

The Agiot

24th Edition

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Bill, Can You Give Me a Little Bit More On The Floor?

By Paul McGovern
Editor

The months of pulling things together, the anguish over the rain, the uncertainty for a long time of the venue, were all put to bed as the Agiotfest happened on the night of the 12th September, in the plateia of Agios Ioannis, Corfu.

I'd dreamt, literally, of possible scenarios in the many nights leading up to the event. One scenario had us all huddled together under shelter, watching light-

ning streak across the sky and rain plummet down.

The 12th was a busy day. The phone never stopped ringing in the hours leading up to 'open doors'. Janet was in to work for her first Saturday shift, after nearly two years of working at Oca Services. She was going to be on the gate tonight and was sorting tickets and answering the phone and giving me sedatives simultaneously.

Several callers were asking 'is it raining?' 'No', I answered, looking anxiously at

the darkening sky. 'Oh, it is here', says the caller. 'Where are you ringing from?' 'Town'. As town is only five miles away this was a bit worrying. Somebody rang from Gouvia. It was raining there too. A few prayers later and the clouds drifted on, unmolested us. I just began to relax when the sound of a crash came from the square below. The robust eight by five metre stage had been erected over the last couple of days.

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Bill, Can You Give Me a Little Bit
More On The Floor.
Continued from Page 1

The builder was crossing the square in his truck. Crash! He drives straight into a stack of monitors. They lay in several pieces on the ground. And I had just finished thanking God for the weather.

The technicians got to work, re-assembled their equipment, and during the afternoon it was fired up for testing. The groups came along for their sound checks. Miraculously, there seemed no noticeable impairment of the sound quality.

Andy and Karen were busy during this carnage, decorating the stage with various buntings. And a fine job they did too. Dave and Trevor were shopping and Barry and Stella and Cecilia and Rich were preparing the 'hut' (Municipal Building) for the catering which would feed and water the crowd on the night.

Chairs were delivered Friday and laid out on the Saturday. Food and drink in, barbecue firing, last-minute appointment of toilets as the taverna was not opening tonight. Three waiters prove to be great workers as the evening unfolds. Giorgos the Mayor and Giorgos (Rika's son) volunteer as bbq chefs.

Jackie was schmoozing the artists, Martin and Doug appear to run the gates with Janet, Lakis brings 'security', four young Greek lads lean on years, but diligent in their duty.

Suddenly it is six o'clock and people are turning up. The Good Old Boys start proceedings to warm up the audience. Numbers are low to start, but soon more and more music enthusiasts are drifting in. The Good Old Boys [Russ and Frank] alternate on stage with Omega Five, down from the north

of the island. Their music is raw, atmospheric. Steve has a gravel voice perfectly suited for their brand of rock. Paul Stenton wows the audience with his lead guitar, ably backed up by solid rhythm and vocal from Barry Packman. Steve is also compere for the night, and is a total natural with charm and infectious enthusiasm. Elegant Natasha ably assists him with a Greek translation of events. There is a tribute to old Agiot Dave Smith, who sadly passed away in England earlier in the year.

Darkness descends and the crowd swells to near-full, the night is on. All those worrying dreams are changing into a pleasant but unreal reality. Russ is back on stage, this time with his pretty daughter Jemma. Shy at first, singing alongside her Dad, it is swiftly evident that she has a great voice; audience bowled over again.

East Of Memphis are on. They have a mellowness and strength about them, Richie's strong guitar and vocals complementing the sweet powerful voice of Sheila McWhirter.

Richie is a stalwart of Agiotfest; again he delivers.

The Dylan Project are delayed by previous sets, but finally they are away. I'd never seen them live before, so was hopeful but slightly apprehensive for them, following such a strong supporting cast. I needn't have worried. Consummate professionals, they had the audience in their palms and people up and dancing on the improvised dance-floor below the stage. What performers, what a tight sound. Yes they played Dylan, but not exclusively. Numbers tumbled out effortlessly, some of which were probably unfamiliar to the appreciative listeners.

In the midst of this Lucy Steele

conducted the raffle, the numbers being picked by local children.

The Dylans come back for their final set. They are obviously enjoying themselves, as they go way past 'closing time and then beyond one o' clock, before wrapping up with 'Like A Rolling Stone', during which they invite all artists up onto stage for a grand finale. 'More, more' is being shrieked at the end.

