

# The Agiot

68th Edition

## This Month

Agiotfest is Warming Up.  
Page 1-2

100+ Club is getting off the ground.  
Page 3

Corfu Light Railway is back on track.  
Page 3

Village News.  
Page 4

Aunty Lula's Love-Bites.  
Page 4

Controversy surrounds Losers' Cup.  
Page 5

Corfu Weather Statistics.  
Page 5

When Nitsa was Young.  
Page 5

Fleshspots of the North.  
Page 6

Corfu in May.  
Page 7

Advertising.  
Page 8

The World of Simon.  
Page 0

Joke of the Month.  
Page 9

Nostalgia.  
Page 10

Chaplain's Chat.  
Page 11-12

Putin's Speech.  
Page 10

## Agiotfest is Warming Up

By  
The Minstrel

92 DAYS TO GO and we will be ready to ROCK at the New Cactus Hilton, Agios Ioannis on 31<sup>st</sup> August, starting at 7.30.p.m.

EARLY BIRD TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW:

Adult TICKET PRICE 18 Euros (until August 1<sup>st</sup>)  
CHILDREN UNDER 13 NO CHARGE

10+ tickets at 16 Euros per ticket  
20+ tickets at 15 Euros per ticket

Over 30 tickets please enquire

These prices are valid until August 1st when we will review them. Individual tickets after 1st August will be 20 Euros. Tickets are for sale either pre-event or on the gate (if not sold out.) There will be no facility this year for reserved tickets at the gate.

DEMAND IS MUCH STRONGER THIS YEAR SO PLEASE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF DISCOUNTED EARLY-BIRD PRICES AND DON'T RISK A 'FULL' SIGN ON THE NIGHT OF AUGUST 31<sup>ST</sup>

HOW DO I BUY A TICKET? EASY!

RING 6974932408 AGIOTFEST DIRECT or



"The Troggs live at their recent successful German tour."

NORTH: KEN HARROP ON 6946949545

NORTH-WEST; (ARILLAS, AG.GEORGEOS, AG. STEFANOS): JIM SKINNER ON 00447862246724.

CENTRAL: PAUL SCOTTER ON 6948701369

EAST COAST: SALLY'S BAR IPSOS 6978520151

MID-ISLAND: SUE DONE ON 6976843659

SOUTH: JIM SKINNER (MORAITIKA) AS ABOVE

FROM JUNE THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS ALSO WILL HAVE TICKETS;

PERAMA: THE BRITISH CORNER SHOP

KONTOKALI: BOATMAN'S WORLD

TOWN: NATASA AT ECO-POINT ON 6979449758

DUTCH CONNECTION: DICK MULDER ON 6975584507

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DIONYSUS CAMPING AT DASIA

NSK TRAVEL IN DASIA

COACHES ARE AVAILABLE THIS YEAR FROM MOST PARTS OF CORFU. ASK YOUR DISTRIBUTOR FOR DETAILS

Agiotfest is Warming Up  
Continued from Page 1



We are proud to have dynamic Heather Skinner opening our show this year!

Heather is from South Wales in the UK. She has been singing for almost as long as she could talk. She has a background in performing musical theatre, folk, opera, blues and jazz. Heather has played Roxie Hart in Chicago, has performed with the Welsh National Opera, performed at Open Air Theatre festivals, and recently sang a selection of Gershwin classics with a group of marketing academics for a performance at last year's Academy of Marketing Conference. Heather also runs an Open Mic acoustic night in her home town of Barry.

On August 31<sup>st</sup> she will be accompanied by guitarist Keith Mitchell.



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- Steve Dell
- Steve Young
- Jo & Mel Sperling
- Lionel Mann
- Sue Done
- Michael Spiggos
- Tavola Calda
- Bill & June Williams
- Spyros Hytiris
- Brenda Pangrakiotis
- Nikolas's Taverna, Agni
- Vassilis Pandis
- In Action gym
- Star Bowl
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## Find us on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Agiotfest-Music-Festival/129472247074639?ref=sgm>

Anybody who reads this far, without nodding off, can you please go on to Facebook if you can and register a 'like'? Better still ask your wife or husband or friend to do similar. Every piece of exposure we can get in this way is definitely driving us onwards and upwards. Thank you!

