

The Agiot

87th Edition

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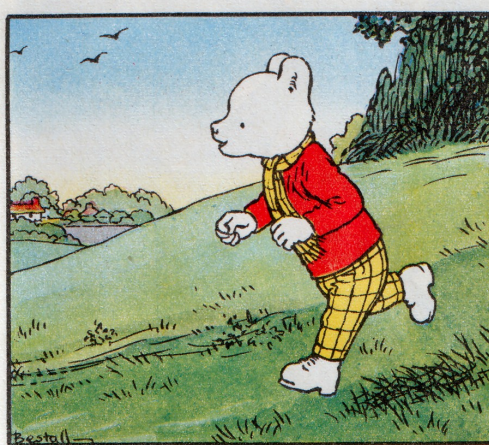
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Village News

- The Editor



*Off Rupert goes, he cannot fail
To thrill the others with his tale.*

Well, another month that raced by. And here now we are slipping effortlessly into 2015.

It was a mild month was December, right up to Christmas, with some rain thrown into the mix. It was, on the personal front, a busy time, decorating, office etc interspersed with many a trip to various Doctors, for Nitsa, Kostas, Nikos, Lula, young Kostas and me.

Most of the results from blood-tests, which came out from these visits, were positive, though our Nitsa had the unpleasant confirmation that she is suffering from osteoporosis. She will need a course of expensive injections but kicked off with the fitting of a support-belt. She has been told by the Doctor to slow down. Mmmm.

I have a new specialist for arthritis. His name is Rudolf Walnut. Enough said.

Little Phoebe in England had a

successful operation and is back to school. Bravo.

A great month was had out walking the highways and by-ways with Twelve-Legs. We have many an adventure, encountering sheep, goats, horses, dogs and cats. Mr [or Mrs] Buzzard is still alive and well and circling above the brook.

I've got to recording approximate distances between post and post. I don't own a pedometer, so count in paces, having ascertained my average gait to be about 67 centimetres. Not too sad for a dwarf.

We have new Albanian neighbours, living in Lionel's former haunt on the plateia. They have two sweet little girls, Esmeranda and Natasa. So our staid winter setting is brightened by these two sprites of fun, skipping and playing up and down Main Street, Agios Ioannis. New neighbours also at the cut-away next to Sofia Villa; Giorgos and Katina from Ioannina. The comings and goings continue in our small world. Old George and Eleni's and Zaira's forecourts stand forlorn and neglected among this 'new grass'.



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Village News

Continued from page 1

'Anna has been away in Italy for weeks visiting with Alexandra, Aegli is in Athens. Nikos had his name-day in the taverna, where the remainder of the family joined to share his rooster. He also came down to Lula's name-day, when Corfu grinds to a halt.



"The Maestro at Carols"

A very successful Carols' night was held at Villa Theodora on the 19th, where twenty-nine people gathered to croon. Lionel rolled back some years and put in a splendid effort. Curry and punch and mince-pies, not necessarily in that order slid down, and fireworks painted the black sky.



"Christmassy"

Christmas day saw our family at the Kanoni home of Elina's mum



"Christmas Night"



"Krissa, Athina & Lula"

Krissa. It was her name-day too. As can be seen from the photo, she really knows how to enjoy herself, and is perfectly entitled to dance on her own furniture.



"Homeowners prerogative"

This was a splendid occasion and notable for Kostas stealing the show with his inimitable dancing. These Greeks really know how to live!



"The Manga"

Now we await the New Year and send our love to Sarah Bennett in Scotland, due to marry Andy Hart on New Year's Eve.

The following day here in Agios will be Kostas' 87th birthday. Guess where we will all be who are here. We have old family friends the Dickinsons staying over, so we are expecting fun and laughs.



"Good food, good wine, good company"



"Athina & Thassos"



"Bethlehem in place"

A VERY
HAPPY NEW
YEAR TO YOU
ALL.

On a wider stage, a Ferry fire grabbed the Corfu headlines on the 28th, and the aftermath of this story is unraveling as I type, so more on this in February, and the results of our Greek General election on the 25th January.

Agiotfest 2015

August 29th 2015.

Please keep this date free in your diary for the.

Here is the Youtube Aftermovie:

Enjoy. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6FWupvfCRg>

No acts confirmed as yet, but we are committed to have the best show to date, which is our aim every year.

Music on Corfu has always been powerful. Classical musicians, brass bands and indigenous players abound. But I have noticed that there has been a significant upsurge in modern music, notably rock. The standards here are high and getting higher. We will definitely be showing a young Greek band or two

this summer. Other events are getting better and more numerous. We could be reaching towards that dream of putting this island very much on the international map.

Here is a photograph from 3 and the Cuckoo's splendid gig at [Epta Texnwn Topos](#) with the Ion Ensemble.



Look out for such musical feasts throughout 2015. Agiotfest will be one such.

Agiot and Agiotfest Links

<http://democracystreet.blogspot.gr/>

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1427706954166861/?context=create&source=49>

<http://www.pinterest.com/agiotfest/>

www.agiotfest.com

<https://fabrily.com/agiotfest14>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/the100plusclub/?fref=ts>

<https://twitter.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/corfubeerfestival?fref=ts>

<http://corfuwall.gr/festivals/agiotfest-2013.html>

[http://www.robgroove.com/photography/agiotfest-2013/#prettyPhoto\[gallery-5959\]/22/](http://www.robgroove.com/photography/agiotfest-2013/#prettyPhoto[gallery-5959]/22/)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=61beYf24Ux0>

<http://realcorfu.com/?s=Agiotfest>

<http://www.the-green-island.co.uk/>

The 100+ Club

The 100+ Club monthly draw was held in Villa Theodora on the 19th of December. The winner of the 100 Euros was Tony Jones, who very kindly handed the cash back to the organisation to be donated in full to Charity. What a Christmas gesture!

