

The Alternative Dog

Incorporating the Alternative Cat and the Honey's Newsletter

Winter 2023

A few words from Jonathan, Honey's founder

This issue of *The Alternative Dog* is our largest ever. In addition to some exciting features (including some words from Jane Goodall and drawings by Joan Baez) we have several articles on canine health and nutrition, instructions on how to knit a dog pullover, a lovely piece by the television presenter Clare Balding, a wonderful spread of cat photographs by Willy Ronis, some moving 'found' photographs of lost dogs by a clever artist called Mister Puca and a really intriguing essay by Dr Ian Dunbar who has been widely credited with inventing (or perhaps I should say re-inventing) reward-based training. Hopefully, you will find plenty to interest you.

You may notice that several of the features relate to canine-themed books published by the New World Press. You may not have heard of the New World Press, but I am sure that many of their authors – Mother Teresa, Deepak Chopra and Eckhart Tolle, to name just three – will be familiar to you. We love the firm partly because they commission books on subjects we feel strongly about (the emotional life of dogs, for example, and animal communication) and partly because they have always been so generous – providing us with interview opportunities, free extracts and free books.

Why is the New World Press so friendly and helpful? *The Alternative Dog* is, after all, a tiny, niche periodical located in a completely different country. My guess (since I have never met them) is that they share our desire to explore new ways (I know it sounds pompous, but I am struggling to express what I mean) of making life better/the world a better place. Although, of course, what they and we are really concerned with – whether we are discussing the meaning of it all or what to feed our dogs – is rarely anything but new. Caring for the environment, behaving ethically, using holistic medicine, incorporating spirituality in one's daily life, respecting other life forms and all the other so-called alternative/new age concepts you care to mention have actually been around for hundreds if not thousands of years.

I am not saying that the old ways – the old beliefs – are automatically better. But the past contains the solution to almost all of today's problems and challenges. I mention this because if there is one way in which Honey's might vaguely be considered innovative it is that we tend look backwards for our inspiration rather than forwards. The diet we promote is, quite literally, ancient. The sort of meat we use – organic, pasture fed, free range and wild – was the only meat available until around eighty years ago. Having genuine, unhurried conversations with customers and potential customers was once normal business practice.

I am rambling as usual and also revealing my inner hippy. What I am trying to explain is that my colleagues and I feel we are a small (okay, minuscule) part of a universal movement determined to improve the world. The New World Press do it by publishing books, we do it by making dog food. Every little bit counts. If you have read this far without throwing the magazine aside in disgust, I am willing to bet you are part of the same movement yourself. Which is why I want to take this opportunity to thank you. Without your custom and support we simply would not be able to carry on doing what we believe in.

Finally, there is a news item overleaf that I would like to highlight. Jackie (a member of our Healthcare Team) and I have developed a 40-minute Zoom presentation on raw feeding that we are happy to give, free of charge, to any group of dog lovers. If it's organised to benefit a charity Honey's will even sponsor the event. After the presentation, by the way, we leave plenty of time for questions. To date we have given the presentation to the members of various dog clubs, rescue centre donors, a behaviourists' association and clients of a veterinary practice. If you know of a group that could be interested, please send them our way.

Thank you again for your fantastic support. Please don't hesitate to contact me directly if I can ever be of assistance with anything.

Very best regards,

Jonathan (Self)
Honey's Founder
jonathan@honeysrealdogfood.com

In this issue



Jane Goodall
On why she loves dogs and admires Marc Bekoff



Dr Marc Bekoff
Introduces his new book: *Dogs Demystified*



Dr Ian Dunbar
Explains his off-leash, reward-based training system



Les Chats!
Amazing cat photos by the great Willy Ronis



Isle of Dogs
Clare Balding's new book on the UK dog world



Tooth & Claw
Dr Stephen Dubin on your dog's teeth and feet



Your dog's Microbiome
Dr Adam Burch's guide to the canine biome



Knits for dogs
Beautiful things to knit for your dog this winter



100 Ways to Love
Meet Chippy the most famous dog in the world



Hettie's Story
A new solution to Mitral Valve Disease



Green Paws
Gardening tips from Teilo our canine horticulturist



In Memoriam
Honey's fed dogs remembered with love

AND MUCH,
MUCH MORE BESIDES...



01672 620 260
info@honeysrealdogfood.com
www.honeysrealdogfood.com

HONEY'S NEWS



We've donated £650,000 of treats!

Thanks to you we have now donated over £650,000 worth of treats to dogs in need. Every time we sell a packet of Beautiful Joe's, we give treats away to one of more than 100 different rescue centres. The rescue centres use them to train the dogs in their care and, of course, as treats. Beautiful Joe's are made by hand in small batches, and we have just invested in new equipment allowing us to increase our production. With your support we hope to donate £1,000,000 of treats by the end of 2026.

If you aren't familiar with our treats, we offer two flavours: Tasty Lamb (£6 a packet) and Yummy Liver (£8 a packet). Both are completely natural – we simply air dry the ingredients to lock in the flavour. It is no exaggeration to say that dogs go crazy for them. You may also like to try one of our training tins (£4) – many people find a single shake is all they need to command their four-legged family member's total attention!

Anything you can do to help us meet our £1m give away target would be brilliant. For example, maybe you could:

- Introduce us to a pet shop, veterinary practice or rescue centre willing to stock our treats.
- Add a packet or two of treats to your regular Honey's order.
- Sign up for our subscription service and receive free treats (if you subscribe through Honey's, you will also save on postage).
- Recommend a rescue centre we can donate to.
- Spread the word amongst dog loving friends.

Incidentally, if you feel you know someone who could become a regular customer or stockist and you would like us to send them a free sample packet of treats then please email the details to: info@beautifuljoes.com.

If you want to know more about Beautiful Joe's and to learn about the rescue centres we support then please visit www.beautifuljoes.com.

Finally, a HUGE thank you for helping us to help dogs in need.



Please review us!

If you have a moment to review us on Trustpilot we would be very grateful. Tangibly grateful, in fact, since if you identify yourself, we will happily send you a little gift. A huge thank you, too, to all our past reviewers.



Update: Honey's Bespoke

Earlier this year we launched a new service: Honey's Bespoke. In a nutshell, we can now make food – raw or cooked – entirely to order and using whatever ingredients or supplements are requested. So far, we have only offered the service to existing Honey's customers and our network of friendly, holistic vets. The response has been very encouraging, and we are now making up special formulas for several dozen dogs. We always imagined that the majority of our Bespoke clients would be poorly dogs with health issues or perhaps allergies and perhaps half fall into this group. However, we are also making a number of older dogs and dogs with very specific food likes and dislikes happy! If you are interested the first step is a consultation with a member of the dedicated Bespoke team who will produce a detailed report and diet plan. If necessary, they will involve your own vet and/or our veterinary nutritionist. Please contact Honey's HQ for more information.



Free healthcare advice

A quick reminder that our vets, veterinary nurses and nutritionists are at your service and at the service of your family and friends. They are happy to offer unlimited, free health and nutritional advice – there is no need to be a customer. Please call or email. All part of the Honey's service.



Zoom, zoom, zoom! Free seminars!

Are you a member of a dog club? Involved with a rescue centre? A veterinary professional in practice? Would your fellow-members/supporters/clients be interested in attending a short Zoom introduction to raw feeding? Jonathan (Honey's founder) and Jackie (one of our nurses) have developed a 40-minute presentation that they are happy to give, free of charge, to any group of dog lovers. If it's organised to benefit a charity Honey's will even sponsor the event. After their presentation, by the way, there is plenty of time for questions. For more information, please email js@jonathanself.com.



New Photo Competition. Win a month of free food

You know how innocent and peaceful they look when they are fast asleep? The new Honey's Competition is simplicity itself: submit a picture of your dog on the theme of 'Let Sleeping Dogs Lie'. First prize is one month of free Honey's (to the value of your most recent order) and there are 3 runners up prizes of either 6 packets of Beautiful Joe's or bones or biscuits to the same value. Rules? Barely any. You can submit up to three photographs and the judges' (appointed by Honey's) decision, no matter how unfair, will be final. Please email your entry to competition@honeysrealdogfood.com before 28th February 2024 or post it to Honey's Photo Competition, Darling's House, Salisbury Road, Pewsey SN9 5PZ.

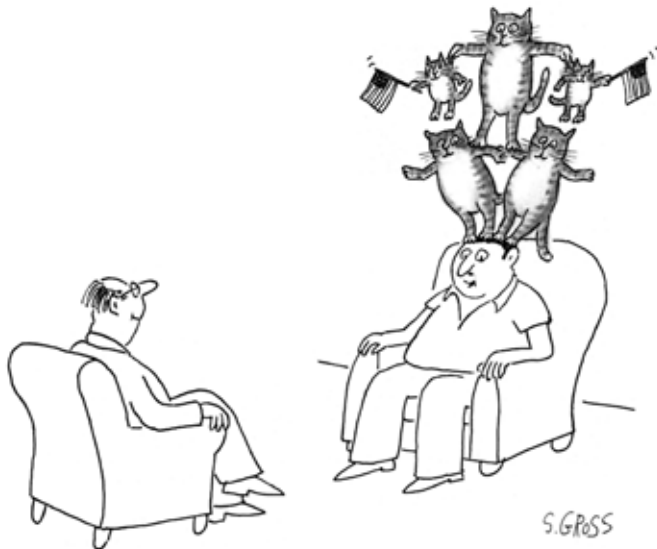


Farm visits

We are happy to say that over the autumn we were able to visit several of our producers. It is our policy to send a member of the production team together with a member of the customer care team on each visit. Afterwards, they write up a report. Here is one such report by Jen Brady (who manages our customer care team) after a visit with Dan Archer (second-in-command of production) to Creedy Carver.

Creedy Carver

Honey's has a long and highly valued relationship with Creedy Carver. Indeed, they have been supplying us with poultry for almost fifteen years. The farm is managed today by James Coleman (who, co-incidentally, was NFU Young Farmer of the Year in 2003) but when we first started buying free range chickens from Creedy Carver we were looked after by his mum and dad – Peter and Sue. The Coleman's have always observed the highest possible standards of animal/bird welfare. Indeed, they were one of the first to develop a free range system whereby poultry could be left to roam safely on large tracts of land that was fallow or had just been ploughed. Creedy Carver own two separate farms. The main one in Crediton is 82 acres, the other is at Coplestone, 7 miles away, and consists of 25 acres. It was James who decided they would branch out into Ducks as long ago as 1999. Currently, they are raising Peking/Cherry Valley hybrids. One of the things that impressed me about their approach is that James is in no hurry to see the ducks grow. Many farmers feed a high energy/fattening diet and, of course, limit the ducks' ability to move around. Not Creedy Carver. They let the ducks grow at their own pace. Antibiotics, by the way, are banned on the farm! Creedy Carver's main challenge over the last couple of years has been avian flu. Through a policy of very careful management, the duck flock has remained 100% healthy but due to the stringent rules he has had to reduce production dramatically. The ducks, by the way, lead as natural a life as possible with fields to forage in, water and shelter. Avian flu has meant more time in barns and less time roaming but now that the threat is receding things will return to how they were. It says everything about Creedy Carver that they work with prisons and homeless organisations to give people a fresh start. Indeed, James has been asked to provide advice to various local councils on successfully transitioning former prisoners and the homeless back into society. We are very proud to have Creedy Carver as one of our producers.



"Cats! You can't live with them and you can't live without them."





Rock & Ruddle News and Winner

Rock & Ruddle provide a service whereby you can have any picture you want on the back of one of their fantastic hairbrushes and they offered us one as a draw prize. We are happy to announce that the winner is Amy Gibbs. By the way, Rock & Ruddle has just created two new brushes (one with dogs and one with cats) designed by our favourite illustrator, Clair Mackie. You will receive a 10% discount with this code: RRDarlingDogs10. Visit www.rockandruddle.com to learn more.



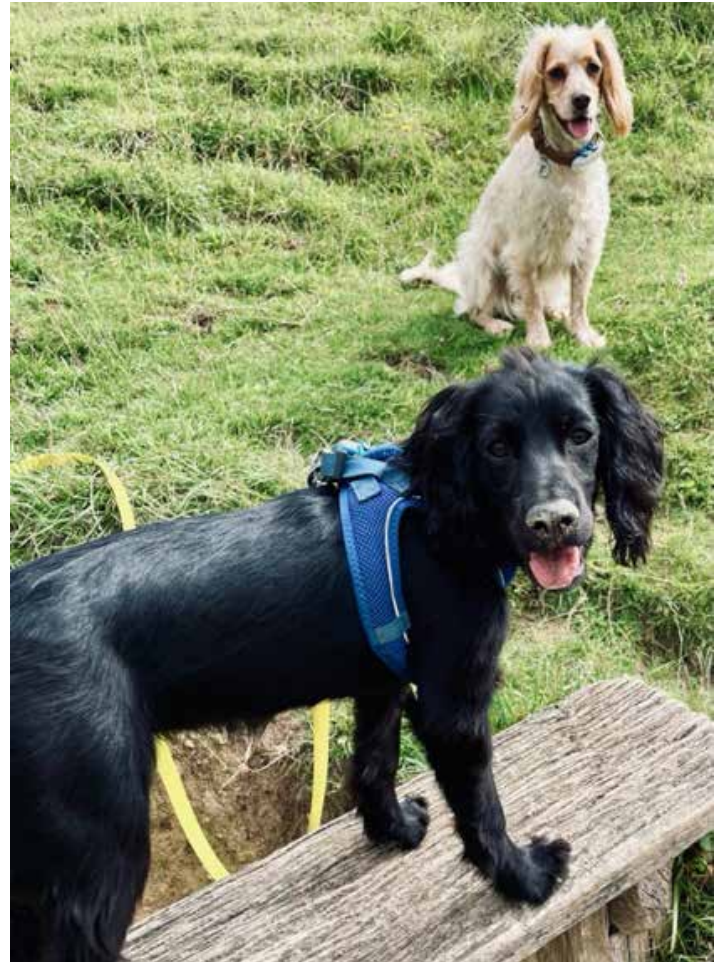
Poetry winner

In the last issue of *The Alternative Dog* there was a chance to win a poem about your dog or dogs by Rosie Hammond. The winner was Charles Robert and we look forward to publishing the poem (possibly about Breeze, possibly Skye, perhaps both) in the next issue.



Win a portrait of your dog or cat

Honey's supporter and young artist Jennifer Starnes has very, very generously offered to create a portrait of a Honey's fed dog or cat. So, we are holding a special prize draw. To enter just email freedraw@honeysrealdogfood.com before 28.2.24. To see more of Jennifer's work visit www.jennstarrart.com



Trixie & Coco immortalised...

Inspired by Ms Hammond's sweet poem, Candice Reece has immortalised her two canine family members

Trixie

I'm Trixie the spaniel and unlike poet's muse Conker,
There is only one thing better than at the dishwasher going bonkers.
I'm a puppy it's true, with much growing to do,
But I am already fearless, hardy - energetic it's true.
Your heart would melt at my love for my sister,
She's trained and ready for all weather that hits her.
Uphill and down, she'll ignore most distractions
(Although, with pheasants, she is ready for action).
I greet every day with metronome wag tail,
My humans anticipate enthusiastic greeting without fail.
Not squirrels nor holes leading to foxes
Can even come close to the excitement of boxes.
Cardboard corrugated or plain, tall as you like,
I'll rip them to shreds using every ounce of my might.

Coco

I am Coco the spaniel and I live in a house.
No other pets irk me, not cats, rabbits or mouse,
With mistress and masters and visits galore,
My walks include fields, meadow and sometimes the shore.
My kitchen is cosy, my tail constant wags
(Although I am spooked by bins, cycles and flags).
My sleep is untroubled by thunder rumbles,
But mealtimes for humans often include grumbles:
I am hungry, so hungry! My tummy insists,
Though my meat pasture fed and my biscuits almost bliss.
I do have a sister and here the tale turns,
For Trixie needs feeding and here's where it burns,
Turn taking's insisted, but, because she's a puppy
Her portions are bigger - an outrage!
How lucky?



Wilson the wonder dog

We received this lovely email from Sarette Martin...

My dog was 10 in September and what better way to celebrate a decade of Wilson than with a dog duathlon to raise money for two canine causes close to our hearts? I decided back in the spring that it would be a good idea if I ran 20 miles and Wilson swam for 20 minutes in the pool where I'm a canine hydrotherapist on Fridays. Wilson loves swimming there and the run would be a good challenge for me. I've completed a couple of marathons, but the last one was in 2011 so I was well out of practice for distance running. The forecast temperature - pushing towards 30 degrees - meant a 4am alarm and a start time just over an hour later. Fortunately we live on the Hampshire coast and so there was a slight sea breeze. I managed to finish before it got (too) warm. Next, it was Wilson's turn at K9 Aquacise & Hydrotherapy in Romsey. He smashed his 20 minute swim (ten sets of two minutes, with a rest on the ramp between each set). At the time of writing we've raised £1,860 for Pensions4Paws and Hampshire Search & Rescue Dogs. I was a police controller for a few years and experienced first-hand what a valuable resource police dogs are in keeping communities safe. The force pays for all medical care while they're operational but once retired these brave dogs are impossible to insure and the full cost of any medical care falls to their owners. Pensions4Paws contributes towards vet bills for retired police dogs in Hampshire and the Thames Valley. I've been a member of Hampshire Search & Rescue Dogs for a decade. It's called out by the police to search for vulnerable missing people. All the search dogs are pets first and foremost but are qualified to national standards set by Lowland Rescue. I'm primary callout coordinator and have deployed volunteer search dog teams to hundreds of searches over the years. Wilson has been a Honey's boy since he was about 15 months old. I credit the quality of food with keeping him fit and healthy all these years (bar an incident with a scavenged corn cob last year, but we received great advice from the Healthcare Team which helped him get back to full fitness after his surgery). I would not feed him on anything else. The photo shows Wilson on his last set in the pool.

It would be wonderful if you wanted to support the two charities mentioned: pensions4paws.com and hsardogs.org.uk



The Forrest Method

Love table tennis? Playing in an attic or other low-ceilinged room? The Forrest Family have come up with a wonderful way to lessen all those bangs to your head: fasten Honey's insulation to the appropriate beams. Hurrah for the Forrest Method!



Speaking out!

We received this interesting opinion piece from Christopher Barder, a Honey's customer, a tutor and a lecturer...

All dogs are different to one another and have their own personalities. This was borne in on my wife, Alison, and myself when we took on a new puppy belonging to a breed we had not encountered before. He is athletic and enthusiastic and his favourite activity is running – whether on his own or with others. He is not an avid eater, either. So, two challenges to deal with and a very different sort of canine personality to learn about and understand. Which goes to show that after sixty years of living with dogs I still find myself feeling remarkably ignorant at times. Our new puppy is different. Our new puppy breaks the rules of how I expect puppies to behave. This uniqueness has another aspect to it. Brian Hare and Vanessa Wood's brilliant book *The Genius of Dogs* is subtitled: *Discovering the Unique Intelligence of Man's Best Friend*. One of the things they write about is oxytocin and its role in the canine/human bond. Indeed, the whole book serves to demonstrate the remarkable way humans and dogs interact for their mutual good if the 'biology of love' is measured. The more insight we can gain into this symbiosis, the more we can learn how to interact with our dogs and the more we can 'read' accurately what they are saying to us through their behaviour and even barking. We can benefit very much because we feel, if we let ourselves, that we love our dogs and we would like to feel the same thing back – but often tentatively because dealing with emotions can feel uncertain at the best of times. Barbra Streisand, after cloning her dog (in the New York Times March 2018, cited in Dr Clive Wynne, *Dog is Love: Why and How Your Dog Loves You*, p. 168) is quoted as saying: 'Each puppy is unique and has her own personality. You can clone the look of a dog, but you can't clone the soul.' Incidentally, it is increasingly accepted by scholars and clerics that dogs have souls and go to Heaven. We are in a relationship from the moment we take home a puppy or adopt an adult dog. So, we need to start with respect. We are not the boss but a partner in which we can be a guide, guardian and provider. The dog depends on us and we, whether we recognise this or not, come to need a positive response. So does our canine newcomer – and we both go on to need this partnership to develop with mutual regard and not bullying, bossiness or being overprotective. Human carers must show self-control not frustration! We are on a voyage of discovery requiring sensitivity to learning on both sides. Encouragement and praise must be pervasive. All this may show us how we may have missed out on these elements and on unconditional love. Dogs make us think, show us about ourselves and our needs. Our dog friends may find us out about ourselves, but what a help and delight they are, absorbing our attention and ensuring we exercise!





The Muddy Dog Challenge

We sponsored longstanding and much valued customer Hiromi Enderle on the Muddy Dog Challenge and asked her to describe the experience:

On the 17th of Sep, Kash (my Golden Retriever) and I participated in the charity event, 'Muddy Dog Challenge' organized by the Battersea Dogs and Cats Home in Windsor Great Park. Unfortunately, after the pandemic, many people neglected and abandoned their pets. Kash and I wanted to help find them a new home where they will be loved. They deserve to have second chance for a happy life. I had not run for 35 years so I started practising every day after I registered to the event. On the day, we had so much fun and I got more muddy than Kash!! About 600 dogs participated but it was very peaceful. It was great to see such good manners. It will certainly be one of my best memories in the UK! I cannot wait to take part in another such challenge in the future!

You can support Battersea Dogs & Cats home here: www.battersea.org.uk



Canine artist Bonny Snowdon

By Anne Mcgibbon

We discovered Honey's as a result of an introduction by the canine artist Bonny Snowdon. Bonny has the half-sister of our Newfoundland, Gunner. When we lost our beloved Nina, a Neapolitan Mastiff we asked Bonny to produce a portrait of Nina. You can see the picture we sent her, and the drawing Bonny created for us! It captures Nina's personality perfectly and every time we look at it we think of our old (sometimes smelly, lazy and grumpy!), loving, affectionate, beloved girl. Thank you Bonny for recommending Honeys to us in the first place and for bringing our girl home.



FREE BOOKS!

Several authors and publishers have generously donated books for us to use as free draw prizes. If you would like to win a copy of *D is for Dog* (reviewed in this issue), *Conversations with my Dog* (see Chris Parker's article), *The Complete Book of Dog and Cat Health* by Lise Hansen, *The Incredible Adventures of Gaston le Dog* by Michael Rosen and *100 Ways to Love* by David Vozar simply send an email to: freedraw@honeysrealdogfood.com before 28.2.24.



Introducing Lulu

Many Honey's customers will remember with great affection the wonderful and much missed Miss Darcy whose life was documented on www.missdarcy.org. Darcy's brother, George, was recently joined by another rescue, Lulu. Both of them are adorable and, as an aside, offer excellent recommendations when it comes to dog-friendly businesses and products. Read about them on the original website and also on their own social media pages.



Hettie's Story

Marina Claessens

Hettie, my 11-year-old Havanese was diagnosed with a heart murmur just before Christmas last year. This was an unexpected blow as she showed no symptoms, other than a little slowing down, which I attributed to age. A murmur. How bad can it be? Not so bad for most dogs who remain asymptomatic, often for years. However, one third of dogs progress quickly

to the Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) stage. Fluid builds up in the lungs, their quality-of-life plummets and their life expectancy is greatly reduced.

After the second echocardiogram it seemed likely Hettie was in the unlucky third as her condition had deteriorated. The mitral valve between the left Atrium and Ventricle was thickened and prolapsed causing a strong (6/6) regurgitation of blood between the two heart chambers, making the sound known as a 'murmur'. Mitral Valve Disease (MVD) is most common in small to medium sized dogs. Cavaliers, in particular, are very widely affected.

MDV is a condition that tends to progress through three stages: B1 is usually asymptomatic; B2 is when the first symptoms (such as fatigue and a change in heart size) begin to appear and when medication (Pimobendan) is usually started; and C, the final and most distressing stage.

I was told that all I could do is to monitor my Hettie's breathing rate, keep administering her medication and, basically, hope for the best. Not wishing to give up so easily I started researching other options. The first of these is open heart surgery. This is a complex, risky and very expensive operation offered by two surgeons in the UK. It seemed to me a terrible thing to put Hettie through, and I rejected it. The second option I found, thanks to an online support group, is called a TEER V Clamp procedure. It's a new operation – indeed it has only been performed on dogs since 2020. It was only made possible after a Chinese company, Hongyu Medical, procured a clamp device in the shape of a V especially for dogs (a similar procedure is routinely performed in humans). Professor Chris Orton of Colorado State University travelled to China just before Covid to learn the procedure and, upon his return to the USA, he and his team started performing it on dogs. To date, over 90 dogs have undergone this operation mostly in the USA, with a success rate of 95%.

I found that only one centre in the UK also carried out the TEER procedure, but back in July they had only done it in four dogs in more advanced stages of the disease and three had died. I began to wonder if a trip to Colorado was affordable and feasible. The first step was to send Hettie's scans and other medical records to Professor Orton. He examined them and replied that Hettie was a good low to medium risk candidate for the procedure and booked a conference call. On that call I received the best possible news: Professor Orton was planning an educational trip to Europe! He had already taught the procedure to the cardiology team headed by Cecile Damoiseaux at the Fregis, a new state of the heart veterinary hospital in Paris. This was a massive relief as the trip to Colorado would not have been easy, to say the least! Conference calls with Paris were arranged, travel plans made, rabies injection and health certificates for Hettie procured, and rusty French brushed up!

After a pleasant and leisurely drive over two days, we arrived in Paris for the initial consultation with Professor Orton, Dr Potter from Colorado and the French team. The following day Hettie had her surgery. In the first stage of the procedure a probe is inserted through the oesophagus to take a good look at the heart to best determine the risk level and to ascertain how the device should be clamped onto the valve. The device is inserted through a small incision in the chest and the procedure is conducted through imaging. Hettie was discharged and able to walk the day following the operation. The heart murmur had reduced to almost nothing and the atrium had already gone back to normal size.

I am told the murmur may increase over time, but not to previous levels and that Hettie is unlikely to ever get to the stage of congestive heart failure. Two weeks after her surgery, she is much brighter than before and raring to run around and play. However, she will have to take it easy for the next few weeks to give the device the chance to fuse with her mitral valve and avert the greatest risk of this procedure, which is device detachment.

Professor Orton, who is now my new hero, would like to see this procedure performed routinely in the future. Mitral Valve Disease is the most common form of heart disease in dogs and can occur relatively early in life. Its course is unpredictable, but most dogs end up dying of CHF, a horrible and distressing condition to manage. I am extremely grateful I was in a position to offer my beloved girl this procedure and I was incredibly impressed by the level of expertise, care and support of the French team. The procedure is expensive, but as my vet put it, considerably less than the fancy car I have never bought. If anyone would like more information, please feel free to contact me at marinaclaessens@hotmail.com and I will be happy to help if I can. Professor Orton's email is: chris.Orton@ColoState.EDU

How to earn our eternal gratitude and a little thank you gift...

Thank you very much for your referrals. Do remember, we are happy to provide raw feeding and nutritional advice to anyone who contacts us, even if they never, ever plan to become a customer. If someone to whom you have recommended us does become a customer, however, we would like to say thank you with one of the selection of gifts shown below. For this reason, please don't forget to tell us the names of any new customers you introduce to Honey's (just to be on the safe side you could ask them to let us know, too).



A tree planted in the Honey's Wood



Two personalised dog tags



Our original Superdog Cape/Towel Thingie



10 packets of Beautiful Joe's treats + Tin



A personalised dog bowl



Two free shipping vouchers



A Beginner's Guide to the Canine and Feline Microbiome

Dr Adam Burch

The aim of this article is to shed a light on what we know and don't know about the canine and feline biome. As a veterinarian I occasionally find myself explaining to the human carers of dogs and cats that an illness or disease is idiopathic i.e., we don't yet understand the underlying cause. There is considerable speculation regarding the role of the biome in some health issues but in many cases it is just that: speculation. However, a great deal of research is being carried out and our understanding is improving all the time.



"I get it—you're hungry."

What is the Gut Microbiome?

Also referred to as the Gut Microbiota or Gut Flora, the term 'micro' for small and 'bios' meaning living organism. Discussions about the human Microbiome has led to a lot of dietary advice for people concerned about their lifespan and their health span (the length of time spent not just alive but healthy with a good quality of life).

The Gut Microbiome is the community of different bacteria species, parasites and protozoa (single celled organisms) living in the intestines, like all the animals who live and thrive in a tropical rainforest and by their existence also provide life to other animals (or in this case bacteria). The bacteria of the gut works in a very similar way, dependant on the foods and water that exist in their environment, they then produce chemicals and materials that provide health for both the host (the pet or human) and the other bacteria in the gut.

This microclimate of bacteria also changes depending on where we are in the gut, from the mouth to the stomach, small intestines and large intestines. The community of bacteria changes according to how acidic or alkaline the area of gut is, what the diet is like and any diseases the animal suffers from to name a few of the things that can affect the microbiome.

How does the microbiome affect my pet (and me)?

In human and animal studies there have been links between the gut bacteria and metabolism and weight management, intestinal health, health of other organs such as the brain, nervous system, heart and kidneys. And even links with the immune system's ability to recognise friendly and dangerous bacteria (pathogens).

Currently the research in the human field is pioneering and in the animal field even more so, even though animals are commonly used for research in laboratories the current number of research papers in dogs and cats are limited. Happily, however, the information available is constantly expanding.

What bacteria live in my pets gut?

