



Ipswich Koala Protection Society, inc.

NEWSLETTER

May 2010

From The President

This is really my first report for 2010. In the last newsletter you would have ploughed your way through my 2009 annual report which was a brief (not) outline of events for that year.

2010 has started reasonably quiet as far as koala rescues go, although sightings of healthy koalas are on the increase in some areas. This is our quiet time of year but it would be nice if this continued throughout the year.

Unfortunately it would appear that this year will see us once again attempting to convince the powers that be (local, state and federal government bodies) of the dire straits our local and neighbouring SEQ koalas are in – remember protecting habitat for koalas ensures all wildlife a future in this world. But koalas are declining at an alarming rate.

With the recent announcement by the Department of Infrastructure and Planning in partnership with Ipswich City Council of the Future Industrial Area (still classified as INVESTIGATION AREA) we will once again be consumed with submissions, mapping, collecting and collating data, as well as gearing up for the busy breeding season.

IKPS will hold a community “CHOICE” day in June (see attached flyer). All members are encouraged to get behind IKPS and make this a day of reckoning. This will be our opportunity to be the voice for all wildlife.

At the recent Commemorative Ipswich City Council meeting celebrating 150 years of Ipswich officially becoming a city, David (aka long suffering husband) Helen (aka media tart) and myself were recognised for our contribution to the city and were named as Ambassadors of Ipswich. I'm not sure what role comes with the title, but my interpretation is that we keep doing what we have been doing for many, many years. And to steal the words of our Mayor Paul “protect our heritage and lifestyle”.

2010 will be do or die for koalas.

Ruth.

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Thank You

We would like to say a very special Thank You to Kay Taaffe and Madeleine Luck-Grillon for their very generous donation of \$1000. Kay and Madeleine have been IKPS members for a few years and are very special people – you'll see why when you read about Shirly's Place later in this newsletter.

More Thanks

Thank you Mt Forbes Rural Fire Brigade for your offer to donate the drinks, man the BBQ, control the parking and supply shade at our 'Community Choice' open Day. And thank you for the donation of a chemical fire extinguisher.

Thank you Linda Smart for the donation of cages, blankets and animal pouches. Those carers needing these are urged to contact Ruth on 5464 6274.



OUR ORPHANS

11/2/10 OAKEY – Adult female attacked by dog, sustained multiple internal injuries. Euth

17/2/10 WARWICK – Adult female dead on arrival. Found to have diseased reproductive organs. Good news is she was 15 years old.

22/2/10 AMBERLEY – (**Hornet** again). Adult male Released and picked up two days later. He was originally admitted with conjunctivitis. One eye flared up again. Still receiving treatment at Moggill.

22/2/10 JEEBROPILLY – Adult male hit by car, (100k). Dead on arrival.

28/2/10 LOWOOD – Old female in very poor condition. Euth. Post mortem showed pneumonia, kidney disease, reproductive disease, wasted. She was 10 years old.

7/3/10 MT. FORBES – Adult male, emaciated, totally blind. Euth

8/3/10 ESK – Adult male in poor condition, prolapsing. Euth

27/3/10 MUTDAPILLY – Adult male found wandering on the ground. Blind and wasted. Euth.

1/4/10 GATTON – Adult male totally emaciated, dead on arrival. Died from pneumonia.

5/4/10 WIVENHOE DAM – (**Doris**) Adult female clinging to a dead tree in Wivenhoe Dam. Rescued by 3 good samaritans. Checked out at Moggill and released the next day, (but not back into the dam). (*see story*)

14/4/10 LOWOOD – Adult female, body score 0 (same old story) pneumonia, diseased reprocutives, cystitis. Euth

16/4/10 ESK – Adult female, body score 0, cystitis, kidney failure. Euth

20/4/10 JEEBROPILLY – Adult male found dead on the ground. Died from old age (11yrs).

30/4/10 CAROLE PARK Adult female hit by car. Multiple internal injuries, crushed head. Dead.

