

The Corfiot

Corfu's English Language Monthly Magazine

December 2007

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No. 204



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in 1947**

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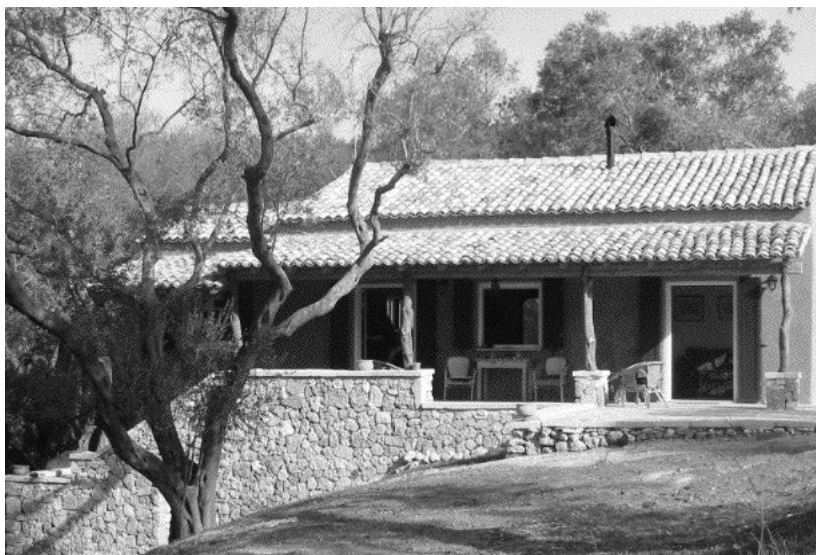
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This Month...

Whose Christmas is it anyway? 14

Sarah Button compares religious and secular Christmases, and finds there's not so much difference

A Trip to Zagori 16

Harry Tsoukalas tells us about a recent trip to Zagori

Book Reviews for Christmas 20

Jim Potts reviews 'The Cat of Portovecchio' by Maria Strani-Potts

Hilary Paipeti reviews 'Corfu - Memories' by Mihalios Kokkalis

Sara Button reviews 'Irish Flames' by John Waller

Christmas 1947 24

Lionel Mann remembers a hilarious postwar Christmas in Germany

Regular Features

Ear to the Ground - *Don't be scared of scares* 4

Notice Board - *Post your events* 5

People in the News - *Memorial Service for Christi and Bobby* 6

Chaplain's Chat - *Christmas - A Good Time to Invest* 10

Take that News - *Horrible things happening* 12

Letters - *Reply to Lionel Mann on church music* 27

Classified, Property Listings 28



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ear to the ground

I SNACKED ON A SAUSAGE ROLL YESTERDAY. Heavy on carcinogenic trans fats and lick-it-and-you-die processed pork. Or so the latest food-scaremongers would have us believe.

In the 1970s, housewives (including my mother) were persuaded by TV adverts that buying Flora margarine instead of butter would prevent their husbands from having a heart attack. Cholesterol had just been 'discovered', and the margarine was supposed to actively diminish levels of the baddy. Now it turns out that all those gullible women were feeding their beloveds with dangerous trans fats. My mother was one and guess what killed my father.

She tried to make me eat this rubbish too, but even as a child my gut feeling was that butter was better - and I was right. (This was the family who would carefully pick all the lovely crisp skin off the turkey and give it to the dog, then afterwards eat their way through a box of fat- and E-laden chocolates.)

It took several decades for Flora to be discredited (I wonder why no-one has sued them for misrepresentation?), but nowadays it seems that only days go by before the health bullies change their minds about whether a consumable product is good or bad for you. Not long ago, they decided, after years of a total ban, that it was OK for pregnant women to drink in small quantities. Then recently, another about turn - alcohol gives you cancer so you shouldn't drink at all even if not pregnant. Eating any form of processed pork (sausage, bacon, ham, salami etc), in whatever quantity, is sure to kill you too. As is consuming red meat.

So there you go. Three great traditions - English Breakfast, Roast Beef and Ale - out of the window.

Funny. I often read articles that explain oddities of our current behavioural patterns as being derived from our caveman ancestors. Like men preferring younger women. The message being that we haven't had time to evolve out of them.

Have a quick look at your teeth. You see the pointy one, two teeth along? It's called a 'canine' and guess what? It's there because our caveman ancestors ate meat! However, it seems that while we've not managed to out-evolve our caveman behaviour, our bodies have apparently de-evolved their ability to deal with the meat that these same distant ancestors were perfectly capable of digesting without dropping dead on the spot.

Just a generation ago, we enjoyed bacon much more fatty than the lean modern stuff, without suffering ill effects; until tea came from China and drinking water became safe, the English drank weak beer for breakfast and all day, and came to no great harm.

Of course, a generation ago, and further back in time, producers didn't pump hormones into animals, nor feed chickens on fish meal, nor cows with diseased sheep. Nor was everything full of Es. And people took more exercise.

So the message? Don't let the Health Police get to you this Christmas. You are in Corfu; eat locally produced foods, which are generally not messed about too much. And take a brisk walk. Soon we'll be reading that cholesterol is good for you (actually, in small amounts, it is vital!).

I'M READING RANULPH FIENNES' ACCOUNT OF HIS POLE-TO-POLE ROUND-THE-WORLD EXPEDITION, *To the Ends of the Earth*, and it's riveting. Like I was, you're probably under the impression that the Arctic Sea is permanently covered with a solid lump of ice and snow. It's this that's melting and breaking up due to Global Warming; and thus all those dear little polar bears are photographed floating around on increasingly reduced icebergs, and we're guilt-ridden when we drive to the shop.

Wrong. As I found from reading Fiennes, the Arctic ice is a thin

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crust, in places only centimetres thick, and comprises lots of completely separate icefloes, small and large, which float around and partly MELT IN SUMMER. Polar bears can deal with this.

Do you know why Greenland is called Greenland? Because it wasn't always covered with ice! Yet there is no evidence that sea levels were higher at a time when Greenland's icy mountains were in the oceans.

Fiennes' adventure took place in the early 80s, before Global Warming was even a twinkle in scientists' eyes. What's your bet that pics of the 'stranded' polar bears were shot in summer (well, they must have been, because it's dark all day in winter), when the ice melts anyway?

David Bellamy thinks Global Warming is bunk. I think it's a cunning bid to control our behaviour, just like the Health Police with their food scares.

The French have a healthy (pun intended) disregard for food scares, and I bet they don't go for Global Warming either.

MERRY CHRISTMAS, and don't let the scares get you down.

NOTICE BOARD

CHRISTMAS AT HOLY TRINITY

Sunday, 16 December

10.30 Nativity Play (written by Jackie Dallos of Lefkada)

19.00 Carol Singing around Town (replaces Songs of Praise in Church).

Meet at Holy Trinity Church, Zambeli Street at 18.30 (for a prompt 19.00 start)

Followed by Mince Pies and Mulled Wine

Sunday 23 December

10.30 Holy Communion

19.00 Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. Read in English and Greek.

Christmas Eve

20.00 Christingle Service. This much-loved service is designed for families with children, but all are welcome. This is a joint service at the Greek Evangelical church.

23.30 Midnight Holy Communion

Christmas Day

10.30 Holy Communion

Come and join us for a Happy Christmas!

Tel: 26610 31467 10.00 - 13.00 Sunday - Friday

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

The Chaplain, Rev. Clifford Owen, and his wife Avis are at the Church Monday to Friday 09.30 - 13.00. Tel: 26610 31467.

Email: holytrin@otenet.gr Website: www.holytrinitycorfu.net

SUNDAY SERVICES

Sundays 10.30 Holy Communion
19.00 (1st, 3rd & 5th of month) Songs of Praise

(Sunday School & Youth Group run same time as Services except Family Service)

REGULAR EVENTS

Tuesdays 10.00 Library & Coffee Morning
Wednesdays 10.00 Coffee & Kids
Wednesdays 12.00-14.30 Lunch Box
Wednesdays 19.00 Scrabble Club (last Wed. in the month)
Thursdays 10.30 Bible Study, the Old Testament (new series)
Fridays 10.30-12.00 Informal Prayer Meeting

The Ark Christmas Lunch Captain's - Kanoni

9th December, 13.00 to late afternoon

18 euros pp for delicious hot and cold buffet, mulled wine, mince pies etc - drinks purchased from bar. Adults 18 euros, children under 12 10 euros. Raffle for hamper and visit from Santa. Tickets from Ark Shop or call 6975 565434.

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Meditation *A method to realize and develop inner peace*

Tharpaling Buddhist Centre is organising a public talk called 'Introduction to Meditation'. The talk will be given by Gen-la Kelsang Khyenrab, the deputy Spiritual Director of the NKT-IKBU, and the Resident Teacher of Manjushri Centre, the main Centre in the NKT.

17th December 2007

7.30 p.m.

Faliraki, Corfu Town

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Remembrance Service Well attended at British Cemetery

by *Charlie Picoula*

After a severe storm the previous day, the Remembrance Sunday Service on 11 November was thankfully blessed by good weather and an encouraging attendance of local residents.

