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## The Pet Professionals

Anthony J. Viganò (Paterson) & Associates.  
Veterinary Surgeons

### Autumn 2004

#### The Bullmastiff Road Test



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#### Swanbourne Veterinary Centre

2 Devon Road Swanbourne 6010	Monday to Friday: 7.00am to 7.00pm
Tel: (08) 9384 2644	Saturday: 8.00am to 6.00pm
Fax: (08) 9383 2846	Sunday & Public Holidays: 8.00am to 6.00pm





# The Bullmastiff Road Test

As featured on the Gary Carvolth and Friends Talking Perth Show on Monday 8.3.2004

**THE BULLMASTIFF:** Known as the Gamekeeper's Dog this gentle giant is extremely powerful and whilst needing a strong consistent handler the breed is very good natured and quite docile unless provoked.

## HISTORY:

The breed goes back to the 1800's and is the only guarding breed to originate in England.

At the time of its creation there were many large estates in England, the owners of which frowned upon game on their estates being poached.

Gamekeepers were employed to oversee the game and they needed an assistant. Mastiffs were too slow and the Bulldog of the time too ferocious so a cross between the two was developed. The Bullmastiff as it was known would track down and tackle a poacher but they were trained not to bite and so held the villain down until the gamekeeper arrived. As time went on and the need for these dogs diminished, the originally popular brindle colour made way for the now favoured fawn variety.



## APPEARANCE:

This is a powerfully built and agile dog with a broad wrinkled head, short square head and dark muzzle.

They have a black nose with large nostrils and an alert, intelligent expression.

With V shaped, wide pendant ears they have a short slightly rough coat, which comes in brindle, fawn, red and often with black markings on the head.

They grow to 61-70cm in height and a massive 45-60kg in weight.

## CHARACTERISTICS:

A devoted and alert guard dog, they are good natured though can be willful.

Docile until provoked they are not likely to attack but will knock down an intruder and hold him down.

They are fearless and protective, even territorial and so can be wary of strangers and so care must be taken to properly socialise and train them in the domestic situation.

They are tolerant of children, intelligent, even tempered and affectionate with their human family so make good companions in the right circumstances.

## WHO SHOULD HAVE ONE:

These are a breed not recommended for fragile or timid

owners. They crave human attention and are generally good with children though can be dog aggressive and wary with strangers so training is essential.

They are fine with other pets as long as they have grown up with them.

They are relatively inactive indoors and so adapt well to apartments though can be lazy and so they need exercise and diet control lest they become overweight.

They do not tolerate extremes of temperature and heat stroke can be a problem in Perth's hot weather.

## Downsides:

They snore, slobber and drool like many of the short muzzled breeds so be prepared to clean up after them!

They are also relatively short lived (between 5-8 years).

## Upsides:

A mellow, easy going intelligent dog with a real presence and attitude.

## VETERINARY PROBLEMS:

Like most giant breeds elbow and hip dysplasia (hereditary early arthritic conditions of the elbow and hip joints) should be selected against when choosing a puppy. Bloat (a surgical emergency situation if it progresses to gastric torsion) due to gas build up in the stomach after eating is not uncommon and so they should be fed small meals and not exercised immediately after eating.

Tumours such as long bone tumours are not uncommon in relatively young dogs.

Eye problems (turning in and out of the eyelids...termed entropion and ectropion) are seen and these are also hereditary problems.

Interdigital cysts (fluid filled bursae between the toes) are also common due probably to poor conformation of their feet and their great weight.

In summation this is not a breed for everyone but they are a beautiful dog and in the right hands and circumstances are a delight to have around.

Many of the listed veterinary problems can be avoided or minimised by choosing a puppy from breeders who have selected against these conditions. Finally anyone taking on a dog of this size must be in a position and prepared to spend time with them with early socialization and training essential.



Tony Vigano





# The Puppy Plus Package:

The most important thing you can do for your new puppy is to properly socialise him/her particularly in view of the stringent new application of the Dog Act.

Legislation however is only a small part of the story and the benefits you will obtain from a well mannered dog in later life are far more important.

Instead of a stressful situation whenever your dog interacts with other people and animals on those wind down walks in the park at the end of the day, it will become the pleasurable experience it should be.