Go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/the100plusclub/?fref=ts> for more information about this worthwhile cause.



“Tony Jones wins the 100+ Club monthly draw”

Agiotfest Sponsors



Fully licensed under Greek law, OCA Y Property Services offers both land and property for sale, mostly in the central region of Corfu. They can also handle the

entire design and construction of a home including all licences, taxes, etc.

Daylong have been working in the compression hosiery market for over 50 years and have a wealth of experience in providing the right solution for their customers. They stock one of the widest ranges of products available in the UK including specialist medical products, sports ranges and a full range of fashionable support stockings and tights.



Design of temporary structures in tube and fittings and various proprietary scaffolding systems including temporary roofs, facade shores and difficult access solutions all designs carried out in accordance with all current British and European standards and regulations.

If you are looking for a travel agent who will spend the time to come up with the exact holiday that you want, in the right place and at the right budget for you, and knows what they are talking about as well, Spear Travels can provide a huge choice and offer holidays with the smaller tour operators that are often not available on the High Street.



Spear Travels can provide a huge choice and offer holidays with the smaller tour operators that are often not available on the High Street.



Boatman's World is a full service chandlery adjacent to Gouvia Marina in Corfu, Greece.

Green Island

Holiday Accommodation on the Greenest Island of Greece: Corfu. Specialized in the Dutch & the British tourist market

Vrionis

With us since 2009, every year Bill Vrionis supplies the best of sound and lighting. Visit his excellent shop on town

British Corner Shop

The largest selection of British food in Greece. Favourite leading brands including Waitrose groceries and Iceland frozen foods. Plus a selection of confectionery, ice cream, soft drinks, beers & wine, dairy produce, household cleaners, personal care, newspapers, magazines and greetings cards.

Sunrise Cars

Discover the hidden beauties of the island with the hospitality and security of Sunrise Rent a Car. Situated on the main road opposite the customs buildings at the New Port, this company has been operating since 1980 and due to its experience can offer the best services and prices.

Nikos Pouliasis

A local and much-respected architect and Mekanikos, Mr Pouliasis has been designing houses across Corfu for many years. He is always kind, patient and fair-minded. Also, his rates are consistently competitive!

And:

NSK

Sally's Bar



Paul & Jan Scotter

Ken & Jan Harrop

Steve Young

Jo & Mel Sperling

Lionel Mann

Sue Done

Tavola Calda

Nikolas's Taverna, Agni

Vassilis Pandis

In Action gym

Star Bowl

Greg Zoxios

La Tabernita Mexicana

Barry & Stella Knight

David Dickinson

Sarah Young

Simon & Lin Baddeley

Bob & Jill Carr

Chas Clifton

Rob Groove

Michael Spiggos, Firebrand Radio

<http://www.firebrandrr.co.uk/michael-spiggos/>

Dimitris Krokidis

<http://corfuwall.gr/>

Tony Barker

<http://villaoasiscorfu.com/>

Adrian Ward

<http://realcorfu.com/>

Maria. Driving School

Spyros Kouloudis. Dentist

Martin & Tracey Stuart

Posidonio Restaurant Agios Giordis

Aqualand

Gouvia Marina

Hotel Telesillas, Kontokoli

Sephora Shop

Compass Café, Kontokoli

Big Bite Restaurant, Benitses

Pat & Gina Brett

Letters to the Editor

From the Editor.

Thank you all for reading and your kind encouragement. Some people have reported a little difficulty in opening the Agiot page; it remains blank. This does not apply to all browsers. If you experience this please remain calm and patient, the page should load in about a minute without human intervention.

Les Woods:

Bloody work, got to go out, Love to everyone, just had a quick glance at The Agiot earlier, good stuff!

ED: Glad you enjoyed Les. We will keep trying.

Hilary Papetei; with regard to Tom Crean

Me too! I believe that if he had been chosen for the last push to the Pole instead of Taff Evans, they would have got back. He had huge strength, while Evans was already ill. The party would not have suffered the fatal delay that Evans cost them. When you see what he did afterwards – saving Lieutenant Evans and later his escapade with Shackleton – you really come to the conclusion that this was Scott’s worst decision. Not the motorised sledges or the ponies. Or the perceived class problems, applied retrospectively.

LENNART BJORKNALD :

were is the november issue my friend like look enjoy the day from Valhalla

ED: Ah, my good pal from Valhalla, welcome to land of the Agiot. The November issue was not archived yet, will attend to that very soon. Thank you!

Barry Knight:

This is the best commercial I’ve seen in a long time.....turn your sound up a little

It’s a 43 second commercial and the sponsor isn’t identified until the final few seconds: https://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?feature=player_embedded&v=9WoM2bHfr48#t=0

ED: Thanks for this Barry!

Bespoke Constructions

Since 1999 we have been improving-some call it renovating-older Corfu properties. Following on from there we have been mixing this with the construction of brand new villas, always with an eye on traditional style.

Every one of our builds is unique, we do not duplicate a pattern, and each is a combination of the customers’ dream and our own enthusiasm.

From these two points we think we have created something warm and special in providing people with their ideal Corfu home at a cost they are comfortable with from outset. We make it a point of

providing a quote, rather than estimates, with most of our building work. For those of you living in the U.K. or Continental Europe, we send reports and photographs, on a weekly basis. You need to know what is happening with your investment, when you are not here. The builds are conducted at the pace you want and with an instalment plan to suit the individual.

