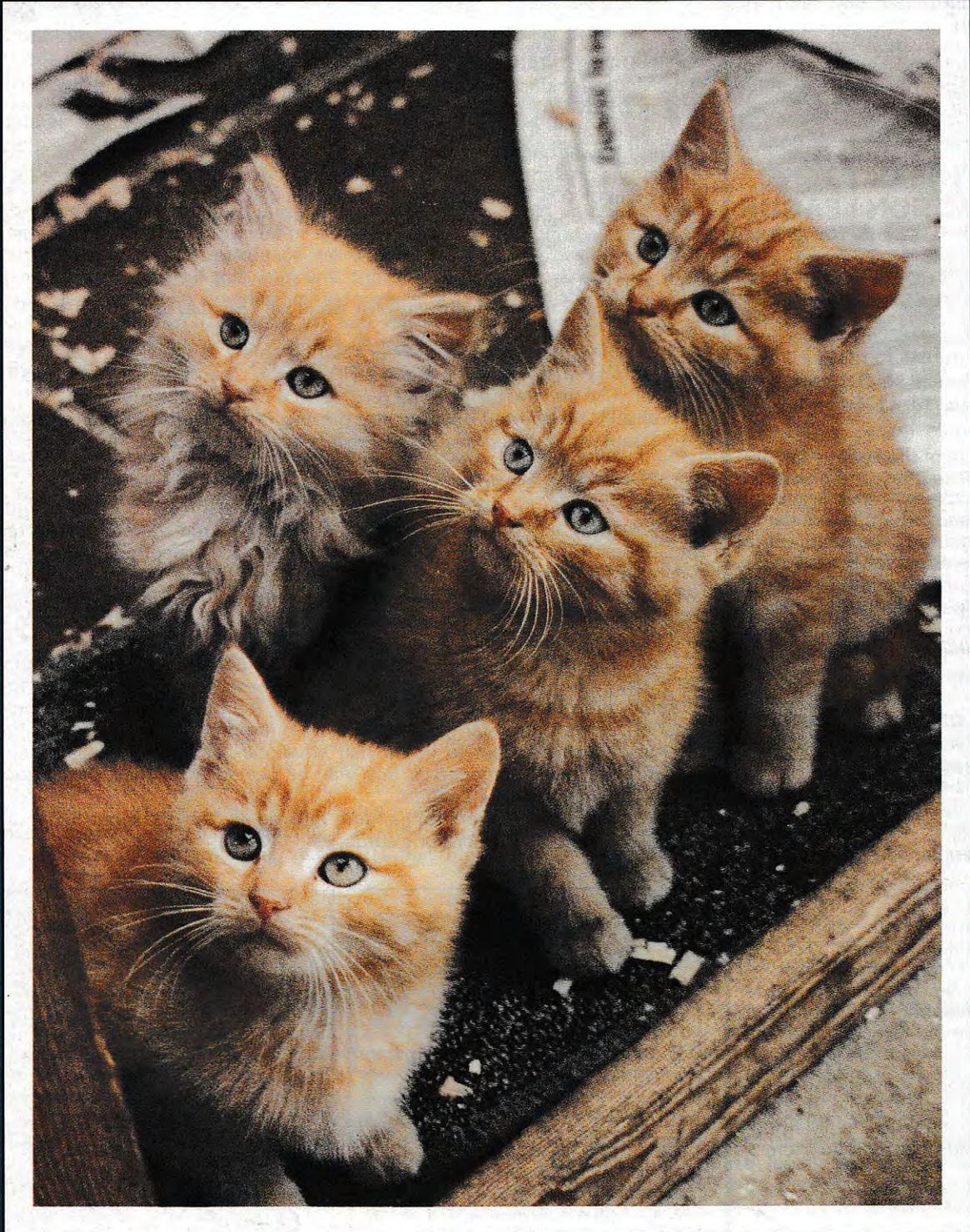


THE CAT

MAY/JUNE 1994
Volume LXVII No. 3



THE CAT

Official Journal of
THE CATS PROTECTION LEAGUE

Editor:
Group Captain H E Boothby, OBE

Articles, letters, poems and stories for consideration for *THE CAT* should be addressed to the Editor. No publishing fees are paid. The Editor reserves the right to edit any material to fit space available.

The Cats Protection League is not responsible for the opinions, advice and factual content of items contributed by authors; views and comments are those held by individual contributors and do not necessarily conform with those of the Executive Committee.

**THE CATS
PROTECTION LEAGUE**
(Reg. National Charity No. 203644)

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Tel: 0403 261947

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Chairman: Mr G Barrett

Director: Mr M McCawley

The objects of the League are:

1. To rescue stray and unwanted cats and kittens, rehabilitate and rehome them where possible.
2. To encourage the neutering of cats not required for breeding.
3. To inform the public on the care of cats and kittens.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Annual rates (minimum):

UK	£10.00
Senior Citizens	£5.00
Junior (under 16)	£2.50
Overseas	£15.00
USA/Canada	\$30.00

* * *

Life Membership £125.00

Annual subscription lasts for one year and is renewable in the anniversary month every year thereafter. It can be paid by cheque or postal order, under Deed of Covenant or by Bankers Order (forms available on request from the Covenant Officer at Headquarters).

Correspondence on membership, change of name and/or address should be sent to the Membership Secretary at Headquarters.

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NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

NEW CPL GROUPS

The **ANDOVER & DISTRICT GROUP** and the **WANSBECK & BLYTH VALLEY GROUP** have recently been approved. We wish them every success. The contact addresses can be found in REGISTER at the back of the journal.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

30 April-8 May

9-11 June

10 September

12-18 September

25 September

19 November

10 December

National Pet Week

South of England Show, Ardingly

Open Day, Josephine Fryer Shelter, New Malden

National Cat Week

Open Day, Bredhurst Shelter

The Supreme Show, NEC Birmingham

The National Cat Club Show, Olympia

OPEN DAY AT MABEL JENKINS SHELTER

The Mabel Jenkins Shelter, Packhorse Lane, Hollywood, Birmingham will be holding an **OPEN DAY** on **Saturday, 21 May**. Events will include a car boot sale, bric-a-brac stall, raffle . . . and that's just for starters.

The fun will begin at **1 pm**. If you have any bric-a-brac (not jumble), unwanted Christmas presents that you would like to go to a good cause, please let us know: ring Julie on 021 783 8439 or the Shelter on 0564 822020.

And, if anybody has any spare sunshine, please bring it along for it would be greatly appreciated.

PET PROTECT INSURANCE

Members will find with the current issue of *THE CAT* a leaflet from Pet Protect Insurance Ltd.

The leaflet bears a code number relating solely to the CPL so that, in the event that an insurance policy is taken out by a CPL Member, it can be identified and thus ensure that the League will receive 10% of the gross premium.

It should be pointed out that the placing of the leaflet in the journal is not an endorsement or otherwise of Pet Protect Insurance Ltd.

CAT COMBINGS, USED POSTAGE STAMPS ETC.

There are no doubt pet grooming establishments throughout the country whose services may extend to cats, particularly long-haired varieties. Any recent and healthy cat fur collected in this way would be very welcome at Headquarters, as, when in sufficient quantity, we are able to sell it to a pharmaceutical company where it is used in the manufacture of a vaccine for those allergic to cats. Such donations, in however great or small a quantity, all help towards raising funds for the League's good work.

Used postage stamps are also used to raise funds for the League and we thank all those members who send them to us. Please separate them into British and Foreign and remember that, because we sell the bulk to dealers, we only get the best prices for those stamps which bear a margin of envelope about 1/2" all round. Stamps which are sent to us on half envelopes or large pieces of paper, those which have been damaged in any way or peeled from their backing cannot be turned into cash for the League.

We also thank members for sending expired car tax discs, petrol coupons, trading stamps and used telephone cards.

FRONT COVER KITTENS



Three months old and beautiful as only kittens can be. This little family was found living under a countryside hedge along with mother. All were collected and taken to the nearest shelter from where they have all been rehomed to loving and caring homes, the mother cat having first been spayed of course. This delightful picture which was awarded a prize in last year's CPL Photographic Competition was taken by Judi Perry of Wincanton.

THE TALKING CAT

A 'talking' version of *THE CAT* is available to CPL members who, because of disability, are unable to read the printed word. Two 90 minute cassettes, made by 'Pendle Voice' and read by CPL member, Katy Thursby, are passed to the listener and back to 'Pendle Voice' by **freepost**. To help cover costs, an **annual charge of £2** is made for this valuable service (please make cheques payable to 'Pendle Voice').

If you are interested in joining this scheme, please write to:

Katy Thursby, 9 East Bank, Barrowford, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 6HD

YOUR CAT'S HEALTH

FIGHTS AND BITES

by Maureen Hutchison BSc BVMS MRCVS

We all know there are certain cats (usually entire males) who delight in a good scrap. Others, less macho, are unfortunate enough to get in their way, on their territory or be suspected of being a rival for a female's favours.

When a cat sinks his canine teeth (fangs) into another cat, two small puncture holes are the only obvious sign of damage. The holes may escape notice if they are obscured by the surrounding hair and if the cat does not draw attention to the site. If the bite is on a leg, it is likely that this will make the cat limp and involve an early trip to the vet; but, on other parts of the body, there may be no obvious signs.

However, the small surface holes conceal a deep, tooth-sized hole into which a large dose of bacteria present in the cat's saliva has been injected. Over the course of the next 48 hours, these bacteria will be busily multiplying at the base of the wound, (quite unaffected by any antiseptics which may have been applied to the surface). After 48 hours the wound may look red and inflamed (when the puncture holes will be more obvious) or swollen up due to the presence of pus at the bottom of the wound (if the puncture holes scab over). If this happens, the first thing the owner notices may be a swelling on the surface of the body. Without treatment, this enlarges and eventually bursts, releasing a copious quantity of pus and/or watery blood. The development of an abscess usually makes the cat feel quite ill and he may be noticeably subdued and off his food.

If the cat is taken to a veterinary surgeon when the owner notices the swelling and before the abscess has burst, the vet will lance the abscess in order to drain the pus. Depending on the cat's temperament and the position and severity of the abscess, this may be done while the cat is conscious or under sedation. Most abscesses will require flushing daily for several days with an effective antiseptic of which 'Savlon' is the only one readily available from chemists although 'Hibitane' may be dispensed by the veterinary surgeon.

In addition to this, the vet will prescribe antibiotics, usually penicillins.

A burst abscess may leave an alarmingly large cavern, but this will heal gradually once the infection has been cleared; although it may take several weeks. It is never stitched as infection may recur and the abscess reform.

It will be seen from all this that abscesses cause an immense amount of trouble which is avoidable if the bite is identified promptly and the cat taken to a veterinary surgeon for 'prophylactic' antibiotics i.e. treatment which nips the infection in the bud.

As well as causing abscesses, cat bites may transmit viruses such as feline leukaemia virus (FeLV) and feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) which have long-term implications. Since entire toms are the usual fighters, castration will prevent these problems in most cases.

Rat bites are another equally serious hazard. Although rats' teeth are smaller than cats', they are still capable of inflicting a painful bite and delivering a quantity of unpleasant and dangerous bacteria. Although cats are naturally more resistant to the germ responsible for *Leptospirosis* (Rat bite fever) than dogs and man, they do sometimes fall victim to this potentially fatal infection which affects the liver and kidneys. ALL rat bites should be treated by a veterinary surgeon; penicillin is the usual drug used.

Dog bites are likely to cause a great deal more damage than cat's or rat's because of the greater size of a dog's jaws. A large dog (and it tends to be the larger dogs which attack cats) can easily break a cat's leg as well as causing

massive bruising and muscle damage. If the bite is across the cat's body then the consequences are almost invariably serious. The chest or abdomen may be crushed or punctured and internal organs bruised or torn. There may be considerable internal bleeding which may be fatal. Even if there is no more external damage than one or two tooth-holes, dog bites are ALWAYS a reason for obtaining emergency veterinary treatment – even late at night or on a Sunday! Dog-owners have a legal as well as a moral responsibility to control their pets and there are various Acts of Parliament to enforce this:

1. *The Town Police Clauses Act 1847*: this makes it an offence to allow any unmuzzled, ferocious dog to be left at large or to set on or to urge any dog to attack any person OR ANIMAL in the street.

2. *The Dogs Act 1871*: under this Act, a magistrates' court may, upon the complaint of any person that a dog is dangerous and not under proper control, order the owner to keep him under proper control.

3. *Road Traffic Act 1972-1988*: this makes it an offence to have a dog on a designated road without the dog being held on a lead. Obviously this Act can be invoked if a dog is off a lead in the street and attacks and injures a cat.

It has to be said that the police have not always been over-zealous in implementing these Acts. However, a little persistence and knowledge of the law goes a long way in persuading them to act. Private prosecutions may also be brought and the RSPCA and CPL Headquarters should be contacted for advice.

Other injuries which may result from fights and other trauma include a condition known as '*aural haematoma*'. A bite or blow on the upright part of the ear (or pinna) bursts a blood vessel under the skin and, because of the configuration of the ear, blood is trapped between the cartilage of the ear flap and the skin. This makes the ear flap swell up like an egg. At one time, it was customary for vets to perform an operation on ears, to drain the blood and prevent it reforming. However, the modern method of treatment, which avoids the need for surgery, is by steroid injections and drainage via a hypodermic needle. Needless to say this comes a good deal less expensive than surgery! If the haematoma is not treated, the cat will not come to any harm and the blood will be very slowly resorbed into the body, but the ear will be left looking crumpled and bent – a not uncommon finding in old tom cats! Cats with this condition should always have their ears checked for ear-mites since a wound may be self-inflicted if the ear is causing irritation.

Tears on the ear flaps – which may be caused by another cat clamping its teeth shut on the ear and the victim pulling away sharply – bleed prodigiously. Bleeding is prolonged by the cat's constant flicking of the affected ear, so that the blood does not clot. Firm pressure i.e. pinching the ear with an absorbent pad, is helpful. When the bleeding appears to have stopped, wrap a bandage right round the cat's head over the affected ear for 24 hours to give time for a good clot to form which will not be dislodged immediately by the cat's flicking its ear.

Cats sometimes return home with large gashes in the skin. How these injuries happen, they don't usually confide to their owners. Broken glass or a tear on barbed wire are likely possibilities. During the healing process it is vitally important to keep the open wound clean, keep the cat indoors so that the wound cannot become contaminated by soil and bathe it daily (salt and water is fine) to remove any dust and hairs. More usually wounds such as this will be noticed within 24 hours and can be stitched by a veterinary surgeon. Antibiotic cover is important; it is inevitable that germs will have been introduced by the implement which caused the cut and stitches will break down if infection develops in the wound.

COMPETITIONS FOR ALL

1994 CPL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION



Here is PUSSCA to introduce our **1994 CPL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION**; the picture won for Mrs Jane Bowen of Horsham a prize in **THE TOP TWENTY** section of last year's Competition.

PUSSCA was adopted at about the age of six months by Mrs Bowen's student daughter in Wales. She was very nervous, particularly of men and it was thought she had possibly been maltreated in her former home. Eventually, PUSSCA came to live in Horsham with the Bowens and, although still susceptible to sudden noises and often frightened of trousers, she has become a very affectionate cat who is much loved by everyone.

As in previous years, the COMPETITION consists of **three sections**:

THE TOP TWENTY; THE SPECIAL TEN; THE COVER SIX.

Each of the 36 winners will receive:

- ★ a **CERTIFICATE OF MERIT**
- ★ a **PRIZE** donated by Pedigree Petfoods, the makers of Whiskas cat food
- ★ £20 worth of Whiskas to be sent to the **CPL BRANCH OR GROUP OR SHELTER** nominated on the Entry Form.

IN ADDITION:

All winning entries in **THE TOP TWENTY** and **THE SPECIAL TEN** sections will go forward to the Selection Panel for consideration for inclusion in the **1996 CPL**

CALENDAR and the **1995 CPL CHRISTMAS CARDS** respectively; owners of those selected will be sent complimentary copies of the CPL Calendar or CPL Christmas Cards to distribute to their friends.

All winning entries in **THE COVER SIX** section will feature on the **FRONT COVER** of *THE CAT*.

Selection of **THE CPL CAT OF THE YEAR** will be made from the 36 winners in the three sections of the Competition. The winner of the **CPL CAT OF THE YEAR** will receive the following, donated by Whiskas:

- ★ an **ENGRAVED CRYSTAL TROPHY** to be presented at the **NATIONAL CAT CLUB SHOW** at **OLYMPIA, LONDON**, in **DECEMBER**.
- ★ travelling expenses for the winner and one guest to attend the **NATIONAL CAT CLUB SHOW**.
- ★ **theatre tickets for two and overnight accommodation at a London hotel**, if required, for the show.

HIGHLY COMMENDED ROSETTES will be given to pictures of merit at the discretion of the judges.

WHO IS GOING TO FOLLOW TWILIGHT AS OUR NEXT CPL CAT OF THE YEAR? Will it be YOUR CAT?

RULES OF ENTRY

1. The 1994 CPL Photographic Competition is open to all readers resident in Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Channel Islands, Isle of Man, Republic of Ireland and Overseas but, **EXCLUDED** are the employees and their families of The Cats Protection League, Pedigree Petfoods and their agents, and the printers of *THE CAT*.

2. **COLOUR SLIDES, COLOUR PRINTS and BLACK AND WHITE PRINTS** may be entered into this Competition. **COLOUR SLIDES/TRANSPARENCIES** may be of any size and must be mounted ready for projection; they should **NOT** be mounted on glass. For identification, each mount should be marked with the entrant's name and address and the name of the cat(s) portrayed. **PRINTS** must be enprint or larger and must also bear the name and address of the entrant along with the name(s) of the cat(s), preferably on a label attached to the back of each photograph.

3. **ALL entries** will be considered for use in *THE CAT* and in other CPL publications unless refusal is indicated on the Entry Form.

If you do **NOT** wish your entry to be considered for publication in the CPL Calendar, the CPL Christmas cards, CPL Notelets and Seals, *THE CAT* and other CPL Publications, etc., please indicate **NO** on the Entry Form. If you write **YES**, the Editor will feel free to select from the entries, and such selections will be retained and used by him to promote the aims and objectives of The League and its work in the United Kingdom and through affiliated organisations overseas.

4. **SLIDES and PRINTS** will only be returned to entrants if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for the purpose; it must be **LARGE** enough to contain your entries and bear **SUFFICIENT POSTAGE**. Any entries retained for use will be returned in due course to entrants, provided an SAE has been enclosed.

5. Copyright remains with the photographer.

6. **Your picture may be of one cat or kitten, a pair or a group; it may be a portrait or an action shot. IT MUST BE IN FOCUS. Remember the importance of background: delightful gardens or items of furniture should not detract from the CAT!**

7. You may enter as many slides/prints as you wish provided **EACH ONE** is accompanied by an entry donation of **50p**.

Please include, on a separate piece of paper, the name, age and sex of the cat(s) portrayed, together with any interesting details of characteristics, history, etc. It is not necessary to repeat these details if you are entering more than one picture of the same cat.

8. It will be assumed that the name and address on the **ENTRY FORM** is that of the person entering the Competition. If you are entering slides or prints on behalf of another person, you must make it clear which slide or print is to be entered under a different name and address.

9. **PRIZE-WINNING** entries from previous years are **NOT** eligible for this Competition; all other pictures entered in earlier years will be accepted again this year.

10. **The closing date for this Competition is 13 AUGUST 1994.** Entries received incomplete or after the closing date will NOT be considered. No responsibility can be accepted for entries lost, delayed or damaged in the post or offered for delivery insufficiently stamped. Proof of posting will not be accepted as proof of delivery.

11. Decisions of the judging panel will be final in all stages of this Competition as will those of the Editor on all other matters affecting the Competition. NO correspondence will be entered into.

It would be helpful to receive your entries AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Do not wait until the closing date but send your pictures NOW to:

1994 CPL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION, PO Box 1017, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 2YF.

CLOSING DATE IS 13 AUGUST 1994.

Remember to include:

1. Entry Form (or a copy of it if you do not wish to cut your journal).
2. Slides and/or prints, each bearing YOUR name and address and the name of the cat(s). If you send your entries in two or more separate batches, please point this out to us so that we can return them to you together.
3. A separate piece of paper giving details of the cat(s) portrayed.
4. An entry donation of 50p for EACH slide or print. Please make cheques and postal orders payable to THE CATS PROTECTION LEAGUE.
5. An SAE, large enough to contain your entries and bearing SUFFICIENT POSTAGE, if you wish them to be returned to you.

We do not want to waste your kind donation on postage and administration, so we will not send receipts unless you ask especially for one; if a receipt is required, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope for the purpose.

Please avoid the use of staples and paper clips which can damage entries in transit; and please beware of inked

names and addresses which can transfer from the back of one print to the front of another. It is much better to pencil your name and address on to an adhesive label and stick this to the back of the photograph.

If you have a camera with a dating facility, beware of using it on any print you intend to enter in the Competition. A date can spoil the overall effect of your picture!

After the closing date of the Competition, all entries received by that date will be examined and selections made by our judges. ALL WINNERS will be notified **not later than 30 November 1994** and a full list of awards published in the **January/February 1995 issue of THE CAT.**

Unsuccessful entries will be returned BY THE END OF NOVEMBER.

IS YOUR CAT GOING TO BE OUR NEXT **CPL CAT OF THE YEAR?**

RESULTS OF COMPETITION No. 68 'DESCRIBING YOUR CAT'

FIRST PRIZE: M A Green, Oadby
 SECOND PRIZE: Mrs C E Warne, Guernsey
 THIRD PRIZE: E M Gillingham, Fordingbridge

Congratulations to our three winners whose entries were drawn from all the correct answers received to this competition and commiserations if you also got the answer right but weren't lucky in the draw!

The correct answer to the Wordsearch was:

ADORABLE

We are very grateful to the many members who entered and who donated so generously to our care of the needy cats and kittens in this way. It was obviously a competition you enjoyed doing and we are planning many more you to solve.

1994 CPL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION ENTRY FORM

A copy of this Entry Form will be accepted if you do not wish to cut your journal.

IN BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE:

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Post Code.....

No. of pictures entered:

Slides/transparencies.....

Colour prints.....

Black and white prints.....

Is negative/transparency available?.....

Total entry donation
(50p for EACH slide or print).....

Cheque/Postal Order No.....

May we use your entry/entries on the CPL Calendar, CPL Christmas cards, CPL Notelets, CPL Seals, THE CAT, CPL or affiliated charitable publications?

Please answer YES or NO.....

If I win an award, I nominate the following CPL Branch/Group/Shelter to receive £20 worth of Pedigree Petfoods

'Whiskas' cat food.....

Photographs entered will only be returned if a stamped-addressed envelope is provided, LARGE ENOUGH to contain all your entries and BEARING SUFFICIENT POSTAGE.

Send the completed ENTRY FORM and donation to:

1994 CPL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION, PO Box 1017, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 2YF.

CLOSING DATE - 13 AUGUST 1994

OLIVER – LAST OF THE DROVERS by Jancis Harvey



Last of the Drovers

Oliver comes from a long line of black and white ferals, who have spent the past few decades in a remote drove way out in the fens near Ely. A kindly lady called Kath has been tirelessly feeding them for many years in all weathers and has seen the various generations come and go. There are just a few houses in the drove and the various kittens who have survived have mercifully been rescued and homed throughout the village, giving a very distinctive black and white touch to the place.

Shortly after Maureen moved to the drove early last year Oliver and Little Mo, his mum, the last of the drove ferals, turned up on her doorstep, and they continued to do so everyday, realising that this new owner of the house was probably a good bet. They would lope up the drove to-

gether, with their incredibly pig-like curly tails intertwined and their heads rubbing reassuringly together.

A cat-flap was fixed to the outer door and with the help of a couple of clothes pegs, the two rather bedraggled little bundles would appear and head-rubbingly wait, every morning.

Oliver has a head as round as the moon and therefore what better name, after another local hero, with a similar roundhead. A makeshift cat-trap from the Cambridge CPL, and mum and son were whisked off to the vet for the necessary operations. The cats both rapidly began to thrive and their rather moth-eaten appearances changed to soft and fluffy, though they were still very frightened and totally untouchable.

The daily visits continued for a few months, until sadly poor old mum, came home one day and died in the office. Goodness only knows how many kittens she must have had, but Oliver was pretty distraught and it was unclear what he was going to do. A second cat-flap was fitted to the inner door and gradually he became brave enough to come into the kitchen for his food.

He looks wonderful now. His head seems rounder and his tail even curlier, and one day came the great breakthrough when he allowed his head to be stroked. He will always be timid, but he has learned to trust and love his new 'Mum' and he buzzes happily when his gourmet meals are served up. A third cat flap has been fitted to the garden door and on a warm summer day he reposes in the shade of the bird table in a satisfied slumber accompanied by the loudest and almost human snores. A local daily dog walker in the drove remarked on passing the house the other day – "You've certainly done a lovely job with that cat!"

THE STORY OF CHIPS by Yolande Stride

The tiny tortoiseshell kitten was scratching through a heap of rubbish desperately looking for something to eat. She was frightened, cold and hungry. A large figure loomed above her; she would have liked to run away but felt too weak and allowed herself to be picked up. Her rescuer stroked her matted fur, tucked her inside his overcoat and took her home to his flat.

It was not a perfect home but it was a home, and the little cat was grateful for it. She was warm and she was fed and, although she was never allowed out, there was always a box for her to scratch in. But there were good days and bad days, because Mike was an alcoholic.

On the good days the kitten was fed and loved because, when Mike was sober, he derived great comfort from the little animal's company. She seemed to supply a need in his lonely and disturbed life that up till now had been missing. But then there were the bad days when Mike started drinking with his friends and the flat was filled with noise and shouting and, Chips as the kitten had come to be called, fled into the nearest cupboard until all was quiet again and she was able to come out and walk amongst the debris of broken bottles and snoring men. She would be lucky to get any food that morning or, for that matter, for the rest of the day.

So cat and man rubbed along together for a while until the day came when Mike's drinking became too much for him and he was taken off to hospital to, 'dry out,' and Chips found herself trapped in the flat with no food and very little water. But there must have been a guardian angel watching over her; this time in the form of Mike's

social worker. Margaret was a cat lover and to her the fate of the kitten was as important as that of the man himself. So on hearing of the sudden departure of her client, Margaret got herself over to the flat to see if anyone was looking after the abandoned animal. There was a girl hanging about outside who seemed to know that Mike was in hospital.

'Do you know if anyone has been in to feed the cat?' asked Margaret wondering what the girl was doing there.

'Nobody's been around for several days that I know of,' she said, seemingly quite unconcerned about the fate of the kitten.

Margaret went over and peered in the window, and there she saw a scrap of multicoloured fur standing on the table miaowing pitifully, obviously in great distress. Something would have to be done and quickly; the poor creature had been there long enough already. The obvious place to go was the Housing Department; but here she met with bureaucracy at its best. Even though they had a master key, they informed her that they were not in the habit of entering tenant's flats when they were in hospital.

'I don't think you quite understand,' she said, 'there's a kitten trapped in that flat and if we don't get it out soon it will starve to death. If you leave it much longer it will be too late.'

Margaret got the feeling that they regarded her as an eccentric female whose only mission in life was to find cats trapped in flats and pester council departments into going to look for them. It took a lot of heavyweight persuasion and threats of the RSPCA and other cat loving bodies to

make them agree to come and have a look. The fate of the poor starving kitten seemed of little importance so long as they kept their protocol in order.

They sent a posse to meet Margaret at the flat but, when the door was opened, no grateful kitten jumped out to greet them. An extensive search brought no sign of any animal, dead or alive and she could see them exchanging, 'I told you so,' glances and getting ready to leave. Then the faintest squeak was heard, so faint that it could have been a mouse. 'You heard that didn't you?' she said. No answer was necessary as she knew they had heard the animal's faint call for help. The sound had come from the kitchen and when Margaret gently pushed the sliding door under the sink they found a frightened bundle of fur cowering in the far corner. She took her home and looked after her until she had once more regained her strength.

When Mike came out of hospital he would have dearly liked to have had Chips back, but Margaret knew that his visits to hospital could be an ongoing thing and she had no

desire to have a repeat performance of what they had just gone through. But for all his faults Mike really had the welfare of the kitten at heart and, knowing his own failings, in the end agreed that a more secure place should be found for her.

No one came forward to give Chips a home so she stayed with Margaret. She is still a very nervous cat and, when visiting, all one will see of her is a mottled face peering anxiously round a corner or the swish of a tail as she dives for cover under a bush. She still has a habit of disappearing into dark corners of people's coal sheds and cellars when frightened. A legacy of her early life no doubt. So many times has the little cat nearly 'had her chips' that it was appropriate that she should be called by that name. She was one of the lucky ones; she fell among friends, but the less fortunate continue to scratch on rubbish heaps and raid dustbins, the down and outs of the feline world, unwanted and unloved.

