‘Somewhere between Calabria and Corfu the blue really begins’. So starts what many readers think as Lawrence Durrell’s most alluring ‘travel’ book, telling about the, apparently, idyllic times Larry and Nancy spent living on Corfu from 1935 until 1939. The appeal of the book is undeniable, with an immediacy given to it by the use, in parts, of what seem to be journal entries as the days passed by for the couple living on the island. The ‘Spirit of Place’, so often captured with great skill by Durrell in his writings, seems at its best in this slim book first published in 1945, after Larry and Nancy had fled Greece and found themselves as refugees in Alexandria.

The broad scope of The Herald allows the Editors to assemble special editions, focusing on a single topic. On this occasion, we look at some aspects of the Durrell’s life before the Second World War on Corfu. We know of Hilary Whitton Paipeti’s engrossing book In the Footsteps of Lawrence and Gerald Durrell in Corfu [1935 - 1939], so it seemed entirely appropriate to invite her to co-edit this edition of The Herald. Hilary has been resident on Corfu since 1981, and is thus in a unique position to contribute. The editors are very grateful to Hilary for her hard work in contributing to this edition.

For want of space, we have held over two significant remembrances of Brewster Chamberlin, who died last year. Brewster’s name will be familiar to those who have read his valuable work ‘The Durrell Log’.

Peter Baldwin and Steve Moore (Editors)
Lawrence Durrell’s Corfu years

The aim of this chronology is simply to provide, without additional editorial comment, an abbreviated history for the years Larry and Nancy Durrell spent on Corfu from 1935 to 1939. I have relied heavily on Brewster Chamberlin’s *The Durrell Log* — see the bibliography elsewhere in this edition of *The Herald*. I have retained Chamberlin’s frequent use of the present tense when I have used sections of his book; and similarly retained his use of ‘LD’ as a reference abbreviation for Lawrence/ Larry Durrell. The account which follows looks at significant events in the life of Larry and Nancy. It does not attempt to list all the works Larry published during his Corfu years. References to friends and writers are limited to their immediate impact on the lives of this couple.

Larry was born in 1912 and started his relationship with Nancy in 1932. Larry had been living in London since 1923, having been returned, against his will and at the insistence of his father, to England for the sake of his schooling. His father died in 1928 which prompted the rest of the family to return to England where they bought a house in Bournemouth. Enticed by the letters from Larry’s friend George Wilkinson, who was living already on Corfu, and seeking not only an escape from the British climate as well as a new home where their limited income could be better eked out, Larry persuaded the family – mother Louisa and siblings Leslie, Margaret and Gerald – to move with him and Nancy to Corfu. Gerald Durrell’s well-known *My Family and Other Animals* gives the best known account of the family’s stay on Corfu.

In the words of Alan G Thomas, Larry’s lifelong friend: ‘There were no ties binding the Durrell family to England; none of them had been born here, and Larry, having put down no roots, was feeling restless. From time to time, a letter would arrive from George Wilkinson describing their idyllic life in Corfu, and the island began to sound more and more evocative.’ (*Spirit of Place*, p 26 – the reader is referred to this book for Alan’s fuller account of the appeal of Corfu to the Durrell family; the book includes an evocative selection of Larry’s letters to friends from Corfu). Larry’s account of his time on Corfu, *Prospero’s Cell*, published in 1945, completed in Alexandria in 1944, is, in the words of Thomas, ‘the most poetic and the least troubled of his island books’. (ibid, p27).

**1935**

On January 22 1935 Nancy Myers and LD are married at the Bournemouth Registry Office. On March 2, LD and Nancy sail from London for Naples en route to Corfu. In bad winter weather they are stranded in Brindisi, Italy, where LD writes the first pages of what becomes the novel, his second to appear in print, *Panic Spring*, to be published in April 1937, after he completes the manuscript of his next novel, *The Black Book*. By March 14 LD finally finds a boat captain willing to take them the 130 miles to Corfu by sea where they land for a stay of two weeks at the Pension Suisse in Corfu town. Come c. March 28, Louisa, Margo, the two brothers and Gerald’s dog Roger arrive to stay at the Suisse, bringing news that Cassell has accepted Larry’s novel *Pied Piper of Lovers*, his first to appear, for publication.
In early April LD and Nancy move to Perama into a small house next to the Villa Agazini, where George Wilkinson and his wife Pamela have been living for a year (see Larry’s letters in the collection of his letters and travel writings entitled *Spirit of Place*). LD names the house Villa Bumtrinket, after a character in the Elizabethan play *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* by Thomas Dekker. The Strawberry Pink Villa, where the rest of the Durrell family are living, is not far away but, contrary to the impression given by *My Family and Other Animals* (perpetuated by the several radio and TV dramatizations of the book), Larry and Nancy rarely actually live with the rest of the family entourage.

