



Billie is making the world a safer, gentler place for Anne

“Having Billie makes the world feel much friendlier, because before, it was all about obstacles, whereas now, it’s just about freedom,” says Anne Jackson, who was given the beautiful black Labrador in mid-June.

Anne had been using a cane for several years as her vision deteriorated. “With the cane you found the obstacles,” she says. “But with Billie, it’s so much more peaceful because she guides me around all those obstacles and so it’s much more affirming, much less stressful – it’s more natural, more peaceful, it’s just ordinary. You don’t get that little jar all the time.”

Anne was initially daunted by the idea of learning to work with Billie, but with Guide Dog Mobility Instructor Kim’s support, she quickly learned to relax, and she and Billie have formed a very close bond.

“She knows how to be an ordinary dog but as soon as I get her lead out, she stops what she’s doing and waits for me to put the lead and harness on her. I’m just gobsmacked by how helpful she wants to be,” says Anne.

Anne says Billie has helped her be out in the world more.

Guide Dogs really do make a difference!



“Billie has a much better idea of what’s around than I do, so I feel much braver.”



Anne & Billie have quickly formed a close bond

“I’m going out tomorrow to meet a friend for lunch and I wouldn’t have done that with just the cane. And night time is much better walking with her than the cane. I feel safer because I know she’ll look after me.

“A couple of times early on, I got off a bus and she would guide me to the inside of the footpath and I’m thinking ‘Why is she doing that?’ and then a

huge crowd of people got off a bus behind that I hadn’t even noticed.

“I would have just been standing there getting trodden on by people if she hadn’t guided me and I felt so relieved that I’d actually listened to her and followed her guiding, but also I realised that she has a much better idea of what’s around than I do, so I feel much braver.”

Raising awareness in her community



Emily & Harvey

“ I just want to try and get rid of some of the stereotypical things that people think of Guide Dogs - that they're always perfect and that they're robots.” ”

Emily Pettit has always been shy but now, with Guide Dog Harvey by her side, she is on a mission to share information and spread understanding in her community.

We first introduced you to Emily and Harvey in our last edition of Paw Prints, and since then, they have taken part in our annual community fundraising event, Pawgust, which asks participants to walk with their dog for at least 30 minutes a day for the month of August. That's no small feat for a young woman who until recently didn't feel confident talking to most people and was still learning to trust in her Guide Dog.

However, Harvey has made such a difference in her life that Emily wants to help people better understand the life of a Guide Dog and the people they support.

“People don't realise how much time and effort and money goes into training these dogs and I just want to raise funds, spread awareness and try and get rid of some of the stereotypical things that people think of Guide Dogs - that they're always perfect and that they're robots,” she says.

The 20-year-old she says she loves being able to show people that Guide Dogs are not only for older people, and that they do get plenty of time to run and play like other dogs.

As much fun as Harvey has, he is also very sensitive and gentle. “He knows that when I'm at the doctor I get really nervous, so he puts his head on my lap and looks at me, and I just pat him,” says Emily. “He's kind of like a Therapy as well as a Guide Dog.”

Still supporting Guide Dogs – 20 years on!



Dedicated volunteer, Anne

“ I thought if I could do that for someone else - and have fun in the meantime - that would be really good.” ”

Seeing the way a Guide Dog opened up the world for her aunt inspired Anne Harris and her husband Michael to commit their time and energy to Guide Dogs Tasmania, and some 20 years later, they're still giving!

They began their involvement through Anne's aunt, Fay, who had a Guide Dog, and encouraged Michael, an accountant, to attend our Annual General Meeting. He soon became Chairman of Royal Guide Dogs Tasmania, working for more than 10 years to help set the organisation on a sound financial footing.

“I could see what a great asset [Guide Dog Jaimie] was to my aunt,” says Anne. “She gained just an amazing amount of mobility with her dog. I thought if I could do that for someone else - and have fun in the meantime - that would be really good.”

So when she began planning for retirement - and worried that that she might be bored - Anne decided to become a Guide Dog puppy raiser, and welcomed Nelson, a beautiful black Labrador, into their home in 2014.

