

The Agiot

52nd Edition

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When Nitsa was Young

By Paul McGovern
Editor



Our Nitsa came into the world on May 11th 1931, in an old cottage which stood on the opposite side of the main road from the present Mini-market in Agios Ioannis behind the Spider Bar, in the general area known by the older inhabitants here as Bay. The old 'Spiti' (house) was a two-up two down accommodation, with a kitchen joined next door. Nitsa became the first daughter of Alexandros and Sofia Analiti, who went on to have a further eight children; Ioannis, Froso, Giorgos, Spiros, Teo, Renee, Prokopis, and Adonis in order of age. All of these plus Grandparents Aglaia and Ioannis huddled within, sharing the two bedrooms.

Nitsa went to the local village school at the age of

six or seven but the war curtailed her studies when she was only nine.

The families were quite poor in those days, materialism was absent, but Nitsa's family were happy, and food was sufficient if not bountiful. They were almost self-sufficient, and kept around their small home pigs (including two sows and a series of piglets) sheep, two cows and many chickens. Nearby, Kostas (of later Taverna fame) had an Uncle who ran a small dairy, near what is now the paint shop close to the Timeout café. So, Alexandros and Sofia were able to supply milk to the dairy for butter, curds and whey (kazaini) to be produced. From this kazaini small workshops on the mainland were able to make plastics, combs and hair-clips etc. The family always had their surplus eggs for sale. Or rather, very often, to barter. A Pramatsouli (travelling salesman of needles, threads, scissors, thimbles and materials) would take their produce in exchange for his wares.

Alekkos was a shoemaker, he learnt his trade at Vari-

patades, so the children were never short for footwear and his cobbling supplemented the family income, from premises in the lean-to at the rear of what is today O Kokoras taverna.

All about were fields owned by the family, in several locations along the border of the main road and down at Vrisi (where current-day Villa Persephone stands). Here they grew potatoes-lots of potatoes, wheat, corn, beans and greens and harvested their orchards of apples, olives and pears. Alekkos had his own vineyards from which he made his wine.

Tragedy struck the family in 1946, when Nitsa's father died at the age of 35. Apart from the grief, this placed upon her young shoulders an enormous extra workload (being the eldest). At the tender age of 15 she helped her Mum raise her siblings, a way of life which hardened her for the work ethic she has maintained ever since. Sofia never remarried.

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When Nitsa was Young
Continued from Page 1

Alekkos' Mum and Dad were Agglia and Ioannis, and Nitsa speaks of her Grandfather with particular fondness. It is a regret for her to this day that he did not survive to see her wedded, as he died in 1956 (aged 60), never having recovered from the premature death of his son ten years earlier.

Water was a precious commodity of course, and the family drew it from several wells and used rain-water channelled from their roof. Large baskets made from bamboo were used for the laundering; clothing and bed-linen were placed in layers within these baskets. As there was no washing powder those days water was boiled in large tin pots and fire-ash was added to this, al-

lowed to settle and poured through a sieve onto the linen. This was left to stand for twenty-four hours. Next day the washers would march off to the nearby lake Limni where the items were washed using tin bowls, wash-boards and soap.



Recreation was Church Holy Days, Christmas, Easter, Panagyri Festival and Carnivale. One particular favourite was the annual pilgrimage to Pantokrator on the 6th of August. A party of about 20 pilgrims

would rise at about 5 A.M. and walk from the village via Kontokali, Gouvia and Spartilas, arriving after the sun had gone down. Torches burning olive oil were used in the dark. The monks had cooked vasoulada (bean soup) and this was served to the arrivees with bread. They were definitely hungry, having fasted for the previous fifteen days.

They slept under the stars (it never rained thanks to God) and left next day after the Service to walk to Nisaki. From here they caught the boat and for the princely sum of 2 Franka (drachmas) they sailed on the kaiki to Corfu town. Thence home and tired by foot.

To be continued....

Village News

By
Dr. Lionel Mann
Contributing Editor



"Cattle in Agios Ioannis"

Greetings from shivering Agios Ioannis. So far this has been the coldest winter since 1967 and there are yet two wintry months to come perchance. We have not yet had snow although the mainland is well covered (a night temperature of -24° was recorded at Florina); our slightly warmer overcast days have

produced a copious supply of rain. Agios Ioannis has not been so badly affected as have some villages in more exposed locations which have had their water supply turned off for days; we have suffered a rash of frozen and burst pipes, but the mains have stayed intact - fingers crossed! Watch this space. From the clear skies the midday sun has real warmth, but not enough to thaw the ice in sheltered places.

