

Best Mates

Winter 2021



When Willy met Mila

How a two-year-old Staffy cross overcame fear to start a happy new life during lockdown

Page 9



THE
LOST DOGS
HOME

From one friend to another



Welcome to our inaugural edition of Best Mates, magazine.

Our intention is to share our stories through this publication—we have so many wonderful stories to tell. Through our stories we hope you will be heartened by the outcomes achieved for the thousands of animals coming into our care every year, but also feel informed on how much is involved in turning around an animal's life and finding them their very own forever families.

As an open shelter that does not receive ongoing government funding we rely on the generosity of the general public, businesses, and our valued supporters to be able to care for the 16,500+ animals coming through our doors every year. This is why it is so important for us to tell our stories.

In this, our first edition, you will read about our golden oldies, Tia the 11-year-old cat who had her world turned upside down when her owner sadly passed away, and Nyx, a gentle Greyhound who won the hearts of her new family as soon as they saw her. As an open shelter we will never turn away any animal because of age or health issues.

Also in this edition are uplifting stories illustrating the hard work and dedication of our extensive network of foster volunteers, our compassionate animal care attendants, talented behaviour team specialists and our professional vets and vet nurses in caring for our animals and giving them the gift of having their best lives possible.

Most importantly, and if you have an animal as part of your family you will understand this, our stories celebrate the very special bond that occurs once human and pet become best mates, forever.

Please. Read on ... and enjoy!

Grant Robb
CEO, The Lost Dogs' Home

Issue 1

Winter 2021



**True love is vintage:
Celebrating our golden oldies**

Page 4

The beauty of adopting a senior dog

Page 5



The healing power of foster care

Page 8

A stress free life for Sunny

Page 10



Contact us:

The Lost Dogs' Home

2 Gracie Street
North Melbourne
Victoria 3051

info@dogshome.com.au
dogshome.com.au

Connect with us online:



Front cover image:

Willy and Mila

The Lost Dogs' Home is an open-intake shelter, meaning we will never turn away an animal based on health, age, breed type, temperament, or situation. We are a leading animal welfare organisation based in Victoria caring for around 16,500 lost and abandoned mostly dogs and cats every year. For more information visit dogshome.com



Hearts of the Home



Meet the team behind our foster family network

Our dedicated Pathways Team are at the very heart of our Foster Care Program and we'd like to introduce you to Eliza, Gemma and Justine.

Not every animal coming into our care is able to cope well in a shelter environment and this is why our

network of more than 900 foster carers is so important. They open up their homes and their hearts to our most vulnerable pets and give them the right environment to rehabilitate and thrive, so they can go on to find their forever home.

Making sure our animals have a smooth journey towards a happy, healthy future is both a passion and a focus for the team and Eliza, Gemma and Justine often 'take their work home' with them. The three of them have fostered an amazing 152 pets!

The team clearly have big hearts – and not just for the animals. As well as caring

for animals at the shelter they also provide around-the-clock emotional support to our foster carers.

"Without the support of our wonderful foster carers we simply wouldn't be able to transform the lives of so many lost and abandoned pets," says Gemma.

Working alongside like-minded people and being part of an animal's transformation is exceptionally rewarding. "But" says Justine, "nothing tops a 'foster fail'—when a foster carer becomes so attached to their foster pet they decide to adopt them forever".

Read our heartwarming foster-fail story on page 9, 'When Willy met Mila'.

Eliza, Gemma and Justine, our foster network champions



Tia finds new love in her golden years



Tia now spends her days relaxing in her cosy new home.

“

Tia likes to sleep, play, sleep some more, and of course relax in her retirement. Thank you to The Lost Dogs' Home for our gorgeous girl!”

– Tia's new mum, Deb

How this 11-year-old cat had her world turned-upside-down before finding the perfect new home

When senior pets like Tia arrive at our doorstep we welcome them with open arms. But we also know it's going to take a little more effort than usual to find a loving forever home. However, we're up for the challenge! As an open intake shelter The Lost Dogs' Home will always be here for the golden oldies. Pets like Tia may be older than most other pets available for adoption, but they're full of love and life – and equally deserving of a good home.

At nearly 11 years of age senior cat Tia came to us after her devoted owner passed away. Her world had been turned-upside-down but all she wanted was to love and be loved.

