

The Agiot

13th Edition

This Month

Village News
Page 1

This Sceptred
Isle
Page 2

Building
Bridges
Pages 3-5

Featured Prop-
erties
Page 6

Property Pages
Pages 7-8

Village News

By Dr. Lionel Mann
Contributing Editor

“The Agiot” is now under new Administration. In the process of changing the designers have made some alterations and some material has been lost. We are in the process of making adjustments and would ask everyone to be patient while matters are being sorted out.

Our last visitors, Sue and Jock Nallon with Michael and Becky, have left after having enjoyed a warm and mainly dry week while the U.K. was shivering. They swam in the Villa Theodora pool and visited some beaches while exploring the island. This summer has been exceptionally good, even by Corfu standards, and is still holding up very well.

The village is hibernating, but beneath the apparently sleepy surface there is yet plenty of activ-

ity as locals participate in activities that they have been unable to pursue during the summer because of the demands of tourism. The taverna is quite busy most evenings when Kosta and Nitsa entertain friends. The quiet is shattered from time to time by the screeching of chainsaws as people prepare firewood for colder weather.

Lula and Paul have gone away on holiday with the Dickinsons, Lula and Cecilia to Thessaloniki; Paul and David to Mount Athos. We are not sure whether the latter pair will shave off beards when they return – if they return! Visitors to the holy site have been known to disappear, although fiery chariots are hardly likely in this case, and the Landrover is still in reasonably good order.

Mount Athos is a peninsula in north-east Greece, the location of very many Orthodox

monasteries with precipitous access. Women and girls are prohibited entry because the monks feel that the presence of women alters the social dynamics of the community and therefore obstructs the path towards spiritual enlightenment. Female domestic animals are also forbidden, with the exception of cats, which keep down the rodent population, and chickens laying eggs that provide the fresh yolk needed for the paint used in [iconography](#). It is wrong to suggest that the prohibition is in order to reduce sexual temptation, a myth that has earned the Holy Mountain a certain amount of foolish notoriety.

This Sceptred Isle

By Paul McGovern
Editor

People are beginning to discover that there is very much more to Corfu than twenty-four-hour boozing and wild parties; the island is really quite civilised away from a few tourist centres. Families from Britain, some with young children, are coming to settle here, attracted by the safer, less frenetic, healthier life-style, the beautiful scenery, the welcoming ethos. True, you will not find a supermarket along the street, a bingo hall round the corner, a burger-bar next door nor a disco a couple of streets away, but if that is what you want there is no need to quit Britain. Corfu is providing refuge for the steadily increasing numbers who want to escape the declining standard of life in the U.K.

The new British settlers come from all walks of life and represent every age-group; however, in order to obtain a residence permit it is necessary to show reasonable solvency and a good character. Current estimates place the total of expatriate Britons on this island as between eight and ten thousand and that number is increasing daily. There are a number of "clubs" where these meet, but many have reached out and become fully integrated into the community into which they have moved, a very rewarding experience.

Of course there are "drawbacks". Unless you are prepared to live a secluded existence in winter you should settle somewhere within easy reach of Corfu Town. Very rarely do we have snow but there is often plenty of rain in winter; however that season is mer-

cifully short, preceded by a delightful brief autumn and followed by a glorious spring. Around Town there is a fairly good suburban bus service, but it terminates at ten o'clock at night, nine at weekends, making attendance at entertainments, generally commencing at eight or later, impossible unless you own a car or are prepared to use a taxi. Taxi fares, though, are much less than in the U.K.

Families with children should not let that cause them concern. Our own children were aged one and three years when they arrived. Within weeks they had some words of Greek. They attended school in this village, later in Corfu Town, and now they are both at university, one in Greece and one in Britain. Children are very quick at picking up a new language and adapting to a strange environment; the younger the better. It must be said, though, that state schooling here, mornings only and frequently interrupted, leaves something to be desired and needs augmenting by private afternoon/evening tuition, either by tutors or at one of the many private schools that provide this service. Sports coaching, art, dance, computer and music teaching are also mainly fee-paying concerns. To obtain a good education is rather expensive. However, on this island, where nowhere is far from a beach and the sea, with hardly any pollution, and there is a wide range of outdoor activity in a delightful climate, children enjoy a very safe, happy and healthy life. Adults of all ages too can participate in a great variety of recreations; for example the golf course at Ermones is reckoned to be one of the best around the Mediterranean.

