



VOZ DOS MACAENSES DE VANCOUVER

Official Newsletter of the Casa de Macau (Vancouver) since 1995

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A SUMMERTIME TREAT

by Alex King



Casa members
enjoying the annual
picnic.



Mary-Anne Antonio and Maria King

When I first joined the Casa de Macau close to eight years ago, one of the events I would always look forward to attending was the annual summer picnic in August. It was something that members of all ages could enjoy and it gave everyone a chance to appreciate the wonderful summer weather in Vancouver. This year's picnic, which took place on a beautiful, sunny Saturday at Burnaby Fraser Foreshore Park, was certainly no exception.

see page 2

Funding from Fundação Oriente is gratefully acknowledged

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TREAT (CONT'D)

The picnic saw a good turnout of members and guests, though numbers were slightly less than usual due to several members being away on holidays at the time.

Lunch, as expected, was delicious and featured a wonderful array of Macanese goodies. I especially liked the savoury prego and the fresh Portuguese buns, though the bratwursts, curry fish balls, curry cuttlefish, assorted salads, and sushi were big hits as well.

For dessert, Pat de Albuquerque brought some delicious

homemade fudge and coconut oatmeal cookies.

I would personally like to extend a belated thanks to the social committee and all the members who contributed in making this year's picnic a success.

Regardless of where it's set and what's served for lunch, the Casa's annual summer picnic is such a great event because of the people who attend. Since it appeals to members of all ages, it bridges the gaps between generations and reminds us of our common Macanese heritage.

Before lunch, I helped "referee" an impromptu game of football my younger cousins held on the field of sand near the picnic area. As the kids enjoyed themselves, I noticed that many of the more senior Casa members were talking with others whom they hadn't seen in some time, enjoying the warm weather and fresh air.

At its core, this is what makes the annual Casa summer picnic such a memorable event; an enjoyable, casual get-together where members of all ages can just be themselves. Because of this, I hope that the annual picnic is a tradition that will continue for years to come.

SENIORS WEEK IN RICHMOND

by Edwina Shuster

I was on my usual jog around the neighbourhood when I stumbled upon a celebration at the Richmond City Hall Plaza. It turned out to be the opening ceremony of Seniors' Week (June 5 to June 10) – the first of many activities that the City had organized to celebrate the cultural diversity of the growing seniors population in Richmond.

Many seniors were enjoying a

barbecue, including the Mayor and other city officials, as well as one of our Casa members, Lyce d'Assumpção Rozario. I discovered that Lyce was not just there to enjoy the opening ceremony and BBQ – she had been invited to perform. Lyce and three other seniors from Richmond performed two lively line dance numbers, the Bossa Nova and an Irish Dance, totally enchanting the crowd.

Line dancing is not new to Lyce, who currently teaches modified line dance steps to a group of seniors (gratis) at St. Paul's Church Centre. Lyce and her group meet once a week, and call themselves "The Three Rs" - Retired, Recycled and Restless. The group just celebrated their sixth year of dancing with Lyce.

see page 3

SENIORS WEEK (CONT'D)

How did this come about? Since Lyce retired from teaching school in Vancouver seven years ago, she has combined her love for teaching with her love for music and dancing. She gathered a group of seniors from her parish (aged 65 to 92) and under her tutelage, they learned to line dance.

Since Lyce also enjoys cooking and baking, these lucky seniors not only get to learn line dance routines, but they get to partake of the treats which she brings for them. This closely knit group look forward to getting together each week not just to dance, but to socialize, share their life experiences, eat and

be merry in a friendly atmosphere. What a wonderful way to enjoy retirement and the twilight years!

I should mention that I've known Lyce a long time. When we first met, she was Miss d'Assumpção, a new graduate of Hong Kong University and I a Primary 6 student at Escola Camões, Hong Kong.

At the time, Lyce was saving for a trip to Malaysia, and as luck would have it, she was offered a job to temporarily replace our teacher who was going on maternity leave.

During the time Lyce was at Escola Camões, she made a lasting impression on all the students. I have always remembered this new, beautiful, young teacher who came into our lives, albeit briefly - she organized outings and invited the whole class to her home where she played the piano as we sang new songs she taught us. Much to our delight she also gave us all kinds of baked goodies.