In the early summer the Durrell family meets the radiologist and natural scientist, Theodore Stephanides, introduced by the Wilkinsons who had met him the previous autumn. Theodore becomes a life-long friend of all the members of the family, not least Larry. In mid-August, the American painter, Barclay Hudson, then living with his wife in the northeast of Corfu just south of the coastal village of Kalami, lends LD *Tropic of Cancer* to read, after which LD writes a fan letter to Miller in Paris who swiftly responds, thus beginning a friendship and correspondence that continues until Miller’s death. Miller’s influence is clear in *The Black Book*. On October 17, in London Cassell publishes LD’s first novel, *Pied Piper of Lovers* with a cover designed by Nancy. By December, LD has finished *Panic Spring* and sends the last section off to Alan Thomas, having earlier sent sections, as they were typed, in draft.

**1936**

In January, LD begins the first draft of what becomes *The Black Book*. It was in April when taxi driver Spiro drives LD, Nancy and Stephanides to have tea with Madame Gennatas in her Venetian manor house at the harbour of Kouloura. Sharply attracted by the wild landscape and closeness to the sea at Kouloura, the following day LD and Nancy decide to move to the area to escape the chaotic and loud cacophony of the entire Durrell ménage. Spiro finds two rooms in Kalami Bay on the far north-eastern shore owned by the Athinaios family (I have seen various spellings of this surname but I have adopted that used by Chamberlin). Ten days later, the couple move into what becomes known as the White House Villa. Soon the couple find a nearby cove best accessible only by sea with the small shrine to Saint Arsenius where they can swim naked in the sea without causing offense.

In about mid-April, Nancy undergoes a curettage procedure, illegal in Greece, in a Corfu Town nursing home. On a lighter note, in early summer, Nancy and LD buy a 20-foot sailboat, which they name *Van Norden* after a comic character in Miller’s novel *Tropic of Cancer*. In early November, the couple move into Corfu Town for the winter, taking a heated hotel room. During the winter weeks LD finishes another draft of *The Black Book*, adding handwritten amendments in various coloured inks before it is bound and dispatched to Miller in Paris.

**1937**

Come February, LD finishes another draft which he, likewise, mails off to Miller in Paris. By March LD and Nancy are ready to move from Corfu Town to three rented rooms in a peasant’s house south of Paleokastritsa on the northwest side of the island for the summer.
In London, during April, Faber and Faber publishes LD’s *Panic Spring* under the pseudonym Charles Norden. By July the couple have returned to the White House in Kalami where, during the summer they discuss with Totsa Athinaios, the owner of the White House Villa, the possibility of adding a second storey with large windows so they can stay there during the winter.

On about August 1, Nancy and LD board the Corfu–Brindisi ferry to begin the trip to Paris to meet Miller, Anaïs Nin, and other of Miller’s friends, before going on to London. They arrive in Paris on 12 August where they arrive at the Gare de Montparnasse to be met on the platform by Miller and Anaïs Nin, before, on 22 August, they move on to London where LD meets T. S. Eliot. In mid-September, LD and Nancy return to Paris and stay for two weeks with Perlès at 7 Villa Seurat, across the street from No. 18 where Miller lives. In mid-December, LD travels to London, presumably without Nancy, but with the painter Buffie Johnson (whom he tells that he and Nancy are washed up, hoping to seduce Buffie). Not to be left miserable over Christmas on her own, in December, Nancy takes the train from Paris to the Austrian Alps to ski (and, according to Chamberlin, find some relief from her husband). LD suddenly leaves London, taking the train to Innsbruck to see Nancy, stopping off in Paris long enough to put Buffie in hospital, the edgy young woman distraught at LD’s erratic treatment of her sensibilities.

Early in the morning of Christmas Day, LD finds Nancy in a chalet in the mountains. Ruining the fine time she was having, he insists they return to Innsbruck that day. The following day, the Durrells go to Austria to ski for a week and continue the combat returning two weeks later return to 21 rue Gazan in Paris.

***

1938

A key date is when, late January – early February, LD writes to Eliot that he has started a novel because Faber would not give him an advance on a book of poems; this is probably what LD referred to over the next several years as “The Book of the Dead”, eventually morphing into *The Alexandria Quartet*. On April 10, after another short visit to London, possibly because of the tumultuous political situation, the Durrells suddenly and abruptly depart Paris for Greece. In April, the couple see the White House Villa for the first time since the previous July and their instruction to their landlord to add a second storey to the building. This now has two storeys but with *small* windows on the seaward side, thus enraging the volatile author who wanted *large* windows out of which he could look at the sea in inclement weather. Later in the winter he realizes the rightness of Athinaios’ decision. The new quarters have a calming effect, but the tension between LD and Nancy continues, if temporarily in milder forms.

