

COMPANION



Lort Smith
caring for animals



**NO LIMITS TO
LIFE ON THREE
LEGS**

**IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST
SIGHT FOR ALBIE**

**A NEW ADVENTURE
WITH RUMI AND JANGO**



**MEET OUR
2020 VOLUNTEER
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**LOCKDOWN
ON THE ICU**

AUTUMN EDITION 2021



lortsmith.com



Welcome to a new year and a new edition of Companion! Whether you've been a supporter of Lort Smith for years or you're a new friend to animals in need, I'm so excited to be spending 2021 with you.

We're making some exciting inroads with our Capital Campaign, which aims to redevelop and expand our existing Animal Hospital and build a second site in Campbellfield. This Campaign will allow us to reach even more members of the community. If you haven't yet seen the plans for these incredible new facilities, I encourage you to visit our website and see what your support will help us to do for animals in the future.

After the unprecedented year we have all just experienced, you would be forgiven for thinking we were taking it easy this year. But that's not in the nature of our hardworking and passionate staff and volunteers — we continue to be the busiest animal hospital in Australia and we are just as committed to delivering high-quality animal healthcare and wellbeing as we were back in 1936.

That's right, Lort Smith will be celebrating our 85th birthday in 2021! It's something I am incredibly proud of as I think back on the millions of lives we have impacted during that time. Because as you know, Lort Smith doesn't just care for the physical wellbeing of animals — we show them how it feels to be safe and loved too. It's something we have been doing for 85 years, and will continue to do in the years to come.

And you, and the compassionate people who came before you, are the reason it's possible.

Thank you so much for being such an incredible supporter to animals in need and the people who care for them.

Yours Sincerely

Dr David Cunliffe
Head of Hospital

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

CELEBRATING

85 years
of
Lort Smith



CHEEKY GIGI ON A RECENT VISIT TO LORT SMITH

No limits to life on three legs

When Samantha and her partner Jai fostered an eight-month-old French bulldog puppy named Gigi, they were instantly smitten and discussed adopting her. But being responsible pet owners, they were concerned about whether their lifestyle was suitable for a dog with only three legs.

“Even though we're not super active, we like getting out in nature, going to the beach and camping. So there was a lot of consideration of whether we could integrate Gigi into that, and whether that was fair to her. But that was 100% just us putting limits on her.”

Gigi had come to Lort Smith with a badly broken front leg, a dislocated kneecap and nose and mouth issues that prevented her from being able to breathe properly. After four surgeries at Lort Smith, made possible thanks to the support of generous supporters like you, Gigi went back to live with Samantha, Jai and their fox terrier mix Ari, and proved that there's nothing holding her back!

“We have been blown away by how quickly she has adapted and the fact that it doesn't stop her from doing anything,” Samantha said.

“Now, when people see Gigi and make comments like “oh, the poor thing” or “how sad”, it makes us realise how humans and animals are only limited by other people's perception, not their abilities. Our other dog Ari lost his eye in 2019 so we are well accustomed to life with dogs that are ‘different’ and know that these dogs are no less worthy of love ... in fact, it makes us love them more!”



JAI, SAMANTHA, GIGI AND ARI

IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT FOR ALBIE



ALBIE BEFORE HIS FIRST ENTROPION OPERATION



Like so many people who come to the Lort Smith Adoption Hub with the intent of adopting an animal, 13-year-old Neisha and her mum Leonie walked away with something they didn't quite expect!

"We've always had rescue cats and so we immediately looked online to adopt," said Leonie. **"We found two cats, a bonded pair, at Lort Smith that we went to look at, but we found they weren't suitable for us; they were just too shy for our family."**

After being encouraged to meet some of the other cats we were caring for, they met five-year-old Albie — or more accurately, Albie introduced himself to them!

"He wouldn't leave me alone!" Neisha laughed. **"He was just meowing and rubbing his head against my legs."**

But Albie wasn't just your run-of-the-mill smooch. He'd had a very difficult life prior to coming to Lort Smith, living with a painful eye condition called entropion for years. Entropion is where the eyelid is rolled inward, causing eyelashes to irritate and inflame the eyeball.

Before Albie was put up for adoption, our vets at Lort Smith performed the delicate surgery of removing a thin strip of excess skin from Albie's eyelids. Our vets are always very cautious with this procedure, removing only a small amount of tissue to avoid causing the opposite problem, called ectropion. While this avoids over-correction, in a small number of cases it can mean a second surgery is required to completely fix the entropion.

And despite being significantly better than he was prior to his surgery, Albie's entropion was so severe that he was one of those rare cases. Two surgeries and some time in foster care later, he was placed up for adoption. Leonie said learning about his condition and knowing eye infections were something Albie would likely live with forever wasn't a deterrent for them at all.

"It would've been so painful, living with ulcerations on his eyes for so long," Leonie said. **"I'm really glad we are now able to look after him and make sure his eyes are ok for the rest of his life."**

"He's really easy to handle and treat, and so easy to give medication to," she said. **"He has such a sweet nature so it's sad to think he might've been put down just because of his eyes if he hadn't come to Lort Smith."**

Now Albie gets to spend all day (and night) right where he wants to be: with his favourite person, Neisha.