The Service was led by the Rev'd Clifford Owen of the Holy Trinity Anglican Church, conjoined by Father Julio of the Roman Catholic Church, and retired servicemen Leslie Everard and Tony Dunford, with Mr Wesley Clash representing the Bahai faith.

Despite prior adverse weather conditions, the British Cemetery was well presented as usual, due to the care and devotion of George Psailas, who laid a wreath accompanied by myself on behalf of the British Vice Consulate. Wreaths were also laid by Athanasios Raptis, Commander of the Hellenic Naval Base and Konstantinos Lessis, Deputy Nomarch.

We were honoured by a new Bugler, Chrysovalantis Moscholpoulos of the local Mantzaros Philharmonic, who kindly performed the Last Post and the Reveille impressively.

A big thank you to all who attended, and to those who helped the day along smoothly, not forgetting the assistance in the successful little reception held at the Anglican Church.



NOTICE BOARD

Deutsche Weihnacht

Thursday 13th and Friday 14th of December the Deutsch-Griechischer Kulturverein Korfu celebrates its annual Christmas Fair in front of the catholic cathedral at Plateia Dimarhio starting at 6:00 pm :

- ★ *mulled wine*
- ★ *home made biscuits*
- ★ *hand made christmas decorations*
- ★ *christmas songs and lots more!*

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Memorial Service for Christi and Bobby

A memorial ceremony took place on Friday, 26 October to commemorate one year after the death of Christianne and Robert Shepherd of Horbury, Wakefield. The ceremony took place outside the chalet where they died of carbon monoxide poisoning during a half-term holiday last year. Mother Sharon Wood and father Neil Shepherd mourned along with Neil's partner Ruth Beatson and Sharon's husband Paul Wood.

The parents, supported by their partners, were tearful during the service, conducted by the Chaplain of Holy Trinity, the local Anglican church, the Revd. Clifford Owen. Present were the Mayor of Corfu, Sotiris Michalef, representatives from the Consular Service of the British Embassy, and local ex-pats.

Christi (7) and Bobby (6) died when a faulty boiler adjacent to Chalet 112 at the Louis Corcyra Beach Hotel in Gouvia leaked the deadly gas into their accommodation.

In his address, Revd. Owen said: 'One year ago last night, a family was on holiday in the chalet here. They were with hundreds of other families enjoying the half-term holiday from English schools. I am sure the children talked about it in their school playground with their friends before they came. But all of us know, that in the midst of that holiday week tragedy struck. On year ago this very morning, Christianne and Robert Shepherd failed to wake up. It was to be some days before Neil and Ruth recovered consciousness.

'So today we gather here to remember that tragedy, but above all to hold dear in our memories Christianne and Robert, whose life on this earth was cut tragically short.'

Sharon and Ruth are both expecting new babies, to be born early next year.

Right: The poignant shrine outside the chalet

Below (from left): Tearful Neil, Ruth, Sharon and Paul during the service. Revd. Owen has his back to the camera



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ACTIVITIES

Winter Walks

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Meet Agii Deka Village, lower car park, 10.30. Lunch at Paxinos, Benitses

WEDNESDAY, 5 DECEMBER Corfu Trail to

Lakones *.** Meet Lakones junction, 2.00

SATURDAY, 8 DECEMBER Konstanti Hill,

Acharavi * NEW!** Meet Acharavi (Freddo Bar), 10.30. Lunch TBA

WEDNESDAY, 12 DECEMBER Kokini - Pelekas -

Kokini **. Meet Kokini Square, 2.00

SATURDAY, 15 DECEMBER Liapades - Liodoro ***

NEW! Meet Liapades, 10.30. Lunch at Doukades

WEDNESDAY, 19 DECEMBER Roman Path and

Dandalo Tower **. Meet Acharavi (Freddo Bar), 10.30. Lunch TBA

SATURDAY, 22 DECEMBER Arillas Ways **. Meet

Arillas Beachfront, 10.30. Christmas Lunch at Pete and Sarah's - everyone bring seasonal dish or wine, plate and cutlery. The turkey's on Sarah!

SATURDAY, 29 DECEMBER Mount Agios

Mattheos *.** Meet first coffee bar in Agios

Mattheos, 10.30. Lunch at Paxinos, Benitses

SATURDAY, 5 JANUARY Secret Path and the

Nun's Trail **.** Meet Acharavi (Freddo Bar), 10.30 for onward car transfer. Lunch TBA

SATURDAY, 12 JANUARY Karst Plateau **. Meet at Stamatis, Strinilas, 10.30 for onward car transfer.

Lunch at Stamatis, Strinilas

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*** Moderate, with ascents

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Negligent businessman helped cause puppies' death

As many folk who have lived here for a while know, autumn is the danger period for poison. Sometimes it's laid by farmers concerned about dogs attacking their baby lambs (mostly born in November and December) and other times by locals culling the summer's strays.

For this reason, and also because Lulu's pups were growing up, I planned to fence in a section of the garden to provide a safe run.

Neighbours recommended Leonides Giohalas, who has a fence business at Alepou, near the pet shop, and accordingly I contacted him to order the fence. Another plus was that his wife is Irish, and I thought I would be looked upon sympathetically as a fellow foreigner.

Not so. Eventually, after a few weeks, he came to measure up. Then silence.

On 28 and 29 October, with the garden still insecured, Bruni, Bella and Paddy were poisoned. Dinos managed to save them, and I immediately rang Giohalas to tell him the fence was now urgent. He promised me for the next Monday or Tuesday evening (he had previously offered to come one Saturday morning but of course this was not possible due to the walks - the hours he offered me his services obviously indicated that I was not a customer to be dealt with during 'normal' working hours, when his 'proper' customers were the priority). And again he did not turn up.

On Saturday, 10 November, just as I returned home from the walk, Bramble and Tasha fell sick. Despite rushing away from a social event, Dino's best efforts failed to bring them back, and they both died in the night. On Monday morning, Paddy fell sick, and he died in my arms in the car as we waited for Dinos - his poor body could not cope with a second dose so soon. (I had just found a home for Paddy, at Foros Taverna in Old Perithia, and planned to deliver him on the Thursday.) I later found a bag of poison mixed with meat which had been deliberately laid in my garden. The fence would have prevented the puppies' taking it.

Luckily, Bella has now been adopted by an English lady - the daughter of Lulu's original foster mother, and is already a much loved dog. Bruni, whom I will keep, is tied up or in the house. Because Giohalas has still not delivered my fence.

After the first poisoning, I phoned to stress that I was now desperate. He was uncontactable on his mobile, but his father, at the shop, had one thing to say: 'Did you pay us?' Giohalas himself had made no mention of payment in advance.

In his negligence, I consider Giohalas at least partly responsible for my dogs' death. I urge you all NOT to put up with similar second-class-citizen treatment by local businesses who disregard us possibly as 'poor' foreigners whose money is not as good as the locals'.

The Ark Animal Welfare Shop

11 Ag. Dimitriou Street, Corfu Town
(Behind Commercial Bank/Serano Cake Shop)

During December 2007 the shop will be open every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 10.00 - 13.00, up until Friday 21 December. It will re-open on Tuesday, 3 January 2008 for our New Year Sale.

Enjoy a refreshing cup of coffee or tea, have a good browse around, and get the bargains while stocks last!

Do come along and help support the stray and abandoned animals of Corfu.

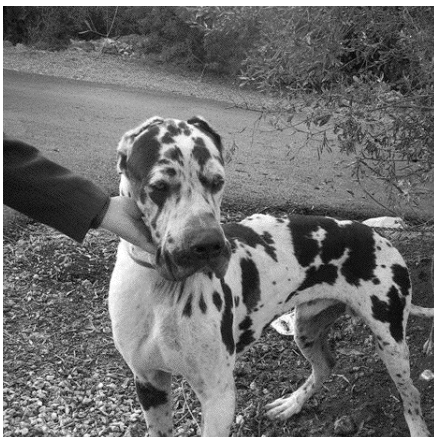
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THE ARK ANIMAL WELFARE CHRISTMAS CARDS 2007 The Ark is selling delightful Christmas cards. There is another new design for this year: Santa Claus with a lovely puppy. This is in addition to the four other charming designs on sale in previous years. Each pack contains ten cards and cost 4.50 euros per pack; a free pack of pet food is offered with each purchase. They are on sale at various locations: at Holy Trinity Church and in the Ark Animal Welfare shop, from Lucy Steele (former British Vice Consul) and from various bars in the Kontokali, Ipsos, and Pyrgi areas.

Does anyone know who owns this dog?

This Great Dane was found around the 15th November on the road between Aqualand and Kokkini. He is very kindly being fostered by a Greek family. If anyone recognises him and knows the owner, please get in touch with 6979 798202.



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CHRISTMAS: A Good Time to Invest

by Clifford Owen

I cannot put pen to paper for Christmas (or fingers to keyboard) without referring to the very 'religious' November 2007 edition of the Corfiot. It contained three articles of great interest, and at least one or other of them should appeal to a goodly number of readers. Lionel Mann's description of Christmas 1940 was very engaging, and it rang bells with many Christmases I experienced in the late 1940s. Oh, those numbers in church! What was it like on 'normal' Sundays in the War, Lionel? For those who remember those Christmas services it must seem like a worshipful mountain that one will never climb again... a worshipful 'land of lost content'.

