



2000

Christmas Past



2007



So soon | a poem for 2022 by Rudyard Kipling and George Orwell

'Lest we forget' you might recall
thine ancient sacrifice
for frantic boast and foolish word
'if drunk with sight of power'.

*The 'when' we learnt, the 'where' was taught
battles, triumphs, heroes
we gorged on that narrative (never mentioned our luck)
but do you get the 'why'?*

Cue pigs that walk on two hind legs
'some more equal than others'
with shots of satire we were forewarned
'ignore your eyes and ears'.

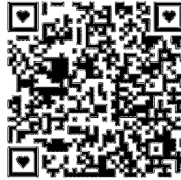
*'Lest we forget' a million times
written, nay chiselled, in stone
on so many monuments, so many tombs
could we forget so soon?*

Yet now we have it in plain sight
power for power's own sake
the rules are just for us it seems
bills that trash our rights.

*Each three word lie that sounds so smart
repeat until it's true
a semblance of solidity
conferred on purest wind.*

'Lest we forget' fair play to scream
a warning from the past
but did they think for e'en a trice
we would forget so soon?

Read me aloud!



What on earth is
he trying to say?



Schwitzer Times

"News that matters"

Sunday, 25th December 2022



From Ciccia and me, here's wishing you a wonderful Christmas and all the very best for a 2023 full of health and happiness!

Edward writes frequently for online sites in his consultancy role in education, and this year attended many 30th birthday parties, stag weekends & weddings.

Yasmin developed the destination wedding theme, doing makeup in all sorts of exotic locations. Ciccia often gets taken along to photo shoots - and can end up in them!

William & Pardis drove to Hungary, Slovakia and Austria in May, and to Andorra and Spain in August/September.



"The world is changing: I feel it in the water, I feel it in the earth, and I smell it in the air" – Treebeard

New Arrival. We have a first great nephew, Leo, born in June to Emma and Marc.

Lost & Found. The full story on two ships that dared to change their names.

Puzzles that run rings round you. In a recent survey, ten cities scored as follows:

Budapest.....	0	Turin.....	55
Ljubljana.....	3	Manchester.....	60
Amsterdam.....	10	Stockholm.....	75
Berlin.....	10	Rome.....	90
Beijing.....	50	Munich.....	99

What was London's score?

Answers to the editor, the first correct response received wins a magnum of Prosecco (for collection / next time we meet).



Karma and the sinking of the Moskva. In April, Ukraine issued a stamp commemorating the defiance of its tiny garrison on Snake Island, once sacred to Achilles, to the heavily armed Moskva, flagship of the Russian navy, after an audio clip of the radio exchange on Day 1 of the invasion went viral. The defiance was seen as a metaphor for the resistance of the whole country to a brutal aggressor, and Ukrainians queued to purchase the stamp. Then, within days of its issue, the Moskva, originally named Slava (NB: sailors consider it bad luck to rename a ship), was sunk by a Ukrainian missile strike, launched from near Odesa, altering the war dynamic in the Black Sea forever, and a severe embarrassment to the Russian navy.

“Now, what a ship was christened, so let her stay, I says” – Long John Silver

The sinking was initially denied by Russia, and so reportedly cautiously and belatedly in western media, but some details have emerged. The ship was hit more than 120km offshore by two Neptune missiles (produced by Ukraine) from land-based mobile launchers. A Turkish-made Bayraktar drone – which have been devastating against Russian tanks – was used to distract the crew, and according to some accounts the Ukrainians waited for stormy weather rendering radar screens messy enough to mask the missiles; it's believed the ship's extensive defensive systems were never activated. In July, Russian forces withdrew from the island.

Millennials and Boomers. In an historic town the pubs are situated on Boundary Street, the circular road running inside the town wall. In December, the boomers of the town follow a local tradition, enjoying a drink in a different pub every evening, there being exactly one pub for every day of the month.

This year a group of millennials, who live on Boundary Street, have come up with a better plan. They claim that by picking a different pair of friends each evening, and walking clockwise between their houses downing a drink in every pub they pass, they can have a graduated pub crawl, with one drink on 1st December, two drinks on the 2nd, three on the 3rd, and so on, culminating on New Years Eve with a circular walk having a drink in every pub. The boomers can't see how this is possible and advise the millennials to stick to tradition.

Who is right and how many millennials are in the group?

If you think the millennials are right, show how the friends might be situated on Boundary Street. If they are wrong, explain why. Send your answer to the editor, first correct response wins a magnum of Prosecco (for collection / next time we meet).

