



LORT SMITH  
**2013**  
ANNUAL  
REPORT



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## OUR VISION

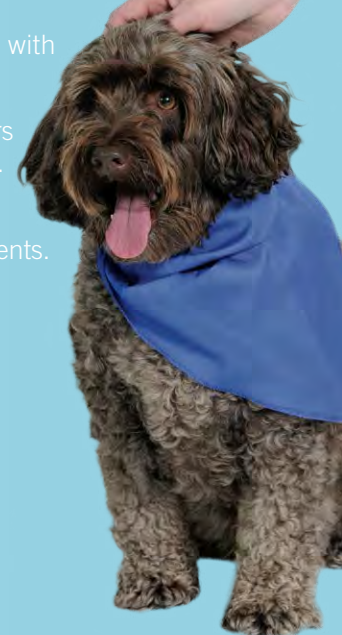
A world in which animals are respected and the human-animal bond is understood and valued.

## OUR MISSION

- > To provide quality care for lost, abandoned, mistreated, sick and injured animals.
- > To provide care for animals of people with limited means.
- > To promote responsible pet ownership.
- > To foster an awareness of animals and the benefits they bring.

## OUR VALUES

- > To be community focused, accountable to our members and sensitive to the needs of animals.
- > To be transparent in our governance.
- > To be dynamic, innovative and creative, demonstrating vitality, energy, enthusiasm and enjoyment in our task of working with animals and their relationship with people.
- > To be fair and ethical in all our dealings.
- > To be open to working in partnership with other organisations, individuals and corporations.
- > To raise and manage our resources with efficiency and transparency.
- > To have a team of staff and volunteers filled with passion and compassion.
- > To create a safe environment for all our staff, clients, volunteers and patients.



# SNAPSHOT OF ACHIEVEMENTS

ON AVERAGE 28 EMERGENCIES PER DAY

## MANAGEMENT



52 INITIATIVES DELIVERED  
51 PROCESSES, PROCEDURES  
& POLICIES DOCUMENTED

FOSTER CARE  
503  
ANIMALS FOSTERED  
3,147  
DAYS OF FOSTER CARE

69 NURSES CARED  
FOR AN AVERAGE  
OF 50 PATIENTS  
PER DAY

45 VETS PERFORMED:

37,918 CONSULTS  
7,675 EMERGENCY CONSULTS  
6,260 SURGERIES



## BUILDING SERVICES

2,000 service  
tasks completed

ETHICS COMMITTEE Australia's  
first ever veterinary hospital clinical  
Ethics Committee established

## VOLUNTEERS

145 NEW VOLUNTEERS  
550 VOLUNTEERS OVERALL

## SHELTER



2,181 ANIMALS HELPED  
908 ANIMALS FOUND NEW HOMES



MARKETING  
84% INCREASE IN FACEBOOK  
FAN BASE

## CHAPLAIN

2,131  
FAMILIES SUPPORTED  
THROUGH GRIEF



## IT 1,843

SERVICE DESK REQUESTS  
COMPLETED. NEW ENTERPRISE  
SERVERS INSTALLED, WITH NO  
MATERIAL DOWNTIME

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
9,600  
CALLS RECEIVED  
PER MONTH

## NURSING

18,755 NURSING APPOINTMENTS  
15,067 HOSPITAL CHARTS COMPLETED  
6,613 SEDATIONS AND ANAESTHETICS MONITORED

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I AM VERY PLEASED TO DELIVER THE 2013 LORT SMITH ANIMAL HOSPITAL ANNUAL REPORT. JOIN ME, AS WE LOOK BACK AND SHARE THE MILESTONES OUR ORGANISATION HAS ACHIEVED.

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Over the past financial year the Board has continued to work towards strengthening the foundational structures of Lort Smith, and I am happy to report that the operational and organisational processes are now in good shape. This has been a large focus over the past few years and it is great to begin reaping the rewards after this concerted and strategic effort.

I refer all members to the finance commentary in this report for a detailed synopsis of the results for the past financial year.

In 2013 the Board and Executive Management Team concentrated on updating the organisational strategic plan. This has informed our ongoing work and allowed us to continue master planning to ensure we build for Lort Smith's future.

This will continue to be a focus for the Management Team as we progress through 2014 and prepare and plan for Lort Smith's future service requirements.

We are nothing without our dedicated staff and I would like to thank everyone for their massive contribution, both in man hours and with the never-ending love and care for our animals.

In 2013, our 45 vets performed 45,593 consultations and 6,260 surgeries, ensuring the very best of care is accessible to all pet owners, regardless of financial status. Our 69 nurses assisted the vets providing care for an average of 50 patients per day and completed 18,755 nursing appointments.

In the shelter our Animal Welfare Officers helped 2,181 animals including surrenders and adoptions, wildlife care and emergency boarding. All this assistance and care for animals would not be possible without our amazing team of 550 volunteers who continued to provide much-needed support across the hospital. They are a truly devoted team of people.

I have had the pleasure to work with the Board throughout the year and would like to thank every Board member for their commitment and endeavours in providing guidance and governance to Lort Smith.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of our CEO, Liz Walker, and her fantastic Management Team who have worked tirelessly throughout the year to ensure that Lort Smith continues to deliver high standards of care to animals in the most effective manner possible.

I would also like to acknowledge our ambassadors who do a fantastic job of promoting Lort Smith Animal Hospital, and our regard for animal welfare: Giaan Rooney, Dr Sally Cockburn and Peter Hitchener.

The generous support we receive each year from donors, bequestors, community fundraising, workplace giving and corporate supporters never ceases to amaze me. This vital support allows us to run our full range of programs, assisting more animals and members of the community. Thank you to all who have supported Lort Smith throughout the year.

I hope you enjoy reading about all the activities and programs Lort Smith undertakes in delivering care to the animals, and helping those people for whom animals mean so much.

*Glenister Lamont, President*





# A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

THE MEANING OF THE PROVERB 'IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD' IS SIMPLY THAT IT TAKES MORE THAN ONE PERSON TO TEACH A CHILD THE WAYS OF LIFE.

A child comes upon many different experiences and circumstances during their life. Often in these times a child is taught by someone else the right and wrong thing to do. As much as it applies to the raising of children, I think it is also applicable to the work we all do here at Lort Smith. In our case, it takes a village to care for an animal. Everyone connected to Lort Smith has an important role to play in making sure our animals are loved and cared for and we couldn't do the work we do without the dedication of everyone in our 'village'.

Every day of the past year has seen examples of just how much can be achieved when we work together as a community to protect the welfare of our animals.

The successful rolling out of Phase One of our Emergency Welfare Assistance (EWA) project is one example. In 2013, we partnered with private pet boarding and pet minding facilities and a number of social welfare agencies to pilot a system where Lort Smith acted as a coordinator of boarding services for the animals of marginalised people.

The pilot proved that more animals could be helped at little or no charge by providing a central coordinating system which links people and animals in need with both private and not-for-profit animal welfare groups.

Another example was the successful outcome for the Lort Smith Enterprise Bargaining Agreement approved by Fair Work Australia early in 2014 and now in place.

I congratulate the Employee Negotiation Team and the Management Team for working so well together, negotiating in good faith and maintaining clear lines of communication with each other and the entire staff.

Within the hospital in 2013, the vets, nurses and customer service teams, while helping tens of thousands of animals, also worked together to improve the overall operations of the hospital and the quality of care we deliver. Projects included reengineering how we discharge animals effectively and ensuring a more proactive treatment of dental disease.

Outside of the hospital, Lort Smith is now playing a pivotal role in Victoria's plans for bushfire response. Lort Smith coordinated a major training day for vets, nurses and animal welfare professionals in understanding what happens at a fire ground and how to treat and triage bush fire affected wildlife and domestic animals.

The team in our marketing and communications department delivered outstanding results in their programs in 2013 with increases across almost all revenue sources. Unfortunately, the bequests received were less than what we had hoped for and this, in combination with a reevaluation of assets, adjustments made for bad debts and the costs associated with implementing a shared services structure, meant that our financial performance in 2013 fell short of expectations.



However, implementing the organisational structure and development of people and processes over the past two years was a significant and necessary investment for our future. In 2014, we expect a return to a healthier financial position.

Despite this, our Lort Smith village has continued to grow both in terms of the services we offer and the animals we care for. That is thanks to the many people who support Lort Smith and provide us with the ability to help the animals that come to us.

I want to thank our Board for their support, governance and guidance, our staff who have embraced continuous improvement and work so passionately and diligently, our volunteers, donors, supporters, suppliers, ambassadors, corporate partners and partners in projects across the animal welfare sector. All of you make up our village and, together, empower Lort Smith to continue its critical and wonderful work in caring for animals.

*Liz Walker, CEO*

# OUR BOARD

**GLENISTER LAMONT:** President, Investment and Audit Committee Member

*"My position on the Board is very rewarding. I enjoy the fun, the challenges and working with people who are so passionate about helping people and animals."*

Joining the Board in July 2004, Glenister became President in December 2011. He likes spending time with his tortoiseshell cat Strupsi.

## INVESTMENT AND AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Michael Cunningham, external consultant.  
Directors as listed

## PATRON

Lady Marigold Southey AC

## OUR AMBASSADORS

Dr Sally Cockburn  
Giaan Rooney  
Peter Hitchener

**PETER VAN ROMPAEY:** Vice President

*"My role on the Board allows me the opportunity to focus on strategic and governance issues that assist the Lort Smith family to follow its vision and mission and to maintain its values."*

Peter joined the Board in July 2008 and became Vice President in December 2011. Peter has always had animals; four dogs and three cats over the years and when his children were young quite the menagerie with numerous rabbits, guinea pigs, goldfish and birds. Currently Peter has an 11-year-old Labrador Bo and a 13-year-old cat Coco.

**VIRGINIA EDWARDS:** Director

*"It is very important to me that we make the right decisions for the betterment of the hospital. I love spreading the word about Lort Smith and the extraordinary services they provide to the community."*

Virginia joined the Board in December 1980. She has a gorgeous eight-year-old Golden Retriever called Hallie and the man that runs the house, Mr Darcy, who is a robust and affectionate black and white cat that Virginia was very lucky to meet at Lort Smith.



**SAMANTHA BAILLIEU:** Vice President

*"The thing I love most about being on the Board is working towards creating better outcomes for animals."*

Samantha joined the Board in June 2000. She has seven pets! This includes three dogs; Labrador Cheekah, Jack Russell Sniffy, Long Haired Miniature Dachshund Barnaby and her four cats, Rosie, Chessie, Tiger and Cappy.

**SUSAN PALMER,** Director, Investment and Audit Committee Member

*"I admire the hospital's wonderful caring staff and their commitment to the care of sick, injured, owned and stray animals and their owners. It gives me great pleasure and pride to help in whatever way I can."*

Susan has been a Board member since December 1995. She has been actively involved with Lort Smith for about 20 years. She has two Lort Smith companions, a rescue Cairn (maybe crossed with a wombat) Benjie and a Border Collie x Kelpie Harry.

**RICK MACDONALD:** Director

*"My role on the Board allows me to focus on the governance associated with good stewardship of our property, facilities and relational empowerment opportunities. In short, people, buildings and the animals they care for."*

Rick joined the Board in August 1998. He has had many animals over the years and currently has several goldfish (freeloaders), two cats; a White Turkish Van x DSH cat Flora and a Ginger DSH Loch Torridon, and a Jack Russell x Queensland Heeler Whisky-Mac aka Miss Whisk who is a six-month-old puppy in training.



