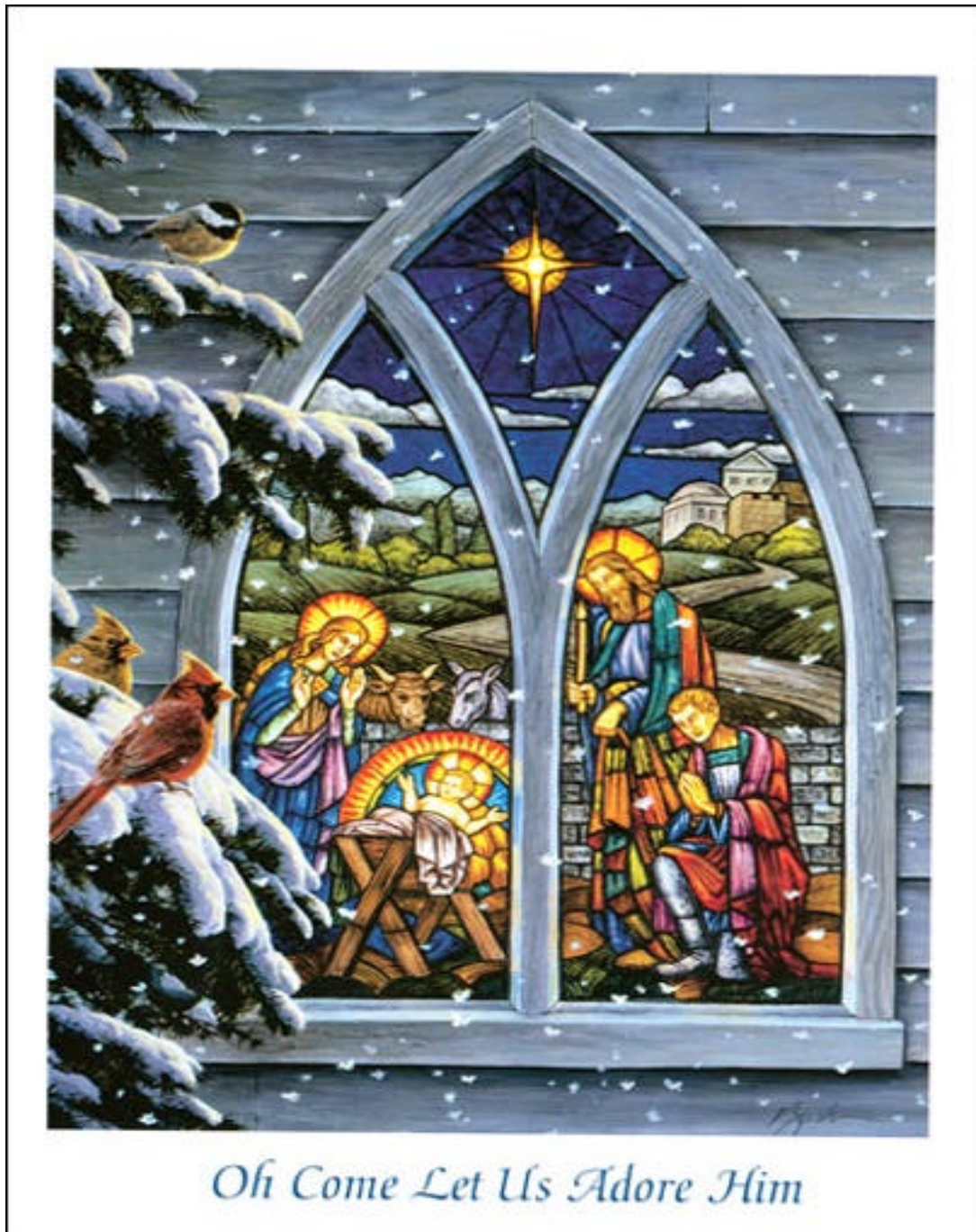


Casa de Macau no Canada (Toronto)

Newsletter Vol. 15 December 10, 2007 www.casademacau.ca



*To All our Members, Sister Organizations around the World,
and the Macanese at large,
We Wish You All a Blessed and safe Christmas
And All the Best for the Coming Year*



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - ENCONTRO 2007

Some of you might be familiar with the expression, to hit the road running, well when I arrived in Macau on Sunday the 25th, I not only hit the road running but also was propelled at warp speed! Things developed and changed throughout the week and it is only now, confined in a plane for the next thirteen hours, do I have time to put my thoughts on paper and to write to you all about our experiences at the Encontro.

If I was to ignore the frustration of last minute changes to meeting places and times, which really only affected the Presidents and the impossibility of getting taxis when bussing was not provided, all in all I would say this Encontro of 2007 was a success. Close to 1,500 participants registered, ranking this Encontro as one of the best attended.

