

Special
71st Edition

The Agiot

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Agiotfest 13; A Milestone?



'The Troggs'



'Vince Vortex & The Cucumbers'

Five days have passed since the magical night of Agiotfest 13. Here are a few comments and a gallery, which say far more than the usual write-up.

STEVE DELL:

'ENJOYING a quiet evening chatting with THE TROGGS in the plateia at Agios Ioannis, off to sidari tomorrow for a warm up with THE SPLINTER BAND, then roll on Saturday'

'Great time at AGIOTFEST with the TROGGS VINCE VORTEX and the CUKES the X LOVERS OMEGA 5 and Heather Skinner —'



'Just lost my job on the dodgems im suing them for funfair dismissal'

Emily Picoulas:

'a special night with special music and special people....thank you so much, the whole concert was so very very good and brought so much happiness to all of us. music but most especially rock music in all its forms is the Nectar that keeps people young. play on!!'

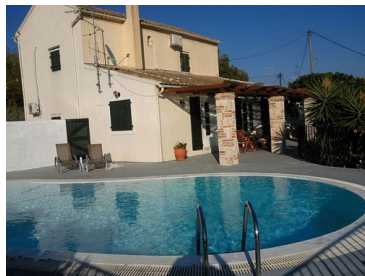
Minstrel:

'A magic time with magic people; one of those very special nights'

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Agiotfest 13; A Milestone? - Continued from Page 1

Chris Allen [from the Troggs]:



‘It was special for us also’
‘our lovely villa in Corfu (Ocay properties), and
‘my’ Hammock in the garden’

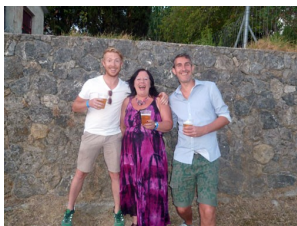


**‘it’s a hard life on the road!’ – at Agios
Ioannis Corfu**

Petros Papageorgiou:

‘Congratulations on an absolutely great night. Great event, great atmosphere, amazing organisation.....
Go Agiotfest 2014... and let’s see a good Blues Band!! Congratulations again!!’

Heather Skinner:



‘enjoying a post-performance pint of Corfu Beer from my favourite Micro Brewery’

‘awesome band, and what a luvverly bunch of guys xxx’

‘I would like to say a massive thank you to all the sound and stage crew, and everyone working so hard behind the scenes who did a fantastic job last night’



‘Richard & Bill’

‘ that was one hell of a skirt and heels xxx Good on you girl !!!’

Alexia Mane:

Thank you!i actually designed them myself and made them with my grandmas help

Sally Tinkler:

‘A VERY BIG WELL DONE TO PAUL, LULA AND THE CREW !!!!!!!!!!!!!

Another brilliant AGIOFEST, absolutely enjoyed by everyone.

THANK YOU xxxxxxxxxx’

Neville Smallwood:

‘ It was a great night out - really enjoyed the other acts. We were on early so we hit the bar afterwards and chilled out under the Corfu sky. Thanks go to Ken Harrop for the pic.’

Troggs Pete, Chris & Dave catching the early acts at Agiotfest 2013 from the (relative) safety of the New Cactus Hilton. They were standing on plastic chairs. Great guys and a lovely pic...’



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Agiotfest 13; A Milestone? - Continued from Page 1

Nobby Snide:

“Agiotfest early punters”



“Vince vortex & the cucumbers are off to a karaoke bar, by request. Whatever next!?”

“Insect hunting in the garden”



Simon and Lin:

‘All news speaks of a brilliant night Paul!!! Many congratulations to you and all your crew. Wish we could have been there for Agiotfest2013! XXX’

Dave Good:

‘A big shout out to Paul "The Guv'nor" McGovern, Lula and everyone else who helped make this year's Agiotfest the best... a superb night!... from The X-Lovers... xXx’

Agiotfest Music Festival:

Thanks Dave, it was a magic night, as you predicted. Very much a team effort this and we have a truly GREAT team.

