



They did it!

Our first ever formal Graduation Ceremony.

Each year, we at Guide Dogs Tasmania work through the cycle of welcoming, training, graduating, and retiring our Dogs in order to keep our waiting list as short as possible. This cycle is managed efficiently with the resources we have available, so we aim to be welcoming new pups just as Guide Dogs are graduating or retiring.

We regularly welcome new pups with great fanfare and publicity, but only recently did we hold our first ever formal graduation ceremony.

We celebrated three Guide Dog partnerships:

- Sara with Guide Dog Pepper,
- Phil with Guide Dog Yoda, and
- Vanessa with Guide Dog Yuri

We heard moving and humorous stories from the Guide Dog handlers, the Puppy Raisers, the Guide Dog Mobility Instructor, and CEO Dr Clare Allen. All of these stories certainly painted a picture of the journey so far, and of the adventures to come for Yuri, Yoda and Pepper.

Congratulations to all three teams, who we know will go on to enjoy many wonderful years working together.

What a fantastic afternoon.

Thank you to everyone involved in our first and very successful Guide Dog Graduation Ceremony. More photos from the event can be found by visiting guidedogstas.com.au/guide-dog-graduation

You can meet all of our pups and follow their journey to graduation by visiting their web pages. Yes, our pups get their own web pages! guidedogstas.com.au/puppy-love/meet-our-pups



From top: Sara and Pepper; Phil and Yoda; Vanessa and Yuri.

The Guide

Taking the lead

Paul and Holly: Finding a way

Paul Watkins, of Hobart, was matched with Guide Dog Holly in 2015. We asked Paul if he would contribute to our first issue of The Guide with some of his thoughts on their developing partnership. When reading this, you might pause to think about the things you take for granted as you move effortlessly from place to place, despite unexpected obstacles or interruptions to your journey. And you might think about how Guide Dog Holly is providing Paul the freedom and independence to do the same...

Holly, a beautiful Labrador cross Golden Retriever slipped, sprang and snuggled into my life. She has a compassionate, companionable and inquisitive nature and an endless enthusiasm. These are only exceeded by a windstorm tail-wag.

Our initial journeys were made up of short step shuffles, attempting to slowly move forward at the same speed and in the same direction. Every day Holly and I were walking together and within a brief period of time there were situations that challenged us, and drew us together. It seemed like learning to dance with the two of us hearing the same tune but occasionally moving to the beat of a different drum.

Obviously, getting to where you want to go is important.

You're about to start walking, and in your mind you may have an image that changes with every few steps you take. You may also have a personal description of landmarks that indicate where you are, such as a particular house, fence, tree or sign and your self-talk helps you remember those things.

The plan for a specific walk can be used again and again, but if you change the direction or the route that you're walking, you need a new plan for that trip. When walking together, you also aim to stay in a straight line with the person in the middle of the path. This makes complete sense, as the middle is the safest area of a path.

But on one particular occasion early in the partnership, we couldn't quite stick to our plan.

We ventured along a street of a known route where a van was parked at the curb a few metres ahead. Two workers had broken up a large area of the pavement blocking our movement straight ahead. We stopped.



Beautiful Holly, ready and willing to go.



Getting to where you want to go is important.

The Guide

Taking the lead



A regular moment of praise for Holly.

Holly and I went straight to the curb near the rear of the van. As there was no moving traffic, we walked across the road to the other footpath to find a clear area.

We discovered the works continued on that side as well!

Holly and I stood among sizeable areas of the footpath that had been dug up and these holes were roughly patched with bitumen. They were “holes that stuck up” and quite the hazards. We needed to dodge and weave to find a safe way around the repair work.

Our movements were a mixture of short, angled, left and right; the thought “practice makes perfect” kept coming into my mind.

Progress seemed promising, however; especially if you consider Holly’s tail-wag when she completed the task, kept me safe from the hazards, and I had praised her a great deal.

We had stumbled, then shuffled, and then we began to stride together.

Holly is now nudging me. She’s reminding me that in 2017 we will continue to direct our attention to not tripping over those unexpected “holes that stick up” in the pavement...



A nudge from Holly: practice makes perfect.



Leading the way...for 60 years

In 2017 we are celebrating the inauguration of the National Association of Guide Dogs for the Blind Australia, luckily now more succinctly known as Guide Dogs Australia.

Did you know that the first Guide Dog in Australia was called ‘Dreena’? Or that the first Tasmanian Guide Dog was called ‘Rumpus’? Or that Guide Dogs Tasmania was initiated in Scottsdale?

You can learn about these things and more from our regular ‘Throwback Thursday’ posts on our Facebook page **‘Guide Dogs Tasmania - Puppy Love’**.

You can also visit guidedogstas.com.au/60th-anniversary/ to read some of the Guide Dogs milestones since 1957.



Guide Dog Dreena

coles



Metro



The Guide
Autumn 2017

The Guide News

Volunteering with GDT makes a difference.

Whether our volunteers are raising or boarding puppies, in the car or office collecting or preparing collection dog money boxes, or helping out occasionally at an event - every puppy (and dollar) we raise will help Tasmanians who are blind or vision impaired.

Roberta has been donating to Guide Dogs Tasmania over a number of years and in 2015 she decided to become even more involved. She heads out each week with her driving buddy, John, to collect some of the 2,100 mini-dog money boxes in businesses around the state. She's also made herself available to work with our Public Relations Officer and Ambassador Dog Dexter at community events. Roberta has taken a keen interest in supporting Guide Dogs Tasmania and with her help, we can continue to raise funds (and awareness) for what we do.

We need your help today.

If you'd like to register your interest in volunteering in Hobart or Launceston, email zoe@guidedogstas.com.au; or visit guidedogstas.com.au/roberta-leads-way-volunteering/



Could a Guide Dogs Tas Companion Dog make a difference in your life?

Every so often, a dog comes through our training program that is simply not suitable to be a Guide Dog. This doesn't mean that the dog has "failed" or that it was "naughty", it simply means that Guiding was not the right career. At Guide Dogs Tasmania, we want to make sure that each and every one of our pups ends up in a role that ultimately changes the life of someone with a disability, whether it be as a Guide Dog, a Companion Dog, or a Therapy Dog.

We want to hear from people who think that they, or someone they know, could benefit from having a dog like this. A dog that is not just a pet, but a necessity.

For seven-year-old Beau, Bonnie was one of these dogs.

Read Beau and Bonnie's wonderful story and find out more at guidedogstas.com.au/beau-and-companion-bonnie



'Puppy Love' Regular Giving: join the club!

You can make a **big** difference when you join our Puppy Love program as a regular donor or sponsor.

Puppy Love members can follow the Puppy-to-Guide Dog journey with regular pupdates and have opportunities to attend exclusive activities and fun events.

For information go to puppylove.com.au or give us a call on **1800 484 333** during office hours.