




# Best Mates

Winter/Spring 2025



## In this issue...

-  Meet our laundry room volunteer heroes
-  See a makeover of the best kind
-  How YOU filled Atticus' life with love



THE  
LOST DOGS  
HOME



# From One Friend to Another



**What a wonderful community of animal lovers you are. Thank you for bringing love into the lives of lost and abandoned pets. From the moment vulnerable dogs and cats arrive in our care to a future of love and happiness in a forever home—you are right there with us making it all happen.**

**T**he Home has more than 40 animals coming through our doors every day. But with your help this year already, we've provided foster homes for more than 2,000 animals and found loving forever homes for over 3,000 animals. Thank you so much!

This edition of Best Mates is filled with stories that I know will warm your heart.

You'll meet Atticus, who was tragically found abandoned amongst hard rubbish but is now loved and cared for by his forever family. You'll read about dedicated volunteers like Caroline and John, who spend hours at the Home each week, ensuring every animal has clean, warm bedding. And you'll discover how Rosemary's love for senior dogs will continue for generations to come.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing Chair of the Board, Simon Greaves, for his dedicated service over the past six years. As his term comes to an end—which he announced at last year's AGM—we're grateful for the passion and steady guidance he has brought to the Board and The Lost Dogs' Home. Simon has been a tireless advocate for animal welfare, and we truly appreciate his significant contributions. From 1 July 2025, we're delighted to welcome Sue Karzis as our new Chair and look forward to an exciting new chapter under her leadership.

On that note, I also want to share that I've made the decision to step down as Chief Executive Officer in September 2025, after six incredibly rewarding years in the role. It has been a privilege to lead this remarkable organisation, and I'm proud to be leaving it in a strong position to continue providing excellent care to every animal that arrives at the Home. Over the coming months, I'll be working closely with our wonderful team to ensure we continue doing what we've done for more than a century: giving lost and abandoned pets the second chances they deserve.

Thank you for your support—these uplifting animal stories, and the bright future ahead, are all possible because of you. Enjoy!

**Grant Robb**  
CEO, The Lost Dogs' Home

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Winter/Spring 2025



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### Front cover image:

Volunteers Caroline and John with Sierra, the German Shepherd-Husky cross puppy.

### Creative by

U-bahn design.

The Lost Dogs' Home is an open-intake shelter, meaning we will never turn away an animal based on their health, age, breed type, temperament, or situation. We are one of Australia's oldest and busiest animal welfare charities, caring for more than 18,000 lost and abandoned pets every year. For more information visit [dogshome.com](http://dogshome.com)



# A makeover of the best kind

**When 22 Maltese dogs arrived on our doorstep after enduring heartbreaking neglect, our team knew it would take a village to help them.**

**T**heir coats were severely matted, and many had untreated skin conditions and dental issues. These little ones needed immediate care—they were in desperate need of love!

From vaccinations and desexing to dental work and grooming, the list of special care was big. But our community's response was even bigger.

When we put out a call for help on social media for grooming assistance,

the team at Uncanny Animals, a local pet grooming salon, kindly volunteered their services.

Groomers took their time building trust with each dog, gently introducing them to the unfamiliar sensations of being bathed and groomed. By the end of the day, 22 freshly groomed pups were ready for the next chapter of their journey.

They were placed into foster homes, where they continued receiving

veterinary care and behaviour rehabilitation before the search for their forever homes began.

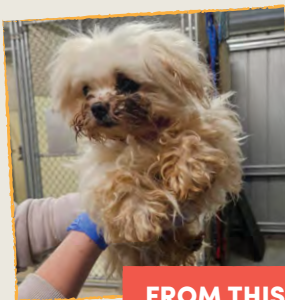
We don't know exactly what they went through before coming to the Home, but we do know we'll do everything we can to prepare each sweet dog for the forever home they deserve.

Your kind support turns neglect into love and fear into trust. Thank you for being part of our village and standing by the animals who need us most.