So it is not unusual to see Lyce still going above and beyond with her volunteering efforts. Her husband Rick and daughter Antonia are very supportive of what she does.

Way to go, Lyce!!!



Lyce (second from the left) and fellow line dancers.

A PILGRIMAGE TO MEDJUGORJE

by Edwina Shuster

Medjugorje is a village in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and until June 24, 1981, was relatively unknown even in its own country. However, on that eventful day, the Blessed Virgin Mary was reported to have appeared to six young parishioners, and since then Medjugorje has become one of the most famous and most visited centres of pilgrimage in the whole Catholic world. According to some estimates, over fifteen million pilgrims have visited it so far, and now seven Casa de Macau (Vancouver) members can be added to that vast number.

At around 11:00 p.m. on June 21, 2006, a group of 16 people from the Vancouver area arrived at Dubrovnik Airport, Croatia, and boarded a van for an approximate three hour bus ride to Medjugorje. Included in this group of exhausted pilgrims were Mabel Ozorio, Cathy Fung, Hercia Delgado, Tessie Delgado, Gilly Marshall, Rowena Tan and myself. At around 2:00 a.m. we arrived at the Pansion Ružić – our home away from home for the next eight days.

The first thing we did in the morning was attend Mass at St. James, the first parish church of Medjugorje. The original church was built in 1897, has been rebuilt and redecorated several times over the years and in 1987



St.. James Church and the exterior Altar.

the spacious square and park in front of the church and to its left, were paved. In this same year, a beautiful statue of the Lady of Medjugorje, carved according to the descriptions of the visionaries, was placed in the park in front of the church. Masses in numerous languages are said every day, and Mass in English was at 10:00 a.m. with the exception of two days when it was at high noon, the hottest time of the day! At every Mass there were at least 20 to 25 priests sitting up at the altar – I think to assist at Communion as there must have been thousands in the congregation.

Though we arrived early for Mass on that first day, people were already packed like sardines in the church. That was the only time we attended Mass inside St. James – every day after that, we sat outside the

church. The benches were always full, but we had our fold-up stools which were life savers and most had umbrellas as shields against the blazing sun. We brought our stools and umbrellas not only to Mass, but to Adoration, when visiting other churches, even to Apparition Hill.

The site of the first apparition of the Virgin Mary is the hill of Crnica just outside the tiny hamlet of Podbrdo, five minutes by taxi (or 20 minutes on foot) from Medjugorje. The usual name for it these days, however, is the Hill of the Apparition. The path up to the apparition site was once a narrow, steep and rocky shepherds' path. It is still steep and rocky, but has been widened by the feet of millions of pilgrims making their way to offer

see page 5

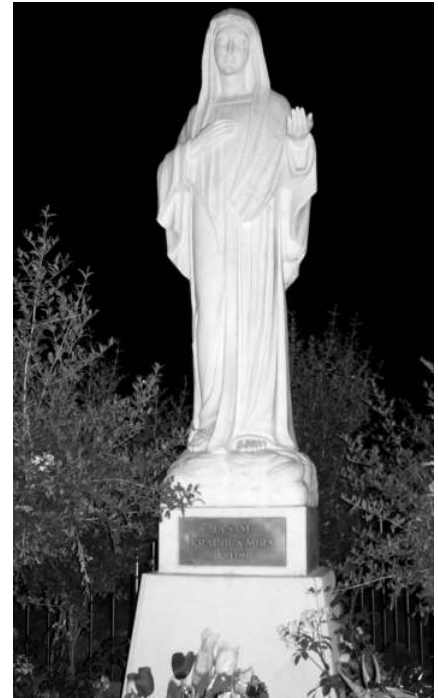
MEDJUGORJE (CONT'D)

prayers to the Holy Mother.