Then came Hilary, our editor, with a detailed lecture on Greek Mythology and Ley Lines. I too discovered Ley Lines some thirty years ago, but I still have many unanswered questions. Are they part of the natural order of geography and thus part of the creation (so therefore 'good', according to Genesis)? Or are they 'occult', hidden in the darker side of things? Why does the St. Michael-Apollo line change dedication through Corfu? Does it mean our island is a significant spiritual frontier? Isn't it interesting that the line ends at Mount Carmel in Israel, where Elijah battled the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18 in the Old Testament).

But that leads straight to the fascinating 'take' of Peter Button in his article on Israel. He has hit the 'right button'! I would love to engage directly with his article but space and time do not allow. May I whet appetites, by provocatively saying that I think the real problem of Israel and the surrounding nations is not simply fresh water from the Lake of Galilee for Syria or Israel. It is basically the Almighty's fault. He insists on keeping His Covenants about people and lands!

Interestingly, the three articles represent three elements that have to be borne in mind when planning modern worship, especially at Christmas-time. They are nostalgia, search, and challenge.

Numbers at Christmas worship have dropped in 60 years, but not as dramatically as some would have us believe. In rural Worcestershire, where I was immediately before coming to Corfu, we used to get between 25% and 30% of the population attend at least one service over Christmas. That contrasted with 4% to 5% on a new housing estate parish in Hampshire. The evidence is that the last few years have seen a gradual growth back in festival numbers. So is it the nostalgia, the search or the challenge? There is always going to be nostalgia, reaching back to re-live the 'good' years before. It may just be the familiar carols. Certainly, churches strive to do their best with their music, but only a few have the resources to reach the standard that Lionel Mann

was used to in days of yore. Candlelight itself is a draw. The Christingle service was invented in 1730 in Moravia, but has only been in popular use for thirty years in England. It has proved to be one of the most attractive services on the Christmas menu. There is something about the participatory visual aid of an orange with a candle stuck in it, which stays in the mind; a symbol of light triumphing in the darkness perhaps? (This year we hope to do it in the Greek Evangelical Church on Christmas Eve. There will be a Christingle/Candlemas service in HTC at the end of January).

Nostalgia, understood as an attempt to recreate the past, is a frustrating exercise. It can be a dead end. Nostalgia that seeks to take a fresh look at half-understood things from years ago, but left a sense of being important; well that's something else. It

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CHAPLAIN'S CHAT

moves us on into seeking mode. There are few things more exciting to a preacher than to teach and preach knowing that the listener senses he is on to something; he is close to making a discovery. Indeed this is one of the greatest demands on a preacher. He has to take the raw material of the Bible, the church's tradition, expound it and so make it relate to the contemporary, that the hearer can get a hold on it. He has to preach knowing that people are prepared to dabble in all kinds of New Age things if they think it will lead somewhere with meaning. I cannot do that in five minutes (sorry Lionel!) But the whole act of worship is an instruction, a vehicle to 'transport' us. I always like to think that people leave a service with something that they can chew on... some morsel of spiritual experience that will draw them back for more. But the way in to serious Christian encounter is via commitment. There has to be an invitation and a challenge. Marriage demands a commitment, which is a challenge to live out with faithfulness. So is Christian discipleship. It is not simply following a creed or a law, but following a Person.

Some weeks ago I was travelling between Watford Junction and Milton Keynes. I was thinking of all that had happened in those five decades since I first travelled the West Coast Main Line: Electric traction, higher speeds, more trains, Virgin Pendolinos in place of the Stanier Pacifics (non-trainspotters won't understand!), new tower blocks. I thought of all the new jobs created. The Old Wolverton Carriage works has changed. Above all, there is Milton Keynes itself. The green fields of Stony Stratford are now a city of concrete, glass and dual carriageways with H and V roads (horizontal and vertical). It was the result of vision and investment. There were ideas and plans; many invested to

make the Euston to Crewe line what it is today. Someone had to say 'yes' and get on with it. Christmas is a good time to say 'yes'. In the Christmas Gospel you will hear Christ referred to as the Logos, the Word made flesh. It is the incarnation. In simpler language: Christians claim and Christmas celebrates the fact that the Almighty has entered into history in human form. He came not out of a space-ship to speak from a hovering distance and disappear, but in the same way as you and me: out of a mother's womb. The rest is history; though some may wish to dispute that. So I don't mind if you come for nostalgic reasons, or out of a deep sense of search. That's very important. But if you want the certainty of faith you'll have to say: 'OK, I am willing to give this a go.' Christmas is a good time to invest...

KALA CHRISTOUYENNA

• *Christmas*
• *celebrates the*
• *fact that the*
• *Almighty has*
• *entered into*
• *history in human*
• *form. He came*
• *not out of a*
• *space-ship to*
• *speak from a*
• *hovering distance*
• *and disappear,*
• *but in the same*
• *way as you and*
• *me: out of a*
• *mother's womb.*

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Take that News...

by *Mr Axe*

So many horrible things happen to us,
usually because of the incompetence of the government officials at every level.
If only I could take an axe and start cutting heads off...
I mean axe all the incompetent members of a very incompetent government.

INVASION OF THE ZONANS

The Greek media unfolded some horror stories this month about a village in Crete called Zonania. Hordes of heavy armed police forces raided the village, followed by hundreds of journalists and cameras. Everyone knew that this village was a drug capital. But if it was not for the cameras around the place would the police have uncovered the fact there were multimillionaires living on a farmer's pension, with tons of drugs everywhere and armour to start the third world war?

Does it sound similar to a village in Corfu? Everyone knows that Perivoli is the local drug capital of but somehow the police don't...

FLAMES OF SHAME

Last summer's fires were a disgrace to the Greek Government, and there is no excuse that there were so many victims. We saw harrowing scenes of old ladies and families who would not leave their homes. The government should have forced the peo-

ple out. No-one can fight flames 30 metres high.

It was also a disgrace about the animals - dogs left chained to suffer a horrific death, sheep dying because their gates were closed. The human factor is to be consider first, but please - animals have a soul too.

It will happen again... But why such a disaster this time?

First, let me tell you that Corfu could be next, because no-one looks after their land any more. Overgrown brambles and other weeds, when dry, spread fire to the trees in no time.

A well maintained property can help stop the fire spreading and make it easier for the firefighters. We should keep grass and weeds down. If the government had paid for this how much money could have been saved on compensation, on lost lives, lost trees, lost animal life, loss of the environment? But who? The Greek Government?

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FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE

As a volunteer in the Australian Bush Fire Brigade, I learnt that setting a controlled fire is the best way to control a bush fire; you create a no-go zone for the ravaging flames. Could this technique be used around our villages? Many Greek fire fighters were surprised when a team from Cyprus used the technique, which until then had been unknown to their Greek counterparts. How much would it cost to have the Cypriots come here to train our own? But who would pay? The Greek Government? I would have used controlled fires to fight the forest fires, and I would have forced everyone to maintain their land, clearing it of dangerous dry shrubs and bushes. There would be a team to do it for the elderly, of course.

SLOW BUT... STEADY

It happened over one weekend, and I was in London to experience it: the England rugby team lost the cup to South Africa; the soccer team lost to Russia in the Euro 2008 qualifiers, making it very difficult for them to get through; and the new rookie from England lost by one point in the Grand Prix championship. 'Thritose to Kako,' my father says. All bad things come in threes!

When the Greek team won the European Championship in 2004, the British laughed it off as a fluke. But is it a fluke that Greece has already qualified? While the British team are struggling and maybe will not make it? I SINCERELY hope they do...

Greece has only one game to go and is already first in their group, but more importantly, in true European Champion style, the team has collected the most points (28) from all the European teams in all groups - more than Germany, Italy and France. Even if it does not get anywhere in the knockout phase, many Greeks will be happy just with the qualification results.

CORFU, THE DECAYING RUBBISH ISLAND

Soon we will be covered with our own rubbish. The problem? A few residents of Temploni, where the rubbish dump is located, closed it down. We are not going to look at who is right or wrong, but the incompetence of the Greek Government means

soon we will be infested by rats, and soon the great disease Templonia will wipe out all life from the island. There is a solution to any problem - but who is going to find one? Personally, I would buy the nimby families new homes in the most prestigious part of Corfu, or move the dump and force people to recycle more.

Maybe the Greek government should step down and take the Greek football team players on as ministers. I somehow feel they could do a much better job, perhaps because at least they are organised.



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Note: Codes are changed regularly to prevent fraudulent download.

www.thecorfiotmagazine.com

Whose Christmas is it anyway?

by Sarah Button

Many town councils in England are removing all references to Christianity from civic festive displays for fear they might upset members of other religions. Birmingham Town Council is apparently naming celebrations the very silly 'Winterval'. But the Political Correctness Police have got it all wrong. Forcing a secular 'Festive' season upon us can't be done. Our traditions and beliefs run deep, very deep. No-one can deny us a reason to celebrate life and re-birth.

If we let them take away symbols of our faith then sooner or later Pagan icons and traditions will have to go too - and one of the first may be your 'Christmas' dinner which, it could be argued, has its roots in the very non-PC carousing, orgy-loving Romans...