To a large extent my job was made easier through all of your co-operation for which I thank all the participants. In fact, you were so conscientious at following my direction to contact me to collect your ID "kits" that I apologize that the start on Sunday was a bit rough. (For the benefit of those who did not attend the Encontro, these "kits" comprised of our ID tags, the latest Armando Santos CD entitled "Memórias di Macau", a vinyl souvenir bag and our very own Casa Lanyard) I am indebted to and would be remiss if I did not single out for special thanks, those members who went above and beyond to help. Top on the list are Cintia and Antonio do Serro. Cintia was our liaison with the Organizing Committee and helped pick up all our ID "kits" from APIM even before I set foot in Macau. Both Cintia and Antonio personally delivered the heavy bags to the hotel and patiently waited until I could check-in at 2:15 pm. It was only then that I discovered that I was expected at a Conselho das Comunidades Macaenses (CCM) meeting for 3 pm! Barely having time to drop my bags in the room, set Marie-Cecile up with lists and sign-up sheets for the limited attendance events, did I have to leave for the meeting. I would like to thank Arnaldo Sousa, Virginia Sanchez and "Zito" Rodrigues who kindly offered to drive me to the APIM office for the CCM meeting. With the scarcity of taxis, I simply would not have been able to attend had they not driven me. As it turned out, the purpose of this meeting was a preparation for the originally scheduled meeting Tuesday, November 27. (You can find my brief report on the outcome of the CCM meeting under separate title)

While I was tied up at this preliminary meeting, Marie-Cecile, Isabel and my brother, Peter handled the ID "kits" distribution and taking phone messages. I cannot thank you enough for holding down the fort. With the meeting over around 5 pm it meant a mad dash back to the hotel with only a few minutes to change and to try and get a taxi to take us to the Welcome Reception starting at 6 pm. Having no success at getting a taxi, we ended up walking from our hotel to the Portuguese School. Little did we realize that our legs and feet would be the most reliable and most times ONLY way of getting us from point A to B. I would painfully regret in the days to follow that I left my sneakers in Toronto! The cobblestones and mosaic tiles though charming to look at are not the most comfortable to negotiate in heels.

The Welcome Reception was an extremely crowded affair. By the noise and occasional shouts of happy exclamations as old friends recognized each other was a great opportunity to get a sense of the spirit of fun and friendship that typifies all Encontros. After we left the reception a group of us went in search for a place to have dinner. We ended up walking to "Fat Siu Lau" and then back to the hotel when I could only then unpack my bags. Fell into bed exhausted by 2 am. This was only the end of day one and the Encontro had not even officially begun!

Monday, November 26 – A last minute Program change meant that our meeting with Fundação Oriente originally scheduled for December 2 was moved to today at noon. Attending this meeting was Dr. Mario Brandão and Mr. Rui Manuel de Sousa Rocha (Director Macau-China Delegation) along with the Presidents and V.P.s of the Casas de Macau worldwide. Each Casa was given an opportunity to present a brief "report" on the state of affairs of their respective

Casas. We each made our case for added "support" from Fundação Oriente as each Casa had unique challenges they faced in their respective countries. Although Dr. Brandão would not commit to anything specific, it was intimated that if we put in a request for assistance and if it is feasible working within the Fundação's budget our request would be considered. Following the meeting, we were treated to a scrumptious lunch at Litoral. Dish upon dish of Macanese delicacies were ordered. Unfortunately, we had to cut short our lunch, as we had to get to yet another preliminary meeting of the CCM at 5 pm. at Fisherman's Warf. Immediately following this, the Presidents were taken to an anteroom, where we were all prepared to meet with Chief Executive of the RAEM, Dr. Edmund Ho. After a short speech that he gave, all the Presidents had an opportunity to present Dr. Ho with our gifts. We then filed into the huge Convention and Exhibition Centre below the Roman Amphitheatre at Fisherman's Warf where the rest of the participants had gathered. After the various dignitaries made speeches, the Encontro was officially opened. A spectacular Chinese banquet was served all the while there was entertainment provided by famous Chinese talented dancers, singers and musicians. Also, the Coral de São Paulo performed a number of songs. Thankfully, there were busses provided to return us to our hotels. Another long full day was over.

Tuesday, November 27 – For most of the morning, both Marie-Cecile and myself were attending the CCM meetings, one for the Conselho Geral followed by a meeting for the Conselho Permanente (See my report). The CCM kindly provided us lunch catered by "Riquexó", yet more delectable Macanese food. While Marie and I were at the meeting, participants who were interested could join a walking tour that took in some of the World Heritage sights and other historical sights such as: Largo do Senado; Santa Casa da Misericórdia; Igreja de S. Domingos; Ruins of S. Paulo; Macau Museum and Monte Fort. By 4 pm we all were asked to assemble on the steps of the Ruins of S. Paulo for a group photo with the Secretary of Social and Cultural Affairs, Dr. Fernando Chui Sai On and other various dignitaries. I have brought back a copy of this photo, which was given to the Casas. A request has been made of the Organizers to get extra copies for members. We will try and follow up on this, however, if it does not materialize, we might consider taking orders from those interested and make our own copies here in town. If anyone would like a copy of this photo, please give your name to me.

