

## AGTA Chairman, Noel Josephides – Cyprus Viewpoint March 2014



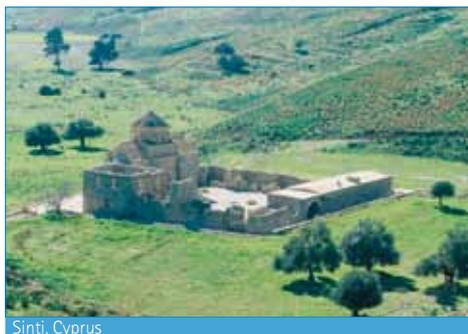
Noel Josephides, AGTA (UK) Chairman

At the end of last year I felt that UK arrivals into Cyprus would perhaps be up on 2013. Now I am not too sure.

**It is extremely difficult to calculate what the capacity to Cyprus is out of the UK. At best it will be static in 2014** but I suspect that, by the end of this year, we will have discovered that there are fewer seats available from the UK. We used to have Cyprus Airways to fall back on but now they don't even know where their office in the UK is going to be. There are rumours that they may replace the lost slot at Heathrow with a flight from Stansted but, again, it is too late for this year. Politicians in Cyprus continue to give out negative messages about the future of the airline and this simply undermines confidence in the UK. Without a national carrier to fall back on, then Cyprus will be at the mercy of foreign carriers which chase profits and are not concerned with supporting Cyprus if they are losing money flying there.

**Certainly, the UK market is not seeing any promotion at all for Cyprus.** It is quite understandable, with all the economic and political machinations going on currently, that not much thought is given to promoting tourism. However, by the time anyone gets round to thinking about promoting Cyprus in the UK, it will be too late. The best booking months have already gone and Cyprus has not featured in the tourism mix. **When will the CTO and the Government understand that, when it comes to tourism promotional budgets, they should have the budgets ready by the end of the year so that promotion starts when the travelling public is ready to book, which is January?**

Greece is powering away, based on attractive prices and a charm offensive. Their Antiquities Department has finally agreed to extend the opening hours of the museums and archaeological sites to 8pm daily. Cyprus has not, unfortunately, benefited from the problems in Egypt – probably because prices on the island are far too high. The main beneficiaries have been the south of Spain, the Balearics and the Canary Islands.



Sinti, Cyprus



Pafos

By the time you read this, we will probably know the outcome of the Ukrainian crisis. Certainly, Cyprus should not expect much traffic from the Ukraine in 2014. And what if the EU decides to impose sanctions on Russia? Will Cyprus support the EU? And, if it does, what will happen to the Russian tourists on whom tourism to Cyprus now depends? Perhaps the UK should have been looked after a little better, especially as tourism from Germany also seems to be dying.

**There used to be strong ethnic operators which supported both the island and the national carrier.** These have slowly disappeared, either having failed or having been taken over. The latest collapse, of Preston Travel, which marketed under the Amathus brand is, of course, not good news either.

### CTO / AGTA Christmas Networking Dinner

The Cyprus Tourist Office London hosted a dinner for AGTA member tour operators / travel agents at the Carrob Tree Restaurant, in London, on the 23rd of December 2013. The event was attended by 35 senior managers and executives from member companies and UK based hotel representatives of Cyprus Hoteliers. **Speaking at the event, Orestis Rossides thanked AGTA members and networking hotel representatives for their efforts in promoting Cyprus Tourism in the UK.**

### AGTA (UK) 2014 Agm & Dinner

Details of this event will be announced at a later date. The 2014 AGM will mark 25 years since AGTA was founded in May 1989.

