



Turtle Bunbury

Every time I walked back to the apartment, I went a different way. I'd learnt that it doesn't matter which way you go in Monte Carlo. You'll still get there. So long as you know the approximate location of the place you are heading to, all you need to do is fasten onto an angle and walk with dogged persistence in that direction. You may have to walk through a tunnel or a shopping mall, or whoosh up a cliff encased in a metal box, or clamber up a thousand steps. But you will get there.

Apart from once when I found myself face to face with an elderly lady in a pinstriped suit who was filling a bright red kettle. She smiled, even as her eyelashes fluttered wearily. I was evidently not the first to spin off piste and wander into her kitchen.

There is a profound joy to walking in Monaco. My preferred commute from my quarters in Beausoleil to the Princess Grace Irish Library took me past the Casino de Monte Carlo, down

the hill towards Eglise St. Devote, then westwards around the bay to the ancient steps running up from Fort Antoine. And then, ruddy-cheeked and wet-kneed, I would pile into the Princess Grace Irish Library and do my best to distract fair Judith, gentle Geraldine, kindly Sile and courtly Claudine from whatever tasks they were otherwise engaged in.

I am presently writing a history of the world as it was back in the year 1847. I actually addressed the friends of the PGIL on this peculiar subject in 2010. And that was the crux of what I was writing during my four wonderful weeks in Monaco in the sun-drenched autumn of 2011.

I think it important that my kind patrons at The Ireland Fund of Monaco understand just how far their generous bursaries can sometimes go. In one particularly eventful stretch, I managed to elope with a Jesuit priest across Argentina, climbed the Great Pyramid of Giza with Werner Siemens, started and finished the Swiss Civil War, killed Mendessohn, slept with a Swedish soprano, enjoyed a circus for the Benefit of Mr. Kite, beheaded a Kazaki Sultan, and established a jewellery shop in Paris in the name of Louis-Francois Cartier.