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Corfu's English Language Monthly Magazine

January 2008

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No. 205

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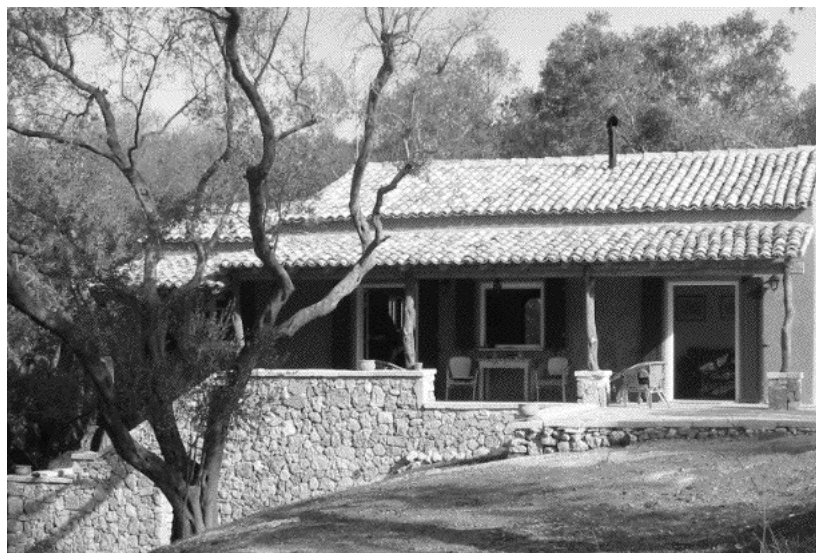
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Afra, 49100 Corfu

Tel: 26610 52833 / 26630 51362

Mobile: 6948 889174

email: corfiotm@otenet.gr

Website: www.thecorfiotmagazine.com

Postal Address P.O. Box 445, Corfu 49100
Editor Hilary Whitton Paipeti

26610 52833 / 26630 51362 / 6948 889174

Columnists - Contributors

Angela Papageorgiou, Clifford Owen

Lionel Mann, Peter Wheeler,

George Papas, Karina Kantas

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ear to the ground

FUNNY TO DEVELOP CULTURE SHOCK on the island where I've lived for so many years! I would expect to get a dose on a visit to the UK, not on a trip to North Corfu!

Staying for a while over Christmas up near Afionas, I potted down to Sidari for shopping, as I figured the big supermarkets at the Upper Sidari road junction could provide for my modest needs. Having got used to the amazing product range at AB in Kontokali, or at the very least Sconto, which while not offering a huge selection is at least neat and tidy, Markato was like stepping back in time. Goods piled haphazardly, and not much more than the basics on the shelves (though I found a superb sugar-free fruit preserve, and the butcher looked adequate). Over the road, Diellas was distinctly grubby, with even grubbier clientele, and on some aisles blocks of goods and even single items were arranged with great spaces in between - think Albania 10 years ago.

In contrast, Acharavi was a haven of culture, with well-dressed young people ciao-ing at each other in trendy coffee bars (Freddo has positively the best toasted sandwich around, served with a pile of crisps and salsa to dip in, all for two euros), and a very superior Dimitra Supermarket (amazing to think that Dimitra and Markato are the same chain!).

But the best shopping find was the closest one. I've driven past Brettas Supermarket, near Kavadas on the road to Arillas and Afionas, many times and not been terribly impressed. It turned out to be just ten minutes walk from my temporary home, and thus - initially - the refuge for emergency supplies of wine. First impressions are deceptive, for Brettas turns out to be one of the best independent supermarkets on the island. You're not going to find Chinese noodles and tacos, but anything else you may need is there, including a butcher, a small greengrocery, salmon steaks in the freezer and lots of very inexpensive household goods. AND it's open all day, seven days a week!

Why so cheap? Well, it's full of Italian goods, to the extent you sometimes have to remind yourself you ARE in Corfu. It seems strange that goods imported from another country are cheaper than stuff produced in Greece - but then, we ARE nearer Italy than Athens and Thessalonika, and cargo by sea is less expensive than road transport. Thus - now that cut priced goods from Italy are no longer underpinned by the sale of illegally cut olive wood - why shouldn't our pockets benefit? Next time you're in North West Corfu, plan to do your shopping at Brettas and see the difference.

FUNNY, TOO, HOW SYNCHRONICITY SOMETIMES THROWS UP THEMES within a single issue of *The Corfiot*. This month, we're focused on food, with a review of Rick Stein's new book (which features recipes from Corfu), while Lionel Mann recounts his first brush with ouzo. Plus two separate but related cultural issues appear, which both are resolved by our lead story. Read on...

THE NEWS THAT EASYJET WILL COMMENCE A DAILY SCHEDULED SERVICE to Corfu this summer (this too is pertinent to our lead story!) has stirred up general jubilation, but also reservation in some circles as to How It Will Affect Tourism. Do you have a strong view on this? Email us on corfiotm@otenet.gr (no attachments). We'll be squaring up the two sides next month.

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(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

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WINTER WALKS

SATURDAY, 2 FEBRUARY Corfu Trail to Lakones NEW! *.** Meet at Lakones junction, 10.30. Lunch at Doukades

SATURDAY, 9 FEBRUARY Agios Onouphrios Monastery and Gavrolimni (includes visit to Donkey Home) **NEW! **.** Meet at Kokini Roundabout for onward car transfer, 10.30. Lunch TBA

SATURDAY, 16 FEBRUARY Mesorachi and the Arillas Headland NEW! *.** 2 1/2 - 3 hours. Meet at the Petra Office, on the Afionas Road, 10.00 for coffee and cake (10.30 start). Lunch at Petra Office (regulars only - bring wine)

SATURDAY 23 FEBRUARY Agia Triada Monastery **** (difficult descent). 3-3 1/2 hours. Meet at Nimfes Square, 10.30. Lunch TBA

SATURDAY, 1 MARCH Imerolia - Kelia - Kassiopi Headland - Imerolia NEW! *** 2 - 2 1/2 hours. Meet at Imerolia (Kassiopi New Harbour), 10.30. Lunch TBA

* Easy ** Longer but no severe climbs

*** Moderate, with ascents

**** Difficult. Quite long with steep hills and rough terrain

Everyone welcome on all the walks - participation is 2 euros.

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This month's name days

01. Tryfon
03. Stamatis, Simeon
04. Isidoros
05. Agathi
08. Zacharias
10. Haralambos, Harikleia
11. Vlassis, Theodora
17. Theodoros
22. Anthousa
23. Polykarpos
26. Anatoli
26. Fotini
27. Asklipios

Name-day tradition dictates that you visit the home of the celebrating person, who will be holding an 'at home' - no invitation required. Take along a gift (alcohol, flowers, cake) and you will be offered a drink, nuts, cake, and possibly a meze.

Lefkimmi protests rubbish plan

Plans for a new rubbish dump at Lefkimmi continue, even though residents of the town and its surrounding villages protest on an everyday basis.

The dump, first intended for Paxos, was blocked by Greenpeace. It's not wanted in the north of the island because of the expensive villas. So now it's has been dumped on Lefkimmi.

All refuse from Corfu and Paxos will be brought to the site and dumped. This includes medical waste (does Corfu Town hospital not have an incinerator?).

Lefkimmi residents would not be protesting if the planned rubbish dump was built according to EU regulations and included a recycling plant. (Why do we have blue recycling bins around the island when there is no recycling plant?)

Papers from the European Union state that the landfill has to be 1,500 meters from the nearest residential area or river. But the rubbish dump is only 300 meters away from the nearest residence and a shocking 50 meters away from a stream. The site is also in the middle of a greenbelt agricultural land planted with olive trees.

The European Union has given a huge grant so this site can be built to correct specification, but where is the money going if corners are being cut?

A spokesperson for the English community of Lefkimmi said she has contacted Greenpeace, WWF, BBC News, Sky News, Mega and Ant1 Europe, with emails and daily calls to local television stations. EcoCorfu/WWF has sent flyers and information and has given their support to the cause. 'They thought they could get away with it. They didn't think we would stick up for our rights,' she said. 'St Peter's, at the northern end of Kavos, one of the biggest tourist resorts in Corfu, will eventually have to close due to health hazards from pollution. Within five years, methane gas will have built up and will need releasing. Pollution like this shouldn't be anywhere near children and residents.'

So it's not just about the damage to the environment - tourism will be affected. Kavos is just starting to rebuild its name as more than an 18-30's resort. However, if this rubbish dump is permitted, St Peter's, the 'genteel' part of Kavos, could disappear altogether. In the summer, the stench will be so bad that no travel agent is going to book tourists to stay in Kavos. With two rivers close by, the water will eventually become so polluted that beaches will be unusable.

Protesters closed down the Town Hall for two days and, in retaliation, the two Lefkimmi nurseries were shut. Rubbish lined the streets and mounted up as refuse trucks were prevented from collecting.

'There have been huge marches, and people standing in the rain demonstrating day and night, but no one cares enough to report and film the demonstrations,' said a protester. 'Not once has the spokesman for the opposition been interviewed. There are no camera and reporters present. But that will not stop the residents of Lefkimmi getting their voices heard.'

Although the demonstrations have been reasonably peaceful, the authorities have been accused of excessive force and indeed have felt the need to protect the site with three riot vans and armed police.

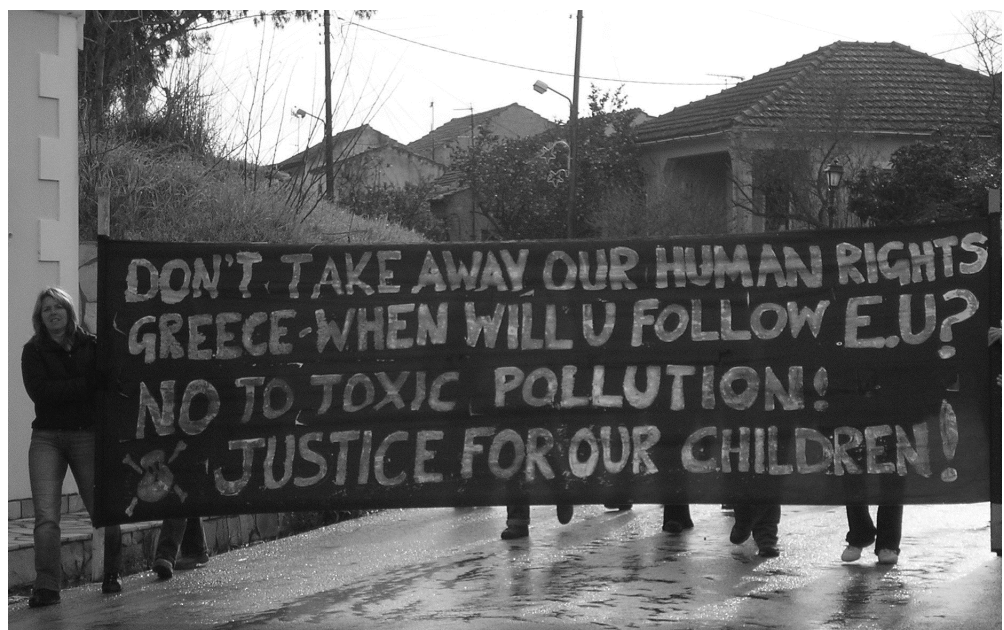
At the end of January, the issue was to go to the Greek courts for a formal hearing. However, this hearing has already been delayed six times. Unfortunately, the case has to go through the Greek courts before it can go to the European Union courts. You would think they would want evidence that the money is being well spent.