It is over, like a dream. The crowd disperses, all smiles.

Such a kaleidoscope of happenings, it is hard to single out an outstanding memory of the night. It was all so good.

But I must mention a few highlights; Steve Gibbons calling for 'a little more on the floor' to Bill, who was highly-commended by the Dylans for his proficiency on the mixing desk. Brendan Day, late replacement for Gerry Conway on drums. He was playing to a group of young village boys in the wings. They were agog. In ten years from now Agios will produce a rock drummer or two. P.J. Wright gave me his slide guitar; nothing can be added from me to that kindness.

I want to thank everybody who played, helped, witnessed or sponsored this great, great night. If they are not mentioned in name above they know who they are and will surely forgive the omission.

Three people deserve a special mention here.. Firstly, Jackie Dickinson for her great efforts in communicating with the Dylan Project in the months leading up to the Agiotfest. Secondly to Dave Pegg, who 'kept the faith' and came over to the time that land forgot. And last but not least to Lula, without whom none of this would have been possible. Her sometimes chaotic methods may befuddle the casual British observer, but like a magician she always pulls things successfully from her hat.

Agiotfest 09 Review

Contributed by
Spyros Hytiris

It just happened. Almost no-one being aware of the event except for the local English-speaking population. A wonderful evening at the family-friendly plateia of Agios Ioannis, where you had the once-in-a-lifetime chance to see quite a few legendary figures from mainly seventies folk-rock and blues bands.

The Good Old Boys, aka Frank Bloomfield and Russ Bartlett opened the festival with a short set of soft, American-friendly acoustic balladry, the pedal steel guitar playing a prominent role in the duo's sound. Sweet renditions of Bread and Eagles tunes warmed up the atmosphere, "Make It With You" being the nicest moment of the set to these ears.

Omega 5 followed with a mixture of sixties and seventies rock. A mean lead guitarist stole hearts with stunning crystal-clear solos, notably Hotel California's all-time-classic second part. A harsh-voiced long blond-haired vocalist added a heavier, old metal aesthetics element. A wide range of selections made it interesting trying to guess what sort of a song the next number would be (The Floyd's Another Brick in the Wall, Thin Lizzy's Whiskey in the Jar, Lynyrd Skynyrd's Sweet Home Alabama, Free's All Right Now, Gary Moore's Parisian Walkways, Cutting Crew's Died In Your Arms Tonight and Rod Stewart's I Don't Wanna Talk About It).

Both the Good Old Boys and Omega 5 took to the stage taking turns twice, the former reappearing as a full band -though much younger now, a surprisingly mature-voiced 19-year-old Jemma Bartlett added, whose rendition of Roberta

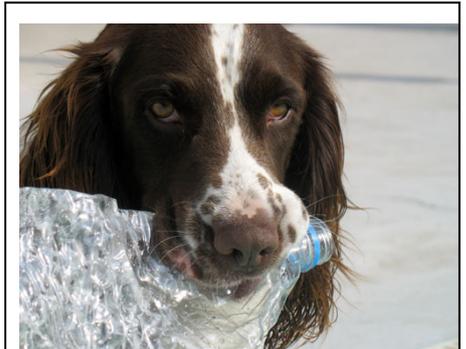
Flack's The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face will linger for quite a while in my ears. More covers by the band included the classic Superstition and one Duffy's number. Omega 5 came up with more 70's and 80's stuff, namely Dire Strait's Money For Nothing, Deep Purple's Smoke on the Water, Lynyrd Skynyrd's Free Bird, Hendrix's Purple Haze, Steppenwolf's Born to Be Wild and Guns'n'Roses' Sweet Child Of Mine before concluding with a frenetic Johnny B. Good. Well played, with a lot of electric and acoustic guitar work but how about some original stuff guys?

East of Memphis, the Scottish duo of Richie Henderson and Sheila Mc Whirter brought quality trad folk to the stage, covering standard folk numbers as well as modern pop ones, like Seal's Crazy. It seemed like the whole place was vibrating colourfully while everyone sang along to "We're never gonna survive unless we get a little crazy", but it was Simon Dupree's psychedelic pop gem "Kites" from 1967 that brought the duo's performance to its highest point, perfectly sung by Sheila's powerful but tender voice, accompanied by Richie's guitar. Other covers included compositions by The Everly Brothers, Ann Peebles, Simon & Garfunkel, Sandy Wright, Sonny & Cher, the Beatles and a modern rock surprise, the Killers' Human.

