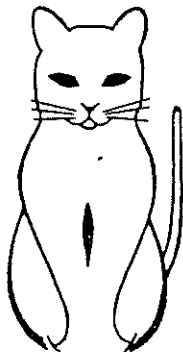


'CAT AFFAIRS'



MARCH 1984

# JOURNAL

SPECIAL AUTUMN EDITION

**The Cat**

**Protection Society of N.S.W.**

(Registered Charity CC. 17122)

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*Two of the Society's Animal Ambulances outside Concord Animal Hospital*

**IF YOU CAN PLACE A CAT OR KITTEN IN A GOOD HOME,  
PLEASE RING OUR WELFARE SERVICE — 'PHONE 51 1011 or 651 2169  
PLEASE DO NOT RING 651 2169 ON MATTERS OTHER THAN THE  
PURCHASE OF A CAT**

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Dear Members: The response to our 1983 Xmas and Ambulance Appeals was remarkably successful, as was the response to Lee-Anne Porter's appeal for old towels etc., for the cat cages. We were delighted also with the number of cards and letters received, all expressing messages of good-will and kind greetings to all who work for the Society.

To all of you good-hearted people who contributed in whatever way, we truly thank you for your gracious consideration. In doing so we should not forget "Sooty", the little cat on the cover of the Xmas journal, who really made the appeal, and came through so handsomely for those of his kind.

Members naturally will be interested in how their donations are disbursed. Apart from partially defraying the heavy running costs of the ambulances and other overheads, a large proportion goes toward maintaining and improving the conditions of those cats and kittens we hope to place. For example — and this should be pleasing to members — shortly before Xmas, and in conjunction with the Northside branch of the Animal Welfare League, we purchased and had installed, an improved and more spacious kitten pen at Dural.

When the kitten season is in full swing this allows us to house and place more kittens at less risk of overcrowding, thus also lessening the risk of spreading infection. The kittens, of course, are happier and much more comfortable. The pen is based on concrete (hygiene and ease of cleaning), is divided in two equal sections with transparent plexi-glass dividing and side walls. It has an aluminium overhanging roof and aluminium rear wall. This design allows plenty of fresh air, sunshine and light, yet gives adequate protection in inclement weather. The pen is shaded by a nearby tree and the plexi-glass allows for easy cleaning. The two groups of kittens enjoy eyeing each other through the transparent dividing wall.

**Comments on Placing Cats:** A few people — perhaps a few members — feel we should give cats away or ask little or nothing for them. This I cannot countenance, and I shall give my reasons: the little animals that we try so hard to place are creatures battling against the odds for a chance at life. We simply will not allow that they should be regarded or treated as "things" or "objects" having no value.

When people have to pay for something they are far more likely to treat it with care, and we want prospective owners to carefully consider the responsibility and consequences of their purchase, and to understand that they are obtaining a living creature of some worth — not a throwaway item that cost them nothing. When

we ask a standard donation of \$25 per cat we do so with the intention of eliminating the undesirable type of owner who might, without much thought for its care, obtain a cat on a whim or just for the "fun" of it, and then growing tired of it, may discard it. "After all, it cost nothing" might be the thought.

Our concern also is to discourage those of a more sinister bent (unscrupulous greyhound trainers and the like), who would descend in hordes if they thought they could obtain cats merely for the asking. The \$25 further ensures that a new owner who for any reason, may become dissatisfied with the cat, will not be tempted to abandon it, but will return it for refund — which is our guarantee to all who purchase a cat.

On the more practical side, we have to operate as a business. The \$25 only covers a very small fraction of our total outlay on each cat. Consider this: the 1983 recommended veterinary fee for speying is \$54, castration \$33. Add \$22 which is the recommended fee for fluvax and feline enteritis inoculations (N.S.W. Division Schedule of Fees 1983), and the ordinary owner is up for \$76 for a female and \$55 for a male cat. Note: The 1984 schedule of fees has risen approximately 4% overall. We ask a mere average of \$25 for a hand-picked, vet-checked, neutered and vaccinated cat, and that's a damn good bargain in anybody's language — let there be no nonsense on that score.

We could not even attempt to provide the type of service that we do at the price, if it were not for the co-operation of those humane and understanding vets with whom we negotiate a fair scale of fees based on welfare considerations and the large volume of our business. One vet in particular gave valuable advice on the construction of the kitten pen and frequently checks on the health and condition of the cats and kittens held for homes. Those vets have our respect and thanks.

Any person interested in obtaining a cat or kitten should ring either our welfare number (51 1011) or direct to the cattery (651 2169). The cattery number should not be rung on other matters or for any welfare help. It is solely for placing cats. No cats will be accepted at the cattery from members of the public. Persons wishing to surrender cats or wanting strays collected must make appropriate arrangements through our welfare section and our ambulances will pick up the animals. All callers on matters not connected with placing a cat shall at all times be referred back to 51 1011.

**Arrangements Regarding Our Desexing Service:** When persons request the services of

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

### — Continued

our ambulance for the purpose of having their cats transported for desexing, an appointment is made by one of our welfare officers, and it is required that all persons availing themselves of this service be available at the appointed time and to have the cat or cats reasonably secure in a room or container (we supply suitable baskets of our own for carriage). There have been instances where, on calling upon a client, our welfare officers have been informed that the cat is a half-wild stray, is loose in the back-yard and difficult to catch. Our welfare officers have appointments to meet and have no time to spare endeavouring to catch such cats. Some callers also wish us to collect strays from the street, we have them desexed and return them to the street. This we will not do.

Where it is distinctly preferable, and persons are able to arrange their own transport, we have a voucher system for desexing. All persons requesting and receiving one of our vouchers must take the cat only to that vet named on the voucher, and pay the designated fee directly to that vet. This service has been arranged with co-operating vets over a wide range of the metropolitan area, who have negotiated with us a special welfare fee for those in needy circumstances.

We do not, and cannot, make arrangements for any other type of veterinary service other than desexing, immunisation and euthanasia. However, we will advise, and if callers require it, we will recommend certain vets or veterinary hospitals to them.

**Provision of Services:** It is unfortunate, but it should be noted, that the welfare services we offer can only be provided during week-day working hours. Unlike one or two of the larger organisations whose income from legacies alone runs to an annual six figures sum (the R.S.P.C.A. from cash legacies alone, received in excess of 373 thousand dollars in a mere 6 month period during 1983), we are not in receipt of anything like that kind of money which would enable us to cover longer hours, week-ends and public holidays. Our entire income for a full year amounts to only a fraction of the wealth mentioned above. Therefore, it is almost impossible to keep up with the huge demands made on our services. Only first-class financial management and the fact that many of us work in an honorary capacity enables us to carry out and continue our current range of activities. We regret that at present we are unable to go beyond that which we already provide.

**Are Our Activities Worthwhile? You Be The Judge:** Over the Xmas-New Year holiday period, although our ambulance service was seriously

cut back, all public holidays were covered for emergencies by volunteers, and our office and telephone were open to all who called seeking assistance. Excepting week-ends, all serious emergencies were attended, and literally hundreds of calls were received reporting dumped cats and kittens — even reports concerning cats locked in flats while owners were away enjoying themselves. In my opinion, it was one of the worst holiday seasons in recent years for dumped mother cats with kittens.

Although we couldn't provide an immediate pick-up service owing to the awesome volume, all who sought our help were assured that our ambulances would catch up with them over the following days if they could care for the cats in question in the meantime. However, what I really wish to report on are those aspects of our work of which members may not be aware.

On the Tuesday following Xmas, one particular emergency that I attended was where an elderly pensioner rang to say that her very well-loved pet cat was suffering extreme pain — could we help? The story was that the cat was in a bad way with a urinary problem and as previous expensive treatment had failed to alleviate the complaint, the only humane solution was to put the cat down. The owner had a transport problem (being a public holiday no local vets were available), but the main thing was she was too distressed to personally face up to what had to be done. However, extremely saddened as she was, she was very grateful that we were able to collect her cat and bring a merciful end to his misery.

We had a great deal of difficulty locating a vet and were finally relieved of our worry when a vet of our acquaintance sympathetically made his services available. However, we still felt the job was not complete. The cat's owner was rung and assured that the kindest thing had been done and that her cat had suffered no pain. I believe this eased her distress to some extent.

One further example of our work occurred on Thursday, 29th December. An agitated caller rang to report that her cat had been struck by a car on Boxing Day and was now suffering very badly (I omit the details of its awful injuries). This person was too distraught and, frankly, too incompetent, to attempt to get the cat to a vet. Fortunately, I was able to direct Sandy Moss with her ambulance to this case and the cat was quickly transported to the nearest vet where, because of the nature of its injuries, it was swiftly put down to suffer no further.

