

Paws Express



Newsletter of
Alexandra & District
Dog Obedience Club Inc

Patrons: Betty Tulloch, Doug Norman B.Sc.(Hons), B.Vet.Sc.(Hons)

September 2024

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Hello everyone. Two months left of classes and then the silly season is upon us!!!

It's been a big year, lots of happy dogs and hopefully, nearly happy owners. I say nearly as sometimes we look at others in our class and think "gee I wish we could do that!!" We all judge ourselves against

others and sometimes we forget or don't see how far we have come!! We need to remember we all advance at different times and different ways.

We have the following activities coming up:

The AGM, we need new people for the Committee. Nomination forms are available for anyone interested, our club is run by volunteers and the more help we can get, the better we can make our it.

The Alex Show with our final club obedience and Rally O comp for Level 4 and 5 and puppies through to level 3 will hold demonstration classes. This gives our dogs a new experience, and allows us to show off what we have learned!! It's a great day, and a day to socialise and mingle with others in the club. More information to come.

Fun Day with lots of games and activities for us and our dogs. Races and eating challenges!!! Ending with a lovely BBQ lunch. Come and bring the family!! It's a laugh and again great experience for our dogs. There's even a fancy-dress competition so get your thinking caps on!!!

As the weather gets warmer remember to bring water for our 4-legged friends, so they can have a drink if needed. Water for us is also not a bad idea!!

Enjoy the next few weeks as I know I will be.

Thank you.

President Debbie

Committee Members 2024

Debbie Callaway (President)
Vacant (Vice Pres.)
Geoff Hyland (Sec/Treasurer)
Jeanne Roberts
Shane (Frog) Freaan
Fiona Mackey
Jenny Hyland
Rosalie Collins
Janene Millar
Sandice McAuley

Life Members

Betty Tulloch
Greg Tulloch (Dec)
Lynne Walter
Maggie Hamill
Julee Hosking (Dec)
Bronwyn McFadyen
Jeanne Roberts
Barb Tanner

Honorary Members

Doug Norman B.Sc(Hons) B.Vet.Sc(Hons)
Mike Hosking
Chris Chester
David Roberts

Instructors

Jeanne Roberts
Ann Jelinek
Pam Poole
Jenny Hyland
Trudie Brooks
Debbie Callaway
Lyn Scotchmoor

Newsletter: David Roberts

Join the Alexandra & District Obedience Club on Facebook

<http://www.alexandradogclub.org.au> ph. 0456583611



TRAINING TIPS



ENGAGEMENT!

The Importance of Engagement in Dog Training

“Training a dog is not just about teaching them commands, but about building a relationship”. ~ Unknown ~



If you have been in one of my classes in the past couple of years you will be aware of my emphasis on “engagement” and its importance if you are to have a successful working relationship with your dog.

Exactly what is engagement and why is it so important in dog training?

We are accustomed to thinking of engagement within a human context. The dictionary definition refers in part to “the relationship between two partners”, an emotional involvement or commitment. This definition can easily be transferred to the relationship you have with your dog.

To have an engaged partnership both parties need to be actively participating in the training.

Unfortunately, all too often in classes we will see a dog who is totally disengaged. A disengaged dog is distracted and more interested in its surroundings, and ignoring its handler.

A dog who is engaged has learnt that the most exciting, interesting person is their human. This is where the love, praise, fun games and rewards come from.

Engagement is your dog paying sustained attention to you because it wants to be with you and be involved in whatever activity you are going to do together. To foster and develop this closeness we can use food, toys, play or some other type of interaction that you know your dog loves.

You might think that this sounds exactly like Focus, and Focus is what you finally achieve. Engagement is having a connection with your dog. It means your dog stays with you, not only physically but also, and importantly, mentally, without being asked to. This in turn leads to it being focused on you and wanting you to initiate a fun activity you can both participate in.

An engaged dog wants to focus and work with you, paying attention to you no matter what you are doing or where you are together e.g. An engaged dog will watch its human intently for their next word; it will check in when on a walk, either on lead or off lead.

