

Burmese Cat Association

Issue No 6

December 2013



New Committee



Members

Win Tadd

I don't breed or show and don't think I ever will, but that doesn't preclude my passion for this wonderful breed. Having recently retired from being a Reader in Gerontology at Cardiff

University
I now work part-time as a Consultant mainly in the NHS.



Claire

James

I enjoy showing, breeding, reading and of course my gorgeous cats.

I look after the Lost and Found register and help Yvonne Bruckel with the rehoming and welfare work.

Cecilia Davies, has also been elected and Viv Crouch and Doris Bubb-Porter have been co-opted to the Committee. We hope to include their photos in the next issue of the newsletter.

Editorial

One of the challenges in taking over as Editor from Chris Stalker is that I have a hard act to follow. She created and developed the format of this letter and we have enjoyed it for over two years. Thank you, Chris, for setting the standard and for all your work and encouragement in helping me to grasp the intricacies of producing a computerised newsletter. I hope you enjoy it.

There are many facets to our Association and a newsletter is one way of bringing all these together and giving us a sense of unity which makes everyone feel involved. We have had some wonderful stories about your Burmese, particularly tales of rescues and re-homes and long may these continue but I would also like to widen our coverage by including articles, questions and comments from experienced breeders and exhibitors as well as owners to expand our knowledge. Please don't chicken out by saying you can't write - everyone has stories to tell and if you just want to send us notes and comments we will happily sort them out and write them up for you. An editorial team - thank you Viv Crouch and Sharon Neal - is on hand to help. Your experience and knowledge is invaluable and we would really appreciate your sharing it with us all.

We might even be able to provoke some comment and controversy about a letter included further on about attendance at shows. This could get us started. We would like to include your letters in each issue and the more controversial the better!

In this issue I am including a report of our AGM at Lyneham because we know it is difficult for many of you to attend and it is sensible for you all to know what went on. You will be grateful to hear it is a much abridged version of the actual Minutes but I hope still worth reading. Although it was a small gathering we made up for it by some vigorous discussion in which everyone joined. It was also an extremely enjoyable few hours of intense cat conversation, friendly reunions and a warming lunch of home-made soup and mince pies. And it was all over in time for us to drive home while it was still light.

A letter from Rosemary Payne which is on page 7 raises issues about attending events like the AGM. Travelling is time consuming as well as expensive but if journeys could be shared it would benefit many members. Ideas about coordinating meeting places, sharing cars or even hiring mini-buses could be aired in the newsletter and on the website - or the Membership Secretary could help by identifying areas in which several members live so that contact could be made. Thank you for your patience in waiting for this rather overdue newsletter.

Finally, I wish you all a happy Christmas and a very peaceful and healthy New Year!

Elisabeth Amies

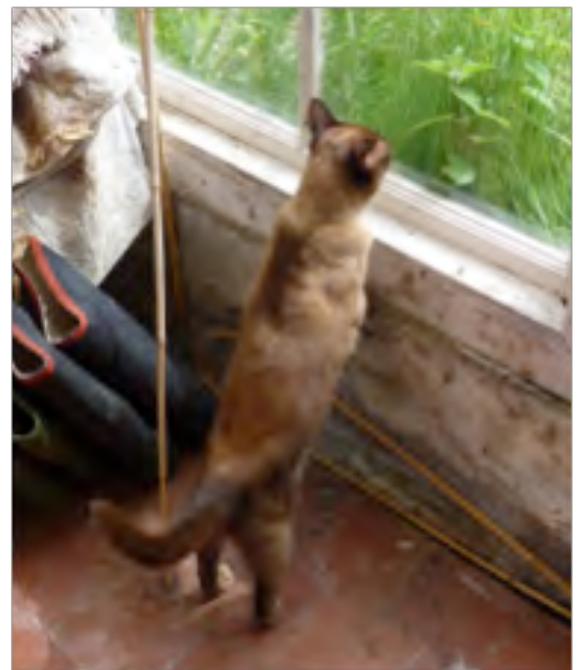
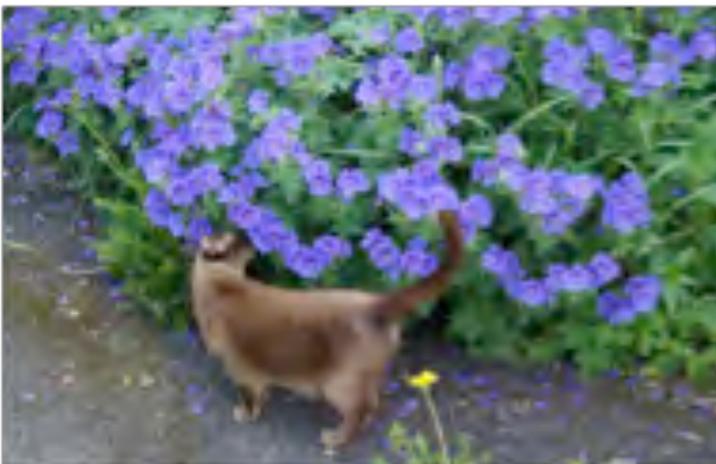
aea@pershire.wvetnet.co.uk



