

No. 0001

CLAWS
(Cat Lovers Animal Welfare Society)
Charity Number: 1062244

No. 0001

Name:

Tel No:

PRIZES
1st Prize: 1 week in 8 berth caravan
2nd Prize: Long weekend in 8 berth caravan
3rd Prize: £50.00 Gift Voucher

DATE OF DRAW: Saturday 30th April at 12.00 noon

CLAWS
(Cat Lovers Animal Welfare Society)
Charity Number: 1062244

Name and Address of Organiser
SUE COLLINS, PO Box 1046,
Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 3TL

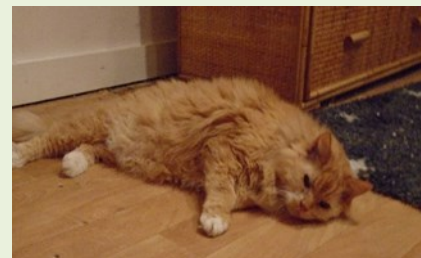
Telephone: 01189 341699
Email: info@claws-s.org.uk

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5 tickets for
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Single tickets
£1.00 each

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C.L.A.W.S Newsletter No 76 March 2022



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NEWS FROM HQ

This is the first newsletter of 2022 and gradually things are getting back to normal.

As always our first concern is for the resident cats and we continue to do all we can to ensure their health and wellbeing.

The construction of the third enclosure is scheduled for the end of April.

The raffle will be drawn electronically on 30th April. Winning ticket numbers will be published on the CLAWS Web Site Home Page and CLAWS Facebook page.

We are looking forward to the Cox Green Village Fair on Saturday 14 May. It is always an enjoyable event and a profitable one too !

In April we shall be launching the CHARACTERFUL CAT COMPETITION to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee so put on your thinking caps on and send in your entries.

There are a busy few months ahead so please help to make them successful too !

CONSTRUCTION OF THIRD ENCLOSURE

The construction of the third enclosure will be finished in April 2022.

The structure is in place. It is the largest of the three enclosures and has been divided in half so we can place the younger cats in one side and the nervous ones in the other.

All that remains is for the cat cabins to be installed and the shrubs, to provide cover for the cats to be planted.



AJ

The phone rang.

"We've been looking for a home for an elderly cat for quite some time without any luck and are wondering if you can help us"

"Well, we may be able to help but it won't be for a month or so as it depends on if we re-home a cat. We are absolutely chock a block at the moment".

"That would be OK" "Then tell me about the cat"

"Her name is AJ (Amber Jane) and she is a short haired tortie girl about 21 years old. Her owner has to attend hospital for treatment three times a week (and sometimes more if his condition deteriorates) and although we (Bobby and Karen) feed her and have taken her to the vet for a check-up (he said she was in pretty good shape for her age and vaccinated her) she is on her own a lot."

"We make sure she is safely in her own home at nights but almost before the door is shut she is out of the cat flap and following me home. We would be happy to keep her but our dog and rabbit have different ideas "

As we continued to chat a plan emerged. We would contact AJ's owner and discuss her future with him. If he agreed to CLAWS taking her into care we would forward him a waiver of ownership form for completion (sending a copy to Bobby too just in case it was needed).

As we chatted Geoff, her owner, realised that AJ would have a happy and secure future with CLAWS and unselfishly put her needs first and agreed to sign the waiver of ownership form.

It took another month before we had a vacancy and Bobby and Karen drove her all the way from the other end of the county to CLAWS. They would miss her very much but we agreed to keep in touch.

A comfortable bed, food and water were ready for her in the library and we left her to settle in. She could see the comings and goings in the kitchen without coming face to face with the Bear Cottage gang.

That was the plan but the very next day when Beverley was serving breakfast she looked down to see AJ by her side !! Toby gave her a sniff, Maggie continued to eat her breakfast and even Dinky seemed to accept her – no screaming !

We had hoped that she would become a member of the Bear Cottage gang but never imagined it would happen so quickly.