CHRISTMAS PAST

My childhood memories are of the smell of Christmas trees and my fathers cigars, the Salvation Army band that played outside our house, carol singing in church, my mother teasing my father under the mistletoe, the thrill of lighting a candle and the joy of opening presents on Christmas Day. A multitude of pleasures came wrapped up in delicious anticipation.

My parents were not Christians or believers of any faith, but they never made a thing about their atheism; indeed we were brought up in the 1960s in a village whose life centred around the Church. We went to a Church of England Primary School, joined the Brownies and then the Guides; when we signed up for Baden Powell's clubs in those days we were expected to pledge allegiance to God, Queen and Country. We joined the church choir; the vicar encouraged us, not because we could sing (I certainly couldn't!) but because he really wanted us there. We were part of his flock - though he never used those words; he was far too trendy for that. The best thing about the vicar was that he ran the local youth club and he didn't make us pray. The vicar also delivered a pretty good nosh for harvest festivals and plenty of chocolate cakes at the annual village church fete. I suppose our social calendar in those days was a bit of a 'closed shop'.

It was not until I went to secondary school that I discovered there was more to religion than parochial participation. By the early seventies I had become aware of Apartheid, Vietnam and Northern Ireland. The John Lennon song 'Imagine' struck a chord: 'Imagine there's no religion, nothing to kill or die for...'. Lennon's lyrics were the hymns of the time. And Christmas? It was a bloody good party that I was mercenary enough to crash. 'So this is Christmas, and what have you done?' sang Lennon.

In 1984 my son Josh was born and a year later my daughter Natasha. Now I had children of my own and suddenly Baby Jesus was back in his crib for Christmas. In the late 80s schools still celebrated the birth of Christ in the traditional way, but our local community was becoming a secular one, and instead of mucking in with everyone else for a jolly in the church we selected our company. My friends, like me, enjoyed the idea of giving and forgiving, lighting candles and indulging in a little light meditation, usually along the lines of thanking a God - some God - for the support of friends and for keeping the bank manager off our backs.

We always had a Christmas tree; actually we used to scrump it. My best friend Meryl and I (she was as poor as I was) would go out in broad daylight to a local plantation - owned by a very rich and very selfish man - and saw a couple down. We'd tie them to the roof of my car and drive home just in time to meet the school bus; we didn't feel a trace of guilt. The kids were thrilled as they ate Meryl's homemade mince pies and we watched them decorate the tree. This will stay with me as my happiest memories of Christmas past. Despite being aware of the Pagan roots of the celebration, I still felt a bit of a fraud for crashing a Christian party.

CHRISTMAS PRESENT

When my children did some maths, calculated the enormity of Santa's task and deemed it impossible, Christmas lost its appeal. > 20

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CHRISTMAS FEATURE

14> These days, they tell me how much they hate the ads on TV and the overstuffed shelves in the supermarket, the continuous plea of commercialism to part with money they haven't got. We all miss the fun of Christmas past, but as non-believers how can we justify our involvement?

The answer is, we don't have to. Long before Christ was born folk were indulging in seasonal jollifications. Our ancestors decorated trees, partied, exchanged gifts, decked the halls with boughs of holly and mistletoe, lit candles, went out at night singing and dancing and ate too much. This was the time of year when they celebrated the coming of light or the rebirth of light. The time when the nights stopped getting longer and the days instead became longer. Now we wouldn't have to wait long for things to start to grow again. The Winter Solstice. So, what had happened?

350 years after Jesus was born, Pope Julius I announced the birth of Christ would be celebrated on December 25th, on the same day as the traditional solstice festival. It was sop to Pagan Romans; a way of persuading them that it was time to adopt Christianity. The Catholic Church had promised not take their feasts away from them and so the Pagan traditions were allowed to survive. Over the years Christians began to accept the more colourful traditions as being representative of Christianity itself.

There were and still are backlashes of course; the Puritan Cromwellians banned the festivals of Christmas and Easter on the grounds that they were Heathen. The Old Testament was often quoted:

Jeremiah 10:2-4: "Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not."

So where did it leave me when I discovered that all along I hadn't actually been barking up the wrong spruce tree. Well, it seems that 25th December is in fact a pretty secular party. Whilst Christians celebrate the Coming of Light in the form of the birth of Jesus, then Pagans can carry on celebrating the Coming of Light in the form of the Winter Solstice.

All in all I cannot see any reason why we should argue about whose Christmas it is. Why can't we just share it as a celebration of our spirituality and the Coming of the Light in whichever form we choose? We all hold so much in common: friendship, love, family, sharing and caring, and most of all a celebration of life itself. It's pretty good when all's said and done. isn't it?

The lore behind a few of our favourite festive things

THE CHRISTMAS TREE In Europe, Pagans would never have cut down a tree. That would have been bad luck; evergreen trees were sacred because they did not lose their leaves in the winter and therefore were representative of continuing life. However, they did bring in clippings of holly and other evergreens for decoration. Roman Pagans decorated living trees with bits of metal and replicas of their Sun God. The Christmas tree as we know it didn't really become popular until the 1850s.

FEASTING The Roman feast of Saturnalia, named after the Roman God Saturn, was originally held on December 17th and went on for a week. It included much carousing and it has to be said the odd orgy or two.

CANDLES Fundamental to the celebration of returning light through longer days throughout Europe and The Middle East, candles are symbolic of re-birth and are often used in processions (like the Christingle Service) as well as decoration.

THE YULE LOG Northern Europeans celebrated the birth of the sun god Mithras at Christmas time, and in the winter huge Yule logs were burnt in honour of the sun. The word Yule means 'wheel', the wheel being the pagan symbol for the year, and for the sun.

MISTLETOE Apart from its healing qualities, this evergreen was considered a sacred plant and kissing under it was a fertility ritual. To some Pagans the white berries represent the semen of the Sun God himself.

HOLLY Another evergreen, holly, was brought into the house as the berries were thought to be the food of the gods. However, some Pagans believe the red berries represent the menstrual blood of the goddess Diana.

SANTA CLAUS He has his routes as a pagan god-form, ranging from the Greek God Cronos; Father Time; to Odin, the Scandinavian 'All-Father', riding the sky on an eight-legged horse (could this be the origin of the reindeer?)

CAROL SINGING OR WASSAILING Wassailing is where our wandering carol singing came from. Wassailers would go from house to house singing and passing round the 'wassail bowl', which was usually full of alcoholic punch.

GIFT GIVING Saturn was the Roman God of agriculture and plenty, and it is from him that the festival of Saturnalia gets its name. Gift-giving symbolized the redistribution of wealth from the rich to the poor during the season of greatest hardship. Big feasts were generally laid on by the rich to feed their poorer neighbours.

DECORATION Aside from the tree, the druidic holiday colours of red, green and white were used and still are today.

I wish all Christians a Merry Christmas, and all Pagans a Happy Yuletide, and those without a faith a Merry Festive Season (NOT Winterval, please!).

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A Trip to Zagori

by *Harry Tsoukalas*

Periklis from Nicholas Taverna in Agni was starting to lose his patience. 'It's not like Lias,' he argued again.

Our conversation was reaching a dead end regarding Epirus, the mainland opposite Corfu. I was disappointed a few years back, when the fat talk about the villages over there which had kept their traditional architecture was just that. Big fat words. Lias, the village where the dramatic story unfolds of Eleni, by Nicholas Gage, had something awry about it, if you had read the book. Meeting Nick and his daughter Eleni was very exciting, but other than Nick's mother's house and the pension that he restored himself everything else was just red roof tiles with plenty of PVC.

Why, then, would the Zagori villages will be different? 'They are different - you have to go and see for yourself.' Periklis told me that he owns a hotel there, but at the time we wanted to visit it was full, so we booked through the internet into a small B&B called Vikos.

The ferry trip to Igoumenitsa takes longer than the drive to Ioannina, so in less than an hour we were there. From the Epirus capital the trip to the villages takes about half hour, but in the dark and with heavy rain it took double that. My new new HTC phone with GPS turned out again to be an invaluable tool in getting us to the heart of the region.

Zagori in Serbian means 'behind the mountains' and many of the villages have Serbian names, like Kapesovo and Chepelovo.

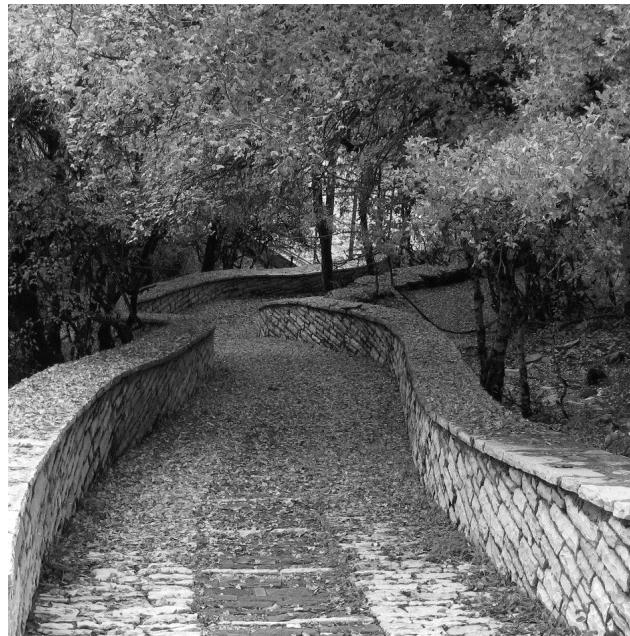
The B&B was excellent. Internally, beautiful soft colours, with hand painted doors and wardrobes, was preparation for a big surprise. The brightly coloured ceilings are a remnant from Ottoman rule of more than 400 years.