The Durrell’s apartment on the second storey is now available as a holiday rental, known as the White House Villa [https://thewhitehouse.gr/stay/white-house-villa/]. Some years later, a plaque, commemorating the Durrell’s residence here is affixed to the wall of the White House Villa.

Nancy’s painting has reached new levels of sophistication but LD’s demands upon her continue. Veronica Tester and Dorothy Stevenson from London visit, and the Durrells do their best and take them sailing and camping. (Michael Haag in his book *The Durrells of Corfu* cites evidence that Larry was unfaithful to Nancy, having a sexual relationship on at least one occasion with Stevenson). In Athens Theodore Stephanides introduces the Durrells to Greek writer George Katsimbalis, the ‘Colossus of Marousi’, so dubbed by Miller in his book of that title. Meanwhile in Paris, mid-August, Jack Kahane at the Obelisk Press publishes *The Black Book* with serious printers’ errors.
Nancy and Veronica Tester travel to Athens for a holiday in October, while LD remains on Corfu ignoring world events. Later that month, Nancy informs LD she wants to have a child, but he resists until September of the following year. The Durrells are briefly in Paris in November on their way to London staying at 140 Campden Hill Road, Notting Hill Gate. Later that month, the Durrells flee to Paris when rumours of an English general strike circulate. While there LD falls in love with and has a brief but passionate affair with the pretty American journalist, Thérèse “Tessa” Epstein; they continue to see each other sporadically over the next several decades. In December, when the strike does not materialize the Durrells return to London.

* * *

1939

In January, The Criterion, edited by T.S.Eliot, prints a positive review of The Black Book by Desmond Hawkins. Spending January to April in London, LD carouses and talks with Dylan Thomas. Miller is planning a trip to Greece. None of them seems concerned with the political situation in Europe.

In April, the Durrells travel to Stratford-upon-Avon to review Othello and A Comedy of Errors for the International Post, which folds after the first number, and thus did not print LD’s reviews, though it did print his article “Theatre: Sense and Sensibility” in its one and only issue. Stephanides’ wife Mary and their daughter Alexia have left Corfu for England where they stay with Mary’s relatives until they join Louisa Durrell and family (still in Corfu at this point) in Bournemouth. In May the Durrells leave London to return to Greece, stopping briefly in Paris. In the summer, LD and Nancy travel to Athens so they can better assess the political situation, now an inescapable presence in their lives. The quarrels with Nancy increase in level of intensity.

Notwithstanding the omens of war, in July Miller lands on Corfu and is met by LD and Nancy. The American is disappointed that the Durrells are still fighting with such vehemence, but becomes completely absorbed in Corfiot life, food and drink. He offends LD’s sense of the holy by committing sexual intercourse with an English girl at the St Arsenius shrine.

When, at the beginning of September, Germany invades Poland and war is declared in Europe, the Durrells leave Corfu for Athens, stopping at the Hotel Cecil in Patras, where Nancy and LD quarrel with vehemence. On September, Katsimbalis and his wife Aspasia invite Stephanides, Miller and the Durrells to tea at their house in Maroussi, Greece.

Except for a visit by Nancy to retrieve household goods in early November, September 1939 sees the end of the Durrell’s idyll, if one can call it that, living, for the most part on Corfu. The following months are spent in Athens and the Peloponnese. Nancy becomes pregnant and the couple’s elder daughter, Penelope, is born on June 4 1940.

This chronology shows that the couple were often away from whatever residence they had at the time on Corfu for visits, primarily, to Paris and London. Their relationship seems characterized by frequent tensions and disputes, perhaps as a result of LD’s serial infidelities. In creative terms, the years LD spent on Corfu made a huge impression on him and Greece was to remain, culturally and temporally, an influence for the rest of his life.

I would like to thank Lynn-Marie Chamberlin, Brewster’s widow, for her permission to quote so liberally from her late husband’s book The Durrell Log. Anthony Hirst, the publisher of The Log under his Colenso Books imprint, has also generously supported my liberal use of Chamberlin’s chronology.

Peter Baldwin
March 2021.
Editor Paul Herron writes:

ANAIS: An International Journal, printed annually from 1983 until 2001, and edited by Gunther Stuhlmann, was the most influential literary journal centered on writer/diarist Anaïs Nin (1903-1977) and includes work by prominent scholars and writers from around the globe. (Lawrence Durrell called Nin his and Henry Miller’s “woman Musketeer” who “was our Aramis—the slim and delicate and aristocratic one, the born duelist.”) The anthology consists of carefully selected critical essays that offer insights into Nin’s work, especially her ground-breaking and commercially successful Diary and her most important fiction, as well as biographical and historical articles. The contents were selected and prefaced by preeminent scholar Benjamin Franklin V, author of several books and articles about Anaïs Nin, with whom he worked personally. The anthology is recommended for anyone seeking to explore or further understand Nin’s writing. The anthology can be ordered on any of Amazon’s international sites, including [https://www.amazon.com/ANAIS-International-Anthology-Gunther-Stuhlmann/dp/1735745901](https://www.amazon.com/ANAIS-International-Anthology-Gunther-Stuhlmann/dp/1735745901).