On the New Year holiday, while again on emergency duty, no actual emergencies came to my attention, but we did have a case with a happier ending. I was called upon to take delivery of a 3-4 months old tabby kitten who was extremely friendly and vivacious. All the

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

## — Continued

way in my car to the veterinary hospital, the kitten remained happy, obviously enjoying the trip. On arrival at the vet hospital he was pronounced healthy and a "people" cat; so he was destined for Dural and an eventual home. (Whoever he goes to will gain a top cat).

The cases cited above are merely some of my experiences over the Xmas holiday period and they are representative only of the many hundreds of similar cases our welfare services deals with. I have described them in a little detail so that you, the member, will have a clearer picture of the variety and worth of our activities, and to give you an opportunity to decide whether your donations are well spent or not. You be the judge.

Meantime, over that same period our efforts to place cats in good homes continued unabated, and on Xmas and New Year's Eves the Treasurer and myself spent both days at Dural helping to deal with prospective owners.

**The Hard Workers Behind The Scenes:** What about that very necessary work which is not directly connected with actual welfare but which is vital in keeping the ship afloat? Over the Xmas holiday period an unsung but very hard-working and dedicated little band — Gordon and Sybil Cozens, Jo Tomkin, Edith Easton, Zena Kensey and Denise Tierney — gave up almost all their leisure time to gather at our Enmore headquarters where they scrubbed, polished and cleaned the premises, prepared and sorted clothing and goods for the 'Op' shop, removed rubbish, shifted furniture and generally knocked themselves out getting everything in order for 1984.

Among a thousand members there surely must be at least half a dozen who are prepared to give up perhaps only one Sunday every three months to assist on the working bees. What Sybil would like to organise is a list of members whom she can call on in rotation from time to time to ease the load when the regular work bees are short-handed. Any member prepared and able to assist please call Sybil Cozens on 427 3828. You can only know in your own heart just how "fair dinkum" you are in your desire to help animals. If you can make this small sacrifice you will be proving something to yourself. I leave it at that.

**Journal:** We believe we have come up with an improved journal at less cost and less postage. Judging from members' response, it has been generally well received. We are delighted with the new format and it shall continue in that style with pictures and illustrations.

As Editor, it is my intention to build up a store of "filler" pictures, and with that in mind,

members are invited to send in cat pictures suitable for publication. Unfortunately, they cannot be returned as they must remain in stock and only published as required (with appropriate captions). Photos can be sized accordingly by the printers and must be original snaps, not negatives or pictures cut out from newspapers etc.

**Cat Shelter:** At the A.G.M. of August, 1980, I was elected as President on a policy of working towards a cat shelter and pressing for an animal ambulance service. The Minutes of that meeting read in part: "Mr. Graham then spoke on his policy if elected President. He said he would like to see the opportunity shop continued and an ambulance bought, a permanent field worker to be engaged at the shop to co-ordinate cat welfare work, and a cat haven to be purchased."

Now, in the almost 4 years that have passed the ambulance service is well established with welfare officers on the staff and 3 (not one) Society-owned ambulances. The opportunity shop has continued to flourish under the guidance of Mrs. Cozens and Miss Jo Tomkin, but the establishment of our own cat shelter is as far away as ever. It is not that efforts have not been made — an appeal to the State Government for a Crown land lease plus various other avenues have all been explored with nil result.

In my opinion, however, it could be considered that our project at Dural where we have excellent arrangements for housing and placing cats, is a more than adequate substitute for a shelter of our own. Even had we been able to establish a shelter, I am convinced that we would not have been successful in placing more cats than we do under our present arrangements. So perhaps, all in all, it would be fair to say that those policies of 1980 have been very largely carried out — given the limits of our financial resources and the extreme shortage of voluntary help.

It is an unfortunate fact of life that charitable organisations always seem to suffer from lack of suitable volunteers with the necessary skills or abilities to deal with the administrative problems of running those organisations. Our Society is no exception.

From time to time, through the journal, we continue to appeal for volunteers to either fill Council vacancies or to offer something in the way of help in establishing a shelter. To date this has brought little or no result. Sitting at a Council table planning and discussing ideas, with too few to carry out those plans or ideas, does not produce results — it is only the **action** that arises from those ideas or plans that really count. We continue to function efficiently only because of the efforts of no more than a half dozen people, and to load that half dozen with the burden of establishing and **maintaining** a

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

## — Continued

shelter would be creating for them a Frankensteinian monster.

For those reasons, and also because of the present economic climate, I believe it could lead to financial disaster, and I have no hesitation in informing members that at the January meeting of Council I recommended that all planning for a shelter be shelved indefinitely. Councillors were unanimous in accepting that recommendation. It is now Council's view that our present activities and our plans for their future expansion should not be jeopardised by time, money and effort spent on a project which is obviously beyond present capacity to accomplish. To reinforce that viewpoint, published below are the main points of an article — "So You Want A Shelter" — which appeared in the December, 1983, R.S.P.C.A. magazine "Animals". (All emphasis is ours and where dogs are mentioned the same can generally be applied to cats).

- "1. To run a shelter you need an income. Our shelter costs are \$4000 a month. Only \$2000 a month is received from the shelter. Our shops cover the deficit, but only by working in them 7 days a week.
2. You cannot run a shelter with volunteer help; that's if you're lucky enough to get any. You must also employ staff, for very few volunteers will accept working to rules, if left alone. They have no job to lose and will ignore directions.
3. The animals will be with you for 365 days a year. Your staff will be entitled to time and a half on Saturdays, double time on Sundays, and two and a half time on public holidays. They will also be entitled to three weeks paid holiday a year, and if they are unfortunate enough to suffer sickness, you must pay them for their time off. Whilst paying these wages you must also pay somebody else to work in their place. Staff cannot offer to work for less than the award wage, it is illegal.
4. No matter how many hours your shelter is open you can expect phone calls from irate people who will complain that they just drove out to the shelter and found it closed. You will never please all the public.
5. To avoid veterinary costs some owners will bring you their dog, claiming that it is a sick stray. They might not even mention that the dog is sick. If it is distemper, it will sweep through your kennels like wildfire, necessitating the destruction of most of your dogs.
6. You will sell dogs that have bright eyes, normal bowel actions and normal temperatures, and six weeks later that same dog will be dying from distemper.

You will receive abusive phone calls accusing you of deliberately selling sick dogs. Nothing will convince the owner that the dog could have contracted the disease after leaving the shelter.

7. ... milk will cause acute gastritis in your cattery. A strict diet must be rigidly adhered to. This will upset many people who refuse to understand the finer points of digestion in animals undergoing the stress of separation.
8. The dogs will rip blankets into pieces that will effectively block your sewer or septic. Blankets and wood also harbour and spread disease, so your dog must sleep on concrete. This will upset more people.
9. For points 7 and 8 you will be accused of not caring about animals even 'though by this time you will be spending 16 hours a day trying to overcome problems.
10. You will hide the anguish you feel when your animals have to be destroyed, but people will say to you: "I couldn't do your job, I like animals too much".
11. On Christmas Day you will wonder where all the people are who wanted a shelter. Only your family will be there. You will then be accused of running a family concern.

If, after reading this, you still want a shelter and are prepared to work seven days a week to raise the money to get one, well go to it. At least you can't say that you weren't warned.  
Silvia Ford, Blue Mountains."

Council is only too well aware of the problems high-lighted by Ms Ford, and it should be noted that the operating costs she mentions apply to a branch shelter only. We would also have to take into account capital outlay and the many other sundry costs and charges. For all the reasons outlined above, Council is now firmly of the view that a shelter of our own is no longer a viable proposition at this time.

**Kingsgrove Property:** The lease on the Society's property at Kingsgrove is due to expire this coming September. Once regarded as a possible future site for a refuge, it is now Council's duty to decide whether to renew the lease or put the property up for auction. Prior to Council reaching any decision to dispose of the Kingsgrove property, any member who feels they have an alternative proposal or suggestion they would like to put forward, is invited to contact the Secretary in writing. All suggestions received will be considered, but it should be noted that the final decision is the prerogative of State Council alone.

With best wishes to all members for a very happy 1984.

Bill Graham, State President and Chairman.

