

The History of the Australian Cat Federation [ACF] (Inc.) from 1972 to the present day *(The ACF sincerely thanks Lesley Morgan for providing the text for this history document up to 2016.)*

At the Annual General Meeting of the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy Victoria Australia (GCCFV) held on 27 November 1969 the following suggestion was made: "It was suggested endeavours be made to form a National Controlling Body. It was resolved that Council be requested to contact the major councils in Australia for the formation of a National Body". Later, on 19 February 1970, at a Feline Control Council of Western Australia (FCCWA) meeting, the following motion was approved: "National Body Resolution: Resolved that the proposed affiliation between Victoria and Queensland is an initial step for a National Body". Subsequently, on 22 June 1972, FCCWA recorded the following: "National Feline Council: Resolved that the FCCWA is in favour of the formation of a National Council. The Committee emphasised that it would only be fair to have one vote per one State, as in some States there was more than one representative".

1972

The inaugural meeting (sponsored by Uncle Ben's) was held in Melbourne on 21 October 1972 with Mrs J E White in the Chair. Also present at the meeting were Coordinator, Dr M J Tait (GCCFV), delegates from Queensland — Mrs M Dougan (Cat Fanciers Association and independent clubs), Mr R Shead (Feline Council of Queensland), and Mrs M Haas (Governing Council of Queensland); delegates from Victoria — Mr D J C Chandler (GCCFV) and Mr V Bumak (DCCV); Miss M Horne (Governing Council of the Cat Fancy of South Australia [GCCFSA]), Mr K Dobbie (CCCT), Mrs D Oaten (CANT), Mrs B T Sparkes (Murray Valley Cat Authority), and Mr H Klopper (FCCWA). Among observer's present were Mrs Mary Hinchcliffe (Feline Control Council of Victoria [FCCV]), Mrs M Oliver, and representatives of Uncle Ben's Australia Pty Ltd (Whiskas).

The question of eligibility for affiliation was raised and it was determined not to exclude the few organisations not represented that day, but it was considered that there was sufficient national representation present to proceed with formation of a steering committee. The councils not present were to be kept abreast of developments and should they wish in the future to become involved, they could be coopted onto the committee. The steering committee was to produce a draft constitution for presentation to the next meeting, and it was suggested that the first National Show should be held in South Australia, because of its central location. Margaret Horne accepted that proposition. The ANCF (Australian National Cat Federation, changed to Australian Cat Federation when the body was incorporated) officially came into being on 10 March 1973. Harold Klopper was elected President at that first conference.

1973

That inaugural ANCF show was staged in Adelaide, on 5 August 1973. Margaret Horne was the show manager with Shirley White as her assistant. The committee comprised June Vogel (Richardson) and Trixie Pettman (South). Among the judges were FIFe Secretary, Brita Kastengren-Remborg, Sonia Dowty (New South Wales), Gwen Jenkins (Victoria), Mrs E Chan (New Zealand), Jack Caird (Victoria), Chris Selby (Western Australia), Mrs N Shead (Queensland), Mrs M Oliver, Mrs N Russack and Mrs D Meyers (South Australia) and Mrs G Litchfield (Queensland). Also officiating were two very new faces to the judging scene — Julian Schuller (NT) and Rossy Faulkner (now Roberts-Thomson) of Tasmania, who was on her first interstate assignment. The very first "Whiskas International" show had nearly 700 exhibits from all States and New Zealand and a public of 3,500 attended. It is interesting to note that the first catalogue cost 50cents! The Best Cat in Show was GC Glenmaulyn Darlene (blue Persian); Best Kitten was Shimtaro Tatianna (Chinchilla); and Best Neuter was PR Robseane Silver Lynx (lynx-point Siamese).

At the 1973 Annual General Meeting, Harold Klopper (Wester Australia) was re-elected President and it was resolved that ANCF "makes application for reciprocal affiliation with the Fédération Internationale Féline (FIFe) providing restrictive clauses are not placed on such affiliation". (Note: FIFe was the European-based parent body of the affiliated controls of then approximately 22 countries). It was also decided at this meeting to produce a bimonthly "National Cat" Magazine. This publication was produced until 1977, in one form or another.

1974

The 1974 National Show was scheduled for Brisbane on 3 and 4 August. After a disastrous flooding of the scheduled venue, the show proceeded elsewhere, and the first ANCF Judges' seminar was held. Visiting judges-speakers were FIFe President, Mme Ravel, and Terry Hiroaka (CFA, USA). Nearly 800 cats were entered, and Best Cat in Show was awarded to Brackenhill Blue Beau (Imp. UK), a blue Persian owned by R. Rowles, with Best Kitten won by Delma Ali Mohaal (seal-point Siamese). In 1974, the Murray Valley Cat Authority withdrew from the ANCF when GCCFV decided not to join. The 1974 year also saw one of the greatest natural disasters ever in Australia's history when Cyclone Tracy hit Darwin on Christmas Day. Many Northern Territory breeders and their cats were evacuated to other States, and it speaks volumes for the tenacity of the Cat Association of the Northern Territory (CANT) that it was able to remain in existence.

1975

The action switched to Victoria in 1975 and the National Show was run by the Feline Control Council of Victoria (FCCV) for the first time, on the Queen's Birthday weekend. It attracted an entry of 950, and was staged at the Royal Showgrounds. Ruth McDonald from New Zealand officiated, with 26 Australian colleagues. The Best Longhair Cat was a black and white Persian, Norwood Pippin; Best Shorthair Cat was Brooklea Nijinsky (Russian); Best Shorthair Kitten was Redwyton Gooditwoshoes (blue British Shorthair); Best Shorthair Desexed was Redwyton Pollywaffle (blue British Shorthair); Best Siamese Cat was Taiping Stanislaus (blue-point); Best Siamese Kitten was Panthera Sparkie (seal-point); and Best Siamese Desexed Exhibit was Casedero Don Carlos. In November, the present name of the organisation was registered, and the body incorporated. Also during 1975, the ACF register of prefixes was initiated, to avoid the then common duplication of prefixes around Australia, and the Australian National Champion title was instituted.

1976

1976 saw the National Show reverting to Adelaide again, with over 900 exhibits on display. The Best in Show award went to a New Zealand entry, Ch Bonaventura Blue Bentley (Imp. UK), a British Shorthair, owned by Leonie Rains. The Best Longhair Cat was Lavendel Crème Apollo (cream); Best Longhair Kitten was Pardeux Jack of Hearts; Best Longhair Desexed was Arrakish Blu Toby (blue); Best Foreign Shorthair Cat was Ch Kingsmead Gold Phora (tawny Abyssinian); Best Desexed Foreign Shorthair Cat was DGC Sandoway Pushkin (Russian); Best Siamese Cat was Taiping Stanislaus (blue-point); and the Best Desexed Siamese exhibit was PN Yerindi Silver Belle (blue-point).

1977

In 1977, the National was held for the first time in Tasmania, and Dr Bill Groom (Chairman of the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy of Great Britain, GCCFGB) was a guest judge. There were approximately 800 exhibits and the Best Cat was Zabadak Mahdi (lilac tabby-point). The Best Kitten was Benchana Blue Lynx (blue tabby-point), with Best Neuter awarded to Redwyton Susie Blue (British Shorthair). Also in 1977, the first ACF Judges' and breeders' tour of Europe was staged. Thirty-five people participated, with many of that number gaining FIFe national or international accreditation as a result. The process followed to achieve this status was not so stringent as for the later groups (1980 and 1982) which had to adhere strictly to FIFe requirements. All involved paid their own way, and they were split into three groups, each of which wended its way in different directions. Those still a part of the ACF who participated in the trip were Margaret Horne, June Richardson, Judith Russack, Julian Schuller, Dianne Dolman, Lesley Morgan, and Trixie Pettman-South.