**GRAHAM CUNNINGHAM:** Director, Investment and Audit Committee Chair  
*"My favourite thing about my role with Lort Smith is being involved with an organisation and people that are so passionate about animal welfare."*  
Graham joined the Board in June 2011.

**BARBARA PESEL:** Director

*"I love being able to work with the animals and it is fabulous to see this great organisation get the recognition and support it deserves."*

Barbara joined the Board in September 2011. She has a miniature poodle called Shiva who always brings great joy to the staff and clients at Pesel and Carr, Barbara's strategic communications agency.

**DR DIANE GIBNEY:** Director

*"I enjoy being on the Board because it actively addresses animal welfare issues which is something I have always been passionate about. I especially love how the organisation also has social welfare as a major focus... and we can never leave people out of the animal welfare equation. Really, no other animal care group has this same commitment to people and societal welfare."*

Diane joined the board in December 2012. She has two goldfish that live outdoors and survive the heat of the summer and freezing Ballarat winters. She also has two cats; Blaize a 12-year-old tortie Burmese who is a bit of a princess and Napigel a very food orientated, affectionate eight-year-old tabby DLH.

**DR JOHN HARTE:** Director

*"This is a great chance to be part of a tremendous Melbourne Institution and serve on a strong Board where everybody generously gives of their time, energy and skills."*

John joined the Board in December 2012. He has a menagerie of animals at home including four dogs; two English Bull Terriers, Molly and Beatrice, a rescued Kelpie x Matilda and a Bouvier Louis. He also has three DSH cats; Cato, Meggie and Hootie, a goose Biig (self-appointed leader of the goose gang), and ducks Marvin and Lucille. Lastly, Harry the huntsman who lives in the guest bathroom.

**ANDREW MILES:** Company Secretary

*"I love the animals; I love seeing surrendered animals finding new parents and leaving Lort Smith with a spring in their step; I love seeing sick animals leave healthy. The staff at Lort Smith are so dedicated."*

Andrew was appointed Company Secretary in May 2009. He has two tri-colour Pembroke Corgis; Mortimer and Sassy, as well as a DSH cat; Rudi, who is deaf, adopted from Lort Smith.



# PROJECTS AND CHANGE

IN 2013 WE CONTINUED TO STRENGTHEN LORT SMITH'S FOUNDATIONS AND MAKE FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS THAT HAVE ENABLED US TO KEEP PROVIDING THE VERY BEST CARE FOR ANIMALS.

We successfully delivered a total of 52 initiatives that streamline our operations and ensure we adopt the 'best-of-the-best'. This included documenting a massive 51 processes, procedures and policies across the organisation.

There were a number of safety and security improvements initiated to ensure animals, clients and staff remain protected at all times. Our efforts to recover historic debts also contributed to strengthened processes and information.

Using generous donations, we were able to upgrade facilities and technology to support the valuable work of the hospital and shelter, such as upgrading our anaesthetic monitoring equipment. We also introduced many low-cost improvements, such as enhancing our hospital charting to ensure the highest standard of care is constantly achieved.

With the assistance of a government grant, we have expanded the much-needed emergency animal welfare we provide to those that experience critical times of need. This is a service in great demand, and with the help of further donations we are continuing to expand it.

The Board and Executive Management Team also undertook an extremely valuable piece of work, liaising with a number of other leading animal care organisations around the world to review our strategic direction going forward.

2014 promises to be another exciting and pivotal year for Lort Smith. We will continue reviewing our services in order to provide the best care for our patients.



MANAGEMENT TEAM WITH JEMIMA, PRINCESS ESTHER, LILLIE AND JESSE



# SUCCESS THROUGH THE EWA PROGRAM

## (EMERGENCY WELFARE ASSISTANCE)

THIS IS THE STORY OF HOW, AGAINST THE ODDS, JOY WAS ABLE TO HAVE HER CATS CARED FOR AND RETURNED TO HER AFTER A HEALTH CRISIS.

.....

Joy was no longer coping at home due to her degenerating mental illness. She and her family were faced with the reality of Joy needing to move out of her home where she lived with her three cats, Sumo, Micha and Charlie. Unfortunately, both of Joy's sons have dogs, big dogs, who would not take kindly to three visiting cats. That is where Lort Smith and the EWA Program came into play.

Joy's daughter-in-law Fleur contacted Lort Smith and put Simone, our EWA Project Officer, in touch with Joy's mental health case worker. Simone determined that Joy indeed met the criteria for assistance and contacted Hotel de Cat, one of our partners to tentatively ask the question, "Can you take on three cats?"

Hotel de Cat came to the rescue and housed all three cats for a month. Angela, from Hotel de Cat, was impressed with how healthy the cats were and surprised by their friendly temperament as we had been warned by Fleur that the two younger kitties may not be well socialised.

Joy was recovering well, living with family, but due to the uncertainty of finding accommodation we were unsure how long the cats would require care. Everyone involved became concerned at the length of time they were in a boarding environment.

Fleur was realistic about the possibility that Joy may have to surrender one or all of her cats and would gently bring it up with Joy on occasion. This was difficult as Joy's cats are one of the most important things in her life and to give them up would be devastating.

After a month Joy found accommodation which allowed her to keep her pets – the downside was it was going to be a further four to six weeks before the cats could move in. Simone approached the cattery team at Lort Smith for assistance.

The very capable staff in the cattery spent an afternoon looking at the foster network and managed to find a foster carer that was able to take all three cats! This amazing foster carer became Joy's saving grace as she was willing to have the cats for the four to six weeks required before Joy moved into her new home.

Joy is now living well in her new home, reunited with all three cats.

"I'm so grateful for the help. It meant I didn't have to surrender them, which would have been devastating. I've been their only Mum. I've told them this is it, we're together forever now!"



# SPOTLIGHT ON SOME OF OUR PASSIONATE STAFF

## **EMILY PHILLIPS:** Continuous Improvement Manager

Emily joined Lort Smith in May 2011. Her role involves working with the CEO and Executive Management Team to implement robust methodology for managing projects and change, risks and issues, along with processes, procedures and policies.

*"I love working at Lort Smith as I am part of a fantastic team of people who are all passionate about caring for animals and the people who own them."*

**Pet Pals:** Emily has two dogs both six-years-old; an English Pointer Lucas and a Fox Red Labrador Isla, a tabby cat Jeffrey, and two horses Saxon and Cheyenne.



## **JENNY KELLY:** Customer Services

Jenny makes customer appointments and ensures clients receive updates about how their pets are progressing in hospital. She has been at Lort Smith since 2001.

*"Educating and assisting clients when they have a question or problem with their pet is very rewarding."*

**Pet Pals:** Jackson is a Staffy x Boxer she met at Lort Smith in July 2004 and couldn't part with, he will be ten in 2014.

## **RON CHAPPLE:** Building Services Manager

Ron joined Lort Smith in May 2007. He manages Building Services including maintenance, cleaning, security and Occupational Health and Safety.

*"My favourite thing about working at Lort Smith is working with people who are always friendly and so passionate about caring for animals."*

**Pet Pals:** Ron's Sheltie and great friend Bobby sadly passed away on 28 February 2014 aged 15-years-old.



## **LISA VARRASSO:** Animal Welfare Officer

Joining Lort Smith in 1995, Lisa helps run and oversee the daily duties required within the shelter. She loves working with the shelter team and is heavily involved in the EWA (Emergency Welfare Assistance) Program.

*"Being part of a welfare organisation such as this is a privilege and an honour. Involved so heavily and working closely with the community makes me smile on a daily basis!"*

**Pet Pals:** Lisa has a 13-year-old Jack Russell named PJ who she adopted from Lort Smith.

**SUE MAE CHUA:** Veterinarian

Sue Mae has been a Veterinarian at Lort Smith since May 2012. She has a special interest in emergency and critical care, feline medicine, internal medicine... and also cupcakes!

*"I love the amazingly caring and compassionate team we have here at Lort Smith. The huge and interesting case load we see is a great challenge. The ability for us to help people of lesser means and give surrendered or stray animals a fighting chance at a good life is very rewarding."*

**Pet Pals:** Sue Mae has a silver tabby DSH cat called Buttons. Buttons was adopted from Lort Smith and loves living at Sue Mae's house.



**TRUDY BIRCHALL:** IT Manager

Trudy joined Lort Smith in October 2011. She manages the IT infrastructure and applications requirements for Lort Smith. Trudy makes sure any IT issues are resolved quickly so that staff can continue to care for animals.

*"I love the way the staff focus on animal care, the good work we do for shelter animals and seeing everyday what a difference the human-animal bond makes to people's lives. When we are out fundraising, it is really rewarding to hear all the great stories people have about Lort Smith."*

**Pet Pals:** Trudy has a 14-year-old Jack Russell Terrier, Tinkerbelle and two cats; Miffy, an 18-year old Ginger DSH and Cuddles, an 11-year-old Black DSH.



**EMMA MORGAN:** Relationship Manager

Emma works in the Marketing & Communications team keeping high-value supporters engaged with the work of Lort Smith. She has been at Lort Smith since December 2011.

*"Every day I get to interact with a broad variety of people and hear their stories about the incredible difference companion animals have made to their lives. I also have daily contact with animals – which is what everyone at Lort Smith loves about their job!"*

**Pet Pals:** Emma has a five-year-old tri coloured, Noonbarra Kelpie, Parko who keeps her on her toes.

**SUSANNAH LO:** Veterinary Nurse

Susannah has been working at Lort Smith since July 2007 in her role nursing animals, making sure they are comfortable and receiving the treatment they need.

*"My favourite thing about working at Lort Smith is working in such close proximity to animals and of course, giving them many cuddles."*

**Pet Pals:** Susannah has two seven-year-old cats; Lo Lo, a Scottish Fold and Akiko, a domestic medium hair. She also has a toy poodle Tim, the oldest of the pack (at nine-years-old) and numerous tropical fish!



# SHELTER NEWS

## 2,181 ANIMALS WERE HELPED IN OUR SHELTER DURING 2013, INCLUDING SURRENDERS AND ADOPTIONS, WILDLIFE CARE AND EMERGENCY BOARDING.

We helped a wide variety of animals including dogs, cats, rabbits, chickens, roosters, ferrets, rats, rainbow lorikeets, cockatoos, birds, ducks, geese, swans, turtles, blue tongue lizards, bearded dragons, possums, sugar gliders, a joey, a tiger snake and even a pelican!

Adoptions made up the largest proportion of shelter work and this year, staff worked tirelessly to rehome 908 animals: 617 cats, 221 dogs and 70 other animals including rabbits, guinea pigs and birds.

Many of the animals surrendered to Lort Smith require medical treatment or surgery before we can find them a new loving home.

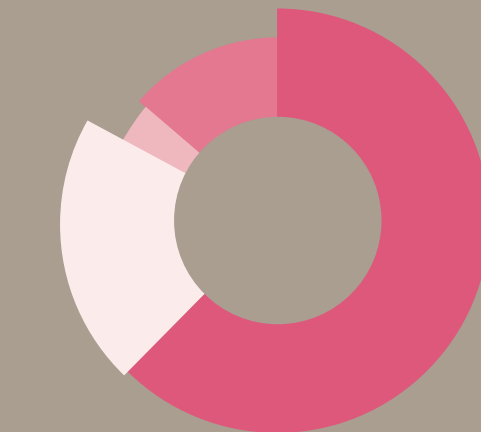
In 2013, in addition to the usual costs of vaccination, microchipping and desexing, we spent \$241,299 bringing 1,151 sick and injured animals back to health. This is one of the very important reasons why we are so active in fundraising.

Although Lort Smith is unable to take in stray dogs and cats for rehoming, we will always care for them until they can be transferred to the appropriate pound, especially when councils and pounds are closed.