Without engagement you will struggle to teach new behaviours. You need to build a strong desire for the food, toys and/or play you have. Do this by making your training fun and exciting e.g. Let’s say you know your dog loves to fetch a ball. You will have his complete attention/ focus – he will be engaged with you – while you hold the ball. Use it to lure him into a sit, immediately mark that behaviour with a happy “Yes!” and then throw the ball for him. When he picks up the ball call “Come!” and repeat the exercise. You are creating a special training environment where your dog is naturally paying attention to you and where your dog is an eager participant. Without him realising it you are teaching two behaviours you want him to learn, “Sit” and “Come” while you’re both having fun. After a short while stop the session and put the ball away then simply talk to your dog and tell him how wonderful he is.

This is an engaged dog that will stay with you and focus on you. Once you have developed an environment where your dog pays continuous attention to you then you have a dog that is very easy to train.

6 tips to practice that help build engagement.

1. We all walk our dogs, so, watch your dog (no talking on your mobile) and reward him freely for checking in with you i.e. looking up, or looking back at you.

2. Trick training. Teach your dog a few tricks. There are many tricks, Spin, Middle, Paws Up, Sit Pretty, to name just a few.
3. Nose work. Dogs love to use their noses. Toss small treats all over your lawn and watch your dog have fun finding them. Have a collection of various sized containers and hide treats in some of them, let you dog “nose” them out.
4. Hide & Seek. This can be played inside or outside. You hide and let your dog find you.
5. Indoor food games. “Now-you-see-it! Now you don’t!” or “The Cup Game”. You will need 3 or 4 plastic cups. Show your dog a treat. Place it under one of the cups then move them all about. Let your dog have fun finding the hidden treat.
6. A sniffing walk. When you go for a walk, let your dog meander and sniff as much as he wants to.

Everything our dogs do is based on motivation. They are motivated to access something pleasant. Motivated to avoid something unpleasant. Using the above activities, you are motivating your dog to want to engage with you – you are fostering engagement. ENGAGEMENT will guarantee FOCUS and a happy, well-adjusted dog who is easy to train and a pleasure to work with.

Ref: “How to Train Your Dog to be Engaged with You”. Nate Schoemer “Tugdogs” Engagement in Dog Training: What is it and why do you need it?

Be the most interesting human your dog has ever met.

~Ralph Weber~



FAREWELL LUNCH FOR BARB.

On the 25th August a number of club members had a lovely lunch at the Corner Hotel, Alexandra, to farewell Past President Barb. It was a fun occasion with lots of laughs and reminiscing. Everyone enjoyed the delicious cake made by our very own chef, President Debbie. We presented Barb with a Life Membership Award in recognition of her dedication and service to our club and we wished her well as she starts a new chapter in her life – the bowling greens of Murrindindi Shire might never be the same again!! Good luck and best wishes Barb.



"GETTING TO KNOW YOU"

MEET YOUR COMMITTEE & INSTRUCTORS.

Did you know that the dedicated team who form your Club Committee and conduct your training sessions are all volunteers! They all have in common a love of dogs and have many years of experience to share with you, the Club Members.



SEAN (FROG) FREAN – Committee Member.

When and why did you join the Club?

I first joined the club in February 2021.

What do you like best about the Club?

I like the fact that every week is different. I also like that everyone is willing to help and the enjoyment the dogs and owner get out of the classes.

What type of dogs do you have?

I have an Australian Cattle Dog.

What attracted you to that type of dog?

Their loyalty and how smart they are.

What activities do you most enjoy doing with your dog?

I enjoy walking and throwing his frisbee!



Chance

JANENE MILLAR: Committee Member and Relief Instructor.

When and why did you join the Club?

I joined the club 3 years ago when I got Maxi as a pup.

What do you like best about the Club?

I like the easy-going friendliness of the club and how everyone is so helpful.

What type of dogs do you have?

Maxi is a stumpy tailed red cattle dog 🐕

What attracted you to that type of dog?

I used to breed and show cattle dogs many, many years ago. When I got out of showing I joined an obedience club. This was also a long time ago and I just love the breed!!

What activities do you most enjoy doing with your dog?