Photobombing history. In March, *Endurance* was found in good condition at a depth of 3 km in the Weddell Sea, 107 years after she sank. This is the ship of Shackleton's Antarctic expedition, another epic British failure like Scott's expedition 3 years earlier, but which no less captured the public imagination for the incredible bravery and sheer determination of the ensuing rescue of all 28 men who had set out from Plymouth on her maiden voyage in the summer of 1914.



Arguably the strongest wooden ship ever built, *Endurance* was designed to resist being crushed (unlike Amundsen's *Fram* which was round-bottomed and designed to be pushed up and out in a crush). This design was ultimately her downfall (unless you blame her name change – she was originally called *Polaris* – see under *Moskva!*) as though she resisted months of pack ice, she eventually succumbed. Whilst the expedition may have failed, her timbers certainly live up to her name! Despite the incredible evidence to report, these jellyfish just *had* to be in the photo!

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"Let us make Social Media in our image, after our likeness: and let it have dominion over all men & women, so that they will think in emoji and waste away their waking hours; and above all else so that we might harvest their data and plant the seeds of complacency or despair each according to their voting intentions" - Genesis 1:32

The Daily Drain

LOCAL & WORLDWIDE COVERAGE



This **F**ire **H**ydrant in Hornsey Lane Gardens dates when the street was laid out. It's also a historical snapshot of the frequent reorganisation of local administration: **H**ornsey **U**rban **D**istrict **C**ouncil only existed between 1894 and 1903.



You know you're in the historic centre of Viborg, Denmark when the drains are this pretty.

You know they had problems lighting the fire when you see coal hole covers drilled out to improve ventilation, like this one in Belsize Lane.



With the reservoir built by the **N**ew **R**iver Company, Highgate had piped water from 1854. This valve on Highgate Hill probably dates from then.



You know you're in Switzerland when the water valves are in three languages



As all good operculists know, coal hole covers in central London are 12", to prevent theft of coal by the lowering of small boys. In Highgate though, they are 14". Is this evidence that Highgate suffered less from the vices of the city?



Can't remember the word for water in Hungarian? Just look down!



In January, Yasmin did the makeup for a wedding in the Maldives, here she is exploring Dhiddhoofinolhu (also called South Ari Atoll).



In February, William did a favourite walk, the *Tre Montagnette*, with Roberto on an exceptionally clear day – we could see Monviso from 170km! Above, the view along Lake Maggiore towards Switzerland.

THE NEXT



Anna



Anna, with Susan, Hendrickje, Clara and Roman



Sofia



Neve with Leo



Watch the sun set behind Stromboli

Yasmin took this amazing sequence from Tropea in Calabria, after doing a wedding there.



In September, after a gap of 8 years, we returned to Calella de Palafrugell on the Costa Brava, for 2 weeks of sun, sea, sand and cycling.

William & David's 800km Cycle Tour of Northern Italy

Part 1.
Orta to Stelvio



Part 2. Stelvio
to San Candido



Stelvio 2021

18 days in 4 x 3 minutes!



Part 3. San Candido
to Venice



Part 4. Venice -
Naviglio - Ticino



We remember **Queen Elizabeth** who died on September 8th after 70 years on the throne, and pay tribute to her steadfast character, incredible empathy, and strong sense of duty and service – an example which stood out as a beacon of light, especially in dark times, when so many other public figures have been so lacking in such qualities.

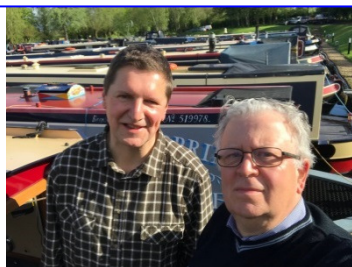
Here she is in an informal moment playing tag on board HMS Vanguard in 1947.



At the end of August we visited Andorra and walked in the mountains with Co & Astrid and their dog Max.