OK, what about the headliners then? Well, here comes history itself. Steve Gibbons (yes, the same Steve Gibbons of the S.G. Band), Dave Pegg (when I met him at the band's reception I couldn't believe I was talking to the bassist whose band Jethro Tull along with the whole British prog thing made my

teenage years a happy period to remember, and his other band Fairport Convention made me start investigating the roots of British folk when I first heard the tremendous Liege & Lief LP of folk covers), P.J. Wright, Steve Gibbons' guitarist (you should definitely check out his excellent collaboration with Dave Pegg titled Galileo's Apology) and an astounding Phil Bond on keyboards. This bunch of old mates is responsible for what is known as the Dylan Project, who cover Dylan better than Dylan himself now that the latter's voice has become hoarser than the old bluesmen and folk singers of his roots. I wouldn't really have to recite all the great numbers we heard on their well-focused, brilliantly worked out set, but one thing is for certain; Unless it's Dylan's poetry and word puns and tricks as well as a great band to perform, you wouldn't get middle-aged or even older people sing along and dance to lyrics like "everybody must get stoned" so happily at the square of Agios Ioannis in Corfu.

I hope -and I believe this is everybody's wish- this year's Agiotfest was only the beginning. We need more please. Or in Jethro Tull's own words we have "reasons for waiting and dreaming of dreams".



"Andy, Man of the Year - wows Rock Artists"

Agiotfest 09 – Raffle Winners

| <u>Winning</u> Ticket No: | <u>Winners</u> Name: | <u>Prize:</u> |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 2038 | Maria Velissaropoulou | 1 weeks stay for up to 7 persons at Villa Theodora during May 2010. |
| 0165 | Janneke & Rosunda | Acoustic Guitar. |
| 0111 | Andy | Asian Spa Massage. |
| 2005 | Julia from Greek Islands | Champagne |
| 0047 | Tim of Island Radio | Water Ski Lesson (Auctioned for charity to Alex Ioannides) |
| 0083 | Dimitris from Gouvia Marina | Ladies Hairstyling |
| 0033 | Paul Scotter | Meal for 2 at the Navigators - Kontokoli |



“Classical Music Night featuring Lionel and Ria”

For more pictures of the Agiotfest 09 week and Saturday’s Rock Concert night then go to The Gallery section of The Agiot on:
www.theagiot.net
 (from week commencing 5th October)

Aunty Lula’s Love-bites

MEXICAN VEGETABLE SOUP

2 tbs Olive Oil
 1 Large Onion finely chopped
 1 or 2 Garlic Cloves mashed
 1 tbs Cumin
 2 tsp Paprika
 A pinch of Chili Powder
 1 tsp Coriander
 1 tin Chick Peas
 1 tin Haricot Beans
 3 Fresh Tomatoes peeled and finely chopped
 1 tbs Tomato Purée
 2 Carrots peeled and finely chopped
 1 tbs Sugar
 3 cups Chicken Stock
 125 gm Spinach finely chopped

Salt and Pepper to taste

GO:

1. Heat Oil and sauté Onions, Garlic and all Spices for about 5 minutes.
2. Add all other ingredients.
3. Bring to boil and simmer for between 30 and 40 minutes until required consistency.

Bon appétit!

Corfu Weather Statistics:

The highest temperature for September this year was 30.9C on the 4th, an all-time record for the month.

The minimum temperature was 17.9C on 23rd.

Total rainfall for the September was 23.1mm with 9.3 mm falling on the 17th. and 8.7mm on the 25th.

Total rainfall for the year so far is 672.9 mm.

Maximum windspeed reached 66 kmh on the 25th and maximum gust speed 181.9 kmh at 16.11 on the 25th

Village News

By Dr. Lionel Mann
Contributing Editor

Although there will be a full report elsewhere it must also be recorded here that Agiotfest09 made a great impact. Performers and audience alike were rapturous in proclaiming their enjoyment of the event. A great time was had by all!

The end of this month is traditionally "The Little Summer of Saint Dimitri", and is often a last taste of summer. Included too is

the national celebration of "Ochi Day" on 28th October, commemorating Greek defiance of Italian threats in 1940. It is also alleged that some local British yachtsmen will find an excuse to splice the mainbrace in celebrating Trafalgar Day on the 21st.

