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The day the media circus came to town

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Searching for Madeleine

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Because 365 days are much, much too long

Still missing...



...one year on



The Resident marks International Missing Children's Day

Friday, May 16,
at 12.30pm for lunch at 1pm
Fatacil Restaurant, Lagoa



Kate McCann at *The Resident's* lunch to mark International Missing Children's Day last year, which was held at *A Paleta* Restaurant in Lagoa

PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

Tickets: 15 euros available at *The Resident* office

All proceeds go to *Associação Portuguesa de Crianças Desaparecidas*
(Portuguese Association for Missing Children).

The association was created by relatives of Rui Pedro, who was aged 11 when he went missing from his hometown Paredes in 1998. Pictured on the left with Madeleine are just some of the other children currently missing in Portugal.

MISSING



Rui Pedro

For more information and to reserve tickets, please telephone Vânia Rawcliffe at 282 342 936 or email vania@the-resident.com

Madeleine McCann has now been missing for one year

With Madeleine McCann still missing a year after disappearing from her holiday apartment, more and more books are to be published detailing different versions of the events that have marked the past 12 months.

Several are already in the shops, written by Portuguese journalists and a former PJ investigator.

Now another former investigator is adding his name to the list of published authors - Gonçalo Amaral, who was the first chief-inspector to lead the Madeleine investigation.

According to Gerry and Kate McCann's spokesman Clarence Mitchell, this new book represents an attempt "to cash in on Madeleine's dramatic story".

However, Paulo Santos, who is Gonçalo Amaral's lawyer, said the book symbolises the recently retired PJ chief-inspector's "right to freedom of expression".

In an interview in the Portuguese daily newspaper *Correio da Manhã*, on Monday, the lawyer said this was his way "of defending himself from the campaigns he has been targeted with", which is "something he could not do before".

Meanwhile, newspapers in the UK have



According to the McCanns' spokesman Clarence Mitchell, the new book by Gonçalo Amaral (pictured) represents an attempt "to cash in on Madeleine's dramatic story"

PHOTO: LUSA

reported that Gerry and Kate McCann are preparing their own version of the events that marked the night of May 3 2007, in Praia da Luz.

The information forms part of a documentary which was due to be shown on ITV on Wednesday (April 30) to highlight the events of the last year in the McCanns' family life.

The programme, prepared exclusively for the first anniversary, focuses on the implementation of an EU version of the American Amber Alert System for missing children.

Clarence Mitchell said the book "will be the family's story, the only official book. It will be a detailed account of their experience, from the pain of the night Madeleine was kidnapped, to being named as official suspects in the investigation".

He added that the family had received numerous offers from authors and publishers but they were still in negotiations to finalise the deal.

"It is a legitimate way of raising money for the Find Madeleine fund but would also give them a chance to put across their side of the story, and to talk about some of the wider issues," he said.

Tomorrow (Saturday) at the Portimão Public Library, former PJ officer Paulo Pereira Cristóvão and Portuguese journalist Frederico Duarte Carvalho will lead a debate about the last year of the Madeleine investigation.

The debate is based on the book *O Enigma da Praia da Luz*, the Praia da Luz enigma, written by Carvalho and published in March. To date, this was the last book to be printed in Portugal about the Madeleine case.

While many say the media coverage of the Madeleine investigation has been treated as fiction, there are now fears in Portugal that the case may be dropped by the official investigators.

In the meantime, and one year on, there is still no news of the whereabouts of Madeleine McCann.

CECÍLIA PIRES
cecilia@the-resident.com



Kate and Gerry McCann's book will be a detailed account of their experience, "from the pain of the night Madeleine was kidnapped, to being named as official suspects in the investigation"

PHOTO: SOLARPIX

The missing boy who time forgot

As the world marks the first anniversary of the disappearance of Madeleine McCann, a couple in Germany will be remembering their six-year old son who went missing in the Algarve 12 years ago.

Renè Hasèe, who was six, disappeared from the Amoreira beach near Aljezur on June 19, 1996.

His mother, Anita, a 37-year old postal worker who was on holiday with her partner Peter and René, told a German newspaper at the time: "We had just eaten something and gone down

to the beach." It was around 6pm and she said René was around 30 metres in front of her when "suddenly our son disappeared as if he had been swallowed by the earth."

She immediately notified the local police, who, she claimed at the time, were not very interested and did not bother to search for René, telling her he had probably drowned.

However, this recollection of events is not shared by a GNR agent, who is still working at the Aljezur GNR branch. He told *The Resident* that he remembers of-

icers spending "day after day searching the beach for the child".

As with any other missing children cases, the file on René was sent to the Polícia Judiciária, said a GNR spokesman. But the Lisbon headquarters of the criminal police have no record of René Hasèe.

"The missing people's database in digital format goes back to 1996," said the spokesman. "The name is not registered on the computer database and we have not found it in the paper entries."

However, the spokesman said

this does not mean the case is closed.

"Sometimes, a case has to wait years until new information is found in connection to it and it is possible this is one of those cases," said the spokesman.

The disappearance received no publicity in the Algarve and only limited media coverage at home in Germany.

But, as the world focuses on Madeleine McCann, we should also spare a thought for one German couple who even now, 12 years on, have not given up hope of finding their son.



Renè Hasèe was six when he disappeared from the Amoreira beach near Aljezur on June 19, 1996



'The village has a large sweeping bay that provides a safe, clean, sandy beach making it ideal for holidaymakers'

PHOTO: SOLARPIX

Praia da Luz: A town in the spotlight

When Madeleine McCann went missing, very few people could point to Praia da Luz on a map.

In the year since, the sleepy town of Praia da Luz has been thrust into the media spotlight but Luz has not always been known just as the place Madeleine went missing.

Situated in the Lagos council, six kilometres to the west of Lagos and only an hour from Faro airport, Praia da Luz is described by tour operators as a beach destination and as being a quaint rustic Portuguese fishing town.

Tourism developments in Praia da Luz

are mainly a mixture of low rise apartments and villas of varying sizes. The tourist accommodation combined with the mixture of family friendly bars and restaurants have made this small town a firm favourite with those wanting a traditional family holiday.

The village has a large sweeping bay that provides a safe, clean, sandy beach making it ideal for holidaymakers to enjoy the clean waters and play or sunbathe on the beach. Every year, the beach goes from empty in December to full of life and noise during August as people from all over the world come to enjoy the holiday atmosphere.

The town demographics reflect the quiet pace of life experienced in Praia da Luz. The 2001 census showed a retired population of 45 per cent and seven per cent of the population was recorded as being under 16.

This is very much a sleepy town that used to rely on fishing and agriculture as a form of income but has diversified to accommodate the increasing numbers of tourists who visit the town now.

When Madeleine McCann went missing, the town became full to capacity as the media world descended. Now, a year on, anyone visiting the beach resort would never imag-

ine the frenzy surrounding Praia da Luz only a year ago.

A stroll around the town reveals that the quiet pace of life has resumed, there are people playing on the beach again, families walking along in the sun, holidaymakers enjoying a drink in one of the many bars or cafes. For a short time, the world felt they knew Praia da Luz, now those who really do know the town have reclaimed the idyllic setting for themselves once again.

DAISY SAMPSON

daisy.sampson@the-resident.com

TIMELINE

2007



PHOTO: SOLARPIX

April 28 - Arrival of the McCann family and a group of friends for a holiday in the Algarve.

May 3 -

Madeleine McCann disappears from the bedroom where she was sleeping with her siblings in a holiday apartment at the Ocean Club Resort, in Praia da Luz, Lagos. Her parents, both doctors, were dining with friends in the resort's Tapas restaurant, around 50 metres away.



