

The Agiot

17th Edition

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AGIOTFEST 09

Music and Fun in the Sun with the Dylan Project

By
Phil Mawson

Winter draws on - and anything else that can protect ones person from icing up gets commandeered, deposited around the body accordingly, in a continuing attempt to keep out the chill. So it is in a state of total siege from Uncle Jack that I have occasion to compose this article and latest news from Planet Agios Music week. It may be cold outside (and inside in my central-heatingless villa) but our thoughts remain focused on the great excitement that lies ahead in September - the headline act and world renowned troupe of wandering minstrels - "The Dylan Project" featuring Fairport convention and former Jethro Tull 'inmates' David Pegg and Gerry Conway and with Steve Gibbons, P. J. Wright and Phil Bond completing the line-up, who continue to play to 'full-houses' in the UK and Europe. "Peggy" and Gerry are well established in Fairport Convention now and are currently in the middle

of a sell-out UK tour. Nigh on 40 dates are being played and I had occasion to meet up with them at the first gig of the tour in late January. They opened the tour that evening in the beautifully historic town of Tewkesbury, playing to a packed audience at the Rose's Theatre. This was the setting for one of the last 'Hurrah' of one of the world's best known comedians, Eric Morecambe. I think he would have been looking down at the fine entertainment provided that night.



Fairport have a great following and treat their audience to much more than a musical evening. Peggy in particular has the gift of being a great communicator and has a rapport with audiences that could only be described as most conclusive - reciprocated in every way and accordingly held in great re-

spect. Truly a friend of the people, he will bring that bonhomie to our festival in September and no doubt add to his ever soaring list of friends and admirers.

After the Tewks gig, we met for a chat about the forthcoming AGIOTFEST in late summer on Corfu. Peggy is almost certain that he and possibly P.J. (Wright) had been to Agios Ioannis in the 70s and, although much younger then, they appreciated the island's culture and history; they hope to take time out to visit various places of interest during their stay.

As the band name implies the Dylan Project leans towards many of Bob Dylan's creations and the audience will instantly recognise most compositions. The musicians augment this style of music with their own compositions as well as reflections of Jethro Tull or Fairport renditions. They will have the audience - and indeed Agios Ioannis - rocking, believe me.

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Agiotfest 09
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This year's festival offers a great opportunity for the village to be placed prominently on the cultural map. The efforts of Paul and Lula McGovern along with Lionel Mann should not go unnoticed. They are prepared to invest in what they envisage should be a most wonderful experience for Agios Ioannis - and for Corfu. If successful and well supported from all areas of Corfu, the Ionian and further a field, the Festival will become a landmark (on an island already with huge musical credibility) by adding a "listed festival" into the European Musicfest circuit. Who knows where we will go from here? We hope it will be the start of something extraordinary and that we'll re-live each September here in Agios Ioannis, enjoying the exciting, continuing musical othsos of the 70s - a decade of festivals that broke the mould of the previous performance conservatism. The

proof will be in a well-received Music Festival, both in performance and by high-numbered supportive audiences. Save up your euros; it will be money well spent.

With their appearance at Agiotfest 09, the Dylan Project will be the first of 'top notch' rock outfits from the UK to perform in Corfu. 'Peggy' himself appeared with Jethro Tull in Athens beneath the Acropolis a few years back, so we should feel proud that Agios Ioannis is his next Greek port of call.

So as I continue to enthuse over the tasty morsel that awaits a very fortunate number of Folk-Rockers, whilst sitting ever close to my log-fire on this cold February day, it is heart-warming to know that the prospect of some fun in the sun is only a few months away.

Our friends who are collectively working on the Agiotfest 09 continue to lay plans for this and subsequent years' festivals. The need to justify certain expenditure is paramount. Top well known bands do

not come cheap, but if we are expected to take Agiotfest 09 seriously we need head-line acts that can attract the numbers required to determine future festival progress. Agiotfest 09 also offers a unique opportunity for local Greek and ex-pats acts to appear and get the recognition that might otherwise elude them. We are encouraging media at every level to promote Agiotfest 09 during both the build up and the actual week's events.