Biscuit

**Photographs taken by
Caroline Beaumont**

**You may remember reading
about Biscuit in the last
newsletter. I think you will
agree that she embodies all
the security, contentment
and serenity that a rescue
cat can feel in the right home**



Annual General Meeting 9th November 2013

Chairman's Report

After welcoming members to the meeting, the Chairman, Maureen Smith, reported that Cecilia Davies, Claire James and Win Tadd had been elected to the Committee; Doris Bubb-Porter and Viv Crouch had been co-opted to give additional help as Helen Hewitt was still very poorly.

The Cat Chat Tea Party at Goatacre was hailed a success, and thoughts were now being given for a venue and format for 2014. Unfortunately the cost of hiring 12 pens from M & F was now £100.00. The Committee were unwilling to increase the price of the tickets and, as an alternative, the Chairman suggested devoting the meeting to having informal discussions, chaired by "experts" about different aspects of breeding, showing and the rearing of kittens etc as this had been so popular last year.

The Chairman had been advised that an application for full affiliation to the GCCF could be made by the Association in August 2014 which would mean we could look forward to holding our own Show in 2015. A discussion followed about sharing a show with another club or joining in with an all-breed show because it would save costs. It was suggested that members should be asked via the website about their preferences for the form our first show should take, suitable venues and even to consider the cost of an independent show. It was recommended that classes for household pets be included in any of these as they now made up a large part of the entries.

Maureen expressed her deep concern about the proposed breeding policy and widening of the gene pool for Burmese. Although she accepted that there might be reasons for this she was worried about the implications of introducing certain breeds into our gene pool and the effect that could have on the established Burmese colours and type. From her many years of experience as a judge she had seen in other breeds how colours could be less distinct when this outcrossing took place. Some breeders too might not always be responsible enough to use the registered variants and this could also cause problems within the breed with undesirable markings appearing. She was passionate, as she believed many of us were too, about keeping the traditional Burmese type and colouring intact and believed there is no need to widen the gene pool when it could have such detrimental results. Members have to work together on this and if we are going to keep our breed as we want it studs and queens will need to be chosen very carefully. Maureen said she needed ideas and would be quite happy to have a debate on another occasion at which to air our opinions.

Accounts

Owing to the fact that the Treasurer, Helen Hewitt, has been badly injured in a road accident and is not able to continue with the accounts. Maureen and Phil Smith have been able to obtain these and are now keeping them up to date until Cecilia Davies can take over. She will also take over the Membership list.

The Welfare Account which is separate from the Association Account will continue to be kept by Maureen Smith. At this time the Association account held £1500.00 and the Welfare £3000.00

Membership - Elisabeth Amies

Our membership stands at 126 including 20 joint members and one junior. Several new members are from different parts of the country so it is good to see we are gaining a wider appeal. In future we may need to reconsider the venues for our meetings and we would appreciate your comments and suggestions about this.

A problem mentioned last year was the loss of donations to our welfare fund when subscriptions are made through PayPal. Although provision is made on the website to make donations very few take advantage of it. Welfare funds depend heavily on donations made when joining and renewing subscriptions. As we grow and take on more welfare work we need to be able to rely on a ready and adequate fund that can be accessed quickly.

Welfare/Lost and Found - Yvonne Bruckel and Claire James

Claire James reported on behalf of Yvonne who was away. She reported that eleven Burmese had been rehomed this year. She had dealt with many calls regarding the Swedish cats, but the credit must go to Phil Smith and his excellent website. Yvonne wished more prospective owners would contact her as matching homes and Burmese was essential.

A number of people have been in touch regarding problems with their pets and it is rewarding when they report things have improved when following the advice given.

Claire James reported that 15 cats had been reported to her as missing. When she has collected all relevant information she forwards it to Phil Smith to put on the website. About half of the missing cats have returned home.

Newsletter

Elisabeth Amies is to take over as Editor of the Newsletter which will continue to be sent by email for the time being. Members without computers will receive a copy by post. This arrangement may be reconsidered when the Association have their own show and results need to be published.

Subs for 2014

The matter of increasing the subs from the current £10 p.a. to £12 was widely discussed and a motion passed that the present subscription should remain until next year.

It was suggested that members be given the option of paying by standing order to help them remember to renew their subscription.