Here on this page is a selection of photographs of the property provided.

We can supply references from satisfied customers with their e-mail addresses.

There are suitable plots of lands at reasonable prices in Corfu, on which we offer an A-Z service in your purchase of and development. We can lead you through the whole process, inclusive of banks, tax offices, lawyers, utility companies etc

Mail in with your enquiry and interest and we can take it from there.

We are dedicated to fulfilling your Corfu dream with a home which stands apart from the ranks.

Bespoke Constructions
Continued from Page 5

Villa Aphrodite



Villa Aphrodite
Amidst the groves

MousHouse



MouseHouse
Before

Villa Theodora



Villa Theodora
Front

Infinity pool



MouseHouse after

Villa Theodora
With over-flow pool



Villa Aphrodite
Construction

MouseHouse
Penthouse



Panorama East



Panorama East construction



Panorama East early dawn

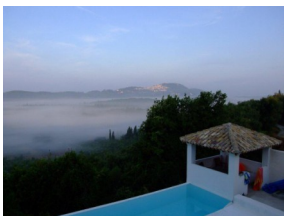


The Gem pool with owner

Construction ideas



Sofia's Villa - Agios Ioannis



Terrain not a problem



Precipice pool construction



Concrete and Steel



Beautiful Brook Meadow



Forming of a spiral oak staircase



The next development?



Villa Persephone

Ocay Villas: Under New Management

By
Paul McGovern

It is with some satisfaction I'm pleased to announce that from the 1st January 2015, our son Peter takes over the running of our villa letting firm.

He has got to grips with it well during the last year, now it is his time to wriggle into the nest and push the old birds over the edge.

I am confident the service and expectations will remain high, and

the rest of his family will be here of course to lend him support and encouragement.

Ocay Villas has rewarded Lula and me with many happy memories since 1999 and a chance to gain new friends and revive old ones. Now we can enjoy many future visits while Peter and Elina do all the work. Oh, I didn't mean to type that bit. Too late. Never mind.

The villa and apartments available through Ocay have expanded considerably of late and

Peter expects to have around two dozen quality villas and apartments for you to choose from in 2015, spread around the island.

Peter will also take charge of the Real Estate portfolio, with the exception of the Building side.

His Mum and I wish him all the best in his new career.

One of the nicest places on our books is MouseHouse, in the Beautiful South, close to Petreti and Notos beach.

Who better to unveil its charms than the owner Diane Carden. This is her story.

Mousehouse Corfu-what can I say?

It's always difficult to try to explain to anyone about a place you love, it's so subjective.

But in the hope of enticing people to this mostly hidden and un-spoilt area of Corfu, I will try to draw you in!

We love all the island-but particularly like to be in an area where we are in a village that has a mix of international tourists and year round residents-Petriti and Notos has all this and more.

Tavernas, bars, traditional Kafeneio and un-spoilt country beaches are all within 15minutes stroll away.

Mouse house is most definitely a house...not a villa, but a comfortable home that we have so many lovely memories in, surrounded by a lush and colourful garden-all planted by my Husband with a vision to create a leafy oasis for relaxation and recuperation

away from the busy lives we all lead.

The veranda at the front of the house is an ideal place to see the world go by. Regularly donkeys, laden with brushwood or straw pass by and the man with a line of goats, who he takes down to the sea in the summer for a cooling dip. All the locals' bip their horns if they see guests on the veranda and pass the time of day. But for more seclusion, the gardens afford complete privacy, with a barbeque and various eating and seating areas.

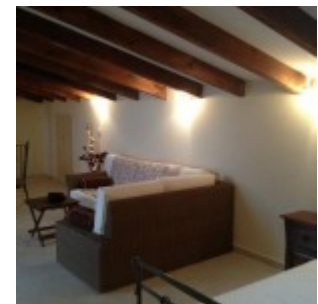
Mousehouse penthouse is our elevated hideaway for 2 adults-beautiful sunset views over the lush countryside.

The inside is modern and just a little bit special for a couple with everything you may need for a comfortable stay. The secret roof garden is a lovely surprise to the entrance of the apartment.

If you are looking for a Greek village experience, in well equipped, comfortable accommodation which has been designed as a home from home-you won't be disappointed.



The front verandah



PentHouse at MouseHouse



Paradise awaits

www.ocayvillascorfu.com





Apostolos Patounis,
9, Ioannou Theotoki Street,
Corfu 49100, Greece
tel.: +30 2661039806
fax: +30 2661020704
e-mail: info@patounis.gr
www.patounis.gr

Traditional Olive Soap

Throughout modern history soap has been a necessity in developed societies, as the primary means of hygiene and cleanliness. It also found application in medicine and pharmacology for its healing and antiseptic properties. Though things have changed, traditional soap still has the benefit of having passed the test of time: It has offered its services for many successive generations, improving the quality of life while being environmentally friendly throughout production and use. Furthermore pure soap is considered the most thorough skin cleanser since it unblocks the skin's pores by effectively removing dirt, oily substances and dead cells.

The "PATOUNIS Soap Works" with a history of over 150 years, still make handcrafted soap by traditional methods from locally produced olive products. The Corfu plant built in 1891, preserved with its functioning tools and equipment, constitutes a living memory of a splendid old local tradition.

The following soaps are made here:

- **Olive Oil Soap** is made totally of pure virgin olive oil. It has limited lathering capacity but is distinguished for its mild action on sensitive skin.
- **The Green Olive Soap** is made of olive pomace oil which contains the olive chlorophyll, is acclaimed for its disinfecting properties and wide range of applications (also good for hair and scalp, provided you use it with soft water).
- **Olive-Palm Soap** is made of 80% pure virgin olive oil and 20% edible palm kernel oil thus a mild soap with rich smooth lather.