**Kalami in May**

Introduced by Hilary Whitton Paipeti

In 2005, Peter Baldwin took an early-season holiday in Kalami, during which he channeled his inner Lawrence Durrell. His article ‘Kalami in May’ describing his experiences was published in the May 2006 edition of The Corfiot Magazine, Corfu’s monthly English-language periodical. It has now been republished for the benefit of ILDS members, and is available to read at: [http://www.corfudurrellfootsteps.com/kalami.html](http://www.corfudurrellfootsteps.com/kalami.html)

Some back issues can be read (free) at [www.thecorfiotmagazine.com](http://www.thecorfiotmagazine.com)
Traditional fishing boat on Lake Antinioti (Lake Antiniotissa). Was this type of boat the model for Gerald's Bootle Bumtrinket? Nearby Saint Spiridon Beach was a Durrell family favourite for picnics.

The chapel of St Arsenius, Lawrence and Nancy’s favorite bathing spot

Due to the graphic-heavy nature of this volume, a copy with higher resolution photos can be obtained [Here].

All photos, unless otherwise specified are copyright Hilary Whitton Paipeti
Two days before Christmas we climbed the dizzy barren razor-back of Pantokratoras to the monastery from which the whole of the strait lay bare, lazy and dancing in the cold haze. (Prospero’s Cell Chapter VI Landscape with Olive Trees).

The monastery, open to the public, now shares the mountain top with a rash of communication installations.

Photo: Dave Hancy

…under the ancient fortress the waves shatter themselves upon ledges of clean granite and arcs of dazzling pebbles (Prospero’s Cell Chapter V History and Conjecture). Out of the tourist season, the rocky shore at Kassiopi seems little changed.

All photos, unless otherwise specified are copyright Hilary Whitton Paipeti
...one must record the existence of a great cave in the point immediately before the beach marked Hermones on the maps. It is approachable only when there is a calm, and the entrance is imposing, being formed in the style of a great gateway (Prospero’s Cell Chapter V History and Conjecture). The cave delves into the rocky cliffs of the bay’s southern arm of Ermones Beach, and is only accessible by boat.

The Ionian Bank, which fronts Saint Spiridon Square in Corfu Town, was Lawrence’s postal address during his time on Corfu. Though the establishment is long gone, it is generally agreed that the Sign of the Partridge, scene of many lively discussions described in Prospero’s Cell, was located on an alleyway immediately behind the Bank.

With its backdrop of cactuses, the next cove west of Kalami is Yialiscari, its crystal waters offering fine swimming. It is only a few minutes walk from the White House, and was a favourite bathing venue of the Durrells and their friends, including Henry Miller.

The bas-relief portrait of Lawrence Durrell, set in the Bosketto Durrell Garden close to the entrance of the Old Fortress of Corfu Town. The memorial was sculpted in bronze by local artist Eva Karydi. The garden was dedicated to the Durrell brothers in 2006.

All photos, unless otherwise specified are copyright Hilary Whitton Paipeti
Hilary Whitton Paipeti introduces her book

*In the Footsteps of Lawrence Durrell and Gerald Durrell in Corfu*

Several times a day, the megaphones blare out: ‘This is the White House, Gerald Durrell’s home when he lived on Corfu’; or sometimes: ‘This is the White House, where Gerald Durrell wrote *My Family and Other Animals.*’ Another boat-load full of summer visitors sweeps into Kalami Bay, primed to be misled. In *Amateurs in Eden*, Joanna Hodgkin, during a stay at the White House with her sister Penelope, Lawrence Durrell’s elder half-sister, notes the same phenomenon: *The White House in Kalami is a beacon for tour boats, and so, every morning for a blissful week in early June, we took our coffee onto the balcony, looked out on the sparkling sea and watched the little boats as they puttered into the bay and paused below the balcony, loud-speaker systems belting out a glorious medley of misinformation: ‘This is the famous White House where Lawrence Durrell wrote *My Family and Other Animals*’; ‘This is the famous White House where Gerald Durrell lived with his father Lawrence’; ‘This is where Justine Durrell wrote the Alexandrian Quartet.’

