



# CATS' AID NEWS

Winter 2011

## CHRISTMAS IS COMING

And our **Christmas Fair** is too! Come and join us on **Saturday 3 December**, at the Iris Charles Centre, Newbridge Avenue, Sandymount, Dublin 4, from **12.00 noon to 2.00 p.m.** *PLEASE NOTE TIMES.*

We've been working hard at fundraising and we really need your support. All charities are feeling the pinch due to the downturn in the economy so you can help by donating goods to sell at our stalls: **Gifts, Jewellery, DVDs/CDs, Plants, Cakes.** Unwanted gifts are always welcome for our **New/Good-as-new stall** and for the ever-popular **Wheel-of-Fortune.** Why not buy some of your Christmas presents at our **Crafts** and handmade **Toys** stalls? Would you bake something for our **Cake Stall**? There will also be super prizes in our **Raffle** and lots more. We should be glad to hear from you if you would like to help at the Sale. Please leave a message on our helpline 01-6683529 and we'll get back to you.



**CATS' AID CORE GROUP WISH ALL OUR SUPPORTERS AND FRIENDS A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A PEACEFUL NEW YEAR**

## GIVE A CAT A DINNER

Donations to our **'Give a Cat a Dinner'** appeal would be especially welcome so please bring along some food, dried or tinned, to help feed the colony and foster cats in our care. This is a huge help towards our food costs.

At the Cats' Aid stall we will have our own merchandise: **2012 Calendars\*, Christmas Cards, Notelets, Mugs, Cotton Bags, T-shirts, Pens, Notebooks, Car Stickers and Keyrings;** and you can become a member if you would like to support us on a regular basis. Refreshments of tea/coffee and biscuits will be available if you need reviving.

**UNFORTUNATELY WE CANNOT ACCEPT BRIC-A-BRAC, ELECTRICAL GOODS, CLOTHES, SHOES, MAGAZINES OR FURNITURE.**

Goods for donation can be delivered to the **Iris Charles Centre, Newbridge Avenue, Sandymount** on the evening before the Fair, **Friday 2 December** between **6.30 and 8.00 p.m.** If you have goods to donate but are unable to transport them we will do our best to collect them from you. Please leave a message at 01-6683529 **NO LATER THAN Friday 25 November** (the weekend before the Sale) and someone from the Sale's organising committee will contact you.

A leaflet about the Fair is enclosed with your newsletter and we should

appreciate any help you can give in publicising it. We look forward to seeing you all on 3 December. **MB**

**\*For the first time we will have 2012 calendars for sale on 3 December, price €6.00, featuring beautiful cat photos, one for each month. See our website, [www.catsaid.org](http://www.catsaid.org), for further details.**

## ANOTHER CATS' AID FUNDRAISER

### Lillie's Bordello Cathouse!

A fun, fantastic fundraiser for Cats' Aid will be held on Thursday, 1 December from 6.30 - 11 pm.

You can stay for the club after as well. Lillie's is at Adam Court off Grafton Street. We will have live music, celebrity guests, nibbles and a lively auction of fabulous prizes including a holiday voucher for €500. There may be a few surprises on the evening... don't miss it!

To book a ticket or find out more, email: [dervlaon@gmail.com](mailto:dervlaon@gmail.com) and keep an eye on our website: [www.catsaid.org](http://www.catsaid.org) and on Facebook.

## REPORT ON 'CATTOO DAY'

We had a lovely day out on September 18. "Paws for a Cause" was run by **Inkwell Tattoo** in Celbridge. John, Emma and Carol spent a long day giving people their new tattoo. Most people went for various designs of a cat paw. The average price of a cat paw print tattoo was €50 with 100% of the proceeds going directly to Cats' Aid. The magnificent sum of €2,200 was raised from tattoo alone. Volunteers baked delicious kitty kat cupcakes, and there were lots of munchies. There was a great atmosphere, everyone comparing cat notes. Cats' Aid representatives were there and we received donations of food, litter, beds and carriers. If you would like to get a paw print tattoo you can contact Inkwell Tattoo directly by email: [john@inkwelltattoo.net](mailto:john@inkwelltattoo.net) or by phone: 01-6102853 (Tuesday to Saturday). **IC**