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"Oh Yes .....they're back alright"

# 100+ Club is getting off the ground

By  
Paul McGovern

A great night was had at SALLY'S BAR, IPSOS on May 27th, when the second draw of the burgeoning 100+ CLUB took place. Many thanks to mine hosts Ken and Jan Harrop, for organizing this fun club, helped by Paul and Jan Scotter, and of course to Sally, Rob and the staff of this friendly spot for putting up with us and feeding and watering us.

The photograph (designed and executed by the mercurial Rob Groove) shows the crowd going mild as the cheque was presented to Sue Calver, representing the winner.

A larger attendance had been anticipated but delays on the C.L.R. coastal track build meant many people from Benitses and further south were thwarted. It did not

stop Jim Skinner coming all the way on his bike and suffering 3<sup>rd</sup> degree frostbite as a consequence.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> June at Villa Theodora, 8.00 pm, Agios Ioannis the third draw will be held, in conjunction with our Annual SPONSORS' EVENING. Be there for tasties and drinkies and a chance to become a sponsor and/or join the 100+ Club.

Ken posted after the event;

## The 100+Club

The Second draw was carried out at Sally's Bar Ipsos. Duncan Schofield from Ipsos, a non member of (The 100+Club) drew out number 30. The winner was Peter McGovern from Ag Ioannis Triklino, winning 70€. Number of people present 16. Members present 7. Five more joined The 100+ Club at Sally's Bar.

A big thank you to the 35 members who have supported The 100+ Club, also a big thank you to Hovoli Acharavi, Mediterranean Corner Mkt Roda, Chippy Chippy Sidari, Darryl Bill Butchers shop Perithia and Sally's Bar Ipsos for supporting the Club. Evening represented by Ken & Jan Harrop (Project leaders) and Paul Scotter (steering group member).

Next draw will be on 21st June at Villa Theodora Ag Ioannis Triklino.



# Corfu Light Railway is Back On Track

By  
Earnest Porter

There is a-rumbling in the deep southern jungles of Corfu.

An eccentric British train-ee from the north of England has picked up the baton, dropped many eons ago by warring Greek factions, and made the first tentative moves to body-swerve bureaucracy and politics, and actually start laying the first track for the long-awaited Corfu Light Railway. The proposed single line, our deep-cover sources tell me, will run between Agios Nikolaos in the South to the New Cactus Hilton in Agios Ioannis

(Triklino), and might dumfound critics by actually being operational in time for Agiotfest 13.



Local coach operators are understandably petrified by the phantom of competition looming in the undergrowth, though operators in the north of the island are derisory, yet secretly thrilled that the anonymous creator of Corfu's own Iron Horse has chosen the south of the island for his engineering.

A narrow gauge engine is being tested now in the U.K. under the moniker Troggs Train.

# Village News

By  
Dr Lionel Mann



The Minimarket has moved to new larger premises fifty metres along the road to Aqualand. It has a forecourt for parking.

Some forty guests sat at the taverna tables in the plateia for the sumptuous Greek Easter feast, provided by Anna and Lula. Midway through the meal a violent squall caused all to hold tightly to plates and glasses. Breakages were minimal until Aegli started hurling plates while Kostas danced.

A flood engulfed gardens when someone forgot to turn off his irrigation hose one night.

Visitors last month included Ricky, Nick, Elizabeth, her mother and a friend, many Dutch cyclists and walkers, celebrating the accession of their new monarch, Kornelius, Patricia and her son, Leo, from Bavaria.

A pretty young Springer Spaniel hankers after bearing puppies so Andy went along to provide the necessary cooperation. He was reported as returning three days later “chewing on a large cigar and grinning from ear to ear”.

Police are said to be searching the neighbourhood for the Violent Squall.



# Aunty Lula's Love-bites

## Butter Beans in the Oven

### Ingredients

- 500gm. Dried Butter-beans.
- 2 Sticks of celery.
- 2 chopped Onions.
- 2 crushed corms of Garlic.
- 400g skinned, chopped Tomatoes
- or** 1 tin chopped Tomatoes.
- 300g Tomato Passata.
- 1 tbsp. of Tomato Paste.
- 3 Carrots, peeled and chopped.
- 250ml Olive Oil.
- 2 tbsp. chopped Parsley.
- 1 tbsp. of Bicarbonate of Soda.
- Salt and Pepper to taste.
- 1 tbsp. Sugar.
- 1 Knorr Vegetable stock Water.

