



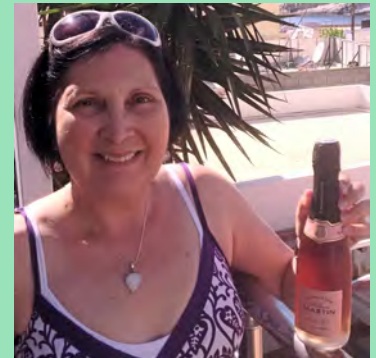
Ryan's Year 16 (RY16) Bottoms Up! Front (BUF): *Living Life Large and Loving It! (4LI)* And that gentle and faithful reader is all you really need to know; nevertheless, the wee details which ensue will no doubt be of more than a passing interest to long-time followers of these Ryan chronicles, which tell and retell, relish and embellish, and wistfully regale one with heretofore untold flights of fancy both fantastic and frenetic featuring our fearless family of Amer-Irish frolicking and festing, feasting and, it must be said, fasting across Europe and far beyond: Ryan Hysterical Year 16 (RY16) is here recounted in this our Annual Wee Epistle 17 (AWE17), arriving as it does annually on or about St. Patrick's Day – *Beannachtam na Feile Padraig!* Happy St. Patrick's Day! – on which



attentive readers will recall we mark the start of the new Ryan Year (RY17). First-time AWE-inspired fans will surely be perplexed by such loquacious legerdemain as this; the provenance of which we owe to our progeny and their precocious preoccupation with acting their age from birth. In short, for Christmas in RY00 (i.e., the year of our eldest's birth) we exchanged friends for family, banter for babies, and correspondence for chaos and it wasn't until March that we'd had half a chance to respond in kind to the many warm wintry wishes well received with our own in return. Suffice to say that having been well remembered then we well remember you now with a raucous rejoinder of "*Happy Ryan New Year 2017!*" and "*Céad Míle Fáilte*" -- A hundred thousand

welcomes! And so this 25<sup>th</sup> volume since that first Gloria-ous Year of Our Progeny (YOOP) 1991AD begins thusly:

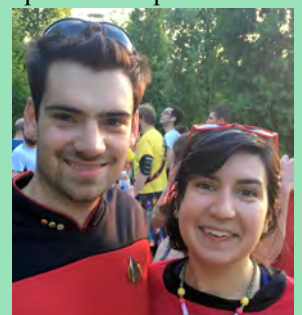
✿ Glamorous Gloria's Gallivanting Gluten-Free Gluttonous Grazing (6Gs) culinary rollercoaster continued un-sated consisting of the Lunch Bunch Ladies, Gathering of Goddesses Group dinners, a Girl Trip to Alba, Italy to an amazing winery La Spinetta (and surrounding restaurants!) to get the best Barolo right off the vine, a raucous Floridastrasse Block Party, a very lazy 10-hour Sunday brunch in the garden ("please pass the champagne"), and of course her famous multi-course elegant dinners "Chez Nous." Finns (2x), friends, and fond feasters shared their good graces gracefully gracing many a lavish table. Having heard that other countries use food as well, Gloria traipsed off on tantalizing trips to Brussels for mussels, England for elegance, and Crete for copious quantities of quality Cretin cravings. Of course, Mike was there too... as he was in Paris for Vivin in Neuilly (tell Eric hello) and Brasserie Lipp in the 7<sup>me</sup> arrondissement. Europeans holiday in August and so did we by moving to an apartment as our house came under renovation (so much wine to move!). Traumatized by the tiny Tree Fort of a home, we sought solace embarking with friends on Rowdy's Rowdy Festwagen to the world's largest wine fest, then beer fest, with many a fantastic German brewery in between. Avoiding the Tree Fort and having survived the 9G fests, 6G used October to visit Carissa and her own dear mother who sadly transitioned in December. Spirits were buoyed by a large turnout of family as well as shared fellowship, which eased us gently into the warmth of Christmas (stay tuned). In 2017 a greatly anticipated event made a triumphal return: 50 of our closest friends paid for the designated driver and the "bus-size wine carrier" for the RY16 visit with 500+ wine-sharing French at *le Salon des Vins des Vignerons Indépendants à Strasbourg*. *hic*