Ron Woolven:

‘I am so glad that you all loved the Troggs. Makes it worthwhile getting them for you’.

Scott Weir:

‘Great night’.

Mickey Lowe:

‘Sorry we weren't there, but we were surely there in Spirit. I KNEW you would create a night of music magic! XXX’

Jane Baker:

‘A great night !! Thanks to the organisers for all their hard work. The bands were all fab, and Heather Skinner was really amazing, though still not convinced that I can like punk music’.

Robert Bennett:

‘The guys are still waxing lyrical !!

If we can get the the accommodation sorted I think I can get 20 next year!!

Sue Done:

Thank you to all the people who donated money at Agiotfest 2013 for Nicholas’s fund raising event. A total of €115.44 was raised.

Agiotfest 13 - A Word of Thanks

The Minstrel

The sounds from Agiotfest 13 are diminishing like a passing band, yet the memories will be vivid for many who attended the night of the 31st August at the New Cactus Hilton, for a long time to come.

Many people have sent thanks for a great show. The truth is it *was* a great event, simply because of the tireless and often selfless contributions by the 'Core', who are named below.

If I leave anyone out from this list I humbly apologise and excuse myself on the grounds of diminishing brain-cells. Many other people help and support us in so many ways, time restrictions prevent me from mentioning you all here. Please forgive, but rest assured your contributions will be acknowledged down the months here, and at www.agiotfest.com.

FIRSTLY, TRY THESE LINKS to take you to our superb photographers Dick Mulder and Rob Groove. Dick also masters our www.agiotfest.com:

Dick Mulder:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.553076784747708.1073741858.115725461816178&type=1>

Rob Groove:

<http://www.robgroove.com/blog-2/entertainment/music-2/photographing-agiotfest-2013/6001/>

&

<http://www.robgroove.com/photography/agiotfest-2013/#prettyPhoto/gallery-5959/7/>

Lula: quite simply put, there would be no Agiotfest without her. She seems to be able to multi-task in a blaze of chaotic industry.

Paul and Jan Scotter: Without recompense and never complaining

they have been at the forefront of the Fest all year. Organised, friendly, helpful and wise they are two rocks to be leant upon, great sponsors and steadfast friends.

Ken and Jan Harrop: Every year they come up trumps in the north of the island, organizing ticket sales and the coach, and introducing our sister organisation the 100+ Club.

Bill Vrionis: again, there would be a poorer show without Bill and his merry team, who get the sounds just right, and the lighting too. Like so many others they sacrifice money to ensure the Agiotfest will roll down the years, we hope.

Peter, Kostas, Elina and Anna Mantzarou, Kostas Panaretos, Jim Pangrakiotis and Bruno Faggi, their first year as catering team, and also sign-posters and banner erectors.

Richard Wilson: Ticket distributor, band advisor, sponsor and above all else superb stage manager. The show went like clockwork thanks to his professionalism and time-keeping.

Michael Spiggos: A central link at Firebrand, Michael filled in at short notice as co compere with Steve, and did some super tight interviews with the acts pre-Fest.

Steve Dell: flew out to Corfu just for the show and gave his usual polished performance on-stage, and chilled out with the other performers off-stage.

Chas Clifton: my cheeky Cockney mate [and a fine discerner of football teams] again mustered a group of his pals to come along, all for the benefit of the village, island and festival.

Lucy Steele: 5 years on the spin she has efficiently anchored our raffle, not only on the night. She organizes the prizes and drums up support

in her own inimicable way.

Sally and all at Sally's bar, Ipsos: for unselfish and continuous support.

Sue Gentry Done: every year Sue does the business. This year she was doing media I.T promotion mainly, but each year she grows with her width of assistance.

Paul and Sally Grove: as well as being neighbours, friends and sponsors they have for three years allowed us to use their front garden as part of the location. This year Paul's promotions officer, Magda, mingled seamlessly with the crowd.

Di Carden and Steve Thomson: Di owns MouseHouse Ltd and sponsors every year. This year, unfortunately, they could not attend in person, as Steve is recuperating from a serious viral infection.