1978

Brisbane hosted the 1978 National Show weekend. By now, there had been an amalgamation of Queensland bodies, and the Queensland Feline Association (QFA) had come into being as a result. The overseas judges who officiated were Dorrie Brice-Webb and Shirley Bullock (United Kingdom). The Best Longhair Cat (and Supreme Cat) was Int. Ch. GC Agena Beau Fantastic (white Persian), sired by the 1974 winner, Brackenhill Blue Beau. Tops and Trevor Jowett had a spectacular National that year, with their British Blues winning various awards. The Best Shorthair Cat was GC Jezreel Jackpot (Imp UK); his daughter, Redwyton Bunty, was Reserve to him, while another daughter (R. Susie Blue) was Reserve Shorthair Neuter. Reserve Shorthair Kitten was R. Dollypots (progeny of Jackpot and Bunty). The Best Siamese Adult was seal-point Delma Arabian Fanticee.

1979

1979 saw the National weekend return to Perth and, this time, it was a cultural exchange, with eight European judges beginning their tour of Australia at this event. They were joined by Lucy Koh of Singapore, a Siamese breeder and judge. There was a line-up of 658 cats, and "real" panel judging was employed for the first time in Australia. The Best Longhair Cat was Myamba Marmaduke (blue). The Best Shorthair Cat was Blaumeise Kashtan (Havana); Best Longhair Kitten was Pimpala Ambassadors (cream); Best Shorthair Kitten was Quashon Copper Faerho (chocolate-point Siamese); Best Longhair Desexed was Amer-Aust Malinga (cream); Best Shorthair Desexed was GPN Watanabe No Nookie (brown Burmese). As there was a suitable panel of FIFe judges present, Mr Terry Dever (Queensland) was examined and awarded FIFe National status for Shorthairs. He was the only judge thus qualified who gained that title without leaving Australia.

1980

Founding President, Harold Klopper, handed over the reins to fellow West Australian, Jack Howson, in 1980. Mr Howson had previously been Secretary and this position was now filled by Faye Schipperheijn. Post-cyclone Darwin was the setting for the show and Annual General Meeting and, at this meeting, it was decided that an ACF Judges Association was desirable. International Liaison Officer (ILO), Mrs Oliver, reported that a World Federation of Cat Fanciers had been mooted (incorporating the Fédération Internationale Féline [FIFe], Governing Council of the Cat Fancy of Great Britain [GCCFGB], and the Cat Fanciers Association [CFA] in the United States) and it was hoped that it would be formed within two years. (Note: It took 15 years, and the ACF was one of the core participants.) Belgian judge, Peter Scholer, was joined by others from all affiliates. The Best Cat in Show (for the second time; that cat was a stayer!) was Int Ch GC Agena Beau Fantastic; Best Shorthair

Kitten was Kokadjo Red Emma (red-point Siamese); and Best Shorthair Desexed Exhibit was Amberkit Anoki (sorrel Abyssinian). Another tour of European shows was undertaken in 1990 by Australian judges seeking FIFe qualifications, with current ACF panel judge, Margaret Bush, gaining her FIFe national longhair "ticket".

1981

This year saw the national proceedings move back to Melbourne. Jean Crockart (United Kingdom) and Will Thompson (CFA) were visitors, and Jean became patron of the ACF Judges Guild, which held its inaugural meeting. The ACF Yearbook (begun in 1978) advertised its rates at \$75 for a full page, \$45 for a half page, and \$30 for a quarter page. (Which makes today's prices especially good value!) Judging ran overtime, and there was some confusion about who won Best Exhibit, but the Best Longhair Kitten was a Chinchilla, Nepeta Beau Brummell, while Best Longhair Cat was a tortoiseshell and white, Sundown Calico Princess. The Best Longhair Neuter was another Chinchilla, Calo Jasmine.

1982

Vaughan Barber (CFA) was the guest judge for the 1982 National Show, held in Adelaide. Somalis were recognised, the subject of Balinese broached, and chocolate and lilac Persians given breed numbers. (Note: No Best in Show details are available.)

1983

The 1983 National weekend in Queensland was attended by various overseas observers; three members of the Malaysian Cat Club as well as Lucy Koh from Singapore were present. Don Swanson (CFA) was the overseas judge and among the winning cats was GC Magnifique Mon Blanc (white Persian) as Best Longhair Cat; Best Kitten was blue and white Persian Glevum Rythm 'n 'Blues; and Overall Exhibit was GC Bajimbi Cream Tomboy (cream Burmese). There were around 500 entries. The first Guild seminar was held, featuring semi-longhair breeds. The retirement of Jack Howson as President necessitated a change of face at the helm. (For a period, Vice-President, Nita Russack, had acted in his stead).

1984

Bjorn Christie Johnstone (director, RAST) succeeded Jack Howson as President. He chaired his only Annual General Meeting when Whyalla (South Australia) was host to the National Show weekend. Unfortunately, his was a short tenure. His presidency was conditional on moving towards an amalgamated cat fancy in Australia, with the now five-year-old Coordinating Cat Council of Australia (CCCA) and ACF "getting together". For various reasons, this did not occur and, as he foreshadowed at the AGM, he later withdrew from office. The 1984 Whyalla National Show was the first hosted outside a capital city, and it was some achievement for a country South Australian club to manage a show so much bigger than their regular shows. Swiss judge, Alfred Wittich, was present and the Best Cat in Show was GC Redwyton Wetheby James (blue British Shorthair and grandson of the 1978 winner), The Best Kitten was Absin Fandango (tawny Abyssinian); and the Best Neuter was Mischa Dorian, a cream Persian. The Guild seminar topic was blue cats (all breeds). One conference matter covered was which judges should adjudicate on Balinese and Somalis (at this stage, the FIFe-style semi-longhair group still existed) and the consensus was that they should be handled by appropriate shorthair judges, given their type. FIFe standards were to be adopted by ACF and, for the first time, it was suggested that ACF might do away with breed numbers.

1985

With the Perth 1985 meeting came recognition of Balinese (providing they were Group 2, rather than experimentally bred) and Judith Russack was by now Secretary. Nita Russack was once more Acting President for the meeting but was succeeded by Eileen Eckblom (Mayor of Whyalla) who was elected at this Annual General Meeting. The Guild seminar was on Abyssinians and Somalis, and five International Champion titles were granted. Mrs Oliver (International Liaison Officer since 1973) was succeeded in that position by Julian Schuller. (Mrs Oliver was in Europe at the time, and had become Vice-President of FIFe by this stage). The Best Entire Cat was Ch Janaldo Jean Pier (blue-eyed white Persian) and the Best Entire Kitten was Absin Avara (tawny Abyssinian). The Best Desexed Exhibit was Chardonnay Lady Toccara (seal-point Birman).

1986

The National Show moved back to Adelaide. The assessment of Russian Whites (with view to recognition) took place over the weekend, and there were more than two dozen available for inspection. Rex breeds were the seminar topic, and visiting judge, Will Thompson, gave a more general talk (with slides) on CFA cats. The big winner at this show was Byron Arabesque, a blue British Shorthair.

The Hon. Lance Barnard A.O. took over the Presidency, having been assured that all that would be required of him was his presence at ACF National weekends, apart from keeping in touch with the Secretary. How wrong that was to prove to be!

Later in 1986, the FIFe sent a communication to ACF, outlining its intent to take disciplinary action against its Australian affiliate. This was on the basis that ACF had breached various FIFe protocols (many of them petty in the extreme, such as publishing genetic articles by a non-FIFe, Dutch breeder-geneticist). The complaints were initiated by Mrs Oliver. It counted for little that at the time of ACF affiliation there was written

acknowledgement from the then General Secretary that Australia would not be expected to adapt all its rules to European conditions. The Executive made a valiant attempt (in three languages) to defend the ACF position, but this was in vain. It was later revealed that not all the FIFe board nor disciplinary commission were completely informed on this matter and many were as much in the dark as we were. The “sentence” was commuted to suspension (on the suggestion of Alva Uddin, later to become FIFe President) at the 1987 General Assembly. Australian representatives present were frustrated in their attempts to put our case, and Mrs Thomas (who had not been allowed to sit as ACF delegate to the 1986 FIFe General Assembly, despite the fact that she was present) was most despondent in her report to the 1987 ACF AGM.

