

Rotary Club Estoi Palace

Newsletter

Volume 4
April — June
2014

Service Above Self



Rotary



Estoi Palace International



RCEPI Newsletter

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1 Christmas came 3 weeks late for the Sao
2 Bras Bombeiros. On Saturday 18th of
3 January, Estoi Palace Rotary Club was
4 delighted to officially handover a brand
5 new, fully equipped ambulance to the
6 Bombeiros.



This project had just taken over a year to complete which was an amazing result.

The Bombeiros of São Brás, a group of well-trained volunteers, have been providing fire and emergency services to this rural area of 150,000 square meters and a population of 15,000, with the bare minimum of equipment for a number of years. Much of their equipment is outdated and badly in need of replacement, so in the summer of 2013 they initiated a fund raising campaign in the hopes of raising enough money to purchase a new ambulance. When the Rotary Club Estoi Palace International heard about the Bombeiros efforts, they approached them about the possibility of making that dream a reality and raise the 61.925 euros required.

With the invaluable assistance of Rotary Coordinator, Chris Garner, Rotary Estoi Palace International contacted other Rotary Clubs and Districts to establish a plan using a Rotary Foundation competitive grant scheme to raise the necessary funds.



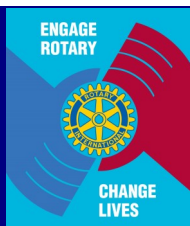
While we awaited approval of this grant, Rotary Club Estoi Palace International held a very successful golf fundraiser at the Monte Rei Golf and Country Club in Vila Nova de Cacela in Portugal's beautiful Algarve, the proceeds of which were put towards the ambulance fund.

Later in the summer the competitive grant was approved by Rotary Foundation headquarters in Chicago. Further assistance was offered by Rotary clubs and Rotary districts in Texas and Brazil. The Bombeiros contributed 4000 euros from their fund of which 2600 euros had been raised by the local Angels Theatre Group and by late summer the final goal was reached! With the funding in place the ambulance was ordered.



Fireman Alex Correia drove the ambulance into the Sao Bras fire station with the

Visit our web site at WWW.RotaryEstoiPalace.org



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klaxon blaring and the 90 plus people there rose to their feet applauding this wonderful achievement.

The ambulance is designed to go out on major emergencies as it is equipped with life saving apparatus, and also to transport seriously ill people from home to hospitals and, hopefully, with the equipment on board give them a greater chance of survival. President Shirley Dunne officially handed the keys over to President Flavio Martins.



Vitor Guerreiro, Mayor of Sao Bras, gave a speech about the importance of the community working together, and Commandante Vitor Martins expressed his thanks to Estoí Rotary Club and the community for such a tremendous achievement.

RCEPI Visits Novacortiça Cork Factory

In early February, 27 members and partners from our Club visited the cork processing factory, Novacortiça, near Sao Brás to learn a great deal about cork and its production.

We were welcomed to the factory by our guide Gianluca Pereyra who gave us a very enlightening presentation



before we toured the factory floor. Gianluca told us that cork is the outer bark of the cork oak tree (*Quercus suber*) which flourishes around the Mediterranean basin in Portugal, Spain,

France, Italy, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia and the trees live for approximately 200 years. The trees are not harvested until they reach about 25 years old, then the bark is stripped from the trunks just once every nine years. The bark is harvested during the spring and summer, as this is the time of year the trees experience rapid growth and the new cork cells break away from the inner cambium easily with little damage to the tree.

Stripping cork is a delicate job that is still done by hand with traditional tools and methods. So far no mechanized or automated process has been as successful as traditional harvesting techniques. Portugal harvests approximately 184,000 tons of cork per year.

Much of the cork that arrives at the factory is turned into

small disks approximately 4 cm in diameter. These disks are subject to stringent quality control and are eventually sorted into three grades: Extra, Superior and Medium.



The disks are sorted by density by machines enhanced by lasers. The machines determine how much light can penetrate a disk and then grade that disk accordingly, the less light that penetrates the disk the higher its quality.

The factory is also branching out to produce items such as umbrellas, handbags, etc.

More information on the cork factory and their shops can be found at <http://www.novacortica.pt> and www.pelecor.pt

The visit was followed by a convivial lunch at a local restaurant.

RCEPI Celebrates Burns Night

On January 25th, 2014, the 255th anniversary of Robbie Burns in Scotland, 116 people gathered at The



Stables on the grounds of the Estoi Palace Pousada to take a cup of auld lang syne in honour of Scotland's national poet, and to do a little fundraising.

Burns didn't live a long life; he died at the age of 37, leaving behind a wife, numerous distraught lovers and 12 children.

His greatest legacy was his poetry which included hundreds of works in

both English and Scots, which are still popular hundreds of years later.

Organized by Scottish expat members of the Rotary Club Estoi Palace International, the evening followed traditional lines. First there was the ceremonial piping in of the haggis (for those not familiar with this animal there is a description later).