It was in the morning, during our first walk, that the surprise came. Exposed stone, and timber windows and doors, were everywhere - and I mean everywhere. Even the road leading to the small hamlet of Monodendri was beautifully made in two kinds of stone.

In the square a new hotel had its new roof nearly completed - all in stone. Was Periklis right after all? Surely not - this village, the gateway to the Vikos Gorge, must be the exception. Apparently the gorge has a place in the Guinness Book of Records as the deepest in the world!!! And the road that it leads to it is all made in stone. Even at a couple of miles long, I decided that it was worth the walk. Indeed, the beauty of the sheer drops of the cliffs covered with trees, and vegetation with the brownish orange colours of autumn, gives the place a rare wild beauty.

I didn't mind either the walk up to the village, while I admired simple things like the stone road where no trace of cement could be seen. Unlike our own streets back in Corfu with crazy paving everywhere - even on walls - with huge strips of grey cement in between. Do they call it 'crazy paving' because we are crazy to use it?

Back in the village the secrets started to unfold. The owners of the businesses like coffee shops, hotels and restaurants, mostly



in their 20s and 30s, were extremely helpful and friendly, and even gave us special stomach-ache pills when the need arised.

At the shop 'Pita tis Kikis' we discovered that the first tourists arrived in Zagori many decades ago from the Corfu Club Med. And this was the region's only connection with Corfu, because the rest was very different.

Even the prospect of seeing the deepest canyon in the world did not bring the hordes. We went close to the edge, but not right up to the edge like a young Greek couple did. He had her sitting right on the edge while, to our surprise, he asked her loudly to marry him. The answer was yes, but would she dare say no when just a gentle push would be enough to make her regret her decision on her way to the bottom?

Forget shopping even for necessities. In Zagori you need to arrive well equipped because the nearest shops are in Ioannina. This explains the old apples, hard as rock, and hard kiwis at breakfast. Nothing grows up there so they shop for weeks to come, especially when snow threatens.

A trip to the next village, Kipi, was next on our list, and I was waiting to see red roofs and PVC in this one.

Driving there is an experience. Everywhere are beautiful bridges, all built in stone, and crossing clean creeks.

And then there was Kipi. I could imagine Periklis with a satisfied grin on his face. The second of the region's 46 villages was just beautiful to behold. It lay on the side of the hill, and all the buildings, even the new ones, were built in stone.

A stroll along the old stone paths led us to a part of the village with ruins everywhere. Could we maybe buy one of these?

In the taverna the menu had all the typical Epirot dishes on offer. Plenty of home-made pies with home-made cheese, vegetables and meat.

A priest sat down next to us, and we started chatting. He explained that the wild boar, goat soup, wild vegetables and all meat were made of local, free-range ingredients. On the menu, they seem to make cheese out of anything and 'galotiri', meant 'cheese from a turkey', which made me laugh. I hate walking and I hate cheese. I am in the wrong place for sure. Papa Vagelis told us about a dip, something between yoghurt and cheese. I'll have the wild boar, thanks.

And how about the ruins? NOT FOR SALE. Too many owners, and they can't come to a decision. Sounds familiar? A stupid law

condemns these beautiful homes to a slow death, here as well as in Corfu - but the similarities stop there. In 1973, the local town planning department passed a law that no material other than stone and timber are to be used in Zagori. Well, we have similar laws in Corfu regarding vernacular materials, but no-one pays attention. But the Zagorians were tough from the start, and when tourism arrived because of the landscape and the architecture, they didn't even consider disregarding the rules. In Zagori, the residents themselves keep their traditions still alive, while in Corfu a corrupt system allowed, and still allows, the law to be overlooked. Periklis was right. I knew now that all the region's villages would be the same.

And believe me it is worth the trip. I'll be back.



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Epirus and Zagori Fact File

The Prefecture of Ioannina is one of the four prefectures of Ipiros. It is bordered by the prefectures of Kozani and Trikala to the east, Albania to the north, the prefecture of Thesprotia to the west and the prefectures of Arta and Preveza to the south. It has a total area of about 5,000 square kilometres and a population of 160,000 inhabitants. Its greatest part is dominated by mountain ranges, parts of which belong to the Pindos spine. The Pindos range forms the border between Ipiros, Macedonia and Thessaly. It starts with Mount Grammos on the border of Ipiros with Western Macedonia and Albania. Further south is Mount Smolikias, the second highest mountain in Greece. The range continues southward with Mount Gamila or Timfi. The southern Pindos range is after Metsovo and it includes Peristeri or Lakmos, and the Athamanika mountains. Among the mountain ranges lie small fertile plains, long and narrow valleys, and steep ravines, such as the Aoos gorge and the impressive Vikos ravine. The Ioannina basin, the ancient Ellopia, with its lake Pamvotida occupies the central segment of the prefecture. The Arachtos, Aoos, Voidomatis, Kalamas, Louros and Acherondas rivers, as well as many torrents flow through almost the entire Prefecture of Ioannina. The prefecture consists of three counties: the county of Dodoni - in the center of the prefecture - the seat of which is Ioannina; the county of Metsovo - at the east of the prefecture - the seat of which is Metsovo; the county of Pogoni - at the north-east part of the prefecture, the seat of which is Delvinaki.

The Zagorohoria (villages of Zagoria) comprise 46 traditional settlements bounded by Mts. Mitsikeli, Gamila and the Aoos River and form a fascinating geographical, architectural and cultural unit. The word 'Zagori' means 'behind the mountains'. Zagorohoria is divided into three geographical sections: West, East and Central Zagori. Each section has its own special beauty and history. The region is one of the country's richest in animal and plant life, not only as regards numbers of species, but also rare species (bear, deer, wild goat, jackal and the like). The architecture here is very distinctive, the houses having been built exclusively of the local grey stone. The marvelous villages of Zagori are a certain guarantee for a fascinating journey that you will never forget!

This is the GPS device I used to direct us to Zagori. It is also a mobile phone, radio, and connects with the Internet for emails. A very valuable tool, especially on journeys.

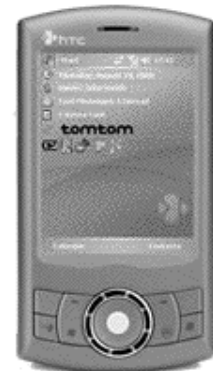
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The Cat of Portovecchio, Corfu Tales

by Maria Strani-Potts

Maria Strani-Potts' novel, *The Cat of Portovecchio, Corfu Tales* was published in October 2007 by Brandl & Schlesinger, an independent Australian publisher of quality working with many award-winning authors. The novel was launched at Gleebooks, Sydney, by the distinguished author David Malouf, on 13 November 2007. The book can be ordered on Amazon or most conveniently (until European rights are sold) directly from the publisher books@brandl.com.au. See also www.mariapotts.com

In his speech at the launch, David Malouf said:

"Maria-Strani Potts takes us inside a whole world, lovingly created, that is like no other we have been invited into; but with an eye that can be savage as well as loving. Just when we think we know some of these characters, and feel comfortable with them, too comfortable in fact, she catches them for us in a new and altogether less easy light... She has the writer's eye for detail: for the small, unnoticed aspect of a thing that makes it immediately alive to us; the writer's sense of pace, that makes time, and room in the writing, so that everything finds its place; and the writer's unsparingness that makes truth more important to her than any desire to please.

"In *The Cat of Portovecchio* Maria Strani-Potts has produced a genuinely charming book...The charm consists in the book's wholeness of view...the writer's generosity in letting everything in; her allowing a place for all sorts of ordinary human follies and indiscretions, for bad humour as well as good, but with a sense that what all this makes up is a picture of the way we are."

Maria Strani-Potts was born and raised in Corfu. Although written in English, *The Cat of Portovecchio, Corfu Tales* is about basic Greek sentiments, instincts and passions.

The story is based in an old fishing suburb of Corfu Town. The sea and the Greek landscape play an important part in the story. So does an abandoned black and white cat. There are many Corfiot recipes in the book. They appear naturally, as part of the story. The story takes place between 1949 and 1957, a time of considerable political upheaval in Greece.

Gunilla Sandin, Head of the International Seminar Programme of the Gothenburg International Book Fair, had this to say:

"When I read *The Cat of Portovecchio, Corfu Tales*, I was immediately drawn to the apparently laid-back way of life of the characters, but it is boiling under the surface in the little village! Every character has a story to tell and very often their lives cross. You will find passion, lost love, a child missing her mother, grown-ups caught up in their own sorrow, incapable of helping others, a priest with bad intentions and secrets ready to be unveiled - if you know where to look. And a lot of strong women! It is also a book full of warm and understanding people who take care of each other and who are doing the best they can with the life God has given to them... It has that little 'extra'. I immedi-

ately visualised it as a film... This is a story that will attract many readers and I also think that the timing for this kind of book is right. We need well-written stories with a universal message."

