give me their names as soon as possible.**

June: White Water Rafting from Llavorsi.

July: Steam Train – Balaguer to Poble De Segur. Lunch and visit to Salt Pans at Gerri De La Sal.

FOR BOOKINGS OR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY OF THE CIA ACTIVITIES, PLEASE PHONE ANN: 836653.

ART GROUP

See Nina O'Brien's article on page no. 23.

THE INTERNATIONAL SINGERS The Singers' Summer Choices

The past summer has been our busiest ever. In all, we sang in seven very different concerts. (Thank goodness for M^o Teresa Raurell, who acts as our highly efficient co-ordinator.) With so many concerts, we were faced with equally numerous choices. Musical ones. For every performance has to be tuned to its particular audience and yet, being amateur, we work from a limited repertoire. For our fund-raising concert and dinner at the Roc de Caldes we expected a mainly English-speaking audience and so we included Gilbert and Sullivan's *Nightmare Song* and *The Hippopotamus Song*. (Many thanks to all of you who helped us raise an impressive 115,000pts for our funds.)

On June 5th, Andorra Television asked us to sing in the big Carpa in Escaldes car park during their broadcast from

the Fira d'Automobile. Flattering? Maybe. Basically, we were 'the natural break'. This meant that, although we sang only six songs, we waited around for some two hours to perform them, two at a time, between the Fira interviews. As the music was piped both to television and the fair ground, most listeners would be Catalan-speakers so we included two Catalan songs plus the appropriate sounding *Who Will Buy*, while Desmond Allen and Josep Planes bravely sang the hearty German song, *Die Juliska* as a duet. We also included the 'transport' song, *The Gospel Train's A-Comin'*

On 20th June 1999, we took part in two very different celebrations in one day. The one at Meritxell (see article), to celebrate silver and golden wedding anniversaries, called for songs of love. At Ordino we joined the world - plus all the other choirs of Andorra - in marking The International Day of Music. Each choir was allowed seven minutes. In recognition of the theme of the day: the fun of making music together, we decided to open with something a little different.

Traditionally, choirs sing in four-part harmony. This time we would sing in unison - and really sock it to them! We sang *Consider Yourself at Home*, and received a gratifyingly enthusiastic response. Next, we chose *L'Arbret Florit*, a less-known composition by Antoni Pérez Moya, the famous Catalan composer of the popular song, 'El Rossinyol'. Finally, every year, there seems to be one song which catches the choir's enthusiasm - at least until we have flogged it to death. This year it was the spiritual, *Lily of the Valley*, arranged with some truly glorious harmonies by W. Whalum.

Once the individual groups had performed, some 200 of us crowded back onto the stage for the thrill of singing *en masse*, including *La Goja de Perafita*, a lovely piece composed by the local musician and poet, Natàlia Sola and conducted by Catherine Metayer.

This year we also gave two *Concerts d'Estiu* or Summer Concerts. The first was held in the church of Santa Maria del Fener, partly as a thank-you present to Mossen Josep Maria who so kindly allows us to rehearse each Thursday in his parish hall. The second was held in La Massana as we so seldom sing there. For these concerts

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we expected our audiences to be predominantly non-English-speaking so we added Brahms *A Plena Nit* and *Amigos Para Siempre* with *The Gospel Train's A-comin'* included because American spirituals are particularly popular in Andorra.

We had one more request appearance: for the opening ceremony of Encamp's International Folkdance Festival. We sang outside, at 10pm, under somewhat challenging circumstances - the overhead lights had failed. However, we just managed to see enough to sing the four-part version of *L'Himne Andorrà* which was received with applause. We closed with *Edelweiss* which ends with a great crescendo, also much beloved of local audiences.

Our final concert was with the Welsh Fairwater Senior School Choir who, incidentally, sang beautifully. For the first time we performed in Andorra's St Esteve church; sadly, straight after that torrential thunder storm, so our audience was both brave and 'select' (despite Caroline's noble publicity efforts). This time we chose songs with the Welsh choir in mind including the spiritual, *Somebody Touched Me* which has some interesting counterpoint. Together we closed with *The Lily of the Valley* which we had originally pinched from their last year's repertoire!

Finally, a word about rehearsals. Maybe you imagine they're a bore. Not a bit of it. Thanks to **Barbara's** wonderful combination of drive, enthusiasm, musicality and sensitivity plus **Binnie's** beautiful playing, they are a real joy; a heady mix of hard work, laughter and a warm sense of achievement when finally we sing a piece right. As one choir member told me recently, 'I love it. I always come away feeling so happy!' It is at rehearsals, too, that we build up our strong sense of an international family (we've recently welcomed an Argentinean to our group of ten nationalities). Now we are working on Christmas music (concerts over the weekend of 10-12 Dec) and would warmly welcome tenors and basses and any sopranos who can hit the top notes! **Contact me as soon as poss. on 836269 or E-mail me on allcards@andorra.ad. Look forward to welcoming you to the fun. Clare Allcard**

SCOTTISH DANCERS

As I write (in mid-August) the venue for this winter's Scottish dancing is still not certain. Our usual meeting place, the Biblioteca next to La Massana Parish Hall, has been taken over by the kindergarten and is no longer available. I am also told that our alternative venue, the parish hall itself, is being altered. As soon as I have more definite information I will ask Jacquie to put a notice in the newsletter. Hopefully, we will begin on schedule at the beginning of October dancing every Sunday afternoon from 4.30 to 6.30pm (to avoid the ski traffic). Everybody but everybody is welcome; single or as a couple makes no difference. Complete novices will feel like pros after a few sessions of our friendly guidance. It is excellent exercise, both mentally and physically, and we manage to enjoy ourselves at the same time. **For further information call Brenda Ross 836 886 or Clare Allcard 836 269.** Very much look forward to seeing you. *Clare Allcard*

TENNIS GROUP

The Andorran climate is ideal for year-round outdoor or indoor tennis, and there are a number of venues where tennis can be played, without necessarily being a member of a club. Fees on the whole are reasonable, and this situation makes tennis one of the most enjoyable and sociable ways of keeping fit.

The objective of the group, which was formed in 1996, is to provide information for those interested in playing tennis, including listing of names and telephone numbers of other players with whom games can be arranged, available tennis venues, and any other tennis related matters where the group may be of help.

It must be made clear that the group only provides information, and that it is up to individual members to use this information to arrange their own games.



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Until now, the group has acted solely as an information source, but should any existing or potential member wish to assist in organising occasional or regular social tennis meets, tennis tournaments, or co-ordinating group visits to international tennis tournaments, this, of course, would be welcomed.

There are at present twenty-eight players on the contact list, available to anyone wishing to contact them for tennis, but other members are invited to add their names.

FOR FUTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: Ivan Stansby - Tel/Fax 836210.

COMPUTER GROUP

The Club holds regular meetings every other Thursday at the Rutllan Hotel, La Massana at 11.00 a.m.

The Group includes experts and beginners and any member with computer problems is welcome. There are always new developments to discuss where computers are concerned.

One of these is that the great genealogical store of records collected by the Mormons in Salt Lake City is now available on the net.

Brian Keep, Peter Smith and Peter Jennings all continue to help us in joining the Internet and solving computer problems.

One of the new problems that is beginning to involve all citizens is credit card fraud beginning with an ordinary cash withdrawal at a cash machine and only involves the net in the scam.

The net continues to expand in Andorra, with the CIA Newsletter now available on the net, at 30 ptes, per copy. At present about 35 copies are sent out to members by E Mail each week.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Stanley Jones - Tel: 836 972

jones.stanley@andorra.ad

or

Gil Lamb - Tel: 835258

gillamb@andorra.ad

THEATRE GROUP

As you may have gathered from the most recent general meeting, I am the proud leader of the Theatre Group. This is very pleasant, since the Group consists of one person - me - so there is precious little to argue about.

The downside to this is that nothing ever gets done because I have a more than full-time job. Since our late, much-loved **Ron Richards** was promoted to the great stage in the sky, we have had no driving force, no producer, no set designer, no director, no stage manager, no actors - good or bad - no gofers and definitely no plot. All we *do* have, is money in the bank for our next production.