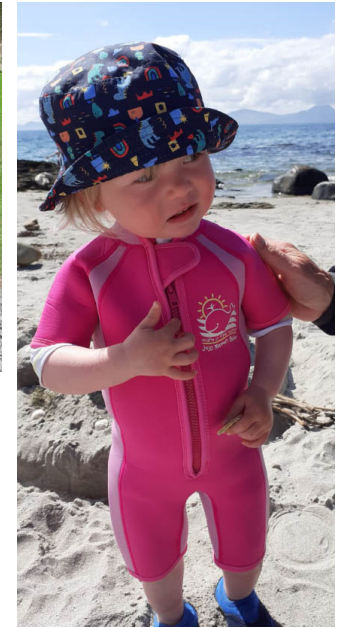


Messing about in boats
William & Chris exploring the Grand Union Canal
(May 2021)



G E N E R A T I O N

Sofia, Ada, Hattie, Anna, Hugo



Clara

Clara



Pardis with Leo



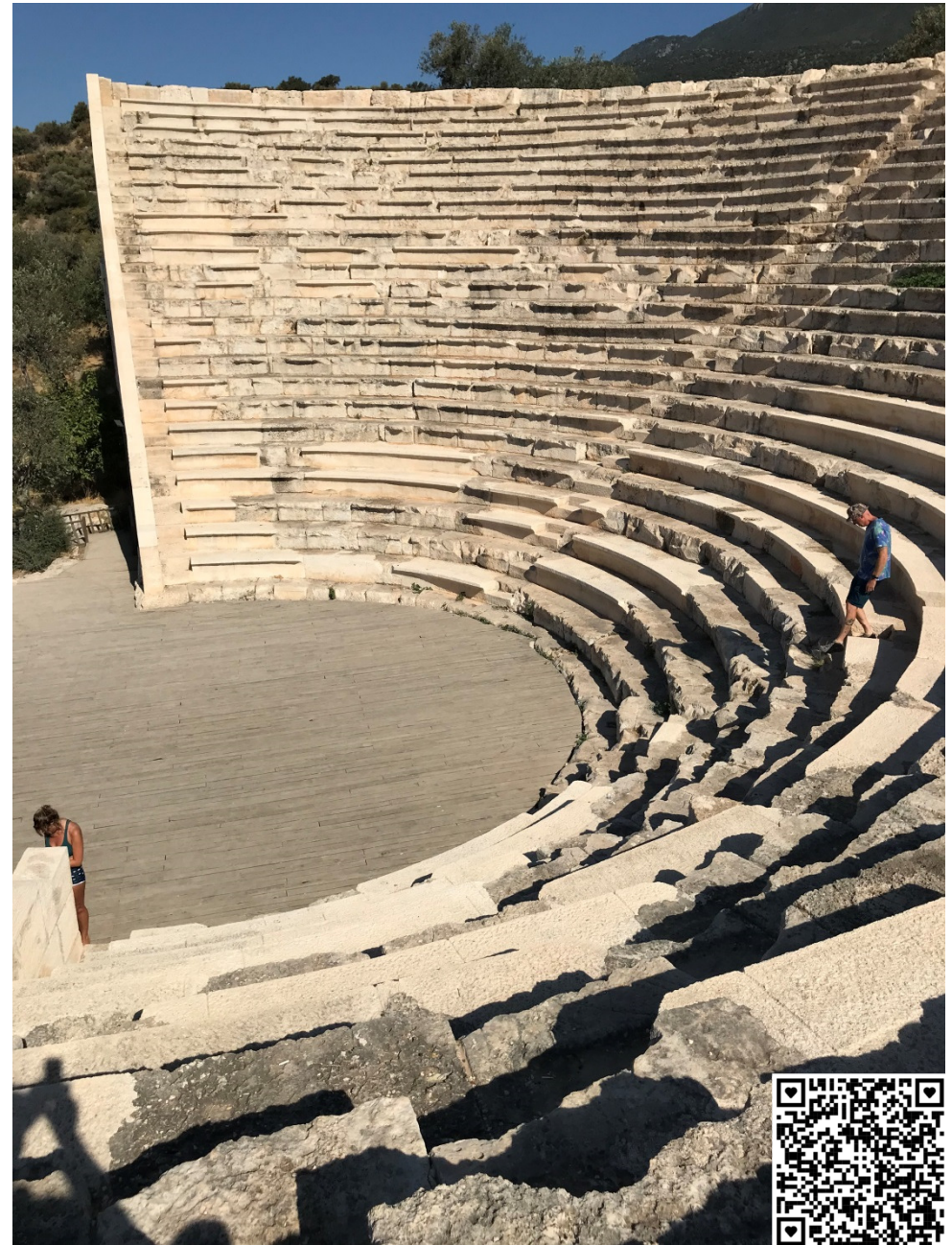
Zsófia & Zoli with Noé



Tony & Cathy on the causeway to St Michael's Mount - yes, we took the boat!



In early May we walked the coast path from Gorran Haven to Mevagissey (pictured), and visited St Michael's Mount with its stunning rock gardens.