## \*\*\*!! STOP PRESS !!!\*\*

We will be holding another **Photographic Competition** early next year with a view to choosing suitable photos for notelets and Christmas cards. Details and application forms will be sent out with the Spring Newsletter so start taking photos of your gorgeous felines! **MB**

*WHEN DOGS LEAP ONTO YOUR BED, IT'S BECAUSE THEY ADORE BEING WITH YOU. WHEN CATS LEAP ONTO YOUR BED, IT'S BECAUSE THEY ADORE YOUR BED.*

# CAT IN THE MANGER

In the story, I'm not there.  
Ox and ass arranged at prayer:  
But me? Nowhere.

Anti-cat evangelists  
How on earth could you have missed  
Such an obvious and able  
Occupant of any stable?

Who excluded mouse and rat?  
The harmless, necessary cat.  
Who snuggled in with the holy pair?  
Me. And my purr.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John,  
(Who got it wrong,  
Who left out the cat)  
Remember that,  
Wherever He went in this great affair  
I was there.

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## LADY'S ADVENTURES

Our twenty-year old cat, Lady, was found after being missing from her home for a whole year and is now safely back with her loving family.

### Lady goes missing

On the 1 June 2010 our beloved cat, Lady, whom we have had for fifteen years went missing from Stoneybatter, Dublin 7. I arrived home from work and noticed she was not around. Because of her age she never usually leaves the house. After checking all around the house we moved on to neighbours, asking them to check their gardens, sheds and garages, but there was no sign of Lady. We made posters and put them in local shops and on walls and lampposts. I phoned animal shelters and vets in case she had been found. We posted her details on our Facebook pages too and I also registered her with our vet as being missing.

### The Cats' Aid Charity

I phoned the Cats' Aid Charity and they gave me great advice on where to look and they also posted her on their website [www.catsaid.org](http://www.catsaid.org). We had a couple of phone calls from people thinking they had seen Lady but none turned out to be her. As the months went by and there was no sign of her we assumed that she must have gone away to die on her own because of her age. Apparently it is not uncommon for this to happen. We were very saddened by her loss after having her as part of our lives for so long and would have preferred to have been able to bury her and say goodbye.

### Lady comes back to her family

On 17 May 2011 I was walking down Ivar Street on my way home from work when I got the shock of my life because there, in the middle of the road, was a cat with its back to me and I knew it was Lady. I called her name and she turned around and looked straight at me but ran and crawled through an opening in an old shed. The land is under planning permission and there is no way in or out. My Dad came round to help and we tried knocking on houses beside it but they told us there was no way of getting into it even from their gardens. We went back to the shed where she had crawled through and for half an hour we called her name and finally she popped her head out and we were able to grab her. We ran home holding her. When we got her back home Lady was confused and scared at first. She hid under a table for a while but soon settled down so that we could check her. She had a green collar on but no disc and seemed in good health so we knew someone had been looking after her.



Lady

### Lady and her other family

The next day I went to buy her a new collar and as I walked down the road I saw missing cat posters everywhere for a cat called "Bean". Yes, Lady was Bean. I phoned the number on the poster and spoke to a lovely couple Nora and Walter. I explained that their cat Bean was our cat Lady who had gone missing a year before. They were shocked and asked me to come down to their home to talk. It turns out their house is less than two minutes' away from us and they live right beside the shed where we found her. They could not have been nicer and were happy for us to be re-united with our beloved Lady. They explained they found her hiding in their shed in July almost a month after she got lost. She was really dirty so they actually had to put her in their bath. When they picked her up she was so skinny they could feel her ribs. Wherever she had been for that first month poor Lady had been through a lot. They brought her to the vet to get a health check and she had abscesses all over her mouth so they had to remove nearly all her teeth. She now only has two left, but I am sure she was very relieved to be free from pain. Her new family welcomed her into their home and nursed her back to health.

The vet they brought her to was actually our vet whom Lady has been going to for the last 15 years and where I had registered her as being missing. Somehow even though the couple explained she was found as a stray and in which area they had found her the vet never checked their lost and found sheet. If they had we might have got our beloved cat back after four weeks instead of a year.

