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Bringing Zoo News and Zoo Views to Zoo Lovers from Calgary Zoological Garden and Dinosaur Park

## THE STORY OF TONGA A Pet Lynx

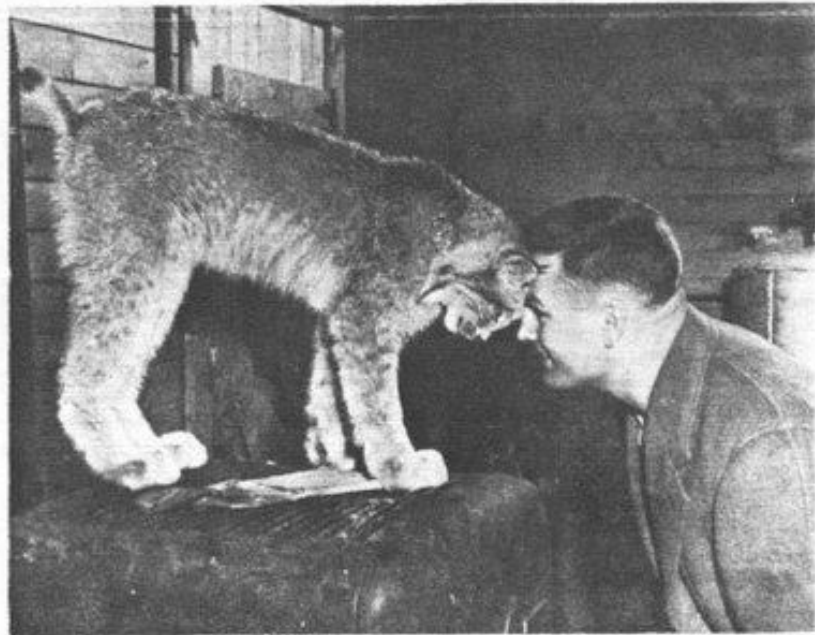
Tonga was born somewhere in the deep woods of the Lac La Biche country in mid June of 1953. Indians had killed his mother and his one brother and sister and presented him to lumberman Bob Turnbull, who in turn decided it might make quite a gift for his animal loving wife Jan.

Soon after Tonga arrived in Edmonton, I received a call from Jan Turnbull requesting directions on how to feed and handle a two-week-old lynx kitten. He was then readily feeding from a bottle on a mixture of half canned milk and water, with cod liver oil and other vitamins added. Mrs. Turnbull was only able to look after him for a short time. Then she very kindly presented me with this unusual pet.

At that time Tonga was no larger than a half grown house cat but much longer in the legs. With his thick teddy-bear like fur, he looked for all the world like a live toy. He was still plainly spotted, much like a fawn or young cougar. His short two-inch tail had a black tip, as had his ears, and his face was always a picture of the sweetest innocence and gentleness.

It was my belief that any wild cat could be more easily tamed if housed with a couple of domestic cats that never, ever exhibited any fear of people, and frequently craved affection and attention from humans. Our small kittens, Seelie and Oscar, were made to order for the job. Tonga wasn't at all backward about making up to them and in short time was playing and bossing them with gusto.

Tonga had the run of our yard and was actually free to go where he chose during the day. At nights he was always quartered in the pump



"TOUCHING" LOVE

house with Oscar and Seelie. The dogs never bothered him and he took very little notice of them but always seemed, even at that tender age, to discern the presence of strange dogs. If the strange dogs appeared to be threatening in the least, our lynx would soon be up the nearest tree or post. However, many times he would climb just for the fun of it, and frequently took bad falls from tree tops, but never suffered any serious effects from these sudden descents.

His tree climbing activities are still interesting to note. He will move straight up a tree with great speed, play about the springier top branches for a while and then, either come down in a series of leaps from branch to branch, or leap to an adjoining

tree and move down the main trunk like a cub bear . . . rear end first. He is now exceptionally agile in the trees and almost daring, frequently taking great leaps from high branches but we have never observed him to slip or fall during the past few months.

Tonga has had a host of activities to keep himself occupied with, while still a boy. He has countless wonderful hours stalking and chasing the hens and in turn being chased by Captain, the huge Jersey White Giant rooster. Surprisingly, as yet he has never killed a hen or even harmed one in any way. He seems quite content to have his fun scaring the simple old biddies and springing out at them from a favorite ambush.

