

Cat Affairs

March, 1991.

*Journal of The Cat Protection Society of N.S.W.
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President's Page

You will all recall our invitation in the last journal to become a Life Governor of the Society. I am pleased to advise that we've had an overwhelming response, with eight new Governors appointed to date.

We have all been stunned by the support. In any circumstances, \$1,000 is a great sum to give ... in today's recession, it often means that great sacrifices have to be made. We thank these new Governors from our hearts for helping when we need it most.

At the same time, we are deeply appreciative of every donation ... whether it be money, goods for the shop, time spent serving in the shop, letters of encouragement, those tender, loving stories of the cats in your lives, the wonderful photos that appear in our magazine.

Every charity is proud of its members, but I hope I don't sound too biased when I say there seems to be a special warmth and unity among all of us!

So there are two new invitations in "Cat Affairs" this time ... the first, to form a Social Committee, and the second to join in a PenFriend's column. Our Editor feels that cat lovers would enjoy writing to each other, and I agree. Everybody had a penfriend once upon a time, and I think it's a lovely custom to revive.

Other plans for 1991 are also taking shape. There's never a dull moment at our monthly Council meetings, we're always discussing new ways we can do things, or perhaps venture into new areas. We may not always agree on the details, but we certainly agree on a common goal ... to do things the very best way we can, for the welfare of cats.

Of course, I'll always keep you informed as we do this. And let me say again that I'm always open to suggestions and ideas from you, our members. Even if you have just the merest flicker of an idea, telephone or write to me to discuss it. Because I work during the day, you can leave your number with our office (on 51 1011) and I'll call you back in the evening.

Meanwhile, thank you all for your constant support and encouragement.

Lyn Thomas

How to make a Paw-Trait

If you'd like to make your own little greeting cards, gifts tags etc, here's an easy idea:

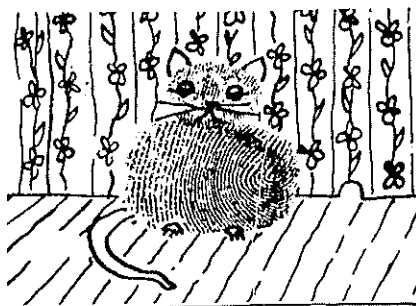
Buy a stamp pad from a stationer. Press your thumb on to the cardboard or paper you're using, for the cat's body.

Press your little finger on the pad, then make a print on top of the thumb print to form the cat's head.

All you need to do is add whiskers, ears, eyes and mouth with a pen. And there - a cute paw-trait.

The example illustrated is by Catherine Russell, who gave us kind permission to use it. Catherine is a calligrapher and artist who works from her home in Narangba, Queensland, and specialises in stationery, book marks and post cards featuring cats. Her own two cats, Pause and Panda, provide constant inspiration.

P.S: Children will enjoy making paw-traits too.



THE CAT PROTECTION SOCIETY OF N.S.W.

Registered office and postal address: 103 Enmore Road, Enmore, N.S.W. 2042.

Welfare Office: 51 1011, 519 7201, Opportunity Shop: 516 2072

Membership/ Volunteer enquiries: 713 8576

PATRONS: The Hon. N.P. Greiner, M.P., Premier of N.S.W., Miss Ita Buttrose, O.B.E., Professor Charles Birch, F.A.A., The Hon. James McClelland.

OFFICE BEARERS: **President:** Miss Lyn Thomas
Vice Presidents: Mrs. Sybil Cozens, Miss Jo Tomkin
Honorary Treasurer: Mrs. Nance Iredale
Membership Secretary: Miss Jo Tomkin

COUNCILLORS: Mrs. Flo Best, Mrs June Chapman, Mrs Stephanie Forsyth, Miss Lesley Hood, Mrs Lena Larsen, Professor Daria Love, Mrs Shirley Pikler, Mrs Beverley Walsh.

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTERS



From Frances Kaukerei of Potts Point

Fifteen years ago I acquired a little dark tabby kitten through the Society.

Harry enjoyed good health through 14 of these years, but early in 1990 he developed hyperthyroidism and almost died.

I was lucky to have a very caring vet, who gave him the best treatment. Harry is well again now, and although I never took his delightful company for granted, his long illness has made me aware that the time we still have together is so precious.

In those anxious weeks when Harry was very ill I took some photos of him sleeping in front of a giant painting of a cat's face. When the photos were developed, I thought how much like a Cat God the cat in the painting appeared ... a Cat God watching over Harry while he was in need.

It seems like only yesterday that the Society brought Harry and me together. I thank my vet - and perhaps the Cat God - that he is still with me.

Harry was ill when this photo was taken, but his owner feels the Cat God watched over him and helped his recovery.

From Joan Haub of West Wyalong

I must compliment you on the last journal. They are all excellent but I think I enjoyed the December issue even more - some wonderful contributions and pictures.

Was thrilled to see Jiminy and Cricket's picture - Cricket took it all in her stride, of course!

I thought the concept of sponsoring a cat a wonderful idea. I know, particularly if living somewhere I couldn't have an animal, I would like to do that. If money were no problem I'd like to do it anyway, even having cats of my own.

Among the tabbies in Venice there was at least one black cat several years ago. I made friends with a young lass in St. Marks Square who had a black kitten. She didn't understand English but understood to pose with me and the kitten!

I've not yet ascertained, after several trips to Bali, why the majority of cats there are minus varying lengths of their tails though. Maybe another member has some theories?

At The Fete



Again last year we took a stall at the Newtown fete. It was searingly hot weather, but Lena Larsen and Nance Iredale (in the picture) stayed on duty all day, as well as packing and unpacking. Shirley Pikler, Julie Gorrick and Monty also gave valuable help.

We'll be repeating the fete this November, and would really appreciate things to sell. They should be new (or new looking) along the lines of glassware, knick knacks, toiletries, baby clothes and toys, table linen, crockery, aprons, tea towels etc - smallish items. Jewellery is also a best seller, if you have some you never wear.

Lena Larsen is the organiser, and you will catch her most days at the office on 511011 or 5197201. Pick ups can be organised if you don't have transport.

P.S. We also need a sturdy sign with our name on it, something that's free standing but won't blow away in the wind. Maybe there's a signwriter who can help, or someone with knowledge of displays? Please ring the office, and ask for Julie.



From Jacki Fleming of Potts Point

I am enclosing a picture and a few words about Edward Bear. I found him trapped in a hole in a back lane in Potts Point. He'd obviously been dumped, was starving and in a very bad way.

I rescued him, took him home and called him Teddy.

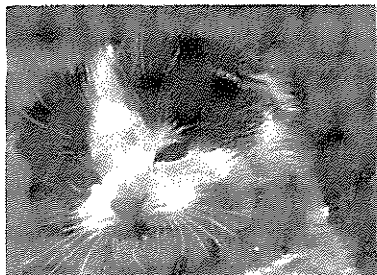
Overnight, everything changed, the TAKE OVER was amazing. In no time Teddy had become boss of the household. He grew and grew to be a very handsome and fat little man. Entered in cat shows, he became such a novelty with the organisers that he won numerous awards. He's also had TV appearances and recently became the Fattest Cat In the World, with an entry in The Guinness Book of Records. Not bad for a stray to become a megastar!

P.S. Edward weighs 22 kilos and is eight years old.

Cat Affairs 4



Pictured with his owner Jacki Fleming is Edward Bear, fattest cat in the world at 22 kilos.



FORM OF BEQUEST

To those caring persons who may be disposed to assist our Society in 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 purpose 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 estate as well as money.

Always Remembered

Enclosed is a cheque in memory of my black cat Bibby, who died on November 22 from kidney failure. She was one of my four dear old cats who sat out the flood last February.

- Evelyn Parsons

A donation in memory of our dear little Penny, put to rest in May, 1988. We had her with us for 15 years, and still miss her so very much.

- Kay and Les Warren.

Wonderful memories of my dearly loved cats, Chia Koschia and Rhys Griffin, who lived out their lives with me.

- June Holdup

In memory of Boy, my nearest and dearest. How I loved that puss.

- C. Green

A donation in loving memory of my beautiful white cat, Princess.

- Mrs M Larsen

In memory of Kitty, a faithful, loving cat born at 3pm on 31st January 1973 in the back garden. Put to sleep on 14th June 1990. Brought back home, and is now sleeping peacefully in the garden where she was born.

- Mrs E. Groves

In memory of my beloved "Black Prince" Toby, put to sleep on 10th February, 1991, aged 10 years. Dearly loved and remembered always by Enid Brown and his sisters Gemma and Annie.

Snippets

from Councillor Flo Best

~~~~~

*Why does a cat sleep all day in the sun? So that it can sing all night in the moonlight.*

~~~~~

The Cat Book Centre in New York lists 593 books about cats in its mail order catalogue. A cat library in California has 1,400 books on its shelves.

Tuan

*Sleeping for a final time
Means you cannot create*

Any more memories

But it does not mean

Our memories

Our shared moments

Shall go away

They will always

Be with me

Triggered perhaps by

A shaft of sunlight

Where you strolled

Around the corner

Of the house

Or

In a dented pillow

On the bed

Or

In a summer shadow

Across a windowpane

They and you

Will always

Stay with me

My friend

Farewell

Bobo

Thank you for joining us!

The following members joined the Society during the last part of November, December and January. We thank you all for your interest and support, and hope you'll be with us for many years to come.

Ms D Boustead of St Peters. Ms E Lang of Bowen Mountain. Mrs A Scales of St Marys. Mr C Plumb of Marrickville. Mrs K Erool of Wyoming. Miss G Cope of Neutral Bay. Mrs A Lennon of Emu Plains. Mrs M Marshall of Camperdown. Ms D Atkinson of Manly Vale. Ms Whittemore of Concord. Mrs A Hodgson of Crows Nest. Mr M Gorrick of Surry Hills. Mrs Parker of Newtown. Mr J Keldoulis of Newtown. Miss B Dyer of Bathurst. Ms B Shaw of Randwick. Miss J Fleming of Potts Point. Mrs J Atkins of Temora. Ms J McCallum of Watsons Bay. Ms M Flaherty of Tumby Umbi. Mr D Butcher of Lilyfield. Ms M Fraser of North Parramatta. Miss S. Laurenson of Ryde. Mrs L Fudala of St Clair. Mrs D. Worthy of Welling. U.K.

