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Feel free to send us an email at kristina@catprotection.org.au or post us a letter with your feedback.

We welcome contributions from readers, but we reserve the right to edit, abridge, alter or reject any material.

Cat Protection does not pay for contributions.

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Membership forms available from our website www.catprotection.org.au or by phoning our office on 02 9519 7201.

#### Care for cats!

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### **President's Report**

Thank you to those members who attended our Special General Meeting and our Annual General Meeting. At the SGM it was unanimously resolved to adopt our new Constitution and it was registered with effect from 30 September 2014 by NSW Fair Trading. This meant we then held our AGM under the auspices of our new Constitution.

As you may recall, a primary reason for the change was to allow us to introduce a new service: temporary care for cats whose owners are in crisis. At this stage, we haven't the resources to provide this service but what we have been doing is to prepare the necessary groundwork so when we do have the capacity we are ready to meet these additional demands. Our challenge now is to find the funds and a suitable nearby property.

At the AGM (and in our annual report) we discussed what it is that makes Cat Protection unique. As well as working to be a best-practice, feline-only, no-kill shelter, it is our philosophy that also sets us apart.

Our cats are not commodities. We are not a pet shop. We don't 'sell' cats and therefore we most certainly don't put a 'price' on cats. The very idea that a 12 year old cat has less value than a kitten – or that a pedigree is more valuable than a domestic cat – is repugnant to us.

The fact is, every cat is priceless, every cat is equally sentient and every cat deserves a loving and responsible home. We charge an adoption fee for our services in assisting clients with an adoption; we don't charge a fee for the cat.

We are privileged to be supported by members, volunteers and donors who share this deep respect for our feline friends.

Our foster carers make an incredible commitment to our work, raising little charges with love and care in order to make them 'forever home ready'. Each year some 400 kittens will have spent time with our wonderful foster care volunteers – right now we have more than 100 kittens and mums enjoying TLC in foster homes.

Some personal stories are included in our annual report to help members understand the depth of the foster care experience. Christine and Colin tell us that 'every cat or kitten we get attached to. We cry when we have to say goodbye to them and we pray that they will all have long and happy lives in their forever homes.'

Pharyn and Craig explain the satisfaction of 'getting to see the progress of the kittens who come to our home – sometimes they are very nervous and are terrified of humans – it's great to see them happy and confident by the time they leave.'

To all our foster carers, cattery and Op Shop volunteers, and to all our friends and members: thank you. On behalf of the Board and staff, I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy new year.

Rhonda House President



Cover photograph of Cat Protection kitten by Danielle Liu

## Thiamine deficiency in cats

By Anne Fawcett BA(Hons) BSc(Vet)(Hons) BVSc (Hons) MVetStud GradCertEducStud (HigherEd)

Anyone who lives with a cat knows that they are prone to developing a liking for a particular type of food, and will often turn their noses up at anything else. "Food addictions" can present a challenge in ensuring that your cat is eating properly. That's not to suggest that changing your cat's diet frequently is a good idea either – such changes can lead to gastrointestinal upsets. But being aware of what you are feeding your cat is key to providing the best diet to ensure his or her health and wellbeing.

One adverse effect we have seen associated with food is vitamin B1 deficiency in cats fed exclusively on a commercial pet meat diet. Vitamin B1, also known as thiamine, is essential for a lot of bodily functions, particularly functioning of the central nervous system.

Animals and humans get their vitamin B1 from their diet. But thiamine in food can be destroyed – by processing (for example, heating or irradiating food); by diets that contain chemicals that can break down thiamine (for example, raw fish contains enzymes called thiaminases because they can break down thiamine); by exposure to ultraviolet light; and by the addition of sulphur dioxide preservatives to the diet.

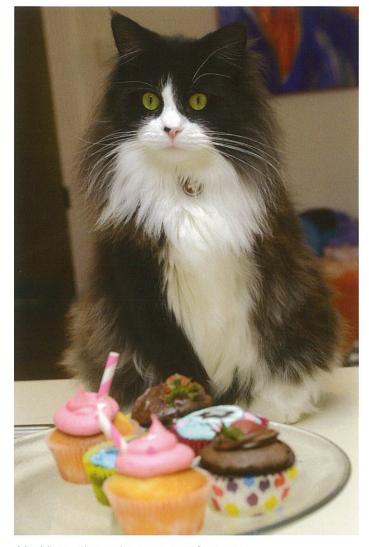
Even if the manufacturer adds thiamine to the food, sulphur dioxides can destroy this. This can cause thiamine deficiency in cats and other animals that eat this food.

