

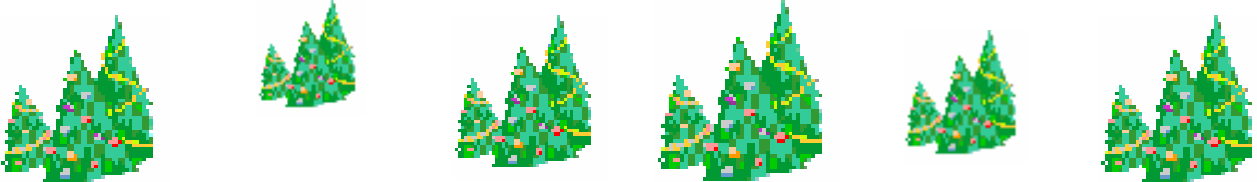


ESTEC SWIMMING & SUB-AQUA CLUB

www.geocities.com/estecessac

Christmas 2006 Newsletter

Second Edition



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suffered a similar fate raising questions of quality control and footwear manufacturers expectations when their products are advertised as hiking or walking boots. None of the guys had a problem however - only the *dainty* ladies! More about the wine tasting (and hiking) weekend in Brian's article 'Tasting Mösel Wine'.



Editorial

Now what about our two front page pictures? Both were snapped during the Mösel valley, Piesport, wine tasting and walking weekend?



At the time of writing this the British media were having a go at an old favourite, euro-bureaucracy! It seems that someone in Brussels had decided a product named 'Welsh Dragon Sausages' could be construed as being made from real dragon so are therefore illegal. Meanwhile products such, as Shepherds Pie, Scotch Eggs and others, seem to slip the net. I do not know whether the rest of Europe has picked up on this sort of thing or are as amused by it as we Brits, but it does make for far less boring reading than the latest political dross.

Newly-weds Rita and Jörg are still enjoying each others close company 'in the tub' and, Ruth Zodnik's boot, the result of a seventeen and a half kilometer stroll above and around the valley. Both of Ann Baker's boots

Have a Happy Christmas and a great New Year.

Phil Baker



Training Matters

A really nice evening took place last September, when this years students organizing a 'Thankyou Evening', for their diving instructors.

The following, in no chosen order, Veerle, Michel, Stefanie, David Prim, David Cossio, Benoit, Francisco and Nuria, organized a BBQ to show their appreciation of how much time, effort and cost the instructors incur while teaching the students each year.



It was a great evening and, as the picture shows, it was much appreciated by all who were there.

On behalf of the instructors -
'Thanks Guys'.



Tasting Mösel Wine



And so the much anticipated wine tasting weekend in Piesport finally arrived. Wil and I together with Sally and Nat set off early, early for us that is, on Friday morning and drove the first part of our journey to Maastricht for a spot of lunch. That in itself proved to be quite an ordeal after an unscheduled visit to a pony farm and an encounter with a most unusual toilet. This provided an interesting talking point but unfortunately not lunch. We then had to wander our way through Maastricht before finding ourselves in a pavement café in the town square.

After lunch and a trip through Europe's most frightening motorway junction we emerged to the spectacular setting of the river Mösel and the town of Piesport. At our destination and met up with the others, who of course had arrived before us and were already in to wine tasting mode. Each had their own story to tell of the trip down but surely not as humorous as the encounter with the outside toilet with the 'see-through' door. Early evening we renewed our acquaintances and sampled our host's delights for the first time. Then on to dinner and what a dinner, I don't think any of us had been served such a huge amount of food. This surely was the fuel needed for the following day's ordeal.

Saturday arrived and off we went like a group of over-aged school kids on an expedition into the unknown. Chris and Lucy, being wiser than the rest, decided that walking was not for them and preferred to do some sight seeing instead. After a close encounter with a group of friendly swans the time came to ascend into the hills. Jörg took the lead with a walking map kindly provided by our hotel hostess and Phil recording points of interest with his GPS receiver.

Onward we trundled through woods and fields stopping only briefly to admire the view, we passed a quarry with a variety of coloured stones which the more artistic amongst us found fascinating.