Maxi is an active dog who spends time on the farm with me. He is always wanting to chase a ball, and he lives playing with his toys and he especially loves kitty. However, we both love doing agility activities together.



Maxi

FIONA MACKEY – Committee member.

When and why did you join the Club?

I joined the Alexandra and District Dog Obedience Club in about 2016. I had been heavily involved in another Dog club and was a strong believer in obedience training and the socialisation of my dog.

What do you like best about the Club?

The friendships of like-minded people.

What type of dogs do you have?

I have a rare breed called a Lagotto Romagnolo. The Lagotto Romagnolo is an Italian breed of dog. They were water-retrieving dogs in marshlands in northern Italy. When the marshlands were drained, the dogs were used to find truffles on the plains and hills of Romagna.

They are affectionate, easy to train and become very attached to their owners, make good companions and watch dogs.

What attracted you to that type of dog?

As a child I was always surrounded by dogs, I have memories of my grandfather's English pointers, my first family dog that I remember was an Aussie Terrier (a couple of them), and then pound puppies.

My first dogs of my own were also bitzas, a Staffie/ Kelpie cross that I got as a puppy from the pound and then a dumped pointer cross. I was a member of the Geelong Obedience Dog club (committee member there also) and was active in dog sports with both dog's, doing obedience with them.

Around 1994 I saw a segment on Burkes Backyard about the Lagotto Romagnolo breed that got my interest, this was when they had only just been brought into Australia. Fast forward to 2015 when I was in the position to be looking for my next dog, and generating the list of wants and don't wants in my next dog, such as wanting a relatively long lived, athletic and smart dog that was suitable to doing dog sports, and I decided the Lagotto was going to be the breed I wanted to go with.

What activities do you most enjoy doing with your dog?

Pretty much anything! Most particularly the friendships I have developed with like-minded people, who are more than likely as nuts as I am about all things doggy (and more particularly all things Lagotto).

Having previously done obedience I was keen to venture into some of the other sports that are now out there.

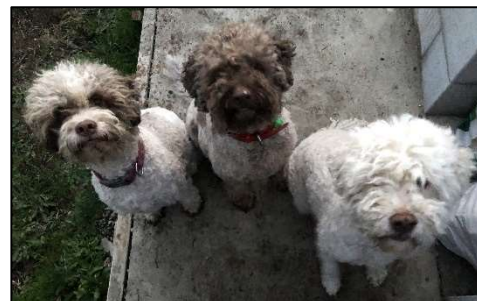
I got into tracking with my two original Lagottos (Mack and Maddy), and haven't looked back. I spend 4 months every year from May going flat out, travelling all over the state doing Tracking Trials. It involves training your dog to follow a ground scent trail and find socks along the track and the "lost" person at the end of the trail. This is done in the bush or open farmland.

Since I acquired another Lagotto, who is also doing tracking, I have also started track and search, which is designed to mimic real life situations where someone has wandered off and gotten lost. This is done in more urban environments and can be done in residential areas during the day and at night.

I have also started doing Scent works with my dogs, which mimics the work detection dogs do to locate an odour and communicate to their handler that the odour has been found. At trials it can be simulated in an interior environment, exterior environment on vehicles or in containers.

Other activities I am looking to venture into in the next year include the endurance test (if it doesn't kill me!), some rally, backpacking and trick dog trials. I did try starting Mack on retrieving, but none of my dogs like the sound of guns, so I didn't go further into this, which is a pity as I haven't heard of any other Lagottos in this arena in Australia at this time. In short, I have attempted to harness the characteristics of the breed and focus my interest in the dog sports that capture their abilities.

Most recently I have also assisted in the start-up of the Lagotto Romagnolo Club of Victoria.



Verona Maddy Mack

ROSALIE COLLIE – Committee member.

I joined the club in 2023 because I had just purchased a chihuahua puppy and wanted to train him to be a good companion. I had recently moved to Yea and chose this area because I knew there was a dog obedience club in Alexandra.

When and why did you join the Club?

The friendly members and instructors and the fact that training is during the day. The last club I belonged to held training classes at night – not a good time for me.

What type of dogs do you have?

