



THE BIRMAN SOCIETY INC.

A Society for the Appreciation and Advancement of the Sacred Cat of Burma

NEWSLETTER

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Next Meeting
FRIDAY OCTOBER 1ST 2010 AT 8PM
At the GCCFV office
4/170 Underwood Road, Ferntree Gully
Secretary: Helen Stephenson
Ph: 9560 9903

BIRMAN LEGEND

“The reincarnation of souls and a deep respect and love for priests is the bases for the legend of the Sacred Cats of Burma”

"Once upon a time, before the days of Buddha, the Khmer people built beautiful temples to honour their gods principally the god Song-Hyo and the goddess Tsun-Kyan-Kse. One of these temples was the temple of Loa-Tsun where a golden figure of the goddess, with sapphire eyes, was kept - and also 100 pure white cats. One of these was Sinh, the companion of an old priest, Mun-Ha, whose golden beard was said to have been braided by Song-Hyo himself.

One night Thai raiders attacked the temple, killing Mun-Ha as he knelt before the figure of the goddess. Immediately the cat Sinh jumped on the body of its master and faced the goddess. The priest's soul entered the cat, and as it did so the white hair of its body became golden (like the goddess, or like the old priest's beard, according to different versions of the story) and its eyes became sapphire-blue like those of the goddess. Its legs turned brown, except where the feet rested on its master – there they remained white. The transformation inspired the other priests to drive the raiders off but, seven days later, Sinh also died carrying with it into paradise the soul of Mun-Ha. The next morning all the other white cats of the temple had undergone the same transformation as Sinh. From then on the priest's guarded their sacred golden cats, believing them to have custody of the souls of the priests.

The original Birmans of France are said to have been a gift from the priests of a new temple of Lao-Tsun in the mountains of Tibet. Two cats were reputedly sent to France one - a male - dying in transit. The female, already pregnant, is said to have survived to become the founder of the pedigree Birman breed of Europe.

It is intriguing when, that in 1960, a pair of 'Tibetan Temple' kittens was given to a North American cat lover, they had colouring identical to the Birman and were accompanied by the same legend - even down to the 100 temple cats.

Whatever it's true origin, the Birman is a fascinating variety which became very successful in France until WW II decimated the feline population. After the war the breed was again reduced to two individuals and it was a long time before it could fully recover. Birmans were first taken to England from France in the early 1960's and were accepted for championship competitions in 1966.

The legend also has it that when a priest dies his soul was transmigrated into the body of a cat and upon the cats death the priest's soul's transition into heaven has been accomplished”

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

THE BIRMAN SOCIETY SHOW 2010

I hope that you all enjoyed this year's Birman Society Show. We hope that you all had a great time and enjoyed the program that we have put together for you. We thought that we had a great combination of Judges and the exhibitors appeared to be enjoying seeing their evaluations of our beautiful cats. Wendy Hamilton, in particular appeared to have an audience that was hanging on to her every word.

We were thrilled to welcome back Johan, who is very popular with our members and also David Scadden and Alan Davies who are also favourites with the Melbourne Exhibitors. Wendy Hamilton, our Specialty Judge, and a fellow Birman Breeder, judged for us for the first time and it was wonderful to see her spending so much time on the Birmans, even if she did almost give our Secretary, Helen Stephenson, a heart attack, wondering how she was going to get her to the airport in time for her flight. Completing our wonderful panel were Jo Millar (another Kiwi- how lucky is that?) and Janis Christison (from Qld), as well as some of our favourite local Judges (Margaret, Merle, Kim and Steven). We thank them all for their work and helping to make it a fun day.

Apart from the Stars of the day (our cats), their Exhibitors and the Judges, I would like to thank all the Workers who help to make it all happen: Stewards, Ticket writers, Kitchen staff and our Club Members who helped to make it all come together. Cheryl Papez and her team did an amazing job of feeding everyone, operating out of a VERY small kitchen. Special thanks to the members of BRICS, for being there with us.

If you enjoyed yourself on the day but were not really involved, we would like to extend an invitation to you to come and join us at our next meeting on October 1st when we start planning for our 2011 show. **YOU DON'T NEED A BIRMAN TO BE INVOLVED.** We are looking for people who love cats (any breed will do), enjoy a few laughs and want to be involved. Speak to Lesley/Kevin and we will get it organized for you.

I could not sign off without mentioning Gaye Downes, who was such a help to me when I was busy losing it while completing my studies as the Show rapidly approached! Thank you!

By the way, I passed!