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Although we've had a small respite from rescuing koalas, we have been very busy nonetheless:

- *Helen met with Powerlink representatives at Mt Byron where koala food trees were being logged.
- *Ruth and Helen attended the Rosewood Walloon Consultative Committee meeting in April as guest speakers.
- *Marilyn and Ann ran a possum workshop for carers.
- *Helen attended a koala workshop run by LACA at Peak Crossing as guest speaker
- *And of course there was our epic road trip. (*read Ruth's story on later page*)

Ms Aree – (you need to say it fast to truly understand her name), was found on the ground cold, dehydrated, wasted and suffering with severe cystitis. Though technically not an orphan because she is 'of age' to have left mum, she only weighed 1.7kg and only had a body score of 1. She seems to be responding with medication and lots of love, gained 220 grams in the first week. Fingers crossed.

Bluey – came into MKH with his mum who was suffering with conjunctivitis. Unfortunately she developed a severe infection due to stress. The baby was also suffering the same infection. He was in care for a week before he died.

Unnamed baby – (although Helen was considering calling him Bailey, supposed to be a lucky name). Mum was killed by a rottwieller X and staffy. All of her internal organs were punctured and one leg broken and chewed. Baby has bruising to one side of his face and one arm. He weighs 86gr and the future for him will be touch and go.

(*from his new mum – I'm probably going to call him Guy or Migi, [my guy] – not sure yet.*)

ORPHAN UPDATE

Courage – is doing really well and is now in kindy

Hoffman – has been to kindy and is now released, although he did knock on someone's door the first night he was out in the big wide world.

Dustin – came in almost the same size as Hoffman, but has not grown at the same rate, also being treated for conjunctivitis. He is doing well.

Marcia – also still in care. Had a slight problem with cystitis, but is clearing up nicely. She should be ready for kindy soon.

Shed – spent a few weeks in kindy and has been released.

Picket – has been released

Cher – last newsletter we were quietly optimistic that this little one might make it. Unfortunately she didn't.

NEW MEMBERS

I.K.P.S extends a very warm welcome to our newest members:

**MICHELLE MORRIS
BELINDA DUNSMORE
THE BRANCH FAMILY
MARCIE GOODINGHAM**



NEW CONTACT

Joe and Michael Janssens have kindly agreed to be our contacts for flying foxes and bats. They are the best people I know to advise on anything 'batty', (pun intended, sorry Jo). Their phone number is: 3271 1382 or Jo's mobile number is 0448 042 937

ANOTHER ROAD TRIP

Thelma and Louise hit the road again. (This time we were more like the Leylands).

A very tiny wallaby was delivered to me some months ago. This is not an unusual occurrence – what was unusual was that it had come all the way from a National Park somewhere near Tenterfield NSW. The fact that it came from NSW is not illegal as long as it goes back.

For months we have had bets on what Precious would grow into. It was a long shot that she could be a brush tailed rock wallaby, but she wasn't telling.

Elsie (wallaby advisor) took on the mammoth task of raising 'Precious'. While she was tiny this was not a drama, as she grew it was obvious that this was not your normal run of the mill wallaby.

The researchers at Moggill were not convinced that she was a rock wallaby, but her characteristics and behaviour were unlike anything we had had in care in 20 years.

Elsie was to the stage of tearing her hair out – nothing was Precious proof. It was time for Precious to go. She was now nearly 5kg of dynamite.

I contacted the Rangers at National Parks in Tenterfield and arranged to meet up with them for assistance and advice on where to release her.

You may recall from our last adventure story that Redman was a most accommodating passenger, (*except for when we stopped for petrol*), just lying on the back seat until we got to Chinchilla. Not so this time.

I had an SOS call from Helen who had administered the sedative and was still waiting a half hour later for it to kick in. This was looking like a nightmare trip. Fortunately once she was bagged (she was a lot smaller than Redman) and made comfortable on a bed at Helen's feet – Helen wasn't so comfortable – we were able to hit the road only an hour later than planned.

Arriving at Tenterfield at 12.30ish we met up with the Rangers who were just stopping for lunch and a cuppa. Another delay, but Precious was very well behaved, made liars out of us, and just sat on our laps and looked around. It was like she knew she was in her home territory.

The Rangers confirmed our suspicions – brush tailed rock wallaby. (Our researchers at Moggill had taken DNA before we left just to be sure. The results would not be back before her release). Brush tailed rock wallabies are rare in NSW and the guys from NP were very excited and knew exactly where the small population lived.