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGALIMAGES

May 5 - The Faro PJ director officially announces Madeleine was abducted and reveals that a suspect's

profile is being shown to locals. John Buck, the British ambassador at the time, drives to Praia da Luz to meet the McCann family and announces that three British police officers will be arriving to help the Portuguese police.

May 7 - The search area is enlarged by a further 15 kilometres from the resort.

May 9 - Mari Olli, 45, a Danish tourist living in Fuengirola, Spain, says she has spotted Madeleine at a service station in Morocco.

May 10 - The Portimão PJ calls in the McCann family for further testimonies while their house is searched. General searches by GNR teams are less frequent and the PJ ensures the media there are no suspicions regarding Madeleine's parents.

May 11 - GNR teams are ordered to stop looking for Madeleine. Scottish businessman Stephen Winyard offers a reward of 1.4 million euros for the person who finds Madeleine.

May 12 - Madeleine's birthday - she is four.





PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES



'A stroll around the town reveals that the quiet pace of life has resumed'

PHOTO: SOLARPIX

Luz Ocean Club moves on

As Kate and Gerry McCann fight to keep the disappearance of their daughter in the public consciousness, there are others who are keen to move on and disassociate themselves with the Madeleine McCann case.

Madeleine and her family had been staying at Luz Ocean Club when she disappeared on May 3 in Praia da Luz. The resort became the centre of unprecedented media attention.

The Resident contacted the Luz Ocean Club to find out what they were going to do to mark the anniversary of Madeleine's disappearance. A spokesman told *The Resident*: "We have nothing planned."

Ocean Club stresses that it will be "business as usual" for them, with May being a busy time for holiday makers visiting the resort.

The summer season has begun for the Ocean Club and they are hoping that the press and media will not be invading them and affecting the holidays of those at the resort this May.

Madeleine may still be missing but Luz Ocean Club is trying to move on from the tragedy.

TIMELINE

May 14 – Robert Murat, Michaela Walczuch and her husband Luís António are called in for questioning by the PJ. Robert Murat is named as an arguido after 14 hours of questioning.



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGALIMAGES

May 17 – The PJ search Robert Murat's house.

May 19 – A video with images of Madeleine is shown to the crowd at FA Cup final at Wembley Stadium.

May 23 – Gerry and Kate travel to Fátima Sanctuary, where they pray with thousands of pilgrims.

May 25 – Portimão PJ releases an official description of the possible abductor and the McCanns give their first interview.

May 30 – Gerry and Kate travel to Italy and meet the Pope in St. Peter's Square, in Rome, where the pontiff blesses a picture of Madeleine.

June 1 – The McCanns are received by the Spanish Minister of Internal Affairs. They ask for the Spanish government's help in the search for Madeleine.

June 15 – The PJ investigates a tip from an anonymous letter sent to the Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf*, saying Madeleine's body should be at a specific spot in Odiáxere, a small village near Lagos. The tip turned out to be false.

June 22 – Fifty days after Madeleine went missing, Gerry and Kate mark the day with a balloon release at Praia da Luz.



PHOTO: CECÍLIA PIRES

On the same day, Geneva airport sees a huge police operation, after two witnesses report sightings of Madeleine.

June 28 – An Italian man and a Portuguese woman are arrested near the Spanish city of Cadiz, after attempting to extort the McCann family.

The day the media circus came to town

On the morning of May 3, 2007 Praia da Luz was bathed in sunlight with the promise of a good day, a good month and a good season. The weather was settling and everything was fine in this lovely part of the western Algarve.

On the morning of May 4, 2007 Praia da Luz was awash with people, including staff

from *The Resident*, all looking for missing Madeleine McCann. Little did we know how large a part this pretty little British girl was to play in our lives.

By the morning of Saturday, May 5, the residents and holiday-makers of Luz were experiencing the beginning of a media circus the likes of which had never been experienced in the Algarve.

Kilometres of cable snaked

across the ground, television vans topped with satellite dishes, radio cars and scores of media personnel all vied for position close to the McCann holiday apartment. The narrow pavements were littered with journalists writing copy.

Until Madeleine's disappearance, youngsters had been allowed the enjoyment of a carefree vacation, under the watchful gaze of their parents. Now parents were openly chaperoning their children, monitoring closely their every movement in the warm May sun – arm's length was becoming too far away with Madeleine still missing.

And with no leads to explain Madeleine's disappearance, it seemed that she had simply disappeared into thin air.

Media presenters from all major television companies arrived in Luz. Why were the British TV stations spending so much on covering this story? What was so special about Madeleine – or her family – that warranted this sort of unprecedented treatment?

Was it true that the McCanns were manipulating the media attention – and if so would any of us have acted differently if our child had disappeared? *The Resident* staff, also trying to answer these questions, were to become key in assisting the overseas media, with live interviews for television and radio becoming almost an hourly occurrence. A fascinating insight into the lives of the big media boys was unfolding before us.

Having undertaken inter-

views for radio stations, I was asked to do a piece to camera for the *BBC* – and suddenly my mobile phones started ringing. Everyone wanted a piece of Portugal and that meant finding local people who were close to the story – and of course *The Resident* was.

The interview coverage went on for days and weeks as the storylines altered from the way in which the Portuguese police authorities had acted, to the culpability of the parents in leaving their children alone. The latter was emotive, taking listeners and viewers into the realms of 'what if it had been us' and the difference in culture between the Brits who put their children to bed at 7pm and the southern Europeans who take their children out to dinner with them.

Working with the visiting media was in the main a pleasure – although there were fickle parts – one, being called at 10pm asking if you can be at Praia da Luz at 5.45am the following morning for a 6am piece. Alarm clock goes off at 4.45am. Shower and orange juice, and just as you are dressing, the phone rings to say you are no longer required. Thank goodness there was no microphone to hear my expletives!

The TV presenters and their producers and crews were always polite and helpful. The people of Luz may not have thought so as the media took ownership of Luz causing discomfort to those who live in the area as well as to those on holiday. It was hoped that any frustrations were soon forgotten



Ian Woods from *Sky News*

PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

ensuring that holidaymakers would return to Portugal, for this is, after all, our bread and butter industry.

In the early days, I took every opportunity to defend the police authorities and the ways in which they had acted and

reacted to this tragic story – it would have been too easy to forget that children just do not go missing in the Algarve and the authorities were dealing with something previously unknown.

Yes, I am sure that they made mistakes – but they were not alone in this. A leading presenter on *Sky News* ensured that my name appeared in *Private Eye* by asserting on live TV that I knew Robert Murat and his mother



Mary Nightingale from *ITV*

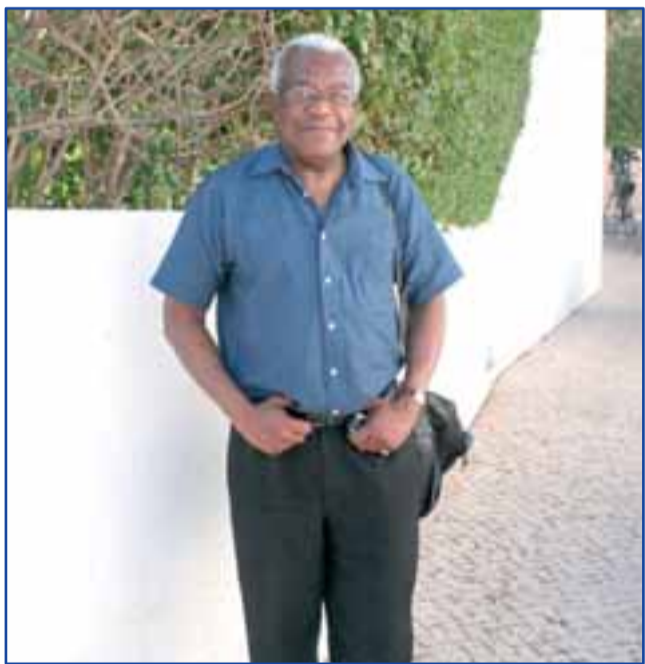
PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

his mother Jennifer, is searched again by a team of 10 PJ inspectors, two British police officers, Civil Protection members from Lagos and Câmara workers. Olegário Sousa, spokesperson for the PJ, says the operation was intended to confirm the existence, or not, of traces of Madeleine.