# EDITORIAL

**On the Selling of Cats:** Every so often one hears the complaint: "I bought a kitten from such and such a market or so and so's pet shop, but it turned out to be sick and died. The vet I took it to said it was suffering from feline enteritis (or cat flu or anaemia or you name it). When I complained to the vendor/s they were not interested".

From time to time we receive letters complaining about this unhappy situation; take for example the letter we received from a member in early January: "Sir, Perhaps you could mention this in your Editorial, though one would hope that as responsible members, we are all too aware of the situation, but I promised a friend — I would write to you about it.

The friend in question wanted a kitten, and I suggested she drive to the Dural cattery and do us all a favour as well as herself and select a cat from there. However, against all advice, and like many other people I have known, whilst at Paddy's market, she fell for the wiles of a kitten there and bought it. It had of course a severe dose of cat flu, and within 24 hours of her bringing it home, it had to be put to sleep by a vet as it was beyond help!

Some years ago, when I was a member of the R.S.P.C.A., it was often mentioned about the pets for sale at the market and I don't think the R.S.P.C.A. could do anything about it. Surely something **can** be done to stop this cruelty?

Myself, I will never venture anywhere near the pet section when visiting the market, I can't stand to see the animals penned up all day, in the heat etc., despite the fact that they are 90% of the time sick in some way.

Can the Animal League, R.S.P.C.A. & C.P.S. combined start something off in the way of an enquiry, which one hopes will put a stop to this sort of thing? — Yours Sincerely, Norma Gray (Miss)"

We appreciate Miss Gray's concern in this matter, but previous attempts to have the trafficking in sick animals at the markets brought to a long overdue end have failed to bring any redress. It is our information that the League's inspectors have paid periodic visits to the markets but any efforts on their part are hampered by the by-laws as they now stand. (It is very disheartening to observe that when it comes to mistreatment or cruelty to animals, those who administer the laws are extremely lenient when dealing with offenders. We find that offences which are **supposed** to attract a penalty of a \$1,000 fine or six months gaol, or both, are met with a mere good behaviour bond, or a paltry two or three hundred dollars fine at most. Here is a typical example from the Daily Telegraph of 11.1.84 — "Leslie Wallace Tucker,

of North Parramatta, who caught his neighbour's siamese cat in a steel jaw trap was fined \$150 in Parramatta Court yesterday for unlawfully setting the trap" — nothing, you'll note, about the cruel ill-treatment done to the cat.

However, following receipt of Miss Gray's letter, I had some discussion on the matter with a Vice-President of the League and it was agreed that we would request our respective representatives on the Animal Welfare Advisory Board to once again bring attention to the deplorable situation at the markets. We can perhaps be excused our cynicism as we wait in hope that this will result in an end to the unacceptable trafficking in unfortunate and often sick animals at the markets.

It is unfortunate that the general public is not fully aware that their best assurance when seeking a household pet is to go to any of the animal welfare organisations which can supply them. Whether they seek one from the R.S.P.C.A., Animal Welfare League or our own Society, is not important as long as they come to one of us.

When seeking a pet from a reputable animal welfare organisation, prospective owners can at least be assured that they will be dealing with people who really care about the animals in their charge, people who often spend a good part of their existence working their hearts out trying to place those animals in good, caring homes — people who are not callous or motivated by greed. Many of those who traffic in animals as part of their living do not care a jot for the welfare or future of the animals in their so-called and temporary care — their concern is only for the almighty dollar.

While it is not possible to guarantee that any particular animal will not fall sick or that some latent defect will not ultimately develop — especially young kittens which can so easily fall prey to infection — at least all our cats and kittens are vet checked, immunised, and all reasonable precautions taken to keep them well and in good condition. If say, within a month of obtaining a cat from our organisation, it should fall sick or prove unsatisfactory in some way, we arrange whatever treatment may be necessary (at our cost), and we'll also if the owner requests it, exchange the animal or take it back, **refunding** the price. Furthermore, all who purchase a cat from us that is too young to be neutered, shall receive at the appropriate time, a call from one of our welfare officers who will offer to arrange desexing at a much reduced and favourable fee as part of our welfare service. Try any of that on for size at the markets!

So, all you good people who have had the

## EDITORIAL — Continued

patience to read thus far, please pass the word to any of your friends, relatives or acquaintances who may be thinking of acquiring a cat or kitten, that if they can't for some reason, come to us for the best of all possible deals, then at least go to the League or R.S.P.C.A. Maybe in that way the message will ultimately get across, and we just might knock the prop from under those who callously trade in sick and miserable animals at the markets and elsewhere.

**Some Pen Portraits of the Little "Characters" who come and go at Dural:** Whenever the Treasurer and I go over to Dural to visit the 'mogs', and to help a little with placing them, they always give us a really big welcome, for as a used car salesman would put it, they are "pre-owned" cats who love a little extra care and attention. Some of them really know how to "sell" themselves and it's a good feeling to see this one or other being carried off to a new home.

"Bigfoot", so named because he had six toes on each foot and walked with a curious kind of splayed gait; A young male tabby of wonderfully gentle disposition, he was brought to us by one of our members and wound up with the other waifs at Dural.

As time went by we began to worry for him as he appeared not to do enough to "sell" himself. Then, out of the blue, a prospective owner rang to have delivered a nice, quiet, gentle cat. "Bigfoot" fitted the bill. Some little time later I received this note from our Secretary: "Bill, 'Bigfoot's' new owner, Mrs. Dickson, rang to say he, as well as she, is as happy as 'Larry'. He is super, loves the garden, and is an intelligent cat. He settled in in 2 days. She thanked us very much for delivering him to her.

"Carrots", "Cyril" & "Blue-Rinse". One

January Saturday a very nice family arrived to select two moggies for their teen-age daughters. The girls found it very hard to choose between little red "Carrots", little tabby "Cyril", and a little grey-mauvish coloured female, "Blue-Rinse". "Carrots" & "Cyril" were very playful larger kittens who tended to hang around to-gether, but eventually "Carrots" & "Blue-Rinse" were the chosen ones, leaving "Cyril" to wait another day.

"Cyril" had been handed in to me as a lost or abandoned stray over the Xmas period; he was a delightful fellow, a real "people" cat. The Saturday following the departure of his mate "Carrots", I was delighted to notice that he'd been placed during the week.

"Laurel & Hardy", Two very affectionate, young male cats, one black & white, the other grey tabby. Their names were interchangeable as it was a team name and they **were** a team. Very outgoing and friendly, they were so named because of their funny ways and mad-cap antics as they romped together, inseparable companions. The black & white member of the team was desperate for a home. On one occasion when another cat was chosen and about to be placed in a basket, quick as a flash he jumped in first as though to say, "please take me instead", but it was not to be.

The very same day that happened, I had not long arrived home when a very happy Dorothy Foster rang to tell me, "I know you'll be delighted — I've just placed "Laurel & Hardy", and both went with the same family". Lovely to know they were not separated.

Well, those are the good bits that keep us going over to Dural most Saturdays, and which help to make our job seem worth-while. The less happy stories we just live with. Oh yes; you're probably wondering how the Dural cats get their names — better ask the Treasurer about that.

## DOROTHY FOSTER'S CATTERY (Member C.P.S.)

Licensed Boarding Establishment  
Separate Apartments — Complete with Sun-deck  
Care with love. Individual diets. Veterinary supervision.  
Your inspection invited.

29 Cranston Road, Dural — PHONE: 651 2946

C.P.S. Cats awaiting caring homes sheltered here.  
PHONE: 651 2169 (Cats for homes)

C.P.S. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION





# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The first letter out of the mail-bag for this issue is from Mrs. Tidey, a long-time supporter and member of the Society.

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Graham, I had forgotten to give you these little stories and thought at some time you may care to use them; one from my dear friend Laureen McDougal. Sorry that my memory failed me, but at the age of 89 years, guess that I'm forgiven.

## "The Fragments that Remain"

By Antonia Gabriella

Lo, I have gathered them, my Lord, for Thee,  
The fragments that remain, that naught be lost;  
The little broken wings that soared care-free,  
The silenced song, the perfect nests  
down-tossed;

\* \* \* \* \*

The trapped and tortured limbs, the clouded  
eyes.  
The hungered cubs that waited until they died;  
Because she came not — she, the huntsman's  
prize;  
Gasping and driven, harried far & wide;

\* \* \* \* \*

The starving strays that roam the streets at night  
Round dustbins touched with silver by the  
moon,  
Eyes dark with fear, paw raised for sudden  
flight;  
Crippled, diseased, shunning the light of noon;

\* \* \* \* \*

Old horses sacrificed for money's gain,  
For filthy lucre hounded to their death —  
I bring Thee all the suffering, fear and pain,  
The speechless anguish of each laboured  
breath.