"Barely a night has gone by where I haven't gone to sleep with a white mass of fur right next to my head," she said. **"He sounds a bit like a mild asthmatic when he purrs, which is a bit annoying but still adorable."**

Because of you, Lort Smith would never have been able to dedicate as much time, care and resources to Albie's recovery.

Thank you so much.



ALBIE NOW LIVING HIS BEST LIFE WITH NEISHA BY HIS SIDE



A NEW ADVENTURE WITH RUMI AND JANGO

Laurel has travelled the world multiple times. But with lockdown preventing her from leaving Melbourne last year, she decided the time was right to bring an exotic new adventure right to her!

"My youngest daughter Emily rang me in November and said 'Lort Smith has a Tonkinese cat available for adoption ... but the only thing is, there's two of them!'" Laurel laughed.

Rumi and Jango are Tonkinese brothers who are incredibly bonded and were in need of a new home.

"I sort of thought, 'Oh gosh, two is going to be double the work,'" Laurel said, **"Then she sent me photos of them and I just fell in love with them instantly."**

Laurel immediately visited Lort Smith to meet, and subsequently adopt them, with staff warning her that the drive home was going to be a noisy one, thanks to the famous Tonkinese meow.

THE HANDSOME RUMI



LAUREL AND JANGO



"Well they definitely started crying but as soon as I turned on the music, they were perfectly quiet!" Laurel said. **"They seemed to love classical music."**

Once at home, the boys' true personalities started to shine through. Rumi is very much the leader, immediately setting off to investigate his new home. Jango, on the other hand, was a bit shy and hid for a few days — until one night when his hunting instincts took over!

"I was sitting on the couch and both cats came and sat next to me," Laurel said. **"I put a wildlife show on and suddenly, they both attacked the TV! They tried to catch the birds on the television!"**

And even if travel is off the cards for a bit, Laurel is determined to make sure Rumi and Jango get to explore as much as possible.

"I'm going to get an enclosure built on the side of the house, so they can safely be outside."

Lort Smith Adoption Centre offers sanctuary, rehabilitation, welfare and a new home for surrendered pets.

Our dedicated team is focused on achieving the best possible outcome for each animal. We will never euthanise an animal capable of being rehomed.

Animals available for adoption can be viewed at: lortsmith.com/adopt

Meet our 2020 Volunteer of the Year

Christine is famous around Lort Smith. She's the smiling face our clients meet when they first walk into our Animal Hospital. She's the lady who prepares delicious platters of fruit and vegetables for our staff to snack on during their busy shifts. She's has an adorable miniature dachshund named Chrysla, who brings joy to so many people through the Lort Smith Pet Therapy Program. She's the foster carer who isn't afraid to take on a new challenge. She's the one in the laundry washing up to 500 towels a day.

It's no surprise that Christine is also our 2020 volunteer of the year!

"My philosophy is that anything I can do that eases the load for the nurses, the vets and the admin staff means the more emotional and physical energy and time they have to devote to the animals," Christine said. **"So for me, nothing is too small, nothing is too big, nothing is too menial."**

We were blessed to welcome Christine into our volunteer program after she moved to Melbourne and wanted to give back to her new community.

"I worked in the Air Force for nearly 34 years and I was medically discharged in December 2018," she said. **"I've spent my entire adult life serving my country, my community and it just felt so natural to continue wanting to do that."**

"My time at Lort Smith has been therapy for my soul, in terms of the interactions with the animals and the feeling of being worthwhile and needed. Plus the staff are amazing, they are so supportive and respectful and so thankful for what we do."

"The Volunteer of the Year Award was such an amazing surprise because I go to Lort Smith because I genuinely love it ... I get much more out of it than I put in, I can guarantee that!"

For further information on Lort Smith's volunteer program visit: lortsmith.com/volunteering



CHRISTINE GETTING A LORT SMITH PATIENT





OUR NORTH MELBOURNE SITE DESIGN

A NEW CHAPTER FOR OUR FUTURE



Did you know that Lort Smith was established by two powerhouse women all the way back in 1936? That's right! Built on their passion and commitment for caring for animals, Louisa Lort Smith and Lady Francis Lyle brought to life their vision of a hospital that cared for the animals of the disadvantaged and vulnerable.

Fast forward 85 years and here we are, still standing proudly on the same North Melbourne site. Still proudly serving the people and animals of Melbourne. We wonder what Louisa and Lady Lyle would say if they could see the legacy they had created.

Over one million animals helped. And countless people too.



