



PAXOS MUNICIPALITY



Cultural Village
of Europe
2004

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News Letter

No4



September, the first autumn month marked the third and last part of the "Paxos –Cultural Village of Europe 2004" festivities. Our usual "action force" started working again, preparing everything for the welcoming and accommodation of the delegations of the German, the Estonian along with the Spanish and finally the Austrian along with the Danish villages.

The new delegation – members but mainly the new location chosen to host the festivities gave an element of diversity to this part of the events. The old Lakka school, fully renovated for the above purpose, having kept all its traditional architectural aspects, with the sea, the pine trees and the fishing boats surrounding it made the most suitable settings for the various performances that followed.

Every delegation offered - as always - a specific element

of a different culture, which impressed the spectators and proved once more that it is very easy for people coming from different parts of the world to find common grounds of communication within the spirit, the artistic creation but most of all through their thirst to relate to one another.



11-14 September 2004

THE HYPERRACTIVE TEENAGERS OF STROEBECK

Although our guests' usual arrival day is Friday, the delegation of the German village Stroebeck arrived on Paxos on Saturday the 11th of September. All of them were members of the Live Chess Society, a club that has been representing their village from the beginning of the "Cultural Villages of Europe" Organization, very actively. Especially this year the Stroebeck delegation was composed almost exclusively by teenager - members of their Society.

They followed with much interest the whole guided tour of our island's sited schedule under the supervision of Mrs Sterling and four other adult members of their Society. Their face expressions at each meal were very funny as the food quantities seemed enormous to them every time. Their exclamations and comments were very enthusiastic every time they had the chance to enjoy the warm and crystal clear sea of Kaki Lagada and other beaches.

Their presentation on Sunday evening at the old schoolyard by the sea in Lakka was very original. They begun with choreographed parts of medieval dances of their area, dressed accordingly. They looked like Hans Christian Andersen's fairy-tales princes and princesses. We particularly enjoyed their modern dances show, their piano playing and even a karate exhibition, all the above being school activities for these teenagers. Listening how Chess first came to Stroebeck and how through the ages it became a main activity in their area was also very interesting.

Our German guests watched the Dance team of the Paxos Cultural Society performing a number of traditional dances and were all very keen in learning the different dance steps.

Their program presentation in combination with their participation in all the planned activities by us for them proved how active and healthy youth they have and how many common interests both Greek and German teenagers have.

We hope they left Paxos feeling pleased. They certainly left our island with a tan!



24 -27 September 2004

THE CHARMING ESTONIANS AND THE OPENHEARTED SPANIARDS

On Friday the 24th of September we welcomed first the delegation of 41 Estonians from the village of Killingi Nomme and then the delegation of 40 Spaniards from the Porrua village.

Although the Estonians were exhausted from an endless buss ride, they returned to their usual selves almost immediately. During the next few days most of them explored Paxos discovering even the most hidden beauties of our island. The head of their group, Kalle, during his long hours of pipe-smoking enjoyed tormenting every ignorant tourist who dared ask him

whether the Estonians spoke their own language or if they spoke a certain Russian dialect. The younger members of their delegation showed a particular interest in contacting the local youth, an interest which was directly and warmly met.

Their delegation was the first to present their program in an idyllic by the sea location in Lakka. Their presentation's quality and variety impressed both the locals and the tourists. Young men and women full of natural beauty and grace danced before us traditional and more modern dance pieces with original choreographies. In between three Estonian ladies performed



local tunes on their accordions for us. The spectators' enthusiasm peaked when five young girls, members of the Gymnastics' School of Killingi Nomme performed very successfully a few modern choreographies full of strong elements of a difficult gymnastics routine. They gave us the chance to see in the flesh the high quality Gymnastics Tradition Estonia possesses in a world level.

Sunday the Spanish delegation's performance day started off very gloomy and rainy. The fact that it kept raining all day did not diminish the Spanish people's eagerness to go ahead with all the planned events. Among other things they particularly



enjoyed their visit at the foreign painters exhibition at the Council Meeting Hall, where Maica Gonzales, a Venezuelan artist, personally guided them through the exhibition explaining and commenting her work and happily accepting to be photographed with them in front of her lovely paintings.

In the meantime, every time the rain stopped we managed to gather all the flowers needed for the Porruans to create the "Ramou", conical wreaths they traditionally carry in front of religious processions. With such a procession commenced the festivities planned by the Spaniards on Sunday evening. The procession took place at the Loggos short but beautiful port road, since heavy rain had turned the Lakka old schoolyard into a pond. The whole Porruan delegation began walking slowly by the sea, under the rain drops, singing in the dusk, dressed in beautiful traditional costumes. The gathered crowd watched surprised at first but soon after started to follow the procession solemnly all the way to the old Loggos school exhibition hall, where the rests of that night's activities took place.

Inside the hall and with the rain falling heavily by now, the Porruans set up an incredible, spontaneous and very vivid party, with Victor, the musician at the head of the festivities. His traditional astourian pipes created a frenzy of sounds, which was enriched by divine women's voices. We all enjoyed a lovely sample of their traditional regional dances and food delicacies, which we washed down with originally made sangria. Many among us had tones of laugh trying to learn their dances and enjoyed drinking wine out of leather flasks, which popped up out of the blue in the over - crowded room.

Almost all of us were wet, but no one wanted this party to end. Instead it became even crazier, when Victor started playing on his pipes a very famous and loved Greek song called "Ta pedia tou Pirea" from a Melina Merkouri film. The party continued in a taverna in the near by village of Lakka, where all language barriers disappeared and the Spaniards, the Estonians and the Paxiots partied united until early morning hours.

They left the next day taking with them all our love and a promise for the delegations of Porrua and Paxos to travel together next year to Killingi Nomme.



8-11 October 2004

NOSTALGIC WALSH-DANCES FROM KIRCHEIM MELODIC MOMENTS FROM TOMMERUP

The last invited delegations for 2004 arrived on Paxos on Friday the 8th of October. The 40 members of the Austrian delegation from Kirchheim and the 27 delegation -members from the Danish village of Tommerup immediately became very friendly with one another and enjoyed together our island's beauties. They had a particularly lovely day when we took them to the almost tropical Voutoumi beach in Antipaxos under a shining and summer - warm sun. The Danish, in particular, showed a strong interest towards the different ways of olive trees cultivation, the various methods of oil - producing, the ways of promoting and selling oil and other olive products and over the Paxiots every day living not only nowadays but mainly through the ages.

On Saturday, the Austrians offered us a lovely evening full of waltz, polka and landler dances presented in the special way of the Inviertel area. Their orchestra composed of 25 competent musicians made a very good impression to all. They performed impeccably many classical music themes, they treated everybody with their lovely Austrian bear and danced "sirtaki" until they dropped. Unfortunately they had to leave earlier and so missed the chance to watch the Danish entertain us the next evening. At the port a little before going on board the ship, they gave another short but lively farewell - performance forcing us to start waltzing along under the midday sun.

The Danish delegation represented Tommerup well, fameliorasing us with some of their local delicacies and local tunes. The audience sang with them the "Cultural Villages of Europe" song, composed by their compatriot, Morten Gamaes. It was a sweet song with lively music and simple lyrics that managed to stay with us for a long time after the Danes had left. People loved particularly the Danish ballads performed by the women members of their chorus and the part of their performance when 6 members of their choir sang "a capella" well known jazzy melodies. The music and their lovely voices filled the little peaceful port of Lakka, turning the night into magic. We were very sorry they had no time to learn the sirtaki dance properly. However, we promise them they will learn it in 2005 in Killingi Nomine along with the Spaniards.



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