We barely had time to run back to the hotel, change and catch the shuttle bus taking participants to the book launch and dinner, which was due to start at 6 pm at the Macau Dome on Taipa. The various authors who had their books launched at this affair were present and had an opportunity to speak. Each President was given a collection of the books for their Casa. Due to their weight, I am shipping them back to Toronto but once they arrive, and after David has catalogued them for our Library, members will be notified. Of particular interest to some I think will be Antonio Jorge da Silva's book "The Portuguese Community in HongKong-A Pictorial History" which is a wonderful compendium consisting of old family photos; photos from sports events; photos from parties and gatherings. These snap shots capture life as it was in days gone by and I am sure will bring back a flood of memories as you browse through the pages and discover maybe even a picture of your younger self! If anyone is interested in ordering a copy of Antonio's book, please let me know as I have the contact information of the publisher in Macau and we can try and make up an order to be shipped to Toronto.

Following the book launch was a delicious dinner – food was European, hosted by Dr. Fernando Chui Sai On, Secretary of Social and Cultural Affairs. Casa was presented with a 3-D framed diorama of the A-Mah Temple. This too is being shipped and will be displayed once it arrives. This time we were entertained by our own Armando Santos who did a wonderful set much to the enjoyment of all. There also was a talented Chinese Opera artist who not only changed her masks in the blink of an eye, but also her outfits.

Wednesday, November 28 – A delegation from our Casa attended the induction of the Boards of the Confraria da Gastronomia Macanese at the Don Pedro V Theatre. Our representative, Cintia do Serro, outfitted with a special cap and gown, along with the other "correspondents" from the other Casas, was called on stage and presented with medals from Dr. José Manuel Oliveira Rodrigues. There were then two guest speakers who spoke on the distinctiveness and uniqueness of Macanese cuisine. Following these speakers was the launching of a cookbook by Maria João Salvador dos Santos Ferreira. There was another catered lunch open supposedly to only those attending the conference but word must have gotten out so instead of the expect number of 80 attendees, my guess would be there were close to 200 people who crowded into the small hall. Miraculously, there was enough food to feed the multitudes as owner and chef of Litoral frantically called up every "reserve" she had. Once again an impressive spread of Macanese cuisine was provided.

The Presidents were only informed at lunch that a dinner meeting originally scheduled for 6 pm was moved now to Friday at 1 pm so it unexpectedly freed up the rest of the day, which was a welcome relief.

Thursday, November 29 – Those who signed up for the day trip into China left bright and early. The rest had a free day until the 4 pm Patuá show. The Casa Songbirds thought we would take the opportunity to sneak in a morning practice. (Members might recall in the last newsletter we mentioned that to truly participate in this Encontro, we would try and get some willing volunteers to make up a choir to sing a couple of Patuá songs. We approached Armando to see if he would "lend" us a couple of songs that he has adapted with Patuá lyrics. Even though he was extremely busy trying to complete the recordings for his new CD, he very generously agreed to lend us two songs. He even spared us one afternoon in October when he came with a pre-recorded music track and helped us with our first practice. The two songs were: "Manso Manso Papia Amor" – sung to the tune of "Speak Softly Love", theme from the Godfather; and the second was entitled "Vida de Jovem" – sung to the tune of "My Favourite Things", from the Sound of Music. Our enthusiastic Casa choir, which we have named the Casa Songbirds, made a commitment to the project and I am very

proud of all of them. Even though we only had 4 practices before we left town our sense of fun and enthusiasm I think projected well when it came time for us to perform in Macau) Thanks once again to Cintia and Antonio, they made arrangements so we could borrow an upstairs room at the APIM Office which had a sound system and microphones already assembled. I would like to specially thank Peter at this point, as he was instrumental in "organizing" us, setting us up and critiquing us in a way that was extremely helpful. His pointers and suggestions were well received and I truly believe helped us perform at our best. We were indeed lucky to benefit from his expertise as a record producer. We had a good 2-hour practice from 10 – 12 pm from which we all gained much confidence.

