

# Burmese Cat Association

*Issue No 7*

*Summer 2014*



## Committee Members



**Viv Crouch**

A convert to the Burmese breed and temperament since 1973, I bred and showed for for some years. I now steward for Maureen Smith when possible. I currently own a brown girl, Ria, and a Devon Rex, Boris.



**Cecilia Davies**

I have shared my life with Burmese cats since 1976 and all have been re-homes. Now retired, I would like to give something back to the BCA by helping with administration.

## Editorial

In the last editorial I mentioned how a newsletter was a way of creating unity within our Association. Unfortunately, groundbreaking news and topical events rarely oblige by occurring at the same time as the newsletter. But we do have other ways of spreading news thanks to email, Facebook and our website. This was very successfully demonstrated by the huge and world-wide response we had to our Chairman's letter about the proposal put to the GCCF to allow Asian variants in accepted Burmese colours to be shown in Burmese breed classes thus competing with pure bred Burmese. This might lead to the loss of our pure Burmese colours resulting from mating to colour variants and contribute to serious breeding problems. At our inaugural meeting Maureen spoke of her passion for preserving the integrity of the breed and now we had the chance to support her in opposing this proposal. Your response was positive and heartfelt and certainly had a part in the proposal being withdrawn. Our Facebook page has never been so busy - nor so passionate! However, please remain on your guard because the proposal is likely to be re-submitted and again we shall need to rely on your support to reject it. For the time being Facebook and the website are our best way of keeping you up to date.

An issue causing considerable concern now that the ban on importing European Burmese has been lifted in the UK is the risk of the head and midline stomach defect entering into cats bred with these imports. These issues are currently being researched at Langford but if anyone is considering importing from Europe please contact Claire Lovell ([cats@kennbury.co.uk](mailto:cats@kennbury.co.uk)) who has more detailed information

Finally, I have an apology to make to Claire Lewis. In the last newsletter I included a photograph of Fandango Bustopher-Jones and wrongly attributed his breeder and owner to another Claire - I should of course have said Claire Lewis. It's bad enough making a syntax mistake but actually to get someone's name wrong and perhaps damage their undoubted reputation is serious. I have tried to make amends by including a photo of Bustopher-Jones's recent progeny and it is such a lovely photograph that I confess a little part of me thinks it was almost worth making the mistake!

Elisabeth Amies

[aea@pershire.wyenet.co.uk](mailto:aea@pershire.wyenet.co.uk)

*Claire Lewis's Fandango Bustopher-Jones, alias Dylan ,and some of his exuberant offspring.. Their proud and long suffering mum is Champion Maharani Lilly-Marlene aka Tosca*



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### Collaring Cats

Wildlife campaigners are calling for a curfew on cats in Britain to keep them indoors at night as is required in Australia. They will also have to have bells attached to their collars to warn other creatures of their proximity. It is claimed that 200 million songbirds are killed each year by cats. At night? Mice and voles were, perhaps fortunately, omitted from the list but apparently hedgehogs might no longer be pounced upon by cats hunting at night if they hear a bell approaching. (How many of us have evidence of hedgehogs being dragged in through the cat-flap?).

It all depends of course on whose side you are on. Hedgehogs are blamed for eating wading birds on the island of South Uist and are now being evacuated to unknown territory with subsequent trauma. Cats are largely domestic but are often labelled as being wild although they are not always the villains. Perhaps if cats have to be tagged dogs will be next on the list - how will our dog-loving public react to a dog curfew?



## *Cat Chat at Thornbury*      **May 2014**

It is a reassuring fact about cat lovers that we are accustomed to dealing with unusual and sudden situations and react patiently and tolerantly to the unexpected. Cats bring the best out in us. And so they did at our Cat Chat this May. It was pouring with rain, it was Bank Holiday weekend, the motorways were clogged with caravans and "incidents" and the doors were locked at the Chantry in Thornbury. Many of us were delayed and it was touch and go whether Margaret Walkden would arrive in time for her talk. However, none of this was allowed to interrupt what became a very pleasant day of socialising and business.

Stevie Hillman organised and presided over the usual excellent lunch which was much appreciated especially by the late arrivals. We had been hoping to have this in the lovely walled garden but the rain deterred even the most hardy of us. As usual Tracey Keegan was her right hand. She works so hard at our events, she knows exactly what to do and is always smiling and cheerful even though she probably has no idea who half of us are! She deserves a huge thank you.