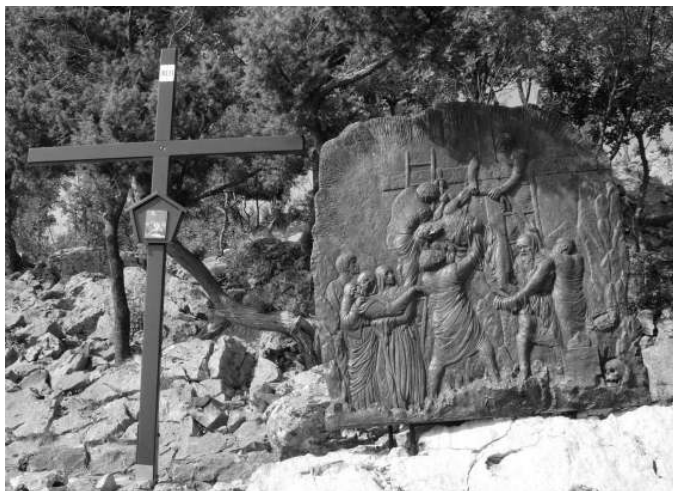
About halfway up the hill, a large wooden cross has been erected to mark the third day of the apparitions – the first time Our Lady gave the call to peace.

At the foot of the hill is a Blue Cross, which is hidden from the road and not far from Podbrdo. It was where the visionaries met in secret for their apparitions during the communist persecution of the early days, and one of the visionaries' prayer group still gathers there regularly. Bronze sculptures depicting the mysteries of the Rosary are placed at intervals on the hill, the joyful and sorrowful along the steep path to the place of the apparitions, and the glorious mysteries along the path descending to the Blue Cross. At the very place of the apparitions, a statue of the Queen of Peace stands majestically, placed there in honour of the 20th anniversary.

Another day of our pilgrimage had us following the Way of the Cross up Mt. Krizevac, a path even steeper, rockier and longer than the trek to Apparition Hill. Cross Mountain, as it is called, is 520 m above sea level and has a breathtaking view. The fifteen ton concrete Cross of Mt. Krizevac was constructed by the people of the area in 1933 in thanksgiving, as well as to commemorate the nineteenth centenary of the Redemption. Even prior to the apparitions, it was the custom to celebrate Mass there each year on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross and on every Friday, people would climb the mountain to pray the Stations of the Cross, led by the parish priest. Fourteen crosses and bronze reliefs representing the Passion of Christ and the Way of the Cross lead up to the Cross of Krizevac, at which a fifteenth cross has been placed showing the Resurrection.



Queen of Peace - Apparition Hill



One of the Stations of the Cross on the way up to Cross Mountain.



Cross of Mt. Krizevac

see page 6

MEDJUGORJE (CONT'D)

We had an opportunity to visit the historic Franciscan Monastery located in Siroki Brijeg, about 35 km from Medjugorje. There we heard a talk from Father Jozo Zovko (whom many claim to be a living saint), experienced a healing service (by Father Jozo himself!), and received a portrait of the statue of Mary as a reminder of the spirituality of Medjugorje. Father Jozo was the priest at St. James at the time the children reported seeing a beautiful woman who identified Herself as the Queen of Peace. He came to believe in the apparitions and was imprisoned for refusing to suppress the young visionaries. It was reported that while in prison, Our Lady appeared to him.

On the way back from Siroki Brijeg we stopped at the small village of Tihaljina, where Father Jozo was stationed after his release from prison. We visited the

beautiful statue of the Immaculate Conception, but which is often called Our Lady of Tihaljina because the statue is in St. Elijah Church, Tihaljina. This statue has been associated with the apparitions in Medjugorje for years because it is the picture of this statue that Father Jozo distributes to the pilgrims visiting the monastery.

The highlight of each day is the 6:00 p.m. Croatian Mass at St. James, which begins with the recitation of the Holy Rosary, and every day at 6:40 p.m. during the Rosary, Our Blessed Mother appears to the visionaries. While we were there, the church, as well as the area around the exterior Altar, was packed solid. The exterior Altar was built in 1989 with about 5,000 seats in the surrounding prayer area to accommodate the thousands of pilgrims who gather in Medjugorje.



Our Lady of Tihaljina

In the church grounds are several locations for adoration, prayers and reconciliation - the Adoration Chapel which offers a place for silent adoration of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar; an outdoor area for silent prayer around a wooden cross with votive candles for the pilgrims to light; and many confessionals, where one has the chance daily to experience God's forgiveness. In addition to these confessionals, priests are also seated in the open areas to take confessions. Whether one confesses inside or outside the confessional boxes, they are all face to face.

see page 7

Rowena, Hercia, Gilly & Tessie attending the 25th Anniversary Mass at the exterior Altar.