August 6 – A Portuguese daily newspaper reports, for the first time, an accidental death theory. The newspaper bases the information on police sources



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES



Trevor McDonald from *ITV News*

PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES



Kate Garraway from *GMTV* interviewing John O'Connor

PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

TIMELINE

July 6 – Another man is arrested in Holland for an extortion attempt in the Madeleine case.

July 10 – Portimão PJ calls Robert Murat in for another session. He attends the Portimão *Departamento de Investigação Criminal* (DIC) with his lawyer Francisco Pagarete.

July 16 – Gerry and Kate McCann thank *Harry Potter* author J. K. Rowling for including a ribbon and a poster with Madeleine's image with her latest book.



July 23 – Gerry McCann travels to the United States where he meets with American organisations working on child abuse and missing children.

July 28 – In Belgium, a local psychologist says she saw Madeleine in the company of two adults in the small village of Tonges, in the north of the country near the Dutch border. A soda bottle from which the girl drank is sent for testing. The lead was later confirmed to be false.

July 31 – A Portimão PJ team, aided by British police and a team of two dogs specialising in blood and bodies tracing, inspects the apartment from where Madeleine disappeared, as well as other locations in Praia da Luz.

August 4 – *Casa Lilianna*, where Robert Murat lives with



The Resident's Sheena Rawcliffe being interviewed by Jane Hill from BBC PHOTO: MIKE ALMOND

Jenny. I had to explain (on live TV) that I did not - *Private Eye* enjoyed pointing out the vagaries of live TV.

I made it my mission to ensure that as many viewers and listeners as possible were encouraged to think of Portugal as a safe destination for their family holidays.

The dilemma for *The Resident* was how to satisfy the public hunger for news without adding to already rife speculation. Each day, the story mandered this way and that and our job was, and still is, to stick to the facts.

Our online audience figures rocketed and we were one of the first European newspapers to create a separate Madeleine section on our website.

Madeleine's disappearance appears to be a story without end - a story which has brought heartbreak to one family unit - a story which put the Algarve firmly in the spotlight - a story which brought unexpected income to the Algarve (the media all needed feeding, clothing and somewhere to stay).

The facts remain as they have for months - a little girl went missing from her holiday apartment in Portugal. She has never been found. No one has

been charged with her disappearance. Everything else is rumour or conjecture.

Regardless, one little girl remains missing, one set of parents wake up to this fact each day and, along with other family members and friends, continue to pray that no news really is good news.

The McCanns hold on to the belief that Madeleine is still alive - because there is nothing to suggest that she is not. I, like countless others, hope their faith is rewarded.

SHEENA RAWCLIFFE



Journalists outside Robert Murat's house PHOTO: MIKE ALMOND



Waiting for the action PHOTO: MIKE ALMOND

False sightings and bogus leads



A search operation in the Arade dam near Silves in January and February was commissioned by a lawyer from Madeira who said he had been informed by a secret source that Madeleine's body was there PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

In the year since Madeleine McCann went missing, the media has been filled with news of sightings and leads on the four-year-old's whereabouts, from Morocco to Belgium, all of which have proved to be false.

These sightings are just a small sample of the leads that the Portuguese and international authorities, as well as the media, received from the public since Madeleine's disappearance.

One of the first widely reported sightings came from Mari Olli, a Danish tourist who said that she spotted Madeleine at a service station in the Moroccan city of Marrakech in early May.

A second sighting in Morocco was of a small blond girl who was photographed in August. After investigation by the authorities, the girl in the photograph was identified as being five-year-old Bouchra Benaïsse, the youngest member of a Moroccan family living in a small village of Zinat near Tetuan in the north of the country.

There have many other alleged sightings, with media reports of Madeleine having been seen on July 28 in the village of Tonges in Belgium leading to a soft drinks bottle being tested for Madeleine's DNA. A Dutch student in Montpellier, France, alerted the authorities after seeing who she believed to be Madeleine McCann at a petrol station, which led to the petrol station's CCTV cam-

eras being confiscated by the police. On June 15, the Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf* received an anonymous letter which said that Madeleine McCann's body was in a specific spot in Odiáxere, a small village near Lagos.

This was followed by a stream of other claims including the extensive searching by divers of the Arade dam near Silves in January and February. The search operation was privately funded by a lawyer from Madeira who said he had been informed by a secret source that Madeleine's body was there.

All of these well-intentioned reports were also accompanied by some not so well intentioned approaches to the McCann family by people claiming to know where Madeleine's body was, to extort money from the family or for no apparent reason.

A year on though, and after many appeals, the only conclusive fact is that there appears to be no evidence of a single genuine sighting of Madeleine McCann.

Eloise Walton

WHAT PEOPLE SAY...

"The police are doing nothing, they just check on traffic fines. When you need the police for protection you never see them and when you want them, they don't show up".

Artur Soares, salesman, Portimão

TIMELINE

who revealed that blood traces were found on one of the walls of the room where Madeleine was sleeping when she went missing. On the same day, the PJ inspects vehicles belonging to Robert Murat and his mother at the underground car park near the Portimão DIC.

August 7 - The PJ admits that further inquiries might occur after the forensic examinations to the samples collected the previous day.

August 11 - Portuguese PJ officially admits that Madeleine may be dead. In an interview with the *BBC*, Olegário Sousa said this was a possibility based on recent leads. On the same day, hundreds of people waited for Gerry and Kate McCann to arrive at the Praia da Luz church for a special



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

service marking **One Hundred Days of Hope** since Madeleine went missing. The Roman Catholic mass took place at 11am, a full church and dozens of journalists, photographers and TV crews remaining outside the small building.

September 6 - Kate McCann is questioned for 11 hours by Portimão PJ.

September 7 - Kate and Gerry are named *arguidos* in the investigation into their daughter's disappearance.



PHOTOS: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES



Continued on page X

Bird's eye view

Civil protection helicopters for rescue emergency and medical assistance are based in Loulé heliport on a permanent basis.

On the early days of May of last year, they were also called in to assist in the searches for Madeleine.

Their mission was to identify any possible site that could be connected to Madeleine McCann. This

air search was held above land and sea and in conjunction with land forces in different locations of Praia da Luz.

The sky above the village was also to be invaded by other civil aircraft, mainly helicopters and small planes, carrying journalists and photographers who were eager to capture images of the scene.



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

Searching for M



Helping noses

Sniffer dogs were much in evidence in the early days of the search for Madeleine McCann following her disappearance on May 3 last year.

These Lisbon-based animals were joined later in the investigation by dogs from the UK especially trained to find dead bodies and used to search the Ocean Club apartment used by the McCanns and the McCann's rental car.

Apart from the criminal police, the Polícia Judiciária (PJ), all other Portuguese police and military forces have *Equipas Cinotécnicas*, dog teams comprising a handler and one dog.