Club Brooch

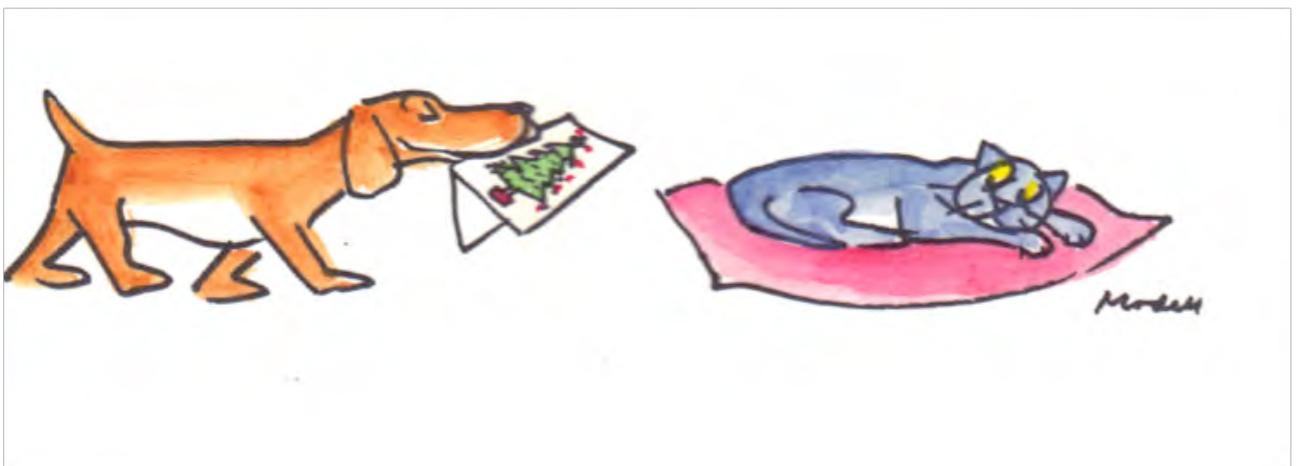
Maureen showed a silver brooch of the club logo. While all agreed it was attractive it was decided, because of the expense (£30 each), that orders would be taken from the website and at shows.

Next Meeting The venue for the next meeting was discussed and a venue nearer to a motorway was thought to be appropriate. It was suggested that a church hall or a Friends Meeting House could be a possibility.

The AGM for 2014 will be held on Saturday 8th November 2014

******REMINDER******

There are a very few 2014 calendars left - if you would like one please order from the web-site or contact Sheila Kimmins





Dylan
Fandango
Bustopher-
Jones

Bred and owned
by Claire James



Janet Cross, who lives in North Carolina, U.S.A. sent us this photograph of her two European Burmese, Willow and Chipper bred in Ohio.

The blue tortie (Willow) is
DEKATTCO'S STELLA ARTOIS
The chocolate male (Chipper) is
BODYGUARD'S XANDY
CHIPPER

There is no contemporary
American Burmese in their blood
lines and they have pedigrees going
back to lines in England.



Health Warning from Win Tadd - never teach a Burmese to play fetch!

Tune into YouTube and search for 'Burmese Play Fetch' and you will find lots of examples of this quirky behaviour. We did and were thrilled when Minty and Mimi quickly got the message and chased their favourite toys and obediently brought them back.

But what the videos don't tell you, however, is how much the cats love this game and now our two never want to stop playing. They wake you up in the morning with the toys in their mouths ready to play and follow you everywhere until you do. When in desperation you hide the toys to get a moment's respite they either dismantle the house until they find them or find a substitute. And if you try to ignore them then prepare to have the toys dropped onto your book, keyboard and even into your cup of tea! So be warned - this cute behaviour has the potential to drive you crazy.

Marmite's "Mewses"

Sharon Neal

Hi fellow Burmese. I've been having lots of mew-ses but have also had lots of holidays so just haven't had time to get down to writing for you.

Now that the holiday season is over, it got me to wondering just what you all did during the Summer. I always used to go to the cattery for my holidays. Actually, I quite like being in the cattery as I can talk to other cats and can also get out in the fresh air in the run attached to the pen - I am an indoor cat, you see. The servants are quite good and bring you meals without you having to shout for ages for them and they also see to your litter tray. I mean, you CAN shout for food if you want to, but there is NO point as you won't get them to change their routine - they aren't a soft touch like Mum and Dad, that's for sure. Mum and Dad usually take my bed and some of my toys - but, My whiskers! never my favourite ones. The problem is that I miss Mum and Dad. It is alright having servant servants, but it is just not the same as having Mum and Dad servants. When you are on holiday at a cattery, although you might get the odd bit of fuss, there is no sitting on laps, no kisses, no nipping under the bedclothes and snuggling up. My ears! what it really comes down to is that there really is no place like home!

