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The Agiot

164th Edition

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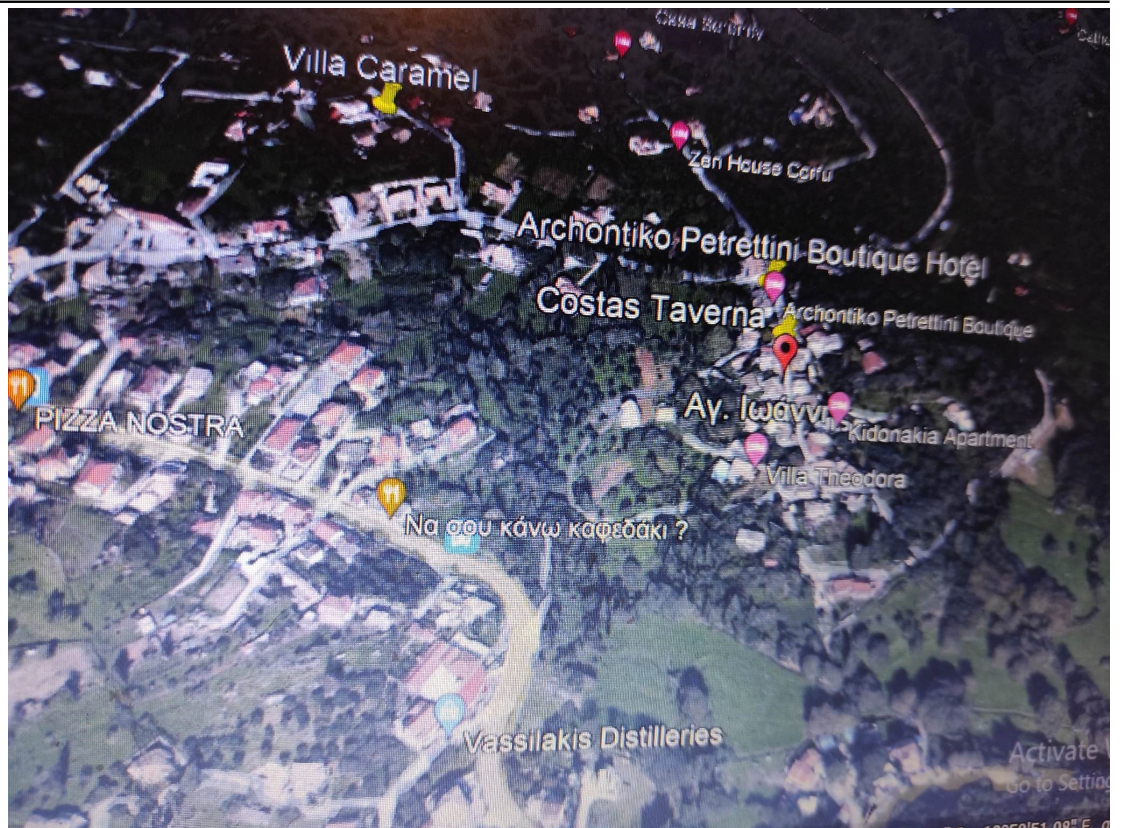
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ALL OUR YESTERDAY'S

HERE WE GO DOWN MEMORY LANE, TO THE VERY FIRST AGIOT
FROM AUGUST OF 2007.

Calling all Agiots!

By Paul McGovern
Editor

Welcome to the first of what we hope will be many monthly newsletters pertaining to our wonderful village of Agios Ioannis, Corfu, its people, its visitors, its animals, its history past and present. Many of you reading this will know of this

strange and beautiful place; the land that time forgot.

For the uninitiated let me explain where we are, approximately five miles west of Corfu airport on the road to Paleokastritsa, set on gently rolling hills amongst the groves of olives, lies this acupuncture point upon the earth's surface,

a village of some five hundred or more souls, centred upon a plateau which hosts a taverna, a family hotel, a small bandstand and a children's play-area. Plane and olive trees stand here, larger trees beyond.

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Calling all Agiots! -

Continued from page 1

Explaining who we are is a bit more difficult. This is a predictably unpredictable place, a melting pot, a crucible; call it what you will. A place, in short, hard to describe when it comes to it, for it surely must mean so many things to the many different people who have sat around the plateia on balmy summer nights, sipping taverna-made wine, eating Greek food al fresco, conversing sometimes long into the night.