Thiamine deficiency causes serious and potentially life-threatening disease. It leads to damage to the brain. In humans this can lead to a syndrome known as Wernicke's encephalopathy – often seen in people with severe alcoholism but also conditions associated with poor nutrition, such as anorexia nervosa and some forms of cancer. It's one reason why so many manufacturers of human foods stress the added B vitamins in their products.

The condition can be subtle and difficult to diagnose in humans, so it's even trickier in feline patients. In the early stages affected cats might go off their food now and then, experience vomiting or weight loss, or just seem not well (there can be many other reasons for these signs).

Later signs might include impaired vision, dilated pupils, difficulty walking or balancing, seizures, tremors, and in some cases being unable to lift their head due to abnormal positioning of the neck (similar signs can occur in dogs). In some cases it can be fatal. The diagnosis can be confirmed by excluding other potential causes and testing thiamine levels.

It may come as a surprise to learn that in Australia, there is a lack of regulation of fresh meat products



No Hero, the cakes are not for you ...

 as opposed to tinned and dry foods – sold for pet consumption.

While the pet food industry is regulated under the Pet Food Industry Association of Australia Code of Practice – which mandates requirements for minimum thiamine concentrations in pet food, pet meat producers do not operate under the same regulations. Despite the fact that this problem has been documented for over 20 years, commercial pet meat containing harmful concentrations of sulphur dioxides remains available.

So how do you avoid thiamine deficiency in companion animals? The simplest option, for the present time, is to avoid feeding meat high in sulphur dioxides. It can be hard to tell just looking at pet meat because the levels are not specified. It costs several hundred dollars to have food tested and there may be batch variation. Varying brands and types of pet food may reduce the overall dose of these preservatives but again, there is no easy way to tell.

If you do wish to feed your cat a meat diet, it is advisable to purchase meat sold for human consumption as the addition of sulphur dioxide preservatives is precluded by legislation.

If you aren't sure or have concerns about sulphur dioxide levels in the food you feed your pet, contact the manufacturer. It is also very important that you let your vet know what you are feeding your pet, including the brand name and where you purchase the food.

The Australian Veterinary Association and the Pet Food Industry Association of Australia have teamed up to develop a reporting system called PetFAST. This allows the veterinary profession to identify patterns in adverse events associated with pet foods. If your veterinarian suspects that your cat has a thiamine deficiency associated with your cat's diet, they can now report this to PetFAST.

If thiamine deficiency is detected early, many signs can be reversed through good supportive care, thiamine supplementation, and change of the diet.

We are really lucky in Australia to have generally excellent quality pet food. Most pet animals do not suffer from many nutritional diseases seen a decade or two ago. But it does pay to be aware of what you are feeding your pet. If in doubt, ask your vet.

#### References

Fawcett A., Yao Y. and Miller R (2014) Probable dietary-induced thiamine deficiency in a cat fed pet meat containing sulfur dioxide preservative. *Australian Veterinary Practitioner* 44(1):554-559. Malik R. and Sibraa D. (2005) Thiamine deficiency due to sulphur dioxide preservative in 'pet meat' – a case of déjà vu. *Australian Veterinary Journal* 83:408-411.

Steel RJS. (1997) Thiamine deficiency in a cat associated with the preservation of 'pet meat' with sulphur dioxide. *Australian Veterinary Journal* 75:719-721.



Dr Anne Fawcett practises at Sydney Animal Hospitals Inner West, and also lectures in veterinary science at the University of Sydney. Some members will recall she is the vet who did the life-saving surgery on Hero, fell in love and decided to adopt him. Pictured above is his big sister Mike being examined by Anne and vet nurse Jenna. For fascinating animal tales, check out Anne's blog www.smallanimaltalk.com

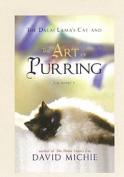
At Cat Protection, we feed and recommend Hill's Science Diet as it provides a complete and balanced diet for cats. As Dr Fawcett says, tinned and dry cat food is regulated in Australia – it is only the 'fresh' pet meat that is not subject to those regulations. Look for tinned or dry cat food that meets the AAFCO standards for complete and balanced nutrition. Cat food labelled 'complementary' should be fed only as an occasional treat as it will not provide your cat with a completed and balanced diet.