How does a cat Find its Way Home?

There are thousands of authenticated stories of cats finding their way home - and often travelling very long distances. The longest recorded journey by a cat is in fact 950 miles - from Boston to Chicago in the United States!

This ability to make for home doesn't work if the family leaves the cat behind when it moves to a new place. The cat can't find its way to a place it's never been. But take a cat away from its original home, and it may very well decide it prefers its old haunts. Then, it sets out, often through rough country, through cities and towns, until it ends up at the place it regards as its rightful home. It's not people the cat tracks down, it's the place.

What is the cat's homing device?

Once, the cat's homing ability was regarded as almost supernatural, in line with the cat's reputation as a creature of ancient magic and wisdom.

Today, modern research suggests that the key to the homing ability of cats lies in a form of inbuilt celestial navigation, similar to that used by birds.

It suggests that during the months or years the cat lived in its original home, its brain automatically registered the angle of the sun at certain times of the day.

But how does the cat tell what time it is? After all, it doesn't wear a watch. The answer is that like man and other higher mammals, cats are thought to possess internal biological clocks.

Therefore, if a cat is uprooted to a new home where the sun's angle at a certain time is slightly different, and it wants to put the angle right, it works by trial and error.

Moving in one direction, it finds the angle gets worse. It tries another direction, and the angle improves - it's closer to the familiar angle. So it concludes that this must be the direction to travel in.

Of course, all this activity is subconscious. But as the cat gradually gets the sun in the right spot in the sky, it finds itself in a neighbourhood where the smells, sights and sounds become familiar. And pretty soon, it arrives at its old home.

The time of the year it travels doesn't seem to affect the cat's homing ability. Sun, rain or snow, it travels on. Like birds, it doesn't need a clear day to navigate, but in overcast weather uses polarized light.

The following accounts are just two of the many stories that prove cats know how to find their way home. They are from the American magazine *Cat Fancy*. Please do write in if you have a homing story of your own!

The Cat that didn't want to move

By Violet Lawton

During his thirteen years with us, Snagglepuss helped me through despair and frustration. I was a single parent and life wasn't always simple and lovely.

One day, my daughter and I moved to another part of town. She was sixteen and Snagglepuss was 8.

The distance between the house we'd left and our new home was approximately 3 miles. There was a stream, a well-travelled highway, wooded open land and many houses between the two locations.

We kept him inside for two weeks after the move, to allow the new scents and sights and sounds to become familiar. Finally, he was allowed out into our small backyard.

He promptly disappeared. Heartbroken and fearing the worst, I called the local pound officer and the police station. I placed ads in several papers and scouted the neighbourhood. There was no sign of Snagglepuss.

At the end of a long week, my phone rang. The caller was the woman who'd bought my house.

"Do you have a black and white cat?" she asked, "and is he missing?" My heart skipped a beat as I assured her that we did, and he was. She went on to tell me he was trying to enter the house through a bedroom window.

Then I knew it could be none other than old Snaggie. We always had a bedroom window open at night for his comings and goings.

It was an emaciated, forlorn looking Snagglepuss that I joyfully picked up a little while later. Back to the new place we went, where he stayed inside for three weeks.

I didn't know it then, but he was to repeat his homeward journey THREE times more! He knew where his real home was, and nobody or nothing was going to stand in the way.



We never knew what finally did it, but one day he stopped trying to go back. He just decided to accept his new home, I suppose, and carve out a special territory for himself. His travelling days were over.

The cat that walked 1, 000 miles

By Helen Overmyer

When I first met Rusty, he had come to my back door for a hand-out. He was a handsome cat, the colour of rusty nails, with darker stripes of bronze. He rubbed against my legs even before accepting any morsels of food. He and his family had just moved in next door. Thereafter, he came everyday and miaowed at my door, and I always gave him a little treat.

For almost two years we were friends. I was also friends with his owners, who told me they were not sure if he really belonged to them or to me.

When Rusty's "Dad" was transferred to Albuquerque in New Mexico, they naturally decided to take Rusty along.

The day they left, I went to town so I would not see them leave. It was quiet when I returned home, and the house next door was empty.

For many weeks I would open the back door almost expecting to see Rusty waiting there. The

winter passed, and spring arrived. I was working in my rose garden one day when the most bedraggled looking cat came up to see me and miaowed. He rubbed his body against my legs, and I could see he was covered with fleas and burrs.

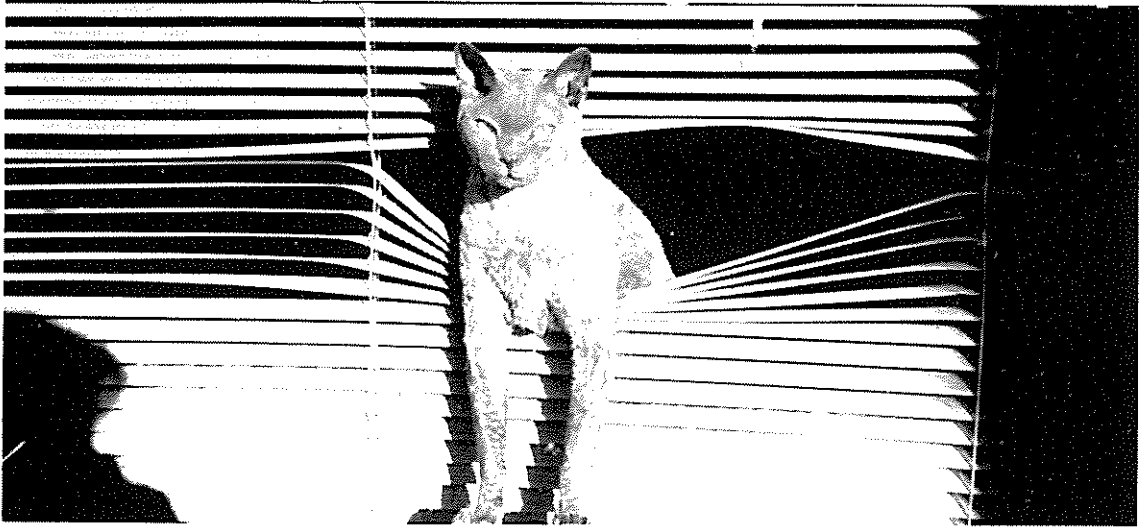
I looked into his tired eyes and softly said, "Rusty." He purred and tried to jump into my arms, but he was too weak to make it. Almost every bone in his body showed. His paws were cut and calloused, and his right ear had a deep wound in it. I could hardly believe it was Rusty, though I knew that not many cats had his distinctive markings.

I wrote to Rusty's owners that night, and asked if Rusty was still with them. They answered at once, saying they had lost Rusty at a rest area north of Little Rock, Arkansas.

I'll never know how he found his way back to me. Little Rock is more than 1000 miles from my home - over roads with heavy traffic, long rivers and even mountains. But make it he did.

Rusty's owners said it was clear he'd chosen to be with me. They passed him to me with their love.

When he died a few years ago, I buried him in my rose garden. I will never forget the cat that walked one thousand miles.



From Frances Kurschildgen of Baulkham Hills

I am enclosing photos of two of my cats (I have seven altogether, all very loved and cared for, but unfortunately most of them are now veterans.)

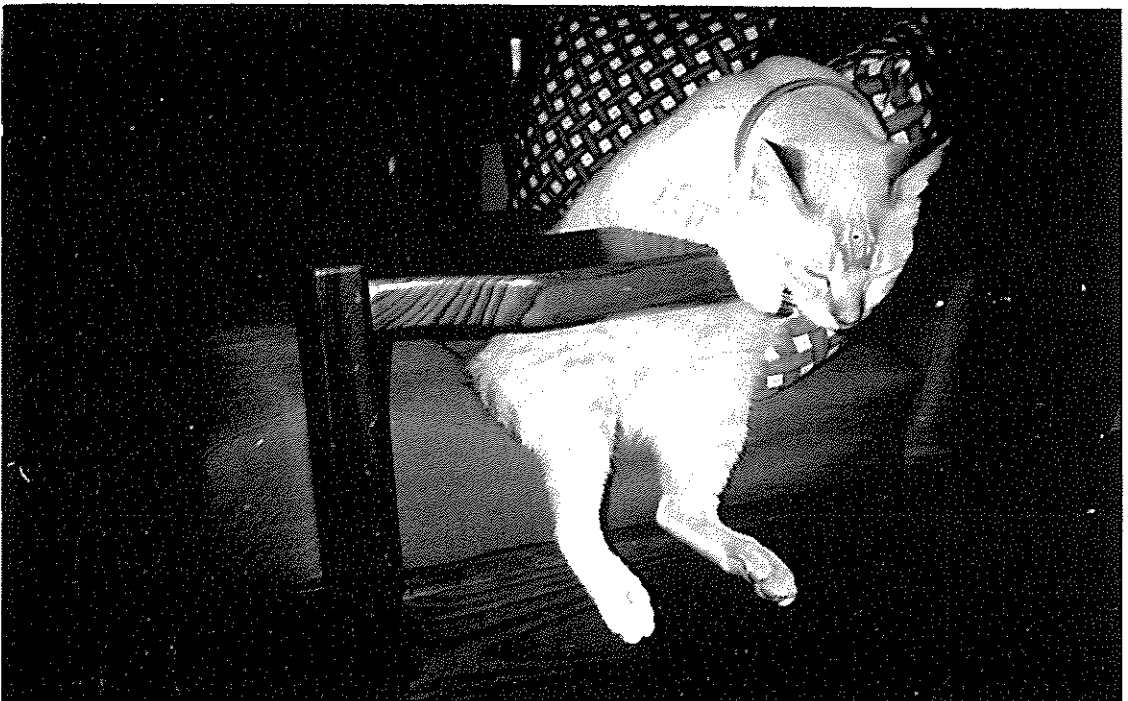
Cheeky, the one coming through the venetian blind, is quite a personality cat who loves people.