MALCOLM'S DAY by Heather Smith

4am—Wake up, grunt and nibble myself for a while before deciding I must get up for a wee-wee. Crash about looking for dirt-tray, trampling on various comatose bodies – human and feline – en route.

4.10am—Return to the Earth Mother's bed and sustain nasty shock when dinosaur pyjama case looms at me in the half-light. Sustain even nastier shock when the Earth Mother looms at me in the half-light, threatening me volubly if I walk across her stomach one more time.

7.30am—Glare at the Earth Mother as she attempts to turn off the alarm clock by twisting my left ear.

7.32am—Trail out to kitchen and wonder for the umpteenth time why we have to have that Terry Wogan creature chirruping away every morning. As usual, my breakfast consists of that tasteless low-calorie muck, but while the Earth Mother is cackling at some Woganesque absurdity I manage to whip a few mouthfuls of Miss Spooki's 'Weight-On' Kittydins for the older feline.

8am—How I hate this time of day! The Earth Mother is windmilling round the place, accusing everybody else of wearing her tights, having kittens on her best frock, etc., etc.

9.05am—At last! Had to endure the usual spate of slobbery kisses (you'd never think she'd be back before you'd had time to vomit up a furball) but at last I hear the long-suffering metal box jerking its merry way down the road. Goodness knows what she does for four hours a day, but at least she's doing it somewhere else.

2pm—Crash, bang – she's back. More embarrassing displays of affection, then we all settle down to a late lunch. Purrdie manages to stage a really spectacular poohing session which diverts the Earth Mother while I whip a tuna sandwich. Damn! She's put that mayonnaise stuff in again; if they spread that over the garden I swear I'd never uproot another petunia.

2.30pm—Saunter out into the garden to see what's going on and end up having an unseemly squabble with next door's hearthrug who seems to think he should be allowed to sunbathe on our tin box, in our drive.

2.45-6pm—Hunting. This consists of a series of threatening gestures and noises, all of which can be achieved while sleeping.

6.05pm—Start badgering the Earth Mother who is usually hopelessly behind schedule by this stage. Tea might or might not emerge by 7.30pm depending on whether she's rushing to get finished before Coronation Street.

7.31pm—Storm out after spitting Evening Primrose capsule under toaster. OK, so my fur is a bit on the tatty side, but do I keep ramming things down her throat when her perm's gone wrong?

7.10pm—Manage to infiltrate into next door's lounge and hide behind the settee until they've gone to bed.

10pm—Achieve spectacular result by leaping on to bed while they are watching suspense movie on portable TV.

10.01pm—Ejected from No.6, pursued by slipper and some extremely rude words.

10.02pm—Back home, I nibble a light supper of half a haddock, then make early tracks for bed to make sure I secure the best billet. I love to watch the others squeezing in between me and the wall. I have to say that the poor old Earth Mother isn't quite so agile as she used to be and often complains of cricks in the neck/back/leg, etc., just because she's spent the night clinging to the edge of the bed.

10.23pm—Grind my teeth for a while, to test the Earth Mother's stress level. On low stress days she can stand it for about a minute before she hurls the pillow at me; on bad days, a couple of seconds usually does it.

11pm—Lie awake worrying how much longer I'll be able to cope with life in the fast lane. Resolve to try and slow down a bit from now on. As soon as I've taken this decision, I am aware of a new pressure. Should I get up and go to the dirt-tray now or wait until the Earth Mother has dropped off?



When this lovely pale ginger boy was a kitten, he and his brothers spent most of their time in a cupboard under the stairs of his home in Bedfordshire. Even now, CHARLIE rarely leaves the property and is very shy with strangers but so affectionate with his owner, Julie Robertson.

GROWING CATNIP by Mark Sunlin

Many people prefer to grow catnip themselves rather than buy the dried variety for their cats. This not only provides your cat with a fresher, more potent supply, but extends the catnip experience to your own pleasure in gardening, to say nothing of saving a little money in the bargain.

Pots seem to be the favoured growing medium for catnip, which is fine as long as you remember that a pot's limited root space necessitates fertile soil and, more importantly, very regular watering. A plant growing in open soil can dig deeply into the ground with its roots to seek out water and nutrients but, in the restricted confines of a pot, water quickly dries out, leaving the soil and roots dry a few hours after being watered. This has a tendency to stunt the growth of otherwise-tall-growing plants, such as catnip, rather than causing them to dry up or give other tell-tale evidence of their thirst. A twice-daily watering totalling up to a gallon can bring about a striking increase in growth from such a potted catnip plant in just a few days, indicating just how much it has been held back by insufficient water.



A healthy catnip plant

A catnip plant grows best in an open area with plenty of sunshine. Like the cats who imbibe it, the plant is a sun-worshipper; if grown in the shade, it will even lean *towards* the sun in an effort to soak up the maximum sunshine. When well-tended, a catnip plant can easily reach three to four feet in height and an equal width. It will burst into bloom twice during the summer, sprouting tiny, white flowers which attract bees and (in North America) hummingbirds with their nectar, while the seeds cast off by these flowers are feasted upon by some birds such as sparrows and doves, so you and your cat are not the only ones who will take pleasure in the presence of a catnip plant. (Neither birds nor bees seem zonked out by their catnip treat, however). You can easily collect some seeds for future cultivation by shaking the flowers above a white cloth once they have begun going to seed; but your catnip



Close up of catnip leaves

plant will grow again next year from the same roots.

In the initial stages of growing catnip, it is crucial to surround the plant with a strip of chicken-wire fence measuring about two by nine feet so that, when arranged in a circle, the fencing will create a cat-proof (or should I say cat-resistant) arena two feet high by three feet wide. Otherwise, any cat passing by will be tempted to climb amongst this feline version of Jack's legendary beanstalk to reach the mystic realm and, in so doing, he will likely – although unintentionally – damage the herb . . . hence the fence. Still, there is no reason to frustrate the felines for, with some 200 leaves at full growth, there will be plenty to go around; you might try rationing it by crushing a leaf now and then on the grass near the plant. This will also help stop any more determined cats from climbing the fence since, even with fencing, you can never really put anything entirely beyond a cat!

Should you have an especially good harvest, **Miss Margery Hopkin**, who has been making and selling catnip mice for many years, with the proceeds going to the CPL, is always appreciative of donations of catnip leaves, dried if possible, sent to her at: **20 Quarrydale Avenue, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts NG17 4DS.**

A charming story from Yvonne Burgess:

An English friend who lives in Monaco was saddened to see an elderly woman throwing oranges at a stray, black cat, to keep it away and so she explained that, if she were to befriend it, it would bring her luck, black cats being traditionally lucky.

Gradually, she showed her how to feed it. Now the elderly woman has gained for herself a great companion. What greater luck could there be than that . . . !

* * *

Anne Woof of Carnforth refers to a photograph of feeding strays in the November/December 1993 issue and would like to remind members that, when feeding dried food, the cat **MUST** be seen to drink water with the food.

Group News

COPY DATE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF
THE CAT . . . 13 MAY 1994 and please
remember . . . no more than 200 words.

ALDRIDGE & BROWNHILLS

Thanks to all our supporters who came along to our first anniversary party, on 5 March to see the cats and have a chat. On that day we dedicated our new pen to Mrs Ann Green and would like to thank Mr Green. Also we had an enjoyable day at the Bingley Hall Cat Show, increasing our funds in the process.

Our first three kittens of the season were born appropriately enough, on Mother's Day – one ginger, one tortie, one black and white – no doubt the first of many!

We are still desperate for volunteers; if you can help in any way, please ring Ann on 0922 31108 or Joan on 0922 682005.

ASHFIELD & AMBER VALLEY

We were very pleased to be one of the lucky groups in the 'Fill a Dish' Competition as we were virtually penniless the day the cheque arrived. Many thanks to Gloria Bacon for nominating us. We also wish to thank Joyce Varty for her fantastic collection of catfood at Safeway Supermarket. I don't think I've seen so many happy foster mums and cats.

We will soon be planning our ANNUAL OPEN DAY at Joyce and Diane's, Sherwood, Rotherham Road, Scarcliffe, Derbyshire (near Bolsover), starting at 1 pm on Sunday 5 June. Please contact 0246 825165 if you want further details or if you would like to help us. We hope to see a lot of you on the day.

We are sorry that we had to stop printing our Membership Newsletter: unfortunately, our printing source dried up and commercial costs are beyond our funds at the moment. We hope to consider a new Membership Scheme in the future.

In February we brought in the saddest tom we'd heard of in a long time. He was first seen lying virtually dead in the gutter, having been stoned by the local yobs. Hopefully, he will recover.

Sue Mohammed

ATHERTON WIGAN METRO AREAS

Many grateful thanks to kind, generous supporters: those who contacted us to join our 200 Club, drawn quarterly. If we get full membership, prizes will be over £1,000 each year! We still have many numbers spare. Anyone interested should ring ansaphone 0942 876577 with details of the enquiry and leaving name and address and information will be forwarded.

Others offered sponsorship for more difficult-to-home cats; we are sorting arrangements soon. For Shelley with successful operations on deformed feet and Charles and his battle-scarred ears . . . the sun shines! SUPER NEW HOMES at last!

We have had generous donations to help feral colonies be neutered and fed; thanks to Graham Lomax, Joan Gee, Neil Powell, Christine Gallagher, June Cooney for all their hard work with these; much suffering has been prevented.

Betty Townsend and her fund-raising 'gang' yet again take over Leigh Library Derby Room for yet another Coffee Morning and Vivienne Hatch and friends set up stall selling goods at Northwest Cat Show on the same day. Very best wishes to Joan Molyneux and Sandra Evans for a speedy recovery.

We hope to improve on last year's rehoming of 339 and help many more injured and sick as well as feral colonies. We have met some GREAT PEOPLE . . . thank you!

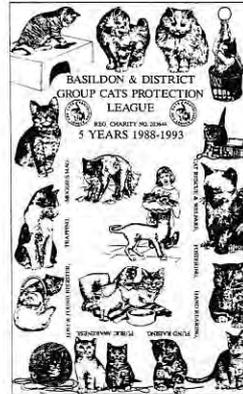
Sandra Anders

BASILDON & DISTRICT

In October last year, our group celebrated its 5th Anniversary and this gave us the opportunity to look back at what

we had achieved. It is quite incredible to discover that we had rehomed over 1300 cats and kittens since we started, but it is also rather sad that there still seems to be an ever increasing number of cats still needing our help. It makes you wonder what used to happen to such cats before we came on the scene.

On a happier note, to commemorate our 5 years, our group has had its own tea towel produced (see illustration). They cost £2.75 each including postage and are available in two colours – sepia print on beige or black print on white. We also have notelets in the same design in sepia only at £1.75 including postage. They have proved quite popular locally. If you would like some of your own please send your order and a cheque for the appropriate amount (payable to CPL Basildon & District Group) to me at 2 Reed Pond Walk, Langdon Hills, Basildon, Essex, SS16 6AX.



Basildon & District Group
tea towel

Local members please look out for our stall in Basildon Town centre, near Toys 'R' Us on Saturday 4 June.

Janet Rouse

BATH

Although we are extremely short of foster homes, homing has been encouragingly brisk of late, thanks to the dedicated efforts of Jeanne Clarke and Eileen Shore.

We have a magnificent, long haired, black boy, three years old and as affectionate as he is beautiful. He is admired by all but needs a home with no other cats and where he will be given regular grooming. Please phone Jeanne on 0225 873196 if you are interested.

Our Spring Air will be held on 7 May from 10 am until 1 pm at The Friends' Meeting House, York Street, right in the centre of Bath, next to the Abbey. Do come and support us if you are in the vicinity.

Linda Reeves

BEDFORD

I am sure other groups are as aware as we are of the need to advertise only the briefest description of a cat which has been found to avoid anyone other than the rightful owners claiming it. Two such attempted thefts have been drawn to our attention in as many months.

In the first instance, a member of the public found an ancient, sick stray and took it to the vet where it was diagnosed as having cat 'flu and a severe chest infection and was treated. The kind lady continued to care for it and advertised, giving colour, sex, age and collar colour and the cat was claimed by someone other than her owner. A week later, thanks to the resourcefulness of another member of the public, she was rescued from a flat where she had been abused and starved and was brought to us. She is now in a permanent foster home where she receives all the TLC she deserves.

The second attempt to claim a cat by a person other than the owner was only thwarted by the alertness of the lady caring for him. NEVER tell enquirers about the stray you have: they must describe what is lost.

M Howard

BEVERLEY & DISTRICT

Hello again, everyone. We are still here, soldiering on despite being badly affected by the human 'flu this winter. The adult cats were well looked after during this period thanks to our chief fosterer, Sheila. Sarah at Pocklington has been very busy helping to get small colonies neutered and adult cats helped and homed.

We are looking forward now to better weather even though that brings problems with the always busy kitten season. With the aid of our small band of helpers, we hope to cope and help if we can in our wide rural area which includes Market Weighton and Pocklington as well as the wider Beverley area.

Earlier this year we were delighted to receive £200 from the 'Fill a Dish' Competition; thank you to Mr S Hawkins of Hounslow for nominating our Group.

With vet and food costs escalating all the time, we are planning fund-raising events for summer and autumn and hope to see our supporters there.

Future events:

- 8 May Stall for National Pet Week, Bishop Burton College
21 May Beverley Pet Cat Show, Minster Parish Hall, Beverley

Please contact me for details or offers of help or homes on 0482 869732.

Joanne Dry

BEXLEY

The first couple of months of 1994 have been kitten-free but as March begins we are taking in pregnant queens, so by the time you read this I'm sure we'll have kittens galore. We've had many enquiries so we are reasonably sure that we will home them all, but it would be nice sometimes to persuade these callers to take an older cat instead.

The bad weather has brought us many strays, often sick or injured, and unfortunately we haven't been able to save them all. As well as these genuine, often sad, cases, many people call us the first time they spot a strange cat and expect us to respond immediately. They sometimes need to be convinced that not every cat is a stray.

I mentioned last year that we had 'adopted' a local recycling centre. We have now received our first cheque from the sale of paper and glass, and the volume collected has been so great that the council has agreed to an additional paper bank, so our share of the proceeds should increase.

Please support us at these future events:

- 14 May Sale, Christ Church, Victoria Road, Erith; 10.30 am to 12 noon
5 June Stalls, Erith Festival, Riverside Gardens; All day.

Norma Nichol

BIRMINGHAM

The Birmingham Group contribution to the March/April magazine from someone other than me will add further fuel to the fire of speculation that I am dead/retired, neither of which is true. This rumour occurs every few years, maybe fanned by wishful thinking, but still inaccurate. It is my unhappy task to say NO to so many of the requests for help that we receive.

The Group is still very much in existence although comprising very few helpers, none in the best of health, three fosterers, and a mere handful of stalwarts who keep the shop going. This is our only source of income as there is no one else to do any other form of fund-raising. Consequently we have to limit our activities.

As our telephone number appears in most directories as well as in the Birmingham Post and Mail Year Book, we have calls from places as far apart as Manchester, Wales, London and all parts of the Midlands, but we have to restrict our activities to the Birmingham area, offering help only to cats therein and never rehoming outside Birmingham.

We hope that people will understand that this policy is dictated by expedience and not by lack of concern.

F Primett

BOSTON & DISTRICT

The night before Christmas Eve, the call came - 50 cats, 24 chickens plus a dog in a derelict building. The owner had had a stroke. Derelict? It was utter squalor! We worked tirelessly over the holiday period to rescue the pitiful animals. Luckily, most survived and many now have loving homes.

Following an appeal, the public helped enormously but our funds have been depleted by the vet bills, feeding, neutering etc., and this came at a time when we were starting work on a new shelter for kittens and pregnant cats. An expensive but very necessary project for us, so . . . any donations towards this would be gratefully appreciated; we'll keep you updated on progress. We have been appalled by the number of pets abandoned recently through owners moving away. Do they never consider the cats' feelings or think how they will survive?

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who helped during our crisis, especially Headquarters, the Holbeach Group for having a fund-raising day for us, and the Waltham Abbey Group for the heated pads and infra-red lights. And a special thank you to our vet, Alistair Mitchell, not only for his expertise but also for his caring attitude and his support over the Christmas period.

Elaine Wallaard



Margaret Hayes took this photograph at a T junction in Adlington, Cheshire when she was visiting the county. There was not a house in sight, let alone a Moggie so how did it get its name?

BOURNEMOUTH

I will start by reminding owners to check their cats' innoculation certificates and make certain they are up to date. Don't wait until puss is on its way to the cattery for the summer hols, only to discover the certificate is out of date! It's a good idea to book the cattery when you book your own holiday. If you are taking a self-catering holiday, NEVER take puss with you but please take him to the cattery. So often they go missing, thus starting up new feral colonies, particularly on holiday camp chalet sites.

We are desperately in need of fosterers, even if just for emergencies; food and litter expenses are paid. Please call Pat Webb on 897044.

We homed 279 cats and 411 kittens in 1993, spayed 225 and neutered 135. 38 cats were put to sleep and 25 returned to owners. We homed more cats in 1993 than the year before but fewer kittens . . . dare I hope our neutering campaign is paying off? We desperately need quality bric-a-brac and jewellery; please send to Diana Pike at address in Register. Thank you for the parcel from Lancashire which bore no address.

Future event:

- 26 May Plant Party at Diane's; 6.30 pm. Please bring and buy a plant.

Viv Worrall

BRAINTREE & DISTRICT

We start with a heart-warming story: our long-stay resident, Sylvester, has now settled in with his new owners at Tiptree and seems to be very happy there. There were doubts by many of us that he would ever be homed because of his looks and disposition but, in the end, there were quite a few offers. Great news! So far this year we have raised nearly £700 from rummage sales etc., and seem set to beat our annual figures again. Let's hope the homing programme has as much success.

Two of our very busy helpers, Tracey and Sharon, are expecting babies this year; this will make three babies to members in less than two years. Nevertheless, we are hoping that both will re-commence cat activities when their babies are a little older, along with their husbands who both come along and assist us in various ways.

Future events:

1 May	Sponsored Walk, Notley area; am
2 May	Stall, Hedingham Fete; pm
15 May	OPEN DAY at the Rescue; 11 am-3 pm
29 May	Fun Day, Halstead, possible Stall.
25 June	Stall, Cressing Fete; pm.

Iris Smith

BURTON-ON-TRENT

The two cats mentioned in our last Group News have been found a very loving home, together. We have since brought two more into our care (or we should say Sue's care) AGAIN – a broken marriage – and happily, these also have been rehomed together.

I received a 'phone call; the young man asked, 'Have you any puppies, please?' I explained that he had 'phoned the CATS Protection League and he said, 'Yes, I know, but have you any puppies please?' It took some while but eventually he was persuaded to take the RSPCA 'phone number . . . but he wasn't too happy about it!

A terrible tragedy happened a few weeks ago because no one wanted to appear interfering. A lady lay dead in her flat for three weeks. When the police eventually broke in, her beloved cat had starved to death. Please, if you know of a disabled or elderly person living alone and have not seen him/her for a few days, chance being accused of interference and CHECK. It could save lives, both human and animal.

In 1993, we helped 1,642 cats, homed 754, neutered 562; veterinary treatment was given to 731 and, sadly, 54 died.

Ivy M Fern

BURY

We are desperately trying to bounce back from the dreadful effects of '93. We are eternally grateful to everyone who sent Christmas donations as, but for their generosity, we would have been out of funds by the end of January. It is heartbreaking that, after 16 years of hard work, our finances and the position of the poor unwanted cats are now worse than they have ever been.

The sponsorship scheme covered the little unhomeables but we would be grateful for more interest for this year with the increasing costs. The donation is £5 a year which includes a picture of your chosen cat. If you can help, please apply to me for details.

We have several fund-raisers booked, one of which is the National Pet Week Fayre at St John's, Parkinsons St, Bury, on 7 May at which Bleakholt, WWF and Greenmount Bird Hospital will be present.

Most recent excuse to be rid of the family cat: 'She is beautiful, spayed and injected, five years old, and not fat but the family have outgrown her.'

Many thanks to the anonymous lady for her donation.

Evelyn Wroe

BURY ST EDMUNDS

A few weeks ago, I received a 'phone call from a sister at the West Suffolk Hospital. They had admitted as an emergency an old gentleman who was very worried about his

cat, Sootie, who was alone in the house with no-one to feed him. I had to drive to the hospital, collect his keys, drive to Lavenham and let myself in to rescue the cat, (hoping that no-one would take me for a burglar, and also that the cat would co-operate!) Luckily, he was very docile and we admitted him to the Cattery. Although he was obviously well-loved, as shown by his owner's concern, the gentleman was too old and ill himself to care for the cat and Sootie was in very bad condition. He is ten years old, and has a liver condition. His general health has improved and he is very friendly, but he will stay with us for the rest of his days and receive lots of TLC.

Future events:

1 May	Open Day, 'Brookfield'
28 May	Sale, Bury Library; 9.15 am-12 noon
30 May	Woolpit Street Fair
11 June	Thurston Fete
12 June	Cockfield Fun Day
18 June	Sale, Bury Library
19 June	Nowton Park Country Fair

Mavis Baker

CALLINGTON & DISTRICT

Thanks to those who sent dinner money for Bisto, whose sticky brown coat is now turning gradually to a shiny black. Armed with Bernard Matthews Turkey Breast, I lure him out from behind the fridge twice daily, an immensely popular routine with the other four resident 'dead-legs' who join the queue and have never had it so good! His blind eye and fear of strangers mean a long stay for Bisto, so he would welcome a regular sponsor, preferably someone in the cold meat trade!

Teddy (Gin-Trap) has recently gone to a kind home and the Fierce Bad Blacks have settled on their smallholding, killing rats with gusto. Our latest rescues include Lulu, living under a bridge across the River Looe; Derry, abandoned at a lonely car park on the cliffs; and Alfie, a ginger kitten with a broken pelvis, being cage-rested to mend his bones, in my sitting room. All await kind homes, as do the 20 cats on our waiting list. Read about the Cornish cats and meet the helpers in our popular Newsletter, available at 65p (inc. postage) for a single copy; or join our Group and receive four copies every year free of charge. Annual subscription is £2.50.

Teresa Dyer

CAMBRIDGE

Our Group has undertaken to neuter about 17 farm cats, some of whom will shortly produce kittens. The alternative is unacceptable action (by the farmers) to reduce their numbers. Pondering on the large vet bill, we will be truly grateful for any contributions.

Over many years Dorice Skeel has been the Lost and Found Officer, providing much sympathy and great efforts for cats and owners. This important role is now taken by Anne Rust, 'phone 0223 862391. Good luck, Anne!

After some reorganization of our growing Group and CPL shop, it is hoped all will enjoy their new roles. However, Judy Webb will continue, as for the last nine years, to render TLC to the handicapped cats, the geriatrics, the 'unhomeables' – except they all do have a home with Judy. This time-consuming work must be done every day, and Judy has an inborn gift for it, and gave up her paid job to do it.

Our shop is in serious need of saleable bric-a-brac, unwanted gifts, household goods. Can local members help? Also, from anywhere, whole or damaged jewellery, earrings, brooches. Group Secretary Janet Andrews performs magical repairs. Please visit the shop, The Catflap, 172, Mill Road, Cambridge.

M Woodhead

CARDIFF

We would like to appeal for a special home for JC a very loving, long haired white male cat with tabby patches, about five years old, who unfortunately has a neck injury

(which is improving) but he needs to wear an Elizabethan collar until it is completely healed.

The remark 'If you care about cats, good intentions are not enough!' made by the Chairman in a Christmas address in *THE CAT*, prompted me to join our local group. If you would like to do the same please send an sae for a complimentary copy of our newsletter to Victoria Smith, 170 Fiddlas Road, Llanishen, Cardiff, CF4 5LZ. Local membership is only £3.50 for four newsletters per year.

If anyone has any spare embroidery silks, or pieces of felt, could you forward them to the above address, so that one of our members can make articles for our Autumn Fayre. Thanks.

Last but not least Kim's eyesight is steadily improving, he only has to see the Specialist after three months; he was going to the Vet's at one time every two weeks!

Future events:

4 May Collection, Central Cardiff
19 May Quiz Evening, Lakelands Club, Cyncoed, Cardiff; 7.30 pm

Diane Allen

CARLISLE AND DISTRICT

We are back! (Well, actually, we've never been away for last year we homed 157 cats and kittens). But our geographical boundary has been changed and during our period of reorganisation our contribution to *THE CAT* was put to one side. However, as we have been explaining to our local members, the cats in our care always came first and none of their needs were overlooked.

February brought us our first kittens needing homes. Needless to say homes were very quickly found. What has happened to the welcome kittenless period when our deserving adults found new and loving homes?

CATFORD

First of all best wishes to all our supporters and helpers. We still need fosterers. If just one cat per individual was fostered it would help. We also need sponsors for our elderly cats. There is Maxi who is black and has kidney problems; Lady with calico markings; she has a hypothyroid; and Slim Jim who jumped on a wall with razor wire along it. His injuries were quite nasty. Slim Jim is a lot fatter now due to tender loving care. We also have a two-year-old named Beauty who has a long term kidney ailment and needs an injection every month. Then there are the feral cats who need feeding. If you can sponsor please contact us.

We would like to make a request for any recent good quality magazines in the higher priced bracket eg women's and camera magazines. Please contact us.

We are still busy fund-raising and will try to keep you updated on events.

Future events:

14 May St Cyprians Hall, Brockley Road, SE4
9 July St Hildas Hall, Courtrai Road, Brockley, SE4

Joan Nightingall

CHELMSFORD & DISTRICT

Thank you, Sybil, for your 'Fill a Dish' nomination. Work on our anti-burglar perimeter fence started recently and we've just re-roofed all the leaking kitten pens.

Watch out for forged £20 notes and forged £1 coins: both very convincing - and very disappointing.

Our saddest case lately was old Timmy whose owner died. He arrived in a trap; we were told he was feral so we released him into a ferals' enclosure. He shot up the wire, fell off and shattered a leg. At that point he turned out to be quite tame. Osteoporosis slowed the healing process and enforced inactivity in an isolation unit made Timmy very depressed. He purred like an engine when fostered out, but a few days later he was found dead. Possibly there was some underlying problem or, most likely, he simply gave up after his owner died despite vet care and TLC.

We're getting an unusual number of stray/unwanted Persians lately, either badly matted or underweight.

We urgently need new sites for some mouse-hungry feral cats.

Future events:

5 May Pet Week Stall & Collection, High Chelmer
21 May Centenary Fayre Stall, Fairfield Recreation Ground, Ingatestone; afternoon

Sarah Hartwell

CHELTENHAM

Ours is a happy tale to tell of Benji, our oldest resident, and Tia, our longest residing cat who were recently homed to a couple who came looking for a young cat to adopt. What luck when they saw and fell in love with these two mature pussy cats. Benji and Tia are happy with their new owners who, we are sure, will care for them and love them for many years to come.

Our most grateful thanks to everyone for kind support, donations and help through the years; without you our Group could never exist to help those poorly and lost cats and kittens who come to us for help; nor would we be able to tell the lovely tale of Benji and Tia and so many more like them. In future months we hope to bring you more of these happy tales.

Future events:

2 May 'May Day' Stall, Woodmancote Playing Fields; 2 pm onwards
7 May National Pet Week Fete, St Mary's Hall, Charlton Kings; 10.30 am-1 pm
30 June Harry & Rosemary Dunsford's Garden Party, 3 Delabere Road; 6.30 pm till dark

R Dunsford

CHESHUNT & WALTHAM CROSS

Thank you to all who have sent donations to help with all our pensioner cats; it is greatly appreciated. We need a home for Pinky, a neutered black and white male, who has had both ear flaps removed due to cancer. He is very affectionate but would like to be the only cat in the household. Any offers?

At the time of writing, the kitten situation has not developed into a deluge; I sincerely hope it stays that way as we still have many young adult cats needing homes. We were delighted with the progress of Prince, a neutered male with only one eye, who had been living in a car breaker's yard for years. He was a real mess, but TLC has turned him into a 'handsome Prince' and he has been rehomed.

Mavis, who used to write our report, still continues to feed the ferals and would be grateful for any donations. We still need Embassy cigarette tokens and petrol tokens (to help us obtain raffle prizes) as well as knitting wool and any saleable items. Please do not forget Kornelia's garden party on Saturday 7 May from 11.30 am. Ring me for details 0707 657876.

Stephanie Duffy

CHESTERFIELD & DISTRICT

First, a big thank you to Friskies Petcare and the donations we received in our hour of need (when aren't we in need?)

At last, we have no small kittens so, hopefully, the older cats will now be given a chance.

Trudie and Suki, my feral cats who have been with me for three years, are coming on wonderfully. Suki even sat on my knee last week, a real tear-jerker I can tell you. Who says a feral can never become a family pet? I am, however, still looking for a sponsor or quiet indoor home for them in our area. If you can offer them lots of TLC, please get in touch with me at 18 Foston Drive, Holme Hall, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S40 4SJ.