*[Note: The 2014 AGM dinner is available for exclusive or shared sponsorship – approximate total cost £1,000. For more information regarding this event please contact the AGTA Secretariat].*

## Amathus Beach Hotel, Limassol – Now A Member Of Muskita Hotels

As announced in the Cyprus press on 22 January 2014, 'the agreement reached last December 2013 to sell the Amathus Beach Hotel, Limassol for 71 million euros has been signed by the New Shareholders and it's been completed officially. The new company that has been set up in order to buy the hotel is **Amathina Luxury Hotels Ltd.**

The Cypriot shareholding companies in the new company are: **M.A. Luxury Hotels Ltd [a company which belongs to Muskita Hotels] 50% / Amathus Public Ltd 25% and / Elerfield Holdings Ltd 25%.**

As part of the agreement the Amathus Hotel will be managed by Muskita Hotels Ltd, the company which owns and operates the 5 star deluxe **Four Seasons Hotel. The Amathus Beach Hotel** has closed for a soft refurbishment and a variety of other improvement works and it will reopen on 1st April 2014. The remaining floor of bedrooms is being renovated, so all rooms will have been fully renovated in the last 5 years. A new 'Grill Room' restaurant will be introduced with fabulous steaks and grills. There will also be substantial investment in the 'Limanaki Fish Taverna' re-establishing it as Limassol's best Fish restaurant by far!



Gardens and sea front of the Amathus Beach Hotel



Gardens and sea front of the 5 star deluxe Four Seasons Hotel



## PROFILING AGTA MEMBERS - Andrews Shipping

**ANDREWS SHIPPING** is an amazing success story. The company was established in 1962 by **Andreas Spyrou**, father of **Spyros Spyrou**. Today, Spyros and his wife Debbie Spyrou, ably assisted by their son and daughter, Andreas and Kristy, and highly experienced **staff** now run this family business with great success. Since its move to larger / spacious premises (see details below) Andrews Shipping has realised considerable growth.

**Andreas Spyrou** had previously worked at a large shipping company 'as a customs clearing agent in London, clearing goods for his customers, who imported these from Cyprus and Greece to the UK, and delivering them to the clients' premises'. So, when he decided to branch out and form his own company - **Andrews Shipping** - in the early sixties he had almost, a 'ready-made' plan on what type of business he wanted to create. That is, to provide services to the UK Greek Cypriot and Greek community on imports of traditional foodstuff produced from Cyprus and Greece. Products included: Olives and Olive Oil, Halloumia & Fetta cheeses, 'Loucanika' (Cypriot sausages), Ospria Vegetables (black eyed beans and

kidney beans - 'Louvi & Fasolia') etc. and with special brands of Wines & Spirits (such as the exhilarating 'Koumandaria' - sherry- and 'Zivania' - deadly clear spirit from grapes!).

Spyros and Nick, Andrea's two sons, joined the company in the early 1970's and expanded its activities into exports to Cyprus and Greece offering exclusive weekly groupage services and full packing and overseas removals. In the 1980,s the company also formed the **Andrews Travel brand** within the organisation which worked very well for many years. In 1999 Nick Spyrou left the company to pursue his own passion of golf holidays and today operates his own company in 'Exclusive Golf Tours'.

Spyros Spyrou continued at Andrews Shipping and when sadly his father Andreas passed away in 2008 took over the company which continued to grow. **Andrews Shipping**, now offers a full worldwide shipping and airfreight service. It can arrange collections from anywhere in the UK, full professional packing service, a weekly container service to Cyprus, weekly ro-ro service for cars, boats etc. **2 years ago the company moved its business into spacious and**

**comfortable new premises in order to facilitate its operations and can now additionally offer a storage service, with individual storage rooms for hire if required.**

Address details: Units 15 & 26 Riverwalk Business Park, Riverwalk Road, Enfield EN3 7QN. Tel: 0208 805 5588. **Andrews Travel & Shipping have been a founding AGTA member since 1989.** As of 2014 the company is listed as an AGTA affiliate member. More information on this can be found on the AGTA website: [www.agta.co.uk](http://www.agta.co.uk)

**For more information please contact the company's website: [www.andrewsshipping.co.uk](http://www.andrewsshipping.co.uk) Or telephone: 0208 805 5588**



Andrew's Shipping Premises

## TRAVLAW – 2014 Big Tent Event



Photos at the Big Tent Event courtesy of TRAVLAW

TRAVLAW successfully held their 5th 'Big Tent Event' on the 22nd of January 2014 at the IMPACT HUB, Kings Cross, London. The event, now established annually, is normally held during January and is co-sponsored by Travalaw and White Heart Associates.