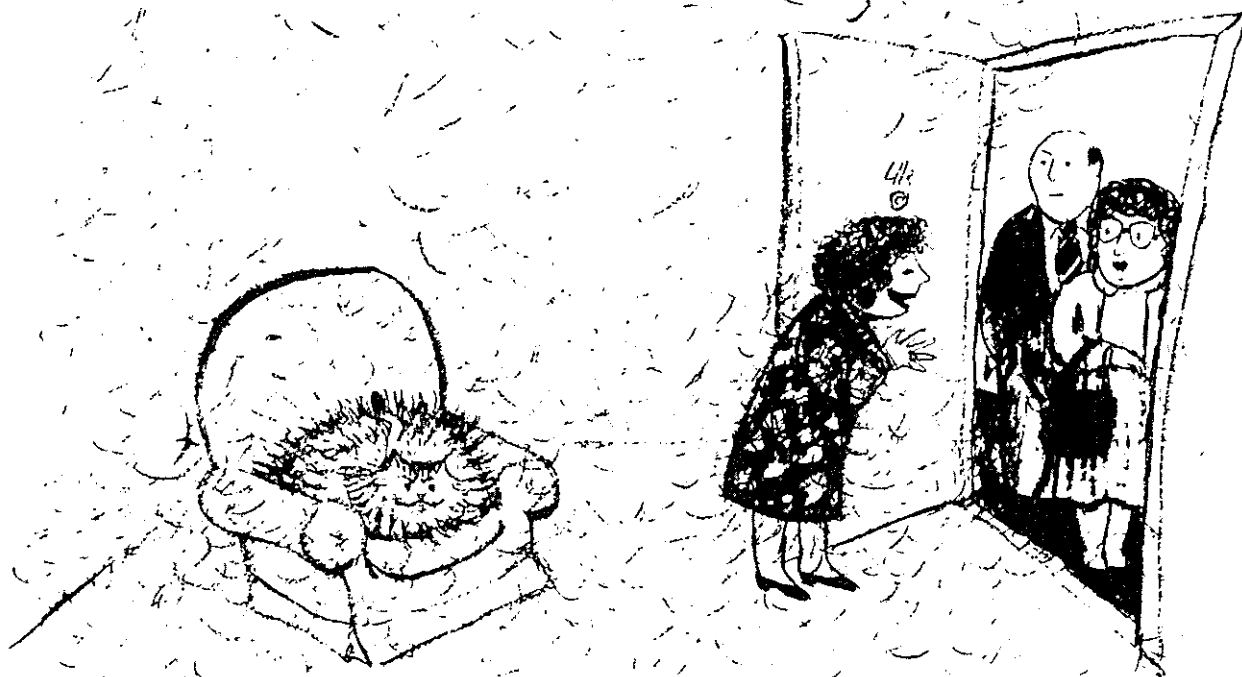
He peeps through the blind to see who's coming, then greets the visitor at the front door. He always says goodbye to his guests by sitting on the telephone table next to the door and miaowing.

Buttons, the other cat, likes to snooze on the arm of the chair. Doesn't look too comfortable, but it's her favourite position!

Incidentally, my ambition is to one day be able to care for unwanted veteran cats. I guess all cat lovers have their dreams of helping.

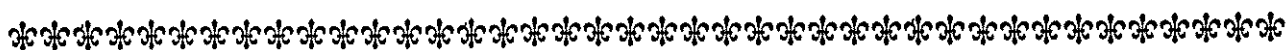
Ed's note: My wish is to have a place big enough to care for all the unwanted tabbies. They're usually last on the list when people are searching for a cat - the more unusual colours are chosen first. A haven where no tabby would ever be turned away is my secret dream!





SIRACUS
CATHERINE IVANCUSA

"I hope you don't mind cat hairs."



SOPHIE

"I was only looking, honest!"
(Oh people, they're so gullible)

This photo of 1-year old Sophie, and the caption, were sent in by Sophie's owner Jenny Wilder, a keen junior member of the Society.

Welfare Report

Please Help Us Spread The Word

This is more an SOS than a Welfare Report. Our magazine goes to members who are cat lovers, so today I am asking you all to spread the word about the horror of this time of year, when the cat population literally explodes.

It could be so easily corrected with the desexing of all cats but "breeders," and the surrender of unwanted strays before they produce their innocent babies.

Meanwhile the cruelty that follows this explosion is unbearable. Kittens are dumped in garbage bins, put in plastic bags to suffocate, sometimes found drowning in public toilets.

We have found young, frantic Mums in small, almost airless boxes with their litter - the boxes taped securely so they can't force their way out. They are dumped on our Enmore doorstep, and often have been there overnight. Perhaps our worse case so far has had a rare happy ending. A box of five very small kittens was placed behind the rear wheel of a car. A young couple passing by saw the car about to reverse, just as they noticed the kittens. Luckily they stopped the driver in time. They brought the kittens to our office to ask for advice about raising them. The driver of the car, incidentally, was shattered about what might have happened.

You can understand our sadness at this time of the year. Every second phone call is a report of dumped pregnant mums, or mums with babies, or orphaned kittens. It is heartbreaking for our Welfare Officers, for Lena and June who help man the 'phones, for Julie and myself.

Add to this our disappointment with finding homes in the past year and you will appreciate why I am sending out this SOS. In 1989 we found good homes for 455 cats

and kittens, but in 1990 the tally was down to 265, despite weekly advertisements in three newspapers.

Some people who bring us kittens - and obviously, many more who simply dump the babies - do so because they can no longer "get rid of them" through pet shops. This is due to new guidelines which say kittens must be eight weeks old, and vaccinated, before a pet shop can offer them for sale. Many pet shops don't accept kittens now, and so this avenue is closed. We applaud the move to make pet shops more responsible, but wish it had received greater publicity. If owners had been aware, they may have had their cats desexed.

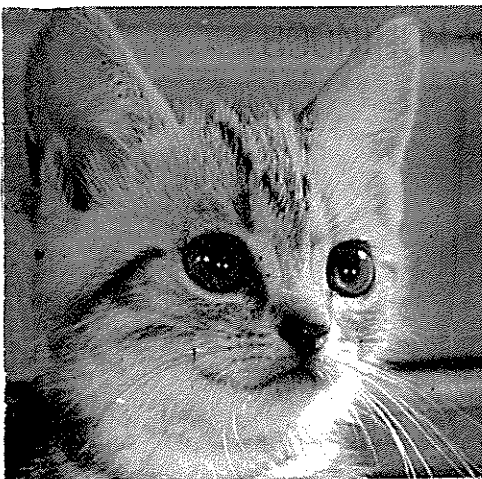
Now what can you do? Obviously, you can talk to friends, neighbours and work colleagues about the need for desexing. On top of this, we have just produced an attractive leaflet aimed to bring in new members, who will then become educated in cat care.

Perhaps you can place these leaflets in your vet's surgery, in local shops, or even pop them in letter boxes in your neighbourhood. A supply can be mailed to you, or picked up at 103 Enmore Road. If you would like them mailed, just give us a call on 511011.

So that's our SOS! Let's cajole, persuade, bully - even blackmail - people to have their cats desexed. And let's get the timing right ... 4 to 5 months for females, and six months for males, remembering that the Society can offer very reasonable rates, and will also pick up and deliver for those without transport.

Please help us make 1991 a year that will see a big improvement in cat care, with a greatly reduced population. All of us here at 103 are thus committed.

Nance Iredale



A TABBY POEM

***If you have a tabby cat,
If you want to please him,
Tie a ribbon round his neck,
Never, never tease him.
Tabby cats are grave and stately,
and they like to act sedately.***

A TABBY CAT STORY

This is about an adventurous tabby, who had a white shirt front and paws and the name of Mary Ann.

The father of the lady who sent me this story was a London rector who lived near the docks.

One summer's day, Mary Ann climbed the 40-foot wall at the end of his garden and disappeared. A prolonged search was made, bills were printed, and a reward offered, but there was no sign of Mary Ann.

A year later, the cat walked through the French windows and into the drawing room. The rector went down to the docks to see the captains of some ships, and it was then discovered that Mary Ann had smuggled herself, a year ago, on board a steamer bound for Australia.

It was not until 12 months later that the ship, berthed again in the same London dock. As soon as she recognised her surroundings, Mary Ann trotted ashore and made her way home.

The captain was able to identify the cat absolutely, and told Mary Ann's family how much she had been admired on his ship, and how she kept down the rats on the voyage.

- Michael Joseph



Eat it all up E.T.

The beguiling kitten in the picture is a lucky little chap. He is being reared by CPS member Lynne Davies of Penrith, and when he is old enough to eat and drink by himself, the photographer who took his picture has offered him a home.

The photo was sent to us by another CPS member, Mrs Dot McDonald, who is a neighbour of Lynne's. Together with a third CPS member, Mrs Elizabeth Smith, they are great workers for cats in the Penrith area, but despite their untiring efforts to encourage desexing, all three women are becoming despondent at the number of cats and kittens being abandoned.

Dot, well known to many of us in the Society, says she is forced to use strong language when she thinks about people leaving kittens tied up in bags and boxes to die.

"I think people who dump cats are complete scum," she says. "It would be very hard to trust these people who are dumping cats. I know I would not trust them with my grandchildren. Dumping a kitten is just like dumping a baby as far as I'm concerned."

Lynne has found two litters of baby kittens recently, tossed away to die. The first litter was almost suffocated inside a plastic bag.

Luckily, her new neighbour's cat had just had some kittens, so the babies were able to feed from her. Lynne is raising the second litter herself, using special kitten formula. Just like human babies, they have to be fed every few hours, so she sets the alarm clock during the night.

Elizabeth (Celie) Smith is just as concerned about older cats living miserable lives in the streets. There are many in the Penrith area, and Celie has taken on the onerous task of feeding a number of them. Semi or completely wild, the food is helping them to stay alive, but they are continuing to breed and so the problem escalates.

Our Society will do all it can to help Celie and other cat lovers in Penrith - or anywhere else we're needed - but we also urge members to continue doing all they can to persuade people to desex their animals, male and female. E.T., as we said, is the lucky one. For thousands of other kittens every week, death is the only relief.

Happy Faces at ur Christmas Party

It was a searingly hot day on December 1, so it was especially pleasing to see so many members at the party. We say thank you to all the long-term members who sallied forth in the heat, and repeat our welcome to new members who came along.

There were many cat stories told, countless photos passed around, and some tears shed as memories unfolded. The great thing is, we members of Cat Protection can share our love and sorrow. We understand.