When still very much of a kitten, Tonga was particularly fond of stalking one of my four pet ravens. The others hearing the alarm note of the stalked raven, would immediately come to the rescue and chase Tonga all over the lawn and finally into the nearest covert. The ravens would not fly at him, but race wobbily over the ground after him. What a sight that was . . . with four shrieking and croaking ravens in raucous chorus, and the sweet little face of the lynx peering mischievously from the thicket. Disney could not have asked for better!

People making the acquaintance of Tonga for the first time are always impressed with his loud purr. He never ceases his purring as long as he is being held or petted. Also, strangers are amazed at his extremely affectionate manners and the docility of his nature. Most unlike the wild cat one usually imagines . . . hissing, clawing and spitting. Tonga just purrs and pets.

When strange dogs enter the yard Tonga immediately arches his back and stands on guard. His side whiskers, so distinctly those of a lynx, stand out . . . and almost seem to fan out. It is only when the lynx is aroused and sense some danger that the whiskers stand out. He will occasionally give a short chase after a stray dog and has several times slapped at them with bared claws . . . enough to make Fido yelp and head for the next county! Our own three dogs ignore the lynx and he treats them likewise. It seems to be case of familiarity but nevertheless also one of mutual respect.

The vocal efforts of a Canada lynx have always been recounted with considerable inaccuracy in various naturalist writings. Besides a very audible motor-like purr, our lynx can emit a short barklike noise, similar to the yap of a small Pekinese dog, and during the mating season of early March, he would frequently give forth loud weird vells, that sounded for all the world like some youngster being, or about to be, strangled. When my wife or I enter his sleeping quarters at night, or first thing in the morning, he will immediately bound forth and emit a soft plaintive whimper. This appears to be a sound of recognition and affection.

Another fascinating trick that Tonga loves to perform, is to get on the top of a fence post or on an old heater and head-butt any person who challenges him with lowered cranium.



SPARRING PARTNERS

He will meet you head on with considerable force, and reminds one of a small goat atop a rock, keeping his playmate at check with a lowered head the minute you lower yours and attempt to approach his pedestal.

Tonga is a reasonably well behaved cat in the house. Frequently when guests are at our home and ask to see this famous character, we bring Tonga inside and he roams about the house, purring and investigating all new faces there. Invariably he will spring on to the bed or chesterfield and recline there in full feline majesty, for all the world like a Prince of Cats. The wolf rug on our living room floor has always held an attraction for him. However, after he demolished the ears on it, he just hasn't the same interest for it. He will play, as will the ordinary house cat, with a small ball or old light bulb, batting it about with his huge paws and jumping over it.

During the day Tonga has the run of our three-acre yard and can visit the neighbors, or anyone else whenever he pleases; but he always stays quite close to home. We confine him at night only, for fear that he might wander to the main roadway and be struck by a speeding auto. He has no fear of cars, and loves to ride through towns in ours. The only drawback with that is that he attracts so many onlookers that one has a great deal of trouble making headway with his intended shopping or

business. Tonga doesn't mind, however, he simply thrives on attention.

Tonga has been described as a "live toy". For this fluffy furred feline beauty looks very much like the Teddy Bear of the Cat Family. He has a unique and inimitable personality, that has never ceased to delight us, and his every movement and pose are a study in symmetry and relaxed perfection. Combine this with a most remarkable and tender disposition, and you readily understand and appreciate our love for one of Canada's most unique pets.—A. F. Oeming, President, Edmonton Zoologica! Society.

## Newcomers to Calgary Zoo

Added to the finch collection are Lady Gouldians, Shaftails, English Green finch, Cuban Olive, Star finch. To the bird collection also come English Blackbirds, Thrushes, Shama Thrush and California, Button and Japanese Quail and Bob White. Our first baby of 1955 was an Aoudad born on January 29th.

The California Sea Lions now have their outside pool heated with electric heaters. These appear to function well, but in sub-zero weather the co-operation of the sea lions is needed. This they gladly give, swimming in and out, thus "pumping" the warmer water from the inner pool to the outer pool and vice versa; thus keeping the water in constant motion.

## JOHN KANERVA AND HIS WORK AT THE ZOO

The world famous dinosaur park at St. George's Island owes its inception to the interest of some of the early founders of the Zoological Society in the prehistoric animals of this world of ours.