The meeting always brings to the fore important trade and consumer topical issues which are discussed by a distinguished panel of experts. The panel on this occasion comprised of: Kevin Davis (Department for Business Innovation & Skills – representing the UK Government),

Andrew Cohen (Head of ATOL at the CAA), John De Vial (Financial Director, ABTA), Chris Photi (Managing Director, White Hart Associates) and Kylie Mather (Travalaw Partner). The informative and lively debate, with the participation of a packed house of a distinguished audience, was masterfully moderated by Travalaw Partner Stephen Mason.

The agenda on this occasion evolved mainly around the procedures and news regarding the forthcoming revised 'Package Travel Directive' (PTD) which is currently being discussed by committees of the European Parliament and Council of Ministers. The debate, with the participation of a packed house of a distinguished audience, was informative and lively and masterfully moderated by Stephen Mason, Senior Travalaw Partner. **It was announced that, although there were still difficult matters to resolve, the new PTD will probably be completed / agreed / and implemented by 2017.**

In his presentation Stephen Mason reiterated briefly the Travalaw launched initiative of the company's **International Law Network (ITLN)**. He said that this is a unique solution for Travalaw clients who may require assistance from overseas lawyers. All law firms have been personally selected by Travalaw on the basis of their skills and expertise. **For the first time, in addition to practicing associate firms in Paris, Madrid and Lisbon, Travalaw will have an Associate firm of Advocates & Legal Consultants in Limassol, Cyprus. The company's name in Limassol is: 'N. Piriilides & Associates' and Mr. Neophytos Piriilides LL.M. represented the company at the Big Tent meeting.**

*[Note: For further information please feel free to contact any Travalaw Team Member at [www.travalaw.co.uk](http://www.travalaw.co.uk) Travalaw is a company of expert solicitors in the Travel / Tourism / Leisure and Aviation industries, which has been an AGTA Affiliate member for many years].*



Photos at the Big Tent Event courtesy of TRAVLAW



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## Promotion Of Quality Cyprus Food At L'atelier Des Chefs, London

The Cyprus Tourist Office London and AGTA (UK) organised a specialist cookery event at L' Atelier Des Chefs in Central London, on Thursday, 21st November 2013.

The event was well publicised to the UK Travel Trade and it was attended by 55 specially selected British Travel Agents. The focus and purpose of the event - asides promoting Cyprus Tourism in general - was to emphasise to the trade the wide variety of quality food Cyprus can offer visitors to the Island. CTO London, Director, Orestis Rossides, outlined this in greater detail in a welcome address to attendees.

Done the way it was done, by getting attendees to apply their individual skills in cooking the ready-made [punctiliously prepared on the night by expert chefs at L'Atelier] for foods like 'stuffed vine leaves -koupepia-, meat balls -kioftedes-, spanakopittas, kebabs and even deserts

like 'locmades' and other types of food, while tasting it and 'washing it down' with award winning Cyprus wines, the event generated an exciting and most enjoyable atmosphere.

Lillian Panayi (CTO) - on behalf of the Cyprus Tourist Office, London - and Alexis Josephides (Sunvil) - on behalf of AGTA- and - did most of the planning of this event. After the event, among many notable plaudits, Alexis commented: 'All those present talked and networked as all of us wanted. The hook for this event was 'cooking your own food'. Other tourist boards have done this but there was a difference when Cypriots do it and why I think it went so well. What was shown was hospitality - this 'filoxenia' that Cypriots are famous for. All those there felt welcomed and equal and it gave the right atmosphere to relax. There were no pretenses and everyone mucked in. I think this is what events we do can bring to it'.



Photos at L'Atelier Des Chefs by JMA Photography



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### End Note:

AGTA NEWS is a quarterly produced newsletter distributed to members and industry networking tourism partners. We would welcome suggestions from members for important news (i.e. awards or out of the ordinary news) about their organisations /companies for inclusion in

future editions of the Newsletter. Comments on published items are also welcomed.

Please e-mail any of these to the AGTA (UK) Secretariat: E mail: [yannis@agta.co.uk](mailto:yannis@agta.co.uk)

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[AGTA NEWS WINTER / SPRING 2014 /](#)  
[\[Published - Distributed, March 2014\].](#)  
design by [www.creativelinkltd.co.uk](http://www.creativelinkltd.co.uk)