Other works by Maria Strani-Potts (contact the author for further information):

An Ethiopian Affair. A novel in English, set in Ethiopia in the early seventies. Publication date to be announced.

The Children of Others. A radio play in English. Three diplomatic wives: the impact of foreign wars- and their husbands' careers- on their lives and families.

The Pimping of Panorea (A Fairytale for Adults): A novella in Greek about greed and the devastation of the environment on a Greek island. Available Spring 2008.

ABOUT MARIA STRANI-POTTS Maria Strani was born in Porta Remunda, Corfu, Greece in 1946. Before she married, she worked at the National Bank of Greece in Corfu and at the Ionian Bank Ltd in the City of London. She has a degree in Social Science from the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London.

Since 1969 she has lived and travelled overseas with her husband, who worked for the British Council. Maria has lived in Ethiopia, Kenya, England, Greece, Czechoslovakia, Sweden and Australia, where she spent seven years, based in Sydney. She has also spent extended periods in China, Belgium and the USA.

Maria was trained as a language teacher by the British Council, Greece, and by the Australian Migrant English Service in Sydney. She has taught English as a foreign language to migrants in Australia and Greek as a foreign language in Australia and other countries. She is a committed quilter and textile artist as well as a writer. She divides her time between Corfu, Vitsa (Zagori) and London.

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REVIEWS

Maria is currently in Australia. She is making appearances in Sydney at the Mosman and Ryde Festivals; at six libraries, several bookshops (including Gleebooks and Dymocks, George Street), Leichhardt Town Hall, AHEPA (the Australasian Hellenic Association) and on ABC Radio. She will be back in Corfu at the end of January. She will be presenting the book in Corfu on 6 February; at the Hellenic Centre, London on 29

February and at the Mediterranean Museum in Stockholm in June 2008.

THE CAT OF PORTOVECCHIO, CORFU TALES by Maria Strani-Potts. ISBN 978-1-876040-85-7, A\$26.95, 276 pp, pb.

Jim Potts

Corfu - Memories by Mihalis Kokkalis

Most people's experience of the Kokkalis Brothers photography business involved mundane tasks like obtaining new passport-size pics or getting films developed. Few customers were aware that behind the shopfront one of the three brothers, Mihalis, was engaged in documenting Corfu.

In 1990, I published 'Pictures from the Past - A Photographic Record of Old Corfu', a modest collection of photographs, some dating back to the mid-19th century, which aimed at highlighting the heritage Corfu had by then lost, and at awakening awareness of what remained in the hope that it would be preserved. I found photographs at the Reading Society and in a few private collections, but the main source was from the archives of Kokkalis. I spent many happy mornings poring over sheet after sheet of thumbnails, discovering many gems, and gradually pulling the pictures together into a coherent storyline.

Mihalis Kokkalis has now published the definitive photographic record of Corfu, the pick of his work from half a century of capturing images on film. Called 'Corfu - Memories', the large-format, hard-cover book contains over 130 black and white photographs dating from between 1950 and 2000. The book is in Greek and English and has a foreword by Thanos Christou, Professor of Art History at Ioannina University.

We forget how Corfu was, before mass tourism and the motor car transformed the scene. Many of the photographs, especially in the section of the book focusing on the Town, come as a shock. Where now vehicles are parked bumper to bonnet, streets then were empty of all but strolling pedestrians (Kapodistrias Street, page 17; Pentofanaro, page 19). The Old Port (page 36), now a car park, is a dusty open space. Later in the book, as Kokkalis gradually moves out of Town and further into outlying areas, some scenes are recognisable only because of unmistakable features. Kanoni (page 89) has its causeway (which dates from the 1840s) but has no Holiday Palace Hotel and only three buildings. Benitses (page 100) is a row of cottages on the shoreline, and some wooden boats are pulled up on the shingle now a - yes! - car park spreads. Glyfada beach (page 102) is without its blemish of sunbeds.

Yet thankfully the book also reveals that much remains. Kokkalis's classic portraits of the Achillion Palace (pages 91-93) could have been taken yesterday; the waves still wash on virgin sand at Myrtiotissa (page 115); and the sea still churns amongst the rocks below Paleokastritsa's monastery (page 110).

On an island, water often dominates the scene, and Kokkalis captures this element, and its affinity with light, in a masterful manner. Some of the most compelling and memorable images involve rain and reflections (Maitland's memorial, page 50; 'Ethnikon' theatre, page 31). In his photograph of the Liston by night (page 52), the receding slicks of the lamps' reflections in heavy rain fall on a pavement so flooded the sea seems to have

washed in.

Kokkalis is also skilled with textural contrasts. He often frames or counterpoints a scene with foliage, transforming it from being just another banal picture-postcard shot, balancing the composition and lending interest to otherwise blank stretches of sea or sky. Thus, a pilgrimage to Mouse Island (page 87) has a top-frame of soft-focus olive leaves; Dasia is seen from Spartillas (page 96) through arching leafless twigs, a stark contrast to the misty distant view; a bell tower (page 104), pale stone and whitewash and rigidly geometrical in form, is pictured through the reverse V of two dark, twisting olive trunks, one of its black bells caught neatly in the apex; the chunky lines and austere arches of the Church of Jason and Sossipatros (page 77) appear through a delicate wisp of Persian Acacia fronds. Time and time again, Kokkalis' use of contrast forces us to look on a familiar scene with a fresh eye.

As the book moves on, people rather than places crop up as a regular theme, in the form of portraits rather than accidental appendages on the scene. The first such image (A fisherman at Garitsa Bay, page 75) includes all the elements typical of Kokkalis's work as noted above - reflection on water and contrasts in form, focus and light - as does another fishing scene on page 86. Every one of the numerous fisherman shots are masterpieces, and, in contrast to shots of landscapes and buildings which still remain, they record a way of life now gone.

The village women too are almost all gone: the lady with white wimple, donkey-mounted and leading her sheep to pasture (page 111); the old man returning home, leaning on his burdened beast (page 128); a crone with a single goat, stooped with her donkey-sized burden (page 130). We can feel the exhaustion, carry the weight of the burden; through the images, we can gain at least some understanding of an arduous lifestyle that - perhaps thankfully - is left in the past.

The book is not without its faults. I would have liked some indication of date on the photographs; only hairstyles, fashions and cars makes give you enough clues to place the decade. And a few of the English translations, when not just a place name, are clumsy.

But that does not detract from a beautifully produced book, one that is rewarding on many, many levels.

Mihalis Kokkalis has been a professional photographer since 1950. He has taken part in many exhibitions and fairs, both in Greece and abroad, winning several top awards. He has contributed photographs for prestigious publications as well as for guidebooks. He has been awarded commendations for his achievements and contribution to culture. His archive comprises more than 4,000 black and white photographs and slides.

Hilary Paipeti

Irish Flames by John Waller

It is 1920 and the people of Ireland are disillusioned; as they fight for independence their sacrifices in the First World War go unthanked by the British. The Royal Irish Constabulary are losing the confidence of their forces and members are leaving in droves. In desperation the British Parliament ships out a selected bunch of British prisoners to back up the dwindling forces. These are the Black and Tans; untrained, uncaring and undisciplined.

Irish Flames is the true story of a small boy's unwitting involvement in Sinn Fein's battle to get the British government to implement the Irish Home Rule Bill which had devolved power from Westminster to Dublin. The small boy (pictured on the cover) is Peter, the author's half brother who, before his death in 1990, gave John a partial manuscript recounting his incredible experiences. This book, following much research, is John's tribute to him.

Irish history is romantic, maybe because the place has always been troubled by famine or war, and good stories come easily from strife. The Irish have a natural ability to describe their experiences with passion and honesty. Peter writes of his home, a rambling pile called 'Merlin', as one would a friend; a place with a personality. The people that fill the house, especially the servants, are part of that character and clearly he loves them.

The sheer drama and horror of watching helplessly as the Black and Tans violate that love is why Peter's story is so engaging.

Written with an astute eye for historic detail, the book changes in style midway, and it is clear it has the involvement of two different writers. The first part relates the story with poetic prose and judicious observation, particularly of the natural world. It is without today's concern for political correctness, giving it a folksy feel.

Later, the narrative uses modern language with a little less sentimentality. It is easier to read, racier, and more enthralling as a result.

Packed with anecdotes and observations of the Irish way of life nearly a hundred years ago, *Irish Flames* is not only an amazing story but a valuable history lesson of a period whose agonies have been conveniently kept under wraps.

Irish Flames By John Waller is published by Yiannis Books at £8.99 or €12.99

www.yiannisbooks.com

ISBN 09544788729

It is available from the Gastouri 'Made in Corfu' shop.

Sarah Button

The Greek for Love by James Chatto

Fans of local food and collectors of books about Corfu will be familiar with this author from *A Kitchen on Corfu*, his peregrination around the cookery of Loutses. *The Greek for Love* is its prequel, the story of how Chatto and his wife Wendy came to settle in the village, to build a house and to raise a family. Sometimes extremely funny ('There was an excellent electrician in the village, but he had died some years ago. Electrocuted while on the job.'), the first and major part of the book is bathed in the optimism of a young couple in love. Then out of the blue tragedy smashes the idyll, as unexpectedly for the reader as for the protagonists.