Your heart rate is said to go down when you pat a dog but is this always the case if your best friend is hell bent on tearing out the throat of everyone he/she sees on that walk?

The answer is simple. Puppy Class is the place to start when your new companion is malleable and receptive to new experiences of the pleasurable kind and a good start here sets he/she up for life. The next stage however is as important and so we have positioned John Connell's Dog Obedience classes to follow on and compliment puppy class.

After 6 weeks on the beach front at Swanbourne (what could be more enjoyable, even on these brisk Sunday mornings than an hour spent with like-minded dog lovers under the guidance of big John) you and your dog should be set up with a real understanding that will set the pattern for the rest of your relationship (maybe the next 15 years).


For our part we are keen to be part of this and so offer you the third part of the equation - an affordable package which includes a discount on the sterilisation of your new pet.

Therefore if you have just acquired a new puppy and are about to embark on the road to responsible pet ownership by attending the Swanbourne Puppy Class, ask about our package of puppy class/dog obedience class and discounted sterilisation. This plus the Petpro card which gives you 10% on all your over the counter products (wormers, flea products, and heart wormers) plus dog food make owning a dog much more affordable.

Ask Dot at reception next time you visit the Swanbourne Centre.



Tony Vignano




## Petpro Veterinary Centre

# Puppy Plus Package

This voucher entitles the bearer to:

- 10% discount on puppy class (4 class block), dog obedience & sterilisation package (within 6 months of issue).
- Petpro discount card which provides 10% discount on all over the counter products for the dog's lifetime.







# Kitten Kindy

Puppy School has been a very popular here at Swanbourne for some years.

Hundreds of puppies have learnt excellent doggy manners during their time at pre-school before going on to John Connell's Dog Obedience classes, thus turning out to be first class canine citizens.

What about our forgotten felines?

Contrary to common belief cats can be socialised and trained and to this end we are interested in hearing from the owners of new kittens who are keen for their new family addition to join Kitty Kindy.



This is not a new idea and has been running successfully in the Eastern States for some time.

Cat numbers have been dropping over recent years, mainly due the effectiveness of the sterilisation

campaigns and also because of the largely unwarranted poor press our felines have been receiving as regards Australia's native animals.

The truth is cats make marvellous house pets and do not need any where near the involvement that our canines demand of us.

When they have been socialised and trained they are even better.

So..... if you have a new kitty and you would like to join like minded people in showing them off and learning more about your furry friend give us a ring.



# Adopt-a-cat

Recently we have embarked on a project known as Adopt-a-cat whereby we have accepted responsibility for the rehoming of limited numbers of stray cats and their kittens.

These poor unfortunate creatures did not ask to be left entire and given the physiology of the feline, being highly efficient breeders, they soon fall pregnant and another litter of unscheduled kittens open their eyes to the world.

Cats make marvellous pets and in raising these kittens and tending their mothers we are very aware of our responsibility to both these beautiful animals and the community.

Having made the decision to re-home these animals we have put together a package which includes vaccination, sterilisation, deworming, flea control, and most importantly microchipping.

This means that these kittens are given the best opportunity to find a responsible home whilst "mum" gets another chance at life.....this time as a sterilised, thoroughly healthy moggie and this time identified for life via a microchip.

Our experience so far has been that prospective new owners approach the purchase of a new cat or kitten involving the whole family. The kittens generally need to stay with their

mother for a while before going to their new homes (equally mum needs to stay around with them for a time to give them the best start she can), therefore bonding with the new owner or family can be done gradually as they visit the chosen one at the hospital whilst they develop or in the case of mum, she carries out her maternal duties.

This process definitely screens impulse buyers and so we can be very sure that when a family takes on a new cat or kitten they have been made very aware of their responsibilities from the outset. I am therefore very comfortable with our role in this process and whilst we subsidise these routine procedures significantly there is still a charge of \$125 for the mums and \$175 for the kittens (which covers the package mentioned above).

I am in total agreement with the adage that says a pet is for life and not just for Christmas but I do think that as long as the "new" owner is made a part of the decision and selection process and accepts the financial responsibility then it will inevitably turn out to be a win-win situation.