It is alleged that the EU were sent overhead black and white photos of the proposed site, which dated back to 1974 - before Melikia, St Peter's and Kavos were even established!

Villagers will continue to protest and demonstrate, and hope to get their voices heard. A further rally has been organized in Corfu Town at the end of the month, and demonstrations will continue outside the site and at the Town Hall.

Karina Kantas

Karina Kantas is author of 'Heads and Tales', a short story collection that will delight, fright, and leave you questioning your sanity. www.lulu.com/karina-kantas



Another take on the 2007 Craft Fair

✍️ **Angela Papageorgiou**

Corfu's now traditional Craft Fair was held at the end of November at one of its most successful and popular venues, at Casa Lucia.

The beautiful surroundings, with their warmth, intimacy and cosy familiarity were once again the setting for a display of interesting and original articles. Anyone looking for a special gift would be bound to come away with something, even if that were only the inspiration to create something of your own.

The storms of the first day were not enough to deter the visitors, who came in a steady stream, and the following two days were beautiful, so that visitors were able to enjoy the gardens of the Casa Lucia and take the opportunity to meet up with old friends and try the wonderful mulled wine and waffles made by Coby, or sample the home cooking of Cheryl.

Jewellery is always a popular gift and there was plenty of choice, with Victoria and Julie specializing in very different styles, exotic and modern. Regular exhibitor Mercedes always has original jewellery amongst the many treasures she features – her 'door snakes' draft excluders are always popular.

Sally is well-known now for her original greetings cards and delicious homemade preserves; Teresa shows us what can be done with a tapestry needle and an eye for colour and design, with her beautiful cushions and wall-hangings.

Katerina and Stella showed us what can be learned from previous generations, with piles of crocheted and knitted articles and those earliest examples of recycling – the rag rugs. Joyce has always brought a touch of whimsy to the event with her knitted animals and Christmas toys and while we are mentioning recycling, special mention should be made of what Gioia calls her 'Garbage Art' featuring wall-mounted art in the form of tall thin houses and streetscapes as well as boats of all kinds, all made from materials found in rubbish bins or on the beach – bits of

wood, string, cartridge shells, razor blade protectors. Jacotte's beach harvest of driftwood and other materials is transformed into wall decorations and mirror frames, to great effect. Mireille, too, produced highly unusual Christmas trees from dyed driftwood.

Wood of a different kind, as well as stone, inspires Paul to create masterpieces of sensuality, while Susie's photos of the Corfu she loves could be bought framed or as cards.

Vivid blue ceramics, often with a seasonal role as cake or canapé plates are the work of Eleni, and Martin had spent many hours creating nesting boxes for birds in the form of little houses – judging by the rate of sales Corfu's bird population will be happy when spring comes!

Carla and Veta presided over a wonderfully colourful corner of paintings, prints and jewellery and delicately painted pebbles and Angela made another corner all her own with quilted cushions. Hilary displayed some of the 'bygones' of old Corfu – fabrics, utensils and articles all handmade, in the days when there was no alternative, in the villages of Corfu.

A number of exhibitors, including Barbara, featured preserves, liqueurs, cakes and other festive fare, not all of which reached home – too tempting, quite irresistible, many of the goodies were sampled on the spot!

If I have forgotten anyone, or spelt a name incorrectly, I apologise sincerely.

It is hoped to expand the Fair next year, perhaps holding it on two separate occasions, possibly once in the north of the island. In this case, it would be possible to invite more people to take part. Further information will be published in *The Corfiot*.

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There's no Business like Showbusiness

✍ Peter Wheeler

26th December 2007 marked the 20th Anniversary Year of the Mantzaros Philharmonic Society's Boxing Day concerts.

To celebrate, a show billed as '20 Years... Like a Fairytale' was held at the State Theatre in Corfu Town. An exciting musical programme of marches, Christmas carols, opera and music from film, as well as "numbers" from Musical Theatre made it an evening that offered something for everyone.

The event was for charity, and a 'full house' attendance which included the Mayor, Sotiris Michalef ensured generous proceeds to the Greek Red Cross. An introductory talk on the charity's ongoing work was given by Mrs Lulu Theotoki, followed by a short word of thanks and introduction to the night's performers by Mr Trivizas, the Board Director of the Mantzaros'.

I was invited to perform in the show and thought I might share with you a few memories and laughs from it, as well as explaining the background to my invitation.

However, being a well brought-up sort, I should first introduce myself. Peter Anthony Wheeler, that's me. I'm what you might call an Anglo-Corfiot: Corfiot mother, English father (deceased). I was born and brought-up in Kent, then moved to London, my home for 15 years and a city to which I still have a strong connection. On Corfu, I live near Gastouri and, together with my mother, own and run 'Jioia Studios' in Pikoulatika, of which you may or may not have heard.

Now (I hear you say), this is all well and good but what's it got to do with showbusiness? Well... you see, I trained as an Actor/Singer/Dancer at the Italia Conti Academy in London, and have performed in the West End ('Sunset Boulevard', 'Scrooge', 'Pinnocchio', 'The Crucible', 'A Streetcar Named Desire'), at the Royal Albert Hall ('Madam Butterfly', 'Tosca'), at the Tudor Club, Piccadilly, and also the at Theatre Royal, Bath, and Manchester and Birmingham Arena - so my participation in the Mantzaros show wasn't as 'out of the blue' as it might seem.

I'll end this bit of background by sharing with you that, during my 15 years in London I was also: a director, producer's assistant, box office manager, theatre house manager, event organiser and sometime security guard for Madonna (please, don't ask). OK, more than enough background!

To explain more about this particular show, we need to travel back in time *cue harp solo (optional).

Late last summer, through a mutual friend, I was introduced to the soprano Rosa Poulimenou. Predictably, as opera is one of my passions, we got on 'like a house on fire'.

From an operatic point of view, this island is indeed lucky as it has two world class artistes in the shape of Rosa Poulimenou and the baritone Pantelis Kontos. Winter and summer, Corfu has a constant programme of concerts, recitals and musical events,

all of which, in my opinion, deserve investigation. DVDs, the cinema and 'nights in' all have their merits, but you can't beat a bit of 'live'!

Anyway, to cut a long article short, I found myself in the headquarters of the Mantzaros, sipping tea, listening to CDs and chatting to its dynamic and very personable conductor, Mr Spiros Dolianitis. One cup of tea later - Liptons, of course; tea snobs will be pleased to hear I did push for a stronger blend - and I'd agreed to sing a couple of numbers in the show.

So, agreed. Next stop, rehearsals!

For those of you who may not know, the Mantzaros rehearsal rooms and administrative offices are in a grand old building, a stone's throw away from the Church of St. Spiridon - keep your eyes peeled when walking around; a plaque's on the front of it.

To reach the rehearsal room you ascend an old staircase with well-worn treads, pass an austere board-room with imposing portraits and push a creaky double door to be greeted, in my case, by approximately 40 musicians, all tuning up.

Maestro Dolianiti introduced me graciously to the members of the band and I also got to meet my fellow performers who, along with Rosa, consisted of two other young singers, Georgia



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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Tryfona and Maroutsela Gasparinatos, both blessed with beautiful, strong voices.

I must have been far too busy taking in my surroundings as, before I knew it, Maestro Dolianiti had given two sharp taps of his baton and we were off!

Georgia and Maroutsela were first off the blocks with 'Belle nuit, O nuit d'amour' from Offenbach's 'Tales of Hoffman' - you do know the piece, trust me.

Now, look, as I've mentioned, I have performed many times but, I have to admit, I got an attack of 'the nerves'. Call it natural English Reserve, call it diffidence at being in a room of talented young musicians, all of whom have known each other for years, call it a last minute crisis: either way, I was jittery!

I strengthened my resolve by inspecting the contents of my music folder, in the process knocking the pianist's sheet music onto the floor and bashing into a saxophone player's music stand which earned me what's commonly known as an 'old-fashioned look'.

Mantzaros Athletic 1, Wheeler United 0.

Needless to say, I did rally by the time it came to my three solos. However, a brief instance of feedback from the microphone may well have had dolphins swimming into the Gouvia Marina. Getting it right is, of course, what rehearsals are for and I'm pleased to say I did - eventually.

The morning of 26th December found me in good spirits and seeking a little extra luck by staring into the sky outside my

house, willing birds to perform their ablutions upon me. I'm sure Paul McKenna knows how to get them to do it, but I had no such luck; there's no doubt about it, performers are a superstitious lot.

The morning's technical rehearsal went well; they really are a great, capable team at the State Theatre. As a performer, no matter where you are in the world, theatres are always full of similar character types. In this particular case, it was a blessing and made me feel even more at home.

A phenomenon exists, named by those of us who have haunted the West End over the years - 'Dr Theatre'. It is, plainly put, the effect of being in a theatre. It cures not only nerves, but minor ailments, production problems and negative energies of any kind. Unfortunately, it's not available on BUPA.

So, good old 'Dr Theatre' ensured all went smoothly during the performance itself. Rosa 'could have danced all night', I waxed lyrical about a 'Blue Moon', Georgia and Maroutsela made sure it was a 'belle nuit' and we all got together for a 'Silent Night' fantasia and 'We are the World'. Splendid, wonderful: Mission accomplished.

It was great to be back 'treading the boards', especially for the first time (well, officially) in Corfu.

As I draw this piece to a close, I should point out that various theatrical events are being planned and prepared, news of which I'll bring you nearer the time.

Should anyone wish to contact me my email address is pwc-fuster@gmail.com

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Me and the Media

Some Personal Encounters

 **Clifford Owen**

'Curate says church spire unsafe' was my first serious encounter with the local press. It was Stowmarket Parish Church in the middle of Suffolk and we had recently had our architect's quinquennial inspection on the fabric. He had decided that considerable repairs ought to be made to the rotting structural timbers of the distinctive 18th century copper-clad spire. Somehow or other the news had leaked out that the 100 foot spire was about to plummet to earth and maim, or worse, innocent people in the street. My vicar was on holiday and I was rung up by a Bury St. Edmunds Newspaper. It was a keen young reporter out to earn his spurs: 'Would you say that there is a danger with the spire, sir? What repairs would be needed to make it safe?' ...and so on. When he asked if there was a chance that the spire might have to be removed, I innocently said: 'Well, it could be, in an extreme case.' The following week, the Bury newspaper carried a photograph of the church with its spire removed and my headline above! My vicar eventually returned from holiday and was not amused at what I had been up to during his summer absence. As it so happened, the spire did get removed two years later, and it was twenty years before a helicopter gently edged a new replica spire back on top of the tower!

