

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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 competing at her first cat show, and winning a few rosettes, she was hooked. Additional breeds followed over the years – American Shorthair, Oriental, Ocicat, Persian, Maine Coon, 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 have been bred/shown under the Tailsend cattery name.

After years of club participation and show management, Karen joined 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 19 countries, and retired as a judge on December 31, 2020. The CFA Board of Directors elevated her to Judge Emeritus status.

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 finding historical cat fancy artifacts online, and through that she discovered the CFA Foundation which had been organized in 1990 to preserve the history of the Cat Fancy. Always on the lookout for interesting items, Karen began a personal collection of old cat books and other interesting trophies, medals and photographs.

Always a strong supporter of the CFA Foundation, Karen was appointed to their Board of Directors in 2006, and during 2010-2011 assisted the Foundation in the setup and design of the Feline Historical Museum in Alliance, Ohio. In May 2012, she took over the management position of the museum, and has been responsible for the growth of the museum ever since. She has even taken the museum on the road to shows, often



The author relaxes with Gigi, a ruddy Abyssinian, after judging a show in China during the fall of 2016.

driving across the United States and back to attend a large show and exhibit museum artifacts.

Through the CFA Foundation's work, she became associated with John Smithson and together they developed the highly popular web site, The History Project ([www.cat-o-pedia.org](http://www.cat-o-pedia.org)), which explores individual cat stories and breed development from an historical perspective.

A prolific writer, she has had over 75 articles published in various magazines and the *CFA Yearbook*, and is currently a contributing columnist for the *Felis Historica* magazine. She was a co-author of the CFA Judges' Association Training Manual for persons working their way through the CFA Judging Program. She is the proud holder of several medals awarded her by the Cat Writers' Association. In addition, she was editor of an online magazine, *Fanc-e-Mews*, for 10 years. She has returned to her early cat fancy roots in the writing of this book about the Abyssinian breed.