

MAY 2024 – IN REVIEW

An Evening with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra –

Nam and I had a great time at the ASO concert on Saturday, 4th May, “Heroic”. The Adelaide Symphony Orchestra was magnificent under the baton of Finnish Maestro Osmo Vänskä. The conductor was more a sorcerer, with an intense physicality coupled with minute gestures, creating flows of music that he weaved to and fro. Part 1 was Beethoven's Egmont Overture followed by his First Piano Concerto. The young Uzbek soloist, Behzod Abduraimov, was wonderful to hear. Part 2 was Sibelius' Lemminkäinen Suite, a gutsy wall of orchestral sound that suddenly changes to delicate passages, and then back again. The Orchestra's timing was spot on in a difficult piece, but clearly Osmo Vänskä was on home territory here!

Dame Helen Mirren transforms into Golda Meir –

In what must surely have been a fluke of timing, the movie “*Golda*” starring Dame Helen Mirren in the title role was released recently in the shadow of the current Israeli-Hamas War. My sister Judith and I are old enough to recall the period when Golda Meir was Prime Minister of Israel, at the time a remarkable situation having a woman as the Head of Government of a state. Golda Meir was widely blamed for the almost cataclysmic losses suffered by Israeli forces in the surprise attack by Egypt and Syria in 1973, dubbed the Yom Kippur War. It was this period that the movie dramatization focussed on.

Dame Helen Mirren must have spent hours in make-up each day during filming, having prostheses and all manner of make-up tricks. But she did indeed look like the Golda Meir that I remembered, and Dame Helen wonderfully portrayed the chain-smoking original “Iron Lady”. It was an enjoyable and thought-provoking movie, probably more suitable for those of us in our 60s and older than for younger folk.

Bits and Pieces –

- I enjoyed a visit for lunch from Stephen Collett. Stephen was in one of the first cohort of students in the Probability and Statistics Program when I joined Flinders University.
- The nowadays rather small Branford family gathered at our Lockleys home for Mother’s Day dinner, which was prepared in spectacular style by Nam.

An Anniversary –

Next month is Nam and my 5th wedding anniversary. But Wednesday 29th May was the 15th anniversary of our being de facto spouses! I sent Nam a floral hamper that also included Prosecco and chocolates.



Bring Out Yer Dead –

We finished May, and therefore autumn, with an alarming omen. **Nam and I both have CoViD-19!**

Nam had started feeling some throat symptoms on Sunday 26th May, but a Rapid Antigen Test showed negative. Notwithstanding this, Nam retired to the guest wing. (Subsequently, a PCR test result came back as positive.) Nam had bad days on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. We thought the storm had passed on Thursday, but late in the day I started feeling congested. My temperature rapidly climbed in the evening, and at around 11:00 p.m., Nam was on the phone first to the CoViD-19 emergency help line and then to the emergency after-hours number to our GP Clinic. The doctor sent us an e-script for the antiviral drug combination Paxlovid, and Nam headed off to a 24-hour pharmacy. I qualified for the antivirals being a person of delicate disposition. I am still struggling as at the time of writing. I think my recovery will be long and slow.

Don't call us, we'll call you. 😊