

# AD LIB

The magazine of  
Paphos Third Age

[www.paphos3rdage.org](http://www.paphos3rdage.org)

Editor: Marian McEwen

March 2023



## Message from the Chair David Sparrow



### **Hello Members,**

As you will see from the Membership News the organisation continues to thrive with a strong influx of new members. To those of you who have just joined, welcome to the P3A and I hope you will enjoy the benefits of membership. Group activities now appear to be back running at pre-pandemic levels with around 40 active groups covering a wide range of topics and interests, but there is always room for new groups. So, if you have an interest not already covered, why not give it a go and set up a new group.

The situation with venues has eased somewhat with several groups starting to use the Paphos Christian Fellowship International's meeting hall (formerly the Welcome Inn). This is extremely well equipped, comfortable and provides an affordable venue with space to accommodate the larger groups.

We are always aware that many of our members have health vulnerabilities, so we recently offered First Aid training to all our group leaders and assistants, paid from P3A funds. 12 group leaders took up this offer and took part in a six-hour Emergency First Aid at Work course, provided by St John's Association and Brigade, who are affiliated to the St John's Ambulance organisation. The training covered essential aspects of how to respond in emergency situations, including CPR. All agreed that the course was very well structured and presented, and we shall certainly repeat this exercise, perhaps every two or three years.

Finally, as always, my thanks go to my fellow committee members for their support, and to the group leaders and assistants that make the P3A such a successful organisation.

# P3A Committee Members

Chair	David Sparrow
Vice Chair	Keith McEwen
Treasurer	Gillian Richards
Secretary	Sue Lorensz
Membership Secretary	Dale Ikin
Groups Coordinator	Ros Sparrow
Magazine Editor	Marian McEwen
Website Officer	Ros Sparrow

## CONTENTS

Message from The Chair	1
Committee News	2
Groups News	3-28



## Membership News

I am pleased to report that membership now stands at a very healthy **804!**

During the whole of 2022 we lost 147 members through resignations and lapsed memberships but we attracted 155 new members and re-joiners which is a significant increase on the previous year.

Interest in P3A is high and already, since 1st January this year, we have gained a further 32 new members which includes 8 members who have re-joined so we appear to be going from strength to strength.

A reminder that your memberships are now valid until 31st August and renewals for the year 2023/2024, will be due on 1st September 2023.

Dale Ikin  
Membership Secretary

## British High Commission



Representatives of British Residents Groups and key contacts in the Paphos Area were invited to a reception on Thursday 23rd February to meet The New British High Commissioner Irfan Siddiq OBE.

His Deputy Ben Rawlings and members of the Consular Team met up with UK nationals living in Paphos, Pegeia and Polis.

Keith McEwen, Vice Chair and Marian McEwen, Editor Ad Lib went as representatives of P3A.

Members of the Consular team are well known to P3A as they have given talks regarding issues such as how British Nationals living in Cyprus could be affected by Brexit and issues re Residency.

The High Commissioner introduced himself, giving details of his background and his experience as a High Commissioner in a number of other countries. He also advised of meetings he had already had with the Minister of the Interior and other government officials. All complicated of course by the current transfer to a new Government.

He advised that Britain and Cyprus had recently signed a new Bilateral Agreement.

The main questions asked at this meeting were surrounding the issue of British Residents losing their voting rights in Cyprus. This was particularly important to people with the forthcoming major changes to local Government in May 2024.

Residency was questioned as to whether we could expect a fasttrack to Biometric cards. This would be particularly important with the onset of ETIAS and negate the requirement to have one.

One of the Consular Team has a meeting with immigration re this within the next week and hopes to be able to circulate a positive outcome soon.

# Boules, Coffee & Lunch Group

*Looking For Something New ? Like To Be Outdoors ?*

*Enjoy Games That Offer Something For Everyone ?*

*Want To Compete, But Not To Be Competitive ?*

**P3A Boules Could Be Just What You Need.  
Every Tuesday in Tala at 9.30am**

Until recently we were simply the P3A Boules Group.

