

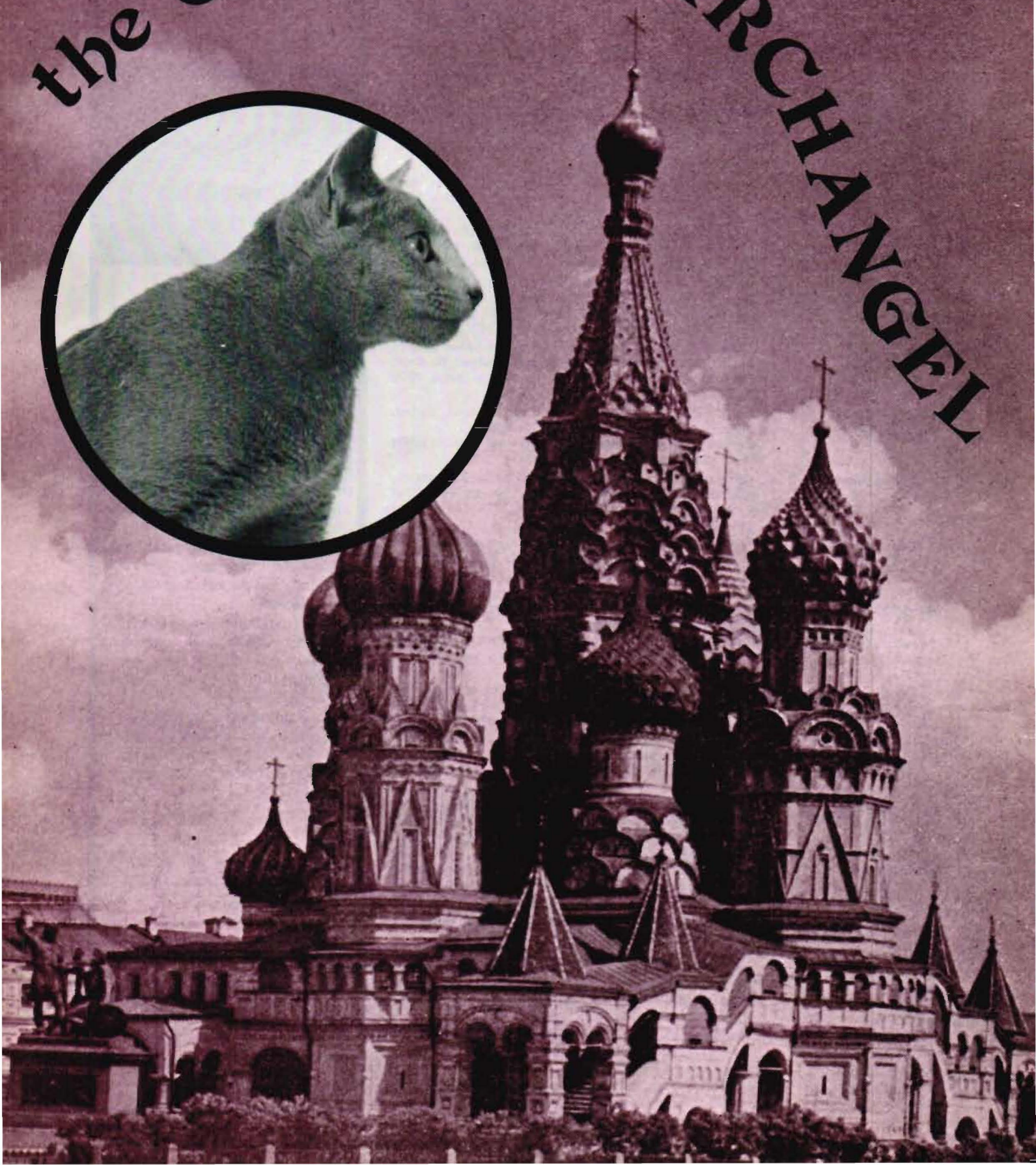
APRIL
1979
NUMBER XXIV

ALL CATS



Stanley Dyer

the CAT FROM ARCHANGEL





GR. CH. SERESHKA SHAZAM
(male)
Br/Ow: G. & K. Bartelmes

...The Russian Blue



“HERE COME THE RUSSIAN BLUES”