Surely there must be a few brave souls out there who could help to revive one of the most respected and (formerly) successful activities of the Club and which gave huge pleasure to participants and audiences alike? I am, of course, prepared to put myself out as before and if necessary again make a fool of myself on stage, but we need a guiding force. We need someone to research the plays, who will nag us, prompt, and generally tell us what to do. I think it is high time that we bestirred ourselves.

Think about it. The first able volunteer will probably be elected without so much as a word being said and no blackballing. Given the recent past, that would possibly be some sort of a record.

Pretty please. **Simon Binsted**

P.S. Peter Parkinson says he's a member of the Theatre Group too!!

WINE TASTING GROUP

For oenophiles serious and amateur, living in Andorra - between the two great wine producing nations of France and Spain - should equal Paradise! However, finding that ideal wine in what is a limited number of local retailers, plus the complexities of being able to recognise what you are looking for, can result in buying a series of frustratingly imperfect wines and potentially - actual damage to one's wallet.

The CIA has had a Wine Tasting Group almost since the Club was inaugurated. However, there have not been



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regular tastings throughout that time, and by the end of 1994 the group had become inactive. In 1995, **Ivan** and **Diana Stansby** agreed to arrange a tasting in the hope of meeting other members of the local community who were equally enthusiastic about wine – and who might enjoy exchanging views and information on the availability of wines in Andorra.

The inaugural meeting of the current wine-tasting group was held in September 1995, and since then a number of tastings have been held at various venues, with enthusiasm apparently high amongst participants. The group encourages all its' members to assist in arranging tastings, and the introduction of new taste preferences and knowledge is an integral part of the enjoyment of any wines selected for tasting. We have few acknowledged "experts" within the group and would welcome the participation of any "Masters of Wine" who have joined the CIA, - fortunately this lack does not appear to diminish the enjoyment of meeting with other enthusiasts and tasting wines!

In November, the group will be organising a meeting at which wines will be presented to reflect the choice

between traditional and modern styles of winemaking and the contrasting interpretation of this theme achieved by Spanish and French producers. To sum it up, the CIA Wine Tasting Group will be presenting "Wines with Attitude"!

See you round the tasting table!! **CONTACTS:**

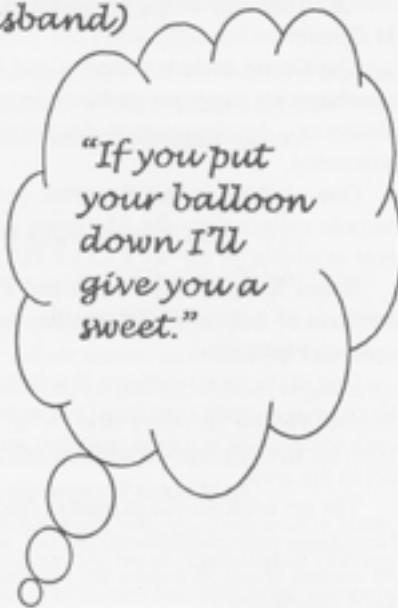
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OVERHEARD

At Group Leaders' lunch in August,

(Wife to Husband)



"If you put your balloon down I'll give you a sweet."



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LETTERS

These are just two of the "thank-you's" received from charities who took part in the Charity Walk on 18th July:

1. FROM THE PRESIDENT OF CÀRITAS ANDORRANA TO ANN PRICE

La present no té cap altre particular que el d'agraïr-vos la vostra invitació a participar com a Entitat Benèfica en la Caminada de Pal així com també felicitar-vos per la magnífica organització.

L'entusiasme, la il·lusió fan que la nostra Organització pugui abordar amb esperança els diferents programes d'acció social que portem a terme per les persones del nostre país.

Junt amb la nostra reconeixença, rebeu el testimoni de la nostra consideració.

Agusti Font González

Translation:

Our reason for writing is to thank you for inviting us to take part in the Pal Charity Walk and at the same time to congratulate you on your superb organisation of the event.

The enthusiasm and solidarity shown by your people and associations such as your gives our charity encouragement and hope when undertaking different welfare programmes on behalf of people in our country. Gratefully, respectfully and sincerely.

Agusti Font González

2. FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER OF THE ANDORRAN RED CROSS TO CAROLINE COLVIN-SMITH:

Vull agrair en nom de la nostre entitat la admirable iniciativa del Club Internacional per haver dut a

terme amb molta voluntat i dedicació aquest gesta tant i tant bonic envers les entitats i ong's del nostre país, moltes gràcies.

Victor Filloy Franco

Translation:

On behalf of our association I should like to thank the International Club for its really lovely gesture in organising this event for the Andorran charities with such goodwill and hard work.

Many thanks.

Victor Filloy Franco

CIA MAGAZINE

Dear Members,

Iam told that, when the Magazine first started, the idea was to talk about the members and related activities etc.

The cover has to show something related to Andorra and its many colour photographs have followed this concept in the past. Something from you will be very welcome. A few suggestions include: a fiesta; a passing cloud; a Club function relating to Andorra; church interiors/exteriors; or whatever you may find interesting or typical of Andorra.

Whenever you have a photo of this type, please send a print to me with your name so that we can add it to the archives for future consideration.

Nina O'Brien

B.P. 42

La Poste Française

La Massana

THANKS TO MARGARET SHAIDA

Dear Editor,

Ihope you will allow me to express my warm gratitude to Margaret Shaida for the many, many hours of hard work she has put in, single-handed, to our club magazine over the past years. How often, when I rang her, would I find she was either in the midst of working on the complicated layout of an issue or typing in work that had been submitted in long hand or about to 'put the magazine to bed'. In a constant search for material, she went to the Wednesday Coffee Mornings, and chivvied fellow members of the Writers Circle to provide articles. Editing the magazine is a job which is, of necessity, done away from the public eye and therefore one which gets few public plaudits. Indeed, I should imagine it is a particularly thankless task except for the personal satisfaction of a job well done.

Well done, Margaret and thank you.

Clare Allcard

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MERITXELL: A DAY OF GOLD AND SILVER

by Clare Allcard

For the past four years, in mid-June, the country's parishes have joined together at the Sanctuary of Meritxell to fête all those in Andorra celebrating 25 or 50 years of marriage: *Les Noces d'or i d'argent*. This year, 54 couples took part and we were very proud to see among them club members Bill and Val Erry, one of only seven couples celebrating their golden wedding anniversary. (Anyone qualifying and wishing to take part simply has to fill in the form - get in touch with me nearer the time - and hand it to their parish priest.)

Arriving around 5pm, each wife was presented with a single rose, its colour depending on whether theirs was a silver or golden wedding anniversary. Then the couples made their way up the long flight of stone steps to the Sanctuary itself, striking in its austere, almost Moorish beauty.

For the second year in a row, The International Singers felt honoured to be invited to close the ceremony with a short concert. Also for the second time in a row, we had another concert booked for the same day, so time was of the essence! We loaded piano, benches and electric cable into the back of my mini-van, some singers clambered in the front and off we went.

Inside the church the seats were soon filled. So much so that we were unable to sing in one of the transepts from where, last year, we had stunning views through the Sanctuary's glass wall to the high pastures of Casamanya. Instead, we were positioned between the central altar and

the reproduction statue of the sacred Virgin of Meritxell. (The original, 12th century, wooden carving was either burnt or looted in the fire of 1972 which destroyed the old sanctuary.) Here, we discovered, the acoustics were not so good. We were to sing directly after the high mass celebrated by all Andorra's priests and sung by the Cor d'Encamp. At one moment during the service, the couples stood holding hands and the priest, placing his hand over theirs, blessed each in turn.

Dieu Vous Unit, a French hymn we first sang at the wedding of Charmaine, daughter of club member **Jeanne Lodge**, is a beautiful, pure-sounding song and

seemed ideal to bridge the gap between solemn mass and cheerful concert. We followed with *Who Will Buy This Wonderful Morning* and then Brahms' *In Stille Nacht* in Catalan. **Gisele Pereira** moved everyone with her performance of the Portuguese love song *Tu*. We closed with the equally appropriate *Amigos Para Siempre* sung in Catalan, Spanish and English.

Afterwards, they presented each of us with a single rose to compliment those given to the celebrating wives. By now it was past six o'clock. So, instead of staying for the party, we changed, grabbed piano and benches and rushed back to Ordino where we had been summoned to a final practice at 7pm with Andorra's joint choirs before celebrating the International Day of Music at 9.