Dedicated sponsorship from every direction would be great boon and as it is my remit to find as much financial support towards making Agiotfest 09 an affordable regular 'happening'. All avenues and suggestions are being considered. If anyone has a suggestion/offer please let us know. My contact number, ever at my side, is (0030) 6943 050593.

LET'S HAVE FUN IN THE SEPTEMBER SUN - ROCK ON, AGIOTFEST 09!

Easter in Corfu

By Dr. Lionel Mann
Contributing Editor

This year Greek Orthodox Easter, Paska, is only one week later than Western Catholic Easter, although in Eastern Europe the Catholics observe the Orthodox calendar in that respect. On 12th April, Western Easter, Palm Sunday will be celebrated here with a solemn procession around Town, bands playing, senior school pupils and other organizations marching, posses of priests led by the Archbishop accompanying the remains of Saint Spiridon in his glass sarcophagus beneath a canopy supported by servicemen, all followed by a host of civilians. Every evening of the following week, known to the Orthodox Church as Great Week, there is a lesser proces-

sion, culminating on Great Friday with a massive observance, processions also around almost all villages on the island, with a great following all bearing candles.

Then, on Great Saturday, early in the morning there is another procession around Town, ending well before 11 a.m., because when that hour is struck by the clock on Saint Spiridon's Church, mayhem is let loose. From nearly every balcony or window an earthenware urn, some as much as six feet tall, is hurled to the ground in an expression of rage at Judas for betraying Jesus. Then bands march around Town playing more cheerful music accompanied by teams of marching girls in a carnival atmosphere, while the crowds who have watched the pot-throwing flock to the tavernas and the municipal staff set about clearing up the

shards of pottery.

At 10 p.m. the Easter service commences in the churches followed by candle-lit processions leading to a central point, in Town the Liston, in Agios Ioannis the plateia, where the liturgy reaches a climax at midnight with the triumphant cry "Christos anesti" (Christ is risen) and the singing of the traditional Easter hymn commencing with the same words, hardly heard above the crash of exploding fireworks, every village trying to outdo its neighbour while the spectacular display from the Old Fortress lights up the night sky for miles around. Then everybody disperses to a meal of soups and kokoretsi before going to bed.

On Easter day the traditional family meal is roast lamb and the aroma hangs over the island all morning.

Our House And Other Ruins

Part 2

By Rich and Karen
The Continentals!



"Roof off and a collar going on to lift the roof height and pull the building together a little!"

The first pictures arrived via email in October 2006, showing the roof coming off and suddenly we realised this was going to be a huge job. The reality of what we were asking to be achieved dawned on us. We were literally racing to the computer to be the first to download the next set of pictures, to see what was happening to "our" house.

Paul and Lula must have been mad accepting this project as they were having to organise builders who could, at the start of this build, only access it from the narrow streets behind. Concrete mixes were being carted down by barrow past our long suffering next door neighbour, Elizabeth.



Gradually, the house began to take shape as we tried to preserve what we could of the old stone walls and the imposing entrance hall, very unusual in an old village

stone house, ravaged by many years of weathering and disuse. Paul and Lula felt much the way we did and worked hard to stop their building team from covering or removing anything unnecessarily. We were amazed to learn that the Corfiot builders really thought that new was best. They clearly believed we were crazy trying to keep the old things, beams, stone outcrops etc!!



"Entrance hall briquettes"

A layer of concrete and mesh had to be placed carefully over the entrance hall roof to prevent the whole roof from falling in, as briquettes placed on edge into an arch way and window coves becomes very fragile as the old concrete crumbles away to nothing! Fingers were crossed and breaths were held until it had all set hard. Had it worked....yes! Phew! The bread oven on the bedroom level was a casualty as we could not afford to hold it all up and restructure it, a shame but we had to be realistic too.