Go:

1. Soak the beans overnight in bottled water.
2. Strain and sprinkle over them with the bicarbonate of soda.
3. Boil preferably in a pressure-cooker, using bottled water, until tender.
4. Strain again and leave to cool.
5. Meanwhile prepare the sauce in a bowl mixing together the chopped tomatoes, passata and paste, onions, garlic, stock, sugar, pepper, salt and half the olive oil.
6. In a roasting tin place the beans with chopped carrots, celery and parsley.

7. Mix the sauce into the tin with the other ingredients.

8. Add enough water to JUST cover the mixture and add remainder of olive oil.

7. Place into oven preheated to 200C until the liquid has evaporated, leaving the beans in a thick sauce.



*Bon appetit!*

# Controversy surrounds Losers' Cup

By  
Dan Druff

The 10th Loser's Cup of Corfu was not without its share of controversy.



Hidden cameras clearly see C.L.C. officials Paul Scotter and Peter McGovern celebrating the fixture draw and, as it turned out, precipitously misjudging the final destination of the winner's Cup.

More rumours of fixture rigging and unfair play littered the day's progress.



The original draw scheduled six events, but 'tiredness' forced the brave warriors to slump into a stupour at Kostas Tavernas laden tables and thereby forgo the two final disciplines, Darts and Shove'apenny.



The finest wellie throw of the

day [ pictured here] belonged to Russ, but he was ill-advised by the officials, who failed to inform him that stratospheric throws were illegal.

More grumblings were heard from some quarters when it was mooted that SOME of the competitors were actually witnessed practicing events for weeks, nay, months before the event itself, in strict contravention of Rule 1214 section C.

Nonetheless the day was deemed a great success and boasted a record entry of 20 athletes from five Nations.

The worthy winner was Richard Quilter, for the second year on the trot, though some whingers are suggesting he had the distinct advantage of staying sober during proceedings.

It has been suggested by an American competitor who wishes to remain strictly anonymous that Alcoholic Handicapping should be adopted by the 2014 competition. I for one enthusiastically endorse this noble motion [Hic!]

The Full results were as follows;

1. Richard Quilter 99
2. Fondas 90
3. Tom 89
4. Paul McG 84
5. Adrian 83
6. Paul S 80
7. Peter 73
8. Kostas 71
9. Mark 70
10. Bruno 65
11. Bob 63
12. Tony 60
13. Karen 59
14. Max 58
15. Russ 56
16. Rikki 55
17. Tim 50
18. Sue 46
19. Gilly 39
20. Alik 36

## Corfu Weather Statistics

### May 2013

Min. Temp: 20°C  
 Max. Temp: 31°C  
 Avg. Temp: 24°C  
 Precipitation: 2.0mm  
 Avg. Wind Speed: 53km/h  
 Gust wind: 48km/h



## When Nitsa Was Young

This series has yet to be completed.

Dear Reader, please be patient and wait until the Autumn, as Kostas needs his afternoon naps, the time when his story-telling is most convenient.

He will recommence his narrative as the summer recedes and his siestas shorten.

# Fleashpots Of The North

By  
Mark Thompson

## I'm going home; by helicopter!

In 1969 I was still at school (you remember the one approved by the government) and thus unable to attend the Woodstock festival, though I wanted to so much it hurt. Being, at the time, an enthusiastic reader of *Melody Maker* I pored over every detail of the event and waited with eager anticipation for the release of the film and the album, you remember with gate-fold sleeve?

I seem to remember that on release the film was reviewed on one occasion on TV by Bill Grundy or possibly Barry Norman who introduced a short clip with something like the following words-and here's Alvin Lee working himself up into a right lather! I was transfixed by this electrifying performance. I listened to many of the records by Ten Years After (TYA), though I was an admirer rather a fan. Thereafter I followed Alvin Lee's career with interest, though I never saw him live. I also saw the Woodstock film many times in many different cinemas.