In the Madeleine case, the dogs used came mainly from GNR sniffer dog teams, because of their expertise in the search and rescue of people.

GNR dog teams have frequently been called in to help in international incidents, like earthquakes and terrorist attacks involving human victims.

Their training includes also drug search operations and perishable goods like food and tobacco.

Specialist police dogs from South Yorkshire were brought into Praia da Luz to help in the search for Madeleine McCann in the weeks after her disappearance.

British detectives contacted the Por-

tuguese police to offer the experience of their sniffer dogs to help in the search for a conclusion to Madeleine case, and this was accepted.

The dogs, referred to as enhanced victim recovery dogs, are trained specifically to detect the scent of human remains and were used at the McCanns' holiday apartment.

A very limited number of these dogs exist in the world and they were most recently used in Jersey at Haut de la Garenne where police are investigating incidents at a former children's home.

The specialist skills the dogs possess allow them to be able to smell through solid materials, including concrete, made possible by specialist training in scientific techniques.

These training methods have been developed by Martin Grime, formally of South Yorkshire police, in conjunction with the UK National Policing Improvement Agency (NIPA) and the FBI in the US.

Trainers keep the details about how the dogs are trained closely guarded but explain that it is a ques-



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

tion of focusing the dogs on tasks. The dogs may be few in number but are employed by the Metropolitan Police force in London and in the forces of Surrey and Greater Manchester.

The limited number of dogs trained and available means that they are constantly working, thus keeping their skills sharp and making them a very effective tool in police work.

The water gu



Maritime police were called in to help in the search for Madeleine in the first hours of May 3 last year and on many subsequent occasions.

This coastal service is part of the Navy's military surveillance and rescue department and keeps a 24-hour

check of the Portuguese coast. Their intervention involved the search of the sea and underwater around Praia da Luz.

It was also the Marine Corps were called in to inspect the PJ, the Lagos Ma-

Madeleine



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

Ropes and dog bones found in dam search

Some bones, later shown to be of canine origin, ropes, a sock and plastic bags were all that was found in the Arade Dam following two private searches for Madeleine commissioned by a Madeira-based lawyer Marcos Aragão Correia.

The first search was held in January and was carried out with the help of *Time Dive* divers from Lagos.

The second dive, held between March 10 and 14, featured a strengthened team of divers, off-duty firefighters, also commissioned by Aragão Correia.

On this occasion the cost was met by sponsorship from the Sociedade Portuguesa de Engenharia e Construção, Lda (SPEC), a Portuguese engineering and construction organisation based in Portimão.

As neither search succeeded in finding Madeleine, Aragão Correia has now returned to his previous occupation as a human rights lawyer in Pico, Madeira, where his office is based.



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

Guardians



PHOTO: CECÍLIA PIRES

ese coastline. one year ago in- f all the beach- caves in the area z. Maritime Police who spect, together with rina a few days

after Madeleine went missing. This search followed a tip-off about a man who was allegedly seen in the area carrying a child and heading to what was later proved to be his home boat, which he used to travel to many countries, and ended up as another inconsequential lead.

Searching on horseback

GNR horse brigades are used mainly to patrol the countryside. These teams are also called into action as first intervention forces whenever there are safety threats involving mobs or riot situations.

In the Madeleine case, these teams were frequent-

ly seen on the first days of the search for the little girl, alone or in pairs, in the more inaccessible areas surrounding Praia da Luz.

The access roads leading to the old fishing parish were also controlled by the GNR teams on horses for various days following May 3.



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

The police and security forces involved

Many of the various police and security force departments in Portugal were involved in the search for Madeleine McCann in the days that followed her disappearance from Praia da Luz, on May 3.

The **GNR** were the first to be called to the scene on that Thursday night. They are the National Republican Guard and were created in 1911. They are essentially the military police force that operates out of the big urban areas. The GNR tasks include law enforcement, security and public order, international co-operation, road regulation enforcement, help and first aid.

Operational departments of the GNR police force also include the dog rescue teams that were used in the search operations held for many days in the area surrounding Praia da Luz. The breeds most often used for tracking or drug finding include German shepherd, Labrador retriever and Rottweiler

Protecção Civil or Civil Protection officers were also involved



The GNR were the first to be called to the scene on Thursday, May 3 2007

PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGALIMAGES

in the searches for Madeleine and were responsible for the helicop-

ter searches on Friday, May 4. Their main objectives are to prevent and act as operational co-ordinators in serious accidents and catastrophes. They are also responsible for identifying risks and limiting their effects, helping and assisting people in danger and helping to restore normality to affected areas.

Polícia Marítima officers were called to help in the early search operations held in Praia da Luz. This is an armed and uniformed force composed of navy and military personnel. They specialise in all matters involving the sea and the coastline, including searching ships and coastlines and regulating maritime activities. Any search operations related to drowning along the Portuguese coast are always co-ordinated by the maritime police.

The **Bombeiros** or fire brigade were also heavily involved in the

searches. Apart from their main objectives to combat fires they also assist the Civil Protection and other government authorities in specific cases, particularly ones involving missing people.

The **Polícia Judiciária** or Judicial Police were created in 1945, out of the Polícia Civil or Civil Police created by D. Luis on July 2 1867. This force investigates all criminal cases including missing persons.

Due to their specific areas of action, the PJ are the only police force that is controlled by the Ministry of Justice and not the Internal Affairs Ministry, as most of the others are. The Maritime Police are under the Naval Ministry umbrella. This police remain the only force with an active role in the case, leading the investigation until the Public Prosecutor decides the outcome of the all enquiry.

THE PORTUGUESE police have come under heavy criticism, particularly from the McCann camp, for their handling of the Madeleine case over the past year. Whatever your view IS on this, there is no doubt that the spotlight has focussed on five officers in particular. Here *The Resident* takes a look at the main personalities.



PHOTO: LUSA

Alípio Ribeiro has been the national director of the Portuguese Polícia Judiciária since 2006. He graduated in law from Lisbon University and entered the Public Prosecutor (*Ministério Público*) in 1973, spending most of his early career in the north of Portugal. Before taking office as national director, he was one of the Porto's regional deputies of the public prosecutor.

Although he kept a distant role in the Madeleine case, his actions became

WHAT PEOPLE SAY...

"How many children go missing everyday and who has heard about them? I don't think it has been detrimental to the Algarve at all."

Mark Smith, retired, Chester, UK



A Polícia Judiciária forensics detective looking for finger prints

PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGALIMAGES

TIMELINE

From page VII

September 9 - The McCann family returns to England and claim their innocence in a statement on arrival. The couple announces the hiring of two lawyers, Michael Caplan, who successfully defended General Pinochet against an extraction request from Spain, and Angus McBride, known for defending celebrities.

September 11 - Portimão PJ officially deliver the case files to the Public Prosecutor to be forwarded to court before a final decision over a possible trial.



PHOTO: PA

September 12 - The car used by the McCanns after Madeleine went missing is hidden by friends of the couple so further forensic tests can be carried out by private experts.

October 2 - Portimão PJ director Gonçalo Amaral makes derogatory statements about the British police and is dismissed from the case.

October 8 - The PJ National director names Paulo Rebelo as the new head of the Madeleine investigation and head of the Portimão department.

October 24 - Gerry and Kate McCann speak for the first time since being named suspects in Madeleine's disappearance by appearing on Spanish television, primarily to promote a new telephone hotline.

November 1 - Gerry McCann returns to work as a consultant cardiologist at Leicester's Glenfield Hospital for the first time since Madeleine went missing in May.

