

# The Agiot

63rd Edition

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## The Quiet Christmas

By  
Paul McGovern



Christmas in Agios Ioannis 2012 was a quiet affair. That quietness brought its own beauty to our little world.



"you can't get the staff"

Old Giorgos has been in Germany for months, with his son's family, since the death of his Eleni. Giorgos (Dodos) has not been well



and into hospital with his gammy leg. Much of Main Street was in darkness for the holidays, following a spate of deaths among our elderly neighbours earlier in the year.

Walking down the lane just before Christmas, I could not help but notice that the only twinkle of Christmas lights in the entire length of the lane came from our own front balcony, a defiant sentinel of Christmas in a dark place. Luckily, Taxi George bedecked his steps and balcony a day later, and Kostoula, despite the loss of his mother Maria this year, soon followed suit.



George put his manger in at the bandstand and all was resolved.



*Happy Christmas to all my friends and admirers - from Andy*



Christmas Eve was cold by our standards. Suddenly the bright fire indoors and glistening tree looked a more tempting prospect, so for the first time in years this family stayed in the warm. We had been into town on a previous evening and not totally surprised by the lack of lights adorning the avenues. Corfu continues to tighten its belt, in line with the rest of the country.

Continued on Page 2



### The Quiet Christmas Continued from Page 1



"Christmas day at Anna's"

Christmas day's lunch was down at Anna's, and it was a splendid get-together. The whole family was there; Alexandra in from Italy and Aegli recently returned from Brussels. Marie (Nikos's sister-in-law from Athens with her daughter Dorita and her boyfriend, Nikos, Anna, Kostas and Nitsa, Lula, Peter, Kostas, Lionel and me.



"Lionel - wearing new present"

Several hours later I walked Lionel home-or was it the other way round.

Boxing -day saw a further opening of presents, around our own tree in Villa Sofia. Peter's friend Elina joined us and this time it was roast beef. What happened to the diet? Afterwards, Lionel watched the telly football (I thought he

Nitsa  
&  
Kostas  
>

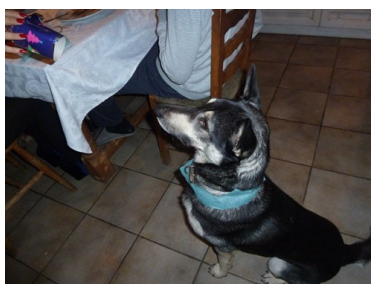


couldn't see) and us young'uns (Peter, Kostas me and Elina) played Monopoly. Had not played that for decades. Modesty forbids me to record here who won.

And now we gird our loins for the New Year gastronomic onslaught.



It has been heart-warming to hear from friends over this period, the cards in particular have been touching. From all of us here in the Time that Land Forgot we wish you all a very HAPPY NEW YEAR!!



"Festive Spirit"

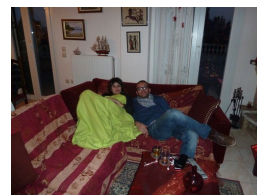
### Christmas Photo Gallery



Lula,  
Marie &  
Nitsa >



Dorita &  
Boyfriend  
<



Drunk girl  
on Sofa  
>



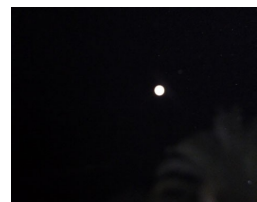
Marie nods  
off as Lula  
talks politics  
<



Sisters solving  
world's prob-  
lems  
>



Homeward  
Bound  
<



## Corfu Weather Statistics

### December 2012

Avg. Temp: 14°C (58°F)

Max. Temp: 17°C (66°F)

Min. Temp: 9°C (50°F) Max. Precipitation: 47.0mm

Max. Wind Speed: 50km/h

Max. Gust Speed: 76km/h

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

On page 9 of the November 2012 edition of The Agiot you have a photo of a dog, and you ask if anyone can identify it. That is our Lakeland Terrier Molly, hard at work in the office, taken in 2006. Sadly Molly died last year, but at least we still have the photos.

best regards

Frank Gaskell (a Corfu regular)



# News From The North

And a big welcome back to Uncle Bulgaria aka Obnoxious Al

Well hallo all Agiot readers, thought I would drag myself to the old keyboard, boil a kettle so a head of steam will boot it up, send a Christmas missive.