But it raised in my mind the whole question of church and media: what to say, when to say it, how to say it. When I moved to a new housing estate in Hampshire, I was rung up every week by a local lady reporter for the front page of our edition of the Farnham Herald. 'Have you anything for me this week Mr Owen?' 'Only the usual on the services.' Our local Mrs X had written a newspaper clip every week for years, which was written rather like a report for the Darby and Joan Club: 'Mr. Bloggs read the lesson, Mrs Harding took the collection' etc. They never added that a massive thirteen people turned up! However, the Herald graciously supported the efforts of the church to gain a profile on a difficult estate, and printed it just as Mrs X had written it. It functioned as a community newspaper rather than a scandal rag.

In 1980 I attended a most useful two day course on journalism at Church House Westminster. These courses were arranged to introduce clergy to the world of the media. They covered the basics: What is news? Why do people read newspapers? Who is the most important person for the newspaper? (answer: the reader!) We were tutored by an experienced local newspaper editor from Brighton. We did exercises on prioritising stories, selecting photographs, what should go into a Press Release and so on. But we had it hammered into us that the reader buys the newspaper, and if he can't find anything to read by page 5, you've lost it. He is likely to flip through the next day's paper at the newsstand, and again if there's 'nothing in it', he may not buy it again for a while. But the effect of the course was to leave me bitten with the world of journalism. I have to confess that I found it exciting.

So in 1983, for my 10 year in-service training modules, I chose the media as a subject for study, especially journalism and local

radio. I was tutored by the Revd. Geoff Curtis, the media officer for Guildford Diocese, who was an ex-BBC Children's Programme Producer and a total enthusiast. Thank God for total enthusiasts. The world would be much the poorer without them. Geoff taught me many of the basics about the difference between radio and TV. Again: 'What was news?' I did radio interviews, learned to edit taped recordings and so on. I was sent on a week's intensive course at a radio training establishment for ministers, and frankly found it hard work. My biggest thrill was being sent out to do two interviews for use on the local radio station: County Sound, Guildford. The first one was with a converted 'ex-rocker', who had been involved in a gang fight with guns some years before, but was now a Christian. I had to prepare all the obvious questions like: 'Have you given up guns?' 'Did you have a blinding light conversion?' and so on. I had to forget that I was a Christian minister and simply be the reporter. My second interview was with a visiting Christian rock band when they came to play at a local comprehensive school. My recording of their music wasn't brilliant but the interview was ok. Both pieces were edited and broadcast by County Sound.

But I had to confess that of the two mediums I preferred the written word, and when the Guildford Herald was launched I was used as an occasional feature writer and interviewer. I had the honour of doing the front page article for the first edition (It was on the Church's Urban Fund). I managed to get a couple of controversial 'scoops', but the biggest comeback was when I had to go as a reporter the annual Masonic Service in Guildford Cathedral. Not being a mason myself, and being aware that at that time freemasonry was a hot issue in the church, I was charged with the difficult task of writing a report on the service. The resulting article created something of an earthquake, with correspondence raining in for several issues afterwards. About this time I had the privilege of interviewing Delia Smith about her faith, for an evangelistic barbeque.

But although I enjoyed learning about the media, I discovered that it is difficult to be neutral in matters when one is already involved a pastoral ministry. Shortly afterwards I moved on to the receiving end. In 1986 some of us launched a baptismal reform group in the church, and I was interviewed on the Radio 4 Breakfast 'Today' programme. That was exciting in itself, but I soon learned with the BBC that you have to have an opponent who tears into you from another studio down a pair of headphones!

When I moved to Worcester in 1989, I did no more local radio or newspapers, apart from a couple of obituaries and a book review for the Church Times. But in 1999 I had the joy of working on an exercise which brought local radio and church together. I wrote the course booklet *Baggage and Treasures* for BBC Radio Stoke Lent course. I made a number of recordings which were edited and made into professional programmes by Sue Booth (many years previously on *Womans' Hour*). In Holy

CHAPLAIN'S CHAT

Week the radio audiences from over Staffordshire (my birth-place) came together at St. Peter's Stoke-on-Trent for a special service of Thanksgiving, with me having questions fired at me from the congregation. It was in 1986 that local radio stations throughout England teamed up with a large number of churches to promote the ecumenical Lent Course: What on earth is the church for? That exercise demonstrated the power of local radio, as it kick-started the ecumenical stalemate, and eventually lead to the formation of Churches Together in England, a new body spearheading local church unity.

You can probably tell that I enjoyed most of this, but it was not entirely painless. By far the biggest and most painful experience I had with church and media happened in 1996. It was also my first experience of what happens when a story 'runs'. I will not elaborate on the details of the incident here, but suffice it to say that in one of my previous churches a choirmaster refused to invite a certain lady to the Passiontide Oratorio Choir, because she ran a 'new age' shop. The decision had been kept from me but had leaked to BBC Radio Hereford and Worcester, who broadcast it on their 17.00 news bulletin, giving me a mere 45 minutes warning. I made a statement one hour later. By 19.00 my phone was ringing! The next day I was phoned by a 'stringer' (I was taught in the journalism course that this species existed) who interviewed me by telephone. The next day the story was carried in all the national dailies. The Bishop rang. The Dean of Worcester Cathedral wrote a feature in the Worcester Evening News saying what a rum lot we were in that parish! But the most painful aspect of all was the division in

church and village. People in my quiet, idyllic, rural, half-timbered village were annoyed that their church and village should be put in the limelight. Guess whom they blamed! I appeared on Midlands Today and it went on and on for days. In fact the story ran for six weeks. It was my first and only experience of what happens when the media sense blood and there is nowhere to hide.

It was the Daily Mail who did me the most harm. When I tried to ask them to correct certain things in their report, they went silent as they set off in search of more 'news' and victims. But there was a 'funny'. I had a phone call from Sydney, from a lead man of an Australian TV programme who wanted to interview me. I thought at first he was having me on and someone local was doing an impersonation. It turned out to be genuine! Sadly, that wasn't quite the end, as six months later a BBC Midlands TV programme featured our village crisis on a programme called Right or Wrong. I had the galling experience of watching myself being publicly criticised on TV. But there was one last funny which perhaps helped to confirm why what I had been involved in was 'news'. The game 'Trivial Pursuits' included a question on one of its cards: 'What was singer x banned from because she ran a new age shop?'

Well, perhaps the good Lord thought that I needed a few years exile on a Greek Island to be left alone from the media; apart, that is, from the relatively quiet world of *The Corfiot*!

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Corfu... the Tourism Suicide Island

George Papas

Christmas Eve was the last straw.

We had heard that usually on Christmas Eve Carols and Corfiot songs were performed by various choirs in the town centre. We wanted to experience this Corfiot Christmas tradition, and so, in order to find out time and place, I purchased six daily local newspapers and one Sunday one. No mention at all, and in the end, I had to phone the Town Hall to find out.

For the few people who attended, the standard was excellent, even though the choirs sung to the Town Hall rather than to the spectators.

Why the secrecy?

Perhaps the authorities don't want people coming into Town. Perhaps the shops are so busy that they don't want any more customers. Perhaps the fact that Corfu is seen to be advertised as a musical island is enough.

We heard that there was no money for extra Christmas lights, especially around the Esplanade, which we are told is one of the biggest and best public squares in Greece.

One would imagine that around Christmas it would not be difficult to organize various musical events, which would attract both young and old from outside Town. If children's choirs performed at the bandstand, parents and grandparents would come to watch, and possibly also a number of foreign residents - if we knew about the event. We might well have a coffee, or a meal, and do some shopping - but of course those shops don't need any customers...

It all comes down to money, but of course we haven't any brains, and are completely sterile of ideas to raise some.

So for a start, what about running singing competitions, with prizes donated by sponsors? I am sure there are plenty of wealthy Corfiots, who would dig into their pockets to support such events. Provided the money does not disappear, and goes where it is intended - to help Corfu Town put on a great Christmas display.

If only we could develop what we are good at during Christmas, we should have a queue of cruise ships lining up to visit over the holiday period. But they won't come to a town where there is no action.

Other cities do it successfully. Why not Corfu?

Now I'm started, I might as well carry on.

What about Carnival? Corfu's is supposed to be among the top three in Greece, thanks to its Venetian heritage.

Groups of actors, or individuals, should be encouraged to dress up in genuine Venetian attire. How can they be encouraged to do so?

The Children's Carnival could be especially well supported with sponsorship. The main Carnival processions could be something special, with colourful bands and choirs and singing. If it was advertised.

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We must seriously consider how we can attract visitors to the island, and persuade them to spend their money here rather than elsewhere. A visit to Corfu should actually become a MUST!

Back to our calendar. Easter. What can I say? Is Corfu a secret society?

There are so many customs and traditions that are unique to the island, that none of the foreign residents or seasonal visitors know about - like the Holy Flame which is brought with great trouble from Jerusalem, and which at the Midnight Mass in the Esplanade Square is used to light the candles of those attending, starting from the Bishop's candle in the Bandstand and moving outwards. But if no-one tells visitors about the tradition, of course they'll pull out matches and light their own candle.

If we want foreigners and visitors to accept our customs, we must be prepared to tell them what they are. If they have the information, they can participate in our traditional cultural events correctly, to the benefit of all.

The August *Varkarola* (Singing Regatta) is another case in point. Such a unique event could attract so many visitors, among them a flotilla of boats, as well as spectators on the shore. Boats should be permitted to moor at a safe distance. I am sure there must be people around with the imagination and technical know-how to make this work.

I know that parking is a problem, but there are large areas on the perimeter of Town which are empty. Has no-one heard the words 'Park and Ride'? It is a good system, but buses must be frequent and FREE. If anything is to be achieved, access to the Town Centre must be kept clear, and police should be ruthless in stopping illegal parking.

I have a few more questions.

Are the landing fees at Corfu airport more expensive than other airports in Greece? Is that why we can't attract any airlines to service Corfu out of season? We keep hearing that this and that airline might be coming, but then they don't. Why not?

Why can't we extend the summer season? Corfu has so many walks that people would enjoy when the weather's not too hot. So many visitors would love an early or late season visit.

We should not be beholden to the airlines to make this happen. We should make our island the best destination in Europe, so that the airlines should be begging us to come, instead of us begging them. It won't be easy, but it can be done.