She is a real outdoor girl and it wasn't long before she ventured into the garden but soon returned. Next day it was pouring with rain and blowing a gale when we realised we hadn't seen AJ for sometime.

We searched the house – not a sign of her. Out into the garden we went. Nowhere to be seen until we caught sight of the grass in the field beyond the ponies' field rippling. And there she was !

We brought her in and rubbed her down. She had obviously enjoyed her excursion.

Next day we found her collapsed. We rushed her to the vet but it was too late. She had suffered a stroke and was gently put to sleep.

We comfort ourselves with the knowledge that in her last few days she was well fed, warm and happy and did not die alone .

HIMSELF



When only a kitten HIMSELF', a beautiful Maine Coon, (or Gorgeous Boy as he is affectionately known – and you can see why can't you ?) turned up in the garden of a CLAWS supporter.

She made enquiries in the neighbourhood but no one came forward to claim him. What else could she do but offer him a home ?

That was 15 years ago and they had a happy time together until about 6 months ago when Jill was taken ill and rushed into hospital. It had always been understood that in the case of an emergency Himself would come to CLAWS and that is exactly what happened.

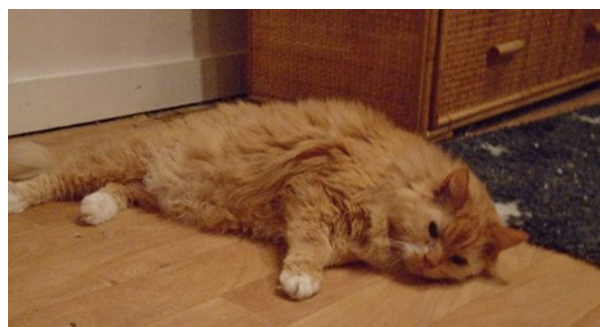
He went into one of the rooms in the cottage and settled in with the minimum of fuss.

Sadly Jill never came home being transferred from the hospital to a care home where she died and so Himself stayed with CLAWS.

We were planning to take him to the vet for a thorough MOT but it was hastened when we noticed his eyes were mere slits, from which tears were oozing forming a crusty layer. His eye lashes had grown into his eye causing irritation which made him scratch.

In a very delicate operation the eye lashes were removed and the eye lids stitched up to prevent a recurrence. Cream had to be applied twice a day – Himself was not impressed ! He went back for a check-up and the stitches were removed and the eyes gently bathed to remove accumulated "gunk".

There were several more visits to ensure there was no infection and he now has clear vision and no pain.



The storms of February 2022 meant that Beverley was indoors one afternoon so she decided to open the door to Himself's room upstairs and see what happened.

She sat down in the lounge and it wasn't long before he came down. He first met Hector and they rubbed noses in a very gentlemanly manner. In fact most of the gang ignored him (the ultimate compliment !) the only exception being – yes you've guessed it – Dinky who screamed in outrage.

But by the morning all was quiet and everyone assembled in the kitchen for breakfast.

It is too soon to let Himself outside but it won't be long before he will be able to go for a stroll whilst we keep a watchful eye on him.

NEW ARRIVALS

PICKLE

The phone rang. "Hello – my name's Jane. I live just down the road from you and wondered if you could help me."

"There's been a stray cat wandering around my garden. It looks in a pretty bad way with a bad ear and a swollen eye – I'm wondering if it's been involved in a RTA. Could you let me have a trap? I'm happy to take it to the vet to have it checked out".

Beverley agreed to take a trap round right away and rang the vets to alert them to the situation.

It didn't take long before Jane rang again. "It's in the trap" so a quick phone call to the vets and it was off for a thorough check up.

He was an elderly cat that looked as though he had been living rough for a while. The damaged eye had to be removed but apart from that he was in pretty good shape.

No owner came forward so CLAWS took him in.

He is a lovely tabby boy and has settled in well. We called him PICKLE because he looked as though he was in a pickle when he arrived.



BERTIE

"We first spotted the cat in April and it has been coming twice a day for meals ever since. Our cat doesn't like it. Can you take it in please?"

It was arranged that they, long time friends of CLAWS, set a trap and when the cat was caught they would bring it over to CLAWS.

