

Newsletter

3: 2010



Cats Protection

Eskdale and District Branch

Winter 2010

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Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Eskdale & District Branch of Cats Protection

Editorial

Nearly Christmas again and time for the annual bottle draw. The sheets are enclosed and if you need more, ring Anne on 01228 791364. We have lots of bottles in the draw, so please fill as many sheets as you can.

Homing has been slow again this year. We still have kittens waiting to come into care as I write this, i.e. the beginning of November.

All the fosterers now have to have the electrical equipment to the pens, and any equipment used for CP purposes, tested to make sure it is safe. This is a new regulation from HQ, no doubt generated by some health and safety requirement in case anyone electrocutes themselves. It would be pretty difficult but I think they are probably concerned about the possibility of members of the public getting a shock and deciding to sue CP. I can just see the ambulance chasing advertisements: “Have you had an accident lately – have you visited Cats Protection and been stupid enough to stick your finger in a socket? Ring Ambulance Chasers Direct on

Its amazing what you can charge to Cats Protection. I recently took an injured wild bird to one of our vets for treatment and was asked, “ Shall we put this on the CP account?” Well no, seeing it isn't a cat and is not even a cat related injury (the bird had probably got its wing trapped and hurt itself extricating the wing.) Maybe it's lucky it wasn't cat related – the pigeon might have sued us for compensation.

So there we are.

I hope everyone is ready for the winter and has a lovely Christmas. Let's hope it is a short winter. *Ginnie*



Fundraising

The summer shows seem a long age ago now, and we have already had two successful autumn sales and coffee mornings – one in Lockerbie and one in Jedburgh – in spite of having to decamp from the town hall in Lockerbie when it was decided that the structure was unsafe, and scaffolding was flung around it. We are very grateful to the Mid Annandale Comrades Club for allowing us to have the event there, especially at such short notice – less than a week.

We still have two coffee mornings/Christmas fairs to go – one in Newcastleton on 13th November and one in Langholm on the 27th November. Please try to get along if you are in the area. If not, all the vets are selling cards, calendars and diaries, and don't forget

The Shop in Longtown

Lots of gifts for Christmas presents and all the cards and calendars as well. It really is looking wonderful just now, with gift baskets and festive jams and chutneys.

Open Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 10am – 4pm.

Fundraisers needed

If there is anyone who can help at coffee mornings please, please give me a ring. We have lost several of our regulars lately and are struggling for helpers.

Thanks to our wonderful bakers and jam makers.

Many thanks to everyone who has done baking and jam making for us this year. It is wonderful and the backbone of the coffee mornings. So thank you to Kath, Susan, Christine, Irene, Sarah and Fiona for the baking; and to Margaret, Flo and Elaine for the jam, jelly, marmalade and chutney. I think the best thing about the coffee mornings is the baking – all those beautiful cakes and tray bakes. And to think I didn't know what a tray bake was until I moved to Scotland!

Cat Work

2010

72 Cats have been successfully rehomed

30 Cats are in care

6 Cats are on the help to home list waiting to come into care



Some of the cats in care:

Bertie

Bertie is 10 years old, male, black, he was originally a Cat Protection cats homed when he was a kitten. He enjoyed living in his new home until children came on the scene, he then became quite unhappy and unable to cope with the young children. Bertie would like a quiet home with young children.

Molly

Molly is 5 years old approx, black and white. She is a very quiet nervous little cat, she would like a home where she could have company when she wanted but able to have her own space.

Toffee

Toffee is a 6 year old black male. He is a very friendly cat but can be unpredictable, so would not suit a home with young children. Toffee is ok with dogs but not with other cats.

We are now microchipping all cats and kittens before they are homed. If the stray cats we take in were microchipped we would have hopefully been able to trace some of them back to their owners.

Thank you to Elspeth for organising a Quiz which raised £96.

The winner was Hazel Cain,
Wallamhill Rd, Locharbriggs.

Elspeth has also been selling second hand books in Banatynes Health Club which has raised £184.54.

A big thank you to Elspeth, her band of helpers and Banatynes.

Poetry Corner

The kitten and the leaves (an extract)

by William Wordsworth

See the Kitten on the wall,
Sporting with the leaves that fall,
Withered leaves--one--two--and three--
From the lofty elder-tree!
Through the calm and frosty air
Of this morning bright and fair,
Eddying round and round they sink
Softly, slowly; one might think,
From the motions that are made,
Every little leaf conveyed
Sylph or Faery hither tending,--
To this lower world descending,
Each invisible and mute,
In his wavering parachute.
---But the Kitten, how she starts,
Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts!
First at one, and then its fellow
Just as light and just as yellow;
There are many now--now one--
Now they stop and there are none.

What intensesness of desire
In her upward eye of fire!
With a tiger-leap half-way
Now she meets the coming prey,
Lets it go as fast, and then
Has it in her power again:
Now she works with three or four,
Like an Indian conjurer;
Quick as he in feats of art,
Far beyond in joy of heart.
Were her antics played in the eye
Of a thousand standers-by,
Clapping hands with shout and stare,
What would little Tabby care
For the plaudits of the crowd?
Over happy to be proud,
Over wealthy in the treasure
Of her own exceeding pleasure!



Cat Pix

Many of the cat pictures in this issue kindly provided by Hubert Schaefer, Germany



*Cats sleep ...
... anywhere!*

The Mysterious Cat Fight

One evening in October when I was putting the cats in the outdoor cat houses to bed, I heard the sound of a violent cat fight coming from the river bank. I try to get the cats in before it goes dark, and I was sure they were all safely indoors, so I rushed into the house, got a torch and went looking. No sign of anything.