Πέτρος Παπαγεωργίου[Petros from Boatman's world]: Sponsor, ticket distributor, and avid fan, he has added a new dimension from the Corfiot perspective.

Peter Cookson of Spear Travels: an evergreen sponsor, Pete is a great lover of Corfu and goes out on a limb to support us, such is his passion for helping our lovely island.

Spyros Hytiris: our resident DJ, journalist and -this year- manic dancer!

Mitsos: wonderfully helpful electrician every single time. Total gent.

Sony: great all round physical work, with no complaints

And last but never least in the Core/Jan Pumford: our secretary volunteers every Agiotfest night to sit at the gate and patiently count everybody in. Not to mention the countless hours she backbones the admin. during the year.

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Agiotfest 13 - A Word of Thanks
Continued from page 4

All prize donators for the Agiotfest.
Nikos Pouliasis: Another stage which did not collapse.

The Troggs: Super bunch of men with super attitudes and par excellence on and off stage.

All prize donators for the Agiotfest.

Omega5: fourth appearance in five years speaks volumes.

Adrian Ward: NEW TO THE Fest year, he was immediately helpful in promoting us, and introduced the young lady Artemis on violin.

Artemis Kokkinou [and her Mum]: She was a very nervous young lady when she came to pre-open the festival. As many had not arrived in time for her short piece, here is a chance to enjoy her. This young lady is self-taught [from Youtube]. She seeks a tutor! There must be one out there somewhere. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N50_o4nbB-A

Vince Vortex and the Cucumbers: on this their second visit, they entered Corfu folklore. You either hate or love them. I love them.

Heather Skinner [with James Williams] a total contrast in style and delivery from what was to follow; and didn't she go down well, and obviously thoroughly enjoyed herself.

X-Lovers: great band, great enthusiasm. They had line-up problems pre-Fest, but overcame them to deliver big time on the night. New singer Alexia has probably gained three to four hundred new fans. Dave Good was a total friend and gent throughout who lent Nobby a bass.

Jim Skinner: Another new lad, though not to festivals, with which he has been much-involved with in the south-west of England. Jim and I slept in the groves the night before the fest, under droplets of rain, guarding the equipment set up on

that night. He also sold tickets and helped arrange the Southern coach with....

Jane from Petriti: organises a party from the south, all from her own initiative. Fantastic.

Bono and Purrsephone: Guard dog and guard cat, for when Jim and I dozed off under the olives.

Chris Allen [of the Troggs] arranged the group's appearance here with him. Negotiations were sane, uncomplicated and a pleasure. He does the Troggs proud.

Robert Bennett: Bringer of bodies from the far north [Scotland], on behalf of Krav Maga.

Ioakeim Theologou: Poster designer and Events creator on Facebook.

Barry and Stella Knight, Simon and Lin Baddeley, Bob and Jill Carr, Micky Clark, Ricky Collier, Steve Young all great supporters and friends from afar, who provide much-needed sponsorship cash.

Sue at Castaway Travel: For great help with Ken's coach.

Mel and Jo Sperling, dear friends from England who freely gave their villa for Vince Vortex and the Cucumbers to stay in.

Vince, Nobby Dick and Steve: they paid their own airfares to play for free for you.

Les and Chris Woods: volunteered for stage dressing and general duties and were all-round good eggs.

Brenda Pangrakiotis: all the way from Ferryhill to talk to everybody.

Sunrise Cars for looking after the Troggs in traffic.

The Grammatikos family for their support

Spiros Revis, magic builder, who was invited as our guest, but insisted on paying at the gate despite driving all the way from Petriti. Spiros epitomizes the spirit of Agiotfest.

Sofia Kasfiki, Green Island, Lionel Mann.

Alex Boukis and Dimitris Krokkidis

for their great promotional work.



Famous Grouse: for the superb Ginger Grouse provided.

And

ocay  property

YOU THE TICKET BUYERS. Not much point without you, the atmosphere you created and the dancing and singing you all so clearly enjoyed

CORFU BEER for lubrication.

