



ton^sinfo

MARCH 2019
Vol. 5, Issue 1

IMPORTANT DATES!

There are two very important dates to put in your diaries!

Tonkinese Breed Club AGM
13 April 2019, 11.00 am
Oxford

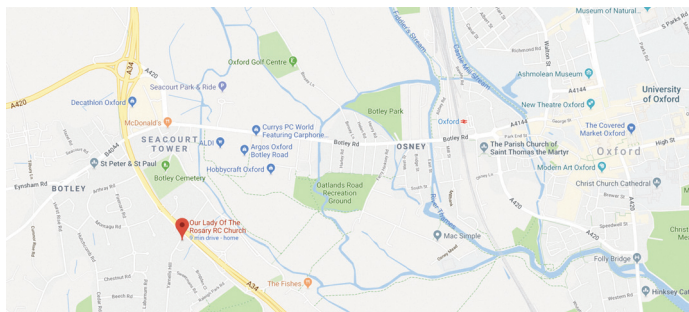
The Club AGM is on 13 April, and before you glaze over with boredom, this is something that you could really enjoy! It always used to be the one time in the year when all the breeders and lots of pet owners came together to meet and chat, and to have their say about aspects of the breed and the Club Show and we'd really like to make this a social gathering again. To this end, *a delicious FREE lunch will be provided for everyone who lets us know they will be coming*, so you won't have to travel a long distance and then go home hungry! There are people who would really like to meet you, and we're particularly keen to put new and established breeders in touch with each other, to share experiences and ask/answer questions.

The venue is a church hall on the outskirts of Oxford. If you are coming by train we can

arrange a lift from the main railway station if you let us know in advance. For those coming by car the address is Our Lady of the Rosary Church, Yarnells Hill, Oxford OX2 9BD. (see map below).

Tonkinese Breed Club Show
7 December 2019
Open to the public at 12.30
Bracknell Leisure Centre

The other date is of course our Club Show, and although it's a long way off, please put the date in your diary: 7 December in Bracknell. We're looking for a new venue as we know this is a long journey for many of our members, but please consider making the trip this year, even if it's just as a visitor, as there's nothing like a show where the Tonkinese are really a focus of attention! As in the last two years, each entry will receive £10 sponsorship cashback on the day. We aren't able to reduce our entry fees because the show is managed in tandem with the other shows in the hall, but by sponsoring the exhibits this effectively allows us to reduce entry fees by £10 per cat.



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TONKINESE BREED CLUB

AGM

**13 April 2019, 11.00 – Our Lady of the Rosary
Church Hall, Oxford OX2 9BD**

HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT

Linda Vousden

Hello everyone, may I take this, belated opportunity to wish you all happy and well in this the Club's 28th year – and isn't it lovely to see the Spring flowers again?

Since the last issue of Tonkinfo we've had another successful show at Bracknell, the BIS winners can be seen in this issue and all other photos are on the Club web site – many thanks to Mike and Lizzi Smith for taking them for us. This past year our Committee has worked very hard to provide information all on the changes regarding Cat Breeder Licensing and how HMRC may view cat breeding from a financial point of view (if you missed it you can find the information on the Club web site, under 'Business or Hobby Breeding'). In fact the Egyptian Mau club was so impressed they printed it in full in their own magazine, with credit to the TBC.

Do you remember the Committee's request for your breeding cat information for the Tonkinese Gene Pool Project? We are grateful to the three Club members who actually sent us feedback. If it doesn't ring any bells please see the last issue of Tonkinfo or the Tonkinese BAC web site under the 'Tonkinese Gene Pool Project' (tonkinesebac.weebly.com)

You have a very pro-active and hard-working Committee who are well-guided by our Chairman, Julia, and who all pull their weight. It is a pleasure working with them and I'm sure you appreciate how much they do for you on both the Club and the Breed Advisory Committees.

I hope to see many of you during this year, and hopefully some of you at the AGM.

Cheers, Linda

Kitten health and breeding

Gerry Smith

The committee is researching the current legal position regarding the health of kittens for sale. There are several Acts in force and it is how these work together that is being reviewed to provide guidance for our members on how breeders should meet their obligations as a seller. A principle concern is the selling of kittens who have the potential to carry hereditary disease, in particular those for which there are genetic tests available; breeders could find themselves liable to prosecution if they sell a kitten that develops a condition for which there is a test, if they have not tested the parents or disclosed to a purchaser that the kitten may carry the condition. (note: if parents are tested clear, then kittens do not need to be tested.) The Tonkinese Registration and Breeding Policies cover DNA testing and we would advise all breeders to review these documents to ensure they are compliant. New tests become available and the policy is updated periodically (not upon the introduction of every new test), links to major laboratories are contained in the Breeding Policy at section 4.8; the current list from Langford labs relevant to the Tonkinese is printed on the back page.

A more complete article covering the actual legislation will be in a future edition of Tonkinfo.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

In my last 'Chairman's Message' I said that I hoped by the next time I wrote that I would be able to tell you all about a new Tonkinese imported from Thailand, and I'm very happy to say that he arrived in September, from Bangkok. We've put something about him and his journey later in this issue of Tonkinfo. This is the first time we have had a real native Tonkinese come in from Thailand, so we're all waiting to see how it will turn out. I have his first litter of kittens (8, all brown) here as I write, just 9 weeks old, but old enough to see how their type and coats are developing, and so far they're looking very good!

The committee continues enjoy meetings when we can chat and share our experiences as well as get through the business of the Club and the breed. You will see four new committee members on our list since last time: some of you may know Gerry Smith (and his wife Sue) who retired from breeding a few years ago; Gerry came to the AGM last year and left in something of a daze as he found himself on the committee! Sarah is a pet owner and wrote a piece for the last newsletter about cat-proofing her garden. Mike and Lizzi Smith are also breeders (Chorus) and have been on the committee for a little while now, Mike contributing particularly with his valuable work on the Animal Welfare Act that we wrote about in the last newsletter.

We have heard of a few breeders who have already been approached by their local council telling them that they have to be licenced if they are breeding cats. Remember that this is NOT the case! You **ONLY** have to be licenced if you are making, or intend to make, a **profit**. It is clear that many local councils have not grasped the basics of this new legislation. If you are a breeder and are approached by your local council you are welcome to contact the committee, or the GCCF for advice about whether the council is acting in accordance with the legislation or

not. You may find that you have to respond to them pointing out the correct facts, but from what we have seen most council representatives dealing with licensing are very helpful and glad of guidance from someone who actually knows what the legislation means!