However, we now spend more time sipping a frappe and having lunch than actually playing Boules. So why not advertise there is more to us than simply a bunch of friends throwing metal balls around.

Of course we do play Boules. It is our main activity.

But we have drinks breaks between games.

Sitting in the shade, having a lots of laughs with friends in a scenic venue, are some of the reasons for coming to Cyprus.

When we do finish playing Boules, most members head for a nearby taverna that specialises in good food at reasonable prices. It makes for an all round enjoyable morning.

## ***So what is so special about Boules ?***

Many things. You can learn the basics in 5 minutes.

Most of our members had never played before..

You can play at any age. It is inexpensive.

Men and women have an equal chance of winning.

It is gentle exercise in the fresh air.

Until the final Boule is thrown the result is never certain.

## ***Does P3A Boules have more to offer ?***

We play at a scenic venue.

We are a cheerful crew and have just adopted a mascot.

We play to win, but winning is not at all the main objective.

We play to enjoy ourselves. Winning is very much secondary.

We draw cards on the day to determine our partner and opponents.

Everyone has an equal chance. Nothing is pre arranged.

## ***What do you need to do if this sounds like a sport for you?***

It could not be easier. Just get in touch. You will be made very welcome.

We have spare Boules just waiting for your fingers to caress them.

Another P3A activity that afternoon? You will have plenty of time.

If you would like to try Boules when no one is around, it is no problem.

We are very happy to meet you one afternoon for a try out.

If after all this you feel Boules is a little too energetic for you, you are still welcome to just come for lunch, as some friends already do.

Permanent Resident or Swallow, we look forward to meeting you soon.

Brian or Angela: [p3aboules@outlook.com](mailto:p3aboules@outlook.com) 96136047



# Book Discussion Group



A new P3A Book Discussion group which was announced for February 2023 is starting in late March or early April due to some unforeseen difficult circumstances. There is still a space or two in this limited size group which will be meeting at Charlyn Edward's house near the Peyia post office.

In response to the four books which were offered to P3A members to read with the group, those who responded overwhelmingly choose **Peter Brown's *The Cult of the Saints, Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity***.

Peter Brown is a renowned Princeton scholar who has written many books on early and medieval Christianity. In this short and easy to read book, which is based on a series of public lectures, he explores how the worship of the saints and their corporeal remains became central to religious life in Western Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire.

Peter Brown starts by saying, "This book is about the joining of Heaven and Earth, and the role, in this joining, of dead human beings. It will deal with the emergence, orchestration, and function in late antiquity of what is general known as the Christian 'cult of the saints.'" He also says, when preparing the lectures, "I found myself to my delight in the company of highly articulate indeed, of magnificently visible friends of the "invisible friends." The motive of such men, their expectations, the social and cultural world that coloured their language and gave such an inimitable flavor to these men's warm capacity for love and loyalty to the invisible dead, are better known to us than is any other aspect of this subject."

As you can see there is a unique blend of scholar and heart in this book which makes it especially enjoyable. The purpose of the reading group is to understand, and also to question and critique, the content of this book. Particular experience or knowledge is not required except for a willingness to explore the topic, to keep reading, and to participate in lively discussions.

If you are interested, please send an email to me, Charlyn Edwards ([edwardscharlyn@gmail.com](mailto:edwardscharlyn@gmail.com)), along with sharing something about yourself and your interests so I can respond to the interests of the group members. I will respond to everyone who shows interest with possible dates for a first meeting and then ongoing meetings at time agreeable to all. Fridays are especially possible but I am flexible so please contact me whenever you read this announcement.

Also, before the first meeting I will share with each participant a PDF file of the first lecture in the book along with instructions on how to obtain either a paper or electronic copy.

In the earlier notice Ros Sparrow wrote the paragraph below to introduce me which I have updated:

Charlyn Edwards came to Cyprus in June from Hamburg University in Germany when her British/American husband Roger wished to retire here. She edits and translates ancient Indian manuscripts in Sanskrit and other languages and researches the archaeology of India and surrounding areas such as Nepal and the Tibetan region. Prior to her work in Indology she studied medieval Europe and with the faculty of the Middle English Dictionary.