Our Casa was allotted a total of 20 tickets for the 4 pm Patuá show, which as it turns out was just the right number. No one was left out. Everyone who indicated interest in attending got a ticket and showed up at the Auditorium at the base of the Macau Tower. There was a pre-show trio musical performance by the "Tuna das Urgências" followed by the show, performed by the Doci Papiaçam di Macau Drama Group entitled "Cuza, Dotôr?" (What's Up, Doc?). Miguel de Senna Fernandes, the Playwright and Director wrote a very clever send up of a common universal theme...the long wait we all must go through these days to see a doctor at a hospital. It was also very helpful that there were translations provided in Chinese, Portuguese and English of the live Patuá dialogue that was happening on stage so everyone could be "in on the jokes". Well-performed and well put together.

That evening the Presidents and V.P.s were invited to dinner at A.P.O.M.A.C (Associação dos Aposentados, Reformados e Pensionistas de Macau) for 8 pm. Yet another superb spread of "home cooking" style Macanese food was presented buffet style. But prior to sitting down, we were given a tour of the premises. They have a wonderful facility, which has an exercise room, message rooms and even a clinic where the seniors can get attention from a visiting doctor. Seniors can also come daily to the restaurant on the main floor and for a modest fee, have a great meal. We were told that the organization is planning to secure the upper two floors of the building so that they can convert the space into small apartments where some seniors will be able to live, making this facility much like our Senior Retirement Centres in Toronto, but just on a slightly smaller scale.

Friday, November 30 – 9 am at the University of Macau was the Conference and debate on the various subjects related to the UNESCO Universal Intangible Heritage. Following this the Presidents were supposed to attend a lunch/meeting with the Secretary for Economy and Finance, which had been postponed from the 28th, however once we arrived at the Portas do Sol, there was a bit of confusion as to who was and was not on the list to attend. Luckily for us, I did not have to attend plus the fact that the meeting was now pushed back to 3 pm. This afternoon was the only time I had left to go back to the hotel, pick up the many bags of books and gifts and to carry all and have it packed and mailed from the Post Office.

In the afternoon, some of our members participated in the Mahjong competition. Although there were close to 300 people who registered for this event, from the report of our members, no more than 80 actually showed up to play. Unfortunately and I say also fortunately for us, none of our members made it past the 2nd round of elimination, however, they said they had fun which was the whole point of the exercise. Why I am glad that they did not make it to the final rounds is that 5 of our Songbirds would have been missing from our debut performance had luck been on their side. As it happens, luck was on my side so I had them all to sing at the 6 pm pre-dinner show. It was good that we had this chance to get our butterflies out, as the room was relatively small. From the positive comments of the audience afterwards, we were well received. Macau's Elvis – Rudy Sousa, followed us on stage. A stand-up buffet was offered for dinner with yet another impressive variety of foods. It was a bit difficult to manage a drink and plate in one hand but we were resourceful and managed quite well. Following dinner people went back into the room where we had performed earlier and were entertained by a variety of talented acts such as: The New Flipsiders; Armando Santos; Coral de São Paulo; Elsa Denton; the band UNIQUE; the MYSTICS; a performance by the very talented Germano Guilherme (who acted as Chiquito in the Patuá play); The Ritchies and lastly the Heart in Macau Portuguese Folk Dancers. There was a wonderful feeling of conviviality and friendship in the room that saw many take to the floor to dance the night away.

Saturday, December 1 – Woke up early to walk to Sintra to catch the 8:30 am shuttle to the Monument for the Macanese Communities. There each Casa President was given the honor to place a wreath in memory of our Macanese community members who are no longer with us. At 11:30 Sé Cathedral was packed with participants who attended Mass and Te Deum. The Presidents then had to make their way to the Venetian for 1 pm to attend a lunch given by the Macanese Businessmen Association of Brazil at the Churrascaria Fogo Samba. A special thanks to H. Alex Airoso who hosted us with a fabulous typical Brazilian Bar-B-Q. There were many kinds of salads and numerous kinds of meat, all served on spits and diced at your plate. Entertainment provided by Armando Santos, the conductor of the Coral de São Paulo and the Coral itself. There also was a performance given by a gaucho.

We had to leave shortly after lunch as we had to make our way via the hotel shuttle back to our hotel in time to change yet again and head out to the Consul General's residence for 6 pm. As it turned out the Consul was out of town but a lovely set up of finger food was offered on the outside open patio. This afforded us a beautiful vista of Macau by night: the Tower, the bridges and the many multi-changing coloured neon lights of the numerous hotels and casinos. We had to wait for a local bus to take us back close to our hotel, which did not allow some of us the opportunity to attend the Macau Youth Symphony performance. From what I have heard, it was a very good show and the church was standing room only.

