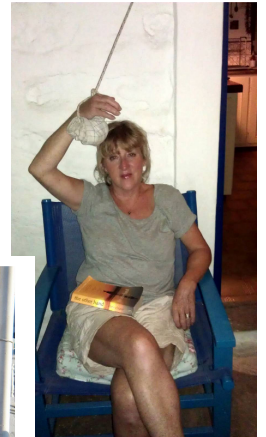




## Sundowners Ashore!

We are forced to consider the possibility of renaming our "Ships Doctor" (with golden lanyard) the Flying Doctor, as the promised sailing holiday turns into a landlubbers island stay. But Peter takes it in good spirits and is up jogging up and over the hills to Pandeli before we are even awake... the locals salute him daily with a "good morning, sir"...and after all, we have the constant sun, swimming every day, good fish restaurants, and "sundowners" on the terrace. We have a fun English/French/Danish evening with Annick & Captain Jeff who bring gifts of sardines for Jan and champagne for me! Very civilised...



While sitting in a local cafe in Aghia Marina, our waitress turned out to be the Danish owner and mayor's wife! After 26 yrs. on Leros, she had many interesting and eye-popping tales to tell of local gossip and corruption, especially regarding the health system, where it is still normal practice and absolutely necessary to bring an envelope with cash if you expect to get treated. If the operation turns out to be more complicated than expected, the surgeon may pause to negotiate a new price! Even the Greeks themselves are thoroughly fed up with the corruption that runs through all positions of authority, so maybe the crisis will be the start of a general clean up throughout.. We have not experienced any of this. The mayor is young, forward-looking and energetic and trying to get things on track. We can see many improvements in the past two years so maybe it's working

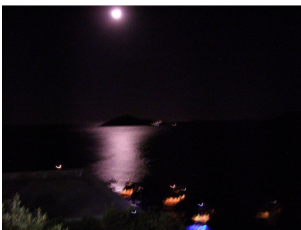


My bizarre posture in these pics is due to a wasp sting which turned particularly nasty- swollen and blistered. Trying to avoid blood poisoning by holding it aloft. Doctor's orders! Able to buy antibiotics over the counter here, so no brown envelopes required!



Amazing moonlight and another wonderful meal at "Dimitris the Bald" always a gracious and welcoming host.

We learn that he was given the restaurant by his mother as, here on the island as in many parts of Greece, "inheritance is matriarchal-it runs from the mother (so the women will own the houses and not be homeless). Open year-round, with the best food and view on the island. Salted mackerel is a Lirian speciality. I love his soft cheese with caramelised balsamico and raisins soaked in ouzo.



Thanks for coming, Peter. Next year a sailing holiday for sure!