Lort Smith will never euthanise a healthy animal that can be rehomed. However, it is an unfortunate reality that euthanasia is sometimes the only option for animals suffering from extremely serious medical conditions, injuries, aggression or behavioural problems.

In 2013, this was the sad outcome for a very small percentage of the animals that were surrendered to Lort Smith for rehoming.

SHELTER OUTCOMES 2013



Adopted	70%
Transferred	17%
EWA	3.5%
Euthanised	9.5%

## EMERGENCY WELFARE ASSISTANCE (EWA)

A very important part of the care we provide in our shelter is Emergency Welfare Assistance (EWA). In 2013 we helped over 120 EWA clients and provided emergency boarding to dogs, cats, an axolotl, a bunny, a turtle and two budgies.

These animals belong to owners experiencing severe hardship and are typically referred to us through case workers. They could be elderly citizens requiring hospitalisation, victims of domestic violence, or people suffering extreme poverty. Usually, their pets mean the world to them and caring for these animals until their owners can be with them again can literally be lifesaving.

Our staff and volunteers provide all the necessities for these pets in our shelter until they can be reunited with their owner.

This sometimes includes providing animals with veterinary procedures. Last year we spent \$32,000 on EWA animals. We are very proud to be able to offer this service at no charge.

In 2013 we received a grant through the Victorian State Government to build our EWA services. Thanks to a few of our generous donors, Phase Two of this program is now underway with completion set for March 2015.

Phase two of the EWA program involves enhanced coordination between a greater numbers of private and not-for-profit providers of pet minding and boarding services along with social workers who are helping people in crisis who have pets. This is an incredibly important program which helps people to seek the assistance they need with the comfort that their treasured animals are being well cared for and will be returned to them when their circumstances improve.

## FOSTER CARE

This year Lort Smith's fabulous foster carers donated their time, love and care to 503 animals, including dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs and wildlife. The total number of days Lort Smith volunteers provided foster care for individual animals amounted to a massive 3,147 days.

One of our volunteers, Charis Dossor, fosters difficult cats needing confinement and has done so since March 2008, fostering 28 cats over this time.

"I recommend everyone try foster caring. You can make a big difference to an animal's life and benefit yourself at the same time," she said.

Lort Smith is so thankful for the generosity of Charis and all of our foster carers that help us save hundreds of animals every year.

## KEEPING PETS OF THE HOMELESS HEALTHY

The 'Where the Heart is' Festival is run by the Royal District Nursing Service and aims to support homeless and marginally housed people.

Each year we attend this event with several shelter staff, nurses and vets who donate their time to provide free pet advice, health checks, flea treatment, micro-chipping, worming and vaccinations.

Lort Smith Senior Welfare Officer Cameron Rogers said, "It is a humbling experience to attend these festivals. It trivialises what we stress and worry about when we witness these positive people, their love for their pet and the human-animal bond. It is a pleasure and privilege to have a small part in maintaining that bond."

## NEW SHELTER MANGER – SERENA HORG

Serena has been actively involved with different facets of the animal industry for 15 years, from working as a veterinary nurse, to animal management officer for various councils. Serena is excited to be the new shelter manager and bring lots of new ideas to help even more animals.

"I love watching new owners fall in love with their newly adopted pet. It is a joy to see abandoned, injured or sick animals have a second chance at life," she said.

SERENA HORG  
WITH CLEO



# VET NEWS

OPERATING 365 DAYS OF THE YEAR, LORT SMITH HAS A COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING LOW COST, HIGH QUALITY VETERINARY TREATMENT FOR LOST, ABANDONED, MISTREATED, SICK AND INJURED ANIMALS.

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2013 has been another successful year with Lort Smith providing access to care for many animals that would otherwise not receive quality veterinary attention.

Overall, our 45 vets performed:

- 37,918 consults
- 7,675 emergency consults including:
  - 4,912 day emergencies
  - 2,763 night service emergencies
- 971 exotic animal consults
- 3,222 surgeries
- 3,038 desexings
- 12,777 vaccinations
- 16,754 blood and other pathology tests
- 3,524 ultrasounds
- 1,122 radiographs
- 6,646 anaesthetics
- 1,694 microchips
- 56 enemas
- 77 cases of toxic poisoning including
  - 16 snake bites
  - 34 rat bait poison.

## CHALLENGING SURGERIES

With four state-of-the-art surgical theatres and exceptional veterinarians, Lort Smith is able to perform many different types of challenging surgeries. Importantly, we keep our fees low and offer discounts and payment plans to ensure these types of extensive surgeries are accessible to many pet owners who would otherwise not be able to afford the care their pets need.

Some of the challenging surgeries in 2013 included:

- 426 orthopaedic surgeries including:
  - 155 cruciate repairs
  - 73 amputations
  - 68 patella (knee cap) surgeries
- 130 broken legs repaired
- 205 bladders unblocked
- 55 foreign bodies removed including corn cobs, golf balls, fabric and bits of plastic
- 34 bladder stone removals
- 26 esophagostomy tube placements (feeding tube)
- 88 pyometra operations (life threatening infection of the uterus).

## VET EDUCATION UPDATE

This year, we continued our vet education program by hosting various important seminars.

In November, Lort Smith shared our expert knowledge, hosting a seminar on the treatment of bushfire affected wildlife. This was attended by over 100 vets and nurses from Victoria. We were lucky enough to have Dr Anne Fowler present. Dr Fowler is an experienced Veterinary Surgeon with a passion for Australian Wildlife. She is heavily involved in providing quality training and education about wildlife care and treatment.

This was accompanied by a national burns management webinar that was presented by Lort Smith's consulting surgeon, Dr Arthur House. Dr House also displayed his expertise, hosting a seminar on knee surgery for private vet clinics.

Meanwhile, in-house sessions conducted included:

- Ultrasound seminar by Dr Plaganyi
- Tips for difficult desexing surgeries by Dr House
- Feline immunodeficiency virus by Dr Holloway
- Various cat presentations by Dr Plaganyi
- Skin disease by Dr Hilton
- Treating joint disease with diet in dogs and cats by Hill's Pet Nutrition
- Journal club – where vets meet and discuss a veterinary journal article.





# SUCCESS STORY:

## MAX EATS 14 GOLF BALLS!

MAX MADE HEADLINES IN THE HERALD SUN, AS WELL AS ON SUNRISE

On 15 September 2013 Max, a Rottweiler cross, was brought to Lort Smith as he had been vomiting overnight. He had refused to eat in the morning and seemed very anxious.

Max was checked out by vet Dr Amanda Tenne who discovered what felt like a bag of balls in his stomach, which were clunking very loudly. She decided to admit him for X-rays to find out what was going on. Sure enough, the X-rays revealed that Max had eaten what appeared to be multiple balls. He was immediately started on IV fluids and pain relief and booked in for surgery.

A few hours later Max was taken to surgery where Dr Tristan Rich proceeded to remove 13 large dense balls and 1 small white ball from Max's abdomen. Remarkably, this was not what had made Max suddenly unwell! There were also small pieces of rubber that had lodged half way down the small intestine causing a complete obstruction. Dr Tristan had to make a second incision into the intestine to remove them and then thoroughly checked the rest of the intestines in case Max had a taste for any more funny objects.

Over the next two days Max remained in hospital under close supervision of the vets and nurses while he recovered. By the third day Max was well enough to go home with his owners who were instructed to feed him a bland diet for the next week before slowly reintroducing his normal diet.

There was a lot of confusion about the 14 balls that were found in Max's stomach. Were they bocce balls or perhaps cricket balls? Actually it turned out they were golf balls. Max's owners explained that every morning they walked him at the local off-leash park which was very close to a golf course. It was so dark at that time of the morning that his owners hadn't noticed Max eating the golf balls, which he must have done over a period of time as some of the balls were far more deteriorated than others.

His owners decided that from then on, Max would have to be kept on the lead so they could ensure he refrained from eating any more golf balls!

It was such an interesting story that Max made headlines in the Herald Sun, as well as on Sunrise, Channel 9 News and 3AW.



MAX AND HIS STOMACH X-RAY

# VET PROFILE

## DR PATRICK CHEAH CELEBRATES 20 YEARS AT LORT SMITH

WHEN DR PATRICK CHEAH GOT A CALL TO FILL IN FOR A FRIEND ON A LOCUM SHIFT AT LORT SMITH ANIMAL HOSPITAL IN 1993, HE DIDN'T REALISE IT WOULD BE THE START OF A LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP THAT HAS SEEN HIM RISE TO HIS CURRENT POSITION AS HEAD VET OF OUTPATIENTS AT THE HOSPITAL.

Dr Patrick Cheah's enthusiasm for the work at Lort Smith and his thirst for knowledge and experience meant that he quickly established a reputation for excellent practice and after only a few months he was offered a full-time position.

"It was an amazing opportunity because the hospital is so busy and you get experience in a huge range of procedures. I joined under the supervision of Dr Alan Lawther and he was a great mentor.

"After about 18 months at Lort Smith I was doing cat femur pinnings, whereas my colleagues in smaller private practices were still just doing routine procedures," said Dr Patrick.

In the early 2000s he was appointed Head of Surgery and later held the position of Head of Medicine before moving to his current role as Head Veterinarian of Outpatients.

"When I started, we had a fairly small number of veterinary staff per day, with only three vets consulting and two in theatre. The consulting vets were juggling looking after inpatients and seeing clients.

"We didn't have appointments. People just showed up, even before we opened. We'd say 'the bus is here' because it was like a bus arrived and unloaded all these people into the waiting room!

"Now we have a managed appointment system and a really well-rounded vet team that gives us a depth of knowledge, experience and expertise to draw on."

Dr Patrick has also appreciated the changes in technology during his time at the hospital.

"When I started we had an auto processor for developing X-rays, and I thought that was pretty flash because some places were still developing film by dipping it in chemicals. Now of course we have a digital system that gives much better results and is much more forgiving of the underexposed or overexposed.

"Fundraising has made a difference to our practice too," said Dr Patrick. "In the early days we were scraping through with very basic equipment, some of it second-hand. We've been able to upgrade our equipment and that's had a big impact on the quality of service we can provide."

Dr Patrick said one of the things he likes about Lort Smith is that it can provide help when others can't, filling a gap for those who cannot afford to have their pets treated at private practice vets.

"We are often the end of the line when owners feel their only option is euthanasia. We can give animals a chance through surgery, treatment or re-homing. Even though our vet department is now huge, we are all committed to the same goal of getting the best result for the animals and it's great to be part of that."



DR PATRICK CHEAH WITH BETSY

# NURSING NEWS

THROUGHOUT 2013 A TOTAL OF 69 NURSES CARED FOR AN AVERAGE OF 50 PATIENTS PER DAY. THE NURSES WERE KEPT EXCEPTIONALLY BUSY, PERFORMING 18,755 NURSING APPOINTMENTS, COMPLETING 15,067 HOSPITAL CHARTS AND MONITORING 6,613 SEDATIONS AND ANAESTHETICS.

In-house training sessions were held covering topics from exotic animals right through to Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease (FLUTD) and avian husbandry.

## VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LORT FOR LOUISE – CELEBRATING 10 YEARS IN 2013

Veterinary nurse Louise Travaille recently celebrated her ten year anniversary with Lort Smith. Louise joined the hospital as a trainee vet nurse in 2003 after completing her Certificates II and III in Animal Studies. She spent her first five years as a full-time staff member but now divides her time between Lort Smith's surgery and consult teams, and a small animal vet clinic in suburban Melbourne.

"I'm enjoying the variety. The clinic is slower-paced work and closer to home which is handy, but nothing compares to Lort Smith where you have such a diversity of cases, clients and staff," said Louise.