Clare Allcard



The Choir at Meritxell - 20th June 1999



The Choir at Meritxell - 20th June 1999



THE CAR BOOT SALE

20th JUNE, 1999

Caroline Colvin-Smith reports on yet another successful Car Boot Sale – our 7th

More than 3,000 people, making the most of a glorious summer's day, came to our 7th Car Boot Sale. Perhaps the perfect weather encouraged everyone to linger, buy or even chat more than usual; certainly there was a feeling that Arinsal was "en festa" that morning. I can remember previous occasions when those of us manning stalls turned absolutely blue with cold, despite being wrapped in blankets and drinking well-laced coffee: this time we really needed our sun-hats.

The stallholders seemed pleased with their sales. There were 48 in all: some the old faithfuls and others new to our Mercat d'Ocasíó. On sale was the usual variety of second-hand goods, food, jewellery, pictures, dried flowers, souvenirs and, dare I say it, some fascinating collections of junk. Perhaps one of the most popular was the xurros and chocolate stall where many of us sneaked in another breakfast!

The charities were delighted with their record sales. **Helpline** made Pts. 86,000 and **Càritas Parroquial of La Massana** received Pts. 48,000 (the sum of the sales-pitch fees).

As usual, the media showed great interest and was full of praise for what it sees as one of the highlights of the season; also, we just made the ATV news at lunchtime.

All of us who enjoyed this morning in the sun are extremely grateful to **Monique Froboese** and **Karen Empey** for their hard work and excellent organisation which made this year's Car Boot Sale such a success. Our congratulations and thanks to them. May we hope that they can be persuaded to have another go next year?

Caroline Colvin-Smith




Veronika Baines & Samia Omar at the HELPLINE stall



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Jo Mills

MUSEU VILADOMAT

by Peter Parkinson

Peter gives all the information we need about the museum so many of us have not visited – yet!

Most of us have seen, outside the Casa de la Vall, the life-size statues of the young couple dancing hand-in-hand, looking out across the valley, even if we were not all aware that it was created by the Catalan sculptor Josep Viladomat. He was born in 1899 at Manlleu near Vich in Catalunya. The Viladomat family moved to Barcelona in 1911, at which time he became apprenticed to a stonecutter, starting work a year later in the studio of another sculptor.

By 1916 he had begun participation in collective art exhibitions in Barcelona. In 1923 he won first prize with his sculpture "Motherhood" at the Barcelona Municipal Exhibition of Fine Arts, using the prize money to travel in Italy and to Paris. There's a copy of this statue in the Museu Viladomat. Thus by the age of 24 he had become an established sculptor, in which occupation he continued up to the time of his death in 1989, at the age of 90.

During 1937 and 1938 he fought on the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War. As a natural consequence, following the Nationalist victory, he had to go into exile in 1939 and settled in Andorra. Around 1950 he felt able to renew residence in Barcelona alternating with long stays in Andorra and continuing to receive many public and private commissions in Barcelona and in Andorra.

He was far from being avantgardiste in his approach to sculpture and perhaps for that reason has not been highly rated by art historians. If you look through the encyclopaedias located in the Andorra National Library, there are very brief entries in *Ars Hispaniae* Volume XXII, in the *Historia del Arte Español* Volume 10 and rather more information in the *Enciclopedia Catalana* Volume 15, where he is said to have been "on the margin of the sculptors of his generation, to have evolved a realist style at times under the influence of Donatello, the Italian Renaissance sculptor".

He never attained the international reputation of another Catalan sculptor, Aristide Maillol, born at Banyuls-sur-Mer in the Pyrénées Orientales in 1861, dying in 1944

in the same part of France. The Catalan Encyclopaedia writes that Maillol was born in Banyuls, Vall Espir which is seen as culturally Catalan, even though it has been politically French for more than 300 years.

In 1986 the Museu Viladomat was inaugurated as a permanent exhibition of his work, in the Carrer Josep Viladomat, close to the Comú of Escaldes-Engordany. It is open Monday to Saturday from 10.00 to 13.00 and again from 17.00 to 21.00, entry 300 pesetas, free for the under 18's and over 65's. You can buy an illustrated guide for 500 pesetas, including fourteen photographs of sculptures, six pages of chronology, a brief essay on his sculpture and an introduction by his son, Francesc Viladomat, who looks after the museum. The guide is in Catalan, and I also got a French version without the illustrations. There may be versions in other languages.

What will you find in the Museu Viladomat? An exhaustive listing would not be useful, so all I shall do in this article is write a little about some of the things that I liked, without any claim that these are in some sense Viladomat's best works. This photograph shows a reproduction of the dancers outside the Casa de la Vall and to the right of that the bronze statue of Pau Casals and his violincello.



Casals, more uncompromising than Viladomat, was born at Vendrell (close to Tarragona) in 1876. He refused to return to Spain after the Civil War, settling at Prades in the Tet Valley upstream from Perpignan where he inaugurated an annual music festival that is still flourishing. (I am prejudiced about the 'cello, my favourite musical instrument, for listening not playing, whether concertos like those of Dvorak and Britten or the unaccompanied sonatas of J.S. Bach). Copies of this sculpture are to be found in Prades, Lleida, Tarragona and Barcelona.

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A few of the sculptures of the Spanish dancer Carmé Tortola Valencia that Viladomat created from the age of 20 are to be found in the museum. There is a female nude "República" holding aloft a flaming torch intended to be placed on top of a pillar in Barcelona, created by Viladomat in 1932, but not installed until 1986. I liked the bronze of Saint Veronica, kneeling, holding the kerchief, which she gave to Christ carrying his cross to Golgotha, to wipe his brow, after which he handed it back, imprinted with his face.

There are several heads of young children, some of them highly finished in alabaster, others being preliminary studies in clay or plaster. There's a crouching female nude in stone, that I have seen somewhere else, which one may contrast with a fully clothed young woman as a seller of violets, while sewing or spinning thread. The statue of

Bishop Benloch is best viewed in situ, outside the church of Sant Esteve in Andorra la Vella. More austere is the statue of St. Francis of Assisi dating from 1927, very linear and vertical: in the Guide that faces a photo of "Motherhood", all nerves and motion, a good contrast. Right at the end of his life he made four small statues, of a crocodile, a hippo, a wild boar and a gymnast with a crocodile.

In sum, a very satisfying life, vocation chosen early, still creating and experimenting up to the end, knowing that his works would continue to be kept together in his own museum. Next time you feel fed up with yourself, other people, life in general, I recommend a visit to the Museu Viladomat. It will help restore your faith in whatever.

Peter Parkinson



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EXTRA FOR A DAY

by Clare Allcard

Clare tells us of her experience as an 'extra' in "Entre el Torb i el Gestapo" about Andorra's part in helping Catalan exiles escape to France at the beginning of the Second World War.

'It's OK for you,' I said ruefully as we were led across La Massana's busy high street.
'You don't live here.'

My companion, a young, slightly improbable blonde, giggled. We both had our hair baled up in large, Day-Glo-pink rollers, I for the first time in about 20 years. But there, they do say one must suffer for one's art.

I'd always fancied being in films and here was my big chance. You know the sort of thing: Extra walks across room. In blinding flash Director realises she's perfect for female lead in horror movie opposite Boris Karloff - well, I have been dreaming this dream for some time now.

'Our' film, 'The Blizzard and the Gestapo', is set in Andorra in the 1940s. At least I think it is. No one actually explained the plot. They don't. Not to extras.

A quick glance round the hotel and I knew why they'd chosen it. It must have been the only one in Andorra untouched since World War II. Wooden stairs led up to a corridor whose walls were covered in thick, regency-stripe paper and dotted with faded black and white photographs showing flocks of sheep in remote mountain pastures. Someone had bitten large chunks out of the floor tiles.

My companion, Margarida, looked round anxiously and whispered, 'I need to pee. I'm so nervous!'

As I wandered off down the gloomy corridor in search of the facilities, it occurred to me that I wasn't nervous at all. Was I too old or could it be that Margarida took the 'instant fame' myth seriously? I found the loo, an antique job with a cistern touching the ceiling and a bit of frayed string for a chain.