If you would like to view our little strays then please contact Dot at the Swanbourne Centre on 9384 2644.





# “Ever wondered whether your vet has actually ever administered that medication he/she gives you to do?”

A good friend and client Jenny Gurnett sent this humorous story to me when her dog Homer had an eye problem.

“Your best friend gets an eye problem. Being good “parents” you take him to the vet for diagnosis and treatment.

Vet obliges and hands over drops/cream to apply to dog three to four times a day.

You think “that’s easy enough I can do that with no bother at all”. What a stupid thing to do you should realize that Fido has no intention at all of co-operating with you especially in HIS home.

Time to apply drops/cream to eye. “Come here, be a good boy and I’ll give you a doggy treat after I’ve put your drops in”. Dog runs in opposite direction and is struck stone deaf.

Next task is to extricate Fido from behind shed. It takes a good half hour before you’ve managed to clear out all the old bits of wire, bricks and anything else that you think might be useful one day.

Having achieved that, you grab dog by tail or scruff of neck (depending on which end of his anatomy he is presenting to you). You grit your teeth as you drag him out and his claws screech on the concrete.

Feeling confident, now that you’ve got dog under control, you approach with said drops/cream, whereupon dog clamps his eyelids together with something akin to super glue.

After finding out that coaxing him to open his eye doesn’t work, you resort to shouting obscenities and dire threats as to his wellbeing if he continues to defy you.

Finally, husband grabs dog in strangle hold and yells to wife to bring in the tyre lever in order to prise eyelids apart. Wife obliges (husband at the time has dog on its back holding it down). Husband instructs wife to assume his position while he uses the tyre lever and holds drops/cream poised above dogs eye.

This is achieved, after missing the target a few times and receiving multiple bites and scratches. The family GP,

who, after presenting yourselves three times a day for the last three days, is getting a bit cheesed off. He finally offers to call in on his way home to apply bandages and administer tetanus injections.

After a week, the dogs appointment with the vet is due. Sighing with relief that this torture is shortly to cease, “parents” duly present dog for inspection. Vet hoists dog onto table asking one parent to hold it. Dog writhes and wriggles so hard that vet decides owners are totally useless and calls in a vet nurse. She arrives and speaks soothingly to dog, who miraculously has stood like a statue, the only movement being to lay his head on nurses shoulder, and managing to convey the message that he absolutely NEVER gets this treatment at home. Vet approaches with drops/cream dog stands perfectly still with eyes wide open butter wouldn’t melt in his mouth. Owners cower in corner feeling lower than dirt beneath a snake’s belly!

Vet declares dog is fit and well and needs no more treatment. Owners delighted and relieved but p----d off at the dog showing them up. All the more so, because as vet was entering notes onto computer, he idly asked what all the heavy bandaging was and why all those needle marks were on your arm! Of course, being loyal to your four legged friend, you smile sweetly (through gritted teeth) and tell the biggest lie you can think of that will explain your own injuries.

On way home dog acts perfectly, apart from alternately blowing hot air down the back of your neck or deciding the backs of your ears need cleaning. Owners resolve to abandon dog at next set of red traffic lights of course they are all green!

After a relaxing cup of tea and feeling thoroughly delighted the ordeal is over, you get up, trip over dog (who is sitting like an angel with one eye open ready for drops) and break your neck. The GP is THRILLED to see owners again and hopes it won’t be too long before dog gets sick again, because he’s made a fortune out of “parents”!

All the above is very tongue and cheek but haven’t you as “parents” of pets been through similar experiences?”





# www.petpro.com.au - your vet online

## OUR PET TAGS

About 15 years ago we came up with the idea of free pet tags given out to all new puppies and kittens and anyone else who wanted them for an existing pet registered with us. If the pet became lost in the area we were a reference point for the finder to return the loved one to its owner.

The tag was simple...our name and telephone number, and a number that we kept on our system which related to the particular pet and his/her family.

This worked well for years and we helped reunite many animals with their worried parents.

Then came along Pet Tags and Microchipping which I realised at the time were logical extensions of this idea. Slowly we stopped offering the tags and the idea lapsed.