Maureen introduced the afternoon session by asking everyone to sign a card for our President, Judy Potter, who was ill. She then went on to thank all our members for opposing the proposal before the GCCF to allow Asian Variants to be included in Burmese classes. This proposal was subsequently withdrawn much to the relief of those concerned about the possible effects on the purity of Burmese colours. Our participation in such events will be greatly enhanced when our affiliation to the GCCF is approved and we have a voice at the BAC meetings. Maureen called for volunteers to assist her in this when the time came. Thanks were given to those who had brought cats to exhibit and to all those who had helped with the complicated arrangements.

Our main speaker for the day was Joyce Dell who gave a passionate talk about the genetic make up of the Burmese, on which she is an expert. She explained how the existing colours could be affected to the detriment of the breed if new colours were introduced. She also told us the proposed breeding policy was on the BCC web site and that, although very long, we should read it and write to the BBAC with any queries we might have.

The judging session was cut short as we were running late but nonetheless the exhibits we had were very interesting and thought provoking especially two of Chrissy Russell's Ayshazen cats from her Thai imports.

Margaret Walkden, who had endured a very long journey to Thornbury summoned the energy to give a most entertaining and affectionate account of her rescue and rehoming work which she described as a mixture of funny peculiar and funny ha-ha. 749 pedigree rescues had passed through her home during her work with re-homing and when asked how she coped she replied simply, "Feed them". Nowadays 3 Burmese allowed her to sleep on the end of their bed and one was in charge of the laptop in her office. On a more serious note she was critical of breeders who would not take their cats back when they needed rehoming because it showed a lack of responsibility.

A welcome cup of tea was enjoyed before departing and there was ample evidence our "poltergeist" had disappeared. Stevie found her handbag, lost car keys discovered, Yvonne's carrier bag was located under a table and the raffle drawn successfully with the Welfare Fund benefitting by over £60. And we could lock the rooms and go home!

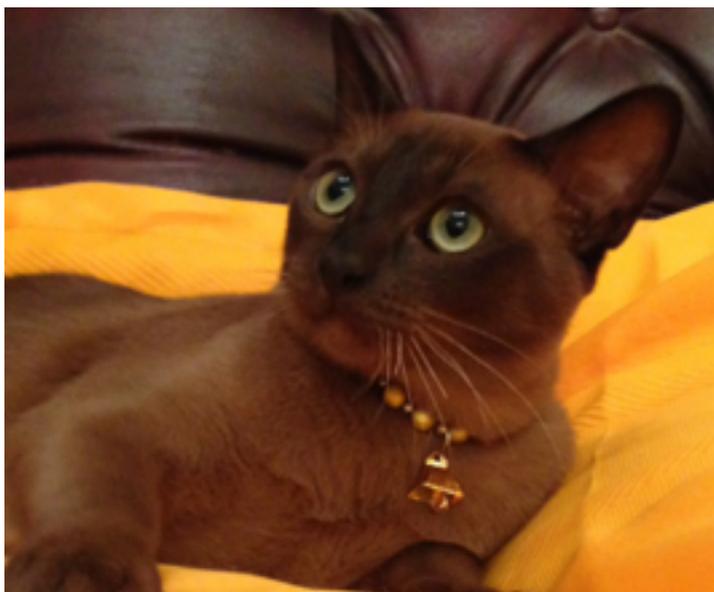
It was with great pleasure that I attended the Burmese Cat Association Cat Chat last month, along with some of my native Thai cats, and Burmese outcrosses. Thank you for inviting me!

According to genetic tests conducted by the renowned feline geneticist, Professor Leslie Lyons, in the USA, the Burmese breed now has the lowest genetic diversity of all other breeds. She has urged us to outcross our Burmese.

I decided to go directly to the source of the Burmese breed. For those who don't know, the original Burmese was a little brown cat called Wong Mau, who had an intermediate (Tonkinese) coat pattern.

Through various matings with Siamese, the Burmese breed was born. It made sense to go back to Southeast Asia, Thailand being the most sensible place to look.

A couple in the USA, Rennie Weinberger and JD Blythin, under the cattery name of Catizen, had already imported a female from Thailand. Her name is Mod Daeng. They were kind enough to give me a daughter from her, whose sire was a traditional US Burmese. Her name is Catizen LookSaoHangTai, "Thai" for short. Thai was mated to GCCF/TICA/FB Champion Katsacutec Dream. Two of her male kittens have gone into the Burmese gene pool.; a blue sepia boy to Finland, and a brown sepia boy remaining here



***Ayshazen Jack of Diamonds (3rd generation)***

in the UK with Angela Crowther of Angisan cats. His name is Ayshazen Jack Of Diamonds, and he attended the Burmese cat chat, along with Nam Dtan, a Brown mink boy that I imported directly from Thailand.

