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Sugar skills are icing on the cake

With the growth in home cooking and the runaway success of the BBC's *Great British Bake-Off*, cake-making is the new rock 'n' roll. And one of its local stars is expert cake decorator Adam Cox.

Adam has spent six years mastering the art of sugarcraft and cake-making, producing incredible edible creations and bespoke celebration cakes for any occasion.

Now Adam is passing on his skills by offering private tuition to all levels of cake decorators in their own kitchens. His classes will teach many different techniques for cakes and cupcakes, including how to cover a cake, how to carve shapes and how to model sugar paste figures.

And for those who want to decorate a cake themselves for a loved one's birthday or wedding, Adam will customise the class to help beginners to produce the cake of their dreams.

Adam said: "All lessons will be held at a location of your choice, as long as there is a table available for us to sit at, running water close by and an enthusiastic student. I will supply everything else."

Adam can be contacted on 07891 830664 or via www.topmycake.com.



Cake sculpture: Adam Cox with one of his party creations.



Server Edie Boon behind the counter at the new Boyden's Pantry in Church Lane. Photo by John Lawrence

Cosy café opens for business

By Betti Blatman

East Finchley has a new café. Boyden's Pantry has been opened by local residents Ben Harrison and Anna Boyden. The pair had been driving down Church Lane daily and noticed the vacant property on the corner of King Street, once occupied by the East Finchley Neighbourhood Centre, and thought it would be the perfect place to start a new café to complement their existing business in New Southgate, called Boyden's Kitchen (www.boydenskitchen.com).

The refurbishment of the glass-fronted corner location resembles a cosy living room with comfortable furniture and there was a 'buzzy' atmosphere amongst the customers when I visited. Ben said they were aiming for residents to have a local meeting point while enjoying tea and coffee, snacks or a light lunch. And besides opening their second cafe, Anna and Ben are also celebrating the birth of their second child. Charlie was born on 14 January. Congratulations to them.

Dark days and a new life

By Harry the cat

I was alone and it was dark. Despite my fur coat, I was freezing cold. I was also hungry, but the foxes were already ransacking the bins, feasting on stale chicken bones.

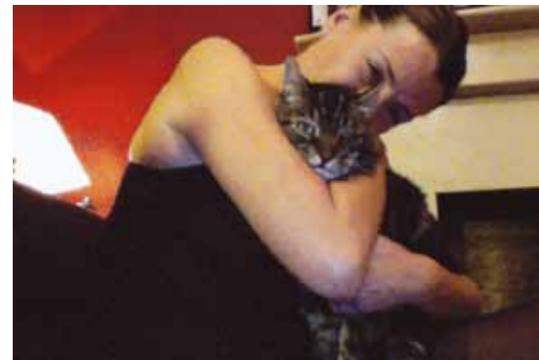
Concealed in the shadows, I watched and waited for the foxes to leave. When they did, I ate what little remained. I couldn't hunt because I'd lost the use of one eye, so my attempts at turning those pesky rodents into dinner were easily foiled.

I used to have a home. I used to be given food whenever I meowed (to alert the humans to feeding time) or by simply looking cute. Alas, those were distant memories.

But today, food, warmth and love are plentiful again, thanks to the charity Animal Aid & Advice North London who rescued me. They also provided the surgery I needed to repair my eye.

Following my spell with the V-E-T, I was taken to a place with lots of other felines. Humans came to visit, peering at us through our cages, and the lucky ones were fostered or adopted. Nine months passed, but no one came for me.

I'm not conventionally handsome. I bear scars from those wild days of fending for



Harry's found a new home with Jen.

myself, and my post-operative eye is a bit on the droopy side. But I'm me, and I have feelings.

Then, on the day of the Muswell Hill Festival, I found my forever home with Jen. The minute we locked eyes it was love at first sight, although I have to say she's no oil painting either!

Today, life's good. No, actually it's great! These days I'm called Harry. I can't remember my old name, but let's hope it wasn't Fluffy Wuffy! Thanks to Jen, and the efforts of the Animal Aid & Advice North London charity shop on the High Road, I have all the cuddles and tuna a happy kitty could need.

Please contact info@animalaidandadvice.org, or call Marilyn on 07533 268 649 should you find a place in your heart to help homeless cats.

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