She has since shared puppy raising duties for Harmony, and boarded puppies while their raisers are away.

Michael remains a committed donor and Anne is looking forward to boarding some of our lovely dogs again soon.

“I really miss it when I don't have a dog, but what I miss most is the social interaction they create,” she says.

Meet your latest puppies!

To sponsor
Jonty or Jasmine
visit
bit.ly/puppy_sponsor



Jonty

Date of Birth: 16 June 2019

Gender: Male

Lives: Launceston

Paw-sonality: Calm, learns quickly, curious and interested in his new world

Loves: Crunchy grass in the mornings, breakfast, sleeping in his crate with Shark, Pig and Bear, lunch, Squeaky Mouse, naps on the deck in the sun - and dinner. (Note the food theme here?)



Jasmine

Date of Birth: 16 June 2019

Gender: Female

Lives: Launceston

Paw-sonality: Very active and a little bit feisty!

Loves: Her pink rabbit that she sleeps with. She is going very well with her toileting and sleeping through the night, which makes her puppy raisers very happy!

Upcoming events



Guide Dogs Tasmania Street Appeal

Wednesday 20th November
Hobart CBD, Kingston, Glenorchy & Rosny
8.30am – 4.30pm

The 2019 Guide Dogs Tasmania Street Appeal is fast approaching and we need you!

Guide Dogs would like to invite you to lend a paw by volunteering for 2+ hours to help us raise \$15,000 by collecting donations from the public.

To register to volunteer, please contact Kristy Wright on kristy.wright@guidedogstas.com.au or 6232 1222.



2019 Myer Christmas Pageant

Saturday 16th November
Hobart CBD
10.30am – 12.30pm

Come along and support Guide Dogs Tasmania's real-life heroes this Christmas at the annual Myer Christmas Pageant.

We will be celebrating the heroic dogs and volunteers who change the lives of Tasmanians living with disability.

Two of our volunteers experience the pups they raised as fully trained Guide Dogs



Sue walking with Grady

“It must give vision-impaired people so much freedom having a dog and knowing they can walk along a footpath.”

Have you ever wondered what it's like to navigate the world with little or no vision?

Having raised six puppies for Guide Dogs Tasmania, Sue McConnell has given the matter a lot of thought. So she was glad to have the chance to try walking under blindfold with Grady, the recently-graduated Guide Dog she raised as a pup.

Accompanied by Guide Dog Mobility Instructors, Kim and Sean, Sue experienced what it's like to put your trust in a dog to walk safely down a street.

“It was actually a little scary,” she said afterwards. “I always imagined it must be really hard, but when you actually do it, you've got no idea where you are, and even when Sean says something like ‘get up to Grady's shoulder,’ you can't see his shoulder so you have to put your leg in close to feel.”

But Sue was left in no doubt of the difference a Guide Dog makes: “It must give vision-impaired people so much freedom having a dog and knowing they can walk along a footpath,” she says. “It must be so much better than having a white cane. You are totally on your own with a cane but with a dog, you've got someone by your side.”



Liz walking with Gilbert

“You're kind of alert in different ways. Without your eyes, you've got to manage how your body is in the world differently.”

Liz Jackson also found her experience with Gilbert, the pup she raised, a revelation.

“There's a bit of nervousness there ... so you have to think ‘right – I've got to trust this dog to do what he's trained to do,’ and focus on relaxing so he can do it properly,” says Liz.

“It took a little while for that to happen for me – probably about halfway up the street – and then it clicked into gear.

“The rhythm started to change, and because you're focusing on holding the harness properly and what the dog's doing, your balance is different and so is your walking pace. So people who are vision impaired experience the world differently all the time.

“You're kind of alert in different ways. Without your eyes, you've got to manage how your body is in the world differently.”

Liz admits to sometimes doubting that Gilbert would make it as a Guide Dog, but having experienced his focus and dependability after training, she now has confidence he'll make a great partner when he is matched with the person he'll guide through life.

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Interested in
raising a pup?
Find more information at
bit.ly/puppy_raiser