Even the White House Villa itself commits the same cardinal errors. This is the introduction to its website: *The White House is one of the most famous buildings on Corfu and part of the island’s rich cultural heritage. It is the former residence of British authors Gerald and Lawrence Durrell, both of whom lived here with their families in the 1930s. Gerald Durrell famously wrote *My Family and Other Animals* at Kalami.*

For some years I vaguely mulled over a book designed to counter such Durrell misinformation (the above are only samples of many more falsities), but never got around to it. Until, out of the blue, an article landed on my desk at The Corfiot Magazine, the magazine I edited in Corfu until 2010. This article, entitled ‘The Corfu Landscapes of Gerald Durrell’, was subsequently published in the August 1996 edition of the magazine, and this piece, authored by Peter Harrison, gave me the push that led to the writing of *In the Footsteps of Lawrence and Gerald Durrell in Corfu (1935-39).*

The book was published in 1998. Shortly afterwards, it was reviewed in the Sunday Times as ‘Travel Book of the Week’ by travel editor Mark Ottaway. The first edition of 2000 copies sold out quickly and in 1999 a second edition of 3000 copies was published. This sold out even faster, but despite continued interest, I decided not to republish, mainly due to other business activities.

But recently, as the world of publishing embraced the internet, I took the decision to republish in electronic format. No longer limited on space by format and printing costs, I was able to add much new information, both about the Durrells and regarding Corfu in general.

It started simply as a guide that would assist interested people in discovering the places mentioned by the Durrells in their Corfu books: ‘Just where can you find Lawrence Durrell’s White House and Gerald’s Strawberry-Pink Villa, Daffodil-Yellow Villa and Snow-White Villa?’; ‘Where did Lawrence spend his time, and where did Gerald search for beasts and insects?’ asked the blurb on the 1998 cover, assuring readers that the book will enable them to ‘discover that much of the Corfu that the Durrells knew
Joanna Hodgkin reviews ‘In the Footsteps of Lawrence Durrell and Gerald Durrell’

This book is that wonderful thing, a genuine labour of love, the summation of many years devoted research. It has already become the essential companion for anyone who wants to cut through the mythologies and misinformation that have arisen around those magical few years that the Durrell family spent in Corfu before the war. Where was the Daffodil Yellow villa? You’ll find it here. Lavishly enriched with the writings of the Lawrence and Gerald, as well as Theodore Stephanides and many others who have walked in their footsteps, this book is a treasure trove. The knowledge is lightly worn, but it is detailed and accurate without ever becoming ponderous. Whether visiting Corfu in person or simply in imagination, this book will be the perfect guide.

Set mainly in Kalami in Corfu, Deborah Lawrenson’s 2008 novel *Songs of Blue and Gold* can be enjoyed as a straightforward story; but it can also be read as an allusion to Lawrence Durrell and his works. A multi-layered plot (like many of Durrell’s) mingles four time-frames (two are purported biographical studies) as an Englishwoman searches for the truth of her mother’s life. At the centre is the larger-than-life personality of Lawrence Durrell, Julian Adie in the book. Adie lived with his artist wife in Kalami’s White House before the war, and later, in Egypt, he put together his memoirs of the time in a travelogue called ‘The Gates of Paradise’. He is also famous for his work ‘The Cairo Triptych’, and at the point we meet him, in 1968, is mourning the death of his third - and best - wife Simone. Though Lawrenson explains that Adie is a fictional character, for Durrellians the book is a veritable treasure trove of similar references, including a very funny parody of a magazine article by Durrell called *Oil for the Saint*, and a polymath character with elements of Durrell’s friend and mentor, Theodore Stephanides.

The title *Songs of Blue and Gold* is also a reference to the portrayal, in the first chapter of *Prospero’s Cell*, of Corfu as ‘all Venetian blue and gold - and utterly spoilt by the sun,’ among literature’s most memorable descriptions of the island. Many years later, talking of his time in Corfu to a Californian audience, Lawrence Durrell reiterated the two-hue theme: ‘...that house with its remoteness and the islands going down like soft gongs all the time into the amazing blue, and I shall never, never forget a youth spent there, discovered by accident. It was pure gold.’

In the modern time-frame that starts the book, Melissa’s mother Elizabeth is dying, and she is also losing her husband. One of Elizabeth’s last actions is to present Melissa with a book of poetry that contains a message hinting at a connection with Julian Adie. Distraught, Melissa seeks solace in the search for the truth about her mother’s past (which we discover piece by piece in the Durrell/Adie time-frame sections), and in doing so she rediscovers her own happiness.

*Songs of Blue and Gold*, we find out towards the end, is a work of poetry Adie planned to write, just as Durrell must have been thinking out his *Avignon Quintet* at much the same period. Talking with Adie in 1968, Elizabeth describes Goethe’s colour wheel, in which ‘yellow... splendid and noble... is the polar opposite to blue...’ This is the key to the book; the counterpoints of blue and gold that crop up time after time during the course of the novel. The retroactive suggestion that the structure of the colour wheel would have inspired Adie’s poetic cycle parallels Durrell’s use of the quincunx for structuring his Quintet.

