

Newsletter

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Magazine of Eskdale & District Branch
Cats Protection
November 2001

Editorial

Dear All,

Welcome to the 4th and final newsletter for 2001, yes, here we are again at the end of another year.

2001 has been a very mixed year for us, foot and mouth devastated the region for all Spring and Summer and it is only now that things are starting to look a bit brighter.

Farm cats were not neutered as early as they would usually have been, which means more kittens are out there, this will no doubt cause us more work in the future.

Farm cat neutering is now well under way again and we are also having a free neutering campaign in the month of November for domestic cats, this will be paid for by the Branch and will help people on income support, pensions and low income. If you know anyone in our region who may benefit from this, then please get them to ring us.

One of our fosterers moved out of the area and we have had to relocate their pen, grateful thanks to Mr Johnstone who helped to dismantle the pen and transport it from Lochmaben to Annan (several trips being needed) on what was a wild Sunday morning and then had to phone home to say he was going to be late for Sunday lunch! The pen is now up and is in the process of being stained, electricity will be installed and then it will be ready to house cats once more. The loss of this fosterer also meant we lost our publicity officer, happily Rhona Dinsdale has agreed to take on this task.

Headquarters have given us money for a commemorative pen: the money for these pens comes from Headquarters members who pay to put a few lines in The Cat magazine in remembrance of their cats who have died. We have decided to put a bit of money toward this and are having a double pen built instead of a single one, this is now under construction (it was delayed due to foot & mouth) and will hopefully be housing cats by the end of the year.

Please try to support us in the final fundraisers of this year, details appear in this newsletter.

Membership renewal forms for 2002 are enclosed, it is still only £5 for a year. Also enclosed are bottle draw sheets, if you can sell more of these then please phone one of us and we will gladly send you more sheets.

Please remember to keep any bric-a-brac for us as we are getting short, also books would be welcome, for both adults & children.

Thank you all for your support over the past year, I hope you all have a Happy Christmas and good New Year and we look forward to your continuing support in 2002. *Fiona*

CAT WORK



It's the middle of October and we still have a large number of kittens in care. The majority of kittens this year have been from farms. We were unable to go to farms in the spring of the year because of Foot & Mouth restrictions, but are catching up now. Of the 123 kittens that have been in care this year 88 were ferals. Feral kittens are a tremendous work for the fosterer, a great deal of time and patience has to be spent socialising these kittens.

167 cats and kittens have been homed so far this year.

38 are in care

4 are on the help to home list

350 cats have been neutered.

Some of the cats in care include:

Fluffy. Three year old, female tortie, fluffy. Fluffy came into care when her owners moved home and left her behind. Fluffy is a very timid cat, not sure of humans at all, but loves dogs. She is quite miserable in her pen and would love a home where she could be quite independent with a dog for company.

Sophie. Four months old, female, black. Sophie came into care at the end of August at about ten weeks old. She was seen wandering, living rough. A gentleman managed to catch her with the aid of a landing net. Sophie was probably a little feral kitten but was so pleased to have a bed and food she purred straight away. She is very affectionate, but is probably going to be a one person cat. She is very wary of strangers.

CAT WORK CONTD.

Cynthia. Five to six years approx, female, tabby and white. Yet another stray, Cynthia was found wandering in a small village, none of the residents knowing where she had come from. She is a lovely cat and has obviously had a caring home at some time, when taken to the vets to be spayed she had already been done.

Helga. Nine weeks old, female, black and white. One of our many feral kittens, was caught with her three siblings and six cousins. Seven adult cats from the farm were caught, neutered and returned. Helga thinks she has been a parrot in a former life as she has to spend most of her life perched on your shoulder.

100+ Club

We now have 113 members in our 100+ Club and are now able to have a 1st and 2nd prize each month

Winners so far:

June	no. 4	Mrs Atkinson
July	no. 60	Suzanne Phillips
August	no. 54	Elsie Elliott
	no. 91	Ann Gray
September	no. 79	Gwen Beattie
	no. 9	Mrs Irving
October	no. 104	Ken Mcnaughton
	no. 71	Angie Beattie

Anyone wishing to join please contact Fiona, Ginnie or Anne. The more members we have the larger prize money we are able to give.

In memory of Tigger

When you came you were scared and shy
You got better and better as time went by
You didn't bite and scratch so much
You didn't run when you felt our touch
As weeks passed we let you out
You got lost twice but Fen heard you shout
We thought you were safe at the Back of the Hill
We let you go in and out at will
We kept you in when we went out
You always came when we would shout
It's so unfair, you didn't roam
You never ever went far from home.

You played with the children in their tent
Many a day like this was spent
You followed Ryan's bike around the block
Then on the window you would knock
You'd come in and collapse on the floor
Once rested you'd then go back for more
You loved the dogs. especially Fen
You even accepted the new kitten Crystal.
Josh and Monte miss you
and the rest of your friends do too
Erin's little friend came to say,
"The world's not the same without Tigger to play".