On at least 2 memorable occasions I saw the film in one of those 'late night/after the pubs have closed' cinemas in Leeds to which people take a few cans or some 'waccy-baccy' and others climbed in thro' the toilet window. In the words of The Saw Doctors- *I took my clothes off in the audience to watch the Woodstock film.*

Subsequently I acquired the DVD Woodstock- the *Directors Cut*, then someone brought from England a Sanyo HD ready flat screen TV. The final piece of the jigsaw was when I bought here in Corfu a Samsung DVD player. Playing the DVD on this set-up was a revelation, yes I'd seen the triptych/ split screen and fast cutting of the film of TYA's set but I'd never seen colour and detail of the film. Once again I was *blown away* by Alvin Lee's performance and cast straight back to

the late 1960s.

I'm not a great one for charts or polls for the best this or the greatest that, though wouldn't disagree with any entry in the 'top ten guitarists' of David Fricke's picks for Rolling Stone Music. However there was always a place in my heart for Alvin Lee. Given his death and recent deaths of Peter Banks-Yes, Clive Burr-Iron Maiden, Jeff Hanneman-Slayer, Kevin Ayers-Soft Machine, The Whole World etc., Alva Lewis-Bob Marley & the Wailers, Bob Brozman, virtuoso guitarist and Andy Jones, record producer & sound engineer who worked with, amongst others, the Rolling Stones and Led Zeppelin, clearly I'm getting old. Or as the Yorkshireman in me would have it- *They're taking them from my pen now.*

After Woodstock Alvin Lee seemed to become the poster boy both for the festival itself, when its history came to be written, and also for a generation that supposedly had a *new explanation*. I also believe that Lee himself was offered tens of thousands of dollars for the guitar he played at the event.

However Woodstock seems in hindsight to have been both the high point and the end of the dreams of that new generation. Things got nasty in the US as it tried to extricate itself from the war in Vietnam, corporate US showed it thoroughly unpleasant side with re-election of Richard Nixon and his later departure ahead of impeachment. In the UK the government battled with the unions and the populous had to face the rigours of the 3-day week. It is my belief that dream of Woodstock and that *new generation* died in the reality of the years that followed.

Within the last couple of years I heard, via the internet, an interview with Alvin Lee in which he appeared to suggest that the mantle or halo of Woodstock had become something of a burden. Rather he wanted to be appreciated as a guitar player; his last album was released as late as September 2012 and he was still on the road. Hearing the interview I felt an infinite

sadness and recalled the last verse of *Guitar Man*, by Bread:

*Then the lights begin to flicker and the sound is getting dim*

*The voice begins to falter and the crowds are getting thin*

*But he never seems to notice he's just got to find*

*Another place to play.*

In reality it took the piercing satire of Cheech & Chong to tell us what Woodstock was really about-*Peace, Love, dope: Incense, crash-pads, Hare Krishna all you groovy freaks: far out and solid.* As Max Yasgur, the owner of the land upon which the festival took place, said 'it was three days of fun and music and nothing but fun and music'. Whilst at the time it seemed like a mould-breaking event I strongly suspect today many of those who did attend, probably now being in senior management and having lived the American Dream, would deny any involvement whatsoever.

Now we rightly look forward to this year's Agiofest. I'm sure few people realise the sterling work our noble editor, Paul, and his team do throughout the year to ensure the continuing success of this event that has become an established feature of Corfu in the summer.

I would like to wish everyone involved, sponsors, organizers, support staff, musicians and not least the paying public good luck for yet another stormin' few days. Not only is there the music but also the chance to meet friends old and new and chill under the benevolent Corfu moon.

For my part I'll be raising a silent glass to rockers old and new and particular Alvin Lee my Guitar Hero.

Yours in the fleashpots,  
Mark Thompson

*As a sad post script to the above I cannot conclude this piece without reference to another iconic figure of the Woodstock festival Richie Havens who died on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April last and who opened the event with a majestic set on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> of August 1969. As with Alvin Lee and those mentioned above the world is poorer for his passing.*