For those of you who could not make 2013, I hope you will make 2014.

Keep following the Agiot newsletters for more news on the Agiotfest.

ROCKON 2014!

Please keep a look out for an extra Agiotfest Gallery edition.

Link will be uploaded soon.

AGIOTFEST 2013 - Raffle Prizes & Winning Numbers:

1st: Villa Theodora, Ag Ioannis, date to be arranged

Ticket No: Green 91 - Claimed

2nd: Beauty aids from Sephora shops

Ticket No: Pink 21 - Claimed

3rd: €25 shopping voucher from British Corner Shop

Ticket No: Green 72 - Claimed

4th: 15 x 1 Game vouchers from Star Bowl

Ticket No: Green 20 - Claimed

5th: Free cocktail for two at Hotel Telesillas

Ticket No: Pink 44 - Claimed

6th: Day ticket for two at Aqualand Water Park

Ticket No: Yellow 905 - Claimed

7th: €25 shopping voucher from British Corner Shop

Ticket No: Yellow 930 – NOT YET CLAIMED!

8th: 24hr Internet card for Compass Cafe, Kondokali

Ticket No: Pink 49 - Claimed

9th: Beauty aids from Marks & Spencer

Ticket No: Green 25 - Claimed

10th: Meal for two at Big Bite Restaurant, Benitses

Ticket No: Green 63 - Claimed

11th: Crate of 12 bottles of Gingergrouse - (mix of
whisky/ginger beer)

Ticket No: Green 80 - Claimed

12th: Indian Head Massage

Ticket No: Yellow 934 - Claimed

13th: Veuve Clicquot Brut Champagne

Ticket No: Yellow 924 - Claimed

14th: Pair of Plastimo Binoculars from Boatman's World

Ticket No: Yellow 915 - Claimed

There was only one unclaimed ticket: Yellow ticket number 0930, issued to Louise A (The initial A being the first letter of her surname).

This lady bought three tickets altogether and if she would like to contact me on 6975 833654 then we can arrange for her to collect her winning ticket (her prize was one of the two 25 pound shopping vouchers from the British Corner Shop).

Village News

By
Dr Lionel Mann

laid down in the open space beside his home.

Drawn by Agiotfest, a large number of visitors came to the village last month, too many to list individually. We enjoyed renewing many old acquaintances.

Bonno is making quite a name for himself by leaping through glazed windows, apparently protected by his stiff coat from the shattered glass. He is thought to be considering touring the halls giving matinee and evening performances in order to gain international recognition and to make his fortune.

There is speculation that George the Taxi may be acquiring a helicopter as he has just had a launch-pad

Corfu Weather Statistics

August 2013

Min. Temp: 25°C
 Max. Temp: 38°C
 Avg. Temp: 30°C
 Precipitation: 0.0mm
 Max Wind Speed: 43km/h
 Max Gust Speed: 42km/h

Nick the Clock's World

A Push in the Rain

A man and his wife are awakened at 3 o'clock in the morning by a loud pounding on the door.

The man gets up and goes to the door, where a drunken stranger, standing in the pouring rain, is asking for a push.

"Not a chance," says the husband, "it is 3 o'clock in the morning!"

He slams the door and returns to bed.

"Who was that?" asked his wife.

"Just some drunk guy asking for a push," he answers.

"Did you help him?" she asks.

"No, I did not, it's 3 o'clock in the morning and it is pouring out there!"

"Well, you have a short memory," says his wife. "Can't you remember about three months ago when we broke down, and those two guys helped us? I think you should help him, and you should be ashamed of yourself!"

The man does as he is told, gets dressed, and goes out into the pounding rain.

He calls out into the dark, "Hello, are you still there?"

"Yes" comes back the answer.

"Do you still need a push?" calls out the husband.

"Yes, please!" comes the reply from the dark.

"Where are you?" asks the husband.

"Over here on the swing!" replies the drunk.

