

Newsletter

3 / 2002



Magazine of Eskdale & District Branch
Cats Protection
Autumn 2002

Editorial - Fiona

Hello again and welcome to the third newsletter of 2002, this year seems to be flying past.

We are still getting kittens coming in as well as cats. People unfortunately still see animals as dispensable; once they get tired of them they either abandon them or (hopefully) phone a rescue organisation. The reasons for cats coming into care are many and varied; from people having to move into rented accommodation which does not allow pets, to allergies and saddest of all, people going into residential care. It is sad that most residential homes do not allow people to take their much loved pets with them. It has been proved that pets can help people in homes and hospitals, so hopefully things will change for the better.

We have enclosed a membership leaflet with this newsletter and are asking if you could persuade someone you know to join us. If every member enrolled one other person our membership would be doubled immediately. It may not seem to be a lot of help as it is still £5 per year, but it all adds up and it is money we can rely on coming in, also if they are tax payers and sign a gift aid form, we receive an extra 28p per £1, from the government; so with everything added up, it does make a big difference to our funds. So please give it a go and try to get one other person to join the group.

Cat

Work



132 Cats & Kittens have been homed this year
40 are in care
6 are on the help to home list
261 cats have been neutered

Apart from 3, all the kittens this year have been little ferals, all teeth and claws for the first few days, some for 2 or 3 weeks. Sadly for no apparent reason 7 kittens have died whilst in care. The only consolation being they died in warmth and comfort and not alone under a hedge.

Some of the cats in care include:-

Sparky

7yrs, female, dark tortie. Sparky was originally a Cat Protection kitten. The family who adopted her have now emigrated to New Zealand so Sparky has had to come back into care.

Missie

4 months, female, dark tortie. Missie was found in a cardboard box behind a garden wall. She is a lovely friendly little kitten, but hadn't a clue what a litter tray was, when she first came into care, thankfully she has learned.

Tiny & Tinker

4 months old, brothers, one black, one black & white. These 2 kittens came into care when they were 7 weeks old, they were part of a small colony of 7 cats who were all neutered and returned. Tiny & Tinker arrived in care hosting every livestock possible.

Mickey

3-4 years old, male, white with some black.

Mickey belonged to an old lady who was taken into care, he is a very timid cat and quite miserable at having to be in care. He needs a quiet loving home.

Cat Work



As you will have read earlier in the newsletter, cats come into care for many reasons. The latest and (so far) most bizarre reason was that the cat had fleas!

Upon questioning the lady concerned it was established that the cat had been treated with a flea treatment and the house had been fumigated. She was told that as long as she kept up the flea treatments, all would be well. She then said that her husband had been bitten by a flea and she was concerned about her daughter.

Again she was reassured that now that the house was flea free and providing that she continued to treat the cat at the appropriate intervals, the household would remain flea free. She then said that the cat had a flea allergy, once again she was told that this would not be a problem as long as the cat was treated regularly.

Her final remark(to this helper) was that the vet had recommended that the cat be rehomed, as she lived in a bad area for fleas!

So beware all those of you who live in certain parts of Gretna; there could be an army of fleas, heading towards you as you read this. The lady in question, phoned a different helper the following day, with a different reason for rehoming her cat.

Anne

Letter from Shep

Dear Fergus,

Thanks for the tip off. You were right, they've let ANOTHER cat in. At least I was prepared. This one is a real handful. She wanders around as if she owns the place making a big fuss of all the humans and then just flops down until someone picks her up and moves her - she's even taken a liking to my bed! She has turned out to be the trickiest one to train yet. She thinks nothing of climbing up onto the humans heads and she's even tried it on me, but she knows better now.



The other cats, the ones I've already trained, have been quite well behaved lately although one seems to be growing a lot. If it keeps going at this rate it will be bigger than me by Christmas. He's called Max and mum says he's got to start jogging up and down the stairs to work off a few pounds and she's put a stop to him pinching other peoples food, including mine - so that's good.

The other dog in the house, Judy, had a birthday in July. She's 14 now and mum says I could be the same age. They know I'm 13 but when they came to collect me from the rescue centre all they knew was that I was 6. This means because no one knows when my real birthday is I have an official one - like the Queen! but not until next March.

