



WORLD AIRLINES CLUBS ASSOCIATION

WACA WORLD NEWS



Enjoying friendship, Culture and the
Beauty of this World!



President's Message



Dear Interliners,

I am very pleased to communicate again with you all through our WWNews. I hope that you have enjoyed reading all the articles since its publication in the electronic format. I would urge you to have copies of the WWNews and cascade it to your members in your club, colleagues at work and with the family at home. We would wish to have your contribution to this communication tool more consistently for its dynamism and continuous publications.

Year 2008 is nearly over and WACA is pleased to offer you the grand Interline Celebration in Nassau, Bahamas coinciding with its 41st Annual Assembly.

Nothing could be more appropriate than Nassau, Bahamas for the present team to present its achievement of projects during the past two years we were in office. Bahamas is the most exotic and dynamic venue for this grand and memorable event as it will be the very first time we shall gather there for one full and exciting week with the taste of the Bahamian warm hospitality.

By showing up at this event, we are reciprocating our appreciation to our dear interline friends in Bahamas about their loves, friendship and good fellowship throughout the years they nourish the true WACA interline spirit. It's a way to say Thank You Bahamas.

In return, we want WACA to discover the Islands of Bahamas to share with others, the beauty and the exclusivity of the destination and to expect as many of our colleagues, friends, relatives to visit and to learn more of the Bahamian culture and tourism whilst promoting the Airline Industry in general.

I have no doubt that our dear host, the Interline Club of Bahamas is sparing no effort to mark this event as the most successful Annual Gathering we ever had, so make the most of it.

Yours Interlining.
Maga Ramasamy
WACA President

Update of our coming International Events and Special Projects

Hello all Interlines:

As we are in the short count down to the Beijing Olympics, I am reminded we, in WACA, are on our own count down to our 41st Annual General Assembly in Nassau combined with the 2008 Interline Celebration. Our friends and colleagues in Nassau are in high expectations of our arrival to start the festivities September 28th.

For those arriving early or staying longer remember the Wyndeham Resort has offered a special rate of \$145.00 USD per night per room. This is a wonderful and relaxing property with lots to do and great entertainment. With the US and Bahamian Dollar on par it is good value. By now, those needing visas hopefully have made all the arrangements necessary.



have a few reminders leading up to the Nassau Interline Celebration. First of all make sure your country will be represented in the opening ceremonies by bringing your national flag, if you haven't already forwarded it to Ann Albury and her team. As previously requested, it should be approximately 90 x 150 centimetres. Please advise Ann if you will be bringing your flag. Her email is aaalbury@coralwave.com.

An important part of our General Assembly and Celebration has always been our charitable commitments. This year we are requested to bring books, pencils, crayons, etc suitable for classroom materials. Our charities this year will be All Saints AIDS Camp for children and the children's ward of the Princess Margaret Hospital. I know from previous experience how generous we as Interliners have been and know we can count on your support for these worthy projects.

While on the subject of generosity, I hope each club has given thought to what items we can bring for our WACA Auction. This is vital to helping us raise funds as well as have fun doing it. You can bring both your charity donations and auction items to the registration area where we will have people to help collect and co-ordinate them.

Our WACA Grand Venture Bonanza continues to be a focus for raising funds and we want to thank those clubs who have generously donated prizes and most important each individual who has purchased tickets. Clubs are encouraged to sell the Bonanza tickets at all their functions. Tickets can be obtained through WACA Headquarters and you can pre order them so Keith, our headquarters manager, can bring a supply with him for distribution.

We are always looking for new and interesting prizes and welcome your donations that will assist WACA in their work and be able to continue organizing great events in the future. Our next draw is the end of August for \$100.00 USD, donated by the Washington Interline Club. Congratulations to all those who have already been winners.

Our Events Calendar for 2008/2009 is shaping up to bring a wide range of interesting and exciting destinations to visit. Please check out this link in our WACA website under www.waca.org. Coming up in the fall, after our 2008 Interline Celebration, we have the Grande Festa in Portugal. This is the 30th anniversary of the Interline Club Portugal. Following is the Discover Syria, sponsored by the Jordanian Interline Club, which will have great historical as well as scenic interest. Their Jordan Adventure Tour and their Cairo and Nile Cruise will follow this.

The Taste of Israel will once again take place in early December and the Interairline Club Zurich will hold their Christmas party December 07th.

As the new year approaches, there are many destinations and events from the Australia Day Celebration in January, the Quebec Winter Carnival, put on by the Montreal Interline Club in mid February and San Diego's Whale Watching Tour later in February or early March. Come spring, the Hungarian Interline Club will be planning their WACA Spring Get Together in Vienna and Salzburg from April 16 – 20, 2009.

There is something that I am sure will spark your interest in the coming months. Please check us out and enjoy the company of your fellow interliners. It is not too early to start planning your next holiday and support our hard working clubs who spend many hours organizing great packages for all to enjoy.

Until we all meet again in Nassau, I wish you safe and happy travels

Elaine Miller

Acting VP International Events and
Special Projects

**INTERLINE CELEBRATION
NASSAU BAHAMAS,
SEPTEMBER 28 ~ OCTOBER 3, 2008**

Update information:-

- Interliners will be welcomed on arrival at Lynden Pindling Int'l Airport by ACB members. (Arrival flight info will be retrieved from Registration Form. Please advise changes in advance so that buses can be scheduled accordingly)
- Transfer to Wyndham Resort by air conditioned buses (20 minutes)
- On arrival at the Wyndham Hotel :-

1. Register and pay package balance to ACB Registration desk (including payment for additional days)
2. Collect room key & Goody Bag package (Please ensure that you receive transport/meal tickets & itinerary)
3. Drop off Charity Gifts – Educational material and/or toys for children (Ages 2 – 16) in Hospitality Room at Registration :-
 - All Saints Aids Camp
 - Princess Margaret Hospital Children's Ward

Registration deadline July 02 has passed, however late registrations will be accepted on a "space available" basis

4. Bahamas Air has offered service charge passes of \$102.00 return to airline employees & dependents (including parents), & retirees.

In order to obtain tickets, please send request to Perky Obrien either by fax or SITA no later than 14th September, stating which Airport they will be traveling from so that a list can be forwarded to that Station Manager.

