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MONACO YACHTSHOW 19

23
26
September
2009

Port Hercules
Principality of Monaco
10:00 am - 6:30 pm

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When sport is their bond

Private tournament for European network of athletic friends

The pleasures of sportsmanship often elude us once we leave those jolly camaraderie days of school behind us. However, a private club does exist to fill this void. Inviting those who are fond of sport, particularly tennis, to join, the ultimate aim is for members to enjoy similar athletic passions and form friendships with others who grew up in an international, multilingual environment and who now lead active professional careers.

A.S.Co.T. (All Sports Country Team), founded in Hamburg in 1991 by like-minded chums over Christmas dinner, has gone from strength to strength. Really "a friendship society enjoying the spirit of sport," according to historical founder and Chairman Baron Charles Eric F. de Villeneuve, it organises an exclusive annual event in a different country each year. For the 15th edition Monaco will, for the first time, host the traditional tennis tournament.

Competing are cosmopolitan teams comprised of members, some coming from



A photo from 1992 of founding members of A.S.Co.T. sporting club (L-R) Standing: Count Christian zu Stolberg-Stolberg, Bernhard von Hothberg und Buchwald, Joachim-Anton von Alvensleben and Honorary Member Carl-August von Oppen, Sitting: Jochen Heins, Baron Charles-Eric F. de Villeneuve and Count Nicolas von Rosty-Forgach

as far afield as Dubai, New York and the Bahamas. Taking place the weekend of 11th September at the Monte-Carlo Country Club (MMMC), the event will kick off with a welcome cocktail on Friday evening at the Automobile Club de Monaco (ACM).

On the agenda are all-day Saturday and Sunday morning tournaments, a luncheon, apéritifs and the

traditional players' dinner on Saturday.

Anyone who wishes to join the society can contact the chairman through the website www.ascot-club.eu

Bear in mind the club depends on the goodwill of members to organise the friendly sporting events, so participation goes beyond playing.

Paula Farquharson

Mums and babies unite

Group celebrates 20 years in Monaco

Founder of Monaco's Mother and Baby Group, Sandra Coleridge, is known amongst the Principality's mums as a life saver. I should know. When I arrived four years ago as the exhausted mother of a newborn baby girl, her meet-up group in St Paul's Church Library was my first point of call. The network of first-time mums that I met have stayed my closest friends here and my experience is no exception.

Over the past 20 years, Sandra has welcomed over 600 mums through its doors on Monday and Thursday mornings. What makes the group so nice is Sandra's warm and approachable personality. While little ones dive into the toy boxes, tired mothers turn to her for advice over coffee. "The group is very international," says Sandra. "At one meeting, I counted up over 22 different nationalities in the room at once. English, French, Italian and German are the most common languages spoken."

When Sandra initiated the group, she had been living in Monaco for a decade with her banker husband - together they had established a shipping company specialising in ship management. Moreover, her own son was



Above: happy mums who meet up in St Paul's Church Library. Inset: Sandra Coleridge



already an adult. "I set up the group to help Lesley Pettinger - a friend who was expecting twins. At the time, there were no activities for Anglophone mums here."

Saved by the church

The then chaplain Charles Danes let Sandra use his own flat for the group's morning sessions. "We started with just four mums and a box of toys. Nowadays there are so many that each year, I throw away any tatty or broken toys and buy several boxes of new ones. Any left-over proceeds are given to charity," says Sandra. Almost £20,000 has been raised for the Children's Society and the NSPCC.

As the group grew larger, meetings moved to the church library. Over many years, the responsibility of running the group has fallen to Sandra. However, she is keen to mention others who have helped. "Chaplain Barry

Thomas' wife Delyth helped for five years and Maya Delinares was a regular for three years. Current helpers include Caroline Caseley, Vicki O'Shea and Debbie Gorski."

All mums past and present are invited to the 20th anniversary celebration on 12th September at La Spiaggia from 4pm to 8pm. The ticket price is €30 (meal and two drinks), €10 per child from five to 12 years and free for under fives. For advance ticket purchase, contact Katrina Jones on Tel: 06-78-63-84-87 at katrina@monaco.mc

A photo scrapbook for Sandra is being compiled. Past members can send pictures before 8th September to Amanda Gallagher at photos@stpaulsmonaco.com or by post to 7 ave St. Roman, MC 98000 Monaco. Louise Simpson