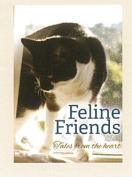
#### Suggested holiday reading

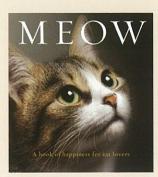
Feline Friends and Meow are available from Cat Protection or direct from Exisle Publishing www.exislepublishing.com.au

Check your local bookseller or favourite online store for *The Dalai Lama's Cat* series of books.









### CAT PROTECTION DIARY

#### **Tick warning**

The Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) has warned pet owners to be vigilant after an unprecedented number of paralysis tick cases.

While ticks are more common in the warmer months, this year there were already a high number of cases as early as August, and in more unexpected places such as the inner west of Sydney as well as more bushy areas such as Campbelltown, Wahroonga, Central Coast and Port Macquarie. Paralysis ticks are usually found in long grass and scrub, particularly in coastal areas. They tend to attach to the head and neck area of the pet and on the chest and the front of the leg, but can be found on any part of the body.

Dr Steve Ferguson of the AVA NSW said pet owners should not be complacent. "Owners should regularly check their pets for ticks by running their hands over the animal's coat to feel for anything unusual. Ticks will feel like small bumps on the skin," he said.

Common signs of tick paralysis

- include:Gurgling or choking
  - Being unable to meow (or bark) properly due to paralysis of the throat
  - Coughing or retching when eating or drinking
  - Breathing difficulties
  - Weakness in the legs progressing to inability to stand.

Checking your cat for ticks can be incorporated into your daily patting and grooming sessions, and be sure to take your cat (or dog) to the vet immediately if you suspect they have a tick. If you are in a tick-prone area, it is advisable to discuss risk minimisation with your vet – there are no guaranteed prevention products but your vet can advise on strategies to reduce your pet's risk of tick bite.

### Cat information in simplified Chinese now available

猫咪照顾知识现已有简体中文版

A detailed information sheet on cat welfare, including the benefits of desexing, is now available in simplified Chinese on the Cat Protection Society of NSW website.

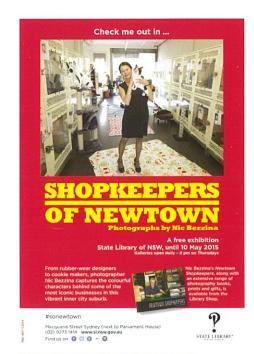
The project was made possible with the assistance of University of Sydney students from the Department of Media and Communications, Jiaying Zhou, Yunfei Qian and Xiaoqing Feng. Cat Protection wrote the factsheet in English, the students translated it, and then it was reviewed by vet Dr Eva Tang before being published on our website.

While we don't have Mandarin or Cantonese speakers on staff, we want to let local Chinese-speaking communities know that our services are available to them – we just need the client to get an English-speaking friend or relative to help. For example, we can assist with discount desexing if the English-speaking person phones our office; we don't need to speak directly with the client.

We're enormously grateful to the students and Dr Tang for their work on this important project.

Dr Tang works for the Nepean Animal Hospital group which has three clinics in Greater Western Sydney – Regentville, St Clair and Blaxland –www. nepeananimalhospital.com.au – and whose vets include a number who speak languages other than English. Please contact the clinics for more information as vets are rotated between the different clinics.

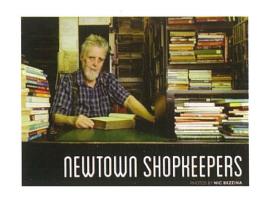
The bilingual factsheet is available from our website under 'cat care and health' 'factsheets'.



#### **Newtown Shopkeepers**

Well, we're not really a shop but then neither are the Enmore Theatre or the Vanguard, and these local venues, along with a number of Newtown businesses – and Cat Protection – feature in a series of photographs in an exhibition currently at the State Library. The State Library notes that photographer Nic Bezzina has "captured some of the most iconic characters of King Street and Enmore Road. These images record the suburb's unique character."