We live some distance from our neighbours; only two of them have cats, and these cats never venture far from their homes, so it had to be someone new. However, I found nothing that night because the combatants had vanished when I shone the torch around.

A week or so later, there they were again, going at each other hammer and tongs by the sound of it. I clambered over the fence onto the river bank and stumbled about in the dark, trying to shine the torch in the direction of the noise. There they were, scrapping away in the thick undergrowth of nettles and willowherb just above the water. However, it wasn't two cats, it was two young badgers! I have never heard badgers fighting so I had no idea they sounded like cats. These two were quite intent on what they were doing and took no notice of me and the torch – and I made quite a racket, shouting at them rather idiotically to stop it. I fumbled around for something to throw at them to break it up. All that came to hand was a chunk of earth and stone so I lobbed that down the bank towards them. They had now retreated into thicker undergrowth so I couldn't see them but they could still be heard. There was a brief pause in the argument and then a loud splash and then silence. I don't know whether the splash was the sound of my missile falling into the river, or the sound of two badgers falling into the river. Either way they stopped fighting.

In case you are wondering, no, they wouldn't come to any harm if they fell in. It was only a drop of a couple of feet to the water which itself was only a foot or so deep at the time.

They haven't given up, however. A week or so later Rob heard sounds of an argument coming from the field behind the stables and on shining the torch in, found them at it again. This time they took to their heels. I would have thought that Holly (our vigilant guard dog) would have kept them away, but apparently not. I'm not even sure she noticed they were there.

We haven't found the sett yet but I presume there must be one not too far away. They were quite small badgers – only about 18 inches to two feet long so maybe they were two young siblings arguing over something. Over food? Why fight at this time of year? Territory? They didn't sound as if they were playing. Anyone got any ideas? If so, let me know and we will share them with everyone in the next newsletter. *Ginnie*

100 Club

August	116	Billy Thomson
	100	Alan Rice
September	105	John Fisher
	78	Mags Wheeler
October	41	Hazel Monkhouse
	3	Robert Willins

*If anyone would like to join our 100 Club
please phone Anne on 01228 791364*

The Joys of Fostering

When I decided to become a fosterer, I thought it would be a life of cuddling cute cats who would gaze at me adoringly and gratefully.

Having been a nurse for over 40 years had me well equipped to deal with the paperwork and medicine tasks admirably. However, reality was somewhat different.

I soon discovered cats are just as awkward, grumpy, aggressive and smelly as any patient I ever encountered, from Beth the imperious Persian to Leo who increased Tesco's sale of plasters tenfold.

As if the cats weren't bad enough Anne Thomson's scathing remarks about my paperwork were as bad as any ward sister I ever encountered. I even missed an Andy Murray game at Wimbledon as I was told to pick up a cat immediately as how would I feel if it got squashed when I was watching telly!

However, the amazing thing is it is wonderful from the litter trays to the hated moment when a new owner takes away one of my beloved cats. The laughs I have had with Anne are priceless and some of the tales unrepeatable.

Have to finish now as I have a lovely mum and 5 kittens to see to and yes, they do gaze at me adoringly and gratefully - I think.

Elsbeth Little, Collin.



Letter from Angus

Hello Isaac. It was good to catch up with your news. I really don't know where to start with all of mine! First, there was that upstart Jack who came to stay – Jack is a Border Collie puppy – for 2 weeks. Then there is the story of how Mischa and I have had our quiet lives interrupted by strange men who came and made lots of changes to the house. And finally, Mischa and I were taken to the vet today to be prodded, poked and stabbed. I ask you, all I like to do is to be left in peace and snooze.

So, Jack came first. I don't know who he thinks he is! A half-grown pup who came with his owner. I like his owner, James: a handsome young boy who I met on my very first day here; in fact you may have met him, as he helped Mum to pick Mischa and me up when we first came here. He likes cats, so I can't speak too highly of him!

Anyway, one evening, Jack wanted to play with us; well, I was having none of that, but Mischa seemed game, and they chased each other for a bit until Mischa had had enough. She sat down on Mum's dining chair, glaring at Jack, telling him who was boss, and then suddenly she fell through the chair and onto the floor. Before stalking off and pretending that was her plan all along. I know different of course. Jack didn't stay too long, but Mum and Uncle were cooing all over him. Huh!

Jack had no sooner gone than life was disrupted again, this time by two strange men who came every day for a few weeks with all sorts of noisy equipment – I can't hear the noise of course, but I can feel it, and it was LOUD! Every day when they came, they made changes to the house. I must say, now they have gone, I like the new looks, but they were very irritating at the time. They have blocked off the hole in the bathroom too, that Mischa and I liked to escape through if Mum (or more usually, visitors) forgot to shut the door. How annoying is that!

And finally, just this afternoon, the cat basket came out. Mischa and I love the basket, and always rush to get in first. Once we were comfortable, I got into "loud yowling" mode while Mum drove us to Longtown. I like to poke my paw out through the front, and have it tickled: well, you need something to do during the journey, don't you.

I was given the run of the vet's room, and thoroughly enjoyed myself, knocking things over, and squirming on the floor. I had to submit to being picked up and looked at, but I got a nice cuddle from the vet afterwards, so that was nice. I didn't hear anything she said, but I do know that when she looked in my mouth and touched a tooth, something hurt – I didn't like that. I do have a special problem with my teeth, it's special only to cats (even tigers and lions can get it), and of course, being a special cat anyway, I suppose I am bound to have it. Unfortunately, it always means the tooth needs to be taken out; I had one removed a couple of years ago, and I have to go back soon and have this one taken out. I hope they don't find any more while I am there.

Okay, that is my news brought up to date; I hope you and all the cats and kittens are well.

Angus