



# NEW ADOPTIONS

A big part of Mercylight's work is finding suitable forever homes for the rescued and rehabilitated shelter dogs. We met up with 2 families who made the big decision to open up their hearts and homes to adopt a Blessing to hear more about their adoption experience.

## DINGO & HIS NEW FAMILY - LAUREN, JOE AND FRED



### WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO ADOPT A DOG, AND WHY ADOPT FROM MERCYLIGHT SPECIFICALLY?

Our son, Fred, had been talking about getting a dog for 8 years and we initially wanted to look for an older dog - we went to Mercylight about 4 times, and to one of the foster homes as well. As a family, we have always agreed that we wanted to adopt a dog rather than buy.

Mercylight had been recommended to us by a friend who had previously adopted a dog there (sister of Cairo), and they told us it was a really well run organisation. We went to meet with Kelly and were amazed by how well-run the shelter was.

### HOW WAS THE ADOPTION PROCESS LIKE?

It was really good, in the sense that it was not too easy. You want the right people to adopt and you need to be careful, so it was good that the adoption process was not too easy. Kelly was really good and helpful and we can't say enough how well-run Mercylight is.

### DINGO'S FIRST WEEK



### DINGO NOW!

### CAN YOU RUN US THROUGH YOUR DECISION MAKING PROCESS FOR DINGO'S ADOPTION?

We actually wanted an older female dog, but eventually we ended up with a male puppy. We went to mercylight about 4 times, and Fred actually saw Dingo during our first visit. We did not see any other dog we liked, and Fred had already fallen in love by that stage.

### HOW HAS DINGO BEEN SETTLING INTO YOUR FAMILY? HAVE YOU SEEN ANY CHANGES?

During the first 4 nights, one of us had to be out here with him every 2 hours. Then, Lauren had the idea to get him a big fluffy dog, and he slept soundly every night since. I (Lauren) thought that at the kennel he was going to bed with all the other dogs - so we thought of this idea and it worked. In the first week, he was not really relating to us, he was just tolerating us. But by the second week he understood his name, "walk", "treat". Now he can communicate with us - if he wants to go for a walk, he will hover around the back entrance. Every morning, he barks once at about 6 am - that is his way of saying "Wake up, I need to go out!". He has adjusted really well, and gets excited when we come home. He will be wagging his tail, and wanting to play. He bonds with us more and more each week.

### HOW HAS DINGO CHANGED YOUR DAILY LIVES?

We have been getting up a lot earlier since adopting Dingo. We are also spending a lot more time walking as a family, together with Fred. It used to be just us (Lauren and Joe) but now the four of us (Lauren, Joe, Fred, Dingo) are walking a lot more together. It is really important to have that bonding time as a family. We have also been meeting a lot of people, other dog-owners and other owners of Singapore specials.

## TORA & HIS NEW FAMILY - BESSIE AND CHRIS



### WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO ADOPT A DOG, AND WHY ADOPT FROM MERCYLIGHT SPECIFICALLY?

Originally, before COVID, we wanted a chill dog that didn't need us to be home the whole day, since we worked full days and stayed out. Hence, we first adopted Moon (Age 12) and Biru (Age 6) from Action for Singapore Dogs. However, after COVID struck, we were always at home and had time to commit to a younger and more energetic dog, and we decided to adopt a puppy. So really, it's all because of COVID! We also wanted a more energetic dog to influence the other less lively dogs.

We're against buying dogs because of puppy mills, so we didn't consider anything other than adoption. While looking for a puppy, we realised that they're in short supply but high demand, especially during this COVID period (as many have more time on their hands to adopt puppies). We reached out to quite a few shelters, but a lot of them were busy with these enquiries. Even Mercylight was quite busy, but we received a response in the end. We also saw an IG post on the Brinnie puppies, and really wanted this batch because of their unique colour!

### HOW WAS THE ADOPTION PROCESS LIKE?

It was quite smooth-sailing! Of course, there was a bit of waiting around for a response at first, but once Kelly responded to our email, things were easy. In the application form, many questions were asked about things like household profile, dogs we currently have and our experience taking care of dogs. After that, we were invited to the shelter to spend 1-2 hours with the puppies, giving them treats and bonding with them. After we decided on Tora, Kelly came to do a house visit with Tora to check if she's alright with our other 2 dogs. She also gave us some advice on how to manage Tora, like putting pee pads and movable fences around the house. Within 3 to 4 days, Tora was permanently adopted!

### CAN YOU RUN US THROUGH YOUR DECISION

### MAKING PROCESS FOR TORA'S ADOPTION?

Actually, we were also considering Tasha (another Brinnie puppy), since she was similar in colour, and wanted to give her a chance since she was blinded in one eye, but we chose Tora in the end because she was the most active out of the 4 Brinnie puppies we met at the shelter. She was so playful and greedy for snacks from us, and we found that very cute!