### Settling back home at last

Lady has now settled happily back into our home and we are so happy to have her back. We are very grateful that Nora and Walter found her when they did and looked after her so well. From what they have told us I don't think Lady would have survived much longer on her own out in the streets of Dublin. Nora and Walter have decided to get a rescue cat from the shelter to replace Lady. So for both families there has been a happy ending: the story of Lady, our twenty-year old cat, who went missing for a year and returned safely. **KM**

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## ADVICE ON SETTLING IN A RESIDENT CAT WITH A NEW BABY

A recent email to Cats' Aid prompted Cyrileen (the lucky recipient of all our emails!) to write up the following suggestions on preparing a cat for a new baby:

### Preparation For A Baby

Parents-to-be may set aside a room for the baby; the cat needs to get used to staying out of this room. Let the cat into the room to sniff around to satisfy his curiosity, then close the door and keep the cat out.

The mother-to-be may be the cat's main carer; this will probably change when the baby arrives, so get the cat used to being fed by husband/partner. Pregnant women should avoid emptying litter trays, so get husband on board.

Your routine will probably change once the baby arrives; you will have times for feeding, bathing, etc. Let the cat get used to the idea that you won't be available at these times. You may want the cat to spend less time indoors; get him used to this and make sure that he has adequate shelter outside.

All these changes should be made gradually, so that the cat has time to adjust. If you have friends with young babies have them visit so that the cat can get used to the sound of a crying baby.

When the baby is born bring something with the baby's smell home to the cat. When the baby comes home let the cat meet the baby (under supervision, of course). The cat may show interest or not. In your busy schedule do try to spend some quality time with the cat. As long as the cat knows that he is still loved he should adjust to the new arrival. **CP**

### This is the situation to which Cyrileen responded:

I got in touch with you months ago as we were having a baby and our male cat was ruining the house with urine. You very kindly phoned me a few times and talked me through some things I could do to help the situation so I thought I would repay the favour and send you on a list of everything we tried and what eventually worked - in case you get other owners who are going through something similar.

Anyway, when the baby arrived we had four solid months of the cat peeing or pooping on something EVERY SINGLE DAY. It was total hell, not to mention mortifying when we had visitors - but I'm happy to say we have now been 'pee free' for a whole three months and have two very happy kitties - and a happy baby!

This is what we did:

1. We brought Munchy to the vet who gave her the once over and could find nothing physically wrong but sent us home with a bottle of Feliway and some antibiotics. The first day of the Feliway plug-in Munchy pooped right beside it so I'm not sure how effective it was, but we left it there until it ran out and gave her the antibiotics anyway - the pooping continued however - but at least we could rule out something physically wrong!

2. Next we tried to up the ante on the treats and cuddles. I bought ham (which they love) and literally every time I pass the fridge I give them a little piece. They now sit looking at the fridge howling, but they are so happy every time I give them ham I know it's working.

Also, I had been spending a lot of time in my bedroom breastfeeding with the door closed (to stop them coming in and weeing on stuff) so I made a conscious effort to feed downstairs more. The cats started lying beside me on the couch as I was feeding the baby and were instantly happier.

3. It's really important to change the litter trays regularly - cats are fastidious animals. We now change it completely every second day - not just poop-a-scooping, a complete change of fresh litter every second day. You must stay on top of that, even with a baby to mind.

4. It was suggested that I move the food bowls apart to prevent competition with each other for food and shelter; I also got out an old sports bag which is extra warm as it's made of nylon and which smelled of me and left it on one of the beds for Munchy. Bambam has a fixation with getting into brown paper bags so we left her out a brown paper bag to sleep on. Both the sports bag and the paper bag have a cat in or on them at any given time of day and the warmth and security they give seem to be working wonders.

5. They got very upset when we moved things around between the office and the spare room to accommodate the baby and were very unhappy when furniture previously in the office (now nursery) turned up in the spare room. We got rid of the futon as we had no space for it and put the rest of the spare room back the way it was, put in the sports bag and paper bag - and they now feel like they have their own space in a room that looks and smells exactly as it used to!