Cheers

Lesley Freemann



PET BIRTHDAYS



July

Creamie 4th Mrs C Badham 1 year old

August

Wispa 18th Mrs C Phelan 3 years old

September

Romeo 16th Mrs T Newman 9 years old

Sophie 1st Mrs Helen Stephenson 9 years old

Mr Keeran 2nd Ms Emma Stephenson 9 year old

Matisse 11th Mrs B Jose 7 years old

Jaffa 23rd Mr M Downes 1 year old

October

Lady Jasmine 4th Mrs E Kalker 10 years old

Indigo 6th Mr P Dawon & Ms K Whitehead 7 years old

Dandy Misty 8th Ms Emma Stephenson 10 year old

Beau Blue 11th Mrs B Jose 8 years old

Jasmine 13th Mr P Dawon & Ms K Whitehead 7 years old

Jokorda Agung 23rd Mr R & Mrs N DeSelle DuReal 5 years old

November

T.T. (Tatania) 9th Mrs M Akester 17 years old

Mickey Blue Eyes 18th Mrs W Mieglitz 1 year old

December

Kemara Shan 19th Mr J Newman 9 years old



WINGED CAT—FACT OR FICTION?

The earliest currently known report of a winged cat is from Henry David Thoreau: "A few years before I lived in the woods there was what was called a 'winged cat' in one of the farm-houses in Lincoln nearest the pond, Mr. Gillian Baker's. When I called to see her in June, 1842, she was gone a-hunting in the woods, as was her wont ... but her mistress told me that she came into the neighborhood a little more than a year before, in April, and was finally taken into their house; that she was of a dark brownish-grey colour, with a white spot on her throat, and white feet, and had a large bushy tail like a fox; that in the winter the fur grew thick and flattened out along her sides, forming strips ten or twelve inches long by two and a half wide, and under her chin like a muff, the upper side loose, the under matted like felt, and in the spring these appendages dropped off. They gave me a pair of her 'wings,' which I keep still. There is no appearance of a membrane about them. Some thought it was part flying squirrel or some other wild animal, which is not impossible, for, according to naturalists, prolific hybrids have been produced by the union of the marten and the domestic cat."



- In the 19th century, there was a winged cat at the centre of a custody dispute with one party claiming him to be their cat, Thomas, and the other claiming it to be their feline, Bessy.
- In *Animal Fakes and Frauds* (1976), S. Peter Dance described a 19th-century winged cat that was preserved and offered for sale in the early 1960s. Its wings had grown when the cat was very young. It had been exhibited during the 19th century by a circus owner, but, when its original owner demanded its return, the cat mysteriously died. It was stuffed but has not been properly examined.
- A "flying cat" was reported in India in 1868. It was shot by Mr Alexander Gibson, and the skin was exhibited at a meeting of the Bombay Asiatic Society. Gibson believed it to be a cat, but others claim it to be a bat or flying fox.
- In August 1894, a cat with wings resembling those of a duckling was being exhibited by Mr David Badcock of Reach, Cambridgeshire, England. It was later stolen and turned up in Liverpool, England, but had shed its wings.
- In 1897, a tortoiseshell cat with pheasant-like wings projecting from each side of its 4th ribs was shot and killed in Matlock, Derbyshire. The story was reported in the *High Peak News* of Saturday, 26 June 1897. Witnesses claimed the cat used its wings outstretched to help run faster.
- In 1899, London's *Strand Magazine* reported a winged cat or kitten belonging to a woman living in Wiveliscombe, Somerset, England. Cat show judge HC Brooke also described it in

WINGED CAT—FACT OR FICTION?

the weekly magazine *Cat Gossip* in 1927: "This cat had growing from its back two appendages which reminded the observer irresistibly of the wings of a chicken before the adult feathers appear. These appendages were not flabby, but apparently gristly, about six or eight inches long, and placed in exactly the position assumed by the wings of a bird in the act of taking flight. They did not make their appearance until the kitten was several weeks old." Unfortunately, someone attempted to cut off the wings, with fatal consequences for the cat.

- In 1933 or 1934, a winged black-and-white cat was captured in Oxford, England by Mrs Hughes Griffiths. She claimed it used its six-inch wings to aid in jumping long distances. It was exhibited for a while at Oxford Zoo.
- In 1936, a winged cat was found on a farm near Portpatrick, Wigtownshire, Scotland. It was a white longhair, and the wings were flaps 6 in (15 cm) long and 3 in (7.5 cm) wide on its back. They flapped up and down when the cat ran. This is consistent with badly matted fur.
- In 1939, Sally, a black-and-white cat with a 24-inch wingspan from Attercliffe, Sheffield, England, was sold to a Blackpool museum of freaks.
- During World War II, an overweight black-and-white cat in Ashford, Middlesex, became a local attraction because of the wings which sprouted from its shoulders. This also seems like a case of matted fur.
- In June 1949, a 20-pound cat with a 23-inch wingspan was shot dead in northern Sweden. Professor Rendahl of the State Museum of Natural History said the wings were a deformity of the skin which happened to take the shape of wings.