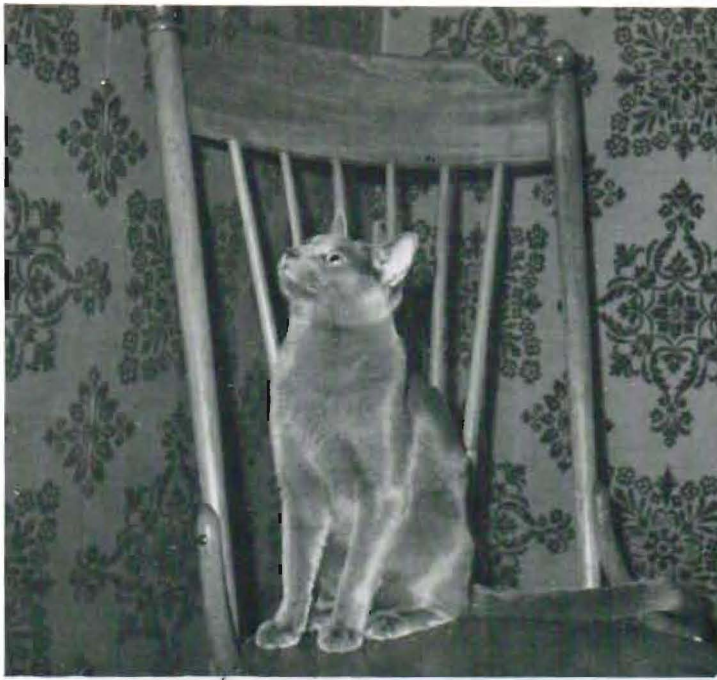
By William Palmer

MR. PALMER IS A WELL-KNOWN BREEDER AND EXHIBITOR OF RUSSIAN BLUES. HIS HI-LINE CATTERY HAS PRODUCED MANY GRAND CHAMPION RUSSIAN BLUES.

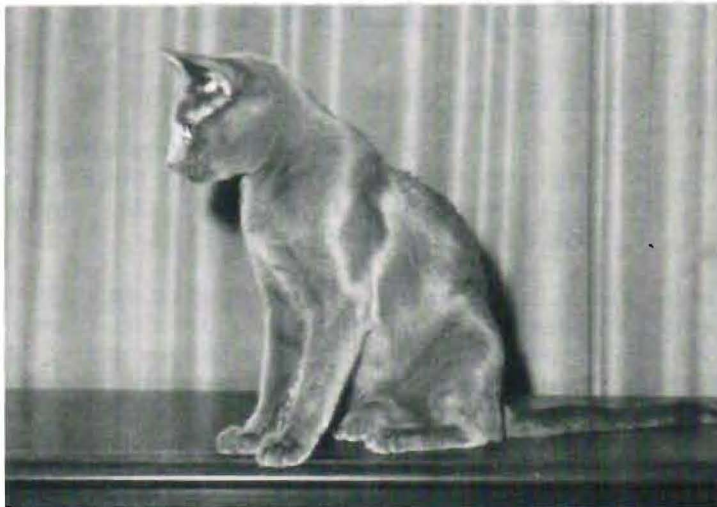
honestly believe the Russian Blue has made a greater impact on the world of Show Cats in the last ten years than has any other breed. Proof of this fact is in the summary of the show reports of the cat shows held in different parts of the country where Russian Blues are now appearing more and more frequently among the top Cats in show.

The actual reason for this sudden emergence of a minority breed that heretofore had gained little recognition is due to the diligence of the Russian Blue breeders themselves. They are producing a new, beautiful, improved model of an old breed which fits the modern show standard well and is being accepted as such by cat fanciers and judges alike the world over. The most important thing about this new improved model is that it is finally becoming more uniform. This new uniformity makes it much easier for a judge when judging the class against the Russian Blue show standard because the two are now more comparable.

This new popularity of the Russian Blue is due primarily to the breeders' improving the body and head type, coat color and, perhaps, most important, the eye color thereby creating a more symmetrical and beautiful cat.