# Corfu in May

By

Martyn & Jo Clark

Corfu in May is we believe the best time to visit the island, everywhere is so fresh, plants and flowers are coming into bloom and the temperature is certainly not as oppressive as it is in high summer. We travelled out on May 8 and were surprised at how few holiday makers there were, we appreciate that it is very early in the year but previous years has certainly seen more people. It certainly doesn't help the tourist trade when one of the major tour operators operating on the island was charging exorbitant rates that were higher in May than in July. We tried to book with Olympic and were quoted £1096 for the two of us at apartments that we have stayed at many times in May and have usually paid between six and hundred pounds. Olympics' explanation was that they were not using their normal charter flight company until June and were buying flights from other carriers. We still booked our accommodation with Olympic and the price we paid means that we were being asked to pay over £800 for the flights if we had booked the complete package. Our flight problem was soon solved though by booking with Easy Jet which was less than half the price Olympic wanted to charge us. It presented no real problem for us but how many people would have rejected Corfu and gone to another destination. The island needs every

visitor it can get but Olympic Holidays certainly didn't help the cause in May.



*On the beach n Mssongi*

It was really nice to be back in Corfu and to catch up with old friends. We managed a trip up to Agios Ioannis to see Anna and Nicos and have dinner in the tavern and it was also really nice to see Costas and Nitsa who made us feel really welcome. We also caught up with Paul and Lula who travelled south to meet us and we had a very pleasant evening and a nice meal at Dionysis in Psara. What was nice was to see two new businesses setting up in Messongi, both are selling good quality merchandise instead of the normal "tourist" tat that is seen all over the island. It was also nice to see our artist friend Ilia who lives in Agnos. Many people will have seen Ilia as she is the lady who sells the paintings on roof tiles at Paleokastritsa outside of the monastery. Has Corfu changed since we left we really didn't think so. There was though one occasion in Corfu town where we were in a chemist shop buying some Korres products and they would not accept a debit card, they wanted cash. It was no real problem as it was explained to us that their suppliers

wanted cash and would not accept cheques, a sign of the times.



*Dinner With Paul & Lula*

As normal it was a problem trying to stay within the 20 kg baggage limit for our trip home. No we were not stacked out with booze and cigarettes, it was honey, cheese and herbs. It was brilliant last year as we drove to Corfu so the only problem was trying to fit everything in the car. We brought seven litres of olive oil back to the UK last year which allows us to have really good oil and not the commercially produced oil that is on sale here. Whilst in Corfu we looked at a house with a view to buying and at present we are undecided as to what to do. In the present economic climate there are some good bargains to be had but there are also some really good houses to rent. It is our intention to spend six months in the UK and six months in Corfu and maybe renting is the best choice. At least with renting you have no maintenance costs and you only have a commitment for the length of your rental deal. We have some options for 2014 and look likely to spend six months on the island. That though is next year for this year we will have to be content with a further weeks holiday in September. To everyone in Agios and for that matter in Corfu we hope you have a good year and that tourism numbers rise this year.

## MouseHouse Penthouse awaits its first visitors



Ocay Villas is proud to announce the highly-satisfactory completion of this little jewel in the south of Corfu. It is the perfect romantic hideaway for couples who wish to be in their own worlds in a special corner of the island.

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# The World of Simon

By  
Simon Baddeley



I took Oscar for a walk into town. We left the house in in rain. I wore layers of clothes under a full-length waxed cotton raincoat, neck warmer, waterproof gloves. Starting through Handsworth Park I peered through railings at my allotment. There's much to be done; walked out of the park, down Thornhill Road to busy Soho Road, crossed over to descend through Wavenhill Park, through Bacchus Park then, via Bacchus Road, to the Soho Loop diversion from the Birmingham Mainline canal, its turgid surface pimpled with rain, its towpath, which soon joined the larger waterway, puddled into the city centre, where, dripping, in company with a drenched Oscar, I called on Richard; not welcomed by Annie the exquisite Bengal cat that shares the flat with him and Emma.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the first week of May, we - Lin, I and Chris Holmes - saw [Richard Pine](#) for lunch at *Harry's Taverna* in Perithia. It detracted not a jot from our companionable enjoyment that, even in May after so late an Easter,

