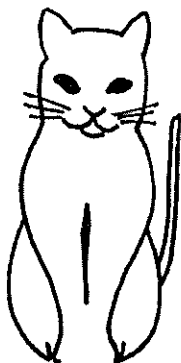


'CAT AFFAIRS'



APRIL 1986

JOURNAL

EASTER EDITION

The Cat

Protection Society of N.S.W.

(Registered Charity CC. 17122)

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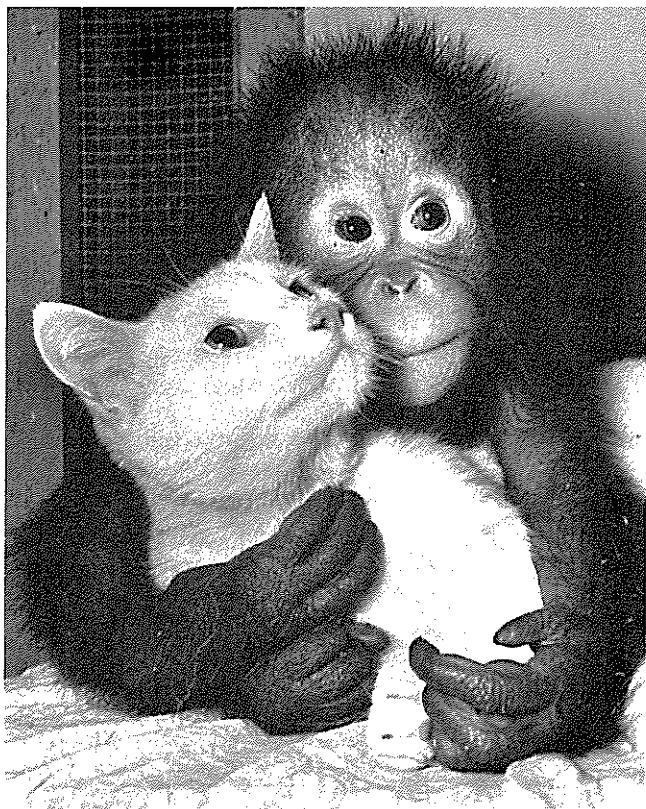
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*There once lived an Ape in days gone
by,
Who heaved a most unapely sigh,
For he loved a cat — Beauty's fairest
Queen
With golden tresses,
Like a real Princess's,
While the Ape, despite his love so
keen,
Was the Apiest Ape that ever was
seen!*

*With apologies to W.S. Gilbert
(Princess Ida)*



**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: At time of writing we are well into the final quarter of the Society's year and I am pleased to report that the various activities should produce a satisfactory result.

The welfare section has been under ever increasing pressure, and that together with my diminished assistance due to health problems has necessitated some changes. Council agreed that the operating of the welfare service would be handled by a sub-committee comprising Shirley Pikler, Nancy Iredale and Daria Love, with the President (by virtue of the position) taking a nominal role. This arrangement has proved satisfactory with the sub-committee reporting to Council on a regular basis. Unfortunately there has been a recent increase in our veterinary costs but we are endeavouring to attract more donations in this area.

Placing of Cats: This to me, is the most heartening and satisfying part of our activities. Observing a happy, purring cat or kitten going off with a caring new owner makes up in part for some of the grimmer tasks. To date we have placed over 300 "moggies" and hope to increase this substantially in the next three months.

It is a sad fact of life that during the kitten season our beautiful selection of young cats is hard to place. However, these teenagers get their change in the winter months when cat lovers think of a warm, contented cat nearby on a cold winter's night — don't we all?

Organisation: Council has been working hard over the past year. Unlike similar organisations we do not run to a paid administrator. Consequently Councillors must put in a tremendous personal effort. This has been cheerfully executed, but at least two of the present members will be retiring at the next election. How to fill those gaps? I ask again for members to put themselves forward if they believe they may have something to offer. A grasp of business, financial or administrative ability is desperately needed. Do not be put off by committee procedure etc. — you can learn the ground rules very quickly — and some actually enjoy it!

Church Service: The A.W.L. has advised that a church service for animals is to be held Wednesday, 14th May — 1.15 to 1.45 p.m., St. Andrews Cathedral. Incidentally, the above date ties in with Animal Welfare Week proclaimed by State Parliament.

Never Too Old: Many people, particularly the elderly, feel on losing a faithful cat companion that they could not, or should not, take on another. But why not? A few months ago we were forced to put down our dear, old Tosca. A number of years ago she had been one of those cats desperately needing a home after being handed into the Society. My wife and I at first housed her temporarily, and then later, just could not part with her. But severe illness and tempus fugit eventually took their toll and we sadly took the vet's advice. My wife (more courageous than myself) remained with her to the end, stroking the poor, misshapen head which a large, malignant growth had developed.

Although there was now a vacancy I was too dispirited to fill it. However, my wife persuaded me to go over to Dural where she said there was a young tabby male who had been there for some time and whom nobody seemed to want. She said he was delightfully friendly and gentle and that once I saw him I couldn't resist. And so he was and so I couldn't. My new little mate's name is Tiggy Touchwood, and a more affectionate companion I wouldn't find in a long day's march. Desexed, immunised, vet checked, provided with collar and tag and the Society's guarantee — what a bargain for a miserable thirty dollars.

Recently, an elderly neighbour friend who is a staunch member of this Society had to put down her old and very ailing cat. She told us she would never have another as she felt she was too old. I tried gently to advise otherwise but she remained unconvinced. Fortunately, her doctor told her that he couldn't imagine her without a cat and that the best tonic he could prescribe would be to get another. So she came to my wife and said: "Could you get me a little, black cat? I so much need one to talk to." No sooner said than done! I have been stroking and petting him this very morning; a little, black male on the way to his new person. I am absolutely certain that our neighbour and that wee beastie will live together happily for a long time to come.

It is perhaps a small thing in our line of work — but, to my way of thinking, **you are never too old.**

With Best Wishes to all
Bill Graham
President and Chairman

MEMBERS' FORUM

Dear Prrrrps,

I heard on TV that there's a flea collar which is herbal but when I tried to get some at the health shop I was told they'd been withdrawn by a government dept. for testing (what for I don't know as this information wasn't forthcoming). Does anyone there have any ideas on which herbs to use? I was thinking people could make up their own, possibly in a strip of muslin or cheesecloth, which would be stretchy. It would certainly be much better than insecticides, as one of my cats is allergic to fleabites and has to wear something constantly. I don't require a direct reply to this question as it will add to expenses, but if it is a viable thing, a few words in the journal.

Lots of luck in the Good Work.

Regards,

Daphne McCallum.

(Editors Note: See article this issue "The Green Ban Alternatives. Also, Sandy Moss says that ½ teaspoon flowers of sulphur given in food daily is said to keep fleas away).

Dear Sirs,

Our current copy of "Arab News" (English language newspaper published in the Sudan) has this to say in a special article: The Prophet warns us against cruelty to any animal we own or have in the household. The Prophet says: "A woman has been thrown in hell because of her treatment of a cat. She has confined the cat without giving it food or leaving it free to fend for itself." Once the Prophet saw a camel which looked thin. He said to his companions: "Fear Allah in your treatment of these animals."

The Prophet's teachings with regard to the treatment of animals can best be appreciated from this Hadith: "While a man was walking, he felt extremely thirsty. Finding a well, he went down to drink. When he came out, he found a dog gasping, and eating dust because of its extreme thirst. He thought to himself: This dog is as thirsty as I have just been. He went down the well and filled his shoe with water. Holding it by his mouth, he came up and let the dog drink the water. Allah has praised his action and forgiven him his sins." The Prophet's companions asked him: "Messenger of Allah! Are we rewarded for a good action we do to an animal?" The Prophet answered: "You will be rewarded for any good action you do to any living creature."