We could tell right away that Tia was a sweet, gentle girl. Our team put

True love is vintage

As an open shelter we have many golden oldies come into our care seeking a forever retirement home. Their adoption stories are always especially heartwarming because they're often overlooked for their younger counterparts in the shelter, even though they come with added benefits.

An older pet generally comes with fewer surprises: size, fur type, personality, and health will already be apparent and being managed effectively. They also tend to be calmer and often much more well-adjusted to family life.

Behind those grey hairs and whiskers are wisdom and life experiences! With care and good luck, oldies can live well into their teens and even twenties and they bring a special kind of joy to their new, forever families. When you adopt an adult or older pet, you will have very likely found yourself a dedicated friend for life.

together an adoption profile to find her a home that would be just right for her—a quiet place where she could perch and watch the world go by and a comfy spot for snoozes in between. But most importantly her very own kind and loving person she could give smooches to.

So, when the lovely Deb visited our shelter looking to adopt a cat, she met Tia and knew she could offer this sweet girl the wonderful retirement home she deserved. We were thrilled at this perfect match!

It's only with help from the general public and our supporters that we can help pets like Tia find a loving new home to call their own. We can answer the call for help in the knowledge that compassionate people are by our side every step of the way. Tia says thank you!

The beauty of adopting a senior dog

How Nyx won the hearts of
her new family members



Nyx is appreciating the finer things in life, like walks and naps, with her new family.

Pets come to us through no fault of their own. Life has brought unexpected changes and people can find themselves sadly unable to care for their pets anymore. We never question or judge when someone surrenders their pet to us. Nine-year-old greyhound Nyx was settling into her golden years when she found herself in this very situation.

We are always here for pets like Nyx who suddenly need a new home.

We believe every animal, no matter their age, deserves a loving home.

When we first met Nyx we could see she was beautifully friendly and liked a relaxed pace. We knew she'd make a delightful companion. That's why it was perfect when Elsa and her partner Nathan, who were looking for a more mature and settled dog, expressed their interest in adopting Nyx.

Since welcoming Nyx into their home Elsa has shared such lovely updates with us.

"Nyx is sweet natured, and she has been so eager to please. At first Wilson, our German shorthaired pointer, was jealous of his new sister making sure he got the last pats. But over time they've become dependent on each other. Nyx helps Wilson relax, so as soon as Nyx is asleep Wilson is like 'oh ok, I can chill now too'. Nyx likes to follow me everywhere. Her favourite thing is going for walks. In the beginning, she was so anxious but now it's like she knows the neighbourhood, she has her usual sniff spots and enjoys walking alongside Wilson. Her other favourite thing to do is nap—she loves being inside watching TV with me and Nathan."

It has been wonderful hearing from Elsa about how well Nyx has settled—particularly as a senior dog joining a new family.

“

I love the bond we've developed. Now that she's here I couldn't imagine not having her and I think we all feel the same, even Wilson. I hope that other people give senior dogs a chance because they appreciate the finer things in life, just like us."

— Nyx's new mum, Elsa



Feeling better and ready for a new life

Karen may be tiny, but she has overcome some big hurdles

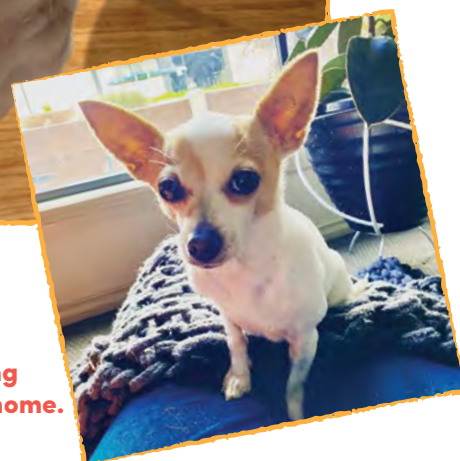
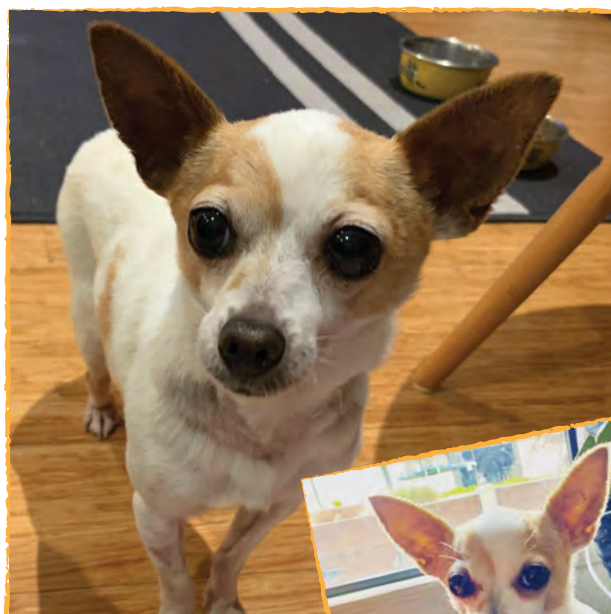
At eight years of age tiny Karen found herself without a home. She was brought to us after a Council Ranger saw her wandering around by herself, looking like she needed medical help.