Fax # is 242-377-7409

SITA address NASJGUP.

Note that Bahamas Air operates out of MIA (Miami), FLL (Fort Lauderdale), MCO (Orlando) and PBI (West Palm Beach).

N.B. **Bahamas Tourist Board** will be displaying country flags in front of the hotel for the duration of the AGA. Please send your Flags to Ann Albury or Perky Obrien no later than September 15th so that they can be included in the display.

There will be no refunds or discounts for any part of the package not taken.

Accepted Currency is US\$ or Bahamian dollars which are of equal value.

(Personal cheques & Credit Cards will not be accepted)

Please...don't leave home without:-

- *Sunscreen, bathing suit/beach and leisure wear/ sunshades, comfortable shoes/slippers, dancing shoes, Camera etc.*

Jacquie Lyseight

Regional VP Latin America and Caribbean

Discover the North of Jordan with JIC

Almost 50 Jordan Interline Club members participated in JIC new trip to discover the North of Jordan, where they visited Ajloun & Um Qais, and supported Al Amani Local Community as a recognition by JIC of the principles of social responsibility to support local communities.

Suhair Mahmoud, Jordan Interline Club



Wadi al Mujib

The new Jordan Adventure

Wadi Al Mujib is one of the undiscovered gems of Jordan.

An unforgettable trip, an amazing group and an experience that proved to be a challenge, stimulating the body and the mind where the words I could describe. One of the best local trips I had with Jordan Interline Club. It was successfully arranged for the first time a one day tour for 49 JIC interliners to the amazing Wadi Al Mujib, a great wide valley - which sweeps your breath away for its magnificent geological formation.

The trip begun by having our breakfast on Haret Jdoudna Restaurant in Madaba City, then we headed to Wadi Al Mujib.

Wadi Al Mujib offered the interliners an unforgettable experience of hiking, scaling rocky cliffs and relaxing in natural hot springs at 400 meters below sea level, the lowest place on earth.

Suhair Mahmoud
Jordan Interline Club



Spring Get Together in Lisbon - I

01. – 04.MAY 2008

A most wonderful experience obviously prepared with much dedication and love !!!

The small group of 30 participants coming from Germany, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Finland, Austria, Hungary, United States, Mauritius & Seychelles were made welcome by members of the Interline Club of Portugal in a welcome dinner hosted at a restaurant close by the Hotel Costa de Caparica.

We had the opportunity to taste the famous Portuguese dish Arroz de Marisco. This in itself was an experience because although coming from islands surrounded by the ocean we had never tasted anything so good.



The next day, after another sumptuous lunch at the hotel we set out for a tour of majestic Lisbon which took to some very interesting and historic places, the astonishing Jeronimos Monastery, the Tower of Belem to name but a few. The evening ended with dinner at Bairro Alto followed by the typical FADO – singing that tugs at the heartstrings, fuelled by passion, tradition and lots of wine!!!

A whole day tour was organized for us the day after and this took us through the Peninsula of Setubal, Cabo Espichel, Arrabida followed by lunch at the Hotel do Mar in Sesimbra. This was followed by wine-tasting at the famous J.M



Fonseca wine cellar where we had the opportunity to purchase some tasty wines of the region.

I must, at this stage, add that our guide was extremely knowledgeable and had an answer to all our questions. Thank you Sónia.

The Gala Dinner at the Hotel that evening was an event to remember.... The President of the Interline Club of Portugal António Ferrão, Victor Carvalho and other members came and once again made us feel welcome. Maga, President of WACA and Peter Gilardoni RVP



Europe made speeches thanking our kind hosts for such a beautiful and well organized tour. Needless to say, the food was just "out of this world" and the company fantastic.

Maybe the highlight of the program was the extraordinary and unexpected show given by the children of Folk Music of the region at the Gala Dinner. It's true that the comments were in Portuguese which we could not understand but it would seem that the ambiance was so intense that language did not matter !!!

Thank you members of the organizing committee, thank you all members of the Interline Club of Portugal. You really made our short stay in your wonderful country most memorable. My short report would not be complete if I didn't personally thank Victor & his most vivacious wife Marie-Helena who went out of their way to make each and every one of us feel at home.



Muito Obrigada !!!

Jenny Adams
Indian Ocean Islands/Seychelles

Spring Get Together in Lisbon - II

01. – 04.MAY 2008



The 2008 Spring get together and European regional meeting hosted by the Interline Club of Portugal, took place in Costa de Caparica. A beachside area just south of Lisbon across the river Tagus. We stayed at the 4 star Hotel Costa de Caparica which was situated along the beach giving views of the sea. We arrived on Thursday May 1st and after settling into our rooms, it was time for dinner. The restaurant Europamar was just a short walk from the hotel, where we enjoyed a seafood stew washed down with a plentiful supply of wine, an ideal way to meet old and new friends.

On the Friday after an early breakfast we attended the regional meeting chaired by Peter Gilardoni. Unfortunately we did not have a quorum, but were able to discuss all sections of the agenda. The meeting was observed by EC members President Maga Ramsamy, VP Public Relations Rosemarie Mamede and VP North America Ann Gritis, who were able to give helpful advice on certain subjects. The meeting went well and finished on time. With sadness Peter informed us that he was stepping down as VP Europe at the AGA in Bahamas so he could spend more time with his family. We all wished him well and congratulated him on the professional job he has done in his time as VP Europe.



After the meeting we all moved upstairs for lunch, to the 8th floor a la carte restaurant, where we enjoyed a wonderful 3 course meal with a panoramic view of the sea and beach area. When lunch was finished we gathered in the foyer before boarding our coach for a tour of Lisbon. The tour started by crossing back into the Lisbon area via the 25th of April Bridge, viewing on the way the statue of Christ the king, which overlooks the city of Lisbon. This statue was inspired by the Christ the redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Once across the bridge we entered the district of Belem, heading straight for the Jeronimos Monastery, where we alighted to view the interior of the Church of Santa Maria de Belem.