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Top Left GR. CH. FESENBAD'S CZARVITCH-YURIC. Br/Ow: A. Fesenfeld & R. Bradshaw
Top Right GR. CH. SERESHKA SALARIKA (female)
center CH. FESENBAD'S CZAREVNA LILLIA. Br/Ow: A. Fesenfeld & R. Bradshaw
Bottom Left CH. FELINEST CZAR TARAS. Br: Peg O'Boyle – Ow: A Fesenfeld & R. Bradshaw
Bottom Right GR. CH. SERESHKA SALARIKA (female)

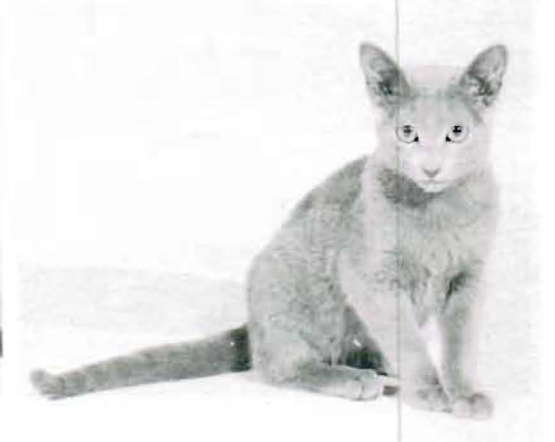
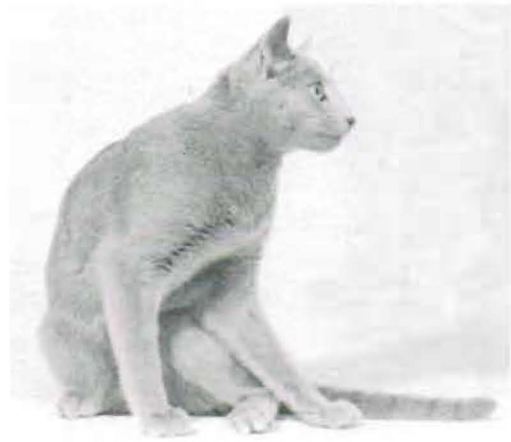


The Russian Blue is actually a natural breed of cat. It was not created by man as were the Havana Brown and Himalayan, nor is it a mutation such as the Rex or Manx. The Russian Blue evolved, developed, and survived in the Arctic and sub-Arctic forests of Northern Russia. In order to survive in such a harsh environment, it was necessary for them to develop their senses of sight, hearing and smell to a very high degree. Add to this the fact that they are by nature extremely fast, intelligent, and well coordinated, and it is easy to see how they survived among arctic predators.