MEDJUGORJE (CONT'D)

Also located on the church grounds is a bronze statue of the Risen Saviour, which exudes from a scraped area near the knee, a substance that feels like a mixture of saltwater and oil.

Not all of us were able to take advantage of everything that was available and happening during our short stay, but one phenomenon that all seven of us experi-

enced was the Miracle of the Sun. It seemed one could look directly at the sun without apparent pain or eye damage, as it appeared to spin and pulsate. Colours streamed from behind the sun as it appeared to come towards us, then recede from us.

Every Mass, every Adoration, every place we visited, were

emotional and filled with a spiritual aura that I had never felt before. I was, and still am, somewhat sceptical that Our Lady appears every day to the visionaries, but that being said, does it really matter? The fact remains that Medjugorje has given millions of people the chance to experience their faith, to renew their faith, and for some, possibly, to find faith.

MOSTAR

by Cathy Fung

Our group of 14 chartered a bus that took us to Mostar which was a 2.5 hours ride from Medjugorje. Mostar is a town situated in a beautiful valley surrounded by slopes of hills and mountains. Just some 10 km from Mostar to the south one can see the source of the river Buna, powerful stream of deeply green and unpolluted water.

When we arrived in the centre of town, one cannot help but notice that Mostar is quite beautiful even with the prints of war still marking the city. As one walked along the streets surrounded by stretch of cobblestones with shops run by local artisans that sell objects ranging from rugs to copperworks, jewellery & paintings everything simply looked incredible. This is a divided town with the Croatian side to the left

and the Bosnian Muslim on the right.

Lunch at one of the local restaurants was a one man operation; he served salad, a sea-food platter and rice. The food was enjoyed by the hungry pilgrims and the price was reasonable.

The highlight of our trip was a visit to Saints Peter & Paul Church which is run by Franciscan Orders. We were fortunate to be able to tour the church which was conducted by a Franciscan monk.

The Church was built in 1533, which was destroyed by the Turks. It was rebuilt in 1866 and destroyed again in the war of 1992/1995.

There are three floors of the church with beautiful stained glass windows and from every part of town, one can see the bell tower. Much damage was done to the two upper floors where reconstruction is on-going.

Due to time constraints we had to turn back as there are much more that Mostar has to offer. Perhaps another time.



The Old Bridge in Mostar

DUBROVNIK

by Cathy Fung

On June 29th, 2006 our half-asleep group finally bade farewell to Medjugorje at 3 a.m. as most of us had to catch the 6 a.m. flight back to Vancouver. The bus took approximately three hours to Dubrovnik Airport, so we were cutting it pretty close!

Since we've come this far, my room-mate (Mabel Ozorio) and I had decided to extend our stay in Croatia and visit Dubrovnik. I must take my hat off to my room-mate for sticking to our plans of staying behind while suffering from a very painful foot after a tremendous fall in Medjugorje. She hobbled in the 41

degrees heat wave but kept pace when we explored the "Walled City." Her stamina was simply remarkable.

Our hotel was air-conditioned (thank goodness), clean and had the amenities of a modern four star hotel. There were convenient public transit to the centre of town and the bus fare was eight Kunas (local currency) per person, one way. We found our way quite easily as most of the locals spoke English and we found that they were most courteous and honest. In Dubrovnik, outside the walls, we discovered a Chinese restaurant. Trust us ...Mabel had her antenna up and circling!! That's another story to

tell.

Dubrovnik offers a huge variety of sights ranging from the breathtaking view from the parapet walk on the ancient city walls to the seclusion of the tiny old church of St. James. Starting from the Pile Gate to an impressive round tower standing in the north-western corner. Along this section we passed five square towers with semi-circular ramparts. Behind the Pile Gate, in a large majestic square sits a fountain surmounted by a dome with 16 heads from which icy cold water gushed from the sides of the base.

Visitors looking down from the top of the ramparts will notice the bright red tiled roof tops throughout the city. They are the sad reminders of the city's reconstruction after the attack December 6, 1991, marking the Serbo-Croat Conflict.

There are three buildings of interest on entering the square:

- On the south side stands St. Clare's Convent built in 1290 and which became the first orphanage in Europe.