we were on our own, as is often so these days, though an English couple came to sit at another table as we left. Richard reported optimistically on the discovery of a new home in Corfu Town for the [Durrell School](#) library that has been forced out of Philhellinon Street, as the daughter of its aged landlord consolidates her parent's properties. Richard, for years has stayed and worked two days a week in the little bedsit space at the School's Philhellinon premises. He's missing that base for the moment and so the useful and - I suspect - restorative routine of a 30km weekly bus commute between village and city. Richard is never loquacious - or perhaps sometimes, in prose, when writing about the great [Brian Friel](#). We talked about many things, gossiping about the Corfiot cosmopolis - Greek and international - of old island *signorini* in their last retreat living in the mouldering remains of grand estancias while others exercised their talents in the modern economies of the world as academics, doctors, lawyers and entrepreneurs; of the juxtaposition of Lyuba Ranevsky and Yermolay Lopakhin in Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard* which describes, so intimately, the fate of 'old money' in a new world, how the playwright could (as does [Brian Friel](#)) forge stories by simply, as Chekhov put it, 'looking out of his window'. We roamed over the idea and importance of 'narrative' - especially the European one with its spe-

cial kind of language - 'Eurospeak'. For all of us the European Union, supported by the Common Market, was about ensuring there'd never be another great European war/ It had the character of a vision and an ideal - the [European Dream](#), [Jean Monnet's vision](#) of an escape from the continent's experiences of rabid nationalism. But Richard, who agreed that ideal, was pithy about the future of the European Union. He wrote as much the other day in the first letter written from Corfu since his recent - and in his view largely futile - spells in hospitals, here and in Dublin...

Joke of the month  
sent in by  
Mark Thompson

*What did the inflatable teacher say to the inflatable boy who brought a pin to the inflatable school?*

*'You've let me down, you've let the school down, but worst of all you've let yourself down!'*

# Nostalgia

By  
Dr. Lionel Mann

Sitting outside my place in the warmth of the evening a few days ago, I was watching with amusement the antics of a couple of seven-year-olds on bicycles racing up and down the narrow village street, in and out the adjoining alleys and around the plateia. Neither of the boys wore helmet or other padding as also had my friends and I in that distant past when we had been similarly engaged in speeding around out village streets and the narrow tracks through the thick growth of gorse and broom, dotted with small occasional clearings around oak, birch, ash, beech, chestnut and poplar on the nearby heath. Grazes, cuts and bruises inevitably resulted, but somehow we survived.

Motor vehicles were rarities in those day and we could play coarse football and cricket in the street, without fear of being arrested by the local 'bobby' who might even bowl an over if he were passing. Play would be interrupted by the arrival of the horse-drawn van of the grocer, greengrocer, milkman, butcher, baker, fishmonger or coalman on their daily deliveries and sometimes mote interestingly by the appearance of the knifegrinder, the tinker or a 'Spanish' onion-seller.

We also climbed trees on the heath and in the local woodland. The latter displayed a large sign by its tightly-locked gate promising that "Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted", but we all knew a hole in the fence and no trouble ever befell us. (It was about four years before I discovered that the owner of that large exciting tract of land was my grandfather. He was very amused when I sought permission to enter it. "I wondered

when you would get round to asking.")

I once fell some thirty feet as a result of having stood upon a dead branch, but I luckily bounced in a pit full of dead leaves and enjoyed the experience so much that I climbed back and jumped four more times until I landed clumsily and received a mouthful of dead leaves.

Fifty years later some persons were horrified that I allowed boys and girls at the school where I was headmaster to climb the trees in our grounds, but no parent objected, I believe in encouraging children to be adventurous and active; the worst that we ever had was a broken wrist. The parents' comment was:

"That will teach him to be more careful in future." We had no parents who were interested in the greed of 'Claims Direct' and our hundred per cent academic record as well as our equally good attendance level showed that raising lively excited children produces successful youngsters. Today's sickly, cosseted, pampered offspring are preparing for lives of ill-health and frustration. Admittedly they are saddled with many handicaps that mercifully my generation were spared, a far more unhealthy and dangerous environment than that of our young years.

From the age of six I walked unescorted the half mile to and from school and as a church chorister similarly walked, often alone, more than a mile on Sunday mornings to the medieval church in the old village and in the evening in the winter dark the half-mile to and from the church in the new village. Too I would walk there alone at seven in the evening for Friday choir practice, returning home by myself at nine o'clock

Only a year older I started walking the mile to the Public Library as many as three times a week. Britain was a much safer place for the young and old in those days.