Sunday, December 2 – The Organizers had given us a half hour to rehearse in the Venetian Ballroom so all the Songbirds made it to the Ballroom for 11 am. As it turned out, we did not finish our rehearsal until noon. We then had

to make our way back to the hotel using two shuttles only to discover that both Marie and myself were locked out of our rooms! Somehow, the hotel had us checked out and had de-activated our entry key cards! What we thought would be a "relaxing" day was fast becoming more pressing as the time wore on until things could be worked out at Reception. By then it was close to 2 pm so we rushed off to a corner restaurant to grab some lunch and then rushed back to the hotel to start my packing. The busses scheduled to pick us up were to arrive at 4:30 pm so needless to say, I did not get to pack much. A quick change of clothes and then it was off to the Closing Dinner. Once again, we were one act of the pre-dinner entertainment. We once again performed our two songs and then immediately I along with my fellow Presidents was called on stage to give a thank-you speech and to present our gift. After this was done, they called all the youth representatives on stage to be acknowledged by all the participants. It was wonderful to see all those young faces; in fact, in my speech I challenged them all to be true ambassadors and to start a Macanese Youth Movement in each of their respective countries. I am as I am sure you all are also anxious to read the report that our two youth representatives, Joanne and Jonathan Barradas will give on their impressions and ideas brought back from their experiences gained at this Encontro.

With my "duties" ostensibly over, I could FINALLY relax and enjoy the entertainment, which was in essence the same artists who performed on the 30th. Casa received two more gifts, one for our participation singing as a group and the second as a gift from APIM. Although the many line-ups to get food were long, the staff kept replenishing the chaffing dishes so there always were choices.

Although I returned exhausted, I think a lot was packed into the week, at least where the Presidents and V.P.s were concerned. Perhaps looking at the Encontro from the perspective of the general participant, you might have come away with a slightly different experience. However, I think overall, the Organizers did leave some "free" time to make plans to meet with friends and family.

Final impressions and overall review:

Thumbs up

- Except for the Welcome Reception, all the venues had ample space and were wonderful places
- Food was spectacular
- Entertainment – fabulous talent

Areas that could be improved

- Scheduling of events – try to firm up program well ahead of start date so members can plan personal appointments so as not to clash with Encontro events thus eliminating last minute surprises and changes.
- Space out start and end time of events better to allow time to get from point A to B seeing taxis are impossible to come by and traffic is often congested
- More economical way to organize shuttles – rather than have one bus per hotel, group hotels in close proximity so buses can fill up and go from hotel to hotel and drop off participants and return quicker rather than having to wait until a bus fills up before heading to or leaving from events

I have been mentioning throughout my report that Casa was giving our hosts "gifts". These gifts we had made up here and consisted of a little Inukshuk on a wood base, which also had our Casa pin stuck on the base and an inscribed plaque. Your Executive decided that the Inukshuk, a very familiar Canadian icon, was a perfect symbol for us. Those who may not know, Inukshuk is an Inuit word meaning "image of man's spirit". Originally, the Inuit, Canada's northern indigenous peoples, built these man like sculptures of rock along our northern shores as markers to lead their way. Today they serve as symbols to remind us of our dependence on one another and the importance of strong relationships.

Finally, welcome home to those who have already returned and again many thanks to all of you for your help in making my life a little less stressful in Macau through your co-operation. Just one last note: Peter has taken many photos covering the Encontro. Once he has time to organize them members will be notified and a viewing can be arranged.

To all participants entitled to a subsidy: You will be notified when we receive the funds from Macau and a date will be determined when we all can meet so that we can distribute your subsidy. Please hang onto your boarding passes

Conselho das Comunidades Macaenses (CCM) Meeting – November 27, 2007

Time and space does not permit me to report here all that transpired at the meeting, however, in the next weeks I hope to produce a complete report and it will be available to those interested to read. Just make an appointment with me and I can let you see it. I will however like to let the members know one important decision that was reached at the meeting.

First a bit of background is needed. Some might remember that at the last Encontro in 2004, Protocols were signed that officially registered and established the CCM of which our Casa is a member and has representation. The CCM consists of a number of Committees: Conselho Geral; Conselho Permanente; Conselho Fiscal and the Conselho Consultivo. All the Casas and some local organizations have representation in the Conselho Geral and Conselho Permanente. Within each of these divisions there are Boards or "Mesas" consisting of a President, some Vice

Presidents, and Secretaries. The composition of these Mesas varies committee to committee and who is entitled to sit on these boards varies as well. This is all outlined in the Statues. The Statues further state that the members on the Mesas shall sit for a term of 3 years. One item therefore on the Agenda for the November 27th meeting was therefore the need to elect members for the Mesas of the Conselho Geral, Conselho Permanente, Conselho Fiscal and Conselho Consultativo as their term, which began in 2004 was now over.

The only Mesa that the Casas have representation in is the Mesa of the Conselho Geral. For this particular Mesa there is: 1 President (who must be a local resident and member of APIM); 4 Vice Presidents (one of which must be Lusitano HK due to proximity and availability to attend meetings in Macau while the remaining 3 to be chosen/elected from the Casas worldwide); 2 Secretaries (both must be local for obvious reasons).