The above soaps are made using only the basic raw material of traditional soap manufacture, i.e. naturally occurring oils, soda, sea salt and water.

Hilary's Ramblings

Contributed by
Hilary Paipeti

The Internet is a library, not the Beano.

When I was at primary school, text books and teachers told us that Christopher Columbus discovered the American continent. Already I knew it wasn't true - the Vikings had already got there. Nowadays we know that practically everyone visited the Americas before Columbus, probably as far back as the Phoenicians. But schoolbookery told us it was Columbus, and for all I know schoolbookery still does.

So these are the 'accurate and reliable' text books, prepared so rigorously by 'panels of readers, well-qualified professors and teachers', which were so lauded in the December issue, in reply to my article about 'schoolbookery' in November!

People who worship the God of the Schoolbook also believe that '95% of stuff on the Internet is a lie'; they are the ones who slam the sources I used in my November article about the 'real' causes of the Great War (WW1), just because they came from the Internet. These people do not use the Net as a great resource to gain knowledge and to carry out research - for them it's a means of propagating personal prejudices; so they go on Twitter or sign onto a forum to 'slag off stupid Americans, snigger, snigger' or similar. These people say that I am spouting 'claptrap' and call me a 'fool', as well as claiming that I am a 'revisionist' for not blindly swallowing the Schoolbook Doctrine. More fool them, for these were my sources:

Original source material: Hansard (the minutes of Parliament in

sitting); the Treaty of London (in the original French and in translation).

Secondary source material: Extensive reviews of the matter on a hugely popular blog, by an Orwell Award winning journalist known for his meticulous research; a review of a recently published anthology of writings contemporary with WW1.

Anecdotal: A family memory from a different distinguished journalist.

It is fantastic that I can access these materials - and just about anything ever written (including the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer should I wish) here in Corfu. I can look up in an instant the Latin name of a flower, or the coronation year of a medieval monarch.

I can download for free over 47,000 classic books, including Dickens and the Barset novels of Trollope, from the Gutenberg website (try it!).

I can instantly find a recipe for any dish that comes to mind, and many that don't. I can - and do - run an Internet business which allows interested folk to guide themselves on local walks. I can compare differing views on historical and modern events. And much much more.

Just think back to the pre-Internet world, where only expensive travel to a brick-and-mortar library would have got me the information I wanted to support my case. Failing that, I would have had little choice but to follow, like a blinkered donkey, in the well-worn but misdirected tracks of my own schoolbookery education.

There is of course a vast amount of stuff on the Internet which is tripe - including the product of

individuals' slugging stupid Americans off on forums. But as in any field of research, one learns to judge which datum is valid and which is nonsense (though much of the nonsense is hugely enjoyable). As a graduate of a four year course leading to an Honours Degree in Education (from a long-established and well-known educational institution, not a buy-a-doctorate one), a course which entailed independent library research, I think I can be trusted to tell the difference. I WISH the schoolbookists would stop squawking and concede that the Internet is an infinite library and not a Beano comic.

Listening to people who experienced the 1914-18 war, and to the conventional-wisdom viewpoints held by the BBC, may well 'confirm' someone's view of events, but this misses the point. I do not question what people thought at the time; I merely point out that much of what they thought at the time was - and is - the 'establishment mainstream'view, often delivered through propaganda (much of the 'popular rage'against Germany was stirred up by spurious reports, for example the ones which put it about that soldiers 'bayoneted Belgian babies').

People believe what they are told to believe - this being generally what the establishment wishes them to believe - and some folk think that's the way it should be. I don't.

Of course, many people who have fixed ideas and closed minds tend to hear only that which confirms those ideas, and that which shores up their shut mind.

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Hilary's Ramblings
Continued from Page 9

I am quite sure that there were plenty of young men who stupidly volunteered for 'patriotic reasons' (or persuaded themselves they had), but this does not preclude others from taking the King's shilling for the adventure that war offers. To deny this is the case is to issue the sort of sweeping statement ('EVERYONE went to war for patriotic reasons') that walks hand in hand with schoolbookery.

As for accusations that I am a 'revisionist', revisionism is an essential tool in the study of History. If it's not used, this field of academia would consist of nothing but regurgitating text books.

When historians began to think outside the schoolbook 'EVERYONE knows that Richard III murdered the Princes in the Tower', many put forward persuasive theories that Henry Tudor was actually responsible. When, after the fall of the Iron Curtain, archives containing

previously unseen information about the Soviet Union and its satellites were opened, many aspects of that period's history had to be revised accordingly. Were these 'revisionists' wrong? If so, why?

I conclude by explaining why people blind themselves to the truth: The Great War constituted such a disaster for European civilisation that the cynical excuses made at the time to justify its outbreak have by necessity been concealed behind a waterfall of misinformation; not exactly lies, but banal mantras which warp the truth. Please look back on my November ramblings to see how the true contents of the Treaty of London, the pretext for the declaration of war, were warped to be the 'official version' of events: The version those oh-so-rigorously-produced schoolbooks spout. And then someone leads a schoolbookist, kicking and screaming as they always do, to some facts which demonstrate that their faux 'treaty obligation' argument is invalid, at which point

they deny they had ever supported the argument and invent another one, deciding that 'patriotic sentiment' and 'public fury' were to blame all along. THAT is the real nature of a revisionist - a person who cannot face the truth when it's offered, and in response revises history to suit his prejudices.