Aunty Lula's Love-bites

Nut Macaroons

Ingredients

4 Egg Whites
 500g Icing Sugar (sieved)
 200g Chopped & Toasted Almonds or Walnuts

Go:

1. Grease a baking sheet.
2. Beat the egg whites with an electric mixer on a medium speed for 2 minutes, then switch the speed to high and continue whisking until stiff but not dry peaks form.
3. Gradually add Icing sugar, about

a dessertspoon at a time, whisking at medium speed (without stopping). Whisk for 1-2 minutes more or until combined.

4. Using a wooden spoon, fold in the nuts.

5. Using a teaspoon, drop mixture in rounded teaspoon amounts, 5cm apart on the prepared baking sheet.

6. Bake in a 160°C oven for about 15 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Transfer Macaroons to a wire rack and leave to cool.

Bon appetit!

Fleshpots Of The North

By
Mark Thompson

It never ceases to surprise me when swimming from a local beach or using one of the many pools around the island how many British tourists feel the need to garb themselves in heraldic symbols, mainly related to football, from the UK. Be it T-shirts, shorts, swim shorts, bikinis, towels, sweat bands, hats, shoes, of all kinds, the list seems endless.

The 'union flag' and the cross of St. George seem to be both predominant and interchangeable for this purpose, but I do ponder the mindset behind it. I accept many people, not just visitors, wear shirts of their favourite team. Indeed many wear such a shirt it being the team of their favourite player, Messi being a prime example of this phenomenon.

James Boswell, self-appointed amanuensis of and biographer to Dr. Johnson, tells us that on the 7th of April 1775 the great doctor made the following pronouncement that '*patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel*'. He was in fact referring to the 'false' use of the word patriot by, amongst others, John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute the so-called patriot-minister. Nonetheless Johnson apparently did value what he considered 'true' self-professed patriotism.

It is perhaps this distinction that makes many feel a little queasy when such a 'national' symbol is used to decorate a towel or swim wear. In the same way when did use of the St. George's flag apparently become the sole prerogative of extremists in England and indeed elsewhere in the kingdom?

This aggressive use of a long-standing symbol, and don't forget that St. George slaying the dragon is a strong myth in many cultures not least Greece, sees the conversion of the flag to a weapon. For those who

have memory of or knowledge of, say, Germany between the wars such 'corruption' of a legitimate and proud banner could be regarded by them as both unpleasant and inappropriate.

The French have an expression, well they would wouldn't they? along the lines of '*be happy or content in your skin*'. I believe that this dictum has both physiological and psychological elements. So far as the physiological is concerned this is not a lame resignation that everything is heading southward and there's nothing to be done, but rather an acceptance, for men, that we'll never look like Pierce Brosnan or(ladies please insert your male of choice) or for women that 'I won't achieve the body of which ever size OO model is currently gracing the catwalks not matter how many hours I spend at the gym' and then make the best of things.

I also believe that there is a strong psychological element to this expression that relates, in part, to nationhood and/or nationality. Whilst it's not necessary to completely adhere to every national stereotype it is surely possible to be English without the necessity of wearing, say, a pair of pants which proclaims that fact.

With apologies to those who make-up the component parts of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Island, for the purposes of this piece, so far, I deliberately blurred the distinctions of all those that constitute this fine kingdom.

The Welsh rightly and properly celebrate St. David as do the our northern friends the Scots with St. Andrew and having been in both Dublin and New York, on separate occasions, I know well the extent to which all those claiming Irish descent or indeed otherwise throw themselves into St. Patrick's Day. On one memorable occasion whilst in New York I saw part of the parade, albeit

on TV, amongst those marching was the Westchester Police Band, African-Americans to man, all wearing 'the green' and proudly proclaiming their Irish antecedents to all.

Perhaps if the English were able celebrate St. George's Day with same enthusiasm they might be happier in their skin. The flag of St. George could then be reclaimed from the extremists and we might see a more interesting selection of towels and swim wear at the beach and around the pool.

Then there would only be the matter of dealing with the ever-present MUFC towels and accoutrements!