I now find a good friend and colleague in the Northern suburbs still offers this service to his clients after taking the lead from us.

So.....as part of Swanbourne Veterinary Centre's 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the building at 2 Devon Rd turning 100 years old this year we thought we would delve back into our past and resurrect some of the things that have helped keep us at the forefront all those years.

Therefore next time you visit Swanbourne ask Dot for a tag! They slip onto the D ring of your pet's collar and resemble the Council registration tag.

Some good ideas are never superseded they just get forgotten amongst the avalanche of modern technology.

Oh...by the way we still recommend Pet Tags and Microchipping!!

Tony Viano

## THE PETPRO CARD

When next you come to the Swanbourne or the Doubleview Veterinary Centres be sure to ask for a PETPRO card.

This card is for you to keep a record of your "over the counter" purchases. Each time you come in to buy dog or cat food, shampoos, pet accessories, a bath, and so on, these purchases are recorded on the card and at the end of 10 purchases you get 10% of the total amount you have spent to redeem against your next purchase.

We have been running the Petpro card for over 6 years now and many clients leave their cards with the receptionist to ensure they don't miss out on entering a purchase.

If you haven't got one then ask next time you come in. Remember the card is valid for ALL over the counter purchases but not prescription drugs or veterinary services.

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for up to date information about everything at Petpro

**www.petpro.com.au**

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**UPDATED EVERY DAY**





# Petpro People

Rebecca has been our kennel hand at the Swanbourne Veterinary Centre for about 18 months now and came through a tough interview process at the time when she won the job hands down with a classic one percenter! During the interview she casually dropped the line that she had



**Rebecca Carter**

“measured the time it would take to get from home to Swanbourne to start at 7am every morning”. So when I asked would getting to work so early be a problem.....her answer was off pat!

Well...having showed such great initiative at barely 17 years she got the job and since then has showed aptitude in many other areas including pet grooming.

This week she was promoted to assistant groomer to Lisa. Well done Rebecca, I'll bet she's working on my job next!

In saying goodbye to Julie Parin (once again), who will be spending at least 12 months in USA with her fiancée Trent, it gives me great pleasure to welcome her replacement Dr Pauline Hoskin to the team at Swanbourne.

Another local girl, Pauline graduated from Murdoch University Veterinary School with 2<sup>nd</sup> class

honours in 2000 after completing school at Riverton Primary and then later at Willetton High School.

Pauline commenced practice in Merredin where she dealt with all manner of animals before venturing overseas on a working holiday in the U.K.

Finally the home ties lead her back to Perth (and to Jasmine her poodle and George the budgie). Pauline enjoys netball and tennis, and has promised Tony that she will follow Geelong avidly in the AFL.

As a veterinarian Pauline combines the type of people skills we have become accustomed to in young graduates from Murdoch plus a real empathy with her animal patients.

She is keen to further her studies in small animal medicine and will have plenty of scope for this at Swanbourne with Claire, Nahiid and Tony.

Good luck Pauline, I have no doubt you will love it here.



**Pauline Hoskin**

## DOUBLEVIEW PRACTICE

After 40 years we have decided to sell the Doubleview practice. This is quite a wrench for me as I was originally employed to develop this then fledgling practice thirty six years ago. The purchasers have several practices in the Perth metro area and will keep on all the staff so that nothing will outwardly change and the practice will be managed by the current senior staff. I have no intention of retiring but am looking forward to having more of a presence at Swanbourne and initiating some new ideas.

I have no doubt we have passed Doubleview to people who will continue its traditions and level of service and I would encourage those clients using this practice to continue to do so.

## SENTINEL SPECTRUM

Finally after years of waiting the ever popular “combo” Sentinel has been given a full set of teeth.

In September this year Novartis announced the arrival of Sentinel Spectrum which not only contains a heartworm preventive and flea controller but now is an ALLWORMER as well. Until now the tapewormer had to be added separately which was a hassle but not any more.

Sentinel Spectrum is the first fully fledged combo and costs no more than the old Sentinel!

So, what are you waiting for!