Next, they herded us into one of the bedrooms; quite spacious actually compared with the loose boxes hotels stable their guests in nowadays. It was stacked with 1940's

clothes. All dark. I must say I was most impressed by Wardrobe. They took one look at each of us, glanced at the rail, and then swooped unerringly on something that fitted. Mind you, Casting had been firm. 'No fat extras. We only have clothes for slim ones.' I'd been a wee bit anxious myself on that score. How to tell Edward my road to fame had been blocked because I couldn't fit into any of the clothes? Shoes were no problem. They had a great sack full. Mine were so comfortable I thought of walking off in them: nice low heeled, leather lace-ups with a soft quilted lining.

Next, a pair of thick black tights was waved in my direction swiftly followed by a calf-length, black and white flecked, genuine 1940s frock (later I found a genuine 1940s hole in it), then a black cardigan and a black coat with a false-fur collar. A black handbag completed my ensemble.

Coat buttoned, I turned to weigh up the competition. Margarida looked smarter than I. Her dark brown outfit included rather handsome brown shoes and a little brown hat with netting dangling from it. They hadn't given me a hat. But of course she couldn't wear hers, not till they'd taken the rollers out. Then there was Elia. They'd dressed her up as a maid. She'd got a wicker carpet beater as a prop. Elia had huge, dark, smudgy eyes and a teasing smile. Still, poor dear, she couldn't be considered real competition, not dressed as a maid.

At the very last moment, as we were being bundled back downstairs, I remembered to grab my book and reading glasses. I might be a novice but I did know one thing: being an extra involves lots of waiting around.

Dressed in our 1940s finery, we trooped back across the high street and down to the Hair trailer stationed at the

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bottom of the La Massana car park. Ushered in, I made myself comfy and was just imagining my name in lights above the makeup mirror and wondering idly whether perhaps I should adopt a pseudonym, when I was ordered out again. A Star was approaching! Unfamiliar with Catalan television (or any television come to that as we don't have one), I don't know whether the bloke was a big star or a little one, but he made the most peculiar noises; as if he was practising for the part of a Pyrenean bear. He kept growling. No one seemed to notice so I just looked the other way. After all, if the chap felt better for a good growl, why not?

Outside, I paced up and down, glad of the coat and the thick tights. Nearby, another woman in rollers paced in the opposite direction. I noted her stylish suit with envy. How come I hadn't got one like that? Then I saw her shoes. New. The real give-away, though, was her stockings: sheer and with a very straight seam up the back. No thick peasant jobs for her. And no way did she find that outfit slung on a rail in the first floor bedroom. Despite an unpromising profile, not helped by her hair being in rollers, this too must be a Star.

Once The Bear was done, I was called back. Unfortunately Hair possessed a strong sense of hierarchy. If the Star was a Pyrenean bear then, she made it quite plain, I was a Pyrenean flea. She even removed my curlers with contempt. Then the Star of the seamed stockings appeared at the door. Back out in the cold for me; awfully good for inflated egos, being an extra. Next time a much more friendly hairdresser called me in.

By the time she'd finished I looked just like photos of my mother during the war; a couple of tortoiseshell combs holding the hair tight at the temples and then bundles of curls frothing behind the ears. She tried sweeping my fringe up and back in a fashionable quiff; then took one look at my large, bony forehead and thought better of it. Hiding the forehead under a strategic cluster of curls, she grabbed a make-up tray and painted my lips vermilion. I was done.

Alone and incognito - there was no way any friend I met in the street would recognise me now - I drifted back

to the hotel's dining room. This had been set aside for the cast. All of us. Very egalitarian. Here we extras received a pep talk from Sergi, a young lad in a baseball cap.

'NEVER look at the camera. Keep ABSOLUTELY quiet during takes. When a take is over return to your original position. Finally, be careful of your clothes. They are valuable antiques.' At least I think that is what he said. Trouble is, my Catalan's not that good. At the outset Sergi had asked me, 'Do you understand Catalan?' I'd replied 'Provided you don't speak too fast.' He proceeded to mow me down with a Kalashnikov spray of words. Still, he had a sweet smile.

By now it was 7pm and our male counterparts had appeared. Margarida's brother, Pere, looked magnificent as a *contrabandista*: black beret perched rakishly above thick black brows, crooked, hawk nose and piercing grey-blue eyes. A five-day growth of beard skulked ruffian-like around his jowls. Had he grown it specially? Another chap, very 1940s Dapper Gentleman, complained his hair felt as if it was glued down with honey. He was to be Margarida's husband and had to carry an empty suitcase.

Why, oh why, do they insist on using empty suitcases? No one seems to know how to carry them as if they're full, and it's so irritating when they're wafted about like fly whisks.

By now I was feeling a bit peckish and I will say this for the acting life, there's a non-stop supply of food. Bags of croissants and pastries kept arriving along with bars of chocolate. Coffee and tea were on constant tap plus hot chocolate and fruit juice. Later, we were served an excellent, hot, à la carte dinner. For now I chose a croissant - and then

spent anxious moments trying to brush the crumbs out of my fake fur. I noticed the Stars only toyed with the occasional infusion. Probably worried about their figures, poor loves.

Elia had disappeared with Miguel who was playing the hotel's general dog's body. Unfortunate

man. Was it the excitement or were his hormones playing him up? Certainly, he had a wretched complexion. Elia had the carpet beater.



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7.10pm. Time to get out my book. Will my reading glasses mark the bridge of my nose?

8.05pm. The rest of the men start a game of cards.

10pm. We all break for supper.

Back in the common room I am well dug into Alaska circa 1930, when Sergi returns. They're ready for my first take. I am to sit at a table in the bar and order a coffee from Miguel.

Alarmed, I ask 'Do I have to speak?'

I receive a pitying glance. 'Of course not.'

Silly me. I wouldn't be an extra if I spoke.

The bar has been transformed. 1940s adverts hang behind the counter. A large wireless set squats on the floor. In the far corner, the Stars prepare themselves for shooting. Two pretty young women sit in large armchairs, their feet demurely crossed at the ankle. But oh dear, they are sitting far too far back. Surely everyone knows ladies never leant back in their chairs; it was considered slouching.

The camera is on rails. Pere is at the bar holding a glass of something red and vile, presumably imitation wine. Sergi places me at a table by the door from where I have an excellent view of the proceedings.

Then, the Assistant Director himself comes over! My moment has come. I give him my most dazzling smile. That does it! For a split second he looks at me - then taps the chair opposite and tells me to change places. He prefers that I sit with my back to the camera.

Never mind. No doubt one can ooze character just as successfully through a well-focused back. I contemplate my role; a lone woman of a certain age gracing an Andorran café during the war. Not two feet behind me sits a smuggler. I will clutch my handbag to my bosom and sit very, very upright.

The Assistant Director comes over again. He smiles. My heart leaps. 'Put your handbag on the table there.'

'Do you think I should?' I ask doubtfully.

Misguided young man. He clearly knows nothing about history. Does he really imagine a lone woman would have exposed her handbag on the table? In those days? Besides it looks untidy.

Sergi now approaches with a 1954 copy of Life magazine, in Spanish. He searches through it till he comes to a page with an advertisement for sewing machines. 'There' he says. 'You can read that page.' And smiles his Puckish smile.

'I hate to tell you, but in the Forties it was thought very *mal educado* to read at table.' He looks at me as if I'm quite mad and moves off. Someone brings me a cup and saucer, a china jug and a sugar bowl with no sugar in it. They've put a tea bag in the cup, the nasty string bit dangling outside. The Assistant Director comes back to tell someone to put sugar in the bowl.

'Perdón,' I say 'but they didn't have tea bags in 1940.'

I proceed to stuff the little tag and string into the bottom of the cup. Maybe I can get a job in Continuity, or Research. Though, from the looks of it, the budget for Research has already run out.

Suddenly, I'm startled by a roar stage left. My head whips round and I stare straight into the affronted gaze of The Bear. Clearly his idiosyncrasies are not supposed to be queried by mere extras.

Behind me tension mounts. A man appears at the door with one of those clapper boards. I'm furious. So much going on and I can't see a thing. Not to worry, I'm sitting very straight and will pour my tea with great character.

'Silence! Roll! Action!'

I pick up my jug and gracefully dribble a little water into the cup. Behind me the saloon doors swing open and a chap carrying a rucksack and snowshoes barges in. I can't see his face but he has a gorgeous voice.

For some unknown reason The Bear greets him in heavily accented English, then switches to Catalan then, again in English, calls to Miguel, 'Champagne! The best!'

Then we cut.