It was not considered necessary to

want me not to talk to strangers or to accept offers of lifts in cars of persons going my way. The invasion from 1942 by hordes of loud-mouthed, foul-mouthed, sex-crazy animals changed all that. Sometimes I had the company of a friend one year older on those walks, but he never mentioned having been warned of any hazards. We were both present, reprehensibly searching for birds' nests holding eggs, in the churchyard of the old church when one of our fellow choristers was bitten by a viper. The victim survived and was in fact singing in the choir that evening, full of serum and proudly bearing a bandaged hand. The incident did nothing to discourage our penchant for birdnesting; we just became more careful!

We never bothered to lock doors in those days before the curse of cupidity descended upon the land. We simply knocked and entered our friends' houses.

It has been suggested that in this world every positive action is countered by an equal negative reaction. This would seem to be proven by the so-called 'progress' of the last eighty years. All the childhood ailments that kept me in bed for most of my first five years have now been conquered, yet others have arrived. We ate healthy organic produce not 'processed, modified' junk. We breathed relatively clean air and not the polluted atmosphere of today. Many possibly beneficial discoveries and inventions have been prostituted for financial exploitation.

Watching those kids the other evening I reflected upon how lucky they are to live in a 'backward' country. Let nobody try to persuade me that this world, living under the threat of nuclear extinction by war-mongering bullies, is a better place today than it was back in the thirties. It is far worse.

# Chaplain's Chat

Articles from the chaplain's column in *The Corfiot*,  
(written between 2003 and 2008  
by Revd. Dr. Clifford Owen)

## The Minefield of Church Music (A Reply to Lionel Mann - September 2007)

(Lionel Mann is a retired Cathedral Organist living in Corfu. In a previous *Corfiot* article he had championed recent thoughts from Cardinal Ratzinger, who before he became Pope Benedict, had spoken out in favour of a return to traditional music and worship in the Roman Catholic Church)

The first thing I must say is that Lionel Mann is a good friend of mine and his musical professionalism as an organist and choirmaster is not in doubt. Attend the Agios Ioannis Music Week (4-8 September) if you want proof. However his 'Opinion' feature *Bravo Ratzinger* in the August 2007 *Corfiot* has put such bait under my nose that I cannot resist a reply!

There is an old church joke: 'what's the difference between an organist and a terrorist?...you can negotiate with a terrorist!' I am not suggesting for one moment that Lionel falls into the latter category, but there is no doubt that relations between the vicar and the organist in a church are absolutely crucial. I read with interest about the encounter Lionel had with the bishop-or-bust vicar some years ago. There have been many similar encounters over the years where the Director of Music has clashed with the spiritual leader. Cathedrals are the chief

minefields in this matter, and I know of stories where arrogant new Deans have waded into famous Cathedral choirs and organists early on, to 'let them know who is boss'. I could make this article a little more 'juicy' by recalling some incidents, but I will resist. However, I mention Worcester Cathedral as an example of a Cathedral which does it well. It is part of the Three Choirs festival, and it goes without saying that the Director of Music there must not only be an accomplished musician of the first rate, but he also needs to understand something of what the worship of Almighty God involves. This inevitably means persons and personalities (The two musical directors that I remember were excellent, as one would expect in the home of Sir Edward Elgar)

But as far as the rule book is concerned, there ought to be no fight to the death in Anglican churches, because Canon Law is very clear in the matter. The exact words are something like: 'The minister is responsible for choosing hymns, settings and chants in worship. Where there is a director of music, the incumbent shall pay due heed to his advice in such choices, but nevertheless the minister shall have final say'. The organist may be from Westminster Abbey, and the vicar may be a musical Philistine, but Canon Law is on the vicar's side. I have been extremely fortunate throughout my 34 years in the ministry to be blessed with a good variety of musicians, with whom I have been able to work, and they with me. That's not true everywhere.

One of the problems in Anglican English church music is that many of the larger parish churches naturally try to, and indeed are expected, to ape cathedrals in their style and selection of music. Most cathedral organists are career men or women, who have come up through the ranks of the bigger parish churches, have reared choirs and have established musical excellence behind them. The trouble is that the lesser fry can't quite meet the same standards and many a parish church's attempt to be a minicathedral falls short with woeful results. Nevertheless, there are many performers and accomplished musicians around who began life singing in church choirs.

