

COMPANION

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**KING CHESTER
TAKES HIS THRONE**
PAGE 02

**THE NEW ERA OF
LORT SMITH**
PAGE 03

**EARNING THE
LOVE OF A
GOLDEN OLDIE**
PAGE 05

**THE LEGACY OF THE
LOUISA LORT SMITH TREE**
PAGE 04

**THE CAPTAIN OF
CAMPBELLFIELD**
PAGE 09



CEO Jennifer Fleming with Lort Smith
adoptee Narla



LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Hello to the incredible Lort Smith community! As the new CEO of this historic organisation, I am honoured to stand alongside you in our mission of improving the health and happiness of animals and the people who care for them.

A bit about me – I am a mother to three children and a beautiful dog named Freckle, who was so named because of her one white dot on her otherwise entirely black coat. I have a background in the community sector,

most recently in aged care, where I became passionate about helping people to overcome barriers that prevent them from living full, healthy and happy lives. This was a major drawcard for coming to work at Lort Smith, because animals bring so much love and joy to our lives. This became even more apparent to me during the various lockdowns we have all lived through, where I saw how Freckle lifted my children's spirits and gave them purpose every day.

That relationship between human and animal is what drives me. The idea of being able to help someone keep their beloved companion by offering them affordable vet care and support fuels my passion for the job. I'm particularly excited to be joining Lort Smith right now when we've seen such an incredible growth and expansion. The new Campbellfield site has been custom built to service a whole new community in Melbourne's north for things like routine vet care and, of course, adoptions. And the redevelopment of our hospital in North Melbourne will be game-changing for pet owners across the city.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the extraordinary generosity of people like you.

Thank you so much for your commitment to caring for animals in need and the people who love them. I am energised by your dedication and look forward to seeing what amazing things this community will do next.

Jennifer Fleming
CEO



KING CHESTER TAKES HIS THRONE

Chester is the kind of cat you can't help but be drawn to. From his Persian good looks to his sweet, attention-seeking personality, Chester had everyone at Lort Smith wrapped around his paw!

But when he first came to us, he looked far from the healthy and gregarious cat he is today.

"Poor Chester was in pretty bad shape," says Erin, one of our Animal Welfare Officers. **"Immediately apparent was his diarrhoea and a skin issue that looked as though it had been inflamed by clipper rash ... he also had an inflammation in his left eye, as well as dental disease ... and a heart murmur."**

To top it all off, Chester was tested positive for feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV), a virus that damages cells in a cat's immune system. We knew it would take a special person to adopt him and when his foster carer Lisa put up her hand, we were thrilled.

"He was a bit skinny and had a few health issues," says Lisa, **"but he's perfect for us."**

This lucky boy now spends his days being brushed, cuddled and taken for walks around the neighbourhood in his 'cat pram', an enclosed trolley that allows Chester to take in the sights and smells of the neighbourhood in safety. **"It's a sensory overload for him, he just has a ball,"** Lisa says.

As the full-time carer for her elderly mother, Lisa says Chester has brought joy and laughter back into their home.

"Mum has a walking frame and he'll jump up on it and mum will take him for a little ride. We call that his 'convertible' because it doesn't have the roof on it, like his pram does!"

How do I prevent my cat from contracting FIV?

The best way to prevent a cat from contracting FIV is to keep them indoors. The virus is spread through deep bites, which means cats most at risk of FIV (due to their propensity to fight) are male, undesexed cats who live mainly outside. Desexing your cat will help reduce their risk of FIV; however, to be extra safe, keep your cat inside.

If you or someone you know have concerns about your cat contracting FIV, please contact our team to make a vet appointment today.



Chester undergoing an ultrasound

THE NEW ERA OF LORT SMITH

After 85 years in our North Melbourne home, Lort Smith reached our limits of the number of people and animals we can provide with world-class care. This meant we needed to grow and on Monday, 13 December 2021, the doors to our second site in Campbellfield were officially open!