Some arrivals rent accommodation, sometimes "testing the water" before fully committing themselves by purchasing. Others first buy land preparatory to building in the long term. Yet others take the plunge by purchasing an established property or an old property for renovation, alternatively by buying land and building to their requirements as a single process. There are also those who build here a holiday home that they rent to visitors when they themselves are not in occupation. We have helped persons of all these categories to relocate here, guiding them over the various bureaucratic and administrative hurdles on the way. To anybody who is genuinely interested in moving here we can refer a number of very satisfied clients.

There is always something to match most pockets. We have on our books a wide range of properties from £30,000 for a village cottage needing some renovation to a spacious luxury villa at £2,000,000. Our portfolio of land is equally varied. Away from towns a minimum of 4,000 square metres is needed for building 200 square metres. We are also able to help persons seeking rental accommodation.

There are still very many places on the island that have not been scarred by tourism. OCAY Services can offer an extensive variety of options to those seeking a comfortable, secure, civilised, unpolluted environment. Access our website at www.propertycorfu.org.

Building Bridges

By Dr. Lionel Mann
Contributing Editor

Midway through my army posting to B.A.O.R from 1945 to 1948 I was appointed Administration Sergeant (second-in-command to the Padre, virtually hotel manager) and Organist of 5th Division Church House. The job was something of a sinecure as I had a very reliable German secretary, Frau Schroeder, who had been running the place as well as acting as liaison with the German staff from its inception. Most of the time she prepared the necessary documents that I needed simply to scan and sign.

Church House was located in a palatial Schloss built by Baron von Cramm, a famous tennis player of the inter-war years, situated in a picturesque location in the foothills of the Harz Mountains between Hannover and Gottingen. At one time it had been commandeered by the Hitler Youth, who had added accommodation extra to its thirty rooms in the form of sturdy cottages that now housed our German staff and their families, Displaced Persons who in 1944 and 1945 had fled the Red Army invasion from the east. The Youth had also added bullet-proof shutters to most windows!

Our nearest town was Alfeld and I was able on most weekday mornings to accompany our ration truck on its way to Hannover as far as Alfeld's church, where I would practise upon the organ for an hour or two until picked up on the truck's return journey.

The organ was an ancient instrument, allegedly designed by J.S. Bach and tonally absolutely glorious, but it needed to be pumped by hand. An elderly local living nearby

would hasten whenever he heard me arriving. He would pump the blower lever very reliably and every fifteen minutes his hand would appear around the corner of the instrument. I would respond by donating a cigarette and receive another quarter of an hour's wind. Since we were handed out 150 cigarettes weekly with our rations I did not consider my helper's demands extortionate! At that time "fraternisation" with the local populace was supposed to be forbidden, but we were a long way from officialdom.

One morning I was waiting for the returning ration truck in the shallow porch outside the main door of the church. It was teeming with rain and the porch afforded little shelter; I was becoming somewhat soggy. The door of a house nearly opposite opened and an elderly lady beckoned me. No fraternisation? Any port in a storm! It seemed very unlikely that the venerable *hausfrau* was a Werewolf intent upon luring a member of the Occupying Forces to his death. I sprinted for cover.

At the time I spoke no German and my hostess had no English, so we conversed by signs. While I was sipping my first and only experience of bitter acorn-coffee (also being drunk by my saviour and poured from the same jug!) she indicated a portrait over the mantelpiece. It showed a very austere military man with large moustache and crowned with the spiked helmet of the First World War German military. From signs I learnt that her husband had been killed in France in the first twentieth-century madness to convulse Europe. Then I was shown a framed photograph of

a Luftwaffe officer, his wife and two little boys. The airman had disappeared over Russia, his wife been killed by Allied bombing in the second lunacy, and this grandmother now had the care of her two grandsons, presently at school.