THE DESIGN OF LORT SMITH ANIMAL COMMUNITY CARE – CAMPBELLFIELD



As we look forward to our future – to our next 85 years and beyond – we have some exciting news to share. As you may already know, our existing North Melbourne site is stretched to its limits, and as Melbourne grows, it's getting harder for some to access our wonderful services. To ensure we can continue champion the human-animal bond for those who need it most, we've come up with an ambitious plan to **STAY AND GROW!**

This is a monumental event in our history and will see two huge projects come to life. These will help us to help more animals just like the beautiful Gigi who you might have read about on page two.

The first project will see us **GROW** with a brand new Lort Smith site built in Melbourne's north. Our Lort Smith Animal Community Care in Campbellfield will bring our amazing services to Melbourne's northern regions. We are so excited to be able to offer our high-quality, affordable care to more people.

Our Lort Smith Animal Community Care in Campbellfield will also significantly improve our Adoption Centre facilities for animals while they are waiting to be rehomed. It will provide green space for outdoor dog runs and purpose built facilities for cats based on best practice models. This will all ensure an environment which is less stressful on animals.

We will also be able to increase our support for people in crisis, whether related to domestic violence, mental health or homelessness, through the expansion of our Emergency Welfare Assistance program. Additionally, we will be able to keep more animals with their carers through increased animal behavioural support.

With construction of our Lort Smith Community Animal Care in Campbellfield underway, we look forward to opening our doors to you all later this year.

Our second exciting project will help us to **STAY** with the redevelopment of our existing site in North Melbourne. With new and improved facilities, we will be able to expand our emergency and surgical services and provide better and more complex veterinary care. This will give us the chance to boldly contribute to advancing veterinary medicine in Australia and build

strong foundations for our future. Most importantly, our North Melbourne redevelopment will help us to continue to champion the human-animal bond for those who need it most.

With great vision comes great investment. To make our Stay and Grow vision a reality, we have launched our **Our Future Is In Your Hands** Capital Campaign. We would like to thank all those who have contributed to our Capital Campaign so far and are helping us to shape our future for the next 85 years and beyond.



SOME OF OUR PATIENTS IN OUR EARLY YEARS



LORT SMITH PATIENT IZZY AT LORT SMITH ANIMAL COMMUNITY CARE – CAMPBELLFIELD SITE. PIC: JAY TOWN FOR HERALD SUN



If you would like to learn more about our Stay and Grow plan or our **Our Future Is In Your Hands** Capital Campaign, please call 03 9287 6421 or email vtaylor@lortsmith.com.



DR LEANNE WITH PATIENT SHANIA

Lockdown on the ICU



No two days are the same in Lort Smith's Intensive Care Unit, and that's exactly why Dr Leanne Pinfold, Head Vet - Emergency & Critical Care loves it! But when COVID-19 hit Melbourne in 2020, it drastically changed the way we provided emergency care to sick and injured animals. We sat down with Dr Leanne to talk about Lort Smith in lockdown.

What parts of your job drastically changed during lockdown?

I really enjoy building relationships with the carers because it can be a really stressful time and I like trying to guide and help them in making often hard decisions.

But during COVID-19, things obviously changed a bit because we weren't allowed to have any clients in the hospital. All our accident and emergency consults were done in the car park or by phone, which was a challenge. And clients weren't able to visit their pets in intensive care, which was sad, so we did things like taking photos so they could still see their pets.

How did the clients, and patients, react to these changes?

Some clients found it really upsetting that they couldn't come in to visit but they were all really understanding that we needed to follow the rules... Some animals were a lot more nervous in the consult room being away from their family but we always had a nurse with us, comforting and reassuring every animal in our care. It was a very busy time for everyone!

Have things eased up now?

No! [laughs].

What were some highlights of this otherwise dark time?

We set up accident and emergency teams of vets and vet nurses, which is something we've always wanted to do, but we were forced to do during COVID-19 and it worked really well. And because we didn't have New Years Eve fireworks this year, we didn't have as many animals running away and getting hurt, which was great!

Many animals that arrive at Lort Smith require critical and urgent vet care. Because of your support, Lort Smith Animal Hospital can stay open 365 days of the year and be there for every animal in need.



SAVE LIVES

Become a Pet Protector today

Pet Protector's help animals in need by providing an ongoing, monthly donation that enables Lort Smith to provide care and support for thousands of sick, injured and vulnerable animals and their families each year.

Lort Smith receives no ongoing government funding, which is why regular giving is so critical. It gives us the financial stability to dedicate funds to help protect the health and wellbeing of every animal that comes into our care.



I would like to become a **Pet Protector** by making a regular monthly gift of:

\$25 \$35 \$50 Or my choice of \$



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To view our Privacy Policy, please visit www.lortsmith.com/privacy. Donations over \$2 are tax-deductible.



CELEBRATING 85 YEARS OF LORT SMITH

COMMEMORATIVE GIFT CARDS

Available for purchase
from the Lort Smith
dispensary or via
lortsmith.com/shop



Lort Smith is **Australia's largest not-for-profit Animal Hospital.**

Our mission is to improve the health and happiness of animals and the people who care for them, regardless of personal circumstances. We rely heavily on the support of our generous donors and volunteers.



Transforming Lives™

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85 years*

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