Best regards,  
Charlyn Edwards  
Book Discussion Group Leader

# Around the World Dining Group

Since our last Ad Lib, we took a break from cooking in December and went out for our Christmas meal to a restaurant in Coral Bay, Sala Thai, and very pleasant it was too.

We started 2023 with a Hungarian meal in January. We enjoyed a pre-dinner Hungarian cocktail called 'Gypsy Kiss', consisting of Apricot Brandy and Prosecco. Our starter was 'Korozott' – a soft cheese cream spread served on rye bread. We then moved on to main courses of Goulash and Paprika Chicken accompanied by Couscous and rounded it all off with a dessert of Hungarian Baked Noodles. All very delicious.

We are looking forward to our next meal in February as I write when we are visiting the cuisine of Myanmar (Burma).

Carolyn Hart

Co-Ordinator Around the World Dining

Tel: 97 762371



# P3A Photography Group

## Spring Report

In Cyprus we have escaped very lightly this winter from the worst that Mother Nature can inflict on our planet. She has given us many warm, sunny days, some necessary rain, mostly at night, and a few gales to whip up the waves in the sea. So this has enabled us photographers to be out and about with our cameras recording the changing seasons and enjoying all that this island has to offer.

In December we held our annual Christmas Lunch and prizegiving at the premises of Paphos International Sailing Club near Agios Georgios.

The certificate for Photographer of the year was awarded to Mike Watts, with second place going to Andrew Hogg and third place to Chris Scorer.



Since Christmas we have enjoyed several local field trips. In January we walked part of the coastal path near Baracas Coffee lounge, capturing stunning coastal views and the sun shining through the trees in the gardens of hotels bordering the path. Since January is a comparatively quiet season for tourists we mostly had the path to ourselves which helps when you haven't got to wait for people to move out of your shot!



In February members of Paphos Classical Vehicle Club gathered in Geroskipou Square for their Annual Rally before setting off into the hills. Members of the Photography Group who were present had plenty of photographic opportunities. Some of the cars were displaying rather unusual passengers.

In late February a field trip to the peaceful village of Kouklia was enjoyed by several of our members.

Entrance to the Museum there is free if you are over 65. Whilst those of us who 'qualified' for this concession took identity to prove it, the kindly guy on Reception at the Museum let us all in free-of-charge, even though some members of the group did not 'qualify' age-wise.

# The Photography Group Cont.

The museum covers a very wide outdoor area with the remains of many buildings that were in their prime when Paphos was the capital of the island. The indoor museum has a big collection of artefacts unearthed from centuries ago and carefully restored and displayed. One particular exhibit which caught my eye was this bath, apparently manufactured several thousand years BC. The population must have been much smaller in stature all those centuries ago. Today's homo sapiens would find it quite difficult and uncomfortable to sit in that structure!



None of our field trips would be complete without a visit to a local hostelry for refreshments. At the end of an interesting and enjoyable morning in the museum and around the village we gathered at the Meeting Place taverna to enjoy freshly made scones and a variety of drinks.

We were hoping to take a field trip up to Troodos before the snow finally melted but couldn't find a suitable date before the meltdown. However, one of our members did manage to get there independently and enjoyed a dog driven sleigh ride.



Meanwhile our weekly Meetings have continued at Coral Star Restaurant. We have had presentations by our leaders Tom Brown and Chris Scorer on a wide variety of topics, including Dodging and Burning (not nearly as criminal as it sounds!), texture art, light painting and smartphone photography. Our membership continues to increase and we are delighted to welcome new members. Our meetings take place at Coral Star Restaurant (opposite Phillipos Supermarket in Pegeia) on Mondays, starting at 10am.



We are planning to hold a Photographic Exhibition in conjunction with the P3A Natural History Group during the weekend beginning Friday 19th May at the Makers Space Gallery near Tala.

For more information about the Exhibition or any of our activities in the Photographic Group please contact Chris Scorer – [crscorer@gmail.com](mailto:crscorer@gmail.com)

We are a very friendly group and if you feel you would like to join us we would be delighted to welcome you.