November 19 - A private detective hired by Gerry and Kate McCann is certain that Madeleine is alive. Francisco Marco, who is based in Barcelona, also told a US television station that "the net is closing on the youngster's abductors".

November 20 - In a personal video, filmed by a family friend in August and broadcast on the BBC's *Panorama* programme, Gerry speaks about a "window of opportunity" taken by an abductor and says that "a predator" was watching his family in the days before his daughter disappeared.

December 6 - The Find Madeleine Fund starts a 112,290 euro advertising campaign in Southern Spain, which will also target North Africa and Portugal.



The PJ faces that became recognised around the world

more visible in the media after he ordered the removal of Gonçalo Amaral from the investigation.

He was called on by the Ministry of Justice on several occasions in the past year to explain the developments in the case. His presence was also required for a special enquiry by MPs at the national parliament, held due to the systematic leaks to the press that the case had suffered since day one.



PHOTO: LUSA

Guilhermino Encarnação is still the head of Faro branch of Polícia Judiciária and one of the national deputies of the Portuguese criminal police.

He graduated in law after joining the PJ as an agent and soon progressed to become an inspector in the *Direcção Central de Combate ao Banditismo*, the national division against crime.

He was part of the PJ team who fought against the FP25, an armed terrorist group responsible for several bomb explosions and killings in Portu-

gal in the first half of the 80s.

At an improvised press conference held by the PJ on May 10 last year, he was the first PJ officer to provide information about the Madeleine McCann case.

Speaking outside the PJ's Portimão office, he revealed to dozens of journalists that the PJ was convinced that three-year-old Madeleine had been abducted.



PHOTO: LUSA

Gonçalo Amaral was the head of the investigation into the Madeleine case from day one until October 2. That was day when, following controversial statements he made to a Portuguese daily newspaper, Gonçalo Amaral was dismissed from the investigation and also from his office as head of the Portimão DIC of the PJ. The order came directly from Alípio Ribeiro, the national director of the criminal police.

Previously, Gonçalo Amaral built a career as a leading inspector in areas

such as crime and drug trafficking fighting. He also took part in the campaign against the terrorist group FP25, who caused panic in Portugal in the early 80s, with political killings and bomb attacks.



PHOTO: LUSA

Paulo Rebelo was called in by national director Alípio Ribeiro to replace Gonçalo Amaral as head of the Portimão PJ department on October 8.

Described as experienced in criminal investigation and a very diplomatic and prudent investigator, he managed to temporarily stop the information leaks about the Madeleine case and ordered different lines of investigation.

His career started in Porto at the economic crime department and later at the drug trafficking division. Transferred to Lisbon, he rapidly progressed in his career and assumed several top positions in 2002. Three years later became one of the national deputy directors of the PJ, but he resigned in 2006 in

support of the former national director Santos Cabral.



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGALIMAGES

Chief inspector **Olegário Sousa** represented the more communicative period of the investigation into Madeleine's disappearance. For several months he was the public face of the investigation, briefing and giving interviews to representatives from the local, national and international media.

On September 17, however, he was called to return to his Lisbon team as the investigation entered a new phase, with the Portimão public prosecutor assuming control of the case.

The chief inspector, who always criticised the information leaks affecting the investigation, particularly to the Portuguese-language press, returned to his normal police duties, leading a team of investigators in a department at the Lisbon PJ office dedicated to art robberies and connected crimes.



UK forensic service plays key role in investigation

Forensic tests on items taken from the McCanns' holiday apartment, the villa the family rented later and their rental car last year are still said to be incomplete.

The British Forensic Science Service, which was called in by PJ investigators, told *The Resident* this week that the case was still open and that even if there was any information, they would be unable to give it to the public.

The organisation, which is owned by the UK government, is one of the best in the world in forensic analysis and sent preliminary reports to the PJ early last September.

With 11 facilities in the UK, the service specialises in property crime, serious crime, drugs, road policing, organised crime, international crime, hi-tech crime and commercial crime.

It uses advanced technology to provide forensic science services and is also involved in training, consultancy and scientific support for UK agencies and private customers.

According to the company's website, it dealt with 130,000 cases in 2004/05, attended approximately 1,800 crime scenes, and appeared as expert witnesses in court on 2,500 occasions.

The last report about the tests being carried out was in the Portuguese media in late November, when a senior PJ officer was quoted as saying that the reports received were inconclusive.

WHAT PEOPLE SAY...

"The McCanns should have never left the children on their own in a foreign country. UK police should have arrested them for neglect. They have lost a child and got to travel the world."

Carol Dowling, retired, Carvoeiro

TIMELINE



PHOTO: SUPPLIED

December 13 - Praia da Luz's community "has not forgotten the little British girl and special prayers are still being held every Friday" according to the catholic priest José Manuel Pacheco,

He was reacting to reports in the UK media saying he "ordered the removal of scores of green and yellow ribbons put up as a symbol of hope in the days after Madeleine vanished".

December 21 - Gerry and Kate McCann prepare to celebrate Christmas in a "quiet and family environment", while the police persist on the line of investigations leading to their responsibility about Madeleine's disappearance.

2008

January 3 - Eight months after Madeleine went missing, Portimão's Public Prosecutor has to decide if the investigation is to have an extended period for further procedures or if the case is filed.

January 31 - A Madeira-based lawyer commissions a diving search for Madeleine in Arade Dam, near Silves. Marcos Aragão says he commissioned the operation after being tipped off about the location shortly after Madeleine

went missing. Time Dive, a diving company from Lagos, carried out the search.

February 4 - In an interview with Portugal's *Rádio Renascença*, Alípio Ribeiro, national director of the Polícia Judiciária (PJ), says detectives were "hasty" in making Madeleine McCann's parents suspects in her disappearance. However, Mr Ribeiro reveals in the interview he believes that there "perhaps should have been another assessment" before this happened.



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGALIMAGES

Max Clifford fights Robert Murat's corner

Max Clifford is known in the media world for his magical spin and for using his unique brand of media manipulation to turn the fortunes of many of the famous and the infamous.

He has represented a myriad of celebrities during a career spanning more than 40 years and has dealt with some of the most controversial characters in the media.

For the past six months, Max Clifford has been representing Robert Murat free of charge in an effort to help him and his family clear his name.

He firmly believes that the British media ruined

Robert Murat's life and told *The Resident* that after meeting with Robert in England he recommended getting lawyers involved and suing a number of media outlets for what he describes as "an assassination of Robert Murat by the British press".

Max Clifford arranged a meeting with the law firm *Simons Muirhead and Burton* who are now representing Robert Murat in "respect of a number of libel actions against *Sky*, *The Daily Express*, *The Sunday Express*, *The Daily Star*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Evening Standard*, *The Metro*, *The Daily Mirror*, *The Sunday Mirror*, *The News of the World*,

The Sun and *The Scotsman*".

"He is suing the British press because there are no foundations to the allegations. They (the British press) printed allegations as fact but they were only allegations and nothing else, Max Clifford told *The Resident*.

The libel action was prompted after the successful outcome of Gerry and Kate McCann's action against two British papers resulting in considerable damages being paid to the couple for defamation of character.