Lunch seemed like in age in arriving, did the mysterious lady in the mountains really exist and more to the point did she have any food. Of course she did, she just took a long time to make it. Perhaps that was for the best because the time she took to prepare lunch lasted as long as the heavy downpour we had expected all morning.

After lunch we trundled on down to the river side which we had admired from above only an hour or so earlier. Not far now to a welcome lie down on a comfortable bed, but, oh

no, we still had quite a walk back to Piesport. Ruth and Ann were living proof of the efforts we had taken as they had destroyed their boots as a result of the hard days walk. The hotel finally came into sight, we were there at last.

The evening came and we dragged ourselves to the wine room to sample our hosts offerings. Not bad too, we each made our judgement as to which wines we would like to carry back to Holland. The evening ended in revelry as had been expected with so much wine to taste.

On Sunday we arose remarkably fresh after the previous evening, perhaps the walk had conditioned us. Off we went to Trier and meet up with our tour guide, who, you guessed it, turned out to be an American. Trier is a fascinating city full of historical links to the Romans, religion and of course the birthplace of Karl Marx. We learned some interesting facts from our guide and gave our cameras another airing. Then after lunch, no ham sandwiches this time, off we set for the journey home and the end of a fun packed weekend. Thanks to Rita and Wil for organising such a splendid adventure, I for one hope we can repeat this next year.

Brian

P.S. This picture, we hope, goes some way to proving that we actually did do what Brian has written about.



The GPS is reading :
 49°53.719N - 006°54.986E
 21 Oct 06 01:03 PM
 Distance walked (at that point) 6.9 km.

Anyone interested enough might like to select the coordinates in Google Earth and have a panoramic view of that part of the Mosel. Worth a visit I think?

Ed.



Captivating Cuba . . .

. . . was the name of our tour operator and is a good description of this Caribbean island. Our holiday comprised one week in Havana and one week at an all-inclusive hotel in the beach resort of Varadero.

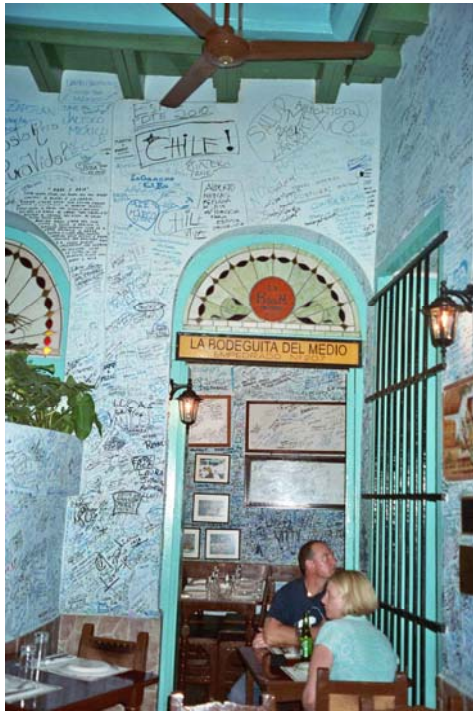
Strict passport control and the x-ray of baggage on entry to the island are immediate signs that things are different here and the taxi ride into Havana gave the first sense of the smelly exhausts from old cars, buses and lorries. We had deliberately chosen an old colonial style hotel near to the historic city centre. It was on the main street, the 'Prado' (Paseo de Marti) which has a wide central pedestrian way that also provides a safe play area for the kids.

We re-visited this area a number of times to explore more closely the plazas, the most famous being 'Plaza de la Catedral', colonial buildings, museums, a handicraft market, bars and restaurants, including the 'Bodequita del Medio', a bar that was one of Ernest Hemingway's favourite haunts during his stay in Havana. This is a good place to try the popular Cuban cocktail known as a 'mojito'.



We did an orientation sightseeing tour by bus, visiting the Capital Building, Revolution Square, a rum factory and a guided walk through the old city which is a World Heritage Site.