Organ playing is an energetic pursuit and I often provide myself with a bar of chocolate to keep up my strength. Most of that morning's supply remained and when I placed it upon the table with indication that the boys might like it the old lady's eyes fairly glistened; she took my hand into both hers launched into what was obviously a fervent expression of gratitude.

The truck arrived and hooted. There was no way that I could conceal where I had been and I was not particularly concerned. Neither was the driver. When I told the Padre he complimented me. "We cannot perpetuate enmity. The time has come to build bridges." Our cook was even more practical. "We can't have our Sarge poisoned." He handed me a packet of coffee to take on my next visit!

When sharing real coffee the next morning I was handed a short letter, written in impeccable English by ten-year-old Johann and also signed by eight-year-old Erich, thanking me for the chocolate. It was accompanied by a gift of pencil drawings, all on coarse grey paper. It was clear that the elderly lady and the two little ones were living on the very edge of destitution. I later discovered that in cold weather, as soon as the boys had returned from school and eaten a meal, all three huddled together in bed to keep warm, lacking fuel for heating.

Continued on Page 4

Building Bridges
Continued from Page 3

There was plenty of wood from fallen timber in the surrounding forest, but two little boys and their elderly grandmother were incapable of collecting more than a very small amount.

Frau Schroeder willingly assisted in preparing booklets from the surplus of paper in our office and I arranged with the driver of a ration truck to bring back a couple of packets of coloured pencils from the NAAFI in Hannover. The result was a veritable flood of drawings awaiting me when I visited. I also maintained the supply of chocolate.

Until the Easter school holiday I had never met the boys, but then one morning when I was playing there was the patter of little feet in the aisle below.

I stopped and looked over the parapet of the gallery. "Johann and Erich?"

"Ja". Eager verification.

"Would you like to come up?"

Prompt assent was followed by a rapid and noisy scramble up the staircase. Both shook hands with formal click of heels, not only with me but also with the blower, whom they obviously knew well.

The pair perched one either side of me on the organ stool while I explained simply how things worked. Johann's English, learnt at school, was good and he translated when younger Erich did not understand. Then I played some Bach. Reaching the end of a page I made to turn it, but a little hand beat me to the draw.

"You read music?"

"Ja, we play geige - violin". I was entertaining musicians!

Back at their home they offered

to play to me. I accepted, steeling myself to receive a kiddy-scrape. Johann took up a little three-quarter violin - and proceeded to play from memory the first movement of Bach's E major Violin Concerto, perhaps a little on the slow side but with perfect bowing and intonation. I was astonished! In the School Orchestra back home I had played viola when our star eighteen-year-old violinist had performed that work no better than this diminutive youngster. Erich followed with a polished performance of a little Mozart minuet. He shared the violin with his brother.

Johann borrowed from his teacher the reduction for keyboard of the orchestral score and a couple of days later we played the entire Bach concerto with me accompanying on the organ. The pumper was ecstatic and launched into a torrent of German.

"He says that we should give a concert here," Johann translated.

I advised consulting the church's pastor. Approval was quickly forthcoming and we set about preparing a programme to be performed at the end of the summer school holidays so that we should have time to practise together; I seldom saw the boys during school terms, though the supply of chocolate and drawing equipment was maintained.

Our drivers had seen "Sarge's skinny little brats" and I often took contributions from our kitchen. Most of our visitors were young soldiers reared on a diet of "bangers and mash" and therefore rejecting the more refined offerings that graced our tables. Our German staff benefited accordingly, as now did also my friends in town.

I also met the boys' friends. It is very difficult to maintain serious demeanour when being ceremoni-

ously introduced on a riverbank, damp boys ineffectually "clicking" heels while shaking hands, soaking girls curtseying, with not a stitch of clothing amongst them. The river ran at the back of their houses and it was a very hot summer!