An ongoing pandemic, numerous lockdowns and even an earthquake didn't stop us from achieving this momentous goal and we are so thankful to each and every donor, volunteer, contractor, staff member and those in the community who helped us make it possible.

Our new state-of-the-art Veterinary Clinic and Adoption Centre in Melbourne's north takes a holistic approach to animal care and wellbeing, incorporating a 'fear-free' design throughout.

It's light, airy and importantly, cool with separate areas for noisy dogs and quiet cats to wait away from the noise.

In February, we also unveiled Moates Park, our new community dog park, which was named after Judy and David Moates, a Melbourne couple who left an incredibly generous gift in their Will to Lort Smith.

By relocating our Adoptions Centre and creating an additional veterinary clinic at Campbellfield, we were able to free up room at our North Melbourne site for emergency assistance and other vet care. But the exciting changes don't stop there!

CREATING A STATE-OF-THE-ART HOSPITAL IN NORTH MELBOURNE



It's been 20 years since our existing hospital was renovated and in January this year, we began construction to bring Lort Smith Animal Hospital into the new millennium.

Our new hospital and clinic will include an expanded intensive care unit and more operating rooms, separate clinic areas for dogs and cats to reduce anxiety, an exotics hub with dedicated treatment rooms and so much more.

While this redevelopment will likely take until mid-2023 to complete, our North Melbourne site is still open and ready to care for your pets. However, there are changes to the location of reception, access to the car park and staff areas that our clients should be aware of.

Check out lortsmith.com for more information or follow us on social media for live updates.

MEET CAMPBELLFIELD'S FIRST ...



ADOPTION: DORRIE!

It was love at first sight when Animal Attendant Casey first met five-year-old King Charles Cavalier Dorrie. "I was working, and I just remember walking through the treatment room and seeing her sitting up on the table being assessed," Casey says. "All I could see were these really big, sad, scared eyes and I just fell in love with her.

"She was an ex-breeding dog, was never toilet trained and she had a really bad bout of the dog equivalent of gastro. But since we got her, she's gotten into a routine and has only had a few accidents. The fact that she was the first adoption ever at the new Campbellfield site is something I'm really proud of! I put a bow on her when we went to sign the paperwork. It was such a special moment."



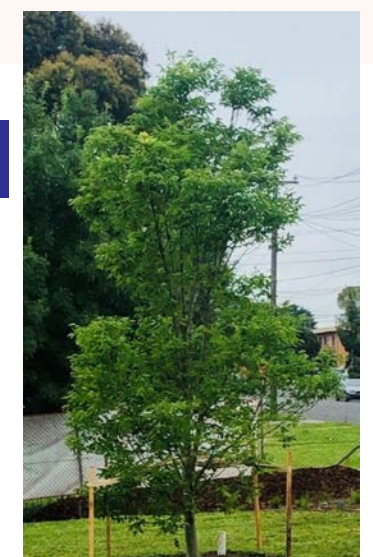
DESEXING: ELVIRA!

When a heavily pregnant cat named Teresa was surrendered to Lort Smith, we quickly placed her in foster care, where she could give birth in a calm and safe environment. All three of her kittens were born healthy and happy and when they reached the right age and weight, they were desexed and placed up for adoption. But it was the calico Elvira who got the honour of being the first animal desexed at Campbellfield! She was adopted by a lucky family on January 7th and is reportedly doing extremely well in her new home.

If you're looking for your forever friend, check out our website, which is updated daily: lortsmith.com/adoptions

LOUISA'S LEGACY LIVES ON

have come from. And what better reminder of our humble beginnings than the inclusion of the 'Louisa Tree' at our new Campbellfield site – a living tribute to our founder, Louisa Lort Smith. The Cimmzam Cimmarron tree represents the growth of Lort Smith Animal Hospital and the extension of our reach into the communities we serve. "Keep the flag flying!" was Louisa's famous catch-cry – and we are proud to be doing just that!