Both are currently registered with TICA. Nam Dtan has been accepted as a 1<sup>st</sup> generation foundation Burmese. Jack is now registered as a third-generation foundation Burmese. When mated with a Burmese, Jack's offspring will be fourth-generation SBT Burmese hence able to be shown.

I have a Brown mink female Thai import, named Mook Dta, and in July I will be welcoming a beautiful Brown Tortie girl from Thailand.

I had great fun on the day, explaining to people about the cats

and highlighting the need to outcross. I am happy to help and advise anyone who wants to import from Thailand, it's not as expensive you might think!



***Nam Dtan (Thai import)***

## The Cat's Cats

When Kostya and I moved to a seaside terrace, I worried that he might be bullied by the local toughs, having been brought up in a London flat as an indulged only cat. But within a week of his being released from indoors, my boy had subjugated the entire feline population of the area and was indisputable Top Cat. He had told me of his previous incarnation as a General in the 13<sup>th</sup> Red Army, and I now began to believe his stories. Breeding will out.



Kostya continued a ruthless defence of his territory, so I was surprised when a fluffy, outrageously camp, ginger and white visitor appeared unchallenged. I assumed that “Princess Tippytoes” was permitted full access because she was female... until I met her staff and learned that “she” was a “he” called “Moggy”! Mog and Kostya became firm friends, going on lengthy expeditions together and shamelessly charming treats from outdoor diners at the boutique hotel

over the fence. (K is particularly partial to mackerel sashimi, I understand.)

Then a skinny black cat with a squint joined them, who wouldn't come near me but was allowed to sit on the watchtower (garden shed) with K. I christened him “Shadow”, because he behaved like Kostya's and was afraid of his own. He was so thin that I fed him furtively on the shed roof, until one evening Kostya escorted him inside to dine. He devoured four pouches of Whiskas and a bowl of dried food. Soon he was around most of the time, and Kostya behaved as if he had always been with us. With winter coming – because I am just this mad – I spoke to K, saying that he must give me a sign if he didn't want Shadow to move in completely. He blinked and stretched.



Eighteen months on, Shadow is an affectionate, playful, bossy addition to the family. His squint has almost gone, and he becomes more trusting by the day. Kostya and Moggy are still best friends and partners in crime further afield. Having found a home, Shadow stays close to it. He and Kostya are brothers. They share defence of the realm, martial arts practice, catnip toys... almost everything. But Shadow knows better than to come onto ‘our’ bed at night!

**Stephanie Lewis**

## Celebrity Cats

Are our cats moving ahead of us in the networking world? We read stories of cats who take “selfies” and an app called Catselvie can be downloaded on to iPads and Iphones. Snapcat, another of the applications, features a moving red dot on a black screen which the cats chase. When they hit the screen with their paws to try and catch it, the phone takes a picture. Owners can then add filters or stickers and proud remarks before sharing the photographs on social networking sites. And apparently not only taking “selfies” of themselves is within their capability - there is news of one cat even unlocking an iPhone with its paw. and playing games on an iPad.

According to research by phone network Three, 3.8 million feline photos and videos are sent every day compared with 1.4 million 'selfies' of people! And just flicking through cat club Facebook pages reveals how many contributors prefer to use their cat's profile picture rather than their own. More than 350,000 cat owners have created accounts for their pets on social networking sites such as Facebook. Some probably even have their very own websites on which they allow their owners to update news of family additions and show successes. They call it social networking! But there is a danger here too perhaps. Our son recorded a programme for the BBC on the pitfalls of concentrating so much on archiving the present moment for posterity that it often detracts from the reality and emotion of the actual moment. While considering this precept, Whistle, his chocolate Burmese, contributed a loud and rather challenging comment. This has now also been archived and no doubt digitalised, filed and stored in the recesses of the BBC. Perhaps this was the first time a Burmese voice has been recorded on Radio 4. It certainly won't be the last that's for sure. Cats have quite clearly discovered how to exploit the appeal of the limelight and to perpetuate their allotted 15 minutes of fame. We all know how much Burmese in particular admire themselves and they are certainly not shy about expressing an opinion as Whistle has shown. A cat chat show next? And how long will it be before we have cat presenters and celebrities? It seems the move has already begun. Bob, the Street Cat, has walked the red carpet and appeared on the Andrew Marr show with his agent, James Bowen. The video of the cat launching an assault on a dog attacking a small boy has gone viral and the cat is being groomed for an appearance at a national baseball game. There was a news item about a cat in New Zealand returning from the hunt and presenting his owner with a packet of cannabis on his door step - and looking rather pleased about it. Recently we read about George Osborne's cat being chauffeured back to Downing Street after a walkabout in London. Who will be the first Burmese to host an extreme challenge TV show? Yours?