There is, of course, more to Agios Ioannis than its plateia as surely there is more to the human body than merely the heart, but there you have it. This centre, this small square with its various comings and goings, is the heart. A newer village has evolved less than a kilometer away, an area called Bey by the natives. It straddles the main road on both sides for several hundred metres, poking fingers of habitation off into the groves. It is newer, brasher, more dynamic. It has bars, etc. etc. It is the body, the arms, the legs. Where is the brain, I'm

wondering? The people who live hereabouts lead their daily lives as people do. Some rarely venture into the heart; others come regularly. Most come in June to the Panegyri, the village festival, which nowadays covers the 23rd and 24th June, and for some people longer. The old church lies just off the plateia and so is the natural magnet. The plateia is also a natural venue for meetings political, or just meetings. And so, sooner or later, are all people sucked towards this plughole. It's a very nice plughole, mind.

The Agiot Online

By Peter H.
Contributing Editor

July 24th saw the AGIOT go live online at:
<http://www.theagiot.net>.

We have created this online venue for all those interested in the village and its people; both past and present. Come and join in, upload some photos, have a

chat or maybe share some gossip. We would love to see you there

Village News

By Dr.Lionel Mann
Contributing Editor

Corfu basks in a heat-wave. Temperatures in July have been consistently in the 30s and reached the low 40s on some days.. Athens has peaked at 45. Brush fires are always a risk at this time of year, but so far we've been spared anything serious. In previous years we've not been so lucky; disastrous fires have been fought by plane, fire-engine, bulldozer, ditch, hose and flannel. This year our two little "fireplanes" have been augmented by a large amphibian to dump water on fires.

The holiday season is in full swing and in addition to visitors

from every corner of the U.K. we have welcomed guests from Germany, Austria, Holland, Italy, Belgium and Denmark. The local taverna has been graced by new marble-topped tables and Kosta, mine host, who underwent an operation on his knee last year, has now fully recovered and was dancing at a recent birthday party.

Additional street lights have been provided around the village, but Nikki still complains of needing to set a candle in the window to guide her home at night. She bought a torch from Nick at a Sunday Table Sale; dropping it has not improved its efficiency. The ageing denizens of the plateia, Mom and Sandy, have

been joined by newcomers Alfie and Loulou. Every passing motor vehicle now runs the gauntlet. Apart from the religious observances, the annual panegyrie was cancelled owing to the tragic death of the 21-year-old son of our plumber in a car accident.

Typically some main roads in Town are being dug up, adding to the usual traffic chaos. Every shopping trip is a new adventure! However water and electricity cuts have become more rare - fingers crossed!

Upcoming

By Paul McGovern
Editor

In September we shall have a stand at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, "A Place in the Sun" Exhibition from September 28th to 30th inclusive. We very much look forward to seeing old friends and new acquaintances during this period. Everybody will be welcome at Stand Q96 where we hope to greet you with our usual hospitality. Refreshments may well be served, so be warned!

We hope that our exhibition will be a window into our Corfu world for you. Whether you are

interested in living here for part of the year, all the year, or eventually retiring here, you may well find opportunities to tempt you. Your main host will be Trevor, who looks after things for us in the U.K., amply assisted by Pimpnel Pete, who is mostly on hand to make sure that Trevor doesn't blow himself—and many others—up. Lula will also be on hand to answer any of those questions pertaining to our old friends Greek Tax and Greek Law. Young Pete will be there too to charm the young ladies whilst old Paul will be present to charm the old ladies.

We are really looking forward to this venture and hoping to gain

some new customers into the bargain. There are lots of properties and some land to entice you. We say some land because we love this island and, although we realize that some development is necessary, at the same time we don't want the island to become a concrete jungle; it's nice as a green jungle.

If you want to prebook tickets for this extravaganza please go to: www.aplaceinthesunlive.com/ and find Booking Info under the Visitors section of the menu, or telephone: 0870 3528888.

The Big Bang

By Dr Lionel Mann



I wonder if today's schoolchildren realize of how much fun, adventure and learning they are being deprived by the current insistence upon over-regulation, feather-bedding, egalitarianism, "freedom" and litigation, "Perry Mason claims". Remembering how we used to race around the streets, the heath and woodland on our bicycles

without any protective wear, at the expense of grazed knees, noses and elbows; climb trees or anything else that offered a challenge; play cricket and hockey with no padding; in the light of today's thinking it is amazing that any of us lived to become eighteen let alone nearly eighty.

