



Pause 4 Paws and Claws

Glebe NSW 2037

We jokingly refer to it as the Glebeian Triangle—the area bounded by Victoria Park at Parramatta Road and Glebe Point Road, Wentworth Park next to the dog track, and the large park at Glebe Point at the end of the road in Toxteth Estates as the tip of the peninsula is known.

We enjoy tipping people to great places to take their pets—whether they be dogs, cats, ferrets, bunnies, or even parrots. We actually have a harness for our large Eclectus parrot and though dogs and cats aren't allowed into indoor restaurants, we found out that we could bring our parrot to the table at one of our faves—The Mixing Pot on St John's Road in Glebe—as long as he remained on my shoulder, under control, with a birdie poop catcher diaper on. Though we love the Italian restaurant that has been an icon for decades, we still weren't brave enough to try it on, even though Jackson is well behaved, has curiosity for unusual cuisine, impeccable table manners and certainly would attract attention as he chomped through a grissini stick.

But if you want to eat with your dog (or parrot, or cat under control), there is a wealth of restaurants on Glebe Point Road, you can also go to the Fish Market and even a couple of doors down from The Mixing Pot at DigiKaf (174 St Johns Road), you can surf the net while stroking the pet! Yep, it has an indoor café area with web connections as well as a backyard area where pets can dine with you on a diet of varied bistro food.

We encountered DigiKaf because the owner contacted us when he saw our first issue about having our magazine at his café, and it's one of many places in Glebe and the surrounding areas you can find Urban Animals. When we unleashed our magazine last October, we spotlighted Newtown and Woollahra, then Leichhardt and Mosman. Because of time constraints in putting together a 36 page issue, we were unable to venture again to the Pittwater area where we enjoyed a Dog Day In The Park, but thought that with the large number of inner urban animal lovers, we'd focus on Glebe and do the Northern Beaches as well as Fairfield, which have a great array of off-leash parks, for our next issue.

When we were living in Chippendale, we used to take our Dalmatians, senior Mick and junior Jerri, out for a run at the fenced St Andrews Oval within the University of Sydney—until one day, we were asked not to return since it is part of a private school—and also at Victoria Park, which is kind of dangerous since it bounds both City Road and Parramatta Road without fencing. Mick, our lead Dalmatian, used to love hopping into the pond and swimming or striding around and since he was controllable by whistle and voice, there was never a threat of him peeling off into traffic. Still, we wanted somewhere better.

So we tried out Wentworth Park which is bounded by Wattle Street and Bridge Road, but it's unfenced too and unless you went early in the morning on weekends, it's taken over by soccer and cricket players. Still Wentworth Park is an excellent place to go to exercise your dog or take it on a lead.

Just across the road is the Fish Market where, though you can't take the dogs into the sheds and shops, you can easily commandeer an outside table to relax, have sushi or fried fish as well as a variety of snacks from the Blackwattle deli or the excellent Waterside Fruit & Vegetable shop. And who can resist the pelicans as they stride around the wharf, mooching treats? Our dogs were enthralled but not excited at these clumsy birds and though fascinated with them, still kept their distance.

We were able to get permission to dine outside at Doyles a couple of times by having the dogs next to an outdoor table but tethered to the fence that borders the back laneway, lying at our side. It's easy to get some healthy treats for them by simply having some raw fish chopped up though they always wanted chips, being the dogs they are.

But the real two finds in the area are a smallish reserve off the beaten track where Leichhardt Street ends off Glebe Point Road and the massive confines of Bicentennial Park and Jubilee Park which are at the end of Glebe Point Road, connected to the Harold Park Raceway and also accessible from The Crescent off the M4's City West Link.

First the hidden treasure. Blackwattle Bay Park is a dogleg shaped park that sits on a slope right at the water's edge with a magnificent view of the city and Anzac Bridge with the added bonus of a bike track along the water. Even more enticing, there is a barbecue setup between Leichhardt Street and Cook Street where the park ends with a comfortable set of shady trees, spectacular vista and protected areas.

Fortunately, the water's edge is not accessible to dogs, being a metre higher than the water, which is a blessing since the sign at the edge clearly warns of the shark danger there. No doubt it's

due to the temptations of the Fish Market just across the bay. But it's a lovely walk in a gorgeous neighbourhood into the park from Glebe Point Road and a different route out past cottages and striking houses to the next stop.

At the very bottom of Glebe Point Road is a huge series of parks areas, but sadly, the artists' loft and old warehouse that housed a wonderful dog-friendly café is no longer—a victim to development. But there is no limit to what you can do within the hectares of parks which also have great parking facilities. Starting at the little Pope Paul VI Reserve, again with those spectacular views of the city, you meander through a paved concourse where you'll find couples smooching on the benches and fishermen on the waterside, while on the other side, dozens of dogs of all sizes and breeds cavort, chase balls and Frisbees (or each other in play), and occasionally drop into the canal that serves as an often putrid stormwater drain.



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If your dog is trained to run beside your bicycle, this is an excellent area to take that mountain bike for a ride and Fido for a furious run. Once you head over the small bridge on the canal, you're in off leash heaven and I've circled this area on a bike countless times and met all sort of characters attracted to our dogs who zip around as a pair of freelancers. We've never had an incident and it just seems a natural place for dogs to socialise.

Another added bonus is the toilets, picnic tables and barbecue near the Crescent end of the park where you'll often find a cult of pet owners lounging over the snags cooking away on the grill or picnic parties of animal owners circled by their brood. It's a magic sort of place and gorgeous at either dawn or sunset with mutts milling everywhere.