In thine eternal plan give these a place —  
These equal griefs, the lower creature's pain;  
That which they cannot offer, of Thy grace  
Accept for them — these "fragments that  
remain".

Dear Mr. Graham,

Congratulations upon another year of wonderful achievement — I like the new form of the journal, it is still as full as ever of good reading and news, but must cost much less in production and postage. Very sensible.

Thank you for your letter wishing me luck in hospital. I am happy to report my hip replacement operation a great success, and I can walk again, which is like a miracle. There was an incident related to my entry into hospital which pleased me very much, and I am sure it would please you. If you think it would be

suitable for inclusion in your next issue please use it.

When presented with the usual questionnaire upon entering Lidcombe Hospital, I was surprised to be asked, "Have you any animals?" I said "I have never been asked that before, How come?" The reply was, "if a patient has been unable to make provision for a pet, our welfare department makes the necessary arrangements for it to be fed and cared for while the owner is away."

What wonderful social workers, to care about such a matter, and what an unusual form of compassion. It would be good if all hospitals follow suit, all credit to Lidcombe!

This does remind one how necessary it is for all pet owners to plan in advance for an emergency, so that in case of sudden absence their animals will be looked after, particularly in the case of persons living alone.

Yours sincerely,

Gwen Thompson

P.S. I wrote this bit of doggerel (not to say catterel), recently. Use it if you wish.

## "Spring Wedding"

By Gwen Thompson

My garden plum tree hides her face,  
In purity of bridal lace;  
The shed roof has become transformed,  
by garlands, and the sun has warmed  
A patch, where, dappled with its light,  
A happy cat sits, framed in white.  
Such beauty shall I never see,  
as blossoms here in cat & tree;  
Nor union perfect, such as that, between a plum  
tree and a cat.

(Editors note: Mrs. Thompson has put much love into that poem. In her letter she also made mention of Mohammed and his cat. For the interest of cat-lovers, a small digression on the subject might be acceptable here. This from my small cat-book library):—

## Mohammed & Muezza

"Curiously, for all his vaunted sanctity, the cat fails to make any more impression in the Bible than a passing reference in the Apocrypha. Feeling this omission at best an oversight, at worst a dastardly slight, the Mohammedans tried to temper this neglect not only with a reverence for the feline but with an explanation for his creation. The Mohammedan version of the cats' origins states that the mouse duo aboard Noah's Ark kept increasing their family so prolifically that Noah felt disposed to take drastic action. He



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR — *continued*

passed his hand three times over the head of the lioness and she sneezed forth the cat, who promptly took care of the mouse overpopulation. Or, if you prefer, according to Arabian legend, while on the Ark the kingly lion was tempted out of stately seclusion by the wiles of an amorous monkey. The result of this transgression of natural law was the birth of a cat.

The love and respect given to the cat by the Mohammedans is best illustrated by an oft-repeated tale about the revered prophet Mohammed, a dedicated ailurophile if ever there was one. Mohammed was deep in contemplation one day with his favourite cat Muezza dozing in his arms. When the time came the great leader to arise and go to his devotions, he cut off his sleeve rather than disturb the snoozing cat.

The cat finally awakened and arched its back to show appreciation for the prophets' thoughtfulness. Mohammed administered his blessing by passing his hand over Muezza's back three times, thus granting the cat perpetual immunity from the danger of falling and ensuring it a permanent place in Islamic paradise. Forever after, the cat was assured the ability to land on its feet".

Dear Mr. Graham,

I liked the poem "Thoughts on Capital Punishment" sent in by Mrs. Gwendoline Thompson and printed in the July Journal. I also agree with the quotation from Dear Pope John. However, I do not agree that he was "the only Pope who ever appeared to care tuppence for animals." I seem to remember that his predecessor Pope Pius 12th kept birds in his apartment in the vatican and one favourite used perch on his shoulder each morning while he was shaving.

Religion having come up I would like to share a prayer attributed to St. Basil, Bishop of Caesaria, in A.D. 370:

"O God, enlarge within us the sense of fellowship with all living things, our little brothers to whom you have given this earth as their home in common with us.

May we realise that they live not for us alone, but for themselves and for you, and that they love the sweetness of life even as we, and serve you better in their place than we in ours".

I found this prayer in a book "The Psychic Power of Animals" by Bill Schul, a book which I thoroughly recommend to all animal lovers and specially to those who have recently lost a beloved pet. It is a Fawcett paperback.

Back to the subject of motor vehicle victims, I have heard, though I have not substantiated it,

that when Council cleaners pick up the body of a dead domestic animal they keep a record of it even if it is not wearing an identity disc. Of course, it is desirable that all pets do wear I.D.'s as you pointed out in the March Journal but I thought this information might prove useful.

Looking forward to the next issue of the Journal -

Yours sincerely,  
Margaret Wilson (Miss)

(Editors Note: The book described by Miss Wilson has been in my small library of cat books for some years; it certainly does contain much interesting reading. The subject of religion having come up (to quote Miss Wilson), it might be worth noting here some of the various religious attitudes toward animals — taken from that same book: "— a state of awareness that appears common to illumined persons throughout history, the conviction of the oneness of life. Sri Ramakrishna drew the anger of the Brahmin priests when he took offerings of food placed on the altar for the Divine Mother and gave them to a hungry cat. St. Francis always referred to the animals surrounding him as his little brothers and sisters." Perhaps best of all though, is Bhudda's philosophy: — "And Bhudda said, One Thing only do I teach: suffering and the cease of suffering. Kindness to all living creatures is the true religion".

Miss Wilson has followed up with a further letter which should interest those members who have suggested we publish some hints on the feeding of kittens. Although Miss Wilson points out her earlier advice on the subject was published some time ago, we feel it worth publishing again, to-gether with her later letter).

Dear Mr. Graham,

Thank you very much for your letter in reply to mine. It was very kind of you to reply personally and I really did not expect that. — I am writing now with a degree of diffidence because I fear you might want to say to me "go and teach your grandmother to suck eggs", but here goes all the same. What has prompted me to do this is your piece in the newsletter about the little torty that you delivered (not speaking obstetrically! — pardon me, I am an ex midwife) and had to have collected a couple of days later for veterinary treatment.

I feel that the problem of lactose intolerance in kittens is quite widespread but little understood. Hence I am enclosing a copy of a previous letter ... for the benefit of those in the Society involved with placing kittens in homes, just in case they are not aware of the problem. I would hate to feel a kitten was returned because

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR — *continued*

of intractable diarrhoea when there is a very simple solution to the problem.

Of course, if a young kitten is taken off milk altogether, especially one weaned too soon, veterinary advice should be sought regarding the need to give it calcium and vitamin supplements, specially vitamin D, to prevent rickets.

Congratulations on the new format of the Journal. I keep them all and now they will be easier to file. It is good to have photographs too.

Yours sincerely,  
Margaret Wilson.

### Hints on Feeding Kittens

By Margaret Wilson

I would like to comment on the newspaper extract "Milk and your cat" referred to in a letter to the editor in the June issue of the Journal. The article states that cow's milk contains lactose which causes cats to develop flatulence and diarrhoea, a fact which is becoming more widely recognised of late. However, the article recommends tinned milk such as Carnation for orphaned kittens because of its high protein content. Certainly, undiluted Carnation, or any other brand of unsweetened evaporated milk, contains more than twice the amount of protein that ordinary milk contains, and in a fairly digestible form. However, it contains more than twice the amount of potentially harmful lactose as well. Therefore, if a cat or kitten cannot tolerate the lactose in ordinary cow's milk it will not be able to tolerate the lactose even in diluted tinned milk.

Readers may be interested in a milk preparation available for babies who suffer from lactose intolerance. It is a powered milk called Digestilac and it has 95% of its lactose converted to glucose. Last year I adopted an orphan kitten who hadn't been weaned and could not lap. I gave him milk from a syringe until he quickly learnt to lap. He was old enough (about 8 weeks) but was obviously the offspring of a wild mother and hadn't been given the opportunity to lap. He developed diarrhoea which persisted as long as I gave him milk. Incidentally, it was Carnation which I gave him thinking it would be easier for him to digest than ordinary milk. When I stopped giving him milk to control the diarrhoea he missed it terribly and fairly demanded some. Being a mid-wifery nurse I was aware of the special products available for babies with feeding problems, and so obtained a tin of Digestilac. From the time I gave this special milk to my little one he had no more diarrhoea and his craving for milk was satisfied. Result — a happy kitten and a relieved owner. Digestilac is available from chemists and

is very easy to prepare.