Poor Karen was not in a good condition when she arrived at The Lost Dogs' Home. She required multiple procedures with our vet team, including patella surgery (because her kneecap was moving out of its normal place) and dental surgery to remove three painful rotten teeth.

Karen spent more than a month recovering from surgery in foster care. Then, once she was feeling better, she spent another few months in the care of our shelter awaiting adoption.

Despite going through a tough time in her life Karen took it all in her stride. She's tiny, but tough! We're very thankful to have generous supporters who help keep our doors open for pets like Karen.

We are so pleased to tell you that Karen has now found a wonderful forever home! Her positive spirit continues to bring joy every day to her new mum, Shani.

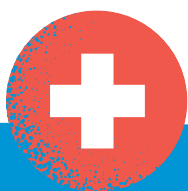


After needing multiple surgeries, Karen is now fully recovered and enjoying life in her new loving home.

“

Karen has blossomed so much, and she and I have formed such a special bond. Karen is so loved, cared for and appreciated every second of every day. Thank you, The Lost Dogs' Home, for bringing us together!”

— Karen's new mum, Shani



The Lost Dogs' Home veterinary team is committed to providing high quality and compassionate care and keeping up to date with current research, trends, and treatments within the veterinary industry.





From major dental work to snuggling on the couch

This resilient cat was determined to find a new loving home

Pretty cat Saffy recently arrived at our shelter lost and in need of help. She had no place to call home and nobody came looking for her.

When our vets checked Saffy over they discovered she had a number of serious dental problems.

“

It's only been a few days, but we've already clocked an impressive number of hours snuggling up on the couch. Thank you for taking such good care of her. The perfect cat really did adopt me.”

— Saffy's new mum, Sandra

The vets said her stomatitis (inflammation of the mouth and lips) was one of the worst cases they had ever seen.

It breaks our hearts when animals arrive in such bad condition and we make it our priority to help relieve their pain and get them comfortable as soon as possible.

Saffy needed major dental surgery, vet care and lots of TLC from our team to help prepare her for adoption. With extra health care needs we knew it was going to take someone special to give her the loving home she deserved. After more than a month in our care, Saffy's special someone came along. It was love at first sight when Sandra met this sweet girl, and their bond continues to grow stronger by the day.

We were so happy to receive this lovely update from Sandra about Saffy.

Saffy is now free from dental problems and enjoys a snuggly life in her new home.

The healing power of foster care

Our Foster Care Program gives our most vulnerable animals the chance to rehabilitate and recover in the safe and relaxing environment of a temporary home.

The Lost Dogs' Home has been growing its foster care program year on year. It takes a very special person to be a foster carer. Saying goodbye as a pet leaves for their new forever home can often be the hardest thing to do!

1,982

dogs and puppies, cats and kittens were looked after in foster care during 2019/2020.



Clancy's temporary home becomes forever



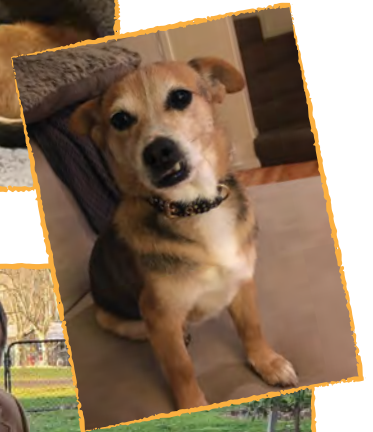
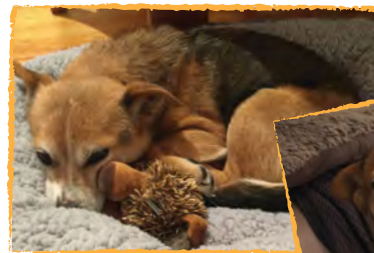
From major vet care, to foster care recovery, to a forever home

Ten-year-old dog Clancy was picked up by our Animal Ambulance. His teeth were in bad shape, so he needed major dental surgery and time in foster care to recover. When the animals in our care require major veterinary work, foster care makes all the difference for a speedy recovery because pets can relax in a home and get the TLC they need.