Old Sandros remains in the clinic and Polymeris is bedridden.

Bono has grown greatly and has taught Andy some bad habits; Andy used to be in nose-rubbing relations with my cats, but now he apes his associate in barking at and chasing them unless they hold their ground, arch backs, hiss and lash out. Luckily I attack him viciously with a big stick when nobody is watching.

Poor little Minimog, alias Samson, has a hard life these days.

The plateia presents a bleak cheerless aspect by day yet at night still glows brightly with its Christmas illuminations. A colony of cats huddles in the warmth of the Nativity lights in the bandstand, snuggling around the infant Jesus.

An old Lincolnshire proverb: "As the days lengthen, so the cold strengthen." Brrrrr!



"No Brakes - but Andy is on guard!!"

News From the North

By Uncle Bulgaria
Contributing Editor

Darned cold up here in the North it does not help when trying to be economic with the heating oil, but I guess most people are in the same boat, which gives cold comfort!!!

On the bright side I have managed to flog the piece of land we had in Tremodi, not so much flog as give away but it all helps the old kitty.

I see another English shop is opening in Rodha shortly, I guess we will be overrun with them soon. With the dwindling amount of brits left here and the Greek supermarkets now carrying many English products, are these overpriced establishments really going to get the business? We will see.

More Tavernas and bars are closing doors this winter and not going to open for the summer. However I have no doubt we will some odd newbie arrival here who think they can buck the odds and turn these

places into goldmines, Makes me laugh.

Bulgaria is pretty quiet as well at the moment, although I do believe they will get more tourists this year and will in fact pick up before Greece does. It will be interesting to follow developments.

I am having great fun at the moment changing my English driving licence for a Greek one. I understand the eye test costs 90 Euros, I wonder as I only have one eye, will I get the benefit of half price?

With all the rumours abounding that Greece will be reverting back to the Drachma eventually, (Does anyone actually believe that?) all I can say is that one always felt you had a few quid in your pocket with Drachmas, and it was easy to become a Drachma millionaire. However if that change did come about, I bet the first thing the government would do is to devalue it, thereby giving us this incredible feeling of wealth by having a pocket full of million Drachma notes

instead of thousand Drachma notes. Ho Ho Ho!

It will be great to see summer arrive, I can dig out my five year old tatty sandals, and a scruffy pair of shorts thereby looking and feeling very local. and thinking how lucky I am to save having to buy a new pair of expensive discount trainers from the local China town shop before the winters ends, Oh, economy, economy, economy. If I want to look really local I will not shave, thereby saving on razor blades!!!!

You see I am not only Obnoxious I am tight as well.

Don't forget you can still get a LillyLongman Cookery book by checking out www.lillylongman.com you can also get a bargain property in Corfu or Bulgaria from www.corfual.co.uk and finally cheer yourself up by logging into CorfuAl Channel on Utube and watching some of our silly videos.

Not a lot to talk about this plus I am sober which restricts flow of thoughts so,

I am and always will be,
Obnoxious Al

Aunty Lula's Love-bites

Lemon Bars

Ingredients

300gr Plain Flour
75gr Icing Sugar (sifted)
225gr Butter
4 Eggs (beaten)
300gr Sugar
2 tsp Finely Grated Lemon Peel
75ml Lemon Juice
50gr Plain flour
½ tsp Baking Powder
Sifted Icing Sugar

Go:

1. In a bowl beat the butter with an electric mixer on high speed for 30 seconds. Add the 75gr of icing sugar and beat until combined. Beat in the 300gr plain flour until crumbly. Press the mixture into the bottom of an un-greased 33 x 23 cm baking tray. Bake in a 180° oven for 20 to 25 minutes or until lightly browned.

2. Meanwhile beat together eggs, sugar and lemon juice. Combine the flour and baking powder and stir into egg mixture along with the lemon peel. Pour over baked dish.

3. Bake in the 180° oven for 25 minutes more or until lightly browned around edges and the centre appears set.

4. Cool in tray on a wire rack and sprinkle with additional icing sugar.

5. Cut into squares of diamonds if desired and garnish with strips of lemon peel.

6. Store, covered, in the refrigerator

Bon Appetit!!