The Blessings of Allah be upon you.

Abd-u-samad and Hasan Ben Ali.

Life Governor Helen Heney, sent us the following culled from the International Herald Tribune of September 13, 1984:

Amsterdam — With more than 300 mouths to feed everyday, Henriette van Weelde is always asking strangers for money to keep her household afloat. Her weekly shopping list of about 770 pounds of fish and meat, as well as medical care for her charges leaves van Weelde with a weekly bill of up to 3,000 guilders.

But thanks to the kindness of passers-by and her own fund-raising, she manages to make ends meet for the several hundred stray cats she shelters in two houseboats on the Singel, one of the Dutch capital's canals.

Her "catboats" sit on the main route of the sightseeing boats that wind through the city's canals, carrying up to two million tourists a year. She has requested municipal assistance but to no avail. The city already maintains pound space for about 7,000 stray cats.

Van Weelde treats all arrivals for any medical problems and neuters them, a procedure for which she has a government veterinary license.

Dear Bill,

I always think no matter how many cats we own over the years, and however much we love them all, there will always be one we continue to miss and often find ourselves telling friends about little things they did, etc. My "unforgettable" was a seal point Siamese. A friend has given me a poem written many years ago, about the reflections of the author on the death of a loved Siamese. I could just feel it would apply to any one of us. I hope you consider the last lines of sufficient interest to put in your In Memoriam column. Enclosed donation to the memory of my cats, bless 'em all. Congratulations on the great photos in the Christmas issue.

I closed the blue, blue eyes, kissed the dear black face,

Stroked the soft dark paws, and wept — bitterly.
We laid him under a white crepe myrtle in a kind friend's garden —

There he sleeps.

If cats have souls, and wiser men than I

Will swear they do,

Then one day we shall play in splendid fields,
and I shall laugh

To see his grace and beauty once again.

— A Life Member.

Name withheld by request.

Dear Mr. Graham,

Enclosed a photo of the houseboat on one of the canals in Amsterdam, which Betty Gil mentioned in the December journal.

Coming from Holland, I have been told it accommodates 200 plus cats. It is run by the Council and really a home to them, (see picture on wall). They are well looked after. Anyone who wants a cat can collect one.

However, if Betty Gill likes more details:-

V V V Tourist Information Office,

Leidseplein 15. Amsterdam.

Holland. Europe.

Could you please pass on the photo to Betty?

Wishing you and your family a happy 1986,

Marie-Therese van Spaendonk.

(Editors note: Better still, we've published the photo as we're sure most members would be interested in this unique house-boat).



*Contented houseboat cats on canal in Amsterdam.
Photo courtesy Miss van Spaendonk.*

Dear Editor:

Would you kindly find a little space in your popular journal "Cat Affairs".

We are seeking two genuine cat lovers who would be willing and interested in assisting in the care of a small number of rescued cats. These healthy, grown cats require feeding, grooming and care for their well-being.

Two people, women in the older or pensioner age group, would probably welcome this opportunity to live in a wonderful resort area with all possible amenities and a good climate. Accommodation is offered in exchange for help in caring for the cats. Both areas are on the Central Coast and interested parties should ring (043) 41 9724 for further information.

Dorothy Haines,
Woy Woy — Umina branch.

Dear Mr. Graham,

Seeing you have a lot to do with cats I am wondering if you can help us with a problem. Some months ago my mother and I were asked to look after a 10 year old desexed ginger Persian as the owner no longer wanted him. I settled in all right and our other cats got used to him, but our white cat who is deaf, tries to fight him. For some reason that I cannot work out my white, deaf cat (Solomon) will not get used to the quiet old Persian (Samson). Even after several months I have to keep them separated all the time. Samson is confined to the garage by day and let out at night when Solomon is inside for the night. Being deaf, I have always kept Solomon inside at night ever since I got him as a kitten. He will be two years old in February.

When Solomon strikes Samson I have to give him a smack on the back, but it doesn't do any good. I can't call out to him as he can't hear me.

All my cats are desexed, well fed and thoroughly spoilt as you can see from the photos I am enclosing. We live on an acre with plenty of gardens and trees for the cats to lie under; also there are other acreages around us, so the cats have plenty of space.

Samson, being old, is very quiet and very, very good natured. He would love to be able to be around the house with the other cats, or lie under a tree in the cool, or on the verandahs. Solomon, on the other hand, is a very active cat. He loves being with Mum and me out in the garden. All the cats do.

I have explained the situation as best I can. Have you any suggestions on the problem; I don't understand cat psychology so I am at a loss — I hope you can advise me.

Solomon is a beautiful cat as they are all beautiful, and I love them all. They are all so different with their likes and dislikes, and moods.

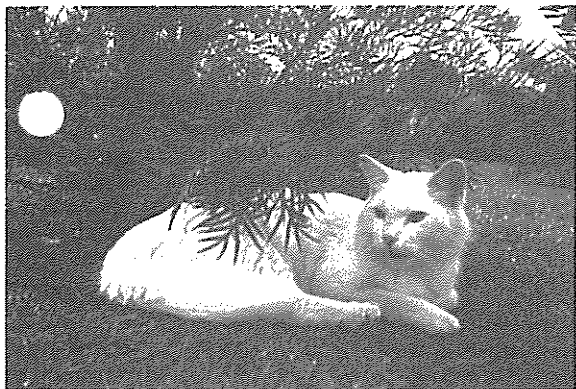
Miss Diane Elias.

(Editors note: Although I may have a little to do with cats, I am no cat psychologist either; rather the other way around. All the cats that own or have ever owned me have soon psyched me out. Demanding doors be opened and shut;

dinner served on the dot; I don't feel like fish tonight, haven't you something better; Move over, you're taking up too much of the bed; stop writing, I want to climb on your lap and be petted, etc. If one wished to be facetious one might suggest that as Samson is a long-hair, why not do as Delilah did and clip his hair! However, although we have advised Miss Elias as best we could, there may be readers who feel they have advice that might help. If so, we would be happy to pass it on. The pictures you see here of Diane's cats do not do them justice in black and white. They were beautifully photographed and look absolutely superb in colour).



Zillah — nearly three. A bonzer tabby, very similar to my Tiggy Touchwood.



Solomon — deaf, white and not yet two years old.



Joseph — he doesn't own a coat of many colours — just black and white.



Samson — 10 years old and fiery red. Isn't he a beauty?

Dear Mr. Graham,

Thank you for the delightful Christmas edition of the Society's magazine. I particularly enjoyed the photos and their amusing captions.

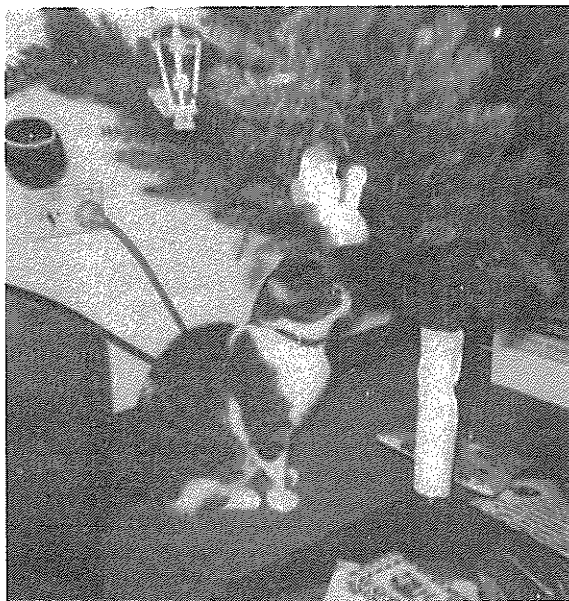
I was sorry to hear that you had lost your little Yum Yum. I remember very well how I felt when I had my last cat, Minnie, put to sleep at 16½ years. But it is a consolation to think what happy lives they had, especially when compared with the thousands of strays who, as you would know far better than I would, lead short and miserable existences.