All the pictures on this page were taken by Mercea McCloskey, except for the group picture by Lena Larsen.

If you weren't there, we hope the pictures may whet your appetite for THIS year's celebration. We really do have fun!









OUR NEW CONTEST



*Win a Glorious Pastel Portrait of your OWN cat
with your favourite real-life cat story*

Here's a contest you'll all enjoy entering, because everyone who lives with a cat has a special story to tell!

Do you remember the funniest thing your cat ever did? Or the smartest?

Is there a sad story you'd like to share with readers?

Have you ever had a telepathic experience with your cat?

Is there something special about the way you acquired your companion?

Then write it down in 300 words or less, and send it to "Cat Story," 103 Enmore Road, Enmore, 2042.

The only rule is this: The story must be about a cat owned by you or a member of the family, and it must be a true story.



THE PRIZE

For the first prize, one of our councillors, Lesley Hood, will do a portrait of your cat in soft pastels.

The portrait will be created from a photo of the cat, and you can choose to have the face only or the whole body. Naturally, the Society will have it framed for you.

CAN YOU RECOMMEND A CATTERY?

We're constantly being asked, by members and public alike, to recommend boarding establishments for cats.

Of course, we do have a list of fine catteries we can suggest from personal experience, but we'd like to expand the list.

If you have boarded your cat recently, and are very happy with the treatment it received, please let us have the name and address and any details that might be helpful.

Proprietors of catteries who would like us to inspect their premises are also invited to get in touch.

Lesley has exhibited at the Royal Pastel Society in London and in galleries in Australia. The lovely tabby on the Society's Christmas card last year is her work.

She chooses pastels for her cat portraits because they give such a realistic effect ... you feel you could reach out and stroke the fur.

Five of the runners up will each receive 20 ... Lesley's tabby cards, blank inside for your own message. Envelopes will be included.

We will also print the prize winning stories in "Cat Affairs." In fact, I have no doubt that every story will eventually be published, so whether or not you win a prize you will be contributing to our magazine.

I do look forward to your entries!

- Editor.



- ★ We visit your home, feed, exercise and play with your pets. Water plants, clear letterboxes. Less fretting for pets, added security.
- ★ Pet Taxi all hours.
- ★ Dog boarding in a home environment

*References happily provided
Security licensed.
Established 1987.*

751-1022

All hours
7 Days

RICHARD DURANI
Proprietor



How Long do Cats Live?

The average lifespan of a domestic cat is almost 15-16 years. It's not unusual to find cats who live longer, but few achieve the ripe old age of 20.

The record stands for a tabby called "Puss," who attained the age of 36 years and one day, though there is an unsubstantiated claim of a cat living to the age of 43!

It isn't easy to equate any particular period of a cat's life with the corresponding age in a human. The common practice of multiplying the cat's age by a figure (often seven) and then saying the result is a human equivalent isn't satisfactory.

The most likely table of equivalent ages would look something like this:

CAT'S AGE

1 year
2 years
3 years
4 years
8 years
12 years
15 years
20 years



HUMAN'S AGE

16 years
24 years
28 years
32 years
48 years
64 years
76 years
96 years

Would you like a Pen Friends' Column?

Even when you live in a big city, it can get a little lonely sometimes. And even when you have a lot of friends, they may live so far away that transport is a problem.

But there's nothing like a letter to brighten up your day, and writing to someone with similar interests is just as pleasurable.

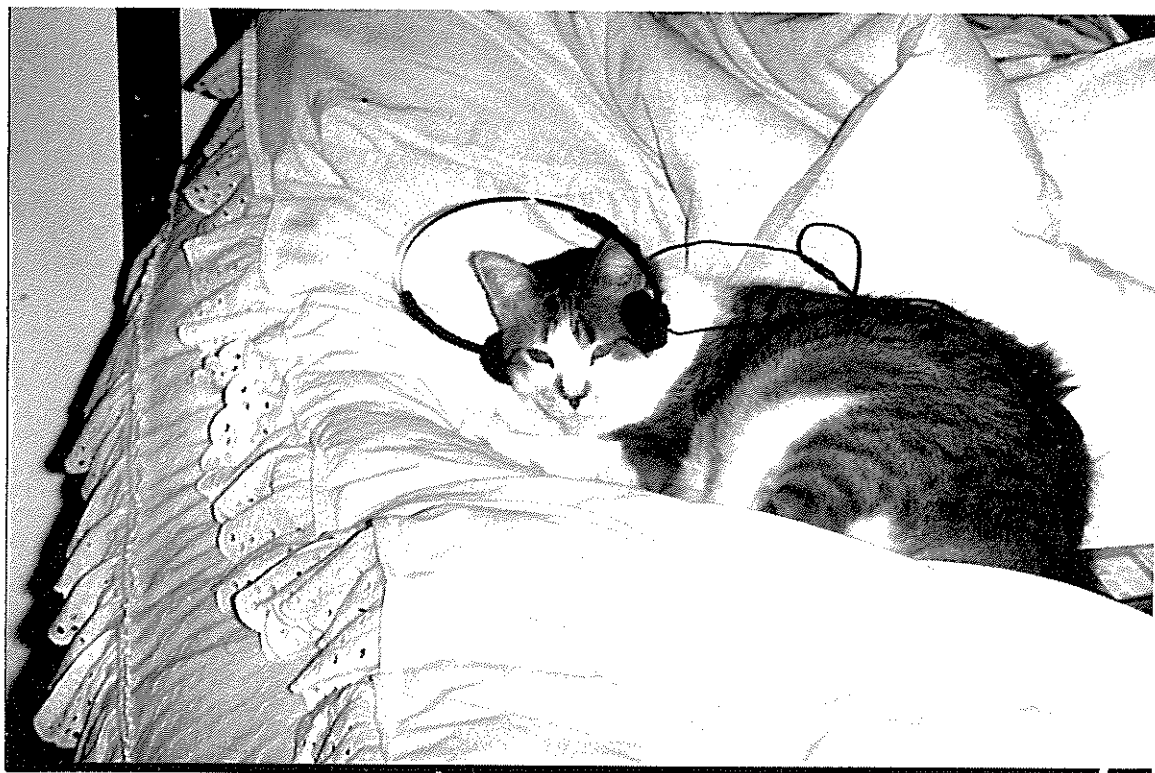
So ... would you be interested in a pen friend?

If you would, just write to me with a little about yourself, and a pen name you'd like to be called as well as your proper name and address. You might

include details of your cats, hobbies, family, any subject you'd like to discuss with a kindred spirit.

I'll publish the details, with your pen name only, in the magazine that comes out in June. Then I'll forward any letters on to you, and you can take it from there. (I'll open the letters first, to be sure they are bona fide.)

When I was a girl, everyone had pen friends, and I think it's a lovely, warm activity that should be revived. So don't be shy about writing in with your interests. There are probably half a dozen among our members who would like to correspond with another cat lover just like you. - Julie Gorrick



From Leonie Shuback of Beacon Hill:

I have enclosed a photo of "The Fonz," a much loved and spoilt cat belonging to friends in Wangaratta, Victoria.

The Fonz was dumped as a young kitten in the wood heap of the golf club where my friends were living almost nine years ago.

Just a few months ago, he had to endure the move to a new home in town. There wasn't as much

open space to roam around in, and territories had to be sorted out with several neighbouring cats.

This all took a few weeks of adjustment, but now The Fonz is happy and content again and enjoying his favourite activity - listening to the radio with his headphones while he lounges on the bed.

Incidentally, I do commend you on the quality of the magazine, and continue to praise all involved at the Society for their wonderful work.



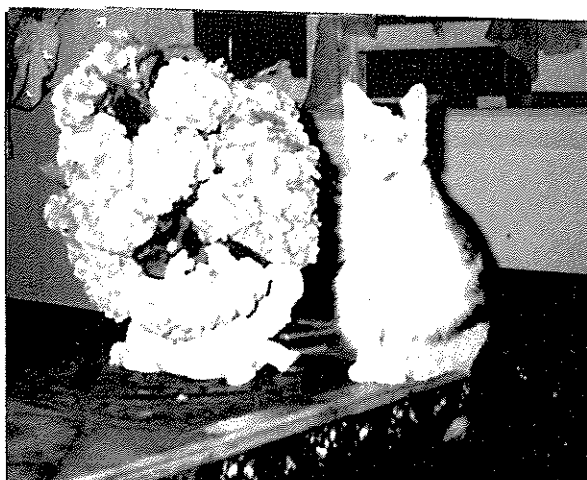
BRAVE CATS

Individual cats have made their own contributions to history this Century. For instance, in the 1930's a cat helped in the building of The Grand Coulee Dam in the United States. It carried a string tied to its tail through the winding drainpipe during the construction. The string was attached to a rope and the rope to a cable which the engineers had

been unable to get through the pipe. Without the cat, construction would have been delayed and costs risen exorbitantly.

And in 1950, as reported in the London Times, a four months old cat scaled the Matterhorn. The cat kept pace with a group of mountaineers entirely without help. It managed to make its own ascent to the peak of the 14,780 feet mountain without benefits of rope or equipment or the thermal clothing worn by the mountaineers.

Particular Blossoms



Angelic King Louis (Kinky), Merea's constant companion and beloved friend for seven years.

by Merea McCloskey

My cousin has white azaleas growing in her garden - an incredible, translucent white with an almost blinding glow. Late winter, there is a promise in the azalea bush. Mid-September, it blooms with blossoms of astonishing beauty. Nature has surpassed itself this year... the white azaleas had fulfilled their promise with a rare, fragile glory and rich magnificence.

Come late November and the white azaleas, in all their wondrous beauty, have gone.

My little cat, Angelic King Louis (Kinky), was white with black. Black beauty-spot on his little face, black cap and cape, a white band around his black tail. But he was mainly white. Such a pure, pure white equalled only by the white of the azalea bush in my cousin's garden.

Yesterday, 26 November, dawned. I awoke automatically at half past five, waiting for the fur bundle snuggled somewhere in my bed to come to life ... stretching and yawning sleepily, walking over my face, miaowing piteously, demanding his breakfast; pulling my hair with all his strength if I dozed off again. I waited in vain. Neither did he amble in about eleven o'clock for our usual cuddles and whisker-kisses over milk and coffee together.