In September, as well as the performers for Agiotfest, we welcomed back Barry and Stella Knight, David, Cecilia and Jackie Dickinson, Andy Dcruz, Martin Stuart to help with administration, Norman

Marcus, Paul and Sally Grove, Slap and Tickle who spent their honeymoon here in 2002, and Derek and Carole Pullen who have bought a new villa that we have built in the village. Robert Bennett visited to celebrate his 50th birthday here, although he did not look a day older than when we last saw him; a number of his friends and relations also came along.

AN APPEAL

Marj PANDI, as most of us know, is an ardent animal lover. She works many, many long hours housing, caring for and finding homes for so many of the stray and abandoned animals on Corfu.

She is being sued in court on 7 December 2009 on the charge of:

BREEDING & SELLING DOGS WITHOUT A LICENCE

As most of us know, Marge has always advocated the sterilization of animals and would be the very last person to breed and sell them!

As responsible animal lovers we, the residents of Corfu, do not agree with this outrageous charge and wish for Marj to have the best legal defence possible. Unfortunately, a good, experienced defence lawyer will command very high legal fees and Marj cannot meet these fees without some financial help from the local animal-loving community.

Is it possible you can dip into your pockets and help in this instance?

Any financial assistance, no matter how small, will be greatly appreciated.

It has always been my experience that we, the caring animal lovers of Corfu never fail to support a worthy cause and this, my friends, is a very worthy cause.

Donations can be made to the ARK shop in town, to myself and any other representative of The ARK Animal Welfare Charity.

We can also show our support by being in the courthouse on 7 December; let's all stand strong behind her!!

Lucy Steele, M.B.E.
Former British Vice Consul, Corfu

News From the North

By Uncle Bulgaria
Contributing Editor

Well, here we are back again in Corfu following a 6 week holiday on the Black Sea.

I find the August heat here so unbearable whereas Bulgaria is a balmy 80 degrees with a breeze.

Interesting place, purely as an investment I bought a small house there couple of years ago, 4 kilometers from the beach. Needs a fair bit of work on it, but slowly, slowly does it. It now has water and electric and after I go back in April to do some more work it will be sort of livable. Last trip I wanted to clean the well which has been uncovered for years, so a local hotel owner and friend very kindly came with me to translate and we found a neighbour who agreed to do the job.

Much to my surprise 3 guys turned up to do it. Having already agreed the price (an exorbitant 20 Euros for a days work) I was nonetheless agreeable to the extra cost. 3 men for 60 Euros can't grumble. As it happens it was a grotty job for the poor sod who had to go down the well and fill the bucket with sludge for the other 2 to pull up. One guy even spoke some English.

Anyway they did a great job, I was very happy. So much so that I said I needed my roof servicing and would one man like to do it. Again it was agreed 20 Euros if I bought the cement needed. (Tight sods) Next morning one man does not turn up so go to his house, have coffee he sez, no sez I, let's get to work, so of we goes to the local village of Rosen to buy cement. Except we end up at the guys house who speaks English from the day before, "sit have coffee" he sez, "no

sez I" I need to start work, He sez he is coming to help!!! I only need one guy I explain as I was going to do the laboring, I don't want money I sez he I will do it as a friend. Bloody hell I think as he gives me coffee and Milky rice in a jam jar to eat. So off we all go in my car to get the cement and do the job. Excellent job again, they worked hard so I pays the other guy 20 Euros as well, just call me generous. Even outstandingly generous. I drive him back to his house in the village, except we go next door, "come in for coffee" impossible to refuse. This not a house but a large shed where his father lives, I sit with trepidation on a stool from the 1940s and my host buggers of for half hour leaving me with this decrepit old man. 4 kittens and a German shepherd with a purple bum and stomach. Non speakada English. Bugger!!

Eventually he turns up with beer, juice drink and coke. Having spent some of the dough I just gave him. Took ages to extract myself gracefully especially as I am not a gracious person. I suppose the moral of this story is these are very poor (like me) kind and generous people. (Not like me)

Banking with Alpha Bank in Greece I automatically use them in Bulgaria, what a load of crap they are. They do not issue an account book or statements. They all have security guard on the door. One branch was he was so appallingly aggressive and arrogant he would not let me in to transact business, needless to say this branch was empty. Eventually after creating a stink at the door of the bank I was allowed to speak to a manager who asked what I wanted, I sez a balance

of my account and to make a withdrawal, then I complained at the disgusting attitude of the guard and the Banks lack of care for the customer, he sez "it's the system". Balls, so a few days later, I went to another branch to again draw dough, this time no problem going in, get to the desk pass my account details say I wanna draw some dough in Bulgarian currency, 40 minutes later I am still there. "What's the problem?" I ask. No Problem we cannot find your account on the computer though. Eventually these incompetent pratts find it and I draw my dough. The clerk writes on a card the numbers of my account and gives it to me. "Use this in future" she sez. When I look everything is identical to the numbers I gave here on my laminated bank details card in the first place!!!!