"There's always something happening and we deal with such a wide range of injuries and disease, so there's a huge wealth of knowledge and experience among the staff.

"One of the most important things for me is the staff. Everyone here is really committed to animal welfare, they're amazing at their jobs and they all work so well together considering they come from so many different backgrounds.

"I also like the satisfaction of knowing that we are helping animals. Vet nursing is really rewarding, particularly in ICU. When the animals arrive they're in trouble and sometimes a bit aggressive due to their nature or pain, but when you nurse them back to health over time you earn their trust and most of the time the aggression disappears," she said.

Louise said that although the hospital has changed a lot over the last ten years, it has stayed true to its original mission to help all animals, regardless of their owners' circumstances.

"I also like the fact that Lort Smith is so well known for doing such a fantastic job. Whenever I mention it to people, they are likely to say 'Oh, yeah, I know the hospital, they helped me' and that makes me really proud."

## THANK YOU STEVE

We acknowledge and thank nurse Steve Isaacs who left Lort Smith in early 2013 after 24 years of service.

His remarkable contribution during this time saw him working on our most needy patients in the Intensive Care Unit and Accident and Emergency area.

His invaluable input provided broad considerations to all of the work undertaken at Lort Smith and he will always remain a member of the Lort Smith Family.



LOUISE TRAVAILLE



# PHARMACY NEWS

DURING THE YEAR PHARMACY DISTRIBUTED 30,155 MEDICATIONS INCLUDING CREAMS, TABLETS, DROPS, CAPSULES AND OTHER ITEMS TO 11,491 PATIENTS OWNED BY 10,226 PET OWNERS.

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## NEW ROLE!

### Dr Justine Schellekens, Head Vet Pharmacy

2013 saw the appointment of Dr Justine Schellekens as the first Head Vet of Pharmacy.

Dr Justine graduated in veterinary science from the University of Melbourne in 2006 and began working in a rural small animal practice. However she had spent her final year placement at Lort Smith and had always dreamed of working at the hospital.

“When a position became available in 2010, I jumped at the opportunity to join Lort Smith,” said Dr Justine.

“I love the challenge of working in such a big hospital. It’s certainly much busier than private practice, and I wouldn’t have it any other way. I’ve worked on such a wide range of cases in theatre, accident and emergency, shelter and inpatients than I could ever have hoped for in private practice.

“My special interests are emergency medicine, shelter medicine, and of course, pharmacology.”

As head of Pharmacy, Dr Justine manages the provision of medications to clients, overseeing the writing and filling of prescriptions and supervises stock control. She liaises closely with suppliers and pharmaceutical companies, reviewing new products, keeping up to date with research developments or changes to legislation.

Dr Justine is continuing her fascination with pharmacology through post graduate studies and aims to gain higher qualifications in this area in the next few years. “The field of pharmacology is continually developing and I’m fascinated by the interaction of various combinations of chemicals and drugs in the body. I like being able to help clients understand the pros and cons of different medications and working with them to find the best solution for their pet’s problems.

“Nowadays we can have medications compounded, for example into flavoured pastes or chews and treats, so that we can find a delivery method that suits each particular animal,” she said.

One of the attractions of working at Lort Smith for Dr Justine is the team approach to cases.

“I really appreciate the array of skills and experience people have across all sectors of the hospital, and the way that this diversity is brought together by the shared passion for making a positive difference to our clients and their animals.” As she has taken on a more managerial role, Dr Justine is also developing her administrative knowledge through study in business management.

“I was very excited to get the role in Pharmacy and I hope to work with the team to help improve and expand on the services we offer to our clients and patients.”



DR JUSTINE SCHELLEKENS WITH BEAU

# SUCCESS STORY:

## BONE WEDGE OPERATION FOR LITTLE ERIC

HE CAN USE HIS LEG A LOT MORE NOW AND IS ABLE TO RUN AROUND FINE

In March 2013, a long-haired miniature dachshund called Eric was brought into Lort Smith with a severely deformed left front leg and a mildly deformed right front leg.

Eric's owner Kirk had recently taken him to another vet clinic where they took X-rays of his legs then gave him the bad news that Eric needed surgery that was going to cost \$6,000. Kirk could not afford this and was very upset because his dog was in such pain.

He decided to try Lort Smith and came to see Dr Warren Gatt, Head Vet Theatre, who has a special interest in orthopaedic surgery.

Dr Gatt examined the X-rays, which showed that Eric's right forearm would be ok, however he was struggling to cope with the deformity in his left forearm. It was severely rotated and required surgery to correct it which was going to cost approximately \$2,000.

Kirk was relieved to hear the surgery was going to be more affordable and decided to proceed.

On 11 April, Eric was ready for surgery. Over several hours, Dr Gatt performed a wedge osteotomy on Eric. An osteotomy is a surgical operation whereby a bone is cut to shorten, lengthen or change its alignment.

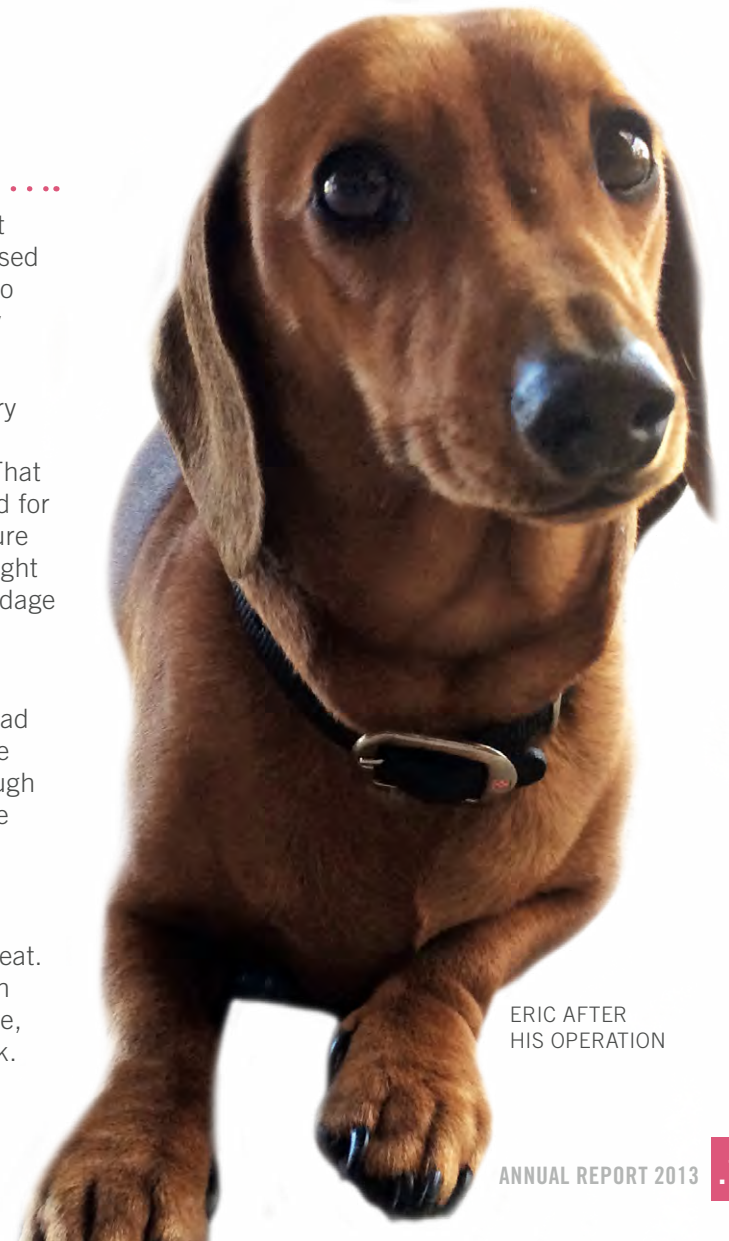
In this case, Eric needed to be realigned, so Dr Gatt took a wedge of bone from the forearm, then stabilised it with a 2.4mm plate. This brought the leg back into alignment and the post-op X-ray proved the surgery had gone well.

Due to the serious nature of this procedure, recovery can be extensive. Careful consultation with a vet is important to ensure the recovery phase goes well. That night Eric went home bandaged up with a splint and for the next few months was confined to a cage to ensure his leg was remaining stable. He was regularly brought into the hospital during this time to replace the bandage and splint.

After another week, Dr Gatt put Eric back under sedation and took some X-rays to see how the leg had healed. It was a tremendous result. The radius bone had healed well enough to take the splint off, although Eric still had to be confined to a cage for a few more weeks before gradually returning to full activity.

Eric is now back at home with Kirk.

"Eric is doing very well, his operation worked out great. He can use his leg a lot more now and is able to run around fine. Every now and then it gets a little sore, but that was expected after the operation," said Kirk.



ERIC AFTER  
HIS OPERATION

# LORT SMITH NEWS

## CHAPLAIN UPDATE

Over the year there has been significant community response to conversations by our chaplain and members of the Companion Animal Loss Support Group about companion animal loss and grief.

This topic has also taken place on radio programmes including: The Spirit of Things on Radio National; Fair Comment on Brisbane's community radio station 4EB; and The Morning Show with Phil Kafcaloudes on Radio Australia.



In print media, articles have also attracted much comment in The Age Melbourne Magazine, The Veterinarian Magazine and Dog's Life Magazine.

These conversations seem to be tapping into a growing community awareness and appreciation of animal loss and grief and the impact this loss has on the lives of people. As this awareness grows and the loss and grief are recognised more in the community for their legitimacy, hopefully more people will be able to find the support and care they need when a loved companion dies.

At Lort Smith, our Chaplain, Adele Mapperson, continues to support families experiencing such losses by helping to support them at the time of death, but also in the days following with phone calls and bereavement cards. This year she supported 2,131 families in this way.

Two Memorial Services held during the year in May and November were attended by a total of 85 people, a testament to the ongoing desire of people to honour and remember their loved animals.

The Companion Animal Loss Support Group, in association with the support of the Centre for Grief and Bereavement continues to meet each month at Lort Smith, and has been attended by those suffering recent losses, but also those still grieving the loss of their companion some months down the track.

Some people attend for a few months, others for longer; all find significant help and support from each other as they share their loss with others, and begin to find their way to live creatively again in a disrupted world.

The Memorial Books in the reception area of the Hospital continue to offer space for people to write their own memoriams, but then also to have that memory shared and honoured by the many people who stop to read them.

## NEW GENERAL MANAGER – SHARED SERVICES, JOSEPH CORERA

Joseph Corera joined Lort Smith in April 2013 bringing with him over ten years of corporate experience in the insurance, banking, logistics and transport sectors. Prior to taking on the role of GM Shared Services, Joseph held roles within finance, strategy, systems and project management and is a qualified CPA. The Shared Services role includes responsibility for finance, customer services, procurement, IT and building services at Lort Smith.

Outside of work Joseph loves spending time with his dogs and horses and is constantly getting tips from the staff at Lort Smith on improving their diet as they used to get a bit spoilt. Joseph is also an avid traveller and has a keen interest in music.



## ETHICS COMMITTEE UPDATE

At Lort Smith, the welfare of the animals in our care comes first, so it is with great satisfaction that during 2013 we established our Ethics Committee. Underpinning the formation of our Ethics Committee is the recognition of the often difficult and challenging ethical dilemmas we face when it comes to caring for animals.

Our investigations have shown that while there is research-focused ethics committees in veterinary organisations such as universities, ethics committees focused on clinical care and broader organisational issues in the veterinary world are virtually unheard of. So, with guidance and support from Professor Lynn Gillam who is the Academic Director and Clinical Ethicist at the Royal Children's Hospital and Associate Professor in Health Ethics at Melbourne University, we are delighted to have successfully established the Lort Smith Ethics Committee.