I searched for him endlessly, calling and calling his name. A next door neighbour told me he'd seen "a

mainly white cat" in the gutter. It had been run over. He took me to the place and it was my little Kinky.

Come late November and the white azaleas, in all their wondrous beauty, have gone. They will bloom again next Spring. But nothing can bring back to our earthsight, those particular blossoms I last saw with their unique and powerful loveliness.

A Plea for the Elderly

(And Other Unit Dwellers)

*I am growing old so must move to a place
Where life is lived at a slower pace;
A Retirement Village or unit for one,
After I've moved, though, what have I done!*

*Where are my pets I loved so dearly,
Their welcoming faces I see so clearly,
I live here, lonely, every day,
For my pets have now gone far away.*

*"No pets allowed." said the man in charge,
"No cats or dogs, small or large;"
I think of the day we had to part,
The ache still lingers in my heart.*

*I come home after being out for the day,
No more do I see my cats at play,
No little dog to jump with glee
When he hears, in the door, the sound of my key.*

*In the maddening rush of the world today,
Will you pause a moment and think, I pray,
Surely the old need the company
Of the pets they have cherished and
loved so dearly.*

Hilda York

Cats in Music



By Claire Necker

Mankind has always delighted in imitating animal sounds, and composers have been giving us the equivalent of cat miaows, spits and caterwauls since the 17th century. In some cases, the music is so realistic that cats themselves are fooled by the sounds and respond to them!

Instrumental cat pieces include polkas, fox trots, marches, scherzos and schottisches. Many are simple but effective compositions aimed at younger piano players, and include words.

A few ballets combine cat music with cat dancing. Tschiaikovsky's "Sleeping Beauty" is the most famous example, with two dancers portraying Puss in Boots and The White Cat. They imitate sinuous feline movements while the orchestra miaows and spits. Ballet itself honours the litheness and grace of cats by naming one of its most difficult steps after them: the pas de chat, which emulates a cat's movement, simply means "cat's step" in French.

Instrumental music with a cat theme is plentiful. Probably the best known pieces are Zee Confrey's jazz classic, "Kitten On the Keys," written in 1921, and Scarlatti's "The Cat's Fugue," written in the early part of the 18th century. Both include a rendition of a cat running over the keys of a piano.

On the darker side, cats themselves were cruelly treated to create "music" from the 16th to 18th centuries, when Cat Organs were a popular form of entertainment in Europe. These consisted of narrow boxes, with a hole at the end. Cats were squeezed into the boxes, their tails pulled through the holes, and attached by cords to the keys of the organ.

Whenever an "appropriate" key was pressed a cat's tail was cruelly pulled, causing it to scream. These screams were the music which so amused the audience.

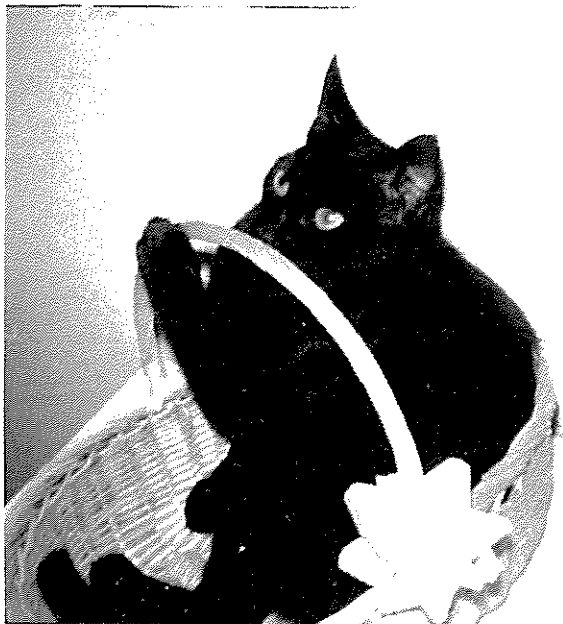
Not quite so barbaric were showmen in the 17th and 18th centuries who trained their cats to perform. At a given signal (in some cases given by a monkey conductor) the cats miaowed in unison. It makes you wonder how long it took the trainer to produce such a phenomenon.

The jazz world chose to incorporate the cat figuratively into music. Early jazz enthusiasts began to call themselves "cats," and adjectives were added to define their special interests ... "cool cats," "hip cats" and "sext cats."

What then, do cats think of human music?

Many of them seem to enjoy it, but tend to be quite selective. They may prefer certain types, certain voices, certain instruments. Some musicians seem to have been lucky in having cats who enjoyed their music, or perhaps it became an acquired taste.

For instance Jenny Lind (so the story goes) used to sit at her window and sing to her pet cat, seated beside her. An impresario passing the window one day heard her divine voice ... and so she was discovered, and her voice given to the whole world to enjoy.



A message from Tammy to The CPS

"My mum used to live in Sydney and help out in the Op Shop. Then she and I moved to Canberra last January. As you can see, I still pose for the camera - I'm always happy to oblige.

Anyway, from my mum Norma Gray and myself, a big cheerio to all my friends.

Sincerely, Tammy.



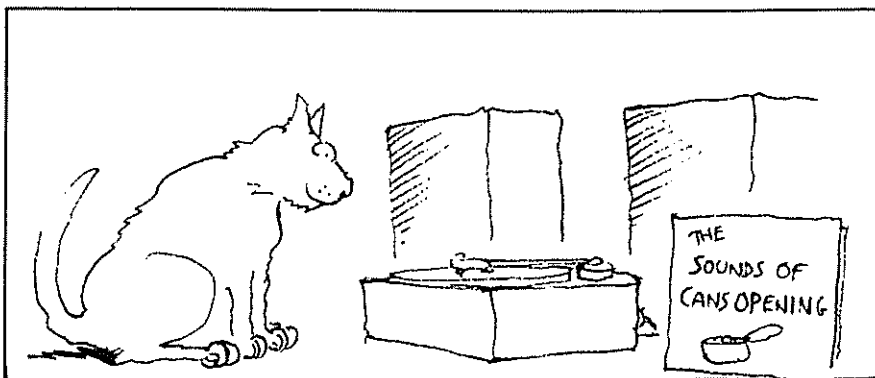
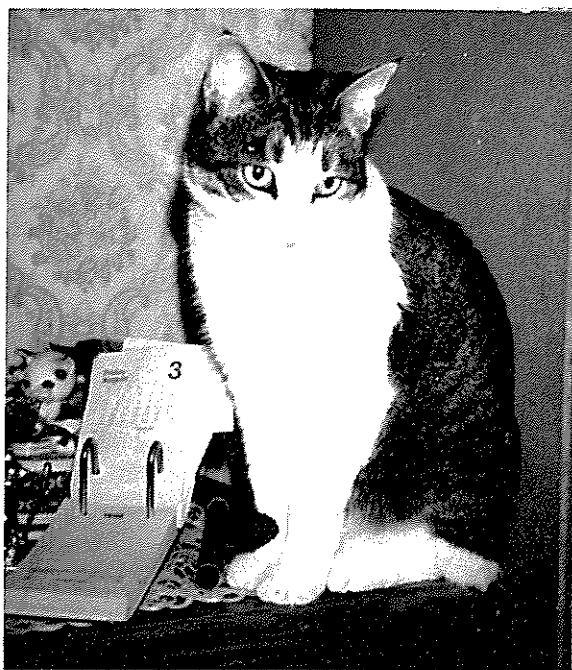
My Name is Natasha

I'm three years old. My owners were working in the Society's Opportunity Shop one day, when I was brought in as a tiny kitten.

Doug and Trish couldn't resist my tawny eyes and black velvet coat, so home I went to Cremorne.

This added mayhem to the Smith household, which already had four cats, but I was quickly allotted a place on the pecking order - yes, you guessed it, number five!

Being half Burmese (so they tell me) I'm quite adventurous, climbing tall trees, roof tops and people with ease. In fact, I broke my leg at five months and have had to have other minor surgery. I think I'm quite well known at the vet's! But my owners give me tender loving care, and I think the other four quite like me now. All in all, I've done quite well for a CPS cat, haven't I?





From Bill and Nona Wilkinson of Lavington:

We are writing to tell you how disgusted we feel that the Animal Welfare Branch of The Department of Local Government (NSW) has seen fit to abolish the licensing of catteries and breeding establishments.

This move will now encourage backyard breeders to flourish, not that there has been any shortage of these "breeders!!"

Only reputable breeders will abide by the proposed guidelines. At least, when licensing was in force, animals had some protection. Now they have little, if any.

Editor's comment: I have been in touch with the Acting Manager of the Animal Welfare Division, Ms Renata Brooks. Ms Brooks says it is hoped that breeders and boarding establishments will regulate themselves, now that their premises will no longer be inspected.

At the same time, she said that the Department will review the situation twelve months after delicensing, and she welcomes comments from anybody with personal knowledge of a cattery or breeding establishment that they think is not being run in the best interests of animals.

You can write to Miss Brooks direct at the Department of Local Government, Civic Tower, Rickard Road, Bankstown, 2200.

Overall, whether you are going to a breeder to buy a cat, or looking for a place to board your cat, it is clear that you have to use caution and commonsense. If the establishment is crowded, dirty, smelly, if any of the cats look in poor condition, if the proprietor isn't happy to spend time with you and show you around, you should go somewhere else.

As a starting point in finding a reputable breeder, you could ring the RAS Cat Breeders Association at Sydney Showground, Tel: 331 9135. The Association has a list of secretaries of the various breed clubs, and members of the clubs can be expected to take pride in their premises and the condition of their animals.

Regarding catteries, as you will see elsewhere in the magazine, I have asked readers to let me know of places they can wholeheartedly endorse so we can pass on the recommendations.



The beginning of a Siamese Love Story

One Spring morning in the year 1907 - or it might have been 1908 - a small boy was standing at the French windows which gave upon the square backing his parents' house in South Kensington, London.

About this small boy there was nothing remarkable except for his spectacles, which were steel rimmed and unusually large and round, and the spottiness of his complexion.

I was that small and insignificant boy. I was looking at the patch which led from the bottom of three iron steps beyond the French windows across the square, and to the back of the houses on that square's opposite side.

What I saw, coming along the path, was something which was to have an influence on the rest of my life.