Complementing Nic's portraits are specially commissioned videos by the State Library, and also a beautiful coffee table book that includes the stories behind the pictures.



### **CAT PROTECTION DIARY**



#### **Open Day**

This year's Open Day theme was 'safety first' and guests were treated to talks by the entertaining and informative animal behaviourist Dr Jo Righetti of Pet Problems Solved. Dr Jo spoke of the dangers that threaten cats outside, how to keep your cat happy and safe, and how to train your cat to avoid risks. Dr Jo gave gave up her Saturday to be our guest speaker and we

#### Happy holidays

While most Australians will enjoy a long and lazy summer at the beach relaxing with friends and family, there is no rest for Cat Protection as this is the peak of kitten season. Our wonderful foster carers and all our volunteers and staff have their hands full with mums and bubs, and little orphans, making sure they grow strong and healthy and ready to find forever homes. It is also a very financially demanding time so we hope you can help us.

We have a Christmas wishing tree, where you can make donations for the things our cats and kittens need; we have our fantastic Christmas raffle; and our friends at Concord Veterinary Hospital are holding their annual Christmas sausage sizzle on Sunday 14 December from 1pm-4pm, with all proceeds to Cat Protection. There will be pet

thank her for her generosity and insights. To learn more about cat and dog behaviour, visit her website www.petproblemsolved. com.au

Thanks also to our volunteers and staff who created the information posters and to the superb Kristy for once again making the most beautiful cupcakes to treat our visitors.



photos with Santa, face-painting, balloon animals, show bags and more so join in the fun - 191 Concord Road North Strathfield. With the hot weather upon us, don't forget to help keep your cat cool. Make sure your cat has access to cool surfaces such as tiled floors, pop a couple of ice cubes in their water bowls (yes, every cat should have more than one water bowl) to keep it fresh, and keep a very close eye on white cats and cats with pale features - sunburn will increase their risk of skin cancer.

#### Education

Keep an eye on the events page of our website to find out about our talks and education programs. We regularly hold **Kitten Kindy** classes which are great not just for first-time cat owners but anyone who wants to learn more about cat care and behaviour. Kitten Kindy is also a wonderful way to engage your children in the lifetime care of your cat. In January we will run our school holiday program 'spend time with the cool cats' for infants and primary school kids. If you're looking for things to keep your kids entertained these holidays, we highly recommend PETS magazine which will keep any animal-loving child enthralled for hours.

#### Annual report

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Annual General Meeting on 8 November. We were pleased to submit our annual report for 2013-14 which highlighted our achievements for cats and of course, our audited financial statements. Once again we are proud to have an unqualified audit, and thanks to some generous bequests were able to end the year with a surplus. As always, our dependence on bequests means we have to keep money in reserves for those times (such as the previous year) we don't receive sufficient income from bequests and have to draw from our savings. To put our size and achievements in perspective, consider that in 2013-14 what we spent running our entire organisation (\$1,580,210) was less than half the money spent in 2013-14 by the NSW RSPCA on fundraising alone (\$3,727,744). Our funds might be limited but our commitment to feline welfare is boundless! The annual report has been published on our website. Thank you to all our members and friends for making it possible for us to help thousands of cats every year.

# Discount cat desexing

Help your cat be happy and healthy

### Desex your cat today

Desexing your cat before they reach sexual maturity (3 months) will:



Decrease your cat's risk of cancer



Reduce the risk of infection and disease



Prevent unwanted behaviours, such as spraying, wandering and aggression



Prevent unwanted litters of kittens

Kittens can be desexed from 8 weeks of age, but it's never too late!

Call Cat Protection on 9519 7201 for more information on discount desexing

Give your cat the wellbeing they deserve and at the same time help end the tragedy of unwanted kittens

cat protection society

OF NSW INC.

www.catprotection.org.au



#### Hello

Our Tiger was not adopted from CPS but we have a relationship with CPS.

Some 11.5 years ago, CPS in conjunction with Bankstown Council had a drive where CPS would collect your cat and take to a local vet for desexing and microchipping.

The requirement was that the owner then had to register their pet with council.

Tiger is now almost 12 years (a happy boy) and we are both contributing members of CPS to assist with the continuing excellent work.