Few days later I need more dough so go to this branch again, (That makes sense they know me now) 40 minutes later I am still there, the computer has frozen and the printer does not work, so they decide to write out the papers by hand which I sign, (now an hour has passed I am still the only customer) but the printer then spews out loads of paper and I sign again. She counts out the money and I say that's too much and again I tell her. But she insists it is correct, so I check the computer sheet and yup its to much, so I count it in front of her and give back the difference. She thinks I am mad and it's a tip. Alpha Bank in Bulgaria, don't bother they are a load of rubbish.

Continued on Page 6

News form the North
Continued from Page 5

On a nice note, every time I went to work at the house my neighbours would load me down with bags of vegetables from the gardens, very generous. They used to do that here for me, years ago, now of course they throw them at my front door as they pass!!!!

Another thing about Bulgaria is the cost of living. Having installed 4 large double glazed windows with openers 1 small and 4 fully glazed doors, cost 3500 Euros? No, it was exactly 1000 Euros, quoted for, made and fitted in 10 days, plastic and aluminum. Excellent quality but heavy handed on ripping out the old stuff. Also you can buy a Litre of Absolute Vodka 11 Euros local Vodka 4 Euros

Best quality Lamb, 4.5 Euros a kilo (about 9 over here) I bought back 50 Kilos for the freezer. Most of the cars seem to be Mercedes and SUVs. But they mainly eat bowls of soup for 50 cents when eating out. Not unusual to see a bloke having breakfast a bowl of soup and 2 litre bottle of beer with his Merc SUV parked outside the hotel.

Of course I am in a very small rural community and English speakers are a rarity as most tourist there are Polish, Rumanians, City Bulgarians. No English. (Thank God) If you want English speaking you need to go to Sunny Beach where the Brit tourists

go. I Did go one time , it is full of young wives with pushchairs full of snotty nosed kids yelling their heads off and parents yelling at them to shut the **** up. Charming. Sex shops every 200 metres and ladies of the night available. I will stick to the rural life thank you where they are kind people. (Maybe the ladies of the night are cheaper, who knows)

Of course the actual city of Bourgas is a pleasure to walk around, shops that are more with it than Oxford Street, Hypermarkets where you can buy a brand new scooter for 500 Euros or a bottle of booze for peanuts, to joint of meat for pennies. Funny thing in the village (Kraymorie) you cannot buy a steak of any sort as it is to expensive for the type of tourist they get. In Sunny Beach it will cost you 10-15 Euros for a tourist type steak.

Now the new motorway is open it takes only 9 hours to drive from Igoumenitsa to the Black Sea and it is a

very pleasant nice drive.

So I had a great time, very cheap and in particular I want mention the Hotel Atiyana in Kraymorie, Near Bourgas, The Owner , Pravdomir, was so helpful to me with his command of English. Nothing was to much trouble even coming to help sort out my electric and other kindnesses. It is a beautiful Hotel reasonably priced, check it out on www.Hotelatiyana.com

It is probably the best in the village and on top of the beautiful beach. So a big thank you to you from me.

Finally, if anyone out there is interested in a property in Bulgaria, contact me through the Agiot bearing in mind I have a 75 sq metre house with 600 sq. metre of garden for sale at about 40000 Euros.

Well that is the saga of Bulgaria; I am and always will be, Obnoxious Al.