Liz Unwin  
February 2023

# Dragonfly Study Group

The Dragonfly Study Group (CDSG) in collaboration with Terra Cypria, the Cyprus Conservation Foundation, is organising the 2023 International Dragonfly Congress at the end of June. Mary Michaelides, the assistant leader of the CDSG, approached the Cyprus Post with a request to issue a commemorative stamp in recognition of the event. To our good fortune, this was agreed and on 23rd February two stamps, a €0.75 stamp and a €1 stamp, were issued. The release was expected to be closer to the event but the post office was running out of stamps of those denominations!



In addition, a commemorative first day cover and a brochure were produced:





## Dragonfly Study Group Cont.

The selection of the species for the stamps was made by the Post Office, taking into account Mary's advice. They requested photographs of several species which Mary provided, and these were put out to several artistic designers, who submitted entries for the selection of two winning designs by a committee. The two species selected were of an *Orthetrum sabina* (Slender Skimmer) female and an *Epallage fatime* (Odalisque) male.

The dragonfly *Orthetrum sabina* was first named by British entomologist Dru Drury in 1773, its species epithet referring to the Sabine tribe. According to legend, the newly built city of Rome in the mid-8th century BC was mainly inhabited by men. Realising women were needed to sustain the population, the Romans invited the nearby Sabine tribe to a festival. Once inside the city, the Sabine men were killed and the women abducted and raped (the word "rape" originates from the Latin "*rapere*", which means to snatch, grab or carry off – apparently this was quite common occurrence at the time). The surviving Sabine men returned to their city for reinforcements, but on their return to Rome, it was the abducted women who intervened, calling a halt to any violence since they were happy with their new lives in Rome. There are many famous paintings entitled the "Rape of the Sabine Women" by artists such as Rubens, de Cortona and Stella. Having said all that, it is not at all clear why Drury chose this name, other than that he liked classical allusions.

Although this species has a long history on Cyprus, being first reported in the earliest records from the island in 1863, it was rather scarce and there were very few records until quite recently. It is a heat-loving species and Cyprus is at the north-western extremity of its extensive range, which extends through the Old World tropics and sub-tropics through Asia to northern and eastern Australia. Thirty years ago on Cyprus the range of the species was restricted to low altitude habitats around Akrotiri and the population sizes were a maximum of 10 individuals. With climate change it has increased its range and there are now established populations on the agricultural tanks around Eptagoneia at an altitude around 450 m asl. Population sizes have also increased and, for example, over the last few years several hundred individuals have been observed on the Paralimni wetland.

The damselfly *Epallage fatime* (Odalisque) was first named by Toussaint de Charpentier. The genus name *Epallage* is derived from the Greek *ἐπαλλαγή* = "mutual connections", since it was incorrectly regarded by Charpentier to be a link between two other families, the Demoiselles and the Pincertails. The species is named after Fatimah (609 – 632), the youngest daughter of Mohammad. The unusual vernacular name, Odalisque (Turkish: "odalik" = "chambermaid") is derived from the term for a female slave or concubine in an Ottoman seraglio (living quarters of the wives and concubines). These latter two names were probably selected to emphasize the oriental distribution of this damselfly, a southwestern Asian species that expands its range in Europe into Cyprus, Turkey, continental Greece, and the Aegean islands.

This species has also had a long history on Cyprus with records dating back to 1863. Its range is restricted to permanent slow flowing rocky rivers and consequently only on the streams of Troodos range. The stamps and First Day Cover will be on sale for 12 months and can be ordered through the Post Office E-shop: [www.cypruspost.post/en/e-shop?category=filotelika-proionta](http://www.cypruspost.post/en/e-shop?category=filotelika-proionta)



# Friday Afternoon Games



Our Friday afternoon Games group has been meeting at the new venue, Angelika, for over a month now, and has proved popular. (Alternative games groups are available on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. Check the P3A website for further information).

So far, we have played Mexican Train, Scrabble, Rummikub and Bridge. We have many more games that need some friends to play with, Backgammon, Uno, Mastermind, more Scrabble, Mahjong, Texas Holdem, Poker, Yahtse, Canasta, more Bridge etc., and you can always bring your own favourite game.

