

ICASSI 1973, Espinho and Lisbon, Portugal

The Sixth International Summer School was a memorial to its founder, Dr Rudolf Dreikurs. It was also a time of tribute honouring the “roving ambassador of Adlerian Psychology”, the “master of encouragement”, the “systematiser”, the “dedicated, forceful, dynamic man of courage and optimism”. The thousands of students trained under him and the spreading Adlerian movement in the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia, South America, and Australia attest to his impact. His life and work were “like a pebble that was dropped into a pool of water which then forms rings that go round and round and spread ad infinitum”.

With a commitment to carrying on the unified spirit and proven success of Dr Dreikurs’ dream, Dr “Bill” Pew, along with Achi Yotam and Erik Blumenthal as Co-Chairpersons dedicated their energies to the continuation of the International Summer School.

At this Summer School, Edna Nash was invited to represent Canada on the Board of Directors. It was also decided that the International Summer School should be held annually in order to meet the needs of Europeans for more extensive training.

Unfortunately, there was not a local group in Portugal and, with only one Portuguese participant in attendance, and there was no follow-up for Adlerian development in that country. Portugal was, indeed, on the brink of serious political unrest. Portugal’s ICASSI ’73 is documented in a written account of the daily presentations by the staff, all former students and colleagues of Dr Dreikurs. It was published as a scholarly tribute to a friend and teacher. The papers were brought together by the dedicated efforts of Ruth Holger-Nielsen before her untimely death.

Dr Eva Dreikurs Ferguson, daughter of Dr Dreikurs, arrived for a week to participate and contribute her memories and ideas based upon her many years of working experience and discussions with her father. Although the occasion was sad, especially for Dr Dreikurs’ daughter and wife and close associates, it was Mrs Dreikurs’ insistence that this International Summer School – which attested to enormous growth, from handful of participants in 1962 to such a vital and expanding group- should not be a time of mourning but a time to reflect in a spirit of celebration. Participants and staff, in giving their summarizing impressions on the last morning, acknowledged the reality of this spirit.

The first setting for this event was Espinho, with the sounds of pounding surf heard from the luxuriously marble-tiled resort hotel on the Atlantic Ocean. Participants took the opportunity to enjoy the immense weekly open Market; the Bull Fight; nearby Oporto and the wine making factories; the oxen pulling in fishing nets at dawn; and friendly village hospitality.

The Summer School was continued in Lisbon, with its intricately patterned cobbled streets and squares, its historic monuments, museums and parks. There were times for short train or bus trips to neighbouring cities, villages and historic sites, and post-conference visits to Spain (Madrid, Toledo, Seville and the Costa del Sol) and other parts of Europe.

ICASSI ’73 was a time for tribute and a time for revitalizing the Adlerian movement.