Dr. O. H. Patrick was at that time president of the society. He together with one or more of the directors engaged an Estonian artist to draw the pictures from which the first models were made. The necessary information for this work was received from such world renowned paleontologists as Mr. Charles Sternberg, of the National Museum, Ottawa, Dr. Barnum Brown of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, Dr. Russel, Curator of Toronto Museum, Dr. W. E. Swinton of the British Museum and Dr. Charles Gilmore of the United States National Museum, Washington, D.C. They also received pamphlets containing pictures and descriptions of these animals from the Hagenbeck Zoo, Hamburg, Germany.

Mr. Charles Biel, famous sculptor of Banff, made the first small models. Then Mr. Biel assisted by Mr. J. Kanerva started making the life-sized models, which are made of concrete moulded over wire mesh frames.

It wasn't long before Mr. Kanerva took over the project altogether. Mr. Kanerva was a painter and wood carver by trade, but soon proved his ability to model the life-sized replicas.

Today our Dinosaur exhibit is the best of its kind to be seen anywhere. Due to the artistry and ability of Mr. Kanerva the replicas are life-like and as scientifically accurate as it is possible to have them.

The most recent project, now nearly complete, is a series of four horses showing the development of the horse from a fox-sized creature up to the horse of glacial times, a horse much like the horse of today, only much smaller.

Before spring, Mr. Kanerva expects to have ready for display, a life size model of a Sabre-Toothed Tiger.

The backgrounds, or painted backdrops, in the Fossil House are also Mr. Kanerva's work.

In No. 1 Fossil House the scene depicts a fossil hunter's camp in the Bad Lands of the Red Deer River. The men are shown at work excavating the skeleton of a dinosaur. For the sake of pictorial display a whole skeleton is shown, whereas, in actual



MR. KANERVA DISCUSSES "DEFENCE" WITH ARMY AND AIR FORCE

practice only a portion of a skeleton is unearthed at a time.

No. 2 Fossil House contains the type of display found only in the larger museums of America. On the shelves at the front, are the remains or fossils of the prehistoric creatures. The painted back-drop shows what the creatures were like when they were living animals.

The first panel on the east side is a composite picture of marine life during early Paleozoic times. It shows trilobites and two species of Ammonites, as well as slow moving crustaceans, related to the modern King Crab, only much larger. The fish with the open jaw was of a kind that sometimes grew to a length of twenty-five feet.

The next panel depicts the amphibians of a Permian Swamp. These are the "sail lizards", *Demetrodon* and *Naosaurus* (*Edaphosaurus*). No one knows what the sails were used for. Replicas of these queer creatures are to be seen just west of the Fossil House.

The next panel is of that time in the Mesozoic Era when the dinosaurs were the predominating form of life, in the swamps as well as on land. Here the artist has pictured *Paleoscinus*, the armored dinosaur that was safe from such flesh eaters as *Gorgo-*

*saurus*. *Chasmosaurus* had a heavy bony collar as its means of protection. In the swamp were duckbill dinosaurs like *Corythosaurus* and *Gryposaurus*. Life size replicas of all these types are to be seen near the Fossil Houses.

*Pteranodon*, the flying reptile, belongs to this group, and to the same geologic time. As yet we have no replica of *Pteranodon*.

The west panel illustrates the era when many types of queer (to us) mammals were found on the land surface of the earth. Of those pictured in this group we have replicas of the Mammoth and the *Titanotherium*.

The long necked Llama-like creature was called *Macrauchenias*.

Here too, on the west panel, are the ancestors of the beaver and the horse, living in a temperate upland climate along with the true birds and snakes. In these four panels Mr. Kanerva has depicted the four great Eons or Eras of the world's development:

First—the Paleozoic, or Age of Mollusks and Fishes.

Second—the Later Paleozoic, or Age of Amphibians.

Third—the Mesozoic, or Age of Reptiles.

Fourth—the Cenozoic, or Age of Mammals.

(Continued next page)

## JOHN KANERVA AND HIS WORK *(Continued from previous page)*

We are indebted also to Mr. Kanerva for the Facade or Mural on the front of Number One Fossil House. This bas relief mural shows an incident in the life of the cave man as he flees, towards his home, from the attack of a sabre-toothed tiger. The animals in the background are Mammoths and a prehistoric buffalo. This is a remarkable piece of work, especially so, since it is all done in cement, and then painted.

