

Burmese Cat Association



Issue Number 9

Summer 2015



Sally Rainbow-Ockwell

Sally has recently joined our Committee as Treasurer. Sally has been a judge for some years and breeds Burmese as well as a new breed - Sokoke. She has been an active director at the GCCF since 2011 and is responsible for their IT and the recent re-development of the GCCF systems.

Sally is a Director at Business Helium helping small and mid-sized businesses to grow and achieve their goals. She won the Action Coach European Action Man award in 2008.

In what little spare time she has Sally might swim, sing or read.

Editorial

This has been a busy summer - not only for us because we are in the midst of moving house and dealing with 30 years of clutter and reviving memories but it has also been an active time in the cat world. Now that we are fully affiliated to the GCCF we know more of what is going on and have a voice. We can send delegates to the BAC meetings and discuss current cat affairs and reinforce our determination to maintain the traditional strength, temperament and appearance of the Burmese. But all this comes at a cost and that cost is time. We all lead such busy lives now that voluntary committee work, exhibiting, breeding and simply owning a cat means time is often compromised. We have been joined by two new enterprising Committee members, Claire Lewis and Sally Rainbow Ockwell, but, like the rest of us, they are busy people too. Deciding on a date for the next meeting can become a challenge when we all have so many other commitments and activities, not to mention travelling long distances. In fact our last meeting had to be a telephone conference call which was actually very successful perhaps more because of Sally's skilful management of it rather than the chatty enthusiasm of us amateurs. This lack of time became a clear issue when we sadly had to cancel our traditional summer tea party because there was so little response to the invitation. One of the pleasures in belonging to a club is having an opportunity to meet socially and share our love for Burmese chatting over a cup of tea and listening to what others have to say, not to mention catching up on the all important gossip.

However, there is some really good news in that we are finally able to offer you our very own Burmese Cat Association show! Because it is our first venture we want it to be successful and we have chosen to be independent of other clubs. Our inaugural show will be held on January 23rd 2016 and will be managed by the highly experienced, efficient and enthusiastic Lynda Ashmore. The venue is a very welcoming and attractive village hall with excellent facilities at Ardley with Fewcott, near to Bicester and just minutes from Junction 9 on the M40. Because of its convenient location and the ease of getting there (remember it will be January!) we hope to attract exhibitors and visitors from the north, east, south and west. There is plenty of parking and the added temptation of Bicester outlet village very nearby where the world comes to shop, as well as Oxford, Blenheim Palace and Woodstock. Or if you just choose to stay put we hope to offer catering and winter warmth and lots of beautiful Burmese cats to admire. Lynda is already hard at work designing rosettes, preparing a schedule and selecting judges. Nearer the time we will also be asking for your help and contributions to make this a really special day for our club to remember.

We asked for your preferences about the newsletter - are you happy to receive an electronic copy or would you prefer to have one mailed to you? Because of the cost this would be sent just once a year. Please let us know which you would prefer - and if you have any other comments or suggestions we would like to hear those too!

Elisabeth Amies

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Cats in Boxes

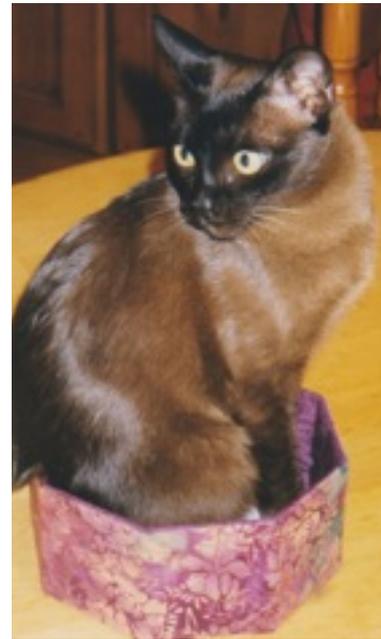
We all know that cats are addicted to boxes and enclosed spaces of any kind, whether it is hiding in your shopping bag, curling up in a shoe box or trying to squeeze into an impossibly small flower pot. We think it is rather sweet and take photographs of kittens piled up in a carry-on bag or a large neuter with legs hanging over the edge of its bed or even a cat lying comfortably in a wash basin. But there are several and various reasons for this behaviour that have been intriguing scientists.