Lawrenson’s novel also shadows Durrell’s *The Alexandria Quartet* in the witnesses’ differing interpretations of its key event, the drowning which is catalyst in the relationship between Adie and Elizabeth. Ambiguous interpretations of this event - suicide, accident or murder? - in the four time-frames hint at an underlying theme, which Melissa expands on: biography, its search for meaning, is essentially subjective.

It’s a subtle and well-crafted novel which deserves the close attention of Durrellians, but you won’t lose out by treating it simply as a finely written story in which Corfu takes one of the starring roles.

Prospero’s Cell
A synopsis

In 1988, with the co-operation of Lawrence Durrell, Pavilion Books in London published a lavishly illustrated ‘coffee table’ book ‘The Mediterranean Shore: travels in Lawrence Durrell country’ in which scenes from Durrell’s prose books were extensively illustrated by watercolour artist Paul Hogarth. Whilst the book showcased Hogarth’s watercolours, comments by Durrell as well as his Introduction are an essential component of the book. Each of the books illustrated were accompanied by a short precis by Robin Rook who was commissioned by the publishers to seek Durrell’s commentary on the books illustrated. Rook died in 2009 and his widow and executor has kindly given permission for us to republish his commentary from this book.

The following text is © the Estate of Robin Rook.

Corfu is presented with the intimate detail that only a resident can acquire. Lawrence Durrell lived there for five years before the war. The result is not a travelogue but a poetic reminiscence salted with the sadness of time remembered. ‘Seen through the transforming lens of memory that the past seemed so enchanted that even thought would be unworthy of it.’ The inescapable lure of the island is made real through the accounts of the adventure of day to day living, and its past, fabulous and historical, emerges through the conversations among an intimate circle of friends – the Count D wistfully suggests that it is Prospero’s isle in The Tempest (after all, ‘Sycorax’ is almost an anagram for its Latin name ‘Corcyra’). Theodore Stephanides produces his shoemaker, Iscariotes, to support the theory that Judas had connections there and Zarian adds a metaphysical note by claiming that the landscape ‘precipitates the inward crisis of lives not yet fully worked out’. The quest to discover the beach where Ulysses met Nausicaa is leavened with examples of the British legacy: cricket and the ‘English’ house – a house with a lavatory and even, perhaps (unheard of, and to the peasants unnecessary) a bathroom.

Robin Rook wrote two texts about Lawrence Durrell for the Delos Press: Lawrence Durrell’s Double Concerto, now out of print, and At the Foot of the Acropolis: A study of Lawrence Durrell’s novels copies of which are still available; enquiries to delospeter@hotmail.com

Announcement

Deus Loci NS 16 (2018-2019)
The latest edition of 2021

Deus Loci: The Lawrence Durrell Journal NS 16 (2018-2019) is now published. See this link for details of TOC and ordering
https://lawrencedurrell.org/wp_durrell/deus-loci/ns-16/

Deus Loci NS17 Call for Papers
Send submissions to Anna Lillios
Anna@ucf.edu
Deadline: September 1, 2021
The White House, Kalami – 2021

*Hilary Whitton Paipeti and Daria Athinaios tell us of the experience of visiting the White House Villa in 2021*

Still ‘[s]et like a dice in a rock already venerable with scars of wind and water’, the White House at Kalami remains today backed by hills that ‘run clear up into the sky behind’, too steep to provide footing for villas and apartment blocks. These days, though, the immediate surroundings are replete with the trappings of an extremely successful tourism business. An expansive shaded terrace at The White House is part of a newly widened garden area with soft seating for pre- and post-prandial relaxation. A new jetty in front of the restaurant was installed recently to cater for guests who arrive by boat.

The building, remaining in the ownership of the Athenaios family as it was when Lawrence and Nancy Durrell lived there in the late 1930s, has nevertheless undergone changes of management over the years, until finally reverting in 2009 to the family under Daria and Tassos, the latter being the grandson of Larry’s landlord.

With the assistance of expert chef Charis Nikolouzos, they have reinvented the menu, coming up with a cornucopia of dishes that combine local ingredients in ways reminiscent of Nouveau Cuisine. ‘Using locally sourced produce,’ states the menu, ‘we have created dishes inspired by Corfiot tradition’, describing the cooking as a ‘delicious culinary journey through history.’

Usually, you can sample the White House take on ‘eel-meat with red sauce’ - *bourdetto* - in the place where it all began for Lawrence Durrell, whose photograph adorns the walls along with other memorabilia of his time on Corfu. The business was never only about the restaurant, even if it remains the most accessible attraction. Because of course the top floor apartment - its construction was paid for by Larry - is popular as a holiday let, now available through Daria’s new business Noon Island Journey [www.noonisland.com](http://www.noonisland.com).