Beautifully written, the book evokes a way of life which has all but vanished in the past twenty years - colouring the book with a second thread of loss.

Hilary Paipeti

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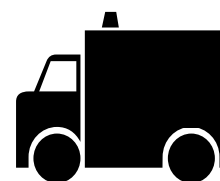
ISBN 0-679-31313-3

Review

...a voluptuous, sensual dive into Corfu - food, drink, the appeal of exile, and the story of a ripening love affair. There is a strand of melancholy within this memoir, as there must be in writing that rings so resoundingly true. But this book leaves one, in the end, grinning like an idiot and envious of the descriptive skills of its author. A lovely book, and the finest sort of travel writing.

Kevin Patterson

Man with Van
Removals
Rubbish
Removed
Neil
6977 161036



TRUE STORY

Christmas 1947

by *Lionel Mann*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ourselves, there was still some meat left.

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

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

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

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

Afterwards, having seen off our 'occasional' visitors and being still wakeful with excitement, I returned to my elegant quarters and turned on the radio. At many places Mass had taken longer than ours and I settled for a very well sung one from somewhere in Europe. Their organist, later announced as none other than the illustrious Helmut Walcha, concluded proceedings by playing the J.S. Bach 'Great' Prelude and Fugue in C Major. That seemed to me to be so appropriate that I learnt it in time for the following Christmas, and have ever since played it at the

end whenever I have accompanied Christmas Midnight Mass. It often means that I am the last to leave!

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

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

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

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TRUE STORY

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

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

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

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

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

"Ho, ho!"

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

In the foyer outside, I heard roars of laughter from upstairs and went to join the rest of the staff in the drivers' room from which they had been able to see everything. For some moments they were unable to speak. Then, "Hello, Sarge. Merry

Christmas!" More laughter, in which I joined. When they could explain, I learnt that Father Christmas had been given a tumblerful of my rum 'to keep out the cold' - a whole tumblerful of rum!

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

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

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

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

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

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

With all digging frantically, it was not long before enough snow had been cleared to permit opening a door. Two US Army officers had been trapped for more than twelve hours since skidding off the icy road at a bend. Our Transport Corporal had thoughtfully taken along my bottle of rum; its remaining contents restored some colour to cheeks before our unexpected visitors were bundled into the Padre's car and brought back to Church House. They were given hot baths and a meal and then put to bed while their car was recovered and thoroughly checked by our drivers. Some six hours later we gave our guests, now fully recovered, another meal and sent them on their way. We never heard any more of them.

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

MODERN WORSHIP GOES BACK TO DAVID

I read with interest Dr Lionel Mann's letter in October's Corfiot. There are a few points made in the letter that I would like to respond to.

I joined Holy Trinity Church this September, and I play (on piano) most styles of music, traditional and contemporary. I think it is great that in the Anglican, Orthodox and Catholic traditions, we can worship God through music in many different ways. I certainly appreciate the talents of classically trained professional musicians such as Dr Mann, but I advocate a different attitude towards music in the context of Christian worship.

a) Supposed 'failure' of contemporary forms of worship?

The Psalmist King David wrote 'Praise Him with timbrel and dancing; Praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe'. I am sure that King David would have no problem with guitars being used in worship since they are stringed instruments developed from King David's time. He also danced for joy when he worshipped God. Why is Dr Mann convinced that the Church has 'tried to be with it' and 'has failed miserably', when the historical evidence of the Psalmist is contrary to this? I note also the popular and widespread use of many contemporary worship songs for example written by Graham Kendrick, David Lyle-Morris, Ron Kenoli, Amy Grant, and others such as my friends and musical mentors Andrew and Wendy Rayner. There is adequate evidence that contemporary forms of worship are used by very large congregations, increasingly so in Corfu as well. There is no 'failure' in this respect.

b) The role of amateur musicians and children.

We should not decry amateur musicians - especially children - when they worship God. Jesus said, 'Allow the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.' So, if a group of children wish to practice a song of worship and perform it in Church, accompanied with recorders, tambourines, spoons, wooden clogs, and a 'fifty-year-old cleric strumming a few notes on a guitar', then so long as they give glory to God, I am sure that their efforts bring a huge smile to His face. I love to see this happen. Those amateurs will one day be joining the Heavenly Host in praising God in person.

c) What is 'success' in the context of Christian worship?

My purpose in writing is not to condone amateurish musical efforts, for how can we give glory to God if we are not 100% committed in all we offer to Him? However, at the same time, the scriptures lead me to believe that the praise of the young child nervously singing 'Yes, Jesus Loves Me' in wavering notes and uncertain timing, is at least as acceptable to God as a technically perfect rendition of Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor played on a cathedral organ. Surely, the test of 'success' in a Christian worship context is to ask, 'to whom is the praise and glory given?' That we can glorify God in both contemporary and traditional forms of worship is self-evident.

d) The role of the 'professional musician' in the Church.

Dr Mann advocates that the planning and performance of church music should be 'left to the professionals'. I do not agree. No church should give a single musician - however talented - the power of veto in worship, because worship is both a collective and an individual act requiring everyone's participation. Those with musical gifts are called to offer their talents to God and in the service of others with humility, gentleness, love and compassion. This involves responding to the needs of all members of the congregation, and also respecting the God-given authority of the Vicar, Priest or Chaplain.

Robert Sherratt, Temploni

RUBBISH RUBBISH

As visitors to your lovely island over the last twenty years, over the last few visits we have noticed a big difference to the large amount of bagged refuse which lies adjacent to the wheeled refuse bins which are placed all over your towns and villages. This we find is a real eyesore and really spoils you nice surroundings (not to mention the health, hygiene and vermin problems the phenomenon must pose). Perhaps you can draw attention to the relevant authorities on our behalf.

J & M Crowe
UK

EXCEPTIONAL CUISINE


I returned recently from staying with a friend in Corfu. During my stay, he suggested we go to the Pomo D'oro restaurant situated in Scaramanga Square in Corfu Town, as he had found it provided excellent food and a very pleasant atmosphere. In fact we went twice more before I returned as indeed I found the food exceptional. The chef, a pleasant young man by the name of Aristotle, obviously had the wisdom of his namesake and his advice to try the specials never failed to amaze us. Moreover, he always came out for a friendly chat and to ask if there was any more he could do for us. He also surprised us with his cocktail making abilities so that in the end we merely asked him for a different one each time! Unfortunately, the restaurant lies somewhat back from the main thoroughfare and I suspect is not patronized as much as it certainly should be. I urge all your readers to try it. I don't think they will be disappointed.

Dr Bryan Waynforth
Kent, UK

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PERSONAL

HOMOSEXUAL HELP LINE CLUG (Corfu Lesbians and Gays). Information line: 6934 903726 or email us at corfulg@yahoo.gr We support any people in Corfu with Gay / Lesbian / Bi / Trans information

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR DRINKING and would like to talk to someone who understands, or if you are interested in helping to start an AA group here, please call 210 800 1073.

DOES SOMEONE CLOSE TO YOU HAVE A DRINK PROBLEM? To help someone, you need to help yourself first. Al-Anon family groups give courage, comfort and support to the partners, families and friends of alcoholics. The Corfu group meets on Monday at 8.00 pm. Any Greek speaker welcome. Call 26610 38776 or 26610 23871 between 08.00 and 13.00 weekdays.

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Corfu town/Paleokastritsa 15 minutes by car. Casa Lucia, Sgombou, Corfu: 26610 91419; 6979 470571; caslucia@otenet.gr

RODA 800 metres from beach. Quiet. 2 bedrooms, dining room, kitchen, lounge with fire, 2 bathrooms. Garden with lawn. Furnished or not. Dogs no problem. 6947 802055

HOUSE SITTING POSITION sought by professional English couple (animal lovers, non-smokers), Sidari area. Available immediately, good references. Tel. 6934 529932

Small ads (for sale and offers categories) are only accepted if paid for in advance. Copy BY EMAIL ONLY. You can leave your payment (5 euro up to 50 words) at the 'Made in Corfu' shop in Gastouri, the Petra office near Arillas, and the Luvcorfu Properties offices at Barbati and Saint Spiridon. Phone 6948 889174 for information.

Need a reliable weather forecast?

A detailed five-day forecast is at:

www.corfunet.com/weather/index.php

The Corfu Photographic Club

welcomes new members for its activities on Mondays and Wednesdays, 7-9 pm. Slide show of work by Greek and foreign photographers every Monday. Phone 6072 886467 or 6936 647100.

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Once we have designed your new web pages and you are fully satisfied with them, we upload them to one of our UK based servers and promote them on all the major search engines.

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Once your site is online, it will inevitably need to be updated to keep your content fresh. Sometimes it's a simple change, like changing a date, or adding an event, or you may want to add a new section or functionality to your site involving site-wide modification. We will happily update your website as and when required to reflect changes in your business practices, prices or seasonal offers.

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You can contact us at any time by phone or email and discuss any queries or problems. We will do our best to address them immediately.

"Search engine optimisation" refers to the act of altering your site so that it may rank well for particular keyword terms, especially with crawler-based search engines. Once your web pages have been optimised it's time for them to be submitted to the search engines. Getting listed does not mean that you will necessarily rank well for particular keyword terms. It simply means that the search engine knows your pages exist. However, because your pages have been optimised, we are confident that your pages will soon achieve high search engine rankings.

