

## THE EARLY YEARS OF THE RAGDOLLS

by Laura & Denny Dayton

November 1969 was our first introduction to the Ragdolls. And from that time on, we were destined to become breeders of these magnificent felines. A pair was acquired from Ann Baker and the male was named Buddy (Bud) and the female was Rosie (Rose). We appropriately penned the Cattery name Blossom-Time, carrying various names of flowers, herbs or living plants for all subsequent breeders. It served us well.

Early history and trials and tribulations are contained in the Ragdoll Club's Newsletter by volume. Further details are available by referring to the attached documents.

The breed has had many "ups & downs" in pursuit of being accepted in the various association. The learning curve as novice breeders seemed almost unsurmountable to gain any recognition. However, with persvrance and the growing number of breeders, slowly but surely, attitudes about the Ragdolls did change. The biggest obstacle was the bias from different associations regarding some of the claims by Baker, who did not believe in the show circuits. And there were questions to be answered about the origination of the breed which was difficult to trace as Baker kept everything in her head.

The obvious first step was to document whatever was furnished to a genetic chart. The "hand made" chart we created started to grow and grow as new breeders surfaced. As it became almost unmangeable, Charlie Myers consented to bring it all up to date on the computer. As a result, his authoritative manual is detailed to the extent that it has the distinction of being able to trace any legitimate Ragdoll back to the founding stock, which is availble world wide.

We felt that Ragdoll owners, however few there were at the time, needed to band together and as a result of a CFF show in Ohio, 1975, ten pet owners, Blanche Herman, a breeder and me participated. The final outcome, was we were granted championship breeder and I participated in the show. The final outcome, was we were granted championship status in all patterns, the first active association to do so. With this great excitement, generated by CFF, we immediately founded the Ragdoll Club in Ohio in 1975.

The beauty of the Ragdolls started to roll and "snowballed" in some cases as there was a high demand for kittens. Even with this success, there were times of financial stress due to litigation with Baker over the the authenticity of the cats. Much credit goes to Bob Trubey, who was a true "Angel" watching over the development of the breed, lend-support in different times of need.

Certainly, no one person has been responsible for the popularity of the breed, but homage must be paid to all that has spent so much time and money, bonding together to help within the confines of the Ragdoll Club, to be in a high esteem in the Cat Fancy today.

Laura and I felt that it was time for others to carry on. We hope that with our limited knowledge of the breed, others will keep breeding to the high standards of the breed. Consequently, the bulk of our breed stock was sold in England. Thus, the first Ragdolls were introduced in the United Kingdom.