

## WHITE CROSS MISSION. SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2011

To all our Supporters

I have to tell you about a wedding! Popa's third daughter Ela (short for Emanuela) married her policeman, Cristi, on Saturday the 4<sup>th</sup> June.

As you know Ela is the manager of our Guest House and does a really great job and it was a joy to attend her wedding.

I went out on the Thursday and it suited me fine to keep out of the way until the wedding started at 4.00pm on the Sat. I was able to spend some time in my house on the hills and it was glorious! The weather was hot and there was a short but violent thunderstorm every afternoon, when the rain was heavy enough to knock the cherries off the trees, but the evenings that followed were cool and refreshing and the sunsets were magnificent. It really is such a lovely country! There were wild roses everywhere and the Golden Orioles sang from the nearby trees. Truly magical!

Late afternoon on the Saturday, members of the family and friends gathered at Mama Ana's house in Beznea. Jill and Roger, who were out on holiday, joined me in the house and everybody waited with great anticipation for Cristi and his family to arrive. Ela looked lovely, very slim and elegant and full of excitement. At 4.00pm exactly Cristi's family arrived outside and the master of ceremonies knocked on the door and asked for Ela. After some good humoured banter little Cristina, in an old oversized wedding dress, was pushed out on to the steps and Cristi was asked if this was the girl he wanted to marry. It was funny to watch Cristi trying to find the words to say "No" without offending Cristina, but he did!

The master of ceremonies tried again and this time Joana's doctor husband went out in a huge blonde wig and teetering on high heels. Strangely enough Cristi rejected him too, but he at least had a consolation gift of a Fanta bottle full of palinka!

Finally, in pretended exasperation, the master of ceremonies marched into the house and demanded to see Ela and she came coyly down from upstairs where she had been hiding and was firmly led away by Cristi's family to the Bratca Town Hall for the civil ceremony, which by law must come first.

An hour later, with much hooting of car horns, everybody arrived at Beznea church for the religious service.

There were 4 priests present, including Popa's brother, and all played a part with no-one seeming to be in charge. The service was quite lovely and the paintings and the mosaics in the church gleamed in the candlelight. After the prayers and the readings and the many, many blessings Ela and Cristi were crowned and given cake and honey to eat. Then joining hands with their God parents and all the priests they formed a circle around the altar table and circled it 3 times. There were candles and incense and a lot of singing and it was all over far too soon.

Outside once more we bundled into the waiting cars and with a police escort (a surprise by Cristi's colleagues on the force) we drove at under 30 miles an hour all the way to Oradea! Never in living memory has that journey taken so long!

The reception was held at a new wedding venue in Baia Felix. It was all very posh and Ela's 200 guests were looked after well. Once we were all seated the band began and Ela and Cristi

nervously took to the floor for the first dance. They had to dance the whole dance on their own and did extremely well. It was lovely to see them both visibly relax after that ordeal and from then on in they really began to enjoy the occasion.

The band was very, very good but extremely loud. They played all night with only 3 ten minute breaks. The whole party went on till 7.00am but Jill, Roger and I gave up at 3.00am and were very glad to get to our beds There were no speeches, just eating and dancing. The food courses came at 2 hourly intervals so I never did find out what was the final item on the menu, but we all went away with a large packet of squidgy chocolate and cream wedding cake. It was a really happy wedding and we were so glad to be there to join in the fun. It's a pity you couldn't all be there but I'm sure you will join with me in wishing Ela and Cristi every happiness in their life together.

The Guest House has already had some good group holidays this year and in particular the Carm (Creative Arts Retreat Movement) retreat in May and the Walking and Reflexology holiday in June had holidaymakers most reluctant to go home. That's so nice to know! There are still 2 more organised holidays this year, another Walking and Reflexology week from Fri 9<sup>th</sup> Sept to the 16<sup>th</sup> and I am leading a Retreat from 23<sup>rd</sup> Sept until the 30<sup>th</sup>. Both cost £400 plus travel. Please phone me on 01726 882366 or 07867577416 if you are interested in either.

Because of the recession we are finding it difficult to pay all the bills at the Guest House and we need lots more customers. Please tell people about us and get them to look on line [www.casadelureni.com](http://www.casadelureni.com)

Ana Maria has had great success in placing many of our young people in private homes in the community and in the last week Claudia Varga and Claudia Kocze have both left us to begin new lives with families in Bratca and Beznea. So far all seems to be working well with the Orthodox Diocese so we are breathing a sigh of relief because we have very little money coming in now and we would find it very difficult if we had to pay wages again.

There are things we want to keep doing and some of you may be able to help. Please contact me if you can.

We want to pay a teacher £100 a month for 10 months of the year to go up to the farm and teach the children to read and write and manage money and to teach them Romanian history and culture.

We want to pay for a summer treat for all the young people and for a Christmas party. For each we need about £500. We would also like to give £1000 a year to buy new clothes and shoes and if you, your church or your club can help with any of these things we would be most grateful. And if any of you fancy coming out for the Christmas party on Sun 11<sup>th</sup> Dec with your suitcase stuffed with prezzies (cost £100 plus travel) just get in touch.

Thank you for being there. We would never have managed without you. Don't forget to mention us in your will!!! With much love and God bless.

Pat.