We would love you to join us.

The cost is €3.00, which includes refreshments and cake.

**Starting time: 2.00 pm**

Details Judith Snell:

**Tel. 99157301**

**Email: [dreckly@cytanet.com.cy](mailto:dreckly@cytanet.com.cy)**





The P3A Quiz continues at the Coral Star Hotel opposite Phillipos in Coral Bay.

We meet on the **FIRST** and **THIRD** Monday of each month.  
Serious quizzing in a light hearted atmosphere with prizes of wine and whisky.

**Question:** *The old Threepenny bit, how many corners did it have?!*

**How many different colours on the South African flag?** (Answers below)

Just a couple of examples of the range of trivia and General Knowledge questions used on the night.

We also have a timed True or False round: Four statements are read out that you must Decide whether T or F but only have Ten seconds between questions.

Food can be ordered beforehand if you wish to eat and we always finish before 10pm.

It doesn't matter if you come as a team, a couple or by yourself we will fit you in.

The quiz starts at 8.00pm and a small fee of 2 euros per person is charged.

Feel free to contact me on the email address below.

Mick: [mickcotton20@hotmail.com](mailto:mickcotton20@hotmail.com)

Quiz answers

12 corners

6 Colours (black, yellow, green, red, white, blue)

# Saturday Talks

The Saturday Morning Talks take place on the first Saturday of each month between 10am -12 noon at the Annabelle Hotel, Paphos.

The Ariadne Conference room in the hotel is very comfortable, has technical backup and allows the presentations to be enjoyed by both the speaker and audience. Refreshments are taken about half way through the talk, and as you might expect of a 4-5 star hotel, are very good.

Your support is essential for this group to flourish, so please come along to the advertised talks.

Also, if any one of you has a burning desire to talk about a subject close to your heart, please let the organisers, Alan and Angie Nicholls know [alnics99@outlook.com](mailto:alnics99@outlook.com) We are always on the lookout for speakers.

There are no meetings in the months of July, August and September (summer break) and also none in January (too close to Xmas/New Year).

Our last talk in February, "Street Photography", by Tony Terrot, was excellent and was attended by 64 people who thoroughly enjoyed the presentation. Thank you very much Tony.

For the rest of the year we have speakers (June to be advised) who I am sure will keep you very well entertained.

Below is a brief description of the forthcoming talks, a fuller synopsis will be sent to you 3-4 weeks before each presentation is due.

**March 4th** has Irene Fenske at the podium who will explain what her title "Food for Thought" is all about. Using President Putin as an example, Irene will endeavor to convince you that human instinctive and conscious behaviour stems from the history of the individual's nurture and environmental background in the early stages of development. Following on from this, Irene will give a historical perspective on the evolution of man, which she says has some humour and interesting facts.

**April 1st** will see Captain Robin Pursey, a retired Airbus Pilot entertain you with tales from his years spent, not only as a pilot, but as a test pilot and training pilot for Airbus. Robin will provide an insight into the development of pilot training from 1976 until today. Airbus sells aircraft worldwide and is obligated to train pilots in their operation. This alone presents challenges due to the language and cultural differences. Captain Robin will devote a part of his presentation to these challenging aspects of pilot training.

**May 6th** there will be no talk in May as it is felt a number of members will wish to be at home to watch the Coronation.

**June 3rd** will see Angela Muir educate you in the ways of the wine world. Angela has over 50 years of experience in the wine industry beginning with John Harvey and sons in Bristol. Angela started work as a wine consultant some 20 years later with clients in Europe, South America and CYPRUS!

The gist of Angela's talk will be on how winemaking, and what people wanted to drink, changed from 1970 to the present date.

Sorry, no free samples!

# Saturday Talks Cont.

**October 7th** will be a joint Mycological adventure. Brian Twigger will guide you through the forest as you search for edible fungi. Brian will point out the bad guys as well as the fun guys (pun intended). Brian has spent many years foraging for his favourite mushrooms and was an associate member of the British Mycological Society. Want to hear about magic mushrooms? Brian will tell you! Brian has made several presentations about this subject during his time in the UK and has also served as a Kennett District Councilor for Ramsbury in Wiltshire.