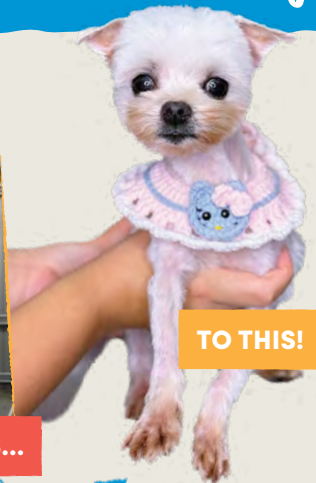


## Look at these incredible before-and-after transformations!

Annabella

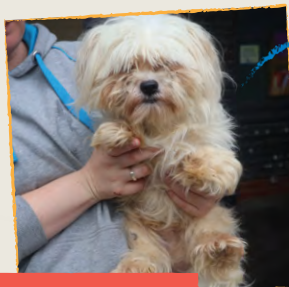


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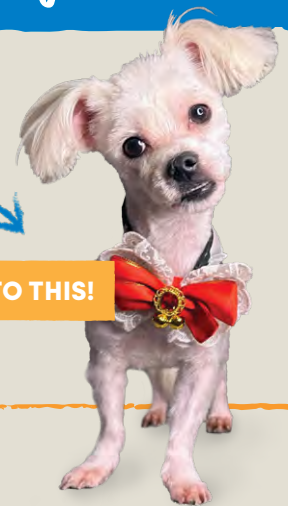


TO THIS!

Bertie



FROM THIS...



TO THIS!

FROM THIS...

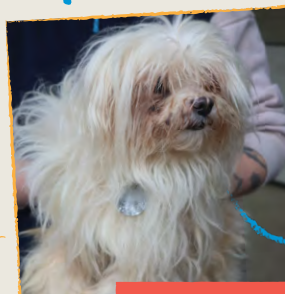


Roxy



TO THIS!

Marsha



FROM THIS...



TO THIS!



## Hearts of the Home

# Meet Kate, our Cat Behaviour Trainer

**K**ate's journey into the world of cat behaviour began six years ago with her first foster cat, Lily. Kate shared, "Lily needed some behaviour training before adoption, and I was instantly hooked!"

Since then, Kate has pursued education in animal behaviour and held various shelter roles—

animal attendant, foster program coordinator, shelter behaviourist—and now cat trainer and behaviour consultant with the Home.

"I couldn't be happier to be here! Despite our name, The Lost Dogs' Home actually rehomes more cats than dogs every year."

**If you've ever wondered who helps our feline friends find confidence, peace and happiness, let us introduce you to Kate, our dedicated Behaviour Trainer, specialising in cats.**

In her role, Kate provides behavioural support and private consultations to help keep cats in loving forever homes and prevent them from needing to come to our shelters.

"I'm particularly passionate about supporting cats who are experiencing high levels of fear and anxiety."

**Kate in her happy place—helping curious cats grow in confidence through play, patience, and plenty of care.**



“

**Helping a fearful cat gain confidence and become comfortable in their environment is an incredibly rewarding experience."**

**— Kate, Cat Behaviour Trainer**

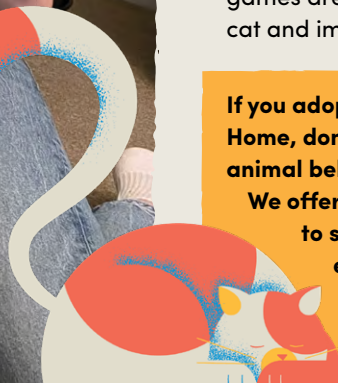
Each cat receives support tailored to their specific needs and personality. Kate works extensively with cats experiencing a range of behavioural challenges, including litter box troubles and conflict between cats in multi-pet households.

"I wish more people knew that cats aren't as low-maintenance and independent as they're made out to be—cats have needs too! Interactive play, enrichment feeding, new sensory experiences, and training games are great ways to bond with your cat and improve their emotional health."

**If you adopt a cat (or a dog!) from the Home, don't forget—Kate and our expert animal behaviour team are here to help.**

**We offer tailored behaviour consultations to support you and your best friend every step of the way.**

**Visit [dogshome.com/behaviour](https://dogshome.com/behaviour) to learn more.**







# Warm blankets and warmer hearts

Thank you to our laundry room heroes!