I hope Henry is better, he sounds like an OK sort of cat who wouldn't make a dogs life too difficult, and I hope those smelly kittens have gone. We've got one living with us, but they've promised it's just for a while and it is definitely going soon, I don't know how you cope with eight of them in the house, I couldn't.

I'm looking forward to your next letter - I've never had anyone to write to before.

Love Shep

Cat News

Farewell to a good friend

Robert and Marjorie Willens recently had the sad experience of losing Charlie, a black and white female cat who they had acquired through the CPL.

Charlie came to live in Robert and Marjorie's Langholm home, with their other cats, almost four years ago, when it was no longer possible for her foster carers to look after her. Before that, Charlie had had a good home for many year, with her elderly owner, who unfortunately had to go into a nursing home and was unable to take Charlie with her.

Robert and Marjorie already knew quite a bit about Charlie, as they had been sponsoring her for a couple of years under the branch's "Sponsor a Cat" scheme. Charlie soon settled into her new surroundings, and made an immediate impact as a character. She had lovely markings and a distinctive "floppy" left ear. Robert and Marjorie's other cats soon learned that Charlie liked to have her own space around her, and although she did socialise, she was usually quite content to be on her own, making it obvious when she didn't want feline company.

Around a year ago, Charlie was diagnosed with a liver condition, which fortunately seemed to stabilise and for several months she was able to continue to live contentedly, with no obvious deterioration in her health. However early in July Charlie's health did start to deteriorate and she became very ill quite suddenly. Sadly she had to be put to sleep on 8th July.

Charlie was a quiet, undemanding cat, who enjoyed living life in her own unhurried, leisurely pace. She is greatly missed. Throughout Charlie's illness she received loving care and treatment from the staff at the Esk Veterinary Practice, whose sensitive and caring attention continued to the end of Charlie's life, and whose support helped Robert and Marjorie to cope with their loss.



Fundraising

Fundraising so far

We were very lucky with the weather for both the Garden Day and the Fun Day – especially when you think what a rotten summer it has been. Many thanks to everyone who came and helped at all the events.

As always, the Garden Day was immensely popular, and everyone in the kitchen was kept busy making teas, and buttering scones. A marvellous £1729.55 was raised, so in the end I think even Cameron thought it was worth all the effort. Some of the money raised goes to the Macmillan nurses, which is another very worthwhile cause.

We counted the Fun Day as our contribution to Cats Protection 75th Anniversary celebrations and a good time was had by all. We raised £700, which is considerably down on the previous year, in spite of the weather being so much better. The hovercraft was a great success again, and so were Sue and Muriel, doing fortune telling and reiki and Indian head massage. I think the biggest attraction was probably the dog show, which Janet organised superbly, with beautifully presented prizes, and plenty of them, so no-one went away disappointed. Unfortunately, the Fun Day really needs a small group of say two or three people to organise it – otherwise it is a bit time-consuming for one person (me). So would anyone like to volunteer for the job? It doesn't take much time if there are a few of you at it, honestly! If not, then I'm afraid 2002 was the last one. However, we would hope to keep on with the dog show, maybe using a local hall. I would welcome any feedback on this, otherwise I shall just barge blithely on, very possibly doing it all wrong.

The day of the Holm Show was fine, although the day before, when we were erecting the tent, was not. It was pouring with rain and there was a gale blowing, being especially gusty just as we lifted the canvas to its full height, but before we had a chance to get the guy ropes in. Result – tent took off, making for the river. Fortunately the car and trailer were parked in its path, so we managed to foil its best efforts to get washed away by the river – now fairly full and fast – behind. It was a bit bent, but not very, and we had a good day, making about £175.

Fundraising coming up

So now we go onto the Christmas trail. Please look at the events coming up and see if you can't come along to at least one. We somehow manage to be in Brampton three times, twice in the William Howard School and once in the Moot Hall – and we are also in Longtown, Langholm, Newcastleton, Dumfries and Lockerbie. If anyone can make craft things for the Crafts at Anne's in October, that would be wonderful. Anything – cards, pots, Christmas decorations, or anything knitted, crocheted, sewn, glued, stapled or nailed together. Or jam. Many thanks to everyone who already does make things for us, especially the dedicated ones who keep at it all year round, like Ruthie and Flo. We truthfully would not have a cake and produce stall at any of our events without them.