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We Listen...

Gastouri Office, Village Road, Gastouri

Tel. 26610 52833 / 6948 889174 / 6948 180198

AGII DEKA (Central) Achillion View House (Traditional - in need of restoration) Very characterful almost-detached village house on three floors. Fantastic sea view. Renovation required for two bedroom holiday home. 35,000 euro

AGIOS MATTHEOS (South) Loutrovio (Traditional - in need of restoration) Stunning old olive press with lots of space. Great view, potential for small yard. 55,000 euro

AGIOS MATTHEOS (South) Courtyard Cottage (Traditional - restored) Old terraced house, for sale fully renovated by the Petra team in traditional style. Excellent value for money in popular 'real' village. 65,000 euro

KASTELLANI MESSIS (Central) Georgia House (Traditional - restored) Roofless old house currently being rebuilt and renovated in traditional style. Nice space, good-sized garden. 85,000 euro

KOURAMADES (Central) Galano House (Traditional - restored) Cozy but spacious quality-renovated one-bedroom house, fully furnished and equipped - take key and move in! Edge-of-village, quiet, rural view, parking outside, small garden. Budget price! 94,000 euro

DAFNATA (Central South) Olive Press Guest House (Traditional - restored) Good business proposition - old olive press converted as small B & B (2-4 units), on course of Corfu Trail. Can extend for owner accommodation. Two courtyards, garden, parking close. Beautiful country view. Bargain price. 130,000 euro

KATO PAVLIANA (Central South) Pavliana House (Modern) A lot of house for the money - very spacious two-bedroom home on edge of traditional village, a few minutes from beach and good facilities. Undeveloped basement for guests or work. Garden, garage. Only needs new kitchen and TLC. 160,000 euro

AGIOS IOANNIS (Central) Yiannis Houses (Modern) Four three bedroom family houses under construction in immensely popular village. Quiet rural location yet near all the excellent facilities, including schools and Aqualand. Top quality construction and competitive price. From 180,000 euro

VARIPATADES (Central) The Trivoli Estate (Traditional - restored) Vast and prestigious estate, with historic mansion being renovated and extended to provide luxury accommodation. Very quiet and private location within easy reach of Corfu Town and West Coast beaches. 2,500,000 euro

Barbati Office, Main Road, Barbati

Tel. 26630 91403 / 6948 180195 / 6948 889181

AFRA (Central) The Doll's House (Traditional - restored) Three bedroom house, immaculate and ready to occupy - immense bargain for size and location. Very relaxing and cosy cottage atmosphere. Covered yard, quiet edge-of-village location, parking and shop close. 85,000 euro

SKRIPERO (North Central) Koukoula House (Traditional - restored) Old house and attached barn, currently being renovated in traditional style. Interesting space, walled courtyard, road access. Convenient and ideal for holidays or permanent residence! 90,000 euro

SPARTILLAS (North Central) Ekklesia House (Traditional - Partially restored) Village house for upgrading - can be occupied quickly, possible DIY project. Up to four bedrooms possible in two or three independent units, for large family or part-rental. Parking close, sea view. 95,000 euro

SPARTILLAS (North Central) The Old Terrace (Traditional - in need of restoration) Eye-catching, picturesque derelict house, in commanding position with great sea view. With very large plot in Town Planning - could be developed for B&B rental or resale. Only one owner.

GIANNADES (Central) Vale View House (Traditional - restored) Very pretty fully renovated house in edge-of-village setting, with car access, country views from two balconies, small yard. Two bedrooms, separate lounge and kitchen. 110,000 euro

GARDELADES (West) Flower House (Traditional - restored) Pretty old house, renovated in traditional style. Up to three bedrooms, large roof patio. Road access, parking very close. Quiet location near best beaches and amenities - perfect bolt hole. 150,000 euro

ANO KORAKIANA (North Central) Happy Kitchen House (Traditional - restored) Magnificent renovated house with delightful kitchen. Full of character throughout, many traditional features. Unfinished basement studio, walled courtyard, road access close. Very well priced for size, condition and beauty! 150,000 euro

ANO KORAKIANA (North Central) Lyra House (Traditional - restored) Character village house, renovated with imagination and sensitivity. Three bedrooms, three bathrooms, sun terrace with sea view. Very tastefully finished. Road access, parking close. Ideal home! 150,000 euro

SPARTILLAS (North Central) Judi Apartment (Modern) Style magazine territory - an exceptional apartment with staggering sea view. Two bedrooms, veranda. Shared pool with sundeck, off-road parking. For sale fully furnished. Mediterranean living at its stunning best! 160,000 euro

KATO KORAKIANA (North Central) Petalo House (Traditional - restored) Old house, renovated to maintain its charm, and immaculate. 2/3 bedrooms, lots of living space including huge patio. Yard, garden and parking. Very tranquil and private location, yet very easy access to beaches and main roads. 230,000 euro

AGIOS MARKOS (North Central) Villa Jackson (Modern) Versatile villa for large family home or two apartments - room for guests or potential for rental. Secluded but convenient for shops and beach. Well maintained. Garden, beautiful sea view. A dream house! 270,000 euro

SPARTILLAS (North Central) Judi Penthouse (Modern) Style magazine territory - an exceptional penthouse with staggering sea view. Two bedrooms, huge veranda. Shared pool with sundeck, off-road parking. For sale fully furnished. Mediterranean living at its stunning best! 500,000 euro

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Arillas Office, Afionas Road, near Arillas

Tel. 26630 51786 / 6948 180197 / 6949 982724

KRINI (North West) Vault Cottage (Traditional - in need of restoration) Very interesting piece of architecture - ground floor barrel-vaulted tunnel. Two floor cottage with walled yard and potential for parking. Imagination needed to create romantic one- or two-bedroom home with character. 27,000 euro

AGRAFI (North) Stavros House (Traditional - in need of restoration) Old house for renovation, but in very good condition - could mostly DIY. Plenty of space for up to 3 bedrooms. Sunny garden, outhouse, streetside parking outside, great mountain and sea views. Minutes' drive to beach and close to Acharavi. And all this at a bargain price! 55,000 euro

VELONADES (North West) Velonades Manor House (Traditional - in need of restoration) Character mansion house for renovation, part of larger complex in quiet country location. Vast space for conversion, could make B&B, home for extended family, or provide rental / resale income. 90,000 euro

PEROULADES (North West) Kyra Skeleton (Partially built) Unfinished concrete structure for completion to make a spacious family home. Open country location near traditional village and close to beach. Good road access. 110,000 euro

AGROS (North West) Perivoli House (Traditional - restored) Ideal for lifestyle change - small house with large vineyard and orchard attached, on edge of bustling small town. One bedroom, immaculate, ready to occupy. Near facilities but quiet. 120,000 euro

MAGOULADES (North West) Alexis House (Traditional - in need of renovation) Rare house for renovation in very popular village. Edge-of-village location, fully detached, space for 2-3 bedrooms, garden, parking outside and very nice country view - ticks all the boxes! Close to Sidari facilities and several fantastic beaches. 120,000 euro

PEROULADES (North West) Sunset Houses (Modern) Three of five houses available in high-quality small development, close to traditional village and short walk to renowned beach, with Sidari a few minutes drive. Two bedrooms. Large landscaped garden with BBQ and room for pool. From 150,000 euro

AGIOS IOANNIS (North West) Villa Oceanus (Modern) Fabulous seafront villa in totally secluded location. Four bedrooms, large living areas indoors and out. Wonderful sea and sunset views, pool. Immaculate and tasteful. Mediterranean Dream come true! 1,300,000 euro

Perithia Office, Acharavi - Kassiopi Road, New Perithia

Tel. 26630 98002 / 6948 180196 / 6949 982726

AGIOS PANTELEIMON (North) Sandy Land (building plot) Plot with spectacular sea view, a few minutes drive to popular Acharavi. Permit for 120 sq.m. house. 35,000 euro

PELEKITO (North) Pelekito Cottage (Traditional - Partially built/restored) Pretty cottage in delightful quiet hamlet near the sea, only requiring modernization - could be occupied. Two bedrooms possible. Many traditional features. 75,000 euro

AGIOS PANTELEIMONAS (North) Sandie's House (Traditional - restored) Two bedroom village house in quiet hamlet, sensitively renovated and ready to occupy. Two large patios with outstanding sea views. Parking, bus service, tavernas close. Near popular Acharavi resort and beach. 143,500 euro

AGNOS (North) Spring Meadow Houses (Modern) Four luxury houses for sale individually as quality holiday homes. Good rental potential. Unique in Corfu: heated pool with Internet control. From 145,000 euro

LOUTSES (North) Yellow House (Traditional - restored) A spacious old house with three bedrooms, fully restored and ready to move in. Lovely peaceful mountain location yet 10 minutes from beach. 175,000 euro

COYEVINAS (North East) Coyevinas Beachfront House (Traditional - in need of restoration) Everyone's 'must have' house, right on the sea. Needs renovation in character. Comes with large plot of land, can build 550 sq.m. additional housing. Prestige home or development. 1,200,000 euro

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