I have recently discovered that many of my school-fellows have also reached impressive ages. At Grammar School even we Classics pupils worked in pairs in Science laboratories at benches equipped with sinks and Bunsen burners, taught to handle razor-sharp and needle-pointed instruments, toxic chemicals, highly corrosive acids, and a wide range of apparatus. In

the woodwork and metalwork shops we used chisels, files, drills, lathes without any protective clothing save an apron and goggles and gloves when at a lathe or soldering and welding. True, we obeyed our teachers, for the cane, birch or expulsion were powerful deterrent of disobedience, but also we were desperate to gain university entrance in an age when such was an eagerly-sought, hard-earned privilege not a cheap "right". Moreover, we respected our teachers for their erudition together with their obvious utter devotion to our welfare and learning. Learning under such conditions was fun and adventure.

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*The Big Bang -
Continued from page 3*

On the Classics side we received eighty-minute lessons weekly each of Biology, Physics and Chemistry. Our Science brethren received forty minutes extra weekly of each subject but were deprived of the delight of learning Latin for equivalent time.

One never-to-be-forgotten morning our Chemistry master set up an apparatus for producing hydrogen and another to produce oxygen. We watched as he filled an old sturdy elliptical fizzy-lemonade bottle with two-thirds of the first, one-third of the second. Then he banished all thirty of us to the far end of the laboratory while he donned protective clothing. Holding the bottle at arm's length out of the window, he removed the stopper and plunged a lighted taper inside, resulting in a very satisfactory explosion. "That's the oxygen-hydrogen explosion, almost certainly how the water, H-two-O, on the earth was formed in the Big Bang that started the universe."

That started me thinking: air contains oxygen and the coal gas then piped into most homes contained hydrogen; how to bring them together without reducing No.1 Heath Road to a pile of rubble? Because mother had left us and father was away supervising building airfields for the Ministry of Works I was living with my grandparents. One Saturday afternoon when both, as well as Aunt Louise and Uncle Lionel, were out I scavenged an empty cocoa tin from the dustbin and knocked a nail-hole in its base. With a finger over the hole I held it inverted over a ring of the gas-

stove in the kitchen and turned on the gas for about five seconds to fill the tin by upward displacement, coal gas being lighter than air. Placing the tin, still inverted, upon the stone floor but slightly tilted with a matchstick under the rim, I withdrew my finger and applied a previously lighted taper to the hole. Pop! The tin fell on its side. It worked! Next time I tried ten seconds of gas, resulting in an even louder POP and the tin jumping about a foot into the air. Emboldened I went for the big time and tried thirty seconds of gas. To my surprise when I applied the taper a small tongue of flame ignited from the hole. As I watched the flame diminished until it was merely a flicker and I was about to pick up the tin when, with a very satisfying BANG, it shot up and made a circular indentation in the ceiling. Inspecting the tin I saw a few droplets of moisture inside it - water! Again I filled for thirty seconds, slid a piece of card beneath the tin and took it outside the back door. Once more applying the taper produced a steadily reducing tongue of flame and I realized that it was simply excess gas burning away until the critical two-to-one proportion of gas to air was reached. The resulting explosion sent the tin up to the height of the bedroom windows. That was enough for one session. I just hoped that nobody would notice the circle on the kitchen ceiling and was virtuously playing the piano when grandparents returned. "Lionel, can you smell gas?" Grandmother's anxious query. I sniffed. "No, I think it's grandfather's cigars." The old boy practically chain-smoked mini-cigars that permeated

the entire house with a rather pleasant aroma. Grandmother was apparently satisfied and nobody ever mentioned the circular mark on the kitchen ceiling.

Whenever opportunity presented itself over the following months I graduated from cocoa tins, through powdered-egg tins, dried-milk tins (wartime "delicacies") and one-gallon paint-cans to two-gallon paint-cans. Until the war had conscripted his employees grandfather had run a building business; plenty of relics remained. It was a two-gallon can that led to my downfall. Grandparents and uncle were out and aunt was thought to be engrossed in her tapestry-work in the lounge at the far end of the big house. I was sending that can soaring above the rooftops. "Lionel, has the air-raid warning sounded?" Aunt Louise erupted from the back door. "No. Why?" A picture of innocence. "The windows rattled. What are you doing?" I tried unsuccessfully to enthruse my aunt to the sight of a can flying around the chimneys. Further "experiments" were forbidden. The way of a pioneer is always hard.