Elisabeth Amies



**Whistle dreaming of fame**

## A VENUE LOST AND A VENUE GAINED! - A REPORT FROM THREE SPRING SHOWS

My Cat Show year usually starts with the Southern Counties show at Reading at the end of January. This year, I was unable to go. Never mind I thought - there is always next year! Sadly, this will not be the case, as along with several other shows, the Southern Counties will no longer "go it alone" but will be going in with the Croydon C.C in Bracknell in February.

In March I attended Wessex C.C running back to back with the Herts & Middx C.C at Eastleigh. It was a lovely sunny day and the event was very well supported with numbers similar to those of the previous year. Sadly, this will not happen next year either as the Herts & Middx will be moving to the Midlands to show with another club which I feel is rather a shame after only two years of showing with the Wessex. The overall winner of the two shows was a Br Blue Shorthair MN Kolinga Emrys. My day was made by the fact that I was allowed a cuddle with my favourite Burmese whose name I had better not mention. Suffice to say that, in my opinion, he is the feline equivalent of gorgeous George Clooney!

Not to be daunted, in April I ventured to the White Oak Leisure Centre at Swanley, Kent for the Essex C.C show. What a cheerful and well-run show it was, too! Approx 280 cats were on show and it was good to see some of the "minority" breeds represented including the Nebelung, Australian Mist, Korat, Classic Ocicat, Tiffanie and Sphynx. Our beloved Burmese were also well represented including most highly titled Mainman Kisschase - now all of ten years old and still knocking 'em for six! The overall winner was Br Shorthair MN Pr Jococa Credit Crunch. This show is already in my diary for next year.

My all time favourite show, "The Surrey & Sussex Cat Assoc", was held at Woking. The numbers were somewhat down on previous years (in common with many other shows) but in 2015 they will be joined by the London C.C. The overall winner was a cheeky little Sphynx kitten. Perhaps not a favourite breed of everyone but this little chap, Amarogue Hobgoblin, had "star quality" by the bucketload!

May saw the repeat of the popular London Pet Show at Earls Court where I was pleased to spend one of the days helping out at a club table. Folk were thronging around all the cats which included some of the lesser known breeds such as the Russian Blue, Ocicat and Ragamuffin. Unfortunately, our gorgeous Burmese were not represented this time, possibly because the show was a week later this year which may have caught people by surprise!

More next time but I think we are going to have to get used to there being fewer but larger shows as more and more clubs go "back to back."

I may soon try visiting a TICA show!

Miranda Ainsworth

Roving Show Reporter 550



## **Post scripts, Stop Press and Final Words**

*Some time ago I asked members to let me know what had inspired their choice of prefix when breeding kittens. I am always intrigued by the choices made and what they mean to their owners and I like to imagine you might be too. There were one or two responses but not nearly enough to write about! I am hoping a second plea might bring results. You needn't write much, just a few words but, collectively, these may add up to a fascinating and rather interesting insight into our cat world. Just to start the ball rolling - I chose Walkabout as my prefix because I am part Australian and because my cats had a tendency to wander off on voyages of exploration. Robine Pocock chose Pussinboots because she first had Siamese. Chris Stalker chose Vintarn in tribute to a person she admired.*

***Please help!***

### **Stop Press!**

**And Poppy, officially recognised as the world's oldest cat by the Guinness Book of Records, made headlines this week, when she died at the age of 24. She had lived through five British Prime Ministers and died peacefully in Bournemouth. Now there's fame!**

*In our next issue we hope to include information about our possible affiliation to the GCCF and the advantages it may bring to our Club. There will be more about Chrissy Russell's breeding programme and some photographs of her cats, perhaps an article from*

*Claire Lovell and, most importantly, a report from our AGM on Saturday, 8th November at The Chantry, Thornbury. We hope as many of you as possible will be able to come with questions, contributions, support and encouragement. You will be rewarded with lunch and we look forward to seeing you!*

*Our best wishes go to Ann Kelly who is retiring after many years as a judge. With a reputation for being respected, reliable and trustworthy she will be greatly missed at many shows.*

**Thousands of years ago, cats were worshipped as gods. Cats have never forgotten this.**

**Anonymous**