You loved your dad and he loved you
You helped him on the computer too
You gave Crystal her confidence back
When you played with her tail she gave you a whack
But she loved to sit outside with you
Side by side with Monte too
You brought Monte home one day
If it wasn't for you he'd still be a stray
You were the only cat who Josh would share
His bed and his pram without a care
We thought you'd always be together
We wanted you to stay forever

You watched snooker and golf on TV
Your nicknames were Tig Tig, Toony and Pee Wee
You were so shiny you reflected the light
You were bright orange and pure white
We thought you'd be here with us for years
It's still so hard to hold back the tears
We knew there was something badly wrong
When you stayed out so very long
We called and called and looked for you
We asked our friends and neighbours too
I searched the field where they'd cut the hay
I kept missing the spot where you lay



Susan came and told me they'd found you
and then, by the look on her face, I knew
I wish I could forget the sight
of you lying there alone that night
You must have been so full of fear
The gate you were running to was so near
Erin cries herself to sleep
All the reminders make our hearts weep
This house is unnaturally quiet
When you were here we had a riot
Time is a great healer, or so they say
But Tigger we miss you more each day.



FUNDRAISING NEWS

Fundraising has been pretty hectic over the summer and autumn. Several members have held their own fundraisers which is an enormous help in many ways – not only does it raise money but it gets to new places where we aren't able to do coffee mornings, and reaches cat lovers that we don't normally reach. So many thanks to Rhona for doing car boots in Annan, to Elspeth for the coffee morning and to Ann and Veronica Nelson for the doll raffle. Thanks also to Eileen for manning (womaning) the stall at Gretna Craft Fair in August.

The three big events since the last newsletter, have been the Open Garden Day, Fun Day, and Sponsored Walk. The Open Garden Day seems an awfully long time ago now – it was summer then. Thanks to everyone who came and helped or bought; we made a fantastic £1,913, which was a wonderful boost to the funds, especially after being so delayed with starting fundraising this year, because of the foot and mouth.

By contrast the Fun Day was decidedly autumnal – by which I mean it was cold, and the wind was so strong that every time we stuck the sides on the marquee, the whole thing took off! However, the day went well and we are most grateful to everyone, especially those from outwith Cats Protection, who supported us – like Juanita and Mossburn Animal Sanctuary, and the ponies, who behaved like angels; Amanda and Tim for the hovercraft; Aileen for lending the trampoline; the Junior Border Rustlers, and everyone else. Janet and Barbara did a great job running the dog show, which was a big success, with 25 entries. Thank you, Janet, for supplying rosettes and very attractive prizes. We made just over £900 and we hope to repeat it all next year – but we need a big push to get it over the £1,000 mark. We've got all the attractions, so now we need a few more members and friends to make the effort to come along. You would find it worth it.

The other thing is that we could do with a Fun Day committee to help with organisation. If anyone is willing to be on this, give me a ring, please.

Altogether September was a doggy month, with 9 dogs coming along on the sponsored walk. I think they enjoyed it more than some of the owners, who weren't so keen on the pouring rain. Thanks to Muriel for suggesting that particular walk and for keeping us all on the right path – not easy to do when leading from the rear, and not having a voice like a foghorn. If anyone has not paid their sponsor money could they give it to Fiona or Anne or send it to me, please.

The Photographic Competition attracted quite a number of entries and a lot of extremely good and entertaining photographs. The winning photographs were all on display at the Fun Day, and do look out for the picture of Gillian's intrepid white kitten who was the Overall Winner, in The Cat magazine Jan/Feb 2002. There should also be a piece on the Fun Day and the Sponsored Walk, in that edition, so don't miss it.

Photographic Competition Winners

- Category 1. Audrey Riordan "Bubbles",
- Category 2. Gordon Forbes "Tubbs"
- Category 3. Elaine Briggs
- Category 4. Mrs Irving
- Category 5. Ryan Dinsdale "Monte Carlo"
- Category 6. Mrs Irving
- Category 7. S&G Wells "Tiggar"
- Category 8. Gillian McCubbin
- Category 9. Elspeth Little "Seamus & Katey"
- Overall Winner Gillian McCubbin.

We are now on the Christmas trail – with the Craft Evening at Anne's on 27th October and then three Coffee Mornings, interspersed with stalls at other fairs, and the Charity Fair at Loreburn Hall in Dumfries on 24th November. The list has changed since the last newsletter so do check which things are when and where – Coffee Mornings have been switched a bit to accommodate other events.

We could do with a few more helpers and a few more bakers. Can anyone volunteer either to come along and man a stall at one of the events, or to bake cakes/scones/traybakes/fudge etc for the Coffee Mornings? Ruthie does an awful lot of baking and we all rely on her pasties and lemon tarts to keep us going, but it means there isn't much left for the customers! So if anyone else can do a bit, the cake stall will appreciate it – as will the supporters who rush in all keyed up to get at the baking only to find that we have already eaten it. And still on the subject of food, many thanks to Flo and the other jam makers for the steady supply of jam and marmalade. We always need jam jars – so please, if you have any, bring them along or give us a ring and we can collect. And if you aren't inclined to bake but can jam – I have a freezer full of rhubarb, blackcurrants and plums (all organic) ready and waiting. Sugar can be supplied.