The Ethics Committee, as a subcommittee of the Board, has primary responsibility to ensure that ethical issues (animal treatment and welfare and broader ethical practises and behaviours) faced by Lort Smith both from internal and external sources are dealt with in a considered, planned and timely fashion.

Of course the Ethics Committee is also charged with ensuring that the Vision and Mission of Lort Smith is supported and underpins our actions when facing ethical challenges.

The Ethics Committee is made up of members from across Lort Smith and the broader community, ensuring we have the wide breadth of expertise required.

The Ethics Committee has a range of issues on its agenda which fall into the three broad areas of: animal welfare (contemplating topics like palliative care, euthanasia, and blood transfusions), responsible pet ownership (asking numerous questions such as should we insist on desexing an animal that requires surgical correction of an hereditary disorder to prevent perpetuation of the condition) and corporate ethical issues (the most important one being considering policies that ensure any partnerships we enter into are aligned with other people and organisations who share our values).

In the next 12 months we anticipate launching numerous policies that will provide greater clarity for our staff, clients, supporters and suppliers and most of all, which will underpin our greatest focus, the welfare of animals.

## OBITUARY – JOAN STURZAKER OAM 1936-2013

Joan Sturzaker OAM devoted her life to animal welfare in general, and the Lort Smith Animal Hospital in particular.

In 1970 Joan set up Lort Smith's highly successful op-shop, an innovative concept at that time. Joan joined the staff of the Lort Smith Animal Hospital in 1977 and continued to work with the organisation for the next 30 years.

She maintained her connection with Lort Smith until her death on 8 August 2013 and she is greatly missed by her human and animal friends and family.





# BUILDING SERVICES NEWS

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR FOUR-MEMBER BUILDING SERVICES TEAM ARE INDEED QUITE REMARKABLE. EVERYONE TAKES EXTREME PRIDE IN THEIR WORK, ALWAYS DELIVERS SERVICES WITH A SMILE AND IS ON CALL 365 DAYS OF THE YEAR.

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As our facilities and equipment grow older each year we are always presented with new and unexpected challenges. Of course there are always the daily routine things to manage or repair but it is the unusual that make our days interesting.

Thanks to 'All-in-one,' aka Chris, our ingenious handyman, who is also a licensed plumber and expert air-conditioning mechanic, we have responded to over 2,000 various tasks throughout the year, without the help of specialised contractors.



CHRIS WRIGHT WITH MISSY

Occupational Health and Safety issues always take priority. A number of strategic enhancements put in place this year include the introduction of Designated Work Groups with their own qualified Health and Safety Representatives, a larger team of qualified First Aid Officers and extra Fire Wardens capable of delivering support for all shifts worked every day.

These vitally important roles supported by a very efficient Incident/Hazard Reporting system help us understand and prioritise where and when resources should be used most effectively to reduce the risk of injuries and incidents and their possible reoccurrence.

To keep up with the never ending demand for maintenance repairs and services along with the supply of goods and consumables, Building Services manages 97 various suppliers and contractors.

Our preferred contractors and suppliers are supportive of Lort Smith's mission and vision and it is these contractors who were called on to assist with key projects delivered throughout the year including:

- Utilising space more effectively by replacing the retail shop with two consulting rooms and an interview room
- Installing two new washing machines in the laundry
- Installing a new smart fire panel
- Completing the five yearly asbestos audit and report
- Installing a master control system designed to deliver quality air-conditioned comfort to the reception area
- New desk tops and chairs in each of the consulting rooms
- New fully adjustable consulting and operating tables in all consulting rooms and theatres.

A great deal of effort has been put into collecting data and establishing a complete asset list and maintenance register during the year.

Security systems have also been analysed in the latter part of year with preparations being made to install extra CCTV cameras, a new duress alarm system, signage along with other enhancements due early in 2014.

# IT NEWS

OUR TWO-MEMBER IT DEPARTMENT HAS CONTINUED TO PROVIDE MUCH-NEEDED IMPROVEMENT AND SUPPORT ACROSS ALL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE AND APPLICATIONS FOR LORT SMITH IN 2013.

The IT team works hard on a daily basis to ensure all of the hospital systems continue to function well and cope with ever-increasing IT requirements. It is vital to keep the infrastructure up to date, to take advantage of technology improvements, and maintain enough support to allow us to provide responsive help to the staff at Lort Smith.

An infrastructure review was conducted at the end of 2011 which recommended replacement of many aging items. An ambitious IT infrastructure plan was commenced in 2012 and completed in 2013 resulting in an upgrade of network switches, servers and SQL server.

Virtualisation of servers has been implemented to maximise performance of hardware, allow for redundancy and minimise recovery time in the event of a failure. Migration of all applications and roles to the new servers was completed in 2013. We have increased storage capacity, reliability and availability by using a SAN (Storage Area Network) device.

We have a rolling task of replacing aged computers and monitors – in a busy hospital it is very important for staff to have access to computers that function at sufficient speed to allow more time to treat the animals.

We are continually working with our veterinary hospital information system vendor to improve the workflow, processing and reporting in this system to maximise efficiency and capture data as easily as possible, in suitable format so that we can analyse the data later.

This analysis allows us to better manage the day-to-day running and plan for the short and longer term future of the hospital.

#### **Other IT highlights:**

Internet upgraded to optical fibre which included external hosted firewall, therefore increasing our network security, and provided Virtual Private Network (VPN) access to allow staff to telecommute to Lort Smith when required. We retained the existing ADSL2+ line as our redundant link. Transferred email to Symantec message labs, to increase security and ensure delivery of emails and allow journaling and legal discovery (backup).

Suffice to say, the IT department have been extremely busy as all of this project work has been in addition to providing everyday support to the staff – from replacing a mouse to providing a data extract. We completed 1,843 service desk requests, on average 94% met service level agreement.



# CUSTOMER SERVICES NEWS

OUR DEDICATED CUSTOMER SERVICES TEAM HAVE CONTINUED TO THRIVE UNDER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BEING THE LIKELY FIRST POINT OF CONTACT FOR OUR CUSTOMERS WHO ARE OFTEN CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR ANIMALS.

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Servicing our customers via the phone, email, website and face-to-face, the customer service team understand how important the relationship between pet and owner is and endeavour to provide the best of care to both.

Lort Smith is Australia's largest animal hospital and along with existing customers the hospital received approximately 8,000 new customers in 2013. The team ensured each customer received quality care and support, an ethos which has been instilled from the time our founders opened the doors to help sick and injured animals in 1936.

Receiving an average of 9,600 calls per month, our staff strive to attend to all customers' needs, whether booking an appointment with our skilled vets, arranging a discharge to collect a member of the family who is ready to go home, or simply enquiring about prices for services.

While case load is unpredictable and there are many times we experience busy activity, the team always aim to provide prompt and compassionate service to all customers. Customer Service are the frontline that assist with emergencies daily; on average 28 emergencies per day, and at times can have over 50 emergencies.

Communication is important and we aim to keep our customers informed of our accident and emergency process from the start and along the way.

Customer advocacy is paramount for our team who provide service from the first available appointment at 8.30am right through to the last appointment of the day before handing over to the emergency team for night service.

Aligning with the hospital mission, our team are very happy to assist those with limited financial resources by working with our customers and assessing each on a case-by-case basis. It is important to acknowledge the difficulties some of our customers face. It is with this understanding that we provide discounts for Concession and Senior card holders, along with our pricing policy which is focused on delivering affordable veterinary care. In 2013 the hospital provided approximately \$900,000 in discounts.

In addition to this, we continue to offer payment plans to individuals who may not have the means to meet all the veterinary goods and services charges up front. In 2013, close to 40,000 transactions were processed in regards to payment plan arrangements.

Our Customer Service team understand and treasure the important bond between pet and owner and will continue the hard work to ensure our customers are supported while their pets are being cared for at Lort Smith.

LOUISA TZOVLAS  
AND BENJI





# PEOPLE PERSON, ANIMAL LOVER

## PROFILE: DEAN MEADE, CUSTOMER SERVICES

DEAN MEADE, CUSTOMER SERVICES OFFICER, IS ONE OF THE FIRST POINTS OF CONTACT LORT SMITH CLIENTS OFTEN HAVE. IT'S A CLICHÉ TO DESCRIBE SOMEONE AS A "PEOPLE PERSON" BUT THAT'S WHAT DEAN IS.

"The vets and nurses are here for the animals, and I'm here for the people," said Dean.

"I love animals and have worked in animal welfare for six years but I know my biggest contribution is being able to help people, even when the outcome for their pets isn't favourable."

Lort Smith client Michelle Kirk can attest to this.

"My cat Harry became ill and died in the hospital from a massive cardiac arrest. I was absolutely heartbroken.

"Dean was so kind when I had to say goodbye to Harry and made a beautiful imprint of Harry's paws, which I really treasure," said Michelle.

While Dean's compassion is well known, it was actually an act of cruelty that started him on the journey which brought him to Lort Smith in 2011.

"I worked as a hairdresser for 15 years and I enjoyed all the customer interaction," said Dean.

Everything changed one night when Dean was viciously bashed at a nightclub.

"It took a long time to recover from that and I was less trusting of people. One of the things that was suggested was that I should work with something I really loved – and for me that meant animals."

Dean got a job with the RSPCA and later moved to the Lost Dogs Home where he spent two years in customer services.

"People used to suggest I become a vet nurse but I'm not good with the gory stuff. I was keen to work in a clinical setting rather than a pound environment though. I kept hearing Lort Smith mentioned so I kept my eye out until a position came up. I love the fact that we have everything here, so I get to see the clinical side, the community outreach and the shelter aspect.

"I get so much satisfaction from my job," said Dean. "I've never had a job before where I wake up and look forward to going to work each day."

Even when he's not working, Dean is often involved with Lort Smith activities and can be seen rattling tins at fundraisers and helping out at events.

"On my days off I'll wear my Lort Smith volunteer t-shirt and people will ask me about Lort Smith. I'm so proud of where I work that I always want to tell them about what we do," said Dean.

And of course, he shares his home with his animal family: two mini-pinschers, one with three legs, which were both adopted from the RSPCA; two Cornish Rex cats; two finches and a one-legged canary that Dean adopted from Lort Smith.



DEAN MEADE AND TILLY



# SUCCESS STORY:

## PUPPY BRAIN SURGERY

DURING HIS TIME IN THE SHELTER ARTHUR BECAME A VERY HAPPY, PLAYFUL, SOMETIMES EVEN CHEEKY PUPPY.

On the 4th of August a little ball of white fluff in the form of a Japanese Spitz puppy was brought into Lort Smith's Accident and Emergency Department with wounds to his face.

His owner thought he may have been attacked by other litter mates the previous night. Whimpering all day and off balance, the struggling puppy was admitted to hospital for pain relief and monitoring.

His face was clipped revealing many lacerations, the biggest wound was on the left side of his face. The vets took X-rays of the puppy's skull under general anaesthetic, to make sure there was no major damage.

X-rays revealed a skull fracture and a piece of bone had broken off and become embedded in the brain. He had a hole in his head, likely from a tooth crushing his skull, and a fracture near the right orbit (the socket of the skull where the eye is situated).

The orbit fracture was likely to heal without surgery, however the loose fragment of bone on the skull was a problem. If an infection developed at the site it was highly likely that the puppy would become extremely ill and ultimately require euthanasia.

At this point the owner was given three options – we could monitor the puppy with uncertainty as to whether an infection or further problems would develop; or we could remove the skull fragment now. The last alternative discussed was surrender.

After a lot of consideration, the owner decided to surrender the puppy, who was still very bright, alert and happy.

The next day the puppy's health deteriorated rapidly. He was looking less comfortable and started having small seizures lasting two to three seconds each. Sometimes he could walk normally, other times he was reluctant to walk, with deep pain in all four legs. He was transferred to the Intensive Care Unit for overnight care and monitoring.

The next day, the puppy went in for surgery with Dr Arthur House, a consulting surgeon at Lort Smith. Dr House discovered two fragments of bone wedged in the pup's brain parenchyma, the functional tissue in the brain. Damage or trauma to the brain parenchyma often results in a loss of cognitive ability or even death.

Dr House had an extremely delicate task at hand, one that had never been performed at Lort Smith before. He very gently removed the two fragments of bone from the brain.

The next day the little puppy bounced back. He was bright, alert and responsive again. His seizures had stopped and he was eating well. A great sign for the small pup!

The staff at Lort Smith decided to name the puppy Arthur, after Dr Arthur House who saved his life.

For the next three weeks, Arthur remained in hospital under observation. He slowly got better and was finally ready to be desexed and put up for adoption.

During his time in the shelter Arthur became a very happy, playful, sometimes even cheeky puppy! He was extremely cute and it didn't take too long for someone to fall in love and adopt him.

Arthur has now grown so much at his new home. He still is very puppy-like, but is starting to develop a few older tendencies too. He gets along brilliantly with his new brother, Stanley a black lab. Still chasing his tail, the children of his adopted family love him and the family say he is a delight to have around.



ARTHUR RECOVERING FROM BRAIN SURGERY

# MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS NEWS

It has been an extremely busy year for the Marketing team in 2013, executing four Direct Marketing appeals and three street fundraisers, attending numerous animal expos in communities across Victoria, holding two large events for our major donors, and running various other campaigns and activities to raise awareness and drive donations.

## NEW WEBSITE

In 2013 the Marketing team worked very hard to overhaul Lort Smith's dated website. This was an important task for a number of reasons. Firstly, due to the very steady rise in online donations and secondly, because prospective supporters want to know who we are, what we stand for and why they should choose us as their charity. Whether they are looking for expert veterinary care, adoption services or volunteering – all this information is now easily accessible to our customers and supporters.

Updating our website has greatly improved the user experience. It is now easy to navigate, find information, request an appointment and of course, make a donation.

Another feature of the new website allows people to sign up for a monthly e-newsletter. This newsletter updates our supporters on what's happening at the hospital, upcoming events, appeals, along with adoption and success stories. Anyone who wants to receive this e-newsletter can sign up in one quick step from the homepage of our website at [www.lortsmith.com](http://www.lortsmith.com)

## VALENTINE'S CAMPAIGN

While we ran many campaigns in 2013, it is worth mentioning our Valentine's Campaign called 'Friends with Benefits'. This campaign was designed to promote Lort Smith's passion for, and belief in, the human-animal bond and the many benefits that animals bring to people.

For this campaign we ran a competition on Facebook where we asked our supporters to send in a photo of themselves with their pets and tell us the best thing about having a pet in their life.

452 people sent in beautiful entries. From the day-to-day benefits pets bring like 'he's always happy to see me' and 'she provides me with unconditional love' to the health benefits of having pets like 'she helps my autistic child' and 'he helps me through depression'. There is no doubt that animals indeed help humans in so many ways - emotionally, physically and mentally.



MARKETING TEAM WITH  
BAILEY, JESSE AND FLO

# FUNDRAISING AND DONATIONS

## STATE-OF-THE-ART EQUIPMENT

Thanks to generous donations in 2013, Lort Smith was fortunate to upgrade existing, and acquire new equipment which will greatly improve the quality of care Lort Smith is able to offer to our fuzzy patients, including:

Cryopen – this equipment allows veterinary staff to easily treat some early stages of skin cancer without surgery.

Wireless Glucose Monitor – allows vets to measure and record glucose levels using a portable testing kit, avoiding the need to take repeated blood samples throughout the day with a needle and syringe.

Cautery unit – allows vets to ease bleeding during surgery.

SurgiVet monitors – we upgraded three of our SurgiVet monitors which keep track of the animal's vital signs such as ECG, pulse rate, heart rate and blood pressure while under anaesthetic.

Surgical instrument washer – providing advanced protection against infection through thermal and chemical disinfection and sterilisation for all surgical equipment.

## REGULAR GIVING

As a not-for-profit charity that heavily relies on generous support from the community, every gift big or small is cherished at Lort Smith. This is why our regular donors play such an important role in our continued success.

With donors signing up for a monthly commitment to be automatically debited from their nominated account, we are provided with a steady and reliable source of funds for the hospital. There is no minimum commitment to sign up for regular giving and as little as 50c per day will cover the cost of desexing an adult cat, which in turn helps to combat the growing stray population.

All of our regular donors automatically become members of our Pets for Life Club, and receive updates via newsletters about how their donations have helped us to save animals.

Our regular donors are also fantastic supporters of our quarterly appeals, often making a one-off cash donation in addition to their regular gift.

We are truly appreciative of the fabulous support we receive from our regular donors.

## STREET FUNDRAISERS

This year many staff, volunteers and pet therapy dogs hit the streets for some tin shaking at three street fundraiser events. We tried our luck at all four city loop stations during morning peak hour, Etihad Stadium before a Western Bulldogs match, and Bourke St Mall when the Myer Christmas windows opened.

The fundraisers were a terrific success, raising over \$14,000 as well as a whole lot of awareness for the hospital. The staff and volunteers at Lort Smith really enjoyed getting out onto the streets to chat to people and hear all of their Lort Smith stories.



A big thank you to everyone who volunteered at one of these street fundraisers, without you this success would not have been possible.

## COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

Lort Smith is very proud to announce that our generous supporters in the community raised over \$58,000 for Lort Smith throughout the year. Our very creative supporters held events ranging from discos to morning teas, ran marathons and donated to Lort Smith in lieu of birthday gifts.

\$6,469 of this total was thanks to members of the community who sponsored a cage in our shelter, with 25 cattery cages sponsored and four kennels. These sponsorships are extremely important as all money raised goes towards feeding, caring for, and ultimately re-homing, cats and dogs that have been surrendered to Lort Smith Animal Hospital. We are extremely grateful for the support of the community.





## HELPING ANIMALS ONE GARAGE SALE AT A TIME

Rellik is a small business started by David and Chris in March 2013 with the sole purpose of supporting the animals of Lort Smith. David is an animal lover and has brought his pets to Lort Smith in the past. This motivated him to give something back to the organisation and help to raise much-needed funds. A keen vintage music memorabilia collector, David had the idea to take in donated household items and sell them at monthly garage sales as well as at different markets. The profits made are donated to Lort Smith.

Rellik picks up the donated items from our supporters' homes, making the whole process really simple for people to donate.

Since Rellik started they have donated over \$5,000 to Lort Smith!

Chris and David's selfless donation of time, money and resource is much appreciated and we would like to say a heartfelt thank you on behalf of Lort Smith and all the animals that have benefited from Rellik's donations.

# 14-YEAR-OLD ENTREPRENEUR

IN MARCH THIS YEAR WE WERE OVERWHELMED WHEN WE RECEIVED A HUGE DONATION OF SOME VERY IMPORTANT ANIMAL ITEMS. WHAT MADE THIS PARTICULAR DONATION SO SPECIAL WAS THAT IT CAME ENTIRELY FROM A 14-YEAR-OLD BOY.

When a pet supply company went into liquidation last year, Jarrod Sacco saw an opportunity and jumped at the chance to start his own business. With his parents' help he purchased a lot of the left over stock and began selling it on Ebay and at markets; and so began 'Bargain Pet Goods'.

After about six months, Jarrod had sold nearly all of the stock and decided to donate the remaining items. Being so close to his own dog, Max, a 13-year-old Schnoodle, Jarrod wanted to help out other animals and after researching different animal charities, he decided on Lort Smith. "I chose Lort Smith because it seemed like they could do a lot with the goods I had left over," said Jarrod. We certainly put them to good use.

Among the items that Jarrod gave to Lort Smith were 50 pet crates of varying sizes, pet strollers, rabbit hutches, cat scratching posts and a chicken house.

The pet crates in particular were very useful as we often have shelter animals that need to be confined to a cage for a period of time while they recover from surgery in foster care. The pet strollers were given to clients of Lort Smith who are currently homeless, this way their pets are able to sleep comfortably while on the streets. And the other items are being put to good use either with our foster carers or in our shelter.

Jarrod's Mum, Chris, is extremely proud of him. "He came up with the initial idea all on his own and decided on Lort Smith as the chosen charity. He has shown that he already has a good business head on his shoulders," she said.

Jarrod came in for a visit to the hospital and was able to meet a lot of our shelter staff.

Around the shelter Jarrod is known as 'Boy Wonder' as we are all so grateful to him for his generosity – he has helped many animals with his donation and he should be very proud of himself.



JARROD  
AND MAX



# MAJOR GIFTS

THE MAJOR DONORS WHO SUPPORT THE WORK OF LORT SMITH ARE EXTRAORDINARILY GENEROUS AND IT IS A HUMBLING EXPERIENCE TO BE THE RECIPIENT OF SUCH GENEROSITY.

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The gifts we received in 2013 helped greatly with the running of the hospital and assisted several key areas, including:

- Purchase of essential veterinary equipment.
- Hospital and shelter activity.
- Lort Smith's Pet Therapy program.
- Emergency Welfare Assistance program.

## BEQUESTS

Bequests are one of the most valuable ways that our supporters can assist us, enabling us to continue delivering our current services and make investments necessary to ensure our sustainability into the future.

They help us to provide discounted surgery and medical care for the pets of people with limited means, provide shelter, treatment and care for thousands of lost, surrendered, sick and injured animals, find new loving homes for animals that have been surrendered to our shelter, purchase essential equipment and medical supplies, and support our community outreach programs.

## HEART & HOME

At Lort Smith we recognise that many people are concerned about what will happen to their beloved pet when they are no longer around to care for them. This is why we developed our Heart & Home Program. Clients who register their pet in our program are provided with peace of mind knowing that we will care for their pets as much as they do. One of the key features of this program is that once the pet comes into our care, we find it a new loving home and cover all veterinary costs associated with that pet for the rest of its life. There has been a significant increase in the number of animals registered in the Heart & Home Program this year, including many cats, dogs, birds, and even a lizard.

David and Wendy Laing and their black and silver labradoodle Kynder, are part of the Heart & Home Program. They sponsor Lort Smith and have mentioned Lort Smith in their Will.

"It was a natural program for us to join as we don't have any children and reside in a retirement village. Originally, before the Lort Smith Heart & Home Program, we were unsure what to do for Kynder.

"We were relieved when Lort Smith brought out the Heart & Home Program as it suits our needs and ensures that Kynder and any future animal we may have will be looked after," said Wendy.

"We love the way that Lort Smith run their programs," said David.

Grace Pavone was one of the first clients to register in the Heart and Home program when it launched in 2009. Along with her beloved Airdale Albert, who was 15 at the time, Grace helped Lort Smith to launch the program by providing a testimonial and being interviewed by the media.

Albert has since passed and she has now adopted Harley, who is also a Lort Smith Pet Therapy dog, visiting residents every week at Parkvale Senior Home.

"People think about loved ones but pets are often forgotten, I wanted to make sure Albert was looked after once I am gone. I left a bequest to Lort Smith as part of the program and this provides me peace of mind as I know now Harley is secured with the program too," she said.