🎯 Michael Me Boy (M<sup>MB</sup>) culminated his academic RY16 efforts by earning a master's degree in Cyber Security at UMCU! And he's now finishing a second master's in Business (well, not at this moment because he's heavily engaged in an epic battle in some fantasy realm keeping us all safe from hazards unknown to the likes of us older folk). In addition to cherishing his cat, contriving to confound his parents with the latest internet "truths" and co-habiting with his phone he's taken to Karaoke: His vocal standard "Bear Necessities" is somehow appropriate for a man of his pursuits. Truth be told, he leads a charmed life. Exhibit A: a hundred thousand drunks on a Friday night at Stuttgart's famous fall beer fest and among them our hero loses his wallet, which is easily recovered the next day at the Lost & Found. Why? It's a charmed life (and it's Germany!). As it was for all of us, Christmas was good to Michael<sup>MB</sup> who got more than underwear (stay tuned).



✿ The fair Carissa it must be said has taken a shine to life and life to her and even though ALTAIR's (Admiring Long-Time AWE-Inspired Readers) will surely remember that King Squirrely, who once went to Pluto, remains Chieftan of the Sacred Family ruling in a new two-story "Cat Tree" domain with Love Cat, his position is precarious as "The Jeff" proposed and Carissa accepted! Congratulations you two!! The Halloween wedding will be in 2018. Well, if moving and getting engaged weren't enough news to be told, Carissa also started work at *Scratch Marketing+Media* moving up the ladder! With her adult life now coming into sharper focus it was time to take the plunge into the deep end of the family gene pool by not only visiting Jeff's parents in San Francisco, but, are you ready for this? By inviting her own parents+sibling to her home for Christmas! Ho Ho Ho and now you know! Christmas in the Ryan home is a lavish and luscious affair (remember: too busy to write cards and all n'all) so it was with more than a wee bit of trepidation that we set forth into the uncharted waters of a '*Christmas-We-Don't-Control*' holiday season...



Well, all worry is wasted and so were we well into the holiday spirits festive with atmosphere and inundated per our custom. It came with ribbons. It came with tags. It came with packages, boxes, and bags. And even though Christmas doesn't come from a store, Christmas with family means a little bit more. Suffice to say, a great time was had by all. Thank ye darlin'! Well these two Bostonites didn't stop there, no sirree next stop Toronto (1<sup>st</sup> TDY), Cincinnati (Jeff's



1<sup>st</sup> half marathon), Vermont (HHH), Iceland of all places for a half-marathon (guess it's too small for a whole one), DC (why?), then off to Chicago in winter to see Hamilton and go to a Christkindlmarkt! (cool, no cold!), which included snow-stranding at O'Hare, and Jeff survived skiing in NH (you see, skiing is Daddy's test for manhood in a young suitor; not dying is the best one can hope for!). But the culmination of such a fabulous year was C&J's whirlwind 2-week Asia tour (#candjapacadventure) Singapore (thanks A&H), Hong Kong, and Tokyo with a stop in LA to see galpal GB. All is well with her and Jeff Thanks be to God (TBTG) n'all...

🍀 The old Volvo+4-1 took us skiing in Garmisch and safely down Rowdy's Rowdy road but MOTN (more often than not) the Jaguar+2 sallied forth into the Black Forest (Cuckoo!), Alsace (Storks!-No, no grandchildren-yet! And no pressure!!), Schwabisch Hall (Beer!), a weekend in