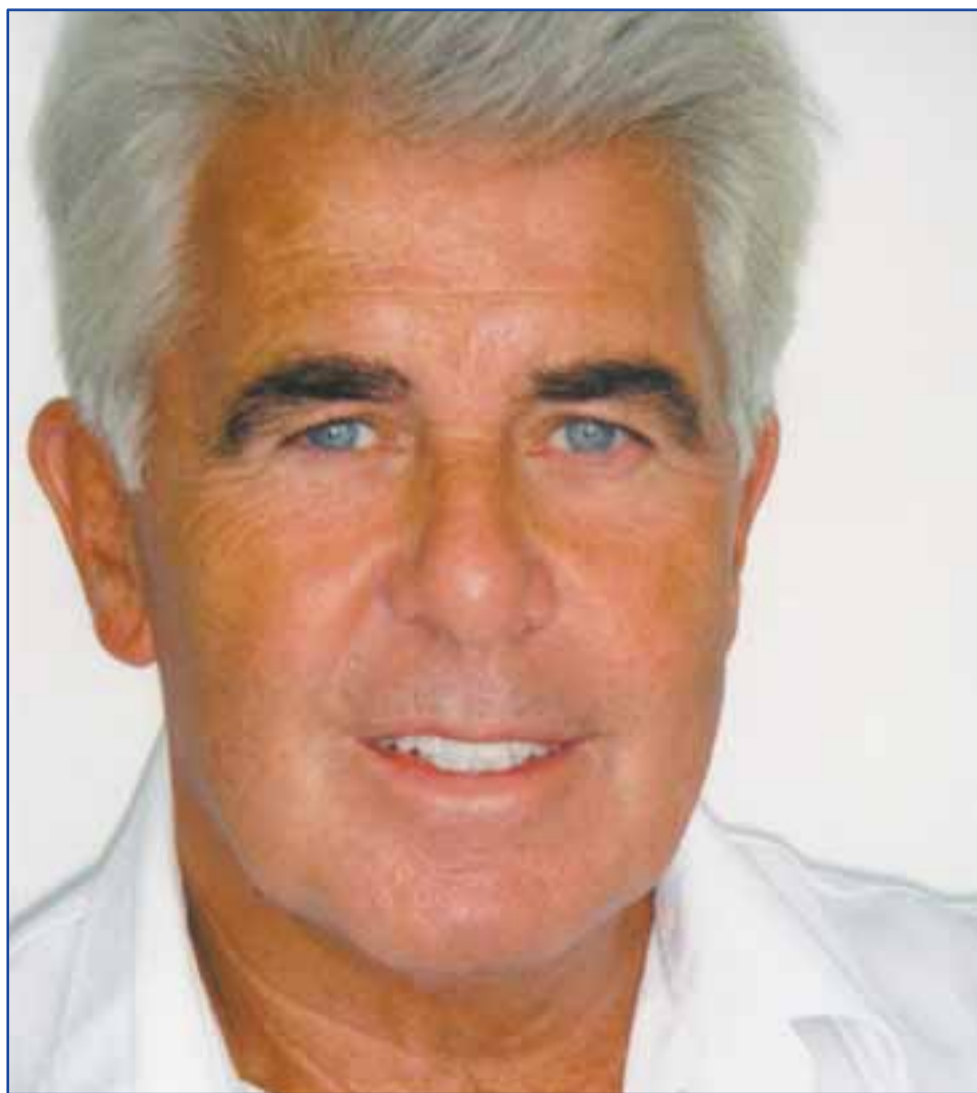
"The McCanns have sued successfully and Robert Murat has been treated just as badly and deserves his justice," said Max Clifford.

"The treatment of Robert by the British media is disgusting and nobody else is helping this man clear his name, so I am offering free advice to him and his family. He will only become a client when he is cleared of his *arguido* status.

"Robert Murat only wants two things - to have his *arguido* status removed and to clear his name."

Robert Murat formally became an *arguido*, an official suspect, on May 15 last year after Lori Campbell, a British journalist from the *Sunday Mirror*, alerted Portuguese police of her suspicions about the British expatriate.

In an article in the *Sunday Mirror* on November 25, she describes how "his behaviour unnerved me" and she felt she had "no option



PR guru Max Clifford

PHOTO: SUPPLIED



Max Clifford is advising Robert Murat for no fee

PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

TIMELINE

February 15 - Melissa Firing, a Dutch student, alerts French authorities in Montpellier, following what she believed to be a sighting of Madeleine McCann at a petrol station on the high-way leading to Montpellier. Tapes from the station's CCTV system were immediately confiscated by the police. The images showed a man and a girl who looked similar but wasn't Madeleine McCann.

March 19 - Two national British newspapers publish unprecedented front page apologies to Gerry and Kate McCann and apologise in court for running more than 100 defamatory stories suggesting the couple were involved in Madeleine's disappearance. The *Daily Express* and the *Daily Star* also agree to pay a "substantial" sum, reported as being more than 600,000 euros, into the *Find Madeleine* campaign fund.



PHOTO: THE RESIDENT

March 20 - A car belonging to Russian computer expert Sergey Malinka, who has been questioned by police as part of the Madeleine McCann investigation, was destroyed in the early hours in Praia da Luz. A spokesman for the national head office of the *Polícia Judiciária* says "the *Polícia Judiciária* can confirm that, because of the nature of the incident, it has opened an inquiry to investigate the circumstances of the fire which destroyed the car of Sergey Malinka".

but to call the police".

As a result, police first questioned Robert Murat in May and then spent two days excavating his garden in August, where nothing was found.

The Resident contacted Lori Campbell at *The Sunday Mirror* but she refused to comment on any aspect relating to Robert Murat or his impending libel action.

Robert Murat has always maintained his innocence and Max Clifford believes

him: "From talking to him and his family, I believe he is innocent of all charges."

Max Clifford has arranged interviews with members of Robert Murat's family in a bid to increase positive publicity surrounding Robert. "Robert's innocence has been declared by his family. They are not *arguidos* and can therefore talk to the press and put

his story across."

Max Clifford hopes that this will begin the process of changing the public perception of Robert Murat, who he says can now no longer work because of the case surrounding him.

"There has been not one shred of proof or evidence against Robert," said Max Clifford.

EXCLUSIVE by DAISY SAMPSON
daisy.sampson@the-resident.com

April 7 - Portuguese police investigators travel to the UK to re-interview the seven friends who were with Gerry and Kate McCann on the night Madeleine went missing from the family's holiday apartment in Praia da Luz on May 3. After 344 days since the British toddler went missing, the new enquiries are the PJ's last effort to find new lines of investigation before the case is filed.



PHOTO: CC/ALGARVE PHOTO PRESS

Business unaffected in Praia da Luz



The Madeleine case has not effected an established tourist destination like Praia da Luz

PHOTO: CECÍLIA PIRES

WHAT PEOPLE SAY...

"The McCanns have never held their hands up and said it is their fault. I feel very sorry for them but they need to take responsibility for their actions."

Jane Evans, villa manager, Caramujeira

"I haven't been put off coming on holiday to the Algarve, I wouldn't want to stay in the same apartment where it all happened but I would stay in the same resort. I think she was taken by a paedophile and families and children are at risk from this anywhere in the world. In light of the whole Maddy case, the police presence is likely to be more prevalent in the Algarve".

Shelley Rose, management accountant, London, UK

The general feeling in Praia da Luz is very much one of moving on from the tragic disappearance of Madeline McCann.

The effect the case has had on a variety of businesses in the area appears to have been negligible and this has been confirmed by a number of local businesses that have spoken to *The Resident*.

The director of a new bar, *Irish Legend Bar*, Stephen Hare said: "People come here to watch sports on television, it (the McCann case) is never mentioned here."

He added "The strength of the euro is affecting us here more than Madeleine being missing," describing Madeleine's disappearance as a "terrible situation".

Sarah Hansen from *Resort das Rosas* told *The Resident*: "We rent a couple

of villas in Praia da Luz and just after it first happened we did have one cancellation but the clients described this as being because of work commitments."