We have decided to produce two of these lovely colour newsletters a year, as they look so attractive and are nice things to keep. I hope those of you reading it will send in items, large or small, to be included in the next issue. It does tend to end up being written by the committee or even mostly by the editor, and I'm sure you don't want to hear me rabbiting on endlessly! I regret to say that the bulk of this newsletter is by me, so if you don't want to make this a one-man show please send in your snippets and larger items!

The most important part of my message though is about the club AGM. When I started breeding the AGM was an important event for everyone in the breeding community. Pretty much every breeder went, and we all felt that it was an integral part of being a breeder to be there. It was of course in the early days of the breed (though by the time I came along it was pretty well established), but I think we all felt that there were important things going on, and we all wanted to make sure that the future of our breed was in safe hands, and was assured, but also that we had a say in it. There were many changes in the early days to things like the Registration Policy (which determines what breeds are allowed in our pedigrees) and the Standard of Points ('SOP', which describes and defines the appearance of the breed and its colours), both documents that define the future of the breed, and safeguard it from change and extreme type. Every breed registered by the GCCF has its own SOP and Registration Policy. There have been changes in recent years too, such as the acceptance of what were once called 'variants' (the Colour-

pointed pattern and the Burmese Coat Restriction) onto the main register, which meant they could be shown, and the addition of the Cinnamon to our accepted colours. I remember long discussions trying to work out what we would call the 'Burmese Pattern' and 'Siamese Pattern' cats, and having to work with what would also be acceptable to the Governing Council.

As a novice breeder I was fascinated to meet the people who had been breeding for many years, and who had done so much to establish the breed in the UK. Many were the owners of prefixes I had heard of, many now sadly gone. I was surprised at how easy they were to talk to, and how much they were interested in what I was doing. I was quite bemused at first by the whole thing, since the terminology and process seemed very opaque and I had no idea how the clubs fitted into the overall Governing Council picture.

I'm saddened by the loss of that sense of community, but also because I think many people feel the breed no longer needs their input. This really isn't the case! The Breed Advisory Committee continues to watch over our SOP and to guard against flaws in type that might spoil or change the look of the cat. For example, the withholding list is a list of physical aspects that are undesirable in the Tonkinese, so include things that are health issues like tail faults, but also things that would lead to a change in appearance like white patches or round eyes. The list is used by judges and if a cat has a withholding fault they are not allowed to award certain types of prizes or places at a show. Quite recently we added a new 'withholding fault' to the list to avoid a bump on the nose, which is beginning to appear on some of our cats.

We recently revised our registration policy to allow breeders to include Tonkinese imported from Thailand in our breeding, and this was a crucial in allowing us to extend our gene pool to the native Tonkinese.

So things are still moving and changing in the breed, and it's important that we hear the opinions of our membership about these things. More important though, is the community of breeders and pet owners that make up the Tonkinese world. Everyone is important to the welfare and continuation of the breed, owners as well as breeders, as there would be no point in breeding kittens if nobody wanted them. The owners are as much the life-blood of the breed as the breeders. There is simply nothing like actually meeting people in the real world. I know that an AGM sounds unbelievably boring, but when it's about something you're personally invested in it can be a lot of fun. Most interesting for me is the chance to put faces to names, and just to chat with other 'Tonkinese' people. There are quite a few new (and not so new) breeders who have never met some of the longer-established breeders, and that's definitely a loss! There are also several people just starting out, and they would like to get to know the wider community, so even if you don't fancy the AGM, why not consider joining us for lunch? The Tonkinese is a welcoming and friendly breed group, with breeders sharing information and supporting each other in many, many ways. I do hope that you'll all come along to the meeting and lunch with us. This is such a good opportunity to meet, chat, laugh and share stories of our cats and learn more about them. I will also be bringing Ramintha, our lovely brown boy from Thailand to meet people, so there will even be a cat there!



Cat litter review

Julia Craig-McFeely

Before you say that my subject line is completely crazy, you have to understand that to many cat owners the choice of litter is a subject of serious interest! This is particularly something that those of us with multiple cats agonise about from time to time (fortunately not all the time).

Over the years I've tried quite a few different types of litter, and quite often as I empty a litter tray I find myself comparing the behaviour of the litter (and the behaviour of the cats) with the last time I emptied it or the last litter I used.

There are quite a few types and although I certainly haven't tried them all, I've had a go at most types, so I thought I might write this up to see whether it would be useful to other people.

Clumping

Clumping litters are ones that stick to themselves when wet, so urine makes little round lumps that are easy to scoop out of the tray with a litter scoop.

These divide into clay-based and 'natural'. The clay based ones are usually the most expensive, but they tend to clump more efficiently than types made from things like corn waste. They're usually composed of a fairly fine grit, and this often causes a problem called 'tracking', which is when your cat walks the litter out of the litter box and all over the floor. Fine grains can make this a real issue. The natural-based ones tend to have a larger 'grain' size but are not so good at holding their shape when wet. Many of

these are corn-based, and I was surprised to learn that this can be a problem with cats who have grain allergies in food. They can be sensitive also to grain-based litters not just from touching the skin, but of because they wash their feet, and if they've been in the tray the grain will be ingested.

Recently quite a lot of people have discovered that a farm supply item called 'Baby chick crumbs' (no not crumbs made from baby chicks! Crumbs of food to be given to baby chicks) works just as well as some of the most expensive clumping litters, at a fraction of the cost. I went through a phase of buying this for my own cats, and I've recently noticed that it's becoming available in much smaller sacks, so the manufacturers are catching on—watch out for a price rise! I have been told (though I don't know how serious to take it) that when damp, chick crumbs can grow dangerous fungus, but I'm not sure how serious a risk that is. Anyway, it's something to be aware of.

If you have kittens you really can't use clumping litter until the kittens are quite mature, as they will inevitably try to taste it and both the chemicals used to make it clump and the effect of it sticking together are dangerous to a small kitten.

If you've succumbed to temptation and bought yourself a 'litter maid' (a self-scooping litter tray), you have to use clumping litter.

Pellets

Small cylindrical pellets usually made from compressed recycled newspaper or sawdust. Some people hate the smell of sawdust, but

... to scoop, or not to scoop?