The answers to a previous quiz; 1. The slogan or catchphrase was *sock it to me, baby!* 2. The presidential candidate was *Richard Milhous Nixon*. I believe right to the end Nixon thought this phrase was used as a term of approbation, carrying the same weight as the official slogan: *Now Nixon-Richard M. Nixon*. Whereas the slogan was accepted by many as a term of rejection or opprobrium of Nixon, the Republican candidate, and all that he stood for on the lines of the coarser, but somewhat more pithy; *Dick Nixon, before he dicks you*.

Now for this months' quiz, please tell me 1. The name of the only bar in the world that according to Harry Pearson, at least, inspired a ballet (by Maurice Bèjart). And 2. The origins of the name of the bar. The usual competition rules apply.

Yours, badly burnt, in the fleshpots,

Mark Thompson

Summer 1976

By
Dr. Lionel Mann

Part Three:

Europe was still sizzling under a scorching heatwave. After a week of gentle travel across Switzerland while recovering from having participated well rather than wisely in the Freiburg Weinfest I arrived in Basel with two weeks remaining on my railcard. Until that time my travel had been governed by the need to visit only French and German-speaking countries for language practice, but now I was satisfied that I could manage in those so I was going further afield. Italy, home of the Renaissance, beckoned.

From Basel I took a train to Rome leaving in the evening, intending to sleep while travelling. All went well until the early hours when we reached Milan. Apparently first class means nothing in Italy. The compartment was invaded by a horde aged from five to fifty who jammed me into a corner and spent the entire night jabbering loudly while eating and drinking noisily from the abundant supplies that they carried with them.

I was not in the best frame of mind when we reached Rome two hours late. (Trains never run on time in Italy. They have not yet found a way to carry a sundial on a locomotive.) My impression of the place was not improved when the clerk at the currency exchange tried to rob me and then the waitress at the station café also tried constructive accounting. I decided that there were a few places that I wanted to see, but that I should travel back to civilisation that evening. I took the risk of leaving my bags at the Left Luggage counter.

Rome was filthy; they had just held one of their endless succession of political elections and the streets were littered with manifestos. I calculated that by walking downhill I should come to the river and I was soon proved right. Even better was the unmistakable sight

of St. Peter's ahead. After spending more than an hour marvelling at that glorious edifice I went up to a priest. "Ubi est Colosseum?" the only time that I have used Latin apart from the Liturgy.

He burst out laughing. "You go straight out of here, then turn right ..." He was English!

I saw the Colosseum and a couple of fountains, had a unremarkable meal and returned to the station in time to catch the six o'clock train to Luxembourg. Just as we left the heavens exploded in a spectacular thunderstorm, not before time; Rome badly needed a wash. In all my travels that summer Italy was the only place where I was not welcomed.

Predictably the compartment was stridently crowded until we arrived at Milan - more than two hours late! After the crowd left only an elderly lady remained sitting in the far corner, as far from me as possible. We travelled in silence; I did not dare to speak lest she should think I were making advances. At last we reached the Swiss frontier and presented our passports to the officer - they were both British and we laughed. From there we chatted pleasantly all night.

At Basel I left the train; it was morning, the train had not made up time and I was hungry. My companion, wise to the ways of Italian trains, had plenty of sustenance and offered to share, but she was going all the way with changes to Calais for a ferry to Britain and I had no wish to diminish her supplies.

The frontier guard at the station asked why I was crossing into France.

"I'm hungry; I need my breakfast. I shall be back to catch another train. Can you recommend a good place to eat?"

He laughed and pointed to a café across the road. "Go there and tell them that Charles sent you. They will serve you well."

After a very good breakfast I went

back and chatted with the officer until the Luxemburg train pulled in. Surprisingly I had the observation car at the rear to myself all the way, watching the sun-baked countryside passing by.

There could not have been a greater contrast between Rome and Luxembourg city. The place was clean, neat and tidy with well-kept parks in which to shelter from the heat and I was made welcome everywhere, staying three days and enjoying every minute.

With nine days remaining on my railcard I returned to Ostend, using it as a centre from which to travel around Belgium: Bruges, Ghent. Brussels, Zeebrugge, Waterloo and Blankenburg.