The luxury villa rental company has not experienced any adverse effects from the McCann case: "Clients would ask us questions about what had happened and if it was safe to bring their children here but it didn't stop anyone coming on holiday."

The British-Portuguese Chamber of Commerce reiterated the feelings of local businesses. Chris Barton, the Chief Executive officer, said: "Without question the incident has made people more cautious and people talk more openly about keeping children within sight at all times, but I am not aware that this has resulted in a downturn in tourism."

He suggested that it may have

even helped some businesses with "an increased demand for security services (alarms, door and window locks) and babysitters".

Chris Dobson, who works in *Terra da Harmonia*, a health food store in Praia da Luz said: "It has not really had an affect on us here, we just wish it had never happened. I hear about it more when I'm in the UK than when I am here."

The publicity surrounding Praia da Luz may have been enormous at the time of Madeleine's disappearance but like many visitors to the Algarve those that choose to come here on holiday do so because they enjoy the area and one incident has not effected an established tourist destination.

DAISY SAMPSON
daisy.sampson@the-resident.com

The faces behind the McCanns PR campaign



Clarence Mitchell has been the spokesman for the McCanns since September, following Gerry and Kate's return to the UK. His first contact with the Madeleine case happened immediately after the little girl's disappearance in May 2007, when he travelled to Praia da Luz at the request of the British Foreign office to liaise with the family. He is a former *BBC* journalist who later became director of the Media Monitoring with the Labour party and one of UK prime minister's spokesman. He left the government job to join the McCann case on a full-time basis, with his salary being paid by British entrepreneur and businessman Brian Kennedy, the millionaire owner of rugby union club Sale Sharks.



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

Justine McGuinness's political background and PR experience were pointed to as the main reasons for her being chosen by McCann family to become their official spokesman after a selection process through a head-hunter. From June to September, when Gerry and Kate McCann were named arguidos, all statements and actions were masterminded by her. Based in her hometown in Dorset, Justine McGuinness is now keeping a low profile, avoiding any statements or interviews.

TIMELINE

April 10 - Gerry and Kate McCann travel to Brussels where they have meetings with MEPs in an effort to introduce in EU an alert system similar to America's Amber Alert.

April 18 - At the beginning of this week, Robert Murat announces through its legal representatives in the UK, Simon Muirhead & Burton, a number of libel actions against 11 newspapers and one TV station in his demand for damages. The litigation was then believed to have the largest number of separate libel claims made by one person against the British Media in the same issue.

April 25 - Sergei Malinka prepares libel actions against British and Portuguese newspapers in connection with the Madeleine McCann case. Reports say that the Russian citizen will ask for payouts of 50,000 euros from each newspaper. The number and the names of the newspapers were not revealed.

May 2 - Marking one year tomorrow (Saturday) since Madeleine McCann disappeared from her bedroom in the family's holiday apartment at Ocean Club, in Praia da Luz, newspapers and TV stations from all over the world prepared special supplements and documentaries

about the case. The McCanns themselves announced a book of their story on an ITV documentary which was due to be screened on Wednesday (April 30).



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

David Hughes joined the missing Madeleine set-up to team up with Justine McGuinness. The two PR consultants had worked as PR consultants for the Lib Dem party in the UK. His connection with the case ended when the McCanns returned to the UK and hired Clarence Mitchell.



'The pain of her parents and those who love her has not gone away...'

PHOTO: SOLARPIX

Because 365 days are much, much too long

Three hundred and sixty-five days. Fifty two weeks. Twelve months. Almost to the day. To the day when, for many people here in Praia da Luz, we began a new period of marking time.

A period in which prayers and tears have been on lips and in eyes every day. A period in which a community has tried (with success) to regroup and other communities, secular and sacred ones, have refused to let go. We want our Little Madeleine back. Today. Now. Yesterday.

Because 356 days are much, much too long.

It is also almost exactly how long we have been away from home. Almost to the day. For we arrived here in the Algarve from Canada on May 6. In these past 12 months, as we have pondered our place here, we wondered, more than a few times, if we made the correct decision to come.

We have been brought glaringly to the same conclusion time and time again. The answer, however, we might want to construct through our own desire, is unequivocally 'Yes'. Yes, we are supposed to be here. Yes, God has a plan for our presence here. Yes, God can use our feeble efforts to bring light where there seems to be only darkness. Yes: God can use even us, in our weakness and frailty.

And we have discovered that he has. Used us Hubbards. From tiny Caspian to clumsy Dad, with particular power through compassionate Susan. And He has used Praia da Luz as well: powerfully.

And this paper, The Resident. And so many and vast people throughout the world whose hearts and emotions have so deeply been touched by the pain and anguish this event has brought about.

We have watched as a community gathered together in outrage: that such an assault could happen in its midst. The anger and violation turned to resolve: 'we will find Madeleine!' After ages of no result, the fervor died down. People have to continue to live in the present. Life, for some, simply has to go on.

But the pain of her parents and those who love her (it is hard to believe that we have never even met her: she is such a part of our lives, and our prayers) has not gone away. Though the seasons have passed, and come again: she has not. So our prayers, and our Vigils and our tears continue. Please: Let little Madeleine come home. Please.

Tomorrow (Saturday, May 3) in the Church in Luz at 6.30pm our prayers will continue. They probably sound tired, dull, repetitive. But we don't pretend to be experts. We just want our Madeleine back.

Because 365 days are much, much too long.



PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

BY FR. HAYNES Q. HUBBARD



Religion has always played an important role in the activities of Kate and Gerry McCann in their search for their daughter Madeleine. The McCanns could be seen regularly attending services in the local church at Praia da Luz.

Kate and Gerry also visited the holy site of Fátima on May 23 in their first visit outside the Algarve following Madeleine's disappearance.

The couple also received religious guidance and support from Pope Benedict when they met with him in Rome on May 30. The McCanns showed the Pope a picture of Madeleine, which he blessed during their emotional meeting.

PHOTO: STEVE PARSONS/PRESS ASSOCIATION

Service of hope

A service to mark the 365 days since Madeleine McCann's disappearance is to be held at the church of Nossa Senhora Da Luz, in Praia da Luz, where Kate and Gerry McCann regularly prayed, tomorrow (May 3) at 6.30pm.

Described as a service of hope and commemorating the year since Madeleine went missing, the theme of the service is "we want you home" and will be remembering Madeleine. It will be held in both Portuguese and English.

For further information regarding the service, please contact Father Haynes Q Hubbard, Senior Chaplain, on 282 789 660.



Praia da Luz church

PHOTO: MARK RAWCLIFFE/PORTUGAL IMAGES

Stopping history repeating itself – the AMBER Alert system

Following the disappearance of Madeleine McCann and much criticism of the Portuguese police in their reaction to the case, Kate and Gerry McCann have been campaigning for the introduction of a system similar to that used in the US, the AMBER alert system.

The AMBER Alert system was set up after the disappearance in January 1996 of nine year old Amber Hagerman. Amber was pulled off her bike whilst playing outside in her home town of Arlington. She was abducted by an unknown man and four days later her body was found in a drainage ditch only four miles from her home.

The first version of the AMBER alert was implemented after a concerned citizen suggested a coordination of the media in Dallas to help collate sightings and find abducted children before they became the victims of murder, like Amber.

The alert system brings together the combined expertise of the police, media and transportation officials to alert the public immediately to the possible abduction of a child. Television and radio stations put out news alerts, mobile phone companies send text messages to their users and internet providers alert users.

The system adopted by the media is very similar to the coverage given to an emergency weather warning and usually has the effect of alerting the largest number of people in the shortest time span to the issue

being reported.