I rather liked it. The newspaper was pretty much odourless, except for those that include a deodoriser smell, and to be honest I found those rather overpowering. Recycled newspaper has the 'green' advantage, and both of these types can be composted usually, though I don't particularly want cat poo in my compost! They will however bio-degrade if put in the rubbish.

Grit

These are things like Fullers Earth or Catsan. I'm always surprised that the cats like them as they are hard and gritty and have quite sharp gravelly lumps. They do track quite a bit, but how much depends on the size of the lump of grit. The biggest disadvantage for me with Catsan was that it created a hard white coating on the bottom of my litter tray, and absolutely nothing would remove it. It was an older tray, so had lost its shine from being scuffed around with gritty litters. I put trays down side by side, one with Catsan and one with newspaper pellets, and the kittens definitely preferred the Catsan. I've never used Fullers Earth, but I've been in houses where people have used it, and boy did it stink! I don't think the deodorising is much good, but that may depend on how often you dump out the tray.

'Space age'

These are quite exciting, and if you don't like the look of dreary grey newspaper pellets, you might have fun with these as they're either white/translucent or brightly coloured. They are mostly based on plastics and silicon, and do clever things like absorbing urine and trapping it inside the pellet. Some even claim to be 'washable'! These come in a variety of different pellet sizes from fine grit to quite large round or gravelly pellets, but as with the clumping litter track-

ing can become an issue with the smaller grit sizes. Because of the expense it's usually advisable to scoop rather than keep emptying the tray. One thing I don't know about these is whether they would bio-degrade, but I suspect not, or they would disintegrate under the onslaught of pee!

So what did I think of each type? I do like clumping litters, and if you use Chick crumbs it can be very cheap. However, I found that it was a bit too easy to get lazy and also to be parsimonious so I didn't dump out the whole tray often enough. I also had concerns about hygiene and health: quite a lot of minor (and major) ailments are passed between cats by contact with faeces, and because we scoop clumping litter rather than replacing it every day (or more often), there are inevitably residues left from what your cat has put in the tray, and that can stay for a long time, so overall hygiene is not great with this type of litter. I have multiple cats, and it didn't take long before I got very tired of the 'Easter egg hunt' morning and evening (and sometimes in the middle of the day too), fishing out the little presents that the beasts had left for me. I have to say though that the cats liked the clumping litters, and it may be because of the fine grains. Oh, and yes, the litter tracked everywhere, though I found some tray types that minimised that.

The Space-age litters were quite nice, but again I found myself spending ages scooping and worrying about throwing it out because of the cost. I suspect if you have a single cat both clumping and space-age would be fine.

I've already said something about Fullers Earth and Catsan: the Fullers Earth just stank as soon as the cats used it, so that went straight in the bin. The Catsan didn't smell,

but wrecked the litter tray: even bleach didn't shift the concrete layer it made on the bottom of the tray, and given that the layer was composed of catsan and urine I wasn't very happy about it lining the bottom of my tray! Also, when I poured it out into the tray it created a cloud of white dust that had me and the cats coughing and sneezing. When a cat got in the tray and had a good dig around this also raised a lot of dust, and I noticed the cats getting red eyes from it. I used up my supply by applying a water sprayer to keep the dust down, but I haven't replaced it. Tracking wasn't too bad as the grit is mostly a reasonable size. I was quite surprised that the kittens liked it as it felt very hard and quite sharp edged. However perhaps it didn't shift under their feet as much as the pellet types.

With pellets I found the big advantage of paper over sawdust is that when wet, paper swells up but doesn't tend to break up, whereas sawdust disintegrates, and of course if your cat is going to track loose litter across the floor, it's going to be the disintegrated part, and that's the part that will smell of cat pee. The tracking from the paper pellets was negligible, though they do seem to like kicking it out of the tray if they can, just for fun. However it's very easy to pick up or brush up. The Sawdust powder definitely led to a

smell of cat pee in the surrounding areas, and was more difficult to brush up especially if they had walked it into a carpet.

I have settled for paper pellets partly because of price, partly because of hygiene. If the litter is relatively cheap you don't hesitate to dump out the whole tray and replace it. With lots of cats I also found that it saved a lot of time, and I think with a large household hygiene is far more crucial than with single cats or pairs. As I've said above, the scented litters became a bit overwhelming. Bio-catolet includes little lumps of gel with deodorant in, and it's quite overpowering, but I tried it as it was cheap. However the 'pellets' were not very compressed, so it didn't soak up as much liquid, and that meant that although the one I ended up with (Breeder Celest, and every time I open a bag I try not to grind my teeth at the absurd spelling) was a bit more expensive, a sack lasted a lot longer than a sack the same size of Bio-catolet.

I'd be interested to know of other people's experience with litters and how you decided on the one you used. Next time I will try and sort out my experiences with different types of litter tray, so if you have any pearls of wisdom to impart please email me — Oh! the excitement!

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Pack of four cards - £3.50 & postage

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An introduction to Feline Psychology

Some years ago I was asked by the Animal Care College to re-write their Intermediate Feline Psychology course and then to write an Advanced Feline Psychology course. I was asked to tutor them, which I did for several years. With the new Tonkinfo format it seemed a good time to share some of that information. I hope you find the following useful. Linda Vousden

NATURE and NURTURE

Experts once debated whether an animal's behaviour is learned or inborn. It is now generally accepted that behaviour involves very complex interactions between the environment and innate responses. An animal's genetic inheritance determines both its physiological and sensory capacities – size, colour, sense of smell and visual acuity etc. In the wild, cats breed by natural selection, this is rarely a factor in breeding pedigree cats but breeders should select for health, vigour and temperament as well as appearance. Selective breeding is an invaluable tool in producing stronger and more useful breeds of animals. Clearly, there is a relationship between breeding, genetics and behaviour.

The domesticated cat has retained many more natural behaviour patterns than most domesticated animals. This is best seen in neonates, who are strongly guided by instinct, but they begin to learn new behaviour almost immediately. An example of innate behaviour is when a mother picks up a kitten: the kitten becomes silent and limp, curling its back to keep its tail and hind limbs raised, making it easier for the mother to carry it. In the wild this reflex is crucial when she has to move her kittens out of danger. Many instinctive reflexes are lost as the kitten grows up, but this is one of several that may continue into adulthood.