Parts of the historic city have been renovated and are in good condition whereas sixty percent of Havana is decaying into dilapidated ruin from the rich and beautiful city it was, one hundred years ago. We walked many streets and saw a broad cross-section of the city. It is busy and noisy but you can also hear live music, quite often buena vista social club style, everywhere. We chose a different restaurant every evening and generally the food was very good and reasonably priced.



During our stay in Havana there was a ballet festival and we went to the Grand Theatre to see some "Mozart Dances" performed by Cuban dancers. Ballet is very popular in Cuba and the National Ballet School was just opposite our hotel so every day we saw the boys and girls in uniforms going for lessons.

We made one of the most popular day trips through the fertile tobacco plains to Vinales. This included a visit to a cigar factory where the whole process from leaf selection to final packing and certification could be seen. It was most interesting to see the detail steps in making a cigar and how they are all hand made. Parque Nacional Vinales is a plain of several valleys separated by pin cushion hills called 'mogotes' which are similar to the limestone hills of Guilin in Southern China.



One evening we went to the Hotel Nacional, a favourite haunt of the Mafia in the 1920s, to see "Parisien Cabaret". This was a scintillating show with magnificent costumes and choreography.

Of course Havana is also famous for its old (1950's) American cars. Many of them are in poor condition, rusty and noisy, but some have been carefully refurbished and are used as taxis.



After the hustle and bustle of Havana it was time to relax with a week of luxury in Varadero where we stayed in a super hotel with beautifully landscaped gardens and swimming pool, a beach with water sports and an excellent restaurant with unlimited food and cocktails.

We think of Cuba as an island, but they explain that it is an archipelago of 1600 islands. The main island is much larger than I thought, being more than 1000 kilometres long. We only saw the north western part. South of the main island in the Caribbean sea is a small island called Cayo Largo that has excellent snorkel and dive opportunities.

So Captivating Cuba is a fascinating place that has a lot to offer.

Barrie



Con and Maria In Guatemala

The following text was sent out to club members and others in October. Con and Maria have since returned home - for a while - but intend to continue with this ever expanding project which they are obviously so passionate about. This newsletter will keep you updated always. Ed.

Our Metal Workshop here at the Camino Seguros site in Guatemala City is now complete. We have equipped five workbenches and set up two welding cabins in the main workshop area with an annexed storeroom with well stocked tool racks and an exhibit room (still empty) where completed projects will be put on display .

I have hired a local teacher and the first classes have been held. The kids are quite excited about it all and we have a long waiting list of aspiring students but decided to start with six boys in the morning and six in the

afternoon. When everything settles down we will probably extend the class size to ten or so.



Maria and I will return from Guatemala in November but plan to come back here next year. There are some improvements which I would like to make to the workshop and we also have plans for a small farming project on a plot of land which the organisation owns outside of Antigua. The objective is to give the kids from the Garbage Dump a chance to get out into the country, help to plant vegetables and play around in the open air and also spend a night or two in a cabin which we hope to build on the site if funds are available.



The Dump

On behalf of the kids from the dump and the Camino Seguro project in general I want to thank each and every person who contributed to our fund for the metalwork project. I am quite sure that it will make a difference in the lives of many children here.

If you or any of your friends would like to make a contribution towards our 2007 farm project fund the ABN bank account number is the same as before 46.96.44.966.

Again thanks to everybody for your support, it wouldn't have happened without you.

Con



Social Matters

This second edition of the Christmas 2006 newsletter is published shortly after our Christmas dinner-dance, providing the following report:

At this time of year the whole festive round-a-bout can become a bit warring so this reporter is pleased to announce that our Christmas dinner dance went really well. Everyone, it seemed, was up for it!

The venue (De Meerhoeve, Oud Ade) was well chosen. Probably a converted large old cow shed, the atmosphere with its open fire places and wooden rafters was warm and Christmassy.

Throughout the evening we were attended by two girls and a boy, no more than teenagers, who seemed to calmly and competently control everything from the bar to serving the dinner. There must have been a chef also because the dinner was well prepared, and tasty.

Our old friends the Cliff Daniels Band returned, not as a trio this time but with one of the guys replaced by two singing and dancing girls. Along with their many cover numbers came the impact of a visual delivery. Highly entertaining stuff.