I have always found Ostend a pleasant place at which to stay with its fine beach, extensive park, docks with shipping and boats performing interesting antics, waffles, prawns straight from the boat.

On the penultimate day, a Saturday, of my railcard I went to Antwerp. Upon entering the Cathedral I was delighted to hear a choir and orchestra commencing a Haydn Mass, but then a priest started performing the liturgy.

I became suspicious and went out to the porch where an elderly man was scanning the notices.

"What day is it today?"

He looked at me in amazement, clearly thinking me mad. "It's Sunday."

I was horrified; somewhere I had lost a day. There followed a hectic succession of trains: Antwerp, Brussels, Ostend to settle hotel and collect luggage, Brussels, Paris, Dunkirk for ferry, Dover at 11p.m. to London just before midnight. The ticket collector at Victoria grinned appreciatively when I showed my pass!

(The final part of that long hot summer will appear in our October Newsletter.)

The World of Simon

By
Simon Baddeley

London for the day

London was all grey overcast and drizzle. Big planes emerged, flaps down, turbines whistling, slowly processing at five minute intervals over central London down to Heathrow.



On Albert Bridge

I caught the fast morning train to London, pensioner's concession - hardly £32 return - with plenty of room in August; a frisson of sadness for departed mum when I see the intercity waiting to start for Glasgow Central on the New Street platform where I wait for my train south. I didn't feel her in the Highlands as we cleared Brin Croft but here, where I could recall the pleasant anticipation of one of my long journey's north, I did, and always will no doubt.



Thames embankment with sleepers

I cycled the familiar route - Gordon Street opposite Euston, past hedged Torrington Square and on to Trafalgar Square threading the congestion, down Whitehall past the Houses of Parliament onto the Embankment...



...straight on along the new blue cycle route to where it crosses the river at Chelsea Bridge and on half a mile to frail Albert Bridge, then across the brown river to take a right on to Parkgate Street. Just before it meets Battersea Bridge Road is *Phoenix Cycles* where I leave my Brompton with Mike, and his son Tom, for servicing. Meantime at a greasy spoon, run by Vietnamese, I take Full English beside tattooed workers in hi-vis tabards; one more - an African - arrives smoking a cheroot...

...the scent of musty paper and rich earth burning clashes with the buttered toast bacon black pudding sausage beans aroma of my classic ethnic meal



"You're spoiling my breakfast" I mumble as traffic rumbles by our outdoor tables. I'm ignored for a minute to save face and then the cheroot is stubbed. Later I count the cost of repairing my bicycle; a whole new back wheel unit as I've no time for rebuilding a wheel whose hub has worn paper thin with use. That also means a new chain and hub gears; new saddle; new brake blocks, and general tightening up and the best new tyres I can afford. I've removed the dynamo and lights front and rear, in favour of LEDs, now so efficient and cheap. Mike's bill is over

£300 but [the bicycle](#) I bought from him in 2004, for £699, feels like new (perhaps better as I know it so well), as I ride it happily back across the Thames via the carriage road through Battersea Park. over Chelsea Bridge and along the river again until I turn left towards Victoria...



...where I'm to meet my friend Charles Webster from *Delta Leisure* at *Seafresh* on Wilton Road for fish and chips and tea and beer, to discuss what I'm doing with Jack's film-tape archive...



Then back up Whitehall, up Charing Cross Road to Euston and another fast train home, enjoying my latest procedural - the intelligent work of Grijpstra and de Gier in *The Blond Baboon* by [Janwillem van de Wetering](#); back home in time to take the minutes of a meeting of [Handsworth Helping Hands](#), including a querying of our guest - my friend Andrew Simons, now its Community Engagement Officer - about [an ambitious local investment](#), in which *HHH* might be involved. In common with similar central government initiatives across the country, it's called in our area, [Birchfield Big Local](#), and those most directly involved, in particular Raj Rattu, a lapsed member of *HHH*, have recently been in receipt of £20,000 to spend on planning how to spend a promised £1000000.