More good news: little Mindy can now eat tinned cat food. It has taken nearly two years of special diets and TLC but the outcome has been worth all the tears and effort.

Mr and Mrs Clarke have told me that Dusty, the Dustbin Hole Oldie they adopted, is making excellent progress and

enjoying his first winter indoors and all the love and attention he is now receiving. Let's hope the good news continues; one lives in hope!

Elaine Keen

CHICHESTER

The Group has suffered greatly during the ill health and the sad death of its founder and Co-ordinator, Mrs Carol Pontin, who had worked tirelessly for cats for many years. She was well known throughout the Chichester area and far beyond for her unswerving devotion to all animals and cats in particular. We all miss her. To revive the flagging fortunes of the Group, Handel Communications, the League's PR advisers, liaised closely with Mr Taylor, the Group Treasurer and put out a Press Release calling for volunteers. The work was portrayed quite honestly as the dirty, hazardous and thankless task that it often is.

Emphasis was on the facts that came from Handel's Group Research Project: volunteers nationwide handling annually 847,000 telephone calls, rehoming 76,000 cats, neutering 42,000 and spending 3,703,433 hours caring for cats.

The Press Release was forwarded to every available media outlet in the area and two radio stations and three local newspapers covered the crisis in depth.

As a result, 50 new volunteers came forward and, at a meeting in a local hall, new life was breathed into the Chichester Group which, we hope, will ensure its continued existence. It is early days yet, but hopes are high and the future of the Group looks secure.



AMBER went missing from her home in Doncaster for five days . . . five days which were agony for her owner Mrs Goodwin. Happily, Amber then returned home, starving and smelling somewhat musty, as if she had been locked in a shed or garage, but very happy to be home again.

CHILTERN

As I write this in March, we are still kitten-less (HOORAY), and have a motley collection of adults in foster care: Sophie, a two-year-old black female, almost blind with partial hearing; she is recovering well from the pitiful and emaciated state in which she was found. Di, another black female, aged at least eight years, has been hit by a car at some stage in her life which has left her with weak and mismatched back legs. It still amazes me that we find homes for all these cats, no matter how 'disadvantaged' they are.

Our fund-raising team is busy as usual, and we hope to see you at some of our forthcoming events:

2 May	Chilton House Fete
21 May	Spring Fayre & Cream Teas, Prestwood Village Hall
21 May	Plant & Table Top Sale, Thame Town Hall
31 May	Fete, Princes Risborough
25 June	Bazaar, Thame Town Hall

Sue Lewis

CRAVEN

Cat rehoming is very slow and we have 25 lovely cats waiting for good homes: eight black, ten black and white, three ginger, one tabby and three torties. Some of the cats are timid and need patient owners but these cats are not feral and will make good house pets. Most of our cats are five years old and over and, quite frankly, no one wants them; it's quite depressing.

Although we have a big Town Hall, booking for fund-raising events is nearly impossible; we have had to book Wednesdays in July and August. Our next event is 21 May and we are desperate for goods; we are also having a Raffle and Tombola stall so, hopefully, we should raise a lot of money to restore our depleted funds. Help at this event would be much appreciated if anyone has time to spare.

Thank you to all the CPL members who have donated goods for our sales and sent donations: we appreciate them very much. Best wishes from Craven Group.

Brenda Heaton

CRAWLEY

The year ended with a record number of cats homed, around 100 more than last year. Left in care are the so-called elderly cats. Any one of them would brighten up a home that provided a cosy bed, somewhere to play, a welcoming lap and tasty food. (Ring 0293 516417).

'Diesel' Davey now has a beautiful coat and has settled in well with another young lady cat. Pimpernel was a very weak baby unable even to suck who endured at least two days in a garden. Our Group-sponsored cat, Lelly with the big haunting eyes, immediately took to him revealing an endearing side to her quiet nature. They are now inseparable.

If you live anywhere near us, do come to our next informal **Coffee Morning** on Saturday 21 May at 26 Mill Street, Three Bridges 10 am-1 pm. You can obtain from the same address a book of poems by Catherine Gatland about her Cats, price £2.25 incl p&p.

Also contact us in the County Mall the week of 23 to 28 May and at the Crawley Carnival on Monday 30 May. You will be very welcome.

CREWKERNE & ILMINSTER (formerly MID-SOMERSET)

During the year the running of the Group has been extremely difficult due, not to financial shortages, but to lack of personnel. At one stage we thought we would have to close through lack of volunteers but we decided to continue by restricting our operations to within an approximate 5 mile radius of Seavington. Should any Member in our local area like to help with homing, fostering or fund-raising we would appreciate hearing from you (Tel: 0460 240633).

Our Welfare Officer (Charo Ritchie) has been exceedingly busy with the needs of the local feline community including the catching, neutering and subsequent return of various feral cats to their colonies.

One incident earlier in the year warrants a special mention. A very young kitten was found in a skip in Yeovil and handed in to the Police. They delivered the kitten (escorted by a butch Alsatian) to our Welfare Officer at dead of night in the police van 'sirens going and blue light flashing', so it was reported (a little exaggeration it is felt). The little grey and white kitten was homed after the usual checks on both feline (via the vet) and new owners (via our Welfare Officer) and was named by them Holly. It is reported that both kitten and new owners are doing well.

CROYDON

Unfortunately we have recently been the victims of 'cat-napping'. One of our outdoor cat pens in West Croydon was broken into on the evening of 8 March. Part of a garden fence was damaged in order to gain access to a pen which housed Kitley, an elderly tabby female cat, whose owner had been evicted from his home. Both she and her cat bed were missing between 7.30 pm and 9.30 pm when

her foster mother went to check the cats. Extra security has had to be installed.

Thank you for the petrol vouchers – please keep them coming, as these help us to obtain tombola prizes.

Future events:

- 22 May OPEN DAY, Purley Cattery, 110 Riddlesdown Road, Purley, Surrey; 11 am-5 pm (Bring & Buy, plants, refreshments)
- 11 June Bazaar and Jumble Sale, All Saints Church Hall, Onslow Gardens, Sandstead, Surrey; 2-4 pm
- 18 June OPEN DAY to raise funds for the 'Golden Oldie' cats, 216 Old Lodge Lane, Purley, Surrey; 10.30 am-4.30 pm (Bring & Buy, refreshments)

We would be very grateful for any saleable items. Please contact 081 668 8065 or 081 668 9661. If you live near enough we hope to see you at these events.

Jeanne Harding

DAGENHAM, HAVERING AND REDBRIDGE

A big thank you from Leo to everyone who has written and donated to his treatment. Jennie who is caring for him has given him so many of your hugs, her arms are aching. I can now report that today, Tuesday 8 March, he is undergoing the second operation. This hopefully will allow him to be able to close his eyes. In the next issue we hope to have a photo of the new Leo.

A thank you also to the Great Amwell Branch for their kind donation and HQ for thinking of us.

A happy ending: a very old cat found in the gutter late on Thursday evening was reunited with her grateful owner four nights later.

Linda Curry

DARLINGTON & DISTRICT

I would like to thank Margaret Bright, for writing the article for *THE CAT* over the past two years. Due to ill health, Margaret can no longer continue, so for the time being I will take over.

The Group would like to thank Sarah, Elizabeth, Katie, Katherine, Eleanor, Audrey, Laura, Kate, Laura, Caroline and Mark of St Margaret's C of E Controlled Primary School in Durham, for raising over £99 and collecting 9 tins of cat food for us. WELL DONE.

Our fund-raising team is struggling to keep up with the number of cats. Our first very pregnant lady of the year arrived end of February. The waiting list is still growing at an alarming rate.

We desperately need HELP at Flag Days. Is there any-one in the area that can help?

4 May in BARNARD CASTLE

7 May in DARLINGTON

We also need help at a COFFEE MORNING, to be held at RICHMOND TOWN HALL on THURSDAY 21 July 8.30 am-12.15 pm.

If anyone can help, please contact Beryl on Darlington 314714 or Val on Darlington 377804.

Terry Foster

DERBY & DISTRICT

We are pleased to announce that a member of staff of Neales, auctioneers, has agreed to attend our Victorian Christmas Fair on Saturday 19 November, to identify and value items for members of the public, at a cost of 50p per item.

Once again, Joan Priestley has kindly offered us the use of her garden at Lilac Cottage, Radbourne Common, for our Summer Fair on Saturday 2 July. If you are able to donate any items for sale/raffle, ie cakes, biscuits, bric-a-brac etc., please get in touch with Samantha Legg on Derby 281243 to arrange collection/delivery.

We have now joined forces with Derby City Council Environmental Services Department, who operate the dog

warden scheme in the city. At present they run a voucher system whereby people on low income can have their dogs neutered/spayed. They have now offered to run a similar scheme for cats. Derby Branch will be paying the vet bills but they will organise and pay for all advertising, staff etc. We will of course continue to operate our own spaying voucher scheme through the charity shop. We will keep you informed how this new venture is running but in the meantime – thank you, Derby City Council.

Sylvia Plummer

DEREHAM & DISTRICT

The 1994 kitten season began early in February with the admission of a pregnant cat very thin and sneezy; with Rosemary's TLC, mother cat has given birth to healthy kittens and all are progressing well.

For a happy story we have Cindy who was found at about four weeks old, almost dead. Rosemary put her on a hot water bottle and she was fed night and day on evaporated milk. Despite the vet's opinion that she would not survive Cindy has grown into a lovely kitten but, alas, due to cat 'flu she was almost blind. Thanks to the expertise of Dr Long of the Boyce Barn Referral Centre she can now see much better after two operations on her eyes. She is now in a Foster home and plays happily with her toys, watches TV and is much loved by everyone except Emma, their resident cat. Rosemary and Denis are busy with the tickets for our Grand Draw in May and early planning is necessary for the success of the Sandringham Show in July.

Dorothy Crocker

DONCASTER

Thank you to Mrs Olive Dannett for nominating us in the 'Fill a Rescued Cat's Dish' Competition.

At the time of writing we have a number of adult cats awaiting homes, yet our callers only want kittens and are often abusive when we cannot provide them. This can be very depressing. However, recently we have also had some lovely thank you letters from the public. We heard of a couple who had found two kittens in their garden. The kittens were tiny but the couple reared them successfully and decided to keep them. As money was short, these enterprising people decided to take on a paper round to help pay for any veterinary fees. We have offered to pay for neutering as we feel these kind souls have made a real effort to look after the kittens and deserve our support.

Already this year we have neutered or spayed 100 cats, either by voucher assistance or cats which are brought to us for homing. We hope this will go some way to preventing the perennial problem of unwanted kittens.

Our next fund-raising event is our Spring Fayre on Monday 2 May at the New Hall, Bawtry, Doncaster.



BEN lives with his brother BILL and Carol Norwood in Hainault. Now eight years old, the brothers were found abandoned at the age of about four months during the severe winter of 1985/86 and BEN still eats as if he doesn't expect another meal! The handsome ginger and white boy repays his caring owner with love and devotion.

DUNDEE & DISTRICT

The year started well by homing 16 cats and kittens; next day, their places were filled but it did cheer us to see the quality of life improve for so many.

Buddie, who was with us a year, has a super home with Lily giving him the love he needs and the turkey he loves. Our other three 'unhomeables' are now in homes and doing well.

Thanks to Lindsay Kirkehill for rescuing from the snow what had become an outdoor colony; two cats and five kittens are now rehabilitated and all in loving homes. A gorgeous fluffy ginger and white boy who had never lived indoors was terrified; once neutered, he was found a wonderful home with Anne Griffiths' cousin, Jean. As he stayed in hiding for three weeks, she almost gave up but, with a bit of psychology and lots of patience, Bengy has now become a real lap cat. If only more people would give those apparently feral cats a chance, they would be rewarded a hundredfold.

I am back to Crieff once the floods have gone to continue the slow process of trapping; I have driven many hundreds of miles attempting to trap Blackie but she remains unneutered.

If any reader has any spare embroidery threads I would be pleased to use them to do cross-stitch pieces to sell for CPL funds.

Lyn

DUNFERMLINE

Margaret Mills was involved in a rescue bid when a black and white cat was spotted, some 20 feet up under a footbridge over a busy carriageway. Appeals to the Police and Fire Brigade were in vain. C R Smith, the double-glazing company, agreed to help for £20, but then backed down. However, David Howe, a local joiner and one of our members came to the rescue bearing his extension ladder. By this time it was beginning to get dark but puss was still clinging desperately to his perch. Happily a few minutes later they were both back safely on the ground and puss was later restored to his grateful owners.

Another cat to have a lucky escape was found by a motorist on the main Kincardine road. The tiny white kitten was being attacked by crows and was covered with gashes. Fortunately they had not managed to peck out his eyes. He did have trouble with his eyesight however, only being able to see through a small slit in his left eye. This resulted in his walking round in circles. Now, several visits to the Vet later, he has made a complete recovery and has settled happily in a caring home.

Beryl Hunter

EALING

Firstly, I'd just like to say on behalf of the Group a very big thank you to Elizabeth Channon for the wonderful job she did as Co-ordinator. We all know what an exhausting post this is and we're all very grateful to her for doing it.

I've got a couple of pleas for members. First of all, Susie Graham is stepping down from the organisation of the annual auction that's held in November, so we need somebody to store all the prizes and to basically organise the evening itself. If you think you could do it, please get in touch with Susie on 081 997 9588 or Alice. Also, space in a garden for a cat pen where a cat could stay is needed. Again, if you think you could help, please 'phone Alice.

Future events:

7 May & 24 June Information Stall, Ealing Broadway Centre

14 May Event, Christchurch Hall, Ealing Broadway
Michele Jameson

ECCLES & DISTRICT

Note: Date and Location change: Our SPRING FAIR will be held on 21 MAY at: THE RED CROSS CLUB, LARK HILL, THORLEY LANE, TIMPERLEY, from 11 am to 4 pm NOT at Cross Street Chapel on 11 May, as advertised in the last

issue. We apologise for any inconvenience.

We hope to see many of our loyal supporters as well as plenty of new faces. Please join us for goods, crafts, information and fun. For directions, please contact Brenda on 061 904 9498.

Our computerised cats database is now in use. Each cat that we foster has his or her 'vital statistics' entered into the computer. Then, if someone wants a male tabby kitten, or a grey adult female, we can search for the closest match - sort of like a dating agency! When cats are homed, they come off the 'active' list and their information is stored on the homed cats list. Of course, the many cats and kittens that are homed by our dedicated fosterers and homing officers wouldn't be at all impressed by this 'high-tech' stuff; they're just glad for the love and care they receive.

If you can help us in any way, please contact Liz Wells on 061 337 8729.

Wynne Hewitt

ELGIN & DISTRICT

We had a good start to the year with a number of adult cats being re-homed but alas, as they went out more came in. We have three older cats who do not enjoy the company of others and need homes where each will be the only cat. They are just waiting to be loving, faithful companions to some one.

The kittens are starting to arrive but neutering the ferals is paying off and we should have less from that quarter.

We continue to operate and fund-raise with our small but faithful band of helpers. Please can anyone else help in some way - fostering, home-checking, fund-raising, perhaps?

Future events:

14 May Coffee Morning, Forres
4 June FLAG DAY, Lossiemouth
1 May & 5 June Car Boot Sales, Fochabers.

All bric-a-brac gratefully received; please 'phone 0542 850270 for collection.

If anyone can spare an hour or so to help, we would love to hear from you.

Erica Clayton

ELTHAM, SIDCUP & DISTRICT

We are now well into our second six months of our own Neutering and Spaying campaign with about another 25,000 homes to leaflet. We have been leafleting via our local free newspaper, *The News Shopper*, with very encouraging results. Those estates where free newspapers aren't delivered, we have started to hand deliver ourselves. Of course this means a great deal more to-ing and fro-ing and this is where our new van has come into its own. In a recent month, Steve Trayfoot, our main driver, together with his wife Jacqui, took in for neutering and spaying, 82 cats; and this was not including various road accidents and emergency call-outs they were asked to deal with.

We realise that there are many HQ members in our area who do not belong to our Branch and we wonder, if you are one of them, would you be interested in your local branch's activities? We have our own quarterly Newsletter with all the local news, fund-raising events, stories and items of interest. If you would like to join our Branch (£2.50 for HQ members) and receive our quarterly Newsletter, please write to our Membership Secretary, Sue Kelly, 354 Well Hall Road, Eltham, SE9 6UE.

Jennifer Orme

EXETER

It is with deep sadness we record the recent death of KIM SEATHERTON, youngest son of Sandra, the Warden at Axhayes. I am sure you would all want me to send our sincere sympathy to the whole family on their tragic loss.

Fund-raising got 1994 off to a brisk start with 16 major events already in the pipeline. Bev's Coffee Morning was very well attended and had the added advantage of the

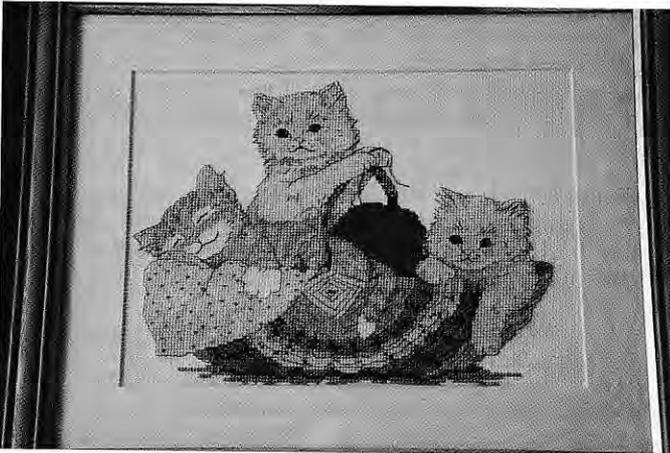
community centre free of charge. Mr and Mrs Cooksey senior's Cheese and Wine Party also went with a swing with 50 people turning up virtually hours before the snow and siberian gales set in. Many thanks to Bev and Julie for their catering and to Stella, Carole and Sheila for their culinary contributions. Supper for 50 is not to be undertaken lightly.

The local paper is offering free advertisements and John is well away having already raised £1,000 during January/February. The monies raised have already been spent with an extension to Sally Ann's Cattery at Tiverton plus a new answering machine. We won't go into details of what happened to the old one; suffice it to say a certain feline is in disgrace.

We are now looking forward to our next event at 'The Cat & Fiddle', the annual Coffee Morning at Dawlish and planning for the major summer event - AXHAYES OPEN DAY.

Margaret Cooksey

FARNHAM & DISTRICT



One of our local members has donated this needlepoint picture to help our funds, and we thought the best way would be try the idea that the Worcester Group had last year when they asked for bids for a framed portrait done by a local artist. We are therefore asking for bids over £50 for this picture, which measures 16" x 13" (materials cost £45). The frame is a russet-golden brown and the kittens are beige, the one asleep being grey/white; the wool is green and the basket beige, red and blue. The rug is yellow with blue spots, and the background white. It has taken six months to work this lovely picture. Bids should be sent to Diana Avenell, 17 Sheephouse, Farnham, Surrey (Tel: 0252 726990) to arrive not later than 30 June, 1994. A superb present for any cat-lover!

Rhoda Young

FOREST OF DEAN

Lots of thank yous to HQ for the magnificent grant which gave an enormous boost not only to our dwindling funds but also our morale. It always seems harder to find the energy to fund-raise in the winter.

However, by the time you read this, the Spring will be well and truly here and we already have our Sales for the year planned. The dates will be published in our local newsletter, *Pawprints*, but we need your help in finding something to sell! Jumble is welcome but we would really appreciate some unwanted presents, bric-a-brac, hand-crafts for which we can ask a good price. Come on, Foresters, what can you find lurking in the spare bedroom, the garden shed, the cupboard on the landing?! The kitten season approaches and we will need all the cash we can get to rescue as many of the unwanted as possible. Collection can be arranged, if it helps.

We have started the year without kittens so the adults have benefited from this. It's surprising how many people will fall for a cat when there's no kitten there to distract them! Long may it last!

Sara

FRAMLINGHAM & SAXMUNDHAM

We were lucky enough to rehome 750 cats/kittens and helped 356 last year; no wonder we were all shattered by Christmas. Last year we had a short break but not this year.

We are dealing with three feral colonies, and have just been told of another. Is there anyone in our area who could give a home to a beautiful but timid cat, who needs a home without children or dogs? Also some who need outside homes with food and shelter? If you can help, please contact us on 0728 603697.

We have a busy year of fund-raising planned, but we do need more help with our fund-raising events; if there are any Headquarters members with a few hours to spare you would be very welcome.

We are also looking for someone, perhaps retired, who could take over the fund-raising, leaving us more time to look after the homeless cats in our care.

We are running our Grand Draw again this year, with a first prize of £50, to be drawn at our Autumn Fayre at Otley in September. Tickets 20p each, £1 a book; if anyone would like to support us, contact me on 0728 603697.

Nancy

FRIENDS OF CARDYKE FARM SHELTER

By the time you read this, we will have completed the furnishing of the Vet's Surgery at the Shelter. No more stressful journeys for the cats when treatment is required; now our long-suffering vet will have to do the travelling!

From our last report: Tigger, our 17 year old rescued cat has found a home. His new mum reports that she is a bad tempered old lady but she is very fond of Tigger all the same. Rodger is now old enough for his operation. He was found to be male (at least we got the name right!) and has had microsurgery on his bottom and is now normal; apart from a chronic eye problem, he is all right.

Future events:

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 7 May | Summer Bazaar, Clarkston Halls, Clarkston; Helpers and Goods 9 am; Public 11 am |
| 11 June | Social Afternoon, Renfield St Steven's Church Centre, Bath Street, Glasgow; 2-4 pm |

We need all the help and goods we can get for our Bazaar; please come along, bring any goods you have and introduce yourself. Baking most welcome.

If you would just prefer a chat with cat-mad people, come along to our Social Afternoon - tea and goodies supplied.

Cathy Duncan

FRIENDS OF THE JOSEPHINE FRYER SHELTER

After a favourable start in January there has been a major drop in homing and a large increase in our waiting list. Although enquiries are still coming in at a steady rate, 95% want kittens and the majority of them will not even consider an older cat. If only people realised how much love and affection and companionship one can get from an older cat who can also be just as playful as a young kitten.

It is with deep sadness that the Friends learnt of the sudden and untimely death of Ted Jones whilst on an extended holiday to his daughter in New Zealand with his wife, Nora. Ted and Nora have been staunch supporters of both the Shelter and the CPL for many years, homechecking, helping find lost cats, collecting and storing jumble, helping out at our fairs and photographing our 'guests'. We have since learned that some of Ted's photographs are being used by Headquarters in educational leaflets on the rearing of kittens.

Future events:

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 2 May | Kingston Fayre, Fairfield, Kingston upon Thames |
| 21 May | Spring Fayre, New Malden Methodist Church Hall, 10 am-12 noon |
| 9 July | New Malden Craft Fair, New Malden High Street |

Lin Leary

FRIENDS OF MABEL JENKINS SHELTER

It looks as though we are going to have a very busy year on our hands. Our homing and acceptance figures are well up on last year.

Our first litter of 1994 was born this very morning and I am pleased to say that mother and four babies are doing very well.

We have dealt with a number of feral colonies recently: 38 cats have been trapped, neutered and safely returned to sites where concerned and kindly people have offered to continue feeding them.

Last month we had the unpleasant task of collecting a pregnant cat from a nearby housing estate. She had been mauled by a large dog who had been let off his lead on purpose by three boys all under the age of 11. Because of her size and weight she was unable to clear the fence and sadly died a horrible death on the way to the vets. We managed to contact her owners, who were not overly concerned as to her fate.

Thank you to all the cat lovers who have supported our shelter, donating food, blankets, newspapers and unwanted items for our fetes etc. Please keep them coming.

Jenny Anderson

FRIENDS OF NEREA DE CLIFFORD MEMORIAL SHELTER

Agatha, sadly one of six cats found confined with their dead owner for 12 days is now in safe hands, enjoying the spring sunshine scampering among the trees at Haselmere Shelter with her many compatriots.

On a more cheerful note, we would like to welcome our new group Co-ordinator Jean Lambert, responsible for many marvellous prints depicting the myriad of cats cared for at the Shelter. Jean has brought with her a wealth of new ideas and her immense enthusiasm is very infectious among the other members of the group.

Tigger (pictured below), who is an extremely charming and beautiful tabby, seven years old and no longer wanted by his owners, would dearly love a caring home.



TIGGER

With that touch of spring in the air and hopefully the promise of more to come, if anyone would like to organise (with the group's help) a barbecue or garden party or any similar get-together to help raise funds and also to meet up with old and make new friends, we would love to hear from you.

Sheila Luke

FRIENDS OF THE NORTH LONDON SHELTER

Many North London Members will remember Elizabeth Hoey, a long-standing member of CPL, who was active at the Shelter for many years who died on 23 January. Our Co-ordinator, June Treble has resigned after 15 years association with the Shelter; the new Co-ordinator is Fraser Wright, address at the back of *THE CAT*.

Our contribution to National Pet Week will be a stall at the Islington Environmental Festival at Highbury Fields on

1 May. Please come along if you can. We are now hoping to hold our annual Bazaar on 15 October. More details later.

Installation of the air conditioning in the centre room is now complete; our thanks to Lin and Lynn who came in one Sunday and cleaned-up. A recent admission to the Shelter has been a young ginger and white cat, with a large abscess and its back legs covered in tar. His back legs have had to be shaved so he looks a sorry sight. Fortunately, he is now well on the road to recovery.

Ann Wright

FRIENDS OF RIVERSIDE SHELTER

The Pensioners' Pen at Riverside has been worth its weight in gold. The cats who live in it are very happy and contented. We have done a few repairs over the winter months, and we have had to have a new floor put in the summer house. The whole enclosure could do with a wood preserver before the winter. There is quite a large area of grass, and this is looking somewhat patchy; some of the cats get lazy and decide that the grass needs watering and so, eventually, a large burnt-out area appears. We will almost certainly have to turf some of it, soon. Any help would be appreciated.

We are looking forward to our Plant Sale at the shelter, which will last just over a week. Everyone has worked hard to produce well over a thousand shrubs, conifers and climbers. There will be bedding plants, pot plants such as fuchsias and geraniums, alpines and heathers, houseplants - in fact, you name it and we've got it. All funds raised will go towards the new surgery here.

Don't go to the garden centre this spring for all your plants, come here. We'll have just what you want and more. **The Plant Centre** will be open from **11 am until 4 pm**, from **14 May to 22 May**. See you there.

Future events:

20 May	Downham Market Charity Stall, 8.30 am-12.30 pm
10 June	Downham Market Charity Stall, 8.30 am-12.30 pm
19 June	Riding for disabled - Wallington Hall, 11 am-6 pm
29 June-2 July	Rose Fair, Wisbech Museum Square, all day
15 July	Downham Market Charity Stall, 8.30 am-12.30 pm
19-21 July	East of England Show, all day
24 July	Open Day, Riverside Shelter, 1 pm-4 pm

GLASGOW

The beginning of the year has been very quiet with very few kittens about. Maybe the 471 cats we neutered last year helped a little, as most of these were from feral colonies. We have had a steady turnover of older cats homed, which is mostly due to the adverts displayed by our members and by word of mouth. Thank you everyone.

By the time you read this we will have had our spring bazaar and hopefully set the year off to a good start financially. There will also be a **May Bazaar** held at the **Hillhead Library**, Byres Road, Glasgow on **Saturday, 14 May, 11 am to 4 pm**.

I am sure the Glasgow Branch Members would agree with me that the new style local newsletter is very pleasing to the eye. David, our Chairman, has made a good job of it. Any Headquarters members wishing also to have a local membership with the Glasgow Branch and receive a copy of our newsletter price £5 issued six times a year, telephone 0236 875497 leaving your details or write to me (address at the back of *THE CAT*).

Anne Mulligan

GREAT AMWELL & DISTRICT

At last the National spaying scheme seems to be paying dividends as our intake of young kittens has dropped this year. This is the first time for many years that we have not

been over-run with litters of kittens early in the New Year. Vera Mead, who runs our Shelter, was thankful for this fact as she has been working under great strain whilst caring for her husband with a broken hip; despite this she has managed to keep things running smoothly.

Our first Sale will be held on 5 May during National Pet Week and we are now busy collecting rummage and gifts for our raffle and nearly new stalls. Our newsletter sent out in January brought in some donations from a few of our dedicated supporters but in all the response was poor and some Members have not even bothered to renew their yearly subscription. If we can keep going we do need the small yearly Membership fee to help us in our work and new Members to replace those we have lost. We are always grateful for any items to use at our Sales as unwanted gifts, etc, are becoming increasingly short in coming in to us. Please help if you can.

Marion K Phelps

GRIMSBY & DISTRICT

Sorry it's been so long since our last report but it has been very hectic here in Grimsby. As the saying goes, 'it never rains but it pours'; well, it has been a downpour of cats and kittens for the last twelve months. We have never had so many cats in care, plus a waiting list for cats to come in. As new homes are very scarce at the moment, this has been a great strain on our finances. With three major appeals in the area, money from fund-raising has been poor. We are in desperate need of items to sell and people to help. If YOU can help we would appreciate it greatly.

