

The Agiot

3rd Edition

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Sandy

By Paul McGovern
Editor

We are saying goodbye to our dear friend Sandy, who has lived with us at Villa Sofia since 1995. Many of you will know our friend. We found her [Ricky and I] in the lanes outside the village, holding up a long queue of traffic in both directions. She was in the middle of the road, slinking and shivering and, stubbornly refusing to move. We picked her up and carried her off to a Chinese restaurant for the evening, where the waiters spoilt her with tidbits and water. All this time she was limping, but funnily enough this limp had cleared entirely by the following morning, when she found herself ensconced on our patio.

The villagers were not used to dogs being taken for a walk through the village back then. As I passed them, instead of the normal Kalimera [good morning] it was either "where are you going with that dog?" or "Mind my chickens". Sandy was always on a lead in those early days, but with time she seduced the Greek population, as she had us. One day I

walked her free through our village, and soon thereafter, her collar-which I'd bought soon after she came- was taken off. It is still hanging on a hook in the shed.

She gave birth to nine pups but none outlived her.

Slowly but surely she staked out her territory. Our home and garden, the front lane, the plateia, the taverna, several of the neighbours' gardens, Villa Theodora and anybody who stayed therein. Kostas in the Taverna had a strict rule against dogs then, he even had signs on his door banning them. Sandy was often inside the taverna; it was funny to see the old man refuse to look at her so that she might stay.

Her one vice was her penchant for chasing birds, especially chickens- not a healthy occupation for a dog in Agios. Once the blood was in her nose she was unstoppable, and any amount of calling and shouting would not keep her from her prey. Once I had to hit her with a nearby umbrella [Nitsa's, which promptly fell apart] to get her to release a

victim. It was the only time I hit her. This hobby of hers only really diminished with age and arthritis. The amazing thing was she was never caught in the act, and had an unblemished reputation with the villagers.

She was poisoned twice, hit by traffic three times in all, she fell down a well one day. She came on thousands of walks, and camped in the mountains with me and my son. She sat and watched goldfish in the pool for hours at a stretch, she loved grapes and walnuts and visitors. The little girls from Britain tied ribbons in her ears to make her even prettier than she was. She never snarled or raised a protest. Mrs White kept her in top style. When we walked her tail rotated like a helicopter rather than wagged. When I was out-of sorts she came to my side and nudged me gently, 'it's okay Dad'. She liked me to sing to her, even though I can't and her favourite was 'Til there was you'.

One day she chased the jeep as I set off to town school with the boys so I had to take her all the way in.

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The Agiot online

By Peter H.
Contributing Editor

We are now up to 49 registered users. Sadly, there does not seem to be much happening on the fo-

runs... The webcam will hopefully be up and running within a few days, so why not stop by and see what is happening on the village square? This is a community

site, so please join in. If you have any ideas of how you would like the site improved, please drop us a line.

<http://www.theagiot.net>

Village news

By Dr. Lionel Mann
Contributing Editor

Recent visitors include the newlyweds, Ian and Tessa Ramage and their children, Paul and Sally Grove again, Mickey Clark, Frank and Elizabeth Gaskell and Ricky Collier. Mark and Jenny often come over from Afra. Kathy Muir dropped in for a day with Ray, her husband. She was dressed quite demurely this time!

Following our blazing summer winter seems to have come early this year with a succession of thunderstorms and comparatively low temperatures. The traditional "Little Summer of Saint Dimitri" has not materialized.

We have very sadly to mention that Sandy, Paul's and Lula's Springer Spaniel, has died. Too deaf to hear them, she had been injured by being twice run over by cars, but it was really old age that told, about 110 years by human equivalent. She held on long enough to greet her owners back from the U.K. and few days later she just stopped breathing. Purrsephone is missing her partner.

Some late, but happy news; Tracy Hawkins and Dave are proud to announce the birth of their baby girl Molly. She was born at 1.37pm on Tuesday 16th October 2007 weighing 6lbs 8oz. We wish them all the very best.



Baby Molly, Ahhhhh!

Sandy - Continued from page 1

On a long walk in Spring she drank from the sea, became seriously dehydrated, and wandered away from our tent; it took me a long time to find her in the dawn. She was sitting like a statue on the shore of Lake Korrision; I had to carry her back to base. The elastic went on my shorts and they fell gradually ankle-wards. No problem I thought at this time of day, nobody about. As the sun was rising a car came past, by this time the shorts were round my feet. I often wonder what sort of pervert the driver thought he had encountered that morning.

She recovered from that expedition but it was the last of her serious walks. She was content thereafter with the village round.