REAL ESTATE : USED BANGERS : MANURE : BONGOES : MOSSY NETS : VODKA
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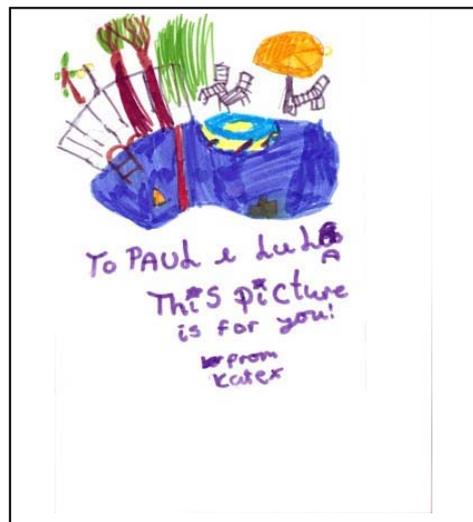
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PARTIES CRASHED
WEDDINGS RUINED
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GOSSIP SPREAD
CONDOMS RECYCLED

OBITUARY

Nicola Taramanidou

After a long and courageous fight against cancer our Nicola died in Ioannina Hospital on 18th September. Nicola, a Manchester lass and keen supporter of United, was cheerful to the last and most of us did not know how serious was her case although she had been going for treatment at fortnightly inter-

vals for many months. She taught at a local frontisterio and was dearly loved by all her pupils; they are shattered at their loss. We all shall miss her deeply. The village is not the same without Nicola's happy presence.



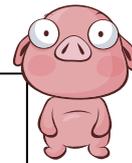
Scherzando saYS

Healthy Advice?!

Wouldn't we like to meet this doctor?



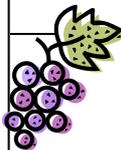
You must grasp logistical efficiencies. What does a cow eat? Hay and corn. And what are these? Vegetables. So a steak is nothing more than an efficient mechanism of delivering vegetables to your system. Need grain? Eat chicken. Beef is also a good source of field grass (green leafy vegetable). And a pork chop can give you 100% of your recommended daily allowance of vegetable products.



Q. Should I cut down on Meat and eat more Fruit and Vegetables?

Q. Should I reduce my alcohol intake?

No, not at all. Wine is made from fruit. Brandy is distilled wine, that means they take the water out of the fruity bit so you get even more of the goodness that way. Beer is also made out of grain. Bottoms up!



Q. Aren't fried foods bad for you?

You are not listening!!! Foods are fried these days in vegetable oil. In fact, they are permeated in it. How could getting more vegetables be bad for you?



Q. What are some of the advantages of participating in a regular exercise programme?

Can't think of a single one, sorry. My philosophy is: No pain GOOD!



Q. Is chocolate bad for me?

Are you crazy? HELLO! Cocoa beans! Another vegetable! It's the best feel-good food around!



Q. Is swimming good for me?

If swimming is good for your figure, explain whales to me.



REMEMBER:

Life should NOT be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in an attractive and well preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways - Chardonnay in one hand - chocolate in the other - body thoroughly used up, totally worn out and screaming "WOO HOO, what a ride!"



Thought for Next Month

Why did the headless huntsman go into business?

He wanted to get ahead in life.



What do you get when you divide the diameter of a Jack-o-lantern by it's circumference?

Pumpkin Pi

A Home from Home

By Dr. Lionel Mann
Contributing Editor

Having spent most of my working life in employment that provided accommodation, and upon retirement therefore needing to find a home, I moved into a comfortable apartment in a quiet little country town. Within six weeks it had been burgled and amongst other things I lost all recordings of fifty years' music-making with various choirs and orchestras, though I cannot imagine what value they held for the thieves.

In due course the local council suggested that I should move into "Sheltered Accommodation for the Elderly" and found a suitable location in a nearby city. The new first floor apartment, one of thirty, was very well appointed, having all the "essential" fittings: electronic locking of both main door and apartment door; alarm cords in every room; instant telephone communication to and from security with regular checks. Additionally I was warned, "You ought not to go out at night; you'll be mugged." Land of Hope and Glory? Great (or Lesser) Britain at the end of the twentieth century. For the past sixty years I have witnessed the country declining into barbarism.

My fellow pensioners were a mixed bunch, but I found plenty of congenial company and the staff were attentive yet not intrusive. However after a few months the relative seclusion became oppressive; I went to a nearby travel agent, "Anywhere around the Med.?"

"There's a tour leaving for Corfu next week."

I had never before visited the island. To those who know the place perhaps a fortnight package-

tour to Ipsos in September might sound somewhat unattractive, but doubtless because of my age I was allocated to a room in a pleasant villa at the back of the village, almost into Agios Markos, well away from the glaring lights, the screaming music and the incessant din. My first sun-drenched week was spent exploring the island; I liked what I saw. The second equally glorious week was occupied in finding somewhere to live. In those days my bank had a branch here and they put me in touch with an estate agent who found me a little place in his home village, Agios Ioannis.