Percy Evans and the Sacred Ibis

By
Dai the Nant

When I moved to Wales, almost the first person that I met was a 70 year old character called Tom Powell, otherwise known as "Tom the Logs" and also "Tom the Ticket". The first because he supplied the village with all their winter fuel, and the second because he was always raising money for charity by selling raffle tickets.

Everybody got their logs from Tom although they were always ringing wet. I once asked Gerry The Oak if Tom's logs were likely to be soaking again this year: "he's had the hosepipe on em all morning" replied Gerry. Tom, of course, sold all his logs by weight.

Accounting for his income from both sources was a bit of a problem because Tom couldn't read or write although he could handle small change. The big job of drawing up a schedule of takings was left to Hannah, his lovely wife. Despite being unable to read, Tom in an earlier life had run a haulage business and had delivered goods all over England and Wales. He couldn't read the signs so I expect he developed a very good memory, as most illiterate people do.

Another by-product of his lack of letters was his frequent habit of

mispronouncing words and names. For example, he always called Conrad, who lived next door to The Oak: Conrod. This irritated Conrad so much that he always avoided Tom when drinking in The Oak, and he eventually moved away from the village.

On another occasion, Dilwyn asked Tom to go with him in his big wagon to deliver a consignment of something or other in Tangiers. They were gone for a fortnight, and when they came back, Tom was soon regaling all and sundry in The Oak with his adventures. Arthur asked him if he brought back plenty of cigarettes and tobacco. Apparently not. You couldn't move for Customs men on the lookout. "If we had packed the wagon" said Tom, "they would have been on us like a pack of Vouchers"

Shortly after we moved to the village I asked Tom if he would help me with some foundations for a garage. We were halfway through digging the footings out when two significant events occurred. First of all Percy Evans died, who had served in the same unit as Tom during the 2nd World War, and second: the village was invaded by bird-watchers.

The bird-watchers had turned up because a Sacred Egyptian Ibis had landed in a field opposite the foot-

ball pitch. Tom was on to this in no time "that bird has been blown here by a high wind from the Sahara" he stated. Actually this wasn't as stupid as it sounded as I can remember being in Leeds when 30 tons of red sand had come down on the city and collected in the gutters. That was put down to a high wind.

What with nipping up to check on the Ibis, and getting ready for Percy's funeral, Tom was not much help with my footings. In fact I didn't see him until after lunch on the Sunday. Percy had been buried, and Tom, in his best suit was piping his eye over a bottle of Guinness. By this time a policeman from Anglesey had turned up (he kept exotic birds) given the Ibis a good slap and thrown it in his van "I could tie a 56 lb weight to this bird and it would find a way to fly off" he shouted at the Twitchers. Very red in the face he was too.

"It could have been brought by a High Wind from the Sahara" said Tom "I have heard of such things"

And then he went all maudlin again, thinking about his old comrade in arms: "A good man was Percy, always kind to others, he looked out for me and I looked out for him." A deep sigh, and then: "But we will all meet again, in the Great Erection"

Monthly Joke (sent in by Barry Knight)

We bought a dog for Christmas, however, our house was broken into last night by two robbers who locked us in the bathroom, and proceeded to steal all they could carry.

Our "watchdog" did not alert us, and for this reason we are giving him away. We no longer want a dog - I am now going to install detection devices with alarms. They're

cheaper and more reliable.

For those interested in adopting the dog please send an e-mail urgently.

A photo of him is attached.

He does have a few problems but with help he should be OK!!



Christmas 1938

By
Dr. Lionel Mann

Part Two:

Despite having been home late the previous night at the school Christmas Concert I was up at seven-thirty the next morning. Every Sunday grandfather attended the eight o'clock Holy Communion at our lovely church and he had welcomed me going with him.