Dear Mr. Graham,

To-day I posted to you a copy of Derek Tangye's book, "Somewhere a Cat is Waiting". Though you have doubtless read his books, some of which are epitomized in "Somewhere a Cat is Waiting", the title enchanted me. Do hope that you and Mrs. Graham enjoy it as much as I did.

I enclose a small cheque for the ambulance fund (or whatever you decide — though it seems to me the petrol account, at to-day's prices, might be the most wanting).

With kind regards to you both — and the department stores tell me it is not too early to say "Merry Christmas"! Bless you and your splendid work.

Yours sincerely, Ruth Parker (Mrs.)

( Editors Note: The book Mrs. Parker so very kindly sent me is indeed great reading for any "cat person". Particularly the story of "Monty" which appeared many years ago under the title; "A cat in the Window". Trouble is, I am having great trouble getting to read it as "She who must be obeyed", got hold of it first. We thank Mrs. Parker for her thoughtful gift and for her very kind good wishes.)

Dear Mr. Graham,

Your new style of journal is very attractive. You might like to add another one to this year's total of strays who found homes. Despite my promise to my husband not to have another cat, after the death of my dear old "Minnie" early last year. As we live in a small flat, I couldn't resist a little tabby and white, about 7 or 8 months old, who was dumped in the College where I worked. Several cats had been dumped there, and although several animal loving staff members fed them, they all disappeared sooner or later to heaven knows what fate. This kitten had clearly had a home, and was extremely friendly and trusting.

Over 10 days I saw her going down hill, and after much carrying-on was allowed to bring her home on week-ends when there was no-one to feed her. I took her to the vet for de-sexing and she took a while to recover as she was in poor condition. She had to be kept in for 10 days, and, as you can imagine, she never went back to the College. She is full of life and mischief now, and my husband who previously didn't like cats, is now quite converted and very fond of her.

As you must be constantly hearing sad stories, I thought you would like to hear of a stray who found a home.

Regards,  
Judith Stirling

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR — *continued*

(Editors note: Now there is a lady who obviously is a real "sucker" for cats; and aren't we all who belong to this Society? My top cat "Yum-Yum", is tabby and white. She was a stray whom I got from this Society more than 10 years ago. When things get a bit rough I often tell her if it wasn't for her I wouldn't be in this mess).

Dear Sir,

I was interested to read in your Journal of July, 1983 of the horse troughs bearing the inscription. "donated by George & Annis Bills".

Many years ago I read about George Bills and how he was concerned because there were no troughs for horses to drink from. I am sad to say I've forgotten any details I read about him.

There used to be a trough in Nth. Strathfield. I asked the Council if they would clean it as it had been used to wash oil from car parts etc. They responded by having the trough removed. Years ago I saw a picture in an illustrated paper of one of these troughs in a country town; the Council retained it and set flowers in it.



Another one which should have been retained was one erected in the 1920's to the memory of one, John Sullivan, who lost his life trying to rescue horses from burning stables. This trough used to be at intersection of Bridge and Parramatta Roads, Camperdown; and of course has been removed. It is the same with old mile-stones. They have nearly all been destroyed. One remains on the corner of Parramatta Road and Bridge Road, Homebush.

With kind regards,  
Peggy Eather.

(Editors note: Thank you Mrs. Eather for providing more interesting information on the old horse troughs. It is interesting to note that one has been refurbished and relocated at Granville).

Enclosed is a donation paid to the N.S.W. Animal Welfare League, Northside Branch, from the owners of "Pitty Sing", Mr. and Mrs. Easton, Turramurra.

"Pitty" was picked up as a **very** old stray cat, by Lee-Anne Porter, and turned over to the Animal Welfare League at my request to try and find the owner.

The Eastons gave us a donation for her return but we felt that this donation should be shared as each organization played a part in "Pitty's" return. "Pitty" is 20 years old and the Eastons are very grateful to have her back.

Yours sincerely,  
Mathilde Kearney-Kibble,  
Vice President, Northside Branch

(Editors note: Though not strictly a "letter to the ed.," the above is published as an illustration of the type of work, and the small humanities that can be accomplished when working in harmony and co-operation with others. "Pitti Sing" was reported as an ownerless stray and when picked up by our Welfare officer and taken to Mrs Kearney — Kibble, that lady recognized that as the cat was obviously very old, it was extremely unlikely she could have survived so long as a genuine stray. Through good-heartedness she kept the cat in her care while advertising for the owners. Many thanks to Mrs. Kearney — Kibble for her good judgement and generosity in this matter. — On the light side, how many members I wonder, know that the names "Pitti Sing" and "Yum-Yum" come from Gilbert & Sullivan's Mikado. The names of three young ladies in the song, "Three little maids from School", are "Yum-Yum", "Pitti Sing" and "Peep-Bo". Who has a cat named "Peep-Bo"?)

To The President, Committee and all who work for the Cat Protection Society. God Bless everyone of you.

Donation enclosed in gratitude to all the beautiful cats that have owned me, and given me so much pleasure. Asmodeus (Kitti-Kat), Peter, Tibs, Grey-one, Samantha (Sammi), Monty, Peta, Ginger, Simon, Little-mum, and Pretty-one.

Yours sincerely,  
Margaret Hunn.

(Editors note: The above letter is published as typical of the many warm-hearted people who responded so kindly and generously to our Xmas

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR — continued

appeal and who, with their nice cards and words of encouragement, helped make our work seem so very much worth-while).

Dear Friends, — Greetings from Ms. Fluff (ginger ex-female), Miss Mini (grey tabby with snow-white underside, pink nose, pink fingers, and big soulful eyes, also an ex: and Count Luna a stray black hairy cat with a white moon under his chin — who comes to feed here but wouldn't let me touch him; I often see signs of recent battles on him; very dignified in spite of dishevelled appearance.

Love and Meow.

Dana & Cat Co.

(Editors note: This member certainly has a sense of humour. We liked her card (reproduced below). The picture is titled "Kitten" and is by a gentleman named Kwok Ta-Wei. A Russian acquaintance born in China, informs me the Chinese characters form a poem which he is unable to properly translate as the classic style is beyond him. Other Chinese of whom I enquired gave a similar answer.)

高見古人有佳法  
今試為之  
未  
知



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**Note:** Horses **not** for Casual Hire.

*(This Establishment visited and recommended by President C.P.S. of N.S.W.)*

## FORM OF BEQUEST

To those benevolent persons who may be disposed to assist this Society and its work, the following FORM OF BEQUEST is suggested —

I give and bequeath to "THE CAT PROTECTION SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES", for the use and purposes of the said Society, the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ dollars, free of all death and estate duties and the receipt of the Treasurer of the said Society shall be sufficiently discharge to my Executors.

The Society, being a corporate body, can receive bequests of real and personal property as well as money.

# OPPORTUNITY SHOP NEWS

By Sybil Cozens — Auxiliary President

I want to tell members about an "unsung hero" working very quietly behind the scenes and her effort in making a nice little profit for the op shop. She is an elderly, long time member living in the Eastern suburbs, always "scrounging" goods from all and sundry, picking up aluminium cans from the byways and crocheting hundreds of coat hangers as well — all this would be enough material for a story but that's not my gambit for today: Some months ago a neighbour and friend of hers went into a nursing home and her house is to be sold. This ladie's son — who lives up country — has been cleaning everything out preparing for sale. He'd our member he would give her for our shop anything his family didn't want and would leave the goods in each room as he went through — providing she would pack and deliver. After many weekends there was so much stuff it was unbelievable, so I decided to keep a record of the total figure netted in hard, cold cash, \$1,300.00. Linen, ornaments, kitchen ware, pictures, clothes, garden furniture, buttons, cottons, jewellery — the costume kind, wool etc etc. The Auxiliary is indeed indebted to her and I thank her on its behalf. For the efficient packing and labelling which enables me to personally unpack, price and record each load delivered. The moral of this story is simple — if you know of any one going into a smaller home, unit or retirement village please plead our cause. I can arrange packing and pickup.

The shop has been fortunate lately as another member in the "Crag" area moved to a retirement village and one of our shop girls arranged for pickup — again a lovely lot of "rot".

The Auxiliary is always grateful for any goods brought into the shop or picked up by our 'couriers' but if anyone wants personal thanks please securely tag your name and address onto the package and mark for my attention. You will then receive a letter. For omissions in the past please accept our sincere thanks — this is from every Auxiliary member and indeed everyone connected with the shop.