So, to sum up, my suggestions of things to look at are:

- The vet for a thorough check-up.
- Competition for food and affection with each other and with the baby.
- Cleanliness of litter given baby-minding duties, do they feel safe and loved given the amount of time you need to spend with baby.
- How much furniture has been moved/added since the baby arrived.
- Give them treats so they feel like they are as special as the baby (even though obviously the baby is the real number one - but the cats don't need to know that!).

I have no idea which if any of these worked or if it was just the passage of time and Munchy got used to coming second to the baby, but the peeing seems to have stopped and we have a happy cat again!

## FREYJA - Part 1 (summer 2010)

I adopted a wonderful teenager from Cats' Aid nearly two months ago. She's nearly one now and has got very long. She loves the garden: she has her sunbathing spot near to the back door, her claw-sharpening trunk and her "attack trees", which she shoots up in moments of playfulness. One of her favourite games is appearing at the front window begging to come in (so I dutifully open the window) and granting me a quick headrub or bellyrub before vanishing out through the cat flap in the back door - only to re-appear begging at the front window again! Am I wrapped around her little paw or what???

Our life together wasn't easy at first. I could see that she trusted her foster carers, but she was terrified of me. However I took her home the day I met her as it was really important to me that she find a permanent home. I've been around cats all my life and know that even the most confident ones hate changes. As far as I know, Perky was moved at least three times in the ten short months of her life so I knew she'd find it hard to settle in with me and Cobweb - my other cat, whom I found scavenging in a car park three years ago.

It made for a very long weekend. I hate imposing restrictions on cats, but for her own sake I had to confine her to the big bedroom. At first she refused food and hid in the most worrying places - many of which I blocked off. Cobweb immediately wondered why he was not allowed into the front bedroom and clamoured at the door.

They met each other a few days later and Cobweb became quite jealous and territorial around me. At this point Perky was still keeping her distance from me, but she claimed her territory by sleeping in some of Cobweb's favourite spots and this led to us getting closer.



*Freyja beating up a toy mouse*

I didn't really care for the name Perky. To me it seems more masculine than feminine. I almost called her Moth to go with Cobweb ("A Midsummer Night's Dream"), but as she revealed more of her personality to me I renamed her Freyja after the Norse goddess of love and destiny.

Two months on Freyja is very loving towards me and Cobweb, and she's the dominatrix of our garden when it comes to the many visiting cats. She's still fairly nervous around humans so I advise my visitors to ignore her and,

hopefully, she'll approach them in her own time. It works providing she isn't overwhelmed (by too many people or too many changes).

After 34 years of living with cats, I just want to remind people that every cat is different. Some trust you straight away and some don't. Some sit on your lap and some don't; some like to be picked up and some don't. (Neither Cobweb nor Freyja sit on my lap, and both hate being picked up.) Some sleep on your bed and some don't; some chat to you and some don't. (They both sleep on my bed and both chat, but they have two very different ways of talking to me.)

If you listen to your cat, he/she will listen to you. It's made ours a very happy home.

Thank you, Cats' Aid, for Perky/Freyja.

## FREYJA - Part 2 (summer 2011)

For a long time I have been very aware that I've owed you an email and a donation. I'm sure you've heard it all before, but I suppose we have all become very cautious following the pay cuts and income tax and interest rate increases. I really wanted to set up a monthly donation but I bailed out when things got too close to the line. There's always an extra bill of some kind - a vet's bill, a sick sister overseas, a friend needing to talk for longer than my inclusive minutes allow, etc.

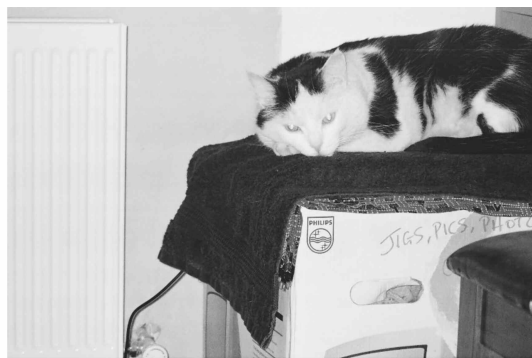
But I'm happy to say that I got a bonus for June and have just donated €300 to Cats' Aid. I pay tax at the higher rate so I'd like you to get the further 40+%.