**S**tep into our laundry room, and you'll witness one of the busiest hubs of our shelters. Some weeks, blankets and towels are stacked to the ceiling!

Our recent blanket and towel donation drive brought an overwhelmingly wonderful response from our community. Thank you to all the animal lovers who arrived at our shelters with car boots full of warm, snuggly blankets and towels.

The sight of the laundry room is a testament to both the community's generosity and the monumental task our kind, animal-loving volunteers undertake.

That's why we are so thankful to have dedicated laundry volunteers, like Caroline and John, who turn mountains of donated blankets into cosy comfort for lost and abandoned pets.

Caroline and John kindly devote many hours to washing, drying, folding, and storing—because clean bedding makes a tremendous difference to animals who need comfort and warmth while they wait for their forever homes. Thank you, Caroline and John!

“

**I am so grateful for kind people like Caroline and John who give up their time for animals. Our volunteers really do have such compassionate hearts. They'll often tell me that when they're sorting through piles of laundry that seem endless, they picture the dog or cat who'll be curling up on that blanket later. That's what it's all about.”**

— Michelle, Volunteer Manager at The Lost Dogs' Home



## Did you know you can get involved too?

While our blanket supplies are now replenished (thank you!), there are many other ways to support lost and abandoned animals.

You can sign up to **become a volunteer** like Caroline and John, make an **in-kind donation** of items our shelter needs, or **donate** to help cover the costs of special loving care for every dog and cat awaiting their forever home.

Visit [dogshome.com](https://dogshome.com) to find out how.





# Forever in Rosemary's A future gift for senior

**Rosemary's unforgettable love for animals will one day live on through the compassionate gift she's included in her Will.**

In 1997, Rosemary and her beloved late husband John discovered a shared passion that would become an important part of their lives—giving senior dogs the love, care, and dignity they deserve in old age.

This devotion led the couple to adopt their beloved dogs Missy, Georgie, and Megan, each of whom became treasured family members.

"I have always loved animals, especially dogs! I am passionate about animal welfare and greatly admire the work of the Home," says Rosemary, who continues her generous support as a monthly donor to this day.

Each of Rosemary and John's dogs brought unique joy to their lives. Rosemary shared how her dog Georgie formed an extraordinary bond with John, becoming his faithful companion. This connection became even deeper during John's final days.

John sadly passed away and was shortly followed by his faithful furry companion Georgie.

In loving memory of her late husband and the dogs that have shared their lives together, Rosemary has chosen to remember the Home by including a kind bequest gift in her Will—an act

“

**When John no longer knew where he was or what was going on around him due to his dementia, he always knew who Georgie was!"**

— Rosemary, Gifts in Wills donor



**Rosemary keeps these beautiful urns of the ashes of her beloved dogs Missy, Georgie, and Megan as treasured memories of the joy they brought to her and John.**

## Your love for animals can live on too



Just like Rosemary, you might like to include a thoughtful bequest gift to The Lost Dogs' Home in your Will. This is one of the easiest, yet most powerful ways, to help bring kindness into the lives of lost and abandoned pets in the future.

To learn more about just how easy it is to leave your own legacy of love,

scan this QR code for a copy of your free Gifts in Wills guide, call our friendly team on (03) 8379 4496 or visit [www.dogshome.com/wills](http://www.dogshome.com/wills)



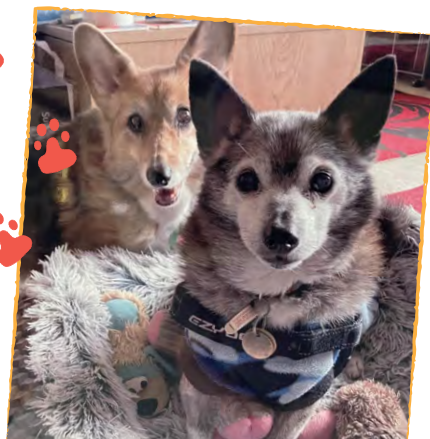


# s heart: or pets

of kindness that means her and John's love for senior dogs will continue long into the future. Their kind legacy will help ensure more senior animals like Missy, Georgie, and Megan can find love and comfort in their golden years.