One or two had to leave a bit earlier but there was none of the 'creeping away' that can happen towards the end of a long evening. We were asked to turn the sound down at one stage which we finally did - at a quarter to one - after Cliff and his team had delivered two (not one) encore(s).

Our thanks go to Wil and Rita for all their efforts in organizing the event.



Is This Funny? (or Have You Heard This One?)

Congregating around the barbecue at our November 4 tennis club bash where persons were avoiding, just for few minutes, the disco decibels. At one point the discussion got interesting when someone said that, on a dive, they'd stumbled on a pair of octopus (or is it octopii?) mating. The question arose as to how they did it. We all know that hedgehogs do it very carefully but what about octopus? It was soon agreed however, that the answer was obvious. It is simply a matter of legover, legover, legover, legover



Pumpkin and Tomato Soup Recipe

At our recent tennis club barbecue, one item on the table-spread was a large bowl of piping hot Pumpkin and Tomato Soup, prepared and brought in by Rita. Two questions being asked were - 'What is it?' and 'Can we have the recipe?'. It was decided then to include the recipe in this newsletter even though, perhaps, pumpkins are somewhat less seasonal now.

Pompoen-tomatensoep (voor 4 personen)

Ingredienten :
1-2el olijfolie
900g geschilde pompoen, in plakken van 2cm
450g rijpe tomaten, zonder kroontjes, in dikke plakken
1 ui, gesnipperd
2 teenjes knoflook, fijngehakt
4el witte wijn
2el water
6dl kippenof groentbouillon
1,25dl room
Citroen sap
Peper en zout
Fijngeknipt ver bieslook, ter garnering

Verdeel 1 eetlepel olijfolie over der bodem van een grote ovenschaal. Leg hierin de pompeen, de tomaten, de ui en het knoflook in 2-3 lagen. Besprenkel het geheel met de rest van de olijfolie en schenk de wijn en het water erover. Voeg peper en zout naar smaak toe.

Bedek de schaal met aluminiumfolie en bak het geheel 45 min. op 190°C in een voorverwarmde oven, of tot de groenten zacht zijn.

Laat de groenten iets afkoelen en schep ze in een keukenmachine. Voeg zoveel koeksap en bouillon toe dat de groenten onder staan. Pureer het geheel tot een gladde brij (eventueel porties).

Schenk de puree in een pan en roer de rest van de bouillon erdoor. Laat het geheel onder af en toe roeren op een middelhoog vuur ongeveer 15min.

pruttelen, of tot de soep heet is. Roer de room erdoor en laat het geheel nog 3-4 min. pruttelen.

Voeg enebtueel nog wat peper en zout naar smaak toe. Schep de soep in warme kommen of borden en garner met het fijngeknipte bieslook.
Variatie:

Serveer met krokante knoflook roûtons in plaats van met fijngeknipt bieslook. U kunt de pompoen vervangen door muskuskaleba spaghetti-pompoen.



Our Committee

Our 2006/2007 elected committee is:

Chairman	Göran Pilbratt
ESSAC Secretary	Wim van Leeuwen
ESSAC Treasurer	Wim van Leeuwen
BSAC Secretary	Chantal Macleod-Nolan
Diving Officer	Mario Monaldi
Training Officer	Vacant
Snorkelling Officer	Wim van Leeuwen
Equipment Officer	Nicolas Le Gallou
Expeditions Officer	Valerie Le Gallou
Swimming Officer	Myra Macleod-Nolan
Social Secretary(s)	Rita Kremer Wil Hedley

The committee minutes and reports can be viewed on our website under the 'Our Committee' icon.



Editorial Footnote

We try to produce a newsletter each March, June, September and December. Contributions need to reach the editor by the end of each preceding month, preferably via e-mail, including any attachments in a file format other than PDF.

Updated versions of the newsletter, though automatically posted on our website, will not necessarily be distributed by e-mail. Such updates, following on from the first edition, may contain for example, corrections and/or information previously unavailable or overlooked.

Non-English text is welcome but must be thoroughly checked by the sender because grammar, punctuation and spelling errors will be published as received' - by this editor!