Our tour guide informing us about every aspect of the church. She then took us on a slight detour to visit the Pasteis de Belem, a delightful pastry shop/café dating back to 1837. Behind the shop is a warren of rooms with walls covered in beautiful blue azulejo tiles, where we sampled the delicious speciality egg custard tarts. We then set off to the waterfront area to see the Torre de Belem and the Monument to the

Discoveries. Our tour then continued around Lisbon, going up and down its seven hills, taking in the many monuments and historic buildings, ending up in the area once occupied by Expo 98 with its futuristic architecture and developments. The coach then took us to the oldest district of Lisbon called Bairro Alto, where we walked down the cobbled lanes till we arrived at the restaurant O Forcado where we enjoyed a typical portugese meal accompanied by the traditional Fado singing, returning to our hotel for a well earned rest.



The next day after breakfast we set off on a full day tour of the northern area of the Costa Azul which contains many castles and the Arrabida natural park. The first stop was in the tiny village of Azeitao, where we visited the winery of Jose Maria da Fonseca. After a short informative tour of the wine making process including dark warehouses full of cobweb covered barrels with the sound of chanting monks playing in the background, we went for some wine tasting. This gave us the chance to sample the famous dessert wine Moscatel de Setubal and then make some purchases.

We then set off again travelling to the town of Setubal where we took time to visit its indoor market, with traders selling their freshly caught fish, fresh vegetables and wonderful cheeses. There were many varieties of fish, from the small sardine to the very large swordfish. Swordfish steak would later be our main dish for lunch. We then travelled the winding coast road through the natural park from Setubal to Sesimbra, viewing monasteries and castles on the way. On arriving in Sesimbra, we journeyed to the Hotel do Mar which was situated high up the hillside overlooking the bay. Here we had another wonderful three course lunch, enjoying views over the beach and bay area. After finishing our drinks on the balcony we carried on our journey through the park and back to our hotel, arriving in plenty of time to relax before that evening's Gala dinner.

The Gala dinner took place in the a la carte restaurant and comprised of a four course meal and entertainment provided by local fishing community. The fishermen with their wives and children all dressed in traditional costumes, entertained us with there local folk singing and dancing. After thanking the Interline Club of Portugal for a well organized event, we said goodbye to each other and looked forward to seeing everyone again in the Bahamas.

Chris Orton
London Interline Club

Airline Club of Singapore Member's Night, 23. May 2008

Sivanandan or Siva as he is popularly known throughout the WACA family worldwide retired in April 2008 from Singapore Airlines after over 40 years of loyal and dedicated service. A person with seemingly endless energy and infectious enthusiasm, Siva's devotion to ACS is legendary.

To honour and to recognise his valuable contributions to ACS, a farewell party was arranged on 23 May at the Singapore Recreation Club. Over 30 members and friends graced the occasion. With plenty of good food and needless to say drinks, the gathering had a festive mood.

Newly elected President Burhanuddin recollected Siva's contributions to ACS in his address and then he and ACS Treasurer Monica Xavier presented a symbolic trophy to Siva. In return, true to form, Siva encouraged all members to support the new Executive Committee in the various activities arranged by them. All of us in ACS wish Siva all the very best in his next chapter in life. But he is not a "soldier who will fade away into the sunset" as he was co-opted into the Exco to act as Advisor. "

Burhanuddin Kamaruddin

President, Airline Club of Singapore



Airline Club of Singapore Heritage tour of Little India



Eleven members of the Airline Club of Singapore did the heritage tour of our own Little India on 21 JUNE 2008.

We had a professional heritage tour guide (M/S Jean Wang) for the tour. Jean was very informative and many of us were pleasantly surprised to 'discover' the rich history surrounding Little India, dating to the days of our founder, Sir Stamford Raffles.

We had a rich insight into our past and, overall, the tour received good reviews from the participants.

Burhanuddin Kamaruddin

President, Airline Club of Singapore



New York City Weekend Extravaganza

9. – 11. May 2008



Twelve members of the Calgary Interline Club (which is half our club) attended the New York North American Regional meet-

We finished the meetings with a cruise around Manhattan on a clear blue sky evening with dinner and dance.

It was a very successful weekend and the members of the Calgary Interline Club truly enjoyed themselves.

Linda McIlhone
Calgary Interline Club



ings. Although the hotel was about 45 minutes from the city, it gave us the opportunity to experience the New York subway and feel like a local. For the most part the weather held out with only a little rain. The New York Club was very hospitable and as this was my first time as a delegate at the meetings, I felt that they ran very smoothly with Ann at the helm and that we got much accomplished at the meetings.



May 8th 2008, "D" day for the Montreal Interline Club delegation, led by President Roger Sutton and composed by Treasurer Stan Fafoutis and Interline Affaires F. (Chico) Valdez, proceeded to the Regional meeting in New York to make their way to the City "that never sleeps".



Like in any good interline event, planning and actual facts do not necessarily go hand in hand and Roger and Stan saw their plans being spoiled by the "infamous" "stand-by" rules. Roger and Rita were the only ones to

make the planned flight, leaving Stan and Anne waiting for the next available flight out of Dorval. Chico, however made his way to the Airport taking his time, having lunch and doing his

duty free shopping before going to the gate where he met Stan and Anne. He was flying **CONFIRMED!!!**

Meanwhile, at Laguardia and while waiting for us, Roger got busy organizing our transportation from the Airport to the Hotel. Upon our arrival (Stan, Anne and myself) at Laguardia, we had a limousine, good for 5 passengers with the respective luggage waiting for us. However, far from our minds was the idea that we would be the navigators (although we had no knowledge of the City) for a taxi driver that didn't know his way from Laguardia to the Holiday Inn at J.F.K. Airport...after one and half hours of arguing, turning right and left, forward and back again, we final reached our destination and the



"Rogers presidential" bar opened sooner than expected - we needed a drink to erase our frustration...maybe the "interlining curse" at its best again?

May 9th, after breakfast the North America Regional Meeting was officially opened by the Regional Vice President Mrs Ann Gritis and nine Clubs (Calgary, Detroit, Florida, Montreal, New York, Pittsburgh, San Diego, Vancouver and Washington) out of fourteen were in attendance. The RVP recognized the presence of the WACA acting Vice President International Events and Special Projects Mrs Elaine Miller as a guest, as well as the members of honour present at the meeting.