## APPEAL

Some months ago I detailed in a Journal how the clothes were sorted and the work involved. (In a forthcoming Journal I'll get it reprinted for new members). From time to time I have run small private functions in my home to raise money for buying dress racks and skirt hangers and we've managed very well. However we could do with 2 more racks and they cost \$60 each. If any one has won the Lottery or would

like to run a Raffle or functions to help the purchase of same — eternal thanks of the ladies who unpack the clothes with no where to put them. Metal skirt hangers with clips for clipping to the waistband or plastic ones (G.B.s use plastic and they are great) are also required. Perhaps some one could launch a "Save our Skirts" appeal. I have \$18.00 in "Kitty". Whilst in "scroungers corner" the knitting season approaches and I've had an appeal from a member who knits toys. "Acrylic wool" is her request. These toys can be put into a washing machine. Any type of knitting yarn is also required, for "creators" of other items.

My husband and I have retired now so mostly you will find one of us at home during the day or night should you want to contact us.

**CLEANING THE OP SHOP** — a very necessary chore. We have a small band of tip top cleaners who journey one Sunday a month to Enmore, don old clothes, gather up their tools of trade and attack. This is not enough and I am now calling for volunteers for a Wednesday roster and a Saturday afternoon roster. By spreading the work over 3 days a month the basic cleaning will take a much shorter time, possibly 2-3 hours. We have recently acquired a floor scrubber so the shop floor is easier and an aluminium ladder has been brought for cleaning windows and shelves — very light, strong and easy to handle. Call me and have a chat if you can come.

## LAN-CHOO TEA LABELS

Over the past couple of years these have been steadily mounting up and I took 1,200 to the showroom last week: I chose boxed pyrex baking dishes and elegant jugs for each of our branches for Raffles. Keep them coming in. Drop them into the shop, with goods, bring to meetings or you can post them to our Enmore address on **No Account Post to the Box as space is very limited** (letters only)

**HOUSIE:** Saturday 29th April, 2 p.m. at ENMORE. Josie & Jim Walsh are going to have "another go" at running a housie afternoon. If attendance is again poor this will be the final. At our last Extraordinary General Meeting held in the Y.W.C.A. you were all fired with enthusiasm when housie was mentioned — so lets see results. We must have at least 30 people. Its very disappointing for the Walsh's when so few come as they are very busy people — working for other charities too. Please phone me 4273828 or write to the Box A523 Sydney South for reservations. Auxiliary ladies will serve coffee, tea & biscuits during the afternoon.

**DRESS SHOW:** Saturday 2nd June 1.30 p.m. at Enmore. Admission \$2 Tea, Coffee & cake will be served by Auxiliary members after

Parade. Cynthia and Maureen will be doing the "honours" again with clothes from "Maco International".

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## **A DEDICATED WORKER FOR ANIMALS CALLS IT A DAY**

Following her recent 80th birthday, Mrs. Dorothy Haines, after many years of selfless community work on behalf of animals as well as people, decided the time had finally arrived to ring down the curtain.

Dorothy, who almost single handedly organised and established the Woy Woy/Umina branch of the Cat Protection Society, served for seven years as the branch's Honorary Secretary, Public Relations and Chief Welfare Officer; all three positions rolled into one which she occupied with dignity and distinction.

Apart from caring for several cats of her own, pressure of work caring for her home, illness in the family and the arrival of her 80th birthday all influenced her decision to relinquish her duties.

Mrs. Haines devoted the past 30 years to caring for stray and unwanted animals, with the last 10 devoted exclusively to cats. In January 1982, she joined the exclusive little band of honorary life members of the Society, an award bestowed on very few, and only to those who

have rendered long and extraordinary service.

As a foundation member of the Animal Welfare League of N.S.W. she saw the need for an organisation devoted to helping animals on the Woy Woy Peninsula. She first helped form the Animal Care Group before joining the Cat Protection Society, serving as the Society's representative on the Central Coast before eventually setting up branches in Woy Woy and Wyong.

Dorothy says much of the success of the branch efforts has been due to the continuing support and kindness of local people. She signs off with sincere thanks to those who have been so generous in their support and with the knowledge that the C.P.S. on the Woy Woy Peninsula is in good hands.

All on State Council are very grateful for the sterling service rendered by this remarkable lady, and wish her and husband Eric, a long, happy and satisfying retirement.

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(Administration

(Letters to the Editor    PHONE 477 1316, Mr. Graham

(Membership

**OPPORTUNITY SHOP: PHONE 516 2072    9.30—4.30 week days  
9.30—11.30 Saturdays**

(Auxiliary

(Fund Raising            PHONE 427 3828 Mrs. Cozens

# OF CATS and DOGS and BIRDS and THINGS (and Cabbages and Kings)

By the Editor

## Recollections and Reflections on Travels

**Past:** Many of us I am afraid, do not often fully appreciate the enormous comfort, companionship, and relief from boredom and loneliness that can be derived from the company of a pet animal, and also, how such companionship can very frequently lift those "blue" periods we all suffer from time to time. Even animals of almost all species feel a need for the company of their own kind, or if that is not available, the company of other species or humans.

On one of our travels, my wife and I once opened upon a lone sheep which was tethered in a large, deserted paddock. When he saw us approach, that sheep came bleating up to us, and his joy was apparent when we scratched his woolly head and spoke a few words of comfort to him. How long he was left alone in that paddock we had no way of knowing, but that animal was desperate for the company of other living creatures.

Then there was the sheep, briefly mentioned a couple of journals back, who lived with the horses an old "Bread & Dripping" Smith's property. His story was that Nancy, the station cook, had bottle-raised him as an orphan, and when he was fully-grown, had refused to allow old Smith to turn him into the paddock with the other wethers, where he would have eventually been butchered for the table. To humour her (for she was a good cook), "Bread & Dripping" turned him into the paddock where he kept his old, retired horses.

Now that sheep, being forever separated from the company of his own kind, decided that he might as well become a horse, for he took to following the horses about, in the hope no doubt, that they would initiate him in their customs and adopt him into their tribe.

The horse, as most people should know, is usually a placid and kindly beast which is not disposed to hold itself aloof from other animals of a non-predatory type, nor does it believe itself to be above a lowly sheep in the great scheme of things. So in due course a conference must have been held among those old, broken-down horses (in that silent way all animals seem to possess when communicating but which is denied we humans to hear), and it was apparently agreed among them to confer the title, "honorary horse", on the lonely sheep.

From that time on, the sheep slept with the horses, grazed where they grazed, accompanied them on the evening stroll to the water-hole, and lounged with them on warm days 'neath the shady coolabahs, joining in their silent yarning.

No, he never learnt to neigh, but the horses seemed to understand — just as they understood his loneliness.

Close on thirty years ago, I went prospecting in the far north-west of Queensland with a partner, a Frenchman not long arrived in this country. Many were the lonely camps we shared, and with little to ease our boredom we took to trying to teach each other our respective languages. Although my French friend was big on talk about the merits of French cuisine, he was a lousy cook, so that chore fell to me. I only had two recipes in my culinary repertoire; a somewhat mysterious brown stew where anything available was chucked into the pot, and curried "goldfish" (tinned herrings). **NOTE:** readers interested in the recipes are invited to write C/- the Editor.

Possibly because of the dull monotony of this otherwise nourishing diet, it was not uncommon during our language classes, for Roger to come out with — somewhat ungratefully I felt — such phrases as: "Le mange Francaise est superior". I'd reply somewhat testily: "repeat after me Roger; my word, this Aussie tucker is good".

It was at one such camp, while the evening meal was being prepared, that a half-grown, half-starved, tabby cat emerged from the scrub, attracted no doubt by the smell of food. Naturally, the tabby begged for a hand-out, and in accordance with bush courtesy it was given him.

He polished off his portion of that evening's concoction with gusto, and with obvious relish asked for more. It pleased the cook no end to have his offering so appreciated and of course, he felt rather kindly toward the cat.

For several days the cat hung around our camp ingratiating himself, sharing our tucker and following us about like a small dog. We welcomed his displays of affection and the company he gave us, and for his part, he made it clear he'd be willing to consider being taken into the partnership. When it came time to move on the decision had been made, so we hoisted him aboard our old Studebaker pick-up and off we went. We named him "chat" which is French for cat. As the Frenchy would have it: "mon vieux, it's about the only word of French you'll every pick up". (He thought as little of my linguistic ability as he did my cooking).