A few weeks earlier our school music master had been rushed to hospital with peritonitis. He was also organist-choirmaster of a suburban church locally renowned for its music. As they were wheeling him out to the ambulance he gasped, "Phone Mann. He'll play at St. Martin's tomorrow." Thus, at the tender age of twelve I became an organist and choirmaster of a choir of twenty-four boys, some older than I and many bigger.

Continued on page 5

*The Big Bang -
Continued from page 4*

They regarded me dubiously, but were determined to maintain their high standard and made sure that I learnt my job quickly. Certainly, our standing-room-only congregations at choral services did not diminish. It was a custom at St. Martin's that after Evensong on the first Sunday of every month each church organization in turn would give an entertainment in the church hall. Before long it became the turn of the choir. Naturally we should sing a song or two, but the boys also wanted to stage a play, rather prophetically about blowing up Hitler. I declined an acting role; play-reading in school had shown that anything even remotely ludicrous reduced me to helpless giggles, unable to participate further. But they wanted an explosion; I undertook to provide that, citing long experience. It was right up my street!

Rather than to bring anything from home I prospected local resources. The door to the hall kitchen was right next to the stage and in the kitchen I discovered a gas-stove, a table and a five-gallon tea urn. It exceeded my greatest wishes; I fairly drooled at the thought of what I could do with such bounty. However, I refused to provide an advance demonstration. "Just time your script and tell me when you are ten minutes from explosion time." The producer-prompter stuck his head through the doorway and hissed, "Ten minutes." I already

had the urn, lid removed, still damp from having produced more than two hundred cups of tea, inverted over a ring on the stove. For five minutes I left the gas tap on, filling the urn. It was all very rule-of-thumb business, but by now I was fairly confident that I could judge these matters with reasonable accuracy. However when I had carefully lifted the urn on to the table, pencil under the rim to tilt it slightly, affording entry to air, and turned on the tap, now near the top and facing upward, I was amazed at the size of the two-foot tongue of flame that resulted when I lit the escaping gas. Anxiously watching the slowly diminishing flame I kept glancing at my watch. Had I guessed correctly? I heard the punch-line, cue for the explosion, and the prompter looked urgently through the door. The flame was now a mere flicker in the mouth of the tap and I nodded. The punch-line was repeated.

There was an almighty crash as the urn exploded. The bottom (now the top) peeled back as if by a massive can-opener; the tap shot off to imbed itself in the brick wall; two windows, protected against shattering by strips of transparent adhesive tape, vanished completely, frames and all; the entire audience, from experience of having been bombed, threw themselves face down on to the floor, hands covering backs of necks; the cast was paralytic with laughter. When the boys had recovered, they crammed into the kitchen. Their mouths moved but I could hear

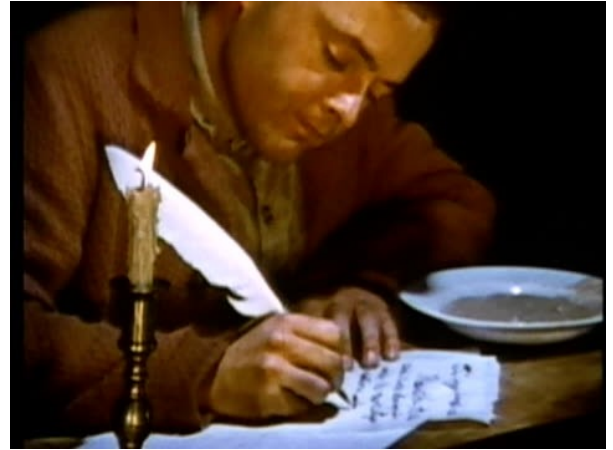
nothing, temporarily deafened. However, it was obvious that they had revised their opinion of me. I would suit them down to the ground. Very few choirs had mentors who made Guy Fawkes look a rank amateur.

Entry to my form-room at school the next morning was met by a howl of merriment and then a flood of questions. News had travelled fast; some of my choristers attended the same school as I. Later in the morning, moving along a corridor between lessons, I came face-to-face with the Chemistry master. He just pointed at me and roared with laughter. Already my hearing was almost back to normal. A new urn was purchased, the kitchen repaired, but I was not even reproved for my expensive sound-effects. After all the choir was largely responsible for the overflow attendances at St. Martin's and the resulting very sound parish finances.