One month back in the U.K. was plenty long enough to make arrangements for permanent departure. I have never returned.

Any British national who comes to settle here must of course first comply with immigration formalities, but those are not unreasonable, aided by membership of the European Union. It is understandable that the authorities should insist that any immigrant will become neither a financial nor a health burden. He/she also needs to wear away the suspicion with which the locals view Brits because the Corfiots have long suffered a plague of drunken louts, loafers, spongers and tricksters. My pension and state of health amply satisfied requirements and it was not long before my neighbours had accepted me, become friends.

I learnt enough Greek for very basic communication and to go shopping at the local supermarket, although that was hardly necessary as I discovered that almost everyone that I met spoke also English or German. However in my first three years I had Greek lessons from

three different local teachers. None prepared their lessons and all taught different "Greek", moreover when I went to the supermarket, having first consulted a dictionary, it was somewhat disconcerting, not to say discouraging, to be told, "We don't call it that, it's here." I have reached a conclusion that there is no completely standard form of Greek; it is just left to each individual to make up his/her own language and to hope that others will understand, especially if it is shouted loudly enough. Both my supposedly reputable dictionaries show numerous discrepancies when one compares the Greek-English and English-Greek sections. I now know enough for everyday needs.

At first I went walking daily, even occasionally the ten kilometres to Pelekas and back. I seldom met anyone else on these jaunts and mentioned it to the fourteen-year-old daughter of my Greek neighbours.

"Oh, no. We don't walk; we just eat and grow fat," was her reply.

Later I took to cycling, my route generally restricted to the comparatively flat Ropa Valley and to Ermones Beach, walking the very steep last hundred metres. Eventually age supervened and even the gentle gradients of those routes became too steep. Now I simply stroll short distances, use the bus services when necessary. Quite often friends of all nationalities passing in a car and seeing me trudging to the bus stop will give me a lift to Town. I share my weekly shopping expedition with my business friends, whose Landrover offers sufficient space for all our purchases.

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A Home from Home
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In Agios Ioannis there is a considerable sprinkling of English, Dutch and Germans and I was soon approached to teach English to their children, which extended to other subjects when I observed the inadequacies of the local system. This led to becoming involved with a Greek-English family who were launching a villa-rental concern. When I was visiting their home to teach their sons it became obvious that they were never going to meet the tourist season deadline in renovating an ancient ruin into a modern villa with patio and pool. One of my earliest visits had been for a Guy Fawkes celebration (the Greeks think us mad!) when the bonfire was on the site of the proposed pool. I enjoy carpentry and offered to help, but I never anticipated giving 256 little fillets for glazing windows and doors six coats of paint, a primer, two undercoats, three gloss, and then fitting the glass. We finished all the work with five minutes to spare before the first visitors arrived, but it was a hectic scramble!

One thing led to another. The business has grown and I have graduated pleasantly through garden-watering, odd-job man, patio-sweeping, pool-cleaning, to becoming office manager, peering for hours at a computer screen, but also meeting every year an exciting mix of visitors staying at our steadily increasing number of villas.

Too I spent a couple of years as organist at the Anglican Church in Town, where I installed a large electronic organ, until I was made redundant by a new chaplain who fancied himself as the Elvis of Corfu. I removed the organ to my apartment, but the Catholic Cathedral caught me on the rebound; for four years I played there until the

Archbishop, with whom I enjoyed a very good working relationship, retired. With my eightieth birthday approaching I called a halt to early rising to catch a bus into Town and needing to wait until five hours later for the return to the village although Mass lasted little more than an hour. However it is fatal to spend ones retirement in idleness, a sure way to an early grave, and I am very lucky to have my tourism interest as well as need of daily music practice for occasional performances.

One evening about eight years ago I was having my dinner out on my verandah when a stray cat approached and politely asked for a share. It was the beginning of a "family" that at present numbers ten, although none of the earliest members has survived. It would be a very foolhardy rat, mouse or snake that came anywhere near my place, but unfortunately a cat's life-span here is usually no more than three or four years; there are very many hazards. Local dogs are very respectful though; there have been a number of scratched noses.