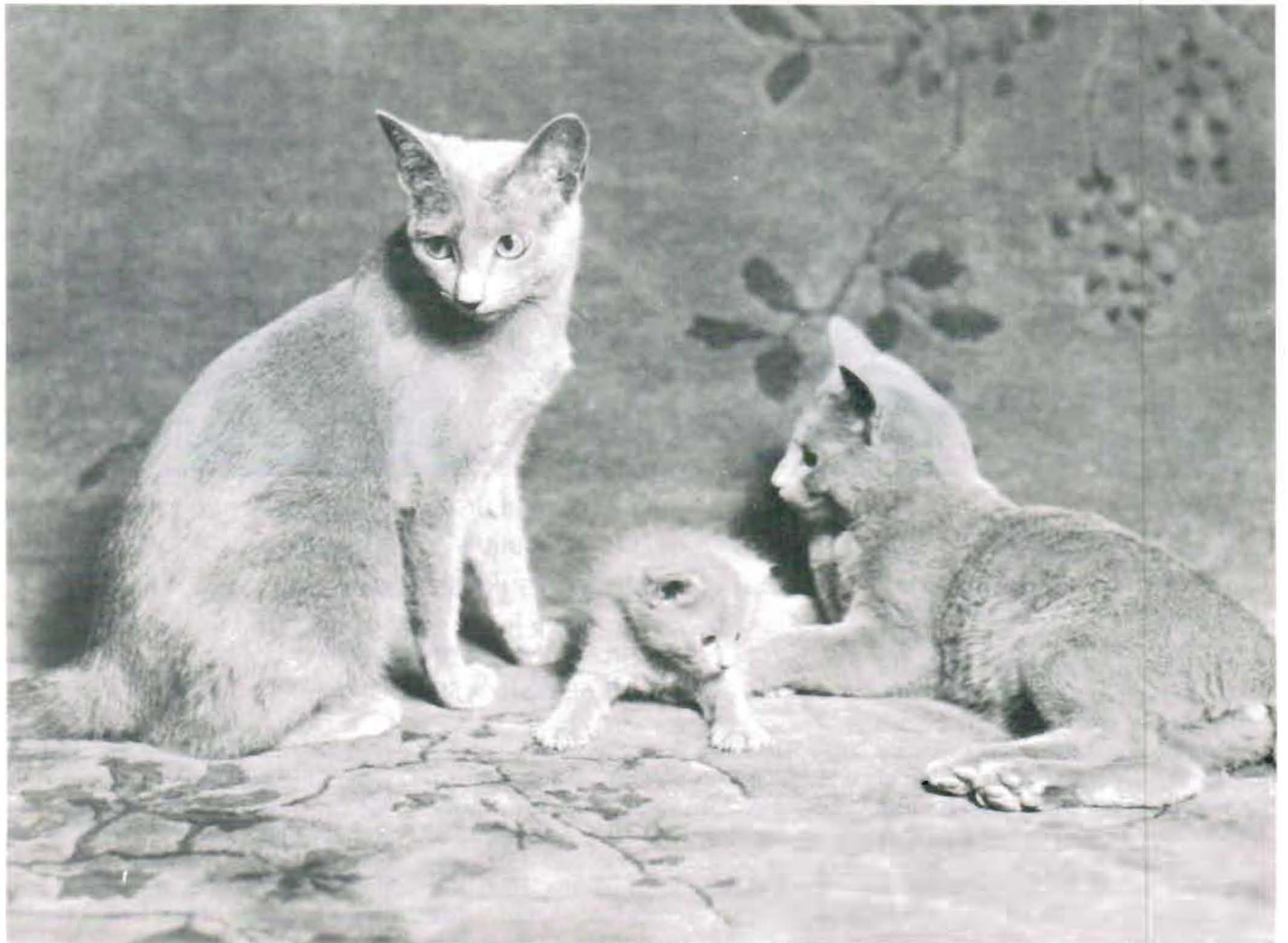
- Top Left* GR. CH. TSAR BLU'S ZABRIELLE (fem). Br/Ow: Donna J. Fuller
- Top center* GR. CH. TSAR BLU'S ZORIAN GREY (male)
- Top Right* GR. CH. SERESHKA SHAZAM (male)
- Bottom Left* GR. CH. TSAR BLU'S ZSA ZSA (female).
(PHOTO: MARV WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY)
- Bottom right* GR. CH. SERESHKA SHAZAM (male)

The harsh arctic winters caused the Russian Blue's plush, double coat to develop into a distinct protective mechanism. The inner coat is composed of short, dense hair that provides insulation from the cold; the outer coat consists of longer, stiff guard hairs to provide a protective

shell for the inner coat and to repel water, dirt and snow, thereby keeping the cat warm and dry. The coat of a Russian Blue feels as if you were running a silk scarf through your hands; the feel of the coat is unlike that of any other breed of cat. Upon examination, noting the thick, close-lying



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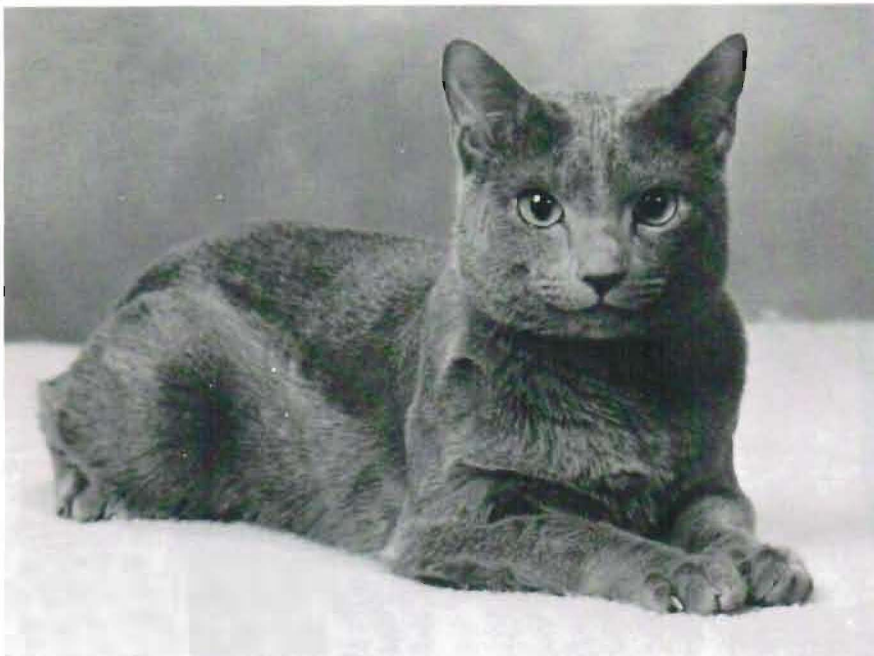