George Papas was born in Athens, and lived most of his life in England. He relocated to Corfu in his 'twilight years', and his English wife soon fell in love with Corfu. 'I too have come to love the island,' says George, 'and it hurts when I see it failing. My wish is to see it become the best destination in Europe.'

Note from the Editor: George Papas's article was written before the announcement came that easyJet is now flying to Corfu (though not all years round). A new Tourism Advisory Committee for Corfu Town has already recommended many of Mr Papas's proposals to the Town Hall, including more cultural information to be made available and a 'Park and Ride' service to be put in place. Members of the Committee will be issued with a copy of this article.



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Going Green

Corfu and the GreenCorfuNet-work

✍ Hilary Paipeti

It was only in mid-January that I was asked to fill in a Prefecture-sponsored questionnaire about the potential for alternative, 'green' forms of tourism in Corfu. The questions were in the form of statements to which you had to agree or disagree at various levels, along the lines of 'One of Corfu's advantages is its olive groves' (I fully agree). We were then allowed to add our comments, and all of the statements prompted from me a response which began 'Yes, but...'

YES, we have vast olive groves, BUT where can you visit a grove, walk around in the shade of the trees, maybe view an old olive press (working or not) and learn about how olives are picked and prepared?

YES, there are walking trails and guidebooks, BUT they have all been created and funded through private enterprise, and the local authorities (including the National Tourism Board) are mostly not even aware they exist.

YES, Corfu's traditional villages stun visitors with their location and architecture (and not just Old Perithia), BUT how many foreigners are bold enough to go off the beaten track and explore the alleyways, without a guide or a trail to follow?

It all comes down to infrastructure, I wrote. YES, the basic components that would attract alternative tourism are in place, BUT the local authorities don't have a clue what and where they are, tourism sectors prefer to direct visitors to the 'big name' locations so they can make money from coach tours, and few of the facilities are easily visitable, because there's nothing to guide you there or, if by chance you arrive, to tell you what you are looking at.

Some exceptions are the Triklino Winery, the Sinarades Folk Museum, the Arillas Heritage Trail (now closed) and the Blue Walking Routes around Acharavi - all put in place and maintained by private enterprise. Several years ago, the Esperion Council created a small footpath network around Valanion; there was no promotion or upkeep, and within a couple of seasons it was overgrown, its expensive constructions destroyed, most of the trails impassable. That's what happens when the local authorities are involved - development grants are regarded as useful way of obtaining cash to distribute political favours rather than actually creating a viable and ongoing project. The sole exception (that I can think of) is Angelokastro, which has been beautifully reconstructed, and has a well presented and written explanatory board at the entrance. BUT whenever we've visited, the main gate has been closed... while the local authority which initiated the development of the site has done a wonderful job, do they consider that it should be visitable only in summer? One of the main benefits of alternative tourism is extension of the season, which requires for the opening of alternative facil-

ities when alternative tourists want to come.

It was then that fate came up with a solution to the problem of lack of infrastructure.

Regular readers will remember that I have been leading a programme of walks for unemployed or self-employed >19

Lake Antinioti is a Natura 2000 site and a certainty for inclusion in the GreenCorfuNet-work
Photo by Stephen Mackay



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FRONT PAGE FEATURE

14> citizens, Greeks or foreigners. The programme is being administered by the DDikeoma Institute, headed by Apostolos Petroulias and based at an office on the ground floor of the Theatre in Corfu Town.

The programme of walks was inspired by my own activities in this field, which Apostolos learned about when I was giving a talk at the Faliraki Centre about my work on walking trails. When planning and leading the walks, I tried to include a place of interest on the route, whether it was a monastery or fortress, a natural feature like a cave or waterfall, or an interesting aspect of landscape such as possible ley line networks. Even the 'raw materials', the footpaths themselves, speak of Corfu's architectural and cultural heritage if you listen hard enough.

Having on the walks seen for himself the vast wealth of features and sites that could provide an infrastructure for alternative forms of tourism, Apostolos (who is not a Corfiot) came up with a new project for the Institute - GreenCorfuNet.

The project will run over three years, at the end of which a network of sites will be registered and made available to the visitor. These will include: walking trails in the countryside and around villages; gastronomy trails in which kafenions and tavernas serving traditional food will be registered; cultural trails bringing in monuments and museums; and ecological sites whether natural (like the Natura 2000 ones) or created (like an ecological farm or animal sanctuary).

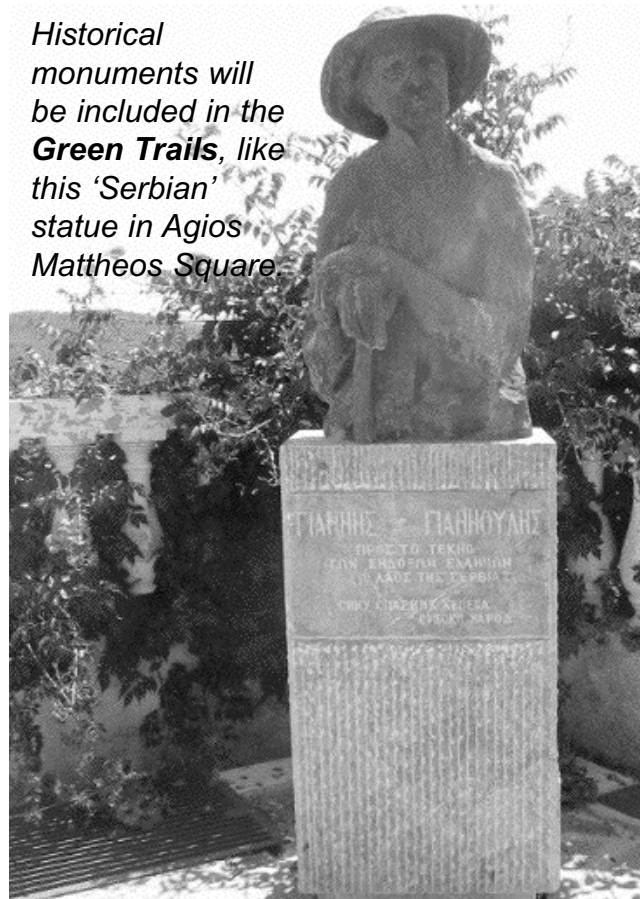
The recommended trails and sites will be available as a guided or self-guided route, or as a pick-and-choose menu for visitors exploring a certain area. For example, a visit to the Acharavi area might take in a coffee at the 'Made in Corfu' Traditional Kafenion near Perithia, a browse in the adjoining olive wood shop, a drive to the Natura 2000 site at Lake Antinioti, a walk on one of the Blue Routes, possibly passing the Dandalo Tower and neighbouring water mill, and lunch at a taverna that serves real local cuisine. The trip could be booked in advance and formally guided, or, using a directory, visitors could access whichever of the sites they want by themselves, in whichever order suits their programme.

The project launches many opportunities for the development of alternative tourism businesses. Some that come to mind are: holiday cottages in villages (see page 16 for an example) or inland countryside rather than in resorts, handicraft centres and art galleries, ecological farms (olives, herb gardens, produce shops), old olive presses restored to produce real virgin oil, horse- and donkey-riding centres, traditional B&Bs, cookery courses, and more. If you already have, or intend to establish, an activity or business which might qualify, please contact me on 6948 889174 or email on corfiotm@otenet.gr and we will discuss your participation.

Let's paint Corfu Green!

The first GreenCorfuNet volunteer day takes place on Sunday, 2 March, when we will clean the Dandalo Tower and adjacent watermill. Volunteers should meet at Freddo Bar, Acharavi, 10.00-10.30

Historical monuments will be included in the Green Trails, like this 'Serbian' statue in Agios Mattheos Square.



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A Dream Come True in Varipatades

by Hilary Paipeti

When in 1997 Harry Tsoukalas established Corfu Real Estate.com he had no intention of making a permanent career move into the property business. After 17 years in Australia, where he had a construction and recycling company, the Corfu Harry returned to was not the one he left. In the early 1980s, the island's villages were well populated; the population tended their fields and olive groves, and made a bit of cash out of tourism during the summer months. During annual visits home to his family, he had seen the villages gradually abandoned as folk relinquished their agricultural ways and traditional settlements for an urban environment and modern lifestyle, while tourism fell slowly into the hands of a few giant tour operators, who were able to manipulate the nature of the island's by now main industry.

Harry had a vision, a neat solution both to the slow desertion of the villages, and to the stranglehold of the big TOs. He saw derelict villages houses restored and put into use as tourist accommodation, bringing the old settlements back to life, and empowering their owners, who could gain a slice of the tourist drachma (as it was then) without being beholden to a faceless corporation whose only motive was profit.



The Large House



The Cottage

Unfortunately, the locals failed to share the vision; maybe they felt the risk of waiving an established if limited salary was not worth the risk, even when the potential rewards - for the island as well as for owners - are large.

So when Harry put his money where his mouth was and converted a family property in the hinterland of Arillas into a three-bedroom house for tourists, most locals mocked him: 'Who's going to stay in that old place inland, when they can be in our new apartments by the beach?' they asked rhetorically.

But Harry had the last laugh, enjoying for three years high occupancy levels - at three times the price per bed over that contracted by the TOs for the 'superior' accommodation in the resort. He offered fresh produce for every breakfast, one evening meal with his parents, and a number of optional extras like olive grove walks, and excursions to off-the-beaten-track heritage sites.

Disappointed from early on by the reaction of the locals, and still unable to persuade them by example, Harry had radically changed his strategy: Instead of saving the village houses by encouraging the locals to convert them, he began promoting them to foreigners as holiday homes. Thus Corfu Real Estate.com developed into Luvcorfu Properties.

But Harry never let go of the vision and, as tourism descended increasingly into crisis, he still sought investors willing to convert village houses into holiday cottages. Enter Henry Holterman, from Holland. Under Harry's guidance, Henry bought two cheap houses in Varipatades, which the Petra Traditional Constructions team restored in old style. Now complete, fully furnished and equipped with every modern comfort, the houses are awaiting their first season of visitors.

For a visitor seeking true peace and quiet, there could not be a more relaxing holiday venue than Varipatades. Since the road provides access only to the village and otherwise goes nowhere in particular, it carries little traffic; however, a drive of only a few minutes takes residents to Pelekas in one direction, and to the main road south at Vrioni in the other, meaning that all parts of the island can easily be reached without braving the traffic of Corfu Town. The golf course and Aqualand are a little over five minutes drive, and the grand west coast beaches, like Glyfada and Agios Gordis, just a little more.

The village has a traditional kafenion, and the bread van passes by every morning. Little alleys wind here and there, and as footpaths head down into the valley, offering a wide tract of unspoiled countryside to explore on foot. A car comes with rental, so the good shops and supermarkets at Vrioni are accessible.