Having originally been two separate houses which had been joined at the front by the last family to live in it many years before, we had a huge, almost unknown area where it had been filled in with stone and rock. We didn't know what we might find when the join was cleared out, I did plan to have only one wall and hence "plenty" of space, comparatively speaking to fit in a downstairs toilet and bath /



shower. However, I was thwarted with this plan as the builders decided they did not think it would be safe to remove one of the two walls and frankly, without a lot more expense bringing in an architect and the mechanicos, we couldn't be sure. So two walls (60cm thick) remained between what was to be our lounge and kitchen. So began the great divide theory! What were we going to do with it to stop a tunnel like effect? Suddenly, the idea came! We were going to need storage space weren't we, how about wine racks? Problem solved in true Corfiot style we felt!

The downstairs bathroom was having to be a little smaller so became a wet room with shower only. Our plans were gradually taking shape; we now had three bedrooms, a lounge, a kitchen and a dining room with an open-air loggia and balcony connecting the front bedrooms. We had basically turned our house around and given it and us,



the view to enjoy at what we were now calling the front! It was a great test of our imagination to visualise and subsequently create an acceptable modern day house from....

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Our House and Other Ruins
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the ruins. There were things we were never going to afford so it wasn't going to be luxurious but certainly it would have all we would need to live comfortably.

We had planned to have the house completed in Phase 1 and then save, plus do some of the work ourselves, while living in the house,



to achieve the Phase 2 which was to be a swimming pool and patio. However, this plan changed as we realised how difficult accessing the house was going to be plus, one phase overlapped various areas with the other. We needed to find a

space for the boiler to run the heating system, how about under a Phase 2 patio? Also, having the builders and machinery already there meant it was going to cost less to keep them there than get them all back later. So more drawings, discussions and Phase 2 got under way in 2007, while Phase 1 headed onwards, fitting electricity cables, laying bedroom floors, building kitchen cabinets, painting walls, tiling bathrooms, kitchen, loggia and balcony.

Our walls caused considerable problems because of the thickness and unevenness of them. Our poor carpenters earned our respect fitting units where walls bent and changed measurements by 6-12 centimetres in places. The electrician got wires in places I could not even guess at how, although his actual loading of the circuits is still a great mystery at times to us!! Maybe, having risen to the challenge of plug points and sockets in an old stone



house his energy had been completely sapped for his final master plan of which fuse covered which area?!

As well as regular chats via the internet and pictures, we were also coming out every holiday we could. It was incredible watching all the trades coming together, sometimes falling over each other, usually finding fault with each other and yet, gradually our phoenix was rising from the ashes. We had plans to hopefully be in by August 2008 and we wondered if this was really going to happen or was it just too much to ask?

(Continued next month)

CORFU WEATHER STATISTICS

So far this month we have had rain on 11 days out of the 23 days. During those days a total of 147.9 mm of rain fell. This brings the total of rainfall this year so far to 472.8 mm. On the 20th 36.3 mm fell, and Lionel's cats asked for wellies!



"Rain, rain and more rain"

Warmest March temperature so far is 18.4 °C and the Coldest March temperature, 3.8 °C.

Maximum wind-speed reached 51.8 kmh from 180° (S) on 20th March at 17:16.

Maximum humidity reached 90% on 5th March and the minimum 30% on the 19th.

Records to date:

Rain in 1 hour: 19.7 mm at: 14:08 on: 14 Dec 2008 - We inflated the dinghies.

Daily rain: 71.5 mm at: 17:43 on: 14 Dec 2008 - We set sail.

High temperature: 37.1 °C at: 15:09 on: 15 Aug 2008 - Record ice-cream sales too.

Low temperature: -10.2 °C at: 20:23 on: 06 Apr 2008 - shiver!

High wind gust : 183.2 kmh from 270° at: 13:58 on: 21 Dec 2008 - we tied down Alfie and Andy.



"Hailstones"

GOODBYE TO A SWEET FRIEND

By Paul McGovern
Editor

My friend David Smith died in February, notice of which has already appeared in these pages. He was 58.

