Meet the friends

Kelvin Sayer has been part of the team at Best Friends since October 2002.

As well as his work with our guests, Kelvin is also the main driver for the transport side of the business and is often seen about town in the vans or delivering transport crates to the airport.

Kelvin and his wife Cathy started showing and breeding Shetland Sheepdogs in 1989 and have been associated with the breed ever since. Now that their adult children Ben and Roxanne have left the nest they share their home at Pontville with their four Shetland Sheepdogs Renee, Lace, Taylor and Frodo and their two cats Jade and Boris.

Home alone?

As well as taking care of dogs and cats while their owners are on holidays we also offer your pet company and activities while you are away for the day or at work.

Boredom is often the cause of barking and destructive behaviour but even the best behaved dog can find being home alone boring.

One of our regular guests to enjoy day care is Maggie who has been a boarder with us for some years. Her owners work full time and realise that Maggie needs a bit of playtime and company during the week so she comes to visit Best Friends every Tuesday. What a lucky girl Maggie is as 3 years ago her present owners rescued her from the dog’s home. Maggie is a favourite with the staff who vie for the role of ball-thrower and walker so it is playtime for both staff and Maggie – however, afterwards Maggie gets to have an afternoon nap!
Another eco-friendly project

We have commenced repainting our boarding facilities using ecolour paint. This paint is Australian made, premium quality water-based paint with zero outgassing of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC's) and has been certified carbon neutral by the Carbon Reduction Institute. On your next visit ask one of our team to show you the new colours.

Our choice of eco-friendly paint is another of the projects being undertaken at Best Friends to ensure that our facilities are safe for your pets, our staff and the environment.

Can dogs see colour?

The University of California, Santa Barbara, tested the color vision of dogs and found they can see colours but see fewer colours than humans, with blues, yellows and greys the spectrum seen by dogs. The hardest colour for dogs to see is red. Dogs were tested for colour vision by being given a treat when they selected the correct colour.

Can cats see colour?

Examination of the cat’s eye shows that they can probably see much the same range of colours as dogs. However, it is hard to assess just what colours cats see due to the cat not seeing any value in undergoing the tests!

Winter comfort

The cold weather brings a change in human lifestyles with more time spent indoors, heating turned on and winter woolies worn. Pets also need adjustments to their lifestyles during the cold weather.

A warm, draught-free sleeping place is most important. Dogs and cats need a cosy bed which is protected from wind and weather. Cold and damp penetrates flooring and raising the bed off the ground is the most significant change you can make to your pet's environment in the winter. The bed should be totally guarded against chilly winds. A sturdy box or doghouse can solve this problem. Make sure the opening is faced away from prevailing winds.

Cats are masters at seeking warmth and appreciate a cat basket by the heater or a cosy box with warm bedding in the shed or garage. Indoor cats love a window-ledge or chair where they can catch the warm winter sun during the day.

Dogs vary so much in their coat types that the amount of warmth needed to be provided by the owner varies. The very sleek breeds have very little coat to keep them warm, and will appreciate a dog coat to keep them snug. A coat will keep some breeds drier if they are taken for a walk in the rain, but dogs must never be allowed to wear a wet coat. Many dogs become uncomfortable in a heated house and will seek out the cooler tiled areas. If the house is heated make sure that the dog is comfortable with the temperature or can go to a cooler part of the house if it desires.

During winter the amount of exercise given to the dog may be less than during the summer months due to the reduced daylight hours or the weather, however for the athletic breeds it is important to try to fulfill the dogs exercise needs.

If your pet is getting on in years you may find it slows down during winter and is reluctant to get out of bed and stiff when it moves. This is usually a sign of arthritic changes that are common with age. Take your pet to the vet for a full check-up. The vet may recommend medication to ease your pet's discomfort and advise you with regard to heating pads, coats or other ways of helping your old friend through the winter.

Notice of vacancies

It is amazing how time goes by and we suddenly realize that next week is a Public Holiday or major event! By then we are almost certainly completely booked out. We are now offering a free E-Mail notice when we are 80% booked for a particular period of time or event. Subscribe by E-Mailing noticesubscribe@best-friends.com.au with the subject "Subscribe"
A ‘stopover’ at Best Friends Resort

Best Friends Pet Resort is honoured to have been entrusted by the Government to play a part in the program to eradicate feral pests from Macquarie Island.

Macquarie is a World Heritage Listed sub-Antarctic island of about 128 square kilometres and is 1500 kilometres south of Tasmania and is surrounded by the largest marine protected area in the world. It is a critical breeding ground for seabirds, including four endangered species of Albatross. Introduced pests have proliferated since black rats were brought ashore in the early nineteenth century and rabbits were deliberately established in the 1870s as a fresh food source for sealers on the island. Rabbits reached plague proportions with an estimated population of up 100,000 creating havoc on the Island with their tunneling, displacing burrowing seabirds and causing landslips sending hillsides to collapse into the Southern Ocean taking with them King Penguins and Albatross nests. The rats also eat the eggs and chicks of burrow-nesting Petrels.

Stage one of the eradication program was bombardment of the island with poison pellets. Stage two is using dogs trained to locate the estimated 10,000 rabbits that may have escaped poisoning.

This year a team of 12 dogs travelled to Macquarie Island to work in this programme for the next four years. These dogs were selected as the best from around 50 dogs that were trained by Steve Austin and trialled for this work. The dogs came from NSW and New Zealand and included 7 Springer Spaniels, 4 Labrador Retrievers and 1 Border Terrier.

The dogs arrived in Hobart over a few days in the week prior to the Aurora Australis departing for Macquarie Island. The first to arrive were the 4 dogs from New Zealand. Kelvin met each shipment of dogs as they arrived and transported them to Best Friends for their stay. During their stay with us their diet was carefully monitored as they needed to maintain their condition for the trip South. We also gave them maximum time in the exercise yards to maintain their fitness and prepare them for their time on the boat.

While on the island the handlers will camp in self-contained insulated huts and the dogs in cosy, insulated kennels. Much of the work will involve roaming the island at night looking for rabbits by spotlight.

On the day of departure, Kelvin and Jean transported dogs and their kennel/crates into the wharf for loading. This required using our two vans for the dogs as well as a trailer for the crates, and co-ordinating with National Parks and Wildlife Service on arrival at Macquarie Wharf. Jean waited to see all the dogs safely boarded. Steve travelled to Macquarie Island with the dogs and their handlers who will remain on the Island for 4 years, living in self-contained insulated huts and the dogs in cosy, insulated kennels. Much of the work will involve roaming the island at night looking for rabbits by spotlight.