



## AN INSPIRATIONAL STORY ABOUT SECOND CHANCES INSPIRED BY AN EX-RACEHORSE WITH ATTITUDE

### ADVANCE PRAISE FOR *ELVIS AND ME*

*Elvis and Me* by Gillian Wills, the story of how a world-weary musician and a broken racehorse rescue each other, is garnering praise from other authors ahead of publication.

**Kristina Olsson, the author of *Boy, Lost*, says:** *'This Elvis has all the swank, beauty and heartbreak of his namesake... If you've ever yearned for a horse, stood up for the underdog or taken a crazy risk, you'll love Elvis.'*

**Maggie Mackellar, author of *When It Rains* and *How To Get There*, says:** *'[Elvis and Me is] a beautiful book about following a passion and changing your life... it shows how full of joy a life can become when you are brave enough to follow a passion.'*



Elvis and Gillian

At 56 years of age, Gillian Wills bought her first horse on a whim. Elvis was emaciated, scarred, unruly, saddle-phobic and imbued with attitude. However, she sensed in him the remnants of a fierce pride that resonated with her own almost-lost sense of self-worth, depleted after leaving a high status position as head of a prestigious Melbourne music conservatorium to move across the country with her partner to Queensland.

As Gillian discloses in her memoir *Elvis and Me*, Elvis was pitched to her as a quiet, beginner's 'I'll-do-whatever-you-want-kind-of-horse' that could hardly summon up the energy to trot. The truth was very different. Rehabilitating Elvis through natural horsemanship methods (horse whispering) with the help of a gifted trainer introduced Gillian to a new world where music was incidental and daily discussions centred on the weather, how to tell good grass from bad, and fear of the Hendra virus.

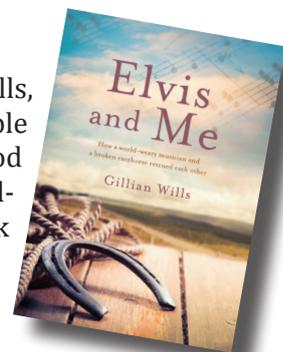
Gradually Elvis's behaviour improved and Gillian's confidence grew. Learning to assert her leadership over Elvis' daily rehabilitation program slowly but surely transformed her world. She discovered a sense of self she had never had before. She found the courage to marry her partner. Most of all, she learnt

to accept and appreciate people and things for who and what they are.

Gillian says, *'I was supposed to help Elvis, but instead he led me on an unexpected trail of self-discovery. I learned to like myself. I realised I didn't have to prove to the world I was worthy, be defined by a profession, or prove that I could achieve an impossible goal. I began to stand up for myself with my partner, employers, children, friends ... and with Elvis, of course!'*

**Gillian Wills** is an Honorary Associate of the Royal Academy of Music for distinguished services to the music profession. She was Professor of Music at the Victorian College of the Arts at the University of Melbourne and held lectureships at QUT and Griffith University. After what seemed a lifetime as a musician and academic, Gillian Wills swapped a fashionable and music-orientated Melbourne city life for Queensland country living and looking after rescue horses.

*Elvis and Me* (Gillian Wills, Finch Publishing) is available from 1 August 2015 in good bookshops and online retailers nationwide in paperback (\$27.99) and ebook (\$9.99).



### MEDIA AND PUBLICITY

Gillian Wills is available for interviews. Kristina Olsson will launch *Elvis and Me* at The Avid Reader Bookshop on Tuesday 4 August. A Melbourne launch at Readings and a Lismore launch at Book Warehouse will follow. To set up an interview with Gillian or request a review copy of *Elvis and Me*, contact:

Laura Boon  
Finch Publishing  
Ph: 02 9418 6247 / 0431 205 177  
E: [laura@finch.com.au](mailto:laura@finch.com.au)