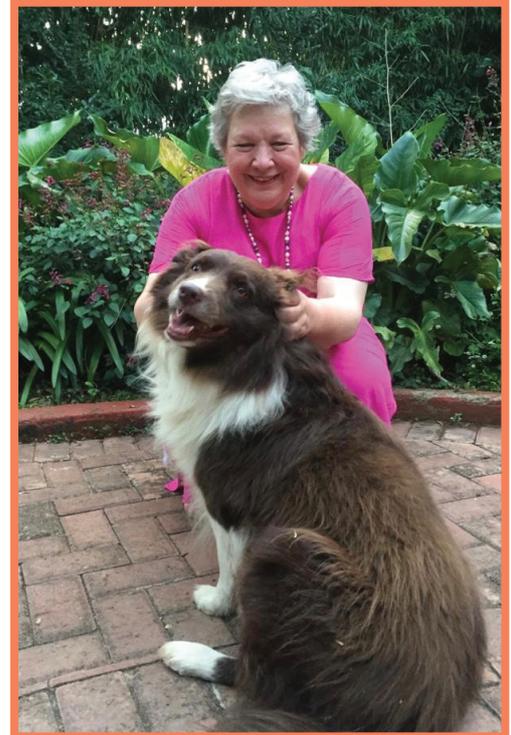


# An Interview with Hanlie & Milo 2020 Winners of the 2nd Annual Cluny Animal Trust Sweepstakes

We launched our 2nd Annual Cluny Animal Trust on the 1st April 2020, right in the middle of hard lock down. Like most of us, we thought the first lock down would only be 3 weeks! But as COVID strengthened its grip and lockdowns continued, we did what we could to sell as many tickets online, but the closing date 31st July 2020 crept up fast and furious. At that time, we had only sold about 400 tickets!

Imogen from the Cluny team got on the phone with the legal eagles about the possibility of extending the closing date. They said we could safely do it as long as we communicated it, so we sent an email to everyone who had a ticket saying that once all the tickets were sold we would do the draw, which we did live and on Facebook at 12 noon on the 31st December 2020 and we were thrilled when Pastor George from Clarens selected at random the name of Milo Robertson!

Milo is one of Hanlie's beloved dogs and here is their story, in their own words, we hope you enjoy it and that it encourages you to enter our 3rd Sweepstakes which will launch again on 1st April 2021 – but this time, there is no closing date, that will only be announced as soon as we have sold all of the tickets.



## Why did you enter the Sweepstakes?

In 2019 it was pure fun to enter when Chantel and team came around to my shop, selling Sweepstakes tickets. The reason why I love the Cluny team stems from how profoundly grateful I am to Dr Katherine and the entire Cluny team who helped me during 2019 to settle Flikvlooi, a young stray Africanis. That year I also bought tickets in the names of our three dogs, Milo, Shadow and Flikvlooi Robertson. To me it was a fun thing to do. It was a way to say thank you on behalf of our animals for all the hard work the Cluny team...I think I is rather hard to quantify the immeasurable contribution they make to animal well-being in Clarens and environs.



2020 was a very strange year for me, but I had to enter the Sweepstakes again. COVID 19 pushed societal needs right in our faces and underscored our interdependence. When I received a nice financial windfall at the beginning of 2020 I resolved to help where I could and support charities that I feel comfortable with. The Cluny Animal Trust is of course very high up on that list!

The first opportunity to directly engage with the Cluny team was during my first return to Clarens after having been in lock-down in Johannesburg since March. It was a windy Saturday morning in September, but I went walk-about Clarens, just to get a feel for what was happening in the village. When I saw the team holding on for dear life to their banners and merchandise, I jumped at the opportunity to get my hands on the 2021 Cluny calendar, which we buy every year! With all that happened in 2020, I felt that it was almost a patriotic duty for those of us who were in a position to do so, to donate to different causes and contribute to Clarens returning to normality after lockdown. So, I bought a calendar, a few of the lovely mugs as well as a number of Sweepstake tickets, for the whole of the family.