- In 1950, a tortoiseshell cat called Sandy with "sizable" wings was exhibited at a carnival in Sutton, Nottinghamshire. Sandy had not previously grown wings, so this seems a case of matted fur.



- In either 1950 or 1959, Madrid papers reported that Juan Priego's grey Angora cat, Angolina, had grown a pair of large fluffy wings.



- In May 1959, a winged Persian cat was caught near Pinesville, West



WINGED CAT—FACT OR FICTION?

Virginia. The finder, Douglas Shelton, named it Thomas, but, after the cat made headlines, Mrs Charles Hicks claimed it was her lost cat, Mitzi. When the cat was produced in court, her wings had fallen off and turned out to be extensive mats of fur.

- In 1966, a winged cat from Alfred, Ontario, Canada, was killed and was examined by scientists at Kemptville Agricultural School. The wings were nothing more than matted fur. The cat was also suffering from rabies.
- In the October/November 1967 issue of the Cats Protection League's periodical *The Cat*, Cecily Waddon reported a matted Persian whose felted fur resembled wings and flapped when the cat moved.
- In 1970, J. A. Sandford of Wallingford, Connecticut saw a winged cat in a neighbor's garden. The orange-and-white longhaired cat was "positively waddling due to large wing-like growths hanging from its midsection." The owner claimed it was how the cat shed its fur in summer. The fur was matted into rectangular pads about five inches long by four inches wide. Some claim it to be a case of feline cutaneous asthenia, but it is a textbook case of matted fur.
- In 1975, the Manchester Evening News published a photograph of a winged cat which had lived in the Banister Walton & Co builder's yard at Trafford Park, Manchester, England, during the 1960s. It had a pair of 11-inch-long fluffy wings projecting from its back. The skin of its tail was flattened into a broad flap. Workmen reported that the cat could raise its wings above its body, suggesting the deformity contained muscle as well as skin. This sometimes happens with cutaneous asthenia.
- In 1986, a winged cat was reported in Anglesey, Britain, and later shed its wings, suggesting they were mats of fur.
- In April 1995, Martin Millner spotted a fluffy winged tabby in Backbarrow, Cumbria, England.
- In 1998, a black winged cat was found in Northwood, Middlesex. Its wings were 2-3 inches back from the shoulder blades, 8 inches long, 4 inches wide, 1 inch thick and flapped as the cat ran.
- In 2004, at Bukreyevk (near Kursk), Central Russia, a winged ginger stray tomcat named Vaska was drowned by superstitious villagers, according to the local Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper.
- In 2007, in Xianyang, Shaanxi province, China, a one-year-old tomcat grew ten-centimeter-long wings with bones in just one month; they first started out as bumps. The owner, Feng, believed it was because the cat had been sexually harassed by other cats. The story appeared in the newspaper Huashang.
- In May 2009, a winged cat was reported in China, with the story appearing on MSNBC



BIRMAN SOCIETY CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW – May 2010



From the editor.....

I don't go to many shows, but I always help out/support/attend our Club's show and it always amazes me how the whole thing is pulled together! With over 200 entries, it was a successful and VERY busy show. SO many people help out, perhaps picking up a judge from the airport, contributing a raffle prize (who did win the 'I Love Cats' quilt?), helping set up the tables and cages, running the kitchen, the list is endless. We had prizes from Fibre Cycle, Jen's Pet Products, The New Boston Tea Party, Aussie Mortgage Broker - Vida Lowry and hundreds of ribbons and rosettes. I thoroughly enjoyed catching up with everyone, and seeing all the beautiful cats. Congratulations to all competitors and a special "Well Done" to all the winners.



Supreme Exhibit in Show

Nick & Cathy Tricarico's
CCCA Trp Gd Ch & Gold Ch
BEVINGTON MEMORY LANE (Hons)
Blue Male British Shorthair
B: 18/01/2007
S: CCCA Tpl Gd Ch & Gold Ch Bevington
Royal Albert (Hons)
D: Silver Ch Kaloofa Ima Blueprint
B: Nick & Cathy Tricarico

BIRMAN SOCIETY CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW—May 2010

Supreme Birman in Show

&

Supreme Birman Ring 1

Janet Grant's

CHAMPION SHEKINAH PRECIOUS JEWEL

Lilac Point Female Spay Birman

B: 25/09/2004

S: Gold Ch/Ch Shekinah Mateus

D: Shekinah Bee Bee

B: Cheryl Papez



Around the house she is just called "Jewel". She likes nothing more but to hang out in her outdoor cage in the sunshine where she loves the tunnel and indoors where a cane bookshelf is her favourite amongst the cat blankets.

