

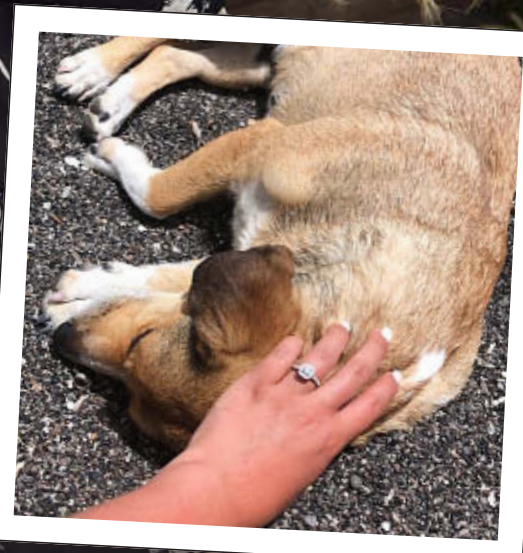
Picture: JAKE McPHERSON/SWNS

The bride and grrr-oom!

NEW LIFE: Jessica at home with Bluebell. **Left:** Jessica's wedding in Santorini. **Below:** Bluebell



How honeymooner fell in love with a stray dog – and brought pet home to share her married life



DOG LOVER Jessica Lloyd knew she would be returning home from her wedding on Santorini with a husband.

But she hadn't bargained for sharing her life with a stray dog who had befriended her on the beach.

Jessica, 28, was enjoying her honeymoon with husband Richard, 36, a firefighter, when she looked under a sun lounger and found a terrified little dog.

Jessica, from Weston-super-Mare, Somerset, said: "She was so tiny and frightened, desperately thin and so weak that she could barely lift her head. As soon as we gave her food she wolfed it down. She was starving.

"I could tell she'd just had puppies. Her belly was swollen. She was exhausted and desperate for love. She followed us all day.

"There were so many strays and every day of the holiday I'd been in tears watching them rummaging through bins for food. I couldn't bear the thought of leaving her."

Jessica, a partnership manager, was put in touch with Greek Animal Rescue (greekanimalrescue.com).

Within 20 minutes a volunteer met her on the beach and Jess decided she would adopt the little dog, whom she named Bluebell (as blue was the colour of the dresses in her wedding party). Six weeks

By **Rachel Spencer**

later and having spent £600 on vet treatment, transport and her pet passport, Bluebell travelled across Europe, going to Athens by ferry, then on a six-day drive to Brussels before arriving in London via Eurostar.

Jessica, who was married in May, said: "The volunteers knew Bluebell because they had found homes for her puppies and they were worried about what had happened to her.

"We took her to the vets, where she was treated for fleas, ticks and worms and checked over to make sure she was healthy enough to travel and live in the UK.

"The vet said she is around two and looks like a beagle crossed with a corgi. She is such a lovely little dog and has settled in well with our pugs Luka and Poppy.

"As you'd expect she can be a little clingy and follows me everywhere but it's just so lovely to give her a second chance. I can't think about what might have happened to her."

According to government figures 307,357 dogs were imported last year via

the Pet Travel Scheme. Figures from 2017 show 39,998 dogs entered the UK for commercial reasons and of those 3,229 came from Cyprus, 15,548 from Romania, 4,303 from Spain and 1,423 from Greece.

The British Veterinary Association recommends adopting from UK rescue centres. But animal lovers struggle to walk away from dogs in desperate need, particularly in countries where there are barely any welfare organisations.

Bee Friedmann was on a diving holiday in Dahab in Egypt when she fell in love with a six-month-old puppy with a broken leg named Hoppy.

Bee, 56, from Margate in Kent who runs her own pet accessories company, Hiro and Wolf, said every time she came back from a diving session Hoppy was there waiting for her.

She said: "I told the woman who ran the diving centre that if she took him in and looked after him, I would pay for his food and any treatment he needed. If there ever came a time when they couldn't

RESCUED: Zawadi was taken to Kent from Egypt as an injured puppy



care for him, I said I would bring him to England. Three months later I had a call asking if I could collect him.

"When I first saw him he was like a little Jack Russell, but when I returned he'd grown into a much bigger dog, more like a great Dane!"

Bee was able to arrange for the puppy whom she renamed Zawadi, meaning Gift in Swahili, to be cared for at Dara and Monica's Pets Hotel so she had time to apply for a pet passport and he could have his vaccinations and other treatment needed to gain entry to the UK.

She spent around £300 preparing him for travel and returned to Egypt carrying a dog crate for him to travel home in. Then they both boarded a flight for just £50 each.

Bee said: "I was at the baggage carousel and the airline staff wheeled him up to me in his crate. He jumped out and scampered around the airport wagging his tail!

"He was a little confused at first but he's settled into life here well and my dog Wolf and my friend's Jack Russell Coco absolutely love him.

"For the runt of the litter with a broken leg, life in Egypt looked bleak. I'm glad to have been able to give him the chance of a healthy, happy life."

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