We eventually staked a claim on a wolfram field, on a lovely, lonely, wild mountain, somewhere to the north-west of Cairns. It was a hard, monotonous and solitary life on the



diggings, there were no newspapers or radio, and it was easy, despite the camaraderie we shared, to get on each other's nerves. The only entertainment we had was when an old hermit prospector, "Speewah Charlie", occasionally dropped by with his banjo. He only new two tunes; "Oh those girls behind the bar", and "My gal's a high-born lady". He played and sang them over and over again, so that I knew every word by heart — and still do.

But of course, we had the company of "Chat", his inquisitive playfulness, his amusing little ways were always something to enjoy; and he never lost the habit of following us about, no matter how far we went. He lightened our hearts. So it wasn't all that bad really, especially when at the end of a hard day's spell we'd down our tools, watch the sun sink behind the mountain, and absorb the beauty of the long day's dying.

But everything comes to an end and fortune is a capricious thing. The vein had begun to peter out about the same time as the wolfram market started a decline. There was little for it other than to pull up stakes and move on. In the great scheme of things, men are but as ants, and on the morning set for departure the Fates delivered their final blow. As we were finishing breakfast, a loud explosion; possibly a sudden clap of thunder, or maybe a prospector setting off a charge on a distant claim, so startled "Chat" that he leapt up in alarm and made off into the dense scrub.

We'd expected "Chat" to return in a short while when he'd got over his fright, but when some time has passed and he'd still not appeared, we became concerned and commenced searching the bush, calling his name the while. But there was no response. We delayed our departure for a day and a half, calling and searching all the time, but "Chat" never came back.

Maybe a dingo had got him — there were plenty in those parts — or he may have been bitten by a snake, who was to know? But we could delay no longer, so we departed that wild mountain, feeling rather downcast.

As we pushed our battered old truck through the boggy creek crossing, I thought to myself; "they'll be the last tracks I'll ever make in this place", (how little we know). For many a mile on the long southward journey we thought of turning back for another look, but we never went back — that is, not till twenty-seven years later — when one of us did return.

Last October, when travelling in the far north of Queensland, the notion came to me that it might be an adventure to take my wife on a side excursion to some of the wilder parts which I once knew so well. Being a person not afraid to leave the beaten track, she was quite excited about the idea, but a search of our map failed to

reveal the location of the place I most wanted to find. We came across such place-names as, Mt. Carbine, Lighthouse Mtn., Mt. Elephant, Mt. Molloy, Black Mtn., etc., even the quaintly named twin tors, Sheba's Breasts, (which caused some wonderment as to what they might look like), but we couldn't find the name of my mountain.

We set out however, in the early morning from Port Douglas, hoping that a faded memory could still guide us to the Place — but so much had changed since my time.

The locale and roads were so much altered to my recollection of the region, that we'd almost given up, then when travelling in the neighbourhood of Mt. Molloy, we passed a sign pointing to a side-track. I'd dismissed it as not being in the right direction, but my wife tapped me on the shoulder and said she thought I'd better turn round as the sign read: "N. Perserverance Rd". "By heavens", I replied, "that's my mountain, I knew I'd find it".

To call it a road was beyond all acceptable limits of exaggeration, for it was no more than a single-width set of wheel-tracks, with heavy scrub, jungle-like, closing in on each side. We'd penetrated quite a distance when we came to the same old, boggy creek crossing that I'd once known so well. I'd been worried that we might meet another vehicle coming towards us, for the track was so rough and over-grown that there was no way of passing or even turning about. But when the track finally petered out to nothing and we got out of the car, I could see there was no cause for concern, for the entire area was deserted and nothing remained from the old days.

The few prospectors who'd once toiled there had long abandoned the place, and from the look of the heavy undergrowth it was clear the mountain had almost completed taking back its own. Apart from the almost obliterated wheel-ruts, it might have looked just like that one hundred million years ago, when the mountain was first thrown up from the earth's crust.

But it was still beautiful. My wife remarked that it was just as she'd pictured it from my description.

We poked about the place for a while, half hoping to find the site of my old claim, or even the rusted remains of "Speewah Charlie's" old, solid-tyred, bean truck, which had been his home as well as his transport, but it was not to be; also the shadows were beginning to lengthen and it was almost time to go. For the first time in twenty-seven years, and for the last time also in that place — for I'll not be back — I watched the sun begin its long slide down behind the mountain, and I took in the beauty of the long day's dying.

Standing silently there, I thought a lot about

many things, and recalled many a scene from my yester-years; how my partner and I had left this place so many years ago to the very month, with the seats out of our britches and glooming despondently at our spectacular lack of success; how all I'd got to show for all the effort and toil on that mountain was a now yellowed, old Miner's Right, issued at the Cairns Court house and dated, April, 1956. I remembered every last word of old "Speewah's" minstrelly tunes which I'd listened to so many times over and over; "My gal's a high-born lady, she's dark but not too shady", and so on, to the very last line. I thought about my old partner, how when we'd dissolved our partnership he'd gone off to Chile to chase his El dorado; how I'd like to wish him, "Bon chance Roger, mon vieux" (maybe just to show him I did pick up some French). But perhaps most of all, I thought about a little tabby who'd appeared out of nowhere to lighten the boredom of our days, share our lonely existence, and cheer us with his company. How dismayed we'd been when he disappeared back into the bush, not to return. I even allowed

myself the fantasy that I'd only to call out: "Come on Come here chat", and an old, toothless, tabby cat would come limping out of the scrub with a happy meow of recognition.

But it was time to go, no time for sentimental fancies; so we departed that solitary mountain, where in a way you could perhaps feel that it was as close as you were ever going to get to the Earth-Mother.

The drive back was quiet. My wife knew I'd be mulling over memories of times and travels past, so she left me to my thoughts. Fact is, I thought a lot about the animals who come into people's lives, sometimes for but a brief time, to share the journey with them. How those animals so often bring a gift of trust and affection which is precious beyond any price, yet is rarely truly recognized for its true worth. And I'll tell you something; looking back on all my travels and adventures, and knowing what I know now, I'd never swop the companionship and love I've had from animal friends, for any fortune I might have dug from the ground in my old prospecting days.

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## A PLEA FOR THE OLDER CAT

By the Editor

When travelling through Queensland late last year, my wife happened upon a discarded magazine in one of the motels we stayed at, in which was a letter to the Editor extolling the virtues of adopting an adult cat. It was then suggested, or perhaps more to the point, royally commanded, by "She who must be obeyed", that I write an article on the subject. Actually, her suggestion was quite good, for it serves to highlight one of the problems which disappoint us so much. First, the letter:

"Often as we get older and our pet dies, we think we could never have another. The trouble of house-training a young animal and coping with its energy, makes us wonder if we could manage.

If you feel like that, have you considered taking an older cat into your home. At the Cat Protection Society of Victoria there are dozens of beautiful house-trained, neutered adult cats of all colours and temperaments, who are looking to recapture the joys of being loved.

Over the years I have had several adult cats from the Society and they have always settled in and become a loyal part of the family. Don't be lonely, get yourself an adult cat who will purr companionably to you as you sit by the fire".

— Arthur Humphries, Mentone, Vic.

Although Mr. Humphries is speaking for the Victorian Society, what he has to say could equally apply here. In our efforts to place young

adult cats, we find it extremely discouraging that when kittens are available, very few people will bother to consider adopting an older cat, not even one that is barely past the kitten stage.

Throughout the kitten season — say from around October through 'til February — far fewer adult cats are placed. Most prospective owners seem to want only to acquire a young kitten — because it is "cute" or, "cuddly". They fail to appreciate that — as Ogden Nash put it — "The trouble with a kitten is that, it grows up to be a cat". Now I am not about to say there is anything wrong with wanting to own and rear a kitten, far from it. I think most people would agree that of all baby animals, the kitten would go close to being the most appealing, but very few people seem to be aware of the advantages of taking on an older cat as against the disadvantages of rearing a kitten.

Naturally, as a person who has come to appreciate the cat just for being what it is, it is very disheartening to observe beautiful-natured, adult cats, with loads of developed character and personality, being overlooked for month after month by the undiscerning, merely because it is erroneously believed that a pet animal must grow up with a family to fully develop loyalty and trust. In my experience this is just not so.

In my opinion, some disadvantages of acquiring a kitten in preference to an older cat are that with a kitten the personality has not

been fully formed and you really do not know whether you are going to wind up with an affectionate, tender-natured cat, or one that is partly or completely indifferent and only interested in you at meal-times. As most "cat-people" know, the personality of the cat is as varied and diverse (and perverse), as that of the human.