1987

On a brighter note, Hobart hosted for the second time in 1987. Judith Russack handed over the secretariat to Lorna Thomas of Western Australia, and another “first” was scored when at the Guild Annual General Meeting it was suggested that open judging (in front of the exhibitors) should be compulsory. Judges were to decide whether they spoke to exhibitors or not. English judge, Joy Foster, joined a panel of our own judges at the show, and, for the first time, an Exotic Shorthair was Best in Show; Comyn Hetty Hotstuff won Best Longhair Kitten. Best Cat in Show was DGC Ellardee Pink Puma (cream shaded cameo Persian); Best Kitten was Sunglo Silhouette (black Oriental); and Best Neuter was DGC Wywory Monty Carlo (cameo Persian).

1988

The ACF moved from the Deep South in 1987, to the Top End in 1988 and Darwin was the scene for the Bicentennial National Show. All Show personnel (including judges and stewards) were arrayed in their best “colonial” garb in honour of the occasion and the guest judge was Alison Ashford from the United Kingdom. The Supreme Exhibit was Katya Count Sviatoslav (Russian blue); Best Kitten in show was Comyn Gooditwoshoes (black Exotic Shorthair); and Best Desexed Exhibit was Cleveland Rajahmah (blue Oriental).

Various changes to policy were implemented. Supplementary Register (SR) cats were declared eligible for competition against full register (so long as a certificate was endorsed showing the cat as SR); Exotic Shorthairs were recognised in all Persian colours; longhairs from Exotic breeding were allowed to be registered as longhair, so long as registration indicated full background; Exotics were to be judged by All-breeds or Longhair judges only. From this flowed the first suggestion to type-group, as is now common practice all over Australia.

At this meeting, delegates determined to pursue an association with FIFe, rather than to pursue a course of defending ACF affiliation. (As a result, the executive later opted to resign from FIFe, rather than suffer the ignominy of suspension. As its President had recently died and Mrs Oliver was acting President of FIFe, it seemed futile to hope for a change of heart.) Liaison with CCCA was endorsed by the meeting, in order to gain a truly-unified cat fancy in Australia. Two observers were to attend the next CCCA meeting.

1989

The Gold Coast proved a popular venue for the 1989 ACF weekend. Kim Everett (CFA) was present on the panel, as was Bambi Edwards (CCCA judge, New South Wales). Both addressed the Guild seminar, which covered topics ranging from Siamese head type through to “Influencing standards” (Jane Horstman). The show was the first open-style National, and the “talk show” format was off to a roaring start. The Best Group 1 Cat in Show and Supreme Exhibit was Tuam Manhattan (black Persian), while Reserve was a brown spotted British Shorthair, SDGC Caerlon Domino (also Best Shorthair Cat). The Best Shorthair Kitten was Kismayu Sherada (tawny Abyssinian) and the future superstar, Maclae Gold Coast King, made his debut as Best Siamese/Oriental kitten. Among decisions at the AGM was the facility for cadet judges undertaking an interstate assignment (as required by the ACF training scheme) to have financial assistance; and Scottish Folds were accepted, as were “new” Birman colours (red/tortie series). Russian whites and blacks were given full recognition, as were smoke-point Siamese and smoke Orientals, along with golden and colourpoint British.

There was a successful motion that more than one affiliate per state would be allowed, and that ACF–CCCA should formulate a common policy on acceptance of new affiliates. It was agreed that, from 24 July 1989, ACF would accept only registrations from its own, CCCA or overseas bodies, and that there be on-going dialogue between ACF and CCCA, with unity the aim. Julian Schuller took over as secretary of ACF, and Lesley Morgan replaced her as International Liaison Officer (ILO).

1990

The ACF returned to Perth in 1990. Constitutional “tidy-up” dominated the Annual General Meeting, and the Judges Guild was endorsed as a recommendatory body to the ACF. A joint policy on recognition of new breeds was initiated; pewter Persians and tabby-point Birmans were accepted; and tight guidelines for allowable outcross in Scottish Folds were established. Qualifying for ACF National titles was clarified. Three challenges (or Awards of Merit) must be obtained at three National shows, with at least 20 months between the first and the last show. Alternatively, two certificates must be obtained at two National show plus three others issued by international or overseas judges (still with a 20-month minimum period). Ragdolls were given provisional recognition without challenge. Various show rules were discussed, and it was decided that, when panel judging was used at an ACF show to decide the Supreme Exhibit, it should be by secret ballot, not conferring. Supreme

Entire Cat this year was Ch Hitaga Wild Imp (tawny Abyssinian); Supreme Kitten was Itoka Bow Bells (blue British Shorthair); and Supreme Desexed Exhibit was Alborah Adriana (black Oriental).

1991

It was back to Adelaide this year. Janet Kneebone from New Zealand was the visiting judge, and the superstar was Supreme Exhibit, RGC Solaris D'Artagnon (blue Persian). Reserve Exhibit was awarded to a Cornish Rex, Rimfire Rex Qattara. The Guild seminar featured red cats (all breeds). At the Annual General Meeting, it became compulsory for breed names and colours to be written, rather than using breed numbers (which varied across Australian controls). Silver tabby-points were accepted and it was decided to reprint the standard book. There was spirited discussion on the placement of Persian noses; "or intermingled" was added to tortoiseshell colour descriptions; and Ragdolls (in the four colours and three patterns) were given full recognition. Spotted Mists were given provisional recognition, and judges were to be trained in the three Group categories. Cheryle Ross (CCCA observer and speaker) addressed the meeting on her visions for unity and a combined ACF-CCCA show.

1992

DCC hosted the 1992 show in Melbourne. Pat Hogan (New Zealand) was present on the judging panel, and for the first time, the Guild seminar attracted a number of judges from non-ACF groups, some of whom were delighted to join as associate members. Topics were generally about "new" breeds — Ocicats, Tonkinese and Maine Coons (the first in the country were presented to the seminar). Initiatives of the ACF Annual General Meeting included the listing of prefixes on the Royal Agricultural Society of New South Wales computer to avoid duplication by non-ACF bodies, as well as substantial changes to show rules. The Supreme Exhibit this year was Ranlauren Jacaranda (blue Oriental) and the Reserve was Gemara Tabu (brown tabby Exotic Shorthair).

1993

It was Just a "hop" across Bass Strait for 1993 when Launceston was "home" to the National. Alva Uddin (Sweden and President of FIFe) , Tom Herbst (USA) and Lotte Borch (Denmark) each judged a full group, at the show which first utilised the method now known as "Australian open-style" (i.e. cats housed in home cages in bays and the judges are the ones to move about, rather than the cats). *"The Australian open style" show is born, 1993* headlined the show and huge press coverage over the week preceding the show ensured a huge press of public all day. Of the almost 400 cats present, not one was Unable to be Handled (UTH), despite the bustle. This proved the efficacy of a "cat-friendly" judging system. British Shorthairs ruled the day in top awards and this was fitting as Tasmania was the home of the first imports into Australia. The Supreme Exhibit was a sentimental favourite, Redwyton Minehaha (blue British Shorthair spay, daughter of the 1984 National winner and great-grand-daughter of the 1978 winner). The Best Cat was GC Leminlain Penny Pixie (brown spotted British Shorthair and also a daughter of the 1984 winner). A tortie smoke Persian, Martes All Mixed Up, was Best Kitten. Dr Harry Cooper (Tasmanian resident and breeder-exhibitor) addressed the Guild seminar, as did Alva Uddin (on Norwegian Forests) and Lotte Borch on Scandinavian- versus "UK"-style Russians. Tom Herbst spoke on US breeds, such as American Wirehairs.

At the Annual General Meeting, the ACF National title requirement was changed to a minimum of 21 months; fawn and cinnamon were recognised in Group 2; tortie and black were allowed in Turkish Vans; and Spotted Mists were given full recognition.

