

Hong Kong Portuguese Community Artefact Collection Campaign (January 2019)

In this issue, we will show you more of the artefacts we received in the collection campaign.

Artefacts that belonged to celebrities undoubtedly attract our attention, but the stories of ordinary people are equally mesmerising. Ms Melba Patricia Correia, a second-generation local Portuguese, donated 43 family photos covering five generations of her family to the Museum's artefact collection campaign. Ms Correia's ancestors settled in Macau in the late 19th century; by the early 20th century her grandparents had married in Macau. Ms Correia's father was born in 1927 and moved to Hong Kong at about 14 years old. He subsequently joined the British forces in Hong Kong and was given the Best Employee Award by the commander of the British Forces in Hong Kong.

It was common for Portuguese people to marry locals in their place of residence, and Ms Correia, born in 1950, is of Portuguese and Chinese descent. She enjoyed the flavours of the cultures of both sides of her family; for example, she was baptised in the Roman Catholic Church when she was small, following the Portuguese tradition, and speaks to her elders in the family in Portuguese, though she is also fluent in Cantonese. At Christmas, her family enjoys a sumptuous Portuguese feast, but they also celebrate traditional Chinese festivals, like Chinese New Year, the Dragon Boat Festival and the Mid-Autumn Festival, following local customs.

Before retirement, Ms Correia was a clerical staff at a hospital. Eager to serve the Hong Kong community, she joined the Auxiliary Police when she was young. The history of five generations of her family is indeed a microcosm of the history of Hong Kong's Portuguese community.



Family photo taken in Macau in 1912. Ms Correia's grandmother (first from left), stands next to her mother (second from left) and father (third from left).



Ms Correia's grandfather (middle row, first from right), pictured with fellow soldiers while stationed in Macau in the 1930s.



Photo showing Ms Correia's father (left) when stationed at the Shek Kong Barracks in Hong Kong, circa 1950.



Family photo taken in Hong Kong in 1958: Ms Correia (front row, centre) stands beside her grandmother (middle row, second from left), while her father (back row, first from left) and mother (back row, second from left) stand in the back. At this time, the family had lived in Hong Kong for more than a decade.



Catholicism is the mainstream religion of local Portuguese. This photograph, taken in 1959, shows Ms Correia (back row, centre) at her Confirmation.



Ms Correia (second from right), pictured with Hong Kong governor Murray MacLehose at the Duke of Edinburgh Award Presentation Ceremony in the 1970s.