Cats rarely confront a dangerous or threatening situation, they prefer to ignore or by-pass it by hiding from it. Cats in the wild may climb trees or hide in a bush. Our domestic cats find their security and comfort zones closer to home in enclosed spaces such as boxes where all the problems confronting them just conveniently disappear. They feel safe and then can take

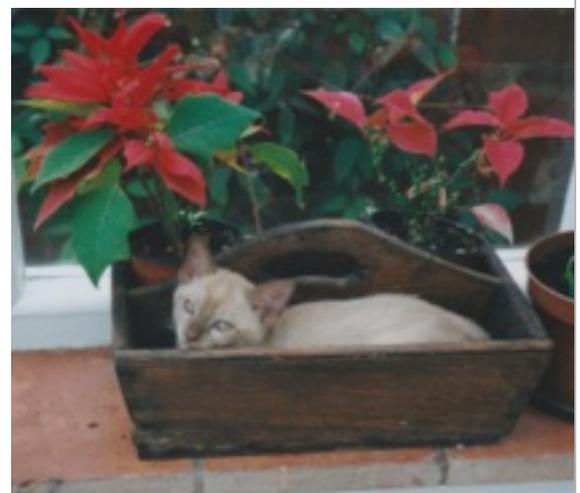
the initiative which is another function the safety of the box provides. Think how a cat pounces on another cat, or on you, from its vantage point and confidently waits to do so. Surprise is a definite hunting tool and if the prey eludes you or attacks you can retreat into your box and try again later. It is common knowledge too that boxes in dark places certainly alleviate stress and can help a cat to settle into a new environment. Just ask any cattery owner!

Another fact that has emerged is that small spaces, often apparently uncomfortable ones too, help to keep a cat warm because they provide insulation. According to a study by the National Research Council the thermoneutral zone in which a cat feels comfortable is between 86 to 97 degrees Fahrenheit (30 to 35.5 degrees C.) because they have a higher metabolic rate than us humans. They need to generate heat and cardboard, especially the corrugated kind, helps to preserve it. This need for a higher body temperature also explains why you often see cats stretched at full length on sun baked patios or garage roofs.



C.)

So now you know! Make room for your cat under the duvet and keep hoarding those boxes!



Did you know that cats prefer classical music?

A study in the Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery found that cats hate heavy metal, are indifferent to pop but are fond of classical music. Twelve cats under anaesthetic and wearing headphones were exposed to the three genres of music for two minutes at a time. Those listening to classical appeared calmer — breathing more slowly and with smaller pupils. Miguel Carreira from the University of Lisbon said that cats are especially partial to the music of George Handel.



*And guess on which day of the year this news item appeared in the press?
(You're right and it was in the Daily Mail on April 1st!)*



This poem by the late Sue Bunce has been sent to us by Viv Crouch and recalls a special day for Sleekline Super Star who was bought as a stud from Sandra Peters and owned jointly by Viv and a friend.

A DAY TO REMEMBER

On November 3rd 1979

Two days before Guy Fawkes
They held a show in Malvern
The place with tree lined walks.
We only went for one reason
It was a little boys first show
So round went the judges in sequence
OH! Sometimes they were so slow
So finally the marks were counted
And he'd won nearly all his classes.
But they had not finished
And up to the front he went
He kissed everyone who stroked him
For the Best in Show pen he was meant
And at last the day was over
And we journeyed home by car
And reflected that we took not only a name
But a truly SUPERSTAR



What is your prefix?

Some time ago we asked members to tell us why they chose their distinctive prefixes. Although the response has been modest we have collected an appealing and interesting selection of your choices. The first reply was from Robine Pocock who is best known for breeding the first blue Burmese. You will all recognise the name of Pussinboots. Robine said the name was just right for her first Siamese, she had never seen a cat with such distinctive markings. And here are several more -

Rosemary Payne

In 1977, my husband and I bought the sweetest brown kitten from Shirley Cox (Kimaross Burmese) called Kimaross Krispins Krumpet, born on 17/7/77. She became known as Kizzy, a name meaning 'stay put' made famous by the TV serial 'Roots'. Kizzy did indeed 'stay put' with us for 17 years! All our cats have nicknames (in addition to their pet names) and Kizzy's was 'Kiz-woz' - after the expression Tiswas, pronounced Tiz-woz - burmese kittens often getting themselves into a Tizzy or a Tiz! So my prefix became KIZWOZZI.

Claire Lewis



Claire has recently been co-opted to the Committee and she is one of our delegates to the BBAC. She is a very busy person but found time to give us the reason for her Fandango prefix . This photo is of some of her Fandango kittens

I've had my GCCF Prefix 'Fandango' since 1991. I seem to remember in the list of prefixes that I submitted to the Burmese Cat Club at the time, that this was number 4 on my list. I duly received a letter from the Club

informing me that the other suggestions were not suitable—for what reason I was not told and unfortunately I can't remember now what they actually were. But they were happy to support my prefix application for my fourth choice. So initially I remember being disappointed that I hadn't got one of my top three choices, however now I am very pleased with how things turned out. One definition of 'Fandango' is 'a dance which starts off slow and sedate but gradually gets faster and more lively - often ending in a hurly burly of exciting sound and movement...Something which I think exactly describes our beloved Burmese!!