As Alva Uddin was present, she was able to speak on the accord which had been mooted at the recent FIFe General Assembly; this was based on mutual recognition of judges, registrations and prefixes and agreement to judge by the others' standards when "guest-judging". FIFe philosophy had changed dramatically under her presidency, and "open doors" (world cooperation) was the theme. The meeting endorsed the International Liaison Officer's motion of an accord between ACF and FIFe. It was also suggested that a similar accord be sought with the New Zealand Cat Fancy. Mr Richings (CCCA Secretary) was present, and suggested that there be three-way discussions at the next CCCA meeting. He also said that the newly formed group in Western Australia (Cat Owners Association of Western Australia, [COAWA]) had not applied to join CCCA.

This was the meeting at which anti-cat legislation reared its ugly head and it was felt that we should, as a national body, confront such issues as a united voice. Thus, the Education and Management Committee evolved. The proposed joint ACF-CCCA show (to be held in Adelaide) was once again raised.

1994

As has become tradition, the “bring your thermals” National was followed by a tropical National, in Darwin. Tom Herbst returned from the USA, and the Guild seminar covered Ragdolls, judging British Shorthairs, and cosmetic surgery. At the show, the Supreme Exhibit was a black silver spotted Oriental kitten, Broadacres Matahari and the Reserve Exhibit was SRGPNGC Comyn Razzle Dazzle (black Exotic Shorthair). At the Annual General Meeting, the International Liaison Officer reported that the accord with FIFe was in place and ACF was, thus, officially recognised as an entity in its own right by FIFe. Tom Herbst raised the possibility of a similar agreement with his body, the American Cat Fanciers Association (ACFA). The idea of once again producing an ACF Yearbook was accepted. The Cymric breed was accepted so long as exhibits were not derived from colourpoints or carriers, and the ACF Award of Excellence (AoE) was instituted.

1995

The ACF returned to the Gold Coast this year. The International Liaison Officer sent apologies as she was representing ACF at the first World Congress of Cat Organisations meeting in Holland. (FIFe, World Cat Federation [WCF], CFA and ACF.) To be invited to this meeting was significant recognition for ACF. Wain Harding of the USA was the guest judge. The top cats across two rings at the 1995 National came from several breeds. In Group 1 they included Best Cat, GC Mingmist Midnite Liasn/GC Scotsglen Deja Vu; Best Kitten, Willangi Zelda/ Tuam Heart ‘n’ Soul; and Best Neuter, GDGC Tuam Corvette/GDGC Tuam Turning Point. In Group 2, Best Cat was DGC Korindah Wisteria (both rings); Best Kitten was Korindah Alwaysza Classic (both rings); and Best Neuter was GDGC Korindah Classic Creole/GC Maclae Gold Coast Angel. Across Group 3, the Best Cat was PDGC Ianthe Ruggerio/Ch Ishmar Lit’l Mishka; Best Kitten was Ke Li Shelley/Aurora Ta Keo Tomahawk; and Best Neuter was Fioric Miss Muppet/GC Alazar Bold Legend.

Annual General Meeting issues included refining the Award of Excellence (AOE); acceptance of Ocicats with the CFA standard; and allowing “with white” Ragdolls to have “a spot you can sit on” (i.e. one spot on hock). The Education and Management report detailed the progress for the year and the “breakaway” association in Tasmania (seeking CCCA affiliation) was discussed, with the ACF giving full support to its long-term Tasmanian affiliate, Cat Association of Tasmania Inc (CAT). It was decided that the initiative for further liaison with CCCA might best come from that body.

1996

We move to the 24th year since a unified, national body was formally mooted. In 1996, in Adelaide, the Supreme Panel selected Skylandia Song ‘n’ Danceman (red and white Persian) as Supreme Exhibit with GDGPN Delmont Stylish Moonlight (orange-eyed, white Persian neuter) as Reserve. The visiting judges were Joyce Irwin (USA), Penny Bydlinski (United Kingdom), and Waltraud Sattler (Germany). At the Guild seminar, Penny Bydlinski (a Burmilla breeder-judge) spoke on this emerging breed and Waltraud Sattler addressed members on her “other” breed, Ocicats. Barbara Fougere from Whiskas addressed members on health and breeding issues.

The show manager, Hilary Moore (Vice-President of ACF and President of the Guild,) had an exhausting weekend, wearing various hats. At the Annual General Meeting, time was given to the necessity to involve the “grassroots” members and, given the horrific fire which had destroyed South Australian Ocicat breeders, Joe and Edna Frittum’s, home recently, the ACF contributed to the appeal initiated by Governing Council of the Cat Fancy of South Australia.

Again, the idea of a national register was discussed; Bengals were given provisional recognition, with ACF judges to submit reports on temperament to the Secretary for review in 1997; and it was agreed to keep a register of all kittens other than self -blue deriving from Korat matings. The style of ballot on to be used on ACF Supreme Panels was changed to allow judges to display their vote to the audience. The ACF judge training scheme was scheduled for an update; sub-committees of the ACF were granted (nonvoting) delegation to the ACF committee; and consideration was given to the nature of commemoration of the silver anniversary.

1997

The 1997 (25th anniversary) ACF Yearbook contained a potted history of the organisation spanning the period from its formation in 1972 to the (then) present day and the following sections record the activities of the subsequent decade.

Twenty-five years of ACF and appropriately (as ACF was “born” via Western Australia’s vision) Perth put on a spectacular show at the Fremantle International Terminal with “Silver Anniversary” as the theme. The guest international judges were Sandra Perry and Chris McNeil from New Zealand. Waratah State Cat Alliance was admitted as a member body of the ACF. The year also saw the acceptance of many new breeds and colours — Japanese Bobtail, Scottish Fold Longhair, Singapura and Tonkinese (to be shown in Mink pattern only). The Scottish Shorthair (“pert” or straight-eared) was given provisional recognition as were the Burmilla and Bombay. New colours accepted were the Cinnamon and Apricot in Group 2, shaded/tipped Orientals, smoke bicolour Persian, tortie smoke and white Persians, and shaded/tipped bicolour/tortie and white Persians.

Having received nothing but excellent reports on Bengal temperament, ACF was pleased to give the Bengal full recognition.

This year also saw the retirement of long-standing Honorary Secretary, Julian Schuller (Northern Territory) and the appointment of the present Secretary, Nell Evans (South Australia). It also saw the resignation of Haidee Lowe (Northern Territory) as Treasurer and she was replaced by Margaret Bush (Western Australia). Lesley Morgan Blythe retired as Secretary of the Judges Guild, to be replaced by Sandi Gemmell (a position that Sandi from the Northern Territory still holds). Helen Farmer (Tasmania) remained in her position as President of the Judges Guild.

The show itself produced a first. The Supreme Exhibit this year (Skylandia Make My Day, a cream bicolour Persian) was none other than the litter brother of the 1996 Supreme winner, Skylandia Song N Danceman (a red bicolour Persian). The Reserve Supreme Exhibit was a tawny Abyssinian, BGC Alazar Good Onya, and third was a Russian Blue, Ch. Niedra Lizette.

Nobody could have foretold the tumultuous 12 months that would follow this meeting when, within a couple of months, ACF would be without its President and Vice-President. In August, the death of our esteemed President of 11 years, The Hon. Lance Barnard AO, sent shockwaves through ACF. This was closely followed by the resignation of the Vice-President, Paul Doody (Western Australia). As a result, ACF appointed Lesley Morgan Blythe (Tasmania) as Acting President and Keryn Rivett (Victoria) as Acting Vice-President. Together with the new Secretary and Treasurer, ACF was poised to head into a new era.

1998

The National Show went to Melbourne this year with the Cat Association of Victoria as host. Lesley Morgan Blythe stepped down as Acting President to resume her duties as the International Liaison Officer and the new President, Dr Jan Hills from the Northern Territory, succeeded her in the chair. No other committee positions changed. One of the major events of the Annual General Meeting was the blanket acceptance of a new constitution (updates from previous years not having been recorded in accordance with Western Australia's Fair Trading requirements) which reflected all the changes made over the past six years.

The guest international judges were Louis Coste (France), Flavia Capra (Italy), and Stephe Bruin (Holland). The big winner at the National was Supreme Exhibit, Quanmarra Guylian (chocolate silver spotted Oriental kitten from Queensland) and Reserve was a lilac tortie Burmese baby, Summerlea Silken Shadows (New South Wales). This year saw some more "tidying-up" of the standards and the International Liaison Officer reported that the March meeting of Presidents of World Cat Organisations (FIFe, CFA, WCF, ACF and TICA) had formally adopted a name for this forum — the World Cat Congress (WCC). The marbled pattern was recognised in Australian Mists.

Later on in the year the Cat Fancy was saddened to hear of the death of Nita Russack, who served the cat fancy for over 40 years as both breeder ("King's Mead") and judge.

1999

Tasmania hosted the 1999 National celebrations, with the show (and functions) held at Wrest Point Hotel Casino. A popular and distinguished start to the weekend was the Friday night reception at Government House for judges, delegates and organisers.

At the Annual General Meeting, the Queensland Independent Cat Council (QICC) Inc. was unanimously admitted as a member body (subject to written ratification by the affiliates) and John Blythe (Tasmania) was elected President of ACF. Kathie Scallan (Queensland Feline Association) became Vice-President.

The Burmilla was given full recognition using the FIFe standard and it was decided that, once significant alteration to a breed's standard was made, there could be no more change for three years. (Note: This was amended in 2004 to allow change if such change reflected possible resolution of a health issue.) Some variations to the Korat standard were allowed and the Sphynx was accepted with body of origin standard. The Norwegian Forest Cat standard was updated to reflect the decisions taken by FIFe (body of origin) at its Annual General Meeting only three weeks prior.

The show attracted 1.5 per cent of the State's population, in part because of the publicity afforded by the impending acceptance of the Sphynx breed, the first representative of which in the country was present for inspection. The overseas judges at the show were Aline and Phillippe Noel (France) and Wayne Trevathan (USA) and the panel finally chose as Supreme Exhibit Rama Road to Mandalay (black Oriental). An absolute crowd-thriller was the vote by panel for Best Group 4 Exhibit, "Murphy", a Hobart Cat Centre resident who, with five other homeless cats, attended with a view to adoption. By 11 a.m. he had been adopted by Devon and Somali exhibitors, Vicki and Mick Essam. By 3 p.m. he was top domestic in the country!

Also during the year, a tour of FIFe shows saw Helen Farmer, Geoffrey Dumigan and Margaret Saal officiating in Denmark, Finland, the United Kingdom, and Austria. Sadly, Helen Ferres, a South Australian judge and "Chiton" Siamese breeder died during the year.

On 1 January 1999, the ACF's Distinguished Merit (DM) Award was instituted, and the first four DM titles were issued thereafter. These went to GC Jezreel Jackpot (Imp. UK) and GC Redwyton Wetheby James, both blue British Shorthair males owned by E.T.H. and D.J. Jowett of Tasmania. The other winners were SR GC Comyn Jellyroll (black Exotic) and Comyn Lola Montez (blue Exotic) owned and bred by Lesley Morgan Blythe (Tasmania.)

2000

Waratah State Cat Association was host to the National, held for the first time in New South Wales at Penrith. A very different show format meant a spread of the weekend's events. The award (over six rings) of "Highest Scoring Exhibit" went to Debbie Moreno's black spotted tabby Persian, Maskad Zulu (New South Wales).

The Guild meeting was frantic and, because of the show timetable, split into two sessions. Recognition was considered (and approved) for golden in Orientals and O-gene Ragdolls and caramel in Australian Mists. A wider range of colours and pattern was approved for Turkish Vans, the standard of which also underwent change. It was agreed that the "gold" and "peach" Australian Mists would be acknowledged as their genetic colours, i.e. cinnamon and fawn. The Persian-Exotic standard had an addition that the nose leather would now be "broad, with open nostril apertures".

At the Annual General Meeting, the meeting endorsed the exclusion from the ACF panel of any judge found guilty in a court of law of an act injurious or prejudicial to the aims and objectives or reputation of the cat fancy. The "milestones" form was introduced for any judges whose names are to be submitted for inclusion on the ACF National Panel of Judges.

2001

The National Weekend was very successfully hosted by the Queensland Feline Association in Brisbane. There was no Supreme Exhibit, as QFA prefers to award no further than Best of Group awards. The overseas judges were Rachel Anger and Gary Veach (USA) and Johan Lamprecht from South Africa. The weekend was typically laid-back, Queensland style, with emphasis for many on the social component! Poignantly, recently retired ACF Executive member for the Cat Association of the Northern Territory, Diane Page, was present in her wheelchair for every event, flanked by husband, Ross and her children and grandchildren. Sadly, her untimely death occurred not very long after.

The Guild recommended recognition of the Selkirk Rex (longhair and shorthair), tortie tabby-point in Birman and the marbled pattern in tabby Orientals, as well as a revision of the caramel and apricot point Siamese standards. At the Annual General Meeting, Geoffrey Dumigan was elected Vice-President of ACF.

The World Cat Congress was hosted in New South Wales (outside Europe for the first time) with the show run by the Waratah State Cat Association at Homebush in March and, at the World Cat Congress, as a result of ACF's nomination (seconded by the Cat Fanciers Association, United States) the New Zealand Cat Fancy became an associate member of WCC.

Br Gt GC Kokadjo Moonshadow (chocolate tabby point Siamese female owned by Julian Schuller and bred by L. Oliver) was granted the esteemed DM title.

2002

On 22 May 2002, a meeting was held between representatives of ACF and the Cat Coordinating Council of Australia (CCCA) Inc. and this boded well for closer liaison. This was attended (for ACF) by the President, the Secretary, and the International Liaison Officer. One outcome of the meeting was that CCCA opened its CCCA titles to ACF-registered cats in order to become consistent with established ACF practice.

Adelaide was the venue for both show and the Annual General Meeting, hosted by the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy of South Australia at Morphettville Racecourse. A Supreme Exhibit was awarded in each of the three rings and the winners were GC Kaloofa Blue Velvet, Pompey Puttin' on the Ritz (both blue British Shorthairs) and the stylish black Oriental kitten, Naengnoi Orient Express. The visiting judges were Kitty Angell (USA), Phillippe Noel (France), Jan van Rooyen (South Africa), and Yuki Hattori (Japan).

Michael Figwer (South Australia) was elected President and Keryn Rivett became Secretary. Barbara La Rocca (Queensland) became the new Vice-President. Recognition was granted to the Oriental bicour; the Javanese was re-named "Oriental Longhair"; and the Tonkinese breed was accepted in O-gene. Selkirk Rex cats were allowed outcrossing until 2016 and some important clarification was made to the Recommended Practices on Breeding, i.e. neither rumpy Manx nor Scottish Fold may be mated like to like.

The inaugural ACF Distinguished Service Award was presented to Lesley Morgan Blythe for her efforts in many different ACF roles over more than two decades.

2003

Off we went to the tropics, to Darwin! This was a most welcome change for the many southerners who converged. In this year recognition was given to Siberians; apricot and caramel were recognised as well as silver tabby-point in Birman and Ragdolls; caramel and apricot were accepted in Burmillas; and the ticked tabby pattern included in Persian–Exotic, British Shorthair, Scottish Fold and Shorthair, and Rex. John Blythe was re-elected President and Allan Raymond became International Liaison Officer.

Again, the show format was different, so results for Best of Group were not calculated in the standard manner. The visiting judges were Olga Abramova (Russia–Israel) and Ken Lawrence (United States of America). The virtue of having an official Reserve judge was unfortunately made manifest when Olga was badly bitten and Ian Rivett stepped into the breach.

Lilac Burmese female, Kokhan Arielle Armani earned a Distinguished Merit award on the basis of two of her offspring winning Best Group 3 Kitten (Rings 3 and 4). The sheer quality of the Northern Territory Burmese was something of an eye-opener to many who had travelled from other States. For the first time, a Japanese Bobtail won a Best in Show at a National — Hajime Ji Yu (owned by Harry Bush, Western Australia). The Supreme Exhibit was a black Persian neuter from Queensland, ACF AoE Katzrus Kuta Kinda.