Rosemary has lived in the same house for over 40 years, sharing wonderful memories with her late husband John and their cherished dogs over the years. Today, she wishes for her and John's love of animals to continue into the future through her compassionate legacy gift to the Home.



Rosemary and John shared their devotion, not only to each other, but to senior pets needing love and care in their last season of life.

## Our 100-year-old Honour Board returns

A cherished piece of the Home's history is back where it belongs.

A beautiful wooden 'honour board' to commemorate our kind donors has recently found its way back to The Lost Dogs' Home. While it was a part of the Home's early history, the board had not been seen for many years—but now, it's proudly back on display on our walls once again.

Carrying with it a century of compassion and generosity, the board bears the inscription:

**"The Lost Dogs' Home  
Animal Hospital – in grateful  
remembrance of all benefactors,  
living and departed"**

Since opening our doors on 28th February 1913, the Home has stood as a sanctuary of safety for lost and abandoned pets, providing second chances for countless vulnerable animals.

The board commemorates gifts received from our kind supporters between 1914 and 1952.

What a joy it has been to revisit the stories of kind-hearted, animal-loving people. People like **Christina Gunther** from South Melbourne, who left £10 to the Home when she passed away back in August 1920, and **Frances Mary Simmons** of Armadale, whose generous £200 bequest in 1923 helped strengthen our foundations during the Home's early, formative years.

Now on display again with pride, the honour board is a daily reminder to us of the incredible kindness that has helped to shape the Home. Every time our team members walk past it, we remember the kind people who helped the Home become the safe, loving place for lost and abandoned pets it is today.

This special board lists the names and generous gifts of the people who put their hearts into the Home from the very beginning. Their legacy lives on—not just in a plaque or on paper, but in every wagging tail, every full food bowl, every contented purr.



### 100 Years of Care and Compassion

At The Lost Dogs' Home, the echoes of the past are never far away. One hundred years of hard, yet rewarding work resonates off the walls: the mournful howl of the lost, the ecstatic yelp of the found and joyful excitement of the rehomed. The Home has changed dramatically over the last 100 years but one thing never changes: this will always be a place where lost and unwanted animals find compassion and care.

"...the establishment and efficient maintenance of a home and for sick, lost, and injured animals marked a very high consciousness of the people of Australia..."  
Governor-General Sir Isaac Isaacs PC GCMG Opening of The Lost Dogs' Home Animal Hospital on 28/2/1913.

"There wouldn't be a month go past where I haven't had some really deep connection with either an animal or somebody connected to an animal. Those relationships touch you and stay with you forever."  
Sue Goring, The Lost Dogs' Home Operations Manager, 2018 - current day.

"I believe that our pets give us far more than we give them. The work you do is highly valued and greatly admired and appreciated. You're doing a great job and a great job of it."  
The Lost Dogs' Home 100 Years



# Where are they now?

**You've helped fill Atticus' life with love!**

**Y**ou might have seen Atticus' story in the news. This poor boy was found dumped on a hard rubbish pile—so emaciated, he could barely lift his head. Our veterinary team provided round-the-clock emergency care to get him back on his feet and give him his best chance at a healthy, happy life.

**Today, we are so happy to share that Atticus has transformed into a joyful dog enjoying life to the full with his forever family, Susan and Paul.**

"When I first saw that Atticus was looking for his forever home, I was immediately drawn to him," shares

Susan. "Right away, I thought, 'This is your home. This is where you belong.'"

Their first meeting confirmed it was meant to be. "We met Atticus for the first time, he jumped straight up and licked our faces," Susan recalls. "And that was it—we just knew he was the right dog for us!"

Now, Atticus brings endless smiles into Susan and Paul's lives. "He makes us laugh every day. The way he chatters away to himself on walks. The way he falls asleep stretched out on the couch, snoring really loudly."

When Susan sent in this wonderful update on Atticus, she included a special note to pass on to YOU...