A lot more care and attention must be given to a kitten; regular feeds several times a day, cleaning up the various messes, and of course, they have to be house-trained. Further, a kitten can be subject to various illnesses and upsets, just like a human baby, and it just hasn't been around long enough to develop much immunity.

The adult cat on the other hand, is usually a very tough beast and just by generally "knocking about" it develops to some extent an immunity, and does not often seriously sicken, except for the eventual debilities of old-age, or is weak from deprivations suffered as a kitten.

From personal experience, all the cats we have ever owned, with one exception, have been well past the kitten stage, yet all have been delightful, affectionate animals who lost little time settling in and accepting us as their new people. In due course, they all have given a loyalty and trust, each in accordance with its' personality, and which, as is the way with cats, has to be merited and well and truly earned.

Many people who are getting well on in the years make the statement that they have become too old to have another cat, and they also consequently worry about what would happen to their pet should they pass on. I truly believe this to be an unfortunate mistake for no elderly person should deprive themselves of a cats' companionship for such reasons. Unless one is too old and debilitated to do much for oneself, an adult cat should make an ideal companion. It is wiser, less mischievous, and thus more manageable for the elderly to cope with.

For those who worry about what is to happen to their pets after they pass on I would ask that they consider this: Even should your pet have to be put down after you pass on, is it not preferable to have given it a good home, shared a companionship, and allowed it the enjoyment of X years of life, rather than that animal, that little fellow-traveller who might have shared part of life's journey with you, should never have had any prospects at all? If you believe otherwise, then both you and some small animal will have been deprived.

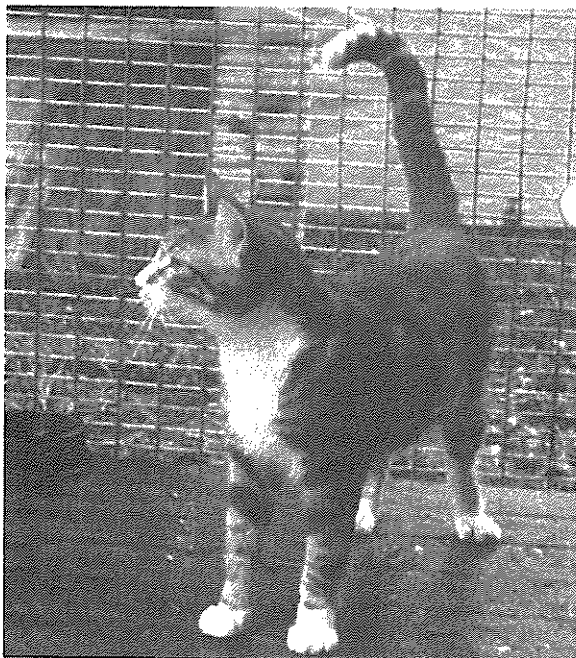
I firmly believe also, that when the owner of an older cat dies, it is much kinder to humanely destroy the cat unless a really caring home can be found for it. I do not believe it a kindness to arrange for such cats to spend the remainder of their lives in a cattery or to be passed around from pillar to post, perhaps kept in a shelter

waiting in vain for a home that does not materialise.

I have known elderly people who have expressed the view that they were too old to have another cat, and then after a lapse of several years, and still finding themselves comparatively hale, have regretted missing the company they could so easily have had.

Because, whether young or old, no-one knows when their time will come, any opportunity to be happy should be seized upon. If it is your thing to enjoy the company of a pet, then don't be deterred merely because you feel you're becoming a bit "long in the tooth". Furthermore, it has been shown, particularly in the case of the elderly, that a pet has a tremendously calming and therapeutic affect, and can actually prolong a person's life. I would imagine that part of the reason for this is that instead of dwelling on one's own problems, health, one is given more to showing a caring concern for the well-being of the faithful companion.

Because of the joyous affection, tremendous companionship, and many, many, happy days cats have given me for twenty years or more, I'm one person who'll not be without one right up to the day they cart me off. And when that day comes, I want my dear, old animal friends to be quietly and humanely put down by a considerate vet. At least they'll have enjoyed several years of contented happiness they'd not have had otherwise, and they'll be spared bewilderment and stress.



*They call me "Meggsie". I'm red and white and a pretty good looking boy; but I won't be here long — you'll see! (He wasn't)*

# "MEMORY LANE"

A donation in memory of Smoky, a big, kind, strong half-Persian, who came into our home at much the same time as our adopted daughter (both babies) — In his fifteen years of happy, illness-free life, he cared for and gently disciplined dogs, cats and human beings.

Inserted by Bruce, Barbara and  
Catriona McKillop.

\*\*\*\*\*

A donation in tearful memory of my beloved tabby "Minka" of five years delightful companionship. Disappeared on June 6th 1983 — Alas! too trustfully venturing into a murderous neighbourhood... May her killer find an identical end.

Inserted by Greg Smelters.

\*\*\*\*\*

A donation in memory of my cat "Pussy", who died of leukemia at the age of 17 years last September.

Inserted by Ellie Christie

\*\*\*\*\*

A donation in memory of Cindy and Noah.

Inserted by Mrs. P. Ball

\*\*\*\*\*

A donation in memory of darling Franchesca (Fran), who was killed crossing the road to home

and left there. A neighbour kindly picked her up for me. The twins miss her — their pussy companion. Animals certainly take control of your heart!

Inserted by Mary Macfarlane.

\*\*\*\*\*

## "In Memoriam"

In affectionate memory of Mrs. Bett Tomkin.  
November 1983.

Inserted by Miriam Middleton

\*\*\*\*\*

In memory of my beloved "Nanna" (Mrs. Tomkin), who loved me so much.

Inserted by Suzie

\*\*\*\*\*

A donation in memory of Marilyn Roberts, late member of the Calico and Bi Colour Cat Club, who was killed in a recent accident.

Inserted by the Calico and Bi Colour Cat Club.

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State Councillors and Welfare Officers of the Society, wish to offer their deepest sympathy and condolences to Councillor Nancy Iredale, and Welfare Officer Joy Peachey, on the death of their Fathers who both passed away in January.

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## From the Diary of a Welfare Officer

By Sandy Moss (Senior Welfare Officer)

One day in early January I was called upon to take charge of a small, black and white male cat. He had a dear little friendly nature, so I delivered him to the vet for a health check and desexing, as I considered him to be ideal "home" material.

During the examination the vet discovered a her angry, swollen lump on the cat's side. While the cat was under the anaesthetic for the desexing, the vet did an exploratory operation and in so doing came upon an air-gun slug buried deep in the cat's flesh. These slugs, so I am informed, are of a dum-dum type which is open ended and hollow, and meant to expand on striking an object. They are capable of causing great damage at close range.

Fortunately for little "Jack" (as the Treasurer later named him), the removal of the slug was successful and he is now happy and well, and at the time of writing, awaiting a new home at Dural. "Jack" is an inoffensive little creature only about 7 or 8 months old. You wonder about the kind of mindless monsters who mistreat such animals so.

*An actual size photo-copy of the .22 calibre slug extracted from the body of inoffensive little "Jack".*



The Secretary  
The Cat Protection Society of N.S.W.  
P.O. Box A523  
SYDNEY SOUTH, 2000

(Please cut out and return to address shown).

I/We apply for **Membership or Renewal of Membership** of the Society for the year commencing June, 1983. **Note:** all persons joining from January remain financial until June the following year.

Subscription	\$100.00 — Life Membership	Enclosed Cheque/Money Order
	\$ 5.00 — Annual Membership	for \$ .....
	\$ 5.00 — Pensioner Membership	Please cross cheques and make
	\$ 2.00 — Junior Membership	payable to:

**"THE CAT PROTECTION SOCIETY OF N.S.W."**

Mr.  
Ms.  
Mrs.  
Miss ..... Initials .....  
BLOCK LETTERS

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---

The Secretary  
The Cat Protection Society of N.S.W.  
P.O. Box A523  
SYDNEY SOUTH 2000

(Please cut out and return to address shown).

Enclosed is \$ ..... (Cheque, Money Order) as donation to the:—

GENERAL APPEAL \$ .....  
AMBULANCE SERVICE APPEAL \$ .....

Mr.  
Ms.  
Mrs.  
Miss ..... First name or initial .....

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..... Postcode .....

**Plea from the Secretary:** Due to the high cost of postage and envelopes, if members sending in their subscriptions wish to receive a receipt, would they please enclose a stamped addressed envelope. Otherwise receipts are not sent.

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