This brings me to the issue of whether church music is worship or performance. My answer is not the usual one. I refuse to accept the false polarisation of worship or performance, because I think the two are closely related. If music is to be worshipful, it should be of the very best that can be offered by that particular group of people. It needs to be performed, which basically means executed or done well. I have little patience with people who don't make an attempt to sing their best. Often the retort is given 'Ah, God looks on the heart, this is just outward show. So and so only likes the sound of their own voice (or keyboard)' Well, I am sure they do, but apart from ego satisfaction, the fact is that musical gifts are not primarily given to enhance the egos of their possessors - they glorify God the giver, and are to be used to inspire the rest of us (Parable of the Talents?)

Continued on Page 12

Chalain's Chat  
Continued from Page 11

I remember having an argument many years ago with my eldest son (now a concert pianist) He wanted to give it all up as he was finding it hard. I said , 'ok, so you really want to finish and spare yourself years of heartache, struggle and possible 'failure.' But think of the rest of us who will be deprived of your music.' He carried on!

But I have two complaints as far as church music is concerned: the first is that cathedral style music can be so altruistic it can be exclusive. We are not able to join in, excluded by our musical inability. This renders worship leading to the few 'professionals' who do it vicariously on our behalf while we look on. I saw this problem overcome well in a French Roman Catholic Mass, where a cantress chanted the first line of each song, sang most of the verses, but then gradually drew in a choir of moderate ability, and finally the whole congregation. We actually participated in the act of worship, rather than being mere spectators.

My other complaint is that professional church musicians tend to absolutise a particular style of music and worship, where everything else is judged second rate. I have to differ from Lionel here because I think that the Second Vatican Council was a marvellous step forward for the Roman Catholic Church, which has brought them into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and enabled them to recognise that there are other Christians on the same planet! (I am an ecumenist as you know) I apologise that because of shortness of space I cannot pursue this further.

But including others in worship brings me to one of the main minefields of church music today: the charismatic culture. Holy Trinity Corfu has taught me a lot in this area, but much of it I knew before I came. Modern church music reflects, as it ever did, the prevailing culture. Whilst I don't believe that all music in church comes from 'below' as opposed to 'above', yet I have doubts about the spiritual origins of much rock-style music in church. I remember with what tension I played some 'Jesus Christ Superstar' music earlier this year! But there is much popular modern music in church which is good, even beautiful, and will still be here in a hundred years time. On the other hand a great deal of Christian music is hardly 'music', has much in common with the Glastonbury Festival, and evokes a kind of bodily response which some find rather frightening. I could go on!

But on the whole, we fly by the seat of our pants somewhat in worship leading; it is something we have very little training in at theological college. But it is a crucial area and one can see why the vicar is finally responsible for making choices in the matter.

Worship has to be culturally relevant in whatever context, and if some tunes seem as though they have emanated from a nursery group workshop, then so be it. At the end of the day, the object is to bring people closer to Almighty God and to lift their sights, and give them hope. It is never just filling the air with sound. Good church music, like a certain beer, can reach the parts that other things cannot reach. I think even Lionel would agree with that!

## Putin's Speech

Sent in by  
Paul Scotter

Is this one time our elected leaders should pay attention to the advice of Vladimir Putin?

On February 4th, 2013, Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, addressed the Duma, (Russian Parliament), and gave a speech about the tensions with minorities in Russia:

"In Russia live Russians. Any minority, from anywhere, if it wants to live in Russia, to work and eat in Russia, should speak Russian, and should respect the Russian laws. If they prefer Sharia Law, then we advise them to go to those places where that's the state law. Russia does not need minorities. Minorities need Russia, and we will not grant them special privileges, or try to change our laws to fit their desires, no matter how loud they yell 'discrimination'. We better learn from the suicides of America, England, Holland and France, if we are to survive as a nation. The Russian customs and traditions are not compatible with the lack of culture or the primitive ways of most minorities. When this honorable legislative body thinks of creating new laws, it should have in mind the national interest first, observing that the minorities are not Russians"

**The politicians in the Duma gave Putin a five minute standing ovation.**

Us lucky Brits in Corfu that the Greek Government is not quite so, er, pragmatic as Mr Putin.