I have two chihuahuas. I chose them 'by accident'. I was seeking a small dog because I was lonely and had enjoyed the company of my previous dogs. I have had many different breeds of dogs, including an Australian Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Rough Collie, Standard Poodle, and four greyhounds.

What attracted you to that type of dog?

I couldn't find any small dogs available nearby or in shelters. They all seem to be the first to find homes. Then one day I found an advertisement for a female longhaired chihuahua puppy in Seymour. I contacted the breeder, but this one had been sold and she only had a young smooth coat male. I asked to visit to see him not thinking that he would be the one, but he was. A year later I went back to get another pup and came home with his litter sister- Martha. I like their feisty nature and responsiveness to learning new tricks, especially after four very staid greyhounds.

What activities do you most enjoy doing with your dog?

We love our walks along the rail trail, also curling up together in a chair in a sunny window. Chihuahuas are very affectionate and love nothing more than a warm knee to cuddle into.



George

SANDICE M^CAULEY – Committee member.

When and why did you join the Club?

I joined ADDOC last year, 2023 with my beautiful pup Molly, a happy little Moodle with a heart of gold – as well as being a little golden puppy.

What do you like best about the Club?

When the AGM came up, I put up my hand to be involved in this great club because I know what great work they do – so much more than turning up every Sunday in hail, frost and stinking heat to help new puppy parents and puppies bond as well as build respectful relationships. I wanted to help these awesome people and contribute in any way I could – but first I had to learn myself. Whilst I have always had dogs and taken some to puppy school over the years, I really didn't have much experience and wanted to learn.

I persisted with puppy classes alternating the two young dogs with classes. However, despite good intentions, other demanding priorities – family business, another public service role, as well as my not-so-great back made me step back from the weekly training. However, I have made the commitment to help this awesome club and fully intend to help in any way that I can and I looking forward to a new year on the ADDOC committee, if they will have me.



Little Molly

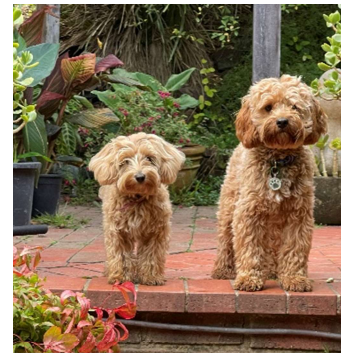
What type of dogs do you have?

I had a bad year in 2023, losing three dogs including Molly last October to a wild dog attack.

When I returned to puppy class with the other then young puppy Harley (Cavoodle) and then later Ellie (Moodle) I was given so much support and care to ensure that both puppies and I were able to build our bonds and confidence.

What activities do you most enjoy doing with your dog?

I enjoy travelling in my campervan with my husband, Ray and fur babies, Harley and Ellie. The dogs just bring a lovely level of relaxation whilst also making you get up and walk around meeting new friends on the way.



Ellie and Harley



GRADUATES

Family Companion Certificate (FCC) to Level 4



Pam and Forrest



Jenny and Theo

MEMBERS' COMPETITION 4TH AUGUST 2024

CCD Obedience



1st John and *Sergie* Equal 2nd David and *Ellie* Bronwyn and *Pearl*

Rally Advanced



1st Joyce and *Nessie* 2nd Jenny and *Maggie* 3rd Janene and *Maxi*

Rally Novice



1st Bronwyn and Pearl 2nd Lyn and Penny 3rd Jenny and Maggie

Welcome NEW MEMBERS

<u>21st July</u>	
Puppies	Beginners
Hayley Johnson & <i>Comet</i>	Rosalie & <i>Martha</i>
Jackie Ashe Browning & <i>Sofia</i>	Sally Meggitt & <i>Winston</i>
Daryl Porter & <i>Loki</i>	Maggie Rigby & <i>Tig</i>
	Belinda Shaw & <i>Jindi</i>
<u>8th September</u>	
Puppies	Beginners
Kylie Arnold & <i>Tex</i>	Melinda Pullen & <i>Bella</i>
Deb Richardson & <i>Bess</i>	Sarah Simpson & <i>Bailey</i>
Cindianne Slorach & <i>Pepper</i>	