We send thanks to Mrs Cliffe who did a Sponsored Walk for us and to Mrs Vessey whose nomination was successful in the 'Fill a Dish' Competition. Thanks also to all our loyal helpers for their time and effort. There are a lot of thankless jobs and it is nice to know we have a few people on whom we can always depend. No matter how hard it is at times, we all keep plodding on. Best wishes to everyone.

Joyce Baker

HALESOWEN

Our membership scheme got off to a flying start. Our Secretary, Carole, has our first Newsletter off the press and posted to our subscribers. If you would like to join us, please send £2 to Carole Smallwood at the address in the Register. You will get a quarterly newsletter with all the news, stories and events. One of our members, Rona Taylor, has produced a 40 minute video of our cats and kittens, showing the work of our Group and various present and rehomed rescues. It makes an excellent gift for yourself and others.

Rona has also started an adoption scheme for our unhomeable cats. For a minimum of £7 a year, you will get a letter and photograph of 'your' cat. This is ideal for people who are unable to have their own cat but adore them. These cats are featured in the video. If you are interested, please ring Rona on 0384 634510.

Future events:

May	Victorian Street Fayre, Halesowen
12 May	Jumble Sale, St Katherine's Church Hall, Colley Gate
3 July	Sponsored Walk, Haden Hill Park; 10.30 am

Pam Hurlston

HARLOW

Our first year is coming to a close and what a year it has been! We successfully homed Bobby our lovely one-eyed boy after four months of TLC. We've rescued cats that have been left behind when uncaring owners have moved house, and re-united one cat and two kittens that had been brought in as strays; one of the kittens lived five miles from where it was found.

The £200 'Fill a Dish prize' was a welcome surprise; thanks again to Sandra Struthers from Loughton. We also received a cheque from Brussels, which, although it

caused a few hiccups with the bank was a lovely surprise.

Like everyone else, fund-raising is the main headache that never goes away. People were generous at Christmas donating food etc., but our cats need feeding all year. We desperately need good quality bric-a-brac and unwanted gifts to sell. We could also use extra pairs of hands to help out at jumble sales, boot sales etc. Transport to collect or deliver both cats and goods is urgently required.

We wish that there were more reasonably priced CPL goods for sale eg tea towels, mugs, fridge magnets, rubbers, feeding bowls, feeding mats, please HQ.

Towels, blankets, carriers, cat flaps etc. are always welcome, especially when they are delivered to us.

Chris A Archer



'The joy of my life' is how Gill Riggs describes TIGGA who has been her constant companion ever since he was rescued from a car park in Southampton in 1980. He likes to join in at mealtimes but is not very impressed with the slice of bread Gill was intending to eat!

HASTINGS & DISTRICT

We are now in the midst of our planning for future fund-raising events. Mrs Parker's Open Days are always very well attended and prove very rewarding, not only financially with bring and buy, raffles, other games of chance, our usual stalls not to mention delicious home made cakes, but 'homing'. Her next one will be Saturday 28 May at the Shelter, 77 Ashburnham Road, Hastings. I am having a Coffee Morning at 53 Ashburnham Road, Saturday 14 May from 10.30 am to 1 pm and we will be running our usual stall at the Charities Fair at the White Rock Theatre, Hastings, Saturday 18 June.

I end with yet another appeal for saleable goods for our forthcoming events in aid of our beloved furry friends, and repeat my thanks to supportive members. Have a good Summer, hopefully a fine one.

Eileen Emms

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD & BERKHAMSTED

We've got off to a very busy start this year with many 'phone calls asking us to take in cats who have been living as strays for months. A good many of these also needed trapping. We have also had the usual flood of people who claim to be allergic to cats . . . all of a sudden! We get about four calls per day asking for kittens, which of course we do not have at this time of the year.

We have several cats with flea allergies which were untreated until we took them in; they will stay until they grow handsome coats. A 'golden oldie', Cuddles, a tortie over ten years old and thin as a skeleton, came to us this week and needs a kind sponsor to help pay for her special diet. She's so happy to have some warmth, comfort and attention but, being a bit long in the tooth, may have to spend the rest of her days here.

We have a busy time ahead with a hectic schedule of fund-raising activities planned. Anyone wishing to receive a copy of our Group Newsletter and Activities List should contact me on 0442 873578.

We still need more foster homes and can never get too much help.

Margaret von Hoensbroech

HEREFORD

We offer a service where we will send a speaker to local WIs, schools, colleges, clubs, etc. We already have ten talks lined up for this year. Our talk informs them of National CPL and the work we do locally. People don't realise how bad the cat situation is and are often amazed at the stories we have to tell. We have made new friends/members, homed a few more cats and helped with some problems. Although advertising may bring in more problems, having a chance to explain how we work and why we need more donations through doing these talks has brought a lot of positive help. People don't have to be cat lovers to listen to our talks as we also give tips and hints on keeping cats out of your garden – the KIND way of course!

Our fete will be held on **Sunday 21 August**, at **St Martin's Primary School, Ross Road, Hereford**. Many local members may have read about Runcible who has won the 'Best Sheepcat' title in a national competition. He and his 'Mum' will be attending the fete this year. Runcible sounds quite a character so please come along and say hello.

Jean Hazle

HIGH WYCOMBE & GERRARDS CROSS

We have had a hectic fund-raising programme recently with two tin-shakes, a jumble and a tin food collection at Sainsbury's. There we encountered both good humour and ignorance: on the funny side, Dai, who was dressed as a cat, went for a cup of coffee from the thermos in his car boot. As he perched on the edge of the boot, drinking, a man pointed to him and said, 'Puss-in-Boot!' Another man later looked at our 'Food For Needy Cats' sign and said, 'What do you need food for; I thought cats caught birds.' All our cats have strict instructions to catch the hundreds of clever birds who can open both doors to the cat pens!

We are organising a scheme for vaccination vouchers. On arrangement with our vets, anyone adopting a cat from us can pay £15 for a voucher which entitles them to a free vaccination (FIE and FVR) at the said vets.

Future events:

30 April Spring Fayre, St Thomas', Holtspur; 2-5 pm
28 May Market Stall, High Wycombe
9 July Summer Fayre, West Wycombe; 1-5 pm

Lastly, any volunteers to take over running fund-raising for the summer months? Pressure of work forces me on sabbatical.

Ann Hollaway

HOLBEACH & DISTRICT

Good News! We have homed well this year and have very few older cats looking for homes; even Mrs Kipling, a resident of nearly two years, chose a home.

Four-year-old Pud, very large, long haired white with ginger patches, cannot be homed with children as he is a bit of a bully; offers of an understanding home or sponsorship would be appreciated. We would also like sponsorship for a large fighting tom who is FIV positive and will be a lifetime resident. He had no name before coming into CPL care but went straight into a crisp box on a hot pad so it had to be BRANNIGAN, which really suits him.

Best wishes to Pat, our fosterer from Sutton St James who is getting back to normal after an operation.

Future events:

7 May Saturday Spalding Tulip Parade, Stall, Wrights Garage, Pinchbeck Road
8 May Stall, Spalding Cat Show, The Castle Complex, Spalding
27 May Tombola Stall, Food Giant, Wisbech
30 May Stall, Sutton Bridge Country Fair
12 June Stall, Long Sutton Diabetic Society Gala

Day, West Street Playing Field, Long Sutton

26 June

OPEN DAY at Monica's, The White House, Oxcroft Bank, Moulton Chapel; 1.30-4.30 pm. Bumper Draw.

Please come and see us at these events if you are in our area.

Lo Collier

HONITON

Our sincere thanks to Mrs E Bland of South Harrow for nominating our Group in the 'Fill a Rescued Cat's Dish for Christmas'. What a wonderful boost to receive an entirely unexpected cheque for £200!

We begin our regular Saturday morning duty in a local shopping precinct on 1 April. It has become not so much a stall just selling CPL goods, but more an Advice and Information Centre – good for everyone involved.

Our Group's subsidised neutering scheme, in conjunction with our vets, as outlined in the last issue, has proved an outstanding success: dozens of enquiries from people only too glad to receive some financial help, and in many cases they have said they would not have bothered otherwise to have their cats neutered, if they had had to pay the full fees. (We did have one lady who told us not to do too many cats, as, 'there would not be any left'! If only it were that simple...)

If anyone is interested in fostering in our area, please ring me.

Margery Grant

HULL & DISTRICT

JoJo, our long-stay foster cat with both kidney problems and feline leukaemia, has sadly died. He was with us for two years, his last few months being spent happily with a foster mum who gave him the run of her flat and indeed life, who had obviously grown very fond of him and was heartbroken when he had to be put to sleep. May I take this opportunity to thank all the people who sent donations towards JoJo's care, as well as the many people involved in making his last months happy ones.

On a brighter note, we seem to be homing cats as fast as we get them in at the moment; let's hope we keep it up!

Last year we homed 475 cats and kittens, slightly down on the previous year but I think this has been the trend all around the country. Hopefully, 1994 will see an upturn in the fortune of all groups and branches as we brace ourselves for the onslaught of the kitten season. Let's hope our past efforts are starting to pay off with fewer unwanted and abandoned kittens needing our help.

Tracey Christmas

ISLE OF SHEPPEY

Thank you very much to the many members who sent letters and cheques requesting our mugs and tea-clothes advertised in the Jan/Feb magazine; quite a number of you sent 'a little extra' which was very gratefully received. We still have both these items available should more be needed.

We are now starting the busiest time of year: pregnant mums, kittens and unwanted cats are appearing from all directions. Valerie, our Co-ordinator, is working very hard to find places for them all to go, so far with success, but it will not be long before she is telling us to use the back door to her bungalow as the front entrance is blocked by a kitten pen inside the front door!

Fund-raising is going well thank goodness; every opportunity is being taken to have a CPL stall, but we are already making frantic appeals for saleable items, so start turning out your cupboards and attics to keep us topped up. Our Quizzes are still very popular; Ruth is kept busy thinking up new subjects. Any suggestions are welcome. New quiz buffs please write to Mrs R Partis, 337 Leysdown Road, Bay View, Sheerness, Kent ME12 4AR enclosing an SAE and at least 20p and Ruth will send you a copy of our latest competition. I know you will enjoy it.

Eileen Brooker

KETTERING & CORBY

It may seem like never, but you have heard from this Group before, albeit a long time ago. Being such a small group, finding time to write is difficult. Now we hope to have turned a new leaf; a new committee, friendly and enthusiastic brings hope of new ideas and help with old ones.

A bi-monthly Newsletter is in the pipeline and soon a free copy will be sent to all our friends and helpers. If you would like an introductory copy, ring 0536 726999. After that, £6 per year will bring information, news and rescue stories from your local area.

Last year was the slowest ever for rehoming and so, inevitably, fewer cats through our hands; since Christmas though we have homed several adults, some of them long-stayers.

A very special home is needed for two beautiful brothers; as they are very nervous, they need a quiet home together with someone who is willing to be very patient and keep them indoors for as long as it takes to gain their confidence and trust. Any offers for Shakey and Pepsi? Please ring 0536 726999.

Lynn Brown

LEICESTER & DISTRICT

The year has started well for us with a total of 24 cats homed by the middle of February. We were also very pleased to receive a visit from our new Regional Director, Claire Horton. Other welcome arrivals were the neutering vouchers from Headquarters. Thank you to Mrs P A Marshall and Sarah Seymour for the petrol coupons and to Mr and Mrs P Spicer for nominating us in the 'Fill a Dish' Competition and Appeal.

Future events:

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 1 May | FLAG DAY, Pet City, St George's Retail Park |
| 7 May | Coffee Morning, Buckminster Road Baptist Chapel; 10.30 am-12.30 pm |
| 8 May | Pet Blessing Service, St Andrew's Church, Jarrom Street; 2.30 pm. We shall be represented. |
| 11 June | SUMMER FAYRE, Trinity Methodist Church, Narborough Road; 2.30 pm. This is our Big Event . |

If you have any good saleable items you wish to donate, please contact Lesley on Leicester 532025.

Christine Boulter

LINCOLN

During 1993 we rehomed 329 cats and helped a lot more; our thanks to all our helpers and readers of *THE CAT* who have made this possible.

Unfortunately we started 1994 with our Fund-raising Officer, Anne Lett, resigning. Thank you Ann for all your hard work, but pleased to hear that you and your husband Pete (our Rescue Officer) will still be fostering for us.

Allison Still and Sandra Greener have kindly taken on the Fund-raising for us and got off to a grand start on our first Jumble Sale of the year with proceeds of over £200. Thank you to everyone who helped.

We are now starting a Craft Group, so if anyone is interested in joining or can help by donating material, wool, patterns etc, do give us a call on 0522 750423.

We are now desperate for Tombola Prizes so if anyone has any unwanted Xmas presents or is doing Spring Cleaning please think of Lincoln.

Future events:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 30 April | National Pet Week, Pet Day; Drill Hall, Lincoln; 10 am-5 pm |
| 5 May | Body Shop, Lincoln. Talk & Demonstration |
| 9 July | Lincolnshire Cat Club Show |

Chris King

LOUTH & DISTRICT

We had a 'phone call from a lady who had come home

from work to find her new dog shaking her six-month-old kitten in its mouth like a ragdoll . . . for the second time! As she had only just acquired the dog, she asked if we could take the kitten! After an operation to stitch up his tum and a few days on a drip at the local vets, the kitten was taken to a foster home for TLC; he made a full recovery and has just been rehomed.

Then followed a black and white kitten found wandering in the road shaking his head. A visit to the vet confirmed that he was deaf in one ear and had some brain damage. Mary is looking after him and giving him a lot of TLC. We have also had five adult cats, ranging from five to ten years old, handed in as their owners have a new baby. Have any other groups experienced this problem?

Two of the cats we have in care at the moment need sponsors: Fluff, a ten-year-old longhaired tabby and Midnight, a black boy even older; he only has three teeth but is very affectionate. If you would like to sponsor either cat, please ring Jackie on 0507 601492.

Future events:

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 7 May | National Pet Week Coffee Morning, Conoco Room above Louth Library |
| 21 May | Spring Fayre, British Legion Hall. |

Jackie Brocklebank

LUDLOW

We have been so busy with many events, and the shop, which is doing very well. Figures for this last year were very good and the result of lots of hard work.

In September, we held, during National Cat Week, a two-day fund-raising event. Numerous stalls were set up, coffee and light snacks were on sale. A sum in excess of £400 was raised; it was also excellent publicity for us.

Christmas brought coffee mornings with mince pies. On 2 April we are holding the first coffee morning of 94 - for Easter - when the garden will also be open

On 19 June our garden is part of the Secret Gardens of Ludlow scheme for the summer when private gardens are on show to the public. This means more publicity so here's hoping for good weather!

Last but not least, thank you to everyone for support in 1993, and for continued support in 1994.

Caroline Morris

MAIDENHEAD

Firstly many thanks to Mrs Auli Wroe for nominating our Group to receive £200 from the 'Fill a Dish' competition. We have also had various other donations since our last report. If anyone would like to make a small donation we have a cat food collecting bin at the CO-OP Superstore in Slough and also at the KENNEDY Garden Centre, Crown Lane, Farnham Royal.

We have trapped and neutered a mother cat and four large kittens on the Cliveden Estate. They will be returned and looked after. We have also neutered and returned a number of cats in the Slough area.

We have homed 23 adult cats and 7 kittens since our last report but we still have some older cats who are proving difficult to home. We have been informed of 34 lost cats and had quite a few calls about marauding Toms which we followed up.

We will be at the Lion's 'Duck Derby' in Maidenhead on 15 May and at the Holyport Fair on 4 June. We will have CPL goods for sale at both events. Any donations for the Tombola at either event would be gratefully received.

Finally we are holding a display of our work in Burnham Library from 2-20 May.

MANSFIELD & DISTRICT

We are very excited at the moment because we have moved nearer attaining our long-term objective of opening a shelter. Premises have been obtained and soon we hope to start work on ground clearance to enable thirty pens to be installed in pleasant surroundings. The amount of work to be done is daunting but we are optimistic that, by late summer, everything will be in place. The response to

advertisements for a warden was remarkable and, hopefully, he or she will be in post shortly. The shelter is at **Spion Kop, Warsop**. A big 'thank you' to everyone at Headquarters for invaluable help and support.

Life goes on as normal and it is more necessary than ever to raise funds for setting up the shelter and day-to-day running of our normal operations. The kitten season seems to start earlier each year; where are all those people who desperately wanted a kitten at Christmas? We are finding that people are asking us to take cats because they can no longer afford to keep them; a sign of the times I'm afraid.

During National Pet Week it is hoped to have exhibitions in local libraries and vets' surgeries.

Sylvia Marshall

MILTON KEYNES

I read with interest other groups reports of no end to the kitten season. Apart from three at the end of January we were kittenless from the end of October! Perhaps all the neutering we did last year is taking effect (fingers crossed). No doubt that will have changed considerably by the time you read this.

At the time of writing we have in care the fattest cat I have come across. She was a stray who was obviously being fed at several different houses for quite some time before being reported to us. We named her Bessie (after Bessie Bunter) and she is a real gentle giant!

The worst excuse for rehoming I have come across; 'My cat dribbles in her sleep and my wife is very sensitive.' They should meet our sponsor cat Lucky, mentioned in the last issue, who dribbles constantly.

Many thanks to everyone who continues to support us in any way; you are much appreciated and please forgive us if we occasionally forget to say thank you. If you would like to help in any way please call us on 0234 241329.

Sue Springham



PERNOD at full stretch, enjoying the freedom of his garden. He 'adopted' his present owners about five years ago and moved in happily with their 18 year old resident cat. He's very much at home and thoroughly relaxed and contented.

NEWTOWN & DISTRICT

I mentioned in our last report some multi-cat problems we had for the new year. One case of 29 cats is coming along satisfactorily, with all kittens taken in and re-homed and all the adults now neutered. We are taking them in as and when we can, six to date. In another case, kittens have been homed and about ten of the adults neutered. It is so much easier when people co-operate. But some people tell us of a problem, and expect to just sit back and let us do everything. They don't seem to realise we are volunteers with lives, families and work commitments of our own.

OK! moaning over. We've homed quite a few of our adults over the last couple of months; though we do have

45 in care at present we hope to home a few more before the kittens are upon us once more (We've just had our first pregnant puss in).

Thanks again to all who have donated towards Nicky and also sponsors. As Nicky is now homed, we are very grateful to have sponsors for the many long-term cats in our care.

Lesley Taylor

NORTHAMPTON

If the Group ran the feline equivalent of Playboy's 'Pet of the Month', Stubby would certainly have everyone's vote as 'Cat of the Month'. He arrived in chairman Judy Manning's intensive care pens as a six-week-old bundle of bones with an obscenely bulging right eye. Cared for by Judy, his damaged eye removed, it became obvious that Stubby would grow into a handsome grey tabby with a loud purr and love for everyone, even though he had lost most of his tail through sheer human cruelty.

After the horrors of his early life, Stubby deserved a happy future. He was rehomed with a local geriatric nurse who told the patients on her wards about the kitten. The catering staff even held back lunch on the day he was collected so that Stubby could be taken to the hospital to be introduced to the patients who were clamouring to meet him.

Best wishes to Helen Austin. We are delighted that she has agreed to foster, but the changeover means one less fund-raiser. Sandra Garwood will be very pleased, and relieved, to hear from anyone who can spare a few hours each month.

Elisabeth Ellice-Jones

NORTH KENT

Our Charity Shop has been burgled again. This time, the back door was smashed in and it has cost us £200 to replace it. A collection box with money in it was stolen and a bag of money given to us the night before by a Mr Singh. Homer, the stray adopted by the shop last year was so frightened he wouldn't go back into the shop for a while.

We have been homing the older cats coming into care. That's good because the kitten season will soon be with us and then the other cats won't stand a chance of being homed while we have the kittens.

Thank you to everyone who has given us donations and goods to sell in the Shop. Bless you.

Joan Johncock

NORTH LEEDS

We've finally moved!

We had no telephones for two weeks but that didn't stop people managing to find us and turning up on the doorstep with cats in their arms . . . and we had no accommodation! The Shelter site is just a piece of scrub land. It could take six months to build the new shelter so we are equipping our large cellar (an old grain store) to take cats until the main shelter is finished; then the cellar will become the sick bay and annex to the shelter. Our first kittens were born two days ago.

The cellar, sorry! annex, has needed a lot of expensive work especially plumbing but, after 14 years of roughing it, our helpers have now their own well-deserved cloakroom/tearoom. As always, it was just a few dedicated helpers out of all our 250 members who worked their guts out during the move, plus some volunteers who were not even members! We couldn't have managed without them.

Finally, it brought tears to our eyes to see our own and the sponsored cats set paw out of the open door in disbelief after being incarcerated for two and a half years and we remembered the ones who didn't make it.

Rita Bulmer

NOTTINGHAM

One of our Nottingham Branch Committee Members, Mr Phillip Clarke, who deals with all the little feral cats in our area, has thought of a BRILLIANT idea for raising funds. One of his friends, Mr Shaun Handley, has offered

to sleep in one of Mr Clarke's Cat Pens for a night! He would like people to sponsor him, please. He hopes to raise a lot of money for our Funds. We would be most grateful if YOU would sponsor him; please help if you are able.

Our Annual Garden Party at the Willowbrook Catotel, 156, Church Road, Greasley, is to be held on SUNDAY, 26 JUNE this year. Our grateful thanks to Mr and Mrs John Wright for inviting us. Do you remember Connie, the little long haired grey cat who had been in the Shelter for ages? Well, Mr Owen has found her a lovely home at last! She has gone to a delightful lady who will care for her and love her. Thank you to all the kind people who offered her a home; I know that you will be very pleased to hear her good news.

Carol Renwick

OTTERY ST MARY

March sees us with not a kitten in sight but the adult cats keep rolling in. Sid and Ted, entire males and nervous, turned out to be handsome chaps with most attractive personalities. Hanging on for the right home is Leah, a very friendly grey and white four-year-old who is just too talkative for her own good. She would make a super pet for someone who is hard of hearing. And then there's Harry, another ex-entire tom who has seen better days, but who adores humans, particularly his foster-mum Beryl. Unfortunately he hates cats, so we can't even send him to our retirement home. What a worry it all is! A friendly seal-point siamese type found straying in a local village filled the void in two ladies' lives after their beloved seal-point died. Sad that he was lost (or dumped of course) but at least the tale had a happy ending.

This year's **Garden Open Weekend** at **Little Upcott, Marsh Green** is **28-30 May** with CPL and plant stalls, draw and teas. Garden open at other times under the National Gardens Scheme and in aid of the CPL. For details telephone 0404 822797.

Maureen Jones

OXFORD & DISTRICT

We have taken into foster care a very fit 17-year-old, who proceeded to beat up the fosterer's own cats, so she had to be confined until she learned some manners! Another recent arrival, having settled comfortably in his foster home, and proving to be a wonderful pet for young children, took it into his head to hop over the balcony one night - forgetting that he was three floors up (yes, he had been sitting on the balcony for several days). He suffered nothing more than injured dignity, but we are now looking for a permanent bungalow home for him!

We rescued an abandoned oriental, wandering perilously close to the main road and crying piteously, only to be roundly abused several days later and threatened with prosecution for theft by his irate owner, who said she always left him like that - he was used to it. Some so-called cat lovers make me spit.

Still, the grateful majority make all the hard work worthwhile, providing we can keep up the fund-raising efforts.

Future events:

30 April	Oxford Cat Club Non-Pedigree Show, Abbey Hall, Abingdon
1 May	May Day CPL Car Boot Sale, Carterton Community College
7 May	CPL Bazaar to celebrate National Pet Week
11 June	Woodstock Charity Carnival
25 June	Witney Charity Carnival

July or early August on a weekday evening, a fete at a beautiful garden in Letcombe Bassett. Where? Phone 0865 242393 for details of this and all other local CPL activities, or send SAE for our newsletter.

Keith Vincent

PETERBOROUGH & DISTRICT

Thank you to all our fund-raisers who have helped with events since Christmas; it is much appreciated and special

thanks to Maureen, Alison, Jo, Tracey, Lorna, Julie and Reg.

Even though we have many fund-raising events lined up, we have to help so many unfortunate cats that all the money goes and we have nothing left for maintenance of pens, new dishes, sterilising equipment etc. So many cats in our care need sponsoring: many of them are ill or too old for rehoming and we desperately need sponsors for these cats. More information on sponsorship and details of cats can be obtained by sending an SAE to 60 Linnet, Orton Wistow, Peterborough PE2 6XZ. Your help would be much appreciated.

Future events:

7 May & 2 July	Asda Supermarket
14 May	Town Hall, Peterborough
28 May & 18 June	Pet City, Peterborough

Anyone who can offer help with the above, please telephone 0945 700220 or 0733 370508.

Anne Eagle

PICKERING & DISTRICT

Welcome to new friends who, since moving to Rydale area, have contacted us; we are extremely grateful for offers of help. A wonderful bonus to our Group was a £200 cheque from 'Fill a Dish'. What can we say but a sincere thank you and very very much appreciated to Aaron Walton who nominated us.

Work is endless for a variety of reasons: we have beautiful older cats to home; enquiries please from the Rydale area. Caring, loving homes were found for all our 1993 kittens and neutered and spayed cats totalled 255.

High costing but purchased now are two further kitten pens, two more front-loading baskets, valuable equipment which makes life easier for our trappers and a bonus to all our excellent vets who appreciate cats being in these, especially the ferals.

The long-stay, older, badly injured tom has been neutered and restored to health and will soon be returning home to Bulmer village; long may he remain in the countryside he knows and loves. Thanks, Diane, and friends for having him back. Thanks also to all for loyal support in any way; without you, our objectives and goals could not be reached. Let us remember the motto . . . 'we help if we can'.

M Dowson

READING (EAST) & DISTRICT



Johnny Morris with members of Reading (East) & District Group's Committee at the Group's launch.

In January this year the former Reading & District Group was divided to form Reading (East) and Reading (West) Groups. We are extremely grateful to Mr Johnny Morris, CPL Patron, for declaring us well and truly open for business and attending our Launch Day on 19 February. We raised several hundred pounds, collected boxloads of cat

food and had a wonderful, but exhausting, time. Thank you to all our old supporters who joined us for a most rewarding day.

Since then, needless to say, we have been extremely busy. Feral colonies, pregnant cats, RTAs, abandonments and strays all keep us up to the mark.

Please note our new contact telephone number:
0734 310999.

Future events:

- 7 May Jumble Sale, California Ratepayers Hall,
Finchampstead; 2 pm
28 May Sale, Committee Room, Wokingham
Town Hall; 10 am-2.30 pm

We hope to see you there.

Shirley Aubrey

READING (WEST) & DISTRICT

We're having a very promising start to 1994 as homing is going well and we have lots of new enthusiastic fund-raisers that have recently joined our team. However, as they are so quick to sell our goods, we run out fast. We have our big Spring Fayre and Auction coming up Easter Saturday and need some good items to sell at our Open Day in August.

We need lots of funds at present as we have been asked to help with a large colony of feral cats living in the town market. They were originally put there to keep down the rat population but their numbers have got out of hand because no one had the presence of mind to have them neutered first. This we plan to do and remove the kittens and hopefully tame them; however we are always running out of places to home ferals. Does anyone out there in our district have any ideas? For details please ring 0734 482902.

Angela Christopher

RICKMANSWORTH (THREE RIVERS)

Homing and Fund-Raising have started very steadily this year and we hope it will continue. Rosemary and Derek Wenzelul have decided to hold a Photographic Competition again this year and if you would like to take part in PUSSY PAWTRAITS the details are as follows:

Class 1 - kitten under 6 months old; Class 2 - Cat over 6 months old; Class 3 - veteran cats over 10 years old. Prizes in each class - 1st, £15; 2nd, £10; 3rd, £5. The overall winner will receive an additional £10.

Entries are 50p per photograph and your name and address, the name and age of your cat plus the class number you wish to enter should be written on the back. Cheques or Postal Orders should be made payable to The Cats Protection League, Rickmansworth (Three Rivers) Group, and sent to 27 Ashridge Drive, Bricket Wood, St Albans, Herts AL2 3SR, together with a stamped addressed envelope for the return of your photograph(s). Closing date for entries is FRIDAY 26 MAY 1994.

Thank you all for your support and we hope to see as many of you as possible at our events this year. Next date to note: 14 May, Rickmansworth Carnival at the Bury Grounds.

Pat Fineberg

ROCHDALE

We started the year by losing two Committee Members, and another valued member, Margaret White, by her sudden death. Both we, and her feline family miss her terribly. Margaret had seven cats, which came into our care - all pedigrees, six being Persians. We have been very fortunate in finding suitable homes for most, but two blue/cream sisters still need devoted slaves to pamper them!