In July, William stayed in Kaş, on the mediterranean coast of Anatolia with Francis and Ipek, my first visit to Türkiye (as it is now called). This is the stunning amphitheatre, restored to enable it to be used for occasional events. With wonderful food, hot sun and great company, it was a memorable visit.



Visiting great grandfather Simon Schwitzer's mausoleum in Tepličky with Monika and Miroslav, the former mayor.



Sunset for our evening meal on Francis & Ipek's balcony in Kaş, accompanied by music from the numerous bars below - and calls to prayer from the mosques.



Edward's 30th Birthday in a Cider Brewery in Bermondsey. By this stage of the evening us parents who had been present earlier were long gone!



Yasmin's makeup work for a clothes advertisement - Ciccia doing her part!



Yasmin & Charlie visiting Orta San Giulio in May.

Edward & Laura at Tommy & Jennifer's wedding in Hackney in June.



Monika, Marek, Malvinka, Paulinka and Marko in their garden in Madunice.



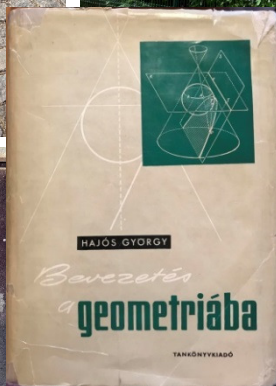
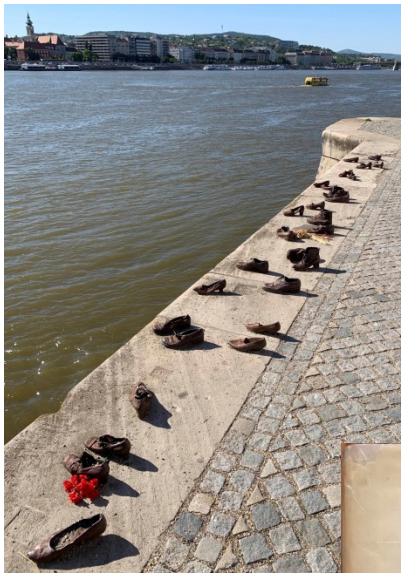
In Hungary we reconnected with many paternal relatives, and after one lunch did some light philosophy with Karl Marx (a.k.a. Gábor Szemző).



Visiting Piešťany with Monika, Marek and family. This is the spa town where my father lived for a few years before moving to Bratislava for school.



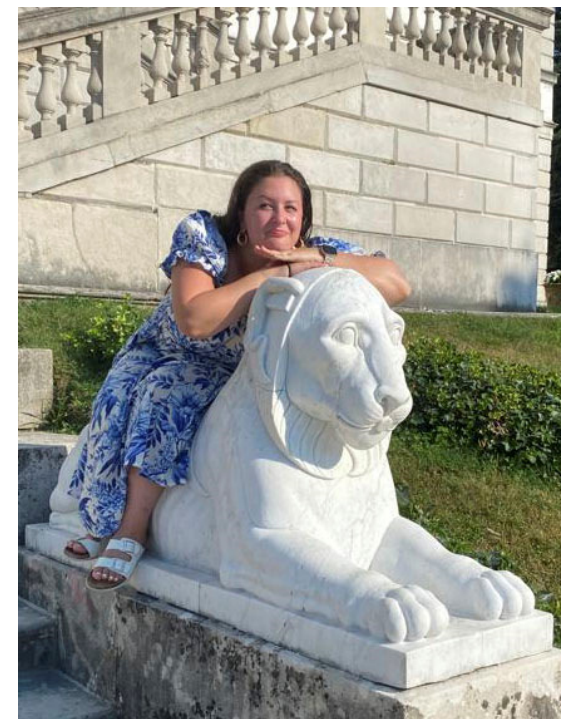
In May we visited Budapest, and enjoyed an evening stroll along the Danube near Ilona's flat with this splendid view of the Hungarian Parliament.



Left: the shoes monument on the banks of the Danube.
Above: Ilona in front of her grandfather's flat (Mese Köz 10), where I stayed in 1979.
Centre: the geometry book written by Hajós György, my grandmother's first cousin.



Lunch under the pergola in Budajenő with Csipi, Ilona, Gábor and Bea.



The Giardini di Villa Melzi at Bellagio on Lake Como, on 28-5-1988 and 16-7-2022. Yasmin did the makeup for a wedding at the Villa Balbiano on Lake Como on the Friday, and on the Saturday took the ferry across to Bellagio to visit some of the spots that William and Pardis had enjoyed on a day trip from Turin with friends 34 years earlier.