Then a hush fell for the "Address to the Haggis", a poem Burns penned in praise of the "great chieftain o' the puddin'-race" in 1786.

This was followed by the Selkirk Grace, a short grace attributed to Burns: "*Some have meat and cannot eat, Some cannot eat that want it; But we have meat, and we can eat, Sae let the Lord be thankit*".

After a main course of roast beef, and a lovely simple pudding, we heard the Toast to the Lassies and the Reply to the Laddies. This was

followed by some lively Scottish country dancing.



The enjoyable evening raised over Euros 1,500 which RCEPI has earmarked to assist the Algarve Oncology Association.

Haggis



The wild Haggis (plural: Haggi) lives in the highlands of Scotland. It is round, four-legged, fur-covered, and usually less than a foot in length (comparable in size to a grouse). It is a shy creature, rarely seen, and for this reason there is great disagreement about its exact morphology and habits. For instance, many who claim to be Haggis experts say that the legs of the Haggis are longer on one side of its body than the other, in order to allow it to better stand on the steep slopes of the highlands. As a consequence, the haggis can only run around hills in one direction, and to catch one you simply run around the hill in the opposite direction. If true, this morphological feature would make the Haggis a cousin of the American Sidehill Gouger. However, other

Haggis observers deny this to be true, insisting that all the legs of the Haggis are of equal length.

Some Haggis-ologists speculate that the Haggis is related to the Australian duck-billed platypus, being a descendant of migratory platypuses who found themselves trapped in Scotland during the last ice age and evolved to become highly adapted to its cold, damp weather.

To catch a Haggis it is advised to disguise your breath with liberal amounts of whisky, and then adopt a stumbling gait, swerving from side to side, so that the animal will be confused about your direction of attack. Many stores in Scotland also sell Haggis Whistles. It is claimed that "in skilled hands this whistle can perfectly mimic the mating call of the Haggis."

*It is sometimes said that Haggis is actually a traditional Scottish dish made from the heart, liver, and lungs of a sheep, mixed with oatmeal, suet, and seasonings, and boiled in the stomach of the animal. **This is far too disgusting to be true.***

RCEPI Visits the Querença Project

João Ministro, Technical Coordinator for the 'Querença Project', gave a very interesting talk to members of the Estoi Palace Rotary Club and following the presentation a number of club members decided to visit the Querença area to find out more. The 'Querença Project' was started



in 2011 in response to concerns that rural communities and previously cultivated regions in the Algarve were suffering substantial decline as land owners and residents were leaving the countryside. Much of the land whilst in private ownership was left in a very poor condition due to neglect or abandonment and was close to being beyond effective recovery.

An initiative to respond to this increasingly familiar problem throughout the region was instigated by the University of the Algarve and supported by national and local governments and other organisations.

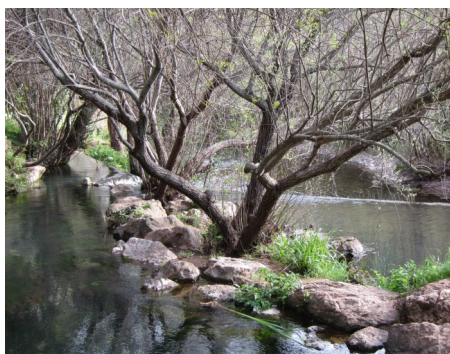
It was recognised that if improvement and renovation were to be demonstrated then the Querença area was a good place to

start and would show what was



possible through volunteer help with qualified leadership. It was hoped that this would also be seen as an example to others of what is achievable.

One objective in Querença is to encourage the reintroduction and growth of native plants suited to the local environment and natural irrigation systems. This would then become a valuable stock as a future resource. A further objective is to encourage



sustainable organic cultivation and encourage traditional local trades. Additionally arrangements are being implemented for private landowners to allow tenants to take over responsibility to farm the land.

A further benefit is giving valuable experience in nature conservation

to young graduates and creating ongoing employment opportunities within the local community.

The Rotary group had a most enjoyable lunch at Restaurante Querença with João Marum who specialises in landscape architecture and was one of the first original team members who launched the project. João showed a demonstration garden in the village centre which had been



constructed using locally sourced materials and planted with vegetation representing the local areas.

The group then drove out to the attractive Fonte da Benémola which is a protected nature reserve noted for the natural spring that continues to flow even in the hottest and driest weather and is the source of the river. Walking by the water in the sunshine surrounded by the many indigenous plants and insects which are now in abundance with our very informative guide João was a delightful experience.

A Helping Hand for Margarida

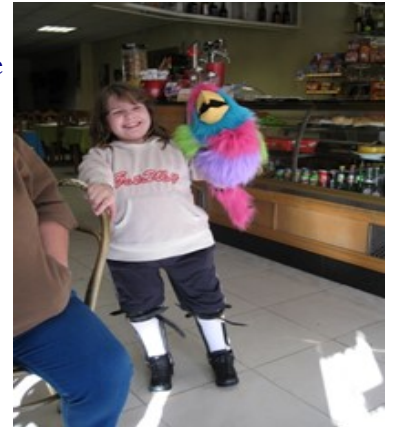
At the Casa do Povo Christmas Party, I received a request to assist a young child living in Estoi.