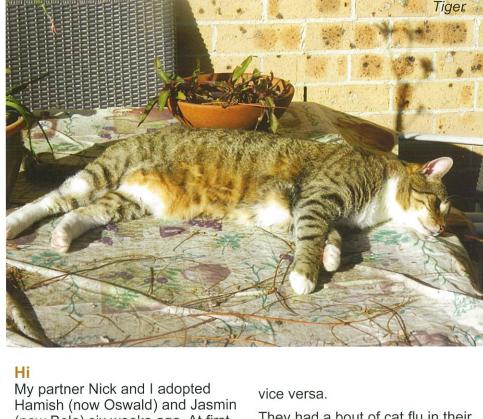
Regards Pamela



Guess who's 2?!!!

Ziggy Stardust was the cover model of the Autumn 2013 Cat Affairs. We adopted him on 31 January 2013. Attached is a snap of Ziggy and his brother Magic reading the magazine.

Kirsten

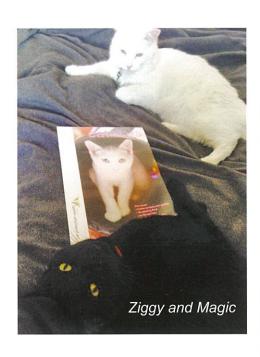


My partner Nick and I adopted Hamish (now Oswald) and Jasmir (now Bela) six weeks ago. At first we didn't know how Bela would go being with us as she was a little stand-offish. It only took a couple of days and she was just as affectionate as Ozzy.

Since being with us, they have both been busy making their new home theirs and at times it feels like we moved in with them, not They had a bout of cat flu in their first week with us and have both bounced back beautifully. They have their own bedroom but mostly they sleep on our bed with us.

We are now a very happy family of four.

Anna, Nick, Bela & Ozzy xxx









#### Hey guys

Just a couple of pics of the stepsisters as I now affectionately call them.

They are doing great and in good health.

Olivia lets me pick her up just before meals to say hello. Food is still her first love.

Lydia is still cautious and still like her rubs at arm's length but she follows me around the house like a dog.

They are both on the animal register with the local council and on weekends they enjoy a little bit of time outside on the back verandah but don't venture too far from the back door.

They are certainly inside cats and prefer the security of indoors.

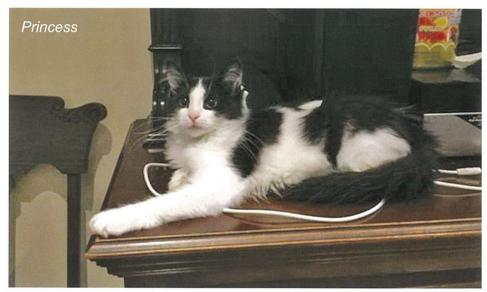
Here are some photos: Olivia doing what she loves most, sleeping, and Lydia doing what she loves most, exploring.

Kind regards Robert

#### Hi there

We just wanted to say thank you. We adopted Camilla on 26 October. Since it is the first time for us to have a cat at home, we are still in process of settling in, but she has certainly brought a joy to our family.

Many thanks Yoko & Tetsuo







#### Hi Vanessa

Here are some pictures of **Princess** Cheers Rob & Brad

#### Hello

Here are some updates about Leo (Ohio he now is).

Fact no.1 - Ohio is a VERY sticky cat which we LOVE! He follows us around all the time and sleeps right next to our faces.

Fact no.2 - Ohio LOVES his food! He can be very vocal when he feels like food which is all day long!

Fact no.3 - Ohio is at the same time very playful. He loves everything that's dangling. Evidence attached!

We are certain that Ohio is having a very pampered and healthy life, and we are very lucky to have such a perfect cat! Thank you.

Regards Yuqi & Alex



#### Hi there!

Thought you might like the attached photo of Banjo (as Christmas is approaching).

Rescued three years ago, he is only JUST beginning to occasionally sit on the couch alongside us, instead of choosing his own chair out of reach.

Maybe let others know that apparently it can take this long for cats to learn the pleasure of a snuggle ... proof that there is hope for all with stand-alone types of cats. I've found it interesting.

Banjo's a very polite cat – when he asks to go out, and you open the door, he turns around and mews his thanks, even though you've already done what he wanted!

So in advance, here's a MEOW from the lovely boy!!!

Regards Clare xx



#### Hello

Here is an update on Roly, or RolyPoly as we like to call him.