Now I'd like to tell you how my Freyja (formerly Perky) is getting on...

I picked her up from her foster home as a very nervous little girl who I felt just needed a chance. It took us about half an hour to get her in to a Voyager. Then it took a further two weeks of me lying on the floor of my spare room for her to get to know my smell and to start to understand that I wasn't a threat to her.

Now that she routinely splays all over me every morning and nips my chin as wash her bowl before meals, I find it really hard to remember that there was a time that I had to work to build up our relationship. Thinking back, it took a lot of time and patience - and most of all belief. I never doubted that, when she was ready, Freyja would come to trust me.

She's nearly two now but she's still a real kitten. She's full of energy and everything is a game. I often hear a clattering sound on the stairs and when I investigate there's Freyja attacking her tail! She absolutely loves the garden and shoots up trees, dances around the grass in pursuit of insects and "hides" behind the veggie beds waiting to pounce on my other cat Cobweb. She's obsessed with birds, but has yet to catch one (which I'm secretly relieved about). She tends to go for wood pigeons and seagulls - they're almost the same size as her! - and while I really don't want to deal with a



*Cobweb*

dead or half-dead bird, I go all mushy inside when I see her crouched down like an arrow utterly focused on her target - a real little hunter.

The most rewarding aspect of Freyja's personality is how incredibly affectionate she is. Given how nervous she was in the beginning, I was prepared for her to be quite stand-offish and to only accept a limited amount of physical contact. But about three months after I adopted her, the morning I woke up to her little black nose in my eye, I realised she's one of the most tactile cats I've ever known.

She just loves to be loved. She loves kisses - rubbing her mouth into my cheeks and chin. She gets so excited that she winds up biting my chin! She gives a lot of belly too and gently play-fights my hand when I stroke her. One of her most endearing qualities is how she makes me kiss her. It's quite bizarre - almost too human to believe, except she does it every day right in front of my eyes. If I'm close to her but concentrating on something else (washing her bowl, even going to the loo), she reaches her paw up - with just a little added claw, places it on my cheek or under my chin and literally pulls my face into hers.

I could go on and on and on about how wonderful she is, but I hope this is enough of a snapshot of our lives for you to know that Freyja, Cobweb and I are incredibly happy together. Thank you for giving us the chance to become this loving family. **KW**

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR FROM HOLLY THE SUPERCAT

Dear Missus,

Holly the Supercat here again.

Oh I had a really bad day not long ago. The people here did not put out any food for me the night before. I was hoping that they had just forgotten but the next morning it was into the box and off to the Cat Doctor. I got really worried when they went away and left me there. Anyway, the Cat Doctor came and gave me something to put me to sleep. When I woke up my mouth was all sore and I felt terrible. The people came and took me Home but when I got out of the box I could hardly walk. They would not let me out, of course, which was just as well as I could not have looked after myself. A while later they put out some of my favourite *poulet poché* and I enjoyed that. There was more when I was going to bed and I had a nice sleep. The next morning both the people here were looking at me very carefully and one said: "I think we can let Holly out". Thank goodness for that, I went out and then came in again for breakfast. I could see they were very happy about that. I think the Cat Doctor must have been cleaning my teeth. If they want to do that kind of thing for you, missus, just say no. If it comes to it I think we would both be better eating jelly only from now on!

Lots of love from Holly

(**Note from the Editor:** I'm glad to know that you came through the ordeal, Holly; a bowl of *poulet poché* always helps! **MB**)

## CATS' AID OBJECTIVES

1. To rescue, rehabilitate and find good homes for unwanted cats and kittens on the explicit understanding that no health recoverable cat taken in by Cats' Aid will be destroyed.
2. The education of the general public in the care of cats with particular emphasis on the importance of spaying and neutering.
3. The establishment of permanent shelter/sanctuary for cats.
4. The promotion of the five freedoms of animals: freedom from hunger and thirst; pain, injury and disease; discomfort; fear and distress and freedom to express normal behaviour.