Both houses are metres from the village road, and the cottage has parking right outside. The large house is mid-terrace and extends on three floors beside a wide alley. The ground floor has a twin bedroom and bathroom with walk-in wetroom. The middle floor comprises a large open kitchen, diner and lounge, while the top floor has a double bedroom and bathroom.



Because in its original state the house had no balconies, the renovation team cleverly constructed an inset balcony on the top floor, which due to the large floorspace was possible without compromising the size of the bedroom. Thus, residents are able to enjoy the stunning view over the rooftops and over the valley to Pelekas - even in the rain! For outside living, the house comes with a yard on the opposite side of the alley. A pergola has been created on part of this to provide shade for alfresco dining.

The cottage is also on three levels. Entrance is to the middle floor, which comprises a lounge with couch and easy chair. Since the building is almost detached, there are windows front and back, so the house is full of light, and enjoys a view over the pantiled rooftops and valley beyond. A spiral stair leads down to the kitchen and bathroom, with small indoor diner and a step-out yard beside the descending alley. Timber stairs lead up from the lounge to a double bedroom, also light and airy and with an even better view.

In both houses, the renovation process has held with tradition. As much as possible of the original fabric of the buildings has been preserved, including the timber stairs and old floorboards. Wherever installations had to be replaced, materials recycled from other old houses have been used. In order to preserve the authentic feel of an old village house, irregular render has been applied both inside and out, finished with limewash paint containing natural ochre tint. Indoors, features such as wall alcoves have been incorporated into the decor.

The house and cottage are tastefully decorated and furnished in earth colours - honey and cream, russet, umber and chestnut - complemented with bright rugs, pretty fabrics and good quality art - there is none of the typical 'rental' cheap pine furniture and tawdry pictures of Mouse Island.

FEATURE

With this prototype enterprise, Harry's dream has become reality. And the dream is now set to run and run: Many of Corfu's traditional villages lend themselves to the creation of a business comprising serviced holiday cottages, rather than a resort apartment block or out-of-village B&B. Among villages that spring to mind as suitable are Agios Mattheos and Skripero, where there are a number of still inexpensive houses in the same neighbourhood. And of course, Old Perithia, though there prices are much higher. Grants of up to 40% for renovation and complete refurbishment (down to the last teaspoon!) are available, providing the cottages will be in use for tourism purposes for a minimum of five years. Naturally, such enterprises can apply to join GreenCorfuNet - see page 14 - and most likely also the 'Guest Inn Greece' network. For further information about available properties, grants and network membership, please contact Luvcorfu Properties on corfiotm@otenet.gr, aivaldim@otenet.gr or angela@petracon.biz. See also www.corfurealestate.com and luvcorfurealestate.com

The Varipatades holiday rentals are being marketed in the UK and Holland by Travelmaker Corfu on behalf of Henry. For more information, call Marlou on 6948 180195 or go to the website www.travelmaker-corfu.co.uk



BOOK REVIEW

Rick Stein's Mediterranean Escapes

 Hilary Paipeti

As if the gorgeously filmed TV programme wasn't enough to show Corfu in its best light (broadcast twice on BBC2 and going worldwide), now comes the book of the series. Little Corfu was the only part of Greece to be featured in the series, up among entire countries (Morocco, Turkey) whole regions (Catalonia, Puglia) and much larger islands (Sicily, Corsica, Sardinia). Only Mallorca comes close in size and style. Corfu was even chosen above Crete, with its famous 'Diet'.

Like all of Rick's books, this one is beautifully produced and lavishly illustrated, with landscape shots of each location as well as photographs of many of the dishes. Page 7 (the first right hand page that falls opposite text) carries a close-up of Rick in typically relaxed mode, against a background of Agni Bay, taken on the beach at Toula's Taverna. (Toula's was to be featured on the original film, but the camera was found to be faulty, and the crew's second visit unfortunately came before the taverna opened for the new season.)

Rick avoids one of the big difficulties facing an author of books dealing with Southern European food and aimed at a Northern European market - how to categorize recipes. Mediterranean countries don't structure meals as (for example) in the UK according to starters, main courses and desserts. In the Med, a soup often IS the main course, and a selection of what we would classify as 'starters' (mezze) can constitute the entire meal. Accordingly, Rick places the dishes depending on the foodstuff which provides its base ingredient, so that chapters are dedicated to: 'Herbs, salad leaves, weeds and other greens'; 'Aubergines, artichokes and the Mediterranean garden'; 'Pecorino, feta, ricotta and mozzarella'; 'Dried beans, grains, rice and pasta'; as well as sections on fish, chicken and eggs, meat, game, puddings and of course mezze. This makes for some seemingly rather arbitrary placements, such as a baked omelette of wild greens featuring in the 'Herbs' section rather than the one on eggs, while a large number of seafood dishes turn up in the chapter on beans and grains, and Paella appears in the section on chicken; but this has a certain inherent logic.

Each recipe begins with a short explanation, sometimes evoking the 'spirit of place', sometimes explaining how Rick tracked it down, sometimes praising a particular ingredient. The recipes are well laid-out and easy to follow - in true Mediterranean style, there are no complicated restaurant processes; but then Rick is renowned for the relative simplicity of his chef work.

Debate will no doubt rage over the authenticity of the recipes - I can of course speak only for the Corfu ones. Briam is pretty much as Vasso at Foros makes it, and so is Rouvas' Rabbit Stifado, the River Taverna's Braised Artichokes and Karidis Restaurant's Bianco. But how did 'Roast Monkfish with a stew of fennel, garlic and green olives' come to be tagged as a Corfu recipe? And I've never seen locals make an omelette with wild greens (but why not?). Then I realized that this is not a book of food archaeology, such as Alan Davidson's 'Mediterranean

Seafood', nor one of record, along the lines of Elizabeth David's regional cookbooks. In fact, the book's subtitle says it all: 'Over 100 recipes *inspired* by the flavours of the Med' (my italics).

Once you've grasped this principle, the recipes make perfect sense - this is, after all, a chef at work, not a cookery writer. Spiced Octopus Salad, which contains cinnamon, cloves and all-spice, and is braised rather than boiled, 'was inspired by the spicing of a lot of dishes in the Mediterranean, especially Corfu.' Of the monkfish, Rick writes: 'I wanted to bring attention to the uniquely firm, fresh flavour of good monkfish so I've accompanied it with a vegetable stew made with the flavours of olive oil, fennel, ouzo and green olives ...[and] a sprinkle of wild fennel herb, which grows all over Corfu.' If the recipe is not one in local ladies' repertoire, it nevertheless adheres to the spirit of local ingredients; if local chefs could be innovators like the best British ones (they are tied by the innately conservative nature of their clientele), I am sure they would have come up with something similar.

When filming, Rick was particularly enthusiastic about the wild greens, and this enthusiasm is conspicuous in the book. But while the gathering and consumption of the greens looks great

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BOOK REVIEW

on film, instructions on how to cook a plate of boiled weeds is hardly a recipe to inspire readers, nor would such a dish be to many people's taste. So yet again Rick's innovatory techniques draws together ingredients from the local larder and countryside to compose a dish, the baked omelette with greens, that would joyfully be devoured by locals, while at the same time bringing an unfamiliar ingredient to the attention of foreigners.

Of the other Corfu recipes, the Grilled Prawns with ouzo, tomatoes, chilli and feta seems to derive from that taverna staple, Prawn Saganaki. Rick's version, however, is an 'inside-out' one, with the prawns cooked separately and arranged on top of the other ingredients just before serving. I disagree with Rick that it 'has a very 1960s feel'; Prawn Saganaki is often an excuse for tavernas to serve a titchy portion of inferior prawns, disguised by the smothering tomato and feta sauce, at a very high price. Rick's way rules out this rip-off trick, and perhaps should be adopted by tavernas as nouveau Prawn Saganaki, a dish for the 21st century.

I would only take Rick up on one 'local' recipe - Sympetherio ('A slow-cooked stew of green beans, okra, aubergines and wild greens'). I don't know its source (nor do Greek friends) - perhaps it's another of Rick's innovations - but the ingredients (which include artichokes as well as high summer vegetables) are not all available in Corfu during 'late summer and early autumn' as he writes (though of course they would be in the UK). And I've never met a Corfiot who enjoys okra! A better and more authentic choice would have been Corfu's wonderful winter vegetable stew with kritheraki pasta.

Friends, fans of Rick, have already cooked several of the dishes for my delectation, the most recent being Fennel Sausages braised with lemony potatoes and bay leaves from neighbouring Puglia. Excepting the Cumberland version, I'm not a great sausage enthusiast, and I find the local ones too spicy and greasy. But the lemon zest (we chopped it fine and left it in instead of removing it at the end as per the recipe) balanced out the spices, whilst the potatoes soaked up the fat deliciously.

What am I itching to try next? Tomato, roasted red pepper and onion salad with preserved lemon from Morocco; Artichoke and prosciutto salad with rocket from Puglia; Sardinian Spaghetti Carbonara made with pecorino cheese rather than the parmesan I've always used; A stew of mussels and clams scattered over char-grilled bread from the same island; Seafood couscous from Sicily; Roast knuckle of lamb with rosemary and borlotti beans from Corsica; Turkish Imam Bayildi (one of my favourite dishes in the world, but Rick's looks particularly delicious); Rice with squid, peppers and saffron, a simple paella-type dish from Mallorca; And chickpea, chorizo, tomato and spinach stew from Catalonia.

But you could easily eat for 100 days using this book. And, considering the normally high price of hard-cover books, it is well worth the money.

Rick Stein's Mediterranean Escapes

BBC Books (Random House)

ISBN 978-0-56349-366-2

20 pounds



At Foros Restaurant in Old Perithia
Rick and Thomas enjoy a tray of Briam.
Vasso's recipe is in the book



Bianco: Fish in white sauce
One of Rick's favourites,
also featured in the book

**Selection
of fish in
the market**



Comfort Food

On chilly winter evenings, you really need your comfort food, so here are more recipes, including one for Baked Beans that you would think came out of a Heinz tin!

Do you have any comfort foods of your own you'd like to share with our readers? Send them in and we might publish, with your name on! Letters to PO Box 445, Corfu, or email at corfiotm@otenet.gr (no attachments please).

Pork and Apple Casserole

For the casserole

Per person: 1/2 medium/largish onion, 150 gr pork (a fairly fatty cut), 1/2 firm apple. Per four portions: Butter, olive oil, small ladle brandy or calvados if you can find it (optional), 500 gr cider or dry white wine, salt and black pepper, cream (optional)

For the puree

Per person: 1 large potato or more, a good knob of butter, tinned milk (e.g. NouNou) to taste, salt

In a heavy casserole (size depends on the number of portions) melt a knob of butter (margarine will not do), together with enough olive oil to cover the bottom of the pan. Have the meat cut into serving portions. Slice the onions. When the fat is hot, fry the meat on all sides until it begins to brown. Add the onions and continue to fry until the meat and onions are golden.