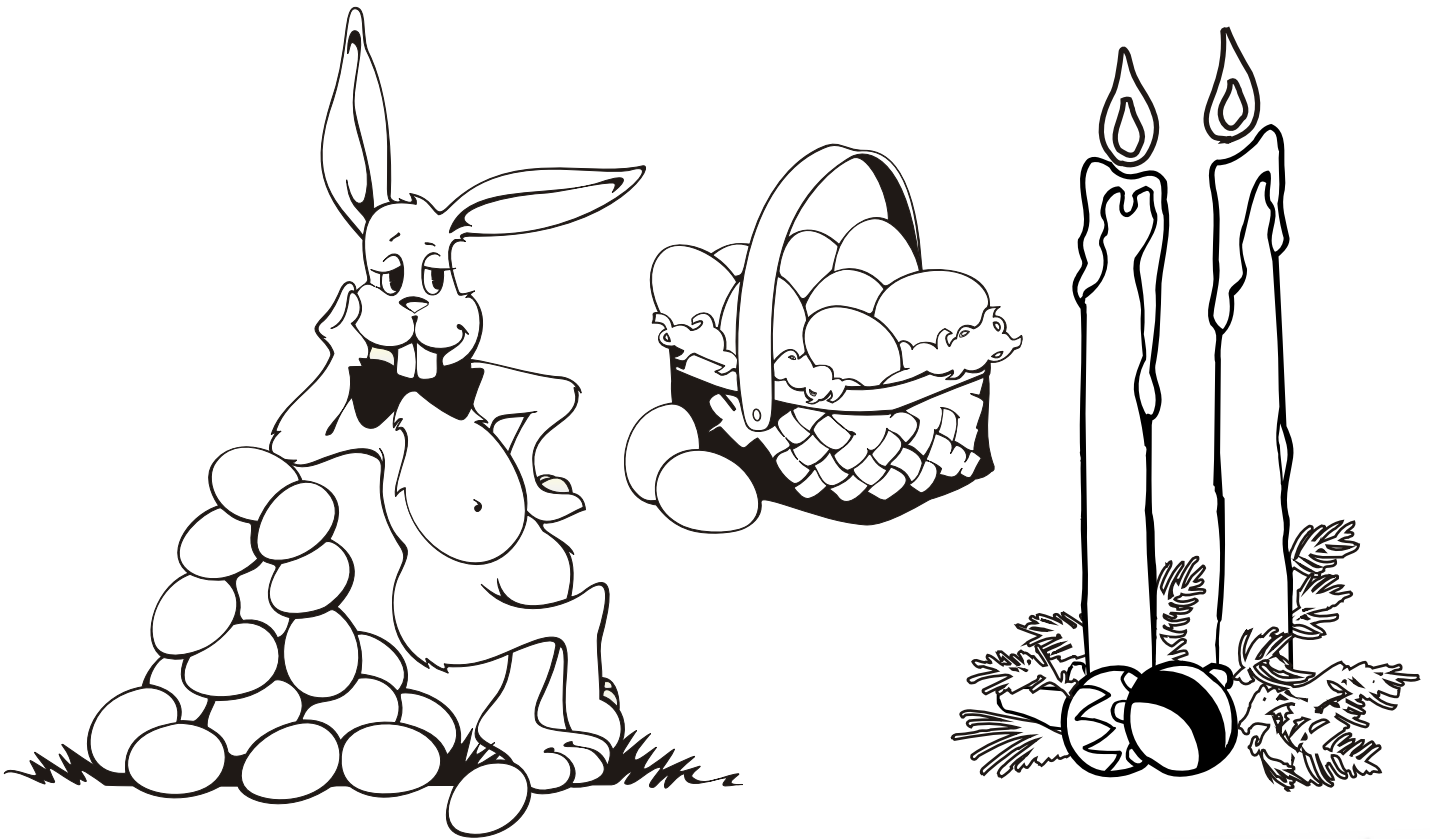




# ★ Kids Corner ★

Children up to 12 years are invited to enter our colouring in competition. Please post or return your entry to Swanbourne Veterinary Centre by 30th June 2004 for your chance to win.....

*A years supply of Flea Control products for your pet!*



*Proudly sponsored by Bayer Australia*



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_

*Good Luck!*