After more than two months of treatment and care, Clancy was ready to find his forever home. Dog lover Lisa had seen Clancy's profile on our website but wasn't sure if she was ready to adopt. She was still grieving the recent loss of her 15-year-old dog, Coco. One Friday night, Lisa watched the 'Give a Dog a Home' segment on Network Ten with Mike Larkan. Up popped Clancy. It was meant to be.

Lisa submitted her application and, within a few days, was on her way to adopt this gorgeous gentleman. She recently shared a very sweet update about Clancy.

"For both of us it was love at first sight. Clancy is a dear dog that loves being cuddled, and he gives so much love back. He's very popular on our walks with people wanting to stop and say hello. I get many remarks about what a lovely dog he is. Clancy is living in paradise. I say he's gone from street life to sweet life. He sits lovingly by my side as I work at my desk, then at night he snuggles up to me on the couch, which is the ultimate reward for me."



Lisa realised it was meant to be when she saw Clancy on Network Ten with Mike Larkin.

A life changing decision

When Willy met Mila

When Willy joined our Foster Care Program during the first wave of COVID-19 restrictions he didn't realise just how much his life would change. He told us his thoughts when trying to decide if foster care was for him.

"I wanted to occupy myself with something meaningful and purposeful. I thought, what better way than to spend my time looking after a furry friend who can also keep me entertained and provide some much-needed company?"

It was a tender moment when Willy first met his foster dog Mila, a two-year-old Staffy cross.

"I felt like my heart was breaking and exploding at the same time. Mila was carried into my car because she was frozen, trembling and too afraid of everyone and everything. For most of the car ride home, she remained in a state of fear. I slowly introduced her to different parts of the house. Her confidence grew, and her personality began to shine through more and more."

Over the next seven weeks Willy offered Mila the love, patience, and compassion she needed. She overcame fear and became a happy dog – ready to be adopted into a forever home.

"Mila's strength and resilience truly inspire me...It has been such an honour to build a bond with her, watching her growth and progress every single day. Being part of another's healing journey is such

a privilege. Watching Mila blossom into a more confident, independent, playful and fun-loving version of herself has been so joyful and heartwarming to witness."

Willy and Mila's relationship had indeed grown stronger and stronger with each passing week of foster care. Willy decided he wanted to formally adopt Mila in true 'foster-fail' style and be the one to provide her with a forever home!



Willy gave Mila the chance she needed to overcome fear and start a happy new life.

A stress-free life for Sunny

How the behaviour team helped this lovely dog find her confidence

Two-year-old Sunny was picked up by our ambulance and brought into the shelter. We could see she was having a hard time managing her stress levels. We knew this would make everyday situations overwhelming for her, and make it difficult to find her a new home.

Sunny spent more than two months in our Behaviour Program working with her trainer, Erin, to help overcome stress in certain environments, such as being left alone. Sunny also showed signs of being frustrated with unfamiliar dogs.

Sunny was an absolute star student! She learnt so much and responded very well to her positive rewards-based training. We saw her stress melt away as she became a happy, confident dog.

When Stephen came along to adopt Sunny it was clear they were a great match. With Stephen, Sunny could

have a loving companion to play with and lots of space to run around. We were so happy to receive this update from Stephen.

"It's like Sunny has lived her full life here. She even has her own couch on the deck. Sunny stands and barks at the door when she wants to come in or go out. She gets along well with my brother's dog and enjoys a run on the farm. And she knows if visitors arrive, it's time to go and play together outside - she fetches her rubber chicken for us to throw."

We asked Stephen, how does it feel to be Sunny's new dad?

"I don't feel like a dad, more like a boyfriend! Sunny is very demanding of my time", he laughed, "but I absolutely enjoy her company. She especially enjoys our walk down to the mailbox every day and never leaves my side. She is a very happy dog and I'm very happy too."