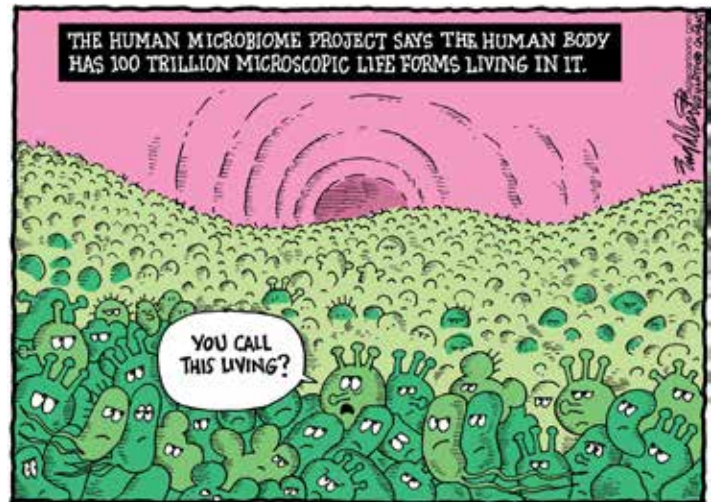
In the dog and cat there have been five major families of bacteria identified that take part in the microbiome: *Firmicutes*, *Fusobacteria*, *Bacteroidetes*, *Proteobacteria* and *Actinobacteria*¹. Each are found in

different amounts at different points in the intestines and are affected by and produce different metabolites (breakdown products of food eaten by the animal and then eaten by the bacteria). The current big questions about these bacteria of the microbiome are: What bacteria are there? And, more specifically, what are they doing?

What happens where there is an imbalance?

The most common external issues noted when there is 'dysbiosis' (an imbalance of the microbiome), are gastrointestinal issues such as vomiting, diarrhoea, poor nutrient absorption, weight fluctuation, flatulence etc. Historically the use of antibiotics for gut upsets has been a first line treatment, but there has been a move away from this approach. The reason being that not only can it lead to antibiotic resistance, but it can also lead to complications and imbalances with the microbiome, as microbes die and there is a loss of diversity.

Changes seen in the microbiome in dogs and cats are an increase in *Proteobacteria*, specifically *Enterobacteria*. These bacteria can survive in oxygen (aerobic bacteria) unlike the majority of intestinal bacteria who prefer a low oxygen or no oxygen environment (anaerobic bacteria). The aerobic bacteria cause intestinal inflammation which then increases the oxygen in the intestines by allowing oxygen to seep in from outside the gut. This starts to kill off the normal anaerobic gut bacteria. There has been a link in both humans and dogs between dysbiosis and overall health, including, metabolic health and obesity, the immune system (antibody production as well as B cell and T helper cell regulation – both are types of white blood cell involved in the immune system), cancer and neurological diseases such as epilepsy to name a few.



What is the effect of diet and nutrition on the microbiome?

Dogs are a naturally carnivorous scavengers, eating a predominantly meat-based diet but taking advantage of a variety of other foods such as vegetation.

Differing diets available commercially contribute a differing amount of nutrition, Kibble based diets containing more vegetable or carbohydrates, raw diets typically containing mainly meat and little to no carbohydrates. Similar to humans, dogs can survive on either end of this spectrum. Cats on the other hand are pure (obligate) carnivores. They require a predominantly meat-based diet in order to lead a healthy life. One protein in particular is essential for cats, Taurine, as without this protein in a cat's diet they can develop a very dangerous heart disease known as Dilated Cardiomyopathy (DCM).

More protein decreases *Firmicutes*, and increases the *Fusobacteria* and *Proteobacteria* bacteria and two types of *Firmicutes* – *Lactobacillus* and *Clostridium* in the microbiome (these bacteria are more tolerant of bile which is used to help digest fats and proteins), and if the diet has more vegetation then the reverse is true.

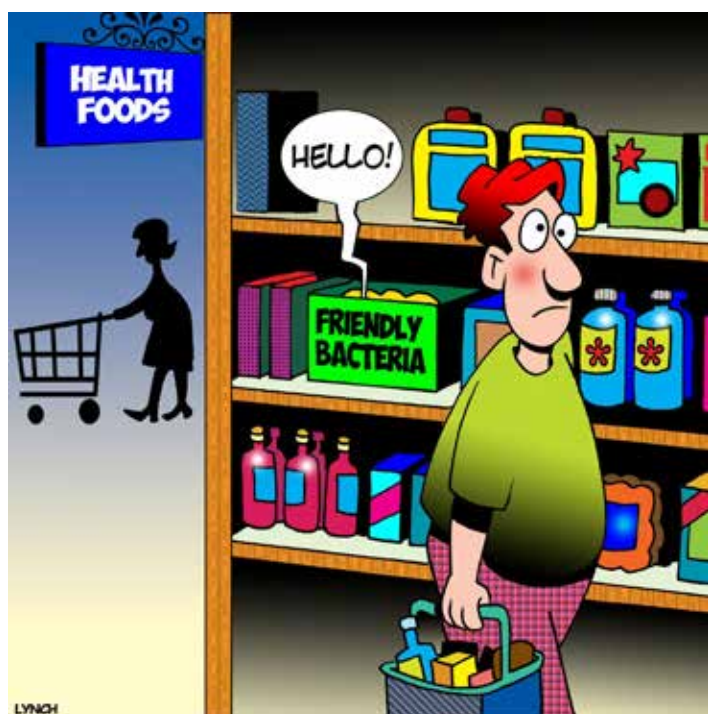
The dog microbiome seems to vary little when the source of the protein, fat or carbohydrate changes (i.e. if it comes from vegetables or meat). However increased meat has been associated with more species of *Fusobacteria* and *Firmicutes* (*Clostridium*) such as *Clostridium Hiranonis*, *Clostridium Perfringens* and *Clostridium Difficile*. The last two are sometimes associated with gut disease however are also present in normal balanced guts as *Clostridium Hiranonis* regulates the others.

These clostridium species help digest protein, increasing the digestibility of the diet and reduces the faeces remaining, hence raw fed diets are usually associated with smaller and firmer stools.

Meat based diets have been associated with increased neurotransmitters such as GABA and serotonin. Dysbiosis of the intestinal tract on the other hand has been associated with reduction of Tryptophan, a protein used to make Serotonin, Melatonin, Indole and other important neurotransmitter hormones.

How does gut disease affect the microbiome?

In humans, dogs and cats gut inflammation has a serious negative affect on the microbiome. With inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) the more severe the disease the lower the levels of Tryptophan (used to make Serotonin) in the body, this leads to a reduction in gastrointestinal motility and secretions and increases the animals pain perception. Inflammation also reduces Indole, an important protein used by the microbiome to manufacture genes associated with improved homeostasis (balance) of the microbiome's environment. In essence, intestinal inflammation leads to reduced gut motion, increased abdominal pain, and loss of a friendly environment for a normal microbiome to form; which leads to a change in the gut bacteria present which leads to more intestinal inflammation.



How are diet and the microbiome associated with weight?

There are strong links between a healthy microbiome and not just obesity but also ongoing weight management and even appetite. Increased levels of dietary fibre such as Inulin (found in root vegetables such as chicory root and beet roots) may improve weight management in overweight dogs, inulin increases levels of *Firmicutes* and produces short-chain fatty acids which trap bile acids (containing cholesterol) in the faeces preventing cholesterol being reabsorbed by the body. Studies have shown continuous high fibre and low-fat diets over 4 months can reduce body weight by 18%.

Please note that certain vegetables such as onions, garlic and leeks, whilst high in inulin are toxic to dogs and cats; please contact your local vet for advice if unsure on whether a food is toxic to your animal before adding it to your pet's diet.

Obese dogs have more *Proteobacteria* making up the microbiome (76%) whereas lean dogs have more *Firmicutes* (85%). *Proteobacteria* leads to higher levels of intestinal lipopolysaccharides (a molecule containing fats and carbohydrates) which leads to gut inflammation and microbiome change. *Proteobacteria* is also associated with lower levels of 5-hydroxytryptamine (5-HT) in the neurological system which leads to increased appetite in obese patients, making dieting even more challenging.

Additionally, a high protein and low carbohydrate diets have been associated with a more enriched microbiome which is again associated with better weight maintenance. A high protein diet has been seen to have a greater effect on the microbiome of an obese dog compared to a lean dog, indicating that an imbalance of the microbiome is present in obese dogs.

What are Probiotics and prebiotics?

Probiotics are live microbes (part of the microbiome's array of normal bacteria), these are designed to help repopulate the gut when there is a loss of certain bacteria or an imbalance following illness or medication. Evidence currently suggests that probiotics have limited effect on trying to repopulate the microbiome; however they do improve the environment (homeostasis) for the microbiome to flourish.

Prebiotics on the other hand are the food sources of the microbiome, mostly fibre type foods such as Inulin which we have already talked about. Potatoes and soybeans are good sources of fibre and beetroot a good source of both fibre and inulin. Inulin has been proven to increase *Lactobacillus* for digestion of proteins and reduce *Enterobacteria* (a cause of gut wall inflammation). *Lactobacillus* may also be sourced from commercial fermented milk products.

In a nutshell...

The balance and interactions between different bacteria and between bacteria and the pet, when it comes to the microbiome is incredibly complex and affects more than just the intestines.

- The microbiome is a balance of bacteria, parasites and protozoa (single celled organisms) who work in harmony to the health of the animal in whose gut they live.
- The microbiome not only live off the food eaten by the animal but also live off the food provided by other bacteria eating and digesting and their waste provides food to the other bacteria.
- The microbiome creates a homeostasis, a balance of the environment that must be maintained for the bacteria of the microbiome to survive.
- There are five main families of bacteria in the gut, they occur at different amounts at different points in the intestines, some can cause infection and disease if not balanced by the other bacteria.
- A short-term imbalance of the microbiome can lead to gut upsets such as vomiting or diarrhoea, long term imbalance may affect other organs in the body, including the immune system.
- Oxygen in the intestines due to inflammation can damage the microbiome.
- Dogs and cats are naturally carnivorous. Dogs can survive without much meat but cats are obligate carnivores. Canine and feline microbiomes benefit from vegetable fibre to help feed the bacteria, fibre is a prebiotic.
- The microbiome affects obesity and appetite in animals, a mixture of fibre and protein and low carbohydrates appears to help favour a microbiome that reduces obesity and appetite.
- Probiotics and prebiotics are different, probiotics may help the environment the microbiome live in, and prebiotics are the essential food for the microbiome to thrive. Fibre such as Inulin is a good source of prebiotics.
- Always ask a veterinarian for advice before adding any food to any pet's diet as some human food can be toxic or poisonous.

Adam Burch

Veterinary Surgeon, BVetMed PgC SAS PgC SADI MRCVS
Adam-the-vet@hotmail.com

Citations and further research

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Barking Up The Right Tree

Dr Ian Dunbar

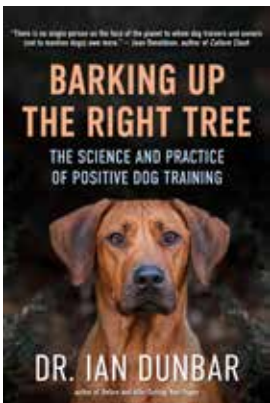
'There is no single person,' wrote Jean Donaldson, herself one of the world's best known behaviourists, 'on the face of the planet to whom dog trainers and owners (not to mention dogs) owe more.' She was speaking of Dr Ian Dunbar the vet and

animal behaviourist who, as early as 1982, questioned the whole way in which puppies and dogs were trained. Instead of aversion and punishment, he proposed an off-leash system that was lure/reward based.

Nowadays the idea of frightening/threatening/harming a dog in order to force compliance has been rejected by most thinking and caring dog trainers and dog lovers. But when I was growing up in the 1960s and 70s it is what was taught. Indeed, the idea that it acceptable to punch a dog to make it do what you want is still prevalent, as anyone who has read up on Cesar Milan (who is ten years younger than me) will be aware.

Which makes Dr Dunbar's latest book so refreshing. I read my copy in a single sitting and if I had to sum it up in a single word I would be torn between 'brilliant' and 'genius'. If you are unfamiliar with the idea of positive dog training you couldn't want a better introduction. If you are a convert already then you will find it packed with extra advice and information. Either way, I consider it one of the most important books about dogs ever written.

Jonathan Self



Extract from *Barking Up the Right Tree* by Dr Ian Dunbar

Barking Up the Right Tree is very different from any book I have written before. Most of my books and videos have been about dog social and sexual behavior, or comprehensive guides and how-to, step-by-step instructions for new puppy owners, such as *Before & After Getting Your Puppy*.

This book focuses on describing and teaching lure-reward training. This involves (1) quickly and easily teaching a dog ESL

(English as a second language), that is, *the meaning* of the words we use; (2) *testing comprehension* of verbal instructions; (3) using much more powerful *life rewards*, such as walks and dog-dog play, and games to create a self-motivated dog; and (4) using various effective, *nonaversive* techniques for resolving misbehavior and lack of compliance. Also, I provide guided instruction for the prevention and resolution of most of the more common behavior, temperament, and training problems that people encounter.

The premise of this book is simple: It's high time we celebrate the glory of dog-friendly, people-friendly, quick-and-easy, fun-and-games, off-leash, results-based, *lure-reward dog training*. I have developed and refined these techniques over the past fifty years. Lure-reward training is the *easiest*, *quickest*, and *most effective* technique to teach your dog the meaning of your words, and so open communication channels to considerably facilitate teaching basic manners, preventing or resolving behavior and training problems, and progressively molding your dog's temperament and personality.

In addition to teaching dogs to Come, Sit, and walk calmly on-leash, dog training needs to give dogs and puppies the gift of confidence around people and other dogs, the skills to handle being alone, comprehension of our language for clear instruction and ongoing guidance when they go off track, and through games, praise, and a wide range of life rewards, the motivation to want to do what we ask.

At root, my goal is always to consider both the dog's point of view and the person's point of view and to develop techniques that can work for

anyone and everyone: for dogs of any age and breed and for all types of people and their families, especially including children.

To avoid and solve unwanted behavioral issues, people must understand dog behavior, learn to "read" their dog's feelings, especially anxiety or stress related to people and other dogs, and cater to their dog's needs. Essentially, reward-based training gives dogs what they need and want in ways that inspire them to do what we need and want.

The essence of *Barking Up the Right Tree* is to explain lure-reward training so that you understand not only how to communicate with, motivate, and change the behavior and temperament of your dog, but also why these methods work so well.

If This Is Wrong, What's Right?

"My dog won't listen to me!"

"He knows it's wrong!"

"How do I stop my dog from housesoiling, chewing, and barking?"

"How can I punish my dog when he's off-leash?"

"How can I punish my dog when she misbehaves when left at home alone?"

Punishment has often been sold as a quick fix for problems like these, but in fact, most of the time, punishment is neither quick nor a fix. On-leash, punishment-based training is often time-consuming and relatively ineffective. The focus is usually on disobedience and behavior problems and on inhibiting and eliminating a dog's natural behavior, rather than teaching dogs *how we would like them to act*.

Early on in my career as a dog trainer, I tried to devise ways to modify dog behavior as quickly and easily as possible while remaining responsive to the dog's desires and delights. At that time, my wife Mimi and I were struggling with a chewing habit of our first dog, Omaha, an Alaskan Malamute. Over his first few months at home, slowly but progressively, Omaha had reduced the size of our front hall carpet from a neat eight-by-ten-foot rectangle into a raggedy-edged, eighteen-by-twenty-four-inch doormat.

Trained as a developmental psychologist with an emphasis on cognition, Mimi's approach to training (that is, teaching) our puppy (and later, our son, Jamie) always championed "needs and feelings," whereas I tended to emphasize observing, quantifying, and then changing behavior and temperament. During our many puppy-raising discussions, Mimi asked me one question that changed my entire outlook on dog training forever — in addition to inspiring the resolution to Omaha's carpet-trimming "problem." Mimi's questions were always demurely asked, infuriatingly logical, and dagger-to-the-heart revealing.

She asked me, "Have you taught Omaha what you would like him to chew?"

I combined our two approaches and now, whenever someone comes to me with a dog problem, this is one of the first questions I ask. If, by the person's definition, a dog is doing something "wrong," then what is right? Define and teach that till it becomes second nature. The question also applies to evaluating the effectiveness of any dog training technique: If one approach isn't resulting in improvement, then try another approach. Don't keep doing the same thing over and over if it's not working.

How did I stop Omaha from chewing our carpet? I encouraged him to chew something else. This was before the days of chewtoys, so I improvised and resolved two problems in one fell swoop. Omaha was also excavating my garden, and I'm a gardener — *Arrrghh!* So I bought an entire meaty cow's femur from the Magical Meat Boutique, and one night after Omaha had bedded down, I went outside and buried the bone in a small, three-by-five-foot area under the rear deck stairs. The next morning, we went outside, and after I rewarded Omaha for eliminating in his toilet area, he set about sniffing the garden perimeter, and then... his nose elevated and started twitching. He caught the buried bone's spoor and took barely a minute to find its location.

And that was pretty much it. No more chewing on furniture and fittings;

all chewing became directed to bones that he found in what I dubbed his “digging pit.” Every night, I would bury a smaller bone freshly stuffed with mushed kibble and a variety of treats for him to find in the morning. This also solved the issue of digging in the lawn and flower beds. Consider Omaha’s point of view: *Wow! There’s hardly anything of doggy interest buried in this entire garden, but this digging pit is loaded with buried treasure!* This is why, in 1848, a considerable portion of the US population ventured west to California — due to a single find of gold in Sutter Creek, but next to nothing in New Jersey.

I still have the gnawed and bleached remnant of Omaha’s original cow femur. It sits on top of a bookcase where I can see it every evening.

Omaha’s education, and further long discussions with Mimi, taught me that “a dog’s a dog,” and that for training to be successful, we *must* cater to their specific needs and feelings. Rather than attempt to “take the dog out of the dog,” my focus increasingly emphasized teaching dogs how to appropriately express their natural dogginess in ways that don’t upset owners. For example, teaching and verbally cuing dogs *where* to eliminate, *what* to chew, *when* to bark, *when* to shush, and *how* not to upset other dogs that may not have the same degree of social savvy and confidence. A well-trained dog can do lots to calm other dogs that are fearful and reactive.

What Is Lure-Reward Training?

Dog training is almost entirely about *communication*, specifically teaching dogs *our language*, that is, ESL. Lure-reward training is by far the quickest and easiest technique for teaching dogs the meaning of our verbal instructions and for regularly testing comprehension as proof of training.

Initially, food lures are used to teach the meaning of handsignals, and then food lures are phased out and handsignals are used to teach the meaning of verbal instructions. Dogs learn handsignals quickly because they are a language dogs understand — body language. Once dogs *understand what we say*, dog training transcends to a different level. As our dog acquires an ever-expanding vocabulary, teaching basic manners becomes even quicker and easier.

The central tenet of any educational endeavor is to, first, clearly communicate what we would like someone to do. With our dogs, that means whatever is contextually *appropriate* from a human viewpoint, and then we reward them for doing it. Luring stacks the deck so the dog is more likely to get it “right” from the outset, and then the dog is frequently rewarded for getting it right, which is the prime directive of all reward-based training techniques.

As a dog’s vocabulary grows, this changes the playing field when it comes to misbehavior and lack of compliance. Now, we may simply instruct our dog exactly how we would like them to act. It is an amazing relief and a true delight to learn how to *effectively* prevent or terminate misbehavior and noncompliance using our voice. In fact, voicing only a single word can communicate three vital pieces of information to the dog: (1) Stop what you’re doing, (2) do this instead, and (3) the degree of danger for noncompliance.

For example, if your dog is about to pee in the house, say, with some urgency, “Outside” or “Toilet.” If your dog is barking, instruct, “Shush.” If your dog is practicing agility in the living room, say, “Bed.” And if your dog is chasing the cat or your children, or about to dash out the front door or jump up on someone, simply instruct, “Sit.” A simple Sit is often the solution to so many problems.

Rather than waiting for utterly predictable bad habits and behavior problems to rear their ugly heads, and then attempting to correct them *after* the fact, lure-reward training takes the opposite approach — preventing predictable problems by teaching desirable behavior from the outset and establishing and internalizing good habits. Then, as these good habits are frequently reinforced, they increase in frequency and naturally crowd out unwanted behaviors. Lure-reward training rests on several key elements: early socialization, clear communication, off-leash training, and the use of life rewards, not simply food treats.

- **Early socialization:** Ideally, prior to eight weeks of age, puppies should grow up *indoors*, in an *enriched environment*, and *meet lots and lots of people* safely at home. The consequences of insufficient socialization with people during the first three months of life become

apparent when dogs reach five to eight months of age. Fear, anxiety, and reactivity toward scary stimuli and situations, especially unfamiliar people and dogs, are all *adolescent-onset* behaviors that destroy manners and make life a misery for dogs and owners alike. However, it’s never too late to socialize an older dog, should they lack confidence and life skills. However old your dog is when they join your family, start socializing right away.

- **Clear communication:** We need to *bring back our voice to training*. From the outset, we must teach the *meaning of our instructions* and then *test that dogs understand* them. We need to teach dogs ESL (or whatever language you prefer). Clear verbal instruction is essential for cuing basic manners and for providing guidance when dogs err. Then let’s use our words to praise our dogs and celebrate with them when they do a good job.
- **Off-leash training:** First train your puppy or newly adopted adult dog *off-leash at home*, both indoors and outdoors, and only then attach the leash to your trained puppy for their first walk. Otherwise, your untrained dog will likely learn to pull on-leash during their very first walk. For inveterate pullers, words of guidance help considerably; for example, to instruct a dog to speed up when lagging, say, “Hustle,” and to instruct a dog to slow down when forging or pulling, say, “Steady.”
- **Life rewards:** To begin, lure-reward training uses food *lures* to teach dogs *what* we would like them to do, and it uses food *rewards* to motivate them to *want* to comply. However, food lures are phased out entirely as soon as dogs learn handsignals, and food rewards are largely replaced by far more powerful *life rewards*. This is done by integrating numerous, very short training interludes into walks, sniffs, play with other dogs, and interactive games with us. Additionally, we creatively “power up” praise as perhaps the most powerful *secondary* reinforcement on the planet.

Other behaviors and activities that dogs really enjoy are also used as rewards — behaviors that most people consider “problems.” However, by putting “problem” behaviors on cue, we can teach dogs *when* it is OK to bark, hug, or let off steam (and when it is not). By using cued behaviors as rewards, the problematic notion of the undesired expression of a dog’s normal, natural, and *necessary* behaviors becomes history, since we know how to turn them on ... and how to turn them *off*. All in all, life rewards are so much more powerful and effective than a mere food treat.



Dr. Ian Dunbar is a veterinarian, animal behaviorist, dog trainer, and writer. He received his veterinary degree and a special honors degree in physiology and biochemistry from the Royal Veterinary College at the University of London and a doctorate in animal behavior from the psychology department at the University of California at Berkeley, where he spent ten years researching olfactory communication, the development of hierarchical social behavior, and aggression in domestic dogs. Dr. Dunbar is a member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, the California Veterinary Medical Association, the Sierra Veterinary Medical Association, and the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT), which he founded in 1993. Visit him online at www.dunbaracademy.com

Excerpted from the book *Barking Up the Right Tree: The Science and Practice of Positive Dog Training* ©2023 by Dr. Ian Dunbar. Printed with permission from New World Library www.newworldlibrary.com



Interview: Hersch Wilson

Hersch Wilson is the author of the newly published 'Dog Lessons' and 'Firefighter Zen'. He is an organisational consultant, pilot, former professional dancer, newspaper columnist, and volunteer firefighter. He lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico, with his wife, Laurie; two daughters; and two dogs, a Great Pyrenees and a Chihuahua-terrier mix.

In this world beset by crisis, why a book about dogs?

First, this beautiful line in the Talmud: 'Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly now. You are not obligated to complete the world, but neither are you free to abandon it.' In other words, even in times of soul-wrenching crisis, we have a role to play; we need to be part of the solution. Even though we often feel powerless, we're not. And at the same time, we crave companionship, community, and solace. Although that often means human companionship, our dogs can play a role: they greet us enthusiastically when we come home, whether from the store or a protest march. They sit on the couch with us with their heads on our laps. They mirror our emotional states. No matter what is going on 'outside', they just want to be with us. Having a dog present in our lives is a great gift, especially in times like ours.

You write that dogs can teach us lessons. What are some examples?

There are the obvious ones, like love and the sheer enthusiasm of going on a walk. And there are others. Dogs, for example, teach how not to get into a fight (most of the time). One of my favorites is their ability to be endlessly curious—even on the same walks we do every day. Then there is the love of wild spaces and their importance to our sense of being. Next is the desire to be free, even if, in our case, it means our Great Pyrenees, Toby, crashing through fences or screen doors. There is the importance of naps, something we seem averse to as busy 21st-century on-the-go humans. I cover more in the book, but the last one I'll leave you with here is old dogs teach us how to be old.

What does it mean to be a dog guardian? Why do you dislike the word 'owner'?

'Owning' implies that I can do anything with the 'object' I own. I can ignore it, take it for granted, and dispose of it if it tires me or I no longer have time. I believe deeply that we can't 'own' sentient beings. Sentient beings have moral standing. The philosopher Mary Ann Warren wrote: 'If an entity has moral status, then we may not treat it in just any way we please.' The word 'guardian' implies that my job is to keep a dog safe and happy, protect them from harm, and respect their needs and wants.

How has being with dogs changed your view of the natural world?

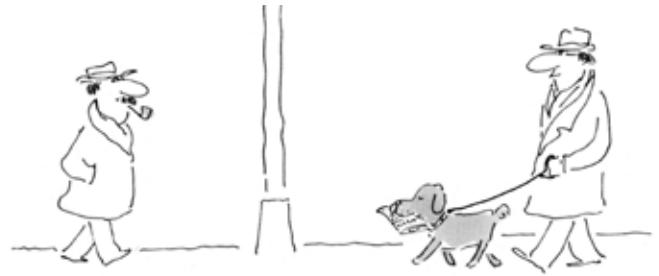
First, dogs get me out in the natural world. They are excited to go on walks on our rural roads or hikes in the mountains. Second, once we let go of our preconceived notions of 'dog', it's not a leap to understand that the natural world is full of sentience and hard-won evolutionary wisdom. The poet W.B. Yeats wrote: 'The world is full of magical things patiently waiting for our senses to grow sharper.' Being with a dog in the wild wakes up our ability to sense the wild in a different and fuller way.

You write in the book that breeds aren't good indicators of behavior. Can you explain?

Any dog's behavior is a product (like human children) of their genetics and environment. On our road, we have an amazing Golden retriever, Cooper. He's friendly and calm. Much of that comes from breeding. But also because he lives with a caring and kind guardian. If you put Cooper in an abusive environment, especially as a puppy, you'd get different behaviors. My brother has a rescue Pitbull named Baron. Who knows how he was treated early on. But Joey and Linda are kind and patient guardians. Baron has issues with other dogs but is friendly with humans and fun to be with. Always look at the individual dog, not just the breed.

What makes a dog aggressive?

Fear makes dogs aggressive. When you think of what we can control as guardians, if we contribute to an environment that creates fear, you'll get an aggressive dog, for example, chaining a dog, where they can't escape or find shelter. Relying on punishment (an ineffective training strategy anyway) where the dog is afraid of you — tucks her tail, ears flattened when you approach, will create aggression. Or cornering a dog, where they can't escape, also will cause aggression. In my view, the key is to create a positive and trusting relationship.



What is your most important lesson from writing Dog Lessons?

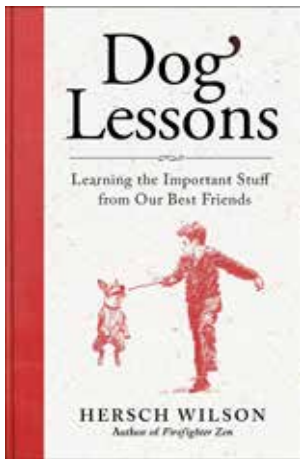
After decades of being with dogs, I thought I knew a lot. Doing the research for this book changed my mind. The most important lesson I learned was about rescues. I believed the first few months of a dog's life set in stone how they would 'be' as a dog later, their behavior, like fear, resource guarding, barking, etc.

Doing the research, and the experience with our two current rescued dogs, Toby and Maisie, taught me that dogs are much more resilient. They can bounce back from tough 'puppyhoods' to be friendly dogs. Well, Toby did. Maisie is part Chihuahua and is easily irritated. We're still working on her; she's a work in progress. But dog resilience is my number one lesson.

Why is it so hard to lose a dog? Is it okay to grieve the loss of a dog?

Because we've evolved. I grew up in a time and place where it was common to put unwanted puppies in a sack and throw them in the river. Since then, I think collectively, we've come to understand that dogs are sentient beings. And they have feelings, like sadness and joy — acknowledging that would've gotten you excommunicated from most psychology departments as recent as thirty years ago.

And more simply, we love our dogs, and they love us. They have short but vibrant lives; they become part of our daily existence and routines. It's because we allow ourselves to love them that it is devastating when they pass away. And it is natural and healthy to grieve. No one should tell you otherwise, how to grieve, or 'get over it'. It is a deeply personal experience.



Extract from *Dog Lessons: Learning the Important Stuff from Our Best Friends* by Hersch Wilson

"What do you want for dinner?" I shouted above the din. My daughter Sully and I were standing next to each other in our hallway. We had our faces and bodies smashed up against the wall.

We were having difficulty hearing each other, and we were holding our arms and possessions over our heads, much like when you're arrested.

But it wasn't the police. The cause was two eight-month-old, wild Bernese mountain dog puppies who were just unbelievably excited to see us. They were raucously loud, sprinting up and down the hallway bringing us toys, coffee cups, the TV remote, all as their way of saying,

Welcome home! We bring you presents! We missed you so much!

Perfectly normal for us.

To the initiated, *the obsessed dog people*, you must be thinking, well, this family did not do the requisite training.

You'd be right. We tried and tried and failed. More about that later. Yet coming home and being overwhelmed with love has its benefits. It's hard to be in a bad mood when a dog (or two) is expressing undying affection for you.

For the nine years Nellie and Tank lived with us, before they passed, each day began with a walk, one that was normally exciting and sometimes anxiety provoking because I never knew what would happen. Once, in front of a new house construction site, Tank spied a dead rabbit on the road. Enlisting Nellie — both were then about 130 pounds — they towed me to the rabbit as I struggled to hold them back. Tank pounced on it, and I pounced on Tank and grabbed the rabbit, and we wrestled for possession — I was afraid the rabbit might have died from the disease tularemia! All work on the new house ceased as the construction guys watched in amazement as a sixty-two-year-old guy rolled on the ground with two bear-like dogs over a dead rabbit. After a struggle I won, I held the rabbit over my head. Misinterpreting the gesture — I was just trying to keep the rabbit away from the dogs — the construction guys applauded and hooted.