When I wrote to you telling you how I had found my present cat, Perdita, you wrote back that she sounded rather like Yum Yum, so I am sending a photo of her. She was a sick 7 or 8 month old when I brought her home from the technical college where she had been dumped. She was suffering from malnutrition and advanced gum disease that all the efforts of our excellent vet and months of gum painting could not reverse. She had all her teeth out before she was one year old. You can see, however, that she is a healthy and beautiful cat of three now, full of life and very spoiled.

I am enclosing a donation towards the Christmas appeal. I recently sorted through my clothes and took a bundle into the Opportunity shop — some old, some, alas, just a size too small for my expanding middle. I think human beings took a wrong turning when they lost the fur covering that expands along with the wearer!

All the best for Christmas and the New Year to you and all working for the Society.

Yours sincerely,
Judith Stirling.



(Miss Stirling's Perdita certainly does bear a striking resemblance to my Yum Yum as she was. Here she is curiously examining a Christmas tree — perhaps wondering what's on it for her. The Editor.)

Dear Mr. Graham,

Received with pleasure the Christmas issue of the journal, and noted the cry from the heart of member G.M. Thompson re the absence of "bells — cats, for the use of."

I'm enclosing four from my pitiful store, in the hope that they may be of some use. Could you forward them on? These were primarily bought in Coles for Christmas decorations — some years ago I must admit.

I haven't looked recently as my two cats are now too fat and contented to worry much about bird chasing, though we have an incredible variety here on the Central Coast.

Best wishes to all in the C.P.S. for a Happy Christmas.

Yours sincerely,
(Mrs.) V. Garrett.

The Secretary,

In the journal, G.M. Thompson was enquiring for "bells" — so I have enclosed a few, as I always remove a bell from a cat collar and put a disc with telephone number on. Also, a cat collar is unsuitable for our cat.

Yours sincerely,
Mary Austin, Hornsby.

(Many thanks to the above two members for their thoughtfulness. An example of how members can help each other with small problems through these pages. The bells so kindly provided have been forwarded to Mrs. Thompson of Leura. The Editor.)

Dear Mr. Graham,

As you kindly included my plea for cat bells in your last journal, may I through your pages please voice my grateful thanks to Mrs. Haines of Umina Beach, Mrs. Garrett of Erina, Mrs. Cozens of Lane Cove, and Mrs. Austin of Hornsby, for their very kind and generous donation of bells. Such interest and practical sympathy was very heart-warming. My cat is now the one who signs himself "Frustrated" and not I, and the birds say "Thank you".

Sincere appreciation from,
Gwen M. Thompspon.

Dear Mr. Graham,

And all your hard working helpers — Enclosed is a cheque to help with your good work and maybe give the less fortunate cats a better Christmas. Your last magazine was very good indeed.

The C.P.S. in Victoria sells Christmas cards featuring cats, of course. Maybe N.S.W. C.P.S. could do likewise to make a little money.

Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Ann Bell.

(Our thanks to Ann Bell and the many others who contributed so generously to the Christmas appeal. In the matter of Christmas cards with several members have mentioned; this has been tried unsuccessfully some years back by our Society. Sales were few — also, the extra workload on the few helpers who already work so hard does not make it a worthwhile proposition. The Editor.)

Dear Sir,

Enclosed please find cheque for Christmas appeal. The journal was beautiful and I hope you will be able to place some of those lovely kittens.

I wish you all a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year. You have all done a wonderful job for those little mites, and may God bless you all.

Yours faithfully,
Mrs. M. Mason.

(Unhappily, Christmas was a hard period to place kittens. Spent about eight hours the Saturday following Christmas at Dural, and although there were several calls, only placed two. Very disappointing and heart-breaking. But, plug on we must. The Editor.)

To the Secretary,

I am enclosing a donation for your Christmas appeal. I always think it's a very worthy cause, you all do a wonderful job looking after the poor strays and finding homes for many.

I read the magazine with interest and enjoy the stories about what cats will do. You published a story I sent you at the beginning of this year — thank you. I said at the time I had another — well, here it is.

Yours truly,
(Mrs.) Loraine Gillan.

This is the second "lost cat" story I mentioned when I sent you the one about the cat who travelled so many miles back "home". Whenever my daughter and family come to Sydney from their property at Walgett they have a good neighbour who comes four miles to see all well and to feed the animals. One year, my daughter had rather a special young cat so didn't like to leave him for the first time, so the neighbour offered to have him at her home. He had disappeared the next morning. The neighbour was in a great state. When the family came home there were many tears and lots of apologies — but no cat!

Each day for a whole week my daughter used to drive towards her neighbour's place to call and call his name. She rattled a tin with Whiskettes in it because he always came when she did that, but still there was no sign of him. She took a carving knife out with her and ran it up and down a steel — a noise cats will usually come to. That didn't work either, so she decided she'd done all she could.

Six months later he just calmly "walked in", and couldn't understand what all the joy and fuss was going on for — over him, of course!

Cats really are incredible creatures aren't they?

Loraine Gillan.

(Editors note: Incredible they certainly are. Thank you Mrs. Gillan for your intriguing story).

With regard to the calumny sometimes heaped upon cats for killing and eating birds by those who little understand the animal kingdom and Nature's imperatives, Gwen Thompson has composed a poem which reflects, I think, the feelings of most of us. Here it is:-

COUNSEL FOR THE DEFENCE by G.M. Thomson

"What a good boy!" I say, and pat his head,
As Darius lays a trophy at my feet.
I am relieved to find it is quite dead,
Long, ropey tail curled round its furry body,
And small front paws clasped as in supplication;
A bush rat, so not welcome in our home,
But beautiful in its way, and some poor widow's
mate.

"What a bad boy" I say, withdrawing love,
As Darius, pride and guilt conflicting, comes
To lay before me Nature's saddest sight,
My limp and feathered friend — an hour ago
Enhancing the morning with his cadences,
Delighting the eye with flashing of his wings.
I am relieved to find he is not wounded,
Not a meal, but victim of a reflex action.

"What logic!" I hear Darius say.
"Good boy! Bad Boy! Do make up your mind!
What is the difference, tell me please,
Between a rat and bird? Something which darts
And rustles so enticingly, my paws
Cannot resist. They simply have to pounce.

I am too well fed to eat my prey, but some
Of my less lucky brethren do, I know,
When there is nothing else to eat.
You human carnivores have no excuse
For killing kindly cows and tiny lambs —
There is abundance you could eat instead.
Please do explain, I really am bewildered".

We were delighted to receive so many Christmas cards carrying messages of encouragement and goodwill from members. We heartily thank them all and publish below a small selection of the many comments:-

To the Little Lions Small and Dainty Sweet. I love the pictures, they would make a lovely calendar.

Happy Christmas with lots of goodies. From Mrs. Green and 'Boy'.

Dear Mr. Graham,

I hope the enclosure reaches you before Christmas dinner. Best wishes to you, Mrs. Graham and all your Committee and staff for a happy Christmas and a healthy and peaceful New Year.

Nancy Freestone.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Graham,

Thanks for the newsletter, always interesting, but I felt a note of sadness when I read how few people attended the last meeting.

You have both worked so hard and achieved so much, it is very disheartening that new members are not joining, and of course, many like me are not able to attend meetings as they would like to. You will I hope excuse my writing; my eyesight is very bad, and also my hand is shaky.