Getting up at any time during the winter was something of an ordeal. My bedroom, smallest of the six, was above the scullery outside the kitchen door and had no heating. It was an icebox; icicles formed inside as well as outside the window. I was "pampered" to the extent of being given a hot-water-bottle at bedtime, but undressing and dressing were performed very quickly. The water from the bottle was emptied into the bathroom sink for my morning wash. It was cold by then; but warmer than the icy water from the tap. Apparently central heating, double glazing and hot water systems had not been around when the house had been built some thirty years earlier. The lounge and the three larger bedrooms were heated by gas fires, the dining room and kitchen by wood and coal fires; that in the kitchen also heated three hotplates and an oven and was kept burning continually winter and summer. It also heated a big black kettle upon a hob, providing the only constant supply of hot water. There was also a large gas oven in the kitchen and in the bathroom a gas-fired geyser poured hot water into the bath. The house was also lighted by gas; grandfather considered electricity dangerous. Gas was piped into the

house from a main under the road.

There were two churches in the village; a pretty little 15th-century one in the older part and an ugly Victorian barn in the newer area. The tall trees in the vicarage garden and churchyard of the latter shaded our tennis court and I often had to climb the fence to retrieve stray balls. Attendance at church for the early service required no more than a two-minute stroll. I liked accompanying grandfather; he was always warmly greeted and obviously well respected. His builders had built most of the houses in the new part of the village and he had named many of the roads.

Grandmother had prepared breakfast when we returned from church. Uncle, aunt and I had morning musical engagements. Uncle Lionel was organist and choir-master of a city church while aunt and I sang in the choir of a suburban church.

Soon after ten o'clock my friend Roy came for me. When I was six and he seven we had joined the choir of the village churches, transferring eighteen months later to a suburban church where the music and the "pay" were better. Too, we had both been promoted beyond our ages in the village school, he one year and I two, moving together and sharing a double desk for three years until he gained a County Scholarship conferring a free place at the city boys' Grammar School where I had now followed him by the same route. Together we set off for church. We had each been given threepence, a penny for the bus fare either way and a penny for the church collection, but unless the weather were really bad we walked the mile-and-a-half; the

penny thereby saved would buy a little bar of chocolate, six sticky toffees or a small bag of sweets at the newsagent's-confectioner's at the bottom of the long hill that formed the greater part of our way. Actually at this time we were saving for Christmas; with father, grandfather, two uncles, sister, cousin, grandmother and five aunts to consider the season promised to be rather expensive, especially for me.

Our choir at church comprised sixteen boys, six women and a dozen men. Since the festive season was not yet upon us our music reflected Advent austerity, but the pews were well filled in those days before the Anglican Church forfeited its credibility through attempting to be "with-it" and "politically correct". There were fifty-two churches in the city with a population of seventy thousand, while today there are only thirty active places of worship for more than double the population though the Catholics have opened three new ones. The site of that where I held my first organist post from 1940 and where all our choral services drew standing-room-only congregations is now occupied by a block of flats.

We walked home after the service. We had been doing that unescorted for about three years, sometimes detouring by way of the heath that started behind the houses that lined the side of the road.

There was no danger; Britain was a far safer place for the young and old than it is today. We were supposed not to climb trees while wearing our best clothes and took care to dust each other down afterwards to remove evidence.

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Christmas 1938
Continued from Page 5

In common with most of our fellows we always wore school uniform in public; we were proud of our school and of our achievement in having gained a place there. The uniform was certainly distinctive: scarlet cap and blazer with gold edging; scarlet and gold necktie; scarlet and gold neckband of pullover worn in cold weather; scarlet and gold cuffs of grey socks; grey shirt and shorts; scarlet and gold striped scarf, grey mackintosh worn when required; black lace-up shoes. We wore "scruff gear" only at home and when out playing on Saturdays and school holidays. Around the county we were known as "red-cap boys" until the war caused a shortage of scarlet dye and our uniform became much less ornate. The dye was probably needed for red tape and staff officers' red tabs.

Sunday dinner was always a roast with assorted vegetables from our garden followed by a fruity dessert. The large garden and greenhouse contained many fruit trees and bushes; grandmother use a variety of ways to preserve fruit for use out of season'. Apples, pears, plums, greengages, cherries, raspberries, loganberries, strawberries, gooseberries, redcurrants, blackcurrants and blackberries were always making unexpected appearances at our meals.

After Sunday dinner, the only midday meal at which the whole household attended, grandfather had a "snooze" of about an hour and I went to the lounge to practise piano and viola. Unless the weather were really bad grandfather would look in on me at about four o'clock. "Coming with me today, Lionel?" We would set out on his "Sunday constitutional".