We did that take six times, occasionally getting as far as the two female Stars also speaking in heavily accented English. Why, I hadn't a clue, but I was dying to offer some elocution lessons.

The shooting of my scene being over, we extras were sent back to the waiting room. Elia had disappeared and Margarida was still waiting to do her bit. Then Sergi told us we could go home. It was almost midnight. We had to return our costumes to Wardrobe, our hair combs to Hair and then collect our pay.

Margarida and I went upstairs; only to find Elia, the maid, totally transformed. She was now wearing a rather dashing low cut silk dress, a jet necklace and *new* shoes! It was those smouldering eyes that did it. She'd been spotted by the Director. Her next part was as a coquette chatting up the barman. Some people have all the luck.

So, to the big question. Are you going to see me on television? Well, probably not, at least not if Pere, the *contrabandista*'s to be believed. From where he sat he could see the film monitor. As the man pushed through the saloon doors and the camera slid silently towards us, there was a split second when you could just see half of Pere's face. For less than a split second you could also see a few locks of my hair. Ah well, at least they paid me 6,000 pts - and I got to be an extra for a day.

Clare Allcard

WALKING FOR CHARITY LA CAMINADA BENÈFICA

Report by Alan Hadden

“To organise and promote gatherings and activities ... with the aim of promoting inter alia friendship between the different nationalities”. So runs Article 2 of the Club's Statutes. And on July 18th, Andorra's first **Charity Walk**, organised by the Club, contributed greatly to the achievement of this objective and, at this writing, had raised over 2,000,000 Pesetas for participating local charities.



Guess Who??

It was not easy. Walking for charity was a new concept (as had been the Club's now annual Car Boot Sale) in Andorra, and had to be explained to the six charities - and to the authorities whose approval and support was required. In essence, they were told, individuals were invited to seek sponsors who would undertake to contribute x Pesetas to the charity of their choice for every completed lap of the circuit in front of the Pal Ski Station. There would be prizes

for the most original costumes, as well as benefit to the charities for the walkers' completed laps.

Publicity in the press and, most notably, on Andorran television was outstanding before and after the event. On the day, some 80 walkers made up from roughly a third each of Club members, of people linked to the participating charities, and of the local youth and beauty, went out at 10.00 a.m. under a cloudless sky to make their laps. Twenty-odd Club members had volunteered as controllers and until noon checked off the walkers as they completed each circuit. Among the prize-winning costumes were those of **Hugh Garner**, H.B.M.'s Vice-Consul, appropriately dressed as John Bull (will there be an Uncle Sam next year?) and **Lisa Fowler**, well accompanied by Elena in her arms and Daisy in a push-chair, and **Valerie Dawson** as a very convincing cat.



Hugh Garner for the Meritxell School - and Great Britain!!

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John Bull won dinner for two at the El Rusc Restaurant (the gift of Antoni Garrallà, La Massana's Mayor, who must be thanked, too, for his whole-hearted support of the project); **Lisa Fowler** won entry to Caldea, given by **Hugh Garner**; **Valerie Dawson** won **Stephanie Steinbrecht's** prize of a day at the Anyós Club; and **Jacque Crozier** and **Ann Matschke**, dressed as birds, won the case of wine given by **David LeMare**.

Refreshments, organised by **Fiona Dean** and provided by her Hotel Micolau, with contributions from **L'Espiga D'Or Bakery** and the **Don Denis** and **Molí dels Fanals** (notably a most delicious cold melon soup) restaurants,

were lavish – and enjoyed by both participants and spectators alike.

Thanks must go too to **Montse Checa** of the Comú, **CISA** and the **local police**, as well as to the **Pal Ski Station**, whose approaches provided an ideal circuit without too much uphill and down and with the wood in its centre offering welcome shade to the walkers; and to the **Red Cross Ambulance Crew**, there on standby, but whose services were happily not required.

In short, a great day for which we should congratulate the Board and, with the benefiting Andorran Charities (**A.D.A.**, **A.D.N.**, **Caritas**, **Creu Roja**, **The Meritxell School** and **UNICEF**), thank everyone concerned – and urge them please, to be sure to do it again next year.

Alan Hadden



Maria Teresa Raurell and Fiona Dean who was the organiser of this delicious brunch



Some of the FITTER WALKERS who continued to the very end

A NEW DEDICATION TO THE MOTHER OF GOD

Maria Teresa Raurell witnesses the blessing of a new shrine in an Encamp beauty spot

The Comú of Encamp has built a new little Shrine, dedicated to the Mother of God of Ecology (Mare de Déu de l'Ecologia).

On 26th June, the shrine and the image – a beautiful ceramic made by Ramon Argilés, a Club member – was blessed by Mossèn Xavier Esplandiú, priest of Encamp, in a very simple, but moving ceremony. After some speeches by Sra. Elena Picart – Consellera de Cultura – and Sr. Jordi Mas – Cònsol Major, the Comú offered an excellent buffet to these present.

This is a quite new dedication, and the Andorran image is only the second to be created in the whole world. The first one can be visited in Gallifa, a lovely village situated in the Catalan area of Western Vallès where the priest, Mossèn Dalmau, organises a lot of activities related to ecology and nature study, especially for young people. Mossèn Dalmau was invited by the Comú of Encamp to this blessing and he told those present when and why he had had the idea of giving the name of Ecology as a new dedication to the Virgin.

The Comú had tried to organise this celebration for 6th June, the International Ecology Day, but the persistent rain

in May obliged the slowing down and even the halting of the road-works for several days. Finally, they decided to hold it on 26th June.

A bus transported the people who were unable to drive. When the bus dropped us, we had to walk a little less than 1 km. on a still muddy road and under the menacing sky, but when we arrived at the place, the sun had decided to shine and we could attend the ceremony warm and happy.

The road begins in Encamp, just below the Funicamp, and is marked as "Camí dels Cortals". It is good, but a little further there is another road on the right marked "Camí de Pardines", and this is the one that leads to the shrine. Probably, by the time you read this, the road will already have been finished, but, before trying to go there, it would be better to ask in "Informació i Turisme", Tel: 831405. It seems that the Comú would like to use this road that leads to Sant Miquel d'Engolasters for cross-country skiing in winter.

(Eds.: There are press cuttings showing the shrine in the 1999 scrap-book).

Maria Teresa Raurell

ASSOCIACIÓ DE CONSUMIDORS I USARIS d'ANDORRA (Andorran Consumers Association)

Following the detailed information in the Autumn '97 Intercomm, several members have benefited from going to the A.C.U. and taking its advice. As a result, the Board felt it would be helpful to take out membership in my name in order to keep abreast of this association's activities.

So far, I have received 3 copies of their very interesting quarterly magazine. These issues have dealt with bank charges, buying a car, holidays, the storing of eggs, olive oil, safe eating habits, textile codes, house insurance, among other subjects. So, if any of you would like to borrow the magazines, just give me a ring.

As most of you know, we have had contacts with the A.C.U. for the last 3 years, particularly as its founder and Secretary was also the editor of "La Revista", the 'glossy' that gave us excellent publicity until it ceased publication.

The Andorran Consumers Association is an extremely well-respected organisation with a high profile, not only

in this country, but also across the borders. It helps tourists as well as residents and is proud of its record for solving many disputes through mediation rather than litigation. A few months ago it received a prestigious Catalan award for its achievements.

To remind you: annual family membership is Pts. 5,000 and the address (in the heart of the old town, near St. Esteve's church) is:

Placeta Monjó, 2, baixos,
Andorra la Vella.

Tel: 867456

Fax: 861466

Monday – Friday – 10.00 – 1.00 & 4.00 – 7.00
(and they do answer letters!!)

Caroline Colvin-Smith

PETITE ELENA & THE ELECTRONIC LADY (a fantasy)

(Continuing Aubrey Weatherbe's 'fantastic tale of many miracles', in the first part of which we read of little Elena's flight over Andorra hand-in-hand with the Electronic Lady and of her introduction to the miracle of sight and sound. That section ended with little Elena wondering why she could see and hear her friends on the ground but why they didn't answer her or even see her. The Electronic Lady had replied, "Because you and I are on a different frequency, a different channel. We can see and hear your friends, but they cannot see or hear us.")

Now we continue with the second part....

frequency ... channel ... I don't understand."