The second (or first, not yet decided) half of the show will be presented by Alan Nicholls who has over 40 years experience dealing with the nasty fungal fraternity during his years as a Biomedical Scientist. Alan will give you a brief insight into fungal infections such as, ringworm, thrush and farmer's lung, what causes them and the signs and symptoms associated with them. No gruesome pictures, I promise!

Come and have a fun morning with Alan's and Brian's fungi!

**November 4th** will see a guest speaker, Chris O'Grady from the UK who will entertain you with a talk titled "**Fakes & Fortunes, Art & Antiques, Dealers and Forgers**". Stories of amazing finds, of money made and money lost in the world of art and antiques. Chris is a professional speaker and at the time of 'booking' him for October, had already 51 talks scheduled for 2023!

After the presentation Chris has kindly offered to give informal appraisals of 'antique' items that attendees may wish to bring along – this is not Flog It! Antiques in the field of oil paintings, sketchings, engravings and etchings, vernacular furniture, netsuke (miniature sculpture) and studio pottery.

This talk is likely to attract a lot of requests to attend. Priority will be given to regular attendees as the audience will be limited to 80.

**December 2nd** will hear David Sparrow, P3A Chairman, talk on a Nature subject yet to be advised. As most of you may know, David is an avid naturalist and is hosting a Worldwide conference later this year on dragonflies.

A more detailed description of each month's talk will be sent to all members 3-4 weeks before it is due. Please do try to support our talks, I know that the speakers spend a lot of time preparing them for you and I think we should all try to support and encourage them. Without our presenters, and you of course, there would not be a Saturday Morning Talk Group. Let's keep it going!

Alan and Angie Nicholls

# Saturday Lunch Club

Marlene and I have been running the Saturday Lunch Club since September 2019. During that time we have obviously been affected by Covid 19 which caused us to cease operations between December 2020 until the end of June 2021.

We have visited many varied venues during our time as Group Leaders, and we try to visit at least one new one each year, although of course there are many old favourites that are always popular and well attended by our members. We try to vary things so that we visit different types of venue each month. The only month we do not organise a lunch is December, however we normally combine forces with the Sunday Lunch Group to dine together early in this month.



Marlene and I always endeavour to ensure that new members are made welcome, and will usually sit with them on their first visit to make them feel comfortable and, hopefully at ease. We always make a seating plan for our lunches and people are able to choose their lunch partners if they so wish. If no preference is made, we like to mix things up and seat people we think will get along together at the same table. Tables are generally for six people although where the venue can accommodate larger tables we will place larger groups on them as requested. We try to keep the cost of our lunches below €20, but that is becoming increasingly difficult, but not impossible. It is still possible to get a 3 course lunch in Paphos for less than €13 believe it or not. Details of these venues on request!

We currently have about 130 members, but of course not everyone is here at the same time and there is no obligation to attend every venue. We are averaging around 50 people for each lunch at the moment, which makes it difficult sometimes to find venues that can cater successfully for such large numbers. Touch wood, we have not had any major disasters yet!

If anyone would like to join, our details are on the P3A website, drop us an email, and we will add you to our mailing list. If you wish to join and have any special dietary requirements, please let us know in your email, so that we can get the restaurants to cater accordingly.

Brian and Marlene Chalcroft

# Cyprus Residents Planning Group



The original Cyprus Residency Planning Group was created in 2019 to help and assist UK Nationals (UKN's), living in Cyprus, to apply for residency, as the UK sped towards the end of the Withdrawal Agreement on 31 December 2020.

During that time, it became very evident there was a requirement for a 'go to' point of reference for UKN's who are living in Cyprus or who want to retire to Cyprus.

So, with funding and support from the British High Commission in Nicosia, the seamless transition, in March 2022, to the new Cyprus Residents Planning Group was made, allowing for the Help Desk to continue and for a brand new, more functional, website dedicated to covering the many and varied aspects of life on the island.