His funeral took place at Vinters Park, Maidstone on the 4th March, a grey and humourless day, matching the mood of the mourners, at least when they turned up for the 9.30a.m service. I was there first and had it in mind to be cheerful, even make people laugh - a thing that David was very good at doing. After reading the messages on two wreaths this humour soon died. My mum's birthday was March 4th, and she was cremated here too; all very spooky.

His friends appeared, and his brother Miles from Australia, with wife Pat. Hadn't seen Miles for 40+ years, could but barely recognize him. Tracey and Bob and Di all came to say hello, also Alan, who had arranged everything. As we entered the chapel for the service, David's cd of his own compositions was flowing from the speakers. I must admit to caving in completely,

and was comforted by Gill, Tracey's mum, a stranger to me.

Alan and Tony and Charlotte read and spoke movingly, I think even the vicar was affected. People were in no hurry to leave, there was a lot of milling about, tarrying by the wreaths. David's music was bidding us farewell.

There was a wake/reception, call it what you will, at the Malta Inn Aylesford. Several said they knew the way, so a long convoy set off. It soon became apparent that nobody seemed to know the route. Very skilfully I managed to lose every single car.

Eventually, we all made it to the large riverside inn. Buffet and drinks. We all agreed that Dave - organisation was never his strongest suit - had masterminded the convoy from on high. There was reading of David's poetry by George and Chris, and people started to celebrate his life rather than his death. And what a colourful life it had been, a life of song and humour and writing and carpentry and cobbling and houseboating and roadying [Hot Gossip!] and soft substances and being a building site

foreman in London (which he dreaded) and wine selling and off-licensing and friends! That was what he was best of all at. He was a good friend to many, he was a gregarious loner, but in private company he was whistful, gentle and kind.

We all stood in a circle and held hands in silence; it somehow seemed right.

Once in Corfu he had gone to the seaside on a cold and blustery day. He returned in a windswept and dishevelled state. 'How did you get on, Dave?' 'Oh', he said, I stayed above the beach, but I could have had it all to myself, - if I'd wanted it'.



He will be sorely missed.

Aunty Lula's Love-bites

HUMMUS

Ingredients

300g Chick Peas
2 Tablespoons Tahini
4 Tablespoons Olive Oil
Juice of 2 Lemons
2-3 large Garlic Cloves (crushed)
Salt and Pepper
Paprika
Sprigs of Parsley

Go:

1) Soak the chick peas in cold bot-

tled water overnight. The next day, drain the chick peas, place in a saucepan and cover with cold bottled water.

2) Bring the chick peas to a rapid boil, keep boiling for 15 minutes then reduce the heat and simmer until cooked. (About 1 Hour).

3) Drain the chick peas, reserving the cooking liquid. Place the chick peas in a blender with the tahini,

lemon juice, olive oil and garlic. Blend until smooth adding a little of the reserved cooking liquid to form a stiff paste.

4) Season the mixture with salt and pepper and transfer to a bowl. Sprinkle with paprika and chopped parsley.

Bon appetite!

Village News

By Dr. Lionel Mann
Contributing Editor

The gigantic mimosa in Villa Theodora garden is one of the many trees that has fallen victim to the high winds that hit us last month. The noble tree that has dominated its surroundings for the last few years was uprooted in a severe gale and now forms part of next winter's supply of firewood already collected owing to the meteorological ravages. Despite the unusually bad weather the display of spring flowers is bursting out, although rather belatedly, decorating hedge-rows, pasture and gardens with a brilliant kaleidoscope.

Paul Grove and Mickey Clarke have spent a few days here, lucky to sample some sunshine. Phil and Liam Mawson are here for a longer

stay. Jacqui Dickinson will be arriving later in the month to take up the organization of September's Agiofest.

Clean Monday delivered its usual dirty weather; kite flying was not on! However Lula and Nitsa laid on a magnificent traditional feast: unleavened bread; taramousalata; squid in various guises including featuring in two risottos, one prepared with olive oil, the other with tomato purée; king prawns; mussels; salad; all washed down with Kosta's wine.