We scanned him and the microchip made it possible for us to trace its owner who didn't want him any longer. He completed a waiver of ownership form which enabled us to take him in.

We called him BERTIE. He is a beautiful boy, very friendly and loves a cuddle.

Two of our supporters decided it was time for them to adopt another cat and had spotted Bertie on our web site. They came to meet him and, after some initial hesitation, he relaxed and graciously accepted a few treats.

A number of other visits followed so that they could get to know each other better and, eventually after the refurbishment of their house had been carried out and Bertie had had a dental, he set off to enjoy his new life just a short while ago.

After only 24 hours we received the following message from Chris, Bertie's new dad :-

"Bertie has settled in really well .Eating (didn't until Thursday evening), drinking, using the litter tray, playing and loving lots of stroking. Purring loudly and often. He spent part of yesterday afternoon on a folded blanket between us on the sofa with his head on Sheila's lap. In the photo Bertie is relaxing on the front window sill (a good view of the garden with lots of sparrows flying about to entertain him). I stayed downstairs with him for the first three nights (Wed to Fri) and this morning we've opened the door to the stairs giving access to the rest of the house. He's had a couple of exploratory visits upstairs and can now explore the whole house."

He has gone from strength to strength.

Thanks to Chris and Sheila for giving Bertie such a wonderful home – he is a very lucky boy !



ADOPTIONS

LITTLE ROSIE

A TNR (trapping, neuter and return to site) exercise was in progress in Slough.

Three cats had been trapped. A helper realised that one was not feral but yet another abandoned domestic. None of the people involved in the trapping had room for her so they rang CLAWS and we were able to take the cat in.

We took it to the vet for a check-up. It was a female about a year old and in good health. We arranged to have her neutered and vaccinated,

We called her "LITTLE ROSIE" to differentiate her from resident cat Rosie.

What a little spitfire ! She marched up and down the run of six pens spitting at all the other cats when all they wanted was to be friendly. She likes humans and enjoys her cuddles and playing with her toys.

We hadn't considered re-homing her until one of our volunteers took a fancy to her and asked if he and his family might adopt her. Because we weren't certain how she would react to a normal domestic environment it was agreed that she would be fostered first of all.

All went well so she was adopted

Her new dad takes up the tale :-

"Once she'd been micro-chipped she began to explore the garden.

She is so happy in herself - the change over the last few weeks has been lovely to see. She has taken over the radiator bed and now sits on our knees.

She and Athena take turns to creep up on each other - it is funny to watch and helps to burn off their excess energy."

What a transformation ! We are delighted. It just shows what can be achieved given time, patience and lots of TLC!

We wish her many happy years with her new family.



COX GREEN VILLAGE FAIR SATURDAY 14 MAY 2022



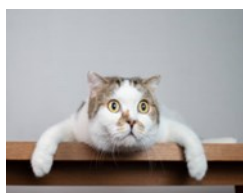
RAFFLE

Winning ticket to be drawn electronically on 30 April 2022. Winning numbers will be posted on the CLAWS Web Site and Facebook page.

To claim your prize please ring the help line (01189 341699)

<p>No. 0001</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Tel No:</p> <p>CLAWS (Cat Lovers Animal Welfare Society) Charity Number: 1062244</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><div><p>CLAWS (Cat Lovers Animal Welfare Society) Charity Number: 1062244</p></div><div style="text-align: center;"></div><div><p>No. 0001</p></div></div> <hr/> <p>PRIZES</p> <p>1st Prize: 1 week in 8 berth caravan 2nd Prize: Long weekend in 8 berth caravan 3rd Prize: £50.00 Gift Voucher</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; text-align: center; width: fit-content; margin: 10px auto;"><p>Book of 5 tickets for £5.00 Single tickets: £1.00 each</p></div> <hr/> <p>DATE OF DRAW: Saturday 30th April at 12.00 noon</p> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"><div><p>Name and Address of Organiser SUE COLLINS, PO Box 1646, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 3TL</p></div><div><p>Telephone: 01189 341699 Email: info@c-l-a-w-s.org.uk</p></div></div>
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CHARACTERFUL CAT COMPETITION



Soon we shall be launching a competition to find the most CHARACTERFUL CAT to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II

We all know lots of characterful cats don't we ? So put your thinking caps on and be ready to put pen to paper or keyboard when further details are released in April.