To understand the extent that behaviour may be modified (behaviour that many owners

regard as inborn) it is important to understand of the effects of heredity upon behaviour. Research into the emotional behaviour of the cat is scarce but there has been considerable study using other animals.

Murphree, Dykman and Peters studied the role of heredity in the emotional behaviour of dogs. With careful selective and line-breeding the team developed two strains, the 'A' strain (dogs with mild temperaments) and the 'B' strain (dogs that were exceptionally nervous). They expected it would take several generations to develop a strain of dogs that could truly be called neurotic, but they discovered that the neurotic animals developed in just a single generation. To prove that the 'B' strain was not nervous simply because they were raised by nervous females (i.e a learned response rather than an inherited response) they cross-bred the stable 'A' strain with the unstable 'B' strain so that each pup had a nervous parent. Half of the pups were reared by a nervous mother (B strain) while the other half were raised by a normal (A strain) mother. If neurotic behaviour were learned then the group raised by the neurotic females would be more neurotic than those raised by the normal females. In fact, that there was little or no difference between the two sets of puppies. All of the animals in the experiment turned out to be nervous, leading to the conclusion that the behaviour was in some part genetic.

Is intelligence a critical factor? By intelligence we normally mean how an individual

performs when tested, bearing in mind the influence of previous learning, environment, prior test-taking experiences and emotional state during testing. The superior performance of certain breeds or species may be affected by differences in temperament or physical ability.

Evidently, cat breeders shouldn't concern themselves about the possible effects of heredity upon their pet's intelligence, but they should consider the cat's inherited emotional temperament. It is important to select a kitten from parents that both have a stable temperament.

PSYCHOLOGICAL & PHYSIOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

The cat is born with the potential for a staggering range of physical and sensory capabilities; its complex and rapid development, from birth, ensures that it acquires the necessary skills to become a highly specialised predator in the shortest possible time – just a few months. The development of the cat can be divided into five phases that may overlap slightly.

Neonatal



From birth until about 10 days of age, a kitten is completely dependent upon the queen for survival and spends most of this phase eating or sleeping. Until her kittens are about 4 weeks old the queen protects them, keeps them warm, feeds and cleans them. The

neonate is born with very fine fur but it is incapable of regulating its own body temperature until about 3 weeks of age. It must huddle into its mother and littermates to keep warm; the sensitive nerve endings in the nose leather help the kitten to locate 'nest' occupants by their body temperatures. Initially the queen only leaves her kittens for short periods every couple of hours, always alert for their distress cries. After the first couple of days she leaves the nest for longer periods and more frequently. Before lying down to nurse them, each time the queen returns to her kittens she washes them to let them know she is present – and to reassure herself.

A kitten's sense of smell is not fully developed until about 3 weeks of age but, by the end of its first week, it can locate its mother by the smell of her fur and milk. It also recognises the smell of the nest so that it can find its way back if it crawls out. The feel and taste of the queen's nipple stimulates the sucking instinct, in turn stimulating milk production. By 48 hours after birth a kitten remembers which nipple produced the most milk, it may even recognise its own body scent on the nipple, and will try to return to the same one each time it feeds.

The neonate's ears are folded close to the head but it can hear and at just a few days old it will respond to loud or distinctive noises by raising its head. The pinnae of the ears become erect between 5 and 10 days of age and the kittens are able to follow sounds with ear movement within a day or so afterwards. The eyes are normally fully open at the age of 10 days but some visual reflexes are apparent before the eyes open. The eyelids peel apart over a couple of days, the kitten cannot focus clearly but it can follow the direction of light and large movements. By 3–4 weeks of age, the kitten can see the

movement of its mother and siblings and has reasonable depth of vision. The visual acuity of the kitten increases about sixteen-fold by the time it is 10 weeks old.

From birth, kittens communicate with their mother vocally, with a range of sounds that vary in volume, pitch, length and intensity. They may purr during suckling and make clear calls of distress if they are cold, hungry or trapped under their mother or littermates. A cold kitten produces intense high-pitched cries, but this lessens as the kitten becomes more capable of regulating its temperature. If a kitten becomes isolated from its mother or siblings it will cry persistently and loudly until found – this is particularly noticeable when the kitten is 3–4 weeks old. The neonates are quite weak, but they can drag themselves around the nest to seek warmth and food, guided by the queen's 'chirruping' calls. Once kittens begin to suckle, they develop enough co-ordination to push themselves into place with their hind limbs while they 'tread' at the nipple with their front limbs. This action stimulates the queen's milk-flow and improves the kitten's muscle tone.

Transitional



Between 10 days and about 3 weeks of age the kittens begin to show a degree of independence from their mother as their eyesight

improves, their limbs strengthen and they become more aware of their environment. By two weeks of age, they are stronger and more active. They are able to raise the front of their bodies off the ground with their forelimbs; they crawl around their nest and even tentatively wash themselves. By 3 weeks, the head initiates their movement and although their balance is still poor they are able to stand. They learn at a staggering speed, and can copy each new skill learned by a sibling. The more precocious breeds will follow movement with their eyes and attempt to climb out of their nests to explore their surroundings.

Socialisation



From 3 weeks to between 9 and 14 weeks of age, depending upon the environment they are reared in, kittens develop their relationship potential with littermates and other species. Breeders should be particularly considerate of the kittens' experiences during this stage of development.

Physiologically – by the end of the fourth week the kitten's sense of hearing is usually fully developed, they hold their tails upright, their legs support them better and they are in control of their head movements. They travel further as co-ordination continues to improve; at this stage they are able to travel almost a meter at a time. Once they are mobile, they may begin using a litter tray. By 5 weeks, their ability to get around is markedly improved and they may attempt to climb and to balance on narrow surfaces. At about 6

weeks of age social and object play has refined the kitten's hunting/killing techniques and three basic hunting manoeuvres may be seen, the 'mouse pounce', the 'bird swat' and the 'fish scoop' – even if the prey is only a twig, toy mouse or a sock. By 8 weeks, they are weaned and have advanced litter tray habits; they have learned that other cats are not always potential enemies. By 14 weeks they are well co-ordinated, have a good sense of balance and are confident in their mobility. They are competent enough to feed, clean and attempt to defend themselves.

