



Karen Lawrence - A Biography

British born, and now a citizen of Canada, Karen Lawrence was introduced to the cat fancy in 1971 when she acquired her first cat, a blue point Himalayan. After her first cat show, and a few rosettes, she was hooked. Additional breeds followed over the years – American Shorthair, Oriental, Ocicat, Persian, Maine Coon Cat, Singapura and American Curly – but her life changed significantly when she acquired her first Abyssinian in 1979. Since that first Aby arrived, the breed has had a strong clutch on her heart. Numerous Grand Champions and Grand Premiers in several breeds have been bred/shown under the Tailsend cattery name

After years of club participation, show management, and handling of CFA's public relations efforts in Canada, Karen applied to the Cat Fanciers' Association (CFA) judging program and began her judging career in 1995. Twenty-five years later, she has judged at cat shows around the world, in nineteen countries, retiring in 2020.

In 1994, Karen began working with a group dedicated to giving CFA a social presence online through development of the first edition of the CFA web site. Once the site was launched, in the fall of 1995, she became the webmaster and was responsible for content, growth and maintenance of the site over the next 15 years.

Early in the 1990s, Karen discovered the joy of locating historical cat fancy artifacts, and through that she discovered the CFA Foundation which preserves the history of the Cat Fancy. A strong supporter of the Foundation, Karen was appointed to their Board of Directors in 2006 and assisted in the setup and design of the Feline Historical Museum in Alliance, Ohio during 2010-2011. In 2012, she took over management of the museum. Several

times over the past years, she has taken the museum on the road to shows, often driving across the United States and back to attend a large show and exhibit museum artifacts.

Through the CFA Foundation's work, she was instrumental in the development of the highly popular web site, The History Project, found at cat-o-pedia.org. She contributes to and maintains that site to this day.

A prolific writer, she has had over 75 articles published in various magazines and the CFA Yearbook. She is currently going back to her cat fancy roots and writing an in-depth, historical book about the first century of the Abyssinian breed.

Karen also wrote the training manual that guided trainees through the judging program along with Rachel Anger. Also, under the JPC Chair Jo Ann Cummings, put the breed presentations into cohesive and presentable Powerpoints, and later on put together the Exotic and Persian head type/structure Powerpoint presentation.