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Dog attacks 89-year-old man

Katrina Condie

John Wall spent his 89th birthday in hospital after being attacked by a dog at Lake Conjola.

Mr Wall was out for his morning walk following a recent hip replacement operation when he was set upon in Lake Entrance road on June 4.

The attack left the spritely gentleman in hospital with a broken elbow until last Tuesday after he fell and hit the kerb.

Mr Wall is angry that irresponsible dog owners let their pets run free around his village, with no concern for others.

"I want people to know that others are suffering as a result of their stupidity," he told the Times.

Mr Wall said dog owners should be held responsible for their pets' actions.

"If I took a dislike to someone innocently walking past my cottage and threw myself bodily at

them knocking them to the ground, with sufficient force to injure them, I would expect the courts to throw the book at me and jail me, as well as compensating the injured person for any medical expenses incurred," he explained.

"However, if my dog does the same thing I can expect to be let off scot-free - why is that so?"

Mr Wall said Shoalhaven City Council rangers should be conducting more patrols to put an end to roaming dogs in Lake Conjola.

"We never see a council ranger patrolling the area in the interests of ratepayers and impounding wandering, unleashed dogs.

"I have heard many complaints of locally-owned dogs wandering free and frightening older residents and I must confess that in the past 12 months I have been threatened on more than one occasion by wandering dogs," Mr Wall added.

Mr Wall said nearby residents, as well as passers by, were kind enough to help him up off the ground after his fall and take him to Milton hospital for treatment.

He said he was following his doctor's advice, following a hip replacement, and walking slowly around the block with the aid of a walking stick.

"I was walking along the when to my horror I heard a sudden rushing sound accompanied by a vicious snarling and, although aided by my walking stick but taken completely by surprise, I was completely knocked off my feet by a dog.

"The force of my falling body into the gutter caused my right elbow to strike the concrete kerb most violently," Mr Wall said.

"It all happened so very, very quickly that it was hard to see what kind of a dog it was - although my subconscious mind tells me that it was a very large Doberman-type of dog.

"And, having attacked and injured me, it disappeared just as quickly as it had appeared - into its own open-gated property on the opposite side of the road."

After being taken to hospital, x-rays revealed an olecranon fracture of Mr Wall's right elbow, requiring two pins and wire.



HEARTBROKEN: John Wall, 89, feels he has become a burden to his family after falling and breaking his elbow when attacked by a dog in Lake Conjola.

After spending his 89th birthday in hospital, Mr Wall was released a week later said he is heart broken that he cannot look after himself.

"I am cottage bound for two months as I can't drive and have to rely on help from my family.

"Prior to this attack, at the start of my 90th year, I felt so young and capable and was able to drive to Sydney and beyond whenever I wanted to - having just passed my fifth driving test," Mr Wall said.

"Until this attack I have always cooked and cleaned for myself, done all my own washing and hung it out. I haven't had to rely on anyone.

"I have always looked after myself and felt so young.

"For the first time in my life, I have become a burden to my children

"For six years I have attended church services which I shall be unable to do for the next eight weekends because of one person's stupidity and thoughtlessness," Mr Wall said.

"My Christian friends tell me that I ought to thank God that I didn't strike my head, instead of my elbow, against the concrete kerb for that could have killed me.

"They also point out, however, that it could have given the police the relevant power to charge the dog owner with manslaughter."

Mr Wall said as a result of this incident, he has made a vow to never, ever walk unaccompanied in that area again.

Milton Ulladulla
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