Buster, our old jaundiced tom, found a new home. He's happily settled in and also slowly changing from his tabby and yellow appearance to a delightful tabby and white gentleman. HOWEVER, yet again we have another elderly cat - a tabby lady - some 14/18 years our Vet reckons. Someone, somewhere is testing our rehoming skills to the limits!!

Our kitten season lasted until after Christmas and started again with two feral litters, one January, the next February, both from the same source - THE Feral Colony of 12 which is now neutered, returned and being fed by a 'pensioner'.

If you live in Middleton/Rochdale and can help our Group in any way please ring Barbara on 0706 353402, or Janet on 0706 46468. For bric-a-brac which is always needed for our weekly market stall, and unwanted gifts for our regular tombolas, please ring Alan on 0706 50113.

Barbara Henry

ROTHERHAM

What a good start to 1994! We have homed 24 adult cats because of the shortage of kittens. Then, February brought nine kittens who were snatched up within hours of our receiving them. A sad story, though, as the mother of one of the kittens was found dead, savaged by dogs.

We would like to say thank you to everyone who sent donations to Bidy who has now fully recovered and has a loving permanent home. Currently in care is a tortoiseshell who was hit by a car before Christmas. She was so nervous that we didn't catch her until February; she now has permanent damage to her front leg and is looking for a quiet, loving family to take care of her. If anyone could sponsor any of our unhomeable cats, please contact Judith, our Co-ordinator.

Thank you to Headquarters for the Grant and vouchers; always needed and much appreciated. Many thanks too to all our volunteers and to Fay who is priceless in her work with needy ferals and welcome to Wendy, our new fosterer (sorry about the smelly one, Wendy!).

Don't forget us if you have any unwanted goods and bric-a-brac to spare. Good luck to all other CPL Groups.

Jackie Lindsey

SHEFFIELD HALLAM

Mrs Margaret Jackson, who died recently, was an active fund-raiser at her fashion parties and helped with our protection scheme for elderly members' cats. Thanks to all who sent donations in her memory.

Thanks to: our fund-raiser Mrs Haywood for a most successful Fashion Show with another planned for June; Mr D Allison for naming us in the Christmas competition; Ms V Herbert of London for selling our goods amongst her colleagues.

Purchase a petshawl (min. donation £1.75 each) or a Kid-dipack (toy and party pack £2, suitable for child up to 7 years) and help to feed a destitute garden cat. SPECIAL BARGAIN UNTIL 1 Sept. Order PARTYFARE PACK £2 (four 3-child party packs) AND GET TWO EXTRA PACKS FREE. Cheques (payable Sheffield Hallam Group) and orders to 68 High Storrs Road, Sheffield S11 7LE.

Our fund-raisers again appeal for Co-op stamps, petrol and cigarette vouchers to help provide raffle prizes.

Vets' bills for the large number of garden cats with which we began to be involved last year, continue to pour in. However a good proportion are now being homed from the gardens, giving great satisfaction to all concerned.

M Leaf

SHETLAND

Our Group continues to be extremely busy; 99 cats and kittens were homed during 1993 and '94 started equally busy. We now have 252 members in our Group so we do feel we have support.

So far, we have not had the violent storms which brought the Braer disaster of January 1993; luckily there were not many lasting bad effects . . . not to the cat population anyway! Fund-raising never stops and new ideas are difficult to find. The annual Photo/Art Competition will be held in March; last year we had over 200 entries and we are hoping for more drawings and paintings this time. The owners (great cat lovers) of the Busta House Hotel, one of the best in Shetland, are letting us stage our Coffee Morning on the premises; that should be good. We shall soon be planning for National Cat Week in September. Last year,

we raised £1,700 during the week from a big Raffle and Social Evening and our local newspaper, *The Shetland Times*, did a super feature on The League.

Among all the stress and hard work, there are always happy endings: Korky, who was discovered abandoned outdoors in a lonely country district when only two days old, was hand-reared and is now a lively, beautiful kitten in a good home.

Margaret Sandison

SHREWSBURY

At last some of our adult cats are finding homes but many callers want kittens. We have been asked to take in several cats from homes with new babies and hope to mount a campaign during National Pet Week to dispel some of the myths regarding cats and babies.

Behind each group is one member who puts in a tremendous amount of hard work keeping the books in order. This is not an easy task but vital if the group is to be kept on the straight and narrow. So on behalf of the group, THANK YOU LYNN for all your hard work.

Yesterday I found a local tom sitting in my kitchen. Bungee, so named because of his flea population, has never been approachable so I was very surprised to find him inside till I saw his head. His right eye bulged out of its socket due to an abscess which went from ear to eye. The wound, about a week old needed cleaning and he is unlikely to regrow fur over this area and his eye has been surgically narrowed. Did some feline instinct tell him where to come for help?

Future events:

4 May & 8 June Sales in the Square, Shrewsbury
7 May Sale, Church Stretton
18 June Stall and Float, Shrewsbury Carnival
25 June Shrewsbury Abbey Fayre and Harlescott Community Fayre

Wendy Penny

SKEGNESS & DISTRICT

Maybe Spring is here at last: the 'phone rings continually with people wanting kittens. Of course we only have adults. Ringworm and leukaemia seem rife this year.

A friend recently driving to London stopped at a lay-by and heard mewing from a litter bin; she found a tiny kitten and took it home. The vet didn't promise much hope but it survived and loves its new home.

Two cats were each homed and returned the next day as they didn't settle! What an example of patience!

Fund-raising is under way and we have many events booked. Hilda Rowson's Coffee Morning raised £160; thank you. The next main Coffee Morning is in Ingoldmells Village Hall on 14 June.

We've had two sad items of news from members. David Williams died suddenly whilst out walking; Jenny, we mourn with you at your loss. Then Frank Field had a heart attack and is in hospital. We wish him well and good wishes go to Betty.

Jeanne Ray

SOUTH SHIELDS & DISTRICT

Our latest lodger is a beautiful little cat of four months whom we have called Baby. Her leg had been broken in three places by horrible children who had used her as a football. Poor little lamb; she was so brave when the vet pinned her leg. Our bill was almost £200; any donations towards this would be gratefully accepted.

We welcome our new helpers, Jane, Steve, Clare and Carol; all are wonderfully enthusiastic and have decided to place CPL displays in all our local Central Libraries. It is a wonderful exercise in PR. I visited one of the displays the other day and just sat back and watched as numerous people took our leaflets and membership forms. I was so impressed and felt very proud of their wonderful efforts.

The warmer weather is now on its way I hope so all our feral babies will go back to the colonies again. I know they

will be happy with their freedom once again.

Sheila E Winton

STAFFORD

Two local newspapers recently ran stories, with photographs, about our Group; we also made a desperate appeal for volunteers. Having done this in the past and having received little or no response, we didn't hold our breath. How wrong we were! June, our Co-ordinator, couldn't believe it when her 'phone started ringing and the callers said, 'I would like to volunteer!' They have been asked to complete a questionnaire stating the activities they wish to volunteer for. So far, I have received 14 completed questionnaires and some of the newcomers have already helped on stalls. I am forming a fund-raising committee with three of the new members and I hope we will now be able to produce more ideas and more funds. Welcome to all the volunteers; you have given us hope.

Future events:

14 May Foreign Food Evening (tickets to be purchased in advance; please ring 0785 214861)
11 June OPEN DAY at Cattery, Briar Patch, Station Road, Haughton; 2-4 pm
18 June FLAG DAY, Stone and Catfood Collection, Gateway, Stone
19 June Afternoon tea at Jane's

An event sheet can be obtained from me, address in the Register.

Cath Keitley

STAMFORD



DENYS

Denys is an example of one of our rescued cats. He was born in 1987, one of a litter of three black boys and one tabby girl. His mother was small, scruffy and grey; his father unknown, probably a large black tom.

Denys was born on a farm, just one of a number of unwanted kittens born every year. His owner decided that the quickest way to get rid of the kittens was to put them in a box and throw them on a bonfire. However, a local woman heard of his idea and managed to persuade him to hand over the mother, whom she kept, and the four kittens, whom she brought to us to try and find homes for them.

The kittens weren't a pretty sight. They had worms, ear mites, diarrhoea, cat 'flu, and were generally undernourished. With treatment they began to improve and seven years on, Denys is an extremely large handsome cat.

He is very affectionate, loves being stroked and the centre of attention. Despite his size he likes to pretend he is starved, and manages to augment his diet with tasty titbits from his doting neighbours.

Without our help, Denys would not be here today.

Deirdre McCumiskey

STOCKPORT

January opened with Stockport Group on TV with

Granada's Community Service Announcements and, as a result, the Group received 160 letters offering help; we hope these will develop into active support.

During National Pet Week we are holding can collections at **Tesco's in Didsbury on Saturday 30 April** and at **Sainsbury's in Stockport on Friday 6 May**. Volunteers are especially needed to help staff the collection at Sainsbury's as it is a Friday and late-night shopping. Last year we collected 900 tins at Sainsbury's so we hope to reach over 1,000 tins this year. Please 'phone Angie on 061 431 9673 if you can help for an hour or two.

After the success of last year's Lottery, we are repeating this with a First Prize of £100 and numerous other prizes. It will be drawn in August so please contact Angie if you can sell tickets for us.

Future events:

7 May	Fair, Woodley Civic Hall
28 May	Fair, All Saints Church Hall, Cheadle Hulme
11 June	Fair, Hazel Grove Civic Hall

Helpers and customers welcome!

Diana Powell

TAMESIDE & DISTRICT

Firstly, we must apologise for the long silence. This is not because there was little to report . . . far from it!

For some time we have needed more room to expand and, finally, last year, we found premises five miles from where we were. We took over in December but there was a lot of work to do (and still is!) but it was possible to move the cats in at the beginning of February. Our vet has his own surgery and recovery room here and is busy catching up with the backlog of neutering caused by the move. The 'unhomeables' have had their 'three weeks house arrest' and have now been released to their obvious delight for they now have fields and barns to explore instead of busy roads; they have started leaving 'thank you offerings' of field mice on the office step!

At the same time, our shop in Ashton moved 200 yards along the road to a new site which offers better facilities.

Obviously, with all this going on we have been very busy fund-raising but still managing to keep up with the day to day business of taking in and homing cats.

Rosemary Picton

TAMWORTH, LICHFIELD & DISTRICT

Homing has been almost non-existent of late; we are taking in more cats than we are homing and we have just had our first litter of kittens. Thank goodness for Shirley's farm where the cats can be free. Some of the cats at Sue's shelter in Lichfield have been penned up for months. As Sue says, 'It's heartbreaking to see the same little faces looking through the wire every morning.'

At the end of January, a local Brownie Pack presented us with a new water heater for the shelter, some cat beds and a lot of cat food. We were very happy to have been chosen as their Christmas Charity. We had some publicity in the local paper and small groups of Brownies visited Shirley's farm where they helped to feed the cats and made a fuss of the friendly ones. We hope to maintain contact with the Brownies, promoting the care of cats and the work of the CPL.

On 16 June, our Group will be 10 years old; we will be celebrating but plans haven't been finalised as yet.

Future events:

30 April	Stall, Tamworth Market
3 May	Stall, Lichfield Craft Market
4 May	Beetle Drive, The Smithfield, Lichfield
7 May	Stall, Ankerside Shopping Centre, Tamworth
30 May	Lichfield Bower Fair
25 June	Shenstone Show

Gail Wainwright

TAUNTON & WELLINGTON

Some better news on the feral front: two of the four long-

term lodgers at our Bradford-on-Tone Shelter have been successfully rehomed. Equally important, this releases precious space for the expected influx of strays and rescues.

A most effective way in which supporters can help at the shelter is by sponsoring a pen; our Co-ordinator, Dawn Mullis, can be contacted on 0823 461527 and will be pleased to supply further details.

Our fund-raising season is now moving into top gear. Help is welcomed at ALL events, but assistance with our **house-to-house collections** from **23-28 May** and our **Taunton FLAG DAY** on **28 May** would be especially useful; please contact Jane Eastman on 0823 270606 if you can lend a hand.

Future events:

30 April	Jumble Sale, Wellington Community Centre; 10 am-12 noon
2 May	Milverton Street Fair
8 May	Animal Roadshow, Wellington RFC; 12 noon-4 pm
30 May	Car Boot Sale, Bishops Hull
18 June	Taunton Summer Fair, Goodland Gardens

Finally, our grateful thanks to Mrs Cree of Porlock who nominated our group for the 'Fill a Dish' draw; we received £200 as a result.

TEESSIDE

Short-term foster homes are URGENTLY needed for cats such as: Sylvester who narrowly missed injury when an enraged wife stabbed her husband and then turned on the cat; or Jasmine who was left behind in a boarded-up house in Hartlepool and fed through the letter box by a concerned neighbour. Our ever-lengthening waiting list will not help in emergencies like these so, please, if you have a spare room and are willing to foster, ring Tina on 0642 534217.

Once again, our sturdy, guaranteed irresistible catnip mice are available at a cost of 95p (inc p&p) from PO Box 6, Yarm, Cleveland.

Future events:

7 & 8 May	Stall, Pets and People Show, Preston Park, Eaglescliffe
15 May	Stall, RSPCA Spring Gala, Great Ayton Animal Home
21 May	May-hem Fayre, Methodist Church Hall, Yarm; 9 am-1 pm
11 June	Stall, Stockton High Street
18 June	Table Top Sale, Sunnyfield House, Guisborough; 9 am-12 noon
25 June	Stall & FLAG DAY, Yarm

We are short of books, bric-a-brac, Tombola prizes . . . and HELPERS! Please ring Hilary on 0642 781853.

Jenny Williams

TELFORD & DISTRICT

After a reasonable start to the year we then seemed to become inundated with cats.

Our local paper ran an article on our plight as a result of which we had many calls offering homes. We now have to sort the good from the bad.

Our special thanks must go to Christa and Gordon for all their hard work and devotion in looking after most of the cats and kittens.

Thanks also must go to Jane, Naomi and our other fosterers for all their hard work and for taking cats in at short notice.

Our fund-raising this year began with an Attic Sale in February, we then had a stand at a cat show at Stafford. Our next event will be another Attic Sale followed by Kids International in May. Grateful thanks must also be given to the many people who provide us with goods to sell and help at all our functions.

Thanks to our friends in Shrewsbury who are holding a Rummage Sale on our behalf.

If any member has any spare wool it will be gratefully received by our Group. A lady kindly knits cat squares for us to sell and she has come to the end of her supply.

Patricia Hobbs

TEWKESBURY, TWYNING & DISTRICT

January and February have been very busy months this year, and I thought it was supposed to be the 'quiet period'!! We were fortunate in homing 40 cats and kittens in January and 23 in February, some of which were long-term residents of 11 months or more. So this was encouraging.

We are just starting on our third feral colony of the year - 12 in number - the previous ones being 10 and 22 respectively. Three of the kittens were born high up in a tree in a squirrel's dray, but Mum brought them down at five weeks of age none the worse for their experience.

One of the feral kittens, 'Spit', now 16 weeks old, is quite an escape artist and I spent four hours recapturing her one evening recently with the aid of a pilchards trail around the garden! (my traps were in use on farms). A spitting, screaming, furious bundle of fur was returned to her pen but not before she had bitten me through my gauntlets. Little horror!!

We have purchased our first Incubator as we had so many kittens to hand-rear last year. Many thanks to one of our Supporters, Miss Belliss, for paying for this for us, and to Nan of the Basildon Group for all her help.

Audrey Spooner

TORRINGTON



Our first sale of 1994, (L to R) Joan Hutchinson, Carolyn Gilbert, Myra Quillon, Valerie Copp

Over Christmas and well into the New Year, our shelter was full to bursting with cats coming in daily; one call was from the police saying five cats had been found in a box. It turned out to be a mum and her kitten with the other adult cats. Happily, after neutering, all have been found new homes and are now experiencing plenty of TLC which they deserve.

Our first fund-raising sale of 1994 was a resounding success, making well over £300 clear profit for the shelter. We send our thanks to helpers and customers alike. Another sale is planned for 26 March which we hope will be an equal success.

Valerie Copp

TRURO AND DISTRICT

The Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday 12 February. John Ashley, in his Treasurer's report, revealed a satisfactory financial state, due to the work of the ladies who manage the shop, and the tireless efforts of Lucy, Carol, Marion and Wendy of the fund-raising committee in organising bazaars, coffee mornings and the like. The annual Christmas Fair held at the City Hall, Truro made a profit of £201 even though space was limited and our stall was wedged into an unwelcoming, draughty corner.

Jill gave a report on her first year as Secretary of the group, a duty thrust upon her at short notice, but undertaken with dedication and enthusiasm.

Christine, our Welfare Officer, reported 161 cats and kittens rehomed during the year. Taking advantage of a quiet spell in January, the cattery has been spring-cleaned, and repainted in readiness for the new arrivals in spring and early summer.

Future event:

30 July Open Day at the Cat Sanctuary, Rosedale, Allet

Eva Ungerson

UCKFIELD, CROWBOROUGH & DISTRICT

A big thank you to all those who contributed to and helped at our Christmas Sale in December; we raised £482.

We have been up and running now as a Group for ten months and are pleased with the initial response, not only for our fund-raising but our 120 strong membership which is increasing all the time.

We are delighted to have erected a shelter at Alan and Pam Baisden's home in Buxted and thank them for their enthusiasm; we look forward to their working with us in looking after the cats that come into our care. If any other members in our area are interested in having a shelter in the garden in order to look after rescued cats, please contact Phil Smith on 0825 762052.

Our FLAG DAY dates are now confirmed as:

2 July Uckfield
6 August Crowborough
3 September Heathfield

If anyone can spare an hour or two to shake a tin for us at any of them we would be most grateful. Please contact me on 0825 762052.

Bev Smith

ULSTER

Our Sale and Auction in February was enjoyable and quite successful, but we are afraid that we have squeezed all our kind contributors dry of antiques. Of course we are grateful for every offering.

Our boutique is short-handed just now. Lily, our champion saleswoman, had a fall in the frosty weather and damaged her hip but, knowing Lily, we're sure she'll be back on the stall in no time. Her sister, Isobel, is a fighter too and she struggles in with the aid of her stick, escorted by Jack who mans the door.

Many thanks to Jacqueline Tunnah for nominating us in the 'Fill a Dish' Christmas Competition and Appeal; the £200 was an unexpected bonus.

A recent outbreak of cat poisoning in a suburb of the city has been very worrying and distressing. We can only hope that the police will track down the perpetrator.

Anne has made splendid progress with her spade preparing a run for long-stay cats to enjoy with safety.

We very much enjoyed meeting Sally Fawcitt, the Regional Director. She had to brave unfriendly weather to visit Northern Ireland. We plan kinder weather for her next visit.

Vera Thompson

UXBRIDGE

We are now able to bring you news of the outcome of our Foreign Coin Collection almost two years ago. Having sorted the coins into the various countries of origin (what a chore!), we deposited them with our Bank who, in turn, passed them to various coin collectors for assessment/calculation. Although we are still getting notified of amounts, so far the total is in the region of £250.

We have an OPEN DAY on 4 June at Helen Packer's, 38 Hill Rise, Ruislip, Middlesex to raise funds towards the cost of a new three pen unit. We look forward to meeting many of the local CPL members and subscribers to our own Group Magazine. More detailed information will be published locally before the event.

On 9 July we will be at Hayes Carnival; hopefully the weather will be kinder to us this year.

If anyone has any bric-a-brac, soft toys, jigsaws (complete) or other saleable items to donate, please contact me on 0895 443637 (evenings only) or Helen Packer on 0895 675556 (day/evenings).

Janet Campbell

WALSALL

We are already in the month of March; what happened to Christmas and the New Year? A mother and a litter of four kittens who are four weeks old are in our care thanks to their kind owners who left them in an outhouse when they

moved. We were called in by the man who bought the house and discovered them. Aren't some people kind! The kind you would like to kick.

I'm pleased to report our white cat called Crystal has a new home and her fur has grown back so there are some happy endings. I am glad to say, Skinny's fur is growing back slowly and he is now looking for a home of his own. Many thanks to those who contributed to both his and Crystal's vet bills; your kind donations were much appreciated.

I would also like to thank those of you who sent items for us to sell; you can rest assured they have all been put to good use. In particular I would like to thank Philip Ring who called and left material for us to make up into items to sell. I was working outside in the pens when Philip called and my husband took a card with a name and address on it. Unfortunately I have mislaid this and am unable to thank him personally. In turn I need to thank Vanessa and her neighbour for their hard work in producing aprons, peg bags, oven gloves etc. from the material. These are being sold on stalls and by helpers in their places of work to raise much needed funds.

What would I do with out you all!

Audrey Woodward

WARRINGTON

We have been busy during the past few months organising our fund-raising events for the year. As a result of a plea in the last edition of *THE CAT* we have been fortunate in enlisting several new volunteers to help us in our efforts. If anybody else in the area has a few hours to spare, particularly at weekends, we would love to hear from them.

Our thanks to Dr Fisk who kindly nominated us in the 'Fill a Dish' competition. With vets bills, food and litter needing to be paid for we are always most grateful for any donations we receive.

Mork & Mindy are six-month-old tabby kittens who need a home. Though they like to be around people, they don't like to be picked up or stroked. Ideally they need to live where they will be given food and shelter with an understanding that they live with you on 'their terms'. I would love to hear from anyone who could offer a home either to the kittens or to one or more of the many lovely cats in our care. Tel: 051 426 8789.

Future events:

21 & 22 May	Birchwood Carnival
4 June	Merseyside Cat Club Show, Kingsway Leisure Centre, Widnes
11 June	Lymm Rose Queen
2 July	Runcorn Carnival

Kath Jones

WATFORD

Firstly apologies for our absence recently: our Chairman, Joyce, has been unwell but is now feeling much better and we wish her a speedy return to good health.

Luckily there have been no real panics during this period. Our re-homing programme is proving successful and we are now awaiting the usual deluge of Spring kittens.

Our fund-raising activities have lapsed a little, but bazaars at St Mary's have been organised for the following dates:

Saturday 28 May
Saturday 25 June
Saturday 30 July

We skip August and the main holiday season to concentrate on the Watford Show in early September (date not published yet).

We hope to see you at some of these events, and would welcome any books, bric-a-brac, white elephant and other unwanted items that we could sell.

Helen Evett

WELLINGBOROUGH & RUSHDEN

Thank you again, Jackie, for nominating our Group in the 'Fill a Dish' competition; a wonderful effort.

For the kind people who wrote and sent donations for

our unhomeable Ricky . . . he has found a home! Miracles never cease and his new owners are delighted with him. Thank you, too, for the other kind donations and offers of sponsorship. (Aren't there some LOVELY people about!). Your photos should be with you soon if you are still waiting.

An advance notice: due to the success of our Cat Photo Competition held last year, we've decided to hold another to coincide with National Cat Week in September, so get snapping! Further details in the next issue.

A very cold weekend in February was amply rewarded when we raised £326 at Tesco and a further £171 on Wellingborough Charity Stall.

We have numerous events planned for the rest of the year, including street collections, carnivals etc. Any helpers out there with some time to spare? We'd love to hear from you.

Heather Smith

WEST CUMBRIA

In a world where compassion so often seems in short supply, we've been overwhelmed by the response to *Eubank's* plight following his mention in our January/February notes. We offer our sincere thanks to the kind folk who have sent donations, written or telephoned about this brave old lad. Dorothy has been very busy during the past few weeks writing thank you letters and sending out photos and Sponsorship Certificates. Thank you all for your kindness and concern. *Eubank's* many wellwishers will be pleased to learn that he's making steady, albeit slow, progress - and he's *still* purring. What a cat!

Our first mummy cat and kittens of the season have arrived. *Mary* is a large tabby/white lady who, despite having lived rough for about three weeks before giving birth, is in excellent condition; she must surely be someone's much-loved pet?

Regarding the tabby and tabby/white cats missing from the Workington/Whitehaven areas, I understand this also happened in Wigton and Lazonby during 1992 and 1993 respectively. Could the same person/s be responsible? Do they know the heartache they cause?

Future event:

4 June FLAG DAY, Whitehaven

Maggie Davis

WINCHESTER & DISTRICT

The Winchester Group would like to take this opportunity to wish the newly-formed Andover Group every success with the running of their group. Good luck!

We are now awaiting the imminent 'kitten season', as, at present, we are relatively quiet, with mostly older, or unwell cats in care. So time is being spent organising new stock, planning fund-raising events, and catching up on paperwork. Has anyone out there got an unwanted computer or word processor, which could be made good use of by our Co-ordinator? If you have one you would like to donate, please contact the Secretary at the address below.

Future events:

Sat 30 April Sale, Popham Airfield

to Mon 2 May

4/5/6 May

Sale and exhibition, Brooks Centre, Winchester

Sat 21 May

Thur 16 June

Wed 27 July

Every Sunday

Lankhills School Fete; 2 pm-4 pm

Sale, St Maurices Covert, Winchester

Sale, Brooks Centre, Winchester

Stall, Worthy Lane Car Boot Sale, Winchester

Please contact me for further information: 97 Firmstone Road, Winchester. Tel: 0962 849201

Debbi Da'Silva-Dias

WOKING

Hello again from Woking Group. We have had a tough year but eventually homed 117 cats and kittens and helped over 220 others with veterinary treatment, neutering, etc.

We welcome new committee member, Helen Bignall, who

has taken over the Lost & Found Register (Tel: 0483 773420) relieving Heather Smith who, up until now, has dealt with most of the calls as well as being Group Treasurer and one of the main fosterers. Our fund-raising efforts last year included a Sponsored Walk (£1,064); Members Open Day (£575); RSPCA Gala (£524); National Show at Olympia (£241); Xmas and CPL Goods (£859) and Car Boot Sales (£623). We do however rely heavily on donations as veterinary and fostering expenses came to over £8,000 for 1993.

Please ring Wendy Swann on 0483 730270 if you would like to take part in our '5 Mile Sponsored Walk' on 10 July, or if you can supply good quality bric-a-brac (we can collect) or can help us as an indoor fosterer in emergencies (especially when the busy kitten season is upon us).

Wendy Swann

WORTHING & DISTRICT

Dorothy Laywoods 'Hope for Ferals' (January/February 1994 issue) prompted me to mention our 'Puss-Puss'. We trapped her in Spring last year with her kittens (still very wild) and took on the challenge of domesticating her. Months of patience eventually paid off and she is now our Cattery mascot. Although basically still feral she is very affectionate and living proof that yes, it *can* be done.

Several casualties: Bracken with an extremely bad head wound; Skippy ten weeks old, dumped in a skip and sadly didn't survive; two very old casualties, 'strays' suffering from neglect and exposure (neither came through their ordeal). Our fosterers continue to do a wonderful job always managing to find that vital extra space. Their pens and homes seem to have elastic walls! We have an average of one unwanted cat a day to add to the list and always have nearly 100 in care, not all homeable so spon-



PUSS-PUSS

sorship is very welcome. Our shop continues to prosper helping to keep pace with our constant vet bills.

Grateful thanks as always to all our enthusiastic supporters and volunteers.

Carole Gordon-Harper

HOW RAGGY DAN BECAME A DANDY

by Joan Calcutt



DANDY

Little did we ever think that the cat that made a regular dash across our garden would one day take over our household.

'There goes that ginger tom again,' was the usual comment. We assumed the many neutered female cats living locally were the main attraction. The fact that they weren't interested didn't seem to deter him. Even in deep snow he still tramped across the garden. We assumed he had a home not too far away and, when we didn't see him for a month, we just thought he'd found more interesting female company.

He re-appeared one dustbin day when I saw him claw open a bag of rubbish awaiting collection to extract a meat bone from among the tins. His previously rakish appearance was now decidedly unkempt and dirty. As Spring blossomed he started sleeping on the shed roof of our next door neighbour but he declined all my approaches by run-

ning off. This didn't surprise me as by now I had heard people shooing him off their property. He had clearly learned to distrust humans.

Things came to a head one day when I saw him on his regular dash across our garden with a section of his coat the length of his body hanging from his side. Thinking he'd probably been in a fight and might need a vet I decided to put food out the next time I saw him. He wouldn't come near it until I returned to the house but, once he was eating, I crept back up the garden in the hope of getting a closer look. Off he shot! However, from that day I put out food for him, starting at the top of the garden and gradually moving it nearer the house. Eventually he started to come at regular times and by mid-summer he would sometimes eat just inside the kitchen, provided the door was left wide open for his escape. Food eaten, he would shoot off as fast as his legs would carry him. By the end of August, although I had many scars and scratches I had managed to pick him up. Four seconds was the longest I ever managed before he struggled to be free. Nevertheless his coat which had eventually come off in a matted mess from both sides of his body was growing again and I decided that if I could get his confidence sufficiently he could be neutered and would then be more willing to move in with us.