30kms of corrugated dirt road and we were at Boonoo Boonoo Falls National Park. The release went exactly as you would hope – not at all like we thought it would. It was perfect. Helen and I arrived back in Tenterfield at around 4.00pm and decided we would stay the night. We had a good feed of Chinese, a warm bed (each), a good night's sleep and were ready to hit the road at 7.00am the next morning.

We only had one dilemma. One the way to Tenterfield we definitely went through Stanthorpe but on the way home we missed it completely. Blame the Navman. We were very tired but it was well worth the effort to see her back with what is probably her family.

There will be one more adventure in the near future, so stay tuned.



“Shirl's Place” Cancer Retreat
a quiet Country Retreat for people affected by cancer
Kay-Marie Taaffe and Madeleine Luck-Grillon
Ambassadors for Dragons Abreast Australia
www.dragonsabreast.com.au
2350 Tarome Road, Moorang QLD 4340
Ph/Fax: 07 5464 9155

Shirl's Place Cancer Retreat Cottage is nestled in the foothills of the Great Dividing Range 100km southwest of Brisbane and is part of a small non-commercial farm with a few head of cattle and two senior horses. Since the property is registered with the "Land For Wildlife" conservation program* there are many opportunities to experience the delights of Wallabies grazing on the front lawns or adjacent hills, Koalas in the trees and an abundance of bird life.

We offer the Cottage free of charge to people mainly affected by breast cancer.

Shirl's Place is named in memory and honour of our dear friend Ruth Ederle-Münger who lost her battle with breast cancer on 1 April 2002. Ruth Ederle, who's nickname became "Shirl" had close ties with the farm through her friendship with the previous owners for many years. She will always remain in our hearts and her connection with this most beautiful and peaceful place will continue through her memory. Because of Shirl we live in south east Queensland. In 2001 we bought this property in Moorang at her recommendation. It was a place she loved to visit, a place she would come to reenergize then venture back into her busy life in Canberra. When her health slowly declined after a second diagnosis of breast cancer, we built a small cottage for her to live in, so she would be close to support but still have privacy. Sadly she became far too unwell to face a move to Queensland and Shirl never saw her Country Cottage.

Since that day we offer the wholly self funded cancer retreat free of charge to women who struggle to afford a much needed break between or after treatments; especially when there is an urgency to take time out to heal and grow strong, away from meeting every one else's needs.

We welcome the presence of a caring and supportive partner or friend for the duration of the stay.

In a serene and very beautiful environment the self contained 3-bedroom cottage radiates a warm welcome. It allows people to reflect and rethink their lives, reunite with themselves while regaining energy to face the demanding world around us.

We promote good nutrition and our guests are invited to join us for home cooked meals in our home for company and conversation, or to enjoy the seclusion and privacy that the cottage offers. We endeavour to meet their needs and give support where required.

Madeleine and Kay

COMMUNITY CHOICES

Queensland Transport recently altered the alignment of the Southern Freight Rail Corridor to minimize the impact on koalas in what they identified as “*significant*” and “*important*” koala habitat at Ebenezer/Mt Forbes and yet the Department of Infrastructure and Planning is still planning an Industrial Estate here.

We are holding a ‘community choices’ open day to discuss this and to plan our course of action. We would like our members to attend at some time during the day if possible. See the flyer for all the details.

THE STORY OF DORIS DAM

As written by her rescuer – Marcie Goodingham

“We were going fishing in our canoe at Billies Bay. It was me, my boyfriend Nick and his brother Alex. While we were paddling we saw a boat pulled up at this old dead tree sticking up out of the water, which had a koala in it.

At first glance I thought the koala was dead, but then it moved so I knew I had to call someone. This was probably about 2:00 or 3:00pm. The people in the boat tied a plastic bag to the tree, probably so the rescuers could see it from the bridge because we were pretty far away. Then they left.

Me and Nick paddled back to the tree and called the 1234 directory to get the wildlife number but there wasn't much reception. We were calling people backwards and forwards. Alex had gone off fishing and me and Nick were sitting in the canoe just thinking and talking to the koala, which I had been calling Boris, because it was getting dark and the wildlife people were still trying to figure out where we were and arranging who and how they were going to get the koala from the middle of the dam.

