



Слава Україні! Героям Слава!
Glory to Ukraine! To the heroes, glory!

"Ní dhéanfaidh smaoineamh an treabhadh duit"
"You'll never plough a field by turning it over in your mind"



Long long ago on an ocean far far away Ryan New Year 2024 (RY24) began upon the Andaman sea with bounty a plenty, drink in abundance, and the happy memory of y'all'n'all firmly affixed in our heart of hearts Thanks Be to God (TBTG)! We had set afloat to make memories for one'n'all lest this Annual Wee Epistle 2025 (AWE25) be short. Fear not gentle readers for was a banner year as meself and my good lady sallied forth dither and yawn in fine AWEful style recounted here as it annually must in grammar so challenging even AI shudders. So, at the dawning of RY25 *"Beannachtam na Feile Padraig"* or "Happy St. Patrick's" let's pick up the tale, trail, and tally in the Nicobar and Andaman islands' very own Port Blair a missable paradise en route to Trincomalee, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), where a TukTuk tour traversed time afore the Bay of Bengal (no tigers) opened into Colombo, the capital. Tea shops, touching elephants, and lunch at the majestic water

front Gaile Face hotel steeled our courage for a dive into a market thronged with thrice more shoppers than WalMart on Black Friday. Next, Goa, India and the Festival of Colors + the uncorrupted St. Francis Xavier himself set expectations for Mumbai, which didn't disappoint as we indulged for a week at Agni Village, an Ayurvedic Spa (so the Mrs. led me to believe) where the 4 doctors signed us into the "Lifestyles Disorders" detox – I kid you not! Suffice to say we WILL be going back!! 🍀 Whiskeyed via Singapore to Sydney in Oz, we boarded Celebrity Edge for wine, wonders, and well, kangaroos. Melbourne first for Phryne Fisher's house & a German beer hall (Why not?) afore Adelaide and the famed ancestral Penfolds tasting bins (Grange yes). Incredible entertainers Will Martin & Jessica Jane stunned whilst Kangaroo Island and Devils in Hobart (no Bugs) and the mountaintop did not disappoint. Back in Sydney, Mr. Wongs, Luna Park, and the Bishop's Mass made us sad to leave. 🇮🇪 Tokyo via Singapore called: Japanese toilets – amazing – Okonomyaki & Katsu to die for, cherry blossoms everywhere, TV tower &



Tokyo tower vistas galore, Shibuya crossing unbelievable, imperial palace sublime. South on Azamara afloat for Kobe beef, bullet train to Kyoto, temples, palaces, castles of renown – who knew? Mass in Japanese (hint: it's the same) in Kochi + Bonito *katsuo no tataki* with beer fortified for a rainy Taiwan Taxi Tour with iPhone translating driver and a sumptuous buffet in the hotel of Taipei – it's all about the food (IA²tF) – War memorial and Chiang Kai Shek tombs not to be missed and Keelung night street market for dinner then back to the ship to depart for Hong Kong – Myself was quite honored to read "In Flanders Fields" for ANZAC day at 05:30 the next morning on board – Very moving – before a visually stunning sail in and out of HK. 🍀 Da Nang, Vietnam next to visit An Hoi an untouched medieval village. Yummy cooking school then walkabout to see the colored lanterns everywhere, but along the river myself noticed on the other side a brief interlude of green, white, and orange ones. 🍀

Could it be, I said to no one, and lo, it was! Irish pubs round the world!! 🇮🇪 Da Nang beach before Saigon next for hand-made clothes, Pho, a stay at Hotel Rex, and their national fireworks display! What luck. G got the classic hat. M got a beer. Singapore next. 🍀 All Long Time AWE-Inspired Readers (ALTAIRs) and those playing along on Facebook will know the pattern, Curry Puffs, Kaya Toast, Kopi Ping (IA²tF) and lunch with our niece and nephew before stopping in Bavaria for an Augustiner fix en route to Paris for breakfast at Angelinas, lunch at our Café du Trocadero, Chartier for dinner (IA²tF), visits to cimetiere du Pere-Lachaise for an homage to Edith Piaf, shout out to Oscar Wilde, and a wave to Jim Morrison. Road trip with Bison+H to Champagne, Chez Philippe Martin (RIP), Reims Cathedral, and for Mass at Chartres in French (hint: it's the same). Back in Paris visits to friends, breakfast at Bar Suffren, then la Motte Piquet market, lunch at Café du Commerce, dinner at Le Relais de Venise (IA²tF) – have the massive profiteroles (you know why) and Mass at La Madeleine (still the same). 🍀 Briefly in the U.S. myself testified to Congress in support of Ukraine afore jetting to Brussels for Friends of Europe "Ukraine: Costs of Inaction" seminar afore going via Paris to Chisinau to get a car to Odessa to speak at the Black Sea Security Forum. A quick trip to Mykolaiv to see the damage then back to Paris via Moldova for EuroSatory (and Giorgio's beer at the Belgian stall) and home via