# VOLUNTEER NEWS

AT LORT SMITH WE ARE SO THANKFUL FOR OUR FABULOUS VOLUNTEERS WHO PROVIDE MUCH-NEEDED SUPPORT ACROSS VARIOUS AREAS OF THE HOSPITAL. WITHOUT THEIR SUPPORT WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO HELP SO MANY ANIMALS.

In 2013, 550 volunteers continued to support us with 145 new volunteers joining the program.

In the shelter, 143 volunteers helped with feeding, cleaning, providing enrichment and giving loads of pats, cuddles and TLC to the dogs, puppies, cats, kittens, guinea pigs and ferrets. They also took the dogs for a walk every day, giving them some fun time out of their cage to take in the sights and smells of North Melbourne.

Shelter volunteer Brittany Hellems says, "Volunteering here is easily the best part of my week! As I don't have pets of my own I relish the time spent giving the shelter dogs love as they're usually there through no fault of their own and are so grateful for the attention."

124 of our foster carers took in a total of 566 animals into their own homes providing rehabilitation and care to get them ready for adoption.

Volunteers also assisted with administration support, driving animals to adoption centres at Petbarn, and helping at many stall events and fundraisers.

We would like to thank our Corporate volunteers from NAB, Ernst & Young, and the Myer Family who took a paid day out of their working environment to volunteer at Lort Smith. Together they contributed a massive 2,040 hours to help animals in need.

## VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

We appreciate all of our volunteers who donate so much of their time to support the work of Lort Smith Animal Hospital. Each year we recognise special volunteers who have made a significant contribution to our volunteer program. This year we thank and congratulate Caroline Lovick and her dog Ralf, and Lorraine Dixon, winners of the 2013 Volunteer of the Year Award.

### Lorraine Dixon

Lorraine has been a volunteer with Lort Smith for approximately five years, volunteering weekly and providing a friendly face to visitors in the retail shop. Her support provides funds to help the hospital treat more animals.

Lorraine has also helped countless new retail shop volunteers by providing guidance and a welcoming environment. In recognition of Lorraine's tireless volunteer work, we are thrilled to present her with an award for 2013 Volunteer of the Year.

### Caroline Lovick and Ralf

Caroline is a Pet Therapy volunteer who has made a significant contribution to the program. Her dog Ralf, a Giant Schnauzer, accompanies her on weekly visits to the Royal Children's Hospital where they bring great joy to the children and their families.

Caroline and Ralf are frequently requested by hospital staff to assist with physiotherapy sessions and to visit children in ICU as Ralf is known to have a special impact on the children he visits. We are very grateful for Caroline's commitment and dedication to helping Lort Smith and are very pleased to present her with an award for 2013 Volunteer of the Year.





## LORT SMITH PET THERAPY

One of our favourite things at Lort Smith is being able to spread a little bit of joy to hundreds of sick, disabled and elderly Victorians via our Pet Therapy program. In 2013, 110 Pet Therapy volunteers took their accredited dogs to 66 facilities in Victoria ranging from aged-care facilities and disability support services through to rehabilitation centres and hospitals.

One of the facilities where we are exceptionally happy to help is the Royal Children's Hospital. Brenda Kittelty from RCH says, "Lort Smith volunteers and their beautiful dogs visit seven wards and the Emergency Department at The Royal Children's Hospital. This highly valued and much appreciated service brings joy to patients, their families and hospital staff alike. The dogs assist in the delivery of clinical therapy, an example of this is motivating a patient to move; and provide unconditional love, comfort and stress relief to so many. Heartfelt thanks to all the volunteers and their Super-Dogs!"

Lort Smith offers this program as a free service to the community because we firmly believe that contact with the dogs helps to improve the wellbeing of patients and residents, as well as their families.

This year we were thrilled to welcome 70 new Pet Therapy volunteers to the program, including Lynne McCallister and her Irish Wolfhound Galahad, who visit regularly at RCH.

"Galahad is a bit of a show stopper because he is just so huge! He is an Irish Wolfhound, which is one of the tallest breeds of dog in the world, so his immediate effect on the children, parents and nurses is to provide instant distraction and fun," said Lynne.

"Distraction from a sterile environment, but more importantly distraction from pain, stress and worry. Many of the children miss their own dogs and like to tell me all about them, so a visit often makes life feel a little more "normal" for them. The children tend to either welcome Galahad with open arms or hug him tightly, or sometimes due to his size, they are initially a little intimidated."

With Galahad's gentle nature and a little coaxing from Lynne and parents, they instead have the positive experience of overcoming fears that leave them feeling jubilant, plus they get a big kiss and cuddle.

"Often when Galahad visits a ward, children leave their rooms to come out and say hello to us, but they also socialise with other children and nurses too. Doctors have often remarked on the positive physiotherapeutic and psychological benefits of pet therapy, especially when it involved a child responding by walking around and laughing, when previously they had not left their room in several days.

"The nurses sometimes invite Galahad to sit with children that are receiving medication through a drip to reduce their anxiety and provide comfort. They love getting their photo taken with him to show other family members and friends. A very special moment for all of us," she said.

We have also had strong demand from many different facilities and welcomed 15 new organisations to the program, including Alpha Autism in Northcote. Toni Thatcher from Alpha Autism says, "Pet Therapy has been a welcome addition to the programs at Alpha Autism Northcote. We have seen a remarkable change in the clients that we work with when the dogs visit us. They are excited to see the dogs when they are here and they are engaging with the dog and its owner. We are extremely grateful to the volunteers that come to Alpha North and Lort Smith Animal Hospital for providing a fantastic program."

In 2013 we changed the name of our program from PALS (Pets are Loving Support) to Lort Smith Pet Therapy, a name more reflective of the services our volunteers provide. Thanks to donations, we also rolled out new uniforms for our volunteers which were warmly embraced. The uniforms reflect the new branding of the Pet Therapy program and ensure all our volunteers are visible when out and about.

We look forward to welcoming even more volunteers and facilities in 2014 and encourage anyone with some spare time and a well behaved pooch to get involved.



LYNNE AND GALAHAD



# MEDIA NEWS

DURING 2013 OUR MEDIA RELATIONS ACTIVITY HAD A NUMBER OF AIMS: TO INFORM PEOPLE ABOUT THE DIVERSE AND COMPLEX VARIETY OF MEDICAL CONDITIONS THAT OUR VETERINARY STAFF WORK ON; TO ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP BY BRINGING TO PUBLIC ATTENTION A RANGE OF ISSUES AFFECTING COMPANION ANIMALS; AND TO SUPPORT LORT SMITH'S CORE ACTIVITIES IN THE HOSPITAL, THE SHELTER AND THE COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS BY ENCOURAGING DONATIONS, VOLUNTEERS AND ADOPTIONS.

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We have been successful in getting a number of issues covered, thanks to the collaborative effort of staff from all areas of the hospital who have come up with great story ideas, provided wonderful animal stars and, of course, faced up to the microphone or TV camera with courage and flair.

CEO Dr Liz Walker led by example, giving numerous interviews in print, radio and TV on topics such as parenting and pets; dangerous dog legislation; why we shouldn't give pets as Christmas presents; and the feminisation of the veterinary profession. She was also the subject of a profile as a Change Maker on Pro Bono, a social change website, and a guest contributor discussing parenting and pets on the BubHub.

Many of our staff were interviewed for a variety of news stories on radio stations, including 3AW, 3RRR, SYN Radio, Gold FM and FOX.

Dr Tristan Rich was also interviewed by The Age and The Herald Sun for stories about snakes, turtles, bearded dragons, orphaned birds and possums. Given the size (or lack of it) of his patients, Dr Tristan's hands were often the only part of him which featured in the photographs illustrating the stories.

However, we saw more of him when he appeared in TV news stories for the Seven and Nine Networks about heat affected animals and on the Sunrise program with Max, the golf ball eating dog whose life he saved.

Dr Andrew Kapsis appeared in numerous print articles, discussing cases as diverse as common foods that are toxic to pets; a chicken that was thrown from a moving car; diabetes in dogs and Moe, the Jack Russell Terrier who 'lost his voice' after inhaling grass seeds that embedded in his vocal chords. Dr Andrew continued to be a regular guest on JOYFM's Saturday morning program and also made several guest appearances on the ABC 774's Hilary Harper program.

Our animal chaplain Adele Mapperson was the subject of a number of interviews and programs about her work counselling people dealing with the loss of a pet and coordinating Lort Smith's Bereavement Support Group.

This topic really struck a chord with the animal loving listeners who heard Adele on ABC Radio National's The Spirit of Things program; Radio Australia's Mornings with Phil Kafcaloudes program; and Radio 4EB's Features program. Adele was also interviewed by The Sunday Age and Dogs Life Magazine.

One of the most controversial topics of the year was the issue of vegan diets for cats. A media release prompted by the condition of a kitten that presented at the hospital in a critical condition after being fed a vegan diet triggered a media frenzy, with coverage in papers in all states of Australia and as far away as the UK (Daily Telegraph) and the US (Orlando Sentinel).

The story was voted the most widely read story in the Leader newspapers in 2013. Dr Leanne Pinfold, Dr Tristan Rich, Dr Andrew Kapsis and Dr Russell Harrison all gave interviews on the topic.

The story had a happy ending when the kitten's owners followed the advice of Lort Smith vets and put their pet on a balanced diet which quickly restored its health.

Overall Lort Smith starred in 67 print articles, 11 television spots and 34 radio spots throughout the year thanks to the great efforts of our team and many journalists. These include Tom Minear of Herald Sun, Jade Robran of Channel Seven, Michael Short of The Age and Ben Rylan from JOYFM who have continued to support Lort Smith throughout the year. Thank you to you all for helping us to raise awareness of Lort Smith and the many animal welfare issues we advocate.

# CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Our social media presence significantly increased in 2013 with lots of activity on Facebook, including stories about shelter animals, pet advice and several fun competitions. As such, we increased our Facebook fan base by 84% and we were delighted to end the year with 10,000 engaged supporters.

This is a very important channel for the marketing team to promote Lort Smith and raise awareness of the unique work that we do, as well as provide an opportunity for our supporters to ask questions and provide feedback. Facebook is also a terrific platform to showcase the shelter animals available for adoption, in many cases assisting animals that were waiting for a long period of time.

A great example of this was Tika a 10-year-old Labrador cross who was extremely shy and did not endear herself to anyone looking to adopt. Tika had been in the shelter for 123 days when we decided to run a campaign for her on Facebook. The campaign focussed on how Tika was extremely shy, but when she went to foster care and got to know her carer, she came out of her shell and even showed off all the tricks she knew.

The campaign was highly emotive and really hit the hearts of our supporters, being shared by a massive 1,437 people, generating 464 likes and 157 comments. Most importantly, one of our Facebook fans saw the story and came to Lort Smith the next day to adopt her. The marketing team were so thrilled to be able to help Tika find such a loving family.

Over the past year we continued to receive much appreciated corporate support from NAB, CSL, Foxtel and Ernst & Young. Lort Smith was also thrilled to welcome two more corporate contributors in 2013, Seek and Australia Post.

Partnering with these corporates is always very exciting, especially when we see such great financial benefits. In total over \$158,000 was raised through our corporate partners. This includes a massive \$92,000 in contributions from the Workplace Giving Program.

Lort Smith loved welcoming all the corporate volunteers throughout the year who assisted with the operations of the hospital and in turn donated their time and love to all our animals.

We would like to thank everyone in the corporate partnership program for their generosity throughout the year.

### Call for help from chilly dogs

Alex White

THESE friendly dogs may look cosy and cuddly, but they are among the hundreds of homeless animals needing a helping hand to stay warm this winter.