### HOW HAS TORA BEEN SETTLING INTO YOUR

### FAMILY? HAVE YOU SEEN ANY CHANGES?

She's settled in very well! She was relatively pee trained, so there weren't many accidents at the start. Other than that, actually, she hasn't changed one bit! When she first came, she wasn't scared, and just walked around and smelled the house. Now, she's still brave, confident, and energetic. The main change happened to our other dogs – they became more active, especially Biru, which is what we hoped for. Although we have to scold her at times since she's quite naughty and playful, we're so glad that the house is more lively now.

TORA MEANS "TIGER" IN JAPANESE, AND I WAS GIVEN THAT NAME AS MY COAT IS SIMILAR TO A TIGER'S!



### HOW HAS TORA CHANGED YOUR DAILY LIVES?

We bring her for a lot more walks than we usually do (more than twice a day) since Tora likes to go out. Because of her, we've naturally become more active. We bring Tora out for runs (which she loves), as well as outings at dog runs or swimming pools. Overall, we're very happy that she's here. She brings a lot of life, energy and joy into our lives. She's a super playful dog, and can sound aggressive when she barks at other dogs on walks, but actually just wants to play with them. She now has quite a lot of friends around the neighbourhood that she plays with often!

## NEW RESCUES



Mercylight is dedicated to rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming stray dogs, so that they may get a second chance in life. Rescue efforts require a great amount of time, effort and manpower, but we believe that every single dog rescued makes it worthwhile.



### WONDER - RESCUED ON 19 OCTOBER

Wonder was found in a nursery scavenging for food, and would not leave even after workers there tried chasing him away with brooms and sticks. The nursery was located near our shelter and reached out for our help. He was rescued on 19 October and is estimated to be 6 months old.

Wonder is suspected to be abandoned, as he was not afraid of humans and knew how to sit and paw during his first day at the shelter, without being taught by the rescuers or volunteers. He is currently undergoing daily correction of slight behavioural issues such as food aggression and painful play bites.

His situation is similar to many other puppies being taken in on impulse and subsequently chased out and abandoned due to lack of patience and proper training. Wonder is fortunate to be rescued, but most young dogs like him will end up being hit by vehicles, chased by other strays or starve to death as they did not learn how to fend for themselves.



### BLISS AND CHERISH - RESCUED ON 2 & 16 OCTOBER

Bliss and cherish are newborn puppies and siblings, rescued 2 weeks apart, from a forested area that is known to have many snakes. Puppies are susceptible to many threats from rats, snakes and other predators when their mothers are away for hours, scavenging for food to feed herself and her pups. Bliss was rescued earlier and did not have much injuries; however, by the time we rescued Cherish, she had wounds and sores on her head and ears. Unfortunately, the 3rd sibling has not been successfully rescued yet as he does not trust the rescue team enough to come near.



### GENESIS - RESCUED ON 13 SEPTEMBER

Genesis is the very first dog that the Mercylight team fed 10 years ago. She is now an aged dog who is emaciated and needed immediate medical attention, which necessitated her urgent rescue. She was diagnosed with hookworm infection, likely from stepping on infected dog stools. Hookworms are intestinal parasites that anchor themselves to a dog's intestinal wall lining, causing blood loss and intestinal distress. A simple deworming treatment is all that was needed to save her, but it is a luxury that most street dogs lack access to. Thankfully, Genesis was rescued in the nick of time and given the proper treatment.

# VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DAY

Mercylight's Volunteer Appreciation Day is an internal event organised to show appreciation towards our loyal and committed volunteers, and give them a chance to have a day out with the dogs they love. During the day, volunteers visited Wag N Wild, where volunteers and dogs both had a great time in the pool together. After a time of bonding over dinner, they enjoyed a leisurely walk at Rower's Bay Park.



During the Volunteer Appreciation Day, we had a quick chat with 2 Mercylight volunteers, May and Faith, to find out more about their experience volunteering at Mercylight.

IT WAS PRETTY FUN TO WATCH ALL THE DOGS HAVE FUN TOGETHER! IT WAS ALSO NICE GETTING TO KNOW OTHER VOLUNTEERS WHO SHARE THE SAME PASSION AND LOVE YOU HAVE FOR THE DOGS, AND LISTENING TO THEIR STORIES ABOUT SHELTER LIFE. ULTIMATELY, IT WAS VERY HEARTWARMING TO SEE ALL THE DOGS COME TOGETHER & HAVE FUN!

**WHEN AND WHY DID YOU START VOLUNTEERING AT MERCYLIGHT?**

May: I started volunteering with Mercylight in 2018! I've always wanted to work with dogs but never knew how until my friend introduced me to Mercylight.