We unapologetically spoil our dogs. They give so much, and we want them to be as happy, content, and *dog-like* as possible. We want them to be dogs, not possessions or little humans; dogs, not trained robots; dogs, members of our family. Our dogs often follow us from room to room; we seem always together.

We do draw the line at rolling in deer poop or, God forbid, eating dog poop. I have asked numerous veterinarians why dogs eat dog poop; no one has a good answer. Other than those, our rules are rather lax.

After our hallway greeting, the Bernese puppies followed us into the kitchen. There, as we began to cook, they lay down to be as close to us as possible. Berners are notorious for turning into "lumps" on the floor, not moving and content for humans just to step over or around them. So we let them be and got on with making dinner. We did it automatically; no sense trying to shoo them out, they'd just come right back. Of course, why would we? We have always considered our dogs as part of our family web, napping alongside us while we work or do chores. We are close knit. And evenings are best. A warm kitchen, happy dogs, and content humans.

A theme of this book is that the world is a complex and often frightening place. To keep our sense of purpose and our sanity, we must be engaged, we must fight the battles, being kind in a world that can seem uncaring. We also need refuge, quiet, peace, and especially love. Being in a house suffused with dog spirit gives us that. Dogs give more than they take. With a little caring, stirring in time with them, walks, runs, play, and belly rubs, they will return the love tenfold.

I am not a dog trainer, a noble and needed profession, and this is not a training manual. Nor am I a dog cognition expert, an exploding field focused on understanding our first nonhuman companions, and this is not a survey of dog science. Rather, I am a dog *guardian* in possibly the fortieth millennia of our relationship with dogs: a cool and hallowed responsibility. This book is about living with dogs and what we might learn from them.

I have lived with dogs for sixty years or so. In that time, my relationship with dogs has gone through multiple phases. I've gone from being wondrous at having a first dog, to appreciating their loyalty, to taking them for granted, to again being wondrous. In writing this book, doing the research, remembering times with dogs who have passed, and spending time with our current dogs — Toby, a Great Pyrenees mix, and Maisie, a Chihuahua-whatever mix — I have been nothing if not astonished by their resilience and affection. Consider this book also my unabashed love letter to dogs.



"WE'VE FOUND A MARVELOUS TRAINER FOR REX."

Of course, dogs are not perfect. As I write this, I'm in Minnesota at my daughter's home, and Toby is at home in New Mexico with a dog sitter. I assume, because we are not there, he has escaped four times in as many days, opening doors, breaking through screens, vaulting walls, diving out of windows, and showing up at our extremely patient neighbors.

Next: shoes. Stuck in traffic, I once tried to calculate the damage dogs do to the economy by destroying shoes — a common occurrence over the years with us. Roughly, there are seventy million US households with dogs. Let's say, on average, each household has one dog that destroys at least one pair of shoes each year. To make it easy, let's say a pair of shoes costs on average fifty dollars. Yes, I know, this under-estimates the cost of many shoes, but it makes sitting in a car doing math easier. That comes out to \$3.5 billion a year in damaged shoes.

More seriously, dog attacks account for between thirty and forty deaths each year in the US. Most attacks are by dogs who are loose and running free, not socialized, often in packs, and who are not desexed.

To keep this in perspective, snakes kill around ten individuals each year (out of seven thousand or so venomous bites). Since 1890, there have been twenty-seven people killed by mountain lions (I'm obsessed by mountain lions), and approximately twenty people are killed by cows, yes cows, each year. Of course, the biggest predators worldwide are mosquitoes (750,000 deaths per year) and us! On average, we clock in at 437,000 humans killed each year (not including wars).

About dog attacks. My youngest daughter, Sully, vociferously declares that it's not dogs but stupid people who are mostly responsible for attacks. That is, she often clarifies impatiently, it is bad dog "owners" who should not be allowed near any animal.

She is much more radical than I.

Of course, Mark Twain famously wrote that "there are lies, damn lies, and statistics." Or as my wife, Laurie, constantly reminds me, if you're the one who is attacked, statistics are meaningless.

Continued overleaf

How much do dogs know? Well, for one thing, dogs fail the “mirror” test. This is an experiment designed to see if animals can recognize themselves in a mirror, thus demonstrating self-awareness. Dolphins, the great apes, a single Asiatic elephant, and magpies pass the mirror test. However, this sight-centric test does not involve or account for a dog’s primary sense, smell. If there was a mirror test using scent, I bet they’d be brilliant.

I feel the subtitle of this book — “Learning the Important Stuff from Our Best Friends” — needs some explanation. First, to be contrarian, there are a lot of important things that dogs can’t teach us. For example, in high school, having a dog that could have taught me calculus or Spanish would have been a significant help in my quest to get into college and thus avoid the draft. Also, contrary to stories about Lassie and other dogs who find their way home over hundreds of miles, not all dogs are great navigators. Only approximately 30 percent of lost dogs find their way home. I sympathize with this. As a firefighter, I was once voted “most likely to get lost on the way to a call.”

Yet I have found that math, Spanish, and navigation, while helpful, are not essential life skills.



In the middle of the night, Peppy suddenly developed a wild craving for the bone.

What can dogs teach us? A lot, particularly about being social animals. Humans and dogs have both evolved to survive in small groups, whether those communities are called packs, tribes, clans, families, or kinship groups.

Vital dog lessons for us include love, loyalty, curiosity, how to avoid serious fights, wildness, and zoomies, among others. Not a bad list for a good life. We could all do better with less conflict, a couple of naps, and more playtime. I’ve

highlighted these skills in “Dog Lesson” sections throughout.

A final note. There is one fact that all dog people hold in their hearts. A dog’s life is much shorter than ours. In our garden we have a tree with a little stone marker on which is written “Zuni’s Tree.” Zuni was a German shepherd that lived with us for eight years. He was hit and killed by a car.

We grieved for months after he passed. Now we have Toby, a Great Pyrenees, who howls every time he hears coyotes, fire department sirens, or the theme music for *Modern Family*. (We watched a lot of TV reruns during the Covid-19 lockdowns.) A meta-lesson that dogs teach is that life with dogs is joyous and short. From dogs we learn that even the happiest of lives are threaded with sadness. That is the largest of lessons that dogs teach.

Hersch Wilson is the author of *Dog Lessons: Learning the Important Stuff from Our Best Friends* and dog guardian who lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. His family adopted their first dog, Shawnee, a German shepherd, when Hersch was ten. Since then, apart from a few dogless periods, he has been around dogs for over sixty years. His book *Firefighter Zen: A Field Guide to Thriving in Tough Times* was published in 2020 and won numerous awards. Visit him at www.herschwilson.com

Excerpted from the book *Dog Lessons: Learning the Important Stuff from Our Best Friends* ©2023 by Hersch Wilson. Printed with permission from New World Library – www.newworldlibrary.com

Review: Knits for Dogs

Stina Tiselius



Whether you are an experienced wielder of knitting needles or a complete beginner, you’ll find Stina Tiselius’s *Knits for Dogs* an excellent addition to your library. The chapters are short (sometimes no more than a page or two) but contain invaluable advice. The book opens with general advice covering everything from measuring

your dog to your choice of yarn and then includes some useful information about felting. The actual knitting patterns themselves are divided into patterns for cold walks, toys and playthings and larger items such as beds, rugs and cushions. The designs are stunning and the instructions are easy to follow. The book ends with a knitting basics chapter which covers, oddly enough, the basics for those new to the joys of knitting. Yes, you will find plenty of advice and patterns online. But nothing beats a beautifully planned and photographed book. *Jane Suffling*



A comfy, warm wool sweater for all those chilly walks. Charlie thinks it’s a great idea and loves wearing it under his harness or, even better, when he’s off the lead.

Yarn: Peer Gynt from Sandnes Garn. 100% Norwegian wool. 50 g (1¾ oz) = approx. 91 m (99½ yd). Shade: Dark Curry 9572.

Sizes: S (M) L The measurements below are the final knitted measurements.

Width at neck: approx. 31 (37) 42 cm (12¼ [14½] 16½ in)

Width at chest: approx. 40 (45) 51 cm (15¾ [17¾] 20 in)

Length: approx. 26 (30) 34 cm (10¼ [12] 13½ in)

Yarn amount: 100 (100) 150 g (3½ [3½] 5¾ oz)

Tension: 22 sts in stocking stitch on 3.5 mm (US4) needles = 10 cm (4 in)

Needles: 3.5 mm (US4) circular needle, 40 cm (15¾ in) long

Ribbed neckband

The sweater is knitted in the round on a circular needle, starting at the neck and working down towards the back. Cast on 68 (80) 92 stitches on a 40 cm (15¾ in) 3.5 mm (US4) circular needle. Work in k2, p2 rib until the ribbed section measures 8 (9) 10 cm (3¼ [3½] 4 in).

Upper section

Change to stocking stitch. On the first round of stocking stitch, increase 20 stitches evenly as follows: knit *3 (4) 4, increase 1*. Repeat *-* to end of round. 88 (100) 112 stitches. Place a marker between two stitches to mark start of round. When work measures 12 (14) 15 cm (4¾ [5½] 6 in), divide for legs as follows: after marker, knit 8 (10) 12 stitches, turn and purl 16 (20) 24 stitches back again. Continue working back and forth in stocking stitch across these 16 (20) 24 stitches until this section measures 6 (7) 8 cm (2½ [2¾] 3¼ in). Place these stitches on a holder.



Lower section

Now work the rest of the stitches on the needle. Cast off the first 4 (4) 5 stitches and knit to end of round. Turn work and cast off the first 4 (4) 5 stitches = 64 (72) 78 stitches on your needle. Work in stocking stitch until this section measures 6 (7) 8 cm (2½ [2¾] 3¼ in). Now place both sections back on the same needle, casting on 4 new stitches between the sections so that you have 88 (100) 112 stitches again. Work in stocking stitch in the round until sweater measures 21 (25) 28 cm (8¼ [10] 11 in). Bottom ribbed edge Place 12 (14) 17 stitches before, and 12 (14) 17 stitches after centre marker on a holder = 64 (72) 78 stitches on needle. Continue working back section back and forth in stocking stitch, decreasing at the start of each round as follows: 2 stitches twice, 1 stitch once, i.e. decreasing 5 stitches on each side = 54 (62) 68 stitches. Pick up 5 stitches and place the 24 (28) 34 centre stitches onto the circular needle, pick up 5 stitches on the other side = 88 (100) 112 stitches. Work to the centre marker and then knit sweater in the round in knit 2, purl 2 rib. Cast off when rib measures approx. 2 (2) 3 cm (¾ [¾] 1¼ in). Sweater now measures approx. 26 (30) 34 cm (10¼ [12] 13½ in).



“Step One: Locate end of yarn.”





How Honey's supports older dogs

'Age,' according to the actress Helen Hayes (and she should know, because she was still working at 90!), 'is not important unless you are a cheese.' Happily, as dogs become

older they generally seem to actively resist the aging process or, in the words of Dylan Thomas, to 'rage against the dying of the light'.

Still, there is no doubt that the passing of the years can bring physical and mental changes to our four-legged family members. Diet has a huge role to play here. It can help prevent and alleviate illness and all the other symptoms of aging.

(As an aside, there is quite a bit of evidence that food can actually reverse aging in humans. For example, a Yale study proved that biological age can be reduced by more than three years in only eight weeks by a combination of diet and lifestyle changes – something to do with balancing DNA methylation... who knew? Obviously, dogs aren't humans but still there can be no doubt that diet can make a huge difference.)

With this in mind, we generally suggest that as dogs move out of middle age to what is euphemistically called their 'golden years', we review their overall diet and, in so far as it is possible without a physical examination, their health. If you would like such a review all you have to do is call or email.



"My advice is to learn all the tricks you can while you're young."

When can a dog be considered 'older'?

At what point ought a dog be considered older aka senior? There is no easy answer to this. Broadly speaking, smaller breeds live longer than larger breeds. For a Great Dane it could be seven or eight, for a Jack Russell Terrier it could be as late as fourteen or fifteen. Every dog is different. The questions to ask oneself include:

- Are they still healthy, active and free of disease?
- Have they slowed down, perhaps getting a little stiff and arthritic?
- Has he or she put on a bit of weight for no apparent reason?
- Are they drinking more water than usual?

A healthy and active senior will still need a reasonable calorie intake, whereas a more inactive older dog may benefit from a lower fat, reduced calorie diet.

Some general tips

- Fat is a very good source of calories and easily digested by a younger dog. However, once they become a little older, dogs can be more susceptible to weight gain (as exercise reduces), as well as health issues

such as pancreatitis, and liver problems. It can therefore be worth reducing the amount of very high fat recipes in the diet for a senior dog, replacing them with leaner options, to help support their aging organs and maintain a healthy weight.

– There are arguments both for and against limiting protein content in an older dog. Protein helps to maintain muscle mass, so it is important to continue to include it as dogs get older. However, in some older dogs, aging organs, such as the kidneys and liver, can start to become less efficient. If this is the case, it may be necessary to avoid higher protein meats such as our Wild recipes.

– Obesity in older pets is a very real concern. As dogs start to become less active in their daily lives they will use less calories and, if the food is not adjusted to account for this, they will gain weight. It is sometimes hard to notice that they may walk a little more than they run, when walks are still the same length. Being slightly overweight puts more strain on older joints that may already be starting to suffer from arthritis. Maintaining an optimum weight will keep your senior dog active for longer, with better muscle tone to support the joints.



"SIX IS THE NEW FIVE."

Your vet's involvement

Prevention is better than cure! Even if your dog is bursting with health and energy we would always suggest regular veterinary health checks (including blood screening) once they reach the senior years.



"We don't talk about the age thing."

Let's talk!

The Honey's Healthcare Team are happy to discuss the most appropriate diet for each older dog, taking into account the breed, age, and health of the dog.

If you would like to discuss your senior dog with us, or would like to review the recipes on your current order, just give the Healthcare team a call on 01672-620260 and select option 2, or drop us an email. We are always very happy to help.



Interview: Dr. Marc Bekoff

Dr Marc Bekoff is one of the most influential biologists, ethologists and behavioural ecologists in the world. He has won many awards for his research on animal behavior, animal emotions, compassionate conservation, and animal protection; has worked closely with Jane Goodall; and is a former Guggenheim Fellow. He has written more than thirty books, many on the subject of dogs including 'Canine Confidential', 'Unleashing Your Dog' and 'A Dog's World'. His latest, 'Dogs Demystified: An A-to-Z Guide to All Things Canine' has just been published and in the words of one reviewer is: 'A must read for fluency

in dog and for bettering the dog-human relationship.' Below is an interview between Dr Jessica Pierce and Dr Mark Bekoff as well as two extracts from this fantastic and strongly recommended book!

What would you like readers to know about the book?

Dogs Demystified largely focuses on dog behaviour—what dogs do and how and why they do it—to help readers see, appreciate, and respect dogs for who they are and not what we want them to be. A large part of demystifying our canine companions is understanding how they sense their world, and I hope this guide helps you get eye-to-eye, nose-to-nose, and ear-to-ear with dogs. Getting a good handle on what is happening inside a dog's head and heart is how we can minimize the border between them and us. When we can do that, we are better able to help dogs be dogs—to do what comes naturally—in a world where many aspects of their lives are often controlled and compromised by humans.

As a cognitive ethologist—a scientist who studies the inner lives of all sorts of nonhuman beings, including dogs—I want to introduce readers to animal research itself. In a conversational, nontechnical way, entries explain research terms and how science is conducted. I also dispel nagging myths such as dogs are our best friends and they are unconditional lovers, they are not. But they do form dominance hierarchies, and there are alpha dogs. I also stress there is no *universal dog* and we must be very careful about making statements such as 'Dogs do this.' Or, 'Dogs don't do that.' Also, singer and artist, Joan Baez, contributed four original drawings, and Paul McCartney wrote a story about a dog he and his family rescued.

What was the most interesting thing you learned about dogs that you hadn't known?

In all honesty, while I do know a lot about dogs, my learning curve was vertical when I dove into the nitty-gritty of some of the scientific studies and tried to figure out why there was some disagreement among them. For example, researchers disagree about how dogs and wolves are similar and how they differ with respect to following human gazing and pointing. The bottom line here is not that some of the studies are bad but rather the differences emerge because different dogs are being studied in different labs with different researchers using different protocols. An important message: While we know a lot about dogs, there is a lot we don't know and we should be careful about making sweeping statements about what dogs can and cannot do. I also included numerous stories from 'citizen scientists' who really want to learn more about dogs and their wild relatives.

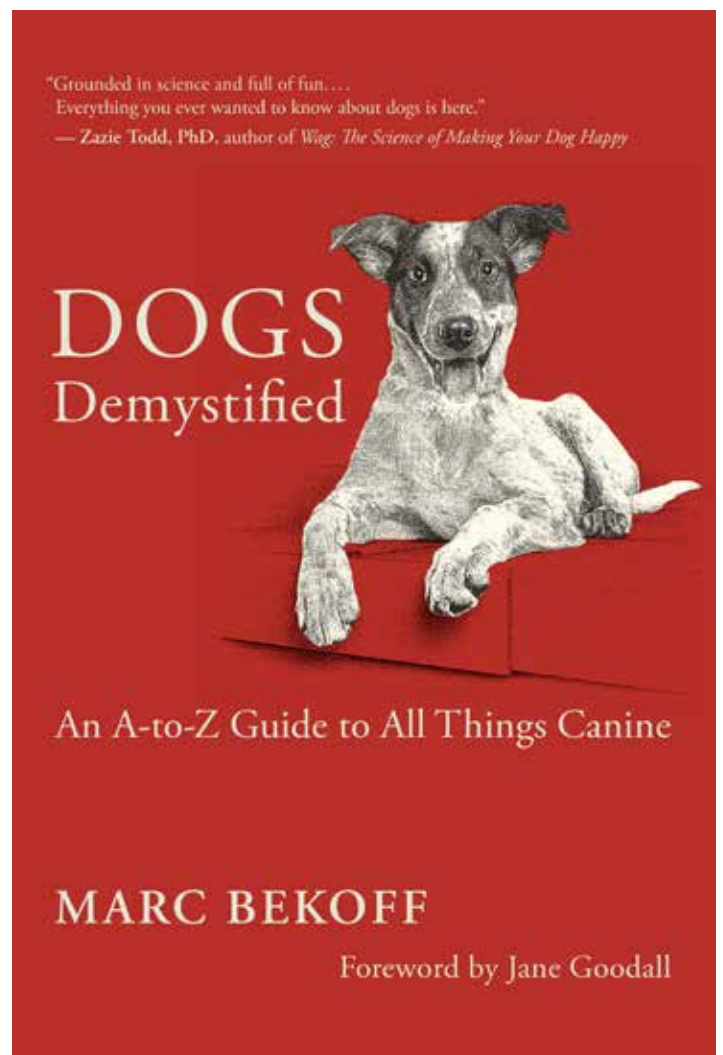
Are there any entries that you think will be especially controversial?

Some people might find my discussions about dominance, alphas, and theory of mind to be controversial. Detailed scientific research clearly shows that dogs do form dominance hierarchies just like their wild relatives, there are alpha dogs, and there is solid evidence that dogs most likely have a theory of mind, when they play, for example. We need to move away from the prejudice of thinking great apes are the only show in town when it comes to having a theory of mind.

What do you most want readers to take away from this book?

Great question. I hope they learn a lot, as I did; I hope they realise that there still is a lot to learn about dogs. It's also important for readers to realise that around 75-80 percent of the estimated billion dogs who live on earth are free-ranging or feral. We need to study these latter populations to get a better handle on the cognitive, emotional, and moral lives of dogs because studying 'homed' dogs in controlled laboratory setups tell only part of the story. This is not to say the lab studies are 'bad', but rather they have their limitations. And giving dogs as many freedoms as possible—giving them lots of choices and agency—and getting their consent before we ask them or make them do something, are essential for having a solid two-way enduring relationship. My deeper hope is that increased understanding will foster more caring. A dog's feelings matter to them, and they should also matter to us. We should take the perspective and emotions of dogs into account in every aspect of our shared lives. This applies to training. I prefer to think of training as teaching and educating dogs about how to live in our human-oriented world—which should be done using only positive, force-free methods.

In reality, dogs are always learning from humans. We often place unrealistic social expectations on dogs, especially homed dogs, who are constantly being asked to do what we want them to do. Giving dogs some extra tender loving care is really good for them and for us. You can't 'spoil' a dog, nor are there really many *bad* dogs. Most of the time, when dogs *misbehave*, they're simply doing whatever they have to do to be dogs. Training is a form of education; it's not a way to program dogs so they always please us. Dogs have rich and deep emotional lives, and we must honor and respect this bona fide scientific fact whenever we interact with them. Treating dogs as if they don't have emotions is antiscientific; it damages the relationships dogs form with us and other dogs. I agree with renowned singer and songwriter Emmylou Harris who told me: 'Dogs are a sacred responsibility, dogs make us better humans, and dogs are one of the universe's best gifts.' When people embrace these ideas, the world will be better for dogs and people.





Foreword to *Dogs Demystified* by Jane Goodall

Almost everyone thinks that my favorite animal must be a chimpanzee. They are wrong.

Actually, chimpanzees share so many characteristics with us that I do not consider them “animals” — any more than we think of ourselves as “animals,” although we are. My favorite animal is the dog. When I was growing up, a very

special dog came into my life named Rusty. Dogs can be extremely intelligent — Rusty certainly was. It almost seemed he was sent to teach me about animal behavior. He didn’t even belong to us, but lived in a hotel around the corner. They did not mind that he left them at around 6 a.m., returning only for his midday meal and to sleep at night, when we told him to go home around 10 p.m. I first met him when I was about ten, and he was my best friend for the next ten years until he died. I would never have gone off to Africa had he still been alive — I could not have betrayed his trust. I still miss him to this day, almost seventy years later, and in spite of all the other wonderful dogs I have known since.

It was because of my relationship with Rusty that I was able to stand up to the professors at Cambridge University who told me, after I had been studying wild chimpanzees for over a year, that I could not talk about their personalities, minds, or emotions — because those were unique to humans. Rusty had taught me long before I began studying our closest relatives that humans were not the only sentient sapient beings on the planet.

Not for nothing have dogs earned the title of “man’s best friend” — or perhaps now we should say “humanity’s best friend.” They have been trained to be eyes for the blind, ears for the deaf, guards for the house. Sheepdogs help shepherds to herd their flocks, and hunting dogs help in the chase. Because of their keen sense of smell, dogs can help track down criminals, find people buried under the rubble of a collapsed building, detect cancer, and predict the onset of epileptic seizures. Dogs can sniff out endangered animals or their body parts being smuggled illegally across borders.

An increasing number of dogs are being taken into hospitals, where they bring comfort to the sick. They provide companionship for the lonely and help autistic children to read because they do not judge. And there are so many wonderful stories of dogs who seek out help when their owners are lying unconscious or wounded after some kind of accident in a remote place. As I watch the horrors of the war in Ukraine, I have seen cases where an abandoned dog (through death or emigration of their person) has been adopted by soldiers. “He’s changed our lives,” said one soldier, who was based with his unit in a hastily constructed, damp trench. “He warns us if anyone approaches — and he gives us love and raises morale.” It was the same story with a dog who was adopted by people sheltering in a basement during air raids in Ukraine.

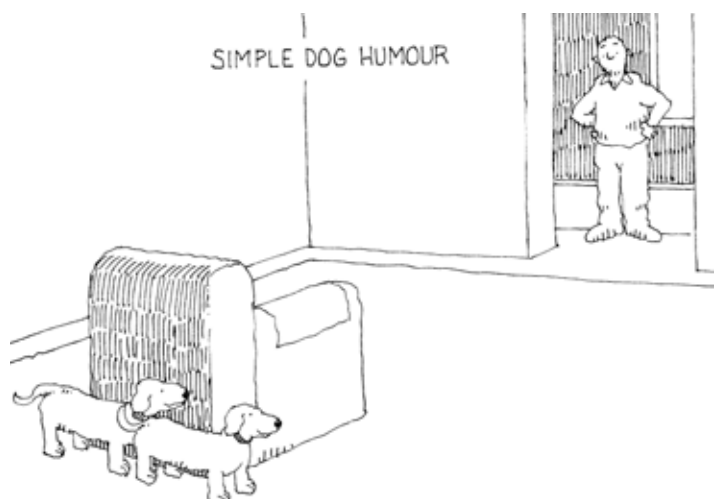
All those things and more are what dogs do for us. But what about the other way round? What do we do for dogs? How do they want to be treated? Of course, we rescue and adopt dogs and give them homes. A dog with a really good home, understanding human companions, access to the outdoors, and plenty of exercise will be a “happy” or contented dog. Especially if there are two dogs, so they can play and keep each other company. A dog can be a member of the family in a good way — treated with love and respect for their dogness. Others are treated not as a dog but as a human with furry skin, dressed in fancy coats and jeweled collars. This may all be done with the best of intentions, but is this the way dogs like to be treated? Do dogs like being bathed in perfumed shampoo or having their hair shaped in fancy styles?

What of the thousands of dogs who are left alone all day, trapped in a house or apartment five days a week, simply to give their owners a few hours of pleasure in the evenings and on weekends, and who are likely to be dumped in kennels when their owners go on holiday? What of the dogs who have very few opportunities to run off-leash, to interact with other dogs? And what of those who are taken for walks but not allowed to spend time sniffing along the way, gleaning information about the world of dogs, tugged along with irritated jerks of the leash?

If you really and truly love dogs, you need to understand the ways they try to communicate. As Marc Bekoff says in this wonderful book, you need to understand “dog,” to learn the meaning of the communication signals your dog is sending you — of pleasure, irritation, displeasure, apprehension, fear. You need to be able to interpret the expression that says, *I want to be a good dog, but I don’t understand what you want me to do.* Understand the desperate apology: *I know I shouldn’t mess in the house, but you left me so long and I couldn’t help it. Please understand and forgive.*

Dogs Demystified will help you to develop a relationship that is two-way with true communication and companionship between human and dog. Above all, dogs are loyal companions who give us unconditional love when they are treated with kindness and respect.

Jane Goodall, PhD, DBE
Founder of the Jane Goodall Institute
and UN Messenger of Peace



TAKE ME TO BEKOFF'S
PLACE, HE'LL
UNDERSTAND



Extract from *Dogs Demystified* by Marc Bekoff

In order to understand dogs, we have to actually see and appreciate dogs for who they are. We also need to pay attention to *how* we are looking — are we bringing any preconceived notions about the cognitive and emotional capacities or limits of dogs? Those assumptions can affect what we see, who we see, and our conclusions. I often encourage people to conduct their own citizen science with their own dog or with the dogs they meet. I ask them to try as hard as they can to see the world from a dog's perspective or to "become a dog" in the way an ethologist would. *Seeing* dogs rather than merely looking at them allows us to get into their heads and hearts.

For me, it's really a lot of fun to watch and study dogs, and you don't need to be a trained, credentialed, card-carrying scientist. Anyone who retains their childlike curiosity and who wants to know more about dogs can build a database of canine behavior and draw useful, practical conclusions. In this way, dogs can rekindle our youthful curiosity. To help foster this, I've included entries in this book on research terms and methods, which you can try out and adapt in your own ways. Historically, citizen science has contributed a lot of detailed and useful information about dogs, and you can use what you learn to help you decide which behaviors you should encourage and which you should discourage — with the main goal being to allow your dog to be as much of a dog as possible, rather than imagining them like a furry human running around on all fours.

Citizen scientists are amateur naturalists — and curious naturalists — who have contributed to the knowledge base for a wide variety of nonhumans. I talk with people a lot when I'm at a dog park or in nature as their dogs are playing, peeing, and just doing what dogs do, and I always learn something. During the Covid pandemic, when many people had to work at home, I received many emails telling me that as people were spending more time with their companion dog, they were learning more about who they were and appreciating them more. One hard-core scientist — in his own words — told me that he came to respect the field of animal behavior more because figuring out what his dog was doing was a challenge, one that was no less difficult than his field of particle physics.

Understanding what dogs are feeling is critical to any attempt to figure out why they do what they do. Dogs have rich and deep emotional lives, and we must honor and respect this bona fide scientific fact whenever we interact with them. Treating dogs as if they don't have emotions is antiscientific, and it damages the relationships dogs form with us and other dogs. Dogs not only care about what happens to themselves, but they also care about what happens to other dogs and their humans. They read us well; what we're feeling goes down leash. Healthy dog-human relationships

are a two-way street and require mutual tolerance and respect, and it can be a lot of fun building and maintaining strong and enduring bonds — which is a win-win for all. We need to meet dogs halfway to build and maintain reciprocal, give-and-take relationships. It isn't all about us. We must learn to know "dog," and dogs must learn to know "human." In other words, dogs depend on the people who live with them to become fluent in dog — to be dog literate — so we humans can understand what our dogs are trying to tell us.

A good analogy is that a dog-human relationship is a puzzle, and our mutual goal is to assemble an entire puzzle that works for all concerned. Of course, the shape of the pieces is constantly changing, and this is part of the game I find especially fun and exciting. The main challenge is fitting the pieces into a coherent whole while recognizing that the "best fit" will vary from dog to dog and relationship to relationship and even over time.

The number and shape of the pieces can vary depending on the personalities of the dog and their humans. Humans must adjust their lives to accommodate their dog's needs, and dogs must learn and unlearn certain behaviors — like peeing wherever they like, chasing, humping, jumping on people, sniffing crotches, and so on — to adapt to their human-oriented world. To work on your puzzle and gain a better understanding about what's happening for your dog, make a list of the different variables and make a drawing of a dog's head, ears, tail, mouth, facial expressions, gaits, and postures, and then consider odors, sounds, and visual signals in the different situations in which you and they interact. One guiding principle for me is that I imagine it's every dog's wish to be able to pee on everything in the world, and it's my job to restrict these peeing proclivities without damaging their dogness or self-image.