For if the truth had been known - that over 800,000 Commonwealth folk, and millions from other nations - lost their lives for a bogus cause- the People post bellum would have had sound reasons to protest against this theft of their children, their husbands, their future.

And perhaps this would have been a wake-up call, impelling them to challenge other fabricated calls for useless wars, surely a commendable cause.

One would have expected that persons who claim to abhor war would open their minds and applaud such a cause.

Corfu Weather Statistics - December

	Max	Avg	Min
Max Temperature	21°C	16 °C	10 °C
Mean Temperature	19 °C	12 °C	7°C
Min Temperature	18 °C	8 °C	3°C
Heating Degree Days (base 65)	21	11	0
Cooling Degree Days (base 65)	2	0	0
Growing Degree Days (base 50)	16	4	0
Dew Point	17 °C	9°C	-3 °C
Precipitation	41.9 mm	4.0 mm	0.0 mm
Wind	48 km/h	5 km/h	0 km/h
Gust Wind	71 km/h	52 km/h	34 km/h
Sea Level Pressure	1029 hPa	1016 hPa	997 hPa

Read more at:

http://www.wunderground.com/history/airport/LGKR/2013/9/1/MonthlyHistory.html?req_city=NA&req_state=NA&req_statename=NA#PFq1VRYHlbugcTgf.99

Nick the Clock's World

Happy
New Year Folks!



Alcohol doesn't make you fat... it makes you Lean..... on tables, chairs & random people.

A guy walks into a bar and orders a triple scotch. The bartender pours him the drink and the guy downs it in one gulp. "Wow", says the bartender, "Something bad must have happened". Yeah it did, he said. "I came home early today, went up to the bedroom, and found my wife having sex with my best friend." The bartender pours the guy another triple shot. "This one's on the house". The dude gulps it down once again. The bartender asks "Did you say anything to your wife ? " The guy answers "Yea, I walked up to her, told her to pack her bag's and get out !" "What about your friend ?" asks the bartender. "I looked him straight in the eye and said BAD DOG"

Q: What did the man with slab of asphalt under his arm order?

A: "A beer please, and one for the road."

Get one of these Ray.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9J7GpVQCfms>

or these

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhg7Xm4FXAY#t=18>



Video Corner

Corfu Stormy Sea:

<https://www.facebook.com/video.php?v=10204730395131399&set=vb.1582541746&type=2&theater>

Dog Tips:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZoBx0tClaxY>

Oh Come All Ye Faithful:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPPRtLZ-amc>

Waterway:

<http://news.gtp.gr/2014/12/22/corfu-host-first-waterway-greece/>

Sally's Bar

All of us at Sally's Bar (Ipsos) would like to wish each and every one of you a happy 2015

and to kick off the new year we are offering you our EPIC HALF POUND BURGER
(with bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato, mushrooms and fried onions)
Available at the special price of **€4.99** until January 31st

SallysBarCorfu / www.SallysBarCorfu.com
Open Everyday from 10am

Aunty Lula's Love-bites

Vasilopita (New Year Cake)

Ingredients:

300g Fresh Butter
 400g Sugar
 3 Eggs
 150ml Orange Juice
 150ml Milk
 350g All Purpose Flour
 100g Finely Chopped Almonds
 50g Finely Chopped Walnuts
 2 tbsp. Lemon Zest
 2 tbsp. Orange Zest
 2 tsp. Baking Powder
 1 tsp baking soda
 ½ tsp. Salt
 2 tbsp. Amaretto Liqueur
 Icing Sugar for dusting
 1 coin of choice, cleaned and sterilised.

Go:

1. In a bowl, sieve the flour and mix in the nuts, zest, baking powder and salt.
2. Using an electric mixer beat the butter and sugar together for about 5 minutes until fluffy.
3. Add the eggs, one at a time waiting to homogenise each before adding the next. Add the Juice and milk and then slowly add the flour mixture. Once homogenised pour in the amaretto and mix well.

4. Place the mixture into a greased tin and at this point place the coin inside the mixture. Bake in a preheated oven at 180°C for about

1 hour, until the inside is cooked.

5. Allow the cake to cool and lightly dust with the icing sugar.

Bon appetit!

The World Of Simon

<http://democracystreet.blogspot.gr/>



Christmas 1947

By
Dr. Lionel Mann

For Christmas 1947 I was in the army but employed in a most unmilitary manner as Organist and Administration Sergeant (second-in-command and hotel manager!) at an army Church House, tucked away in the forests in the foothills of the Hartz Mountains in Germany, running religious instruction courses for all ranks.

Our last course before Christmas, forty young soldiers, left on Monday, giving us three days to prepare for the arrival of our guests and the festival. The kitchen, run by our Scottish lance-corporal cook and his two very competent German "hausfrauen", was working overtime; the Sacristan and Librarian, a couple of privates, were polishing and decorating, setting myriads of candles (and a surreptitious incense cone or two) around the chapel. Our four drivers also entered into the spirit and assisted with decorating the main rooms whilst our twenty German staff made sure that everything was done in accordance with the best local traditions - greenery sprouted from even the most unlikely places.

Our boss, "the Padre", had allowed every member of the British staff to invite a guest to stay for the week from Christmas Eve, but as all my friends in B.A.O.R. were either chaplains or organists and would therefore be on duty at Christmas I had passed my entitlement back to him. It left me free to oversee the running of the place, although that was something of a sinecure as my very efficient German secretary, Frau Schroeder, saw to most of that.