Moreover, a couple of weeks later the churchwardens enjoyed a much wider reading than usual for their Annual Report by starting, "Our organist has demolished the church hall kitchen, using an explosive tea-urn."

This very first Edition had a total of just the six pages, originally, but as everything after Lionel's Big Bang was to do with Real Estate, those pages have not been regurgitated here.

Letters to the Editor



Dear Gentle Readers,

Pray forgiveness for trying a new style of Agiot for this new year.

The usual long -some may consider too long- Agiots will come out in April, July and October.

For the neglected months we will cheer them up by including old Editions, dating back to the magazine's inception in July 2007.

For Gentle Readers from the start you may be interested, sometimes amused, by the changes wrought since those early times, when Lionel sat next to me in the office and we used to churn out the Agiot in a single morning.

This first edition sees Lionel in his old-world and much-loved and remembered style.

This edition also shows our Resident Contributor Hilary, she is a main reason why the Agiot has continued and thrived so well. Occasionally, she takes a sharp pencil, and prods it in my ear, to ensure I am not sleeping, but composing.

For Newer Gentle Readers there will be the chance to obtain a little history.

The response to last month's article about Kostas Senior was quite overwhelming.

Thank all of you who wrote in. It is a big encouragement to continue this potted island tale into the future.

Below I have published a few of the many letters and will add more next month. I won't publish too many, as it may be construed as self-serving. And I'm working through replying to each of you who took the time and trouble to write in. Those replies will not appear here.

The Old Man has even impacted the Agiot which, by the way, he was aware of and encouraging about. He could not read it, but loved the pictorials.

In the short month of this February, as I type these lines, the reading figures for the month

stand at 971. I can imagine Lionel chortling away and saying, 'oh, we have such fun'.

Graeme Tickle, St. Helens.

Just read your obituary to Kostas, a beautiful piece. A truly wonderful man. We will truly miss him, he was Agios Ioannis. RIP The King x

Margaret Chel, Lisse, Netherlands

Beautifully spoken Paul. Love the storY about the life of Kostas. You must miss him a lot. X

Sofie Jansen, Amsterdam, Netherlands,

*Paul, bravo bravaaa
What a wonderful story
you should publish it as a blog on the tavernas website 100%*



Sophie

i postponed my lunch break here in the office cause i was so into it

Dick Mulder, an Agiot.

gia sou file. what a wonderful story you wrote about your father-in-law! life in a nutshell, very good!

Richie Henderson, Edinburgh, Scotland.

Hey Paul how's things? Wonderful tribute to Kosta in the newsletter. More than fitting. Just to let you know I've changed my email addy as from today it's now _____ Coming over in May for seven weeks see you then!

Ray and Anne Mann, Brantford, Ontario, Canada.

*Interesting reading
I only wish we could visit the village again
We so enjoyed our time there.
Looking forward for the next publication
Sincerely
Ray and Anne.*

Ken Harrop, Corfu.

Hi Paul,
Thank you for giving The 100+ Club an excellent write up in The Agiot, it is much appreciated.
Love to you, Lula and Family
Ken & Jan xxx



'Nick's niche'

Nick The Clock's World

The Comic With A Conscience

Japanese scientists have invented a camera with a shutter that operates so fast, that it can capture an image of a woman with her mouth shut.

If you're a woman who just got upset, remember, it's just a joke!

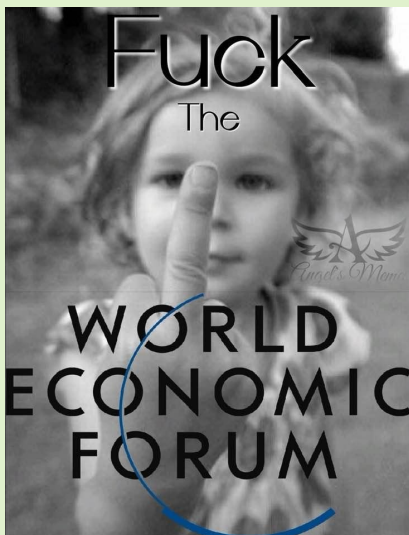
Of course there's no camera that fast!

Real winners don't follow the crowd and/or willingly obey wholly corrupt authorities, they lead with their principles and integrity in full flow. Well played champion 🙌🙌



"Stand up for what you believe in, even if it means standing alone."