What can we say, here we are in a most beautiful Island, Heating oil has gone from 1.05 euros a litre last year to 1.39 euros. How the hell can they justify that hike.

The chemist seem to be permanently on strike so we have to pay full whack for medicines, no hope ever of EKA reimbursing us.

House break ins are rife again up here in the North.

The minor roads up here have the biggest pot holes I have ever seen in 24 years, in fact I think a family of Russians have just moved into one it's so big.

The house tax is back again this year, and you need to wait for ever in the bank to tax your car. (Those of us that drive legal cars).

Olive trees are being cut down all over the place just for the wood to keep warm, not even for reselling.

Two friends have died in the last 3 weeks one from old age and one

very young from a heart attack bought on by stress. Father and son actually.

BUT, it's Christmas, so lets forget the doom and gloom for a few days and drink thank whatever Deity you worship that we are here for another year.

Don't forget that if you want a laugh check out Corfual Channel\utube where there are 25 videos to help pass the day.

So to all Agiot followers, Happy Christmas and New Year and if you can do a favour for somebody worse off now is the time

I am still obnoxious Al

## Aunty Lula's Love-bites

### Greek Style Fish Soup

#### Ingredients

- 1 kg Fresh Fish (cod or any type of red fish)
- 1 litre of Vegetable Stock
- 1 Onion, cut into quarters
- 1 Onion, finely chopped
- 3 Carrots, cut into small cubes
- 2 Courgettes, cut into small cubes
- 3 Potatoes, cut into cubes
- 100 gr Celery
- 120 ml Olive Oil
- Salt & Pepper
- Pinch of Saffron thread
- Juice of 1 - 2 Lemons



"Aunty Lula at work"

Go:

1. Put the fish, quartered onion, saffron, and salt & pepper into a large saucepan with the vegetable stock and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for about 15 minutes. Strain and reserve the liquid. Skin the fish and remove all bones and cut into 3cm pieces.
2. Heat the olive oil in the rinsed-out saucepan and sauté the chopped onion, carrots, courgettes, potatoes and celery for 5 minutes. Add the reserved strained cooking liquid into the saucepan and simmer the vegetables for 15 minutes.
3. Finally add the lemon juice and the fish into the soup, using a wooden spoon, gently stir through.

*Bon appetit!*

### GREAT PRICES FOR 2013 SUMMER VILLA LETS

Roll up roll up roll up! Go to [www.ocayvillascorfu.com](http://www.ocayvillascorfu.com) and check out the excellent Villas Theodora, Persephone, Aphrodite, MouseHouse and Noy. And that is NOT ALL. We have a range of beautiful places to stay dotted around Corfu.

In these uncertain economic climes we are happy to offer generous discounts on selected villas for many dates.

If you want a great time in a great place then mail us at the above website and check on just how generous the discounts are.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

# Mtoto

By  
Dr. Lionel Mann

During the five years that I was a guest at The Old Grange, Hampton, the wife of my host had a pet Siamese cat, 'Mtoto. Mrs. Muller, educated in a Belgian convent and whose grandparents had been the wonderful assortment of Irish, Belgian, West Indian and Italian, was a very proficient linguist, fluent in about a dozen languages and at that time learning Russian "to keep my hand in". During the war she had acted as a censor of foreign mail. Swahili, learnt while Colonel Muller had been Chief-of-Police in Tanganyika, was one of the assortment, and 'Mtoto means "baby" in that tongue.

Pampered 'Mtoto was a highly privileged member of the household. On my first evening there the three of us were listening to records in the Music Lounge when the cat entered carrying a mouse, which it promptly released and began to chase around the room. Eventually the poor rodent took refuge under the upright piano. (Mrs. Muller was also a very competent pianist.)

"We never had mice in this house until you brought them in with your damned incompetence." Colonel Muller addressed the frantic feline while he and I were struggling to move the piano so that matters might be brought to the inevitable conclusion.