And Anna Virtue writes.....

I am often asked how the prefix of Hobberdy was chosen.....

In my youth I read many of the series of books by Derek Tangye (known as the chronicles of Minack) about his life on a flower farm on the beautiful Cornish coast. His life was shared with his wife Jeannie and a succession of cats and donkeys.

When I applied for my prefix the following passage from Derek Tangye's "When The Winds Blow" came to mind.

"Jeannie, being influenced by being half-Scot, half-Irish and living in Cornwall, likes to believe in the existence of pixies, leprachauns...and Hobberdy. Hobberdy, you may remember, is the imp which K.M. Briggs in her book describes as *the imp who lives in old houses, takes care of the owners, and who enjoys displaying his sense of humour by performing extraordinary antics*. Thus, when we lost a pair of silver salad ladles, then found them beautifully polished under the bird table six months later, Jeannie attributed the mystery to Hobberdy's form of humour".

I had always thought there was something in common between the Burmese cat and the Hobberdy and so..... the decision was made.

The rest, as they say, is down to history. Hobberdy history.

Maureen Smith tells how frustrating it can be not to be allocated the prefix of one's choice but how, in time, it becomes so familiar that it ends up being the most acceptable

Applying for a prefix back in the 70's was a complicated process. You had to be a member of two clubs and some took considerably longer to approve choices than others! Nor were you allowed to use place names for prefixes. I had sent in a list of three, two of them were places in Thailand which I wanted.

I had spent hours going over a map of Thailand with a magnifying glass and sent two named places in the smallest writing I could possibly find and which I couldn't even see without the glass. But it didn't do me any good and my third choice which I didn't want was the one I was given. KANELIQUE was the third name made up of from the first four letters of the prefix Kanella and the last five of the queen's name which was Angelique. I remember being so disappointed when I received my prefix and it had only taken five minutes to do as I was so convinced I would get one of the others. Now after so many years of using my Prefix I can't imagine any thing else but I was not happy when I was given it. And I can't even remember what the other two were!

And me? I chose Walkabout because I am half Australian and it represented a freedom I treasured for all my cats to enjoy. And the kittens had lovely aboriginal names like Billabong and Kangaroo. After our mother died, my sister applied for a prefix and received a letter from the GCCF saying they would be happy to allow her to continue to use our mother's prefix, Kutjing, for the Siamese she had bred for many years - a gesture we both appreciated.

A Burmese Story

by Jenni Rozario

My love of the Burmese starts with my husband! Born in Rangoon, Burma, in 1940, his mother had to trek to the hill stations of India to escape the Japanese – with her baby, her nanny and other women and children, some of whom never made it – but that’s another story. After the war, back in Burma and with another child and after her family were reunited in India she decided to come to England. I met my future husband many years later here in Bath where we have lived for over 30 years on and off. In the late 1980’s we found ourselves, with two children, running a restaurant just outside Bath (a Burmese one of course!) with his mother and our Great Dane, Max, our guard dog. My husband saw an ad for Burmese kittens and Co-Co and Mau Mau were added to the family, all Burmese! Co Co, Burmese for “younger brother” and Mau Mau, “older brother” were loved by all, especially our Great Dane, (a big softie), our son Daniel 5 and our daughter, Georgina 3. All went well until our restaurant business took us to Portugal and we had to part with Max and the Yayas as my daughter called the cats.

Max went to a couple in Bristol who asked us what we were doing with our cats. We hadn’t thought it through so when they offered to take the cats too, we were happy to keep them all together. Of course we missed them all dearly but we kept in touch and soon realised they were just as much loved by their new owners. When we returned from Portugal with myself pregnant with our third child, Natalia, imagine our pleasure when we heard from the couple asking whether we would like our cats back! Much as they were loved, there was now a grandchild and, although very protective, Mau Mau was a little aggressive and they worried that he might just be a little too over protective! I kept it a secret from the two older children, driving to Bristol one day to collect them. Imagine their surprise and happiness being reunited with their lovely pets!

Mau Mau and Co Co moved with us several times enjoying a lovely life until sadly Mau Mau was run over. He made it back to our house and died in a tent in our garden. The children were devastated. Co Co lived a few more years but died of kidney failure eventually. With our three children, 8, 14 and 16, all at school by now, our life was empty without the cats so Georgina came home one day with Su-Khi, the last of a litter in our local pet shop. She still lives with us aged 15! Of course Su-Khi needed a friend and my younger daughter, Natalia, was surprised one Christmas when we’d all clubbed together to buy her “San-u-May” (Burmese for beautiful daughter), a beautiful blue tortie who is now 8 years old and the mum of 2 amazing litters. Narla, our baby, was the only brown girl in the last litter. We just had to keep her! She’s 2 years old now and hopefully pregnant herself.