MICROCHIPPING

MICROCHIPPING

We have become increasingly concerned about the number of calls we receive on the helpline regarding missing cats.

It soon becomes apparent that although they are microchipped they cannot be traced because their details have not been updated

It doesn't take long to contact the company holding the chip to update the owners new address. It can make the difference between being able to reunite the owner with its pet or months of worry and heartache and perhaps never seeing your beloved pet again

It only takes a few minutes to have a microchip inserted. It is painless and inexpensive. Sometimes there are special offers that enable you to have your pet chipped at a special rate.

**DON'T DELAY : GET YOUR PET CHIPPED TODAY
AND ALWAYS REMEMBER TO UPDATE YOUR DETAILS**

STORM EUNICE



Bear Cottage was not immune to the ravages of Storm Eunice.

It dislodged the roof on the pen of six and tore up some of the fencing.

Thankfully Beverley, Bear Cottage itself and our resident cats were unharmed.

Grateful thanks to Mat who turned out at 8.00 am on Saturday morning to effect temporary repairs.



This is so true. Time and time again we are told by the caller that there is a feral cat running wild in the neighbourhood only to find it is an abandoned domestic.

With time, patience and lots of TLC it can be brought round and a permanent loving home found for it.

ABBEY



Life's not always fair but this is too much. She hadn't reached nine years of age and was only with us for four years. All cats have something individual and special about them but Abbey was a 'wonder'. Rescued in 2014 by CLAWS as part of the large intake of 12 cats which all came from one dreadful location and influenced the decision to change the focus of CLAWS exclusively to traumatised cats. Abbey's is a success story, albeit for far too short a time.

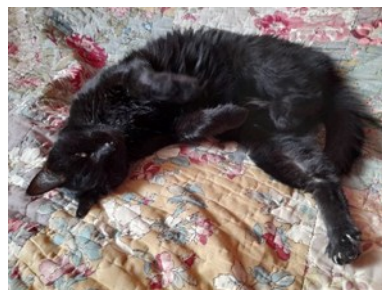
It was early September 2017 and we were looking for a cat to adopt, when fate took us to the CLAWS website. Abbey was featured as 'Cat of the Month' and made a very striking impression, a beautiful black cat. She had been with CLAWS for almost four years (now between four and five years old) and had only recently crossed the threshold indicating that she was ready to be given the chance to transition to domestic life. We were indeed fortunate that our paths crossed at that point in time. When given it, Abbey grasped her opportunity with all four paws.

We contacted Bev who came to meet us at home and we visited at CLAWS to meet with Abbey. She stayed in her bed at the back of the pen but graciously accepted some proffered treats. Firstly from my wife and then myself. On my second approach I was rewarded with a hiss (Bev had pre-warned us). We loved her straightaway, why not hiss at some stranger who kept creeping up uninvited – even with treats. We agreed with Bev that we could move forward with an adoption and, after a few more interim visits, we finally collected Abbey on 16th October to take back to her new home.

For the first five days we kept the doorway to the stairs closed so that Abbey could familiarise herself with the ground floor of the house. She immediately showed great spirit by climbing out of the pet carrier and thoroughly investigating every aspect of her new domain, both at floor and furniture level. Her conclusion – 'no other residents to guard against, just these two who I can soon knock into shape'. She quickly located the food and toilet facilities. Over those five days we took shifts sleeping on the sofa overnight so that she wasn't crowded but didn't stay downstairs alone. During the first night she spent some time sleeping by my feet on the duvet – a good start – but for the first few days mostly stayed under the armchair, emerging for food and tempted by the odd treat. Then we opened the door onto the stairs. After a satisfactory investigation of the upper two floors she now had access to her whole territory (Abbey was a 100% indoor cat). She loved it. An athletic and powerful girl, she enjoyed running up and down the stairs and leaping onto the windowsills. A keen observer of the world outside (with no inclination to join it) she spent many happy hours watching from our bedroom windowsill.