We adopted Roly in June 2013 and he fitted in straight away.

He loves to play, loves his food, is a big snuggler and as you can see, likes to stay in bed in the mornings. He can be quite the diva but we love that he has so much personality.

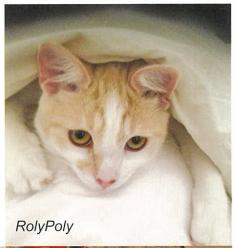
Thanks Cat Protection, you do a great job.

K&M

#### **Hi Cat Protection**

This is our new kitten Gypsy. She was once extremely shy but not anymore. We love her very much. Elizabeth







#### Hello

Just letting you know about one of your happily adopted cats.

We renamed him from Ozzie to Weasley but all we ever really call him is puss.

We've had him for 10 weeks but it was amazing how quickly he seemed at home with us.

He is so playful and talkative, sometimes a bit too boisterous. He loves climbing the trees in our courtyard and exploring the rooftops, as well as pestering the (much bigger) local cats to be friends.

Thanks so much, we love him. Polly, Nadine & Jack

#### Dear Nerida

I just wanted to give you an update on two wonderful kittens we adopted from the Cat Protection Society two weeks ago.

Basil and Sage (now called Raj and Indi) have settled in beautifully into our home. Our girls are thrilled.

Raj and Indi have both formed a strong bond with our lovely oneeyed dog Saffy, who treats them like her children and licks them both each morning! They happily follow our very friendly rabbit Freddie around the house.

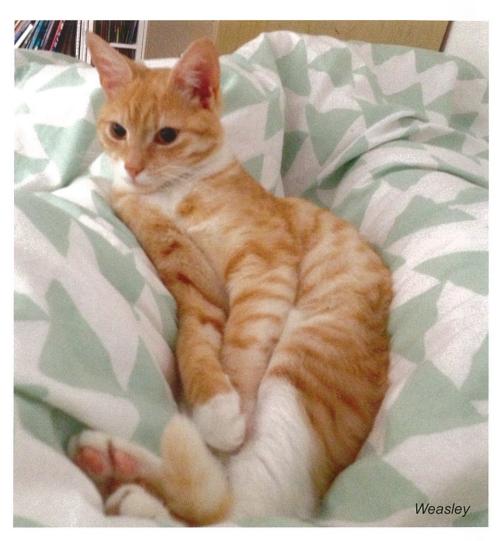
We can't believe how easy this transition has been. They are such well-adjusted kittens. One thing that makes us truly happy is that our dog Saffy, who had grown up with our late cat Mishka and had been quite needy and depressed since Mishka's death, now has a new lease on life. It is fabulous!

As you can see from the attached photo, Saffy has even relinquished her bed for her new "children".

Thank you for all the fabulous work that you all continue to do.

Warmest regards

Natanya, Phil, Saskia & Sienna (Raj, Indi, Saffy and Freddie's staff!)





#### Hello from the Savoy

We's all being very wells. Portia gave us a scare, she has being loses weight and they have done two bloods over past few months. No results though she is in stage two renal but this doesn't explain weight loss. So we's just looking after her and see what happens. She is 17 and a half years tortie, so we treat her as top cat.

Tigger has heated cubby bed and room service ... and a second bedroom plus a radio and night light. It's nice and sunny during the day, so Tigger has presidential suite.

We took a poll about picture in mag and we's don't thinks Tigger should hog the limelight, we's want to stars as well so here we all is. Slave took pictures.

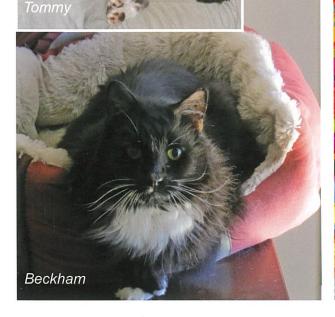
Samcat, Beckham, Ollie, Tigger, Tommy, Sophia & Portia













### IN MEMORIAM



#### Happy

1995 - 17 May 2012

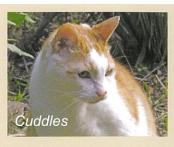
You filled our home with your playfulness and joy. You ran in the wind, climbed in the trees and frolicked in the water. Our lives were enriched by your presence and your kind loving soul.