Jewel is one of a small number of cats including her daughter Sophie. It was hard to part with her single litter but eventually they all found good homes.

Jewel has not had an extensive show career but regularly competes at the annual Birman shows in both Melbourne and Canberra. She has done quite well in Canberra previously without reaching the heights of her last show.

Jewel was bred by Cheryl Papas from Shekinah Birmans and was one of a litter of five. Cheryl is quite proud of her and others she has successfully bred and shown over a number of years.

Janet



Supreme Birman Ring 2

Suzanne Parkinson's

CCCA Triple Gd Ch & ACF AoE & Gold PN

SHARADA SALAMINCA (Hons)

Seal Point Female Spay Birman

B: 13/02/2006

S: Silver Ch Chanmali Kusri Kasseem Kaadesh

D: Db Gd Ch Dejavu Miss Molly

B: BK Heather

Inca has been such a great PR birman at shows for the past four years; she loves to chat to people and give them rough nose kisses and head butts.

She has many many Supreme Wins under her little white paws but this was an extra special one for me being at the Birman Show.

Suzanne

BIRMAN SOCIETY CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW—May 2010

Supreme Birman Ring 3

Suzanne Parkinson's
BRYNLER DOE-RAE-ME
Seal Point Female Birman
B: 26/10/2009

S: Silver Ch Chanmali Kusri Kasseem Kaadesh
D: Db Gd Ch Sharada Velvet Slippers
B: Suzanne Parkinson

Little Doe really is a 'deer' little girl, just seven months old she has already had a Supreme Group One award to her credit and numerous Group wins and placements. She is a half sister to Inca and I am very proud to look to the future with my homebred girl.

Two Supreme Birman awards at this years Birman Club Show was so exciting particularly being a relatively new birman breeder.

Thanks to the members of the club for your support and friendship at the shows.

Suzanne



Supreme Birman Ring 4

Sylvia Knight's
Champion
ELDORATO ANGELICA
Seal Point Female Birman
B: 29/03/2009
S: Gold Ch Eldorato Marat
D: Ch Eldorato Aphrodite
B: Lesley Freemann
D: Shekinah Bee Bee
B: Cheryl Papez

We were lucky to have been offered the chance to buy a great kitten from Lesley Freemann. Angelica has the classic Birman feature that we do love in this breed. She is small and dainty, lovely clear eyes and of course sleeps on the bed! Lovely coat. not too long. Her temperate is mild, some times affectionate and has a weird meow noise. Fairly fussy with food...aren't they all... and gets on well with Pheobe our chocolate girl. She loves to play with those pipe cleaner spiders and when we throw it away she runs and fetches it and brings it back like a dog. loves sitting in front of the fire.

So far she has done very well in shows and they don't seem to bother her much.

Sylvia & Andrew

LOUIS WAIN ART

Louis Wain (5 August 1860 – July 4, 1939) was an English artist best known for his drawings, which consistently featured anthropomorphised large-eyed cats and kittens.

In 1886, Wain's first drawing of anthropomorphised cats was published in the Christmas issue of the Illustrated London News, titled *A Kittens' Christmas Party*. The illustration depicted 150 cats, many of which resemble Peter, sending



ing invitations, holding a ball, playing games, and making speeches over eleven panels. Still, the cats remain on all fours, unclothed, and without the variety of human-like expression that would characterize Wain's work.



In subsequent years, Wain's cats began to walk upright, smile broadly and use other exaggerated facial expressions, and wear sophisticated