Daria has also set up the Durrell Spot, a shop-cum-museum that promotes and markets Durrell books and associated items. The Durrell Spot is at 7, Agios Sophias Street, Corfu Town.

[https://thewhitehouse.gr/](https://thewhitehouse.gr/)

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Photo by Peter Baldwin
Karaghiozis: three modern Greek shadow-play comedies

This is the third volume of a projected Complete Works, that is original writings and translations, of Stephanides as planned by Anthony Hirst of Colenso Books.

Theodore Stephanides (1896 – 1983) was a doctor, poet and translator who was also involved in biology and astronomy and published studies in those fields. He was born in India, but in 1907 his family took up residence in Corfu. In collaboration with the Greek writer George Katsimablis, he translated poems of some of the greatest Greek poets. He also rendered into English verse the Cretan Renaissance romance Erotokritos, and published, in The Greek Gazette of London episodes from the Karaghiosia shadow theatre, the subject of the book under review here. He wrote original poetry in English and published three poetic collections: The Golden Fleece (1965), Cities of the Mind (1969) and Words in a Crucible (1973). A fourth collection, together with his recollections of his friendship with Lawrence Durrell, was published in 2011 under the title Autumn Gleanings: the Corfu Memoirs and Poems. He died in 1983 in London, where he had been a permanent resident since the end of the Second World War.

His memoir of his evacuation with allied soldiers from Crete in 1941 was the subject of his book Climax in Crete, (London, Faber and Faber. 1946, with a Foreword by Lawrence Durrell). Long out of print, but to be republished in due course by Colenso, Climax in Crete is subject to a long essay by Ian MacNiven in Deus Loci NS16 2018 - 19.

It is impossible to overstate Stephanides’ influence on both Lawrence and Gerald Durrell. He became a close family friend to the Durrells when they lived on Corfu in the 1930’s, a friendship which lasted until Stephanides’ death. Stephanides little collection of translations with Katsimbalis of Greek poets Modern Greek Poems (London, 1926) influenced from the outset Lawrence Durrell’s interest in Greek literature when he discovered the book in the 1930’s.

The three plays here are not translations but adaptations by Stephanides of original Greek shadow-play theatre. Writing fluently in English, the author avoids the trap to translation difficulties and adapts the style and humour for the English reader. The plays are full of invention, wit and humour and are very well worth reading. They are a testament to the breadth of Stephanides skill from scientist to gifted writer. Highly recommended.

Books from Colenso by Stephanides and about Corfu:

Sweet-voiced Sappho, tr. Stephanides
Theotokis, The life and death of Hangman Thomas, tr. J. M. Q. Davies
Theotokis, Corfiot tales, tr. J. M. Q. Davies
Stephanides, Το Χρυσό Προσωπείο / The Golden Face (Corfu poems on pp. 20—29)
Jim Potts, This spinning world (Corfu stories on pp. 30—35 and 73—79)
Jim Potts, Reading the signs (Corfu and Paxos poems on pp. 22–30)
and, soon to be published: Maria Leontsini *The Ionian Islands in the Byzantine Period: a classified bibliography* (divided by islands and then subjects with Corfu having the most entries)

Among books for which Colenso Books is a distributor, there are also

- Stephanides, *Autumn gleanings: Corfu memoirs and poems*
- Maria Strani Potts: *The Cat of Portovecchio: Corfu tales* (a novel despite the subtitle)
- Maria Strani Potts: *Το πούλημα της Πανωραίας* (*The pimping of Panoraia*) — an allegory of the destruction of Corfu by uncontrolled tourist development, in Greek only.

Enquiries and orders for any of the books listed in this section of this essay should be addressed to colensobooks@gmail.com

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**Lawrence Durrell’s Corfu – in books**

Here follows a short reading list of books for those who want to know more about Lawrence Durrell’s writing inspired by Corfu. It excludes, largely, collections or anthologies of writings which include such work. Full bibliographical references are not cited here. The idea is that, given that all the books in his list are believed to be in print and that the general reader will be able to find a suitably priced edition from her/his usual source of book purchase, it is only necessary to list titles and authors. Dates of first publication are given to enable the reader to understand the approximate chronology of these works.

The most obvious title is the novel where Durrell claimed, in his Preface to a 1959 edition of the book, to hear first ‘the sound of [his] own voice’: *The Black Book* (1938), a book heavily influenced by Henry Miller. Island life on Corfu is well reflected in the novel *Panic Spring* (1937), republished in 2008. Although an anthology (parts of *Panic Spring* are published in this book), *Spirit of Place: Mediterranean Writings* (1969) remains a trove of first-hand experience of the Durrell’s life on Corfu, with extensive extracts of Larry’s letters to friends in the book. The text is ably supported by a commentary by Larry’s friend from the days before the family set off to Corfu until Durrell’s death: bookseller and honorary Durrell archivist, Alan G. Thomas.