I had another interest, having "adopted" a couple of musical little orphaned boys living with their widowed grandmother in the nearby small town. Every day that week, when I went with the ration truck on its way to Hannover for our supplies, the driver left me in town to practise on the beautiful old organ in the church but also to deliver packets of the season's delicacies sent from our kitchen to "Sarge's skinny little brats" in their house almost opposite the church. "Fraternisation" with the locals was still illegal, but we were very many miles from officialdom and everyone approved my attempt to "build bridges".

On that Monday evening the Padre handed me the key to the wine cellar. "Take the chaps down and let them each choose a bottle of something." Officially only he and I were entitled to wines and spirits, but we never knew how many occasional visitors might descend upon us so I always ordered rations for six officers and six senior N.C.O.s; Church House therefore had the best-stocked cellar in B.A.O.R. For weeks before Christmas chaplains from all over the region had paid "liaison visits" and departed with clinking sounds ringing from the boots of their cars.

When our staff had made their selections I checked to see what each had taken. Nobody had chosen Jamaican Rum so I took a bottle of that and then invited all to a "bottle-party" in my palatial quarters. We started on my rum, but nobody except the Transport Corporal liked it so I left the bottle on my table with the invitation to help himself whenever he felt the

need! We had a very pleasant evening and slept well that night. I suppose that I played the organ for Compline without misadventure - anyway no-one complained!

On Christmas Eve the ration truck left me at my friends' house opposite the church and I delivered the last of the supplies that our cooks had provided. Little Johann, aged eleven, and even smaller Erich, nine, were in a state of excited anticipation; the local custom was that presents were to be distributed at midday. I listened to their babble of conversation, part German and part English for my benefit. (Both boys had some English; Johann's was quite good.) The truck returned to collect me before the critical hour, but I knew something of what each would receive. Church House had at one time been a Hitler Youth sports centre and in the cellar a treasury of skiing equipment had been discovered. Some of it was far too small for any visitors that we were likely to have. We had obliterated the insignia on two complete sets which I had delivered when the boys were at school; grandmother had hidden all away.

Crisis! When the rations were unloaded the cook discovered that no turkeys had been sent. "What was the traditional Christmas fare in olden days?" The Padre posed the pertinent question. "The Boar's head in hand bear I," words of an old carol. We had wild boar almost upon our doorstep. We were supposed to consult the German forstmeister before hunting, but this was an emergency.

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Christmas 1947

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All our guests had arrived so we of the permanent staff lent them our rifles and I handed out seven rounds of ammunition to each, eight in all including our Transport Corporal who took charge of the expedition. He claimed to know a valley in the forest where boar came down in the middle of the day to drink at a stream. There was some merriment when the soldier to whom I lent my rifle chased an indignant spider from the barrel upon first application of the pull-through; the weapon had rested in my wardrobe through the eleven months that I had been in residence. The intrepid hunters trudged off into the forest and we waited in keen anticipation.

About a half-hour later it sounded as though World War Three had erupted; a prolonged burst of distant small-arms fire broke the sylvan silence. Some minutes passed before our corporal returned running, dashed upstairs to pick up the rotor arm of his 15-cwt truck, performed the necessary rituals and drove off into the forest at high speed without having said a word to anyone. The waiting became almost intolerable before the truck returned slowly with hunters clinging on at all angles. The business part of the vehicle was completely filled with a huge boar that overhung the back. It took the combined efforts of all eight to carry the beast into the kitchen. All fifty-six rounds of ammunition had been expended, yet the animal had just one bullet hole - through the brain. Claims to the tusks were many. Apparently six or seven other boar had escaped unscathed!

The corporal left again to bring the forstmeister, the only person

around able to skin and dismember the brute. He was not best pleased to be called out on Christmas Eve, but was considerably mollified with the large hunks of meat that he took home for his family and that of his assistant. As well as joints for every family of our German staff and of course a very ample supply for ourselves, there was still some meat left.

That afternoon the Padre lent me his driver to return to the town. When we pulled up in front of my friends' house we heard some very tuneful singing. I waited until it finished before knocking on the door; my driver was compelled by regulations to stay with his vehicle. There was hardly time to hand my big bundle of boar to grandmother before two little boys, screeching with delight, had carefully put down their violins and thrown themselves upon me. The room, decorated with greenery and heated by a blazing log fire, was full of neighbours who had been invited to share in the bounty that my formerly destitute friends were now enjoying. (The previous summer Johann and I had given a concert to a packed church and the Burgermeister was now also keeping an eye on the family.) Grinning at me from a corner were Herr and Frau Shroeder with Fraulein Krantz, our Padre's secretary, while I was introduced to everybody else, males clicking heels and nodding, females bobbing while shaking hands, and all smiling warmly. There were also two older boys, one playing viola and the other the cello, making a full string quartet to accompany the singing. I could not keep my driver waiting long, but a plate of delicacies was taken out to him to keep him occupied while all sang "Es ist ein' Ros entsprungen" for my entertainment.

"Sarge, we didn't really want to fight people like that, did we?" My driver echoed my thoughts on the return journey.

Some unannounced visitors had arrived in our absence. That was always happening at Church House. Officers and senior N.C.O.s from units as far as fifty miles away, as well as members, men and women, of the civilian Control Commission for Germany, would appear to attend services and then to share our meals. Our kitchen always provided for "surplus to establishment" and anything left over went to augment the rations of our German staff. First Evensong of Christmas after tea was well attended and following dinner, together with the rest of the British staff, I spent the evening circulating amongst the arrivals and departures exchanging season's greetings and general conversation. Rank meant nothing at Church House and Staff Officers with red tabs would be seen chatting convivially with privates.