In a small ladle, heat the brandy or calvados. When it is warm, set it alight and immediately pour it into the pan, shaking it to distribute the flames (Warning: The flames will burn quite high; keep your head back and make sure no loose hair is in the way. Also, turn off your extractor fan before you add the brandy. You can omit this procedure if it seems scary, but it does give a smoother finish to the dish.)

When the flames have died down, add the cider or white wine and allow to bubble fast for a minute. Then turn down the heat and season with salt and lots of freshly ground black pepper. Cover the pan and simmer slowly for about one and a half hours or until the pork is tender. It can be cooked in advance and reheated to this stage.

Shortly before the pork is cooked, add the apples, peeled and sliced. Continue the cooking for about 10-15 minutes until the apples are tender but still holding their shape. Stir in half a cup of single cream at the end if you like.

While the pork is cooking, peel the potatoes and cut into chunks. Boil in salted water until tender. Drain and keep warm if the pork is not ready.

Just before you are ready to serve, add the butter to the hot potatoes and mash very well, making sure there are no lumps. Beat in the hot milk until the mash is at the consistency you like (for this dish you use rather more liquid than usual in British cookery).

Serve the pork with the mash on hot plates, with the juices and apples spooned over the potatoes.

If you like a thicker sauce, lightly flour the pork before frying.

Lentils and Noodles

500 gr brown or green lentils, salt, 2-3 onions, olive oil, 3 cloves garlic, 1 1/2 teaspoons ground coriander, 500 gr hand-made Greek noodles (hilopittes), butter

Wash the lentils. Using a large pan that can later accommodate the noodles, cook the lentils in about 500 ml water until they are soft and the water absorbed - add more if it goes dry before they are ready. Add salt at the end.

Chop the onions finely and fry gently in olive oil until soft and golden. Add the crushed garlic and coriander and continue to fry gently for two minutes until golden. Add to the lentils and season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

In another pan bring a good quantity of water to the boil, salt it and throw in the noodles. Cook until just tender, about 10 minutes. Drain well and add to the lentils. Stir in butter to taste and serve very hot.

Baked Beans

500 gr white dried beans (the smallest you can find), 1 box tomato passata, salt, black pepper, sugar, cornflour

Rinse the beans, cover with cold water and leave to soak overnight.

The next day, drain the beans and cover them with abundant cold water. Bring to the boil and simmer at a lively rate for about 10 minutes. Drain and place in a large, heavy, oven-proof casserole. Add the tomato passata, black pepper and enough water to cover by about two centimetres. Place in an oven at 150°C and leave to cook for 1 1/2 hours or until very soft but still holding their shape. Check the level of water about half way through, and add more if it seems dry.

When the beans are completely soft, remove from the oven and place on gentle direct heat. Add salt and sugar to taste (you are aiming at a flavour similar to Heinz Baked Beans). Then add cornflour teaspoon by teaspoon until the sauce reaches a consistency like tinned beans - about a heaped tablespoon will probably be enough, but it depends on how much starch the beans have released and the quantity of the sauce.

Your beans are now ready, at a fraction of the cost of the commercial variety. Serve with a place of buttered toast (not on top of the toast as it gets soggy) or as part of an English Breakfast or simple supper.

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Neil
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A Grewsom Winter

Hello there everyone! Have you missed me or is that just wishful thinking? I have of course been away so long now that the readership of *The Corfiot* may well have altered to such an extent that there are actually people looking at this page and wondering who the hell is this person called Auntie Nora...

Without going into too many personal and possibly incriminating details, let's just say for the newer readers that I am probably Corfu's oldest living travel employee. Years under the yoke of tourism have wrought their worst and I don't get out and about as much as I used to. Gone are the wild old days - no more Greek Nights (oh, the joy of swabbing out the coach at the end of the night!), no more night transfers - I almost forgot what people looked like in daylight; it was a shock to realize their skin was not really neon green or sodium pink - no more sweating in polyester at the airport. The Company (whichever one it is that currently employs me, it does get confusing with all these takeovers) has taken pity on me or, more likely, could only really get rid of me on Health and Safety grounds, so I am set up for now with a smart desk, an ergonomically correct but hellishly uncomfortable chair, a handed-down computer, a potted plant, a waste paper basket even though the office is supposed to be both paper-free and to recycle. I sit in a neat little office with a view of some trees and I have the great pleasure of answering complaints letters all day long.

Actually, I think I might have died and gone to Hell, because there can surely be no worse punishment than this job.

How do you answer someone who writes that he wants full compensation because no-one told him it was going to be so hot? Please.

Any day soon I shall break down and reply as I really feel - and then I fear I shall become the former oldest living travel employee.

Still, that's in the future, in a couple of months or so, because at this time of the year tourism in Corfu is non-existent and most travel employees are swanning about in the Caribbean, in Thailand or the Maldives, Malta and Cyprus, swishing up and down alps in Switzerland, or line-dancing on cruise ships with bejeweled divorcees. That is unless there is something to keep you in Corfu. In my case, the latter applies.

What keeps me in Corfu in winter?

Laziness chiefly, plus numerous cats to feed, and an on-going battle with mould - if I went away for a weekend, let alone a couple of months, I would come back to a bedroom looking hideously kinky, to quote a book title, with black furry walls where unspeakable things lurk in the cupboards.

But there are compensating factors. Where else in late December, for example, would you be able to spend most of the daylight

hours sitting at a café table enjoying your pick of designer coffees, a never-ending fashion show, friends dropping by to join you, and with all the gossip you could imagine (or not) being passed on and even created all round you? Not to mention the attentive sales people who bring their wares right to your table - CDs and DVDs and designer lighters come to mind.

There are café enclaves all over the town, but none of them can compare with the cachet of the Liston. Over the years, a few things have changed, chiefly the chairs and the waiters. Otherwise the atmosphere is much the same as it always was.

At the Coffinetta end of the Liston, it is mostly older people who gather, and sales of Greek coffee are high. Few of the patrons at this end can be bothered to pronounce the foreign names of the new types of coffee and are faithful to tradition anyway. Ouzo and tsipouro are popular, along with tapas-like mezedes. It's winter, and scarves are worn, plus overcoats and even hats, which is so old-fashioned it's revolutionary!

As you stroll further south along the Liston, you seem to pass through one of those wibbly-wobbly transparent walls that feature so heavily in fantasy films. This is largely composed of testosterone and pheromones and once breached, thrusts you into the 'younger' end of the Liston area, where much flesh is bared even in winter and while gossip is still popular it is frequently interrupted by smouldering glances and incessant cigarette-lighting. It is hard to negotiate the tables without tripping over boutique bags, and sunglasses are de rigueur. In this section of the Liston, the waiters are young too and in their black outfits scarcely distinguishable from the customers. What is more, women over forty are invisible to the waiters. On the whole, men are thin on the ground; they spend their winter mornings in banks.

I love it - where else would you want to be in winter? All life is here: alliances are forged, marriages dissected, reputations ruined and transactions made.

And all for the price, albeit exorbitant but thoroughly worthwhile, of a coffee or two.

See you there my dears!

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TRUE STORY

OUZO!

✍️ *Lionel Mann*

During my first years in New Zealand I lived free of charge in a comfortable apartment with a glorious view over Wellington in return for teaching English for two or three hours daily to three Greek boys who had been falling behind at school because they spoke only their native language at home.

Their father, Vasili Papageorgiou, had been Chief Engineer of a tanker torpedoed in the Atlantic during the Second World War. By a chance in a million he escaped from the flaming inferno and was rescued. He signed on to another ship, but by the time it reached Auckland he was a nervous wreck and was hospitalised. He liked New Zealand so much that he stayed and after the war brought out his wife and many relations, opened a chain of Greek restaurants and later diversified into real estate. When I arrived in 1965 Vasili was a millionaire, leader of a large Greek community, a Justice of the Peace, had built the Greek Orthodox Church in Wellington and brought out a priest for it, yet still lived in a terraced house in a rather run-down quarter of the city. I had an apartment next door.

As well as sending my evening meals so that I might have more time for teaching their sons, the boys' parents invited me every Sunday to lunch with them. Their Orthodox Church service was held earlier than our Anglican one so Vasili always greeted me at his door when I arrived and handed me a glass of Scotch, until one Sunday: "Today special - Greek Easter. Try." The glass contained a clear liquid and he checked me as I made to drink. "Wait." He added water and the liquid turned milky. "You like?"

I liked - and was given a second glass. The following meal was the most uncomfortable that I have ever eaten; I was trying hard not to fall off my chair!

Vasili visited every Greek ship that tied up at Wellington and always came ashore with bottles clinking in every pocket. He gave me a bottle of ouzo, but I usually drink only a glass of wine with my evening meal so the bottle stayed for months untouched in my sideboard.

Then one morning I awoke with a terrible cold and that evening I was giving my monthly organ recital at the church. Unless on the point of death a musician never cancels a concert; you risk losing your regular audience. I never take drugs and I had no whisky. Try the ouzo. Every half hour I sipped a centimetre of ouzo from a tiny medicine glass.

By midday I felt absolutely great, got up, cooked and ate breakfast and then the lunch sent down from next door. Following a three-hour practice that afternoon I gave one of the best concerts of my life that evening. The critics thought so too!

Ever since then, even back in the UK, I have always had a bottle of ouzo in the house - just in case! At the slightest suspicion of indisposition a little dose of ouzo quickly puts things right. To my mind it is by far the greatest of Greek contributions to civilisation.

There was a sequel to that experience. Some time later I was giving another of my monthly recitals, on this occasion with three of my boy choristers singing Mendelssohn and Brahms trios as part of the programme.

On the morning of the concert twelve-year-old Glenn phoned me. "Sir, I shan't be able to sing tonight; I have a terrible cold, and so has Dean." (Eleven-year-old brother and another of the trio.)

"Glenn, ask your father if he has any ouzo."

A short wait then, "No, sir, he hasn't any."

"Ask him if he has any Scotch - whisky."

Another pause, then, "Yes, he has."

"All right. Both of you, try a sip of it every half-hour."

That evening the three boys received a standing ovation from the packed pews and crowned everything by singing in unison the 'Alleluia' from Mozart's 'Exsultate, Jubilate' as an encore, complete with its glorious penultimate top C that bid fair to shatter the windows and 'brought the house down'.

"I've a mind to send you in a bill for all the Scotch that I've poured into those boys of mine today." Glenn's and Dean's father and I had quite a laugh afterwards.