We went on holiday at the beginning of October and I arranged for food to be put out each day but on our return he was nowhere to be found and a neighbour said, 'You'll have a shock when you see him, something has happened to his face. He won't even drink.' Somehow we'd never given him a name. The neighbours called him scruff and to us he was Raggy Dan! so I went up our garden calling 'Puss, Puss' all to no avail. It got dark and still no sign of him so, armed with a torch, I went to the neighbours who'd last seen him and asked if I could search their garden. I eventually found him under a hedge in a pitiful state

with an abscess on the side of his face weighing his head over to one side. 'I shouldn't touch him,' was the well meaning advice proffered. He had taken four steps towards me before going down and was clearly too ill to care. I put him into a borrowed carrying cage and took him home. He spent the next three days at the Vets who suggested he neuter him at the same time.

We brought home a very pathetic looking individual with face stitched from mouth to inside the ear and eye closed. His only object initially, to escape from the house. When a relative called next day his question was, 'Why didn't you have it put to sleep?' It took six days before he ventured onto a lap and it was 10 weeks before his face was fully healed so he could venture into the garden.

During that time we learned many of his idiosyncrasies such as his ability to snore so loudly that the television had to be turned up to hear above it. He also has a fixation for shoes, initially wanting to use them as a toilet but, since learning a litter tray is for that sort of thing, he enjoys lying with his front legs down into the toes of a pair of shoes. He

is convinced the three piece suite is for his comfort along with the beds, preferring to settle on whichever duvet is in the sun. He has dog-like qualities of devotion not wanting me out of his sight. If I go into the garden he comes too whether it is to put the washing out or do the gardening; when I go in so does he. If I go upstairs, so does he. He also begs from the table at mealtimes tapping my leg with his paw to remind me of his presence and, if that fails, a paw appears over the edge of the table. He has regained his trust of people and enjoys the company of visitors although he seems to prefer men.

I eventually learned his history: left when his original owners went to live in Ireland. The new householders had agreed to take him on but stayed only a few months and the new people didn't let the cat in so, for more than a year, he had lived by his wits. Still he now lives in well-earned luxury after his ordeal. As for us, we consider the previous owner's loss is our gain. By the way we eventually called him DANDY as that is what he had become from a RAGGY DAN!

JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME by Tommy



TOMMY and JERRY down under

Our move to a new home was not as straightforward as most cats. I'm Tommy the tabby. When I turned up at the Russells in Woking in 1984, they took me in; a trip to the vet sorted me out and I settled down with the other resident cats, Suzi and Miskins. Suzi was all black and an old lady of 11 and Miskins was a six-year-old tabby with a white chest.

The following year, Jerry turned up battered and bruised; a typical fighting tom with long, thin body and big head. A quick trip to the vet fixed him up also and soon his battle scars disappeared. He soon became a happy and contented puss like the rest of us although he was still nervous.

The years went by and both Suzi and Miskins died and were laid to rest in the back garden so there were just two of us left. Tommy and Jerry.

In October 1991 a few visits to the vet had us both wondering because we were not ill; then, a few weeks later we were taken to a cattery near London Airport, right under the flight path, where we were put in a cage together and a nice lady looked after us for an overnight stay.

Next morning a vet looked at us and we were put in separate cubicles for our JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME. Ten minutes drive to the airport and onto a Jumbo with lots of other cats, dogs and even rabbits! Next stop Singapore, 13 hours non-stop, a re-fuel and on another 8 hours to Sydney. We let some passengers off and a few of the cats and dogs and were off again to Melbourne. Into another van and the short trip to our new home.

This can't be right! A Quarantine Station! Listen to those howling dogs! We are placed into a pen together again but

only a concrete floor and an old cardboard box with a piece of sheet in the bottom.

After four days in prison, who's this? Our owners have come to see us. Are we going home? Not yet. Next door, two beautiful Persians look on intently. A few more visits by our owners and our two month sentence is up; we are placed in a travel basket with a blanket with the familiar smell of home, into the car and away from the city north to Shepparton and a new life 'Down Under'.

It's more than a year on and Jerry has been through a bad time; he's had all his back teeth out due to gingivitis, but we're both so happy and contented now and curl up with Paul and Clare each night.

Was that journey all a dream?

MY FIRST RESCUE

One of the best things I have ever done was to join the CPL. It was about supper time; the cooking smelt lovely and I was ready to eat. The front door bell rang and three little girls were on the doorstep. I had rescued their kitten from the main road a long while ago so they knew I loved cats.

'Mummy says there is a person up our road who has four tiny kittens and she is going to throw them out tonight and has shut the mother cat away from them; they are SO tiny!'

Turn off the gas, forget the supper, put on a jacket and rush over to the road nearby.

A very strange mother and daughter came to the door (we have since learned that they have been banned from keeping animals). I asked if I might see the kittens and they took me into a cold, dreary room. There, looking so forlorn in an old box with neither paper nor blanket, were four wee mites about four weeks old. The mother cat was shut out. I asked if I might take the kittens and that, if she would get the mother cat, I would get her spayed. The woman was very reluctant to agree to this but, eventually, the little girls (who had come with me along with their mother) and I brought them to my home. I have four cats of my own so I was able to give the kittens a lovely 'kitten supper' and they all curled up in a bundle and slept through the night. In the morning, the little girls' mother brought the mother cat and it was really touching to see the delight of the kittens when they found the 'milk bar'.

In the meantime, I had 'phoned the CPL Shelter, Axhayes, and Sandra had agreed to take them in. By lunch time, they had been collected and are now having lots of TLC. Thank God for the CPL! How glad I am that I joined.

Muriel Callaway

Letters to the Editor

From: Jackie Schatz
19 Clifford Street
Appleby
Cumbria CA16 6TS

Sir,

We are considering giving a home to a four-month-old tom kitten with an impaired sense of balance.

My vet believes it may have been a lack of oxygen at birth which caused the problem. He was a feral farm kitten and was like this when first seen at the age of eight weeks. The other kittens of the litter were normal.

Dickens has a very unsteady gait: he staggers and falls when moving slowly; however, when moving quickly, he is much more in control. He runs, pounces, climbs and descends stairs and virtually anything else he can get his claws into. He also uses his tray remarkably well, though it has to be an extra large one so he has room to manoeuvre.

I am hoping that other members and veterinary surgeons may have some experience of such a cat as I worry with regard to his future. When this very active kitten stage passes, will he still continue to be as mobile, carefree and happy? At the moment he has real quality of life, but he will naturally become more sedate as he grows. I would like to think he has a normal life expectancy and would be grateful to hear from anyone with an adult cat with similar disability.

From: Jennifer Walley
Hen Bragdy
Bodorgan Estate
Anglesey
Gwynedd LL62 5LW

Sir,

I was interested to read the 'Update on FeLV vaccination' in the January/February 1994 issue of *THE CAT* and wonder if any other members of the CPL have experienced the following.

In September 1992 my two cats, Scamp (now 7) and Smudge (now 5) were vaccinated for the first time with Leucogen at the same time as their other annual boosters. However, after the second dose three weeks later, Scamp developed an irritating patch at the site of the vaccination. At that time he was also having antibiotic injections and tranquiliser injections for the washout of an eye socket which had never completely healed after the removal of an eye the previous year. Scamp eventually scratched a very large bald patch on his shoulder/back but, because of the amount of injections he had received over a period of some months, it was not clear which had caused the irritation.

In September 1993 Scamp and Smudge again received a Leucogen booster along with their other annual boosters and within 24 hours Scamp was again scratching, resulting in another large bald patch which only really healed at the end of November. This was mentioned to our Vet who has made a note that Scamp is to receive no more Leucogen boosters and in fact it is not now possible for me to fit Scamp with a flea collar as this also brings up an irritation. Smudge, fortunately, has suffered no ill effect.

My Vet advised that they would be writing to the manufacturers of Leucogen to find out whether this had occurred to other cats. I am loth to put Scamp through any more aggravation but wonder if Leucocell 2 would have the same effect?

From: Hilary de Silva BVSc(Cey.)
9A Havelock Road
Colombo
Sri Lanka

Sir,



Here are Marigold and Sirisena, a blind couple who live here in Colombo with their cat, Tembo Maama. These old people are desperately poor and are assisted by the British Wives' Welfare Group who appealed to me to spay the cat; I did the operation free.

As you can see, they love their cat very much and somehow contrive to feed her so that her condition seems better than theirs. I have also vaccinated her against rabies and given the tricat vaccine free for I think it very worthwhile as the cat brings them so much joy and affection.

There are many such people who deserve help with their pets. I do not agree with people who maintain that people who are so poor that they cannot even feed themselves properly should not be permitted to have pets. They have not heard that 'man cannot live by bread alone'.

Tembo Maama brings so much light into the dark world of Marigold and Sirisena. Why can't people see how important psychologically it is for such people to have a pet to love and to be loved by?

From: Miss C E Baker
3 Cornwall Road
Bexhill-on-Sea
East Sussex TN39 3JN

Sir,

Ms Sally Dewhirst's Burmese is spraying (January/February 1994 issue) because he is trying to draw her attention to the fact that there is something wrong with his environment; it may be he wants to be the only cat. I have found after many years as a cat person that some cats will spray because it is the only way to tell you that there is something wrong and will you please put it right!

There is a homoeopathic remedy which will probably solve the problem - *staphisagria*. I would advise Ms Dewhirst to obtain the booklet, *Homoeopathic First Aid for Pets* by Christopher Day MA VetMB MRCVS VetFFHom, available from Weleda (UK) Ltd, Heanor Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 8DR, price £1.50. Weleda are suppliers of first class homoeopathic remedies stored the right way in glass bottles. Never buy homoeopathic remedies that are not stored in glass bottles.

From: J E Murphy
5 Raglan Court
Plymouth PL1 4JE

Sir,

In response to Mrs Fordham's letter (January/February 1994) concerning feline interference with security alarms, without a detailed description of the system(s) it is not possible to offer more than a few generalised observations.

The degree of interference depends on the type and siting of the alarm sensors. Typically domestic installations use a combination of:

- a. beam sensors – infra-red or visible light – normally located at heights to prevent intruders climbing over or crawling under – would be activated by a pet passing through the beam. Solution – shut window/door/gate in opening with active beam sensor to prevent pet activation.
- b. pressure pads – unlikely to be activated by the weight of domestic cat.
- c. continuous wiring/window foil/fibre optics – requires the window/wall/fence to be broken – unlikely to be activated by a pet other than by gnawing or scratching.
- d. mechanical open door/window switches – unlikely to be activated by a cat.
- e. passive infra-red detectors – detect changes in ambient room temperature due to body heat – may be activated by a cat. Most modern IR sensors have a sensitivity control which can be adjusted to reduce false alarm rates (including presence of small animals) but this should be used carefully so as not to reduce effectiveness against a well-covered intruder. A better solution is to ensure the cat is excluded from rooms with IR detectors when the house is vacated and the system active. It is also advisable to shut doors to and between rooms fitted with this type of sensor before activating the system.
- f. external 'security' lights – activated by a variety of movement detecting sensors. Likely to be activated, albeit fleetingly, by a cat or other animal. Cats will tend to move quickly to shadow when illuminated by the light so it will not remain on long. Such lights will be activated by welcome visitors, neighbours' pets, wild animals and large birds so should not be a bar to keeping an animal yourself. If CPL advice on keeping cats in at night is followed this solves the problem. These lights are intended to deter intruders approaching the property to make detailed assessments of other security devices; therefore occasional false activations are not only to be expected but may well improve this deterrence value.

In summary, not all detectors are liable to cat activation, and those that are can be avoided by management of a pet's ability to wander about a vacated, alarm-active house.

Should the lady in question have any doubts she should:

- a. contact a reputable security firm; most systems should be annually serviced and the engineer would be best placed to advise which sensors are fitted and where;
- b. offer to cat-sit a neighbour's cat and see what effect this has on the existing system.

Scrapping the system or denial of feline company are extreme and unnecessary solutions.

From: Diana Horsley
13 Old Woods Hill
Torquay
Devon TQ2 7NR

Sir,

After watching the TV programme about the CPL, in which no one was shown offering a donation when either acquiring a 'new' cat, already neutered and

inoculated, or getting rid of cats they couldn't afford to keep, I added up the cost of items listed in the CATS column of my 1992/93 household accounts. (This does not include subscriptions and donations to animal charities).

It was an abnormally expensive *annus horribilis* for me because it included one euthanasia fee in addition to the annual booster inoculations for three cats, plus £33 advertising for a missing elderly cat which was later found dead in a neighbour's garden, and £25 to 'buy' an old, rescued cat that no one else wanted. I also habitually pay for house visits by the vet instead of going to the surgery and I buy cat litter which some people might consider a luxury in this area of gardens and woodland. BUT, the WHOLE LOT, including tinned catfood, averaged only £4.45 per week to keep two or three cats in an unusually expensive year.

It is incomprehensible to me that people deliberately get rid of living creatures on the grounds of expense. I don't know how much a SINGLE cat costs to keep nowadays but surely not more than £3 per week. What else can the person who gets rid of a cat buy with that £3? A packet of cigarettes, perhaps?

From: Margaret Graham
54 School Street
Fraserburgh
Aberdeenshire AB43 5HY

Sir,

Nothing can ease the pain of losing a cat, but I have found that there are two things which make it slightly easier to bear:

1. Have more than one cat; when tragedy happens, the house does not feel so depressingly quiet and empty.
2. Replace the deceased cat as soon as possible. Replace is possibly the wrong word because a new cat would be a new individual, quite different from any previous cat. We love all cats, there are so many needing homes and (albeit sadly) there is now room for another cat.

Like all other cat-people, I have been through bereavement several times and I know that these two measures really help.

From: Miss M R Bellord
17 Salisbury Road
Harpenden
Herts AL5 5AR

Sir,

My cat, Oliver, has used the cat flap quite happily for six years but, a few months ago, he got one paw caught in it. Apparently, he had pushed it open with his paw and then changed his mind; as he withdrew, the flap came down on his paw and the harder he pulled back, the tighter it became.

I was alerted by his yells but had an awful job releasing him because I couldn't get round to the outside to hold him and push the paw forward to slacken the pressure. He was howling with pain and pulling backwards all the time and the flap was jammed so tightly on his paw that I was afraid it would break the bones. Eventually, I managed to free him and minimised the bruising by holding a pad soaked in Witch Hazel round his paw for half an hour; so no harm was done.

However, I am uneasy now about leaving him for long in case it happens again when I am not there. Unfortunately he is a 'paw-pusher' in all circumstances, rather than a 'nose-pusher'. Has anyone else experienced this? Has anyone any suggestions to prevent its happening again?

Can You Tell Me?

Can you help me with the problem of fur pulling?

Anika, a chocolate tortie point Siamese, was acquired just over a year ago through one of the CPL branches; she had a history of four years of having litter after litter of kittens. Now spayed, she shows every sign of enjoying a normal cat life and is most affectionate and delightful. About six months ago, I had to go away for three weeks when she remained at home and was looked after by my very kind neighbour. When I came home, I found the dining room floor strewn with tufts of fur which, at the time, I put down as possibly due to a tussle with a mole which she was said to have killed while I was away (though she seems to be a pretty inefficient hunter, having had scarcely anything else). Since then, she has from time to time pulled out two or three tufts of fur which I find around the house; this usually happens when I am not around but, if I see her beginning to do this, I can tell her in a normal conversational voice not to do it and she stops and does not go back to it. She has sometimes gone two or three weeks without any fur pulling, then it starts again. She always seems to pull from the same place, the right of her spine, quite close to her tail and the fur is sparser there than on the rest of her.

My vet can find no reason why she should be doing this – no fleas – and says that it is not bad enough to do anything about like giving her drugs, and that it is usually due to stress. I cannot think what she has to be stressed about for, since the first time, I have been away for only a week, when she did not pull out any fur.

Janet Carr, Bookham

Innumerable causes have been recorded where cats pull out their fur (or eat wool) if subjected to various kinds of trauma. It is not at all unusual for this to occur when owners go on holiday or, indeed, if sometimes they only go out for the day! The cat thinks the owner has 'gone forever' and its distress is very real. While we do not wish to anthropomorphise, we should nevertheless regard such incident as similar to a mother leaving her child.

In some way, we have to impart to the cat that its owner will return and that it has not been abandoned. This is not always easy, but cats quickly learn words repeatedly used and so owners should talk to them using phrases, 'I shall be back and, on returning, 'I am back'. The word back is learned in connection with the owner leaving but returning. Normal conversation is essential at such times and no owner should ever just be there one minute and then suddenly disappear the next without a word. It is surprising how many words cats learn if they are constantly used.

A cat known to the writer knows the names of several rooms as well as 'upstairs' as its owner has arthritis and cannot pick her up to take her where wanted. She also knows quite a few other words and phrases as well as 'I will be back'.

When a cat has been stressed, as in this case, Denes Herbal Nerve Tablets relax and soothe; they are not drugs. Similarly homoeopathic remedies such as Kali Phos are most helpful but must be prescribed by a vet practising homoeopathic medicine as the dosage must be assessed accurately. Drugs such as valium should never be resorted to, except in exceptional circumstances such as fire outbreak, flood, earthquake or acts of cruelty or, perhaps, pain; there it has its value.

Siamese become particularly attached to their owners and require regular petting and companionship; it is most inadvisable to leave them with neighbours to feed, however kind and well-meaning, so a 'live-in cat sitter' should be considered, unless boarded at a carefully selected cattery. This applies to many of the pedigree breeds of similar temperament. It is one of the reasons for the ever-growing number of pedigree strays; if they are unhappy, they 'leave

home'. Cats are creatures of routine; neglect and loneliness and fear create a string of problems. Where cats must for some reason be left in a house on their own (it is unwise for them to have outdoor freedom due to theft, accident or straying), a radio might be left on, a ticking clock, some heating where appropriate, as well as toys for amusement. Regular visiting at set times, at least twice daily and preferably three times, should be the order of the day; they should be groomed and petted and life made as normal as possible.

★ ★ ★ ★

Years ago, probably before both patented cat food and weed killers came into general usage, a cat would mostly, at the end of a good, long life, die in its sleep. Nowadays, it seems, almost all, if one asks cat owners, die of painful kidney failure. At one time, certain patented foods in the form of dry biscuits, were suspect but this has been taken care of in that cat owners are well instructed to leave water alongside such food.

But, to illustrate the sad instances I have observed in recent years, I have known cats with completely differing diets who still end up dying of kidney failure; most recently, the last of our own cats died last year at the age of 10 and his friend, a neighbour's cat who died the month before of the same complaint. Ours had mostly cooked or raw fish, chicken, chicken liver, turkey, marmite toast, catmint and about six individual biscuits only. The other cat had patent foods and biscuits.

We have neighbours who diligently apply weedkiller on their lawns; the cats have always roamed across these unfenced front lawns and, at a later part of the day, would clean their feet and fur, where they'd previously sunned themselves on the poisoned grass. One therefore concludes that diet is not the cause and that weed killers are strongly suspect. If this is found to be the cause, cannot the use of weed killers be actively discouraged? This English habit of baize-green perfect lawns is unreasonable. The sight of daisies on lawns can be so cheering and, in a drought, clover still survives all green, so why apply these substances which are harmful?

I would really like my questions and theories to be followed up and the cause of these continued unnatural deaths be found.

Joyce N Hamilton, Walton-on-Thames

Mrs Hamilton can rest assured that her concern as to the rising cause of death due to kidney failure in cats is a matter of concern to many.

Unfortunately, we are forced to live in an increasingly polluted environment; not only through air and water pollution, but by a 'cocktail' of chemicals forced upon us from every quarter. It is therefore necessary for the general public to protest!

Fortunately, The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have, in January 1994, published a free leaflet aimed at encouraging the public to report incidents involving pesticides or veterinary medicines. The leaflet explains that incidents occur where people, animals or the environment have been harmed by pesticides or veterinary medicines. It sets out how to go about reporting them.

Copies of 'Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines – Reporting Incidents' are available from:

*HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6FS.
(Tel: 0787 881165; Fax: 0787 313995)*

Cats should, and can, be kept away from harmful chemicals in the home and garden; the majority are not necessary. Most cleaning can be done with hot water, soap and water or soda and water and a little bland detergent such as Fairy Liquid, a product which, if used sparingly, may be used for many purposes (but must be rinsed off dishes). Sprays of various kinds are not necessary and simple,

natural items such as lavender impart a fresh smell to the home. Pure wax polish is harmless, too.

With regard to the garden, many of our most beautiful gardens, open to the public and shown on television, are organically maintained. Neighbours can be asked to say when they are using harmful products so that cats may be kept under control. The worst cases of toxic damage and poisoning occur where cats live near farms and agricultural land.

Where there is a very great temptation to use selective weed killers on lawns, areas should be netted in, a section at a time and animals (and children) kept out until a second or third cutting. Treated in this way, when the entire lawn has been sprayed, it is then very easy to keep them hand-weeded. The chemical mostly used is 2.4.6.D and is toxic to humans as well as animals, particularly to cats. When a fertiliser is necessary, an organic one can be used. Roses can be sprayed with a biological product; soapy water and a few corms of garlic pushed into the ground around the roots, keep most greenfly away.

There is no need to use a slug bait which is highly poisonous to cats. Some small jars of milk or beer let into

the ground around plants attract both slugs and snails; one can purchase 'Slug Bars' for this purpose. It is not generally appreciated that slug baits are responsible for the near extinction of our lovely song birds, particularly the thrush, and have decimated the hedgehog population. With the encouragement of wildlife, there is no need to use chemicals as the balance of nature is maintained.

With regard to the water supply, a growing number of dog and cat owners will not give them tap water but are using either filtered or bottled water due to the high concentration of nitrates and pesticides found in many of the public water supplies.

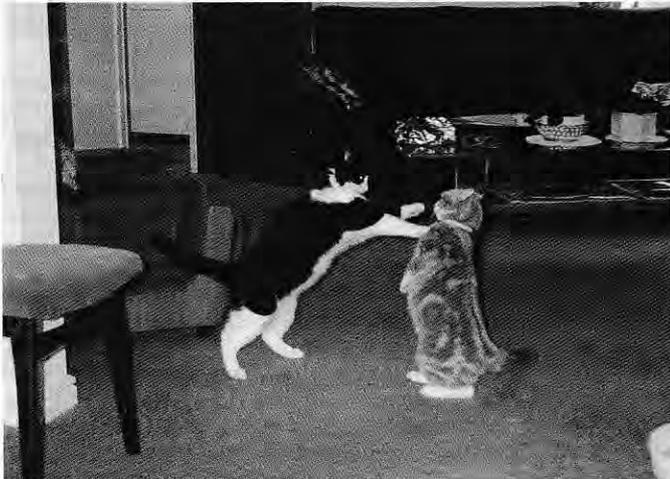
Further suggested reading:

P is for Pesticides by Dr Tim Lang and Dr Charles Clutterbuck (in association with the Pesticides Trust), Ebury Press, £6.99, ISBN 0 85223 968 8.

C for Chemicals by Michael Birkin and Brian Price, The Merlin Press Ltd., £4.99, ISBN 1 85425 027 2.

The Residue Report by Stephanie Lashford (Foreword by Sir Richard Body, Chairman of Consumer Watch), Thorsons Publishing Co., ISBN 0 7225 1481 6.

OSCAR by Eddie and Marjorie Cunningham



Right to the jaw!

Introducing Oscar, who was rescued by his Dad from the Metro tracks at Cullercoats when he was about 6 weeks old. Dad is a Metro driver who, one day was about to leave Cullercoats Station en route for Newcastle at around 8 am, with a Metro train crowded with office workers, schoolchildren et al. Dad saw what he thought was a brown leaf blowing across the end of the platform and then coming to rest in the centre of the tracks. The 'brown leaf' turned out to be a tiny ginger and white kitten which then proceeded to demonstrate its newly learned skill by washing its face without falling over, quite unconcerned that 100 tons of Metro train was about to move over it!

Dad quickly brought the train to a halt, climbed down and approached this tiny scrap of feline indifference, picked it up, climbed back into the driving cab, and parked this minuscule moggy on the window ledge, and set off on his journey to the next stop. The kitten, after a few experimental tune-up screeches then gave a full-blooded howl of indignation/hunger, then crept into Dad's 'bait bag', curled up and quickly fell asleep!

This sleep lasted until Dad arrived home and introduced the newcomer to the other three residents, namely Princess, Raspa, and Boots. It was like dropping a hand grenade into a lions' den! Within seconds this insignificant bundle of high-speed aggression had spat at Boots, chased Princess off her favourite chair and was trying out Raspa's back as an alternative method of transportation!

That day was Mum's birthday so he made a delightful, if

a trifle unexpected present. As Mum is as cat crazy as Dad it was just a second's effortless expenditure of charm to make her his willing slave.

He was named Oscar because he was Wild(e) (!) and now a year later still tries to knock Raspa off his top-cat position with frequent sparring/wrestling matches which always start the same way: mutual grooming, much purring, a few warm-up 'range-finders', then all hell breaks loose!

His latest escapade was to bring in to the house a very lively mouse, which promptly escaped under the piano. Dad obligingly moved the piano so the mouse then decided that the sofa offered safer accommodation. Dad moved the sofa and the mouse legged it behind the bookcase which must weigh several hundredweight. Dad (perspiring mightily) moved the bookcase, Oscar caught the mouse, Dad trapped it in a towel and put it over the back fence, much to Oscar's disappointment but more to Dad's relief!

BRIGHT IDEAS HOMES FOR OLDER CATS

Every issue of *THE CAT* contains sad comments about people's unwillingness to take on an adult cat; they all seem to want kittens!

Our winning 'BRIGHT IDEA' comes this time from Mrs Louise Locock of Oxford who has, over the years, given a home to six adult cats, and finds them invariably loving and happy cats. Mrs Laycock writes:

'We chose adult cats specifically because we were both working and felt we did not have the time needed for a new kitten in need of constant supervision and play. I wonder if people who ask for kittens have thought about this extra commitment to be weighed up against a few weeks of extra cuteness?

I'm sure all CPL groups and branches have tried everything they can think of to steer people towards adult cats instead. My idea is that, every time people request kittens, they be given a leaflet to take away and read; it should explain all the work involved in caring for a new kitten along with reasons why they should wish to consider the benefits of an adult cat instead. 'Kitten candidates' could be given a 'cooling-off' period after receiving the leaflet and be given, if appropriate, a compulsory tour of the adult cats waiting for new homes BEFORE seeing any of the kittens. When I see all the pleading, whiskery faces and hear of their sad histories, I find it hard to resist taking them all home!

A cheque for £20 for Mrs Locock's 'BRIGHT IDEA' has gone to the OXFORD & DISTRICT GROUP at her request.

CAMBRIAN CATS, CATERPILLARS AND CASSOCKS IN THE MERRY MONTH OF MAY

by J A Timms

Over the hills and far away . . . climb the oh-so steep winding, single track lane, where grass grows wide astride two bands of tarmac, until the car groans in disbelief; watch the jumbled edge of pale pink Lady's Smock, as Juliet appears in Prokofiev pirouette; wild strawberry blossom, disarrayed; lemon Welsh poppy heads nodding in salute; cerise campion, white Jack-by-the-hedge peeping in attendance. Travel through the overhanging canopy of forty luscious shades of green, copper beech fountains dripping with mahogany translucence. Pass the confused tangle of honeysuckle mesh entwined with brambles.

Gasp as you eventually overcome the hairpin bend and slice finally through tumbling billows of frothy Queen Anne's Lace, where Titania and Ariel wave their wands; a dangling briar branch taps the screen.

Ascend the steps across the writhing glassy stream, through the iron gate along the ivy-clad path into the meringued 153 year-old beamed cottage, stone walls two feet thick, where once dwelt a parish priest, adjacent a tiny chapel, afront ancient woodland.

Awake at dawn to sweetened birdsong, geese cackling overhead in cacophonous symmetry; step along the verdant lane; imbibe the perfume from the carpeted drifts of a myriad of bluebells; spot the plaqued navelwort, coined lime. From the pinnacle of the mountain, view a passionate tapestry of gunmetal clouds overlaid with turgid sunlit leafiness, from whence the peak sprinkled with sifted icing-sugar sits enthroned above a theatrical mirage of slate blue mountains; follow the wisped wings of seagulled charcoal mist – the very Dragon's breath from Merlin's cave.

Enter the galleyed kitchen; scoop up the multi-coloured tiny cushioned pads of feline fluff to make room for emptiness; let the opener grapple-grind food whilst Lucifer, tempter of The Gang of Four, snow-white bibbed ginger, Pied Piper, solo siren chorister, heralds the lyrical alarm, treads a trail soft, silent through the flap, around the houses, to scramble purposefully through the window, followed by big-boned Barney, paintbrushed mackerel tabby, who settles to a feast of rabbit; Mostyn, sleek, jet, torched amber jewels, shovels fish into his cavern like cement into a mixer; velvet-lined blue Teddy pads impatiently; singed apricot stripy Sandy delves daintily at his dish; old lady white patched black, single toothed Juanita tastes her tray; salted angora Gwen blinks hypnotic iridescent opals eye-

lashed arachnid; mighty marmalade Del, rich rust-encrusted neckchain, appeals with segmented citrus spangles. Pause . . . Contentment. Listen to the silent chomping of sated unison.