Although the cat is not considered a highly social species the kitten's experiences during this stage of development largely determine just how social the cat will be as an adult. Play with parent and siblings, and being handled by humans is absolutely necessary to ensure that the kitten accepts human contact when it is an adult pet. If a kitten is particularly frightened by anything at this stage, there is a possibility that it may remain fearful of that experience for the rest of its life.



The gallery opposite is from Ulla Korterman, who is diving into breeding again after a single litter some years ago. Welcome to the Club Ulla, and congratulations on your beautiful kittens!

The end of this phase is characterised by more individual exploration of the environment than social interaction.

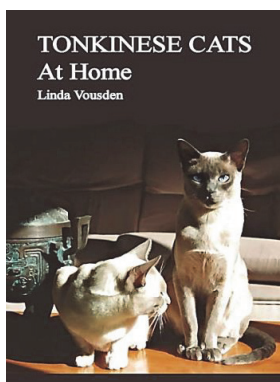
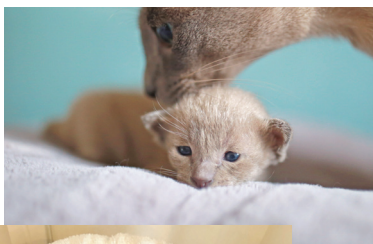
Juvenile



This period extends until the onset of sexual maturity, which is dependent upon the individuals and the breed of cat but is usually at around 18 to 20 weeks of age. The young cat's body grows quickly to become the co-ordinated and muscular frame required of the predator. With an established behaviour potential and a body that is almost mature, the Juvenile moves into the next phase of life – adulthood.

In the next instalment I will talk about Nourishment, which is immensely important in building a healthy future for a kitten.





'Tonkinese Cats At Home'

2nd edition in softback.

£9.99 plus p&p

22.9 x 15.2 cm

In this book I offer a guide to living with and looking after Tonkinese as pets. With 59 special photos there are sections on choosing your Tonkinese, creating a harmonious household, health care, general maintenance, photographing your cats and more.

Only available from the 'Shop' at
www.tonkinese.me

Should I register as a breeder?

Hilary Goodburn

Over the last seventeen years I have been breeding Tonkinese and although I have not kept accounts as such, I have kept all the receipts from my vets, from food delivery companies and other large items I have purchased for my beloved cats.

I have read all the information I can about the new Animal Welfare bill, with special interest in the bit about “breeding animals to sell as pets” The information is not very clear and is ambiguous in parts, so I decided to talk to the experts, the people whose job it is to enforce the new bill, The Local Authority.

I rang and asked for the department dealing with the Animal Welfare Act and was put through to Kelly in the Environmental Health Dept. I asked her if I should register and she did not know but said she would send me all the information I needed. I received by email an application form for Dog boarders, kennel owners and small animal farmers, and discovered that they had just added “Cats” to the categories. No details to help me, but I did receive a list of charges. I read the sheets, which were not helpful and emailed back to say it did not help and did I need to register as I bred a few kittens each year. The next email was very obscure; it was about stopping the import of puppies from abroad and Welsh puppy farms.

No further forward I sat on the emails, put my accounts in order for my kitten selling from Jan 1 2018 and waited.

Two months went by and I received the following email from Lisa Farrell with the grand title of

Licensing Officer Compliance & Enforcement at my Local Authority.

“It has been brought to my attention whilst browsing the Internet that you are a local breeder of Sokoke kittens.” and informing me that cat breeders were now required to register with their local authority. I replied explaining both that this is *not* what the legislation says, and also that Sokokes were an endangered species and that they cost me a fortune to keep because the kittens are not yet in demand, as they are the rarest domestic cats in the world. Her response was very strange as she informed me that *when I make a profit I must register for a license*. It appears that these local authority officers have no idea what they are dealing with, or how the system of cat breeding, registration or kitten selling occurs, because Lisa did not even know what the GCCF was. I took a long time explaining about pedigree cat registration, costs involved in vaccinations and health checks, feeding, caring for mum all year. Mums injections, health care, food, heating, laundry, lighting, stud costs, show entry and travel, pedigree preparation, kitten goody bags and everything else and the poor woman seemed stunned. I went on to explain about keeping records, accounts and the other paperwork involved and I think she wished she had not bothered to contact me. She did not even mention my Tonkinese, so neither did I. I did however agree that if I started to make a profit then I would register.

It should be clear to all of you taking the trouble to read this, that every Local Authority will be different, their charges will be different and their knowledge will be different, so you must all make up



...My experience with the Local Authority

your own minds about whether you need to register or not. If you advertise it will be found on the internet and you too may get a call, so it's a good idea to be prepared!

My best advice to you is to look on the Tonkinese Breed Club web site, read all the information you can and start keeping accurate records of everything you spend on your cats.

There is a list of acceptable costs you can consider on the web site. I have a copy of my Local Authority five page application form. I won't be completing it until I make a profit, which won't be anytime soon. Just to remind you all, this Animal Welfare Act affecting cat breeders came into force on 1st October 2018. Your income and expenditure should be kept accurately from then. Good Luck!

Tonkinese Breed Club Shows 2018 & 2019

It was lovely to see new and returning faces, and especially our staunch supporters again at our show in December. We are well aware that the show is sadly often out of reach for some of our members, which would be a problem wherever we go. We are not deaf to requests for a change of date or venue but there are a huge number of things that have to be put together when putting on a GCCF show. Here are just some of the things we have to consider:

1. A Show Manager willing to take on our show (they are becoming more and more scarce each year);
2. People prepared to be at the show hall the night before, and on the day to work on the Show manager's table, to work on the Club tables and stay to help clear away at the end of the show;
3. An economical venue with the right sort of lighting that will provide suitable *safe* areas not only for the cat pens but an isolation area, vetting area, judges' room, catering and parking etc. (many leisure centres are no longer permitting cat shows);
4. Access to public transport for judges and exhibitors who don't drive;
5. A date acceptable in the GCCF calendar, which is becoming busier each year;
6. Judge availability and expenses;

7. Vet availability and expenses;
8. Show licence application (must be applied for at least a year in advance).

Also, with the notable drop in exhibitors generally, you can see why so many clubs need back-to-back shows with other clubs, including the National CC. However, the TBC Committee has managed to put on a show every year but two (and these were due to date clashes) since our first wonderful show in 1996. It is so important for the breed to keep a Tonkinese presence at the shows. Our 2019 show has already been organised and will be back-to-back with the National CC in Bracknell, but beyond 2019 we don't yet know. If you have a suggestion for a show venue, please do let us know.