It can be quite challenging to make sense of the inflowing and outgoing information, but it also can be loads of fun. By doing this, you get to know your own dog better, and they get to know you better, and these shared emotions and knowledge can function like "social glue," which is mutually beneficial.

Some people might think: *What a pain this is! I just want a dog and I want them to be happy.* But in the long run, if you take the time to get to know your dog better, it's a win-win for everyone. Looked at this way, it's a gift rather than a chore.

We strip far too many dogs of their dogness, and surely we can do better — much better! Some people also try to strip dogs of their rich and deep emotional lives, which flies in the face of loads of scientific data — dogs are not simply a bundle of unthinking reflexes. In fact, we can learn about our encounters with other humans by paying attention to how dogs interact with dogs and us. Dog aficionada Sarah Murphy told me, "I have raised three kids, and worked in multiple high-profile management jobs, and yet I have learned more about raising, partnering with, and working with humans from my dogs than anything else in my life."

Of course, I hope this book helps you understand the world of dogs, but I really hope it helps you understand your own dog — by inspiring you to get to know them for the individual they are and to build a life together based on mutual understanding, respect, and love.

In many ways, we're a planet of and for the dogs. So let's do the best we can because it would be a lonely planet without these amazing beings.

Marc Bekoff is the author of *Dogs Demystified: An A-Z Guide to All Things Canine* along with 31 other books. He is a professor emeritus of ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Additionally, Bekoff has won many awards for his research on animal behavior, animal emotions (cognitive ethology), compassionate conservation, and animal protection; has worked closely with Jane Goodall; and is a former Guggenheim Fellow. To learn more, visit him online at www.markbekoff.com.

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Review: D is for Dog

Emma Lynas & Sara Ogilvie

There is a long and wonderful tradition of illustrated alphabets. My favourites include Quentin Blake's 1989 gem ('Aa is for apples, some green and some red'), the illustrated 'Grand Tour' alphabets of George Tytler (produced in the 1820s and given to Walter Scott) and William Nicholson's 26 woodcuts (E is for Executioner!). Now I have a new one to enjoy: 'D is for Dog'. The rhyming text is by Em Lynas and the joyous illustrations by Sara Ogilvie. It has been beautifully – stunningly – produced with a witty, die-cut cover and gorgeous endpapers that identify each dog breed featured – one for every letter of the alphabet. I wasn't surprised to read that the *Guardian* have listed it as one of the best new children's books. Indeed, I couldn't agree more with Imogen Russell Williams who wrote: 'A lovely, lollopy picture-book alphabet of dog preoccupations (Bark, Itch, Napping etc), which bounces from A to Z in gleeful rhyme, with a bonus alphabet of breeds at the back. Ogilvie's round-eyed, boisterous pups are inimitably charming.' Technically for children but actually I think a lot of adults will enjoy it, too. Kate Lee

D is for Dog, by Emma Lynas with illustrations by Sara Ogilvie is published by Nosy Crow.

Text © Em Lynas 2023

Illustrations © Sara Ogilvie 2023

EM LYNAS & SARA OGILVIE



IS FOR DOG!



is for empty and
begging for more.



is for racing around and around.



is for over . . .



is for quietly
chewing a shoe.



D is for dancing
on two legs
and four.

Green Paws

Gardening Tips from Teilo our canine horticulturist



Teilo on the lookout

Jim and I have been spending our evenings by the fire, 'cwythched up', as they say here in Wales. Jim is reading a book which sounds right up my street: *Led by the Nose: A Garden of Smells*, by Jenny Joseph. The book was originally published in 2002. Jenny died in 2018 at the age of eighty-five. She is remembered for

her poetry and, in particular, 'Warning: When I am an Old Woman, I Shall Wear Purple'. Her eccentric book contains a month-by-month memoir and gardening notes. It also includes an essay on smell and several lists of odoriferous plants and how to look after them.

Most people know that us dogs have an extraordinary sense of smell that can even detect changes in human body chemistry. While my working comrades seek out contraband or explosives, rescue and track I like to keep my nose to the ground in the garden (the compost bay is particularly rewarding).

Idle human chat about canine olfactory skills usually leads to a mention of our eyesight being poor but it is not quite as simple as that. Our colour perception is limited and the sharpness of our vision generally poorer than humans. However, we have better night vision and we have a wider field of view with excellent peripheral vision. Which leads me to my favourite winter pursuit. Squirrel Surveillance!



Chilli 'Purple Haze'

Grey squirrels cause Jim quite a few problems in the garden. He has grown tired of protecting tulip bulbs by planting them under a barrier of wire mesh or dusting them with chilli powder. Now he buys daffodil bulbs which squirrels ignore. He chooses a selection of novel cultivars each year. Varieties such as 'Limbo' or 'Tricollet' end up being just as showy as tulips. They have the added advantage that, unlike tulips, they are reliably perennial.

Jim has found a clever bird feeder called the Squirrel Buster available at livingwithbirds.com. Birds can feed freely, but the weight of a squirrel shuts off the food via a spring mechanism. On other fronts Jim comes off worse. Over the last growing season squirrels have eaten his sunflower heads, nibbled his sweetcorn, apples, courgettes and squashes and stripped bark from a young sweet chestnut. I have vowed to help more by stalking and chasing the bushy tailed aliens.

Grey squirrels:

- are not always grey. Some are nearly black and a few are albino.
- are omnivores eating insects and birds' eggs as well as nuts, seeds, fruit and fungi.
- were introduced from North America in the late 19th century.
- have no significant natural predators. Foxes, cats and birds of prey may make some impact. Many die on the roads.
- breed mainly between February and April with an occasional second brood in July.
- weigh twice as much as our native red squirrels but are not directly aggressive towards them. They do however compete for food and carry squirrel pox a viral disease which only adversely affects the reds.



Coloured stems for winter floristry

If you enjoy cutting flowers to bring indoors over the warmer months but feel a dearth of material over winter, plant some willows such as *Salix alba* var. *vitellina* 'Britzensis' which has orange-scarlet stems or *Salix x sepulcralis* 'Erythroflexousa' with its wonderfully contorted copper-toned branches. Consider the dogwoods too. Common dogwood, *Cornus sanguinea*, has claret-coloured stems. It grows naturally in hedgerows in southern England and merits a space in the cutting garden. There are several cultivated forms too; plants such as 'Winter Beauty' with yellow stems blending to red at their tips and 'Midwinter Fire'

also two-toned but a more vivid orange. 'Anny's Winter Orange' offers a flame effect as well. For contrast, add yellow-stemmed dogwood, *Cornus sericea* 'Flaviramea', which will bring a chartreuse tint to the mix.

Don't limit your appreciation of conifers to those few species we use as Christmas trees. Conifers add structure to the winter garden. They can be strikingly colourful. *Pinus mugo* 'Ophir' has lovely golden tones and *Juniperus squamata* cultivars like 'Blue Star' or 'Blue Carpet' have a steely presence. Lime Cross Nursery (limecross.co.uk) sells a wide range of ornamental conifers. Some such as *Pinus mugo* 'Picobello', *Pinus strobus* 'Krugers Liliput' and *Pinus parviflora* 'Adcock's Dwarf' are slow-growing and ideal for containers and courtyard gardens.

Sow chilli seed in February if you can provide a cosy spot such as a heated conservatory or a south-facing windowsill in a warm room. There is an abundance of interesting varieties available from seaspringseeds.co.uk and useful cultivation notes on their website.



Abies koreana 'Icebreaker'



Sherlock: a working cocker working with 'at risk' young people

Chloe Simons

Sherlock was introduced to me in May 2019, in a strange and serendipitous twist of fate that would have profound repercussions.

I was working for the charity Nacro, teaching English to young offenders in a secure centre in Kent. My sister, who is a vet, had told me about a project that began in Scotland called *Paws for Progress*, where they ran a rescue dog training programme with young offenders. It supported young offenders to train rescue dogs, getting them ready to be rehomed. When I looked into it, the rate of reoffending was remarkably low compared to the UK national average. Having felt disillusioned many times by the regular return of released young people, after mere weeks of life on the outside, I knew I had to pursue it. My intentions weren't all selfless though – an avid dog lover since as early as I could remember, I was desperate to try to wangle permission to own a therapy dog I could take to work with me. I used the *Paws for Progress* study to try to coerce the Head of Education into backing a similar initiative in our centre. A few months later – having written a dog policy in collaboration with Kate Harper, a dog trainer and dog behaviour expert – we received permission from Nacro and HMPS to introduce a Therapy Dog to our centre. Now the only thing to do was find a suitable dog.



I asked my sister (over Sunday lunch) to 'keep an eye out' for a dog suitable for therapy work. Her response was dismissive: 'No one brings a dog into the vets that they're looking to rehome, not one suitable as a therapy dog, anyway'.

The next morning, and her first consult of the day was Trisha Healy, who began talking about her working cocker, Sherlock, who

had recently retired from his career as a gun dog. She felt he needed something else. Perhaps work in schools as a therapy dog?

I tried not to get ahead of myself after receiving a text and picture of Sherlock from my sister although inside I was ecstatic. I knew he would still have to pass an assessment and that there would be many hoops to jump through.

Kate Harper's assessment was robust. The prison environment was often noisy, chaotic and busy. The goal was to find a dog who would not only tolerate an environment like that but thrive in it. It felt like a big ask, that it would take a special dog.

Thankfully, Sherlock passed his assessment with flying colours. Kate described him as: 'A one-in-a-million dog: eager to please, sensitive and cheeky in equal measure.' We clearly had luck on our side, as almost without looking, the perfect dog for our initiative had presented himself to us. Trish's work and training with him as a gun dog had given him excellent discipline and a high tolerance of noisy environments. Working in a prison would not faze him. Trish intuitively knew the impact Sherlock would have in transforming children's experiences of education and was happy to allow me to adopt him. I still cannot quite believe how lucky I have been to have been given this opportunity.

Sherlock worked alongside me in the prison for a year. In that time, I

saw how he transformed the environment. The young people knew he needed a calm space, and so any aggression seemed to evaporate at the door to the classroom. Some of the most dangerous and volatile young people in the UK, would turn into giggling softies, throwing themselves on the floor to stroke his belly. Sherlock's unconditional love had a profound impact, increasing the feeling of trust between young people and adults. There was a huge reduction in the amount of fights, attendance to library lessons increased by 60% due to his presence and staff were reported to be much happier having been greeted by Sherlock on their daily rounds.

To help with rehabilitation, and mimic some of the successes that *Paws for Progress* had delivered, I knew we somehow needed to involve the young people in training Sherlock. For an incredibly obedient and highly trained dog, finding appropriate training was not immediately obvious. Thankfully, Kate Harper suggested running a programme where the young people could train him in scent detection in collaboration with UK Sniffer Dogs. We delivered a programme that awarded Sherlock with a Bronze and then Silver level of certification as a sniffer dog, training him to detect gun oil, Kong rubber and cat nip. The young people working on this programme were thriving, gaining practical skills and building a trusting relationship with Sherlock and other adults. We even managed to take two young people out on temporary release for a day to enter a scent detection competition where they came second. On release, one of the boys had valued the programme so much that he began to aspire to work as a dog trainer in the future.

When the centre was privatised and closed in 2020, Sherlock and I joined a Pupil Referral Unit called Newhaven School in South East London, where he was able to continue making young people feel special and look forward to coming to school. Walks with Sherlock would help them to regulate after a difficult morning and for many, being greeted by a wagging tail in the morning helped banish their fear of education and minimise the rejection they had felt after exclusion from mainstream schools.

As of September 2023, and at the age of twelve, Sherlock has retired and is enjoying life in the north, exploring the peak district and dining on Honey's food. In the four years he worked alongside young people in education as a therapy dog, he was able to improve the lives of hundreds of young people, reducing anxiety and allowing them to access education in a nurturing and relaxed environment.





World religion and animal welfare

Joyce D'Silva

Recently, a dear friend of mine spent over £600 on medication for her ageing goldfish. Other friends are spending a fortune on treatment for their terminally ill rescue

dog and are giving him gentle palliative care. We sincerely love our companion animals and most of us do our very best by them. This level of care is a beautiful thing.

Are these 'pets' the lucky ones? If we asked any animal, would they rather be a much-loved pet or live their lives in the wild, rather than be an animal in a factory farm, they would surely say 'Yes'. The factory-farmed animals do not have names, only numbers – and these numbers are skyrocketing. Every year over 80 billion farmed animals are slaughtered for their meat, as well as trillions of fish. In addition, 192 million animals are used in experiments every year, some to aid medical progress, others for testing cosmetics or household products. Other animals are hunted for 'sport', forced to entertain us in tourist ventures or are trained to fight for horrific spectacles such as bullfighting. The levels of deprivation and suffering endured by such animals is devastating.

With over 80% of the global population claiming adherence to a religious faith, it is clear that many people of faith are involved in these cruel activities. Do their faiths not teach compassion for others and respect for all creatures? Do their holy books, founders and current leaders take a stand against cruelty?

Surprisingly, I have been awed by some of the beautiful writing about animals contained in the scriptures of many faiths.

In the Qu'ran I discovered that Allah had given cattle to the people not just for food and clothing but so that 'you find beauty in them when you bring them home to rest and when you drive them out to pasture'. I found that animals are regarded in the Qu'ran as 'communities like you'.

In the Bible I found that one of the reasons why Moses was chosen to lead his people was that he showed compassion to a thirsty lamb who had strayed from the flock.

I was heartened by the lovely Buddhist metta (loving-kindness) prayer: 'May all beings everywhere be happy. May they be healthy. May they be at peace. May they be free'.

I loved the story in the Hindu scriptures of Yudisthira, who was prepared to give up his place in heaven to that of a faithful dog.

How about the primacy of compassion over pilgrimage, as recorded in the Sikh's revered book, the Guru Granth Sahib: 'The merit of pilgrimages to the sixty-eight holy places, and that of other virtues besides, do not equal having compassion for other living beings'.

What of the beautiful words of the seventh century Saint Isaac the Syrian who described a merciful heart as 'a heart on fire for the whole of creation, for humanity, for the birds, for the animals ... and for all that exists'?

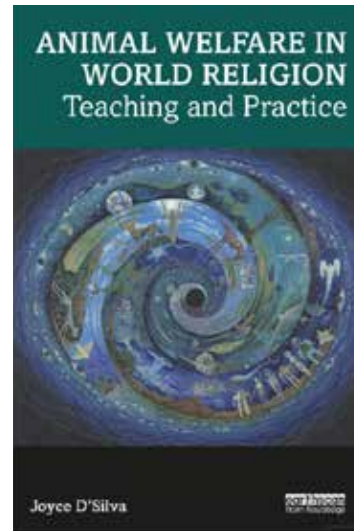
There really is an abundance of inspiration to be found in the sacred scriptures of the faiths.

Yet we need only look at an intensive chicken farm to see the abhorrent ways in which we have come to treat the creatures we rear for our food. The laying hens may be kept in cages so small that they cannot even spread their wings; the chickens reared for meat, the broilers, are not usually caged but kept on the floor, with maybe twenty or thirty thousand in each shed. They have been bred to grow so fast that a fluffy yellow one-day-old chick will get to around two kgs in weight in just five or six weeks. The 'farmer' can then send them for slaughter and start yet another batch. More batches per year equals more profit per year.

But growing so fast has destroyed the health and strength of these birds. Their skeletons cannot sustain the weight of muscle (meat) and a substantial number go lame before they even reach slaughter-weight. Figures of painfully lame chickens range from 27% to over 50%. Many are fed antibiotics, ostensibly to keep them free of infections, but also because this encourages fast growth too. (And the over-use of antibiotics in farmed animals is a major factor leading to the major global health threat of antibiotic-resistance.)

There is a further, hidden monstrosity in the intensive poultry industry. The breeding birds, who are bred to produce those twenty thousand chicks, are kept on short rations. Why? Because they have been selectively bred for very fast growth. If they ate as they wished, they would almost certainly go lame before they reached puberty and started to breed.

So, they are fed just once in twenty-four hours. After the mad rush for their feed, they then spend the next twenty-three hours and fifty minutes feeling hungrier and hungrier. Even a British High Court judge has admitted that they are in a state of 'chronic hunger'.



'Animal Welfare in World Religion: Teaching and Practice' is published by Routledge.

Could such abhorrent treatment really be sanctioned by faith leaders? Could people of faith actually own such factory farms? Truth is, there has been a deafening silence from most faith leaders on all these institutional forms of animal cruelty. Thankfully, there are wonderful exceptions. Rev Andrew Linzey has repeatedly challenged his Christian peers, asking, 'Does the Church really see the suffering of farm animals?...Has it really grasped that now, as never before, we have turned God's creatures into meat machines?' Theologian David Clough urges Christians 'to resist production systems that have no regard for the flourishing of animals'. Recently a Muslim High Court judge in Pakistan ruled that 'Like humans, animals also have natural rights ... to live in an environment that meets the latter's

behavioural, social and physiological needs...It is inconceivable that, in a society where the majority follow the religion of Islam, that an animal could be harmed or treated in a cruel manner'. Followers of Judaism are taught not to inflict suffering on any creature. A distinguished Jewish leader, Rabbi David Rosen, declares that factory farming is a 'flagrant violation' of this principle. Mahatma Gandhi, himself a vegetarian and devout Hindu, declared 'I should be unwilling to take the life of a lamb for the sake of the human body...the more helpless a creature, the more entitled it is to protection'. The recently deceased Buddhist leader, Thich Nhat Hanh, also promoted a non-meat diet and begged his followers to eat in ways 'that can preserve compassion and preserve our beautiful planet and help beings suffer less.'

It is wonderful to have these modern voices speaking out against the horrors of factory farming, but sadly they appear to be the exception. If you counted all the sermons preached by faith leaders in the course of a year, how many would talk about caring for animals and treating them with compassion? We definitely need a revolution amongst faith leaders – and their followers too. I hope they can be courageous and take on the institutionalised cruelties to which we subject our fellow sentient beings. Perhaps we could all take on board what Pope Francis wrote in his 2015 encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, where he called for a spirit of 'loving awareness that we are not disconnected from the rest of creatures but joined in a splendid universal communion'. In my book *Animal Welfare in World Religion: Teaching and Practice* (Routledge, 2023), I have looked at the inspiring religious texts, the founders and saints of all the major faiths and compared these beautiful teachings with what actually happens on the ground today in places where each faith is predominant.

Joyce D'Silva is Ambassador Emeritus for Compassion in World Farming International, has lobbied for farm animal welfare at Westminster, Brussels and the World Bank. 'Animal Welfare in World Religion: Teaching and Practice' is published by Routledge.



The weird dog guy

Cam Wimble

Unfortunately, there aren't that many professional canine nutritionists in the UK and even fewer who support and encourage raw feeding. A leading member of this small, exclusive and important group is Cam Wimble aka The Dog Nutritionist. His 84 videos on

YouTube have received almost a million views and he is regularly featured in the media. He has been an amazing supporter of Honey's over the years. Here he explains, in his own inimitable style, how he became a canine nutritionist. www.thedognutritionist.com

This may come as a surprise to many people, but I didn't become a dog nutritionist because I'd always been an animal lover. It seems like 99% of canine professionals – whether they're a dog trainer, a vet or a breeder – started out due to a long term love for animals. I was a late bloomer.

However, becoming a weird dog guy doesn't just happen overnight. You need a lot of exposure to a lot of dogs. You also need to go through the trenches a bit with a dog, to know how special they are. For me, this came when I joined a dog running company at the age of 23, as a 'business development manager'. I was slightly conned into the job, the title should have been 'dog runner with a laptop'. As a 23-year-old man I was a regrettable and embarrassing combination of stupid, lost and overconfident. My main concerns were dating, money, clothes, trainers and how I looked. In short, I was wrapped up in myself.

When I began working with dogs I was, frankly, not that interested in them. I looked after them, of course, but it was automatic, without much thought. The days turned to weeks, the weeks to months, and a definite transition occurred. I went from only caring about myself to really caring about them. I became deeply interested in and involved with their lives. I began to understand their different personalities, their quirks, their needs. Collecting 30 bags or more of poop a day is bound to have an effect on anyone. It certainly shocked me into awareness. I realised that scooping and bagging was a tiny price to pay for the joy and contentment which dogs brought me. At first it was work, but within a month it was family. You love the dogs, and the dogs love you, and the owners love you because the dogs love you and you love owner because they love you. It's such an amazing job, despite the poo.

Yes, it was sunshine and rainbows, but we ran dogs and our job was hard. I'm talking 4:30am alarm call, picking dogs up and doing an hour walk and then a seven kilometre run. Dropping dogs off. Picking dogs up again at 10:30am, doing a midday walk. Dropping dogs off. Travelling across London, doing a one-on-one run. Picking dogs up, doing an afternoon walk and then dropping all the dogs off again. On Tuesdays and Thursdays for two months, I did 20 miles of walking/running. Up at 4:30am, in bed by 8:30pm. It was bliss. I became a dog. I literally ate anything and I could sleep anywhere and I was fit as a fiddle. But more than that, I was happy because I understood life better, and it was the dogs that I had to thank. Get up, have a purpose to your day, be with friends and/or family. Do your exercise, eat well and you will be happy. Dogs taught me that life really is that simple.

I saw a quote the other day that reminded me of what dogs did for me, and for the lost boy I used to be. 'I am my dog's rescued human'. I am a human that has been guided by dogs, or 'the weird dog guy'. So, how did this weird dog guy become a dog nutritionist? One year into dog running, my friend who was also a runner for us, got cancer. Stage

4 cancer at 24-years-old.... If dogs taught me how to live, Oli getting cancer taught me how precious life is. At 24-years-old, at least in your own mind, you're invincible. But here's my mate who I've known since I was seven years old, told he's likely going to die.

Precious. Important. Not to be wasted. Thankfully, Oli was a fighter, and Oli had dogs and nutrition. The dogs to distract him from death, to remind him that life was still happening and that joy was to be had in the short term. And nutrition. Despite the Doctor's orders to get fat prior to his chemo by eating pizza and pasta, donuts and cakes, Oli did the opposite. He worked with a nutritionist to come up with a diet plan to strengthen his body and immune system, to prepare for the battle that lay ahead of him. Oli recovered at a rate the doctors had not seen before. Nutrition is so important, that it can help save lives. But even on its own, it can save lives. This was how I became a dog nutritionist.



I then recognised what my mates were eating, the dogs in our care, and I noticed the issues they were getting and simply connected the dots. This was when I began to survey the mad party I had entered, the world of pets. What on earth is going on? Vets are taught by dog food companies that natural fresh raw foods and homemade diets are dangerous. The same dog food companies give them money to sell their processed foods. The foods that make the dogs sick, so that they end up in the vets?

There was one particular case, a bulldog we used to walk. He slept 22hrs a day, had diarrhoea every single day, refused to walk and was literally rotting from the inside out. Three years of terrible processed food and multiple prescriptions of antibiotics to 'cure' his diarrhoea. He was slowly dying. Trying to tell an owner who is in total despair, that the healthcare professional who was trained for years in canine health, was wrong to prescribe those medications for a gut issue and doing this, combined with their advice to keep the dog on the terrible dry dog food was slowly killing their furchild was tricky. And it was this that broke the camel's back, my back. I had to become trained enough for people to trust my advice. Because they needed my help, and without training and knowledge, there was no authority. I never planned to be a nutritionist, have an Instagram page and make YouTube videos. I don't have a personal Instagram and I never take photos of anything I do. But I do it for the dogs, and more so, I do it for people who love their dogs. I have the best job in the world.



Why dogs need vegetables

Jonathan Self



One of the questions I am often asked is why so many of our recipes contain vegetables. I should probably begin by explaining that all our formulas are complete and were created for us either by our own chief veterinary surgeon or by 'guest' veterinary nutritionists. When you take into account our Bespoke, Lean and Organic ranges, we must have well over thirty options including food specially formulated for working dogs, overweight dogs, dogs with particular health issues and so forth. Some include vegetables, some don't.

Our most popular formulas, however, are 66% meat and meaty bone and 33% seasonal vegetables. The meat is free range, pasture fed, certified organic or wild. It is fresh and if it wasn't being used in our food you might expect to find it in a posh butcher. The vegetables are either grown for us – without chemicals – by a local farmer or, in the case of the organic vegetables, come from other farmers in the UK. In fact, all the ingredients are sourced from British producers.

There has been much debate over whether vegetables are a necessary part of a dog's diet. The main argument against vegetables is that dogs are carnivores not omnivores and would barely eat any vegetable matter or fruit in the wild. I agree that dogs are carnivores, but they aren't obligate carnivores and sometimes they definitely choose to eat vegetables and even fruit. To offer just one example, my late English pointer, Darling (much missed) used to pick her own blackberries (very delicately with her lips) and harvest her own carrots (which was extremely annoying). Moreover, canines eat the gut contents of their prey, which usually contains vegetation. They also scavenge vegetation, which includes herbs, vegetables and fruit.

Anyway, to my mind feeding vegetables to a dog can only be beneficial. Here are nine reasons why:

1. For dogs who need to come down a collar size or two they help make them feel full. Indeed, for all dogs the vegetables mean there is more food to eat... something that most dogs appreciate!
2. Some organs (the heart, liver, pancreas, etc.) work better in a more alkaline environment and the same is true of some hormones. Vegetables help to balance the alkalinity and acidity. If there's too much acidity, it can lead to inflammation. And inflammation causes many chronic diseases.
3. Vegetables contain a wide array of nutrients – especially phytonutrients – that your dog needs. Phytonutrients are one of the most important kinds of nutrients you can give your dog – they kill cancer cells, reduce inflammation, promote gut health and support a healthy liver. But they are *only* found in fruits and vegetables. So if your dog only eats meat, he or she is missing out. Research published in the *Journal of Animal Physiology and Animal Nutrition* found that phytonutrients could potentially benefit many aspects of dog health, concluding: 'Phytonutrients possessing anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties may have notable roles in the prevention of chronic diseases, whose underlying development involves accumulated oxidative stress and chronic low-grade inflammation or altered immune function.'
4. Vegetables help hydrate your dog.
5. Vegetables provide your dog with a host of vitamins including B vitamins, Vitamin C, Vitamin A, Vitamin E and Vitamin K.
6. Vegetables contain important minerals including calcium, potassium and magnesium.
7. Some vegetables are rich in enzymes, which can help with anti-aging.

8. Vegetables are packed full of antioxidants like lutein and beta-carotene. These help to protect your dog against unstable molecules called free radicals. Free radicals are a major cause of aging and disease.

9. Vegetables are high in fibre. Fibre passes through your dog's intestines largely undigested. Once it reaches the colon, the bacteria living there ferment the fibre to create short chain fatty acids aka SCFAs. SCFAs are then used for energy, to build immune cells and protect the mucous lining in the gut. Fibre reduces cancer risk, has antioxidative properties, clears toxins and helps with gut health (more about which below).

Despite all the research, science still hasn't discovered all the many ways in which food works to keep us healthy. Take something called fisetin, which is a natural plant compound (polyphenol) found in a variety of vegetables including strawberries and apples. Studies have found that fisetin reduces the effect of senescent aka 'zombie' cells. Zombie cells are cells that refuse to die but which hang around the body releasing chemicals that can be harmful to nearby cells, affecting cell survival and reparative potential. The build-up of these zombie cells promotes ageing and age-related conditions, including cardiovascular disease. When senior citizen mice are given fisetin their health life span improves dramatically.



There is hard research, too, showing that vegetables reduce the chances of cancer in dogs. A study involving Scottish Terriers, for example, found that feeding any type of vegetable at least three times a week produced a 70 percent reduced risk for developing transitional cell carcinoma, otherwise known as TCC, a type of cancer often found in the urinary bladder and urethra of older, smaller dogs. Feed green vegetables and you reduce that risk by 90%

There is still much work to be done about what a healthy dog's biome looks like, but what we do know is that canine diets that exclude fresh vegetables result in considerably less healthy microbiomes.

Among the most important compounds plants provide are the polyphenols, flavonoids, and other phytonutrients. In multiple studies, adding polyphenols to the diet has been shown to significantly reduce markers of oxidative stress. Oxidative stress, to save you looking it up, reflects an imbalance between the systemic manifestation of reactive oxygen species and a biological system's ability to readily detoxify the reactive intermediates or to repair the resulting damage. What does it matter? It is suspected to play a huge (and not very positive) role in a wide range of diseases including strokes, heart attacks, age-related development of cancer, Alzheimer's and more.



"Oh, I do a little grass on occasion, but I avoid the heavy cruciferous greens."

Some apiaceous vegetables (e.g., carrots, cilantro, parsnips, fennel, celery, parsley) contain polyacetylenes, an unusual class of organic compounds that has antibacterial, antifungal, and antimycobacterial benefits. They play a key role in detoxifying several cancer-causing substances, specifically mycotoxins (including aflatoxin B1).

I could go on about other beneficial things to be found in vegetables such as indole-3-carbinol, lutein, zeaxanthin, sulforaphanes and quercetin (considered nature's Benadryl because it's so good for dogs with allergies) but I feel I have made my point. Fresh vegetables can't possibly do your dog any harm and there is plenty of evidence they will do him or her a great deal of good.

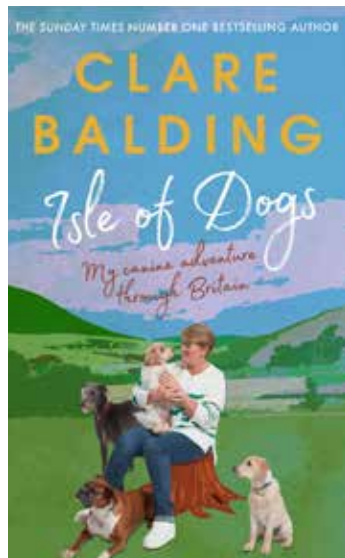


Isle of Dogs

Clare Balding

Since I rarely watch television, I only know Clare Balding through her books. As my daughter explained to me at great length, she has presented any number of programmes and series from Countryfile (‘you must have heard of Countryfile, Dad’) to Crufts (‘Crufts, Dad, Crufts’) and from the Olympics to Famous & Fearless. I am sure she

is amazingly talented at this and doubtless recognised wherever she goes. But I first came across her in 2012 when a friend who knew I was obsessed with Gerald Durrell’s ‘My Family and Other Animals’ thought it would be amusing to give me Ms Balding’s ‘My Animals and Other Family’. What was intended as a joke turned out to be a very welcome and fortuitous introduction for Ms Balding’s memoir described an extraordinary life. Her father was a very successful horse trainer and as a result she was brought up not so much in a house as in a stable. The horses – and there were generally around a hundred of them in residence – and the dogs came first. It was a male world, too. She was privileged in one way, neglected in another. Anyway, I have all her books including those she wrote for children (they were illustrated by Tony Ross and are well worth reading even if you aren’t technically the right age) and when I saw she had written a book purely about dogs I pre-ordered it and awaited its arrival with considerable anticipation. The subtitle for ‘Isle of Dogs’ is ‘A canine adventure through Britain’, which is a perfect description the book. Over the course of a dozen chapters, Ms Balding produces a sort of canine portrait of our nation. Some of the places she visits and describes will be well known to anyone who is into dogs: the Kennel Club, for instance, and, of course, Crufts. Even so, she offers new insights, new information. My favourite chapters were those about subjects with which I was not that familiar: the Royal Family’s dogs, rescue greyhounds, medical detection dogs and breeding – to offer just a few examples. Indeed, the book is packed full of fascinating stories and information. Ms Balding’s style is chatty and personal – she doesn’t hesitate to reveal things about her own life – and if you are looking for an engaging, enjoyable, dog-focussed read you won’t be disappointed. Jonathan Self.



An extract from *Isle of Dogs: A canine adventure through Britain* by Clare Balding.

I am fascinated by the impact dogs have on our lives, the characteristics they display themselves and bring out in us and even how they influence our choice of friends, how we live, where we go on holiday and the sort of jobs that we want to do. *Isle of Dogs* is an exploration of the way dogs have shaped and influenced the people of the United Kingdom.

It is a telling of our national story not through the usual metrics of wars, monarchy or politics, but through our dogs.

Why are we drawn to certain breeds and what does that say about us? What has changed in the way we look after our dogs, and how has their role in society altered through the centuries? We have certainly moved away from keeping dogs outside in kennels and far more of us have them in our homes, on our sofas and (hands up as guilty on this one) sleeping on our beds at night.

My parents, until recently, had an ageing lurcher called Mac and a boxer called Boris. The latter is as badly behaved as his name might suggest, with no heed of recall and no understanding of personal space – which, given his size (he is a beast), is an issue when he enthusiastically greets young children, elderly people or anyone with balance issues.

The sofas and chairs in their sitting room are covered in books – not

because my parents love to read, but in an attempt to persuade the dogs not to climb on the furniture. Consequently, any human who wants to sit on a sofa has to rearrange a library of books. I’ve suggested a removable cover would be more attractive. Or, of course, training, but it’s too late for that.

Boris has been known to sit up on a chair at the kitchen table expecting full service, and whenever the dishwasher is being stacked, he likes to add a personal prewash to the plates. Even my mother might concede that Boris is the worst-behaved dog she has ever had, but on the plus side, he is very affectionate and funny.



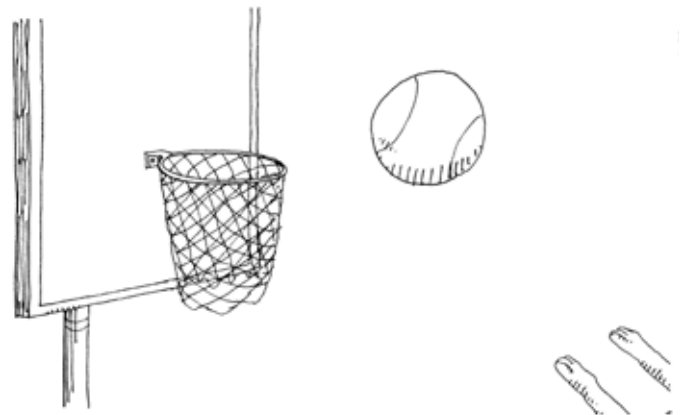
“We can’t get you a toy every time we go shopping.”

Sadly, Mac reached the end of his glorious run in the spring of 2023. He lived longer than any lurcher our family had ever had. He always got up to greet visitors with his tail wagging and a grin on his face. In those last weeks he became less mobile and gradually less responsive, not wanting to eat or go for a walk. The decision was inevitable but painful and it doesn’t matter how old you are when you lose a dog, you cry like a child.

Mac has left a huge hole in my parents’ lives and we expected poor Boris to be bereft. In truth, he seems to have got over it rather quickly. It has meant an unchallenged position at the dishwasher to ‘help’ with the plates and if he sits next to my father at the dining room table, he can be guaranteed a good tasting menu. He is too old now to reform and, like my father, his behaviour is only going one way - and that’s not towards improvement.

Those who invest the time and commitment into training dogs have reaped the benefits of their extraordinary gifts. They can help people in all sorts of ways; we have made use of their superior senses to root out drugs, discover disease, detect bombs, rescue missing or injured people and sniff out accelerants in potential cases of arson. Dogs are amazing.

THE HOUND OF THE BASKETBALLS

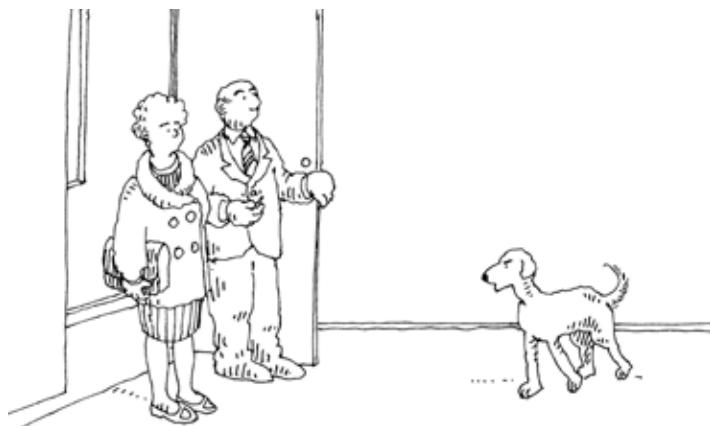


Archie was not particularly gifted or well trained, but he seemed well suited to us. The reason Alice and I picked a Tibetan terrier was fairly straightforward. They don’t shed hair, which was essential as Alice is allergic to animal hair. A Tibetan terrier is small enough to pick up but strong enough to go on long walks, which was perfect for me. They are

intelligent, loyal and full of character. They are good guard dogs but don't yap without cause.

Tibetan terriers have been around for about 2,000 years. Originating in the Lost Valley of Tibet, they were considered bringers of good luck and were treated as members of the family, referred to as 'the little people'. They could act as a babysitter, sheep or goat herder, guard dog or companion. Their shaggy double coat protected them against high winds and the cold of winter while in the summer their coats would be shaved off and woven into cloth. The dogs had to survive at altitude in very thin air and were renowned for their endurance.

I always believed that Archie had hidden powers of perception and that he could judge people from a distance. Maybe it's true – he certainly picked good friends for us. He was not that keen to learn tricks, unless there were treats on offer, in which case he was more than eager to please.



'Just where the hell have you been, I've been worried sick!'

I know it is the given British convention that you have to be either a dog OR a cat person. You cannot possibly be both. I wonder if it's a version of snobbery to look down on cat people; the stereotype of the 'mad cat lady' doesn't help. As someone who did not grow up with cats, I have been guilty in the past of falling into the trap of thinking dogs (and by extension, dog owners) are vastly superior.

Well, I'd better do the equivalent of going through the red channel at the airport and admit I have something to declare: we now have two cats. They are mother and son British shorthairs called Button and Eric. They are very sweet and beautiful but I would never suggest that they either obey commands or give two hoots about how Alice or I feel. They give us attention if they fancy a treat and Eric is particularly adept at standing by the fridge and giving me doe eyes and a little bit of affection until he gets more fish. He has been known to actually jump into the fridge to point at the fish. Now I think that's quite clever.

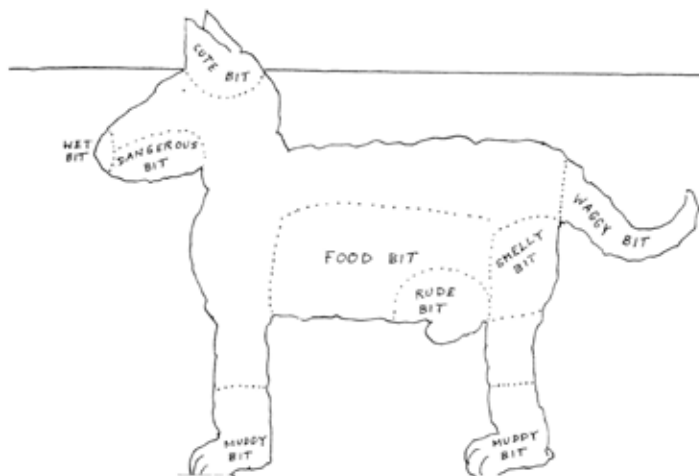
Button likes it when I'm in the study. She climbs on the desk and walks all over the keyboard until I open the drawer and give her a disgusting smelly biscuit thing.



'CHEERS?' 'LORRY?' 'JUMPER?'
YOU CAN TALK, BOY? AND YOU'RE BRITISH??

Cats are too independent and too cool to give in to sentimental simpering. Having said that, whenever we come back from holiday they make a point of sleeping on the bed for at least the first two nights. Button will often kiss Alice's nose to wake her up, and she kids herself that it's driven by love rather than hunger. When Button moves on to flexing her toenails on Alice's head, it's not as loving.

KNOW YOUR DOG



I have a very posh aunt who has said to me disparagingly, 'I can't believe you have cats,' as if it is a crime against society. She stopped herself from saying 'so common', but I know that's what she was thinking.

For the sake of my aunt, my mother and all those who will find it hard to forgive me for allowing cats to come into this book at all, that is where I will leave any talk about Button and Eric, except to reiterate that you can like dogs AND cats.

Anyway, this is a book about dogs and the cats won't give a damn about that, because that's the way they are.

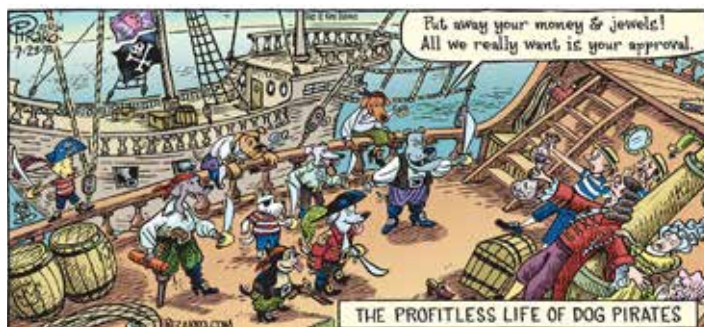
In the course of my research I will travel across Britain meeting a variety of owners, breeders and dog experts, finding out as much as I can about our canine companions. I will meet dogs who do everything for their owners: from waking them up in the morning to unloading the washing machine. I will find out how people care for and train dogs that are as large as a pony or small enough to fit in a handbag. I will discover why certain breeds have soared in popularity, and why it was that our relationship with dogs changed during Queen Victoria's reign. There are a vast number of businesses that thrive because of our love of dogs, so I will visit doggy day care centres and talk to professional dog walkers and a dog listener.

The other, more personal quest is for us to find another dog to make our little family complete. I do not intend to rush that decision, but if it comes as a by-product of visiting so many doggy people and places, then I would consider it serendipity.

My father has always maintained that when a dog dies you cannot replace that individual but you can fill the space they leave. Anyone who has ever loved and lost a dog will appreciate the huge hole in the empty kitchen every morning when you go to make breakfast for a dog that is no longer there.

We are famed as a nation of dog lovers, but I wonder whether any of us truly appreciate how much our lives, and our history, have been shaped by our connection to canines. This is an adventure, an exploration and a voyage of discovery across our Isle of Dogs.

An extract from *Isle of Dogs: A canine adventure through Britain* by Clare Balding. Published by Ebury Press



THE PROFITLESS LIFE OF DOG PIRATES

100 Ways to Love You

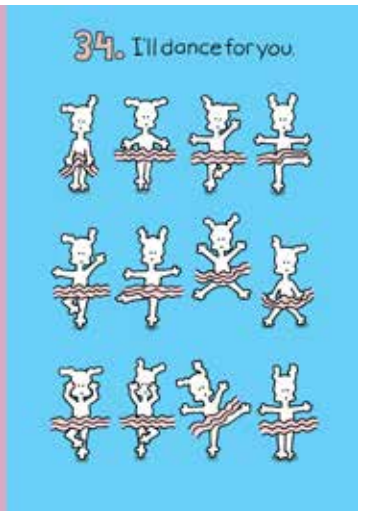
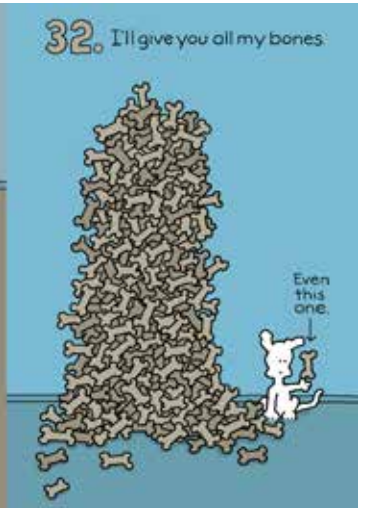
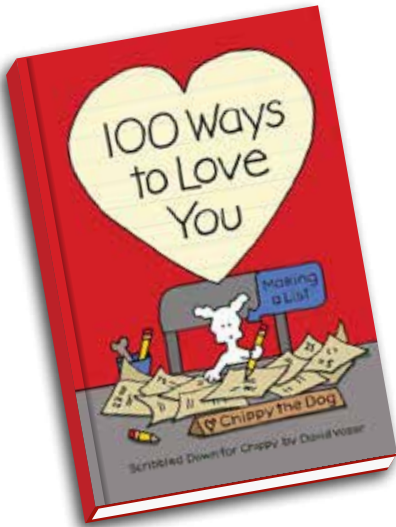
David Vozar

If you are one of the 17 billion people who has watched Chippy the Dog GIFs then he will need no introduction. But if you are new to him, it is probably worth beginning by quoting just some of the thousands of reviews this book has already received:

- 'I love Chippy the Dog! Everything about this book makes me smile...'
- 'Chippy is PAWdorable!'
- 'This book is so sweet, gorgeously illustrated and makes a perfect gift.'
- 'I can't express how much joy Chippy has brought to my life.'

The brainchild of David Vozar, Chippy was created as an antidote to all the negativity that exists on social media. David, incidentally, spent his life in publishing and taught himself animation after his retirement. No one could call Chippy (named for David's dog growing up) deep BUT the drawings are sweet and he is, well, cute. We had several advance copies of *100 Ways to Love You* in the office and they all mysteriously disappeared!

100 Ways to Love You by David Vozar is published by Source Books





Spig

Jo Turner

Spigget was our son Will's name for biscuits when he was a toddler. Not Spigot, or Sprocket – words with some sort of meaning – but Spigget. Will was just seven when a small, adorable, innocent, energetic puppy came into our lives and he insisted that Spigget – spelt with two 'g's and an 'e' – was to be his name. Over the following years, various veterinary receptionists would say in a slightly doubtful voice: 'Oh, I don't think we've ever had a Spigget before.'

Will is now nineteen and Spig died, four months ago.

He was my dog and I was his human. Our relationship was close and loving in a way that is difficult to describe. The nearest I can get to it is to say that it lacked any restraint, any sense of caution. I knew all along that when the end came it would be hard to bear, but I hadn't realised how hard. Holding his head and burying my face in his fur for the last time was almost unbearable. So much life, love and joy, and so much of my own identity wrapped up in that smelly old rug of a spaniel! In the days after he died my friend commented that she didn't think she could get used to the idea of me without Spig. I'm not sure I'll ever quite get used to that idea either.

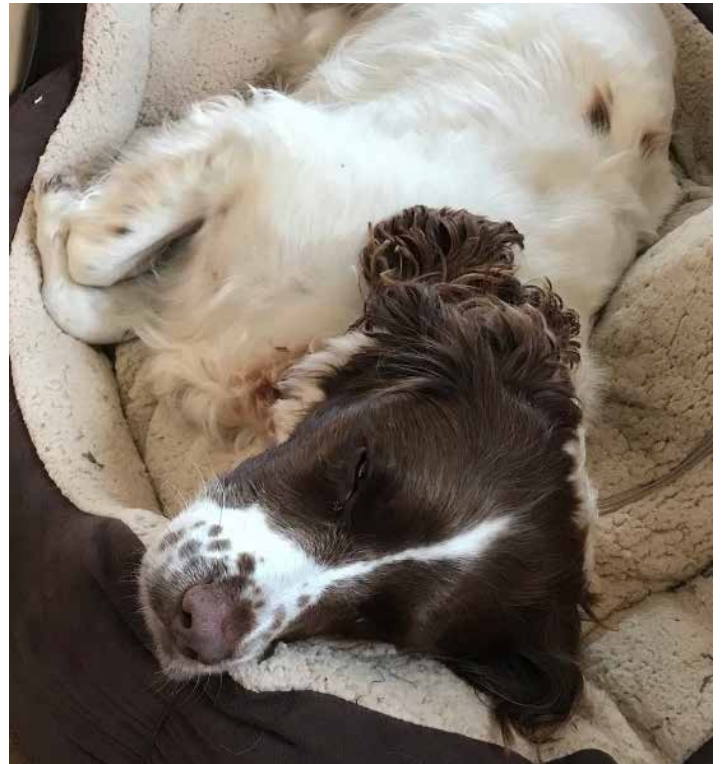


I discovered that it's mostly okay these days to admit that you are distraught to have lost your dog. Not politely sad, but genuinely grieving. There was a small voice inside me muttering unhelpful phrases like 'just a dog', and 'all a bit self-indulgent', but I ignored them. I was relieved to discover that amongst the wider community there is more genuine acceptance that losing your companion, the one who loved the woods and streams as much as you did, the one who tolerated all weathers and all of your moods without question, is something really tough.

It might be tempting to think that grieving our pets so publicly is a recent thing, typical of a more tolerant age. In fact, in a corner of Hyde Park there is a little cluster of pet graves, belonging mostly to dogs and cats but also to a monkey and a few beloved birds. According to Andrew Day in his article for Historic UK, this pet cemetery was opened in 1881 when Mr and Mrs J. Lewis Barned requested that Cherry their children's Maltese terrier be buried in the place where they had walked their dog and bought lollipops from Mr Winbridge the gatekeeper. Perhaps the Victorians weren't so hard hearted. Same with the Romans, who buried their pets and erected monuments. There's an inscription on one that ends: 'You who pass on this path, if you happen to see this monument, laugh not, I pray, though it is a dog's grave. Tears fell for me, and the dust was heaped above me by a master's hand.'



Acceptance is good, but the most frequent comment I noticed, particularly from other animal lovers was: 'It's just awful, isn't it...?' Which seemed to be as much a question as a statement. What do you do with all these feelings? Where do you put all that love? In the first few weeks after Spig's death, when tears would still catch me unawares and I saw him everywhere, I discovered a few things that helped. I came across *The Grief Recovery Handbook for Pet Loss*. The book encourages a full review of your life with your pet, the good and the bad, and engagement in a deliberate naming and processing of your emotions. Whilst not for everyone, this full immersion approach helped me to move through the worst of my feelings in those initial weeks.



Another strategy was to buy myself an e-bike. We live in a town on the edge of the Cotswold escarpment where the only way in any direction is up. I decided that Spig would approve of me flying around the countryside in his honour, my metaphorical ears flapping in the wind as his would've done. It has been a huge benefit and comfort to be out in the places he and I would've walked, without the direct reminder that there is no longer a white bottom with a brown spot bobbing along the path in front of me. I have also made an effort not to have 'no go areas'. I have walked with friends and their dogs. It's a bit odd, and I find myself expecting Spig to appear over the brow of a hill, but I still want to be in these beautiful places, and it is getting easier. I also notice I can appreciate other dogs, perhaps even more so than before. A good friend told me she always remembers to pat and talk to the old dogs. 'These are the ones who have put the time in,' she says. 'They deserve to have their efforts acknowledged.'

I am lucky. I have people around me and resources that have made this process of grieving Spig easier, but it's not the same for everyone. There is a paragraph on the first page of *The Grief Recovery Handbook* that says [for some people]: 'friends and even family often do not understand or accept the intensity of the grief we feel when our pets die. That sad fact makes many pet griever's isolate from human contact for fear they will be judged.'

There are various organisations offering bereavement services for pet loss including the Blue Cross Pet Bereavement Support Service and lots of good advice online. If you have experienced the loss of a pet recently or in the past and are struggling to move forward, I would encourage you to seek support, either from friends who get it, and can handle your big feelings, or from one of the support services. These straight-forward, non-judgemental and unconditionally loving beings who come into our lives are pets but never 'just pets'. The vets had never had a Spigget before. I've had other dogs and cats, but I'd never had a Spigget before, either, and I don't expect to ever will again. Perhaps one day there will be another dog that needs me. But I'm certainly not looking.



Conversations With My Dog

Chris Parker

I'm a dog lover. I have been fortunate enough to spend a large section of time with many loyal, energetic, occasionally needy, always loving, trustworthy, protective four-legged family members. And then came Sam, the Staffordshire Bull Terrier. A beautiful, muscular, smiling red and white bundle of energy. As a family, we fell in love with him immediately. He returned the emotion without reservation. He was everything I had hoped he would be. Over time he became something more; something I couldn't have expected.

Since the late 1970's, I have been studying, teaching and training others in communication and influence. I have long been convinced that the quality of our communication determines the quality of our personal and professional relationships; indeed, the quality of our entire life experience. No matter how much experience I may have had in both education and the corporate world, I am still learning, still looking for new ideas. Even so, I didn't expect one of my most effective teachers to be Sam. Over the years Sam has taught me a great deal about communication.



How, you may be asking yourself, can a dog possibly have meaningful conversations with a human being? Of course, Sam doesn't use the same vocabulary as I do. He experiences the world very differently, has different

behaviours and attitudes, and relies heavily on body language to share messages. However, in my experience no two people use precisely the same language in precisely the same way. We all experience and interpret every event and express emotions differently.

Sam and I do get our communication right. We interact, we share an abode and a certain way of life, together we turn, conducting ourselves appropriately in social situations. And if you're wondering why I've just said that it's because I'm referring to the Latin root of our word *conversation*. We can trace it back to the verb *conversari*, which is a compound of *con*, meaning 'with' or 'together' and *versare*, meaning 'to turn'. From this verb comes the word, *conversation*, which has several meanings dependent on context. These include 'conduct', 'a particular, disciplined, habitual form of living', and, of course, 'social interaction and communication'. So, in all these ways, I can say that Sam and I are great conversationalists. Anyway, here are seven magnificent things about communication that I learnt from Sam, my Staffordshire Bull Terrier.

1. Communication can be Transactional and/or Transformative

Some people treat transactional communication as an opportunity to achieve their goals at the expense of others, but not Sam. Of course, he lets me know when he's hungry or needs a walk. He has needs, as we all do, and he trusts that I will respect them. He, in turn, respects my needs, and those of my family. Through his example, Sam teaches us that the best transactions are always *win-win*. He also offers lessons about the transformative power of communication. It is transformative because communication affects our brains. The words, gestures and the facial expressions of others influence us. Our words, gestures and facial expressions influence others. We can use conversations – and all other forms of communication – to shape, change, create and improve our own life experience and that of others. Sam is a super-positive transformer! He is alert to the first signs of our joy, accomplishment, fatigue, negativity or upset.

2. Curiosity is key!

Sam was born curious. The most important thing he's taught me about curiosity, is the need for me to be just as curious about those people that I've known for a long time, as I am about something or someone new. Great communication grows out of respectful curiosity; to identify their needs, wants, likes, beliefs, hopes, fears, expectations and address these as appropriate. Sam and I have walked in the same park every day for years. He treats every visit as if it is the first time. His curiosity shines, creating within him extraordinary levels of excitement and joy. I feel it, too.

3. Respect holds hands with curiosity

As far as I'm aware, Sam doesn't read Latin or know any Middle French. If he did, he would know that our word *respect* comes from the Latin *respectere*, meaning to *look back* and *consider*, and from the Middle French word *respector* meaning to *notice with special attention*. The thing is, you don't need to understand the words when your natural curiosity ensures that you give everything special attention. Sam doesn't know how to give a casual glance. And that's at the heart of this lesson. You can't offer a casual glance and be respectful. Sam models this perfectly. Always. Every time. No matter who he meets.

4. Silence is golden

Listening is best understood as a multi-sensory, all-encompassing activity that incorporates looking and feeling. It is total absorption in the other. We cannot be great at listening until we feel at home in silence. Not surprisingly, Sam is brilliant at listening. He is happy to be silent. He makes both look easy. Thanks to Sam, I've become much better at understanding and managing silence.

5. Match others communication preferences of those you meet if you want to create rapport

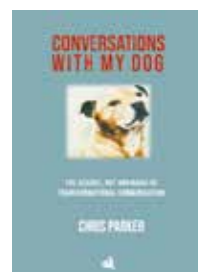
When I'm teaching communication skills, I explain matching as the process of identifying and using other person's preferred communication patterns. Done well, this creates feelings of rapport and of being understood. There are many things we can match, including: key words and phrases; sensory language; sequencing and body language. To do this, we must temporarily forget our own communication preferences. Sam has been doing it since he was a puppy. He matches the energy, the attitude, the behaviours and expressions of those he meets instinctively and completely. I've seen him play rough and tumble with a big dog, and soften in an instant when a much smaller dog joins in. He will wrestle with me and then lay peacefully when a young child pats him. Often, I watch him and think, 'My dog matches naturally, and I'm still having to work at it.'

6. Manage comparisons

There are three types of comparison: appropriate, inappropriate and irrelevant. Appropriate comparisons are those we can learn from. They motivate and inspire. Inappropriate comparisons create the opposite effects. They diminish, divide, damage or destroy. Irrelevant conclusions can also lead to division, and they inevitably create distractions that waste our time. Sam avoids these comparison-traps, because he doesn't waste time comparing anyone or any one thing with another; he always meets, greets, explores and matches without unnecessary judgements.

7. It all grows out of gratitude

Sam is grateful for the slightest touch and the briefest word of acknowledgement. He's grateful for the trust we place in him whenever he plays with our grandchildren. He's grateful for every opportunity to walk by my side, and he approaches every interaction with his wonderful mix of curiosity, respect, enthusiasm and joy. We can't be joyous if we're not truly grateful in the first place. Our curiosity, respect and enthusiasm will be limited if we're not grateful for the opportunity to interact with someone and learn something new. And this is at the very heart of successful communication. As Sam knows and demonstrates every day. No wonder we love our dogs.



Conversations With My Dog, by Chris Parker, is published by Chiselbury.

To be loved, is to be changed

Mister Puca

Unable to have a dog of my own while a university student, I took my film camera for walks, sometimes finding myself in antique shops. One in particular was run by an eccentric, possibly slightly senile, woman. Everywhere you looked it was a hoarder's dream and while sitting in a corner with a shoebox full of loose photographs in my lap, I unconsciously started selecting those with dogs in them. Friends at the time joked these 2D dogs were my new pets. Most people thought of my collection as morbid and depressing – but I felt it was more like adopting ghost dogs. So, *Hi, I'm Dead*, started as a way to do something with these images. Initially I was going to do prints, then a narrative of how these were dearly cherished pets made me decide to grow this into a zine. A 'zine' is a self-published, often small circulation run of original artwork and/or text, often made with photocopiers or low cost production methods.

The only evidence that these animals ever existed is their photographs and given where I found them it is safe to assume that their human companions are also deceased. When I first started collecting them it often made me think of the phrase: 'To be loved is to be changed.' These dogs were loved and cherished – you can tell that from the way they were photographed and the fact that the photographs were saved – and surely they must also have been changed. At any rate, the photographs are the only memorial to these dogs and, in turn, they are each dog's only legacy. A once discarded photograph, now saved, is the only way their love will be recorded, that they will ever be remembered.

In my final year of university my then partner at the time decided to get a puppy, Morris. We spent a few years sneaking him under the nose of landlords from one flat to another, until now where he lives in a flat as a declared pet. Thankfully not featured in this zine. My childhood dog, Sockey, is featured as he is no longer with us. A mongrel, Jack Russell mother, unknown father, he was my first friend. He was with me from childhood to early adulthood. Clever, stubborn, an escape artist and fun loving – he sometimes visits me in my dreams, making me happy. I hope that sometime in the future someone will find my photos of him and know that he was also truly loved. I hope to create more zines with my film photos and combine it with my illustrative work.

Copies of *Hi, I'm Dead* can be purchased from Mister Puca's website for £5 each: www.misterpuca.co.uk



Why some vets are still suspicious of raw feeding



Last Autumn I attended the British Association of Homeopathic Veterinary Surgeons (BAHVS) annual conference. I am a great believer in homeopathy having employed it with considerable success on my farm. I don't know why it often works – but it does. I am conscious, however, that it annoys some people. As I see it, homeopathy can't possibly do any harm. Moreover, it is inexpensive and properly qualified vets always use it alongside conventional medicine. So, why not give it a try? Anyway, I mention the BAHVS because many (if not most) of its members have long been in favour of raw feeding. I attribute this to the fact that they are genuinely open-minded when it comes to how they can best look after the animals in their care. Which brings me to a fascinating question. How is it that so many vets are still suspicious of species-appropriate feeding? Not a day passes here at Honey's HQ without us hearing from a dog lover looking for a practice which will support rather than criticise their decision to raw feed. The fact is dogs may have been eating raw food for millions of years, but a massive percentage of highly educated and compassionate vets simply won't countenance it. The reasons for this are various and complex. To begin with, there is a perception amongst some veterinary professionals that there is not yet sufficient scientific evidence to support raw feeding. This perception is encouraged by the big pet food manufacturers, who have massive marketing budgets to support their anti-raw stance. Happily, there is more and more research showing that a natural diet is both nutritionally adequate and safe. At Honey's we contributed to this research in the form of a two-year study, which we called *Raw Proof* (please do ask for a free copy) and I can also recommend Conor Brady's 500 page *Feeding Dogs: Dry or Raw? The Science Behind the Debate*, which contains over 1200 references. Then there is the practical side of things. It takes a vet seven years to qualify, after which he or she will probably spend a year or two gaining experience in someone else's practice before, possibly, starting up on their own. If and when they do set up on their own, they will have to invest heavily. Building a surgery is far from cheap and insurance is particularly expensive. They won't ever become rich, either. Last year, the average GP earned around £120,000, whereas the average vet earned around £41,000. Bear in mind that their seven years of study must also be paid for. Indeed, student debt is a huge problem for the majority of vets. They are, by the way, also in one of the most stressful professions, with a high incidence of depression and suicide. There are two highly profitable sectors that exploit this situation. The first is the pharmaceutical industry. The behaviour of pharmaceutical manufacturers need not concern us here, except it is worth remembering that it is not in their commercial interest for dogs to be healthy. The second is the pet food industry. Ever since pet food was invented by James Spratt in 1860, manufacturers have been persuading vets to endorse and sell their products. Today, pet food manufacturers provide vets with financial support in the following ways:

- They pay commission to vets for selling food via their surgeries;
- They pay vets to carry out research, attend conferences, write papers and so forth;
- They support the larger professional bodies;
- They subsidise the costs of education for vets undertaking training and professional development.

Understandably, vets want to support the people who support them (in this case the big pet food manufacturers). Moreover, until the growth of

the raw food movement, they had no reason to doubt what they were being told, especially as the pet food industry employs thousands of so-called scientists. Vets can be forgiven for their lack of knowledge about raw feeding for another reason: they are taught very little about canine digestion during their studies. Colleges rarely devote more than a day to the topic and the lectures are often sponsored by the big pet food manufacturers. You can guess how impartial such lectures are likely to be. To the best of my knowledge raw feeding isn't on any veterinary college curriculum in the UK or, indeed, the world. Another problem is that a tiny percentage of vets and scientists genuinely believe – for reasons that aren't entirely clear – that raw feeding is dangerous. These vets and scientists spread fake news and put their names to very dubious research. Because they use medical terminology and publish learned papers, some other colleagues believe what they say. The Raw Feeding Veterinary Society and other organisations work hard to correct these false claims. Nevertheless, some innocent vets are taken in. As an aside, I could say a lot here about why so much medical research is not to be trusted but will save it for another day. One of the problems with the way in which the majority of not just vets but also doctors are trained is that they are taught not to question 'scientific research'. What they are not taught is to be open-minded, use common sense, listen to their instincts, consider anecdotal evidence or – crucially – take a holistic view of medicine. A very good example of this in human medicine is the lack of training in nutrition.

The good news? Although some vets are not yet convinced of the benefits of raw feeding, the situation is changing. I doubt there is a veterinary practice in the country that doesn't now care for several raw-fed dogs. As a result, vets are seeing the benefits for themselves. Moreover, new, genuine research comes out every year in support of species-appropriate diets, and this must help, too. Crucially, those who raw feed are part of a movement. A movement which, I believe, will come to dominate the whole pet food sector. *Jonathan Self*

Review: Gaston Le Dog

Michael Rosen



My children were raised on Michael Rosen. In fact, although they have all grown up and some have children of their own, a visit to their now empty rooms reveals copies of *You Can't Catch Me* and *Smelly Jelly Smelly Fish, We Are Going on a Bear Hunt and Tea in the Sugar Bowl* – the best of his books being illustrated by Helen Oxenbury or Quentin Blake. Indeed, Rosen has authored more than 140 books of poetry and prose and that's on top of all his writing for television and radio. Much of his work is serious and deeply personal. He has written extensively and movingly, for example, about the death of his eighteen-year-old

son, relatives who went missing in WWII and his own, terrifying experience of catching Covid. Anyway, I was thrilled to receive an advance copy of his latest book – *The Incredible Adventures of Gaston Le Dog* – but also nervous. Given his extraordinary output, would the latest Rosen live up to my expectations? Given that the book is based on stories Rosen used to tell his son while they were on holiday in France, I decided that the best way to assess the book was to read it out loud to my nephew, Mark (7), and my niece, Heather (8). So, for the last week or so I have been on Bedtime Story Duty at my sister's house. The press release I was sent described the book as 'a funny and fantastical adventure', claimed that it was loosely (very loosely I would have said) based on *The Odessey* and goes on to explain that: 'Gaston le Dog longs to return to the beautiful beach he remembers from years ago.' I was doubtful as to whether a trip to a seaside could be turned into an epic tale of sufficient interest to keep two fidgety children engaged... but I was wrong. The story gripped them from the beginning. 'Why,' I asked them, 'do you like this book?' Both chimed in that it was because of Gaston Le Dog. They loved his character and the fact he could speak and that he was funny. So, if you are looking for a dog themed book to give to, say, a child aged seven to eleven, then Michael Rosen's *The Incredible Adventures of Gaston Le Dog* could be it. *Alfred Lee.*

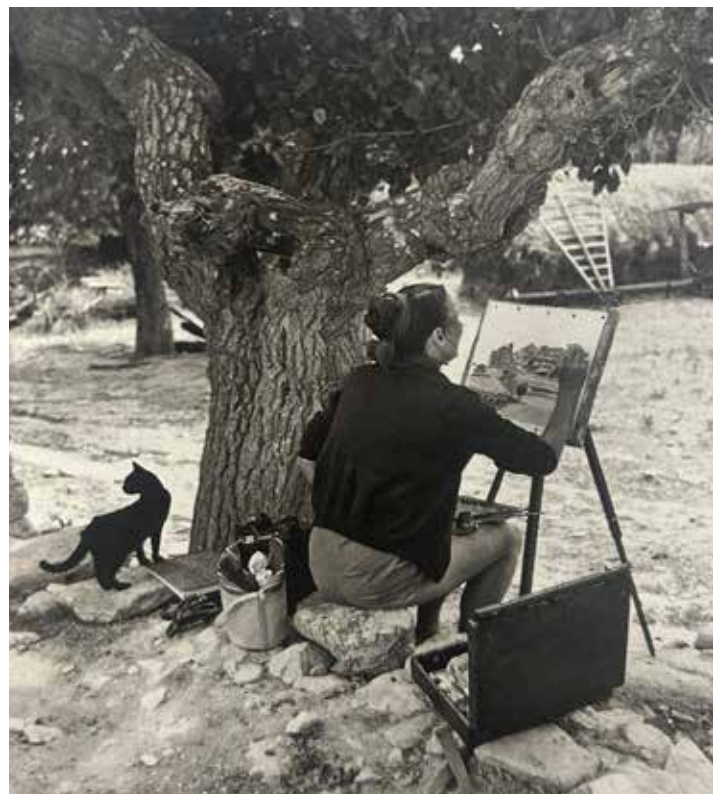
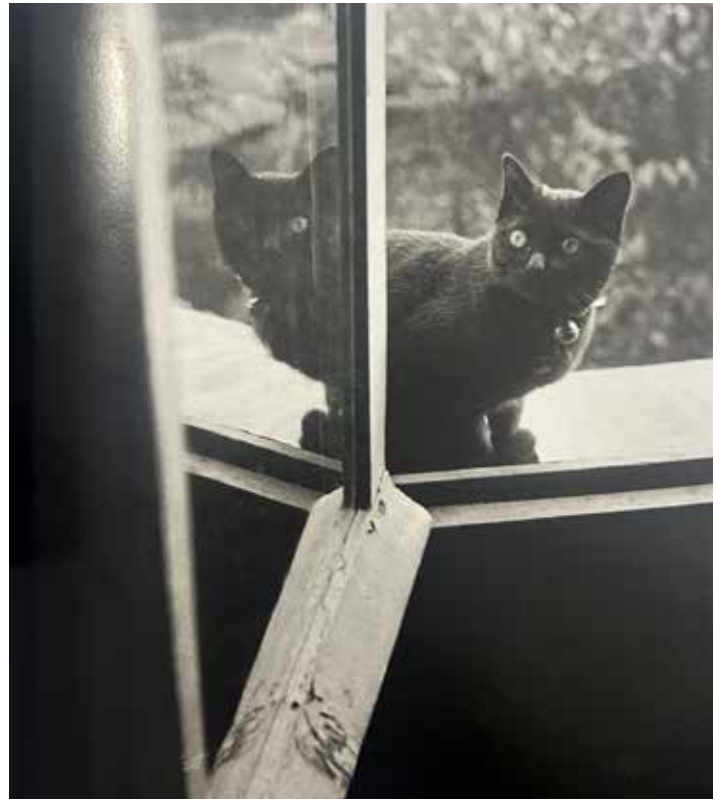
The Incredible Adventures of Gaston Le Dog, by Michael Rosen, is published by Walker Books

Les Chats:

Willy Ronis

Most people have never heard of Willy Ronis the French photographer. Many of his images are, however, world famous: the shot of a little boy running with a giant baguette or the grainy black and white image of a man whispering into his lover's ear or the picture of his wife, naked, washing herself in a basin. Less well known are the hundreds of photographs he took of cats. Close-ups of cats, cats indoors, cats outdoors, cats asleep, cats awake, cats he spotted on his travels. They are simple and charming and effortless. Ronis, who was born in 1900 and died in 1999, said of his own work: 'I have never pursued the unusual, the never seen, the extraordinary, but rather what is most typical in our daily existence, wherever I find myself... the modest beauties of ordinary life.' The surrealist poet Philippe Soupault wrote of his work: 'Willy Ronis has his heart in his eyes.' Something that is apparent in these beautiful photographs.







Tooth and Claw: Home Care for Pet Teeth and Toenails

Dr Stephen Dubin

Once upon a time, before prednisone, before antihistamines, and before global climate change confused the pollen cycles; my grandparents had a log cottage in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. It was there that they spent the six week long hay fever (AKA summer catarrh) season each year. And it was there that my sister, cousins and I spent our summer vacation. One year I arrived without a toothbrush or toothpaste, and explained to my grandma that, regrettably, I would not be able to brush my teeth for the duration of my stay. How wrong I was. She taught me her recipe for homemade toothpowder: equal parts of salt, baking soda and chalk, ground together in a mortar and pestle. Until a new toothbrush could be purchased, I used my finger to apply the mixture to my teeth and a scrap of cloth to clean them.

This incident, along with some other matters of dental care, grooming, and other matters related to DIY animal husbandry came to mind, last week, as I read the following on our local newspaper:

Today is another sad day for us. Our cat, Beau, was put to sleep because of heart failure. Our beautiful Beau had gone through dental surgery several months ago. Now, we are questioning ourselves should we have put him through it. Beau was never well afterwards and seemed to be an older cat.

Of course, it would be misguided to analyse Beau's particular situation; but, over more than 60 years of veterinary practice, I have pondered many questions about home grooming of pet teeth and toenails.

At this point, I must stress that what follows represents my personal perspective and may not always align with current veterinary medicine and practise. It includes insights gleaned not only from my professional mentors but also from farmers, trainers, nurses, technicians, groomers, and people involved in animal rescue. I am going to mention some procedures that should be reserved for urgent situations and some which may involve inherent risks or potential dangers. In the case of any serious or alarming issue my advice is to always seek professional veterinary assistance.

Another point. Please remember that although our pet's teeth and claws are necessary and useful tools, they can also become formidable weapons. For our own safety and that of our pets we need to maintain a relaxed but vigilant attitude while caring for them. Another reason to seek professional assistance. Don't do anything which may put you at risk from a bite or scratch.

Turfism

Turfism is the non-cooperation or conflict between people or groups with assumedly common goals or interests. It is especially prevalent in the professions, where specialists (lawyers, barristers, doctors, architects, dentists and the rest) each insist that only they can look after a particular issue or problem. It also exists in veterinary medicine. Who may and who may not provide certain services manifests itself among the specialties e.g., orthopedists vs neurosurgeons, dermatologists vs endocrinologists, veterinary surgeons v. technicians, professional care givers and lay people.

In the USA, the 'standard of care' is the guideline by which a veterinarian's competence is evaluated. To be within the standard of care, we veterinarians must perform our duties with an average degree of skill, care and diligence as exercised by colleagues practicing under the same or similar circumstances. When I began veterinary activity, this meant that a general practitioner was judged in comparison with other general practitioners in the same county or state. My own observation has been that, with the emergence of the specialties and the electronic media; the standard of care, at least from the malpractice viewpoint, has become dominated by the policies and recommendations of the specialty boards. This has been augmented by the other boards such as boards of directors of corporate veterinary chains and franchises.

At the time that I embarked on my veterinary training, in 1960, we were taught that domestic animals, including pets, were the chattels

or property of their owners. As such, owners or their employees were allowed to perform husbandry tasks on their animals subject to moderate limitations. Consideration had to be given to humane treatment, public health and safety, and to government regulations. Animal husbandry was largely labour-intensive, with major dependence on skill, experience, courage and sweat. As veterinary students we were encouraged to be ready to step in when people required additional knowledge, experience, equipment; and sometimes, convenience. Over the years, for better or (mostly) worse, I have seen animal caregiving become capital-intensive, mechanised and increasingly subject to turfism. This has been clearly evident when it comes to grooming in general and dental care, in particular.

Back to Beau

I don't know what dental operation Beau had to have, but I can take a shrewd guess: the removal of tartar. What is the difference between plaque and tartar? Plaque is a thin, soft material that forms continually on and around the teeth. It's usually transparent, white or pale yellow. When plaque is not removed, it hardens into tartar, which is hard and crusty and can make the teeth appear discoloured (yellow, brown). Tartar can irritate the gums, cause bad breath and gingivitis. Moderate tartar is amenable to home care. Severe tartar may require professional cleaning.

Is general anaesthesia safe for dog and cats dental care?

Which brings me to a very important question: is general anaesthesia for pet dental care safe? According to the 2020 AAHA (American Animal Hospital Association) Anaesthesia and Monitoring Guidelines for Dogs and Cats, the mortality (death during or soon after procedure) rate for healthy dogs and cats undergoing anaesthesia is approximately 0.05% to 0.1%. However, their mortality rate for sick dogs and cats is estimated to be around 1-2%. Note that AAHA hospitals are usually the best equipped, staffed, and supervised facilities in the US so they should have better outcomes. Also, their findings, in general, assume pre-anaesthetic testing and peri-anaesthetic monitoring, which, of course, increase the cost. Mortality should also be distinguished from morbidity – the situation of diminishing health or aggravating other problems short of immediate death. Morbidity from general anaesthesia may devolve from decreased blood flow, diminished respiration, hypothermia, prolonged recumbency, aspiration of saliva or vomit, etc. Most instances of general anaesthesia are associated with nonrecurring or rarely occurring events, such as neutering, injuries, tumour surgery etc. Dental care is an ongoing need. Treatment once or twice yearly under general anaesthesia for, say, a decade must be assumed to increase the overall risk by anything from ten to twentyfold. There are, without doubt, many situations where the benefit of dental procedures under general anaesthesia justify the risk and cost. But it is important to understand the risk. The cost of a professional dog teeth cleaning in the UK ranges from £149 to as much as £1000.



often needed for pets with aggressive behaviour or those who cannot relax for a non-anaesthetic treatment.

Is ultrasonic scaling harmful?

Ultrasonic scalers work via vibration from piezoelectric or magnetic transducers. The vibration dislodges plaque and tartar from teeth. The scaler also sprays water that helps dislodge plaque and tartar and to dissipate some of the heat that is generated by the transducer. Ultrasonic scalers are efficient and the time of actual cleaning can be less than that for hand scaling. Because of the vibration, the whining noise (most animals are more sensitive to sounds at higher frequencies than people are) and the water spray, general anaesthesia at a depth to allow for endotracheal intubation is well-nigh mandatory. It is not surprising, therefore, that groomers and lay people rarely use them. I asked my own (excellent, progressive) dentist why he never uses an ultrasonic scaler on my teeth; but rather, only hand instruments. He replied that he was concerned that the vibrations might weaken the enamel surface. In the face of this divergence of opinion – and given the overwhelming endorsement of ultrasonic scales by veterinary dental specialists – I consulted the ultimate arbiter: ChatGPT! A 2018 study, titled 'Effects of ultrasonic instrumentation on enamel surfaces with various defects' published in the Internal (sic) Journal of Dental Hygiene, analysed enamel damage caused by ultrasonic scalers with various enamel conditions that are difficult to see by the naked eye. The findings suggest that using ultrasonic scalers in removing plaque and dental calculus could cause further damage to teeth with enamel cracks and other enamel conditions. The study concluded that identifying tooth conditions and dental calculus before the treatment using ultrasonic scalers is necessary to minimize damage.

The importance of preparation

I cannot sufficiently stress the importance of approaching any dental or grooming slowly and carefully. How would you feel if, without warning, someone suddenly tried to force your mouth open or attempted to cut your toenails. How? To begin with acclimatise your dog or cat to being handled in a gentle and non-invasive way. Once they are used to this start, with infinite care, to focus on specific areas you would like to access. Typically, these areas include the ears, mouth, and toes. Tell them what you are doing. They may not understand the words, but they will find it comforting. As you do your examination check for any sensitivity, sores, or changes in colour. Become familiar with how they usually look, smell, and feel. This 'mini-physical' may involve lifting the lips to check the mouth, inspecting the tongue, and gently pressing on the footpads to extend the nails. Use a cell phone camera to get pictures for future reference. If any handling appears to cause pain or fear; back off but try to discern what may have caused the distress. Brushing teeth once or twice per week is the best maintenance (along with a bone) that you can do. Moderate tartar needs some scaling and surface treatment with hydrogen peroxide dabbed along the gum line on cotton. For many years, I strongly recommended use of glycerite of carbamide peroxide (Gly-oxide) on the gum line. This preparation is more viscous and adherent, so it works longer. It is still a good choice, except that the price has ballooned and availability seems limited. Severe tartar most likely calls for at least initial professional cleaning by a veterinarian, veterinary nurse or experienced groomer. Similarly with any bleeding, exudation, or pus.

The next stage

Once your dog or cat is comfortable with gentle handling, we can proceed with grooming, including teeth and nail care. When it comes to pet dentifrice, there are many options available. I'll share a simple method that has consistently worked for me. While there are a few organic pet toothpaste options free of xylitol, saccharin, and other toxic ingredients found in human toothpaste, my preferred choice is a homemade mixture from my grandmother's recipe, which consists of equal parts salt, baking soda, and chalk. I mix these ingredients in a mortar and pestle. It's cheap and has a long shelf life when stored in a sealed container. If we don't have access to calcium carbonate powder, generic antacid tablets (Rolaids, Tums) can be used as a substitute. In a pinch, any combination (or single one) of the three ingredients will suffice. Some people like to use a small toothbrush or a textured finger cover. In this regard, I also refer to my grandmother's approach. I start with a small piece of cotton cloth. If we and our pet become more comfortable, we can transition to a piece of surgical gauze for a slightly more assertive brushing style.

With patience, experienced instruction and perseverance, many human companions can scale (remove tartar) with hand instruments. Many people like the flat end one, while I have found the claw type most



"Jeez, that looks like one troublesome canine."



"Flossing?"

Is general anaesthesia for dental care always necessary?

Can any dental procedures be performed without general anaesthesia? Is it always necessary? According to the European Veterinary Dental College (www.evdc.org), the EU specialty board for veterinary dentistry: 'All dental treatments, and oral/maxillofacial surgery, in small animals must be performed under general anesthesia. This is due to the examination and treatment processes potentially being uncomfortable and to allow complete exploration of the oral cavity.'

My own experience would support a more nuanced approach. Quite often, particularly when dental preventive maintenance is consistent, gentle, and mindful pets can have long periods – perhaps their entire life – of good dental health, fresh breath and pleasant appearance without the need for anesthetized cleaning. Such care may be given by their human companions, groomers, or other experienced lay caregivers. The feeding of raw bones can obiously really help as bones are nature's toothbrush.

I offer an approach to dental prophylaxis (prevention!) below. General anaesthesia or strong sedation is usually needed when our pet has severe periodontal disease, when teeth need to be extracted, and other times when significant dental pain is present. Anaesthetic cleanings are also

useful, especially for spaces between teeth. This is not something to be undertaken without proper instruction. There are lots of videos online, but my favourite is one by Dr Andrew Jones on YouTube called Dental Cleaning for Dogs at Home. Dr Jones, really recommends bones by the way! You could also ask a vet or nurse to help you the first time.



THE CLIPPING

Restraint!

Naturally, we want our pets to remain still enough during grooming so that we can have good results, while maintaining safety, comfort, and sanity. In addition to mutual mindfulness my advice is to get an experienced assistant to help you and/or to use swaddling. Swaddling refers to a towel-wrapping technique used to swaddle a pet in a large towel or blanket for safe handling. It's a fairly easy way to restrain them while easing stress and allows us to handle a cat or small dog without anyone getting hurt. Again, there are plenty of online tutorials on YouTube. Another recommendation is to use a pheromone. Pheromones are chemical signals that are odourless to us but play a vital role in influencing the emotions and behaviours of animals within their own species. You can buy a feline 'facial' pheromone, which essentially replicates what a cat rubs onto people and objects they want to mark as their own and also a dog 'appeasing' pheromone (DAP), resembling biochemical cues emitted by lactating bitches. These pheromones prove very helpful in soothing pets during grooming sessions, easing the introduction of new family members, facilitating peaceful travel, and generally promoting a sense of wellbeing. In the USA, I recommend Feliway, while Adaptil serves as its canine counterpart.

I do not ever advise tranquilizers

Throughout history, people have used pharmaceutical tranquilizers as a means of managing stress and anxiety. Some of these are derived from natural sources, such as valerian, cannabis, or malted barley. Others are the result of chemical artifice. Regrettably, many of these substances, especially those of synthetic origin, are inadequately understood in the context of pet use. They often prove inconvenient to administer and can lead to toxic effects or unpredictable outcomes, such as idiosyncratic loss of inhibition. As such, they have very little place in routine home pet grooming.

Can I take care of my pet's toenails at home?

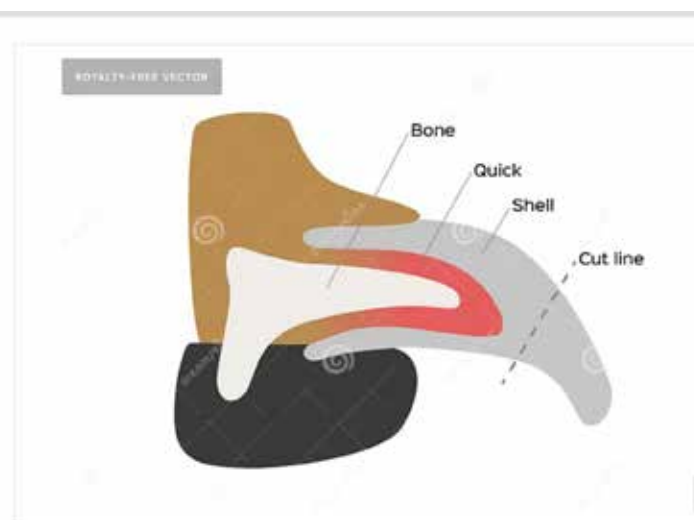
Dogs and cats have natural instincts to keep their toenails healthy by scratching and digging. Among the reasons for this instinctive behaviour are territorial marking, exploration, burying and hiding objects, removing loose or redundant tissue, thermal regulation (by finding cooler soil), and recreation/stress relief.

Before talking about toenail trimming, it is well to consider some alternatives i.e., scratching posts and designated digging areas. Every pet should have access to these alternatives before, after and, perhaps, instead of nail cutting. Many commercial scratching posts are poorly made and most are overpriced. The rug-like covering, that feels nice to people, is too soft to be effective; and may also get tangled in their claws leading to injury. A store-bought post can be rehabilitated by winding it with sisal rope. A very serviceable and inexpensive scratching post for cats can be built by tacking or cementing a piece of canvas or burlap onto a board. This also has the advantage that we can hang it at a level that will give our cat a nice stretch while enjoying their scratch. Similarly, attaching a sheet of sandpaper to a board makes a good abrasive that many dogs will learn to scratch and keep their nails in trim.

With patience, pet's nails can be groomed nicely with a nail file or emery board. Bleeding and pain are avoided. I believe that, in addition, this gives them the enjoyable scratch feeling along with our company. Motorized grinders are widely and intensively advertised. In my personal experience, many dogs and cats are annoyed by the sound and the weight in the hand can be tiring.

A brief anatomy lesson

The diagram shows the simplified structure of canine or feline toes with the claw extended. Make an enlarged print of this to pin up within easy access. Notice the pink part. That is where blood vessels and nerve endings are found. The dashed line is where to cut. Although the quick is easier to identify in clear nails, it is in a similar position in pigmented ones.



The kit

Assemble all the tools and supplies in a convenient place, before starting the pedicure. Obviously, some treats (Beautiful Joe's!) should be to hand. Toenail clippers come in two basic forms. The 'guillotine' (or Resco) style has the advantage of being easier to keep sharp, especially because we can replace or sharpen the slicing blade as needed. As such, they can do the job with less pressure and rotation. With 'pliers' style, it is easier to fit in small openings, as when the nail is ingrown. They are available in

several sizes. When they become dull, they must be replaced in toto. It is best to have both types.

Dark Toenails

With white or translucent toenails, it is usually easy to see from the side where the quick (pink part) ends. For black nails, the place to look first is underneath. Look for a hollow section toward the point. It is safe to clip in this part. Trim very carefully, if at all in the solid part slowly squeezing the clipper to see whether there is a noticeable flinch. If so, stop. Compare the length of dark nails with any nearby light ones. In any case, it should never be necessary to cut the nails more than needed for the tips to be flush with the ground. On subsequent trimmings, we can gradually get the nails shorter if desired.

Hemostasis

It's a part of life that when trimming our dog or cat's nails, they may suddenly move, causing us to inadvertently cut the nail too short resulting in bleeding. Back in 1960, I was taught that a pet would never bleed to death from a cut toenail, and I've never had reason to question this belief. To prepare for toenail trimming, it's a good idea to have some hemostatic agent(s) on hand. Exposing the blood vessels of the nail also exposes nerve endings, and the fastest, most reliable, but also stinging option is silver nitrate. Silver nitrate is typically used in the form of 'sticks', which makes application easier and helps prevent contact with and discoloration of our skin. Another effective and somewhat 'tingly' option is alum. While alum can be found in powder form, the easiest and safest way to use it is a styptic pencil, as is commonly used to address shaving misadventures. Alum is also the key ingredient in various blood-stopping powders. Many other finely subdivided materials can assist in reducing bleeding, including cornstarch, flour, bentonite and kieselguhr (diatomaceous earth). When using blood-stopping powders, it's a good practice to have an applicator, and most veterinarians utilize a hypodermic syringe cap for this purpose. If needed, antiperspirants or bar soap can also serve.

Broken and ingrown claws

These uncomfortable onychological misadventures are, regrettably, all too common. They may result from going too long between trims, from getting tangled in fabric or from no apparent reason at all! The remedy is usually cutting the claw above the break or in the entrapped portion, preferably in an expeditious decisive way. There will be momentary pain; and, often bleeding and/or release of pus. Have bandage(s), hemostatics, antiseptic (hydrogen peroxide or betadyne) and treats at hand. If we have the inclination and courage to do the treatment at home it is unpleasant, but no worse and often much better for our pet than it would be after the waiting, transportation, and handling attendant upon getting professional treatment.



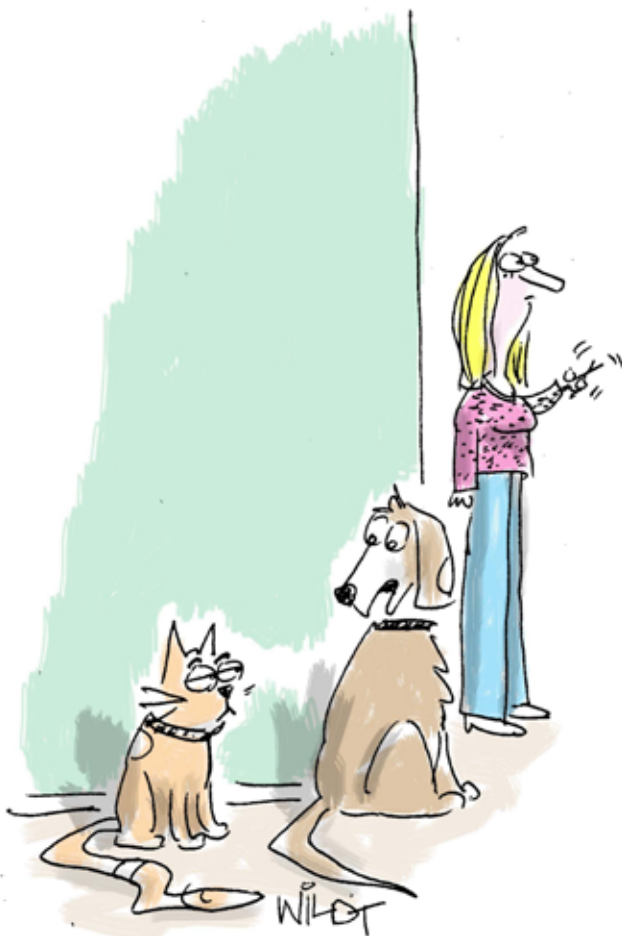
"Every Thursday I do her nails."

What about declawing of cats?

Cats need their claws for climbing, as weapons, implements (as we use forks or tongs), communication (by visual and pheromone marking) and for artistic decoration of our belongings. In addition to being painful and risky, declawing (including the purportedly less barbaric tendon cutting) deprives them of much. Thankfully, declawing is illegal in the UK.

In conclusion...

A final word on why we should consider DIY pet dental and toenail care at home. It is less expensive and more convenient, of course. Crucially, however, it can be more comfortable and safer for our pets.



"I really don't mind having my nails clipped, but if I'm too easy, she'll think she can brush my teeth."



"This is one sick dog."

Honey's Dogs

One of the best parts of being, as it were, in dog food, is that one has an excuse to look at dog photos and count it as work. We can't see enough dog photos! We oooh! and ahhh! and pass them around amongst ourselves. Here is just a sample of dogs we have been admiring since the last issue of *The Alternative Dog*. If you send your photos to Jonathan, he makes a note to include some free treats in with your next order. If he forgets then please remind him! jonathan@honeysrealdogfood.com. Finally, many of the pictures that follow are of new Honey's customers. A very warm welcome to you and your human companions and thank you for choosing Honey's.



Alfie Hodges



Bonnie Gunn



George Collins



Archie and Lola Elson



Crumb Jones



Humphrey Cox



Bella and Donna Hodges



Daizy Robinson



Jack Hunt



Boo Tanin



Fuge Kulcsar



Jack and Jarvis Andresen



Sydney Grigsby



Vesta Galloway



Yamanja Gunn



Lola Foster



Morris Hannaford



Rubix Fleming



Lola Haughty



Nova Wheeler



Shaheen Gunn



Sydney Grigsby



Sherlock Simons



Luna Wagland



Poppet Francis



Stanley Chase



Mason Haughty



Ruach Gunn



The Wonderful Palmer Pack



Tipper Weatherley



Willow Smith



Star Starnes

IN MEMORIAM

The following few pages are devoted to some extremely moving and deeply personal remembrances for much-missed, much-loved canine family members. They vary in length (some short, some long) and content (some factual, some full of stories and reminisces), but they all contain a common element: they have been written from the heart. We will be dedicating a tree for all the dogs mentioned here, and for any other Honey's fed dog who has died, in the Honey's Wood. If you have lost a dog (even if it is some time ago) and would like him or her mentioned in the next newsletter, please email me direct. I will also arrange a tree dedication. Finally, if you are bereaved at the moment please accept my own heartfelt condolences.

Jonathan (Self)
js@jonathanself.com



Barney Sowden
2009 – 2023

Barney passed away peacefully in my garden in the sunshine, his favourite place, with a full stomach, his favourite state, after a final totter around the local pond. He was 14 years and 2 months old.

From the age of 3 months onwards, Barney was very unlucky with both his physical and emotional health, and frequently tested the skills and facilities of local vets and a variety of specialist vets over the years.

With the very best veterinary care, the very best diet, the very best dog care, and a whole lot of love from me, he had a long and happy life, despite his many afflictions. Though restricted in where he could go and what he could do, Barney loved the outdoors, and was ball and food obsessed. He was a very special dog.

Farewell, and rest in peace without anxiety or pain, my brave, handsome boy. I will miss you forever.



Ali Ashbee
2009 – 2023

We all miss you so much Ali. You were a crazy girl in your younger days and you helped to bring up many pups who came into our lives. You loved to go shooting and brought home many pheasants and ducks. As you got older and others took over you accepted it with good grace. Know that you were so loved. Sleep well until we meet again.



Bailey Wilcox
2010 – 2023

He was the most undog like dog in the world, but he was ours and we loved him! He loved his Honeys food – a cause for much laughter as he was on the Working Dog Food! This picture was taken just a month before he died.



Barney Higgins
2009 – 2023

Barney was a character. He didn't need a clock to know exactly when it was time for dinner. He was a DWA – dog with attitude – he had his routine and would tell you what he wanted and when. We miss him in the kitchen where he waited patiently for little bits of food – cucumber, lettuce, anything – to 'accidentally' fall onto the floor. Barney loved his motorhome holidays with us and his other doggie companions: Milly and Dibble. We will never forget the wonderful walks and adventures we shared He herded us, as if we were sheep, running backwards and forwards to make sure we were all safe and all together. Barney became a vocal dog as he slowly lost his eyesight and his mobility. However, he found

a way to communicate what he wanted whether it was the chair to sit on or get a cuddle. When we lost Dibble, Barney was very upset and lost, but Milly really helped him. Barney used to follow her everywhere. He only settled down if he had company. Barney had many medical ailments and allergies but with the help of different vets over the years we were able to ensure that he had a good quality of life. He never complained. Eventually his body let him down but not his terrier determination and strength of mind which wanted to keep going even to the very last walk he had with us. Our world is a much quieter world without him. No barking to make us run to the room to help him on a chair or carry him up the stairs. We had twelve wonderful years with our little boy – every moment special – he is greatly missed and will remain in our hearts forever.



Basil Waters
2007 – 2023

Basil was our first pointer and the reason we fell in love with this beautiful and noble breed. Such a beautiful soul his whole life and a true gentleman. So many happy memories made with this wonderful boy well into his sixteenth year. He really was the most amazing and loyal friend, and we count ourselves lucky to have had so many years with him. He is missed terribly by all of us. Run free special boy you are loved more than words will ever express.



Bella Clark
2012 – 2023

Remembering the beautiful Bella. Taken from us suddenly in the early hours of Sunday 16.07.23. Born in Ireland in 2012. Picked up as a stray by the Dog Warden. Transferred to the UK by Dogs Trust. Named by them, such an apt choice! Rehomed by us from their Evesham Centre on 17.02.13. A loyal companion to fellow dogs Jack and later Pip. A happy life spent exploring West London (this picture taken in Chiswick House), Hampshire and Cornwall.

Bella Biscuits. Bella Boo. Princess Poppet. Squiggle Bottom. A very special lady. Much loved. Will always be missed.



Bella Stone
2008-2023

We said goodbye to our lovely Bella, in June of this year, peacefully at home in the sunshine. She was a complex soul, a dalmatian/collie cross with the best and not-so-great

traits of both breeds. She arrived with us as an eight-week-old puppy and delighted everyone she met with her beautiful soft ears, incredibly

sharp, trainable brain and penchant for playing with plastic bottles. She was intensely loyal to her people, made us laugh a lot, and had a joyous delight in movement that is evident in this favourite photograph. In her heyday she could keep up with her lurcher friend as they chased each other around the fields. She loved ripping open her Christmas fluffy duck present, dispensing of the wrapping and shredding the toy within five minutes with a big doggy grin on her face – a yearly ritual she never tired of. She had a rather queenly attitude towards other dogs – she had plenty of doggy friends who she'd known since she was a small puppy, but absolutely hated most spaniels and we were avoided like the plague by many spaniel owners who had learned it was best to give us a wide berth. She rather ungraciously accepted a new dog into her life seven years ago (Rocky, also in the picture), and they rubbed along pretty well most of the time – he was her confidence giver and she became much happier on fireworks night and out and about in noisy environments once she had him for company. Rocky put up with her somewhat intimidating presence with a large dose of terrier indifference and extremely good grace. Bella was a huge part of our lives for fifteen years and watched my daughters grow from children to adults, keeping them company every step of the way. We miss her graceful presence. RIP our lovely girl. XXX.



**Moss (Levenghyll Climber) Anderson
2007 – 2021**

**Bingo (Levenghyll Bongani) Anderson
2010 – 2023**

We had dogs in our lives both as children, and as parents, but not for some time. We met Pippa Williams (now a really good friend) and our collective futures were decided. Initially Moss and then Bingo a couple of years later. Although very different personalities they got on very well with each other. Learning new skills was an essential part of our activities. As a group

we enjoyed success in Gundog working tests, we extensively explored our country's mountains, valleys and coasts. We heard that a local primary school wanted a dog, who would both listen to, and encourage their pupils to read. We got involved because Moss clearly loved the attention, as well as the smiles on the children's faces. It was a 'win-win' situation. We were also, because we were dog owners, fortunate to be invited into our local Hospice to spend time with both patients and their relatives, as well as the staff. These 'headlines' are an insight into just a few things, which having Moss and Bingo, enabled us all to do together. However, as every dog lover knows, just as valuable and memorable, are the everyday shared experiences of having dogs in our lives. That 'contented ordinariness' which we must never take for granted. Those things we miss when our 'best mates' have died.



**Buddy 'Bhoy' Davitt
2012 – 2023**

Buddy came into our lives when he was only 7 weeks old, and for the following 11 short years our lives were centred around him. Although he had some issues, both behavioural and health, he was many more things to us all.....

He was always loving & giving,
He was needy & clingy,
He was clever & funny,
He was always up for a 'fight', right to the end
He was the best doorbell we ever had and loved the sound of his own bark,
He would leave every surface drenched with his slabbers,
He would do anything for a seafood treat,
He would chase his ball until he dropped,
He would have protected us from the devil himself,
But above all that

He was our Buddy Bhoy, a much loved and loyal companion, who is sorely missed every day.

G'nite Bud Bud
xxxx



**Charlie Pavey
2011 – 2023**

Charlie, we were blessed with the time you had with our family, sleep well.



**Dottie Freeman
2013 – 2023**

We adopted Dottie in late July 2018 at the age of four and we all immediately fell in love with her. We aren't sure of the life Dottie led before she came to us but my mum and I both have our different ideas. Dottie could be walked off the lead because she would always trot one inch off our heels and would stop when we stopped. This led my mum to believe she had been trained to perform in Crufts, but really I think it's because walking like this meant she didn't walk more than what was absolutely necessary! Dottie became my shadow and fellow adventurer, we led a somewhat nomadic lifestyle, going on long walks in Wales, getting zoomies on beach trips to Cornwall and staying at friends' houses all over the UK. We often said she was happiest when going for a drive in the car, eating or sleeping alongside us on the sofa. She was truly the most perfect dog for us, and we feel grateful we could give her all the strokes she deserved, delicious food, cosy beds and doggy adventures in the short five years we had her. Here's to you Dotts and our life changing time together, you're so missed and still so loved.



**Flo Dick-Durward
2007 – 2023**

You had us all fooled into thinking you'd go on forever. Our intrepid, wee, irreplaceable Flo. We all miss you so much.



**Freddie Williams
2012 – 2023**

As you know they leave such an empty space in our hearts. Freddie was a gentle giant whose presence is sorely missed. We rescued him from a racing kennel in Essex just over six years ago. He was a challenge at first, having had no individual attention or love. He hadn't been kindly treated and bore the scars to prove it. Sadly, he was just a commodity as a means of earning money. Eventually with patience and love he realised that all humans were not the same and began to trust us. He has been a joy and a very loyal friend. We miss the walks. We miss the greeting in the mornings. But most of all we miss him .



**Grosch Leftwich
2017 – 2023**

Grosch was the most loving and affectionate boy. He lived life to the full each and every day, always on the go, and probably packed into his short life what most dogs manage in a long life time. His zest, vitality and enthusiasm for living for the moment were infectious. Grosch was one of a kind, a very special boy, it was an honour and a privilege to have him in our lives. Still can't believe that he is no longer with us; my darling boy, we all miss you so much, taken too soon from our home but never from our hearts.



Gypsy Darling
2012 – 2023

Adopted in 2017 aged seven. Developed from a timid, at times unsociable young lady to a much loved gentle, but food thieving, family girl. The hills or the sofa – her favourite spots. Loved and missed by us all.



Harvey Griffin
2009 – 2023

It is with great sadness that we have had to say goodbye to our gorgeous boy Harvey. When we went to see Harvey and his brothers and sisters in 2009 he was the chilled one with the chunky backside and big feet, he grew into his backside but always had big feet and so he was often mistaken for a puppy even when he was 10. He was such a perfect and kind boy who loved nothing more than a good walk with the chance to flush a few pheasants along the way.

When he was at home he could always be found curled up in his bed surrounded by everyone's shoes that he had collected. Harvey was growing old gracefully until his fight against his dementia became too much for him. He will be missed every single day. R.I.P. my beloved friend.



Jasper Goddard
2011 – 2023

Our much-loved boy, Jasper. You have been such a joy. It has been such a pleasure to have shared your life. Full of life, love, mischief and such a lovely character. Your leaving has left such a hole in our lives. So very much missed and loved more each day. Sleep well me boy xx



Jasper Wilkinson
2009 – 2023

Jasper joined our little family as a mischievous but loving little pup. We already had his older half-brother so he had a role model. Once we got through the early days Jasper developed into a gentle and loving dog (springers are known for their lovely/lively nature and he certainly fit that profile).

Once he reached adulthood I introduced him to Pets as Therapy, an organisation that visits schools, hospitals etc. where a dog can make such a difference to someone's day, and he thrived in the environment and loved our visits. I know he made a difference to those we met on these visits young and old. He retired from his role a while ago but is still remembered and loved his walks on the beach. He has left a big space in my family, but I know he enjoyed life and made the most of every minute. A very special boy.



Kelpie Flint
2012 – 2023

When my beautiful girl Kelpie arrived in my life, I felt loved like never before. I just felt complete. I used to take her to work with me. I would carry her in a puppy pouch and we developed a very strong bond. She didn't want to be walked by anyone else – she only had eyes for me. We became one. I knew that my life had changed – would never be the same again. A year passed by and then we rescued Troy. He is a handsome boy from the streets of Romania and Kelpie

took care of him straight away. His arrival made the family complete. Troy just slotted in like he had always been with us. We had lots of adventures together. We went to the beach. We went camping in the Yorkshire Dales. We went everywhere together – never apart until now. Life is not going to be the same without you by my side, Kelpie, smiling away and always wagging your tail. Troy and I will always love you forever. You will never be forgotten, my beautiful girl. Stay safe my little angel. Run free over that rainbow bridge until we meet again.



Kiera Southcott
2008 – 2023

From the moment she arrived in my lap, Kiera knew her role in life... to keep me on the straight and narrow! She was more person than dog. She attended work meetings, she did yoga and she could tell the time. Kiera was my personal furry alarm clock for all things: food, walks, cuddles and bedtimes! She nursed me through my partners death last year and without her I don't really know

how I'd have managed. Beau, the shepherd, and I both miss her terribly – the house is so quiet without her, and we are not as on the ball with anything time wise!!!



Lilah Walles
2010 – 2023

We were so lucky to have this little Sausage with the big brown eyes in our lives. She had the softest skin and softest heart and enjoyed every second of life. Her spot in front of the window (her TV), is now very empty and we miss her dearly. We celebrate her every day in all the memories we have of her in all her small little antics every day and we are really thankful that we could share her life.



Lisko Smith
2011 – 2023

Dear Lisko, meaning fox in Bulgarian, came over to England two years ago as an oldie, aged between (maybe) ten and twelve. He had been living in a hay barn with other stray dogs in Bulgaria, and was limping following two leg breaks, one of which had not been treated.

An earth angel to many dogs, Sarah, fostered him and we adopted him in January 2022. Her wish was for him to have some comfort in this

end part of his life, and to see at least one sunny Spring with a family around him, food, warmth, shelter and a comfortable bed. He had these things, we like to think, and lived with us for 18 months until July 2023. He settled in well with our other two dogs, and was respected by all of us, even three young grandchildren learnt to be gentle and kind with him. His mobility deteriorated although he enjoyed some walks, with a bit of help from a doggy buggy, and lots of sunny snoozing in the garden. In the last months he kept us on our toes with a lot of barking at nighttime, as dementia started to set in alongside his reduced mobility. We learnt a lot though from this old boy. He opened our hearts with compassion because he must have suffered due to the weak back leg which eventually would not hold him up at all, but he tried so hard to plod on and remained grateful for his food until his last day. He didn't complain, he accepted his lot, and he taught us to be patient and kind. He was put to sleep in the garden, gifting us the calmest peaceful day – it was as if he understood it was his last day, and he somehow made it easy for us all. We stroked and groomed him, talked to him, in spite of his being deaf, and loved him. He left us very peacefully. We are grateful he came into our lives and he will be remembered fondly forever. We are happy that Honey's will be planting a Memorial Wood and look forward to hearing about the tree dedicated to Lisko.



Macy Pattinson
2012 – 2023

I was born into a humble and loving abode in Hertfordshire. I had two brothers and three sisters. My father was a white Toy Poodle, and my mother was a caramel King Charles Spaniel. One of my brothers, Louis, was chosen first by eager owners, then my future family came to Hertfordshire to choose one of the remaining puppies. Apparently, I was democratically selected by my family

because I appeared to be the most fun. I managed to climb the sofa, lick their faces and play with their hair. My new family – Alasdair (Ali), Sarah, Lucas and Saskia – came to collect me in December, and I was loved and cared for from that moment, although I did miss my brothers and sisters for a while. I was allowed in the back garden until it was safe for me to play with other dogs. My new home was in London, between Clapham Common and Wandsworth Common. I was absolutely delighted to meet and play with so many dogs. My first walk of the day was to Saskia's

school. Sarah and I would then join her friends and doggies for a stroll. My family owned a black Land Rover I was so fortunate to be taken on wonderful adventures. Weekend trips to Suffolk, Kent and Hampshire. In April in 2013 was my first holiday to Cornwall. OMG sand, sea, rocks and extra-long walks. So many new smells, spring flowers and rabbits. We stayed at great auntie Jo's little fisherman's cottage. We went nearly every year during Easter. My family went on summer holidays to the hot sunshine abroad, guess what, I was looked after by great auntie Jo in Cornwall. She used to let me sleep on her bed, how nice. I did develop some idiosyncrasies. At about nine months old, Sarah was having a natter with some friends, and we did not notice a big motorbike about to start its engine, the exhaust pipe was right by my ear. The engine started, it blasted out a thunderous noise, it was so scary I never really recovered. A type of PTSD I believe. From that moment on, I barked at any motorbike that came close to me. A dog psychiatrist may suggest I had ADHD tendencies, I would rather not be labelled. I was the alpha of my pack. Who jumped on the sofa first! It became a great comfort to me that I chose Alasdair (Ali) to be my pack leader. He knows dogs, especially me. It was so clever of him to discover raw food. I was always healthy. I only visited the vets four times. Ali taught me how to swim. It became one of my favorite pastimes. I would go with Ali for long walks by the river Thames at low tide and Ali would throw a stick in the water. Even when he threw the stick some distance and with a strong current, I would fetch it and bring it ashore.

Lock-down was a happy time. My family was with me at home most of the time. I would sit in a bed basket under Ali's desk and then follow him around the house, before walks and after walks. Even up to the roof-terrace, we all loved the sunshine. In the evening we had drinks, treats and nibbles. I was also allowed on the sofa; a habit I managed to secure. I just loved being gently stroked and melt into my family's laps. We also discovered the joys of the huge expanse of Wimbledon Common, a place where we could all soak in nature's seasonal beauty. Last spring, on one of my four visits to the vets, I was diagnosed with an enlarged heart. I was given some chewy tablets to take every day. Apparently, a reasonably common condition with the Cavapoo breed. Ali used to joke that I was loved and I loved others too much. It was a hot sunny mid-morning on Saturday 7th Oct, Ali took me down to Battersea foreshore, he likes to pick up plastic when we go for walks. I had six swims and then we walked back to the car. I was a bit slow, which was rare for me. Ali decided we should take a rest in the sunshine at a café where I could dry off. It was difficult for me to settle. I rolled onto my side and had a heart attack and passed away. It was a blessing in some ways as I had started to develop a cough and I would have felt sad watching my family see me suffer. I was with my pack leader having just had a wonderful swim and resting in the sunshine. What a happy life I had.



Margot Matchett
2009 – 2023

Margot Matchett – beloved number one dog, our love and inspiration. Mother of Maudie, Leila, Luna and five boys. Missed dreadfully and loved forever.



Noodles Sullivan
2008 – 2023

Our beloved Welsh Terrier, Noodles, lived to the ripe old age of seventeen and a half. We adopted him in 2010 and had many adventures over the years. Towards the end he was blind, mostly deaf, with some form of dementia, but continued to enjoy life. He is dearly missed.



Ocean Wilbraham
2013 – 2023

Sadly, we lost Ocean on the 17th of June 2023. Not a day goes by where we don't miss her and remember her. She was a very strong French Bulldog who loved walking in the Lake District – up to twenty miles at a time in her heyday. Her fur friend Buddy misses her, but not the twenty mile walks as he can really only manage 10. Forever in our hearts and memories.



Perry Penrose
2011 – 2023

Perry was a legend beautiful kind and hugely missed by us and all our family.



Poppy Curtis-Jones
2010 – 2023

My dearest little Poppy or Poppa as I used to call her, since she was like a bottle of pop! So full of energy, full of mischief and love. She was adorable and everyone loved her. In 2020, we brought Tedo into our home – a rescue dog who had been traumatised and who suffered from seizures. Poppy came to his rescue and taught him how to not be frightened of going out of the front door. She was very patient with him and he followed her every move. In 2021, she developed a condition called SARDS. She lost her sight and went completely blind within just a couple of weeks. This time it was Tedo's turn to come to her rescue which he did. We worked together with me giving her instructions right left, step up, step down etc. She created her own mental map of the house and areas where we walked. She learnt this very quickly and got some of her life back, and it became enjoyable for her again. Her sense of smell went into overdrive which gave her great pleasure as she could smell any treat even if it was in another room. Around this time she also developed a heart murmur and she died in my arms of a heart attack on the 2nd August 2023. It was devastating since I couldn't do anything to save her – it happened so fast. As heartbreaking as it was, and is, I was with her, and she was with me. I miss her terribly, as does the whole family, including Tedo. Sometimes I feel her presence in my house and I talk to her. I know she is listening.



Reginald Mitchell Hartley
2014 – 2023

Reggie (aka Ziggy or Deddars) was adored from the moment he was born. As well as getting lots of attention from his human family, he never spent much time away from his mum (our other dog) or his 'cousin' Burtie, who we also lost this year. He also got to meet with his sisters on a regular basis. I've never met a dog like Reg in that he was equally happy wherever he was – it could be a beautiful beach, a stunning woodland

or a car park! If he had attention, he was content. Reg had an expressive face and big personality, and always made us smile. A fit, athletic dog, but also clumsy and funny, he lived his life to the full and enriched ours beyond measure. Reg has left a big hole in our lives. He will be loved and missed forever.



Scout Rutter
2011 – 2023

Scout was the most perfect dog. She chose us and gave us nearly twelve years of unconditional love and fun. We miss her xx.



Sheba Spencer
2012 – 2023

Our wonderful rescue dog, Sheba, sadly passed away in July. She was around eleven years old but her date of birth is unknown as she was unchipped when found. Our home feels very empty without her presence and her doggy love for her family.



Tally Kibler
2008 – 2023

When it became clear that I wasn't going to take myself out for a walk every day after becoming self-employed working from home I knew I needed to make it a non-negotiable priority by getting a dog. It was a Border Terrier – Tally (short for Talisker, my favourite whisky) – who came into my life. She was one of the best things that ever happened to me. I found myself feeling part of the community where I live, meeting wonderful people whose paths I would otherwise not have crossed mine and, of course, I benefitted from walking three times a day whatever the weather. However, the best thing was Tally herself, a beautiful being who taught me so many essential life lessons. We became very close over the years in part because of her health. She had a digestive disorder and because of it I had to pay constant attention so that I could watch for flare-ups. This, in turn, led to a much deeper knowledge of everything about her. She trusted me to help her. She could be quite dominant, and it taught me to stand up for myself – something I had had difficulty with before. Latterly she had many diminishments related to old age: back problems that limited her mobility, deafness, cataracts affecting her sight, and even loss of full capacity to smell. She endured all these without frustration, bitterness or anger by living completely in the present moment, just accepting what is without regret for the past or fear of the future. I was a youthful 57 when she became my companion. Now I am 73 and facing the diminishments of aging myself. She taught me so much about how to be fully alive: trust in something bigger than yourself, take your power appropriately and live in the present moment without regret or fear. I really hope I have taken her lessons on board enough to enable me to age as gracefully as she did. She was a brilliant teacher as well as a wonderful being that I feel so lucky to have had in my life for so long.



Tiki Whatley
2011 – 2023

Tiki is much missed – she was very good at clearing up after my messy boys at meal-times! Every bowl was licked clean as well as the floor! She was precious and so clever at coping with her blindness, the boys never twigged that she couldn't see. Thank you to Honey's for helping me when she was diagnosed with SARDS, as I didn't get that support from my vets at that time, you really

helped getting her weight under control. Even though we have two other dogs the home is very quiet without her. Many happy memories with our beloved cheeky Tiki.



Stanley Taylor
2012 – 2023

We joined the Honeys family when Stanley was only four months old and never regretted it for a moment. He just loved the food, also the service, advice and delivery was excellent right from the beginning ten years ago and has remained so ever since. Stanley is greatly missed.



Lexi Riggins
2010 – 2023

Our Darling Lexi...

Despite being one of the most challenging of the many dogs I have had the fortune to pet-parent, the nine years I spent with Lexi were nowhere near enough. We had two versions of our amazing dog. Lexi 1.0 entered our lives in February 2014, as a high energy, busy three-year-old who had surprised her previous owners by producing not one, but two large litters. Her intelligence was such that two of her offspring went on to become police dogs. After her second litter, she was thankfully spayed. We were her sixth home and we soon found out why! She was a handful regardless of whether she was living in the town or in the country. We soon received complaints from our neighbours, including the woman next door, who was a pet sitter and thought that Lexi's separation anxiety was going to be the undoing of her business. If we were out for even the shortest time,

she treated the neighbourhood to a cacophony of constant barking. 'Not to fear,' we said, 'we will soon be moving to the countryside where we will have no neighbours.' Perfect, we thought. How wrong we were! The temptations of the countryside were too much for our Lexi. Surrounded by fields of sheep, she was constantly looking for holes in the fence so she could have some 'fun'. Not that she would ever have hurt them but keeping her away from them was a very demanding job. We longed to be able to let her off the lead on walks, only whenever we did, we would regret it. Lexi had a terrible health scare in February 2022. One vet was ready to put her to sleep and I made arrangements to collect my daughter from school to say goodbye. But no, Lexi was not done yet! She rallied at the last moment. The next few months were difficult, and she had a few small relapses, but eventually she stabilized to become Lexi 2.0. Although she still ran around after our other dog, Badger, and still played swing ball with my daughter (usually crushing the ball), she no longer looked for holes in the fence or went full pelt down the garden chasing who knows what. We could actually walk her off lead and I could stop worrying about what she was getting up to. Our Lexi was a sharp-witted dog who would open doors and visit Granny in her flat downstairs. One whiff of an argument from us, or one swear word and she was off, front door wide open, the house filling with cold air. Granny's door would be flung open too. I guess that although she was largely over them, she still had a tiny bit of her anxieties left. Despite that, she loved the bangs of Christmas crackers and energetically participated, taking one end of the cracker and vigorously pulling. The louder the crack as they split, the better. They would then be ripped to shreds. We have many funny videos of that activity. Our Caspar was top dog and Lexi dared not put a paw out of place. She missed him so much when we suddenly lost him in April 2021, that we had to quickly get her a companion. In the middle of lockdown, that was easier said than done. We ended up with Badger, a 5-year-old rescue lurcher from Ireland. Now, finally, despite Badger being dog aggressive, it was Lexi's turn to be top dog. How she relished making him take a long trip around the table at mealtimes showing all her not-so-pearly-anymore teeth! She decided Badger could only be 'Dad's Dog' and he was not to get too close to my daughter or me. She loved to spend the evenings in the office with me, manicuring her nails and letting out contented groans. She was my daughter's best friend. She will always have a special place in our hearts and is very much missed.



Tolley Pile
2009 – 2023

'Drakeshead' Labrador. Rising 14 years when lost. Great companion. Perhaps should have been trained more fully as a working gun dog but we loved him as a pet. Greatly missed.



Enzo Whitehouse
2012 – 2023

We are heartbroken. Enzo suddenly ran off whilst walking in the woods and was hit by a car and killed instantly. He was eleven years old but everyone was always surprised by his age because he was so fit and healthy – one person even thought he was a puppy! I cannot describe the pain my family and I feel at the moment. He was my little man, my shadow, such a happy boy. I feel lost without him and the house is so empty.



Bobby Rogers
2011 – 2023

A Honey's fed dog from a puppy – he loved every mouthful! Greatly loved and much missed.



Lily Dillon
2008 – 2023

From the day she was born, Lily was always sure of what she wanted. The litter Lily was a part of were very playful and loving, the very essence of being a Labrador! When families were coming to meet their new puppies or indeed choose which one they would like to join them, Lily would have a limp, or seem off colour and so was never 'chosen'. After numerous trips to the vets, they confirmed that she was 100% healthy

and gorgeous, the penny dropped. Lily had chosen us! She knew that she needed to stay, and that she had a very important job in our family. From that moment, she has filled our hearts with love and happiness. Lily was so full of life as a young dog, she adored to be outside, to swim and explore but at home she had the most calming nature, and through our stresses and worries she would always provide the best comfort. When Lily was ten, and after we lost her mum, Oreo, the matriarch of our family, we spent five months just with Lily. She was happy, but we could see that she missed having a four-legged companion. To our delight we discovered a litter, with Lily being the great aunt, had been born. That summer we collected Pepper and the rest was history! Lily was over the moon that she had a little puppy to care for, play with and they were inseparable from the start. Lily would always say yes to a walk, always yes to a cuddle and always yes to a treat! She was the perfect girl. We are sorely missing her sweet, calming and loving spirit. There really is no dog quite like her, all of our friends and family listed her as their favourite in our household, we always said now you can't have favourites! It was just Lily, she would touch your soul in a completely unique way when you met her. We are forever thankful to her for that incredible gift.