Novak Djokovic
#1 TENNIS PLAYER IN THE WORLD



Things that make you go hmmm

ATHLETES UNDER 35 THAT SUFFERED CARDIAC ARREST



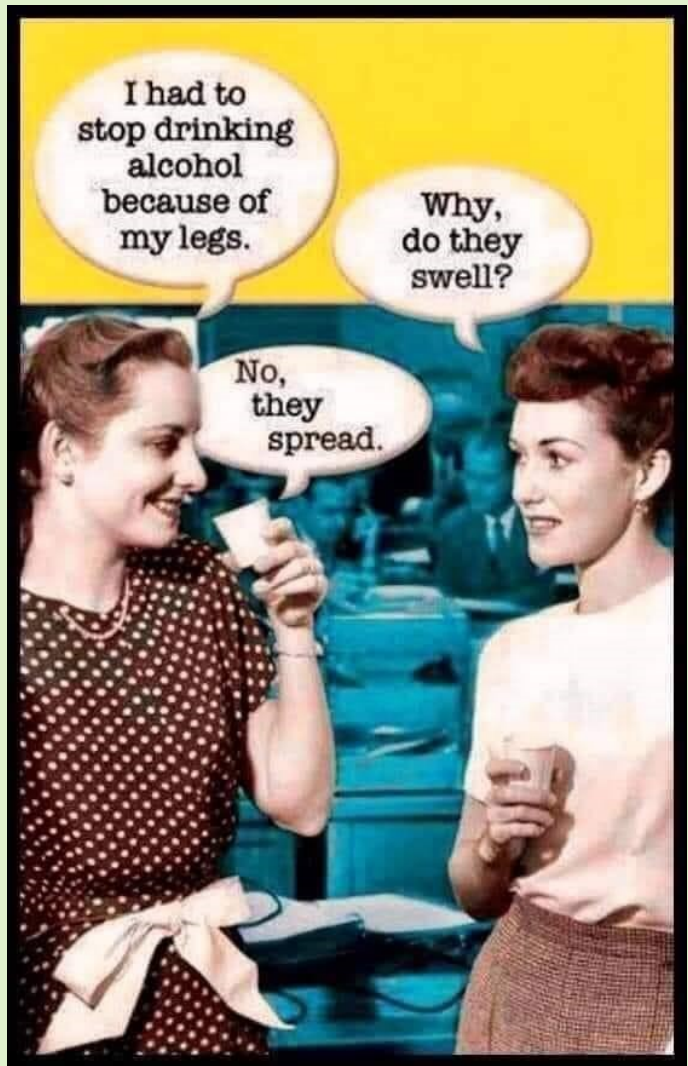
1966-2004 1,101
2021-2022 1,598

Nick The Clock's World - Continued from page 7

Brilliant idea by a Restaurant in Australia.
No cellphones means 10% discount on Bill.
I love this idea 😍



Everyone kept hitting their heads as they walked down my stairs, so I hung a sign as a warning.



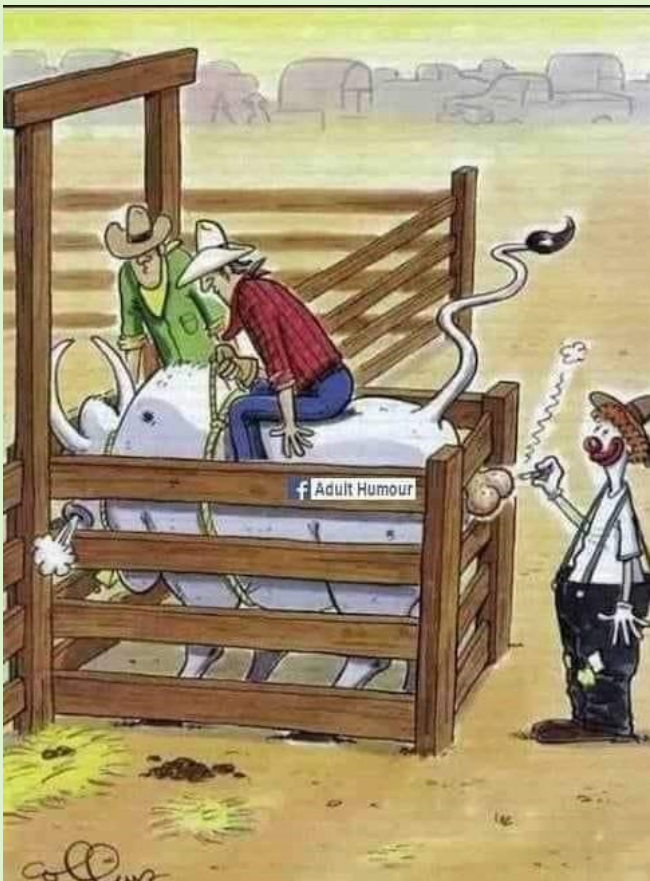
Nick The Clock's World - Continued from page 8