Our next great occasion will be March 25th, the Feast of the Annunciation, Independence Day, a national holiday when all organizations parade to commemorate the day in 1821 when the first blows were struck in the Greek War of Independence, the conflict lasting

over a century in which the Greeks rid their land of the Turks who had held them in bondage for nearly four hundred years.

Corfu was never conquered by the Turks, who were with heavy losses four times repulsed by the Venetians occupying the island to protect their vital trade access from the Adriatic to the Mediterranean. Most of the seafront in Town is given over to parks and open spaces, having been originally cleared of houses in order to give a clear field of fire for the defenders. The Ionian Islands were re-united with Greece in 1864 when the British, the eventual successors of the Venetians and then Napoleon's French in 1815, handed over sovereignty to the inhabitants. Nevertheless Corfiots will certainly join with fellow Greeks in spending the day in celebration, a great excuse for eating, drinking and making merry!

News From the North

By Uncle Bulgaria
Contributing Editor

What the hell, not a bad winter, tried the beach fishing again, nothing, suppose next time throw the line with bait!!!! Instead of being with a few mates on the beach all night having a few beers....One cannot help being an old fart, or indeed a drunken old fart. However, no fish.

What's happening up North, let's see, we had clean Monday, who said there is no money around?? Every restaurant was full and heaving, except one, Acharavi, Rhoda, Kasiovi, all of them, Great. But I suppose who wants to eat bad Belgium food in Acharavi. One restaurant empty. WHY? Who knows? Maybe because the chef whoops I mean

cook is drunk in a Rhoda bar trying to make a problem with peace loving English patrons! Namely me!!!!

The roads are still appalling, due to the drainage work, De'mos are doing great, but sods law sez that 'tarmacking' will start when the first flights arrive.

Economy, I suggest any one out there with cash in the pocket goes out drinking with a view to bargaining for drinks this season. Get a few extra drops in the glass. What, What.

Island Radio is back on the air, 105.1 FM Hate doing it, but kudos where they are due. Brilliant music most of the day for old farts like me, 50s to 70s, far superior setup than before where the afternoon music was just noise. And of course the

Sunday program is totally brilliant.

I heard that at the end of this month a music event is being organised By Island Radio or its owner Tim, and it is very exciting. If your interested in doing something out of the ordinary check out their web site.

Anyway The cookery book is coming on well, translating 150 year old cookery terms into modern idiom and cooking the recipes is really challenging, but it would be really great to actually have an open fire instead of a modern cooker, I don't think.

I am, and always will be, Obnoxious Al.

Education

By Dr. Lionel Mann
Contributing Editor

At his last Prime Minister's Question Time, shown on television, Tony Blair proclaimed proudly how much had been done to "improve education" in Britain, declaring the millions of pounds had been spent to that purpose. It was a glaring example of the popular fallacy that throwing money at a problem will solve it. At least a modicum of intelligence is also required and that seems to be a very rare commodity in English-speaking corridors of power these days.

Daily, receiving e-mails as well as reading and contributing to comment on a number of journals, I am horrified at the abysmally low standard of literacy displayed by the general public. Most of the messages would have elicited roars of derision from the eight- to eleven-year-old pupils at the schools where I taught. Some of the texts come from teachers and university graduates. "*Quis custodiet ipsos Custodes?*"

As late as 1963, a church organist-choirmaster, I could be sure that my boy choristers aged from seven to thirteen or fourteen could easily read the words (and music!) of the hymns, psalms and anthems in our repertoire. When I returned to Britain in 1976 I was horrified to find that I needed to teach choristers, even boys in their teens, to read the words before they could sing them.

The deficiency is not only in literacy; numeracy and general knowledge are also pitifully inadequate. I derived no satisfaction from seeing such lack although it made my job easier. Required to prepare children for entry to independent grammar schools at the age of

eleven, I quickly discovered that I could guarantee the success of my pupils, even if they needed to gain a scholarship. In my seventeen years at the school we had only one failure, a boy who arrived just six months before the crucial examination. We took him, formerly a pupil of a "highly reputable" preparatory school near London, at the request of a parent who had been compelled through ill-health to retire to our area. The youngster spoke exquisitely, had perfect manners, was a very good athlete, but was an utter disaster academically, about three years adrift by our standards.