"In time you will understand. You are witnessing the miracle of sight and the miracle of sound. You of the human race take these miracles for granted, unfortunately," said the Electronic Lady and then she pointed to a man who was entering the Square of the People.

As soon as the children saw this man they shouted with glee and ran to him. They climbed all over him; some of the children grabbed his legs, others crawled up his back and all the time he was laughing and joking with them.

"That's the Bishop of La Seu d'Urgell, all the kids like him. He's one of our Co-Princes. He's very nice," said Elena.

"This is the miracle of love, in this case the love of the young and the old for each other. Before we leave the square ... look ... do you recognise the pram near the bandstand?"

"Of course. My baby brother is in that pram."

"This is the greatest miracle of the planet Earth: the miracle of birth. So ... what do you think of your new brother?"

"He's a big, fat pig and he cries all night."

"Elena, you're not being nice!"

There were only two clouds over Andorra at this time. Near the Andorra-France border there was a towering thunderstorm in which the strong vertical currents had

produced large hailstones which now pelted the tobacco crops of the Andorran farmers. Towards the south near the Andorran-Spain border a white cumulus cloud was rising quietly and rapidly increasing in size.

The Electronic Lady and Elena shot up between the two clouds. Elena was afraid as she watched the thunderstorm with its flashes of lightning and roaring of thunder.

"We are not going to fly into that thunderstorm are we?" asked Elena.

"No, we are going to fly alongside the white cloud because I have something to show you. It is a circular rainbow on the side of the cloud. Look - over there."

With the sun on her right, Elena looked to her left and she saw what to her looked like a coloured target for archers.

"In the centre of the rainbow you will see our shadows. If you would like, Elena, we will dive towards the centre and go through our shadows. It will appear to us as if our shadows are rapidly flying towards us."

"Yes, please!" Elena became very excited as they dived into their shadows and came out the opposite side of the cumulus cloud.

"Wow! That was great fun! Can we do it again?"

"No, time is running out on us. This was an example of the miracle of pleasure. Now we shall ascend to the stars."

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They climbed higher and higher, faster and faster. The Earth appeared the size of a tennis ball one moment and almost immediately became a point of light. They passed suns, moons, stars and planets on their swift journey through Outer Space. At last they stopped and hand-in-hand they slowly rotated.

The stars were so numerous that Elena could not possibly count them. She was absolutely thrilled with the beauty and vastness of the Universe.

"It's so beautiful. I never thought anything could be so fantastic," Elena said.

"This is the greatest miracle of all: the miracle of the Universe. Now ... Elena ... now do you believe in miracles?"

Elena was so captivated by the splendour of what she was seeing that without thinking she said:

"I don't believe in miracles."

Elena felt her hand slip and saw the horrified look on the face of the Electronic Lady who could not do anything to prevent Elena from tumbling in Outer Space. Elena could not breathe as there wasn't any oxygen! She fell head-over-heels and had no idea where she was. Her body entered the Earth's atmosphere at too sharp an angle and started to burn from the friction.

In the Square of the People in Andorra la Vella the Minister of Education looked up and said very quietly:

"Look! There's a new comet."

But it was not a comet: it was Elena's body burning and leaving a long trail of fire. She entered the top of the thunderstorm which was now directly over Andorra la Vella. The moisture put out the fire but the vertical currents sent her up and down many times inside the black cloud. Quickly she turned into a huge hailstone and fell out of the thunderstorm.

The Minister of Education saw the gigantic hailstone falling rapidly towards the Square of the People.

"Run for your life!" he yelled.

Everyone in the square ran as fast as they could. Elena, now frozen into a solid state of ice, fell into the roof of the bandstand. BOOM!!

.... Elena opened her eyes, felt her face and shoulders. Where was the ice? She looked around her. Where was the Square of the People? She was totally confused. She looked up and then slowly realised that she had fallen out of her bed!

She crawled to the corner, picked up her teddy-bear and then ran downstairs. She hopped, skipped and yelled, "I believe in miracles, I believe in miracles."

Her father said, "What a pleasant change since yesterday." He gave her a hug and kiss. "Happy birthday, Elena. Your present is in the living room."

"Yes, happy birthday, dear," said her mother as she, too, hugged and kissed her daughter.

Elena walked into the living-room. However, something outside the window attracted her attention. The fog was swirling and shapes were being distorted. She thought she saw the Electronic Lady smiling and waving at her. She also thought she heard, "I love you, petite Elena," and then the image blended into the fog.

"I love you too," said Elena.

"To whom were you talking, dear?" asked her mother.

"Nobody," said Elena staring into the fog. She turned and saw the bright red bicycle, her birthday present. While her parents watched her, she put the teddy-bear on the seat of the bicycle. She then removed the birthday card from the handles and saw the gold letters indicating the name of the model of the bicycle. She could not stop the tears and when her parents held her hands the tears came in earnest. The model of her beautiful, red bicycle was – **THE MIRACLE.**

Aubrey Weatherbe

Cristòfol Mobles Anyós

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HAPPY 90th BIRTHDAY to Eleanor Richardson

Eleanor Richardson celebrated her 90th birthday on July 1st with her friends. She received a gorgeous bouquet of flowers from the C.I.A. members and birthday cards came pouring in. There were also plenty of balloons and presents.

Eleanor posed for some pictures – isn't she a star!!! You can imagine from the photo below how much we were all going to enjoy the delicious cake baked by Clare.

We wish her all the best of health and happiness and we'll all celebrate the new century with her.

Samia Omar

P.S. She refused to divulge the names of all the boyfriends who visited her!!! Mum's the word!



Diana Pennal, Clare Allcard, Eleanor Richardson & Caroline Crichton

THE 116 EMERGENCY NUMBER

May we remind you of the efficient emergency service number 116.

However, we **MUST STRESS** that this number is **FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY**,

And should **NOT** be called if you are suffering simply from a common cold, coughs and other such minor complaints. While the doctors are dealing with you, others may need them for heart attacks and other life-threatening illness.

For any other information ie. Doctors, Dentists etc., please call **HELPLINE mobile phone number 334055**

HAS ANYONE -----?

by Nina O'Brien

Have you ever heard of a "post-exhibition preview"? If not, here is one. As luck would have it the magazine is just a little late for our show so this is a brief critical appraisal in advance. A reminder at this stage of the Art Group's exhibition at the Sala Polivalent, Ordino. It opened with a cocktail reception at 6 p.m. on 30th September and continued for another three days during local working hours.

Roughly speaking, at this stage while I write, there are 11/12 present, 9 members participating with more or less 109 paintings, some for sale – some not. Thinking back to the first big show in June 1996 there were many more art forms than a variety of technical effects. Well, now three years later, there is certainly progress – a transition from the amateur to a more mature and subtler level. The focus appears to be shifting from conventionally "picturesque" subjects towards an experimental "modernism". There are traces of leaning towards "les Fauves" of the Paris Salon of autumn 1905 and surrealism, which is surprising as well as complimentary considering the absence of local art resources.

Many people dislike surrealism because it is characterised as "super-realistic" – at times pertaining to a nightmare or dreamlike quality shown by Dali, Rousseau or Chagall with his leanings towards cubism. "Fauvism" to some is even more unacceptable, being fierce and wild in colour and art form. The eventual success of the great modernists suggests that progress was made in changing the goal of the artist somewhat. To many it is no longer to reproduce nature but to represent it in one's own concept or view. The artist does not have "to depict the visible" but "to make the visible".

Well, whatever one may call the group's work it is a product of art. When one paints or sculpts or is involved with similar creative pursuits, one is always producing what later may be defined or considered a "work of art". Thank God that this collection does not represent such "works of art" – absolutely stereotyped, rigid classification. Our subject matter and its treatment varies. In some there is a certain "cling on" feeling to the past basking alongside the new modes and methods of expressionism.