The business agenda included points of interest for the Region as well as for WACA. Under "New Business" a series of issues such as Protocol for members of honour, facts related to the past AGA in Cape Town and an international event in Budapest were introduced by Clubs. A letter of tribute to Poppy was read by the Pittsburgh



Interline Club President, Mrs Ellie Masters and the Montreal Interline Club also introduced a series of proposals for amendments to the WACA Constitution and Bylaws and had a presentation on the project "Quebec Winter Carnival 2009" as well a presentation on a study on the interline movement. However the "interline curse" flagged down the MIC delegation, again, playing a "dirty trick" on their plans: After travelling all way down from Montreal to New York with the necessary laptop and projector, setting it early in the morning and before the start of the meeting, they come to realize that the cable to connect the projector to the laptop was missing...the panic alarm sounded...but after some two hours (*it was a Saturday and the stores open only at 10:30*) and US \$50.00 spent on transportation, the US\$8.00 cable was finally purchased and the mission impossible (*almost*) was achieved with success.



After the traditional closing remarks made by each club thanking the host club for a job well done, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30pm. That night we had the Cruise dinner dance and some of the participants, that shall remain nameless, needed their "beauty rest" and time to get more "lovely if possible" than they already are.

At 17:30pm we gathered in the Hotel lobby in order to board our buses. After a drive through the "rush hour" in New York, we arrived at the pier on schedule (*...the bus driver knew his way from the hotel to the pier...*).

The New York Interline Club organizing Committee had done a superb job! Their

choice of venue, the dinner, the service provided by the stewards, the scenery of the "big Apple" at the dusk as well the support and friendship demonstrated by the local members and their guests was impeccable and made the evening one of the most enjoy-able that I, per-sonally, have attended. It was also, time for us, the "Montrealers" to celebrated Roger Sutton's 81st birthday...And we indeed did so in the company of two lovely ladies, Kiki and Shirley, from the Florida Interline Club.

And, by the way, who dares to say that we the "youngsters at heart" can not keep pace with the



"youngsters at age"? The picture below definitely proves that whoever came up with the idea did not know Shirley, Roger and Stan....

Like all good things in life...the evening comes to an end around mid night. Time to board our buses and return to reality, in this case to the Hotel....



The New York Interline Club, one of the originals Clubs, not only in the North America Region, but also in the World Airlines Clubs Association, was revived some years ago thanks to the then RVP North America, Mrs Ellie Masters efforts and a group of dedicated Airline Employees under the guidance of Headley Walker and Gladys Keller. They had just given us a remarkable example of "where there is a will there is a way" and that you do not have to be "big" to think "big" and achieve any goals that you set for your Club.

On a more personal matter and while typing this report, I, mentally, lift my cup of coffee (*I do not drink...alone that is*) and make a toast to the "F WORDS" (*Oh please! Get your mind out of the gutter...I'm only copying a phrase that I heard in the film "My First Mister"*): FRIENDSHIP, FAMILY, FORGIVENESS, FOREVER AND FUN!!!!

After all isn't this what the Interline Spirit stands for????

Yours in interlining

Montreal Interline Club

P.S. Identity of the author of the report under witness protection from those participants that "shall remain nameless".



FRASER VALLEY WINERIES SECRETS

25. - 31. May 2008

28 Interliners traveled from the UK, USA and New Zealand to take part in our Wine Tour of the Fraser Valley.

The weather was extremely good to us, just a few sprinkles on Tuesday; the bus was a little noisy, but everyone had a good time and we received some very kind comments.



This Wine Tour was diversified, not just wineries. Monday was our North Shore tour, with a walk around Lonsdale Quay, then on to Horseshoe Bay for lunch, followed by a tour of Capilano Canyon. Most of the group walked across the bridge and through the tree houses. They were very proud of their "I walked Across the Bridge" certificates. After that hair raising experience, we boarded the bus for Gastown and enjoyed a spaghetti dinner, then back to the hotel for our World Famous Moose Milk Party.



Tuesday was little different. Our bus driver took us on an unscheduled visit to suburban Chilliwack. Residents came out of their houses to watch this large bus traverse through their quiet neighbourhood. We were supposed to visit Minter Gardens, but he took us to Minter Nursery!!! In their usual acceptance of the unusual, our guests started to admire the local gardens, exclaiming over the azaleas and rhododendrons. After a two hour delay we finally arrived at Minter Gardens, and thoroughly enjoyed the walk around the gardens with their magnificent displays. After lunch at the gardens, our next stop was the Farmhouse Natural Cheese Factory in Agassiz. Their cheeses are all handmade from their own goat and cow's milk and tasted wonderful. At last, our first wine tasting – Kermode Winery who specialize in wild berry wines. I can recommend the Alpine Blueberry. We had supper at the Fort Langley Pub and returned to the hotel for a restful evening.

Wednesday was great. We had a new bus and driver. We visited three wineries: Lotus Land, who specialize in organic, small vintage wines; Glenugie Winery operated by the Taylor family who make award winning red and white wines; and Rivers Bend, B.C.'s newest farm-based winery. By the number of bottles our Interliners purchased, all the wines passed the taste test. In the early afternoon the group arrived at the Peace Arch Park for a BBQ.

The weather was fantastic; we all sat outdoors and had a few sips of wine with our hamburgers, baked salmon and baked beans. We played Bocce Ball and horse-shoes and thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon. A tired group got back on the bus for a well deserved rest.



Thursday started off with an evacuation of the bus due to plumes of smoke billowing from the wheels. Our committee of retired airline mechanics agreed it was just from the new brake linings, so reboarded the bus to the Blue Heron Winery whose specialty is red robust cranberry wine. We all enjoyed an excellent lunch at Sharkey's in Ladner. Our next visit was to Wellbrook Winery, who make fruit wines, and also sell fresh fruit juices. Thanks to Ann Senko, we had a display of painted funky rubber boots by Rainco. Most of the girls had a fun time trying on and purchasing these boots, at a bargain price of \$20.00. The day ended with a trip to the Sanduz Estate Winery who offer delicious, well-balanced grape and fruit wines and Isabella Winery in Richmond.

Friday, and we saved the best to last. The Township 7 Winery in South Langley, was established in 2001, and create exceptional wines in small lots from BC grown grapes. Domaine de Chaberton Estate Winery has an excellent selection of both red and white wine, and have won many awards for their wines. Our farewell dinner at the Charthouse in Steveston was the culmination of a perfect tour. Good friends, good food and good fun.