Sunny is now living the good life in her new home.

Mental health and wellbeing is so important for our pets too

Dogs and cats coming into the Home may experience a range of behaviours, including lack of confidence and anxiety disorders. These animals need specialised training and care.

Our dedicated team of behaviourists know each animal that comes to The Lost Dogs' Home has their own unique needs. While some pets adjust easily to new situations, there are others who need a little extra help to live life to its fullest.

Through one-on-one interaction the Behaviour Team at The Lost Dogs' Home is able to plan the best possible journey to adoption for these animals.



The challenge of finding this sweet cat a home

DJ's long list of special needs meant an extraordinary search for a special new owner

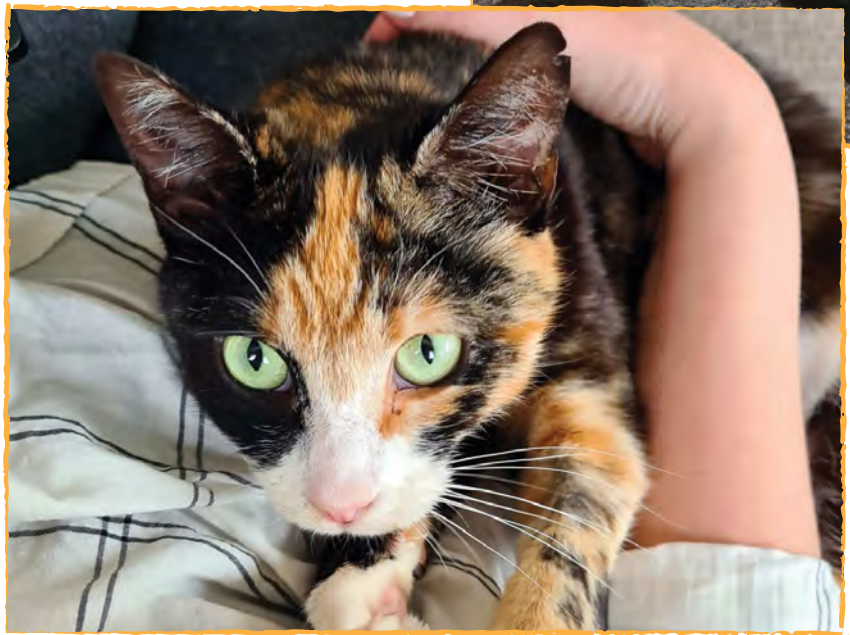
It's so rewarding when our special needs pets find their forever home, especially when they've been waiting a long time for an adopter to choose them. Thanks to the generosity of supporters we can provide the extra care some pets desperately need.

Soon after DJ arrived in our care she was diagnosed with feline asthma. It means she needs daily medication in the form of an inhaler. We also discovered this gorgeous girl has FIV (Feline Immunodeficiency Virus), so she needs to be kept inside and away from other cats. FIV is a virus that affects the body's immune cells. It can't be transmitted to people but can be spread to other cats through bites.

Despite her health conditions we could see that DJ was determined to enjoy life to the fullest! She spent more than two months living with a dedicated foster carer who told us how much DJ loved belly rubs, playing and cuddling.

We knew it would likely take a bit longer for DJ to be adopted because of her long list of special needs. But good things take time, and that was proven when Kaden came along. Kaden was more than willing to give a lifetime of love and care to a special needs pet like DJ.

We were thrilled to get this lovely update from Kaden about DJ. We couldn't be happier for them both!



DJ doesn't let her special needs stop her from enjoying a full life.



I love everything about her, from her pigeon-like purring to her cuddling up next to me when I'm having a bad day. From day one, she owned the house and settled on my bed immediately. She loves her laser pointer and anything that makes a sound. She also loves to wake me up for breakfast by jumping on the bed and purring."

— DJ's new owner, Kaden





Make Forever Happen

What would you do to make forever happen?

Fundraising for The Lost dogs' Home helps us provide vital care for over 16,500 dogs and cats every year until they find their forever homes.

Visit makeforeverhappen.com and choose how you want to fundraise.

We'll support you along the way with resources and tips.



Contact us:

The Lost Dogs' Home
2 Gracie Street
North Melbourne, Victoria 3051
info@dogshome.com.au
dogshome.com.au

Connect with us online:

