

Majorca by John Broadhurst.

E're we go, e're we go, e're we go,
Sorry, forgot, quite the wrong show.

An early departure, October 24th, a Saturday,
So that we could make several stops on the way.
The first of these was the Rufus Stone,
Which turned out to be just a metal cone.
Never mind to Broadlands we'll go; but,
We arrived to find that also was shut.
Undaunted we pressed on, an ever optimistic bunch,
At least the services were open for lunch.

The United Car Park took in our car;
To Gatwick, by bus, not very far.
Monarch Airlines, Gate 62.
Come back in two hours, is my advice to you.
So pushing our trolley, we went down in the lift
To the shopping area, in search of a gift.
The announcer said 'Broadhurst,' or so Mum thought,
But our extensive enquiries all came to nought.
Many names appeared on the monitor screen,
However, ours was nowhere to be seen.
It all seemed rather absurd;
We could only assume that Mum had misheard,
With all the bustle, noise and rush,
What was needed was a little hush.

We found a place to eat our snack
That we'd pushed around on the trolley's luggage rack.
Coffee next, the cappuccino kind,
For this liquid Mum has a one track mind.
To Check-in, at last we joined the queue,
Which gave us something positive to do.
Then, yet again, we had to wait
Till half past ten at the departure gate,
In the meantime, on the screen displayed,
Flight 3372 to Majorca has been delayed.
Leaving at 00.30, or so it says,
Providing there are no more delays.

We took off, at last in the 300 Air Bus,
And flew down to Majorca with the minimum of fuss;
Arriving there at 02.43.
It was still quite dark, so there was nothing to see.
The Evergreen Rep. Lynn,
Told us all our coach was in.
So Northward we went
All hell bent,
On grabbing what little sleep we could.
What we could see of our hotel, it looked pretty good.

Our room was number 121,
Once inside we knew our holiday had begun.
So into bed,
As soon as my head
Hit the pillow, I was fast asleep,
To dream of how we'd spend our week.

We woke at eight.
For us quite late.
Buffet meals
To me appeals,
As that way
Every day
You take whatever food you wish,
Helping yourself to your favourite dish.
We had as much breakfast as we could eat,
With plenty of time, quite a treat.

At 10.45, our courier we met.
I take it she was all they could get;
For she did seem to try,
I just wish I knew why,
To put us off most of the excursions,
Which didn't matter as we have aversions
To organised visits, wherever they go,
We like to please ourselves, and so
We set off to find a map,
And fell into the tourist trap;
Because, bingo,
Neither of us could speak the lingo.
Not to worry, the walk was good,
And returning from the market we felt we should
Avail ourselves of the lovely hot sun,
After all that was why we'd come.
The only thing we couldn't disguise
Was our great dislike of those pitching flies.
So we went inside to catch up on our sleep
And for a good two hours no-one heard a peep.

After dinner a walk to the shops,
Even on Sundays nothing much stops.

Early next morning our destination
The Central Bureau for Information.
For an up-to-date time-table,
To find out if we would be able
To visit all the places, however far
Without resorting to hiring a car.
From eleven to three Mum sat in the sun,
That being her favourite idea of fun.
A Mini Golf Competition was my aim;
But sadly for me, no-one else came.

So, I lay on a sun bed,
And, for a while, I read.
Then I just messed about,
Which is me without a doubt!

Later, we thought we'd see if we could reach
The famous mile of golden beach.
Unfortunately we set off in the wrong direction,
But, after some smart detection,
Neptune Street we spied,
At the bottom of which, behold, the tide.
Pleased, at last to have got it right,
We noted that the 'Gold,' was in fact 'White.'
Sunbeds under thatched palm shades, as far as the eye could see,
A perfect exotic setting, with even the odd genuine palm tree.

The Flamenco dancer in the Hotel Marte
Performed very well, but we didn't see her garter.
Back to the Juniper, for the Hawaiian Band,
Some danced, some sang, one had fire in his hand.
Two shows in one night is what we had,
All for free, that can't be bad.

Another beautiful sunny day,
We just whiled away
On the beach
Out of reach.
Of all that makes the world go round,
Children's laughter, the only sound.
From all the cares its good to be freed,
To have the time to just sit and read.
Warm sunshine, a gentle breeze,
Made all the better for knowing, at home we'd freeze.

We hung around for the Variety Show;
After three acts, we decided it was time to go.

After much studying of time-tables and taking advice,
The bus to Porto Pollensa appeared quite nice,
To visit the market in search of a bargain,
Grab a quick coffee, then off back again.

A bicycle ride seemed like a treat,
At least it would be a rest for our weary feet.
So across the road,
Minus Spanish highway code,
To hire a bike for just two hours,
Sadly the two men at the shop were a pair of showers.
Although the hotel bikes were a trifle dearer
Gradually it became much clearer,
As one man began to remove a wheel,
It wasn't long before we started to feel,

The bikes weren't the only ones being taken for a ride,
So I asked for my money back, I've got my pride.

Back to the hotel we went,
Paid our money, now content
That at least the bike would stay
Together in one piece, while we were away.
After all this fuss,
Which I suppose is typical of us,
Our cycle ride was a success indeed,
Taken at a leisurely speed.
Nevertheless after about an hour,
Using long dormant muscle power,
We sat ourselves down to read,
Which made me realise I must be going to seed,
For no sooner had I hit the seat
Than I was blissfully, fast asleep.
Really who could not ask for more;
Surely that's what a holiday's for.
The sightseeing can wait for another day,
That's not the main reason we came away.

Not to be daunted we stayed up once more,
To see what the night's show had in store.
A troupe of Brazilians were there,
And most of the time they were almost bare.
No-one can say I'm prejudiced as such,
But watching native dancing doesn't appeal that much.
However, there was something else to watch,
A Spanish First Division football match.
Broadcast live on our room's TV,
Madrid lost to Barcelona 1-3.

Although by now our legs were tired,
An early start was required.
Inca Market,
Was our target.
No-one can say we don't keep up with the trends,
Because the bus we went on was one that bends.
In the centre the floor swivels round,
Silently, without a sound,
Giving a peculiar sensation from the back
As though we were going on a different track.

The market, I suppose, wasn't all that bad;
At least we found something hand made for Peter and Dad.
Once again we were fortunate with the weather,
As we traipsed around looking for goods made from leather.

I'll say this for Mum, it takes a lot to alarm her;
But she was worried as we waited on the train for Palma.

The Majorcan peasant,
I'm sure really quite pleasant;
But a train full of them, makes it hard to find out,
Where on earth you're going, even if you shout.
We disembarked this local train, at the end of the line,
And found the Soller platform in plenty of time,
To watch the old western style train pulling in,
The wooden slatted seats felt pretty grim
After all the walking my feet let me know I'd got 'em,
Now the train seemed hell bent on punishing my bottom.
This ancient monster dating from 1929,
Unfortunately doesn't seem to run on time.
It moves through traffic in the busy street,
Shop gazing from a train, an unusual treat;
But after a slow start,
And a breakdown in the rear cart,
The experience was omnificent,
The views quite magnificent.

We arrived in Soller at half past two,
Wondering what we were going to do
For two hours;
Look at the flowers?
Sit and dream?
No, neither, we bought an ice cream.

This peace was shattered by Miguel,
Who attached himself to us, and began to tell
The history of his favoured Soller,
Which was sadly to prove our folly;
For he quickly bundled us into his car,
With us spluttering, 'Is it very far?'
Along winding roads we were shaken,
To his own home eventually taken
There to be shown the ancient fallen palm tree,
And beautiful views in all their majesty.
Inside the house, in every room,
How his dear wife had met her doom.
'Here's the kitchen, have a drink.
Do you like it? What do you think?'

Back in the car and off to Porto,
With us pleading that we really ought to
Find our way to the bus station,
As he showed us the homes of most every relation.
He took us to see a 16th century hotel,
Which was indeed all very well,
But no matter how interesting it was
We were in a hurry to go, because
There was only one bus home,
And we didn't want to be left there alone.

So, at last, after a further detour
Miguel dropped us safely back on the shore.
It was then I discovered it had not been quite what Mum hoped,
For throughout this adventure she had been groped
By this sad, lonely, dirty old man,
Whose motto was surely, 'Get what you can!'
He obviously believed that women over 50 don't tell,
They don't yell, and are grateful as ----, ah well.
Far better the saying that means so much,
Look all you like, but you mustn't touch!
In fairness Mum coped with the minimum of fuss,
When confronted with this Majorcan octopus.
I still don't think she have interested the old crust,
If she hadn't been showing quite so much bust.

The bus journey back through the mountain range,
Showed how dramatically the island's change
From miles and miles of very flat land,
To steep, craggy slopes on the other hand.
The road twists and turns to the very top;
It pays not to look over the perilous drop
To the valley below, all lush and green,
There were the most spectacular sights we'd seen.

The evening show at ten
Comprised of four strong men
Who were informed before the fun began
That they were competing for the title 'Mister Tarzan.'
Won eventually by a Scottish lad
Who proved beyond doubt that, indeed he had
Muscles stronger than the rest,
That's why the girls voted him the best.

First thing in the morning we did seize,
The chance to buy some duty frees.
Wine from Hiper Tucan, across from the hotel,
Then to Porto Alcudia for the imports that smell.

We went to the beach, but the sun went in.
The wind began to blow and goose pimples our skin.
We lunched in the Burger King,
While we pondered what we could bring
For Steve and To from our holiday,
To the leather shop we made our way.
Bum bags were our choice at last.
We wondered how the time had passed;
For we'd reached our last afternoon,
So we would have to return home soon.
But before that,
As it's so flat
Wandered away from the busy main street,
And came across a veritable treat.

The lakes that are part of the Alcudia scene,
We'd heard of, but had not yet been
To appreciate how beautiful they are.
We're glad we did not hire a car,
For within easy walking range
There is an amazing variety of change.
Lakes surrounded by tiny Majorcan homes,
A treasure for anyone who roams
Away from the busy thoroughfare;
Most will depart without knowing it's there.
We saw bananas, dates and many more
Plants that sadly don't grace our shore.
It was a lovely way to end our stay,
Colourful memories for many a day.

We were due to be picked up about 12.30,
Plenty of time for a bath because I felt dirty.
After our meal,
Eaten with zeal,
Mum read her book,
While I went to look
At another Spanish football match live on TV,
It seemed the best way to pass the time to me.

The coach was driven by the same little man,
And from then on all went according to plan.
A pleasant flight
Through the night.
We collected our cases, and then the car,
Wishing we didn't live so far
From the plane;
But all the same
Our faithful car soon covered the ground
And brought us home, safe and sound.

To relive all that we had seen,
Saturday to Saturday, and in between.
Relaxed, yet exhausted and moderately brown,
Knowing tomorrow to work, we must both settle down.

And so to conclude this Majorcan ode
Some thoughts on the island, its people and our holiday abode.

Majorca, Mallorca, call it what you will,
Of its Autumn climate one could never have ones fill.
The weather temperature is just about right,
75 to 80 degrees at its height.
If their affluence could be measured in tiles,
They would be way ahead by miles.
Their pavements are tiles, their home outside and in.
Yet right next door a plot more like a bin

To speak to, they seem a rather brusque nation,
But much of what they say is lost in translation.
Some are friendly, helpful and nice,
Others smile, but I felt, at a price.
Ordering from a restaurant or café,
It isn't what, but the way they say,
'You sit down,' should be an invitation,
Yet often sounds more like an admonition.

When thinking of the hotel, many words spring to mind;
Basic, adequate, perhaps rather unkind.
Purpose built would make more sense,
That, I feel, is its best defence.
The room was spacious, on the first floor,
No-one could reasonably ask for more.
The balcony was facing West,
Which, for us, was by far the best,
As it caught the evening sun,
And also lit up the view as each day begun.
The self-service food was very good,
Enabling us to eat as much as we could
For breakfast and dinner; then between those two
The simplest of lunchtime snacks would do.
One dear young lady fetched her grandad his tea,
Plonking his soup before him she said, 'Its pea!'

The en suite had bath, shower, bidet and ants by the score,
In one long column they crossed the floor.
But the place was always spotlessly clean.
The ladies 'what did' could daily be seen
Washing the floor so beautifully tiled,
As we into breakfast all dutifully filed.
Not only did one risk breaking one's neck,
By the end of the meal it again was dirty as heck.

Children were catered for throughout the day,
With plenty of interesting games to play;

They even entertained the evening guests
Leaving us wondering when they had their rests.

There were deck chairs and sunbeds to help us relax,
So we could build up our suntans, or lie on our backs.
The swimming pool looked inviting and clean;
But unheated water just isn't my scene.
The kids had much fun splashing about,
While other would watch and scream and shout.

Nothing is perfect, truth to tell,
But, all in all it was a good hotel.
Before we return, perhaps a Spanish class;
But to Majorca for now, 'Muchas gracias.