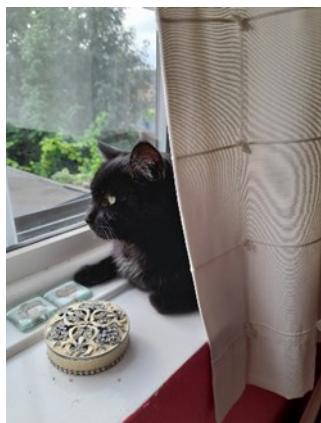
Abbey quickly settled in and whilst never becoming a lap cat liked to be stroked and combed whilst lying next to you on the sofa. She climbed across us for nocturnal visits to the windowsill and felt entirely free to wake us up during the night for more food (our fault entirely). Ball games featured in the daily routine (both alone or with our participation) and she favoured a catnip sardine which often got a fearful bashing.

A gentle and affectionate companion, Abbey loved her home and life and recognised that we three were a team. Her transition to a domestic situation was smooth and trouble-free which showed great spirit and bravery for a cat that it had taken Bev four patient years to coax to a point where that was possible. She had never encountered the usual house noises (TV and washing machine) but took them all in her stride. Confident in her own territory, she was also able to completely ignore fireworks and any other external noises.



MEMORIES

ABBEY



In early September of this year, Abbey started to act oddly with food – stopping eating the wet pouches but eating the fish and chicken which we gave her. Was she just showing a preference? Thinking that she might have a dental problem, we made an appointment with the vet in mid- September. A total of six visits in nine days (stressful for any cat) proved that it wasn't a simple dental problem but liver damage. Our beautiful Abbey had to be put to sleep on 28th September without reaching nine years of age. She was loving and much loved but four years just wasn't enough to share with our lovely girl.

As always, our gratitude and thanks to Bev, Sue and colleagues at CLAWS for giving us the opportunity to spend these too short years with the wonderful Abbey.

HECTOR

Chris writes:



Hector was put to sleep a few days ago(November 2021}. He was arthritic & diabetic & seemed to occasionally suffer dementia.

We calculated he was probably coming up to 15 years old as we had adopted him from C.L.A.W.S. July 2010 & we had been told he was around 3-4 years old then.

We gave him the best life we could & he certainly developed into a more friendly & tolerant fellow over the years - as you might recall he had a very fiery temperament.

MONTY

MONTY was homed by CLAWS as a kitten in 2005. A member of the family was allergic to cats but controlled it with drugs until she became pregnant and her doctor advised her not to take the medication any longer. After much heart searching and many tears Monty was returned to CLAWS in 2018.



He was a little disorientated at first but soon settled in and became friends with his carers and fellow felines.

The helpline rang. "I am looking for an older cat for my mother. All she wants is a cat to sit on her knee and cuddle" "I think we have just the right cat" and told her about Monty. "My mum is housebound—could you possibly bring him over ?" So we took him over - we had never seen a cat settle in so fast !! A quick tour of the lounge and then he jumped up on Mrs C's lap and settled down and he was still there when we left 1/2 hour later.

He was diagnosed with cancer in early 2022 and was gently put to sleep in February 2022.

They had 3 wonderful years together.

Dear Monty—he was an absolute joy and loved by all who met him.

ALICE

Alice spent the night of Storm Eunice on “her” boat which was “moored” in the garden.. She was completely unfazed by it. She is now known affectionately known as Captain Alice.

Recently Tony treated himself to a canoe anticipating many happy hours on the river during the summer.

What did he call it ? You’ve guessed haven’t you ? Yes it’s ALICE and her name is emblazoned on the side of the boat !



ELSA AND INNOGEN PART 1

This is the story of my two cats, Innogen and Elsa, who are such wonderful company, yet I sometimes think are as different as two cats could be. As I sat down to type this, they have both followed me and are sitting within a couple of feet - I think they would both follow me everywhere if they could!