Top

GR. CH. VELVA'S COBALT BARON OF TSAR BLU (male). Br: Diana Doernberg — Ow. D. J. Fuller.
(PHOTO: HERITAGE STUDIO)

Bottom

RUSSIAN BLUE KITTENS BRED BY D. J. FULLER.
(PHOTO: HERITAGE STUDIO)



undercoat and abundance of darker guard hairs with their gleaming silver tips reveals that the Russian Blue's coat looks like the coat of no other breed as well having a somewhat speckled appearance due to the silver tipping as opposed to an all over sameness of color. So, contrary to common belief, the Russian Blue is not a solid color cat and should neither be judged as one, nor bred to become one.

Changes in temperature cause the density of the Russian Blue coat to change. Similarly, changes in the length of the days and the intensity of our natural daylight affect the distribution and amount of silver tipping in the coat. One of the reasons the Russian Blue of today doesn't have the thick double coat of his ancestors is that most of them are kept indoors in artificially heated and lighted rooms; this upsets the natural biological rhythms which govern the Russian Blue's coat cycle. In judging Russian Blues in the warmer months allowances should be made for the darker, thinner coat which is not the expected plush coat; it is merely a seasonal change. So, as the seasons come and go, so do thick, silvery coats; however, the type and eye color remain more or less constant usually depending upon the condition and health of the cat.

As for type, the Russian Blue body should be fine bones, long, lithe, and graceful in outline and carriage. The legs are long and the paws are small with slightly rounded toes, five in front and four behind. The tail is long but is in proportion to the body. The head should be slightly long and the top of skull flat. The medium long nose is straight. Ears are rather large and wide at the base with tips more pointed than rounded. Eyes are set wide apart, aperture rounded in shape, and as *green* as possible.

The Russian Blue has been called "The Archangel Cat" and "Foreign Blue." It is one of the oldest recognized breeds of cats known today. In Northern Russia, the beautiful blue cats were trapped for their plush double coats which made excellent furpieces. It is believed they were brought by sailors from the Archangel Isle off the coast of Russia to England and Scandinavia, where rumor has it they were the direct descendants of the Royal Cat of the Czars of Russia.

It wasn't until 1880 that the first Russian Blue was exhibited in England. The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy changed the name of the "Archangel Cats" to "Foreign

- Top Left GR. CH. SERESHKA LONG JOHN SILVER AT 4 MONTHS (male)
- Top Right GR. CH. SERESHKA ALAKAZAM OF KITTAY (male)
- Center Left GR. CH. SERESHKA SAVOIR-FAIRE (male)
- Middle GR. CH. SERESHKA SAVOIR-FAIRE (male)
- Center Right GR. CH. SERESHKA SALARIKA AT 4 MONTHS (female)
- Bottom RUSSIAN BLUE FAMILY — SERESHKA CATTERY SEATTLE, WA, — GEOFFRYE & KATHLEEN BARTELMES.



Blues.” The first Russian Blue was imported to the United States in 1888 and the first was registered in 1900. Russian Blues were first shown in London in 1902, and, according to the journals of the Cat Fancy of England, Queen Victoria was the proud owner of two of the earliest ones. It wasn’t

Top Left GR. CH. VELVA’S COBALT BARON OF TSAR BLU AT 5 MONTHS.
(PHOTO: HERITAGE STUDIO)

Top Right GR. CH. TSAR BLU’S TSARGAZER (male). Br: D. J. Fuller
— Ow: Lee Ann Peck

Bottom Left GR. CH. TSAR BLU’S ZSA ZSA (female).