Margarida suffers with a congenital disease that effects her legs. She is unable to walk without the aid of leg braces. Due to a bungling bureaucracy she had been unable to get new



braces via social security and had been confined to a wheelchair for a year.

A total of 1540 euros was required to purchase these for her. We managed to raise via the community 465 euros and we were able to work with another local children's charity ACCA who supplied the remaining money. Another example of what we can do working together. This transformed Margarida's life and she is now running around very happily.



Mega Quiz Night

At the end of January *Four Seasons Country Club* organized a Mega Quiz Night to benefit us and another local charity. 112 people attended an excellent evening with a Rotary team of Claire, Agnete, Katrina and David coming along, and I was happy to fly the Rotary flag with my own team and come in at second place out of 28 teams. We received a donation from them of 1660 euros which will go towards helping the Algarve Oncology Association in the area of breast screening.



Milk for the Children

In 2013, the Food Bank received a donation of rose wine, which they were unable to use. They gave the wine to us and we were able to raise almost 1200 euros by offering it to our members and other Rotarians in return for a donation. The funds raised were used to purchase Formula Milk for children which the Food Bank had asked for. We were delighted to present this to Nuno Alves in early March, when he came to give us an update on the essential work being carried out by the Food Bank.



Welcome to our New Members

Manuela Almeida

Manuela, who now lives locally, spent much of her life in the Alentejo and Lisbon. She also had a spell working in Dublin for the Portuguese Embassy. She is retired now and wants to help in her local community. She has joined the Youth Service Committee and has already been to meetings to promote the Interact program.



Isabel Correia

Isabel lives in Faro and runs her own Travel and Events business and is also a qualified Life Coach. She also has a 4 year old daughter, so has a full on life. Despite this she also wants to help make a difference within her community and she has joined the International Committee.



We are delighted to welcome both new members into our Club and know they will be an asset to us.

YOUTH SERVICE



We are aiming to set up an Interact Club for young people in the community. What is Interact? It is a club for young people ages 12-18 who want to join together to tackle the issues in their community that they care most about. Through Interact, they are encouraged to

- Carry out hands-on service projects
- Make international connections
- Develop leadership skills
- Have fun!

In order to further this the Youth Committee has had an eventful few months with a workshop at Escola João Deus in Faro, organized by our member Anita Lima and attended by our Youth Service Chairman, Pauline Burnham and our new member Manuela Almeida. It was well attended with 26 students and 3 staff coming to find out more about INTERACT.

The presentation was given by 4 members of Tavira Interact, including their incoming Interact President, with Tavira RC Treasurer Antonio and our incoming Assistant

District Governor, Abilio Lopes on hand to help.

By the end of the presentation 9 students had expressed an interest in knowing more, also 1 member of staff offered to be our liaison with the students.

Anita is following up with the students and we are hoping to have another meeting in April.

**A CLUB IN FARO FOR THE STUDENTS
BETWEEN 12 AND 18**

THIS IS OUR AIM



Photo Courtesy of Tavira Interact

Upcoming Events

April - June

1st April 2014	E.G. Meeting Estoi Palace 13:00 New Members Introductory Speech - Robert Levin
8th April 2014	Meeting at Estoi Palace 13:00 Speaker will be a representative from the Sao Bras Bombeiros
15th April 2014	Business Meeting Estoi Palace 13:00
22nd April 2014	Fellowship Outing—Visit to Tavira Salt Pans and Lunch Details To Be Confirmed
29th April 2014	Meeting at Estoi Palace 13:00 New Members Introductory Speech - Salome Silva
2nd May 2014	Quiz Night - Details to be confirmed
6th May 2014	Meeting at Estoi Palace 13:00 New Members Introductory Speech - Phil Wyndham
13th May 2014	Meeting at Estoi Palace 13:00 Speaker will be Rui Baptista from Ibermail
20th May 2014	Club Assembly Meeting Estoi Palace 13:00 Discussing 2014/2015 Programme
27th May 2014	Meeting at Estoi Palace 13:00 Speaker will be Katrina Gale talking about BEES
31st May 2014	Sailing Regatta off Vilamoura Off-Shore Yacht Racing and a BBQ” to follow
3rd June 2014	Meeting at Estoi Palace 13:00 New Members Introductory Speech - Manuale Robinson
10th June 2014	Portuguese Day—No Meeting
17th June 2014	Meeting at Estoi Palace 13:00
24th June 2014	Meeting at Estoi Palace 13:00

As event scheduling can change at the last minute. Please click [here](#) for the very latest RCEPI event information

For anyone wanting to know more about any of our events or to register for participation, please contact via e-mail the Secretary at SECRETARY@ROTARYESTOIPALACE.ORG

If you wish to attend one of our meetings please let our Master of Ceremonies know by sending an e-mail with your details to MOC@ROTARYESTOIPALACE.ORG