The Wine Tour Organizing Committee consisting of Sheila Read, Pat Lindeman, Ann Senko and Ann Harward was formed in September 2007, and spent the next few months, planning the route, deciding which wineries to include, and literally doing a DRY run. We are delighted that it was such a success, with many positive comments from the attendees. Also, thank you to the V.I.C. members who registered for the whole tour as well as other members who attended on specific days. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Ann Harward
Vancouver Interline Club

Dodo's Nest - I 02. – 07. June 2008



*An island paradise where both the heavens and earth meet.
A land so small, so diverse, like its people- this is Mauritius.
As varied as the shades of blue, are the Mauritian people.
The warmth of their country radiates from within each of their
miles and open arms.*

*It's easy to lose one's self in the rhythm of the land,
the beat of the sega and the flow of Green Island.*

Just as each individual and snapshot of the island has left a memorable impression upon me, a piece of myself is also left behind. Being my first experience attending a WACA event, the strongest mark of what the group and I represent (as a member) goes beyond the miles shortened by the airlines; we are the bridges that bond cultures, the arms that embrace the world, making us and keeping us one.

Mauritius is a land of welcome, an island of comfort and her people, well they have now become a chosen family called friends!

Melissa D' Souza

Vancouver Interline Club



Nearly 50 interliners participated at the 2008's edition of the popular International Event Dodo's nest this year held at Trou aux Biches Hotel in Mauritius.

The Paille en Queue Interline club in fact celebrated this year its silver jubilee of Dodo's Nest and at the same hotel its was fist organized. The Hotel Management offered the best of themselves to make our stay the most memorable than we ever had. The farewell dinner was held on the beach with a magnificent show retracing the historical aspect of the Mauritian Nation. The food and beverages were excellent and the participants coming from different part of the globe and which was well balanced make us feel proud to belong to such an organization like WACA where the family spirit prevailed.

We are grateful to the WACA Member of Honour Mr. Donald Payen from Mauritius who made came to greet us and also to have the presence of the WACA Secretary General Mr. Julain Chau, the WACA VP Public Relations Mrs. Rosemarie Mamede, the Regional Vice President of Europe Mr. Peter Gillardoni and Mr Yousef Yousef Regional Vice President – Africa/Indian Ocean and Middel East. And of course the WACA President, Maga Ramasamy.

All the participants would like to say a big THANK You to the members of the Club of Mauritius for their effort put in the organization of the International Event.



Dodo's Nest - II 02. – 07. June 2008

Mauritius " the star of the Indian Ocean" will enchant you, will uplift your soul, making you feel that you belong to the chosen few, where the feelings that each WACA member who attended the Dodo's Nest that was held in Mauritius in June 08 had felt.



The amazing hospitality of Troux aux biches Hotel, the friendly faces of every Mauritian we met, the amazing turquoise sea, and white sand beaches, made our trip to Mauritius a dream come true.



The AIM Regional Meeting was a success where important issues were raised concerning the Region and the preparation for the 41st Annual General Assembly that will be held this September in Bahamas.



A big thank you goes to WACA President Mr. Maga for the excellent arrangement and to all members of Paille- en - Queue Club for their warm hospitality.

Suhair Mahmoud
Jordan Interline Club



Jamaica Jump Up 05. – 08. June 2008

A total of 57 interliners enjoyed this traditional event and had a wonderful time. Jacquie Lyeight President of the hosting club and Regional Vice President Latin America and Caribbean sent us some photos with a very promissory message: **We want you to get jealous so that you will make your way down here soon!** And don't forget – the next "Jamaica Jump Up" is already planned!



The Great Adventures Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam

And lo and behold at the summoning of the Thai Interline Club, many “bats” change hands for a chance to see and behold the glorious sights of exotic lands once more.

A few intrepid souls, keeper of the skies and chariots therein, clambered aboard various sky-chariots from other lands afar to gather at the imitation capital of the universe KOKNAB to be greeted by the wise ones from the house of YINGLEK. Some in anxious anticipation of such an event had camped out earlier in the great capital and had already parted with great hordes of “bats” for goods and services.



And it came to pass that a small crew of six souls gathered at the great place of the Royal Patronage called SUVAARNAPHUMI where small and large winged air-breathing air-chariots feasted on various liquids to prepare for great journeys far and wide. After paying homage to the various houses of SECURITY and IMMIGRATION the party entered the belly of the small chariot for a land called AIDOBMAC to see the great glories of the ancient Khmer civilization and the atrocities of the misguided brothers of the new but fleeting order of LOP TOP in the not so distant past

The crew of Australians, Israelis, Jamaicans and Swedes dutifully recorded such events and in the spirit of robust international relations made some of the natives happy by spreading largesse around, albeit with heavy bargaining. We, newly ordained members of the “KEEPERS OF SECRETS” now numbering over two million per year shall not divulge these precious gems, but implore you to “GEAR UP” and meet new friends and reacquaint with previous ones and discover ancient wonders and thereby be inducted into the Club.



P.S. Names have been changes to protect the guilty and innocent

The intrepid Jamaicans and Swedes completed the marathon of Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam with only minor injuries and major memories.

The Thailand Interline Club must be congratulated for putting together such an interesting and exotic *pilgrimage*.

Winston Marshall
Jamaica Interline Club

Regional Meeting in Bangkok

Meetings in Bangkok have been always very exciting and also relaxing.

The Airline club of Thailand had organized this meeting in May and in a very beautiful Hotel which was right in the heart of the city. Arnoma hotel has a very beautiful surroundings flanked with many departmental stores.



Most of us arrived on 16th evening and were treated with a sumptuous welcome dinner in the hotel. The members of ACT with Khun Yinglek with her youthful winning smiles made us feel so wanted and made the dinner a big party.

Later in the evening some of us headed for the famous Thai foot massage. Buhran and Pragdas from Singapore knew where to head for the same. Shopaholics headed for the shopping.



Next day after a good spread of breakfast the Regional meeting started at sharp 0900 Hrs. The Agenda well drafted by RVP Orathai concluded by Lunch time. Everyone economized with words and free discussions made the meeting very enjoyable.