Perhaps you will share my optimism and sentiment regarding the group's lack of opportunity to a comprehensive program. Without art history and art appreciation resources in English they paint, as it were, in a vacuum. It is practical indulgence or isolatory existence leading intellect and knowledge from the past. From a professional point of view, I condemn it. Yet from a more human aspect it is possible to enjoy flowers in their

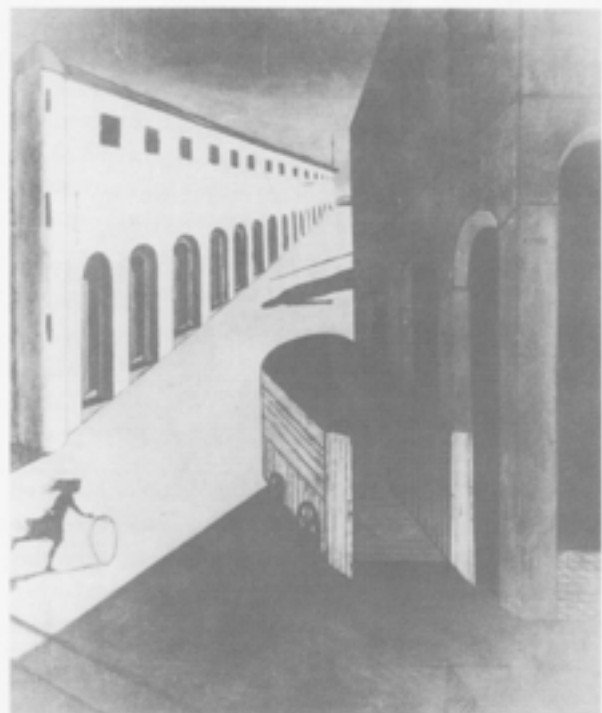
coloured form and delicate fragrance without a deep theoretical knowledge of the plant. No analogy would be really parallel. Look at all those art historians and art critics who have never painted or created – they have never had any practical art existence. Their vacuum is even greater. They cannot even have empathy with the agony and pain that one feels when things go wrong while creating.

I have heard people saying, while looking at a painting by a member of the Group "This looks like Nina's". True, some are reminiscent of my style but this is natural. This is how a school of art progresses. After all, one preaches what one practices.

To sum up, the exhibition is one big creative effort. I suppose people who come will know it and those who could not visit will hear about it. I am sure that everyone has their opinions.

Thanks anyhow, until next time.

P.S. A reminder that the Art Group meets on Friday afternoons, (or on other days at the convenience of Members) at the studio in Andorra la Vella. Anyone, ranging from zero experience of painting to expert, welcome. Phone Nina at 837772.



*"The Anguish of Departure"
A thought provoking surrealistic dreamscape by
Chiricio (1888)*

THE ANDORRAN NATIONAL ANTHEM

by *Caroline Colvin-Smith*

When the Andorran National Anthem is sung on formal occasions I've often wondered what the exact words were. Maria Teresa very kindly dug out a copy for me. In case anyone is curious about it, here it is together with a translation:

*El gran Carlemany mon Pare,
dels alarbs em deslliurà,
i del cel vida em donà
de Meritxell la gran Mare.*

*Princesa nasquí i Pubilla
entre dos nacions neutral.
Sols resto l'única filla
de l'imperi Carlemany.*

*Creient i lliure onze sécles,
creient i lliure vull ser.
Siguin els furs mos tutors
i mos Prínceps defensors.*

*Great Charlemagne my father
freed me from the Arabs
and gave me life from Heaven:
our great mother, Meritxell.*

*Born a princess and heiress,
neutral, I lie between two countries.
I, and I alone, am the only remaining
daughter of Charlemagne's empire.*

*Christian and free for eleven centuries –
thus do I wish to be.
May our Law be my guardian and
the Princes my protectors.*

In 1920 the Pope decreed that the Virgin of Meritxell was to be the official patron saint of Andorra. Thereupon the Co-Prince, Bishop Dr. Joan Belloch i Vivó, wrote this text and the Andorran composer, Father Enric Mafany of St. Julià, set it to music. It became the National Anthem which was heard for the first time on 8th September, 1921. The occasion was a deeply religious, but festive ceremony to honour the Virgin and to crown the beautiful, wood-carved image of her. The whole country took part in the celebrations and 8th September has, since then, been the most important date in the Andorran calendar.

RESTAURANT REPORT

by *Maria Teresa Raurell*

“LA BURNA” at Sispony

Dreaming of a quiet place for a “tête-à-tête” dinner, or being with a group of friends with no loud music to disturb you whilst you talk? Then you must try “La Burna” Hotel/Restaurant in Sispony.

Ot Sala and his wife Judit, a nice young Andorran couple, will be very pleased to welcome you to their restaurant and will offer you some of Ot's specialities – for he is the chef.

In a well-lit dining-room, where several windows open onto a terrace where Judit grows a lot of lovely plants and flowers, one can enjoy the dishes that Ot suggests. They are inspired by Catalan and French cuisine, but always have that personal touch. And at a reasonable price.

For example, I recommend “Green salad with sausages” (Pts. 750), “Homemade pâté” (Pts. 700) or “Lentil and pig's trotter salad” (Pts. 850). These are only some of my favourites, among several other first courses.

Among the main courses I suggest “Meatballs with cuttlefish” (Pts. 1,300), “Shoulder of Lamb with wine sauce” (Pts. 1,400) or “Grilled Salmon” (Pts. 1,200). There are other choices, all worth trying.

The desserts are usually home-made and I particularly like the “Profiteroles” (Pts. 600), “Orange in special syrup with hot chocolate” (Pts. 475) and “Babaroise of raspberry, or lemon” (Pts. 500) and why not try the “Dried fruit in liqueur” (Pts. 450)?

Obviously, the menu changes a little depending on the time of year, but always offers the best of what is in season.

They can book for groups of up to 35 people and the price of dinner ranges from Pts. 2,800 to 3,000, including a good wine. This is only possible from Monday to Thursday because at weekends the restaurant needs to provide enough tables for the hotel guests.

The hotel has 12 rooms, which is helpful if we ever have no room for our visitors.

For the restaurant as well as for the hotel, reservations can be made on Tel: 835355 or Fax: 836875.



FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

Maria Teresa Raurell would like to thank all the people in the various government departments, comuns and tourist offices who have assisted her in the compilation of these details of activities being organised in different parishes during the next two months.

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES IN ANDORRA FOR OCTOBER, NOVEMBER AND EARLY DECEMBER

Andorra la Vella

OCTOBER

1st October

Theatre Season in "Teatre Comunal", until December.

6th October

Cineclub de Les Valls at Teatre Comunal.

16th October

Theatre Season for children, until June.

22nd, 23rd and 24th October

"Fira d'Andorra"

NOVEMBER

3rd November

Cineclub in Teatre Comunal

5th November

Theatre Season in Teatre Comunal

20th November

Theatre Season for children in Teatre Comunal

(This month there will be the traditional "Diada del Bacallà" (the Cod's Day) at Plaça del Poble. The date is not yet certain.

DECEMBER

1st December

Cineclub in Teatre Comunal

3rd December

Fira de Santa Llúcia - Selling Christmas decorations, Nativity scenes, greeting cards, candles etc.

18th December

Theatre Season for children in Teatre Comunal

Canillo

OCTOBER

17th October

Horse and Cattle Fair, and Handicraft Fair. The first is organised by the Comú and the second by Unió Pró-Turisme.

NOVEMBER

1st November

In the evening at Plaça Montaup "Castanyada" (eating chestnuts and traditional small cakes - panellets -) on All Saints Day in celebration of the latter.

DECEMBER

Different activities related to Christmas, especially for children.

Encamp

OCTOBER

The painting exhibition by the young Andorran Verónica Solsona, inaugurated on 14th September at Complex Esportiu i Socio-cultural, will continue until 14th of this month.

Other exhibitions can be visited this month in Pas de La Casa. Not in the Comú's Exhibitions Hall, because of workmen.

Every Thursday evening

Indoor football league for adults at the Complex Esportiu.

15th October - 15th November

Squash Tournament at Complex Esportiu, probably in the evening.

This month in the Complex Library

Children's Hall - there will be a monographic exhibition about the books' and library's history, with documents, photographs and different work to make everything comprehensible to children because the exhibition is being arranged especially for them, but it is also of interest to adults. It will last until November.

At the same place "Setmana del Llibre Infantil i Juvenil" - A week - probably longer - about books especially written for children and young people, from the early editions up to the modern CD-Rom.

31st October

"Castanyada" at Pas de La Casa, and dancing. Organised by Dep. d'Informació i Turisme.

NOVEMBER

1st November

Activities for children about Halloween, organised by Area del Jovent.

Until 15th November

Squash tournament at Complex Esportiu.

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DECEMBER

During all of December

Different activities for children in connection with Christmas.