The website **crpg.com.cy** covers a whole host of important subjects to inform and, where necessary, to encourage the visitor to the site to call the CRPG Help Desk for more information and assistance where it is required. The scope of CRPG is not just island wide as it's reputation has reached across the globe with callers from as far afield as Australia and the USA – the age range will, perhaps, surprise you as our clients range from as young as 8 to 103 years old!

The range of issues is extensive from a simple request for an application form for residency to helping to sort out one man's difficult issue where CRMD had recorded him as already deceased hence not being able to apply for residency. This was quickly and efficiently resolved with the help and intervention of the British High Commission in Nicosia.

The Help Desk operates from Monday to Friday from 9am until 1pm. Calls are managed on a one to one basis with care taken to ensure all appropriate information is recorded for the most apposite advice to be given – and, where necessary, to signpost the caller appropriately.

CRPG keeps its finger on the pulse of change both in the UK and in Cyprus to guarantee that UK Nationals are given up to date and correct information - the best source of which is from **GOV UK** which is an online portal regularly updated for UK Nationals, the world over, to access up to the minute information - and with links to 23 Ministerial Departments and 400+ other agencies and public bodies – every subject is covered.

CRPG consists of a team of professionals offering impartial, practical guidance and knowledge gained from listening to the needs of UKN's who live in Cyprus, so if you, or anyone you know, needs help and advice given impartially and FREE then do please contact CRPG on **99 826 087**.

# ST. VALENTINE – A Worldwide Celebration

Saint Valentine is a 3rd Century Roman Saint, commemorated in Western Christianity on February 14th and in Eastern Orthodoxy on July 6th. However, since the Middle Ages, this Saint's Day has always been associated with courtly love. His is also a patron saint of Terni, epilepsy and beekeepers.

Saint Valentine was a clergyman, either a priest or bishop – in the Roman Empire who ministered to persecuted Christians. The story goes that he was martyred and his body buried on the Via Flamina on February 14th. This has been generally observed as St. Valentine's Day since the 8th Century.

These days, Valentine's Day is most popular in the Arab countries, Asia and Latin America. Originally from the 6th Century Lupercalia celebration of fertility, this Pagan day is held in Rome on February 14th every year.

Different countries and their citizens have numerous ways to celebrate St. Valentine's Day. For example, in Honduras, it is regarded simply as a day of love and friendship. But in Nepal, where it is called Prem Diwas, hundreds of roses are imported to satisfy demand. The same is true of Iraq, where the streets of Baghdad are also flooded with red teddy bears as presents to give to loved ones.

In Lebanon, Puerto Rico and Sri Lanka special dishes linked to large family gatherings are prepared to give to loved ones, such as the Sri Lanka Love Cake. And in Columbia, where it is known as the day of love and friendship (Dia de Amory Amistrada) it is celebrated twice yearly. The 14th February is the main celebration but the third Saturday in September is also a popular date.

While in the Philippines, thousands of couples get together for group weddings. They are very happy to say "I Do" during a large public ceremony, while in the Dominican Republic everyone exchanges small gifts of love between couples, family and friends. These are known as 'catinitos'. It is also a big day in South Africa. Here, three quarters of South Africans celebrate Valentines' Day as a national holiday. It is also a big day in Panama but is somewhat overshadowed by Mardi Gras.

Bangladeshis take Valentine's Day very seriously. They send thousands of greetings via SMS and social media, showering their loved ones with gifts and flowers. Brazilians have 'Dia dos Namados' or Lover's Day, also celebrated on June 12th while in Equador they make good use of the famous Ecuadorian roses. In Japan, women buy gifts for their partners. Known as 'giri' chocolate is selected for friends and colleagues while 'honmei' gifts are for closer contacts.

But of course the largest celebration of all is in the USA. Here, Americas start giving gifts early in their lives. Young children as well as adults send hundreds of cards and give gifts. Still, other indications for St. Valentines' day have frequently been observed in nature. Indeed, it has been widely reported since the Middle Ages that all birds paired in mid-February. This pairing came to be associated with the romance of Valentine. And although these legends differ, St. Valentine's Day has come to be recognised worldwide, as the day to show romance and devotion.

PATTI SHERRATT