Then we headed for Lunch in a Japanese restaurant "Fuji" at Central World plaza across the Hotel. It had variety of platters for everyone.

It was time for relaxation after a good meal. Sutira knew where to go for the relaxation. Yes we headed for another foot massage in suave Central plaza. It was bliss.



We all headed for a good Evening in Bangkok. We did miss our friends from Sri Lanka and Auckland.

We parted next day after Breakfast to meet again soon thanking Orathai and her team for giving us a good time of business and pleasure

Gayatri Chandra
Delhi Interline Club

Airline Club of Thailand Local Sport Activities and Survey Tour

Airline Club of Thailand (ACT) had organized at the beginning of the year 2008 two sports Charity events: a Bowling...



... and a Golf Tournament for donations to The Princess Mother's Medical Volunteer Foundation. 64 teams/192 persons joined the Bowling and 20 teams/100 persons joined the Golf Tournament. ACT achieved the target of 5,000USD for this year donation

The China Silk Road Survey tour for Committee Members of ACT on 09-17Apr'08 starting from Xi-an to Urumuqi on 09-17Apr'08 was also organized. It was fantastic!

Orathai Bhuddhamanupap
A. C. of Thailand



Discovery China Tour 2008

From Cathay to Tartary – Beijing to Ulan Bator

In July this year, I had the pleasure of leading a small group of interliners on the Discovery China tour from Northern China to the heart of Mongolia. Although the itinerary encompassed 10 days, we managed to see a variety of scenery and culture that is often off the beaten track of many Western tourists. Our journey began in Beijing, where we anxiously awaited the arrival of Urs and Marc De Maddalena from Xian. Beijing had experienced a freak storm the previous afternoon and the airport was shut down as result. Fortunately for us, the Zurich interliners arrived in the nick of time and the group set out for Taiyuan on a Hainan Airlines jet early in the morning.

Shanxi Province. Taiyuan is the capital city of Shanxi Province and is home to over 2 million people. It is also a hub for visitors to access the sights of Shanxi. Shanxi is home to many historical treasures of China, due to its long history and prominence amongst the dynasties of ancient China. Our first stop was at the Jinci Temple in Taiyuan. The temple still has impressive architecture from the Song dynasty from the 10th Century AD and it also provided the start of the Olympic torch relay in Shanxi Province. After Jinci, we were on our way to the ancient town of Pingyao. Before we reached Pingyao, we detoured to the Qiao's compound, where we were given a cultural tour of life in a rich merchant family in China's past. The compound happens to be the set for the acclaimed movie, *Raise the Red Lanterns*, which was nominated for an Oscar. The massive compound consists of several individual courtyard complexes and the scale of it all attested to the immense wealth of the Qiao family.



Pingyao. After the Qiao compound, it was a short drive to Pingyao. Pingyao is listed in UNESCO's world heritage list and is protected by 4 ancient city walls. No vehicles are allowed within the 4 walls of Pingyao, so we hired some porters to carry our luggage to our hotel, which is situated in the center of the walled city. As we walked into the walled city, one cannot help but get amazed by the collection of old buildings and hutongs in the town and one could imagine how life looked like in China a few hundred years ago. There are few modern buildings in Pingyao and we were glad to reach the Tian Yuan Kui hotel, which is a beautiful inn housed in a traditional building of a few hundred years old with multiple courtyards and reputed to be the best in Pingyao. After checking in, many of us set out on our own to explore the main streets and narrow lanes of the town. The dusk light on the ancient town was simply amazing, giving the town an atmospheric feel that reinforced the character of the place. We had an extra day in Pingyao and we had a guided tour of the town's impressive walls. We also visited the town's Confucian, Buddhist, City God and Catholic temples, which bear testament to the cosmopolitanism of Pingyao's past. The town also happens to be China's banking center during the early part of the 19th century, before the rise of Hong Kong and Shanghai as alternatives. So it was appropriate that we visited an old Pingyao bank building. We also had a cultural performance at the Confucian temple, which detailed the traditions and culture of Pingyao.

Hanging Temples. Next day, leaving Pingyao reluctantly, we headed north for Datong City on a modern expressway, which cut down travel time between Pingyao to Datong to less than 6 hours. Along the way, we could see remnants of ancient beacon towers built over 2 thousand years ago and sections of the Great Wall, which is not as well preserved as the wall near Beijing. After lunch, we visited the Hanging Temples of Hengshan. Hengshan is one of the holiest mountains in China and the Hanging temples are built into its sheer cliffs next to a river. From the distance, the sight of the temples sticking out from the rock was unbelievable. The temples are held in place by wooden beams lodged into the holes on the rock face. The temples are shrines to Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. As is the norm, the temples demonstrated the flexibility of the Chinese, when it comes to religious beliefs. The temples were built to mollify the gods so that the floods that use to ravage the area could be stopped.

Yungang Caves. The drive to Datong from the Hanging Temples was supposed to be a short one but road works meant the trip took almost 3 hours. Datong produces a quarter of the coal in China and is home to many coal-fueled power stations that provide electricity to Beijing and nearby areas. As a result, the city can be very polluted at times. The main reason why tourists visit Datong is because of the Yungang caves. Because of Datong's legacy as the capital of the Northern Wei (Turkic) and Liao (Mongolian Khitan) dynasties, the city has been blessed with many historical monuments. At first glance, we could not fathom what awaits us as we drove by the world's largest coal mine, which is directly opposite the UNESCO heritage site. Once we arrived and entered the caves, the scale, beauty and historical significance of the Buddhist carvings stunned us. Frances Mercer from Canada described the place as "Petraesque". Yungang is relatively unknown with Western tourists but it is one of the most spectacular sights in the world. There are many cave complexes, showing influences from Greece, India and elsewhere. As per usual custom, we had our first group picture in front of a giant Buddha statue, which was exposed after the front cave wall collapsed during an earthquake in the past. The caves date from the period of the Northern Wei dynasty, from the 5th to 6th centuries AD, when Buddhism was the state religion. The caves were later renovated under the Mongolian Liao Dynasty in the 11th century AD, when Datong was the capital.