10th December

St. Eulàlia's Day – Patron Saint of Encamp. Concert by **The International Singers** at 21h30. Christmas Carols. (*Date and time to be confirmed later*). In Sant Eulàlia Church.

Escaldes-Engordany

OCTOBER

1st – 30th October

Art Exhibition at Comú Exhibitions Hall – *Further information – Tel: 890875*

During this period there will be the usual classes for adults and children on cultural subjects, also sports activities, at the various schools.

Every Saturday Morning

An interesting market is held at Santa Anna square and Church square. Fresh products, preserves, clothes etc., are on display throughout the year.

NOVEMBER

1st – 15th November

Halloween activities for children, at 16h30 at the Ludoteca. Centre Social i Recreatiu.

Possibly a piano competition organised by the Harmonia School and the Comú. *Tel: 826501 for confirmation.*

Every Saturday morning

The usual market.

During this month there will be some art exhibitions at the Comú Exhibitions' Hall.

During this period there will be the usual classes for adults and children on cultural subjects, also sports activities at the various schools.

DECEMBER

2nd December at 17h00

Different activities for children at the Ludoteca.

All Month several art exhibitions in the Comú Exhibitions' Hall.

Advent Calendar in front of the "Façana de l'Art" (c. Santa Anna Nº 2). *Every evening at 20h15 from 1st – 24th December*, raffle of works of art by several Andorran artists. Some authorities from the Comú will be present. Tickets sold in the Comú Office and in the "Façana de l'Art". *Information – Tel: 890875*

Every Saturday

The usual market.

During this period there will be the usual classes for adults and children on cultural subjects, also sports activities, at the various schools.

La Massana

OCTOBER

9th – 17th October

MINI-EXPO – Exhibition of lots of models and miniatures

of ships, trains cars, etc., and there will be some lectures by well-known specialists. At Sala de la Closeta.

21st October – 12th November

At Sala Prat del Molí (located just in front of the Informació i Turisme Office, at the place where the old Hotel Naudi used to be) celebration of the 70th Birthday Anniversary of the Catalan poet Miquel Martí Pol. Exhibition in connection with his poetry and some lectures. Also, other interesting activities concerning this important writer.

30th October

At 22h00 "Castanyada" (eating chestnuts and special cakes in commemoration of All Saints Day)

NOVEMBER

12th November

Last day of the exhibition and activities detailed above.

13th November

At 22h00 in the Parish Church, Concert in honour of Saint Aciscle and Victoria, by Coral Sant Antoni and Orfeo Andorrà. Later, "botifarrada amb allioli de codony" (sausages with mayonnaise made with pounded garlic, quince and olive oil. This sauce is very popular in Andorra and the quince gives it a very special flavour), and coca (flat cake). Later there will be a ball at La Closeta. Everybody will be welcome.

14th November

At 16h00 performance by Esbart "Els Esquirols" and Festival for children, and "chocolatada" (hot chocolate) for children too.

15th – 21st November

Several activities in connection with Jorge Luis Borges, the very important writer born in Argentina in 1899. Commemoration of his Anniversary, with lectures, readings of some of his work, etc., in Sala Prat del Molí.

25th November – 30th December

Exhibition of paintings and sculptures by Dolors Novellas, at Sala Prat del Molí.

DECEMBER

11th December

Fira de Santa Llúcia in the morning in La Closeta. Do not forget that, as in previous years, our HELPLINE team will have a stall there and they will be waiting for your visit and, of course, you will have several things to choose and buy.

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Ordino

OCTOBER

31st October

At 21h30 "Castanyada" and ball in the Iniciatives Turístiques square.

This month the courses for children of judo, English language, and probably dance, will begin. And also courses of Tai-xi-xuan qui gong, Italian language, Club Photo and French language for adults. *Information in the library - Tel: 837811 and 737080, Fax: 839225 and E-mail to: andorra.ad.*

4th - 8th October

IV Tenpin Bowling Championship for children - IV Banc Agrícola i Comercial d'Andorra Trophy, in Centre Esportiu. *Tel: 737070*

Until 17th October

It will still be possible to take part in summer activities proposed by the Iniciatives Turístiques of Ordino. Several guided trips, on foot, on horse-back, mountain bike and others, in the Ordino Valley and in the Sorteny Natural Park. *Information - Tel: 737070 or Fax: 839225.*

NOVEMBER

8th - 12th November

IV Tenpin Bowling Championship (single) for children - IV Banc Agrícola and Comercial d'Andorra Trophy. In Centre Esportiu.

DECEMBER

Early December

Drawing competition about Christmas, for all the children of Ordino.

December

Christmas concert by **The International Singers** in Ordino Church. Date and time to be arranged.

Sant Julia de Lòria

OCTOBER

3rd October

Fira del Roser (traditional market of crafts), organised by Unió Pro-Turisme Laurèdia. In case of bad weather, in Centre Cultural i de Congressos. If it is fine, at Plaça de la Germandat. *Information and Inscriptions - Tel: 844345*

22nd October

At 22h00 - XV Theatre Season, in Auditori Claror of the Centre Cultural i de Congressos.

NOVEMBER

12th and 13th November

In the Auditori Claror of the Centre Cultural - Show by la Cia. "Es Grata". Probably in the evening.

19th November

XV Theatre Season, at 22h00 in the Auditori Claror.

21st November

Concert by Orquestra Nacional de Cambra, organised by Crèdit Andorrà. The time is not yet known. In the Auditori Claror of the Centre Cultural.

DECEMBER

Early December

Fira de Santa Llúcia - Selling of Nativity scenes, Christmas decorations, greeting cards, etc., and inauguration of the Pessebre, made by the Board of the Unió Pro-Turisme Laurèdia.

18th December

At 22h00 Concert by the choirs of Sant Julià.

AUDITORI NATIONAL D'ORDINO CONCERTS

XVII FESTIVAL NARCISO YEPES - Tickets at Crèdit Andorrà Offices.

3rd October

At 12.00h - This will be the only concert in the **Ordino Parish Church**, instead of in the Auditori. With Sergi Claret, violin, and Miriam Manubens, piano. With works by Mozart, Chopin, Bach-Liszt, Beethoven, Wieniawsky and Bela Bartok. (1.000 Ptes.)

3rd October

At 18.00h - Jorge Elias, tenor and Edelmiro Arnaltes, piano. (3.000 Ptes.) Programme not yet known.

10th October

At 21.30h - St. Petersburg Hermitage Orchestre, Michel Lethiec, clarinet, Mats Liljefors, conductor. Works by Mozart, Rossini, Glinka and Prokofiev. (5.000 Ptes.)

16th October

At 21.30h - Orquestra Nacional de Cambra d'Andorra, Gerard Claret Concertino-Conductor, György Sebörk, piano. Works by Haydn and Mozart. (4.000 Ptes.)

24th October

At 21.30h - Orquestra Ciudad de Granada, the singers Ana Belén and Miguel Rios, and the Lluís Vidal Jazz Trio. Josep Pons, Director. Ana Belén and Miguel Rios will sing Kurt Weill. (6.000 Ptes.)

Further information: Iniciatives Turístiques d'Ordino - Tel: 737080 or Internet: www.andorra.ad/comuns/ordino

**OTHER CONCERTS IN
AUDITORI NACIONAL
D'ORDINO**

*Tickets at Sindicat d'Inicativa Office and in Iniciatives
Turistiques of Ordino*

3rd November

At 21.30h - Maria del Mar Bonet. This Majorcan singer presents her new CD "Cavall de Foc" (Fire Horse). She is one of the most internationally known and appreciated singers of the Catalan Language.

10th November

At 21.30h - The Flying Pickets. They are the first European "a capella" rock group. They are very good and their voices are really amazing.

10th December

At 21.30h - The Georgia Mass Choir. In 1996 the whole world could listen to them singing at the Opening and Closing ceremonies of the Atlanta Olympic Games. This choir has sung with Whitney Houston in the film "The Preacher's Wife" and with her and Stevie Wonder at the gala "Celebrated the Dream: 50 Years of Ebony", broadcast by TV for all U.S.A.

18th December

Christmas Concert by the Cor Nacional de Petits Cantors d'Andorra and Orquestra Nacional d'Andorra. The time is yet to be arranged.

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Roca i Ribes, 1st door on left).
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