"Enlightened experts" criticized us for our "formal" methods, children from the age of four required to sit at desks, to learn to read, write and number, to learn mathematical tables, to recognise grammar and syntax, allowing each child to develop at his/her own pace, but spurred on by weekly competition with his/her peers. Also the pupils studied history, geography, science, French, Latin, music, art through carefully planned syllabi ensuring thorough coverage through their six or seven years with us. Games and gymnastics too played their part. We encouraged children to be adventurous. Whereas children at local schools were discouraged from playing such "competitive" or even "dangerous" games as cricket, hockey and football, we played all three as well as introducing pupils to gymnastics, and even allowing them to climb the trees that graced our grounds. In all my time we lost only two football matches and none at cricket or hockey. "Whatever you do, you do well. Anything else is an utter waste of time." I did not dare to advertise our success. To be really good at anything in Britain today is to invite denigration, at-

tack. Word-of-mouth recommendation kept us pleasantly full.

To introduce such a system in the seventies required a thorough purge of the staff when I took over as head, but I had the full support of the governing body of parents. They recognized the woeful state to which education in Britain had been reduced and welcomed my sweeping changes. All my new appointments had been educated and trained outside the U.K. The only British teacher, beside myself, on the staff was "unqualified" but an absolute miracle-worker with five-year-olds and an accomplished artist who held annual exhibitions of her work. She also taught art throughout the school; the work produced by our pupils never ceased to delight and amaze me. Teachers are born, not made.

We all worked for salaries less than that of a first-year teacher at a State school straight from college, yet I had no recruitment difficulties. The pleasure of being able to teach free from bureaucratic intrusion attracted the really committed. The school's fees were kept to a minimum in order to make our system available to as many as possible. Our pupils represented a wide range of nationalities and "social standing". I particularly enjoyed seeing the friendship between the son of a local garage mechanic and the heir to a peerage, one weekend shared at the stately home, the next at the little village house. Their fathers were great friends too, a fanatical interest in vintage cars their bond. I needed to limit to two each the number of models that either boy was allowed at school, otherwise there was not enough space in their desks for books! Both went on to very successful academic careers.

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Education
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The legends with which I adorned the walls of my form-room infuriated some visiting prospective parents, but it worried me not at all. We had a very pleasing waiting-list!

Mediocrity is failure,
Pre-eminence success,
So strive hard to gain the summit,
Content with nothing less.

The little ones were delighted to sit at desks, reading, writing and numbering "just like our big brothers and sisters". Give a child a taste of genuine accomplishment at an early age and he/she will often stay "hooked" for life.

I would agree with those who declare it unfair that parents should need to pay extra above an already extortionate taxation in order to secure a good education for their offspring, but until the State provides an efficient system of education that alternative will always appeal. Some parents spend their money on drink, some on fast cars, some on elegant dress or accommodation; the choice is limitless. Those who, recognizing the pitiful inadequacy of public schooling, decide to invest in their children's future are no more than exercising their right of choice. Moreover it is unlikely that any government would genuinely attempt to improve matters; an intelligent populace would quickly spot their leaders' inadequacy.

Although it sometimes meant exceeding my self-imposed limit of twenty-four pupils aged from eight to eleven in my form, preparing for their entrance examinations, I would not refuse requests, usually two or three times annually, from parents asking that we should admit a child labelled as "disruptive",

"aggressive" or "ineducable" at a conventional school. I always had the mixed age-group because the younger children were infected by the enthusiasm of their older form-mates in approaching their examinations and the exuberance of excited youngsters bursting in proclaiming success.