Champagne on a long luxurious libationary Jag jaunt with 24 wine lovers to a rented Chateau in that hallowed region (M. Philippe Martin, our hero, says "Buvez bien, Buvez Martin!"), further afield flying in France we fondly feted the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Lafayette Escadrille (Fantastic!), and enroute finally found Speyer (and the Goldener Hut von Schifferstadt-Google it!), for fun Mike judged a speech contest at Sciences Po in Reims (more bubbly!!!), and even further afield sans Jag we wee two wandered Suffolk in the UK for our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at the scene of the blessed event (thought I was going to say "crime" didn't you?), which coincidentally coincides with the annual 398<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group's annual remembrance at Nuthampstead (great new 398<sup>th</sup> museum there—use Google Maps to find it); 'whilst' in the UK we stopped in at the RAF Bentwaters Cold War Museum, which just received a real A-10 to display and found the epoch memorialized included Mike's time there—and his name was even on the recreated flying schedule in the Ops room! Cool!! A sumptuous Sunday lunch followed



at the Wentworth Hotel in Aldeburgh (next to Mike's former residence) during which we discovered a window into heaven-Sticky Toffee Pudding! Calories be damned Gloria's learnt to recreate it-often ;0)>🍀 While the pleasure of places new and re-newed brings wonder to life, friends found and re-found bring fulfillment and 'tis year t'was no exception in d'at regard and thanks to Karri we met Gus & family again from Argentina; thanks to Bob, we met Blaino & Jeana in their natural habitat; and thanks to Space-A, Boss Hog & June stopped through; thanks to the cornucopia of Italian temptations at the Fischer-Trezza fete we feasted with Baz & Bec, and of course many a fond friend and memory awaited us in Oberammergau. Jeff & Sandy brought Mo & Karen, Rich & Sue are always at home TBTG, and thanks to Mr. Internet we connect far and wide especially with our Singaporean family and friends. Flea markets of all things meant more time with Miss Vicki but MOTN made us miss Mac even more. Esa just stopped by for Sticky

Toffee Pudding (hope there's leftovers:) 🍷 Mike's so called "work" carried him o'er the sea to San Remo, Italy, Kiev, Ukraine, the aforementioned Crete, which is in Greece technically but is a world apart, Brussels, as usual, DC as usual but this time as the SES Mentor on a course for future leaders—very fulfilling, to Montgomery, AL (50 years after moving from there!) to consult with Air Univ (and to a minor league beisbol game with Steve) with a very cool stopover in Charlotte at a German Brauhaus with Clarence, then to Carrolltown, and nauseatingly to DC again. Well, further evidence of our being truly blessed, if it were needed, was our "additional duties" which this year included representing EUCOM in the local community at the grand opening (GO) of the annual Canstatter Wasen (Oktoberfest), the GO of the annual Weindorf (wine fest), riding on the Mayor's carriage in the Stuttgart Fasching (Carnival) parade, and of course the annual St. Paddy's Day reception held by the Honorary Irish Consul General in Stuttgart—needless to say, the Guinness was plentiful, the music enjoyable, the food remarkable, and the occasion memorable (unless the Guinness was too plentiful that is). A real highlight for Mike was Admiral Bob's invitation to be the speaker at his retirement at the impressive San Jacinto monument in Houston, TX. Well done sir!



🍀 Finally, as is our custom please join us in inviting our Lord to watch over our coalition troops as they go into battle today and to give comfort to those who've come home and to the families of those who did not. **Godspeed one and all!**

-- Mike, Gloria, Carissa & Michael Ryan +49 711 680 4039 [RyanMC2@gmail.com](mailto:RyanMC2@gmail.com)

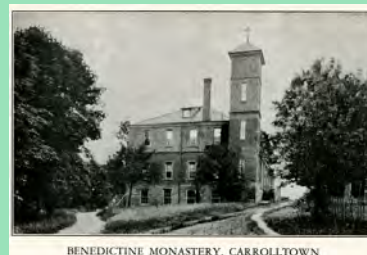
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**LIVE MEMORABLY!**

-- Lovecat, Obi Wan and Moonbeam too!



*Truth be told, this is our last transmission this station as a new challenge awaits...*



BENEDICTINE MONASTERY, CARROLLTOWN