

Dave's Regal Queeny

Dave was born with a hereditary eye disease known as Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP). A degenerative disease, RP degrades vision over time and can vary in different lighting conditions, leaving people feeling confused about their surroundings.



Despite his deteriorating vision, Dave never let his RP get in the way of leading a full and active life. Dave received Orientation & Mobility training with a white cane and maintained an active social life, being involved in tandem bike riding, lawn bowls and hiking.

Dave used his long white cane to get around for 12 years, however when he took a holiday to Queensland, he soon noticed he was unable to navigate unfamiliar surroundings. He lost confidence in his mobility and asked friends for support and guidance to get around.

When he returned home, he realised his local surroundings were becoming a challenge too. His vision had further deteriorated and he was losing his independence.

"I had friends who use Guide Dogs and although I have a great love of animals, I had never felt ready for the commitment of seeking one for myself. But with my confidence dropping, I knew it was time" Dave explains.

Dave was given the opportunity to 'test drive' a Guide Dog, an experience that he describes as "simply mind blowing".



Staff at Guide Dogs Victoria set out to find the perfect match for Dave. That is when he met Queeny. After a paw shake and friendly lick of approval from Queeny, Dave was smitten.

Queeny provides a whole new level of mobility for Dave, allowing him to continue his active life with greater ease. She certainly lives up to her name too, with Dave often receiving comments from passersby about her alertness and regal looks!

In April, Dave and Queeny made a permanent move to Queensland to be closer to friends. They are enjoying the new environment and love heading to the beach so Queeny can run and play out of harness. Last week they were relaxing on the lawn together before an 8km community walk. Dave describes this simple but precious moment...

"As Queeny and I waited to be collected, we relaxed in the shade. Queeny lay beside me, chewing on a pig's ear. I was so happy to feel the contentment and devotion we have for each other. It was a powerful, moving experience, highlighting the trust and companionship we share. We are so well matched."

Queeny was a sponsored pup from the Q Litter in 2007. The support of her sponsors helped us to provide her intensive training at no expense to Dave. At a cost of up to \$30,000 for every working Guide Dog, we simply couldn't provide this vital service without help from our sponsors. Dave wishes to express his thanks to everyone that has supported their journey. "We live alone together and life is so satisfying" says Dave. "To start each day with a tail wagging dog is such a joy. Queeny has changed my life". ●●