Ben was the most spectacular of our "ineducable and disruptive" successes. He arrived requiring special diet and sedatives prescribed for an eight-year-old by an ignorant G.P. (No wonder that the Health Service has run into financial difficulties!). Within a month diet and drugs had been forgotten; the boy was too busy making up colossal leeway. For his last year he was Head Boy, based not only upon academic achievement but also upon his cheerful leadership, an example to other pupils. All our children sat the entrance examination of more than one school and accepted the place that offered the best conditions. Ben gained four scholarships! He had been utterly bored into rebellion by the primitive unchallenging conditions at his primary school. Ben was but one of about forty whom we saved from State ineptitude, but I hate to think of the number of potentially bright children who are doomed to stultification by "the system".

The true wealth of a nation is its brains. For decades Britain has squandered and scorned its assets until now it is approaching bankruptcy, its industry, commerce and community in tatters, the general populace in its ignorance believing politicians' pronouncements to the contrary.

Some years ago the local hospital asked me to give a piano recital (only my fourth ever - organ and harpsichord are really my instruments) in aid of their funds. They

had a fine Bechstein grand piano in their Community Hall. At the buffet supper afterwards a member of the audience approached me. "What are you doing teaching, when you can play like that?"

For some moments I was silent, stunned by such a blatant enunciation of "Those who can, do - those who can't, teach." Then, "Don't you think it's a bit hard on the pupils if at least some of their teachers don't have skills?"

It was his turn to remain silent while he digested what was to him obviously an entirely new concept. Eventually, "Yes, I suppose there's that."

In my teaching I recalled my own childhood and used methods that had proved so successful for me. At eleven I had gained a scholarship to a prestigious grammar school and matriculated by the age of sixteen in an era when such was not a cheap "right" but a rigorously contested prize, although I did not enter university until I had completed military service five years later. WW2 was a grave blight upon the earth for my generation!

It is with great affection that I now remember my teachers at both primary and grammar school, although with typical regrettable youthful lack of consideration I never returned to visit either after having left. Mr. Buck, who taught the top class at our village primary school, enjoys a special place in my memory. Having reached his class at the tender age of eight, after whisking through all four lower classes in just over two years, I unashamedly confess to having loved him for the three years that I spent under his tutelage far more than I loved my parents or any of my relatives. I received plenty of evidence that he loved me too.

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Education
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Later, at the grammar school to which Mr. Buck's teaching gained my entry, I thoroughly enjoyed studying under the direction of an erudite and dedicated staff, many of whom would never have survived in today's over-regulated, bureaucrat-dominated environment. "Twit" Harris, delightfully, wonderfully eccentric, taught English with infectious élan; Major Reynolds, invalidated from the Eighth Army after having been wounded, easily unravelled the mysteries of mathematics for us; Mam'selle Dupont made learning French a glorious adventure; Doctor Wilkinson brought History to vibrant life; we explored avidly the world's Geography with "Doug" Lawson; each of our trio of Science masters, one each for Chemistry, Biology and Physics, always had an intriguing "discovery" to show us; "Reggie" Cave spiced our Latin lessons with anecdotes from Ancient Rome, some of them rather risqué; "Fatty" Watson had studied Art with Eric Gill and even I, with little talent in that direction, enjoyed his lessons; our Woodwork and Metalwork instructors communicated their enthusiasm to us; "Dodger" Doe, our Music Master, had my full approval - he had nominated me at the age of twelve to be his successor when emergency surgery had caused him to vacate his church organist-choirmaster appointment.

In my first year I sang treble in the performance of Handel's "Messiah" by the School Choir and Orchestra with professional soloists. Then I graduated to playing viola in the orchestra, a full symphony orchestra, an exhilarating and later very useful experience. How many schools today have orchestras playing Mozart and

Haydn symphonies, Bach and Mozart concertos, Handel, Schubert, Schumann, Mussorgsky, Stanford, Grieg, Elgar? We even performed Beethoven No. 1 - glorious fun! Not only did we remain for an hour after school twice weekly for rehearsals but we also presented a full turn-out for two hours every Saturday evening, braving the wartime blackout on our bicycles. Every boy in the school belonged to at least one of the many after-hours "clubs", encompassing a wide range from Art, Archaeology and Drama to Air Training Corps, Boy Scouts and Metalwork. Every member of staff assisted in running those groups.