Early in the year, a Turkish Van female, Ch. Vanstar Nephra of Delisman (bred by Julie Walker and owned by Berenice Harris), was accorded DM status.

2004

Westward, ho! ACF went back to Perth with the Feline Control Council of Western Australia as host this year. A bevy of overseas female judges graced the show. Aline Noel (now living in Canada), Nurit Pahl (Austria–Israel), Clare Coutinho (South Africa) and Stephe Bruin (Netherlands) combined with ACF judges to determine the winners. Ultimately, the Supreme Exhibit was Keeza Barnicle Bill (lilac Burmese) owned by Janine and Harry Cooper (Tasmania). Interestingly, he was a son of Kokhan Audacious Audin, the highest scoring Group 3 Kitten in Ring 3 the previous year.

Julian Schuller (Northern Territory) was elected President and Nell Evans (South Australia) returned to the Secretarial role. The new Vice-President was Keryn Rivett. The incoming President of the Judges Guild was Margo't Maddicks, replacing Helen Farmer whose long record of stewardship of the Judges Guild was so admired by its members. Lesley Morgan Blythe was much relieved at the prospect of being replaced as Editor of the "ACF Year Book 2005" by Jane van Dyk, family circumstances at the time prohibiting the necessary commitment on the previous Editor's part.

The Distinguished Service Award is not given lightly but this year it was presented, for the second time, to Margaret Bush (Western Australia) for her sterling record on ACF's behalf.

After much discussion at the Annual General Meeting, the suggestions for change to the constitution were abandoned and it was decided to revert to the Western Australian Fair Trading Model Rules (with slight variations). The formatting of the ACF By-laws document was still a work in progress. The meeting decided that, until ACF's constitutional overhaul was completed, it was inappropriate to meet with CCCA as planned. CCCA officer-bearers had taken the initiative to moot a new, single, national body but, without the constitution refined, ACF was not in a position to debate this prospect.

A further seven levels were added to the ACF Award of Excellence (AoE) scheme; there was a modification to the Ragdoll profile description; and the Foreign White Longhair was recognised. Bicolour Siamese and Balinese were recognised, as was the Burmilla Longhair. There was good news for host affiliates as it was agreed that they would retain 10 per cent of all profit made from National shows. On the health front, affiliates were to encourage Polycystic Kidney Disease (PKD) testing of Persians and derived breeds to be recorded for registration purposes.

Also during 2004, Geoffrey Dumigan and Diana Arnold participated in a judging tour which took them to the United Kingdom and the Czech Republic, making them the first Australian judges to officiate in the latter country.

2005

A debut hosting by the Queensland Independent Cat Council at Marburg (near Ipswich, Queensland) took us out to an extremely pleasant, rural setting, where all events took place at Marburg Estate, with its Victorian Heritage-listed homestead building, complete with fabulous cedar panelling and resident ghost.

A Special General Meeting was convened for Friday afternoon, to admit the Feline Control Council of Queensland (FCCQ) Inc. (whose application for affiliation was submitted in February) as a new member body with voting rights at Monday's Annual General Meeting. This was a significant Annual General Meeting. The agenda contained many proposals for change to the old (existing) constitution, as well as a proposed new "overhaul" constitution. Add to that 33 years' worth of by-laws to be slotted into the appropriate place and there was, inevitably, a long meeting.

Ultimately, the proposed new constitution was not accepted, so the amendments to the existing prevailed. There were no changes of position among the office-bearers, but Lesley Morgan Blyth was reappointed as Yearbook Editor.

However, the AGM was not all about the constitution. “Skeletal deformities” (formerly a withholding fault) was relocated to “Disqualification” in the standards book; the term “and white” was reserved for bicolours or vans of breeds where no differentiation of amount of white is made in the standard; and Rex and hairless breeds (with no points for colour) were now to be exhibited as Agouti, Agouti and White, Non-Agouti, and Non-Agouti and White. Mating of patched to pointed was accepted, so bicolour colourpoints became legitimate. Smoke points were accepted in all breeds that have both smoke and pointed patterns and it was no longer a penalty for apricot, red or cream cats to have freckles. An important set of motions which addressed problematic Persian–Exotic skull structure and Dm colours, as well as the silver series, was allowed in Persian–Exotic, British and Scottish breeds was passed. In Abyssinians, a bump on the nose became officially “undesirable” and cinnamon and fawn were accepted as Tonkinese colours. Golden (in breeds in which it is recognised) was allowed in colours other than black. The name of the Bombay as it is bred within affiliates was changed to “Australian Bombay”, in order to avoid confusion with the US-style, original breed.

Another most important issue was the unanimous agreement to the Queensland Independent Cat Council’s proposals that ACF take actions to address the south-east Asian pet trade problems that are of such concern to us all. This topic has been taken to the World Cat Congress and, in April 2007, action was taken to assist ACF and CCCA in its approaches to the Australian Government.

At the show, the major winners were Best Allbreed Cat (and Supreme Exhibit) was ACF AoE Gold CCCAGC, Sap. DGC Vonderbren Sumthing Special (blue van Persian); Best Allbreed Kitten was Creswell Tally Ho (cream Burmese); and Best Allbreed Neuter was Kachelle Sno Chivelle (Foreign White). As some had attended the World Cat Congress and New Zealand Cat Fancy National the week before, the judging line-up featured a large number of overseas judges, namely Pam DelaBar (United States), Edith-Mary Smith (Canada), Kaai Du Plessis (South Africa), Eric Reijers (Czech Republic), and Penny Bydlinski (United Kingdom).

Finally, two more DM winners emerged; Yendor Boronia (black Oriental who was bred by Margaret Sharpe and owned by J & H Slape and R Crowley) was awarded her title for the achievements of her ACF National Best-in-show-winning offspring and a grand old man (unfortunately no longer with us but whose offspring keep his name alive), Chiton Don Carlos (bred by Helen Ferres and owned by Liz and Scoot Andresen) became the first Siamese male to claim the title.

2006

In October 2005, an application for membership of ACF was received from The Feline Association of New South Wales. This achieved a majority Executive vote and was confirmed at the Annual General Meeting in June 2006.

Geelong was the host city and the Cat Association of Victoria the host body for the 2006 National weekend. This was the ultimate “bring your thermals” weekend but, while the weather was frigid, the CAV hospitality was the opposite. The social events were extremely varied and ranged from informal welcome drinks at our “home”, a holiday village where we occupied a series of self-contained cottages, to an even more informal barbecue (Harry Bush was grill chef), to one of the most memorable national show dinners where the venue was wonderful, the company was lively, and the food exquisite.

The show as always featured the crème de la crème from all States and Territories but the final winner was a local exhibit, a wonderful black Oriental owned and bred by Tracy Appleby, Watirah Naughty But Nice. There was no opportunity for the traditional photo of Supreme Exhibit in the silver Whiskas rose-bowl (put her in it and only the tips of her large ears would have shown!). The visiting judges were Louis Coste (France) and Kim Cutter (South Africa) and a most welcome visitor was the effervescent, South African judge, Lynel Du Toit, (passing through Geelong on her way home from the New Zealand Cat Fancy National the previous week).

At the 2006 Annual General Meeting, W.M. (Bill) Griffiths (a barrister from Tasmania) was elected President and Lesley Morgan Blythe returned to the role of International Liaison Officer. After the presidential election, the Vice-President (Keryn Rivett) took the chair and conducted a tight meeting.

Some of the key decisions were that, to be eligible for AoE awards, an exhibit must be placed in the Top Five at a given show; a subcommittee be appointed to review the constitution; provisional membership status of ACF became part of “Definitions” in the constitution; vitiligo (depigmentation of skin) was added to “Disqualifiers”; and mink pattern in Scottish breeds was accepted. Silver Bengals were recognised, as was the Egyptian Mau (using the CFA standard). It became optional for Groups 2 and 3 training to be combined and the meeting approved the formation of a subcommittee (each affiliate to nominate a representative) to collect and collate information dealing with welfare issues, with particular reference to the pet trade to south-east Asia.