In fact my late partner, Tina, and I had as many as five cats for a long while. For a few months we even had six living in our house, as when my mother suddenly had to go in to a home, her two black cats, a mother and daughter named Pixie and Portia, came here, but it was impossible to get them to get along with our other cats at the time, as hard as we tried. My attempts to contact other rehoming charities having failed, I eventually recalled having heard of a local organisation named CLAWS and was hugely grateful to them for taking Pixie and Portia in, and after they had several more ups and downs they were both eventually successfully rehomed. I shall never forget CLAWS' help in this, as life was becoming very unpleasant in a house with cats who just did not get along.

But returning to my current two cats, the first, Innogen came here in October 2014. Innogen is a pedigree Maine Coon, and her pedigree name is Empurrer Andromeda. She came when our previous Maine Coon, Rosalind, died and we collected Innogen from a breeder in Sidcup in Kent. The breeder's house was a sight to behold, as it was not especially large, but every room seemed to be home to a family of Maine Coons. The living room seemed to be over-run by them - it was a cat-lover's paradise. We had an early choice from a litter of seven kittens, and we picked her because she had a golden streak of fur above her left eye which gives her extra character, and also because she seemed quite out-going, which we thought she would need to be because she was going to become the youngest of a household of five cats. We renamed her Innogen, as we had named all our pedigree cats after favourite characters from Shakespeare; Innogen is the main character in *Cymbeline*. We took the usual care in introducing her to our existing cats, and all went smoothly as she became especially friendly with Myranda, a Birman who was the youngest of our other cats. They had great fun chasing each other around the house, and when one of them had had enough the game would be stopped by a hiss, but never it seemed with any real malice.

Innogen is a tortie/tabby. She has the most incredibly silky fur, and although she is large for a domestic cat, she is not particularly large for a Maine Coon, which tend to be very large cats. Of course I know that I am obliged to think this, but I have two different Maine Coon calendars in my home, and when I turn over the fresh page on the first of each month I very seldom think that the cat in the photograph is as beautiful as Innogen, and I have yet to see one that I consider more beautiful. Despite her size, she is very much a 'gentle giant'; in fact she's rather a 'softie'.

As I mentioned, Innogen was the youngest of five cats in our household. My partner died in August 2016 at which time the next youngest, and Innogen's best feline friend, Myranda, was already suffering with the awful disease F.I.P. We had managed to import a drug from America which it was hoped would counter this disease, but although it extended her life Myranda died in January 2017. Our other three cats, two rescue cats and a Birman, were each eighteen years old, and the situation which we had dreaded happened when they all died within a very short time, between September 2017 and February 2018. So I was left with just Innogen. This left me with something of a dilemma, because, although the experts say that cats are solitary animals, Innogen had lived with other cats all her life, first with her breeder and then with us. I knew that I didn't want to go back to having as many as five cats, but not only did I really want more than just one, I also felt that Innogen might be lonely if, at the age of four, she suddenly found herself alone, especially as at the time I intended to return to work, although in the event I never did. In fact, Innogen was wonderful company during this period when she was my only cat, and seemed to be closer to me than ever, but nevertheless I decided that it would be better for both of us if I acquired another cat, and the sooner the better in case Innogen should get too used to being an 'only cat' and made a newcomer unwelcome.

There are so many organisations seeking homes for homeless pets, that I assumed it would be an easy matter to find another cat. What I had failed to realise is that they seem all to subscribe to the theory that cats are solitary animals and my ownership of Innogen seemed to rule out my taking on another. No matter how much I explained that, large as she is, Innogen was a gentle cat well-used to sharing a home with other cats and that I was completely confident that she would get along with another cat, it seemed hopeless.