*Prospero’s Cell: A Guide to the landscape and manners of the island of Corcyra* (1945) is Durrell’s own account of the years he and Nancy lived on Corfu, whilst the account carefully researched by Nancy’s daughter by her second husband (after divorce from Larry), Joanna Hodgkin, is the highly thought of: *Amateurs in Eden: The Story of a Bohemian Marriage: Nancy and Larry Durrell* (2012). Worthy of equal praise is Michael Haag’s *The Durrells of Corfu* (2017), a reliable corrective to the partly fictionalised account of the Durrell family life on Corfu as portrayed in a recent TV drama.

Finally, seek out Hilary Whitton Paipeti’s *In the Footsteps of Lawrence and Gerald Durrell in Corfu* (1998) – see elsewhere in this newsletter for publication and ordering details.

Peter Baldwin
Richard Pine of the Durrell Library of Corfu brings us publishing news

Imminent publication (by Cambridge Scholars Publishing, UK) of the first three volumes in the “Durrell Studies” series:

Durrell Studies 1: Borders and Borderlands: explorations of identity, exile and translation (edited by Richard Pine and Vera Konidari)
Durrell Studies 2: Lawrence Durrell’s Woven Web of Guesses - new essays by Richard Pine
Durrell Stidies 3: The Eye of the Xenos: Letters about Greece 2010-2020 by Richard Pine and Vera Konidari


The publishers are offering a discount of 25% on Lawrence Durrell’s Woven Web of Guesses - put the code “PROMO25” in the appropriate box on the payment page

Publication of issue no. 4 of C.20 – an international journal at www.c20ajournal.com

Contents of C.20, issue no. 4:

Work-In-Progress: “Nessim”, a sequel to The Alexandria Quartet by Frank Kersnowski
Essays 1: “Mentors, Muses and Magicians: Lawrence Durrell’s Peasants” by David Green
Essays 2: “Writers and Self-Exile: J B Priestley on Voluntary Exile” by Jim Potts
Essays 3: “Why is Victoria Hislop so Dull?” by Richard Pine
Poetry: by Moria Daum Kaplan, Gitit Milo, Yorai Sela and David Green
Memoirs 1: “Michael Haag: a Memoir” by Bruce Redwine
Memoirs 2: “The Mas Michel and Noel Guckian” by David Green
Review: Foteini Lika, “Roidis and the Borrowed Muse” reviewed by Richard Pine
Notes: on Durrell and Rilke by Bruce Redwine; on Shakespeare and Migration by Ralph Berry
Obituary: Brewster Chamberlin

News of a republication of Gordon Bowker’s biography of Lawrence Durrell

Dear Peter
To introduce myself, I work for a publisher here in London called Lume Books - lumebooks.co.uk. We have republished Gordon Bowker's study of Durrell as a Kindle edition. I expect you’re familiar with the book. I just wondered if this might be something your members might be interested in. This is the link, below, for any one interested in acquiring this edition of the book -

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Through-Dark-Labyrinth-Biography-Lawrence-ebook/dp/B07NY3G1YB/ref=sr_1_3?keywords=gordon+bowker&qid=1613579028&s=books&sr=1-3

I’m a massive fan of LD by the way....so I was pleased we did this book.

With kind regards
Sophy Lynn

Editors’ note: we hope to hear more from Sophy in the next Herald about her enthusiasm for Larry’s books.
The Herald - editorial guidelines and publication dates

The Herald is the newsletter of the International Lawrence Durrell Society [ILDS] – see: www.lawrencedurrell.org. It will be emailed as a matter of course to all members of the ILDS. It will also be uploaded to www.lawrencedurrell.org for free access to any interested reader.

Should a member wish to receive a printed version of The Herald, they may contact the editors at newsletter.ilds@gmail.com to make the change.

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Readers are invited to contribute articles, news items, events and details of new publications by or about Lawrence Durrell for future publication in The Herald. Articles and contributions should, in the first instance, be limited to no more than 300 words. Unpublished photos or illustrations which may be of interest to readers of The Herald will also be welcome provided the editors are satisfied that appropriate copyright consents have been obtained.

Would-be contributors are advised to email the editors (newsletter.ilds@gmail.com) to discuss the scope of their contribution and its suitability for The Herald.

All inquiries about The Herald should be sent to newsletter.ilds@gmail.com


The views and opinions expressed in The Herald are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the International Lawrence Durrell Society.