The chapel was about full to its sixty capacity for Midnight Mass, to which some of our German staff came. The Padre, arrayed in his splendid vestments, had Sacristan and Librarian, both clad in spotless albs, as his acolytes; his rendering of the liturgy was always dramatic, the more so for festivals. The congregation fairly shook the timbers with their singing of familiar carols and I rather regretted that the little organ was hardly adequate to accompany such efforts.

Afterwards, having seen off our "occasional" visitors and being still wakeful with excitement, I returned to my elegant quarters and turned on the radio.

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At many places Mass had taken longer than ours and I settled for a very well sung one from somewhere in Europe.

Their organist, later announced as none other than the illustrious Helmut Walcha, concluded proceedings by playing the J.S. Bach "Great" Prelude and Fugue in C Major. That seemed to me to be so appropriate that I learnt it in time for the following Christmas and have ever since played it at the end whenever I have accompanied Christmas Midnight Mass. It often means that I am the last to leave!

Despite having been late to bed I was up early in the morning. There was no Communion service but, conforming to military custom, the Padre, our Commanding Officer, went around delivering tea and biscuits in bed to all British staff and visitors. I accompanied him on his rounds, carrying an extra tray of cups and saucers. First, of course, we had to "brew up" and afterwards enjoyed our own "cuppas" together in the kitchen. I always relished conversing with Fr. Cole. He had a never-ending fund of anecdotes, mostly hilarious, was quite down-to-earth and had no time for the smug and unctuous of so many of his calling.

Breakfast was at nine and Matins, attracting many visitors, was sung at eleven. Afterwards the padre celebrated Communion for the benefit of those visitors who had not been able to receive it elsewhere. It was my turn to assist as server, a duty I shared in rotation with the Sacristan and Librarian when not required to play the organ.

The boar was voted a great success as an alternative Christmas dinner. Perhaps it should have

been hung for some days before being cooked, but nobody had previous experience and accordingly could not notice any inadequacy. After dinner our German cooks and waiters were sent home and our other meals were buffet style. I helped our Lance-Corporal cook to set them out. My only other duty, apart from seeing that our guests were being entertained, was to play for Evensong and Compline. Even for those there were a number of occasional visitors.

On Boxing Day our guests went for a walk through the forest accompanied by most of the staff. We held the daily four services but otherwise routine was very relaxed. The next day our Christmas guests departed and normal duties were resumed. I went to town with the ration truck and was greeted very enthusiastically by "my kids", who were rather disappointed that we had not yet had any real snowfall so that they could try out their presents. Then came Sunday with its usual influx of visitors for our services.

The Monday saw a bustle of activity. We were giving a Christmas party for the children from the nearest small village. After lunch all our transport was busy collecting our guests - together with their parents! When all had arrived they set about the main business - eating. Food was not that plentiful in Germany and not a crumb of the very ample provisions remained after about sixty children and parents had wolfed down everything in sight. The highlight of proceedings was to be a visit from Santa Claus and we adjourned to the lounge to wait for him.

The very large lounge had three sets of double-glazed French

windows that faced towards a steep track leading down from the forest. There was an excited exclamation as Santa, one of our German waiters suitably padded and disguised, appeared on the skyline. It had snowed and then thawed and the track must have been treacherous for his progress was very unsteady.

Sets of steps were set at intervals into the descent and Santa's sack was clearly quite heavy because he staggered very uncertainly down the first flight. At the bottom he lost his footing and slid a few metres downhill on his back. Somewhat dishevelled he picked himself up, took the next flight of steps at a run and crashed down again. The younger children were tearful, the older ones rocking with laughter. Again Santa came to his feet, stumbled to the top of the last steps - and came down those in a magnificent glissando on his back. Had he not been so well padded and obviously very relaxed he must have broken every bone in his body.

He came slowly to his feet, stood swaying for some seconds and then mounted the few steps to the verandah outside the lounge. The place was filled with children, some weeping loudly, others helpless with laughter. Their parents were surveying everything with severe Lutheran disapproval. It was clear that Santa had been nobbled. As I stood, fighting my own inclination to laugh, waiting to open doors to admit Santa, there was a boy of about ten at my feet, writhing on the floor in ecstatic merriment. I opened the door.

"Ho, ho!"

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It was a wonder that I was not immediately intoxicated by Santa's breath. He was caked thickly with mud, his red clothing disarranged, showing the cushions strapped beneath, and his "beard" was under one ear. He was certainly the merriest Father Christmas that I am ever likely to meet. I closed the doors and fled.

In the foyer outside I heard roars of laughter from upstairs and went to join the rest of the staff in the drivers' room from which they had been able to see everything. For some moments they were unable to speak. Then, "Hello, Sarge. Merry Christmas!" More laughter, in which I joined. When they could explain I learnt that Father Christmas had been given a tumblerful of my rum "to keep out the cold" - a whole tumblerful of rum!

"I should have you shot for desertion in the face of the enemy." Later the Padre and I were having a cup of tea in his study and reviewing the afternoon's proceedings. I learnt that Santa had made a mess of handing out the children's presents, completely incapable of sorting out names.

"Still we gave them a good meal. I bet poor old Hans is getting hell from his wife - if he managed to make it home." The Padre chuckled.

The next day we gave a party for our German staff and their families followed by a bilingual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in the chapel. Everybody attended and I had chosen well-known carols common to both languages, The result was very hearty singing. That was very definitely "building

bridges"!

It was two days before Hans returned to his waiter's duties. We greeted his return with a roar of applause!