Duke Lymbery
2011 – 2023

Duke came to us as a tiny rescue pup of ten weeks old. He'd been abandoned in a park with his sister on a cold winter's day. The heroic folks at South East Dog Rescue in Kent took them in. We'll never forget arriving home to-

gether with Duke. We found this tiny little mite, all brindle and brown with white-rimmed eyes, sitting by the dog bowl, before getting up and sitting beside the sack of food, then repeat. With each move, he'd fix us with a pleading stare. We got the message! Duke grew into the most adorable bundle of energy. During his early years, we could never tire him out. He loved going out. He loved coming home. He just loved life! From a tiny puppy, he grew into our 'baby bear': thirty-five kilos of fluff and affection. Everyone wanted to know what breed he was. The DNA test came back as a right mix of Rotty, Staffie, Alsatian, and anyone's guess. All we knew was that he was the gentlest, friendliest dog we'd ever known. Although as strong as a tractor, his legs were a constant worry. Noel Fitzpatrick, the TV Supervet, saved him twice; at six months of age and three years when his front then back legs went consecutively. To Noel, we are forever grateful. We are also eternally grateful to everyone at Honey's Real Dog Food who fed Duke for the best part of ten years. He loved his Honey's meals. Honestly, he scoffed his first one with such gusto, if he could have written his own thank you note, he'd have sent a dozen! Duke was the centrepiece of our family. He was our reason, our routine, our baby boy. We had such adventures together in beautiful parts of the country like Norfolk, Scilly, and Mull. He was a waterdog, in and out of rivers whenever he could, and oh, how he loved the beach. He became a bit of an ambassador for animal welfare charity, Compassion in World Farming, appearing in many videos, social media posts, and articles, not least in *The Scotsman* and *Sunday Express*. During lockdown, he'd join the festive 'thank you' meetings for all the team. He also became a central character in the book, *Sixty Harvests Left*, our farm hamlet walks together becoming an important part of the narrative. He also inspired passages about kinship toward other creatures. He'd sit happily with our rescue hens. He loved the forty cows in our neighbourhood. Duke and they would lick noses. In those moments of greeting, the line between cow and dog would blur. Their bonding was beautiful. Despite a lifetime of problems with his legs, it was severe kidney failure and a cancerous mass that would lead to his calling over the rainbow bridge. We are heartbroken. But feeling blessed at having had four more precious weeks with him receiving palliative care. And touched profoundly by more than eleven years with the gentlest and most warm-hearted of souls. His affectionate spirit lives on. He will remain forever in our hearts.



Spig Turner
2012 – 2023

Spig was just a dog. A dog I had longed for. We met when I climbed over an old wooden door into the pen, on the farm where he was born, and he came to investigate the buckle of my boot. *Oh, there you are, at last, we can get started*, I thought. Spig was short for Spigget, my son Will's name for biscuits, as

a toddler. He won everyone over in the end. His greatest conquest was Matt, my cat loving business partner who conceded that Spig was an awesome dog and had almost converted him to the dark side. My husband, also not an easy win for Spig, bonded with him through play fights and long walks in pheasant filled woods, from which Spig would return looking like something from *The Black Pearl*. For my kids, he was their childhood dog, a constant, innocent, loving, and often smelly presence. My relationship with Spig was forged in the hills of our Gloucestershire home. Wandering, often getting lost, Spig in search of sticks to carry and streams to jump in, stopping when we were high above the town to take in the view. He seemed to know what I needed better than I knew myself. In the first days after Spig died, I thought the sadness would be too much to bear. I told Ian: *'I don't know who to be without my dog. I don't know where to put all that love.'* But of course, love finds infinite outlets. And the thing that grieving Spig has taught me, is I can be with sadness, I don't need to push it away. And it can co-exist with happiness, one doesn't cancel out the other. There is no rush, grief has its own time and place. Spig and I are no longer physically together, but I feel him when the wind is in the trees, and in the sound of the sea, in birds, and in the quiet moments he would have reminded me to take. Where the sadness and the joyful memories are welcome. Spig was just a dog; like my right arm is just my right arm, a view is just a view, and love is just love.



Samson Poole
2012 – 2023

Samson (he was strong and long-haired!) was a handsome pedigree English Setter, named 'Upperwood Colour Vision' at birth. Everybody who met and came to know our boy was instantly taken with him: gentle, full of character, loving and friendly. He was independent (sometimes obstinate!) and a great car traveller, always enthusiastic about exploring somewhere new. But he especially enjoyed our local walks together, followed by a long session of serious chilling out. Sadly, he became ill with liver disease in the past several weeks and despite heroic efforts from our vets (Hunters Bar in Sheffield), Paragon Veterinary Referrals (in Wakefield) and us, he could not be saved. His remains will be laid in our garden beneath a stone inscribed 'I cannot lie by your fire', a very moving and sensitive poem dedicated to his own departed dog by American poet Robinson Jeffers. Rest in peace, our beautiful boy. We'll see you over the rainbow bridge.



Locksley Finch-Smith
2013 – 2023

On 24th July we had to make the hardest decision to say goodbye to our gorgeous boy Locksley. Although it was the hardest decision, it was ultimately the final act of love we could give him and we take comfort in knowing he's now at peace. Locksley was our first dog together – our first doggie love. He came to us at 8 weeks old and we were privileged to have him for nearly eleven years. He was a gentle,

sensitive, sometimes petulant boy, who we joked was a grumpy old man from a pup. He brought us joy and laughter and leaves a massive hole in our hearts. Someone once described Cavalier King Charles Spaniels as 'love sponges' and they couldn't have been more accurate in his case. He wanted to be wherever we were and wouldn't properly settle until both of us were with him. Give him a knee to sit on, a face to lick or any type of food and he was a happy boy. We'll miss his many different barks (which ranged from 'the cat has food and I don't' to 'I'm scared of that Tupperware'). We'll miss the 'face of joy' (being licked within an inch of your life); zoomies, the excited sneeze he gave every time we told him it was time for tea, falling asleep wrapped around our head, just seeing his eyes popping above the side of his stroller in his later years when limbs were sore, his cuddles, his cheeky 'joker' grin and the many random items he managed to get stuck to his nose. Most of all, we'll miss his unconditional love and companionship. Thank you for the amazing memories Locksley – you will always be our first doggie love.



**Bussell Buxton
2006 – 2022**

Bussell was born in 2006 on the Glenalmond Estate in Perthshire to a resident Border Terrier (the chief ratter) and a champion father, also from Perthshire, who we had known since 2000. He was the grandfather of our much-

loved Border Terrier called Wooster for whom we thought a companion would be just the ticket now that he was 3½ years old. We always thought the blue Border Terriers were the best looking (black coats with Harris tweed trousers) and Bussell was our third blue Border! When we collected Bussell, Wooster sat in the back of the car and turned his head to the corner and did not want to know anything about her. Soon after arriving home, he realised Bussell was here to stay and it did not take long before they became the best of friends playing endlessly. They chased each other round the house as if on a racetrack taking it in turns to be the leader. Bussell was named after the ballerina as she used to dance with her front feet in anticipation of her dinner. She amused us so much as she was always keen to join Wooster in his basket regardless of how much room there was, always managing to squeeze into the smallest space. He was such a gentleman and would never have jumped into bed with her. We had endless fun with them both with wonderful walks all over the country which they much enjoyed and believing regular exercise was much better for us all. Bussell and Wooster accompanied us everywhere both at work and play and they were always good company with a sense of mischief and fun. After losing Wooster at 18½ in early 2021, Bussell was very bereft and it was only after a holiday in Cornwall with other four legged friends and walks on the beach that she began to be her old self again. The bond between us became ever closer enjoying each other's company and she accompanied us wherever we went. Then suddenly in the autumn of 2022, Bussell developed kidney disease. We tried everything and despite the helpful advice and huge support of Honey's and others, we lost Bussell at the beginning of November. We felt very deprived as she was (only) 16½ and it meant that we had lost both of our best friends within 20 months of each other. We still miss Bussell enormously and keep expecting her to come round the corner. We have so much to thank our dogs for and not a day goes by when we do not think of them and wish they were still with us. How lucky we have been to have them in our lives for so long. We are so grateful for all the fun, loyalty and affection they gave us over many very happy years.



**Skye Simpkins
2010 – 2023**

Skye was born in 2010, to a mix of show and working dog parents which proved to be a good combination. She was a clever, energetic, fast and quick learning dog. She had a fulfilled life enjoying great walks and visiting

many places around the UK with the favourites being anywhere close to water as a keen swimmer. Skye especially liked the beaches of Cornwall. In later life she was diagnosed with heart disease which slowed her a little but she was still capable of a change of gear when needed. She enjoyed dignity and was bright and alert to the end. She is hugely missed by everyone who knew her.



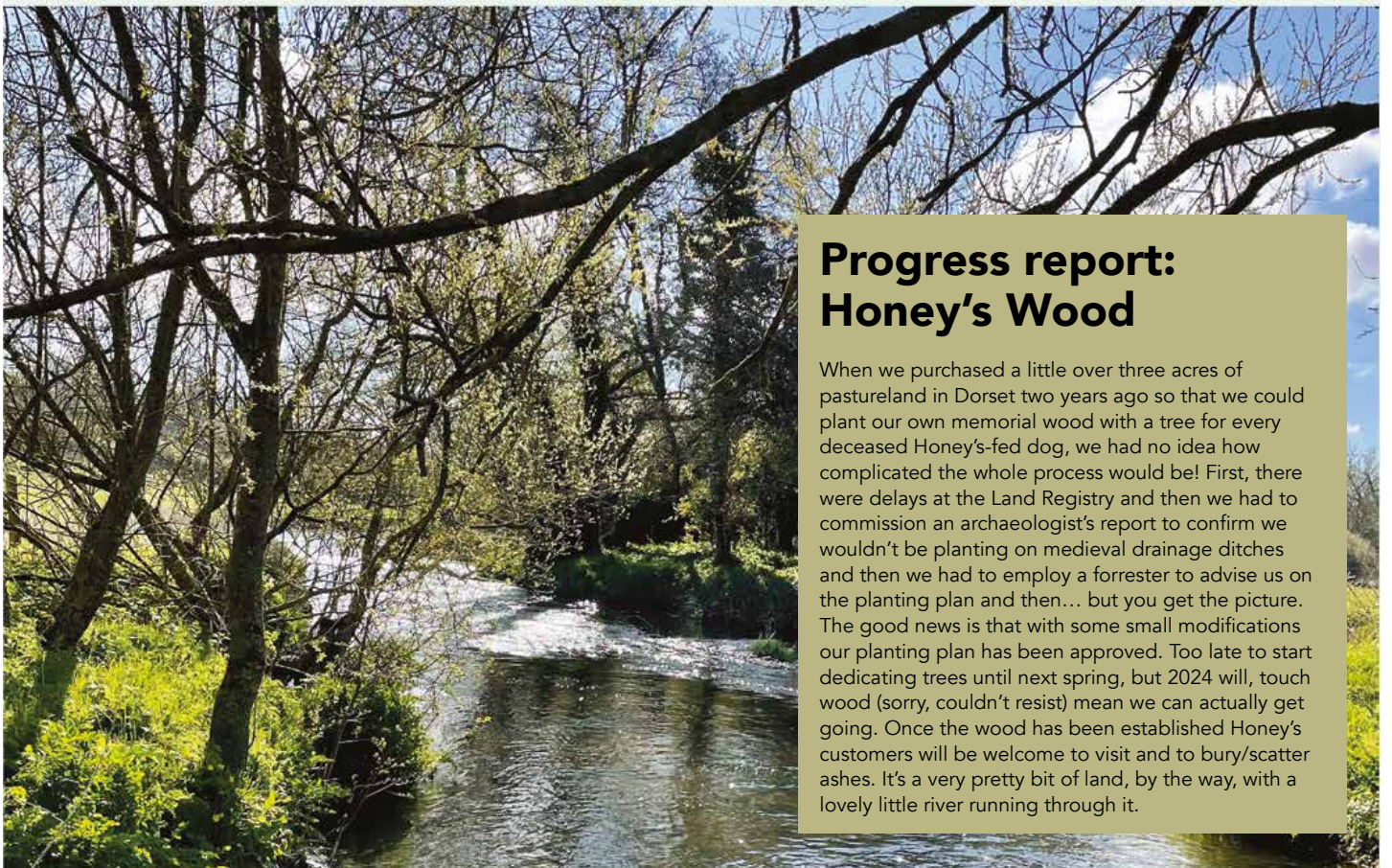
**Ruby Clinkard
2010 – 2023**

**Gunner Clinkard
2015 – 2023**

Ruby entered our lives like a tornado, she was a spirited puppy at best but mostly just all out naughty. She took over our lives and our

hearts and quickly grew in to a loving, knowing and gentle soul (although her defiant streak never quite left her). We didn't think we could love another dog like we did Rubes but then Gunner entered our lives when he was two years old. We'd missed his puppy stage but we certainly hadn't missed any of the fun of this clumsy, gentle giant, who completed our family. Ruby was the perfect big sister to this daft dog that she had to share us with. Together they were hilarious and wonderful in equal measure and have brought us years of full hearts and belly laughs. To lose them so close together has been unbearable but there is comfort in them still being together. The impact that having to say Goodbye to them both has had on everyone around us is testament to what special souls they are.

Thank you 'Ruby-Tuesday' and 'Gunner-Bear' for all the love, fun and memories.



Progress report: Honey's Wood

When we purchased a little over three acres of pastureland in Dorset two years ago so that we could plant our own memorial wood with a tree for every deceased Honey's-fed dog, we had no idea how complicated the whole process would be! First, there were delays at the Land Registry and then we had to commission an archaeologist's report to confirm we wouldn't be planting on medieval drainage ditches and then we had to employ a forester to advise us on the planting plan and then... but you get the picture. The good news is that with some small modifications our planting plan has been approved. Too late to start dedicating trees until next spring, but 2024 will, touch wood (sorry, couldn't resist) mean we can actually get going. Once the wood has been established Honey's customers will be welcome to visit and to bury/scatter ashes. It's a very pretty bit of land, by the way, with a lovely little river running through it.

Competition winners

In the last issue we held a photograph competition in which you had to submit a picture on the theme of 'The Eyes Have It'. The response was, as usual, overwhelming! We received hundreds of brilliant entries of which just a sample are featured here. Thank you, thank you to everyone who entered. We have made a note to include some free treats in with every dog's next order. If we have missed you it is a mistake on our part (well, on Jonathan's part because he was in charge and he can get a little confused at times) so please let us know in order that we can put it right. The winner, chosen with great difficulty, will receive a month of free food. The runners-up free treats. Thank you again!



Biscuit Parker



Connie Kendall



Dougal Brittain



Babio Leach



Cash McGibbon



Eddie Bowen-Jones



Baxter Morgan



Cleo Sankareh



Eddie Corke



Bertie Redfern



Coco Lozano Bermejo



Ella Venede



New 'LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE' Photo Competition. Win a month of free food

You know how innocent and peaceful they look when they are fast asleep? The new Honey's Competition is simplicity itself: submit a picture of your dog on the theme of 'Let Sleeping Dogs Lie'. First prize is one month of free Honey's (to the value of your most recent order) and there are 3 runners up prizes of either 6 packets of Beautiful Joe's or bones or biscuits to the same value. Rules? Barely any. You can submit up to three photographs and the judges' (appointed by Honey's) decision, no matter how unfair, will be final. Please email your entry to competition@honeysrealdogfood.com before 28th February 2024 or post it to Honey's Photo Competition, Darling's House, Salisbury Road, Pewsey SN9 5PZ.



Flo Murray



Frankie Key



Fuge Kulcsar



Emi Sterbova



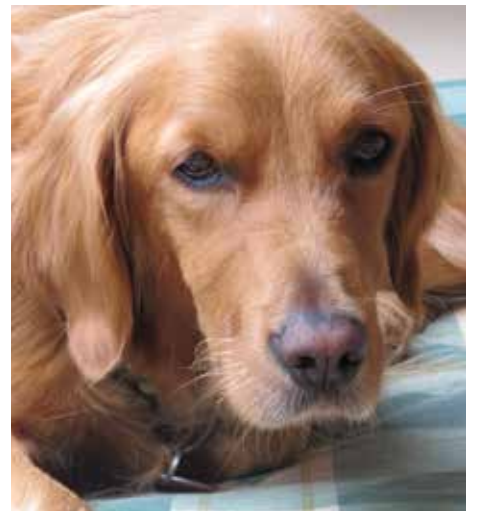
Frank Jessop



Grace Boswell



Frankie Wingrove



Guus Palmer



Forest Gorrie



Frodo Ng



Henry Bush



Honey Sankareh



Jak Wakeford



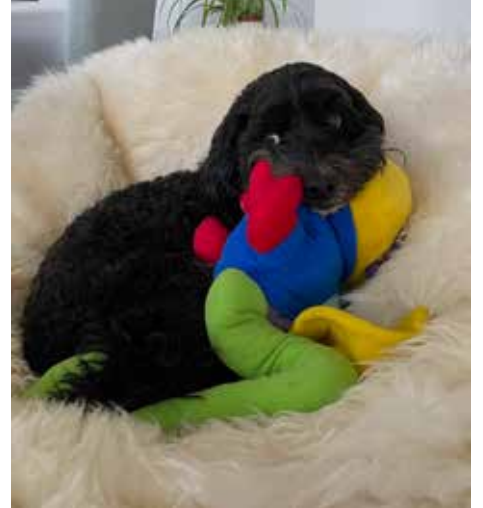
Kipper Le Bourgeois



Humphrey Carr



Jura Morley



Lenny Carr



Jack and Jarvis Andresen



Kash Enderle



Loki Gorrie



Syd Turnbull



Ziggy Lancaster



Chopi Price-Rees



Luna Wagland



Mallie Bunn



Mollie Carlen



Luna Wilcox



Maple Palmer



Mole Lever



Mabel McGregor



Marnie Gibb



Monty Crane



Maisie Smith



Meredith Whitbread



Myrtle Gorrie



Nuno O'Reilly



Pepito & Flo Dick-Durward



Riley Martin

RUNNER UP



Orla lever



Percy Bourne



Rixi Morris-Jones



Patch Walton



Pickle Bury



Og Palmer



Ronnie Prosser



Rory Walker



Bear Gambogi



Wren Card



Rosie Brittain



Scout Williams



Tilly Humphries



Rubix Fleming



Rupert Kennedy



Tirion Taylor



Tapio Spurrier



Winnie Barnes



Sofi Cotton

The Honey's Directory of Everything



Free books. Free advice. Free goodies.

If you know a dog lover who is interested in switching to a raw diet or who has a dog with health issues, do, please, put them in touch. We don't mind if they never, ever plan to become a customer. Indeed, we are happy to provide advice, support and even recipes. The most important thing is to do the best for their dogs. Also, if you would like free copies of our books to pass on or sell as a fundraiser for a good cause, all you have to do is ask. If someone you refer to us does decide to order (and they will be under no pressure to do so) we will, of course, say thank you in a tangible way – just let us know. Finally, a huge thank you for any referrals or introductions, which are greatly appreciated.



A personalised Honey's Dog Bowl

A personalised Honey's Dog Bowl with your dog's name on the outside and Honey's on the inside. Price: £25 for small, £27 for the medium and £31 for the large BUT free, of course, if you recommend a new customer who orders from us!



Our original Superdog Cape/ Towel Thingie

Is it as cape? Is it a towel? Either way, it is the perfect way to dry off a wet dog. It comes in four sizes but only one colour: black. Small £15. Medium £18. Large £21. X Large £25.50. XX Large £30. Matching towel £6.

We are very grateful for any new customers you introduce and have a small selection of gifts (As G B Stern said: 'Silent gratitude isn't very much use to anyone.') to offer you by way of thanks. Please ask for details.



Good things come in small sizes – 250g to be precise

A quick reminder that almost every single formula we offer is available in 250g as well as 500g chubs (the rather silly name used for our sausage like packaging). Please do ask for smaller sizes if it would be more convenient for you.



Please send us your photos!

We love to see pictures of our four-legged customers. Please email them to: info@honeysrealdogfood.com Thank you, thank you!



Gift Hampers

Don't say it with flowers, say it with Honey's! Prices for Gift Hampers start at £45 including delivery. We'll be happy to include a personalised card, too, and lots of little extras (such as book and treats).

%'s!

Each Honey's recipe has a different % of bone, offal and vegetable. To find the % that suits you best, please call!



Honey's Bespoke

We now offer a Bespoke service whereby we will make raw or cooked food entirely to order. Our own vets and nutritionists can devise recipes for you if required. Our Bespoke service starts at around £250 a month.



"Behold the secret to happiness."



Beautiful Joe's

We offer two types of handmade, air-dried treats: Tasty Lamb for £6 (in a red packet) and Yummy Liver for £8 (in a yellow packet). We give away treats for every packet sold and since we started this ten years ago, we have donated almost £500,000 of treats to dogs in need. We also offer a snazzy yellow training tin (£4.00), gift packs (from £10) and subscriptions (place a regular order and we will top it up with free treats).



"Oh yes, and some dog biscuits...!"



The Honey's Working Dog Food Range

You want choice? We have choice! We make six free range recipes and five wild recipes. Most can be ordered with and without vegetable, and come in two sizes – 250g and 500g.

Free range Working Dog Food	With Veg 250g	Without Veg 250g	With Veg 500g	Without Veg 500g
Free range Chicken	£1.26	£2.07	£2.52	£4.13
Free range Duck	£1.41	£2.07	£2.81	£4.13
Free range Pork	£1.62	£2.17	£3.24	£4.34
Free range Turkey	£1.41	£2.07	£2.81	£4.13
Pasture Fed Beef	£1.56	£1.89	£3.13	£3.77
Pasture fed Lamb	£1.64	£1.87	£3.28	£3.73

Wild Working Dog Food	With Veg 250g	Without Veg 250g	With Veg 500g	Without Veg 500g
Rabbit	£2.40	£2.86	£4.79	£5.72
Game	£2.36	£2.69	£4.75	£5.30
Venison	£2.40	£2.86	£4.79	£5.72
Pheasant	£2.21	N/A	£4.41	N/A

Please note that all our food - especially our 'wild' range - is seasonal. Although we keep as much stock as we can in our freezers we can't always guarantee availability.

Active Working Dog Food	500g
Pasture fed Beef	£3.13
Free range Chicken	£2.52

Certified Organic Dog Food

Certified Organic Dog Food	With Veg 250g	Without Veg 250g	With Veg 500g	Without Veg 500g
Pork	N/A	N/A	£5.81	N/A
Chicken	N/A	£3.23	£4.94	N/A
Turkey	N/A	N/A	£4.94	N/A
Beef	N/A	N/A	£5.76	N/A

Please note we also offer organic pork tails, pork belly ribs and pork heart.



The Honey's Lean Recipe Range

Looking for something low in fat and/or low in protein? Our Lean range comes in four recipes.

Lean Dog Food	250g	500g
Lean, pasture fed Lamb	£1.96	£3.91
Lean, free range Pork	£1.92	£3.85
Lean, free range Duck	£1.67	£3.34
Lean, pasture fed, Beef & Washed Tripe	£2.12	£4.10



Free range bones and wings

Looking for something that Fifi or Fido can get her or his teeth into? We offer a wide range of free range bones and wings. Bones are important for two reasons. Firstly, they provide vital nutrients including calcium, complex (good) fats and vitamins. Secondly, the actual chewing of the bones is what keeps a dog's teeth and gums healthy. Chewing and gnawing is also, believe it or not, excellent exercise and helps a dog to stay fit. We recommend giving your dog a fresh bone approximately once per week. Wings, on the other paw, are the perfect complete meal.

Free range bones and wings	
2 knuckle end pasture fed beef bones	£4.35
5 large pasture fed beef lollipop bones	£8.30
5 medium pasture fed beef lollipop bones	£8.30
2 medium pasture fed beef lollipop bones	£3.80
8 small pasture fed beef lollipop bones	£8.30
5kg of free range chicken wings	£16.95
1kg of 3 joint free range chicken wings	£3.90
1kg of free range duck wings	£4.90
1kg pasture fed lamb ribs	£5.45

DIY ingredients Save up to 33%

Why not make your own dog food using our ethically sourced ingredients? Not only can we supply you with wild, free range and organic 'makings', but we can also provide you with advice, recipes and support. We reckon that going the DIY route saves most of our customers between 25% and 33%.

Beef heart pasture fed per 1kg	£4.25
Beef tongue, pasture fed 1kg	£8.50
Beef liver pasture fed per 200g	£1.60
Beef tripe pasture fed washed in water per 1kg	£6.00
Chicken carcass free range per kg	£3.80
Chicken necks free range x 10	£5.45
Duck carcass free range per kg	£4.35
Duck necks free range x 10	£8.20
Lamb heart pasture fed per kilo	£5.80
Lamb trachea pasture fed x 4	£3.80
Pork certified organic pig tails x 6	£3.20
Pork certified organic belly ribs (750g approx.)	£6.90
Pork certified organic heart per kg	£5.45
Pork free range tongue x 2	£3.30
Pork free range trotters x 2	£4.35

Special DIY boxes Save even more

If you have the freezer space, why not take advantage of our special DIY boxes and save even more £££?

Special Offer Boxes – big savings!	
DIY taster box free range	£31.50
Duck carcass free range 14kg	£56.90
Chicken carcass free range 14kg	£49.25
Lamb ribs pasture fed 9kg	£43.80

Certified organic beef bone broth

Made using certified organic, grass-fed beef bones and filtered water with carrot, unrefined, unpasteurized and unfiltered apple cider vinegar aka 'with mother', thyme, turmeric and black pepper – all of which are also certified organic. 200ml £5.42. 500ml £10.90

Handmade Biscuits

We used to make our handmade biscuits at home but we got fed up with having to stay up all night baking, so now a local baker produces them for us. We use only the finest ingredients (including wholewheat flour) and, as you would expect, we have no truck with preservatives, sugar, salt, colouring or other chemicals. 100g of natural bone shaped biscuits or cheesy hearts will cost you £3.28.



"I really just need the one."



RAW PROOF

The results of our 24-month research investigation into a species-appropriate diet for dogs is now available. You can download a PDF from our website or ask us to send you a hard copy (free of charge).



The Real Honey's Dog Food story

Do you know someone who is interested in switching to raw feeding? Would a copy of Jonathan's book help? Please ask for a FREE copy in your next order.

Our packaging is 100% recyclable. We use packaging that takes up 20% less space in a freezer than a tub and weighs 90% less.

Our books are also available as FREE downloads on our website



Phone: 01672 620 260

(Mon-Fri 9am-5pm)

Email: info@honeysrealdogfood.com
www.honeysrealdogfood.com



All Honey's literature is printed using vegetable based inks on FSC® approved paper. FSC stands for the Forest Stewardship Council.

10 good reasons to recommend Honey's



1. Free, expert advice

We are happy to help with free, unlimited, expert advice, tips and diet plans even if you never, ever plan to become a customer. If you want to make the food yourself (which is surprisingly easy) we can explain which ingredients to buy and how to keep the cost down.



2. A diet designed specifically for your dog

We will ask you all about your dog – his or her age, weight, gender, breed (if relevant), allergies, health issues, likes and dislikes, level of exercise and more. We like a photo if it is easy. Then we will recommend a specific diet designed to ensure that he or she receives the optimum level of nutrition.



3. The Honey's Health Team is at your service

Diet can make a huge difference to health. Certain canine health conditions require certain diets. We employ a Health Team (which includes vets and vet nurses) to look after the poorly dogs we feed, and they are at your service. It is one of the reasons why so many vets in private practice recommend Honey's.

Free book! Available as a download or we will happily post it to you.



4. Honey's is made from organic, free range and wild ingredients

We only use the highest possible quality and freshest ingredients that would, if they weren't becoming dog food, be 100% suitable for human consumption. This is really important not just for ethical reasons but because high quality ingredients contain much higher nutritional values. Our meat is all certified organic, wild or free range.



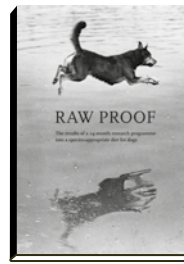
5. Our food is British and seasonal

All our ingredients come from British farms and are, therefore, seasonal. The artisanal nature of our production means that each recipe changes from batch to batch – much better for your dog.



6. Honey's food is complete

Our food meets all the most vigorous nutritional guidelines as set out by the European Pet Food Industry Federation (FEDIAF), the Pet Food Manufacturers Association (PFMA) and the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO). We achieve this without adding any supplements.



7. Honey's invests in scientific research

We've contributed to the growing scientific evidence that species appropriate (aka raw) feeding is the optimum diet for dogs by investing in major research. Please ask for copies of our research paper: *Raw Proof: The results of a 24-month research programme into a species-appropriate diet for dogs*, which was first presented by Dr Nick Thomson to Fellows of the Raw Feeding Veterinary Society.



8. We campaign for better farm animal welfare

We visit all our producers regularly to make sure that they meet our exacting farm animal welfare standards (which we publish). We donate 1% of sales to Compassion in World Farming. By the way, we never turn any charity that approaches us away empty pawed.



9. Honey's works to minimise its environmental pawprint

We work hard to minimise our impact on the environment. We have achieved ISO 14001 (which is awarded to companies with high environmental standards). Our packing is 100% recyclable.



10. Honey's is a small, family business

We are a small, family business (so small that the founder and his son are happy to give you their personal emails in case they can help with anything) and we believe in traditional service. Honey's has no sales function and no sales staff. We never try to persuade anyone to buy our food. When you talk to our team they are speaking from the heart.

Honey's is Carbon Neutral and we believe we have the most environmentally friendly packaging for raw dog food in the UK. We are members of 1% for the Planet and our founder is a trustee of the Rainforest Trust.



Why not all raw dog food is equal

It is definitely not our style to be critical of other raw dog food producers. On the other hand, we are concerned about much of the commercially available raw dog food. And, we are not alone. A growing number of vets agree. Indeed, Dr Nick Thompson, founder of the Raw Feeding Veterinary Society, recently said:

The ideal raw food diet is varied, uses high quality ingredients and is properly formulated to make sure it includes all the necessary nutrition. One concern is intensively farmed meat, which may contain higher levels of antibiotics and other harmful chemicals. Another worry is formulations that contain too much or too little of certain ingredients e.g. rice or bone. A surprisingly high percentage of raw food diets (as differentiated from raw food meals, most of which are not 'balanced and complete' on their own) may not be nutritionally adequate. Variety, again, is key to providing all required nutrients appropriately.

You can be confident that Honey's is made from the finest quality ingredients and is 100% complete.