Congratulations again to these beautiful Tonkinese, and their deservedly proud owners, for their TBC Best In Show titles in 2018:

Overall Best In Show and **Best Kitten**
Tonkano Rareity (TOS f 32) F, Owner: Hilary Goodburn, Breeder: Samantha & Katy Miller

Best Adult Ch Fecheldee Gertude (TOS d 32) F, Owner/Breeder: Coral & Vince Macey

Best Neuter UK IGrCh & GrPr Amorcatz Jane Eyre (TOS a 32) F, Owner: Catherine & Arkady Bernard, Breeder: Sue Amor

Keeping a cat at Stud (part 2)

Julia Craig-McFeely



I covered most aspects of having a stud mating with a girl in the last issue, but mating represents a very small proportion of your boy's time. Almost all of his time will be spent without a visitor, and in many cases without a companion, as I've found that putting a neuter in with him can be more irritating to him than pleasurable, as he's really only interested in mating, and that's not going to go down well with a neuter. Entire boys seem to be happier on their own than entire girls or neuters of either sex. Perhaps it's something to do with territorial behaviour.

When I built my first stud quarters several people said 'don't make the run too large', and I'm afraid I didn't listen! I thought that if a boy was going to have to live several years in this space he would want plenty of room, so built a 15-foot run onto his shed. Unfortunately my first boy spent all his time pacing back and forth, and an experienced stud owner who visited explained that this

was because studs are very territorial, so they need to be able to keep control of the space around them. If it's too large they have to keep getting up and pacing, and that's what my boy was doing, back and forth, back and forth. I rehomed him to another breeder experienced with studs, and the change in him in his new run was instant: he lay down on a corner shelf and just looked instantly relaxed as he could see and control the whole space from his shelf. It was a valuable lesson, and my later studs have been much happier with a more limited run, though I still like to have a large shed.

As you will know, Tonkinese are gregarious and love the company of humans as well as of other cats, so I worry about my boys because I know they will be lonely, and this can lead to anxiety behaviour like shouting and pacing, which is very distressing to see.

I mentioned my young boy Ecco in the last issue, and he has matured into a dream stud. He is incredibly calm and laid back, never complains and seems perfectly happy with his lot. If he felt anxious about his confinement he would try to shoot out of the door every time I open it, but he doesn't. His predecessor, who was not happy at all as a stud is now happily a neutered pet, and behaves beautifully with his neutered female companion. Ecco still rarely sprays, so I'm able to have an easy chair in his house and that has made a big difference to the time I spend with him.

When I first read an article about keeping a stud, the writer recommended keeping a stack of magazines available to amuse you when you go out to sit with your boy. Both my boys don't like my hands to be busy with

something else when I'm with them though, so books are not acceptable. However modern technology has the answer, and I invested in a 'Kindle Fire' which, with a subscription to Netflix, is the ideal way to pass the time with my boys! I have mine propped in a holder where I can see it, and I can settle back in my comfy chair for at least 45 mins each evening with each boy and watch an episode of a series or movie.

I'm quite interested in their response to my smartphone. I was sitting in a bus one day and watched a baby in a pram desperately trying to get its mother's attention, but her eyes were glued to her phone. She patted the child, but wouldn't make eye contact as she was glued to her messages, and the child was doing absolutely everything it could to try and get her to connect with it. The cats are the same: I will sometimes assume that I can catch up with texts while I'm outside, but the boys have other ideas, head-butting the phone or climbing all over me to come between my eyeline and the phone screen. Clearly just sitting there and stroking is not enough: they expect real contact and interaction, not just physical presence. Tonkinese particularly like eye contact, and I often look down from the Kindle to find the boy I'm cuddling looking intently into my eyes.



I now have two boys, and that's a serious time commitment. It has rather crimped my social life: if I'm out to supper I find that by the time I've given the boys their 'quality time' after getting home, it's midnight or later, and I probably still have to put down the last bowls of food for the night for the other cats! Between the new boys starting to work and the older boys retiring I had four studs at one point, and it was really too much for me, though fortunately it wasn't for very long. If I'm very organised I can say good-night to at least one of the boys before I go out, but then I worry that they are confined for a lot longer than usual. I do still shut them in overnight, partly because if there's a stray Tom in the area they are most likely to visit during the night (which can seriously wind up everyone, including the indoor cats, who go nuts if they hear cats shrieking outside), and partly because the boys do occasionally feel the need to shout a bit, and I don't want to upset the neighbours.

I don't spend much time with them in the morning as I'm not an early riser, and I need to get to my desk and start work reasonably soon after crawling out of bed and feeding my household. If you're an early riser it might be a good option to spend your quality time with your boy in the morning and just a short time in the evening. I have found that dividing the time I spend with them in two is not enough, as they need a good long stretch with you at least once a day, so two short visits doesn't work. I've also found that if I visit during the day for a long stretch, it doesn't replace the evening visit, as the boy still seems to expect his evening time. I generally don't visit during the day because I don't want to raise expectations that I can't maintain, as I'm sometimes out during the day for work. The routine seems to work for them, and as long as I don't try to have any social life, for me too!

The Thai Prince

Jo Sturgess

Some while back Julia and I got talking about the need for new bloodlines for the Tonkinese in the UK. It's not so difficult to find a Burmese or a Siamese kitten that you could buy for breeding, and from that you could start a new first-generation line, but actually that isn't as good as it sounds. It means you have to add another cat to your household, which is a big commitment for a breeder who may already have all the cats they want to keep. And if you want to found a new line from her, you have to keep one of her kittens as well. Assuming all that is OK, the reality of UK Burmese and Siamese bloodlines is that nearly all of those lines are already in the Tonkinese, although I'm glad to say that now the Burmese import ban has been lifted (as we now have a DNA test for the Burmese Head Defect) there are cats



*Two of the first pictures
Nolan sent of our boy*

coming in from as far afield as Australia. However, the Siamese lines remain problematic as so many are not acceptable in our breeding policy because they have Orientals or what were 'experimental' colours in their background at the time of registration, so they are not on the full register. Few breeders would in any case like to use the more modern types of

Siamese, and the Burmese girls we saw on show seemed tiny, which raised questions about their suitability for breeding.