The outgoing members of the Mesa of the Conselho Geral who were elected in 2004 and whose term concludes now were the following:

President – Leonel Alberto Alves (APIM)

Vice President – HK Club Lusitano

Vice President – Lusitano Club California

Vice President – São Paulo, Brazil

Vice President – Australia

Secretaries – Sebastião da Rosa (APIM) and Luis Viseu (IIM)

Proposed and passed at our meetings was the following:

- 1) in order to facilitate in the election process of the Mesa of the Conselho Geral, which will occur every three years and to make sure there is a fair rotation of representation between the Casas worldwide, it was proposed that a list be drawn up. To determine the order on this list, all the Casas names were placed in a bag and the names were drawn randomly by the Presidents, numbering 1 – 11 (Remember that Lusitano HK always has a V.P. place)
- 2) it was proposed that no distinction should be made between 1st, 2nd, 3rd nor 4th V.P.
- 3) According to the Statues, it is supposed to be the "individuals" who are elected to the positions but by default, these individuals will represent their respective Casas
- 4) It was a tacit understanding that IF by the luck of the draw, Lusitano CA, São Paulo or Australia's names were picked in the first three draws and since they had just sat on the Mesa, their names would be removed

Results of the draw for the rotation for the position as Vice Presidents on the Mesa de Conselho Geral for the next 12 years are as follows:

- 1) Macau Cultural Association – Vancouver
- 2) Casa de Macau no Canada-Toronto
- 3) UMA
- 4) Casa de Macau – Portugal
- 5) São Paulo – Brazil
- 6) Casa de Macau – Australia
- 7) Macau Club – Toronto
- 8) Casa de Macau Vancouver
- 9) Lusitano California
- 10) Rio de Janeiro – Brazil
- 11) Casa de Macau USA

Results of the election by secret ballot of the new Mesa of the Conselho Geral 2007 - 2009:

President - Leonel Alberto Alves (APIM)

Vice President – HK Club Lusitano

Vice President – Sergio Rui de Pina (Macau Cultural Association – Vancouver)

Vice President – Monica Alves (Casa de Macau no Canada-Toronto)

Vice President – Raquel Remedios (UMA)

Secretaries – Sebastião da Rosa (APIM) and Luis Viseu (IIM)

So there you have it, our Casa has a seat on this Board/Mesa for the next 3 years. As I said at the beginning, there was a lot more discussed at the meeting with other Mesas for the 3 remaining Committees having been elected but since these other matters do not affect our Casa directly, I have chosen not to include everything in this article. My report to come will cover the notes I took at the meeting.

On behalf of the Executive, I would like to extend our wishes for a very Merry Christmas to you and yours and all the very best for 2008!



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, February 16th, 2008. Full particulars as to venue, etc. will be mailed out with AGM forms in January. Please mark your calendar.

CANCELLATION

Due to the poor response, we regret to inform members that the Cha Gordo which was scheduled for Sunday, December 16th has been cancelled. We thank volunteers who were willing to give a helping hand.

COOKING/BAKING RECIPIES, FEBRUARY 23, 2008

Casa has managed to secure the use of a commercial kitchen for cooking and baking demonstrations by Cintia do Serro and her Helpers. As you may recall, in our last newsletter we informed you that Cintia is our Gastronomica representative at Encontro 2007 in Macau. APIM (Organizers of the Encontro) are encouraging all Casas to promote Macanese cooking. If you are interested to attend our first demonstration, please complete and return the form. If enough interest is shown, this will be an ongoing event.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Most members would relate to Naomi Baltazar as our line dance teacher and you would be correct. However, she is also a nurse by profession and has consented to give a talk on what we could do to

improve our health. The date for this will be Saturday, Apr. 19th 2-5 p.m

Bingo (recap)

A lovely afternoon and evening was spent with 45 Members and guests who gathered at Casa last October 13 to play Bingo. Thanks to Celsa Larcina and Joyce Barros, assisted by members of the Social Committee, the evening went without a hitch with Nena Noronha calling the numbers. As this was a fully subsidized event the only cost was the price of the Bingo cards and if lady luck smiled on you that more than paid for the cost of the cards, plus your dinner and refreshments, not to mention your evening of enjoyment. Pizza and wings were served followed by a selection of fresh fruits and cookies and cake. After a bit of socializing, it was time to tidy up. A big thanks to all who helped

MASS FOR THE DECEASED (RECAP)

On November 3rd, a good turnout attended a memorial mass for deceased members at Our Lady of the Rosary Church.

Prayers were offered for the deceased members of our community, as well, for the Macanese community worldwide. A rose was placed by the Altar as the names of the 2007 deceased members were called out.