EARNING THE LOVE OF A GOLDEN OLDIE



Cassandra and Mila at the park enjoying the sunshine.



Cassandra has fostered Greyhounds for years. And while she loved every single one, she always knew that she was meant to be their ‘stepping stone’ – the person who looked after them until their forever families arrived.

But one day during lockdown, she was struck by a feeling that maybe she was finally ready to introduce a dog to her life permanently. And that’s when she saw Mila on Lort Smith’s website.

“I loved all my Greyhound boys but none of them have taken my heart the way Mila has,” she says. “When I met Mila, I knew very quickly that the reason I fostered for so long was that I was making space for her. As soon as I brought her home, I knew that I was her forever home. And I’ve never felt that before.”

At 10 years old, Mila had been surrendered to Lort Smith with a variety of health issues: dental disease, a mild fever, luxated patellas and some deformity in her front legs, an irregular mass in her spleen, excessive weight and Cushing’s disease – a syndrome that causes her body to make too much of a hormone called cortisol and can impact her ability to fight infection, control her weight and respond to stress.

“Lort Smith asked me to have a think about whether I was willing and able to take that on and support her with her health issues,” says Cassandra.

“To be honest, it was totally fine for me. Greyhounds are quite high-needs dogs, so I’m used to having additional needs for pets. It wasn’t a concern for me but I’m glad they checked because I think if people are going to adopt an older dog, they need to be receptive to their changing needs.”

Mila when she first arrived to Lort Smith



While it was love at first sight for Cassandra, she says that it took Mila a bit longer to open up to her.

“She was quite aloof to start with. It wasn’t that she was well behaved, she was very polite – like she was too afraid to touch anything that wasn’t hers,” Cassandra says. “She knew her one toy and her one blanket, but she just didn’t get that she was allowed to explore or play with other things. I’d stuff a snuffle mat with treats for her, but she wouldn’t go near it because the food wasn’t in her bowl.”

“During the first six weeks or so, anytime that she wasn’t being fed or actively engaged with, she would go and sit under the dining room table. I have a feeling it was a habit from her past.”

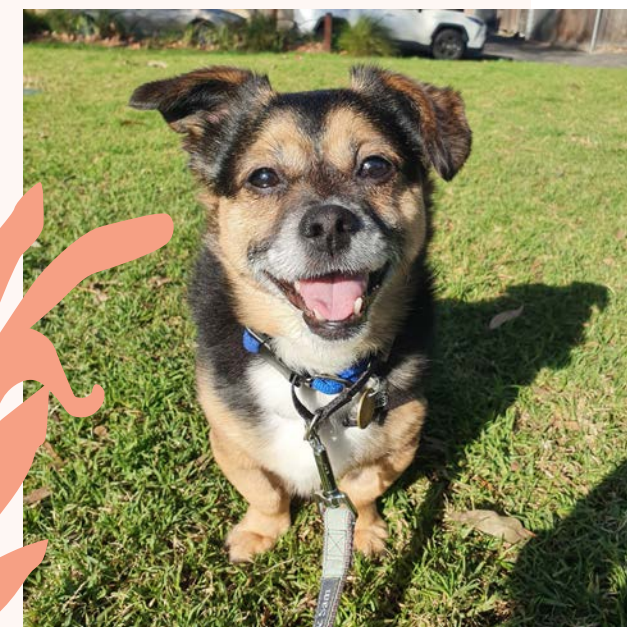
Slowly, with Cassandra’s encouragement, Mila learned that she was safe and loved in her new home.

“The first time she went and grabbed a new toy and brought it to me was massive,” Cassandra says. “For a long time, if I pulled her up on the

couch with me, she’d sit just out of reach. Now she’s getting closer and closer all the time, and even snuggles with me occasionally.

“I think it’s a real honour to be loved by an older dog. They’ve been through things; there’s no guarantee that they will be comfortable with you, unlike puppies who don’t know any better. Mila has seen some things; she’s got her own baggage and it’s such a delight to watch her unpack that around me.