Shortly before we went to England in September she was run over, a rear leg broken. Being deaf, she could not hear the cars coming. She survived the operation, a metal pin in her limb. She began walking again. Whilst we were away, another vehicle broke her toes. At first she seemed okay but she sank after

that and could barely walk. She would have passed on but for the devotion and kind attention of Anna and Sally, Nitsa and Paul Grove. She was just waiting for us to come home I think. When we did she was perking up and the old tail was wagging again. We took her to our home and she had three days on the rug, watching telly and having one last meal of feta with me.

She fell asleep and didn't wake up. We buried her in Sofia's garden the next day, under her walnut tree. Nitsa often called her scata vroma [shit-dirt] but, like Anna and Lula, she was crying at the graveside. Nuala Ramage drew a lovey picture of our friend.

Goodbye dear Sandy.



News from the NEC

By Paul McGovern
Editor

The Oca team made their first Exhibition at the NEC exhibition centre on September 28th-30th. For all of you who came during the three days to lend moral support we send a big big thank you.

The 27th was our set-up day, time to build up our small stand. Alan and Honey were very busy, especially with the display of models of villas that were a centrepiece of our show. There was a lot of carrying and fetching and here is owed a thank you to friend Barry, for hauling quite a number of our boxes etc from his home.

There were seven of us taking part; Alan and Honey, Lula, Peter McGovern, Peter .H, Trevor and myself.

We opened on the 28th, Stand F96.

We left our 'digs' in South Yardley, where we were being well looked after by Michael and Marion at the Central Guesthouse. In the porch of their comfy home was a figure of the Bhudda; Marion urged us to rub his tummy each morning for luck. I did on the Friday and then became superstitious enough to continue the ritual for the rest of the stay. We were becoming quite attached by the weekend.

Got to the show by about nine and OPEN DOORS at ten. We'd never done this before, so the first two or three hours of quietness were a bit disturbing; I was beginning to think, 'what I am doing here?' But it picked up gradually as the day wore on. Free raffle tickets started to go; the prize a free week's stay in Villa Theodora for May 2008.

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Pious Puss

By Dr. Lionel Mann
Contributing Editor

He was only a small cat, little more than a kitten, and of very friendly disposition. Greeting warmly in the churchyard four of my choristers who had arrived early on a chilly spring morning for Sunday Mass, he was rewarded with a hearty petting and, having established a firm comradeship, he followed them into church. It was pleasantly warm in there; every day three services were held, at least two sung on Sundays, saints' days and other festivals, so even in the depth of wartime winter the church was always heated.

At St. Martin's we prided ourselves upon the cordial welcome that we offered to newcomers. There were no others yet around so the four took it upon themselves to extend hospitality to this latest arrival. Obviously he might be the object of some embarrassing curiosity so they looked for some place where he might be screened from prying eyes. Ah, of course - the pulpit! They led him thither, made sure that he was comfortable upon a bed of padded kneelers, closed the pulpit door and left him to his devotions.

Being of somewhat retiring dispositions the four did not boast of their kindly action and preparations for Mass went ahead in their usual orderly manner. I always played for fifteen minutes or so before a service. At St. Martin's there was no brainless babble in church. Every arrival was handed prayer-book and hymnbook and greeted cheerfully by a sidesman in a muted whisper. Women wearing clattering high heels, men wearing army boots, children on leather soles tiptoed noiselessly over the highly polished parquet floor to their places. Although even on a normal Sunday we had standing-room-only congregations I could always play quite softly in the prevailing silence.

My music had been carefully timed. At three minutes before the hour I was aware from the reflection in the mirror on the organ console of the passing behind me of the four pairs of blue-robed proba-

tioner choirboys who took their places in the rear choir-stalls. With about thirty seconds to go I came to the end of my music, changed books on the music desk, glanced up the church to where the crucifer flanked by a pair of candle-bearing acolytes stood ready at the door of the choir vestry to lead in the choir, and waited.

The gentle musical tinkle of the sacristy clock broke the silence. I counted the eleven strokes and then played over the first line of the hymn. We always started with a "rabble-rouser". Hit 'em for six to get them in the right mood! With more than three hundred, many of them service-men from the nearby barracks, packed into the church the singing was a thunderous roar and I could use the full power of the organ. Again in my mirror I saw the eight white-and-blue pairs of singing-boys and choristers processing into the choir-stalls behind me and then, on the periphery of my vision, the white, scarlet, purple, silver and gold of acolytes and priest emerging from the sacristy door beside to organ to take their places in the sanctuary.

