



AFICS – Cyprus NewsLetter

Number 004 July 2015

AFICS-Cyprus: Third Annual General Meeting

The AFICS Cyprus Third Ordinary Assembly Meeting, held on 10 March, was attended by 39 members. With nine items on the agenda, the meeting covered an extensive number of subjects and, following the report of the President, the floor was opened for discussion.

One specific topic of interest was a query on whether UN retirees were required to complete the Cyprus Government income tax return forms. Following a lengthy discussion, the President explained that each country had its own laws on this subject and summarised the debate by informing members about a Deloitte 2014 taxation guidance document outlining the Cyprus Government taxation laws and applicability which members were advised to read should anyone feel uncertain about how to comply with the law.



The Deputy President referred to rumours circulated in March 2014 with respect to the status quo on Pension Fund staff administration and investment of the assets of the Pension Fund which could have negatively impacted on UN retirees. However, all present were assured that the funds are invested with prudence following the four main criteria of safety, profitability, liquidity and convertibility, under volatile market conditions, and that the situation was closely monitored in New York by FAFICS, so much so there was no need for worry.

At the end of the meeting, a member of Personnel Section briefed former national staff members on the new medical insurance system which has been transferred from Henner, France to Cigna, Belgium.

The Executive Committee are delighted at the significant turnout for this Assembly, as it is important to keep all informed, preferably in person, of current affairs which are of specific interest to all AFICS members.

The minutes of the Assembly Meeting were posted on the AFICS website shortly afterwards.

EDITORIAL

The hot Cyprus weather is now upon us, but apart from the heat, the temperature is rising in the fields of economy and politics in the four corners of the earth. In this part of the world, we are undergoing severe constraints with salary and pension adjustments in place. However, looking on the bright side, here in Cyprus we are more fortunate than our neighbours in Syria, Egypt, Greece, Iraq and Turkey, not to mention Libya, Tunis and Aden.

On the positive side, Cyprus is enjoying a peaceful period with a promising dialogue between the two community leaders. In spite of the austerity measures now being taken, tourism seems to be on track for another good year, thanks to the stable political situation and of course the natural beauties and reliable weather Cyprus has to offer which attract visitors from the northern hemisphere looking for holidays in the sun.

As the saying goes, when everything else fails, take a vacation! So whether staying in Cyprus or travelling abroad, it is important to keep in mind ways to protect ourselves from the harmful rays of the sun and dehydration, so use your sunscreen and drink plenty of water! The Executive Committee wishes you a great summer.

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AFICS Executive Committee

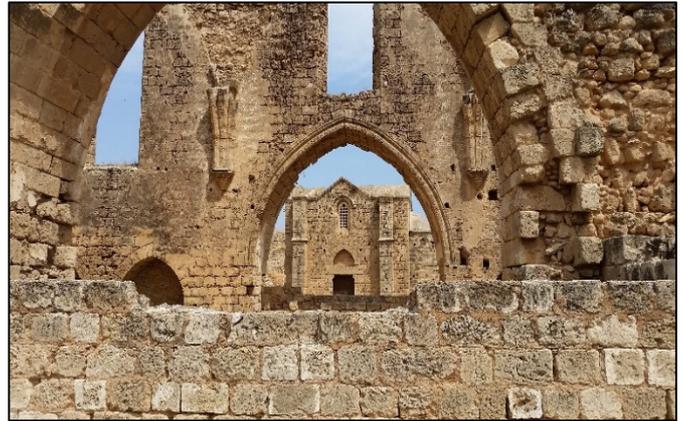
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The Association's small office at UNFICYP is currently out of use due to extensive renovations which are taking place in UNFICYP Headquarters. Once these have been completed, our office will be handed back to us. On behalf of AFICS-Cyprus, the EC would like to thank the UNFICYP administration for the wonderful support it provides.

Visit to Famagusta

On 23 May, several members of AFICS together with friends and family, boarded a 55-seater bus and set off for a visit to the beautiful town of Famagusta under the guidance of Ms. Rita Severis of the CVAR (Cyprus Visual Arts Research) centre, an archaeologist with a remarkable in-depth knowledge of the area.

Organised by AFICS Cyprus Social Coordinator Fredy Galotopoulou, the tour began at 9.30 am. During the journey, Ms. Severis gave the visitors a brief account on the history of Famagusta during the period 1300 to 1500 AD. On arrival, a number of sites of cultural heritage were visited, including the Othello Tower, the Venetian Walls, the church of St. Peter and Paul, St. Nikolaos cathedral, and the Lusignan Palace.



The church of St. Peter and Paul

No AFICS excursion takes place without participants attending a meal and this trip was no different. A delicious lunch was served at the Aspava Restaurant, following which everyone went for a long walk along the Famagusta beach. For Fredy, it was a return to her home town and a very poignant reminder of her childhood.

This was a highly successful trip, more of which will be organised to other parts of the island in the future. It is hoped that more members of AFICS, together with their nearest and dearest, will be able to participate, and the Committee would dearly like to hear if any of you have any specific visits you would like organised. All suggestions are most welcome!



The Venetian Walls overlooking the Famagusta harbour

AFICS sponsors CVAR event

On 9 July, CVAR (the Centre of Visual Arts and Research) of the Costas and Rita Severis Foundation hosted a discussion with Mr. Espen Barth Eide, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Cyprus, as guest speaker.

The event opened with introductory remarks by the President of CVAR, Ms. Rita Severis, followed by Mr. Barth Eide who delivered a 45-minute summary on the Cyprus problem. Several journalists and representatives from Cyprus TV channels island-wide were present, together with members of the general public, many of whom took part in a question /answer session. With his frank approach to the Cyprus issue, Mr. Barth Eide managed very successfully to deliver his optimistic view on the negotiations currently taking place between the leaders of the two Cyprus communities.

The President of AFICS who was present throughout the evening had occasion to speak to Mr. Barth Eide and to Mr. Sergiy Illarionov (Ukraine), the Coordinator and Head of Office of the Special Adviser. This was a highly successful occasion, and AFICS was gratified since the donation approved for the CVAR at the last Assembly Meeting sponsored the event.

AFICS-Cyprus Annual Dinner

Our annual AFICS dinner is planned for **6 October 2015**. Every year, the Social Events Coordinator explores new locations in an attempt to find an appropriately convivial location for as many AFICS members to gather together as possible. This year, we are going to congregate at the "Esperides Tavern", situated on the RIK road (very near the Kapnos Shuttle Bus terminal).

The price is expected to be in the region of €15 per person, including a pre-drinks gathering before the meal for everyone to relax and socialize before we sit down to eat. Hopefully, we shall see as many of you there as possible.

More details will be posted on the website closer to the event, so **WATCH THIS SPACE!**