Importing from America wasn't really on the cards because of the small breeding pool that form the basis of American lines, but also because American Tonkinese have a different type to ours. European cats may also have limited genetic diversity as breeding communities can be small, and often their breeders imported UK lines to improve their gene pool, so it's quite difficult to find a cat that has good outcrossing that doesn't already have UK lines in it.

We came to the conclusion that importing a native Tonkinese cat from Thailand was going to be a better option, providing us with truly different genetic material, and from lines that had not been subject to the genetic tampering inevitable with pedigree breeding, where we make so many choices about which of our cats we breed with.

We discussed the idea with the other members of the committee who were very supportive. Julia chatted with Steve Crow, then chairman of the GCCF, who had been to the World Cat Congress in Bangkok, and he put us in touch with Korat breeders who had brought cats in and updated their breeding policy to allow them in the registration of their breed, so that we knew what we needed to do with our registration policy to allow us to breed from a Thai Tonkinese. We were lucky that Linda was around, as she understands the Registration Policy better than anyone, and was able to make sure that the revisions we needed were consistent with our overall policy and with GCCF rules.

Lots of stations down the line of a long trail of contacts found us in touch with Nolan, a new contact in Bangkok, who very quickly



... Ramintha of Rameses

disabused us of the notion that people in Thailand bred the western version of Thai breeds! There are only a handful of breeders of Siamese or Burmese, and nobody was willing to breed a litter of Tonkinese. In any case, a single litter was not really what we wanted, as we ideally wanted to bring in two or three cats from independent lines. He told us that the best way to find a true Thai Tonkinese was to look at the 'street cat' population and those in rescue centres. Because we can now use DNA testing to confirm coat pattern and breed, we knew that we could prove a cat was Tonkinese even if we didn't know its parents, and that was acceptable to the Breed Advisory Committee, as long as the cat was from Thailand (where the Tonkinese was a native cat) and not just from anywhere.

Within a few weeks, Nolan had found three kittens, a brown boy, a brown girl and a blue girl. We were extremely excited!

The first step was to make sure they were basically healthy. Nolan bathed, wormed and de-fleaded them, then he took them to the vet for their first tests, for leukaemia and feline AIDS. These were negative, so they were vaccinated and microchipped, as all the import tests had to be linked to the correct cats at all times. All went well, and we started the long process of establishing by testing that these were indeed Tonkinese, and that they did not carry any inherited conditions that we could test for. The swabs for DNA testing for coat pattern had to go to California as testing in Thailand is slow and time-consuming for Nolan as he would have had to queue at a lab for hours. These were the tests for coat colour and pattern as there was no point in proceeding any further if the cats weren't Tonkinese. After a wait of many weeks we decided the first set of swabs had been lost in the post, so a second set went off, and finally we got the results. The two browns were indeed Tonkinese, but the blue girl was a Burmese. In fact she was probably a Tonk-

inese with a Burmese coat pattern, but as we cannot tell the difference between a BCR Tonkinese and a pure Burmese, the BAC (Breed Advisory Committee) had decided we should only register a TCR Tonkinese under our revised registration policy.



Arrival!

Nolan started to put out feelers to find a home for the blue girl, and we focussed our attention on the two browns. The pictures he sent showed lovely kittens who looked very much like our own kittens. So we moved to the next stage of testing. It was a bit difficult to decide in what order to do things, but Nolan's next stage was to get serum tests done for rabies. All three cats came back negative, so once Nolan was sure they were at least 12 weeks old they went back to the vet, and the first jab of the rabies vaccine was given (booster would be 4 weeks later). Then he sent another set of swabs off, this time to Langford labs in the UK to test for Burmese Hypokalaemia; Burmese head defect; Siamese progressive retinal atrophy; recessive long-hair gene. These all came back clear, and we felt we were well away! Because Thailand is an 'unlisted' country for Rabies (i.e. there is active rabies in the animal population), the cats had to wait another 3 months after their second vaccination for another serum test to confirm they didn't have rabies because the incubation period for the disease is so long. We knew at the outset that we couldn't import a cat until 7 months of age because of this policy.

During all this we would occasionally lose contact with Nolan for long periods. At one point he reappeared after a long silence because he had been ill with Dengue fever, which was a bit alarming! He has fortunately recovered! Meanwhile, the kittens – now young cats – were growing and getting bigger and stronger every day. The last set of tests we wanted were the PCR tests to confirm they did not carry cat 'flu, as that can be devastating to a cattery as you really can't breed any more if you find you have cat flu carriers in the house. These were again to be sent to Langford, but Nolan dropped out of sight again while he and his girlfriend moved house out of the city. For nearly 3 months we wondered what was happening, and then finally he came back to us, and said he had sent the swabs. They took weeks to arrive, as customs held them up, but when they got to the lab we felt sure it was only a matter of rubber-stamping everything as the cats were so obviously healthy.



checking out his new run



Slimline build, day 1

In the meantime Nolan had found a home for the Blue Burmese. Sadly, the little brown girl was ill, there was no diagnosis, but she was very poorly, she became weak and despite the best efforts of Nolan, the vet and Bew (Nolan's partner) who had bonded very closely with her, she died. Obviously this was very upsetting for everyone. However, we decided to go ahead with the boy, who by this time had been named Ramintha, after the area of Bangkok where he was found.

I had already researched importing and we had decided that although it was more expensive, we were far less likely to encounter any importing problems, including delays

that would be stressful for Ramintha, if we used a company that specialised in importing and exporting pets to bring him in. It was worth it as they handled all the paperwork and we knew there would be no hassles bringing him through customs if there was an experienced courier company managing all the bureaucracy. The next hurdle was that they had to travel within 5 days of the owner, or the owner's agent travelling. It looked as though Julia or I would have to fly to Thailand just so that we could turn around and fly back so that Ramintha could go on the next cargo flight. However, we had a bit of luck at this point! Julia realised that her nephew was visiting that part of the world and was due to fly back in a couple of weeks. He very kindly moved his flight home from Manila to Bang-kok, and met up with Nolan at the airport to sign all the papers that would allow Ramintha to fly, and in a flurry it seemed our boy was about to leave his warm Thai home and come to chilly, damp England. We were almost there!