Members who participated in the Mass were: Monica Alves, Gloria Anok, Barbara Baptista, Joyce

Barros, Marie Louise (Rocha) Chang, Marie Camille & Chuck Gonsalves, Regina Holden, Archer-Celsa-Meno Larcina, Cleo Ozorio, Marie Cecile & Chappy Remedios, Tony Gutterres, and Maria Zappavigna. We thank Americo Sousa for laising with the Pastor. Proceeds from the collection, amounting to \$208 was turned over to the Church.

ARMANDO'S NEWEST CD

Once information is available, members will be advised as to availability of Armando's CD which was launched at the Encontro in Macau.

VOLUNTEERS FOR 2008

On behalf of the Social Committee, Marie Louise wishes to thank all volunteers who took on monthly duties to arrange for the menu and food preparation for the First Thursday Socials in 2007. You will doubtless agree that nothing is better than home cooking, and the planners did a fantastic job. Marie Louise advises that, as this system proved such a success, it will be repeated for 2008 and she is now canvassing for volunteers. If you feel you can help, please phone her. Need I mention, no volunteers no home cooking and we may have to settle for pizza ;-)

2008 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Please return the enclosed forms in order to qualify for subsidies. Note that a few of the events are for members only. Thank you.



CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS OF MACAU By Rudolfo Baptista

(reprinted by kind permission of Filomeno (Meno) Baptista)

My father wrote this article which was published in the Sunday Examiner on December 18th 1959. He records his memories of the days when Christmas was for all a domestic feast linking every family with the Holy Family.

For generations the people of Macau have faithfully observed some beautiful Christmas customs taught them, probably, by the missionaries and nuns who were among the earliest settlers in that outpost of the Empire. When many of their sons migrated to Hong Kong, Shanghai and other places in the Far East in search of employment, they carried these customs with them.

Unfortunately, with the passage of time they succumbed to British influence and adopted such things as Christmas trees and cards, plum pudding, the turkey and even that monstrosity of monstrosities "Santa Claus".

Now that December is no longer a day of fast and abstinence, CONSOADA (the full meal of the feast) has lost its meaning and it is feared that for the next generation or so these customs, which are still observed by many families in Macau and Hong Kong, will completely disappear. In some households preliminary preparations for Christmas may start

towards the end of September or the early part of October, when the home fed pig is killed (in situ!) for the making of the delicious Macau sausages "Chourico Vinho de Alho", and Chourico de Cularau". Practically nothing of the poor animal is wasted. The skin is washed, cleaned and dried and will form the principal ingredient of that wonderful dish "Chow Chow de pele". The rendered fat (lard) will be kept for the making of the "Impada" and "Cuscuroao". The legs and shoulders are cured and will adorn the festive board at Christmas and New Year as ham.

As everything is home made and eaten literally fresh from the oven, the few days preceding Christmas are really hectic ones for the housewives and their "Chee Lohs". They will probably start with making of the "aluar". This is a sort of butter scotch made of leguminous rice flour, melted brown brick sugar (jagra), butter, thinly sliced almonds and coconut shavings. The mixture is stirred into a batter with an oar in the shape of a cricket bat. When it is of a certain stiffness, it is placed on a prepared board flattened out and cut into squares about an inch thick to represent blankets to cover the Child Jesus. The "Folhar" is a kind of mince pie filled with coconut shavings and garnished with icing sugar. Next comes "Cuscuroao" made of flour deep-fried in lard and twisted into the shape of shells with a chop-stick and garnished with icing sugar. On the morning of the 24th, the "Impada" will be made. This is a pie filled with spiced fish, eggs, almonds, olives and cheese. It is shaped like a cradle to represent the manger in which the Child is laid. While the "impada" is being baked, the mother and the other girls will put the antimacassars, the laces and curtains and prepare the crib. After a brief repast, preparations will be made for the "Consoada"

The menu is a traditional one consisting of (1) Sopa de Lacassa- a soup made of vermicelli, shrimp, tomatoes and balichao. (2) "Peixe Assado" a whole fish stuffed with garlic, olives, almonds cheese and baked. (3) a salad of carrots and turnips (Loh Pak) in a sweetened vinegar dressing. These three dishes are "De Rigueur" and where there is room for more, curry fish and rice or other seafood products may also be taken. Dessert will consist of fruit in season, Impada, aluar etc.

The head of the family, his wife and children will sit down to this meal which may sometimes last very near to the hour for Midnight Mass. Returning home the family will partake in "Canja de Frango" cold meats Christmas cake and other sweets.