"Without the Home and the generous people who support it, like you, Atticus wouldn't be here. We wouldn't have this brave, strong, silly, funny boy in our lives. Thank you!"

## What should you do if you find an animal in need?

Contact your local council for assistance or reach out to a nearby veterinary clinic. They can help arrange for the animal to be taken to a shelter, like The Lost Dogs' Home for urgent care, safety, and support they deserve. We will always be ready to help, thanks to kind supporters like you.

“

**Because Atticus gives us so much joy and so much love, we feel like he's the one doing something for us—rather than the other way around.”**

*— Susan and Paul, Atticus' loving forever family*

**The headlines and images across the media were heartbreaking. But Atticus' story took a heartwarming turn, thanks to animal lovers like you.**



**Susan and Paul said Atticus has become a bit of a local celebrity on their walks - "Sometimes people recognise him from the TV and come up to us, saying, 'Is this Atticus?'"**





# Our Work in Action

## Veterinary Care:

### Trevor is now pain-free

**T**rey was found all alone in someone's backyard. Not only did he have no place of his own to call home, but he was wounded and in pain. His leg had a serious injury that we could see had gone untreated for some time. Our veterinary team quickly stepped in. When they discovered they could not save Trey's leg, the decision was made to remove it—giving him the best chance at a comfortable, pain-free life.

Trey was such a brave boy throughout the month he spent in care, recovering from major surgery and learning to walk on three legs.

Today, Trey is healthy, happy, and has found his loving forever family!

**Trey's story shows just how vital veterinary care is—and how your support helps give injured animals the second chance they so deserve.**



**Brave Trey is no longer alone or in pain. He is enjoying a happy life in his forever home, thanks to you!**

## Foster Care:

### Esme flourishes in a foster home

**E**sme was only four weeks old when she arrived at the Home. At such a young age, she needed extra special care—as tiny puppies like her still rely on their mum. To make her needs even more complex, Esme was born with a rare condition in which her eyes never developed—she has no eyes.

Thankfully, a loving foster carer opened their heart and home to little

Esme, giving her the peaceful comfort, care, and cuddles she needed to grow into a confident dog. Now, Esme has found a forever family to love her for exactly who she is.

**Esme's journey is a true testament to the importance of foster care—giving her the chance to grow stronger, explore her other senses, and, most importantly, feel safe and loved.**



**Esme grew up surrounded by love, thanks to foster care.**

## Adoption:

### Maggie's journey to a forever home

**M**aggie was just six months old when she arrived at the Home last Christmas—lost, alone, and unsure of what might come next. But her story was only just beginning.

Our adoption team took the time to get to know Maggie and what kind of home she would thrive in. Before long, Zoe came along—already a

proud adopter from the Home—and Maggie's fresh start truly began.

Now Maggie is part of a loving family, with a doggy sister named Maple and plenty of camping trips and cuddles.

**Maggie's story highlights the impact of adoption—changing lives by carefully matching pets with people who will give them the love they've been desperately searching for.**



**With the right match, Maggie's life was transformed through adoption.**



# Making veterinary care more accessible



## Our pet survey results and an update on our new Mobile Low-Cost Vet Clinic.

**A**t the Home, we believe every pet deserves access to veterinary care—no matter what their family is going through.

But with the rising cost of living, more and more people are struggling to afford even the basics. Sadly, the pressure isn't just on families—it's on our shelters too.

To better understand what pet owners are facing, we surveyed 713 people and undertook a focus group and interviews at the Melbourne Pet Show. The answers we received were honest, heartfelt—and at times heartbreaking.

Here's what they told us:

# 61%

of pet owners  
surveyed live  
below the  
poverty line

# 43%

have delayed  
veterinary care  
due to cost

# 58%

have relied on  
credit cards to  
pay vet bills

Many people shared personal stories of sacrifice:

"I couldn't afford to put petrol in my car, so I had to borrow money from my family for the petrol, so I could take my dog to the vet."

"Our old dog had arthritis and had to receive regular medication and injections as well. It was very expensive."