A couple of days after Julia's Nephew flew home, Nolan sent Ramintha off. It was a long flight, and he left on Monday, arriving in the UK on Tuesday 4 September. The import people were amazing, keeping us informed at every stage as if we were their only clients. I was in London at work when he landed, and Julia was in Oxford holding her breath! I still didn't quite believe it was



Snow? No problem

really going to happen as I read the text to say that the transfer van had left Heathrow, and I still didn't believe it when Julia sent me a picture of the van pulling up outside and the driver very carefully removing a large carrier and walking to her front door. He carried it all the way through the house to Ramintha's quarters in the garden and opened it up and waited for our beautiful boy to come out... which he did, so confident and purring and so beautiful! He had a good look around, and Julia told me he purred straight away as she stroked him and picked him up.

I met Ramintha that evening, and we were both amazed at how much he looked like our Tonkinese. His coat was very lightweight: you could see his skin through it because, being from a hot country, he didn't need a thick coat. I was a bit worried about how he would cope with the cold weather, though the weather was very mild for September. Julia had the heating on quite high in his shed, but he wanted to be out in the run sniffing the air and looking around.

Julia took him down to the vet the next day and we sent off a new set of PCR swabs to Langford, and every one of them came back negative, a testament to the care given to their cats by Nolan and Bew. Not

only was our boy everything we could have hoped for in type, he was also free from Herpes, Calici and Chlamydia. He can be used the same as any other stud, by any females in the UK.

Over the next few weeks 'Minnie' muscled up, his coat thickened (very quickly) and he put on a good layer of fat which we hoped would protect him during the winter. Just as well, as the snow and frost haven't bothered him at all, and he spends almost all of his day in a warm nest on the shelf in his run. He is now a really solid chunky boy. He doesn't carry chocolate or dilute (blue/lilac), so his kittens will all be brown, but he is available to anyone who wants to outcross to a real native Tonkinese. His first litter of 8 babies are strong and healthy and both good size and type. He's a really affectionate boy, with a bit of a thing for head-butting, and he looks, and acts, like a big brown teddy bear.

I don't think we could have done this without the support of the BAC and the Club, and we owe everyone involved a huge debt of gratitude for making it happen. Now that we know what is involved we are much better equipped to do it again to bring in another line, or to help someone else import.



Minnie's first litter

Our Beautiful Breed

Show photos by Mike Smith



Best in Show Neuter UK IGrCh & GrPr Amorcatz Jane Eyre, Owner: Catherine & Arkady Bernard, Breeder: Sue Amor



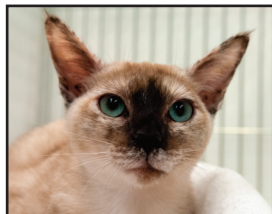
OBIS Judge, Julia Craig-McFeely with Best In Show Adult Ch Fecheldee Gertude, bred and owned by Vince and Coral Macey



Above and below: BIS kitten and overall Best in Show Tonkano Rarity with proud breeder Katy Miller and owner Hilary Goodburn



Best in Show pedigree pet GrMC All That Jazz, Owner: A Reynolds



GrPr Tonkyway Saba

Our Favourite Photos from the 2018 Show



Lilyput Camberwell Beauty



BIS Adult, Ch Fecheldee Gertude



Part of the club table showing our display of cards



Household pet

Nobby Noodles



Tonkaholics Ziggy Stardust



Ch Tonkyway
Tseen-She

For more of Mike's great photos, visit
<https://www.tonkinese.info/2018-show-gallery.html>

www.tonkinese.info

tonkinese.info

TBC Recommendations For Breeders

In addition to the GCCF Code of Ethics the TBC strongly recommends that the following points are noted by owners of queens and studs.

- 1 If breeding from a Tonkinese on the REference register, ensure that it complies with the current Tonkinese Registration Policy - some cats are on the REference register because they have ancestors that are not permitted in the Tonkinese breed programme (eg. Orientals or cats of unregistered or unknown parentage).
- 2 A stud owner is not obliged to accept a queen to stud
- 3 Studs must be on the active register with the GCCF and must have their Certificate of Entirety (COE), micro-chip number & DNA test information lodged with the GCCF prior to the registration of their first litter. Stud owners should be able to show a copy of this information to the queen's owner.
- 4 Studs, and visiting queens, should be vaccinated against Feline Enteritis and Cat 'Flu (but not within 14 days before the mating). Homeopathic vaccinations are not acceptable. Vaccination certificates should be available for inspection.
- 5 The queen's owner has a responsibility to make arrangements, including the inspection of stud premises, well in advance of taking the queen to stud.
- 6 Studs must be regularly tested for FeLV and FIV, even if they are inoculated against FeLV. It is recommended that they are tested at least once per year and the documentation should be shown to the owners of visiting queens.
- 7 The stud premises should be available for inspection, by appointment, by the queen's owner prior to the queen being brought to stud.
- 8 The stud owner must make clear any conditions relating to the kittens, or repeat matings, **before** the queen is left with the stud.
- 9 The stud owner **must** supply the following for the queen's owner : a). A mating certificate that complies with GCCF Section 1 Rule 3d.. b) A full pedigree of the stud showing at least three generations with full registration numbers. c) A stud fee receipt.
- 10 Queens must be on the active register with the GCCF.
- 11 It is recommended that queens are tested for FeLV and FIV within 24 hours before visiting the stud, unless from a fully tested household, and the documentation should be shown to the stud's owner.
- 12 The queen's owner should be aware that the stud fee is for the services of the stud and is not based upon results - it should be offered at the time the queen is left with the stud.
- 13 The breeder **must supply** each kitten owner with a copy of the GCCF code of ethics; a valid vaccination certificate showing that the full course has been completed for Enteritis and cat 'flu; a properly completed pedigree certificate that includes at least three generations with full registration numbers and the pink registration certificate duly signed by the breeder for transfer of ownership.
- 14 **It is strongly recommended that, in addition to DNA tests for coat-pattern, breeding cats should be tested for Progressive Retinal Atrophy (PRA) and for Burmese Hypokalaemia.**

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List of available DNA tests applicable to the Tonkinese breed:

Burmese GM2 Gangliosidosis

*Burmese Head Defect

*Burmese Hypokalaemia

*Progressive Retinal Atrophy (rdAc)

*Pyruvate Kinase Deficiency (PKDef)

**Currently required to register active males under the Tonkinese Registration Policy*