

Famous Felines

**Hamish
McHamish**

**St
Andrews
Fife
Scotland**

*(page checked
January 2026)*



Hamish, a long-haired ginger cat born in 1999, became well-known around the small Scottish town of St Andrews, noted for its university and celebrated as the home of golf. Owned by retired TV producer Marianne Baird, Hamish lived with her for a year or so in his youth; but after that he became more and more nomadic, often spending days away from home, so Marianne saw little of him, although she did still ensure that he had his annual health check and vaccinations.



Hamish McHamish
St Andrews' cat about town

Most of Hamish's time was spent around local businesses and shops, such as a hairdresser, estate agents, the Holy Trinity church, as well as university buildings and private homes; he always had plenty to eat and drink! The town has a large population of tourists and students who encountered Hamish over the years, and with the creation of a Hamish McHamish Facebook page his profile was raised further, with over 7500 Likes in September 2014 *(page no longer available)*. Visitors to the town would specifically seek him out to be photographed with him and

upload their pictures. Such was the interest from students, visitors and townsfolk that a book was written about him: *Hamish McHamish of St Andrews: Cool Cat about Town*, by Susan McMullan (*below left*). He appeared on BBC-TV's *The One Show* (2013) and in various newspaper articles, not only in the UK, and he also featured in a short segment of ITV's *The Secret Life of Cats* (2014).



On 30 November 2013, St Andrew's Day, and as part of the St Andrews Food & Drink Festival taking place at the time, an ice sculpture was created in the grounds of Holy Trinity Church in the town centre. It took the form of a fishing boat at sea with fish leaping ahead — and sitting at the prow was a representation of Hamish! The public could watch as the ice boat (named *Hamish*) was carved and took shape during the day, although the cat had been created beforehand. After dark the display was illuminated, and Hamish himself was taken to cast his eye over it.



November
2013



Hamish depicted in an ice sculpture at St Andrew

In January 2014 Hamish was chased up a tree by a couple of dogs, causing the Lord Provost of the county of Fife, Jim Leishman, to ask dog owners to keep their animals under control and on a lead when around the cat. 'We've got to protect the old boy. He's getting on,' said Jim. 'We've got to make sure he's not upset. He is Scotland's most iconic cat, after all.' Staff from the hairdressers, assisted by students, helped to recover the cat from the tree.



Hamish awaiting rescue from a tree, January 2014



From April 2014 there's been a permanent memorial to Hamish in the town, something that doesn't usually happen while animals are still alive. A public campaign was begun by Flora Selwyn, editor of the *St Andrews in Focus* magazine, to raise £5000 (around 8400 US dollars at the time) to honour the cat, and the target was soon reached. A bronze statue of Hamish, sculpted by David Annand, was unveiled in Logies Lane, where it stands on a stone plinth; the feline himself made a brief appearance at the ceremony.