I do wish you both a happy Christmas and a more prosperous New Year with regard to the Society. I have not as yet read all the Journal but always enjoy it.

Sincerely,
Vera Durham.

(Editors note: Vera Durham is one of our delightful elderly members who, although in her 85th year, is still deeply interested in the welfare of animals and retains an unflagging interest in their antics and charm. Our very best wishes to you also, dear Vera.)

GALLIMAUFRY CORNER

By Miss (olio) Cellany and Sal Magundi

The Role Animals Can Play: Cute kittens and playful puppies are hard to resist. The unfortunate fact of life however, is that all too soon they grow up and many once doting owners promptly lose interest. Because very many are dumped or surrendered (particularly at Christmas holiday time), thousands of such no longer wanted animals are put down by various animal welfare agencies each year. It all seems such a terrible waste, especially when you consider that many of the animals could have provided a new lease of life for a considerable section of the community. Here is what San Francisco is doing about it:

Almost seven years ago, Ken White, a University graduate in Creative Writing and English Literature, decided to capitalise on the potential of a community's unwanted animals. After specialising in education and gerontology, White joined the San Francisco S.P.C.A. as director of education with a brief to modernise that organisation's schools program.

According to White, who visited Sydney last year, the success of the S.P.C.A.'s various programmes owes a lot to the techniques of the peace and environment movements. "We took the position that if you give people a chance to show their best side, they'll respond. The San Francisco community response has exceeded all expectations, and the upshot has been that in

the last few years no healthy animals have had to be put down."

Soon after joining the S.P.C.A., Ken White launched an Animal Awareness Club, an innovative teaching system that integrates humane education into the regular school curriculum. The program is based on a set of five packets of teaching materials covering the habits of domestic and wild animals — how they communicate and what they need to survive.

The emphasis is not so much on teaching kindness as increasing awareness so that children are able to form their own opinions. White saw the potential for expanding the schools program. He organised a scheme whereby the kids and the S.P.C.A. menagerie could be taken into institutions for the physically and mentally handicapped, hospices, halfway houses and old people's homes.

The concept, now known as the Animal Assisted Therapy Program, has since grown to the point where 98 institutions regularly receive visits from an army of volunteer school children and pets. Even prisoners have been given a part to play. Newborn animals are sent into the correctional facilities where they are looked after by offenders till they are old enough to go into the S.P.C.A.'s placement program. The prisoners are also encouraged to care for

injured wild animals and birds which are later released.

The S.P.C.A.'s work includes an adoption outreach program where animals are taken by the mobile adoption unit into city parks and squares and offered to the public. Its resources are drawn from the nearly 24,000 animals surrendered each year to the society. Through careful screening and training, the S.P.C.A. places ninety per cent of them.

Says White: "Animal assistance therapy is now included as part of the nursing degree at San Francisco University. It's also a structured part of training for social workers. What the whole program boils down to is fostering a pro-animal attitude within the community, and you can do that simply by education".

An Eventful Life With Animals: We recently listened to a tape by English animal-lover Barbara Woodhouse, called "Talking to Animals".

According to the author, humans should be a little more humble where the animal kingdom is concerned. "They've been put into this world by God to bring comfort and joy, and you have to give in this world, you can't get without giving, whether it be to the human race or the animal kingdom."

Mrs. Woodhouse says she always found that animals want to be with people, want to please them, are very fond of small children, love a happy family atmosphere. One should be able to sense how much they want to be appreciated but unfortunately many people seemed to think that animals have to be broken. "When things do go wrong it is almost always humans that are at fault. If only it could be appreciated the pleasure animals can bring us in this rather drab world".

Mrs. Woodhouse also claims to be able to communicate with animals in a far deeper way than speech by the use of telepathy, touch and perception — but most of her talking is entirely telepathic. To demonstrate this, she tells of a lovely old cow named Queenie. Queenie was very ill, suffering with a severe stomach ailment. As she was 17 years old and had already had 15 calves, the vet felt she should be put down. However, Queenie "communicated"

saying she needed something. When let out of the cowshed she promptly set off up the lane to an old ivy covered building. She ate the ivy as though her life depended upon it. Ivy is poisonous to cows, but Queenie recovered. She ate homeopathic poison to get well — Queenie knew what was needed.

With regard to her rapport with animals without actual speech, Barbara Woodhouse says that she trained Queenie's daughter Snow Queen to act in films. She even trained six cats to act in a filmed scene with a strange dog. It happened this way.

The six cats were supposed to act in a kitchen scene. When eating their dinners on the kitchen floor and this dog entered, each cat was to jump onto a designated place — stove, shelf, table, etc. After about ten efforts to get the cats to do anything but spit (that's cats all right), the director asked Barbara to see what she could do. She says that it only took her about ten minutes to train the cats. After telling (mentally) each cat what was wanted and showing them the positions they were to jump to, when the camera rolled each cat on entry of the dog, jumped to its designated spot. No doubt we'd have any success in persuading our two spoilt mogs, Medley and Jumble to obey like that!

One very interesting segment on the tape was where the author tells of her early years spent on a ranch in the Argentine. She says that horses were broken in very roughly there, but one day she met an old Indian gaucho who taught her how to gentle a wild horse without breaking it. He explained to her that when horses, unfamiliar to each other, came into contact they expressed greetings by each horse blowing from the nostrils into the other's nostrils. That was his way of handling a horse wild and fresh off the Pampas.

Barbara says that she tried this on an unbroken horse which had already killed one man who tried to ride it. She claims the old gaucho's method worked like a charm, and the same afternoon she was riding the horse.

Well, whether true or only partly so, it's all magic stuff when it comes to animals, and that's what intrigues us.

Purrs, dears, till next time — Olio and Sal.

WELFARE NEWS

By Nancy Iredale

We were called to pick up a happy, romping tabby and white kitten by a concerned lass who had heard cries in the early hours of the morning. On investigating she found this wee scrap with adhesive tape all round his tummy, hanging in a tree.

Despite his ordeal, he was a cheerful soul but all our avenues for holding kittens were full. He was placed in a cage in the waiting room of Concord Animal Hospital and some poor unsuspecting client, on a routine visit, went home with two animals instead of one.

Happy New Year little tabby!

An emergency! A stray cat had wedged itself head first in between two buildings. The R.S.P.C.A. had been unable to help as they had only one ambulance on the road... so did we but Sandy made a quick dash across the city.

The cat certainly was between two buildings but in no way wedged in. However, it was inconvenient for it to be wandering around the building — a bank — so this was obviously one way to get quick action.

A frantic caller to "get rid of" a cat and kittens was told to bring them to Enmore one very hot day recently. They duly arrived, very hot and confused. We were glad to note that the well dressed lady was also, well, to put it bluntly, sweating under her heavy make up. As the conversation progressed we became more tight lipped and terse because we learned that the little mother puss was "disgusting and disobedient, terribly disobedient". She knew she was not allowed to come inside but persisted in doing so. It could even have been in pursuit of food — she was woefully thin. Mum and babies were offered a drink of milk and although she was obviously hungry and thirsty she drew back and let her babies feed. Disgusting? No. Disobedient?

She was a young, part persian of extraordinary colouring, terribly thin and looking sort of ashamed of herself. We determined her New Year would be a better one — and it is. Desexed and waiting she proved to be a doll. Gentle, affectionate, gaining weight overnight she quickly won a home. She is doing fine, we hear, much loved by cat loving parents and two small children. A happy ending.

One of our favourite clients, living in a housing commission complex which was hostile to his cats, decided to move into more congenial surroundings. This was quite a sacrifice financially. He did all the right things borrowed traps, as some of his hanger-ons were a bit skittish, locked them up and generally was at pains to do everything correctly. All but one of his friends were delighted with the move... she absolutely refused to stay. I should mention he had only moved about one block away. Three times he caught her and locked her up, etc. But as soon as she was free she was over the fence and away to her hostile home.