Inner Mongolia Huitenxile Grasslands. Having seen the revelation of Yungang, we headed north for Inner Mongolia, which is located just over the border from Datong. After an hour of driving on a new 4-lane expressway, we bid farewell to Jacky, our guide, who handed us over to our Inner Mongolian guide, Franky. We arrived at the Huitenxile Grasslands at around 3 p.m. and were kind of letdown by the concrete Mongolian Yurts, even though the yurts had an ensuite bathroom. We had a good dinner of roast sheep leg and some boiled mutton, washed down by copious amounts of good Chinese beer. Entertainment was provided outdoors with wrestling and horse riding demonstrations, with members of the audience being invited to participate. I stayed discreet, since the Mongolian wrestler was bigger than I am and he definitely looked very strong! There was a big show at night with Mongolian songs and techno music. All this provided a surreal ending to the night in the Inner Mongolian grasslands.

Hotpot in Hohhot. Hohhot, the capital of Inner Mongolia was our next stop and the clean lines and modernity of the city impressed us. The Olympics torch relay took place the previous day from the ultra-modern Inner Mongolian Museum and Opera building. We were also lucky to get close to some Olympic torches in Hohhot's airport as a Lenovo executive was taking some back to Beijing. Whilst in Hohhot, we took care of our appetite with a mutton hotpot lunch, and took in the sights of city with a visit to the city's Tibetan-Buddhist temples. Hohhot is much larger than Ulan Bator, capital of Outer Mongolia, as we would find out later.

Transfer to Ulan Bator. After a one-hour flight from Hohhot, we landed in Beijing's stunning new Terminal 3 and proceeded to Terminal 2 to catch our wee hour Mongolian Airlines flight to Ulan Bator. We arrived in Ulan Bator at around 3:30 am in the morning and were met by our Mongolian guide Tsegi. Ulan Bator at first glance is not an attractive city and looks like a run-down ex-Soviet town. As we drove to our hotel, we could see the scars of the rioting and unrest that gripped Ulan Bator a week before we arrived, although things had quieted down since. We finally checked into the Kempinski Khan Palace hotel (Ulan Bator's best hotel) at 5 am for a much needed rest.



Ulan Bator. Tsegi, our excellent and beautiful Mongolian guide, came to pick us up at 11 am for a city tour of Ulan Bator. Our first stop was at the Sukhbaatar square, where the pre-Naadam ceremonies were taking place. The Mongolian honor guards were dressed in ancient Mongolian military uniforms and along with important members of the Mongolian government, paid respects to Genghis Khan and Sukhbataar, whose statues adorn the square. Sukhbataar was a communist, who gave Mongolia its independence from China in the chaotic years after the fall of the Manchu Qing dynasty. On the other hand, Genghis Khan, known as Chinggis in Mongolia, is the national hero of Mongolia, with his image adorning the airport, the hillsides, the Mongolian currency and almost everywhere. The afternoon saw us visiting the Museum of Natural History where there were important exhibits of dinosaur fossils, including that of the Velociraptor of Jurassic Park fame. We capped the day with a visit to a Mongolian Cultural performance, where we enjoyed amazing and beautiful throat generated music and other cultural performances.

Naadam Festival. The Naadam is the most important festival in Mongolia and is normally held during the national holidays. The largest festival of all is held in the national stadium in Ulan Bator and we arrived at the stadium just as the festival performers were concluding their pre-show drills. After an hour in the stadium, the Naadam festival got underway with the Mongolian Cavalry riding around the stadium and dancing and singing by performers in colorful Mongolian costumes. The President of Mongolia gave a speech and declared the festival opened. The performers of the festival, including Mongolian Olympic athletes destined for Beijing, did a march by. During the festival, which celebrates Genghis Khan's victory over his chief rival, 3 "manly" sports are contested, which are archery, wrestling and horse riding. In the afternoon, our bus raced to the grasslands outside Ulan Bator to witness the conclusion of the horse racing competition. As we waited under the giant blue sky, we strained our eyes over the horizon left of us, to see any approaching signs of the racing horses. After a while, we could see small plumes of dust in the far distance and these eventually became larger as we made out the outlines of the horses racing towards the direction to the right of us. Hundreds of horses from around Mongolia participate

and are usually ridden by boy jockeys. Great honor is bestowed upon the family of the boy who wins the race and many families journey to the racing grounds on horseback for days just to participate. After the racing, we lingered around to see other activities, such as a performance by a teenage Mongolian contortionist.

Terelj National Park. After a morning visit to Mongolia's last King's winter residence, the Bogd Khan Palace, and Zaitan Hill, which commemorated the friendship between the Soviet Union and Mongolia, we headed out to the Terelj National Park. The park is located about an hour's drive Northeast of Ulan Bator and is famous for its peculiar rock formations. As we entered the park's entrance, we could see low hills and endless pastures with flocks of sheep, goats, yaks, cows and horses grazing. The most notable rock formation in the park is known as the Turtle and the rock does bear an uncanny resemblance to the reptile. Steve Charlton from Montreal also rejoined us this time after his bird watching tour to an adjacent area near to the Terelj. We finally settled into the Mirage Camp, which is a collection of Gers (yurts) with a nice dining yurt. We were pleased by the Yurts, which were clean and lend an authentic feel. After settling in and exploring the surroundings, we clambered up the nearest hill to catch a breathtaking view of the surrounding hills and pastures. It was good to do the climb with Urs and Marc de Maddalena of the Zurich Interline Club, as they pointed out herbs and flowers that are also common to the Swiss Alps, like Edelweiss and Thyme. Dinner was at the dining yurt, which had western dining tables with linen! After dinner, we had a hearty chat with our lovely guide Tsegi and enjoyed the dusk light and its effects over the wooded hills of the Terelj.

After a night of sleeping through a snoring symphony (4 in a yurt) and visits to the loo through the cool night air, we woke up to some light rain in the morning. The skies cleared a little bit later as all of us hired horses for a morning ride. Guided by Tsegi and some Mongolian nomad boys, we set out from our Yurts under a big blue sky, riding amongst flocks of sheep and horses and smelling the crisp air flavored by the wild flowers of the meadows. After an hour, we arrived at a local herder's Yurt, where we were offered fermented Mongolian mare's milk. The morning ride concluded after 2.5 hours and we headed back to Ulan Bator to do some souvenir shopping and concluded the day by enjoying a delicious Mongolian barbecue dinner.