2007

Tasmania hosted the National show again, in Hobart, and the Supreme Exhibit was, for the first time, a Norwegian Forest Cat, Ch. Snowstars Xavier. Again, there were record-breaking crowds at the show. There were no changes to the officer-bearer positions. Secretary Nell Evans was the recipient of the third ACF Distinguished Service Award. Judge training rules were amended to allow already-licensed ACF panel judges to officiate interstate as a junior judge for their new group, under the supervision of a local tutor judge. The Siberian standard was amended to bring it in line with that of FIFe. The Scottish Longhair was recognised, as was the Tonkinese in pointed and “solid” patterns.

2008

The Queensland Feline Association hosted the National weekend in Gympie, Queensland. Again, the officers of the Federation remained unchanged. The resolutions included that, to be listed on the ACF Panel of Judges, one must be normally domiciled in Australia; and that, if satisfying certain stringent conditions, (subject of by-laws) cats registered with WNCA may be registered by ACF affiliates. Provisional membership of the ACF was introduced. There were slight changes to the Turkish Van standard, clarification of “faults” in the Ragdoll standard; and changes to the head type standard for Cornish Rex. The LaPerm was recognised with The International Cat Association (TICA) standard.

2009

The AGM and show were held in Adelaide, South Australia. Again, there were no changes to the list of officer-bearers. It was decided that a review and update of the ACF Judges Training Scheme would be undertaken. A working party will investigate anomalies in the use of terminology throughout the standards. Standards for breeds with no points for colour or pattern were changed to include five points for these attributes. The smoke point and silver tabby point standards were updated (for all breeds) and extensive fine-tuning of Dilute modifier colours (caramel and apricot) was applied across the board. Cinnamon and Fawn were recognised in British Shorthairs and the standards of Abyssinian- and Burmese-derived breeds now also reflect that a bump in the nose is undesirable.

2010

The National weekend took place in Perth hosted by the Feline Control Council of Western Australia (FCCWA), with a show featuring a mix of overseas judges from FIFe, TICA and CFA, as well as “the home team”. The Supreme Exhibit in show was a chocolate tabby-point Siamese, Syrecks Sheyenne, owned and bred by Margaret Osler of Victoria. Professor Diana Davis succeeded Bill Griffiths as President and Sandi Gemmill (Acting Vice-President after the resignation of Margo’t Maddicks) was elected unopposed to that position. Dr Isobel Johnstone became President of the Judges Guild. Among decisions taken at the Annual General Meeting were that Ocicats in classic pattern were accepted without challenge status as Ocicat AOV (“Any other Variety”); “hybridisation” colours and patterns are now acceptable in Manx; and Amber was recognised in Norwegian Forest Cats. White Orientals were recognised in blue-, green- and odd-eyed forms. Ocicats were removed from the list of breeds in which a bump on the nose is undesirable.

One of the original criteria for ACF awards was removed (i.e. that the exhibit must be placed in the Top 5) and judges will now only award if, in their opinions, the cats are worthy of 95 points. It was decided that the website would undergo a complete update and be professionally redesigned.

2011

The Queensland Independent Cat Council (QICC) hosted the 2011 National weekend, with meetings taking place at Virginia Palms Hotel. Recent natural disasters (flooding and Cyclone Yasi) did not thwart QICC’s enthusiasm. Thanks to the effect of Chilean volcanic ash, it was to be a longer, long-weekend than anticipated, with many flights cancelled. Visiting judges included Carlos Lopez (TICA, Argentina) who addressed the Guild seminar on Bengals, Don Finger (ACFA, USA) whose subject was Selkirk Rex, Monica Dany (TICA, Austria), and Karen Peplar and Lynel Du Toit (South Africa). After some years, the Annual General Meeting agreed to replace the current form of the standard book with an annual, complete edition in A4 size. The meeting also voted to retain original registration numbers when cats are transferred between councils and allowed reclassification of dilute colours on DNA results. It was reaffirmed that the website would be updated and professionally redesigned.

Caramel and Apricot in three base colours were recognised in tabby and smoke (including “with white”) in the British Shorthair, Exotic, Persian and Scottish breeds, as was silver tabby-point in Persian, Exotic, and British Shorthair. There was a minor adjustment to the Maine Coon standard for coat texture and, after many years on provisional recognition, this time with a well-designed PowerPoint presentation, and with live samples present, the “Australian Bombay” achieved full championship status. Cats Victoria Incorporated (CVI) was granted full membership at the Annual General Meeting.

2012

In 1973, the ACF had its genesis with initial meeting organised in Melbourne by Clyde and Beryl Chandler of the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy of Victoria and Australia and others. The 40th ACF National Show was, therefore, held in Melbourne over the Queen's Birthday long weekend in June. This show was unique in the annals of the ACF as it was organised by a committee of people based around Australia. The Show Coordinator was Lesley Morgan in the deep south of the continent, Hobart, Tasmania and her hard-working assistant show manager Matthew Wood from South Australia took responsibility for ferrying cages to and from Melbourne among his other duties. Joint Show Secretary–Treasurer was Robbie Walker from Queensland's Gold Coast. The Northern Territory played no small part in this as Scoot Andresen in Alice Springs was the Chief Steward while in Western Australia Carole Galli and Pamela Lanigan handled sponsorship and the web site. The Supreme Exhibit was a Russian Blue from Western Australia, Kimara Zaris Evelina, owned and bred by L. Nikiforos

In 2012, the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy of Victoria and Australia (GCCFV) was welcomed back to the Annual General Meeting as an ACF member body after 39 years. GCCFV is the oldest cat body in Australia (founded in 1926) and in 1972 and 1973 participated in the first Australian National Cat Federation (ANCF) meetings.

The meeting approved amendments to facilitate more frequent meetings of the Federation and also passed amendments to some Show Rules. The adoption of a competency-based Judges Training Scheme was approved. The Peterbald, American Shorthair, American Curl and Pixiebob were accepted for recognition. Committees were convened to finalise standards for the Bombay and Peterbald. The Bengal Standard was amended to bring it into line with the current TICA (country of origin) standard. Bernadette Roberts became co-editor the ACF Yearbook with Lesley Morgan and will continue in that role in 2013. Julian Schuller was elected to the position of International Liaison Officer.

2014

The ACF's 2014/15 year began with the National hosted in Sydney by ACF itself, with on the ground assistance from Cats NSW personnel. As in 2012 (Melbourne), 'fly-in' personnel played a large part in running the event with Cats NSW's Brad Curtis as Show Manager. The show was very successful and I was able to organize follow-up articles with two different forms of media – one internet-based and the other, the new pet magazine "Australian Dogs and Pets". The show was sponsored by Purina and OzPet, for which we thank those companies.

An interesting mix of overseas judges (most, first-timers to Australia) and a bevy of ACF's own comprised an interesting judging panel. Chief steward Scoot Andresen (reprising his 2012 role from the Melbourne National) ran his department very efficiently and a selection of 'gun' stewards ensured that Supreme panel judging ran smoothly and finished 3 minutes ahead of schedule. Eventually, the Supreme award was taken out by Ambritt Hurricane Harry, a British blue male who had also taken out Supreme Grp 3 Exhibit the previous year, in Adelaide.

As every year, the weekend afforded many social opportunities as friends from all over the country met up. It also offered those involved with the various meetings the usual endurance trial!

Unfortunately, our President, Prof Diana Davis, could not re-stand because of pressure of professional obligations. We thank her for her dedication to the role, which she fulfilled since 2010. Prof Eleanor Ramsay was elected in her stead (See 'New Faces' pages). There were no other changes to the line-up of officers of ACF.

New (provisional) affiliate Cats NSW sat for the first time at the AGM and GM and though it had no voting rights, it participated in all debate and indeed, had a motion on the agenda. (The progression from provisional to full membership of ACF is guided by the constitution.) It is most regrettable that as a provisional member, the body is not recognized by CCCA and that its judges (all but one, trained by CCCA) are no longer recognized, either. The same essentially applies to its registrations, though its registrar formerly held that role with a CCCA member body. I know that this is a source of bewilderment to many Australian exhibitors and breeders, so I mention it here. We are informed that the newest criterion for acceptance of our provisional bodies and their judges is that such bodies must have full voting rights with ACF. As there are two motions for the 2015 AGM to accept Cats NSW, it seems assured of gaining full membership status, and its judges and registrations thus being recognized by CCCA.