#### Tiny

1995 - 13 July 2012

You were a shy and sensitive soul. Never a lap cat, preferring your own space and chair. However, when I went through a long illness, it was you who came and sat with me and when I was sad you would look up at me, lifting my spirits.



#### Cuddles

1995 - 23 June 2014

We brought you home on 17 May 1995 along with your brothers Happy and Tiny, making our family unit complete. When you were young you could run like a cheetah. You loved sitting on a sunny windowsill, preferably on top of Happy! You loved having a chat every day about almost anything, and you always got your own way! We trust you have joined your brothers Happy and Tiny at the Rainbow Bridge.

You are all always loved and eternally remembered Susan and Tony



#### Maeby Baby

Maeby came to us from Cat Protection at the start of 2012 after two years of patient attempts by my wife to overcome my deeply ingrained ambivalence towards cats (her name was a play on my usual reply when Jo asked me if we could get one). She was a shy cat who

distrusted any and all visitors to our apartment, which she quickly came to consider to be her domain. That distrust never extended to Jo however, who, after a short, scratchy feelingout period, very quickly became Maeby's Mum, and her favourite thing in the world.

Somehow Maeby always knew when it was Jo coming up in our building's very noisy elevator, and would race to the door to greet her with loud meows which always sounded like she was trying to say hello. She would follow Jo from room to room and whenever Jo sat down for long enough, would come up to give her little head butts so the world had no illusions that they belonged to each other.

My experiences with Maeby were slightly less idyllic. With me being the first one up in the mornings, Maeby quickly determined I was the morning feeder, and made my alarm clock redundant with early meows and, on my more reluctant days, an uncanny ability to jump onto the bed and land on the precise spot that would cause me the most pain. It also became my job to put Maeby in the cat carrier whenever we took her to the vet, an experience she hated

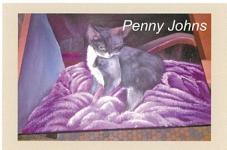
and fought with a vengeance, as the tiny scars on my forearms continue to show.

However, occasionally, when she was warm, fed and comfortable and all the stars aligned she would lie next to me and purr like the sweetest cat in the world.

Earlier this year Maeby suffered a tragic accident. Despite a frantic trip to SASH and the hard work of the vets, we had to make the terrible decision to stop her suffering the only way possible. It was truly heartbreaking seeing her in so much pain and then watching the light go out of her eyes. We still miss her every day. Maeby may not be around anymore but her effect lives on. I went from being impartial to

cats to now being a very proud "alpha" to not just one but two kittens. My wife wanted to name the second cat Neva! Michael

### **IN MEMORIAM**



#### **Penny Johns**

And, the love goes on ... She arrived one day on the windowsill of a neighbour's home with no note or explanation.

Destined to stay, she needed a name and it became Penny – referencing the song Penny is from Heaven.

Penny Johns shared her life and love with the Johns Family for 21 years. Her soul has now returned to God and her body will return to the earth from where she came.

Elaine



#### **Ebony**

"Sometimes the smallest things take up the most room in your heart."

Sleep well, our sunshine girl. Love Megan and Maryrose

#### Sahara

In honour of the memory of my beautiful cat 'Sahara'.

Diana

#### For Christine

May she rest in peace. Todd



#### Jenny

In honour of my little girl cat Jenny, who died suddenly aged 13 years. She was such a lady and she used to make me laugh. Puff cat and I miss her very much.

Gail

This donation is made on behalf of Jenny the Tortoiseshell cat who passed away on 17 September 2009. Mary

### **CAT PROTECTION OPENING HOURS**

Office and Adoptions: 103 Enmore Road, Newtown

Office: 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday Tel: 9519 7201

Adoptions: 11am to 2.30pm, Sunday to Friday; 10am to 3.30pm Saturday

also Thursday evenings 4.30pm to 6.30pm;

Friday afternoons 3.30pm to 5pm Tel: 9557 4818

Op Shop: 85 Enmore Road, Newtown Tel: 9516 2072

The Op Shop is generally open between

10am and 4pm, 7 days a week.

If closed, donations can be left at Cat Protection

at 103 Enmore Road

# perfectly balanced



## ideal balance

natural ingredients perfectly balanced

Natural Ingredients
No corn, wheat or soy

No artificial flavours, colours or preservatives



