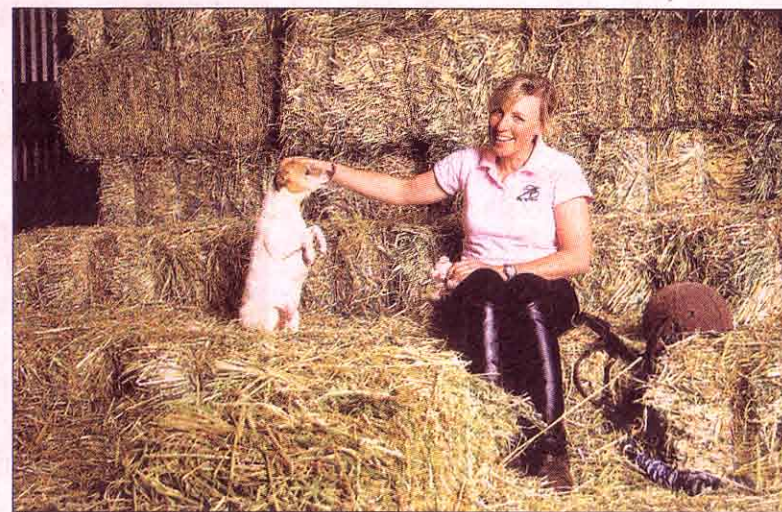




Rick Walsh, of Hills business Frank Walsh Drilling, takes a break with Ellie the border collie during an outback well-drilling trip.



Hills equestrian Megan Jones and Jackie the Jack Russell feature in the book.

RIGHT; Woodchester resident Chris Hocking returns from a day mustering cattle with helpers Danny, Sooty, One, Ted and Matey.



By Lisa Pahl

When Sally Harding was a girl with a growing passion for photography, her best subject was the family dog.

It was usually the only family member that was still around the place after she had covertly “borrowed” her parents’ camera.

But the much-loved pet also provided valuable experience for the budding photographer.

Now an experienced photojournalist, Ms Harding has revisited her early passion for capturing dogs at their best, compiling their images and stories in a new book, *City Dog Country Dog*.

Launched on Friday at the Lions Hearing Dogs Centre at Verdun, the book is a celebration of Australian dogs in settings as diverse as their many breeds and was inspired by the Aesop fable, *The City Mouse and the Country Mouse*.

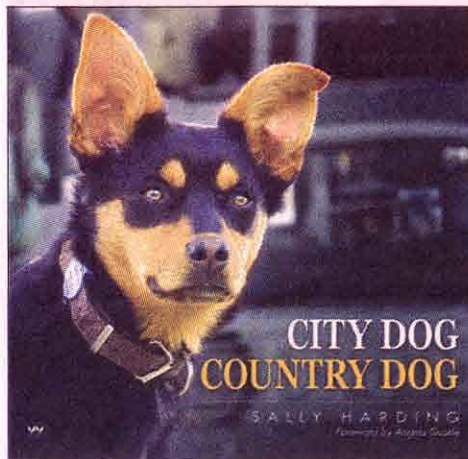
The story of the different lives of two identical animals reminded Ms Harding of her own experiences with dogs.

“Many years ago I had a pet dog and we lived in a city area, but she used to hang out a bit in the country as well,” she said.

“I had the farmers telling me how amazing she was with all the tricks she could do, but meanwhile I was admiring their sheepdogs and how clever they were.

“... So I wanted to produce something that would appeal to a lot of people that also reflected how versatile and adaptable dogs are.”

The hard working sheep and cattle



City Dog Country Dog author/photographer Sally Harding with Robbie the Lions Hearing Dog at the book's launch on Friday.

LEFT: The book's cover.



dogs make an appearance in the book, alongside the pets who enjoy a more pampered city life.

While Ms Harding came across many of the four-legged stars through family and friends, “there were a lot of cold calls out of the blue” when she saw dogs that caught her attention.

One such dog was a blue-eyed Australian bulldog pup called Furgee that she spotted in its owner’s arms on a trip to the shops.

“Within hours we were back at her owner’s home doing the photos,” Ms Harding said.

Most of the images were collected over several months after she developed the idea for the book, but some date back as far as 15 years and are among her favorite images.

The book aims to showcase the nation’s dogs and their personalities in their individual settings and includes several Hills hounds.

“There have been stories about wine dogs and the great Australian working

dog stories, compiled by writer Angela Goode (who wrote the forward to *City Dog Country Dog*),” Ms Harding said.

“But I don’t think anyone has cut through the issue of dog ownership and reflected on how different they are, but how entwined they are.”

Ms Goode and fellow dog lover and celebrity chef Simon Bryant helped launch the book last week.

Ms Harding said she chose the Lions Hearing Dogs Centre for the launch, and as a recipient of part proceeds from the book’s sales, because “they are silent achievers who quietly go about their business”.

The centre is a not-for-profit organisation that trains rescued dogs to become helpers for the hearing impaired.

“I think it is time they are recognised for the great work they do,” she said.

City Dog Country Dog is published by Wakefield Press.

For information visit www.wakefieldpress.com.au