The verdant garden of The Old Grange backed on to Bushy Park, a royal park extending from Hampton Court Palace. One morning when I was in the Music Room I

saw a pheasant flutter over the garden wall to land on the lawn. Also I noticed 'Mtoto crouching behind a hydrangea bush watching the bird with evil intent. Completely unconcerned, the bird strutted across the lawn and disappeared round a corner of the house. 'Mtoto bounded in pursuit.

There was an indignant squawk and the cat reappeared, hotly pursued by an enraged pheasant. He took a desperate leap through the cat-flap in the kitchen window. I hurried to the kitchen and found Mrs. Muller recovering from the shock of a furry projectile bursting through the window by the sink where she had been preparing a meal.

"Chased by a pheasant? Rubbish! I just remembered an urgent appointment." 'Mtoto was calmly preening himself in the middle of the floor.

Our neighbour complained that the cat was depleting the stock of goldfish in his ornamental pond, but Mrs. Muller would hear none of it; her beloved 'Mtoto, fed on the fat of the land, would never sink so low. From my bathroom, the only room in the house that overlooked our neighbour's garden, I had watched the cat dangle the tip of his tail in the water and wait. Presently a paw flashed, despite the netting supposed to prevent such action. A fish was flipped from the water, this time to fall upon the netting and luckily to slide back into the pool. Who was I, though, to sully the reputation of such a faultless feline? I told nobody.

One evening the three of us were having dinner in the kitchen, it being a rare occasion when no guests were present. 'Mtoto entered through the cat-flap, a large goldfish in his mouth.

Mrs. Muller was aghast, wordless.

"It's all right, dear," Colonel Muller observed casually. "He only wants you to fry a few chips."

"But what can we tell Bruce?" His wife found speech and was worried about contact with her neighbour.

"You could always buy him a shotgun." Delivered with calm aplomb.

I was convulsed with merriment.

'Mtoto engorged his supper in a corner of the kitchen; not a scrap was left.

It was arranged that from time to time the Mullers would replenish their neighbours' stock of fish. Such delightful agreements abounded in that happy, cultured community. The waste from my bathroom discharged through the neighbours' system, the fee being one rose from the garden of The Old Grange to be delivered every summer. Civilised living!

# An Ano Korakiana Celebration

By  
Simon Baddeley

## Μια ωραία και "ζεστή" χριστουγεννιάτικη εκδήλωση



*Carols in St Athanasius in Ano  
Korakiana*

Μια ωραία και "ζεστή"  
χριστουγεννιάτικη εκδήλωση πραγματοποιήθηκε απόψε στον Άη-Θανάση από τη Φιλαρμονική Κορακιάνας. Τα δύο τμήματα του Μουσικού Συλλόγου, η Μπάντα και η Χορωδία χάρισαν στον κόσμο χριστουγεννιάτικες μελωδίες και τραγούδια, σε ένα χώρο που απέπνεε όσο κανείς άλλος, το «πνεύμα» των ημερών. Σε αυτό εξάλλου αναφέρθηκε προλογίζοντας την εκδήλωση ο Πρόεδρος του Συλλόγου Σπύρος Σαββανής. Το μουσικό μέρος της βραδιάς «έκλεισε» με τα ντόπια Κάλαντα των Χριστουγέννων και η συνέχεια δόθηκε μετά πολλών ευχών στο «κελί», όπου η Βασιλική, η Ηλέκτρα και η εορτάζουσα Νατάσσα ετοίμαζαν και προσέφεραν λουκουμάδες...



The [interior of Saint Athanasius](#) has been captured in a wrap-around photo made a few years ago. It is an exquisite sacred space - at night bejewelled by light. The Korakiana Band and Choir held a beautiful and 'heartwarming' Christmas event of music and songs on Saturday night in Saint Athanasius - a space radiating, as no other, the 'spirit' of the season. Introduced by the President of the Music Association, Spyros Savvani, the musical part of the evening closed with local Carols and prayers in the Basilica, after which Elektra and Natasha had prepared loukoumades...



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