Johann's violin was really rather small for him so I enlisted the clandestine assistance of Frau Schroeder and Fraulein Krantz, the Padre's secretary, in finding a full-size instrument. They made contact too with Johann's teacher. I had started smoking to use some of the weekly supply, but now I stopped in order to accumulate a store of "currency".

Johann's teacher was Herr Berenstein, a former leader of the Munich Opera Orchestra and a Jew. Under the Nazis he had been removed and with his family sent to a concentration camp. His wife and young children had "gone up the chimney", but he had been saved by the "cultured" camp commandant who had formed an orchestra of inmates. However, when liberation by the advancing Russians became imminent the S.S. guards had gathered the musicians together and broken their fingers. I rather hoped that in my War Crimes prosecution days I had helped to send some of those brutes to the gallows. Now Berenstein could no longer play well, but he could certainly teach.

In due course my helpers tracked down a full-size violin that met with Berenstein's approval. For the princely sum of one thousand cigarettes I bought it and it went to the teacher to be re-strung and adjusted. One Saturday when the boys were not at school I took it along and presented it to the incredulous youngster.

Building Bridges
Continued from Page 4

Grandmother at first tried reproving Johann for "begging", but was soon convinced by his obvious astonishment that such had not been the case. It was barely a week of intensive practice before the boy adjusted to the larger instrument.

On the evening of the concert the Padre lent me his car and driver. Some fifty metres from the church door we were halted by the crowd. I was amazed and somewhat anxious, never having expected such an audience. Well aware of curious scrutiny I made my way through the throng to the door. However, never in all my time in Germany both then and on many subsequent visits, alone or with my choirs and pupils, have I encountered any animosity and I have made quite a number of friends.

A little platform had been erected in the gallery so that Johann could be seen by the audience; the parapet was quite high, but perched on the organ stool I could see well that the church seemed to be packed by the time for starting. The burst of applause when Johann mounted his rostrum surprised me; never before had I heard clapping in church.

To this day I can remember our programme: Johann played a Corelli Sonata, a couple of Brahms's Hungarian Dances (the only time I have accompanied those in church!) and the complete Bach Concerto. Between those items I played an Introduction and Allegro by John Stanley and J.S.B.'s "Little" E Minor Prelude and Fugue. We had spent very many hours rehearsing and all went very well. Doubtless inspired by the occasion, though, the young maestro

launched into the finale of the concerto at a cracking pace that we had never before attempted. I feared for his execution of the double-stopping section, but he whisked through it as of manner born. At the end, however, he mopped his brow with the back of his bow hand, "Phew", a little-boy gesture that evoked laughter from the audience. They applauded - and applauded - and applauded.

German audiences attending concerts in church must finish with cricks in their necks. Johann had been primed what to do if encored. He went down from the gallery and walked to the front of the church to perform a movement from a Bach suite for unaccompanied violin. He walked back through another torrent of applause to where Erich, who had turned my music, and I had come to stand at the back of the church. We sent him back for another encore, an Austrian folksong which his teacher had arranged as a double- and triple-stopping exercise, apparently simple but very effective.

As Johann made his way back towards us he was halted by a man who stepped from the pews and started to address the audience.

"Who is that?" I asked Erich.

"Der Bürgermeister!" The little one was obviously impressed.

The little speech ended with more applause and Johann was released to go up into the gallery and to place his beloved violin in its sturdy wooden case. ("He has it in bed for nights," Erich had impishly confided to me.) The Bürgermeister also came to thank me before I went back to the schloss.

That event marked a turning-point in the family's affairs. The Bürgermeister and other town dignitaries saw to it that they lacked no more. I witnessed a huge delivery of logs before the winter set

in! However I kept up my association until I left upon demobilisation. Johann now travelled weekly to Hannover where he received music tuition and played in the young persons' orchestra at the university, all subsidised.

I had no need to worry when I was demobilised; Irma Krantz promised to keep an eye upon the family. For some time, though, I missed those affectionate little ones. We had a desultory exchange of letters that soon ceased. My own studies left no time for anything else.