There was another much later sequel. One of the three Greek boys I had been teaching, Angelos, went on to become a very successful lawyer with a practice in Wellington. When I arrived he was a desperately shy ten-year-old and bottom of his class; when I left three years later he was confidently top of the class and Head Boy of the school. (Spiros, the eldest, became an accountant; Tassos, the youngest, went to medical school, but died young.)

Only a year ago Angelos was sent by the New Zealand Government to Crete to interview anyone who had witnessed the invasion by the German airborne forces in May 1941. The attack had been opposed mainly by New Zealand troops and eyewitness accounts were needed while there were still those alive who had seen the fighting. Many of the defenders were either killed or captured; only few escaped, but they inflicted such severe losses upon their opponents that those airborne troops were never again a serious threat.

Angelos detoured via Corfu especially to see me before returning home. I had not seen him since he was aged thirteen so I did not recognise him - but he recognised me. We spent a great day while I showed him around Town, exchanging hilarious reminiscences, particularly of playing 'mini-cricket' in their backyard, to the horror of the neighbours!

WE ARE THE GUESTS

Robert Sherratt's January letter was horrifying in its display of the monumental arrogance and abysmal ignorance that have made English-speaking nations so widely despised and hated. Please, Robert and others, remember that we are guests on this beautiful island. How would you react to an uninvited intruder bursting into your home and criticising your décor, appointments and household management?

Personally I should immediately propel out the ill-mannered lout with the toe of my boot!

Certainly there are many differences between Corfu and Great Britain, but at least some of us 'ex-pats' are here because we prefer greatly the Corfiot life-style, and we bitterly resent attempts to 'colonize' Corfu, to turn it into Little Britain. If people want Sainsbury's round the corner, a burger-bar next door, a bingo-hall in the next street and a disco down the road they should go elsewhere. If you don't like what you see here then get out. Stop whingeing.

When I retired I moved into an apartment in a sleepy little country town. Within a month it had been burgled. At the suggestion of the local authority I moved again into 'Sheltered Accommodation for the Elderly' with electronic protection, alarm cords in every room, instant press-button communication with the Warden and Security, and advice: 'You shouldn't go out at night; you'll be mugged.' This was in a prosperous large town in an agricultural region, not one of the savage run-down massive conurbations left by the demise of British industry. I bore with that for a few months and then went to a travel agent. 'Anywhere around the Med?' 'There's a tour leaving for Corfu next week.' Here I am not shut away, segregated, despised, as are the elderly in 'civilized' Britain that also seeks to reduce them to abject poverty in order to finance its wildcat military adventures. In Agios Ioannis I needed first of all to allay the suspicion attached to any British immigrant as a result of the ignorant, arrogant, indolent, incompetent drunkards who, unable to make a living elsewhere, try to foist themselves upon

the unsuspecting Corfiots, and have given us a very bad name. (Clifford wisely did not include those in his highly-entertaining January 'chat'.) Now I am one of the village, greeted by young and old. I join in their fun, mourn with them, share their concerns. Together with the other elderly as well as the very young I can walk around in absolute safety at any hour of the day or night. If I forget to lock my door I need not worry; nobody else bothers either. (That is how it was in Hampton in the fifties. How greatly has Britain deteriorated in a half-century!) My nearest relatives are in Canada, but in Corfu I have 'family'. I know that if I have difficulty there will be many around to help me. The Corfiots have a great reputation for friendliness. Let's keep Corfu that way. We do not want foreign 'improvements' imposed here, as seen today in its ugliest forms in Afghanistan and Iraq.

To respond specifically to Robert's complaints:

(a) There are direct flights from the UK for our Easter in April. It is doubtful that there is adequate demand to justify anything earlier (Written before the easyJet announcement - Ed.).

(b) Man (one n) has always been a hunter and always will be. I do not particularly like the shooting of little birds either, but those guns are not being used to slaughter indiscriminately innocent Iraqi and Afghan men, women and children, are they?

(c) Since I started keeping pet cats about six years ago I have lost count of the number that have been killed, at least twenty. It distresses me greatly, but I remember that in their poverty Greeks had little or no use for any animal that did not earn its keep, a severely practical approach. Their ethos is entirely different from ours and, living in Greece, I respect their way of life. What right have I to try to change it?

(d) As soon as British street signs are duplicated in Urdu or Polish we shall have the right to ask that signs here should be duplicated in English - actually many are. If you come to live or visit here take the trouble to learn at least enough of the language for daily use. The semi-literate English-speakers are

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LETTERS

notoriously lazy when it comes to learning languages.

(e) Corfu is by no means alone in having difficulty in disposing of refuse; it has become almost a world-wide problem. Our local authority is more-or-less managing to cope. At least we generally have a daily refuse collection as opposed to a weekly one in Britain.

Consider that for more than two thousand years until the British left in 1864 the Corfiots had always been ruled by occupying powers who made little if any effort to educate the residents. Corfiots have had only a relatively very short time in which to learn to govern themselves and are not doing at all badly. Insensitive, ignorant criticism is at the best unhelpful, at the worst flagrantly insolent, and tarnishes even further the already suspect reputation of British immigrants. Anyway, life here is vastly superior to that in the over-regulated yet greed-driven, crime-stricken, violence-worshipping, drug-sodden, booze-swilling, pollution-plagued, barbaric UK. Accept beautiful, tranquil Corfu for what it is - faults and all. I love Corfu.

Dr. Lionel Mann, Agios Ioannis

NO RIGHT TO CHANGE A CULTURE

I am not usually given to writing to magazines, but I feel that I must reply to the letter from Mr Sherratt, printed in the January issue of *The Corfiot*.

First and foremost, Mr Sherratt must realise that WE are the foreigners here and what gives us the right to try and change a long established culture? The hunters who shoot the birds also take them home and eat them. This is no different to the grouse and pheasant shoots in England, and it is not a criminal offence there, so why should it be here?

With regard to the neutering of stray animals, is Mr Sherratt willing to fund this action at a cost of some 70 euros per animal? There is no government funding in England for the mass neutering of strays, in fact organisations such as RSPCA and PDSA receive no government funding whatsoever. I myself have a dog (neutered) and would be perfectly happy to buy a license as I did in UK, but I fear that this would lead to even more strays if license legislation were to be introduced here.

Mr Sherratt doesn't say where he lived prior to moving to Corfu, but may I ask if the signposts in his locale were in French, Polish, Russian, Urdu etc - I think not! And as a former employee of Yorkshire Electricity I can assure him that bills were not sent out in different languages. As for civil servants speaking English, does he then expect Germans, Dutch, Scandinavians etc to learn English also? The simple answer, Mr Sherratt, is to learn Greek as I am trying to do.

I think it a shame that you came here and are now trying to change an ancient culture with its own traditions into something that, presumably, you wanted to escape from. I would suggest therefore that you catch the first available flight back to where you came from, and please, Mr Sherratt, take all the other whinging ex-pats with you. Corfu may not be perfect, but its culture, traditions, people, and the beauty of the Island is why I came to live here, and I love it, warts and all.

Allan Harrison, Prinilas

NOT QUALIFIED TO CRITICIZE

With regard to Robert Sherratt's letter last month 'The Things that Matter in Corfu - Or do they?', I feel that a few months as a resident and some holidays hardly qualifies the writer to direct accusations of indifference by the authorities and denunciations of the tolerance of the population of activities that he personally finds distasteful. While some readers might sympathize with his propositions and aversions, Mr Sherratt's admonishments smack of arrogant old-colonial-style 'we know better than the natives' morality.

To address his moans specifically:

a) If Mr Sherratt was involved at all in the 'real' life of Corfu, rather than being a member of an ex-pat clique, he might learn that a large number of people at various levels of 'authority', far from being indifferent, are working unpaid behind the scenes to promote tourism and improve the island's infrastructure.

b) While few of us like the hunting of small birds, Mr Sherratt should understand that this activity was until recently a way of life, and a necessary food supplement in not-long-gone days of poverty. What right does he, a recent incomer, have to tell them not to? And if he had been here a few years (or a few decades) instead of just a few months, he might be aware that hunting is by no means as prevalent as it was in the past.

c) Poisoning of animals is illegal and subject to a prison sentence. The law decrees that dogs must be registered and chipped, which is more than it does in Mr Sherratt's 'civilized' UK. Several animal welfare charities and individuals do their best to neuter strays (in the UK, similar efforts are mostly undertaken by the private and charitable sector, not by government). Again, Mr Sherratt displays his ignorance and prejudices.

d) I recently paid a visit to the tax office, where the two delightfully helpful young civil servants spoke excellent English. But why should they have to? Why should bills be issued in English? What about Germans, Dutch, Albanians, Bulgarians and those from other countries? Don't they have the right to have bills issued in their languages too? And correct me if I'm wrong, but aren't ALL our road signs in English? In the UK, foreign incomers have to get by in English. As a foreign incomer to Greece, I suggest that Mr Sherratt learns Greek.

e) I believe that many UK local authorities have reduced rubbish collection to once every two weeks. Here, the rubbish truck passes every two days. Until 20 years or so ago (at a time when Mr Sherratt probably hadn't even heard of Corfu), there was NO rubbish collection; people buried their waste, or threw it in gullies. It seems that our uncivilized island is moving forward, whilst the civilized UK is regressing. (Just for the record, last year's problems were due to a picket at the main landfill site.)

To conclude, I suggest Mr Sherratt goes back to the UK and puts his energies into civilizing that savage and uncouth place.

Name and address withheld on request

'IRISH' BOUZOUKI MEMORIES

I much enjoyed Pete Button's January feature on the bouzouki. In particular, his explanation of the 'Irish' bouzouki tapped a memory.

In the early 1970s I was book publicist for the noble house of Cassell, also using my evenings to skulk with guitar around London's folk clubs. The two worlds collided when it came my turn to whip up pre-publication press coverage for Peter Kennedy's formidable collection of 'Folksongs of Britain and Ireland.' The obvious venue was the English Folk Dance and Song Society up in posh Regent's Park Road but, as Kennedy gloomily observed, the more publicisable performers would regard it as tantamount to trogging all the way out to Heathrow.

As it was, many were only too happy to clamber aboard the Cassell charabanc and drink free wine as they gazed in wonder on Yours Truly dancing attendance in bespoke tailoring complete with heirloom bling of lucky coral tie-pin and monogrammed cufflinks. Among the 'names' who'd generously agreed to play was John Pearse, still known for the excellence of the guitar strings that carry his name. That evening he was carrying a hybrid instrument of only slightly arched back that he described as a bouzouki but which I instantly saw through and derided with all the authority and arrogance of an ignoramus just back from his first holiday in Greece. I was put in my place.

So London legend goes, the first 'Irish' bouzouki was actually built for Pearse under circumstances that gain in romance and unlikelihood with each telling. John used to teach guitar in the very venue we were toasting Kennedy's new book and had been obsessed with Greek music, which he played on a cheap instrument picked up somewhere in the Aegean.