Lort Smith Animal Hospital is calling for people to donate used blankets and towels to keep homeless pets warm during winter.

Winter is a peak dumping period for unwanted animals and chief executive Liz Walker says the shelter is desperate for more winter warmers.

"A lot of people have spare blankets just sitting in the cupboard that can help make a difference for our little ones," she said. "It is hard for animals entering any shelter so we want to make their stay as warm and comfortable as possible."

Donations of blankets, towels, soft dog beds and coats can be dropped off at the shelter in North Melbourne.

The call came a week after Melbourne shivered its way through the coldest morning of the year. The dose of early winter weather saw the mercury in Melbourne plummet to 4.9C at 6.22am on May 21.



Rugged up: Minnie and Dexter try to keep warm.

### Kitten critical after diet

VET WARNS IDEOLOGY DANGEROUS FOR PETS

Kellie Cameron

A KITTEN has almost died after its owners fed it a strict vegan diet.

The horrific story...



bold says the danger to fence cats onto inappropriate diets. She's pictured with Roger, who's well...

collar-appropriate diet," she said. "You can't force your ideology on the cat. "Conscience will seek out ment and your cat is possibly more likely to go hunting and kill local native fauna if you deprive it of meat."

De Pristal said she had not come across a similar case in her 22 years as a veterinarian.



Having a ball: Keen soccer fan Lychee at the Lort Smith Animal Hospital. Picture: DAVID CAIRO

Good sport Lychee has his own goals in mind with these big brown eyes and he knows he can had been therapeutic for

TIKA



# FINANCIALS

Lort Smith reported a significant loss of \$3.9m for the 2013 calendar year (2012: Loss \$0.7m).

Trading conditions were extremely tough in 2013, with vet services revenue of \$10.5m for the year, representing a pleasing increase of \$1.0m on 2012 (up 11%). The increase was principally from our core service offerings; that of consultations (up 6%), diagnostic imaging (up 27%), surgery (up 10%) and hospitalisation (up 18%). In line with our Mission, discounts to people of limited means increased in 2013 to \$0.9m from \$0.7m in 2012 (up 17%).

Cost of sales, of which drugs and chemicals are a major component have been well controlled and managed through improved processes and systems and have remained stable year on year.

Other income of \$3.5m in 2013 reduced 37% on 2012. Other income principally includes bequest, donation and fundraising revenue and while donation and fundraising revenue was slightly ahead in 2013 (3%) against 2012, revenue from bequests was more than \$2 million dollars less than the prior year. The shortfall in bequest revenue placed the organisation under cash flow pressure and resulted in the redemption of some investments. Bequest revenue and donation income are a vital revenue source for Lort Smith to be able to continue its good work.

Lort Smith operations are labour intensive, with labour costs making up over 60% of the costs of Lort Smith. In 2013, personal costs increased to \$11.3m from \$10.2m in 2012 – an increase of 10%. This increase was mainly brought about by wage increases provided as part of the Lort Smith Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, a one-off adjustment to leave liability and the costs of an internal restructure designed to streamline our shared services.

Other expenses in 2013 were \$5.0m, compared to \$3.0m in 2012 – up 62%. During the year Lort Smith took the opportunity to write off property, plant and equipment that had no realisable value, and also streamlined its depreciation policies to better reflect the useful lives of property plant and equipment. In addition, and reflective of the difficult trading environment, Lort Smith wrote off old debts in excess of \$1.0m in 2013; in 2012 bad debts written off were \$0.5m. During the year, \$0.5m of old debt previously identified and provided for was collected through an internal debt recovery program. As bad debts have become more prevalent during these difficult times, Lort Smith has engaged Dun and Bradstreet to assist in recovering bad and doubtful debts.

Dividend income in 2013 increased by 12% on 2012 and is reflective of a growth in profits and dividends declared by corporates in 2013. Interest income in 2013 decreased from 2012, reflecting the lower interest rate environment that has had a flow on effect on investors like Lort Smith.

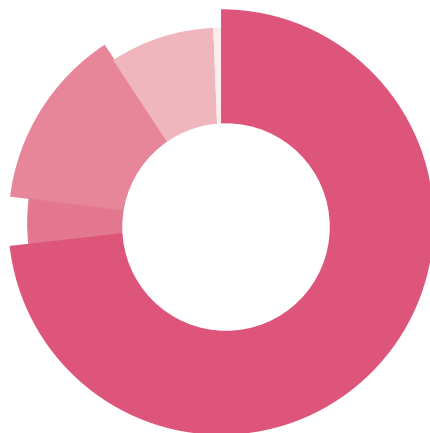
The Board and management thank most sincerely the people and organisations who assist Lort Smith through donations, bequests and in-kind support.





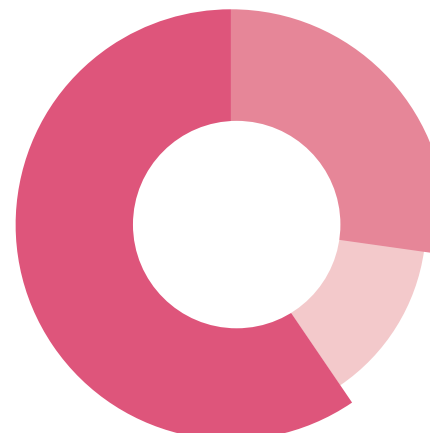
## REVENUE

Veterinary Services	73%
Investment Income	4%
Bequests	14%
Donations & Fundraising	8%
Trusts & Foundations	1%



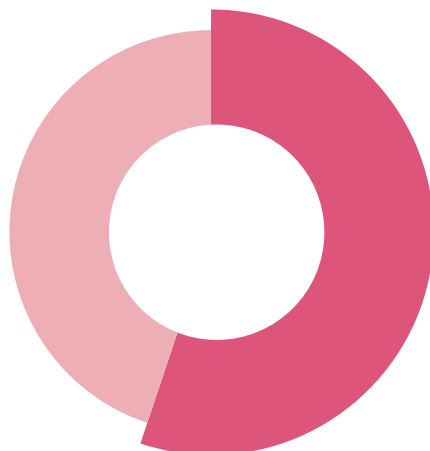
## EXPENDITURE

Wages & Oncosts	60%
Hospital	27%
Finance & Administration	13%



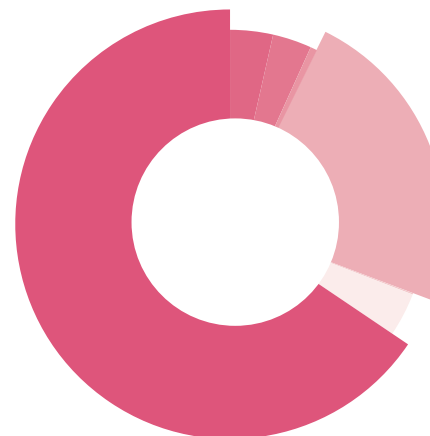
## LIABILITIES

Trade & Other Payables	55%
Employee Benefits	45%



## ASSETS

Property Plant & Equipment	65%
Cash & Cash Equivalents	4%
Trade & Other Receivables	3%
Inventory	1%
Investments	23%
Investment Property	4%
Prepayments	0%



# STATEMENTS

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

REVENUES	2013	2012
Veterinary Services	10,461,179	9,431,340
Retail Shop	54,533	376,638
Bequests / Legacies	2,062,764	4,144,289
Membership	1,495	1,490
Trusts and Foundations	94,500	90,000
Donations & Fundraising Income	1,296,017	1,253,917
Interest	46,989	178,523
Dividends and Investment Fund Distributions	492,741	438,646
Rental Income	25,683	20,592
Debt Recovered	485,676	-
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>15,021,577</b>	<b>15,935,435</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
Veterinary Services		
- Pathology	384,324	355,045
- Drugs	1,414,162	1,483,001
- Food for Animals	19,869	24,476
- Discounts to Clients	845,836	745,018
- Other	2,434,377	1,298,273
Retail Shop	53,300	243,337
Wages & On-costs		
- Salaries and Wages	9,011,166	8,962,598
- Superannuation	891,870	806,250
- Other Wage Expenses	1,355,955	938,064
Finance and Administration	2,508,434	1,747,704
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>18,919,293</b>	<b>16,603,766</b>
<b>NET (LOSS)/PROFIT FOR YEAR</b>	<b>(3,897,716)</b>	<b>(668,331)</b>

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS	2013	2012
Cash Equivalents & Cash	1,178,790	3,666,777
Trade & Other Receivables	1,074,477	842,763
Inventories	185,922	159,470
Investments	7,790,437	7,414,395
Prepayments	38,314	54,395
Investment Property	1,200,000	1,000,000
Property Plant & Equipment	21,822,167	21,504,925
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>33,290,107</b>	<b>34,642,725</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Trade & Other Payables	1,602,329	873,942
Employee Benefits	1,303,771	1,353,350
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>2,906,100</b>	<b>2,227,292</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>30,384,007</b>	<b>32,415,433</b>



# RECOGNITION OF SUPPORT

## MAJOR GIFTS

A H Bienvenu  
A Yan  
A Gunatunga  
A Pratt  
B Pesel  
B Vial  
B Blatchford  
B Hughes  
BT & JM Moores  
C Gray  
C Everingham  
D Hassett  
D James  
D Thompson  
Ensign Laboratories  
F Kitching  
G Shalit & M Faine  
H Abson  
H Metelmann  
H Irwin  
J A Nolan  
J Rust  
J Schurmann  
J M Hawkins  
J Schilin  
J Thompson  
K Blackman  
L Lewis  
L Teo  
M O'Sullivan  
M & J Brodie

M Hay  
M Southey AC  
M Balfour  
M Orr  
Moniton Pty Ltd  
N Carrington  
N H Sturgess  
N Gantner  
P Townshend  
P Potter  
R & L Lewis  
R Muirden  
R Andre  
S Baillieu  
S and N Ewans  
S Perrett  
Specton P/L  
S Giorgini  
S Egerton  
The Calvert-Jones  
Foundation  
The Myer Foundation  
The Orloff Family  
Charitable Trust  
The Sheehan-Birrell  
Foundation  
The Traiders Corporation  
Pty Ltd  
The Yulgilbar Foundation  
Timothy C S Probert Pty Ltd  
T Hipkiss  
T Legg  
V Erwin

## BUSINESS SUPPORTERS

Boehringer-Ingelheim  
CSL  
Ernst & Young  
Foxtel  
Hanrob Pet Hotels  
Hill's Pet Nutrition  
Myer Family  
National Australia Bank  
Petbarn  
Seek

## LEGACIES

Eleanor M Albiston  
Florence A Anderson  
Charitable Trust  
Alan G Barker  
Charitable Trust  
Leslie & Heidi Basch  
Charitable Trust  
Edith J Beggs  
Charitable Trust  
Wilfred & Ruby Bird  
Charitable Trust  
Mabel K Corless Trust  
Kevin S Cowell Trust  
Ian W Dodd Trust  
Alma & Carmen  
Figuerola Trust  
Mary V Jones Bequest  
Louisa Lort Smith Trust

Lady Lyle Trust  
Bruce McDonald Trust  
Margaret L Merrifield  
Memorial Fund  
George & Violet  
Morewood Trust  
K S C Nanson  
George Turrell Trust  
Ada Withers

## GRANTS

Department of  
Environment & Primary  
Industries  
Equity Trustees Hazel  
& Arthur Bruce Bequest  
Scobie & Claire  
MacKinnon Trust

## BEQUESTS

Marcia D Anderson  
Barbara H Arents  
Dolores Bardini  
Mavis W Barnett  
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