Some thirty years later I was travelling south from Hamburg by rail when I realized that the train would pass through Alfeld. Would it stop? I had my luggage ready and sprang out on to the platform.

The house had received a face-lift and a stranger answered the door. She knew nothing of previous occupants but summoned the lady from next door. "You were sergeant and you did not speak German then." This had been one of the little girls, the boys' school-mates.

Yes, when Church House closed Fraulein Krantz had moved to a ski-instructor job and taken the family with her. The lady knew no more, but I found that very reassuring. Johann Schmidt is a very common name and I have been unable to discover if one such has ever held an illustrious music appointment. Anyway, the very warm welcome, including a meal, that I received from my informant and her husband before resuming my journey, suggested that my bridges had been well built.

Featured Properties

Villa Felice



This magnificent villa of four hundred and fifty square metres stands atop a hill on the outskirts of Almiros on the north coast of Corfu, within a mile or so of the lively small town of Acharavi.

The property is set in eight thousand square metres of land with three hundred and sixty degree views, which include the mountain, the coast and

Lake Spiridon. The entrance to the property is along a firm track leading from the main north coast road. Therefore the property combines privacy with easy access.

There are 4 bedrooms in this almost finished villa which include in-built wardrobes.

The property has under floor central heating, double glazing and a lot of thought has gone into the layout, especially in the kitchen area which features an island unit and from the very spacious lounge entrance area sweeps a majestic marble staircase to the first floor.

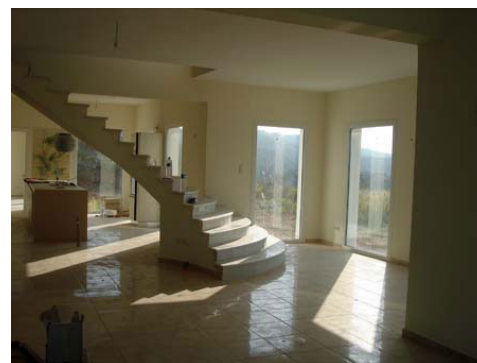
This really is a magnificent opportunity for the right people.

The owner is quite prepared to finish the property with the inclusion of landscaping, patios and a swimming pool, which is reflected in the required price. However, the owner is also prepared to sell the property as it is, and offers will be considered on their mer-

its.

The owner has put lots of energy, love and effort into this property but for private reasons has to return to her homeland and therefore does not require the property any longer.

We encourage viewings for this magnificent property.



Price: 2 million euros

Agios Valley Views



The villa built in 1992, is approached by a narrow sealed lane from the main Ropa Valley road. It occupies a mainly level hilltop site of three-and-a-half thousand square metres, grassy and interspersed with bushes and small trees. The front of the villa commands a spectacular one-hundred-and-eighty degree view extending from the hills of Vassilaki, along the Ropa Valley and its surrounding hills, round to Vatos.

The building itself comprises the

main villa, approximately 130 square metres in size and a guest annexe that is almost its mirror image. Entry is across a covered veranda that comfortably seats six for *al fresco* dining. The doorway leads into a large fitted kitchen from which a short flight of stairs leads into an open-plan L-shape lounge-diner. French windows afford access from lounge on to a balcony overlooking the valley. There is similar access at the rear to a balcony that basks in morning sunshine.

From the kitchen another flight of stairs leads down to a shower-toilet and two bedrooms, one capable of accommodating either a double or twin beds and the other very spacious extending beneath the annexe. It has two French windows opening on to a large patio graced with oleanders and palm trees. All bedrooms have built in wardrobes.

The adjoining guest annexe is virtually identical with the exception of the large bedroom.

All windows and doors have recently been re-equipped with alumin-

ium shutters.

To one side is a large brick shed about 9 to 10 square metres, used for gardening equipment and other appliances. Space to the other side affords drive-in parking for three cars. the owners have always maintained the villa in very good condition, annually occupying it for the summer months.



Price: 300.000 euros

PROPERTY PAGES



Vernoukos

The two-storey three-bedroomed centrally heated home stands high above the sea, an infinity pool lies between it and the forested terraces which tumble away to the shore.