If you work up an appetite and need refuelling, Glebe Point Road has a plethora of cafes and restaurants which will take dogs outside that offer every kind of food and beverage option. Working your way back up the hill, there's a range of coffee shops but within a block, there's the gorgeous Neumann's Deli at 379, the standard Aussie eatery Spot at 367 and the fantastic Bakery Restaurant right next door with a selection of meat pies and sweets as well as breads, rolls and other treats. All have sidewalk tables which are allowable for canine (or other animal) companions.

Halfway to Parramatta Road is The Craven, right next to the Valhalla Cinema where an enviable selection of breakfast delights compete with their hearty pasta dishes and other temptations. Past another round of cafes and restaurants with back yard areas, there's the yummy La Vera Pizza right next to the Glebe Veterinary Hospital at 113.

Vet Tony Sheldon at that practice has done his time in Aspen, Wales, New Zealand and Surry Hills where he has an associated practice. He's also the author of two books, "The Howl & The

Pussycat" and "The Trouble With Harvey". He's a fab vet too, we having taken Mick to him on his last day to confirm a twisted stomach before taking Mick off to the University's wonderful clinics at 65 Parramatta Rd just around the corner to be eased into the afterlife. We'll never forget both clinics' kindnesses.

But hey, back to food and walks! We used to go to Café Otto at 79 Glebe Point Road for meals with the mutts and they still allow the front two tables in the lush streetside yard to be used for dining with your furry companions. Up the road a block, there's always the Saturday Glebe Markets where you can hoof around the stalls, grab a snack and sit out on the lawn to hang with fellow pet partners. If you're into the serious health food, there's always the iconic GNC Health Foods across the street.

Only a block down is the Broadway Centre and not to be missed is the neighbourhood pet shop on the third floor. Broadway Pets was recently refurbished and it is a showplace for how live pets can be ethically and lovingly presented and sold as well as a cornucopia of pet products with super-friendly staff and a broad range of choices. We've been shopping there for years, it being the only local place we could get our specialist Hagen seed, reptile lights, a great assortment of dog and bird toys as well as it having a lovely dog and bird display area which shows that pet shops can be quality places to find your pet-mate. It's actually owned by Bob Croucher who is also publisher of the trade Pet Industry News as we later found out when we created this magazine.

Glebe is a natural haven for dog walking, shopping and dining al fresco, a destination for people from around Sydney to come, sit and stay.



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Pet Tails

Reading 'What The Dog Did' brought back a lot of memories of hilarious times with our flock of beasts. Plus we've also sat around the back yard with friends regaling us with their tales.

When our Dalmatian Mick was just a pup, he lived between my house and my future wife's down the road. One night, her flatmate consented to take care of Mick and in the middle of the night, heard retching sounds coming from his office. There was Mick, having eaten a part of his leather compendium, throwing up a mass on the floor. He went downstairs to get a towel to clean up the mess and then discovered, to his horror, that Mick had jumped up on the kitchen counter and grabbed an unopened plastic bag of muesli, tore it open and then violently shook it back and forth as he ran through the kitchen and lounge room, spreading two kilos of muesli in every direction.

But still, there was that warm pile of hurl to clean up and when he went back upstairs after an hour of vacuuming the downstairs area, he noticed a small, round, black, ten cent piece size object in the puddle. It was a badge with pin still intact that Lisa used to wear that Mick had swallowed. It said, "Bad Dog, No Biscuit".

Our Eclectus parrot Jackson, who routinely rode on Mick's back like 'the littlest cowboy' and does the same now with Jerri, our younger Dalmatian, has an amusing vocabulary of words and phrases. He learned "I'm the lady's man.... I'm the love machine!" from Lisa and he constantly tells our other parrot, Roger the ringneck, to "Step up Roger.. c'mon Rogie... step up. He's a riot of mimicry.

But it was a heartbreaking day when Mick was close to passing away and wasn't able to get up from the floor by himself for us to take him to the vet. Jackson was watching him from atop his cage and when we gently urged Mick to "Get up Mick", Jackson started repeating, "Step up Mick, c'mon, get up. Get up Mick." There wasn't a dry eye in the house.

Mick had a lot of friends around the neighbourhood in Newtown and one of the most playful, but a dog that had to be watched in the backyard was Bodhi, a fluffy blonde of a Golden Retriever. The reason she had to be constantly under scrutiny when she visited is that she would eat anything—hoses, sprinklers, rocks, bottle caps or any item that wasn't cemented into place.

One afternoon, Bodhi's dad was working in his backyard and had prepared a bucket of cement to repair some stonework. He went in for a beer after mixing it and came back to Bodhi's head in the bucket, licking it dry after consuming a couple of litres of cement.

Fearing the worst, he had to wait it out and the next day, out it came, in lumps, en masse and in full—like a bad barium enema. Bodhi survived but lost her taste for rocks as well.

We relayed this story to Danielle of Animax and she had a riotous tale to tell of Buddy, her Border Collie. One morning in the backyard, she and husband Steve noticed Buddy having a bit of a hard time having a poo and there seemed to be something dangling from the rear. It turned out to be a piece of rope. As Danielle held Buddy, Steve had the unenviable task of pulling the rope... and pulling... and pulling. In the end it was over a metre that came out, but fortunately, it didn't get caught on the way.

If you have a short (200 words or less) great pet tale that you would like to submit for the next issue, please email them to topdog@urbananimal.net or mail to Pet Tail at Urban Animal, 20 Hordern Street, Newtown NSW 2042. We'll have a prize for our five best.

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