One night it took a biffing in a fight and John took it to luthier John Bailey who, unable to replicate the bowl-back, offered to try a replacement. Pearse lent him a cittern as model for the body. When John started gigging on his new 'fake' bouzouki, the sound wasn't 'rough' enough for 'rembetica' so he got himself a genuine Greek instrument and draped Bailey's creation on the wall for ethnic décor.

Time went by until one impromptu hootenanny, Irish player Johnny Moynihan of 'Sweeney's Men' plucked the Bailey from the wall and so liked it that at evening's end Pearse made a gift of it.

Back in Ireland, others heard, admired and craved Moynihan's flat-back 'Bailey' and sent orders for their own. Thus did word and imitation spread.

Thanks to Pete and The Corfiot for this plunk down Memory Lane.

Chris Holmes, Gouvía

THANKS FOR POPPY APPEAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Dear Lucy

It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge receipt of your Statement of Accounts and splendid cheque in the amount of 1,276.99 representing the total amount collected in aid of our Poppy Appeal 2007 in Corfu.

May I say we are indeed most grateful to you all.

Congratulations on yet again an increased collection, we are truly delighted with the result.

I do assure you all once again, that this contribution will assist us greatly in continuing our work for the ex-Service community and their dependants who may be in need, and it is only with the support of such good friends that we are able to continue our work.

In closing, may I also take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year.

Carole Vizard
Overseas Development Officer
For Head of Poppy Appeal
The Royal British Legion, UK



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EMPLOYMENT

ELECTRICIAN English 16th Edition qualified, all work undertaken from new builds to extra sockets. Call for a free estimate. Carl Perrin 6976 333688

WORK WANTED Reliable, enthusiastic, 27 year old Englishman seeks employment in Corfu. Years of experience in the tourism and hospitality sector, excellent customer care skills. References available on request. Please contact Liam Machell. Tel: 6947 496231 or email liammachell@yahoo.co.uk

ENGLISH/GREEK COUPLE recently returned from the UK seeking employment as villa caretakers or similar. Long experience and excellent references available from similar position in the UK. Tel. 6973 825449 email: stavkli@hotmail.com

PERSONAL

ARTIST SEEKS EXHIBITION SPACE in offices, restaurants, bars to display work. Bright, colourful designs and semi abstract work. Please visit

www.liammachellart.co.uk to see examples of my work or contact Liam Machell. Tel: 6947 496231 or email liammachell@yahoo.co.uk

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.

RENTALS

AGRAPI Newly renovated large village house, 4 bedrooms, huge reception areas. Sun terrace with great view. CH. Parking outside. 1000 euro pm. Call 6948 889174
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WINTER LETS AT CASA LUCIA Fully furnished and equipped cottages with central heating at low winter rentals. Beautiful gardens, village shop, bus stop 5 mins walk. 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

Small ads (for sale and offers categories) are only accepted if paid for in advance. Copy BY EMAIL ONLY. No attachments and no caps. 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.

Signs It's Time To Redesign Your Website

Eventually you'll have to make some changes to your website. Some of these changes can be accomplished with simple maintenance and by making updates to your site. But there's only so far that patching and revising your current site can go. If your site is particularly outdated, or if it's not working well for you, it's probably time to consider a full-scale site redesign. Here are some signs that it's time to redesign your site:

YOUR BUSINESS HAS CHANGED OR GROWN If your business is no longer the same as it was when you designed your site, chances are that you should redesign your website to reflect that. If you've only had a few small changes, you might be able to just update your current website. But, if you've changed your business direction, decided to provide new products or services, or if your company has grown significantly, it will pay off to redesign your site. Reconsider how the changes to your business should be reflected or addressed in the structure, design and strategy behind your website.

YOUR SITE LOOKS AS IF IT WAS DESIGNED IN 1995 Some signs of an outdated web site include: chunky, slow-loading graphics; old-style "framed" coding, where the site is divided up into panes that load separately; animated cartoon clip-art throughout the site; text created as images instead of in HTML. Having any of these on your site could reflect poorly on your business, making you look behind the times. It can also make you look like you don't care enough about your business or about technological advances to keep abreast of them. Keeping your company's website looking modern will improve its credibility.

THE INFORMATION ON YOUR SITE ISN'T USER FRIENDLY If you cringe when you read your site text, or if you regularly get questions on your site text from visitors, restructuring your copy or rewriting it can help to fix these problems. If you've been adding to your site over time and the navigation has become unwieldy or confusing, restructuring your navigation could be another pressing reason to redesign your site. You want visitors to be able to easily find their way around your site and to be able to access all the information you have within a few clicks. Laying out your site to make that possible can make your visitor's experience on your site a lot easier.

YOU APOLOGISE FOR THE SITE WHEN REFERRING TO IT OR HANDING OUT YOUR BUSINESS CARDS Your site should be a source of pride. It should provide your clients and prospects an easy way to get a lot of information about your business. And, if you have to apologise for out-of-date information, broken images, poor design, difficult navigation or anything else on your site, it makes you look unprepared and unprofessional. Make sure your site is in top shape and looks impressive, so your clients believe your business is in good shape too.

YOU'RE NOT GETTING GOOD RESULTS ON THE SEARCH ENGINES Poor rankings in the Search Engines can be a result of not optimising your site well. Poor search engine ranking can also be a result of bad design choices or coding on your site. Make sure that your site isn't designed using frames and that the text is coded in HTML. Flash sites are also more difficult to optimise for Search Engines.

IT'S NOT BRINGING IN ENQUIRIES AND HELPING YOU TO MAKE SALES If your site was designed long ago, then there's a good chance that it was designed just to act as an online brochure. This was very common a few years ago, when websites were new. But recently businesses have realised that a website can do a lot more than just impersonate your brochure - it can help you close sales, bring in new prospects and make your business easier to run. By redesigning your site to include the latest e-commerce applications, you can bring in more enquiries and make more sales.

YOUR SITE IS DIFFICULT TO UPDATE If your site is difficult to keep updated it might be time to consider a whole site redesign. Make a list of everything that you want to do on your site and consult a web designer about redesigning your site with those changes in mind. Often, if you have extensive changes to make to your site, it can be less expensive to just start again. If your site is designed in Flash, redesigning and recoding your site could improve its functionality.

If your website suffers from these problems and needs a new look, then maybe it's time you spoke to Truetype Web Solutions. Our speciality is designing and optimising cheap, but highly efficient websites. Our websites are consistently in the Google's top ten results for their chosen keyword or phrase. We are proud of our close personal relationship with all our clients and we are always happy to update your web pages to reflect any changes in your business. At Truetype Web Solutions we offer free website analysis and consultation. Why not contact us today to discuss refreshing your website? For more information about the other services we offer and a portfolio of some of our latest work, visit our recently redesigned corporate website at www.truetype2000.com.

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New This Month:

ANALYPSIS - IPSOS (Central) Analysis House (Modern) Lovely country location a few minutes from beach - two floor house with basement, small outside space and all-round balconies. Needs modernization but habitable with a good scrub. 59,000 euro (pictured right)



PEROULADES (North West) Kardaki Orchard House (Modern) Small two bedroom house with extensive outbuildings. Only kitchen/bathroom upgrading required. Large plot with 45 olives and lots of fruit trees - could make olive farm. 175,000 euro

AVLIOTES (North West) Sea View Cottage (Modern) Rare find in Avliotes - immaculate two bedroom house with great sea view. Two covered patios and large sun terrace. 135,000 euro

GOUVIA (Central) Villa Julie (Modern) Lovely villa in very convenient country location. Two bedrooms, lots of patio space, garden, shared pool. 275,000 euro (pictured right)



VATOS (Central) Vatos Valley View House (Modern) Brand new apartment, ground floor of two storey traditionally-built house. Two bedrooms, two bathrooms, large living area, huge terrace garden with to-die-for view. Very tasteful. 150,000 euro

GIANNADES (Central) Giannades View House (Traditional - in need of renovation) Beautiful large old house in traditional village with lots of facilities. Small garden, road close, fantastic view of Ropa Valley and beyond. Very sound - mostly internal renovation. 150,000 euro (pictured right)



GIANNADES (Central) Giannades Garden Cottage (Traditional - in need of renovation) Little two-floor cottage with balcony. Comes with large adjoining plot, currently built with shacks - can build new house or create nice garden. Great View. 55,000 euro

LOUTSES (North) Kannavidis Mansion (Traditional - in need of renovation) Prestigious mansion, nearly 400 years old, for large family home, and/or redevelopment for resale or rental. Lovely traditional architecture and many original features. Large additional plot in Town Planning available as extra - can build 1,100 square metres as individual houses. Generous renovation grant available for main house. 350,000 euro (pictured right)



ARILLAS (North West) Villa Joanna (Modern) Immaculate and ready to live in or rent out - a great business prospect in lovely North West resort. Sleeps 7-10, including annex accommodation for owners if desired. 100 metres from beach with sea view, near facilities but quiet. For sale fully furnished and equipped. 450,000 euro

NEAR KASSIOPI (North East) Kariotiko Cottage (Traditional - in need of renovation) Two adjoining cottages selling as one unit in inland North East Coast hamlet near Kassiopei. Lots of potential for imaginative restoration. Small garden, parking. 100,000 euro

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LYRA HOUSE, Ano Korakiana. Imaginatively restored two bedroom house with separate guest studio and roof terrace with sea view. 150,000 euro



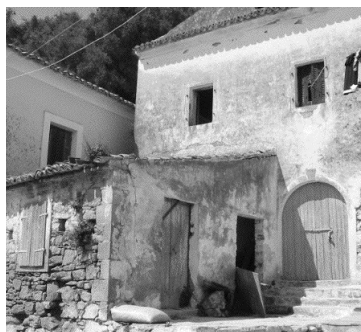
HAPPY KITCHEN HOUSE, Ano Korakiana. Magnificent renovated house with delightful kitchen. Full of traditional character throughout. Unfinished basement studio, walled courtyard, road access close. 170,000 euro



PORPHYRAS MANSION, Katavolos. Rare mansion on North East Coast, with extensive accommodation, 4000 sq.m. grounds and fantastic sea view. Affordable at 450,000 euro

Gastouri Office Tel. 6948 889174 / 6948 180198

SPRING MEADOW HOUSES, Agnos. 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



HOUSE WITH THE BLUE DOOR, Kato Garouna. Substantial old house for renovation in picturesque village. Potential for three spacious bedrooms, large lounge and kitchen, and yard and sun terrace. Parking and nice view. 60,000 euro

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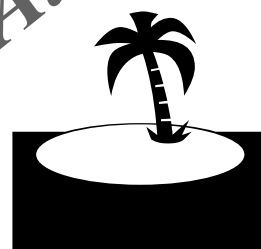
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