Conclusion of our trip. Urs and Marc departed in the morning for Beijing on an Air China flight, whilst Frances and Walt Mercer would depart on the night flight to Beijing, like myself. We met up with Steve Charlton and Ruth Anderson of Montreal, as they were also leaving that night for Moscow on the trans-Siberian train, for an informal walk through Ulan Bator. We met up later again for our last dinner together at a restaurant run by an expat Uzbek lady from Samarkand. Looking back, time really flew and we saw a lot. We saw how Beijing has changed beyond recognition for the Olympics, we have seen the cultural treasures of Shanxi Province, had a glimpse of Inner Mongolia, celebrated the Mongolian Naadam festival and rode with Mongolian nomads in the Terelj. I still remember how I reflected on my thoughts as I rode in the Mongolian steppes under the big blue Mongolian sky, on how lucky we are as interliners, to see so many things and discover the world armed with our travel benefits. Yay to interlining!

Julian Chau
Hong Kong Interline Club

LAKE BAIKAL

After the finish of Julian Chau's wonderful Mongolia trip, 2 of us from the Montreal Interline Club traveled westward, taking the Trans-Siberian train across Siberia to Moscow. Our single stop on the trip was at a truly-memorable place – Lake Baikal.



When I was in university in the late 60's, I went to an evening lecture by a geology professor who was advocating a strange theory – that the earth's continents were essentially dry islands floating on a sphere of molten lava, with giant oceans filling in the spaces in between. He pointed out the similarity between the eastern coastline of South America, and that of western Africa, as well as fossil "evidence", to illustrate this too-easy-to-be-true theory.

Today, "plate tectonics" has pretty-much replaced "continental drift" as an accepted fact. The Indian plate has recently banged into Asia, sending the relatively-young Himalayas up into the air. The Pacific Plate is sliding northward past the North American Plate (the boundary line being the San Andreas Fault), and this is where Californians know "The Big One" will come from. Newfoundland and England are moving further apart, and the Mediterranean is closing.

In Africa, the great Rift Valley was formed by the African and Arabian Plates drifting apart – some of the lower-lying land has filled with water, forming the flamingo-famous lakes, e.g. Lake Nakuru, often visited by those who travel around East Africa.

But the most-impressive example of a deep lake lying between two separating plates is in southern Siberia, near the Mongolian border – Lake Baikal. This is not a "lake" in the true sense – it is a huge abyss, 7 kilometres deep! Actually the bottom 5 km are filled with silt, but the quantity of water remaining in the lake is still astounding! It is the largest fresh water lake in the world, by volume. Lake Baikal contains as much water as the 5 Great Lakes combined! If the 10 biggest rivers were to empty their waters into (an empty) Lake Baikal, it would take approximately a year to fill it up! If the water in Lake Baikal were poured over the continental United States, it would cover the entire country to a depth of over 10 feet!

It is in one of the world's still-unspoiled wildernesses. The lake is surrounded by uninhabited forest. Several rivers flow into the Lake from the nearby mountains, but none of them support any human settlements.

Although there is some fishing, the only industry is a single pulp and paper mill, located near the outflow of the lake, and which is constantly watched for pollutants by "green" organizations. The nearest large city is Irkutsk, situated an hour's drive away, well down on the Angara River, the only river flowing out from the Lake. Lake Baikal water is so pure, it is taken from the middle of the lake, filtered, and bottled! The visibility straight down is 30 meters.

Wildlife is abundant – besides the usual forest species (bear, lynx, moose, and of course sable), the lake supports the only colony in the world of fresh-water seals! Controversy surrounds how they arrived there. These surprisingly-bulbous creatures eat fish found in the lake, mainly an endemic species called "omul". Even sturgeon are occasionally found in Baikal's deep cold waters.

Fishing is centred in the small coastal village of Listvyanka, and what a small peaceful place it is, consisting of a small market, some poorly-stocked general stores, a picturesque old-but-still-used Russian Orthodox church, a small but very interesting aquarium/museum with 2 frolicking seals, a dilapidated-but-functioning chair lift, a single "modern hotel" (with one of the most-sour and unhelpful receptionists I've ever met), and many home-stays (with some of the most-friendly people I've met). Houses are single-level wooden (hewn-log, not clap-board) structures. All seem to be unpainted, except for the windows – the shutters and sills of all the houses are brightly-painted, usually a "forget-me-not" blue. (There must have been a sale on that paint one year....) All houses have an outdoor privy, which is shared by both owners and guests. Although there are a few public wells in use (complete with bucket-on-a-rope), most houses sport an elaborate system of pipes and conduits to collect rainwater, especially for the "banya". This room is basically a small sauna with a wood-burning stove, which provides Spartan facilities for each guest to take a one-after-the-other late-afternoon make-shift shower, before enjoying a hearty Russian dinner (black bread, borscht, main course, and vodka).

The rest of the train trip to Moscow was fairly uneventful, but throughout the entire journey, one inescapable realization kept crossing through my mind – how fortunate we are to be Interliners, and to be able to visit such far-away places as Mongolia and even Siberia! *Za **druzh-bu!***

Steve Charlton
Montreal Interline Club

Just the end.....

Dear Interliners,

This edition of your WACA WORLD NEWS has now reached its last page and I must admit, that it is the biggest one I have produced during all these years. It was funny to note that most of the material only reached me during the last three weeks. I am very happy that this allows me to report about nearly all international events organized during the last months. For the first time, there are articles and stories from all our regions – many clubs have sent stories and photos of their local events. My big “Thank you” goes to all those of you, who spend your time in writing stories, selecting photos and sending me all this material for publication. Without your great support, it would have been impossible to prepare such a complete edition!



Time is now running very quickly - it is already next month that most of us will meet in Nassau at our “2008 Interline Celebration” and the 41st AGA, organized by our friends from the Airlines Club Bahamas. Please read carefully the updates in this edition of your WWN as well as latest news to be disseminated by WACA Headquarters. You will also find all this information on our website www.waca.org . If you have additional questions, or wish to have further information, please do not hesitate in contacting the Organizing Committee, our Headquarters or any member of WACA’s EC.

Yours in Interlining
Rosemarie Mamede
VP Public Relations

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