The second batch of tickets I bought electronically. This process is just as easy as buying your tickets face-to-face, Imogen from the Cluny team made this all so easy...so there really is no excuse for not getting your hands on a ticket for 2021!

Then, it was around October, when I spotted by sheer chance, a Facebook post that the team intended setting up a table to sell the last batch of Sweepstake tickets.

I thought I would help them to finish the task, and I sent Chantel a message via WhatsApp and she had was truly kind and sorted everything out. When I was in town again on late November, I popped by to pick them up, they had a table set up just outside of the Courtyard, after lunch we were strolling by



and I could not believe that Chantel still had tickets left...but she wasn't going anywhere until she sold them!

I felt so sorry for her, the entire Cluny team sacrifice so much of their time, they have very little time off and when they aren't working, they have to fundraise, so I offered to basically take the balance of the tickets off them in order for them to be able to go home and enjoy their Saturday afternoon. At this point in time, I very flippantly offered that if one of our tickets win, I would return 50% of the winnings to Cluny given how committed they were!

## How did you feel with Chantel called you to tell you your name had been drawn at random?

It was quite farcical! I did not watch the live online draw. I was in Johannesburg struggling with the after-effects of chemotherapy and the stacks of evil medication I have to swallow, dozing and feeling sorry for myself. I was expecting a call from my homeopath, Chanelle, who assists with managing the side effects of the chemo treatments.

When the phone rang, I didn't register the caller's name properly and I just started shooting my mouth off about how terrible I was feeling, describing everything I was experiencing in graphic detail. I think Chantel was completely thrown by what she was hearing and not making any sense of what I was sharing. When she eventually got a word in and explained that one of the tickets in Milo's name was drawn as the winner, all I could hope for was that the conversation was not broadcasted and/or recorded on the other side... thankfully it was not!

Milo, who usually keeps me company when I nap in the daytime got an extra ear-rub while I tried to explain what happened. However, he was generally oblivious to the luck he brought to our house.

## You like so many other people you bought tickets in your own name and then in your dog's name - Milo actually won, why did you do that?

Not a single day passes that I do not realise how incredibly privileged our dogs (and us) are. They are better fed and get more affection and attention than many children. The two collies (Milo and his sister, Shadow) certainly have not known one second of hardship in their lives.

Flikvlooi's situation was different. She was a stray that chose to just arrive at our house one evening. But because she is the symbol of the underprivileged in our household, we want to in a way also let the dogs subscribe to a culture of giving back and sharing...I know it may seem silly to some, but it works for us!

## What do you know about the work that Cluny does and why do you feel it is important?

Dr Katherine and her private veterinary practice is one of the core services that we have used since we have become part-time residents in Clarens. As schools and the church are usually integrating mechanisms for newcomers, for us it was the vet. Katherine and Chantel's personas are so intertwined with Cluny Trust that over time we became aware of the incredible contribution the entire Cluny team makes to the area.

In our lives, Ian (my darling husband) and I are convinced of the ability of animals to bring immense joy and teach valuable lessons to us as human beings. In a society where abject poverty is the reality of a large section of the population, we one would not want to see that potential source of joy is stripped from people who already have so little. But the reality is that the trade-offs between caring for pets and keeping a hungry family fed can at times be devastating. The Cluny team steps into that breach, over and over again. It would be wrong as animal lovers, to not do all we could to support them, even in the smallest of ways. So, over the years, I have placed their collection tins in my shop and bought the annual calendar. Then came advertising the second-hand bookshop that benefits Cluny and now the annual Sweepstakes. I am constantly reminded that the need is greater than what the resources could ever be!

## What do you plan to do with the money that you won?

As promised Milo very generously donated 50% of his winnings to the Cluny Animal Trust.

R3000 is deemed as re-imburement for the initial buying of the tickets, and some is held in the kitty for buying 2021 Sweepstake tickets, which we believe go on sale on the 1st of April 2021. We will use the balance to respond to other desperate calls for support (from other institutions). And along the way, we will of course buy a few treats for our precious dogs!