Warm winter fleeces

Is anyone else interested in fleeces with the branch name embroidered on the left breast pocket? - as mentioned in the last newsletter. They will probably have the Cats Protection logo rather than our "Lend a Paw" logo, unfortunately, but they will say "Eskdale & District". Give me a ring if you are interested as soon as possible please.

Buy, buy, buyfrom US

Please note – this is important. IF ANYONE WANTS ANY CARDS FROM THE HQ CATALOGUE (the one that comes with the magazine) COULD YOU ORDER THROUGH US - ME. That way Eskdale gets the profit, rather than headquarters. Just ring me with a list of whatever you want and I will put the order through. However, in their wisdom, headquarters have put the rest of the catalogue out of house, which means that the CP warehouse does not deal with it and consequently that branches cannot order goods from it. This is a serious blow, not just from the aspect of selling goods to members, but also because it means we have to find all our own suppliers for goods to take to fairs, shows, festivals and coffee mornings. Fortunately we already do source a lot of goods from other companies, but many branches rely solely on selling HQ goods, and it will hit them really hard.

All the more reason now, for everyone to come to the events. We have lots of gifts, cat toys, cat beds, and lots of other stuff. We also price our goods a little more competitively than headquarters, so come and find all the Christmas gifts and bargains that you need – and ignore the catalogue!

Ginnie 013873 76738

Forthcoming Events 2002

- End of Sept Stand at Langholm Agricultural Show
- 20th Oct Stall at Craft Fair, William Howard School, Brampton
- 27th Oct Crafts For Christmas at Anne's, 38 English St. Longtown 7pm - 9pm
- 9th Nov Coffee Morning and Autumn Fair. Day Centre Langholm, 10am to 12
- 16th Nov Coffee Morning and Christmas Fair. Lockerbie Town Hall, 10am to 12pm
- 23rd Nov Stalls at Christmas Charities Fair. Loreburn Hall, Dumfries
- 30th Nov Coffee Morning and Christmas Fair. Newcastleton Village Hall, 10:30 to 12:30

If anyone would like to book a table at one of these events please phone GINNIE on 013873 76738

The Literary Bit

Many famous people have loved cats – most of the great and the good, in fact. Most people know that Dr Johnson loved cats and had a cat called Hodge, for whom he personally went out and bought oysters, fearing that the servants might turn against Hodge if they had to do it. But did you know that Henry James was reputed to work with a cat on his shoulder, or that George Bernard Shaw could not pass a cat without petting it? Mark Twain was also passionately fond of cats and wrote, “ a home without a cat, and a well fed, well petted and properly revered cat, may be a perfect home, perhaps, but how can it prove its title?”

Competition

Cats Protection HQ is running a competition for **Rescue Cat of the Year**, the award is being sponsored by **Felix**.

There are six categories:

ULTIMATE SURVIVOR. A cat that has survived against all the odds.

LONG-DISTANCE TRAVELLER. A cat that has made an incredible journey.

MOST INCREDIBLE STORY. Amazing but true cat stories that defy belief.

BEST TURNAROUND A cat whose behaviour, health, appearance, or life in general, has made a dramatic about-face due to circumstances.

BEST FRIENDS. A cat-human relationship (not cat-cat); a cat that has enabled a person to have a better quality of life e.g. providing emotional support to a stroke victim or the cat that alerts its deaf owners whenever the phone or doorbell rings.

FELIX BEST PERSONALITY. A special Felix award for characterful cats.

You have to enter your details, and your cats and write a bit about your cat and why you are nominating him/her for the category.

If you would like to nominate your cat or cats please give me a ring (01461 202761) or drop me a line to 12 Prestonfield Road, Annan, Dumfriesshire, DG12 5HD, and I will send you an application form for each cat you wish to enter. The cat must have been rescued, either through a rescue organisation like ourselves, or by an individual.