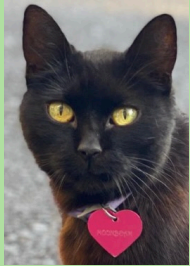
NYC allowing an M&G Poconos weekend en route home. 🍀 The Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) (Irish Catholic) Annual Golf tournament brought friends launching a summer at home TBTG. Friends, family, weddings, and wonders + fireworks, Finns in DC, and a family 70th for big sis preceded alighting for Alaska for another oration vacation (OV). In Anchorage a surprise HS reunion lunched us first then AF reunion launched us in full



splendor on the Kenai river for salmon afore a rainy Seward sallied us seaward and south. Glaciers, eagles, shops, and sunshine, the Red Dog Saloon in you know, and Skagway's White Pass Railway rounded our rambunctious revelry, which continued with whale tails in Vancouver and a wonderful afternoon and eve at The Top of Vancouver. A day tour of Chicago whilst heading home was windee. The AOH Our Lady of Knock Mass (still the same only better), FL friends at home, ZZ Top, Ethnic Fest, the Cambria County Fair, and annual movie night under the stars



(Slapshot) augustly ended a sensational summer. 🍀 OTRA (on the road again), Michael Me Boy (M^{MB}) braved Bavaria's breathtaking beauty with us'ns in O'gau, Garmisch, & Munich whilst parental pairings of personal pals pleased profusely. Oktoberfest, Zugspitze, and Andechs of course, but at the latter we sadly learned our dear Moonbeam finished all nine. Whilst M^Y flew home, Michael the Elder (M^E) and



Graciously Gallivanting Gourmet Gloria (G⁴) dropped into Dover, UK (castle) for an OV. 🇮🇪 Into the breach at Honfleur, then Le Havre, Bilbao and ah, Bordeaux docked downtown. Trois jours (3 days) of favorite French finds: Margaux, Saint Emilion, and old friends Chateau Lamothe de Haux, Canelé, et cous-cous (IA²tF). Santiago de Compostela next for the last 10km of the Camino (in the rain, but no complain) before Porto tasting Taylor's 50 year old – WoW! Lisbon last, but not least a rental car to Termas de Sao Paulo do Sul for a real spa week with FL friends gave us freedom to see the Monastery of Alcobaca (I'm told Mass there is the same), Mateus Palace (had to be done), Castelo and Convento de Cristo in Tomar (must see), and a 3-bottle lunch on a Douro river cruise. Spa was my new happy place

until we stopped at Fatima on our return on the day celebrating the 7th apparition of Our Lady (that Mass was not the same – Powerful!) 🍀 Finally fall on The Farm found friends from Israel, firepits, and football (USAFA – they won – en route to Anchorage for a short OV), Fiddler on the Roof, and a sumptuous 12 days of Christmas in Carrolltown (ancestral home). Flying 2x to FL for new client Starfighters Space (Google) saw a space launch, an amazing Irish pub, n friends old & new. For them M^EG⁴ had to go to Athens, Greece (IA²tF) no oration, but great libation. Clearly failing at retirement a 4th time, ME spent two weeks in DC lobbying of all things for clients whilst regaling audiences far & wide via the magic of television on all t'ings worldly n wise and closing out RY24 taking up a board seat for a company that, like all M^E's clients, will secure our future. 🍀 Well shite, I almost forgot “Céad Mile Fáilte” - "A hundred thousand welcomes." All caveats



now fully observed. 🇮🇪 Dear AWESome reader, as oneself must agree, Yet Another Grace Filled Year (YAGFY) for the likes of us, that wee band of AmerIrish intruding as we do each St. Paddy's to remind you of our love & fidelity havning not done so religiously each Christmas since our progeny presented as ALTAIR will no doubt know. In closing – say it isn't so! – we give thanks to the Creator for teaching us to live in joy not just to enjoy! And may it be so with you true and faithful friend one'n'all'n'all. We raise a glass to you and yours, be you near or



on some foreign shore, for 'tis God's Grace that ere we met, and His true promise that we'll yet be reunited in our love and arm-in-arm in Heaven's pub! *Slainte!* 🍷 Finally, as is our custom please join us in inviting our Lord to watch over our U.S. Allied, partner, and Ukrainian troops as they go into battle today on our behalf, to give comfort and strength for the battles they will fight inside, to bestow mercy and healing on those injured, to welcome home those who gave so much, and to shine His face upon the families at home as they also serve who only sit and wait.

Godspeed! 🍀

The Ryans.

Live memorably!

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