View from the ramparts which encircle the old town of Dubrovnik.

see page 9

DUBROVNIK (CONT'D)

- On the opposite side stands the small St. Saviour's Church built after the earthquake. It has a beautiful Gothic façade embellished by a rose window and exquisite sculptures & paintings. Above the front entrance of the church is the sculpture of the magnificent Pieta, flanked by the statues of St. Jerome and John the Baptist surmounted by a statue of God the Father.

- To the right of the church is the Franciscan Monastery. Unfortunately the doors were closed and we were unable to have a visit.

There were numerous shops and open-air restaurants along the walls. Bargaining was totally non-existent. Prices were slightly high as it is a tourist

attraction.

Once again we had to return home. It was a great experience and a most delightful visit. Speaking for my self, I would love to return and continue my journey in Croatia as there are much to be explored with all its history and splendour.

TODAY AND YESTER-YEARS

by Margie Rozario

In 2005, during the summer holidays, I decided to take a seven day Alaska tour with Brendan, my great grandson, as he did better than I expected in school. He was entertained onboard with a group of Teens under Supervision. They had their own games, exercises, shows and dances, and adults were not allowed to join or even sit in. He had a 'ball' (without grandma looking over his shoulder) and made some friends. He was quite impressed with the sit-down dinner and enjoyed the four course meals. Just as well, as my ulterior motive was to see my own reaction on being alone (partly) during this trip. Recollections intruded my thoughts but I kept myself busy looking in on whatever entertainment that was going on and met Brendan for meals.

I placed myself at some inconspicuous seat and could observe everything that was going on. It was very enlightening taking in the various people on board from all walks of life and their cultures, and shortcomings. From their conversation I could tell whether they were 'partners' or 'married'. It was not only enlightening but as a 'senior' also most educational on the facts of life as it is today.

The weather was lousy - raining and cold. The Commentator kept telling us to look at the beautiful waterfalls when all we wanted to see were icebergs. It was definitely the wrong time of the year to be heading there. Even the Americans were glad to see sunshine when we docked in Victoria, Canada.

The food and shows were fabulous and the cuisine available at anytime of the day from Breakfast to 1 a.m. the next day, but cabin service was available round the clock. I am sure this is not new for those who had taken this trip before. This trip was a new experience for me - being the observer instead of a participant. There was a group learning the Tango, Cha Cha, etc. which was quite amusing and a class for cross-stitching for a spectacle case which was nice but I did not finish it - maybe some day.

Take care you all - keep smiling for tomorrow is a new day of hope and sunshine. The trouble with looking back is that we can't change the past, however, we can make the future a better one.

With
Deepest
Sympathy



Remembering.....

Philip Pereira, a long time resident of Vancouver who passed away peacefully on Saturday, June 10, 2006, with his family by his side.

He will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by his loving wife of 42 years Marlene, son Robert and daughter-in-law Lucia, daughters Michelle and Jill. He will also be missed by his extended family and many friends.

Robert Pereira (son)

Philip and Marlene have been regular attendees at the casa meetings, and participated in our various functions for many years. Philip will be missed by his friends at the Casa de Macau (Vancouver).

Dates to Remember



Events

Macanese Festa
October 21 2006

Feast of the Virgin Mary
Patroness Mass
December 9, 2006

New Years Dinner / Dance
December 31, 2006

Next Meeting

November 11, 2006

Welcome to New Members

John Anok

Elga da Roza

Rose Gill

Maureen Mui

Jacqueline Yung

Elizabeth Olcen (Victoria)

Patricia Tonkin (Victoria)

Micaela Airoso (Toronto)

Armando Santos (Toronto)

And anyone else I may have inadvertently missed!



Did you know?

The Chinese name for Macau, 'Aomen', is derived from two geographical features:

- the peninsula of Ao (bay)

- the navigable passage between the peninsula and the islands to the south called men (gate or door).

The name Macau is derived from the Cantonese word Amakau which means the Bay of Ama.

Ama refers to the goddess Tianhou (Heavenly Maiden) or A-Ma (Mother), as she was known locally.

The A-Ma Temple existed before the city of Macau came into being. It was formally founded in Macau during the reign of the Wanli emperor (1573 to 1621) of the Ming Dynasty.