Most of the village was surrounded by a rectangle of roads known locally as "the four-mile

square". This was our regular route. For the first mile we had grandfather's woods on one side, the heath and then the old aerodrome on the other. These were followed by farmland and the last third of our walk was through mainly a built up area. As we strode along briskly the old boy discoursed upon his early days, his business, his philosophy of life, the state of the world, breaking off from time to time to comment upon some aspect of nature that his countryman's eye had observed; animal tracks, displaced vegetation all aroused his interest. He seemed to know everyone whom we met and would enquire of family and affairs. Many were his tenants and again I was impressed by the respect and warmth with which we were greeted. The sign "Trespassers will be prosecuted" by the gate at the entrance to his woodland meant nothing; in my younger days I had been told that boys had played in this wonderful venue for ages and still did. When I learnt of the ownership and sought permission for access he had twinkled and said, 'I wondered when you'd get round to it. All right, but no fires.' The locked gate was no obstacle; everyone knew a hole in the fence. During the Depression those woods had been a source of firewood for his tenants. Moreover he never evicted anyone unable to pay rent. "It is better that a house is occupied and cared for than that it lies empty."

Sunday tea was ready when we arrived home. It often included a delicious pork brawn made by grandmother.

After tea we all set off to church in relays; my grandparents went to Evensong at the village church round the corner, the rest of us to our usual places.

Following our service Roy and I along with the other boys received

our three-month choir pay, a half-crown, two shillings and sixpence, thirty pence - for at least forty attendances. It was yet twelve years before I was in a position to see that I and my choristers received a more appropriate reward from a miserly Church for our services. Nevertheless with Christmases only a week away all contributions were gratefully received! We still each saved another penny by walking home!!

Corfu Weather Statistics

January 2012

Maximum Temperature - 14C

Minimum Temperature - 6C

Average Temperature - 7C

Windspeed - 74km/h.

Gust-speed - 69km/h.

Rain - 26,9mm

(as at 30/01/12)

R.I.P. Big Jim Knight



It is with particular sadness I report the passing of Big Jim, who came to Agios Ioannis several times during the

90's and most recently in 2007. Here he can be seen playing and singing to a small group of friends at Villa Theodora in the Spring of 07. Jim was here for a whole summer at the beginning of the 90's and played around and about this part of Corfu in many bars and tavernas, particularly in town and Krontokali. I was his 'roadie' in those days and we had some good times and laughs during our weekly travels.

Jim died in Edinburgh after a long struggle with lung cancer. Goodbye Jim, your singing is still with us.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

The 'pen' you caution us about sounds a lot like Socrates's 'cave' in which what we assume as real is illusion. He suggested we are prisoners tightly chained since childhood at the back of a cave compelled to gaze at a wall in front of us. Behind us is an enormous fire. Behind us, between us and the fire is a walkway, along which animals and people walk, carrying every variety of object. We watch the shadows cast by this passing parade, not knowing they're shadows, nor that the noises on the walkway are echoes off the wall in front of us. Sounds a bit like a large screen? We prisoners have been taught - indoctrinated - to view the shadows and echoes as real - rather than reflections. We've come to respect, as experts, those who tell us what these shadows mean and even predict their future behaviour. If any of us begins to have doubts about this - as your editorial suggests; if indeed one of us has his chains removed and is allowed to stand so we can actually see the things that created the shadows and the echoes, we wouldn't quite know what we are looking at. Having imbibed so much expert interpretation of shadows, the freed prisoner is confused and puzzled by the actual things that cause them. This is why a waking citizenry is often so full of odd and confused ideas about the world, when first they move from unquestioning acceptance of the world of shadows and echoes, when first they leave the 'pen'. Indeed, many exposed to the buzzing blooming confusion of reality would prefer to turn back to the familiar world of shadows and echoes.

Socrates suggested Socrates - contrarian old irritant genius that he was - that you were compelled to look at the fire, "wouldn't you try to turn your gaze back toward the shadows; toward what you can see clearly and hold to be real? What if someone forcibly dragged you out of the cave: wouldn't you be angry at the one freeing you? If dragged out into the sunlight, wouldn't you be distressed and unable to see even one of the things now said to be true."

To be optimistic, after some time on 'the surface' you might acclimatize. You might learn to see more and more things around you, until at last you could look at the sun. You would understand that its dazzling light is the source of "the seasons and the years; the steward of all things in the visible place, and is in a certain way the cause of all those things you and your chained companions had been seeing". For such insights Socrates was accused by Athenian democrats of corrupting youth and condemned to death.