True, I hated the bullying Sergeant Thompson who took Physical Education, but we were relieved of his attentions after my first year when he was called away to make hell of the lives of Army recruits in 1939. He was succeeded by "Scruffy" Scurfield, a former county cricketer, who made P.E. great fun and also taught Biology with exciting keenness. I gained a lifelong love of cricket from our Games coaching, and even becoming soggy and muddy playing football was acceptable.

Some years ago I was discussing education with the psychiatrist father of one of my pupils. He remarked that whereas those of younger generations that he had interviewed had generally hated their schooldays, my generation seemed to have enjoyed theirs. I suggested that it was because learning flourishes only in an ordered and disciplined environment. Strange as it may seem, the harsh sanctions imposed in my schooldays against indiscipline were very seldom encountered, not through our fear of them but because we were too usefully occupied

to have time to rebel. Normal school hours were from 8.45 a.m. to 4.45 p.m. with "clubs" leading to at least an hour's extension, and homework an addition ranging from one hour to two or more.

"Freedom" and "rights", so often bandied about these days and preached in many schools, are illusions, delusions. Freedom is restricted by obligations to society; unrestricted freedom is anarchy. The only rights that anyone may justifiably claim are earned through his/her contribution to the community in which he/she lives. Even "children's rights" are honestly won solely by how well a child is striving to make himself/herself a useful citizen; anything else is completely artificial and without sound foundation, the product of woolly wishful sentimental dreaming. To claim unearned "rights" is to prey upon the community. The exercise of irresponsible freedom and unmerited rights breeds disorder and indiscipline, the enemies of learning.

This world is a tough, hard, cruel place and our existence upon it is but precarious at the best; consider the constant succession of floods, fires, famine, pestilence, disease, drought, tsunamis, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, not to mention the lethal toll of the roads and the warlike propensities of politicians and other leaders. Nothing will ever change that; as soon as one plague is removed another takes its place! Yet the world is also a very exciting place and absolutely beautiful. Full enjoyment of its wonders, however, is gained only with understanding, appreciation of its mysteries. Such understanding and appreciation increase with the development of intellect, the gift of genuine education.

PROPERTY PAGES



Special Giannades

This is an unusually but beautifully restored house in the old part of Giannades village. This house features an open-plan kitchen dining and lounge area. A completely new indoor shower room/W.C. and an upstairs bedroom with a possibility of a second one on the lower floor. Artistically renovated this house is well worth a look.

Price: € 99,500



Villa Felice

This magnificent 4 bedrooomed villa is four hundred and fifty square metres and stands atop a hill on the outskirts of Almiros on the north coast of Corfu, within a mile or so of the lively small town of Acharavi. Featuring ensuite bathrooms and under floor heating, viewing is encouraged to see all the benefits of this property.

Price € 2,000,000



Land near Messaria

This plot of land measures approx. 970 square metres and is situated near the picturesque old village of Messaria in the north of the island of Corfu, on the route to Sidari. A building of about 124 square metres would be allowable on this piece of land. Utilities are within immediate reach and a topography is available.

Price € 50,000



Sfakera Retreat

This charming, ready to move in to villa, nestles beside the old Sfakera road in the North of the island. This 3 bedrooomed property is 145 square metres with oil fired central heating, one air conditioning unit, insulated walls, tiled floors and a large integral garage on the ground floor. This is a well kept property with splendid sunset views.

Price € 225.000



Villa Maria

Set in the village of Agios Ioannis this property is set in four thousand square metres and consists of two 'sister' villas, the larger of the two being 100 square metres and the second villa only slightly smaller. Both the two bedroom villas are beautifully laid out and there is the opportunity to purchase the furnishings of the larger villa.

Price: € 510.000



Bulgarian Property

The villa is 52 square metres in size with 2 rooms up and 2 rooms down and balconies featured. It is situated in 600 square metres of land which includes a well in the garden for water supply, electricity is also connected. Located only 10 to 15 minutes from the fabulous beach of Kraymorie on the Black Sea.

Price: € 49.000