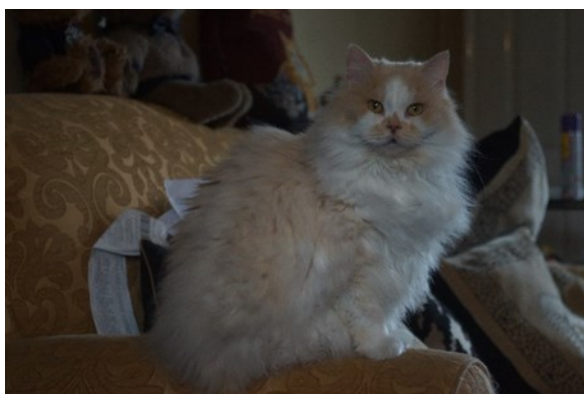
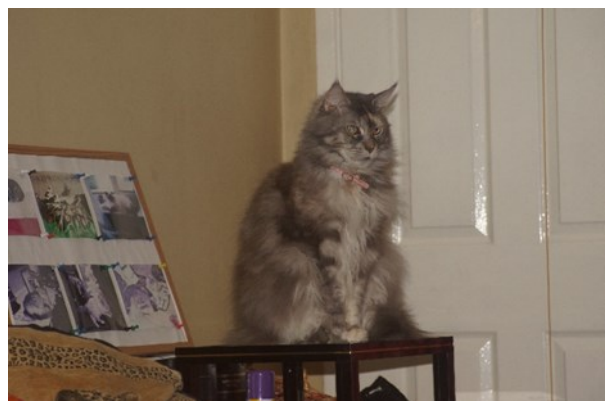
This led me to do something that I never thought I should do, and would certainly not recommend to anyone else. A friend pointed out that a lady in High Wycombe was seeking to find a home for a cat of around Innogen's age through *Facebook*. I was initially very suspicious, but went to see her, and found that she was providing a foster home for a cat that had been imported to the UK from Egypt by someone who had imported several abandoned cats from that country. At the time, this lady had an imported cat from Egypt herself, but was also acting as a foster parent to Elsa, who was a white cat about four years old and with quite long hair. I asked the same questions I would ask any breeder who was selling cats, and all seemed to be OK, so Elsa came to live with me in April 2018. I had her checked by my usual vet very soon, and took great care in introducing her to Innogen, keeping her in a spare room for a few days, and only letting her into the rest of the house to get used to Innogen's scent when Innogen was safely out of the way. Eventually, they caught sight of each other through an open door and I decided that the time had come to introduce them to each other. Elsa roamed around the house for about forty minutes; Innogen followed her all the way but without trying to intervene. Eventually, Elsa sat down on the living room floor; Innogen sat down a couple of feet away, and by-and-large they have peacefully shared my home ever since. In many ways, they are as unlike as two cats could be; not only is Innogen a pedigree and Elsa a rescue cat, but Elsa is rather demanding and has a loud voice and a very loud purr, while Innogen only occasionally expresses herself with a characteristic Maine Coon 'chirrup', and has a purr which is barely audible. Elsa knows exactly what she wants, and how to get it, while Innogen is a rather nervous cat, and very alert to unusual noises. She often looks upstairs apparently nervously as though she thinks someone or something is going to come down the stairs.

CAT TALES

Elsa's favourite toys are small balls of tinsel, while Innogen loves playing with the light from a light-pen. They both love sitting on me, but seem happy to take turns, and spend most of the night sleeping on the bed with me. On the whole I think it would be fair to say that they are content in each other's company without quite being the best of friends. Every now and then, one will chase the other around the house for a few minutes; it always seems to be in fun, but I think you can never be entirely sure. I sometimes think that Elsa would like to play more with Innogen, but that whenever she tries Innogen is not sure whether she is being friendly or not, and reacts so cautiously that Elsa gives up the attempt. But we can never know for sure.

Elsa is the first cat that I have owned during my adult life who did not come to me as a kitten, and I find it impossible not to wonder how her life in Egypt has affected her character now. She has an amazing appetite, and it's impossible not to wonder if she was very hungry when she was on the streets of Cairo and so got used to eating whatever she could whenever she could. She is exceptionally affectionate, which makes me wonder if she is compensating for a time in her earlier life when she was unloved, and for the three months she spent in quarantine before coming to the UK. And she tends to be a little assertive at times, which I guess she would have to be while she was alone on the streets for a time.