Yours etc

Simon

Good afternoon,

So lovely to stumble upon this site. I remember the best 10 days ever in 1970 - August I think, staying here with my cousin Rosemary when I was 19.

I recall the smell of mimosa and the wide sands of Glyfada beach when there were just the footings for a new hotel and a little beach restaurant.

John Stapleton the news reporter was also staying here and water was in short supply because the weather was so hot.

I remember eating souflaki outside in the evenings and the Greek yoghurt topped with grilled brown sugar - delicious. It was here I fell in love with the Mediterranean and Corfu will always hold a special place in my heart. I wish I had stayed.

Thank you !!

Allie (Alison Hay as I was then)

Corfu Donkey Rescue

Dear Friends

I am writing on behalf of the local Donkey Sanctuary (**Corfu Donkey Rescue**) run by Judy Quin - she is not aware of this e-mail - I am sending it to try and help a little, if I can.

As we all know, these gentle creatures have mostly lead a life of heavy burden and are now ending their days in Judy's care. During these very cold, and sometimes frosty days and nights it is essential that the donkeys have sufficient covering to keep them warm. On their behalf I am asking you all to search through your cupboards and if you have any old, but useable, blankets to spare, please consider donating them to the donkeys.

For further information on the Donkey Sanctuary you can visit: **Mobile:** 4947 375992 **Sanctuary:** 26610 91943
Web-site: www.corfu-donkeys.com
E-mail: judyquin@otenet.gr

The Corfu ex-pat community have proved their generosity to me many times over the past 29years (The annual British Legion Poppy Appeal; The tragic Tsunami in 2005 followed almost immediately by the earthquake in Pakistan during the same year; The ARK Animal Welfare Charity ...) and I am sure you will not disappoint me this time!

I look forward to hearing from you all in due course.

Yours sincerely

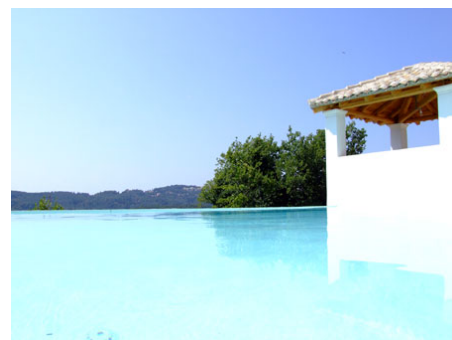
Lucy Steele, M.B.E.
Former British Vice Consul
Corfu



For homes under
construction

Please Contact:

OCAY
Property Services



at

P.O. Box 1424
Agios Ioannis, Triklino, Corfu 49100, Greece.
Telephone: (0030) 26610 58177 - Mob: (0030) 6974932408
E-mail: mcgovern@otenet.gr
Website: www.propertycorfu.org



An Article taken from the Evening Standard - June 2011 (sorry for the poor quality)

Photo Gallery



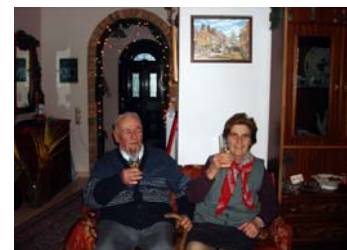
"A beautiful photo sent in by
John Christie"



"Messonghi in January 2012"



"Football day out in the North"



"Shades of Christmas -
In Agios Ioannis 2011"

THE ARK ANIMAL WELFARE CHARITY
(Friends of the Animals)

MOVING HOUSE? LEAVING CORFU?

If you are at the stage of having a good clear-out,
for whatever reason, please don't throw your
unwanted items away!

Most of you know The ARK has a small shop in
town and we will sell anything from a set of
cutlery to a washing machine! All items accepted
must be in good condition; all electrical items
must be in working order.

So, if you have any unwanted items: ie: books;
dvd's; clothing; shoes; electrical items; kitchen
equipment etc. we will be happy to take them off
your hands!

Proceeds from all sales go towards helping the stray
and abandoned animals on Corfu, of which there
are far too many.

Please call: 6975 833654 to arrange for drop-off /pick-up.
Your co-operation / generosity will be much appreciated.

Visit our website: corfuanimalwelfare.com