“There’s something really special about obtaining that love because it’s not a given. You have to earn it and it’s really special when you get it.”



Mila on her daily walk with Cassandra



HEADLINES FROM THE HOSPITAL

WITH DR DAVID CUNLIFFE

As we reach the other side of yet another busy summer holiday period, I wanted to reflect on some of the top stories from Lort Smith Animal Hospital over the past few months.

Managing more demand with fewer staff

Throughout the pandemic, we have seen a 30% increase in the demand for veterinary services across the industry. This is due a variety of factors, such more people adopting or purchasing pets, and people spending more time at home and therefore noticing more behaviours or symptoms of concern. However, while demand has increased, supply is at all-time low, with staff needing to be at home quarantining due to COVID-19. We have managed this as best we can and have a terrific team who are stepping up to ensure we can always be there for your pets.

Supporting those in need

Another side effect of the pandemic is the increase we have seen in the number of people who require financial assistance when seeking vet care. These are often people who could afford vet services in the past but lost work during the pandemic and are now experiencing financial hardship. That's why your donations are so important — so we can continue to provide high-quality and affordable animal health care to the whole community. Thank you so much for your incredible support.

A slightly skew(er)iff case

We recently saw a dog who had reportedly been feeling sick for a few weeks. Turns out they had swallowed a whole bamboo kebab skewer, which had gone through the stomach, pierced the intestines and made its way into the dog's back muscles, behind the kidneys! Thankfully we were able to pick it up using our CT scanner and the operation to remove it was a success. One of the more bizarre cases we've seen at the hospital recently!

A warning to cat owners

While some children's books will have you believe that string or wool is the perfect toy for your cat or kitten to chase around, we are unfortunately seeing an increase in the number of cats ingesting these materials, causing a serious restriction in the intestines. Specially-made cat toys are safer for cats to play with or go with my personal favourite — the laser pointer! Nothing to swallow and hours of fun to be had!

From Campbellfield to North Melbourne

As you will have read about earlier in this newsletter, our biggest focus over the past few months has been the opening of our beautiful new clinic in Campbellfield and beginning renovations at our North Melbourne hospital. This is truly an exciting time for Lort Smith and our clients and we are grateful for your patience, enthusiasm and support as we work to make Lort Smith the premier veterinary clinic and animal hospital in Melbourne.

NUMBER OF
DOGS TREATED: 6562

NUMBER OF
CATS TREATED: 9891

OTHER ANIMALS
TREATED: 1791

REMEMBER MAUI? WE'VE GOT AN EXCITING UPDATE...!

At the end of last year, we wrote to you about Maui, a five-year-old Shar-pei cross who came to us in a very bad state. Not only did he suffer from acute anxiety, incontinence issues and a serious mouth injury that caused him to yelp in pain, but he was also diagnosed with vestibular disease, a neurological condition that affects balance and coordination in dogs.

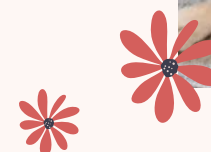
After treating his wounds and putting him on medication for his other ailments, Maui was placed in foster care to recover with one of our long-term volunteers, Cindy. Under her loving care, Maui overcame his anxiety and incontinence issues, his mouth healed up beautifully and Cindy came to love his wobbly and clumsy disposition.

So much so that after Christmas, she has decided to adopt him!

"He can be a bit of a weirdo sometimes, but I can't imagine him not being by my side," she says. "Adopting him just felt right and I feel at ease knowing he will stay with me."



Maui and Cindy



We are absolutely thrilled for Maui and Cindy and wish them all the best in their new life together. And if you're looking for your own Maui, jump onto lortsmith.com/adoptions — you never know who might win your heart!

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS FOR ANIMALS IN NEED

Christmas and the summer holiday period is always one of our busiest times of the year for Lort Smith. But it's also the most heart-warming, because it's when we see just how generous our community really are and how much they want to help animals in need like Maui.