Faith: One fine day in 2014, I realised I wanted to adopt a dog. As a 1st-time dog owner, I decided to volunteer with my husband who had dogs previously, and we also went for training the same year.

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE THING ABOUT VOLUNTEERING AT MERCYLIGHT?**

May: I enjoy spending time with the dogs every week. Coming to shelter feels like a de-stress from school and everything else!

Faith: Till today, I look forward to every duty, adoption drive and training session (seems incredible, but it's true!). In addition, I love being part of Mercylight as it is well organized and filled with like-minded people that all wish to find a fur-ever home for our furkids.



**HOW HAS VOLUNTEERING AT MERCYLIGHT IMPACTED YOU?**

May: At the start, it was a little scary because I had no experience with dogs (the closest was going to a dog cafe) but slowly I got to learn more about the dogs and how to handle them etc.

Faith: Volunteering makes me see God in action. HE ALWAYS PROVIDES when the team lacks manpower. Also, it has made me more patient with myself, fellow volunteers, and the dogs - all are teachable and trainable if time and love are given.

Training is another area that impacted me. It increases the chances of adoption, and there is great joy that comes with witnessing both dogs and handlers learning something new, and bonding together. These are the times I feel results do not matter, and if time permits, I feel every volunteer should at least attend once.



GOD'S AMAZING WORK TO STOP THE RAIN, AND A CHANGE FROM SENTOSA TO THE SWIMMING POOL WAS GREAT! I ENJOYED EVERY MOMENT, ESPECIALLY BEING ABLE TO MASSAGE SOME ANXIOUS DOGS BEFORE THE TRIP & SPENDING TIME WITH FELLOW VOLUNTEERS TOO. I LOVED THE DINNER TOO AS THE STAFF WEREN'T SCARED OF DOGS!

THOSE WE LOST



CHARMING  
2012-2020

Rescued from a construction site in 2012, Charming got on well with other dogs and lived up to his name even after going through surgery for a facial tumor. Charming passed on in November in peace.

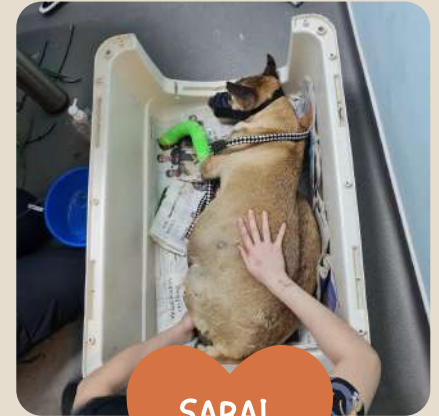
"He was always a very greedy (but very polite) boy, and would follow us around when we were feeding, hoping to get extra food from us. I wish I could have given extra sayang before leaving. Hope he knows that we all love him and miss his presence very much!"  
- Lavelle, volunteer



KIMMY  
2014-2020

Kimmy was rescued in 2016 with her puppies and lived well with no issues. She left us in October 2020 after a sudden deterioration of health. She fought a good fight and braved through all the storms like a champion - kidney failure, babesia disease, beyond normal low platelet which warranted transfusion, pancreatitis, and a tumor in her intestine.

"Missing you in the kennel at your favourite spot & remembering you always as a cool warrior & fighter... till we meet again." - Devin & Faith, volunteers



SARAI  
UNKNOWN-2020

Although Sarai was in our lives for only a brief moment, her rescue reminds us of how pivotal each rescue can be. Sarai was found in a drain and a swift rescue, thanks to Kelly, allowed her to visit the vet. Unfortunately, due to previous complications before the rescue, Sarai passed. Thankfully, she passed in peace with others to comfort her, and fought bravely till the very end.

**OTHER UPDATES**

**ACHIEVING CHARITY STATUS!**

Mercylight officially achieved charity status, which lightens our financial load and enables us to focus our efforts on taking care of the dogs and finding them forever homes.

**SOLD 2000 COPIES OF OUR 2021 CALENDARS TO RAISE FUNDS!**

In order to raise funds for the Save Blessings Medical Fund, we sold 2000 calendars and raised a total of \$20,000, which will be used to provide ongoing medical care for the shelter dogs.

**TRAP-NEUTER-RELEASE-MANAGE (TNRM) PROGRAMME!**

Mercylight took part in the nationwide TNRM programme by NParks, which aims to sterilize over 70% of the stray dog population over a span of 5 years. 18 Mercylight volunteers were trained and officially certified to trap stray dogs under the programme.



Thank you all for supporting Mercylight in one way or another and contributing to our cause to save Singapore's street dogs. Share this newsletter with your friends and family, and follow us for more updates!

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