Dismay at the bloodstained letter as Lucifer swats a dish, splattering the floor. The Young Ones' springy feet thunder upstairs, bouncing to meet their mistress; two fairy forepaws disarm your shoulders. Focus on the fathomless pools. Carnelian optics ablaze, Lucifer, engine apurr ecstatic, fangs fiendish, grazes your cheeks and chin. An accordion fan opens to reveal Beatrix's indulgence on hindlegs. A peacock plume, perpendicular, approaches. Watch. Worship. Egyptian ornaments, timeless decorate.

Thin lasers of light arrow the veil; gaze beyond horse-chestnut candles at patchworked fields; wonder at the Tinkerbel-capped poppybuds bursting with crumpled chiffon; espy the diamanted silverleaf, ashimmer; Chopin etudes consumptive. Look across bedspreads of dandelion-dotted daisies, dewdropped, threaded through with buttercups; a bumble jersey drones, dancing his betrothal to the gossamer crinolines; Tchaikovsky, tortured, rhapsodies. Bunched Jacob tactiles stand biblical askance, gnarled twisted horns crescented, aside ghosted shepherds.

Visit the wise old man of the mountains, wizened woodturner, millmaker amidst the beacon gorse-scarred tufted wastes, where panes seasonally rattle and Cathy claws 'neath a pitch of crystallised Milky Way for her Heathcliff.

Travel to the old mill house by the stream; greet fond friends under the heady garlanded arch; sample delicious delicacies in animated conversation; ponder choicest flora in the dreamy romantic idyll.

Pilgrim to the genteel priest, Holy Russian Orthodox, Father Time, black-bearded, cassock swirling cossack; breathe the incense, absorb the Greek.

Past Rochester's ruins, ride along the avenue, envisage the box-edged rose garden, where Darcy entertains Elizabeth, against prancing ponies in the paddock; wander around Mr McGregor's garden, where Peter squeezed under the gate. Beatrix's spirit lingers amongst the water-coloured geraniums.

Startle at the ejaculation of the ominous eager eagle, his chariot of fire soaring overhead, piercing the sky, a messenger of The Fourth Horseman.

Perplexed, return once more, transported, to sleep, perchance to dream.

THE BIRTHDAY PRESENT

by Patricia Voisey

'Don't forget to buy something nice for Sasha's birthday' said my husband (self styled non-sentimental and indifferent to small animals) as I got into the car. 'I'll see what I can find in the pet shop when I get the cat litter,' I replied, thinking of a squeaky toy or another rope pull. Sasha, by the way, is my (now) two-year old Shih Tzu bitch who has spent all her short life in the company of an assortment of cats and a Jack Russell bitch. When she is out walking with Luckie she meets other dogs and becomes a dog – at home she is almost convinced she is a cat!

A new pet shop had opened in the village that week so I decided to give it my patronage. It was a pleasant shop, freshly decorated and airy and well stocked with basics and 'goodies' for pets, but what I wasn't prepared for was the sign 'Kittens for sale' and one forlorn scrap of fluff sitting in the middle of a rabbit run. It wasn't that it looked ill cared for – it just looked so LONELY. The owner told me

that there had been three kittens the day before but two had been sold immediately leaving just the one. She had let it sleep with her Collie dog the night before but now he was back in the pen waiting to be sold. Of course I HAD to rescue him from his loneliness and tried to think of a justification I could offer to my husband for bringing back yet another cat. Then I remembered Sasha's birthday – the kitten would be the perfect birthday present.

I did the rest of my shopping clasping the bundle of fluff in a basket in my left hand while juggling credit cards and shopping bag in my right. He was very good, looking up at me with milky blue baby eyes.

'Oh no, not ANOTHER cat' was the greeting from my husband. 'It's not for me' I lied, 'it is Sasha's birthday present – you told me to get something she would like.'

Introductions were made all round. Kitten was very brave at meeting so many cats and two dogs. The big cats

were completely indifferent – just another addition to the menagerie – but Sasha and Luckie were absolutely delighted. Kitten took one look at Sasha's long silky fur and intriguing feathery tail and decided that she was to be his friend for ever and ever. Sasha was besotted with her new friend and licked him from top to toe: he loved it. He followed her everywhere, burrowing under her long fur whenever he caught up with her and swinging on her tail when he got left behind. Sasha started to walk bandy-legged – 'her' baby was always between her front legs and she was most careful not to tread on him. Luckie looked on tolerantly, waiting for an opportunity to make friends with the new arrival (she had, after all, brought up twin orphan kittens some five years before and they still treated her like their mother) but Kitten preferred long fur. Eight pairs of green, yellow and orange eyes looked on distainfully from various vantage points throughout the house and garden.

I named Kitten, 'Lucifer' because he is a little devil (in the nicest possible way, of course)!

For four weeks he and Sasha were inseparable, playing, eating and sleeping together. Sasha was constantly washing Lucifer and he loved it. I don't think there has ever been a cleaner kitten. The special kitten food had to be put on one side of Sasha's dish so that he could eat with her.

He has grown from a helpless kitten into a young cat in four short weeks and has begun to get more adventurous. There is a whole new world awaiting discovery and lots of potential playmates, although the senior cats are not at all

interested in games. However, Lucifer has discovered the joys of stalking Luckie's stubby little tail. It is always wagging 'nineteen-to-the-dozen' but is just out of reach, and it is very funny to watch him bound up on all four feet and then throw himself into a pirouette to hang on to Luckie's rear. He also loves to reach up and put his two front legs around her neck and climb on to her head. Luckie is most tolerant although Lucifer's teeth and claws have become very sharp.

They have become an indivisible trio, romping and rolling around together all day. I have even seen Lucifer peering inside Luckie's mouth when she flopped down and yawned after a particularly strenuous game; and Luckie occasionally brings Lucifer a present – a dead mouse. Sasha still continues to wash Lucifer from head to tip of tail several times a day.

Eight pairs of green, yellow and orange eyes watch these undignified antics from a respectful distance.

The only 'down side' to this tale is that Lucifer doesn't have much time for me! I was hoping he would learn from watching the older cats that it was expected he would sit on my lap or on my shoulder in the evenings and accept some affection, but he much prefers to curl up with the dogs who are, most probably, sleeping at my feet. On the other hand, he does seem to like snuggling up in the crook of my husband's arm when he tries to read the newspaper and he – the self-professed non-sentimental, indifferent-to-animals person that he is – dares not turn the page in case the kitten should be disturbed.

BOOKSHELF

*These books are available from local booksellers or, in some cases, from particular addresses given; they are **NOT** available from Headquarters.*

THE CHATTO BOOK OF CATS edited by Francis Wheen
Pub. Chatto & Windus ISBN 0 7011 4005 4 £15.99 hardback

In this new anthology, Francis Wheen reflects not only the beauty, dignity and affection of cats but other less happy aspects of the cat's long and often gruesome path through history. His selection of writings is therefore wide ranging and some items might upset readers; many will be new to even the most widely read of cat owners. A fascinating book.

WILD CATS OF THE WORLD by David Alderton
Pub. Blandford ISBN 0 7137 2306 8 £16.99 hardback

Wild Cats of the World presents comprehensive coverage of the whole range of the cat family: leopards, cheetahs, lions, tigers, as well as the lesser wild cats of Europe. There are colour photographs aplenty by Bruce Tanner, distribution details and a wealth of information about development, evolution, hunting techniques and behaviour. David Alderton raises and discusses the question of conservation now that many of the species are in danger of extinction in the wild with some of the sub-species having already disappeared.

MAGNUS THE ORKNEY CAT by Kathleen Russell
Pub. Canongate Press ISBN 0 86241 447 4 £7.95 hardback

Kathleen Russell's drawings and paintings combine with Marion Campbell's simply told story to produce a charming book for young readers. Set in Orkney, it recounts the adventures of Magnus, a ginger cat, and Granny, and has a 'happy ever after' ending.

WHY DOES MY CAT . . . ? by Sarah Heath
Pub. Souvenir Press ISBN 0 285 63147 0 £13.99 hardback

Why does my cat . . . hide when I have visitors? eat the house plants? refuse to use his litter tray? scratch the wallpaper? These and many more feline behavioural questions are answered by Sarah Heath, a practising veterinary surgeon, in a very knowledgeable and readable way. This book demonstrates how an understanding of the natural instincts of your cat will help you to deal with any problem that may arise from his seemingly unsocial but natural behaviour. A book that will help you to help him to become a better companion to share your home.

THE LITTLE PERSIAN CAT BOOK ISBN 0 7513 0039 X
THE LITTLE GREY CAT BOOK ISBN 0 7513 0040 3
THE LITTLE CAT VET BOOK ISBN 0 7513 0042 X
THE LITTLE CAT FACTS BOOK ISBN 0 7513 0041 1
by Elizabeth Martyn and David Taylor
Pub. Dorling Kindersley £4.99 each, hardback

Four new titles from The Little Cat Book Library, bringing the series to 12. Many members will already be familiar with The Little Tabby Cat or The Little Marmalade Cat for instance and will know of the easily readable format and colourful illustrations which go to make these books so attractive. If you are looking for a small gift for a cat loving friend, one of these delightful books may well solve your problem.

COOKING WITH LILOU by Claudine Duluat & Joëlle de Gravelaine
Pub. Les Editions du Laquet ISBN 2 9506140 6 X £9.50 hardback

Lilou is Claudine's cat, exploiting her passion for terrines by creating ones acceptable to the feline palate. Translated by N and A O'Flaherty, the recipes, approved by a veterinary surgeon, make tempting reading for any feline not totally devoted to canned cat food and the illustrations and accompanying cat tales add to the charm of this rather unusual recipe book.

Remembering Cats

Would contributors to Remembering Cats please keep their notices to 25 words or less. Thank you.

FLUFFY GIRL – Put to sleep 9.12.93, 12 years old, after losing her brave fight to cancer.
Love you forever

LOVELY SAMMY – The cat who came in from the cold to 4 years of TLC. Put to sleep to prevent further suffering.
Mary & Joyce

Thoughts and memories will never cease, darlings **POPSIE** 1972-1983 and **SMOKEY** 1984-1989. You were my life, my all. John Ashford

Darling **MITTEN**, lovingly remembered each day.
Sheila

GEORGE SHAW – Died 13.1.94. Always his mummy's good boy. He was her best and truest friend for 16 years, and her anchor during troubled times.

Dearest **CHARLIE** – Died 9.1.94 tragically in a road accident. Always lovingly remembered. Rest in peace forever. Lots of happy memories.
Jenny, Smudge & Fluffy

LYLE – 20.12.93. Blessed with your loving company for almost 15 years. No one could ever know how sadly missed you are. Ma, Pa & Tate

Our darling **WILMER**, silent tears will always fall, also our beautiful **PEBBLES**, who disappeared October 1993. Missing you both dreadfully.
Our love always

Treasured memories of our darling **RUSTY**. Died of tetanus after an unknown accident 11.5.93, aged 5½. Sadly missed, love you forever.
Mum, Dad & Whisky

COLA – Good night, God bless. Laid to rest peacefully 21.1.94. Sadly missed.
Love Mum, Dad, et al

SALLY – Put to sleep 16.3.93, aged 19 years. I still miss you. Loved and remembered always.
Mummy

Remembering **GOLLY** with love and affection, so soft and gentle. Died 14.4.93.
Sadly missed by Daddy, Don & All

PURDY my girl. Died 4.2.94. You're at peace now.
Bev & Barry

RUMBLES – Put to sleep 4.2.94. So lovable, so loving and so loved. You stayed as long as you could. RIP dear puss, dear friend.
Robin

SASHA – Put to sleep 16.2.94, to prevent further suffering. Thank you for 12 wonderful

years darling, we shall never forget you.
Mummy & Daddy

MIRANDA, BOBBY, FLEUR, AMBROSE and **GERALDYNE**, special cats to Eleanor and Dick, but many others love and remember you, with much love.
Sharon & Donna

Beloved **MONTY** – 16.8.87-4.10.91. Our brave and wonderful little boy, killed in the road. Always in our thoughts.
Mum, Dad & Tufty

Remembering our two dear friends who left us November/December 1993. Little **CASSIE** 15½ and wise **CILLA** 16½. We miss you so.
Beryl and Roy

PUSHKA – Our tom cat, aged 10 years. Put to sleep 4.1.94. Reunited with **JOSIE** puss. Love and miss you both.
Peter & Barbara

TIGER – Sadly put to sleep 28.1.94. Here's hoping your new life will be healthier. Forever in our hearts and thoughts.
Mum, Dad, Helen & Keith

In memory of **MIRO**, aged 12. Died as the result of a car accident. Sadly missed, but never forgotten.
Mummy, Christy, et al

SOPHIE – 23.4.91. Our baby snatched away suddenly with cancer. Our special angel now lights heaven with her beauty. God Bless.
Love Mummy & Daddy

TIGGER – Put to sleep 1.2.94, aged 18½ years, to prevent suffering. Our one and only baby. We will always love and remember you.
Mum & Dad

RAM – Died tragically 24.1.94, aged 8. Our tabby boy always full of purrs and cat talk. Do anything to have you back.
Tracy & Keith

TOROSAY – I'll always love you. May 1977-July 1992.

DOMINIQUE – We miss you so. What happiness you gave us. Love you always. Died 15.2.94, Kidney failure.
Mummy & Daddy

BENJI ALEXANDER WATLING – Died aged 19½. My best friend sadly put to sleep. A very special cat. I love you and miss you very much.
Claire

THOMAS – Our beautiful boy. Blindness never stopped him until 20.2.94. Thank you for the best years of our lives.
Mumsie, Mummy et al

In memory of **POPPY**, our dear little cat. We

miss you and will always remember you with love.

TODDY – Our tabby and white angel. Killed on the road 5.1.94. Love and miss you very much.
Michele, Ray & Jack

GUTHRIE – Greatly missed, our dear furry friend for 15 years. Always in our thoughts. Sadly put to sleep 29.12.93.
His family and friends.

In loving memory of **TOTTY**, who tragically died 21.1.94 after 4 wonderful years. I'll always remember you, and thanks for your love and companionship.
Alice

In memory of **ROSIE GREENAWAY**. A true and gentle friend. Died 6.5.93. Our bond of love will never be broken.
Mum

JEMIMA – Our gentle red point Siamese, put to sleep after incurable throat problem was diagnosed. 22.7.93, aged 13. Always remembered.
Mum & Dad

OGGIE TEAPOT – 4.5.79, **SQUEAKY** – 18.1.89 and **BUBBLE** – 14.7.93. In loving memory. You made my darkness bright, and like stars you shone on me.
Penny Goodwin

ANASTASIA – 20.5.93. You left me one year ago, but you will live in my heart forever.
Mam, Leo, et al

ZACHARY – 21.6.91-7.6.92. If memories keep us close, then we are never far apart. Always in our thoughts, forever in our hearts.
Wendy, Phil, Helen & Family

In memory of dear **TABS**, died 11.6.92. Rest in peace my darling. Until that happy day when we meet again. I love you.
Dad

TIGGER – 21.3.79-17.2.94. Gone but not forgotten. Big Bairn we'll miss the thud of your four paws around the house.
Mummy 1, Mummy 2, Daddy & Moke

Our darling **HOLLY**, aged 2, died 23.6.93, while we were on holiday, another victim to the roads. God bless.
Jenny & Family

FRED, JANE, HARRIET, FREDDIE, TIDDLES, TIPPER and **THOMAS**. Always loved.
Mum

STUMPY and **BULLET**, not ours, but very much loved, also **MUFFET, BABY DOLL, MAXI** and little **PANSY**. We loved you all.
Mum & Dad

WHAT'S IN A CAT'S NAME?

PLATO, FELIS, SILAS, SUSAN and HULDAH (Gill Attack, Sheffield)

All our cats have been 'rescue cats' and the first was called **PLATO**, because our relationship with him was going to be firmly based on a footing of kindly interest, but philosophical detachment. As ever, fine words buttered no parsnips and, within a week, we were besotted by him and were utterly devastated when, eight months later, he was killed on our quiet, suburban road.

Grieving bitterly, we determined that **PLATO** must have a 'family', a living, loving memorial to him. With this feeling to guide us, we took aboard two dreadfully traumatised, 18-month-old litter brothers whom we named **FELIS** and **SILAS**, names of gravitas and weight, names that would stand to remind us all that these two, shivering wrecks were the inheritors of all the fine traditions of The Noble Cat.

Six months later, when **FELIS** and **SILAS** were full of cheerful confidence and steady good health, we added **SUSAN** to our little band. Rejected because a baby was due, **SUSAN** is a pretty, four-year-old silver tabby. When we went to collect her, she stared at us with huge, bewildered, black-rimmed eyes . . . a real black-eyed Susie.

By summer, **Plato's** 'family' was feeling pretty much complete; until, that is, my husband brought home a starving, mewling mite that he had found trying to cross one of our city's main roads in the morning rush-hour. Not knowing a stoat from a sturgeon, I thought for one mad moment he had started rescuing weasels! It was suggested that this poor little scrap had been dumped in nearby woods; she was certainly in a desperate state. However, lots of TLC and detailed help from our vet pulled her through and now **HULDAH** (Hebrew for weasel) is the much loved, happy, healthy baby of 'PLATO'S FAMILY'.

All About Cats

WHY DO WE LOVE HIM?



SPARKY.

The call came through: 'can you take in a three-year-old cat whose owners can no longer keep him as they are expecting a baby and he's a bit unpredictable?'

So Sparky arrived, a very unsociable puss. We were told by his owners that Sparky had never been outside because they lived in a flat with no garden.

Unpredictable he certainly was; we had the scars to prove it. Oh but was he beautiful, a ginger and white feline heart throb.

A farm life was suggested for his future but by then our hearts were melting. How could we let him go to a farm when he had never even been outside before. Fearing for his safety and worrying about his ability to fend for himself, the thought of him alone and frightened was too much for us. So we signed the forms and adopted Sparky in August 1990. We hoped that he would improve with our TLC.

Well, here we are years later; Sparky hasn't improved despite our efforts and masses of TLC; he's still unpredictable and regularly bites and scratches us. His visits to the vet are dreaded by all of us. But one recent visit gave me a long awaited and very much appreciated hour of cuddles without any injury to myself, as Sparky was sedated for an examination and I was allowed to take him home while he was still asleep. I had three years to make up for and it was wonderful.

Its very hard for other people to understand why we kept him and sometimes its very hard for us to understand why we kept him, but having recently lost him for two frantic days (we think he got shut in somewhere) it made us realise just how much we do love him. And as for why? well, I really couldn't say.

Dawn and Andrew, fosterers

FLUFF'S STORY

I suppose some cats are lucky and some not quite so lucky, but I have been lucky all my life.

My name is Fluff and I think I was named so because my black and white coat is very long and fluffy. I didn't start out as Fluff but, as I am now 16 years old, I can't remember what I was first named. My first home was not a happy one and my lovely fur became very knotted even though I did my best to keep myself clean. I was left out all night and had no love or attention. I teamed up with a grey and white cat called Charlie and we became firm friends.

One day, when I was about two years old, my friend said

to me, 'I know where there's a great home with CPL members; I heard about it on the cat vine!' We went together into a garden where there was a party going on, a Silver Wedding Celebration; we gate-crashed but were made very welcome with plenty of food and a lot of attention.

After the party was over my new friends tried to comb my fur and clean me up but I was in such poor condition that off I was taken to the vet. When I came back, I found myself accepted by the other cats, Squeak and Jack and, of course, my old friend Charlie who had also made his home there. Squeak, a female cat, was a little bit snooty and harder to get on with than the rest but we soon all settled down together.

For many years we enjoyed good food and every comfort; then my friend Charlie was run over and Squeak died when she was 12 years old. Now my constant companion, Jack, has died of old age at 19½ and I am all alone. I am combed every day and always look my best but the other day I had to take another visit to the vet as I had an abscess which was very painful and swollen. The vet cleaned my teeth as well and now I am back to my old self. My fur and whiskers which had to be cut round the abscess are growing again and I have been convalescing in the garden in the sunshine. The other day, all of a sudden, the pedigree upstart from next door jumped over the fence and wanted to play but I am too old for games now so I took no notice. He is about seven months old and is called Arnie and he tries to jump on my tail but I tell him I want to sleep. These young upstarts never do what they are told but, perhaps when he gets a bit older, he will quieten down and we can be mates. The only thing is, I am getting a bit deaf and I cannot hear him when he creeps up on me. Hold on, I'm sure that was the sound of my food being prepared . . . miaow for now.

(Sadly, since Fluff dictated this to Marion Phelps, he was involved in a RTA and was killed by a car which did not stop; Fluff was 16 years old.)

A FRESH START



RUBY.

Ruby used to live with my parents and was tested for leukaemia because she was always getting sick; she was not eating and was generally very poorly.

We thought the field behind the garden could be the cause: it was sprayed with insecticides and Ruby used to go there to catch mice and shrews.

We decided she should move and live with me and she picked up straight away. She now has a healthy appetite and is very happy. She is eight years old and, although timid with strangers, she is very loving and keen on snuggling and kissing.

Jackie Goodrick

TO DIMPLE – IN MEMORIAM

The scoop of earth in which you lay
Is now no longer warm; and chill the grass.
Not that spot wherein on Summer's day
Reclined at ease, you watched me while I toiled
Amid the flowers.
Or, sleeping, let the daylight pass
In idle hours.
But not without some small caress
From you to me, to show me that you cared.
It was not needful! I could guess
All that you could not say in human tongue
Before you left.
Seven happy years we spent,
Now I'm bereft.
Your daily contacts all will disappear.
Your earthly body with the earth will blend;
But, while I work outside, I'll feel you near
Because, for seven years, you were my friend.

B J Poskitt

MOVING HOME



TUFTY

Tufty is a small grey and white six-year-old male who began living with us properly at Easter last year. I say properly because his real owners, then, live opposite us and we had spent a good 18 months trying to keep him out of our house.

They had bought Tufty and his brother Smudge as house cats but both had objected to the arrival of a baby girl by fighting and demanding to be out of the house. Tufty then decided that he would rather be with me and my husband either in the house, through any open window or door, or in or on a car as we went to work or unloaded after shopping. He also camped on the front doorstep in pouring rain and complained to any passers by that we had locked him out. I lost track of the number of indignant people I spoke to and would allow him to dry himself in front of the fire before braving the weather again.

Things finally came to a head at Easter when having given in and allowed access through the day (it was easier than keeping him out) his brother joined in on the act. Huge fights ranged around the house, bleeding scratches, bites, fur lumps and worst of all Tufty spraying. Enough was enough. I spoke to the owners and after much heart searching they agreed to let us have Tufty and put Smudge up for adoption through CPL; they had been trying to home the cats as a pair through the RSPCA but with no luck. Smudge has since been rehomed.

Life in our house now revolves around Tufty. We have no choice in the matter. He has taken over completely and obviously believes that everything is as it should be. He even treats my parents and their house in the same way.

K Featherstone

EMILY'S RECOVERY

Over a year ago, as a surprise for my step-father, we chose two kittens; they came from a farm, were eight weeks old, both female and black and white and each had seven toes on their paws, supposed to be lucky.

We brought them home and they were named Emily Jane and Charlotte Ann. Emily looks like Felix on television and Charlotte is the image of Charlie Chaplin.

Emily's toes didn't bring her much luck for she was shot with a .22 air weapon. She rarely leaves our garden so we fear this is where she was shot, probably in the front garden, no more than 70 feet from the road. She had a pellet in her lower abdomen for 48 hours before our vet discovered an obstruction. Thankfully he operated immediately and she came out of the operation safely but the pellet hadn't stopped when it entered her body and five to six inches of intestine had to be removed. She was kept in hospital under observation for nearly a week – on a drip for the first few days – and she is still going back twice a week because of secondary complications. A strip of skin and fat to one side of her stitches died and started to peel away, causing the area to look like an open ulcer.

Emily is still on antibiotics and has to have her tummy bathed at least three times a day; but she is recovering thanks to the skill and speedy treatment of our local vet who is marvellous. The police were notified of the incident but have now closed their investigation after questioning several people with no result.

We were horrified that someone could be so purposefully cruel and concerned that the person who did it is free to do it again when they should be disqualified from owning an air weapon at very least.

My reason for writing this story is to warn people: if your cat is in terrible pain for no apparent reason, do not rule out the possibility that it may have been shot with an air weapon. We didn't think this would ever happen in a quiet village but, sadly, it did.

Emily will take time to recover, not only physically but mentally as well because she is now very nervous of gun-like noises.

D L Haines

A TEESSIDE RESCUE

One day, staff at a Middlesbrough Estate Agent were contacted regarding a repossessed property on a local housing estate. Through the window of the empty house, a neighbour had seen kittens playing . . . and also a dead kitten lying on the floor. A cat lover at the office telephoned a well-known animal charity only to be told there was nothing they could do and she should ring her local CPL Group.

This she did and Welfare Officer, Tina, responded immediately. Although she does not own a car, she managed to borrow transport and drove over to collect the house keys from the Estate Agent. On arrival at the empty house, she found that the scene glimpsed through the window was exactly as had been described. Access through the front door was attempted but this proved impossible. Entry by the rear door was the only alternative but this was fraught with all the obstacles imaginable in a rubbish-strewn, overgrown garden.

Eventually, Tina managed to squeeze in at the rear door. The house was indeed empty, except for a litter of five undersized four-week-old kittens and, sadly, the decomposing bodies of two bigger kittens. The reason for this soon became evident as the mother cat, probably feral, raced up the stairs and, using the banisters at the top as a staging post, leapt into the loft and out through a hole in the roof. Sadly, the first litter had been big enough to be left by their mother, but not big enough to climb out onto the roof. Almost certainly, a similarly cruel fate would have awaited the second litter had they not been rescued and soon transformed into glossy, healthy, well-fed, affectionate kittens.

Jenny Williams

QUEEN PEGGY



PEGGY

It was a frosty foggy morning in February when she arrived, a bedraggled ginger lump on the lawn. The first vet wanted to put her out of her misery but there was still too much life left in those infected emerald eyes. Our second vet gave us a little hope: we would keep her comfortable for as long as possible; she had an immune deficiency, an eye infection, an abscess in her mouth and not many teeth, the latter earning her the name of Peggy which also suited her ageing years.

She had a good summer, pampered and spoiled, but she gave us so much more in return. She was proud and serene; never a scratch, a spit or a hiss; a better natured cat you couldn't meet. She was a Queen. She had been with us for almost twelve months when she deteriorated rapidly: we couldn't accept that this was probably the last of many trips to the vets; in our hearts we knew but we clung to the hope of a miracle cure. Bringing home the empty basket was the hardest thing we have ever had to do.

A year to the day after Peg arrived we were given an abandoned twelve month old tom. He's the complete opposite of Peg, a young hooligan who terrorizes the local cats, earning him the name of Biffa; he will never replace Peggy but he has lessened the loss and hopefully he will be around until he's old and sedate!

Richard West

CAT ADOPTION

After the tragic loss of one of our cats on Boxing Day, we adopted 'Cinders', as we called her, from the Crawley Group of the League.

Our other cat Samson had been showing signs of grieving for his lost sister who had been his playmate since birth, but he was not prepared for Cinders! She had been ill-treated and was not into playing games, but fighting for survival. Her split coloured face, divided exactly down the middle, seemed to make her look even fiercer than she was.

When we first visited Cinders we were told she was recovering from being spayed – for the second time! The vet had not realized until too late. No wonder she was not keen on humans, but unfortunately for Sam she was not too keen on cats either.

The first time my husband picked her up, as he is used to doing with our cats, she gashed his face and struggled away immediately. Every time Sam attempted to make friends with her she hissed and spit at him; it was sad to see his confusion, as he had never experienced anything but loving kindness in his short life.

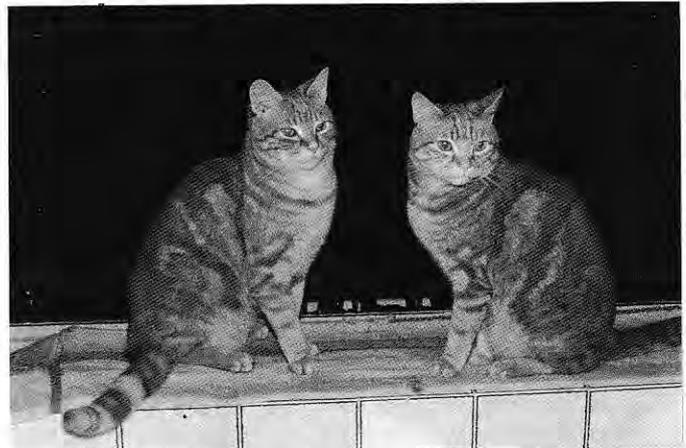
Gradually Cinders healed, both physically and mentally. She ate well and her coat began to shine. Eventually she indicated that she was ready to sit on a lap, by sitting neatly at one's feet with her front paws together and head up

looking you straight in the eye. You had to wait a few minutes for her to muster up the energy to perform a sitting leap, but eventually she would jump up, turn round several times and settle with her back towards you. After a couple of minutes of being stroked and praised, she would leap down – with rather a thud in the early days, due to an old injury, and settle down somewhere nearby.

