



# The Islander



Christmas Island Community Newsletter

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## Christmas Island Kung Fu Association

### Cocos (Keeling) Island Culture Exchange Program, 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2016

Written by: Members of the Christmas Island Kung Fu Association



The Christmas Island Kung Fu Association celebrated the success of the recent culture exchange program to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, a significant milestone for both the Association and the Christmas Island Community. The aim of the trip was to experience all the islands had to offer, culturally and naturally, and in exchange we would showcase some of our own islands culture, in the form of the Traditional Chinese Lion Dance.

Departing the Island Tuesday, the 19<sup>th</sup> of April, our troupe travelled to the Cocos Islands where we received a warm welcome from the local community. For many of our members, the Cocos Islands were somewhere they had never been before, despite the close proximity. Many members of the group expressed their amazement at the beauty of the Lagoon, so different from the ocean at home. We also experienced the beauty of the lagoon up close during our trip to Direction Island, one of the uninhabited islands in the atoll. The picturesque beaches impressed the whole troupe. While on the Island our older members enjoyed the famous Cocos Island "Rip" where they saw some amazing sea life, while the younger members snorkeled off the beach, experiencing the ocean for themselves.

Throughout our trip we also had the pleasure of dining at the many café's and restaurants such as Maxi by The Sea and Tropika on West Island and Rasa Di Sayang on Home Island. Here we experienced a variety of Western, Cocos and other Asian dishes, many with locally caught fish. While on Home Island we also visited the Museum, learning about the Islands history, with a particular focus on the battle with the German raider, Emden.

Throughout our trip, members of the group also met with Cocos Island community members and locals to discuss and generate interest for local cultural groups to arrange for a similar cultural exchange program, travelling to Christmas Island to demonstrate and explain local traditions. We are currently still in contact with several community members of the community groups and look forward to helping these groups arrange for the exchange in the near future.

On Friday 22nd May we were scheduled for our performances, consisting of one on Home Island and two on West Island. After catching the morning ferry to Home Island, we performed at the local school, with students from both Home and West Cocos Island, parents and local community members in attendance. We had the privilege of being introduced by the Indian Ocean Territories Administrator and took the opportunity to invite local cultural groups to arrange for a similar cultural exchange program from Cocos Islands to Christmas Island.



Following the performance, the Troupe were honoured to attend the Anzac Service, paying our respects to those lost in war. Later that same day we travelled back to West Island for a performance at the local Pub, where we performed for the gathering of local parents, children, and visiting tourists, once earlier, and another later at night. We received praises and compliments from the Cocos Island community, many of who had never seen a Lion Dance Performance before. It was great to see the kids running after the lion, only to run away squealing when the lion suddenly turned around. Moments like these reinvigorate our passion for performing the lion dance for the community. This does not take away, of course, from our respect for the cultural significance of the dance.

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# CICATHOLIC CHURCH 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

## 19 JUNE 2016



To commemorate our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the committee has worked diligently over the past weeks to plan a meaningful event to help celebrate this milestone in the life of the Christmas Island Catholic Church.



Wonderful! Thank the Lord for giving us an amazing day.

The celebration began with a special service in the morning at 9am. At the end of the service, a special church anniversary prayer was recited thanking the Lord for looking after this little church of ours. It was here, in this church that this all began 25 years ago.

Then, in the evening from 6pm onwards, over 70 people came to the Church where our dinner celebration began with Paul Maberly opening the ceremony and welcoming all guests. Ron De Cruz & Celestine Marsh then spoke of how the founding of the church began. Appreciation was acknowledged to various individuals for their tireless acts of kindness in helping the church during the early years and for some, even now. Special recognition was given to former leaders, special ministers and catechists. In their address, Ron and Celestine spoke of the life and resilience of this church.

Paul Maberly then spoke about the works and services done by the church currently. He also thanked everyone who is still supporting the life of the church by their selfless help. Special recognition was given to current leaders, special ministers and catechist.

We then had the cake cutting ceremony. It was a beautiful chocolate cake and founders and leaders of the church were invited to cut the cake. A scrumptious dinner was then served. Celestine entertained the guests with a couple of songs while dinner was in progress with Darren following on with great music.

After dinner, we had some fun trivia for the adults while the children were entertained with sparklers and piñata hitting. Presentation of prizes for the trivia game to the winners and also certificates of appreciation to various church members, sponsors and donors were then handed out.

A souvenir bookmark was given to all who attended.

Special thanks to the church members who have worked together to plan this special event in the life of our church. May God bless you all – Ron De Cruz, Lucia & Celestine Marsh, Darren Marsh for the projection of photos and tech support.

On behalf of Church committee, I would also like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to all who helped in all the pre and post work required – Ron De Cruz, Lucia & Celestine Marsh, Michael & Tricia De Cruz, Ollie & Jesse Lines, Darren Marsh and Lorraine De Cruz. The evening was a huge success and would not have been possible without your efforts.



Beautiful anniversary cake and some of the guests.

Fun for the kids