Christmas lunch and dinner are very elaborate functions and generally held in a residence of the oldest member of the family. It is very common to see the grandparent surrounded by seventy or more members of the family at dinner. After dinner incense and candles are burned at the Crib and all join in for prayers and singing of carols. Some families make it a point to continue singing every evening until the feast of Epiphany when the Christmas season comes to an end.



REGULAR EVENTS AT THE CASA

1 ST Thursday of Each Month Jan.10 – note date	Thursday Social	2 – 9:30 p.m.	Contact Person: Marie Louise (Rocha) Chang Cacilda Ribeiro Regina Holden	905-889-3298 905-737-0530 416-200-9623
3 rd Thursday of Each Month	Card Drive	1 - 9:30 p.m.	Marie-Cecile Remedios or Cecilia Conceição	416-383-0327 905-427-0850
Monday and Wednesday Resumes Jan. 7	Tai Chi	10 - 11 a.m.	Monica Alves	905-887-9408
Monday	Yoga	7 – 8 p.m.	Margaret Noronha	416-291-6015
Tuesday Resumes Jan. 8	Line Dance	7:30 - 9 p.m.	Helena Barradas	905-201-7155

IMPORTANT NOTICE FROM THE EXECUTIVE

Mahjong Players - Please make it a point to put away the tables, chairs and mahjong sets in the storage area as neatly as possible. The cleaning lady has, on more than one occasion, complained that it was difficult for her to access her cleaning material stored in this closet.

Food - Much as we would prefer to not bring this up, especially as it was mentioned previously at Casa, we would appreciate it if members refrain from "doggie bagging", or putting aside food for any member who is not present when the food is served. However, after seconds have been served, and before helping yourselves to take away, please speak to a member of the social committee. Very often committees hold meetings the following day and could use this food.

Cushions - We will be adding two dozen new cushions for your comfort. In this respect, please only use one so that others may also be comfortable.

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION.

There is no time more fitting to express my sincere thanks to all who have submitted articles for the newsletter and to wish everyone God's blessings this Christmas, and may the New Year be gentle on your health, bring you inner peace and happiness. *Gloria*

GALA BANQUET
SATURDAY JANUARY 19TH, 2008 6 p. m. to 12:00 midnight
VENUE: Sts. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church, 231 Milner Ave. Scarborough

To facilitate members returning from the Encontro, the Committee has extended the cut-off date to December 21st. This is the latest before the Hall will need to know final numbers. We look forward to your continued support. Thank you.



There will be **a 50/30/20 draw ** at least 20 door prizes + lucky draws, table prizes * gifts for children under 12 * gifts for seniors 80 and over * spot dances and games * A DJ has been engaged for your listening and dancing pleasure

M E N U

Caesar Salad with Parmesan Shavings & Garlic Croutons

*Roast Loin of Pork stuffed with Spinach & Mushrooms
 Madeira Wine Sauce*

&

Grilled Chicken Breast with Citrus Sauce

Crispy Medley of Seasonal Vegetables

Roasted Parisian Potatoes with Olive Oil, Garlic & Rosemary

Assorted Dinner Rolls with Butter

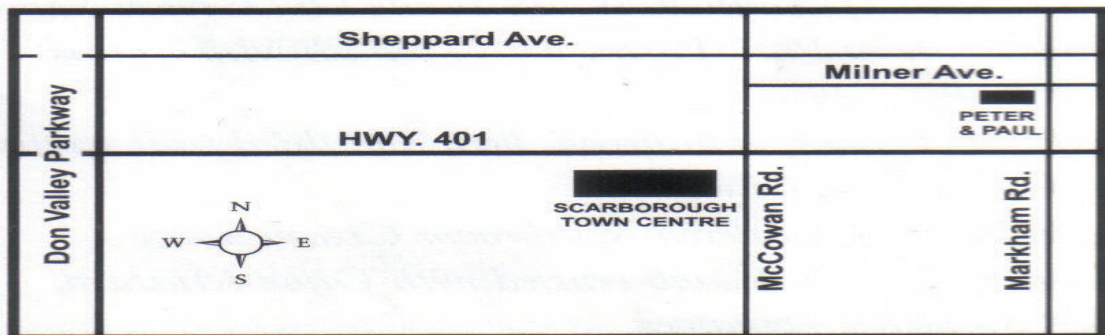
*French Vanilla Ice Cream Crepes Drizzled with Chocolate, Garnished
 with Fruit Sauces and Berries*

Coffee, Tea

Venetian Sweet Table

*Assorted Cakes, French & Italian Pastries, Tarts, Petite Fours,
 Fresh Fruit Mirrors, other
 Coffee, Tea Table*

Cash Bar



Banquet Hall of Sts. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church on Markham Road (entrance on Milner Ave.) 2 lights north of the 401. and one light south of Sheppard Ave. AMPLE PARKING – BUS ACCESS FROM SUBWAY TO DOOR