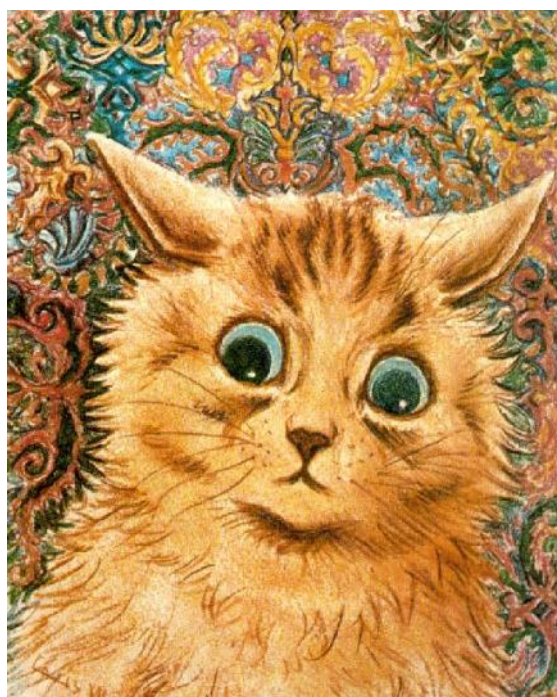


contemporary clothing. Wain's illustrations showed cats playing musical instruments, serving tea, playing cards, fishing, smoking, and enjoying a night at the opera. Such anthropomorphic portrayals of animals were very popular in Victorian England, and were often found in prints, on greeting cards and in satirical illustrations.



Wain was a prolific artist over the next thirty years, sometimes producing as many as several hundred drawings a year. He illustrated

about one hundred children's books, and his work appeared in papers, journals, and magazines, including the *Louis Wain Annual*, which ran from 1901 to 1915. His work was also regularly reproduced on picture postcards, and these are highly sought after by collectors today. In 1898 and 1911 he was chairman of the National Cat Club.



CATS IN THE NEWS

Flowerpot

British workers opened a sealed crate from Malaysia and couldn't believe their eyes as a kitten stared back at them. It had survived for over a month by licking condensation off the crate's walls. The tortoiseshell was tired and thin but instantly greeted workers with a friendly meow. Workers plucked the girl kitten from the crate and called the RSPCA. The kitten had crawled into the crate at the port of Penang and been sealed inside as it waited to be loaded to a ship. She then endured a voyage to South Hampton and lorry trip to Salisbury without food and light. The eight-week-old was named Flowerpot and will stay in quarantine for six months but a home as been lined up for her.



Smokey & Dotty



Thousands of plant-lovers travel miles to the Chelsea Flower Show each year, but none would risk their life to do so. However, four-month-old kittens Smokey and Dotty hitched a lift from their plant-nursery home in Hampshire to the showground in SW3 on the undercarriage of a lorry. For 60 miles they perched on a ledge only two feet from the ground, staying put even when it stopped at traffic lights. Ninety minutes later and three motorways later, the lorry finally came to a halt at the showground and the terrified cats were discovered. The cats are owned by Rosy Hardy, who has been exhibiting at the Flower Show for the 10th year running.

Major Benjie and Georgie

A pair of mischievous moggies had their owner in a cat flap after boosting the neighbourhood crime rate. Major Benjie and Georgie were caught red-handed following mysterious cat burglaries on the next door neighbour of their embarrassed owner Elaine Floodgate. Oriental tabby Major Benjie started the crime wave by sneaking through the neighbour's cat flap and returning with a cuddly toy. Days later, the bold cat came home with more loot. Her other cat Georgie sneaked next door and made a beeline for an expensive watch left lying on a bench.



The cats were caught after the neighbour mentioned that things were disappearing. The penny dropped with the cats owners and now the criminal conspirators now banished from their neighbour's house, have become peeping toms. They have taken to sitting on her bathroom ledge and staring at her in a menacing way.

PAWS FOR A CHUKKLE

The Bachelor And His Cat

A bachelor who lived at home with his mother and pet cat went on a trip to Europe. Before he left he told his best friend to inform him of any emergencies.

A few days after his departure, his cat climbed up on the roof, fell off and was killed. His friend immediately wired him with the message: "Your cat died!"

In a few hours he was back home, having cut short his trip in grief and anger at his friend, whom he told "Why didn't you break the news to me gradually? You know how close I was to my cat! You could have sent a message 'Your cat climbed up on the roof today', and the next day you could've written, 'Your cat fell off the roof' and let me down slowly that he died."

After a quick memorial service, the bachelor left again to continue his trip. A few days later he returned to his hotel and there was a message waiting for him from his friend. It read, "Your mother climbed up on the roof today."

How to Photograph a Cat

- Put the cat on a pillow.
- Set up your camera.
- Put the cat back on the pillow.
- Get a bowl of food and put it next to the pillow.
- Put the cat back on the pillow.
- Grab the food bowl and follow the cat. As you run, hold the bowl in our cat's face, tempting her to eat.
- See if the neighbours will come over and pick up the sofa while you snap a picture of the cat underneath.
- Cross the names of your neighbours off the list for your next party.
- Put the cat back on the pillow.
- Place a catnip-stuffed mouse in front of your cat and wait for your cat to go crazy.
- Go back to the pet store and demand a refund.
- Decide on a family portrait with the cat instead.



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www.thebirmansociety.com