### Mr. Axel Reventlow

Since the last number of "The Honker" was issued, we, and all zoo-minded people, have lost a very good friend, namely Mr. A. Reventlow, Curator and Director of the Copenhagen Zoo.

His sudden death has deprived us of one of the leaders within the Zoo World. Mr. Reventlow was considered a Dean of Zoo leaders, as he has been able to breed many different birds and animals in captivity, that no one else has been able to do. However, Mr. Reventlow's work was not confined within the boundaries of his zoo. He travelled far and wide—to Africa, India, Australia, etc.—to get the specimens he wanted, and to study their habits and surroundings in their natural haunts, thus gaining knowledge that helped him make their surroundings in the zoo more homelike.

He was a friend of our zoo, and willingly and often exchanged specimens with us.

He will be missed by many—not least by the many guests from all over the world, who gathered in Copenhagen last summer for the International Zoo Convention, and who were so royally entertained by both Mr. and Mrs. Reventlow.

### News from European Zoos

By RAY DAWSON, F.Z.S.  
MANCHESTER ZOO

Received at Belle Vue, Manchester: Polar bear, Aurora, from Brookfield Zoo; collection of Mud Skippers from West Africa; young female Black Rhino, brought from West Africa by Messrs. Leago & Bloom; young male Grevy Zebra, from East Africa; male Impala, from East Africa; one pair of Ostrich; Bateleur Eagle; one pair Crowned Cranes; three Leopard Tortoise. Last, but not least, the first pair of Gerenuk or Giraffe-Necked Gazelles to be exhibited in Europe.

Bristol Zoo has recently received a

fine pair of Lowland Gorillas, "Congo" and "Josephine," to replace the famous "Alfred" who lived in the Bristol Zoo from 1930 to 1948, and died at the age of 20 years.

Bristol has just completed a new Rhino House that is of novel design, and has also constructed a nocturnal bird house, complete with artificial moonlight. This appears to function well. Such nocturnal creatures as Kinkajou and Jerboas are very active at midday.

Chester Zoo has recently done much new landscaping including a new Rose Garden. They have also constructed a new beaver yard, Coypu pond, Himalayan Panda enclosure, Wapiti Wood and new breeding cages for Budgerigar. A new ape house is planned for the spring of 1955.

London has added to its wide range of exhibits by receiving an Otter-civet from Sumatra; North American Collared Lemming; a Gerenuk; a pair of White-Tailed Black Cockatoos; Grizzled-grey Tree Kangaroo; Tawny frogmouth, short toed Eagle, Geoffreys Cat and a pair of Tibetan Wolves.

In thanking Mr. Dawson for his interesting information, we would mention that he has a very fine collection of Zoo Guide books from around the world. Should "Honker" readers have spare copies of such books, we hope they will send them to Mr. Ray Dawson, 18 Reynolds Road, Old Trafford, Manchester 16, England.

Incidentally, Mr. Dawson relates that a pair of Golden Eagles have nested and raised young in Northern Ireland in 1953. This is the first time this has happened in this century.

### OUR ZOO IN WINTER

Most people go to the zoo more often in the summer than in the winter, many go there only in the summer. Just what is the zoo like in winter? How do the animals fare?

Did you ever go to a farm on a real cold, stormy, wintry day, and there go into a clean, cozy barn filled with cows? Have you felt the cosy atmosphere—outside the wind is howling, the snow blown hither and yon—but in here it is cozily warm. There is an aroma of clean hay, and the cows are contentedly chewing their cuds, and looking at you with placid, undisturbed looks, well tended, well fed, not in the slightest inconvenienced by the raging storm outside. It gives one a feeling of peace and contentment.

That is the way one feels when one goes to our zoo in winter. Whether you look at the hardier animals, who prefer to remain out in all kinds of weather, or you go inside in the well heated and ventilated houses, you here see contented animals. These, also, are well fed, well cleaned and cared for. They are kindly treated, and know it. None need battle the elements—none worry as to where the next meal is to come from.

Some of those that have been there for some time eagerly watch for the keepers. They know their steps and their voices. They do not shrink away from them but come to them willingly, to be fed or maybe, only to be petted.

In winter, even more than in summer, we think, the zoo is like a cozy home for the animals. Some day when you feel restless go down there and see for yourself.

Photos by Lorne Burkell, Bruno Enger, Alberta Government.

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