So, I am well pleased that I now seem to have a double home. It's all a bit weird really, as the one has an upstairs and downstairs and the other is all on one level. First home is bigger, but second home is long and flat. We seem to get to second home by car. Half of first home is squashed into the car along with me in my carrier, that dog and Mum and Dad, and off we all go. I don't mind the car, really, which is one up on that dog who lies shivering on the floor. It doesn't do to seem too willing though, so if I've had a nap, when I wake up I yell my head off to make sure Mum and Dad know I'm still there. Sometimes I sing to the music that is on in the car. This is good and must please Mum and Dad because they always turn it up louder for me.

When we get to second home, I am usually put into a pen where I can use a litter tray or sit in my bed and watch what's going on. Once the car has been emptied, I am let out and have a good wander round to make sure all my toys are still where I left them and that everything is in order.

At first home I run through the lounge and hall, up the stairs, across the landing and into my bedroom making as much noise as I can. In second home, I start at one end and run flat out to the other as there are no closed doors in between so I can get up REAL speed. My tail! What a jolly good noise I can make too! The floors are wood, and the sides are metal, so it all sounds louder. There are big windows at the front, so I can watch the birds, rabbits, squirrels and sheep outside, and there are so many backs of sofas for beds. Nothing else changes, as Mum and Dad and that dog are there, so is my food, so it is a lovely way to have a holiday. I bet some of you also have a second home where you go for your holidays. Mine is a caravan, Mum says, but a lot of you have probably got houses or flats or boats or motorhomes or touring caravans or even tents. Mum has helped with names of things as we were having a chat about holidays and she was saying she's seen cats having all sorts of holidays and walking around campsites on leads - and "why won't you?" My paws! "Why won't I? That dog is bad enough, without all the others!

Anyway, that's what I've been doing and mew-sing about all summer. It might not sound very exciting to you, but it suits me well enough. What about you? Bet some of you have some REAL adventures and it would be good to hear about them. So don't keep them to yourselves, let the rest of your Burmese mates know.

Look after yourselves and Paws Up Burmese

Your mate,

Marmite



CRISPIN

He came to me in the Spring
When the leaves were new and green
Through summer sun and flowers
He skipped and played for hours.
Autumn came and the leaves turned gold
And soon the winters first snow to behold
Christmas tree to wonder at
And paper to rip apart
A special place for a little brown cat in
everybody's heart.
Spring came again, a year had gone
And the summer sun
But before the leaves turned to gold again
My Crispin had left me too.

Sue Bunce



This excerpt is from a letter written to Chris Stalker commenting on the lack of entries in shows.....

I was most interested to read your comments about dropping show numbers because this has been a concern of mine for quite some time now. It has been noticeable for quite a few years. A friend of mine has just acquired two kittens as he intends to start showing again after a gap of 20 years. He has the National CC Show Catalogue from 1990 which shows there were 3,140 entries. Last year, there were only 334 - a reduction of 89%. I have got catalogues going back over five years and many of them show quite high reductions in numbers too.

Another friend has just e-mailed me, having popped in to the Kensington CC show today and she said there did not seem to be many cats there and, of course, they had to "move the goalposts" by changing their status to try to bring in more numbers as other clubs have done. The White Persian CC show for example no longer restricts to just White Persians.

Having thought long and hard about this, I think it is a mixture of people having to cut back on expenses and also, although I hate to suggest it, do you think it may possibly also be a case of cat showing now being a "dying" pastime? I am a lifelong ballroom dancer and up until a couple of decades ago, dance halls were crowded but now you just get a few elderly folk - so pastimes do go "out of fashion". I guess it must be faced that the majority of Cat Fancy people are over 60 and quite a few could be gradually dropping out due to ill health or just to getting a bit jaded with it after many decades. I do know of several such people!

It could be that ten years down the line, there will be far fewer clubs and far fewer shows. I think it is very sad and wonder if the GCCF are "taking on board" this problem?

Best Wishes,
Miranda Ainsworth

And this is an extract from a letter Sheila Kimmins received when she sent out the invitation to the AGM in November.

.....If I could find someone else who was attending from Cornwall who would be willing to car share, then I would like to attend.. Having only joined the Association earlier this year, I don't actually know of any members from Cornwall. The length of the journey from Truro and the unpredictable weather makes travelling alone less appealing.

Rosemary Payne

Rosemary went on to comment that she had recently read an article in which it was suggested that petting and stroking one's cat could actually cause it stress. If so, she thinks Burmese must be their own worst enemies.

Ed. *The response to stroking is usually purring which we interpret as contentment, hardly stress. Yet, some Burmese also purr when visiting the vet, being injured or when giving birth and these are surely stressful situations. Any comments?*

And finally.....

Ever wondered who visits the website?

Thought you might be interested to know that our website was visited by nearly 800 people during the last couple of months. About half of these were new visitors and they came from 10 different countries staying on the site for an average of 2.27 minutes. The re-homing page was, understandably perhaps, the most visited.

Beware of people who dislike cats - Irish Proverb