Part 2 will appear in the June newsletter



DEREK

Beverley's neighbour dropped in . "Have you seen the Parish app ?" It was an appeal from a family for a home for their tortoise which they could no longer look after. "No I haven't but I'll follow it up" (As you know Beverley can't resist tortoises.) Before she could pick up the phone to ring the owners a friend called "Have you seen the appeal on the Parish app for a home for a tortoise ?" Beverley assured her that she was on the case and got in touch with the tortoise's owners straightaway.

They brought it round. It had been fed turtle and terrapin pellets with none of the greens so vital to its wellbeing. Beverley was very concerned about it and immediately rang the specialist vet and booked an appointment for the next day. On the way over Beverley decided to call the tortoise Delia.

Unfortunately the specialist tortoise vet was not on duty but a colleague examined it and said that it was a male Horsfield weighing only 250 grams (it should have weighed 450 grams). He was admitted it for treatment and it was arranged that Beverley would collect him (yes, not her !) when his condition had stabilised.

On the way home Beverley re-named him **DEREK**.

He stayed in the tortoise hospital for longer than expected due to the storms which brought down trees which had blocked the route. He put on weight, his colour improved and he was lively lad so was fit to come home at the end of February and is now the seventh member of the Bear Cottage tortoise family.



POEM

MYFANWEE

(A Welsh Girl's Name)

A terrified cat visited me
Twice a day, jut to see
If there was a room with no need to roam,
A place, perhaps, it could call "home"?

Three years have gone and you're still not brave
I can't give you love and cuddles I crave.
Myfawnwee I call you as I love the name,
Oh how I wish that you were tame.

I put two tunnels were a roof
Draft free and predator proof.
You get clean fluffy blankets every week
That you snuggle into when the weather's bleak.

During the hours of the darkest nights
You are comforted by solar lights.
Why still nervous, you come so near,
You must know by now you've nothing to fear.

When you emerged from your kennel under the roof
I'd hoped that you would know that this was proof
Of how much I wanted you to stay
And never, ever run away.

You now only eat chicken and salmon and such
With Lacto-free milk that ou love so much
You'll enter my room for breakfast and tea -
You'll even come up close to me.

I've been in animal rescue all of my life,
I thought I knew cats well,
But if I dare to try to touch you
You really are like "a bat out of hell".

I don't know what to do next
Or where I'm coming from.
Are you upset that I call you Myfanwee
When I know you're an entire tom ?

Vera Hooker

TOBY HAD DISAPPEARED !

Where was Toby ? There was no sign of him in the house and by now it was dark outside and blowing a gale. Beverley was forced to abandon her search and retired to bed to spend the night worrying about him.

She was up early and having fed the Bear Cottage gang went outside to renew the search.

There was no sign of him. “Now think – where was I working yesterday afternoon ?” Then inspiration struck she had been in the “stable” where the bird food is stored.

And there he was, sitting on top of the feed bin, shouting bad words at Beverley.

After coming in and having a hearty breakfast he went upstairs to lay on a proper bed and sleep it off.

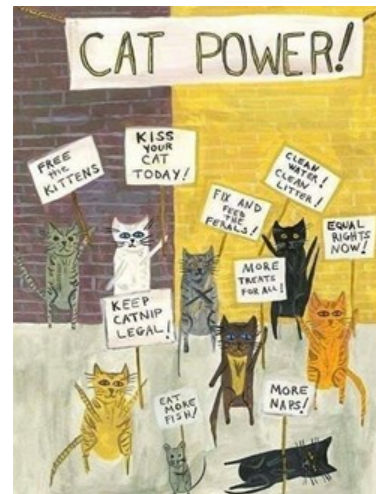


ON A LIGHTER NOTE

Larry the Cat has a statement... "I did not attend the Party at No 10, with Boris!"



When you go on vacation and ask your parents to watch over the cat...



Friend: "Me and my kids are coming over to visit you but they don't like cats. Do you think we can use one of your cages?"

Me: "Of course we can. No problem."



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ON A LIGHTER NOTE