The closing date for entries is 15th November, 2002. So give me a ring now (leave a message if I'm not in) and I will send you an entry form; it would be lovely if a cat from this area won!

If you can possibly hold a coffee morning/evening at your home, inviting a few friends, we can supply you with cat goods to sell, Christmas cards, calendars, gifts, home-made jams etc. are all available, not all items have cats on, so you could persuade your doggy friends to come too. Ring Anne 01228 791364, or Ginnie 013873 76738 or myself 01461 202761, if you would be able to do this for us.

My Cat's Like Your Cat

My cat may look like your cat
With know-it-all eyes like yours
Spreadeagling itself on your jumper
A prelude to sharpening its claws

My cat may look like your cat
With sticky-out whiskers like yours
And the knack of slipping off branches
To land safely each time on all-paws

My cat may sound like your cat
With a mew reprimanding like yours
After scratching the arms of the sofa
Goes burrowing under closed doors

But as a kitten my cat was abandoned
An unloved and pitiful stray ..
But it's thanks to Cats Protection
That my cat's like your cat today.

By Roger McGough Poet. Written on the occasion of
Cats Protection's 75th Anniversary Celebration, May
2002.

A Quick note from Vivaldi

I have to be quick cos Mam says we need to get this newsletter out soon and we don't have time for messing around; I don't know what she means!

We are all well here, we've had kittens coming and going but usually just one at a time in the house, and not tiny squeaky things, proper nearly cat, kittens. I quite like the ones that are a bit grown up and not too silly. They've mostly been girls but that doesn't make a difference, Anyway I better get a move on or Mam will send the newsletter away without my bit.

The reason I'm writing this is to warn all you cats out there that something funny is happening out there. Mam went off to the National Canine Defence League Kennels, she goes there sometimes to walk the dogs, but this time she brought something home. Now I know what you're thinking, and yes we thought the same: (another dog like Roxy, large, bouncy, noisy and brainless), well I was all ready to move out; but no, it wasn't a dog. I was a large cage, a bit like a really big cat carrier, but inside were two kitten size creatures! Apparently they're guinea pigs! They are quite nice to watch, they squeak when they get carrots or broccoli (I tried a bit of broccoli, and they are welcome to it, I was spitting it out for ages afterwards, it kind of tickles the top of your mouth, and it's not a bit like cat-nip) and they wander about and are quite happy.

They don't bother us at all and Woolfie often sleeps on top of their cage and they don't mind. We all watch them for quite a long time. It really isn't fair, as I had quite enough to fill my day, before they arrived and now I've had to add 'Guinea Pig Watching' into my schedule; this of course means that I'm not doing something else and I think that I'm probably not getting enough sleep.

A Quick note from Vivaldi (contd)

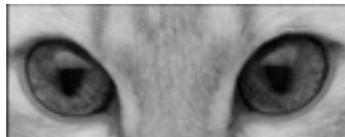
The strangest thing of all though is that Angus thinks they are his pets, (Angus is the ginger fluffy one who thinks for a long time before he does anything) he watches them for ages and sleeps beside their cage and even rubs noses with them, I think that's really brave as they have quite big teeth, but he says they don't bite. I don't know why Angus thinks they are his, he must have been told he can have them because he really isn't bright enough to have thought that up on his own.

I've talked it over with Woolfie and we have decided that we might ask Santa for a pet each instead of a pond this year, Santa has really let us down with the pond and (even though I hate to say this) Jack isn't as bad as he used to be, so maybe a pet would be a better idea, we will have to give this a lot of thought, as they seem to take up a lot of Angus's time, and I don't know if I would have time to watch them like Angus. Anyway it's a while until Christmas, so we don't have to decide yet.

I seem to have wandered away from what I was going to tell you! Just keep a watch on your owner as they have a nasty habit of bringing home surprises! It could have been worse, it could have been another Roxy (or Jack). Thinking of that has made me feel quite weak, I'll just go and have a lie down somewhere, I heard the top of the Guinea Pig cage is quite comfy!

All the best,
Vivaldi

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General Committee on inside back cover

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Disclaimer

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