Of course he went twice each day to feed her and waited while she chatted to him before eating her food. He was in despair and one day made up his mind that he would be taking a stroll twice daily for the rest of her life.

As he trudged disappointedly away he heard a wee squeak behind him and turned to see his friend walking with him.

As he tells it, he was at a loss how to treat her and almost holding his breath he continued on to home. She followed him all the way and made a great fuss of her erstwhile companions and, what is more, has not left the yard since.

He thinks it is a miracle and I think he deserves it.

PRACTICAL NUTRITION FOR CATS

By Daria Love

Cats are carnivores ie. "flesh eaters". In the modern context of animal welfare, it is perhaps attractive to suggest that cats may be able to forgo their primitive beginnings and live as vegetarians. However, unlike dogs, it is almost certain that cats cannot be maintained on a vegetarian diet. Cats have deficiencies in some essential enzyme systems required to synthesize certain nutrients within the body. These essential nutrients cannot be found in

vegetable materials and thus require the provision of at least some part of the diet as food of animal origin.

On the other hand, despite their image as carnivores, cats cannot be maintained in nutritional balance on meat alone. Unlike the meat provided by loving cat owners, the selection of prey hunted by wild cats is varied and complex and contains very much food unavailable or unattractive to the human

provider of food for cats.

What are suitable diets for cats?

In the formulation of a diet for cats, a number of factors have to be considered. These include protein and energy sufficiency, vitamin adequacy and mineral balance. Fresh water must be available at all times.

Commercial Cat Foods

As a general rule of thumb one can say that it is **very easy** to provide a balanced diet using a variety of commercially available canned and dry foods labelled as cat foods. These foods have been formulated by professional nutritionists to provide a balanced diet. Canned food has a high water content which must be recognized and compensated for by feeding sufficient volume to the cat. Some dried cat foods may contain insufficient fat for energy requirements.

The problems of energy sufficiency and food availability are exacerbated if dog food is substituted for cat food over an extended period. Cats require a higher fat diet than dogs and are also unable to handle the high vegetable content of some dog foods. **Variety** in commercial foods is desirable to prevent faddish food consumption. Likewise it cannot be recommended that commercial diets form the entire food of cats. **However**, if you or your cat finds it desirable to do so, the cat will not be adversely affected if adequate intake is maintained i.e. the cat finds the diet sufficiently palatable to consume sufficient volume.

Canned commercial cat food can be given to kittens at an early age. It has the advantage of being easily blended (say 50:50) with milk to be offered to kittens at 2-3 weeks of age when they begin to lap. Over the next 7-10 days, the proportion of milk can be decreased gradually and kittens (if necessary) can be weaned at 4 weeks. This is also an excellent way to rear orphan kittens.

Dried cat food: It is possible to maintain adult cats on this food provided they eat large amounts and an adequate volume of water is available. Many veterinarians do not recommend dried cat food as some literature available some years ago suggested its presence in the diet contributed to urethral obstruction mainly in desexed male. Many cats which are presented to a veterinarian with urethral obstruction are those which do not appear to drink sufficient fluid. Therefore, an exclusive or predominant diet of dried food would exacerbate their problem of adequate fluid intake. Feeding of a large quantity of dried food to such cats (if identifiable early) and to male cats that have had a urethral obstruction, or which have been desexed at an early age (less than 6 months old) is not recommended.

While it is very easy to provide a balanced diet if commercial cat foods are fed, it is extremely

difficult to provide a balanced diet using other foods. The problems of imbalance are seen most acutely in young animals; the changes may be so great that a complete recovery is not possible. The most usual problems encountered in feeding cats can be illustrated by the following:

1. Can I feed my cat on meat and milk alone?

All meats are very low in calcium and therefore have an incorrect ratio of calcium to phosphorus. This leads to severe bone undermineralisation if meats are fed as the **major** part of the diet without proper supplementation.

It is not a simple matter just to add milk (high in calcium). Even if milk was consumed at sufficient volume (almost a physical impossibility for cats) to increase markedly the calcium content of the diet, it would not correct the calcium to phosphorus ratio because milk also contains phosphorus.

Meat is also deficient in vitamins A and D and iodine which are essential for cats. Milk is also a poor source of vitamin D.

It may be possible to maintain adult cats for some time on meat and milk before nutritional deficiencies are seen. However, it is **not possible** to do so with growing cats. Nutritional deficiencies, especially skeletal deformities and pathological fractures of bones, can develop quickly if growing cats are maintained on meat and milk alone.

2. Does milk cause diarrhoea in kittens?

Some kittens may, for some part of their growth, develop diarrhoea if they are fed a diet containing full strength milk. This phenomenon will usually disappear rapidly if the milk is withdrawn or the milk is offered in smaller quantities diluted 50:50 with water.

If milk is withdrawn completely, the diet must be supplemented with calcium if it does not contain a major component of commercial cat food.

3. Can I substitute cream for milk?

No.

Cream is the fat from milk and contains only fat and fat soluble vitamins.

Its feeding may remedy a diarrhoea problem (because milk lactose is not present), but the cat will need another source of calcium and other vitamins, proteins and minerals.

4. Can I feed liver to my cat?

Liver is high in vitamin A and is an excellent source of this essential vitamin for cats. **HOWEVER**, excess amounts of vitamin A (which can be ingested if the cat eats more than 2 meals of liver per week) can cause an extremely severe debilitating and life threatening skeletal abnormality in cats.

Fortunately this abnormality is now rarely seen as most cats are fed commercial cat foods.

Liver, even given at two meals per week, can

cause diarrhoea in cats. This is usually of no consequence to the cat and the problem is usually only observed where litter trays are used by cats. Therefore, feeding of raw liver is not wholly desirable.

5. Can I feed my cat exclusively on commercial fish diets?

Yes — if it will eat nothing else.

Some fish muscle contains an enzyme, thiaminase, which breaks down thiamin (vitamin B 1) — an essential vitamin. This enzyme is destroyed by cooking (as is vitamin B 1 itself).

Therefore:

- (1) large amounts of **raw** fish should not be fed
- (2) fish variety commercial cat foods are cooked (destroys thiaminase and vitamin B 1) and, like all commercial diets has added vitamin B 1 to maintain the food in balance.

Canned fish foods are highly smelly and are excellent to keep on hand for the occasion your cat is ill. Cats which cannot smell food will usually not eat — the pungent odour of this food is excellent for this purpose.

6. Can I feed raw eggs to my cat?

Raw eggs contain avidin, a substance which makes the essential vitamin biotin unavailable to cats (and dogs). Cooking destroys the avidin and makes eggs safe.

It is not good practice to feed raw egg whites or raw whole eggs to cats.

7. How often should I feed my cat?

This will depend on the age of the cat. Orphan kittens less than 2 weeks require food at least each two hours. At 2 weeks of age this can be reduced to each 4 hours. By 4 weeks they should be able to lap food mixtures independently. **Fresh** small volumes of food should be offered 4 times per day until the kitten is 10 weeks. After 10 weeks it may be reduced to 3 meals. I recommend twice daily feeding for kittens over 12 weeks and for adults.

8. How should food be presented?

Make fresh water available at all times. Food should be presented as small quantities, freshly at each meal. Always present **growing cats** with an excess amount of food at each meal, but present it in smallish quantities and add to it as

consumed. Remove excess food at the end of the meal and store. Well nourished cats will rarely eat stale food. If food is presented to the **growing** healthy cat in this way, it will always have available sufficient food for its needs. It is not possible to provide rigid volumes or weights of food to be consumed — it will vary depending on the metabolism of the individual cat, its exercise level and the type of foods consumed (canned, dry, meat, etc).

As the cat reaches adulthood, the quantity of food presented should be adjusted to prevent obesity. The most common cause of obesity is overeating. If your cat is too fat, reduce its intake of food. If you are concerned that your cat eats very little but is still fat, document accurately the total amount of foods consumed and consult your veterinarian.

Provide milk at "meal times" along with other food if you include this in the diet of your adult cat.

Cats respond well to meal times. This procedure allows the owner to observe the food consumption of the cat (thus being able to detect early if a cat is not well), it reduces food wastage and is more hygienic. It also reduces the food consumption excess of some cats which occurs in unsupervised group feeding situations.

9. How much should I feed a lactating queen?

Although we hope to minimize this occurrence with our welfare policies, members often rescue queens and wish to help them rear their kittens.

Usually queens up to 4 weeks of lactation (usual peak lactation time) with greater than 2 kittens suckling, will require in excess of four times their normal food consumption. If the general rule for feeding described before is applied, the queen should not lose an excessive amount of body weight.

10. What is wrong with the diet of my lactating queen — her hair is falling out?

This is not a nutritional problem. It is the result of hormonal changes associated with lactation. The hair will regrow rapidly once the kittens are weaned.

"MEMORY LANE"

A donation in loving memory of Smoky aged 15, Tommy Tucker aged 12, Nigger and Sambo (brothers) aged 17 and 17½ years, Suzie aged 14, and now gentle Sal aged 9 years.

Inserted by the Stone cat family.

* * * * *

In loving memory of "Giselle" a wonderful little chocolate point Siamese. She gave 17 years of great happiness and such devotion that we feel we shall never have again. Also in memory of a darling little cat "Sharee" who also gave me her love.

Sadly missed by
John, Marie & Margot Tuchen.

* * * * *

A donation in memory of our beloved Siamese "Thai", lost while trying to find her way back to us.

Inserted by Barbara Kuhn.

* * * * *

A donation in memory of the late, great, Thompson.

Passed away on 14.11.85. Sadly missed by Gizmo, Seymor, Cassie, Scobie, Professor, Merlin, Skye, Dolly, Mae-Mou and Sam.

Inserted by Mia Graham.

* * * * *

A donation in memory of Snowy.

Inserted by W. Sanderson.

* * * * *

"IN MEMORIAM"

A donation in memory of my late brother, Stan Brown, who passed away on 30th July, 1985. Stan loved his cats more than anything in the world and could never turn away any stray cat that wandered in. Consequently we ended up with five which are my pride and joy and great company now that I am alone.

Inserted by Enid Brown

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In loving memory of my dear friend, Jean Foster. Passed away December 1985.

Inserted by Mrs. B. Robinson.

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In memory of former fellow C.P.S. members and "ailuraphiles" Miss Irene Lean died 20.4.1971. Miss Beryl John died 21.3.1976.

Inserted by Mrs. Sadie Watson.

* * * * *

A donation in memory of our very dear veterinary surgen, J.H. Lillyman of Mona Vale Road, St. Ives, who died on 5th March, 1986. He fought a brave fight against a fatal illness and died far too young with still so much to offer to the animal world. He will be very sadly missed. This donation is from my cats; Sergeant Blackett, Stumpy and Tom.

Inserted by Margaret Gosling.

* * * * *

CENTRAL COAST CALLING

By Dorothy Haines (Woy Woy Branch)

Xmas was a busy time — many dumped cats and kittens. We welcomed new members, Mrs. Thornton of Umina and Mrs. Payne of Woy Woy Bay. Two vigorous enthusiasts.

All hands flat out promoting the Street Stall at Umina on Easter Saturday morning. Have high hopes, and reaching for the stars in the way of a big financial result. An enormous Plants Stall is being set up and special Easter goodies being whipped up and gaily packaged. Fred is EXTRA BUSY in his workshop over at Patonga, one item being a bicycle he has built with his own clever

hands — he's already built one each for himself and Dorothy and the couple are a frequent sight as they whizz round that picturesque area on their community work etc. etc.

Sorry to report our indefatigable Stall-raffler and ticket-seller and tireless cake-maker, Mabel Rafe, after moving to a lovely retirement village, is experiencing a spell of illness. We all hope and trust treatment will make her fit again. She certainly has not lost her wonderful spirit!

With warm greetings from Woy Woy — Umina.

NEWS FROM TUGGERAH LAKES/WYONG BRANCH

By Branch President Edith Duport

The holiday season was, as usual, a very busy time. All of 1985 was quite exceptional as to de-sexing and placing mature cats and kittens in good homes.

A large number of kittens were boarded by Joy and Vickie Skinner of Wyong. Both Joy and Vickie have been a very great help in placing these strays into satisfactory homes.

Also President Edith Duport has quite a number of kittens and young de-sexed cats in residence — a good number having been placed in homes — many still waiting placement.

During 1985 a number of street stalls were

quite successful and more are planned for this year to help give funds for this work.

Sincere thanks to our loyal helpers who have been a tower of strength. Mrs. Watsford, Mrs. Fisher, Mrs. McCulloch, Mr. and Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Pearman. Also many thanks to Mr. Bruce Wassell of Wyong.

Our gratitude is expressed also to Radio Station 2GO (Gosford) for consistent help — also Tuggerah Lakes Wyong Advocate and Guardian newspapers.

We urgently need new members and welfare workers to assist placing young cats and kittens into good homes.

THE GREEN BAN ALTERNATIVE

By Elizabeth Francis

The above term was one synonymous with a small group of concerned citizens fighting to retain some verdant space in the every increasing concrete jungle. Now this title is applied to a group of herbal products made in New South Wales and available in health food stores.

This line of merchandise is for human, animal and garden use. As I like to limit the use of chemicals on all fronts, and being aware of the fatal results of insecticides to animal and bird life, I decided to first try the herbal garden variety, and though I'm no garden expert, my plants are none the worse for the changeover, and my pets can safely relax in the garden.

In the hot weather, fleas create a problem for most pets especially if they have sensitive skin. So, instead of the usual brands of flea collars I decided to try the herbal collars which are imported from America, and found them just as effective as their chemical counterpart.

As well as these products, I am personally using the herbal mixture for rubbing on exposed areas to help ward off the various flying objects that attack us. Again, I have been satisfied with the results.

As well as the herbal collars, the American market also produces herbal flea powder and

shampoo for pets. I have now used all these products and will continue to do so. They all help in the fight against fleas but if an animal is tearing its skin as a result of fleas, veterinary attention must be sought, of course.

All the above products contain eucalyptus oil, pennyroyal oil and catyput oil. If your pet is allowed indoors you will find the blend of these three oils gives off a delightful but non-sickly aroma. You will have the best smelling pets on the block! So why not give the new method a try? You've nothing to lose!

(Editor's comment: My new cat 'Tiggy Touchwood' is experimentally wearing a herbal collar purchased on 20th February, 1986 at a cost of \$6.73. Manufactured in the U.S.A. under the brand name 'Petsafe', the claim is that it is non-toxic, contains no poisons and is absolutely safe for both human and animal. Contains only oil of pennyroyal, oil of eucalyptus, oil of cedar, oil of citronella, oil of rue and oil of rosemary.

Smells absolutely delicious but is it effective? Shall report results to members in the next issue of the Journal. Any product that is effective in flea control and is non-toxic must meet with approval. Another product is 'Nature's Gate' herbal shampoo. Non-toxic and contains pennyroyal oil. Shall also report on same.)

WOOLLAHRA REVISITED

By Elizabeth Francis

The day of the Queen Street Fair dawned with cumulus clouds hovering in the sky, and we hoped that they would remain inactive until after the great day had drawn to a close. Someone up there must have heard our plea, for eventually the sun could be seen, fighting a path through the ethereal mass.

The happy group of early workers set off for their destination, and upon arrival set about arranging the goods in the most beguiling manner possible, hoping for a more successful year than previous.

Even before the official opening, the "Birds of Prey" were visible rummaging around the various stalls, seeking the first bargains of the day. The effervescence of past fairs seemed to be lacking this year; even the music was more subdued. Also missing were the saintly group known as "The Nuns of Perpetual Indulgence". This slightly outrageous contingent add a touch of colour to the scene and attract some attention, especially from those who are not familiar with Eastern Suburbs incredulities. Any attention gatherer is usually good for business.

As in our first attempt at this adventure, the response from members was gratifying, added, this year, by an announcement in the autumn edition of the Journal. I'm sure the "Elegant Ones" were delighted with their Fan-Aid.

Our hopes for more revenue this year did not eventuate; people seem to be more cautious with their spending; perhaps it is a sign of the economic climate we are experiencing. Some stall holders I spoke to, complained that revenue was down on previous years. So we had to be satisfied with \$887. At least this will pay for quite a few de-sexings.

As it is time-consuming to write to all those who contributed to the day, the Fair Committee here extends its gratitude to all those who took part in their own particular fashion. A special thanks must again go to our competent couriers, Nancy Iredale and Sandy Moss, without whose help there would have been no stall for those pampered pussies.

By four o'clock, the "One" who should be obeyed decided to rain down on us, thus causing a more hurried departure, and one hour less in trading time. Still it could have been worse.

Finally, an announcement regarding the cancellation of the 1986 Fair has been made by the arrangers who organise most of Sydney's fairs. Apparently the standard of some of the people visiting Queen Street is not what it used to be. Perhaps the discerning people are tired of the over-loud music and the numerous food vans that seem to grow in number each year.

I will endeavour to try and find another location for the "Cats" and let you know at a later date.

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

By the Editor

The subject of the following two short stories is love — and to some extent, the benefits to be gained from its remarkable power to heal. Almost all the Earth Mother's sentient creatures crave companionship and affection, or at the very least respond to it, whether it be associated with their own or other species. And as we all know, Man, and other animals for that matter, have from time immemorial demonstrated a capacity for sacrifice, even unto death, because of love for other or fellow living creatures.

Therefore, although the stories are not to do with animal welfare as such, I believe they are apposite here, for without that magical property we call love, there would be no concern for animals — or each other — nothing more than primitive urges to satisfy the needs of the self.

Care would not be taken, when in those parts of the field or forest where all creatures should remain unmolested, and all things growing should remain unplucked, to leave nothing but one's footprints — and to take nothing but one's time.

The Tree that would not Die

There is a seedling in our garden which we are gently nurturing — I'll tell you why. Almost twenty years ago, a young botanist friend of my wife, Loretto Williams, returned from a field trip to Western Australia with various native plants. Among them was a tiny wattle seedling which she gave us, though warning that she very much doubted we could get it to grow — let alone flourish — as it was indigenous to West Australia only, and was unlikely to adapt to the

soil and climatic conditions in our neck of the woods. So, with hope, but little confidence in its future, we carefully planted the 4 inch seedling in a sunny area close to the other wattles growing there in a small clump.

As weeks turned to months we were delighted to observe that the once tiny seedling had apparently 'taken', and in fact was looking pretty perky. When it had reached a height of over two feet, I remarked to my wife that she should let Loretto know the wattle had taken kindly to its surroundings and appeared to be thriving; I knew she'd be keenly interested. But Loretto Williams was never to know how well her unusual wattle had grown in foreign soil — she was already dead, a young woman still only in her early thirties — from a brain tumour.

At such times one always questions the unfairness of life, of chance. A kind, young person with a love of all nature's works was suddenly gone. Most people sooner or later experience similar tragedies throughout their lives, and when they happen we cast our eyes heavenward and ask the question — though we know no answer will be forthcoming. So the tree, in remembrance of its donor, became the "Loretto Williams Wattle".

As the seasons came and went, we nurtured that tree with all the tender loving care we could give, and what once had been a spindly seedling grew into a graceful sapling, then eventually matured into a beautiful young tree. Unlike the varieties of this State, its blooms of a darker, honey shade, lasted throughout the greater part of the year.

After several years had gone by, the tree had grown to well over twelve feet. Through the large window at the top of the stairs we used often to admire the beautiful picture it made in our garden, with its full sprays of golden blooms and tendril-like leaves that appeared to always float on a gentle zephyr. We reckoned that picture beat anything we had hanging on our walls.

Then came the southerly buster! All night the wind howled and shrieked, rain lashed and overflowed the gutterings, and hailstones pelted down with a ferocity that was awesome. Lightning ripped at the sky and brought down all the nearby power lines, while thunder boomed a relentless cannonade. It was one of those fierce storms visited on Sydney every once in a while.

In the morning all was quiet in our sodden garden, not even a bird chirped. The damage was heart-breaking. The back fence was down and the large rowan had split at its base and had crashed onto the rotary clothes-line, wrecking it completely. The carport which I had recently and laboriously erected had come entirely apart (lousy workmanship), and its wreckage lay strewn over and about the car it was meant to

shelter. Many other shrubs and trees had suffered various degrees of damage, but all this was as nothing compared to what had happened to our beautiful wattle.

My wife nearly cried when she saw it, for at about shoulder height it had snapped like a brittle twig, and now lay disconsolate and bedraggled with its upper branches sweeping the wet ground. The only thing holding it together was a thin layer of outer pith and bark. We reckoned there was not the ghost of a chance to save it. But, we had to try, we had to do our best for Loretto's wattle.

How we managed it I don't know, but somehow we succeeded in raising it and securing it into place much as one would set a broken limb. At the break, I lashed it firmly with thick, greasy twine, then we staked it as securely as we could. I just hoped for the best but without much optimism as I'm no sort of tree surgeon; I don't even have a 'green thumb'.

Several weeks passed and the tree did not die. When at last I unwound the twine I was truly surprised (and delighted) to discover that the break had healed completely. The only marks were indentations left by the twine. One could have almost said that that tree had a mind of its own and a strong will to live. So more seasons came and went, and the tree grew taller and stouter than ever, giving joy and delight with its golden blooms and matchless, graceful beauty.

But there is a time for all things. Came a day, a year or so back, when my wife said "I think you had better take a look at the wattle, it seems to be sickening". And so it was. One large branch was already dead, which, when one reckoned the years, was in the nature of things, for the life of a wattle is unfortunately short; much as it is with small animals. In an effort to prolong its life I cut away all the dead wood — but it wasn't much use. Before very long it bent low its golden head as though weary, and then in a short while it faded away. We felt a deep sadness and remembered the girl who had given us the tree as a tiny seedling in a baked bean can all those long years ago. I thought "Well, Loretto Williams, we did our best, tried to keep it going for you. We're sorry it's no more." Then, taking a bush saw, I cut down the dead tree, close to the ground.

Over the years we had remarked upon occasion how the other wattles growing nearby had always propagated by dropping seed pods which sprang up as seedlings, thus ensuring life's continuum, but strangely the West Australian never had. Now, of course, it never would.

Never would? One should never discount the small miracles sometimes wrought by Nature. For not very long after I had cut down the tree my wife came to me in some excitement,

exclaiming: "Come and look! I do believe there is a West Australian wattle coming up. I'm sure it's a seedling from Loretto's tree and not the ordinary kind for the leaves are tendril-like, and not feathery". She was right! On examining the plant I had to agree, it **was** a baby West Australian wattle.

Over the past few months that seedling has received all the love and care we once gave its parent. It has been transplanted to the site of the original tree and is now almost three feet high. Only recently I observed it had sprouted two tiny yellow blooms — the forerunners of many. So in our garden there is still a "Loretto Williams Wattle" just as other plants in the garden bear names we have given them in memory of people or favourite little creatures now beyond our ken.

Sometimes, when in the garden just musing and taking in all the bountiful things Earth Mother has to offer — tiny creatures scuttling through the grass, the greening of the shrubs, the loveliness of the tall gums all about — it is perhaps natural to be enticed to think that maybe, just maybe, there is a wider shore where, and in which case, the shade of Loretto Williams may have had a hand in the rebirth of her wattle. Or, of equal wonderment, did the tree, knowing it was dying, drop that one little pod in its final days?

One thing, in all my life I never met Loretto Williams, never knew what she looked like; I don't even have a picture of her formed in my mind. As mentioned earlier, she was a friend of my wife, and purely by chance I never got the opportunity to meet her. I just have a gentle feeling, an affection, for that young woman long dead whom I never met but knew of only as a fine person. And that is why there is a seedling in our garden which I am gently nurturing.

Note: Stirling Macoby in his book, 'What Flower Is That' mentions that Australia's floral emblem, the Acacias are a family of over 500 species. However, he describes only four in detail: Cootamundra Wattle (N.S.W.), Sydney Golden Wattle (N.S.W.), Queensland Silver Wattle (Qld) and Golden Wattle (Eastern Australia).

Irene and little dog "Beau"

Not far from the Bogong High Plains of north-eastern Victoria, at a mountain gap which separates the Ovens and Kiewa Valleys, we pulled in one day in early February to have our "elevenses" before continuing our journey to the charming little town of Myrtleford which lies nestled in the beautiful Ovens Valley. Very little traffic appears to come through that way, and we had no sooner poured coffee from the

"thermo" when we heard the distant sound of a low-powered motor labouring up the steep and winding mountain road. It was approaching from the opposite direction in which we were travelling.

After some minutes, a motor-cycle came into view around the curve and pulled up close to where we were resting under the shady trees. With the paraphernalia worn these days by bike riders including the "man from outer space" helmet, it was difficult to assess the rider's sex, but what attracted our interest and attention was the pillion passenger; a small dog, not much more than a pup really, which rode in a low, open basket attached to the rear seat. When the rider raised the visor of the "space" helmet we saw, slightly to our surprise, that its wearer was a woman of early middle age. Exchanging greetings with the lady, we then invited her to join us and to share the remainder of our coffee. This invitation she gladly accepted.

Naturally, our conversation centred on her little dog and the way in which he appeared to take to and enjoy riding pillion behind her. Irene (for that was the lady's name), then told us what a joyful, dear companion he was, and how much he meant to her. When riding with her on the bike and he felt the need for a relief stop, he'd cleverly reach out with a paw and tap insistently on her back — it was the reason she'd stopped nearby to us.

Then, as is often the way with strangers met by chance, Irene eventually confided to us something of the great worry and problem in her life, and why the companionship of that dog was so important to her. Irene obviously was a person who led a somewhat lonely life with few to pour out her troubles to. This is what she spoke about up on that quiet mountain:

Irene and husband Herbie lived in an old farmhouse somewhere in the region of Mount Beauty. As she put it, they thought they had it "made", enjoying an idyllic existence in enchanted surroundings. She spoke poetically of how, when up on the High Plains, the mist would come in low of an evening, and how one could reach up into the clouds and feel that one was just "one step away from Heaven".

Then one day, several months past, tragedy struck. Without informing anyone, Herbie had gone alone to a far paddock to repair a broken-down car. While underneath the vehicle the jack had slipped causing the car to pin him beneath it. He'd lain for the best part of twelve hours unable to free himself from the crushing weight, and when found — and then only by chance because a vet had come to attend a sick cow — he was pretty far gone. Throughout the long and terrifying hours, while still conscious, he'd attempted to attract attention by kicking on the vehicle with his one free leg — but no-one had heard.

The gangrene and damage to vital organs caused by such severe stifling of blood vessels for so long a time had been enormous. Now, many operations and several months later, Herbie lay in a Melbourne hospital, unable to walk and with one arm permanently paralysed. He'd lost all interest in living and Irene's main concern was to get to visit him as often as possible; to restore, if she could by her devotion, Herbie's will to go on, and to let him see that in her he had someone who truly cared.

Of course, life in the old farmhouse could have been much more miserable and lonely for Irene had not someone who recognised this, kindly given her the pup. That dog had become a faithful friend to her; he'd given her the companionship she so sorely needed, and was something to take an interest in and to care about while hoping and waiting for Herbie to recover. She'd named him "Beau". One could well understand why that small animal meant so much to her.

What we had intended as a brief stop for refreshment had by now developed into a lengthy interlude; shadows were beginning to lengthen and it was time to go. We wished Irene well for the future and I said in parting, "Listen Irene, when next you visit Herbie, tell him you met a traveller on the mountain who said he was overjoyed to be able to take in that wonderful

scenery which at one time in the recent past he thought he would not be able to see again. Maybe it'll give him hope. And tell him also that he's a lucky guy to have someone like you." Then, after saying our good-byes, Irene whistled up her little dog who immediately leapt into his pillion seat and off they chugged down one side of the mountain while we set off down the other.

As we rolled on through that beautiful country I thought, "Well, that should make a good story for the journal. It has all the ingredients; love, caring, loyalty — and — what better to illustrate all we've ever said about the comfort to be derived from the presence of a faithful companion animal". As I mused, I reckoned it to be thousands to one that I'd ever meet with Irene and her little dog again, and that whenever I should come to that gap in the mountain on my way to the wonderful coun- I'd always wonder, did everything come right in the end for Herbie, Irene and the little dog she cared so much about?

I hoped that somehow, love would find a way.

Note: Re the healing power of love. Quite some years ago scientists at Harvard under the direction of Professor Pitirim A. Sorokin conducted research which concerned the power of love. They came up with the finding that love has more power over disease than medicine. I would be the last to dispute that finding.

My Sweet Ebony
by Marjorie Mary Hurst

Midnight velveted,
Green-jewel eyed,
Aloof and elusive
You nose-scanned my home,
And selected
The most satisfying chair.
The spot where the sun
Reached warm caressing fingers,
Then
Carved a hollow in my heart
And snuggled down,
Purring.

PET OWNER — DO YOU LIVE ALONE?

If so, have you made arrangements for the care of your pet or pets in the event of your personal misadventure or demise?

If you have not, we recommend that you give serious thought to nominating a relative or other persons you trust to make the type of arrangements that you would wish.

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CONTACT

**FOR ALL ANIMAL WELFARE ENQUIRIES,
INCLUDING AMBULANCE SERVICE AND DESEXING RING 51 1011**

WANT HELP/WANTING TO HELP?

**REGISTERED OFFICE 103 ENMORE ROAD, ENMORE
PHONE: 51 1011**

ALL MAIL SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO: P.O. BOX A523, SYDNEY SOUTH, 2000

(Administration

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

(Membership

**OPPORTUNITY SHOP: PHONE 516 2072 9.30—4.00 week days
9.30—12.00 Saturdays**

(Auxiliary

(Fund Raising **PHONE 427 3828 Mrs. Cozens**

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 sufficient discharge to my Executors.

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

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, 1985. **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 \$
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"THE CAT PROTECTION SOCIETY OF N.S.W."

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Ms.
Mrs.
Miss Initials
BLOCK LETTERS

Address

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Phone No Signature Date

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

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GENERAL APPEAL

\$

Mr.
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Miss First name or initial

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