CATASTROPHE

Eric Ferguson

Cat food commercials on TV
show cats of high and low degree
eating the contents of their tins
- full of nourishing vitamins,
while with a supercilious air
soft voices overhead declare
the food has such seductive taste
nothing is ever left to waste.

Their cats bound in and cannot wait
until they've emptied every plate.
What kind it is, they do not mind,
they never leave a scrap behind,
but daintily leave every dish
licked clean of rabbit, beef or fish.
Then beaming owners speak with pride
of how they're more than satisfied.



Beguiled by such persuasive prose,
out to the shops my dear wife goes.
Determined then, her plans are made
to earn a feline accolade.
She comes home laden with the lot
- there's not a brand she hasn't got,
and when she's opened up a tin
our cats are then invited in.

They look - they sniff - away each goes -
their thoughts expressed by upturned nose.
But each tin gets the same reaction -
not one can give them satisfaction.
Once, in a while, they stop to taste
a bite or two - the rest is waste
spread round the vinyl to prepare
a skid pan for the unaware.

The trouble is, it seems to me,
our cats just will not watch TV.



*Oh what unhappy twist of fate
Has brought you to my gate ?*

*The gate where once another stood
To beg for shelter warmth and food
For from that day I ceased to be
The master of my destiny.*

*While he, with purr and velvet paw
Became within my house the law.
He scratched the furniture and shed
And claimed the middle of my bed.*

*He ruled in arrogance and pride
And broke my heart the day he died.
So if you really think, oh cat
I'd willingly relive all that
Because you come forlorn and thin*

*Well ... don't just stand there ...
COME ON IN!*

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 10th November | Christmas Fair & Coffee Morning,
Langholm Day Centre 10am – 12pm |
| 17th November | Christmas Fair & Coffee Morning,
Lockerbie Town Hall, 10am-12pm |
| 17th November | Stall at Craft Fayre, Langholm Community
Centre 10am – 4pm |
| 18th November | Stall at Craft Fayre, Langholm Leisure
Centre 11 – 4pm |
| 22nd November | Stall at Craft Fayre, Annan Community
Centre 7 – 9pm |
| 24th November | Stand at Charities Christmas Fayre,
Loreburn Hall Dumfries, 10am – 4pm |
| 1st December | Christmas Fair & Coffee Morning,
Newcastleton Village Hall, 10.30am-12.30 |

If you would like to book a table for any event, or can help with selling, baking, or making things to sell, please ring me, Ginnie, on 013873 76738

One last thing. Do we have any members who work at the Royal Bank of Scotland? If you do, and you do any fundraising, the bank will match whatever you raise, up to £500

Ginnie

Letter from Dougie

Hello everyone. I am 21 years old, I moved in with Ginnie this year, and I send greetings to all Senior Citizen cats, and the message – never say die!

When I had to leave home back in May I wondered what on earth was going on. I'd lived with my people all my life and everything seemed to be fine. But they lost their sheep in a foot and mouth cull and decided to move – so out went Smudge and me. Smudge is only a stripling of 13 years and she went to a new home in August (good riddance, I never liked her much) but I'm going to stay with Ginnie. I have a potassium deficiency so I get a tablet every day for that, and I walk a bit lopsided as my hind legs don't quite follow my front ones – they go independently and diagonally, but I can fairly fly about when I choose, and it doesn't bother me a bit. The other cats look a bit startled sometimes – I think they aren't sure if I am cat or crab. But I show them. For instance, just this morning one of the other cats (Tish I think it was) brought a shrew in. Ginnie grabbed him and he let it go in the porch. She then spent ages trying to get it outside to freedom, but it wouldn't go. Well, we could have told her, shrews have no brain. So there it stayed, and then it must have dodged her, for all of a sudden I spotted it in the kitchen. Well, I was on that shrew before you could say Jack Robinson. Ginnie grabbed me and took it away, but I'd had my fun by then, and I'm afraid the shrew wasn't much good for anything by that time, but it just shows you what you can do if you don't let things get you down.

All for now

Dougie

Crystal

*My age is sixteen
I'm not at all mean
I have a brother called Josh
He thinks he's so posh*

*When he first came
He was very tame
His tail is very tall
And he tore the landing wall*

*I really am very sweet
And my ears are so lovely and neat
My brother Josh eats a lot
But I am just a little dot*

*I have a Mum and a Dad
A sister, a brother who's a little lad
I love my sister, I sleep with her
She tickles my chin and I start to purr*

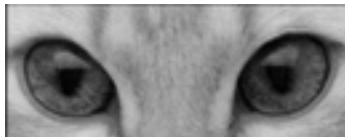
by Erin Dinsdale, age 9



Kitty's Bedtime Prayer

*Now I lay me down to sleep
I pray this cushy life to keep
I pray for toys that look like mice,
And sofa cushions, soft and nice.
For grocery bags where I can hide,
Just like a tiger, crouched inside!
I pray for gourmet Kitty snacks,
And someone nice to scratch my back.
For window sills all warm and bright,
For shadows to explore at night.
I pray I'll always stay real cool,
And keep the secret feline rule.
To never tell a human that ...
The world is really ruled by cats.*

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Disclaimer

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