



MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL
FOLK & TRADITIONAL ARTS PROGRAM

FIELDNOTES

Accession Numbers:

LO-01-03-FN

LO-01-03-C

Fieldnotes

Audio recordings

Photographic documentation

Additional materials

Date(s): May 15, 2001

Related Accession Numbers:

Individual/Group/Event: Ana Amelia Monteiro

Fieldworker(s): Laura Orleans

Location of Interview: Casa Saudade Library

Street Address: Crapo Street

City: New Bedford

Zip: MA

Co: 02745

Contact person (if different from above):

Title:

Sponsoring organization (for event or group): n/a

Address (if different from above):

Phone: Daytime:

Evening:

E-mail:

Website:

Special Needs (including translation):

Traditions documented on visit (traditional art/skills, occupational experience, ethnic or religious community): Discussion of various Cape Verdean traditions especially Patron Saints Festivals and Festa da Coroa do Espirito Santo

Traditions noted for follow-up: Festa da Coroa do Espirito Santo (June 3); Festa do Sao Pedro (June 30, July 1)

Other Possible Contacts: Maria Freitas (established both festivals here in New Bedford); her husband (built a pilon for use at Sao Pedro); Antonio Gonsalves (musician-violin and guitar, Ivo Pires' nephew); Falai Azevedo (boat builder); Tazinho Brito (guitarist).

Summary Description: Ana Monteiro is a librarian at Casa Saudade (the Portuguese language library of New Bedford). Born in Nova Cinta (sp?) Brava, a small village, she grew up on her family's land. She attended the Catholic School established by Padre Pio (an Italian Priest beloved by the Cape Verdean community who lived in Brava for many years and was later Priest at St. Patrick's Church in Roxbury, MA and visited New Bedford once a month to say mass. He passed away about a year ago and many in the community are still mourning his loss.) She then taught for several years before immigrating to Boston with her family. In Boston she worked in factories for several years before marrying and moving to New Bedford. She attended school to get her GED and later worked as a long term substitute in the New Bedford Schools before taking her current position at the library. Because of her close association with Padre Pio and her devotion to the Holy Spirit, when another parishoner, Maria Freitas, decided to establish the Feast in New Bedford in 1983, Ana and her husband were chosen as one of 12 couples to put on the feast. They have been doing so ever since. The Feast has its origins in Portugal and is associated with Queen Isabel who was very kind to the poor and used to feed and crown them. The Feast was brought to Brava when a Portuguese merchant who was a devotee of the Holy Spirit travelling between Portugal and Brazil was caught in a storm and prayed to the Holy Spirit to be saved promising if they reached land safely to leave his crown there and establish the Feast. Ana was able to recall Feasts from her childhood in Brava as well as those put on in New Bedford. Key elements are that each year one household builds an altar to the crown (the altar is decorated with flowers and candles) and the devotees visit the home and pray. This is followed by a procession to the church (with singing and drumming) for a mass and social hour with food and occasionally music. The colors red and white and symbols of the dove and flames are all in evidence. This year in New Bedford the Bishop of Cape Verde will be present. The Portuguese community continues to celebrate this Feast also, but in a much more lavish way. Padre Pio instructed the Cape Verdean group to keep there festivities simple with a focus on the religious nature of the day. After interviewing Ana Monteiro, she introduced me to Maria Freitas at whose home all of the ceremonial objects for both Espiritu Santo and Sao Pedro are kept (crown, pilon, altar cloths, flags, etc.). Maria is currently sewing a robe for the Bishop. She also makes all of the skirts, sashes and flags for the procession. Her husband made a pilon (large, wooden mortor and pestle for grinding corn) which is an integral part of the Sao Pedro celebration. I will be interviewing Maria and her husband in the future.