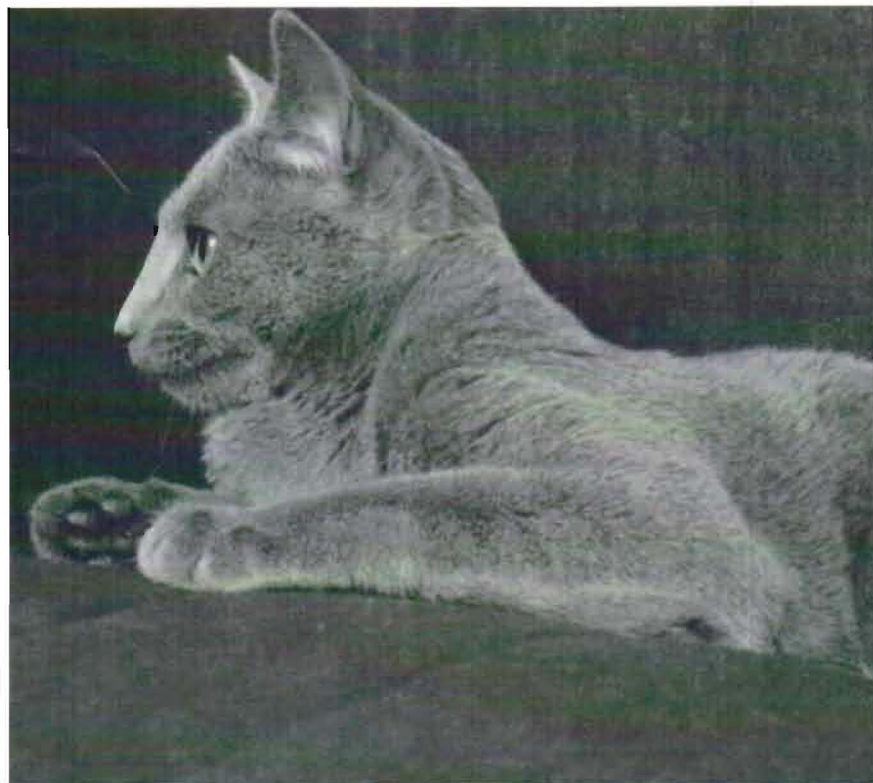
Bottom Right GR. CH. TSAR BLU’S FITZWILLIAM (male).
(PHOTO: MARV WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY)

until 1944 that they were first shown in Denmark. In the United States the majority of the Russian Blues (from which all of our Russian Blues are descended) were imported here following World War II.

In England (because of World War II) there was a lack of breeders available to continue the breed; so, some fanciers used the British Blue, or Blue Domestic, in their breeding programs. In Scandinavia, faced with the same problem, the breeders there found they could use the old round-headed, short-nosed, heaved-boned Blue Point Siamese in the same manner. The result was that two different types of Russian Blues were being imported: the rounder headed, extremely plush-coated cats from the English lines, and the thinner coated, sleeker, wide-eared cats with better type and eye color from the Scandinavian lines. Since shows would produce two different types of Russian Blues in the same class, it was very confusing to both judges and fanciers alike as to which one fit the show standard best. After many years of frustration, some Russian Blue breeders found that the best type was the result of breeding both the English and Scandinavian lines together thereby producing a new improved model which fit the show standard better; this also produced more uniformity in the breed. Crossing these two "lines" also produced improved fertility and larger litters. All of these things have been motivating factors in this new tremendous growth and acceptance of the breed.

The Russian Blue is a strong healthy breed of cat which is easy to raise. They are ideal cats for apartment dwellers because of their quiet, shy nature and clean habits. They are fun loving without being destructive and *very* affectionate. Sometimes at the cat shows, older spectators stop and ask if my Russian Blues are the same as the Blue Maltese. I simply ask them to look closely at my cats and form their own opinion. After looking for a few minutes, they usually say, "Well, they are both blue cats, but the ones you call Russian Blues in the cage here look different; they have a regal bearing, silver tipped coat and OH! those deep green eyes. NO! The Maltese never looked that good!"

I believe if we were at a race track where they were running cats instead of horses or dogs, you would hear the track announcer say in the home-stretch, "HERE COME THE RUSSIAN BLUES."



GR. CH. SERESHKA ADIMI OF SUNTAR (female)