This story sums up our love of Burmese cats who are part of our lives. And now, after visiting Burma three times with my husband, finally going back to his beautiful country and visiting the Burmese Cat Sanctuary on Inle Lake we can look back on our lives full of love for all our Burmese family!

Jenni Rozario

Jenni wrote this account as a letter to Stevie Hillman who was able to add a postscript saying that Narla is expecting kittens sired by her Boysie and she is the granddaughter of her late stud Ch. Ayudha Mr Tibbs and is very like him.

Ed. It is well worth watching the video on uTube of the Burmese Cats of Inle Lake Burma where their grace and beauty remind us of why we admire them so much.

Narla chilling out and getting to know the elephants





**You are cordially invited to the
FIRST BURMESE CAT ASSOCIATION
CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW**

To be held on
Saturday 23rd January 2016

**At
Ardley With Fewcott Village Hall
8 Russett Road
Ardley, Bicester
Oxfordshire
OX27 7PL**

Come along and enjoy a celebration of the Burmese cat in all its glory!!

SHOW MANAGER Mrs Lynda Ashmore

7 Ledstone Road, Sheffield. S8 0NS

01142 586 866

lynda.ashmore@googlemail.com

Schedules will be available to download from the club website nearer the time but if anyone requires a hard copy please let us know asap.

The show will be held under GCCF rules and license and will include Ped Pet and Non Pedigree section.

Other breeds are very welcome on exhibition and limited stall space will be available.

MAD MAX
AMAḤAMA KYKAT KLYKOT

MAUREEN SMITH

One day in the early 80's I received a call from the Burmese Cat Club Welfare Officer, Margaret Howe. She asked me if I would take in a brown entire male who had been rescued from what could only be described as a chicken run with several breeds all mixed up together. They were all breeding and most of them had medical problems including ringworm. I had been asked because of my love of the Brown colour. It was not our normal policy to re-home entire cats but because he was 10 and did not have the best of tempers we thought we would give him a try as a stud.

I went to Kent to collect him and had never seen such a pitiful sight, he was hunched up on a shelf with his head sagging down miserably onto the shelf too.

By this time I was very worried about what I was taking on but the Welfare had decided to keep him at stud for a year and see how he behaved and what he might produce as he was from a very old line.

In his new and comfortable home Max settled down well unless I went in to clean or tried to touch him. After a couple of months Margaret Howe said she would like to try her Blue Girl with him. Bearing in mind I hadn't laid a finger on him although he had been cleaned up and his claws clipped at the vet I used, I knew he was ok. I put the girl in the queen's quarters and he showed interest. It was with great trepidation I let her out in the morning and imagine my surprise when he mated her and behaved like an absolute gentleman. They lived together for the entire week until she was collected.

Until his next queen was due I spent hours with him talking, sitting reading and playing with him but it seemed nothing would bring him round to accept humans. He attacked the red shoes I had on one morning and we found out later he had had a broken breastbone where we presume he had been kicked. I used to take my supper down to eat with him and do the crossword - something I have always done with any stud I have had. One

night I had my elbows on his shelf talking to him when I must have got too close and he swiped me across my face and left me with a very bloody nose. I put plaster over padding but the blood was still pouring. When I went to bed I looked like something from Comic Relief and red nose day. I had a scar for a few years after that.

Max had never played in his life and the first time he played with some string I cried. It took 18 months before he trusted me and crept on to my lap and that brought more tears from me. And all the time he had a steady stream of ladies to him producing lovely strong kittens. When he started to love me he pushed his head into my shoulder, which was very scary the first time as I wondered if I would get a pierced ear.

The worst queen he had to him was my own Kanelique Yavanha. When she attacked him as soon as she came out of her pen we realised that she knew where she was and didn't like it. We took her for a drive in her basket covered with a blanket and there was complete silence. When we returned her, I covered Max's window so she couldn't see where she was and then let her out. She was as good as gold, mated and subsequently produced 5 kittens. She went on to have 3 litters with him but we had to follow the same procedure every time.

Max became quite a cult figure within the club and had a steady stream of ladies, Recently I found my old records and saw he had had at least 70 queens. One night, a lady from Sussex rang to say she had a calling queen, but there was something wrong with the phone and I only picked up bits of the conversation. When she arrived the following morning she had 2 girls with her, which was quite a shock as I had never had to deal with two together before. Max mated them both but they didn't take, as, unbeknown to me, he was in kidney failure. I had to have him put down a few days later. He was nearly 17. He had had 7 years of love and care and he went to sleep in my arms.

I was very proud to have cared for Max. He had been such hard work and then so rewarding. I have never had another stud quite like him. If any one still has an old BCC News from the late 80's you might see a lovely poem my vet wrote about him. And if you do see it please let me have a copy as I no longer have one.