The hymn came to an end and I prepared to accompany the choir in the singing of the Introit Psalm, number 43 as this was no festival, only a Sunday in Lent, while the priest censed the altar. But what was wrong with the organ? It was emitting an eerie wail! There was no time to waste, however, and we started the psalm, the choir's singing drowning out the foreign sound.

Yes, there was definitely something wrong with the instrument. When I stopped playing it seemed as though air were escaping through one of the pipes. I pushed and pulled each drawstop in turn and the noise ceased. The boys' unaccompanied responsories to the priest's intoning were coordinated through a mere finger movement by the leading chorister on either side of the choir so I had time to change books again. Usually I could maintain contact with the eight choristers on the opposite side of the chancel by

looking in my mirror, but today it seemed as though every one of them were avoiding my eye.

Accompanying the singing of the Kyrie Eleison, in Lent a simple plainchant setting known by everybody, sung by everybody and accompanied by fairly loud organ, restarted the organ's troubles and once more I fiddled with drawstops until the bleating ceased. There was no time to switch off the wind; I needed to play almost continuously through Sung Mass. It seemed that unless I played very softly I could not avoid the trouble. At first I had wondered whether there were a wailing infant in the congregation, but a mother would have seen very promptly to that. I should need to phone the organ-tuner as soon as I later reached home; he would not like being called out on a Sunday, but the fault would have to be rectified before Evensong.

Accompanying the Gradual hymn between epistle and gospel result in another bout of wailing, but by now I was becoming suspicious. Even when I turned my head to look directly at the opposite side of the choir no boy would meet my eye. Was that strange sound really coming from the organ's pipes above my head or from a source somewhere to my left? It sounded almost like a cat mewling. Aged thirteen myself, I had no illusions as to the mischief that any lively boy might perpetrate. Playing for the Creed elicited the by now common sequel, a grotesque concluding ululation; to my relief and amusement I realised that the instrument was not at fault.

My conclusion was almost immediately confirmed. Father Morgan ascended the stairs to the pulpit, opened the door and stumbled. "Damn! Who put those kneelers there?" He crossed himself. "In the name of the Father, ..."

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Pious Puss - Continued from
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A little probationer started to laugh, but was immediately silenced by the glacial stare of the Head Chorister, himself fighting desperately against merriment. I dared not meet anybody's eyes.

The latest addition to our congregation, doubtless thinking that the service were ended since he had been released from confinement, and that he was conforming to local custom, processed steadily up the centre aisle, singing cheerfully - perhaps somewhat tunelessly - at the top of his voice. Having enjoyed a "sing-along" with everyone else he was now indulging in a solo effort - and delaying the start of the sermon. At the back of the church a little girl darted out of the pews, picked him up, cuddled him into purring and took him outside.

From then on Mass proceeded in its usual well-ordered fashion. We would never endanger our musical reputation, but I believe that no boy in the choir dared look at any fellow chorister. I kept my eyes very closely on my books. When all twenty-five of us were crammed tightly together, kneeling at the sanctuary rail for communion, I was sure that I felt occasional tremors of merriment from the boy jammed against my right side. My left was tight against the wall.

Upon entering the choir vestry after the service to dismiss the choir I found only the Head Chorister and his deputy there.

"Sir, we dismissed them. They were rather - bubbly, sir."

Although both were slightly older than I, and in the same form at school, they yet addressed me as "sir" when on choir duty - and made sure that all the other boys did so too! (I shall not tell you what the pair, my very good friends, called me at other times. Chris, his father away commanding a North Sea M.T.B., always gained first place in the form whilst Klaus and I had to settle more or less alternately for second

and third, however desperately we contested Chris's primacy.)

We collapsed on to chairs and roared with long-suppressed laughter.

"Sir, sir, - I nearly - I nearly died when I saw you - when I saw you messing about - messing about with the organ." Tears were streaming down Christopher's face. "They didn't tell us about that cat until we were lining up ready to start."

Klaus, his deputy, Austrian refugee, son of Jewish scientist father and Catholic mother, singing in an Anglican choir, was a brilliant young Viennese-trained musician. Yet second-formers, he was principal cello and I principal viola in the school symphony orchestra, another bond between us. Now he was fairly doubled up, helpless with amusement.

Although so young I had already realized that there are times when authority has to turn a blind eye; neither did Father Morgan ever refer to the incident. However, it became a cherished part of the annals of St. Martin's choir and was regularly recalled with great relish, even after all the choristers of that era had "superannuated". I wish that I knew what happened to precocious pious puss. He deserved a good home, one that would appreciate his musical talent.

NEC - Continued from
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We were all pretty pleased by the end of the day and starving too. We judged it as quite a satisfactory opening to our campaign, and at least nothing disastrous had occurred. The buffet at the Indian restaurant took a hammering that night. Steve and Jo had driven up from Kent, and even booked into the same guesthouse.