Over the years, through membership of a U.K. book club, I have built up a considerable library and therefore spend much leisure time reading. Euronews is my chief T.V. viewing, perhaps has much as thirty minutes daily, but there are one or two Greek programmes that show international documentaries that sometimes catch my attention. The local taverna is conveniently only twenty metres from my apartment; I visit to sample their delicious ethnic cooking when I want a break from preparing a meal.

Many U.K. expatriates who have settled here still spend a great deal of their time at cosy clubs of their own nationality. They do not know what they are missing; I have found it very rewarding to become a mem-

ber of the local community, to join in their celebrations, to share in their mourning, to be welcomed to family events. I have seen others come for a few months, even a year or two, but then leave because there is not a supermarket in the next street, a bingo hall round the corner, a burger bar next door or a local disco. Corfu is not Little Britain and nobody, least of all the Corfiots, wants it ever to sink that low. This island has its own ancient culture, its own unique way of life, and its inhabitants firmly resist attempts to vandalise their heritage in the way that the U.K. has suffered.

Corfu is an ideal place for retirement, provided that one's health and finances are both sound. With the collapse of the pound my U.K. state pension has lost one-third of its original value and I am fortunate in having means of augmenting it. The generally warm climate suits old bones, and though we have plenty of rain in the winter it usually comes in short very sharp bursts, not in days of monotonous drizzle. Thunderstorms are really spectacular! Twice in my fifteen years here we have had snow; it started at nine in the evening and by eleven every child in the village, and most of the adults too, were out snowballing. By ten the next morning all had gone, except on the highest hills. Even in the depth of winter the sun has real power, although an icy wind often blows from the snow-covered mainland mountains.

Additionally there is virtually no crime. I cannot remember when I last removed the key from my door. Even the oldest and youngest wander around in complete safety at any hour of day or night - as long as they watch out for the Corfiots who are training for Formula One!

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There are those who complain or leave because they reckon that health care in Corfu does not equate to the U.K.'s National Health Service. I have seen persons here caught with medical emergencies who have recovered as the result of first-rate treatment, while the current record of the N.H.S. is nothing to boast about.

Persons with young children would be advised not to settle. U.K. education is certainly in a parlous state, but in Corfu it is even worse. It is essential to augment the mornings-only state system by costly afternoon and/or evening ref-study at one or more of the pleth-

ora of private schools that exist for that purpose, but these do not adequately fill the gap. One of my former pupils has recently left to pursue a course of science at a British university. The unfortunate is now encountering considerable difficulty, has been called back during holidays to fill gaps in his experience. Here he had never set foot in a laboratory, never handled chemicals or scientific instruments such as I did from the age of eleven and my pupils from the age of eight. All is learnt from a textbook; there is a single series of books for each subject used countrywide, very narrow and inadequate. "If it isn't in the book it didn't happen," a ten-year-old questioning the absence of ref-

erence to the early Viking settlements in America was told by his teacher. Much ignorance exists here.

Anybody still of working age would need to be very industrious, to possess a required skill and to have good economic backing in order to settle here. Most ambitious Corfiot youngsters seek their future elsewhere. There are persons too indolent or incompetent to hold a job in the U.K. who come here claiming an expertise and thinking to spend their lives boozing and doing a minimum of work. Very few survive for long. Corfiots are not fools!

Featured Property:



This new luxury detached house is new to our property list and is built within a plot area of 323 square metres. Located in Kambos, Alepou not far from Corfu town, the building is situated in a luxury residential complex with a communal street, yard, and private drainage.

The basement area of this villa is 86.5 square metres and includes a boiler room, a Playroom/Games room featuring table tennis, billiards and others, a fully equipped

gym, and a sauna. There is also an underground parking area of reinforced concrete and 10 square metres in size.

The ground floor is 81 square metres in size and consists of the living room area with a beautiful featured fireplace, a fully fitted, very modern kitchen and dining room. Also featured on this floor is a Shower/WC room with a Jacuzzi Shower cabin.

The first floor, 90 square metres in size, consists of three bedrooms, a large bathroom housing a Jacuzzi-colour therapy bath, and a WC also with a shower cabin.

A loft area covers 45,5 square metres, beneath ceramic tiles.

A main feature of this house includes a heated swimming pool within a nice garden inclusive of garden furniture. As well as the

special designs featured and all colours and lighting, furniture also comes with this house including electric appliances and tv's. Plus Solar Panels.



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