At the General Meeting (GM) various motions affecting standards, recognition of breeds and registrations were dealt with. As a result of some NZ and ANCATS Burmese (and Tonkinese thus derived) having other breeds in the background and their recognition of Cinnamon and Fawn, there was a majority vote for there to be an 8-generation pedigree required for registration for cats from those sources. This step was taken primarily to keep our Burmese eligible for export and to ensure no 'interesting surprises' emerge in the breed in the future.

A motion from WA that we recognize the Aphrodite Giant (from Cyprus) was based on its recognition by WCF and the sole representative of the breed in this country was present for inspection. It gained full recognition on a 7/2 vote. There were slight amendments to the Maine Coon, Norwegian Forest and Burmese standards, while the Bi-colour Ragdoll is now allowed (as per Birman) a mix of colour and pink on the paw pads (6/3).

As it's a natural phenomenon when dealing with tipped and shaded silver cats, the Burmilla breed had golden added to its palette. There was much discussion revolving around the Manx and Cymric breeds and a working party is to report to the 2015 GM with its findings, based on GCCF practice. On-going work on breeding by-laws and refinement of the Judge Training by-law will also be reviewed in Perth, where the 2015 National weekend is to be held.

After several years of communication with FIFe, it seems the ACF adaptation of the EMS code (a Sandi Gemmell and ILO project) to cover ACF-specific colours and breeds has been given the official thumbs up. We were thanked at the WCC for our on-going communications with FIFe on this. EMS ("Easy Mind System" created by a friend in Norway, Eva Minde) is becoming a universal code, 'spoken' by many breeders all over the world and being adopted outside FIFe on an increasing basis. It always seemed sensible for usage to be uniform rather than there being differing interpretations and consequent confusion, which would defeat the whole purpose. How much simpler to note on a pedigree "OSH os 09 25" rather than "Oriental Shorthair cinnamon silver ticked tabby bi-colour"! It's interesting that the originator of breed coding, GCCF (Governing Council of the Cat Fancy, UK), is switching to EMS!

With the 'anti cat' sentiment which so sadly abounds in our country, we need all the good PR we can get. Cats in general but pedigreed ones in particular are featured in a new series of postage stamps produced by Australia Post, just released. (I was sworn to secrecy until the series was a fait accompli.) The trail of emails backwards and forwards with its Philatelic Content Researcher as photos were acquired and cross-checked was extremely lengthy, but we now have a product. Cats NSW Secretary Terry Goulden supplied the photo of the Australian Mist featured; surely the centerpiece of the collection.

During the year, there have been a number of new judges added to the ACF panel – some brand new, others transferring from elsewhere; in one case, after some 40 years' service with one body. We welcome one and all. At the end of 2014, COAWA (Cat Owners' Association of WA), applied to ACF for membership. This body has been fully functional under CCCA auspices since 1992, but as with GCCFV before it, (the oldest body in the country) the requirement for provisional membership still applies to bodies transferring to ACF. A management agreement is in place and mentors appointed by the ACF Exec will help with the transition from one national governing body to the other. Several more judges are joining the ACF panel, their previous CCCA panel status being respected by ACF. We wish COAWA a long and mutually productive relationship under the ACF umbrella.

2015

The new year began in Perth, where CatsWA staged a successful eight ring show held over two days. For the first time since 1987, a GCCF judge (John Hansson) officiated at the ACF National, along with Lone Lund and Martti Peltonen (FIFe, Denmark and Sweden respectively) and a bevy of TICA ladies from the USA: Mary Lou Anderson, Adriana Kajon and Vickie Shields. Bronwyn Main and Chris Lowe represented NZCF while judges from various ACF affiliates also took to the floor. Eventually, Supreme Exhibit was won by serial Supreme winner Ambritt Hurricane Harry.

That evening at the dinner, there were two presentations of note: The retirement of Nell Evans after many years dedicated service as Secretary and the ACF's most prestigious 'gong', the Distinguished Service Award, which went to Sandi Gemmell. This award has only been given four times and all four recipients were present on this occasion.

Because the show occupied two days, the weekend was a particularly long one. The Judges Guild AGM and seminar was staged on Monday and in the absence of the President, the meeting elected Scoot Andresen to chair the meeting, which he did extremely decisively, with scrupulous impartiality.

The following day the ACF's own AGM and GM were held. Second term President, Professor Eleanor Ramsay, impressed all with her clarity and humanity and steered the meeting through a heavy agenda. Incoming Secretary, Carole Galli (WA), no doubt emerged from the meeting a little overwhelmed, but she has certainly picked up the baton and run! The meeting accorded provisional membership to Western Australian body, COAWA.

Among many other items, the Neva Masquerade was recognised, cow-hocking was declared a withhold fault in all breeds, as were reduced nose leather size and/or restricted or pinched nasal aperture and audible, difficult breathing or mouth breathing. The Russian standard was amended to the liking of the breeders and the meeting and the three-year moratorium on standard changes was removed.

We were not to know it at the time, but Perth was the last many of us were to see of stalwart John Evans, Nell Evans' husband and helpmate (and for one term, a member of the ACF Executive), whom so many of us regarded with such affection. His death in November was pretty much inevitable, but still came as a shock. Since 1998, John had been a fixture at National weekends, always at the ready to help the local crew with set up or any odd jobs that might relieve the burden on show management. This year's National weekend just won't be the same without him.

It was entirely fitting that in November 2015, CCCA finally voted to recognise the judges of Cats NSW, all of whom had been CCCA trained. In fact, the last year has seen an unprecedented number of established judges transferring to ACF as individuals (rather than en bloc, as when GCCFV, FCCQ and COAWA joined as member bodies) as well as a smattering of new, ACF-trained judges joining the panel. We also have a former ANCATS AB judge (originally CCCA panel) undergoing an assessment/mentoring programme with Cats NSW. So, it's been a year of expansion.

2016

QFA hosted the National in Brisbane, judges representing CFA, TICA, NZCF and ACF officiated over two days and six rings. The Lance Barnard AO award for Supreme Exhibit was won by CH Kimara Blu Shimma Kinda Special, a Russian owned and exhibited by Alan & Janis Christison and bred by the inimitable Lucy Nikiforos. OzPet the odour free litter continued their support and we welcomed Royal Canin for the first time.

Topics for the seminar held on Monday included presentations by Dr Ian Williams BVSc, Royal Canin on Nutrition for Queens & Kittens, Lorraine Shelton, Link between Colour and Temperament was enjoyed by all present, Karpati, a new pattern that has emerged in domestic cats in the Carpathian Mountains and is similar in appearance to the Lykoi the "werewolf cat". Jamie Christian presented the Lykoi a new breed which was elevated to Championship status with TICA from 1 May 2017. Heather Roberts, a TICA judge introduced the Singapura and Brian Pearson, CFA presented the Turkish Angora which was given recognition at the 2016 General meeting the following day.

The ACF Cat Legislation Committee was formed with representatives from each state, the purpose of the committee is to increase knowledge of cat legislation in each state and work towards uniformity of cat legislation nationally for the benefit of cats and responsible cat breeding and cat ownership. Joy Verrinder representing the Animal Welfare League and convener of the G2Z project was appointed as an advisor to the committee. The meeting agreed to recognise CATZ Inc. thereby respecting NZCF's recognition.

A new award for Companion cats was agreed, to be known as the ACF Companion Award of Honour. Best in Show companion cats over nine months of age where there is a minimum of five companions present are eligible for the award.

Sandi Gemmell, Acting President and the ILO represented ACF at the 2017 World Cat Congress meeting in Las Vegas at the end of April. WCC does not legislate in any way, its aim is to promote better understanding and co-operation between the world's major cat organisations which meet annually to freely discuss matters of mutual concern in a friendly relaxed and co-operative atmosphere.