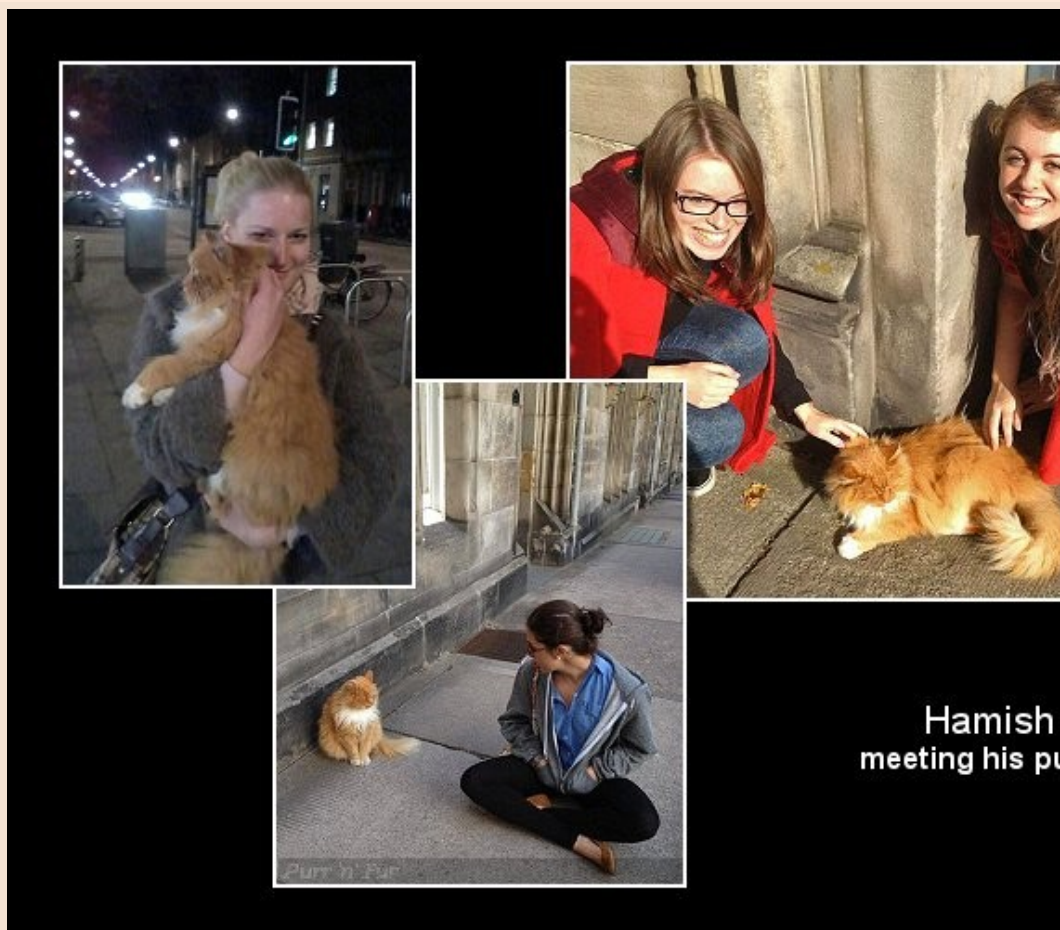


Sadly that was almost his swansong; a few months later, in early September 2014, Hamish contracted a chest infection that he was unable to shake off. Despite the best of care, things got worse, to the extent that on 11 September it was felt best to put him to sleep to avoid further suffering. He was much missed by the townsfolk and those that knew him — but at least there's still that memorial to a remarkable cat.



**Shops and businesses
in St Andrews were
regular ports of call
as Hamish did his rounds**





Links and further reading *(links checked January 2026)*

- ❖ Visit St Andrews: [Hamish McHamish](#). *(archived copy)*
- ❖ YouTube clip, Oct . 2012: [The Book Launch of the Famous St Andrews Cat](#) - with personal appearance by Hamish.
- ❖ Visit St Andrews, Oct 2012: [Hamish McHamish: Cool Cat about Town](#). *(archived copy)*
- ❖ STV, Oct 2012: [Book published about famous St Andrews town cat Hamish McHamish](#) - includes clip of Hamish and Marianne Baird. *(archived copy, but video didn't load)*
- ❖ Herald Scotland, Oct 2012: [On the trail of Hamish McHamish](#).
- ❖ Telegraph, Nov 2013: [Hamish McHamish: cat to be immortalised with £5,000 bronze statue](#).
- ❖ YouTube clip, Aug 2013: [Meow, Stroke & Purr](#).
- ❖ St Andrews Food & Drink Festival, Nov 2013: [St Andrew's Day Ice Sculpture](#). *(archived copy)*
- ❖ Courier, Jan 2014: [High jinks for famous ginger tom Hamish McHamish](#).
- ❖ Visit St Andrews, Mar 2014: [Behind the Statue of Hamish](#). *(archived copy)*
- ❖ YouTube clip, Apr 2014: [Statue Unveiling Ceremony](#) with two appearances by Hamish.
- ❖ Independent, Apr 2014: [Hamish McHamish: St Andrews cat honored with £5,000 statue](#).
- ❖ Courier, Sep 2014: [St Andrews cat Hamish McHamish is dead](#). *(pay wall)*
- ❖ STV, Sep 2014: [Famous St Andrews town cat Hamish McHamish dies in owner's arms](#) - includes video clip. *(archived copy, but no video)*
- ❖ Wikipedia: [Hamish McHamish](#).

Acknowledgements and thanks to [Chris C Ferguson](#) and [Susan McNaughton](#) *(not found)* at Flickr for their images used here (the latter has several more in her photostream of Hamish's statue) — take the links to see them full-sized.



Hamish



Hamish
December 2013

For other 'Cats about town' see [Featuring /Adventures & Travels 21 to 28;](#)
[Mini-Fragments 3 - Ludlow](#)

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