In the meantime the snow came in a big way. In addition to their regular duties our drivers operated three-hour shifts, day and night, driving up and down the kilometre-long track to the main road to save us from being cut off. Whenever we had a chance we were out skiing on a ski-run that started almost outside the front door. Irma Krantz had represented Germany at skiing in the last Winter Olympics before the war; she was quite a martinet, but we came to enjoy our skiing under her tuition. Of course there were no such luxuries as ski-lifts and Irma would not allow us to remove skis to trudge back uphill. Herring-boning is a very exhausting business!

The morning four or five days after Christmas the driver of our ration truck noticed a big hump in the snow beside the main road not far from where our track met it. At that time either the Sacristan or the Librarian acted as driver's mate lest an emergency should arise. As a result I could not visit town as 15-cwt trucks had seats for two only. Both dismounted to investigate and then took the shovels with which the truck was equipped and started to dig. They quickly discovered the back of a car and somebody inside was knocking. The Sacristan stayed digging while the driver sped back to the schloss for assistance. Everyone grabbed spades and jumped into transport leaving me to prepare to receive casualties.

With all digging frantically it was not long before enough snow had been cleared to permit opening a

door. Two U.S. Army officers had been trapped for more than twelve hours since skidding off the icy road at a bend. Our Transport Corporal had thoughtfully taken along my bottle of rum; its remaining contents restored some colour to cheeks before our unexpected visitors were bundled into the Padre's car and brought back to Church House. They were given hot baths and a meal and then put to bed while their car was recovered and thoroughly checked by our drivers. Some six hours later we gave our guests, now fully recovered, another meal and sent them on their way. We never heard any more of them.

The next day another course, forty young soldiers, arrived, "business" resumed, and very memorable Christmas was over.

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL**CORFU & LEFKADA 2014**

Dear Friends of The Royal British Legion

Once again I am delighted to report that the total gross amount collected for the 2014 Poppy Appeal amounted to **€2,740.13** –

Yes, the amount is correct and, according to my reckoning a whopping great increase of 38.2% over 2013!!

A very fitting honour, especially in this 100th Anniversary Year, for our serving troops at home and abroad.

We have, again, proved ourselves to be more than generous in remembering those who gave so much for so few in order to safeguard us all.

Like our supporters in Corfu, Lefkada supporters are equally as dedicated to the welfare of our troops and in the very capable hands of Jackie Dallos, she collected a gross amount of €425.00 an increase of 29.2% over 2013!

We thank you and your supporters Jackie!

On behalf of The Royal British Legion Annual Poppy Appeal, I thank you all (both here in Corfu and our friends in Lefkada) for your continuing kindness and support. I can assure you all that your efforts are very much appreciated and the cash put to the best possible use.

Yours very sincerely

Lucy STEELE, M.B.E.
Poppy Appeal Honorary Organiser

Chamber Music Holidays and Festivals 2015

The Greek Island of Corfu

Our new style website with extensive information about the Corfu Chamber Music Holiday Festival 30th May to 10th June 2015 www.chambermusiciholidays.com has been met with much interest and positive comments and several people have already booked.

The Day by Day programme will be online early next month. It has been a pleasure to research and write extended information about this historic, cultural and beautiful island. I have revisited some of the historic sites in the Old Town of Corfu and will update the website in the next few days with more information, there is so much to see of interest in this superb UNESCO Corfu Town as well as the rest of the island.

We are now finalising programmes and locations for the concerts, and discussing the possibility of a concert in the fantastic archaeological site in Butrint in Albania, just 30 minutes by hydrofoil from Corfu!! People are still talking about the fantastic concerts by the quartet from Vienna, Prague and England/Spain earlier this year. They will all return again in 2015. The list of musicians playing in the concerts has been updated to include the wonderful Greek clarinettist Odysseas Karydis who played in many of our concerts with the Kocian Quartet from Prague. Details will be on the website as soon as possible and also in the next Newsletter.

There are a limited number of places for violinists and violists, and just two cellists. We are hoping to form a wind quintet - details of any vacancies in the next Newsletter. Listeners are welcome and will have some extra excursions on two or three mornings, there are already three bookings. Our delightful family run hotel has a maximum of 30 rooms and as there are several booked already it would be wise to send an application as soon as possible.

Bernard Gregor-Smith was in Corfu recently. The cellist of the Lindsay Quartet and member of the Quartet who played in our Divertimenti in Corfu Festival this year and scheduled for 2015 had this to say.

“Recently I had the extraordinary pleasure of a day trip to the beautiful and mysterious country Albania and wished that I had much more time there to experience more of what it has to offer. Butrint was so, so interesting and that was obviously the opinion of a team of archaeologists. Wandering around the ancient ruins one could really imagine the lives of the many civilisations who dwelled within its massive walls bordering the azure sea. On the return to the island of Corfu I was treated to a Winery where a concert is being planned next year in its spacious, stone dining complex. I sampled the delicious red wine from the vineyards just over the hedge of roses, I can't wait to return!!

New - British Airways are flying direct to Corfu from London starting in early May. This should make flights from the USA and Canada also Japan easier. There are several direct flights by cheaper airlines from most European countries. Most people from Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the South East Asian area find it easiest to fly direct to Athens and then a short flight to Corfu.

This year we introduced the opportunity to pay by credit card on Paypal which has proved popular especially for people outside Europe. Further information is on the website. We have an interesting mixture of long standing friends who have been with us on several Holidays and new people and I am very much looking forward to a very sociable group with wonderful music. I really appreciate so many people keeping in touch and also recommending us to their friends. Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to email me.

With all good wishes for an enjoyable end of the year with lots of wonderful music.

Vivienne E. Pittendrigh

Director Chamber Music Holidays and Festivals

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www.chambermusiciholidays.com