DID YOU KNOW
Stickers on fruit! You may notice the number mark on sticker but few know what the numbers on the stickers mean

DID YOU KNOW
If there are 5 digits and the first is 8, the fruit has been **genetically modified**

DID YOU KNOW
If there are 4 digits and the first is 3 or 4, it means that the fruit has been **sprayed with pesticides..**

DID YOU KNOW
If there are 5 digits and the first is 9, The fruit has been grown **organically**



That's' All Folks !

Hilary's Ramblings

Contributed by Hilary Paipeti

What a difference a day (or two) makes!

AFTER A COUPLE OF MONTHS of almost permanent fog that did not dissipate until midday, then a week or two of gales, followed by a deep freeze for another fortnight, warm sunshine finally arrived near the end of February. It was extraordinary to watch the first spring flowers, suffering under the previous week's frost conditions, suddenly perk up, stick their heads over the ramparts, and bloom.

Cranesbills and marigolds have been making hesitant efforts to flower since December, but suddenly they burgeoned, along with spurge and honesty. A day or two later, along came the first grape hyacinth; then they were everywhere. In a patch of dank woodland, the shy violet took its chance.

The most grievous floral victim of the freeze has been the asphodel. The foggy damp of midwinter encouraged early shoots of the perennial, with hopeful flower-heads initially sprouting in January. As this flower tends - at least in this part of the island - to proliferate over exposed fields in valley bottoms (where the fog likes to collect in mild and calm weather), the chill's sudden onslaught caught it out; flower shoots keeled over and blackened, and fleshy leaves shrivelled with frost-nip. In its prime in April and early May, the asphodel is like a sea of foam suspended above the ground, ivory tinged with pale pink. Unless the plants can recover like the cranesbills did, we're unlikely to enjoy a similar scene this spring.

Thank you, Jack Frost!

Get on with it, like the Corfiots do

WHEN AN OLD-GROWTH TREE BLOWS DOWN across the road in an overnight gale, or heavy rainfall causes a bank to slump onto the highway, the locals swing into action. Someone calls the bloke up the road with the digger, and a couple more dust off their trusty chainsaws. Within the hour the blockage is clear. No road closure for miles around, no teeth-sucking jobsworth civil authorities turning a molehill into an Everest. Even major damage, like the landslides around Agii Deka after the terrible storms of 18 months ago, was cleared in a couple of days.

In contrast, have a look at this:



Just 50 metres from my brother's home in a village in the north of England, heavy rain caused a ruined house to collapse onto (half) the village street, the main artery for the couple of thousand residents to access the large nearby city. This was half way through January. Though it looks to me like a Corfu digger could have sorted this by lunchtime, while someone controlled the traffic, the road remained closed for **over a month**. For the entire period of closure, all but a dozen village residents on the right side of the blockage had to be redirected to town around a three mile loop. No doubt some pen-pusher in the city council had put clearance of the rubble low on a list of priorities, while locals would be reluctant to take action for fear of health and safety regulations.

Yet another reason to be happy you live in Corfu!

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

1) Someone who has evidently not attended classes on human reproduction:

'I just had a baby, but it doesn't look in the least like me. I'm wondering if my boyfriend has been cheating on me, and I've had another woman's baby.'

2) A former UK government minister, Brexiteer, on the current shortage of salad vegetables in his country:

'If I'd known that my Brexit vote would cause frosts in southern Spain, I might have reconsidered.'

HORSES FOR COURSES



If the hat fits

There is a relatively new riding school in the Varypatades valley.

Anna and her staff are very friendly and professional.

If you are in Central Corfu and you are interested in your children learning to ride obedient horses, look no further than the box below.

GREEK AND ENGLISH AND DANISH SPOKEN.



**Ιππικός Αθλητικός Ομίλος
Κέρκυρας**

Τηλ. 697 674 6692

https://maps.app.goo.gl/i1MrCM387AGu1yr97?g_st=ic

If you advertise here it will cost nothing. We have a modest but growing circulation.
It is our pleasure for our friends to advertise their wares without charge.