"We've cut back on all the expenses that are not vital. We've stopped spending on anything that you don't absolutely have to and just restrict to the absolute basics and eventually that has a toll."

## We're taking action—thanks to you

We're using these findings to advocate to Victorian and Local Governments for more affordable pet care services, including low-cost desexing, registration, and microchipping.

As part of this work, we'll be hitting the road as soon as we can with our new Mobile Low-Cost Vet Clinic,

bringing affordable, compassionate care to pets in need across Melbourne and regional Victoria. We can't wait to share more with you as this life-changing initiative rolls out.

**Thank you for standing with pets and their people. Your support is making vet care accessible—and helping to keep best friends together.**





# Riding for a cause: Ray's mission

**For Ray, The Lost Dogs' Home isn't just a charity—it's a part of his life's story.**

**"M**y journey with The Lost Dogs' Home began 45 years ago when I adopted Monty," Ray shares. "Monty was my best friend, and we did everything together for close to 20 years." Since then, Ray has adopted many more animals, each one deeply loved.

Ray has made a special donation to the Home for his birthday and Christmas every year since 2013. But for his 80th birthday, he wanted to do something bigger. In 2024, he cycled from Albury to Altona—over 337 kilometres—raising nearly \$15,000 for the Home.

This year, to mark his 81st birthday, Ray rode another 110 kilometres and raised almost \$5,500. His local community rallied around him, with neighbours, friends, and local businesses cheering him on and giving generously to support the cause closest to Ray's heart.



**Ray and his dog, Jessie J—  
together thanks to adoption,  
now helping more lost dogs  
find their second chance.**

**And he's not stopping there— Ray is committed to riding to raise money for the Home every year until at least 2030, when he turns 86!**

Ray's incredible dedication is a beautiful reminder of the difference one person can make to the lives of lost pets.

# Time to paws and play!



## Riddle me this

Though I have no  
voice, I tell a tale.  
I'm a mark you leave  
when walking a trail.

What am I?

## Find the words that help tails wag

Each hidden word represents an example of the loving care you make possible for lost and abandoned pets.

Look horizontally, vertically, and diagonally for these 10 words and circle each one:

- Shelter
- Adoption
- Microchip
- Vet
- Treats
- Grooming
- Foster
- Playtime
- Blanket
- Toys

N	G	R	O	O	M	I	N	G	S
T	O	Z	E	S	V	R	L	T	P
E	U	I	P	H	Z	M	A	I	L
K	J	R	T	V	V	E	H	N	A
N	L	S	E	P	R	C	W	U	Y
A	V	T	H	T	O	J	Q	I	T
L	J	B	O	R	L	D	R	W	I
B	Y	Y	C	N	P	E	A	W	M
F	S	I	I	H	L	Y	H	Q	E
B	M	F	O	S	T	E	R	S	G

Riddle answer: A pawprint

# Be like Ray: Make Forever Happen

**Ray has found a powerful way to turn his love for animals into lasting change—and you can too!**

If you're passionate about helping vulnerable cats and dogs, why not become their champion by fundraising for The Lost Dogs' Home? Whether you run a marathon, bake up a storm, or come up with your own unique fundraising idea, every dollar you raise will help give lost and abandoned pets the loving forever homes they deserve.

Scan the QR code to visit our new fundraising website, **Make Forever Happen**, for inspiration or to sign up today.





# Looking for a trusted local vet for your beloved pet?

Our North Melbourne veterinary clinic is here for animal lovers like you. Whether it's a routine check-up or something more serious, your pet will be in caring, experienced hands with a team who understands just how much they mean to you.

The Lost Dogs' Home Vet Hospital—made possible thanks to a generous gift in Will from lifelong animal lover Frank Samways—offers expert, compassionate care for pets in the community. **And every visit helps another pet in need, with all proceeds supporting the care of lost and abandoned animals in our shelters.**



Book today at [vet.dogshome.com](http://vet.dogshome.com) or call 03 8379 4498.

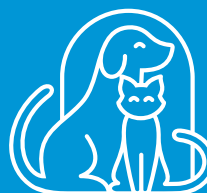


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