I saw for the first time a Siamese cat. Cats of course I had seen before. But never before had I seen a cat with a body coloured palest cafe-au-lait, blue eyes in a mask of deepest chocolate, with matching tail and paws.

He - or more probably she - I never knew - was on a lead, tail and head proudly in the air, and followed at the heels of a girl who must have been about fourteen.

She was exceptionally attractive, so much I realised. But at that period in my existence, girls held no interest for me. I was only interested in the cat - and I believe it was at that moment I made up my mind that if I ever (as I fully intended I should) had a cat of my own, it would be a Siamese.

- Val Gielgud

Ed's Note: Mr Gielgud, brother of Sir John and himself a successful author and playwright, was to have several Siamese cats over the years. Their story is told in his book, "My Cats and Myself," published by Michael Joseph. The charming illustration here is from my book.

AUXILIARY JOTTINGS

Another year is galloping away, and I hope 1991 will see contentment in your own life and peace, please, in the Middle East.

Thank you for your donations, which have been coming in at a splendid rate. We couldn't do without you - we have to keep the shop stocked, and they need our money at Welfare.

DOG TRAMPOLINE: Mrs Nelson of South Strathfield (tel: 6425961) has a Doberman-size trampoline to give away. As it's too big for the Op Shop to handle, please give her a direct call if you're interested.

COAT HANGER COVERS: Regular readers will know that for many years our ladies in Eastlakes and Bondi have turned out thousands of covers with their nimble fingers, needles and crochet hooks. I want to thank them again for their great contributions, and now this brings me to another matter: The covers have to be sewn on to wooden hangers, and thereby hangs another tale. Our "sewing lady" met with a very serious accident some time ago, and is finding it difficult to manage the hangers these days.

Is there a volunteer who would take over from her? Everything will be supplied - the hangers, covers, and plastic tubing for the handles - and of course, you do the work in your own home. Please ring me on 4273828 and we'll work out a way to get the materials to you and the hangers collected.

SOUTHERN SUBURBS PICK-UPS: My plea for someone to pick up in this area has been answered, and a very dedicated lady has taken on the job. She is doing wonderfully, and says she is enjoying it too. Thanks a million, Margaret. While on the subject, I wish to repeat my thanks to our other helpers, too. They travel hundreds of kilometres a year collecting for the Op Shop, and without them the shop would be very much poorer.

ELECTRICAL GOODS: The committee of the Auxiliary has decided not to accept electrical appliances any more, unless they are in working order. We haven't been able to find anyone to take over the job of repairing them, and there's a limit to Gordon's time! So please, we'd love your small appliances ... but only if they work.

BOUQUETS TO: Our Springwood worker, for all the lovely handcrafts she sends us. Her talents are unlimited, it seems. And many thanks for the beautiful curtain remnants, they were snapped up in the shop.

Another huge bouquet to our Ryde lady, who over the years has made countless items for the shop, as well as toiling three times each month in the "back room." She has made hundreds of sewing repairs, and looked after our children's clothing ever since the inception of the Op Shop. Her work has been invaluable, and it is only because her hands have "given up" that she can no longer continue. Zena, it is with deep regret that we say farewell. Good luck, and a million thanks. - Sybil Cozens

WANTED:

Volunteers to form a Social Committee

At our Christmas party, several members said they would like us to organise more functions through the year.

We'd love to do it, too, but the fact is, we simply haven't the time to spare at the moment.

How about you? Would you like to be on a Social Committee that could plan and run a social activity, say once a month?

Our upstairs room, where the Christmas party was held, would be available at any time for committee meetings and functions themselves.

The kind of activities suggested so far include Bingo, a recipe swap, a fashion parade of Opportunity Shop garments, a talk about cats by a veterinarian, a Melbourne Cup lunch, a talk by a nutritionist on food facts and fallacies, an exhibition of flower arranging, and a Tarot card reading (just for fun).

All these things could be held on our premises.

Going further afield, you could think about garden visits, picnics, dinner parties, theatre parties and so on.

If you're very active and very keen, you might even like to consider running street stalls!

However, the main purpose is not really to raise money for the Society, but to give members and their friends (and families) the opportunity to get together on pleasurable occasions.

Of course, only people who have had some experience in organizing events like these know the work involved.

So think hard before you volunteer...but if you do decide you can help, it would be wonderful!

Just write to me in the first instance, and if I get enough names to form a committee, I'll put you all in touch with each other. - Editor.

P.S. If we do succeed in getting a committee together, coming events would be advertised in each journal in plenty of time for members to attend.

15 Golden Rules for Cat Owners

1. Feed your cat at regular times from his own bowl. Have fresh water available at all times.
2. Get it used to wearing a collar from an early age. The collar should have an elastic insert and identity disk.
3. Change the litter tray daily, more often if necessary.
4. Make sure your cat's "booster" vaccinations are kept up to date.
5. Worm your cat regularly (see article on worming in December 1990 journal)
6. Groom your cat often - every day for longhairs. Use a flea comb as well as a brush to check for presence of fleas.
7. Establish behaviour rules early on. It is no use trying to stop a cat from scratching furniture after several years.
8. Have your cat desexed at the appropriate age - five months for females, 6 months for males.
9. Know where your cat is at all times - don't let it roam unsupervised.
10. If you are going on holidays, make proper arrangements for your cat's care well in advance.
11. Take your cat to the vet at the first sign of a problem. Don't put it off.
12. If moving to a new home, keep your cat indoors for at least 2 weeks before allowing him outside. Then make sure he is supervised when he goes outdoors.
13. Be patient when introducing a new cat to the household. A few snarls and hisses are to be expected. Give lots of attention to the "other" cats so they won't feel rejected.
14. Teach children to be gentle, for their sake as well as the cat's. A tormented cat can't be blamed for scratching when it's struggling to escape.
15. Don't be self conscious about kisses and cuddles. Your cat enjoys them as much as you do!

She's a Sweetheart



A year ago, beautiful ginger Kiri posed with her owner Robin Tyler to win "Most Charming Cat With Owner" category in our photo contest. Kiri is now two, and Robin says her sweet nature and loving ways make her a companion in every sense of the word.

Is Grumblebum the Cat for You?

For months now, Grumblebum has been waiting for someone to fall in love with her at our Parkland cattery.

If you would like a contented, placid cat to share your life, she may be the one for you.

Grumblebum is a very dark tortoiseshell, amber and brown with a lot of ginger on her face. She is desexed, and about 18 months old.

When we first took her in she was spitty and cross, lean and mean - hence the name. Now she has turned into a plump young matron - a true fireplace cat, who likes to sit around quietly, contemplating her surroundings.

Grumblebum would be perfect for a one-to-one relationship with an older person, and would fit happily into a unit. She enjoys the quiet life, and doesn't need distractions.

If you are interested in seeing Grumblebum, Parkland's address is 505 Sunnyholt Road, Blacktown. It is open 9 to 5, seven days a week, and the phone number is 626 9333.



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- We really care for cats



Shirley and Ron Butler offer a happy, caring environment for your animals, long or short term. You can leave them at Parkland with confidence

- * Separate runs
- * Veterinary attention on hand
- * Special diets catered for
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- * Cuddles guaranteed

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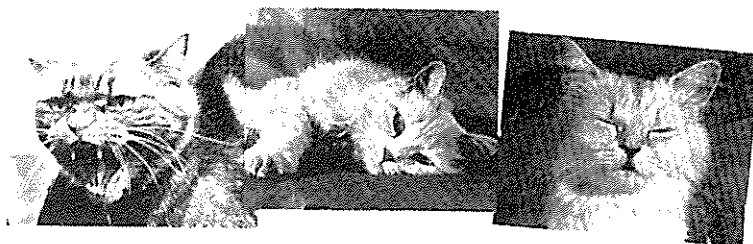
505 Sunny Holt Road,
Parklea.
Tel: 626 9333

THE GINGER CAT

By Mina Gray

*Is it cold in the vast brightness
With your flit whiff of a tail
Clasped tight over small ginger feet?
Have you found a corner to crouch while
you wait
For me to come
Being sure I will come without fail?
It is cold in the sunlight over the earth
And even with the blinds pulled down
in the house
Pretending you are around each corner
and have just left each room.
Cold on the step were you sat
With your flit whiff of a tail
Clasped tight over small ginger feet...
And the milk is still in the saucer.
And neither Aeschylus, Sophocles nor
Euripides can fill
The small warm place were you sat
Purring upon the mat.*

Ed's Note: Mina and her husband are recent members of CPS. Ginger lived to be 16, before she became very ill and was put to sleep by a vet in Mina's arms.



How to recognise your cat's emotions

EMOTION	CAT'S RESPONSE	WHAT CAUSES IT
Happiness	Face and body relax. Cat may purr, stretch, knead, lick.	Stoking, cuddling, eating, feeding, feeding kittens, snoozing.
Controlled Happiness	All of above. But if he flicks his tail or ripples his body. it's a signal he wants the stroking to stop!	Qualified contact. Cat may purr as he sits on your lap, but object to stroking.
Sadness	Lethargy. Dull coat, loss of appetite. Change in toilet habits, scratching or pawing at various parts of the body or skin.	Sickness, loss of animal or human companion. Feeling of neglect, seperation, anxiety.
Rage	Body contracts, ears flatten. Tail flicks and becomes puffy. Breathing is rapid, there may be a loud yowl. Cat may attack person or animals he considers a threat, or displace his aggression on an innocent victim. Rage erupts quickly!	Presence of a new or alarming animal or human. An accident. Threats.
Fleeting or Expectant Anxiety	Flexes her body muscles, makes "chutier chutter" sounds.	A short-term stimulus - for example, seeing a fly or bird she wants to catch.
Prolonged Anxiety	Ears flatten, tail flicks, body ripples. May bite or scratch if action continues.	Becoming too aroused from being petted or held. Can't handle energy change.
Eager Anticipation	She may stare at you, miaow, jump up beside you, rub her head against your hand. If litter needs changing, often runs back and forth to litter box, or circles it.	Something a cat wants from you - eg, to sit on your lap, have head scratched, have litter changed.
Dread Anticipation	Body ripples, tail flicks. May pretend to be taking a nap, or take off altogether.	Your cat knows what's going to happen next, and doesn't like it! For example, ear cleaning, grooming, being put in carrying basket.
Ambivalent Anticipation	Encourages petting in the beginning, then runs away quickly. Can't accept high energy and has to discharge it.	Your cat wants something and yet doesn't want it - eg, wants to join the party but is too shy.

Caring for an elderly friend...

Introduction:

The level of care given to ageing felines by their owners can actually increase their healthy, active lifespan. So even if your cat is young, be sure to keep this helpful article ... you'll certainly need it one day!

It had been said that one of the few things only patience can acquire is an old friend.

Time alone develops understanding of the idiosyncracies (endearing and irritating alike) of friends. So an observant owner will have a long and subtle history to relate when she brings along an ageing feline patient to the surgery.

The signs of change described by an observant human provide an immense resource for the veterinarian, who can then recognise various patterns of change as being characteristic of different disease processes.

COMMUNICATION IS VITAL

Elderly patients require a considerable depth of communication between their owner and the vet, in order to distinguish disease from the general ageing processes to be expected.

For example, there are lots of thin old cats, and most of them will have identifiable problems which can be treated, or at least modified. But the vet would have a clearer path to diagnosis if the owner can describe any changes in the cat's eating habits, exercise pattern and so on.

MORE CATS ARE LIVING LONGER

As the level of care given by humans to their feline friends has improved, so too has the lifespan of cats increased - and a healthy, active lifespan at that.

The best guarantee of longevity is still genetic - you have to select grandparents who lived to a good old age - and this is not a choice over which cats or humans have much control! However, with better nutrition, vaccination, and less access to the dangers of roaming - including car accidents,

Cat Affairs 26

cat fight abscesses, poisonings, dog attacks - more cats are achieving a respectable old age.

For some time, folk lore has listed the average age of cats around 13 years. Today, most vets are seeing many more 15 to 20 year olds than they did 20 years ago. Many of these old cats are in good health, too. There are changes in the metabolic rate, body fat: muscle ratios, organ reserve and immune system efficiency, but these changes are not yet affecting the quality of life the cat enjoys.

What this means is that the routine you have established for your cat - in consultation with your cat, of course! - is pretty effective. However, as the changes I have mentioned are still going on, albeit invisibly, there are still a few things you can take note of with a view to helping your cat even more.

As animals age - and this includes humans - one of the main problems to arise is a decline in the efficiency of the immune system.

This system is based on blood, bone marrow and other cells which "seek and destroy" all the invaders which attack the body throughout every minute of the day. It is the decline in this system which is thought to lead to the increase in cancer seen in the elderly, for instance. Cancer cells are not recognised as offensive and destructive cells by the less vigilant immune system, and so can gain a foothold in the animal.

The decline in the immune system is also known to contribute to the increased severity of common problems when seen in the aged. Flu and other infections cause more severe symptoms, and the elderly cat takes more time to recover.

Vaccination therefore becomes MORE important as natural defences weaken, as a means to keep the immune system stimulated, and competent at least against flu and enteritis.

THE ORGANS

Alongside the decline of the immune system, other organs are becoming less efficient as they

By Dr Kim Kendall

"wear out." This is referred to as loss of organ reserve - the liver, kidneys, lung, heart etc. have no difficulty with day to day existence, but when there is a problem they can no longer increase their capacity to deal with the crisis. "Failure" ensues.

It is not really failure of the organ at this stage, because if the stress - infection, toxin overload, dietary excess - is removed, the organ can once again function happily on a day to day basis

In fact, removing or reducing the stress is the main aim of treatment of elderly patients. No-one can make them young again, but working together, you, your cat and the vet can aim to return the cat to the state of health that existed prior to a crisis.

GENERAL CARE

Therefore, general care for a healthy geriatric cat is aimed at prevention - even more so than for young cats - because the elderly cannot afford to lose any organ capacity. They have less reserves.

Many organs can continue to do their job until 50% of their capacity is lost - hence, kidney transplants require only one, etc. - but once down to that 50% there is nothing to spare.

With this geriatric group has come recognition of malfunctions of more organs than just the kidneys. For example, a thin old cat that drinks a lot of water is a challenge - it may not be an irreversible kidney decline causing the problem.

CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

The challenge is to identify your cat's own problem/s and try to change the course of the disease process.

Starting at one end and working through to the other, here is a much abbreviated list of problems that vets encounter regularly in elderly felines:

Dental Disease. Many older animals - an estimated 80% - have some degree of dental disease. Depending on the involvement of gum and root, dental extraction or sealing may be required.

THE GERIATRIC CAT

Ongoing infections of the gum, and in the back of the throat, can become very difficult to cure, so early attention is vital.

Asthma. Cats who have suffered repeated episodes of bronchial asthma will end up with damaged lungs. The asthma is usually related to allergies, and may be identified as seasonal.

The bouts of breathing difficulty may not be very noticeable initially, which makes the disease difficult to treat. There is usually a significant amount of permanent damage done before the cat itself shows any indication of a problem to its owner.

A cat sitting around a bit more often is not a truly remarkable event, after all, especially as the cat leaves adolescence and is expected to behave more sedately (!) in middle age.

However, this lack of lung capacity does mean that any stimulation requiring increased respiratory effort - being chased, hot days, another asthma attack etc. - will make the cat quite desperate for breath. Treatment is not curative, but the worst effects of the problem can usually be reduced to a manageable level.

Anaemia. A lack of red blood cells, and hence lessened oxygen-carrying capacity for use by cells elsewhere in the body, is not a disease in itself. There are numerous causes, some treatable, some not, so a more in-depth study is indicated if anaemia is apparent.

It shows as paleness of the gums (from a normal pink like your own through to white in severe anaemia) and by a lack of breath, so that any physical effort induces a pounding heart and panting.

Cancer. Cancer is, of course, one of the major health problems of an elderly population. It can occur in any organ or area, as in people, but the most commonly presented tumours are in the skin (including sun cancer of white ears and noses, which starts as a crusting and proceeds to tissue destruction) and in the lymphatic system. (The lymphatic system is part of the blood defence or

immune system, and the main target for the Feline Leukaemia Virus, FLV, and the Feline Immune Deficiency Virus, FIU. Lymph nodes of the intestines and bone marrow can also occur.)

Tumours of the brain, lungs, liver, kidneys, bladder and bones are rare, but can crop up. Unfortunately, some 80% of tumours in cats are malignant, so early detection and treatment has the greatest chance of cure, or at least the chance of an extended enjoyable life.

A mention should be made of mammary (breast) cancer in cats. It is rarely seen in cats spayed before their first season, but it becomes increasingly likely with each successive litter, or extended hormone treatment.

95% of these cancers are malignant, and lifespan after removal is directly related to the size of the tumour when it was removed. If small, the lifespan may be unaffected. If greater than 3cm square - it is not very big, really - only a survival time of 3 to 6 months can be expected.

So, if your cat had a litter before being desexed, a regular rub of the tummy and a "breast check" would not go astray.

THE THIN CAT

The Thin Cat. Traditionally, thin old cats drinking vast amounts of water were all lumped together as "kidney cats." So, because loss of kidney function is irreversible, and can only be modified up to a point, they were often left to go their own way.

Now, two interesting things have happened. First, at Davis Vet School in California, they are successfully doing kidney transplants on cats - the only place doing them at the moment, but no doubt more will follow. So terminal kidney disease may eventually prove to be less of a problem than traditionally believed.

Second, we know that an array of disorders may cause the same symptoms, and some are very treatable.

Among other diseases that thin

old cats may be suffering from are the following:

Diabetes Mellitus (sugar diabetes), treatable with daily insulin injections.

Liver destruction or cancer, which can be helped by medication and a modified diet

Cancers elsewhere in the body, which have variable responses to surgery, chemotherapy, etc.

Heart problems which are now treated more effectively with new drug regimes.

Thyroid hormone overproduction caused by a benign tumour in the thyroid gland, and with assorted types of very successful treatment available.

At the same time, it is true that a significant number of cats do have kidneys in decline. Once the kidneys are damaged they tend to get into a vicious cycle of self destruction, and this continues at a constant rate of decline for the remaining life of the cat.

However, the effects of loss of kidney function CAN be modified by a change of diet. So if your cat is suffering from symptoms such as mouth and intestinal ulcers, depression, vomiting, and sometimes anaemia caused by damaged kidneys, there may be hope. He will have to cooperate and eat a low-protein and low salt diet, and he may also need treatment with various drugs and vitamin supplements. But some cats have led satisfactory lives for three years after prominent signs of kidney disease have become evident, and that's encouraging. If owner, vet and cat cooperate, it means even the course of this incurable problem can at least be modified.

Incidentally, the oldest cat currently living in Australia has just retired to Queensland with his retired owner at the grand age of 36! He has been living much the same life for the last 20 years.

While this cat is obviously a Methuselah, many other well cared for felines are approaching their biological centenaries - about 18 years for a cat equates with a human age of 100.

The Martyrdom of Street Cats

The following extract is from the book, "Just Cats" by Fernand Mery. More than 30 years has passed since M. Mery described the plight of homeless cats in France ... but the situation remains the same today, here in Sydney and our other Australian cities and towns.

The real martyrdom of cats is that of strays in towns, who live a hole in corner existence around fences and gardens.

To what extent are these the victims of human selfishness?

There are the cats put out on the streets because their owners are going on holiday; there are those who, kept with their mother - just for her milk - are abandoned when they grow up; all those cats who, weary of hiding all day, of avoiding cars, dogs and brutal people, come together instinctively to find refuge in the meagre thickets of public parks, behind fences in empty lots or houses in construction. Then, with the coming of winter, however do they bear the cold, rain and hunger?

Then people condemn them for their passionate natures, for multiplying, for complicating the problem by being prolific.

What do they eat, these city cats belonging to no one? On good days, perhaps some greasy paper, a few insects, and here and there, a bird or a rat stupid enough to cross their miserable path.

In Paris, of course, as in all French cities, there are decent people, often badly off themselves, who have to hide as though doing something shameful, when they come to murmur some words of affection to these anonymous cats, to offer them a caress, to bring them the necessary minimum - as if trying to excuse, in the eyes of these intelligent creatures, humanity's ugliness.

Impossible to recount the daily, obscure little drama of these starved wretches. The bloody battles, the entire weeks spent in waiting, the victories that have to be won for the right to be among the five or six privileged to fall on any edible rubbish and carry it off jealously as if it the most wonderful prize.

How many innocent kittens and delicate cats choked with pleurisy, or exhausted by constant diarrhoea, surrender their little lives without understanding what curse pursues their breed... which wants only gentleness and peace?

It is a question of a creature, condemned by our blind selfishness, in the heart of a civilized city, to a lot which no other animal species in the world has ever known: to die of cold, hunger or fear, without other respite than that of an ephemeral embrace, itself wrung from his fellow sufferers, and at what a price!

Ed's note: Part of the work of the Cat Protection Society is to catch stray and sick cats. Before we catch them we do all we can to establish that they are not owned. In some cases, we try to find homes for healthy strays, but most are too wild to become domestic pets. These little street animals are taken to veterinarians to be euthanased by painless injection. It is a far kinder solution than leaving them to the pitiful existence described so movingly by Fernand Mery.



A look at life through the eyes of a cat.

Her name is Ann and she has lost her spouse,
So it is just her and us now in the big house,
She takes care of us and we are all well fed
And on the verandah each of us has a nice bed,
We have all been dumped, that's a fact for a start -
By people with no conscience and certainly no heart,
Some people wouldn't spend money on a sick cat,
But Ann cares for us and takes us to the vet,
She won't get us put down if we can be cured,
Of love and kindness we are always assured,

Every morning Ann comes outside and sits on the step
While we line up and take turns to sit on her lap,
She cuddles and pats us and strokes our fur,
We really wouldn't know what to do without her,
Every year Ann takes a holiday and has to leave us behind -
A lady comes to feed us and she is very kind,
But it is still not the same life without our Ann,
So we look forward to the day when she arrives home again,
Ann thinks she owns us but it is the other way around.
Because we adopted her the day we were found !

By Spike (who owns CPS member Ann Walsh)



CAT BURIALS IN ANCIENT EGYPT

After Bastet, the Cat Goddess, emerged as a primary object of worship around 950 BC, cats assumed an even greater importance in Egyptian society.

Indeed, the penalty for taking a cat's life was death. (This meant it was very unlucky to come across a dead cat in the street, because you ran the risk of being held responsible for its demise!)

The inevitable eventual death of the family cat was an occasion for deepest mourning. The bereaved displayed their grief to all and sundry by shaving off their eyebrows as a token of affliction, and the cat was buried with great ceremony.

The actual funeral varied with the degree of importance achieved by the cat, and the size of the owner's purse.

Temple cats were given the most elaborate service, and were ultimately laid to rest in a true sarcophagus or tomb. While the ceremony was less elaborate for house cats, every effort was made by the owner to provide a coffin for the cat and wine for the mourners. Even the very poor interred their cats in cemeteries, with neighbours often taking up a collection to help. It has been estimated that the modern equivalent of a first-class cat funeral was around \$1,200, with a cheap funeral costing \$200.00.

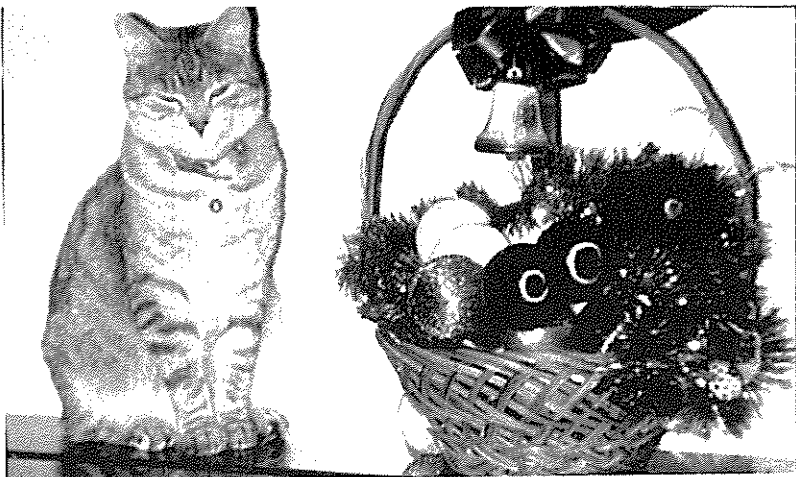
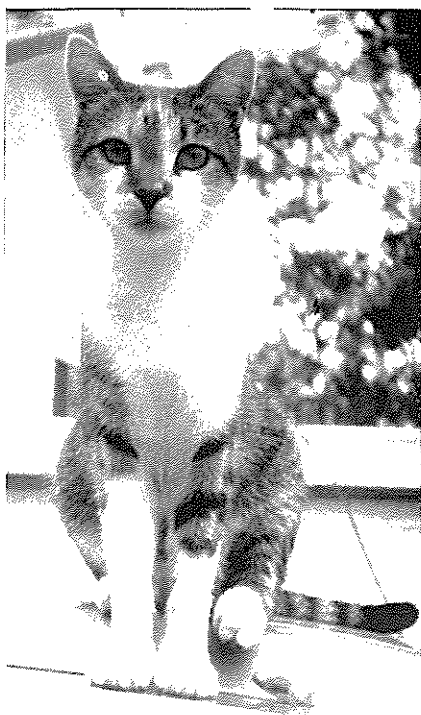
Aristocrats who could afford the most elaborate funeral followed precise rules governing the arrangements.

First, the cat's owner wrapped the animal in clean linen, and carried it through the streets lamenting bitterly.

When he reached the undertaker's rooms, the cat was carefully embalmed and treated with drugs and spices before being wrapped in colourful strips of cloth for mummification. (The cats were embalmed because of the Egyptian belief in immortality, a doctrine that originated in their country.)

When the wrapping process was complete, cloth was laid over the eyes and carefully painted to match the original eyes in shape, size and colour. Artificial ears were then attached, and a turquoise collar was wrapped around the cat's neck before it was deposited in a specially prepared case. The case, which sometimes measured up to three feet high, was hollowed out in the shape of a seated or standing cat.

Sometimes mouse mummies were buried with the cat, so it would have food during its afterlife.



Emma at Christmas

This sweet silver tabby is Emma, apple of Jo Tomkin's eye (Jo is our Membership Secretary.) Emma found Jo in Christmas, 1989, so Christmas 1990 was a special occasion for her. She celebrates her second birthday this month.



Hi, I'm Andrew!

I belong to member Diana Sewell of Nowra, and was her Christmas present from the Society the Christmas before last. I'm one year old and a bit now, and Diana says I'm a continual delight ... despite my interference in everything going on and my non-stop "chat."



Nancy's Lovely Cats

Playing their favourite game of "Hide-In-The-Box" are Harry and Willa, who share their lives with long-term CPS member Nancy Lovely.

ST JEROME AND HIS LION

*St Jerome in his study kept a great big cat,
It's always in his pictures, with its feet upon the mat.
Did he give it milk to drink, in a little dish?
When it came to Fridays, did he give it fish?
If I lost my little cat, I'd be sad without it -
I should ask St. Jerome what to do about it!
I should ask St. Jeremy, just because of that...
For he's the only saint I know who kept a pussy cat.*

- Anon

N.W. Where are you?

One of the best entries in our "How Many Words Can you Find In Caterwauling" contest didn't have a name or address on it - just the initials N.W. We have contacted members with those initials, but they weren't the word-making N.W. Will you please get in touch with us so we can send you a prize?

Thank you and congratulations.

from Page 27

Caring for an elderly friend...

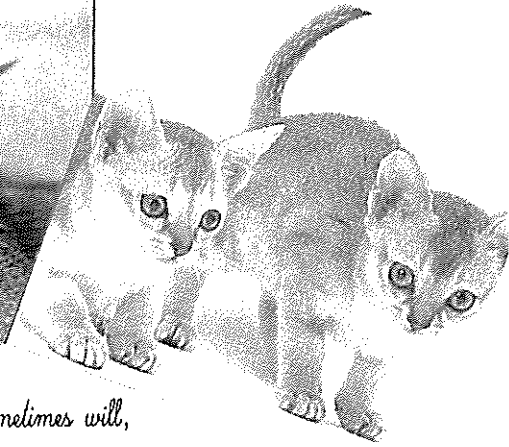
THE GERIATRIC CAT

The friendships formed with these cats, and the deep understanding between "owner" and "ownee" (who owns whom?) is of great value. Much can be done to keep the later years healthy and satisfying, the main ingredients being observation of change by the owner, regular vaccination and veterinary checks, and continued enjoyment of proffered creature comforts by your feline companion.

As a final thought - pets help people live longer too, just by being there. As always, we need each other.

- Ed.

Don't Quit!



*When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you're treading seems all uphill,
When the funds are low and the debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest, if you must, but don't quit.*

*Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As everyone of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about,
When he might of won had he stuck it out;
Don't give up though the pace seems slow—
You may succeed with another blow.*

*Success is failure turned inside out—
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems so far;
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit—
It's when things seem worst that you must not quit.*

- Anonymous

This poem was sent to us by Madame Kuvani, life member of CPS. Madame says it has helped her through many a tough spot, and she hopes it may also help others.

MEMBERSHIP/DONATION FORM

To The Secretary, Cat Protection Society of NSW,
103 Enmore Road, ENMORE, 2042.

Membership

I/We apply for membership or renewal of membership for the year commencing June, 1990. (Note: Those joining between January and June remain financial until June, 1991.)

Subscription:

Life membership - \$250.00 Annual membership - \$10.00

Pensioner Membership - \$5.00 Pension Number

Junior membership (16 and under) - \$5.00

Enclosed is cheque/money order for \$.....

My name and address are given below.

Donation

I/We would like to make a donation towards the humane work of the Society.

Enclosed is cheque/money order for \$.....

Please cross all cheques and make payable to
THE CAT PROTECTION SOCIETY OF NSW

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss Initials

SURNAME, Block letters please.

Address:

Postcode: Telephone:



Change of Address Form

The Membership Secretary,
The Cat Protection Society of N.S.W.
103 Enmore Road, ENMORE, 2042.

(Please cut out and return
to address shown)

If you have changed your address since applying for new membership or renewal, would you be kind enough to fill in this form

Surname Initials
(BLOCK LETTERS, PLEASE)

New Address

..... Postcode

Previous Address:

Thank you for your co-operation