Together, our community donated an incredible \$149,838.37 toward our 2021 Christmas Appeal. These donations will play a vital part in helping any animals that come through our doors who are sick, injured or vulnerable.

All animals deserve a chance at a happy life and Lort Smith was able to give that to them — because of you.

On behalf of all the staff, volunteers and foster carers like Cindy, thank you again for your support in 2021.

Dr Jenn with recently adopted
Maggie May



THE CAPTAIN OF CAMPBELLFIELD

With experience in vet clinics around the world and a strong passion for animal welfare, our new Business Manager Jennifer Donaldson is the perfect person to lead Lort Smith Campbellfield in this exciting new chapter. We sat down with Jenn to learn more about her and what the future holds for Campbellfield.

What does a typical day at work look like?

There's that cliché of no two days ever being the same but that's true for my job. Sometimes I'm working with the team to get our processes and practices in a great place so we can help as many animals as possible; other times I'm looking at how we make Campbellfield the go-to clinic for the community. It's the perfect combination of animal welfare and customer service.

Tell us about the opening of Campbellfield – that must have been exciting!

Moving into a new building of this scale is always going to be a little crazy but getting those doors opens was just such a great feeling. We've had such a great response from the community, and we feel really proud. It's just such a beautiful facility – we've really focused on making the space warm, calming and inviting; as stress-free an environment as possible. Seeing people and animals alike come in and feeling at ease and happy to be there is so wonderful to see.

What is the Campbellfield team like?

We've got an amazing bunch of people working here, with an incredible amount of skill and experience. It's been especially great watching the adoption team and the clinical team come together as one, because they get to see the whole journey of an animal: they come to us in need of care, we treat them and find them a home, and then they come back to the clinic as someone's beloved pet needing routine vet care. It's so nice to feel like we're part of their lives.

What are your hopes for the future?

I'm really excited to build our relationship with the community. There are so many animals and so many people that need help and support and we just want to be there for them. We want animals to be able to get the care that they need, and we want people who need support with their pets to access that too.

Lort Smith Campbellfield is located a 25-35 Berwick Road, Campbellfield VIC. To make an appointment with our team, call 03 9328 3021.

YOU CAN SAVE AN ANIMAL'S LIFE EVERY MONTH.



SIGN-UP TO BECOME A REGULAR GIVER TODAY.

I would like to make a regular monthly gift of;

☐ \$25 ☐ \$35 ☐ \$50 Or my choice of

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Address	<input type="text"/>		
Suburb/State	<input type="text"/>	Postcode	<input type="text"/>
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Email	<input type="text"/>	DOB	<input type="text"/>

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Fundraising Team at Lort Smith 24 Villiers Street, North Melbourne VIC 3051
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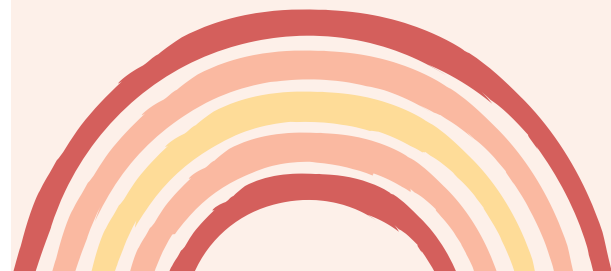
TAILS OF LORT SMITH

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Is your pet your favourite topic of conversation? Well, we're all ears! Whether you have adopted your beloved companion from Lort Smith or our hospital has impacted the life of your pet in some way, we want to hear about it.

Send us your story to fundraising@lortsmith.com along with a photo, and you may see your pet featured in this newsletter or on our social media!

Who knows who you may inspire to adopt their next companion or even start supporting Lort Smith, so we can continue providing world-class veterinary care to animals in need.



24 Villiers Street, North Melbourne VIC 3051

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Bequests 03 9287 6430

Donations 03 9287 6419

Community fundraising 03 9287 6419

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