Day two the Saturday, and numbers are picking up. Micky and Pat were welcome visitors, as were Karen and Rich. Karen had designed our catalogues and Press releases. Thank you Karen! Keith came just to wish us well-that was nice. Derek and Audrey came and we chatted for quite a good while

The last day, Sunday, was the busiest. By the close we had received a lot of interest in Corfu and quite a number of enquiries. Robert flew down from Glasgow and was soon into designs and drawings and Robin and Christine called in.

We broke down the stand and that was a lot quicker than the construction. The large Exhibition Hall was eerily sad without its buntings, displays and crowds. During the close season Villa Theodora will be host to several couples, interested in property or land in Corfu, to look around and maybe find their dream, or investment, here. The calendar is filling up with these visitors, but for anybody wishing to book for three days free stay between now and May, then please phone Trevor on (UK) 01227 722462 or Paul on 00 30 26610 58177. The three days will be a relaxed opportunity to see the island in its quieter mode, inspect tempting villas or land, find out all the pros and cons of buying, without obligation.

Winner of the raffle was Stella Knight from Sutton Bridge, Lincs. *Stella performance!* It is Stella's birthday in May, so the Gods were shining on her for this one...

Hot Property

By Paul McGovern
Editor

This month's hottie is an end-terrace cottage in the village of Kalafationes, snuggling in the hills only a few miles south-west of Corfu Town. This is a sleepy village, ideal for people who are fed up with Suburbia or town. And yet its location has the advantage of being very accessible for trips into Corfu Town, or to the beaches of Agios Giordis, Yalaskari, Glyfada and Mirtiotissa. Kalafationes is unspoilt, and surrounded by the ubiquitous olive groves.

The cottage has long been in the same family, and is upward of two hundred years old. It is small, forming the end part of a terrace of cottages. The external dimensions are seventy two square metres, comprising two floors. The whole is structurally sound, yet needs a complete renovation. This is an ideal task for the DIY enthusiast, as it is not an extensive job, plus access up to the building is good- this is not always the case in village situations hereabouts. We can do the work on your behalf, if you prefer, and will be happy to consult with you over design and quote you accordingly.

There are two small plots of garden, either side of the property. One of these could be used as car parking space. A recently paved lane leads to two sides of the cottage. Water and electricity services are to hand. The bonus is the view seawards, as in the photo.

All this potential, and for a very reasonably priced 40,000 Euros [£30,000].

To book a free 3-day stay at Villa Theodora to view this or other properties or land, please phone Trevor on (UK) 01227 722462 or Paul on (Greece) 00 30 26610 58177.



View Seawards



Small Garden



Cottage Front



Paved Approach

For Sale



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

For Sale



Coastal near Giannades

This is a quite magnificent development overlooking the sea from a raised position, a short distance from the old village of Giannades. The property is secluded. Set on a piece of land approximately four stremmas [1 acre] in area, there are two detached villas with landscaped terraces dropping down to an infinity pool.

Price € 1,300,000

For Sale



Coastal village

This charming traditional cottage nestles in the hillside village, overlooking the sea on the east side of the island, not far from the village of Ipsos. This property has a very large garden either for relaxation or cultivation, or possibly for future development.

Price € Negotiable

For Sale



Ano Korakiana

In an idyllic old world location, amongst the cottages of Ano Korakiana, not far from the National Paleokastritsa highway leading swiftly to town, is this splendid detached house, nestling on the mountain slopes with lovely views below. The spacious three storey house requires renovation but is very sound structurally.

Price € 85,000

For Sale



Faery Cottage

This is definitely the time that land forgot and this one small picture is to entice the romantic amongst you to seek out this idyllic spot amongst the northern, olive-clad mountains. Come and live in this stunning terrain, and yet only ten minutes by car to the northern beaches and shops.

Price € 120,000

For Sale



Pikoulatika Development

In the hamlet of Pikoulatika this new development is scheduled for completion in the Autumn of 2007. Set in 13,000 square metres of countryside, with extensive views overlooking Corfu and the sea, the properties consist of three detached villas, each with its own swimming pool.

Price € 430,000

For Sale



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 WWW site for details)

Price: € P.O.A.

For Sale



Hoeck / Ropa Valley

Are you adventurous? Would you like something slightly out of the ordinary?

Set in a paddock of 4000 square metres, surrounded by beautiful countryside and yet only seven miles from Corfu Town, is a timber-built house dating from only 2004 together with a separate holiday cottage.

Price: € 200,000