Now one of her favourite poses is lying on her back with her legs in the air! We think she is trying to say she is happy and glad to be with us.

Diana Hart-Thomas

MOSES AND MACAVITY



MACAVITY (left) and MOSES

Moses and Macavity are now seven years old, neutered males from the same litter. Their mother was an abandoned cat and the kittens were born under a bush in a local garden. The householder couldn't catch the mother, but the kittens were brought inside when they were a few weeks old and we gave a home to two of them. In spite of their lack of early contact with people, they have grown into two gentle, affectionate cats. Neither we nor the furniture have any scars to show.

Although almost identical in appearance, their characters are very different. Macavity is a very serious sort of a cat – nothing done in a rush – while Moses is a devil-may-care individual who does a great deal of rushing about.

Macavity has an unusual love of water. Even in heavy rain he likes to stay out in the garden while Moses is to be found curled up in his favourite chair. Running taps fascinate him, especially if the bath is being filled. On one occasion Macavity's enthusiasm overcame him while he was sitting on the edge of the bath and he joined me in the water!

One of Moses' chief delights is to lie in wait for Macavity behind a bush in the garden so that he can pounce on him as he goes past. Macavity is usually tolerant, but sometimes Moses gets his ears boxed. Moses also loves really windy days when, ears back, wild-eyed, he races madly round the garden, through the entire house and out again to repeat the process.

Patricia Morton-Smith

CAT

Cat crouches still, to watch birds fly
Muscles tensed, head to sky
Slides close to earth . . . glides along
As bird alights, full of song
Stealth is the way, sinews tense
As bird uncaring feeds by fence
A streak of fur . . . a flash of black . . .
Ferocious pounce . . . the bird alack
has flown: warned by my shout
Angry cat turns to stare me out
With look that says 'He got away,
When you're not here I'll have my day.'

L.T.E.

FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO LONDON



BOOTS

Boots is four years old and came from an SPCA shelter in San Francisco in March 1991. He had been a stray and obviously had some unfortunate experiences with people as he was very fearful when we first took him home. However, after a few months, he relaxed and was then very sweet and loving, letting us tickle his tummy when he rolled over and climbing up on to our chests to knead and purr and cover us with wet kisses. Nevertheless, he still occasionally hid under the bedclothes when new people came into the house. He loved basking in the garden in the Californian sunshine; he loved his favourite catnip plant and always looked very surprised to be caught out after a few, intoxicating nibbles.

We moved to London in 1992 and Boots and his feline companion, Missy, also from the shelter in San Francisco, spent six months in quarantine. It was heartbreaking to visit them every Saturday but the people at the quarantine cattery took excellent care of them and they survived the ordeal better than we did and seem now to have forgiven us for the inconvenience; they even enjoy being London flat cats now!

Wendy Stevenson

WHERE IS LILY?



LILY

Lily is two years old and has been missing from her home in Ripley, since 28 October 1993. She was never a cat to wander out of her garden and no cats have been reported as missing in the area. Her owner, Mrs Sharon Rothwell, went through the whole gambit of trying to find her without success and is wondering if someone is caring for her somewhere. Lily is mostly tabby with one ginger shoulder, four white paws and chest and a tail which is tabby with ginger bits and white and ginger circles. It is really a very distinctive coat and her eyes are large and round. If you know anything about Lily, please let her distraught owner know: **Mrs Rothwell, 67 Heage Road, Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 3GE Tel: 0773 749871.**

BLOSSOMFALL

No fluffy fireside toy; You made the rules and kept the score;
Permitting us to know so much; condemned to learn no more.

Nor did we need to know; the Forest Gods
That took your sinuous form held sway
For aeons ere mere mortals had their day.
And so we watched and worshipped, understanding not,
Yet cherishing the role that was our lot.

Those orbs that blazed with half remembered fire
Transfixed our souls; yet could not say
One sleepy Spring-kissed Easter afternoon
A solitary speeding car would snatch your life away.

A thousand voices whispered from the wild
And called you from the warmth of Winter's hearth.
A thousand times you trotted home unscathed;
What lured you from the safety of the path?

Three joy-drenched years you rode life's wondrous tide
And cared not that each jape might be your last;
You had to tread your predetermined path;
The age-old summons from your primal past.

A tranquil corner of a plot sublime
Holds one small grave where tulips dance aflame;
Safe by the old oak tree you loved to climb,
Where choirs of drifting blossom sigh your name.

BIGGLES!

Barry Jones

ANN MONK HAS AN UNUSUAL PROBLEM WITH SEAGULLS!

A few weeks ago a friend and I were sitting in my conservatory nattering and watching my cat Herbie jumping across from roof to roof. He must have had his hob-nailed boots on when he ran across my conservatory and out of sight. All was quiet, and then, suddenly, there was an almighty commotion. I ran outside, calling Herbie, then there was a loud thud. My friend saw it all! Herbie was flying through the air attached to a seagull! Who had hold of who, we're not sure, but Herbie dropped in the bushes about thirty yards away, and was visibly shaken. I've heard the expression 'pigs might fly', but never cats! And we were only drinking tea. Honestly!

(From Eastbourne & District Group Newsletter)

ONLY A CAT!

Beth is dead!

She died one morning in June 1993 when the veterinarian's needle ended her battle with liver failure. Her life could have been prolonged with a constant course of injections, said the vet, but her quality of life would not improve. No problem, of course, so her loving and devoted servants gave permission for her to be 'put to sleep'. Easy decision, really, she was only a cat! She was the one who leapt onto our bed each night and, gently purring, allowed herself to be cuddled for a few minutes before finding her own cosy corner to settle down. And, who was it who sometimes (often) repeated the performance around 5am with a gentle nose nudge suggesting that a little snack would not come amiss? Whose faultless beauty, gentle nature and great courage and dignity in illness can never be forgotten? Beth, of course.

But then, as the blasé would say, on hearing of her death. 'Cheer up, she was only a cat'.

Sorely, sorely missed.

Judy and Tom

A CAUTIONARY TALE FOR ALL CATS

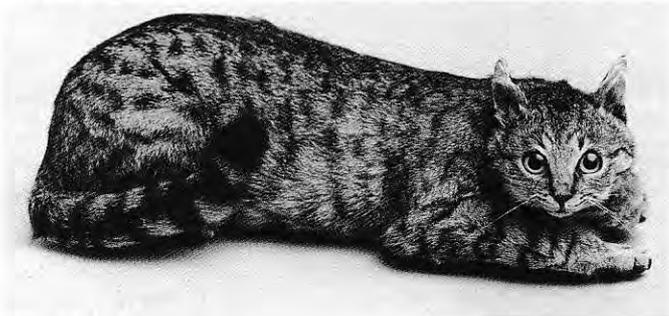
Slowly and silently Timmy crawled through the cat flap. He licked his coat back into shape and looked around the kitchen.

What! No dish in the corner, no tit-bit to welcome him home? There seemed to be a lot of scurrying around the house. He could hear unfamiliar feet on the stairs, and strange voices coming from upstairs. Then he was conscious of a long drawn-out wail – such as he had never heard before.

Ye gods! Did this mean that he had now to share the affection of "his" people with a BABY?

Joan Brehme

'CRIMEAN TOM'



'CRIMEAN TOM'

A preserved cat named 'Crimean Tom' is on show at the National Army Museum in Chelsea, an exhibit in the new gallery, 'The Victorian Soldier'.

'Crimean Tom' was rescued in the Crimean War from the ruins of Sebastopol in 1855 and brought back to England as a pet by British officers. He had been found amongst the dead and dying by Captain W Gair of the 6th Dragoon Guards (the Carabiniers) when, after a year's seige, British and French soldiers entered the ruined city of Sebastopol. Following the custom of the times, when Tom eventually died the skin of the much-loved pet was stuffed and mounted and presented to the Royal United Service Institute in Whitehall which later donated it to the National Army Museum.

(Admission to the National Army Museum, Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea, London SW3 is free)

AND ANOTHER

Weep not *Jane Stay* for she who has no name
But share her joy! Admire her agile frame!
Somewhere, unknown to you, she has a bed,
Maybe beneath some old, discarded shed.
There in the warmth of love her kitts she'll raise
Purring to them her mother-song of praise.
In Nature's way she walks her daily path
Nearer to God than any by your hearth.

Dr Georges Ware

(Written in response to *Jane Stay's* charming and moving poem, 'ANOTHER DAY' in the January/February 1994 issue of THE CAT.)

CPL REGISTER OF CAT SITTERS

An up-to-date register of cat sitters is maintained on a purely voluntary basis by Mrs S F D Thompson, a CPL member.

If you would like a copy, or if you wish to have your name included as a cat sitter, please write to:

Mrs S F D Thompson, Rignalls Cottage, Mapridge Green Lane, Great Missenden, Bucks. HP16 9PH. Tel: 0494 862404

Please enclose two second class stamps for reply

CPL CHARITY SHOPS

If you are going on holiday this summer and your travels take you to any of the following areas, why not pay a visit to a CPL Charity Shop? The Groups and Branches running them will be pleased to meet you if you introduce yourself:

ABERDEEN

118 King Street
Aberdeen AB2 3BB

BIRMINGHAM

294 Vicarage Road
Kings Heath
Birmingham B14 7NH

BRISTOL & NORTH AVON

272 North Street
Bedminster
Bristol BS3 1JA

COVENTRY

146 Lower Ford Street
Coventry
CV1 5PQ

DERBY

3/4 Haymarket Arcade
Derby
DE1 1BP

EASTBOURNE

4 Susans Road
Eastbourne
East Sussex BN21 3HA

ELTHAM & SIDCUP

14 Tudor Parade
Well Hall Road
Eltham
London SE9 6SX

HEREFORD

13 Commercial Road
Hereford
HR1 2BB

LIVERPOOL

84 Muirhead Avenue East
Liverpool L11 1EL

LUDLOW

5 Old Street
Ludlow
SY8 1NW

MAIDSTONE

37 Union Street
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1DY

MEDWAY

34 Canterbury Street
Gillingham
Kent ME7 5TX

NORTH KENT

70 Havelock Road
Gravesend
Kent DA11 0JL

RAINHAM

255 Gillingham Road
Gillingham
Kent ME7 4EP

TRURO

23 Pydar Street
Truro
Cornwall
TR1 2AY

WORTHING

33 Rowlands Road
Worthing
West Sussex BN11 3JJ



Miss Humphreys of Wimborne never did discover where KITTY came from! She walked into the house about three years ago and made it clear she was there to stay. Exhaustive enquiries failed to find her previous owner so Kitty, a rather unusual ginger and white female, began her new career as constant and devoted companion, only leaving the side of her new owner for a quick stroll round the garden.

Aslam was discovered by tourists on the Malvern Hills. It was the early May holiday. He was in a state of extreme exhaustion and so was taken to the local Vet. There he was declared to be of extreme old age and in a very poor state. The Vet could find nothing physically wrong; he was just a tired, old cat. He was given subcutaneous fluids and lots of TLC. The worst of the knots were removed from his once beautiful ginger coat.

The Vet made no charge for his services but he needed the hospital space for his 'clients'. He rang to see if I could take him in. When he was brought to me and laid in my arms my heart sank at the state of him. He was no weight, his eyes were mere slits so shrunken had they become. What had I agreed to take on? One look at his beautiful face and the battle inside was won. He had, indeed, been a large and handsome cat. Even now, in such a sorry state, a glimpse could be seen of his proud bearing. What better name could he be given than Aslam? So Aslam he became.

I carried him gently indoors and laid him in a basket. He promptly got out and lay down next to it! He was too weary to move any further. He licked daintily at the saucer of milk which was offered then he looked at me with a look which said 'You are not my family but you will have to do, for now.' Food was offered but refused. Having opened numerous tins of many varieties I gave up. He continued to drink sparingly of the milk which always had to be freshly poured.

Then came the day, when giving chopped heart to the rest of my Feline family, he caught the scent of something worth trying. He managed to eat about a dessertspoonful of the meat chopped very small. From then on he ate a variety of foods. Never more than a tablespoonful but at intervals of two to three hours. Hopes began to rise; he looked better and his eyes looked less sunken. The good days were marred by the days when he refused every proffered item and he visibly lost ground again. Then would follow more good days, his coat began to shine, perhaps more to do with the gentle brushing and constant stroking than with his nutrition. He never, however, washed himself. It fell to me to cleanse his mouth and nose. He bore the indignity with good grace, gently but firmly pushing me away when he had had enough. Attempts at removing any more knots from his coat were firmly discouraged.

He began to take daily walks in the garden. Then came the day when he seemed to get the scent of home. He set off determinedly down the garden path and up the road, heading only he knew where. He soon tired, however, and so lay down where he was. I carried him home with a heavy heart. He wanted his own family. I was no substitute.

The time had come and gone for the keeping of a stray to allow the owner to claim him. Despite all efforts no-one had come forward. I could do no more. My heart ached with pity for this faithful animal pining for home.

We continued our daily walks. Some days a little further; some days a little less. Often determination beaten by weakness. Was I cruel to let him try? I don't know. I don't know that I could have stopped him and once he had had his walk he seemed to accept his fate, for that day. Tomorrow? That's another day.

He enjoyed the warmth of the June sun, lying in the garden facing towards the hills from whence he came. He continued to improve and decline in a regular pattern. Never really getting well. He seemed content enough and in no pain or distress.

Then came the day when he seemed to be getting weaker. No amount of persuasion could tempt him to eat not even the rare treat of raw liver which he loved. He continued to drink and seemed in no discomfort. He still staggered to the litter tray but now he did not climb in sim-



ASLAM

ply stood alongside. Newspaper took care of that. If he was seen 'in the act' he would be gently lifted up. Cats so hate to soil themselves. He still wanted to go for his walk. It was a long and wearying process but he was so determined that between us we managed.

One Friday, Black Friday, he got up and after one step fell over. I picked him up and carefully laid him in his basket. Was this the time for euthanasia? He still seemed in no distress so it was decided to let nature take her course, with further review if necessary.

Over the weekend he continued to drink both milk and water. Most of the time was spent out in the sun, under the trees facing his beloved hills. Every movement was anticipated and any sign of pain or distress watched for. He was lifted in and out of the basket as needed. He was, above all, loved.

He continued to sink. He was laid in his basket for the last time on Sunday night. He slipped into a peaceful sleep. His breathing was easy and there was no pain. We sat, the family and I, with him until he slipped away at 10am on Monday morning. The last one in June.

That was yesterday. My heart seems broken. How could I get like this in so short a time? I love all of my animals but never has one affected me like this. Was it the fact that he never accepted me as his own? That he continued his fruitless search for his first family? Was it that I had been so powerless to help him in his search? I feel that I somehow failed this once beautiful animal. Was it his pitiful state? I don't know.

Why didn't his family look for him? Had he come further afield than our own enquiries took us? Unfortunately we will never know. He had from me just two months of love and care. He has given me memories and heartache which will last a good deal longer. But for all that I know that I would do it all again.

So I sit and look upon his last resting place, in a garden in the warm June sunshine, under a shady tree looking towards his beloved Malvern Hills.

Ode to Papagena

Silent and sedate
She sits, my cat;
Elegant and sleek
The wisdom of the world
Behind her amber eyes.
Jealous of her territory,
An Oriental Queen,
She brooks no interlopers.

Isla Mair

JUNIOR PAGE

If you want to write to Junior Page, please address your letter to:
Mrs R van der Graaf JP
50 Amphill Road
Maulden, Beds. MK45 2DH

TOFFY MY CAT

Toffy was a tortoiseshell and white six-month-old kitten who as a stray went to the Skipton CPL group. She was quite poorly and had to have eye and ear drops.

Now Toffy is a fit, healthy and lazy cat who would be dead if the CPL hadn't looked after her.

Erica chose Toffy and now she lives with her and likes to snooze in front of the fire, sometimes even in the beds. She's very lazy, but Erica loves her very much.

Erica Pickles,
West Yorkshire



TOFFY.

CATS

I own a tiny furry animal,
or rather she owns me,
whatever I do,
she will be there, to hinder to help,
to sit upon my knee

When I cry she pats me gently with her paw,
her face will then appear,
with eyes as large saucers,
as a tentative nose comes near.

When I wake up in the morning,
she has crept beneath my covers,
I love her for what she is,
and I ask for no others.

Suzanne Leedham, Ascot, Berks.

★ ★ ★

WINNERS OF CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

Over 8 years – Answer was TOYS.
Frances Strachan, Montrose.

Under 8 years – Painting or colouring competition.
Claire Skinner, East Sussex.

★ ★ ★

COMPETITION

Win a super T-shirt with a picture of cats that you can colour yourself!

IF YOU START AT 4L AND CROSS EACH DESTINATION AS INDICATED, WHICH SQUARE DO YOU FINISH ON?

1R	1R	2D	1R	2D
2D	1L	1L	1R	2D
3R	2D	2D	2U	3L
3U	2R	2U	1L	3L
2U	2R	4U	3U	4L

L = left

R = right

U = up

D = down

Follow directions indicated – for example if you start 4L, do 4 squares to the left, not counting the one you are already on.

Send your answer to the address at the top of the page.

COMING SOON FOR JUNIOR CPL MEMBERS!

ARE YOU A JUNIOR CPL MEMBER UNDER 13 YEARS OLD?
YES!

Then, you will notice a change as from this September. Instead of being sent *THE CAT* you will receive every year 3 copies of *JUNIOR NEWS* and 3 copies of an exciting, new, colour newsletter called *THE KITTEN*.

This is how it is going to work:

In September, you will receive *JUNIOR NEWS*; in November, it will be *THE KITTEN*; they will alternate throughout the year.

When you reach 13, you will then receive *THE CAT*; from September, *THE CAT* will no longer include *JUNIOR PAGE*.

You are very welcome to start sending in your stories, poems, news and views; drawings and photographs to be included in these two Newsletters.

To launch *THE KITTEN* in November, we will be having a **JUNIORS' PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION** and this will be featured in the next issue of *THE CAT*. The subject will be ... have you guessed? ... YES! YOUR CAT (or anyone else's CAT!) and you will be able to send in up to 4 photographs. So ... start snapping now while the weather is good but WAIT until the Competition appears in the July/August issue of *THE CAT* before sending any photographs.

We're sure you are going to like the changes and hope you will participate in your new newsletter by writing about your cats to me at this address:

Alison Swann, Junior Education Department, The CPL, 17 Kings Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 5PN.

ROUND THE CPL SHELTERS

CAMBRIDGE GROUP

Picture the scene: a cold, drizzly November afternoon in 1982. A handful of well wrapped-up helpers stand behind tables piled high with jumble and bric-a-brac. The rain gently splashes into their tea cups, their noses get pinker and their willing fingers gradually go numb as they wait for the arrival of that elusive being, the customer. Eventually, with the cash box in much the same condition as it was when they arrived, they go home, cold and disappointed.

OK, I exaggerate, but although our first fair-cum-jumble does not go down in history as a raging success, it taught an immediate and invaluable lesson: the importance of advertising!

So began the Cambridge Group which has never looked back. Monthly meetings started in April '83 and Joan Axe, our first Co-ordinator, was busy organising (successfully!) fund-raising events every few weeks. Rescuing began in earnest, with three safe havens to call on: Veronica, Joan and Sharon. Those initial three pens were funded by our first benefactor, Maria Rickard, who has continued to be invaluablely kind and generous.

Sadly, Joan announced in 1989 that she was moving to Spain. So, the search was on for a new Co-ordinator and came in the shape of foster mum, Judy Webb. Judy's fostering has increased over the years – her 'incredible

kittens won't eat", "the Vet says . . .", or possibly the most terrifying, "I've had an idea . . ." Always calm, Liz helps keep things in perspective and is a great diplomat – very useful when awkward situations inevitably arise.



Bluey and friends with a few stray foster mums they have in their care . . .

We are not a large group, with a capacity for up to 35 cats and kittens, but we do cover a large area and have a waiting list most of the time. We have eight foster mums, Judy, Veronica, June, Sophie, Linda, Eileen, Margaret and myself. Between us we could tell many tales, both happy and sad. The terrified ferals with their babies (sometimes not so much younger than their mums); injured cats and cheeky kittens, who knows what they've all been through? Still, we remain always optimistic and *very choosy* about the new homes our charges will go to . . .



Judy outside her labyrinth of pens.

shrinking garden' gradually being taken over by CPL pens and sheds. Judy has our permanent and disabled cats who live out their days happy and well-loved in a series of interconnected pens. These have large, heated houses and there's plenty of space to play among the bushes in the large grassy run. We currently have eight permanent cats, among them Annie who, despite being blind and deaf, is very contented. Then there's Bluey, our large hairy Persian with a penchant for wrapping himself around *anyone's* shoulders and staying there; woe betide he who has the audacity to try and remove him!

Judy's garden hosts our annual Garden Party, a hugely successful event and one to which people can come and meet the cats and see how we work. Over the years it has raised thousands of pounds for us and will no doubt continue to do so.

While Judy continues to lavish TLC around her pens and is still a very active member, she has passed the 'boss's hat' to Liz Martin, our Co-ordinator since 1992. Poor Liz spends so much time on the 'phone, not only from the unceasing CPL calls, but also due to the fact that she works full-time for BT! Liz is very patient and spends many an hour listening to us foster mums with our worries . . . "the



The Cambridge Group Synchronised Drinking Team in rehearsal . . . get in line Nellie!

Our monthly meetings are vital; we discuss the cats in care, forthcoming events and ideas for future fund-raising. Cranking-up local awareness of our group has become our main priority of late. We recently ran a photo competition, bringing in a staggering 625 entries and as an excuse initially to show off all the pics, we held a Craft fair with 'Cat-snaps' Photo Show. June Sharp wins a gold star for organisation; it was a really enjoyable and successful day.

Our monthly newsletter 'Mews Update', keeps us in touch with members who cannot get to the meetings. 'Mews' is also distributed to all the local Vets and anywhere else we think it may be read! It gives us an opportunity to talk about the cats in care and also to appeal for

items to sell, more helpers and of course, CASH! We frequently run competitions and would like to thank all those companies who donate prizes, thus allowing us to use all of *our* money for the moggies!

One of our most successful ventures to date is thanks to Benji & Sylvester. A local artist kindly produced an illustration of these two Cambridge cats which we have printed, together with CPL logo, on T-shirts, sweatshirts and more recently, tea-towels. Literally hundreds have sold in the past couple of years and these have been one of our main sources of income.

Judy and Liz had their 15 minutes of fame, courtesy of Anglia TV, who came and filmed at Judy's shelter during National Cat Week. Despite their (un)apparent nerves, they gave faultless performances and so, amazingly, did the cats, the stars of the show of course . . . Let's hope it will have some effect on the lesser spotted Cambridge Cat Lover.

Our latest venture is our charity shop, The Cat Flap, which opened in September 1993. The decision to open the shop was a difficult one in the midst of recession, but we are pleased to report that things are going very well. However, we are experiencing some difficulty finding enough volunteers. If any readers are local to Cambridge and can help, please get in touch with Liz on Cambridge 842839. The main purpose of the shop is to bring in more cash, but it also serves as a kind of 'HQ' for us. People come in for a cat-chat, for advice and leaflets, and to find out what's going on.

Our Lost & Found lady, Dorice Skeels is unfortunately kept busy – the dreaded cat thieves seem to be more than usually active in our area of late. Cat theft must surely be every cat lover's worst nightmare: if only people would keep their cats in at night, perhaps there would be less of it!



The shop's opening window display with our Benji and Sylvester T-shirts and sweatshirts.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our Vets. All ours give us discounts, going some way to prevent our Treasurer, Veronica, from having a nervous breakdown when the bills come in! We are lucky also to have the Cambridge Vets School lurking in the wings for those unusual and difficult cases.

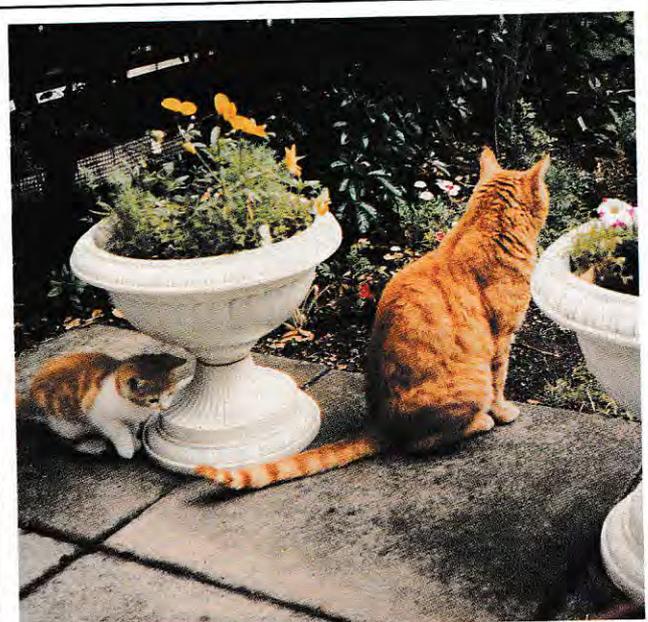
Finally, we look forward to many more years of what is for all of us, sometimes happy, often sad, but always rewarding work. We thank those who have helped us in the past, those who help us presently and those who give up their gardens, spare bedrooms, time and tears helping so many cats and kittens. Our very best wishes to all the groups countrywide – keep up the good work!

Keely Gilchrist

Go on hunting, little cat.

On velvet paws through moonlit ways,
Let all the joys of long lost days
Lessen the darkness with their rays.
You've all eternity for that.

Joan M Williams



SANDY, aged 16, and LEO, aged two months. The kitten from next door could not resist SANDY's long and interesting tail and SANDY, being a perfect gentleman, studiously pretended he didn't know what was going on. SANDY lived for 18 years with Barbara Fuller in West Molesey, who managed to catch this lovely moment on camera.

IN MEMORY OF LORD DIGBY OF TODDINGTON (TODD)

Here he comes
My ginger friend,
Eyes flashing,
Tail on end.
In his world of food and sleep
He has never need
to keep a watch on prices,
World affairs,
I am guardian of his cares.
In return, he smiles at me,
Digs his five toes in my knee,
Plucks my jumpers with his claws;
Holds my heart strings in his paws.

Audrey Goulding



PURDY's fur is as soft as silk, even to the end of her incredibly curly tail! She lost her first home when a child became allergic to her fur and went to spend six months with an animal rescue organisation in Cambridge before being homed once again. This time it was the resident Jack Russell which proved to be the problem. Finally rescued by Fiona Browning of Newmarket, seven year old Purdy is now safe and sound at last, a beautiful, affectionate and loving cat.

GROUP AND BRANCH REGISTER

Enquiries from anyone wanting a kitten or who wishes to adopt a cat or two are welcomed by Branch and Group Secretaries.
Please note: DO NOT CALL AT ANY OF THESE ADDRESSES EXCEPT BY APPOINTMENT: MAKE CONTACT BY LETTER OR PHONE FIRST.

<p>ABERDEEN GROUP M. Anderson, 18 Holburn Road, Aberdeen AB1 6EX.</p> <p>ABERDEEN GROUP Mrs S Cosway, 4 Hill Foot, Nab Wood, Shipley, West Yorkshire BD18 4EP.</p> <p>ALDRIDGE & BROWNHILLS GROUP Mrs J Hawes, 32 Clarendon Place, Felsall, Walsall WS3 4NL.</p> <p>AMMAN VALLEY GROUP Mrs E Williams, 126 Cwmaman Road, Glanaman, Ammanford, Dyfed SA18 1EJ.</p> <p>ANDOVER & DISTRICT GROUP Mrs H Hodgson, Lamorna, Chalkpit Lane, Monxton, Andover SP11 8AR.</p> <p>ARBROATH GROUP Miss E Cameron, 49 Keptie Road, Arbroath DD11 3EF.</p> <p>ASHBURTON & SOUTH DARTMOOR GROUP Mrs P Brooks, Tikhai Cattery, Homeleigh Bungalow, Caton Cross, Nr. 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MORE CAT STAMPS

by James Mackay

No fewer than three issues appeared during February. On the first of the month Britain released a booklet of ten First Class greetings stamps with the theme of messages from perennial favourites in children's literature. Joining such much-loved characters as Rupert and Paddington Bear, Peter Rabbit, Biggles and Dan Dare, is Orlando the Marmalade Cat, depicted with a quill pen in his paw, writing a letter to a friend.



In December 1993 the Falkland Islands issued a set of five stamps based on photographs of islanders' pets. The 34p stamp showed a puppy with a cat, while the 39p featured a playful kitten on its hindlegs. The stamps were re-issued on 18th February with an overprint publicising the Hong Kong International Stamp Exhibition.

Honouring the same exhibition St Helena took a leaf out of the Falklands' book and released a set of four stamps, also on 18th February, showing pet animals. The 25p depicts a Common Tabby Cat, according to the caption, but this anonymous creature with his gorgeous markings is an uncommon specimen indeed.



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