

The Rescue of Wicket

The club was informed of a Griffon who urgently needed rehoming. He lived with a person in Queensland and she no longer wanted him as she said that he was urinating in her house and if he didn't go she was going to get him euthanised or have him in her words "destroyed".

Our rescue officer Donna Murphy, spoke to the woman and tried to give her some advice on how to housetrain him as he was still a young dog. It appeared that when she got the pup she had been told that he had been 'paper trained'. She then expected to be able to put a single sheet of paper on the ground in the laundry and the dog would automatically use it.

She also said that she had yelled at the dog, put him in isolation and withheld food as part of his supposed 'toilet training'. All of these behaviours are clearly detrimental to the dog and no doubt created total confusion in the poor little dogs mind.

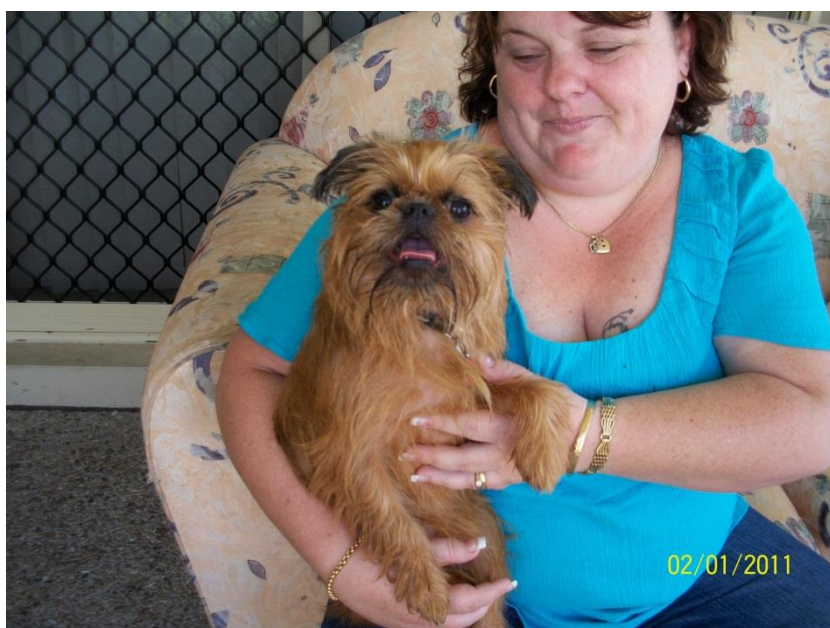
Her attitude towards the dog was aggressive and it was clear that she was not a suitable owner for a Griffon. Donna realised that it was imperative that the dog be removed as soon as possible before he was euthanised by the

woman.

Fortunately Donna had relatives in Queensland, where she could stay so with her family they made a lightening dash from Sydney to Brisbane and back to collect Wicket.

Wicket and Donna

Although he appeared to be in good physical condition it soon became very clear that he was a confused and slightly fearful little boy due to the inconsistent and unreasonable behaviour and



expectations of his owner.

In the end it took Donna 9 months of rehabilitation before Wicket developed into the happy confident little Griffon that he deserved to be. Donna had the additional confusion of living in a house undergoing renovations while trying to retrain little Wicket.

Donna kept a diary of the rehabilitation process and some of her entries are below.

Wickets Diary

7.1.2011 – Picked up Wicket this afternoon. Brought Wicket back to my sisters and there was lots of pats and hugs. Wicket seems happy. And loves the kids ages 3 to 12. Packed the car and the kids and of course Wicket ! 10.30pm leaving QLD...NSW here we come.

8.1.2011 – 12.30 home at last. Wicket was a dream in the car this little guy takes everything in his stride (But that's a Griffon for you)

11.30pm Well it's been a long day Wicket has had a bath and settled in with the rest of the Murphy Clan. Wicket loves Jewel (the cat) they gave each other a nose rub.

I am noticing Wicket isn't sure what the grass is for... ? So today I have spent a lot of time going outside and repeating my doggy toilet word "Toilet". The neighbours' must think I'm crazy or wonder at least who I'm talking to .I am hoping my other Griffons will help me out and show him the way.

I am not sure at the moment about his eating habits while he loved his dinner (chicken) he didn't seem to like eating it out of the bowl...?? So he was encouraged as I put bit by bit on the floor next to his bowl. Too soon to know if this is habit or he hasn't been fed out of a bowl or just his way

9.1.2011 – I was up till after midnight last night taking Wicket outside trying to encourage him to go the toilet not sure how he did as with the house renovations I have no outside light! He still wouldn't eat of a bowl today or tonight.

10.1.2011 – We had builders here today so I locked the dogs outside. Wicket wasn't very happy but after a few moans and yaps he settled down with the rest of the clan. We are still going outside and encouraging him with toileting. He doesn't seem to have been taken outside much as he seems confused about what is expected. And still no change with his eating!

11.1.2011 – Caught Wicket doing a wee on the floor inside. He looked anxious when I caught him. I just picked him up and put him straight outside on the grass and started to repeat the magic word "toilet".

12.1.2011 – The fur kids all had chicken balls tonight and I still can't get Wicket to eat out of his bowl. He just sits away from it staring around so I sat down and put the chicken balls in front of his bowl in the hope he might then eat from the bowl but no luck tonight!

13.1.2011 – Wicket at last tried to eat from a bowl this morning as the dogs were having left over meat from last night's BBQ for breakfast. The only problem was he wanted Will's bowl and Will told him in no uncertain terms to buzz off...

14.1.2011 – Very proud today while standing out the back Jason said " Quick look Wicket is going to the toilet without being asked. Once again the neighbours must think we are CRACKERS as we were both were calling out "Toilet" and "Good Boy" and were so excited that he was learning !

15.1.2011 – Break through at last Wicket ate most of his dinner from his bowl tonight. I am feeding them all on the back verandah at the moment as the new walls are up and there is a lot of wet plaster glue stuff and the cornice has just been delivered. After half an hour its back outside and time to chant my magic word again...

23.1.2011 – Time for another bath and Wicket seems to really enjoy having them

25.1.2011 – The girls and I spent time after dinner playing with a ball with the dogs. Wicket seems interested but not sure what to do. Merlot is very quick to get the ball and bring it back first.

At last Wicket eats his whole meal from his bowl and even sometimes finishes first. I'm so happy with his progress.

Nine Months later...

Wicket has lived with our family now for 9 months.

He has come so far in that time. Gone are the problems of eating out of a bowl and his toilet training has ended on a positive note. The shy little guy that came to live with us is now an independent, outgoing little Griffon.

The time came when he was ready for his new home and the club was pleased to say that he has found a loving and permanent home with Ric and Lucy at Bondi.

There are other Griffons in the area and he will see them on his walks on his walks around Bondi from time to time.

Donna is pleased to say that she has been in touch with Ric and Lucy and is able to report that Wicket is doing well. He is loved and happy with people who understand how to care for a dog.

Wicket and his new owner

By Michelle Parker Brien from The Phoenix 2012 – the official newsletter of The Country Griffon Club of NSW