After sitting with Boris for over an hour we went back to the car to get my jumper and a towel. We came back and tried luring him towards the canoe but we were scared he was going to attack us so we waited for Alex to get back so we could use his oar and his landing net.

We had the oar on top of Boris's head and the landing net underneath his bottom, but he was so strong and gripping for life. So we started breaking branches off the tree so he couldn't jump onto another branch. While we were doing that he fell into the water and then climbed straight back up the tree. Soon after that we got him in the net. Alex had the oar, Nick had the net and I was trying to unlatch his claws from the branch. Soon enough he was in the net with my jumper on top.

Straight after we caught Boris the wildlife carer called and said to keep him warm and we told her we had an esky, so in the pitch black I had to paddle back to the bridge while Nick held Boris.

When we got to the car we placed the net with Boris inside the esky and called back to see what to do next. We arranged to meet at McDonalds. It was about 7:00pm that we got there and that was when I found out Boris was a girl so I had to change her name to Doris, so she became Doris Dam.”

Note: Marcie came with me when I returned Doris to Wivenhoe Dam. I couldn't believe it when she pointed out the 'tree' Doris had been on, just a couple of large sticks really, a very long way from shore. We can only guess how she got there. Maybe she was trapped there when the Somerset Dam floodgates were opened a few days before, because I was later told she had been there for 3 days.

Marcie really hadn't wanted to go fishing that day, she wanted to stay in bed. We are so grateful that she changed her mind.

P.S. Marcie is now a volunteer at Moggill Koala Hospital.

Next IKPS meeting
at 3pm on Sunday, 6th June
at 10-14 East Field Court, Deebling Heights
Everyone welcome

OUR POSSUM WORKSHOP

Our possum workshop in April was a great success with a variety of carers and their partners attending, ranging from new carers up to experienced ones. Marilyn and Anne shared the presentation of topics and answered many interesting questions equally. A booklet and certificate were presented to all attending.

The feedback received was great, with comments such as 'very educational', 'easily understood', and 'enjoyable'.

All our new carers that attended are now caring for their first possum and doing a wonderful job. Congratulations and enjoy the rewarding experience.

A huge Thank You to Graham and Celia for opening your home to us and sharing our workshop with us.

Anne

A Letter to the Prime Minister

With a Federal election coming up, now is the time for us all to write to Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and the Minister for Environment Peter Garrett, urging that koalas be listed as 'vulnerable' under the EPBC Threatened Species Act. The Federal Government will make the final decision in September, after that there won't be another opportunity for **at least another 5 years** – by then it will be too late. More information is available on the AKF's Koala Campaigners website, but don't just click their letter, use it as a guide. 'Form letters' are not as effective as an individual letter. The deadline for submissions is 8th June.

The following is a letter written to the Prime Minister from Simon Baltais, President of the Wildlife Preservation Society:

Dear Prime Minister

Minister Peter Garrett is considering listing the koala as 'conservation dependant' instead of vulnerable. I am asking you to intervene. The koala clearly meets the criteria for Vulnerable under the EPBC Act and the document written by Minister Garrett's Department is not scientifically valid according to the Australian Koala Foundation (AKF). I believe the figures of the Australian Koala Foundation koala numbers are correct (no more than 80,000), and I am shocked that Minister Garrett's document fails to identify and acknowledge the tremendous commitment of \$8m worth of science and, more importantly, it fails to identify and acknowledge the 2000 field sites and 80,000 individually measured trees that give the AKF confidence of their assessment. This is unprecedented data by an organisation like the AKF, and it is shocking that your Government ignores their commitment to the koala and its habitat. Protecting the koala forests will allow over 1000 species already on the vulnerable list to be protected and we cannot comprehend why Minister Garrett fails to understand both the social and economic benefits of this. His Department appears to be bogged down in scientific arguments but fails to understand the bigger picture and the role the koala plays in the Australian landscape. Minister Garrett continually says he will not make this decision until September of 2010 and I urge you to not allow him to let the koala down by a 'conservation dependant' listing.

Yours sincerely, a Koala Campaigner

Simon Baltais