## MEMBERSHIP

If your payment crosses with us sending out reminders, please accept our apologies. Preparations for sending out the Newsletter are made while monies are still coming in and, of necessity, we have to draw the line on a certain date. Rest assured that receipts will be sent out with the Spring edition. Thanks to all our supporters. **MB**

## Cats' Aid Core Group

Claire Anderson  
Maeve Bradley  
Irene Crawley  
Muriel Davidson  
Sandra Downey  
Lesly Field  
Doreen Grant  
Margaret Hopkins

Deirdre McCormick  
Lorraine O'Conaill  
Claire O'Rourke  
Eileen Penston  
Cyrileen Power  
Eileen Warren  
Ann Woulfe

## SPOOK

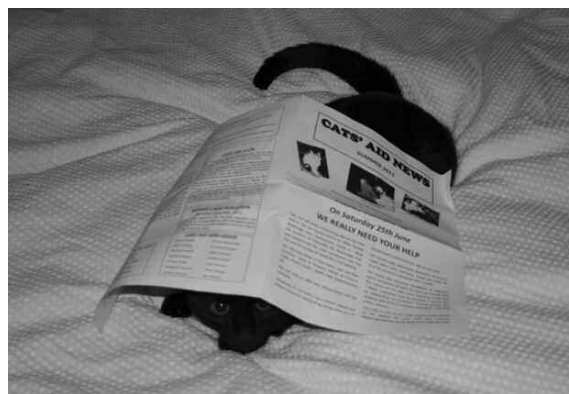
Spook (formerly known as Davey) came to us in April 2009, when he was just six months old. He was a very scared little rescued feral kitten who hadn't had much socialising in his first few months.

We had a fairly hairy first few days with him, as he was pretty terrified of his new surroundings and wouldn't eat or leave his bed - I was so worried that he wouldn't settle, and he jumped at any noise.

Well, what a different cat he has become! We had re-named him Spook because initially he was afraid of **everything**, but now it's more appropriate because he is a little terror! When he is not sleeping, he tears around the apartment, doing laps, leaping from one piece of furniture to the next. He loves chasing his toy mice, goes mental for his feathery toy and attacks his scratching post (and our furniture) with gusto. He likes to "help me study", and manages to find the exact piece of text I'm reading, or piece of paper I'm writing on and plonk himself on it. And as you see from the photo, he likes to keep updated with the goings-on at Cats' Aid. He also loves to hide in paper bags. He has a bit of a paper fetish, I think!

He adores having his belly rubbed, and rolls over and meows if I have the nerve to stop petting him for more than 30 seconds! He is a very chatty cat, with little brrrrs and meows coming out of him quite regularly, especially if he thinks we are ignoring him. He greets us with meows and head-butts when we come home and likes to knead our bellies with his paws!

He is such a lovely cat, with buckets of personality. I'm so glad we could give him a home he is happy in, and we completely adore him. **AG**



*Spook*

## AND FINALLY....

**Newsletter distribution:** We asked in the autumn newsletter if members willing to receive their newsletters by email would contact us. If you are interested and haven't yet contacted us please let us know by sending your email address, with a covering note, to: <catsaid@gmail.com>. Thank you for your continued support for Cats' Aid. Any money we can save on postage will go to help cats in our care. **MB**

## CATS' AID HELPLINE:

# 01-6683529

Messages for Cats' Aid  
may be left on this number.  
The helpline is checked daily.

**CATS' AID ON THE WEB: [www.catsaid.org](http://www.catsaid.org)**

**Would you like to see your rescued cat's story featured in *Cats' Aid News*?** If you enjoy reading the stories of rescued cats in the newsletter, then why not let everyone else know about yours? Have you an opinion about something feline which you would like to share with us? Write to us along with a photograph and we'll do our best to publish it. Please write to: The Editor, Cats' Aid News, P.O. Box 2874, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. It would be a big help to us if you could enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return of your photograph. Alternatively you can email your story and photograph/s to the Editor, *Cats' Aid News* at: [maevebradley@eircom.net](mailto:maevebradley@eircom.net) (only to be used in connection with the newsletter please). **MB**