The system has proved so successful in the US that it has been adopted in different forms by some European countries already. What is really wanted by campaigners is a united system across Europe so all forms of transport and media can come together in a continent wide coordinated search. For the proposal suggested by Gerry and Kate McCann presented in Brussels on April 10 to be accepted by the European Union, 785 MEPs need to declare their support for the plans.

The goal of the AMBER alert is to instantly galvanise the entire community to assist in the search for and safe recovery of an abducted child. However, the alert system is only to be used in cases of suspected abduction and not in general missing persons cases. Certain factors are assessed by a variety of actors and if it is decided that the case is a possible abduction then the alert will begin.

Greece has adopted a form of the AMBER alert system and had results very quickly with a case of a suspected abduction of a 13 year old boy. On July 3 2007 the teenager went missing at 10.30am from a small community in central Greece, after a search by the family for the boy they then went to the police.

Local police feared the boy may have been taken by a passing motorist when they found no evidence of the whereabouts of the boy. Between the family, the police and the Greek centre for missing and exploited children the decision was made to implement the AMBER Alert

Hellas system. Within a short time the child was found thanks to the joint efforts of nine ministries, national television and mobile phone companies.

The Greek case is of particular interest because the family involved were foreign and had only been living in the country for two months.

To add to the complications none of the family could speak Greek including the boy that disappeared. The success of the investigation using the ALERT system proves in this case that many seemingly insurmountable problems can be overcome in a case if an effective plan is in place.

Nothing can possibly describe the torment and worry a parent must face when their child has been possibly abducted, however, an efficient and practical system of alerting all relevant parties can

only be seen as a positive step in the process of finding a child and explains why parents across the US and certain European countries are united in their praise for the AMBER alert system.

DAISY SAMPSON

daisy.sampson@the-resident.com

Europe's political agenda over its missing children

Tomorrow (Saturday) marks one year from the day Madeleine McCann disappeared from her bed in the holiday apartment that her family was renting at the Ocean Club resort in Praia da Luz.

The drama and anguish surrounding this case is no different to the nightmare that many thousands of children and their parents are suffering in different parts of the world.

What distinguishes Madeleine's case from others is the impact it had on public opinion through the blanket media coverage it generated.

This high visibility created a political fog that marked the case in a way that is still to be understood by many of those who have been following it on a daily basis over the last year.

Many thousands of pages and hours of air time have been filled with the disappearance, the investigation, the witnesses and the presumed innocents.

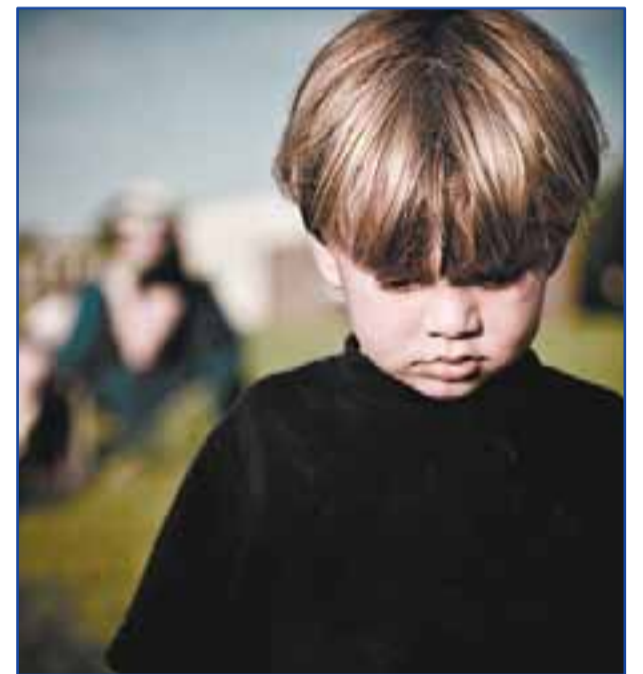
One year on, a massively important battle is still struggling to capture the media's attention - a Europe-wide alert system that can be activated whenever a child goes missing.

Based on the American Amber Alert, named after an abducted little girl named Amber, the introduction of this system is relying on the goodwill of politicians and law makers from the 27 EU countries. Some European countries have already followed America's example and introduced their own programmes.

But a global system, or even an EU system, is still to be created and only God knows when it will happen as nobody seems to be willing to take the lead, except the families of those who go missing.

If I was a cynic I would think that the issue remains as a non-priority in our modern Europe because it has no economic consequences.

But I'm not a cynic and therefore believe that the failure to



'Nobody seems to be willing to take the lead, except the families of those who go missing'

implement an alert system is due to pressure of time on our very busy MEPs and members of the European Commission.

The solution is, therefore, simple - they must find the time and make sure that in future, missing children receive priority.

CECÍLIA PIRES

cecilia@the-resident.com

Shame on you

A special email address set up by *The Resident* the weekend after Madeleine disappeared, for people to send messages of support to the McCann family, has had a fantastic response (see some examples on the right).

The Resident was the first publication to introduce such an initiative and the hundreds of emails received prove just how caring and thoughtful the majority of people are. And even now, a year on, people are still emailing us at maddy@portugalresident.com with their kind messages.

From Dubai to Dublin, Iceland to France and the UK to the USA, people have expressed marvellous, and often moving, sentiments.

However, a few left me feeling disappointment, shame - and a lot of anger. For there are some people out there who are, quite simply, idiots - and very sad.

Take **John**. I won't mention his surname to enable him to maintain a tad of badly needed dignity. John sent his CV to the special email address. He didn't bother to put any covering information in the main email, just attached a covering letter and a CV. Shame on you. Then there's **Jane**. Claims to be a journalist and contacts the Madeleine email address to ask ... if we could supply her with the telephone number of a local person! Jane - you didn't say anything about Madeleine. No comforting words; no message of support for the family. Shame on you, too. **Mike Almond**

Some thoughts and prayers received by *The Resident*

I find it very hard that little Madeleine has not been found after nearly a year. Madeleine needs everyone's help to find her. May I ask the people in Portugal, Spain and other surrounding countries to please, please keep looking for her.

Valerie Horton (a 70 year-old grandmother)

Words can not describe how much this horrible ordeal has affected me, in ways not easy to describe. As a mother of a beautiful toddler, I weep deep in my heart for Maddie and all the other missing children all over the world. Always in my thoughts, and will always keep looking for you! **Lindie, South Africa**

My thoughts are with Madeleine and her parents, along with my full support. We will never give up looking or caring. **Julie**

I, like many, pray for the safe return of this sweet child. It is so difficult to understand how anyone can be so cruel to an innocent child as to keep her from the family she loves so much and who are broken-hearted at her absence. **Delores, USA**

Madeleine and her family haven't left my thoughts or prayers since May 3. I still believe Madeleine is alive and out there somewhere.

Katie Reed, Maryland USA

Dear Gerry and Kate, I along with thousands of others have never ever doubted your innocence.

Lilly Valgerdur Oddsdóttir, Iceland

To read more Letters of Support, please visit www.the-resident.com

Little did we know a year ago that the poster we produced to help find Madeleine just days after she went missing would sadly be as relevant today as it was back then ...



DESAPARECIDA MISSING

Madeleine McCann



VISTA PELA ÚLTIMA VEZ NA PRAIA DA LUZ NO DIA 3 DE MAIO
LAST SEEN IN PRAIA DA LUZ ON THURSDAY MAY 3

Se tiver informações telefone
If you have any information please call
Portimão PJ 282 405 400 | Faro PJ 289 884 500