The often overused accolade 'Location, Location, Location' is richly deserved here.

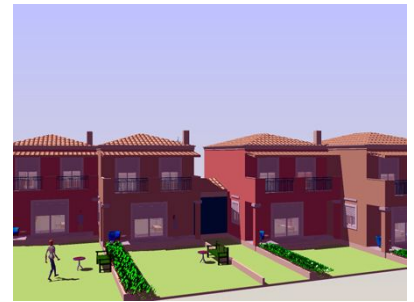
Price: € 1,200,000



Vine Cottage - Hlomatiana

Just 5 minutes from Messonghi, this village house has been totally refurbished. The dwelling size of this property is 65 square metres and features two-bedrooms, a shower room and open plan kitchen, dining area and lounge. Patio doors lead on to a verandah with sea views over the West Coast.

Price € 93,000



Agios Ioannis

Set in the village of Agios Ioannis, 5 miles from town, is this new development of 4 linked-detached houses, set in a quiet corner of the village. Plans are drawn and approved and available. Building is due to commence shortly. Each house is of two storeys, comprising 100 square metres altogether, and each has its own small garden.

Price € 175,000 (each)



Agios Martinos

This is a modernized, old stone, mid-terrace cottage. Only five minutes away from Acharavi and features magnificent views across to Albania. This property has a small central room/hallway with two rooms leading off which could be used as bedrooms or one as a lounge area. A new kitchen (English) has been fitted along with a refurbished bathroom/shower room.

Price € 85,000



Land in Katounas

These are two adjoining plots of land, each of 4,000 square metres. This gently sloping land is easy to build on and features fantastic uninterrupted sea views. Both plots can be bought together (combined cost of €340,000), or separately each priced as below. Nearby is the beautiful village of Kassiope with its traditional harbour.

Price: € 180,000 (per plot)



Land in Danilia

This is a very picturesque piece of land. The buyer would have an option of dividing this piece of land and building two separate properties each of about 130 square metres. Water and electric utilities are nearby, and this land lies a short distance from the main route between Gouvia and Aqualand.

Price: € 110,000

PROPERTY PAGES



Hlomos

This is a two-bedroom village terrace cottage situated in the beautiful mountainside village of Hlomos. Newly modernized and renovated it features a working fireplace and a good quality spiral staircase leading to a top floor with amazing views. This is a new property to our website and well worth viewing.

Price € 120,000



Pearcroft Villa - Ag. Ioannis

A four-bedroomed detached house in the Ropa Valley, Agios Ioannis. This house features a very large family kitchen with solid oak units, a large lounge with corner fireplace and a wooden staircase with marble steps leading to a large landing area, suitable for converting to a snug or study. Well maintained lawns and gardens surround this property.

Price € 360,000



Velonades Mountain Property

A small terrace cottage in the village of Velonades. This property also includes a piece of land 30 metres from the cottage, which is buildable. This property could serve as a temporary home whilst building on nearby land, and could then be rented out. An ideal buy for someone in the building business.

Price € 42,000



Rose Villa-Afra

This is a three double-bedroom bungalow, 110 square metres in size and about ten years old. It is situated in Afra with perfect accessibility for Corfu Town. It features a modern kitchen with fitted hob and oven, a fireplace in the lounge, oil-fired central heating, air-conditioning, water purifier and double glazing.

Price € 214,000



Panorama Development

Stunning, innovative, moulded to the terraces villas, enjoying unspoilable views across the valley. Both three-bedroom villas are one hundred square metres basic with extra covered area in the linkage. The villas are centrally heated and feature spiral oak stairwells.

(See website below for details)

Price: € 326,000



Villa Alan-Ag.Pandeleimonas

Situated in the quaint village of Ag. Pandeleimonas, is this charmingly renovated and restored house, 160 square metres in size. It has two bedrooms, a bathroom, kitchen and open-plan lounge-diner. On the ground floor is a garage and workshop. A gallery on the first floor gives out to extensive views. Included in the price is an integrated 40 square metres self-contained studio flat.

Price: € 230,000