

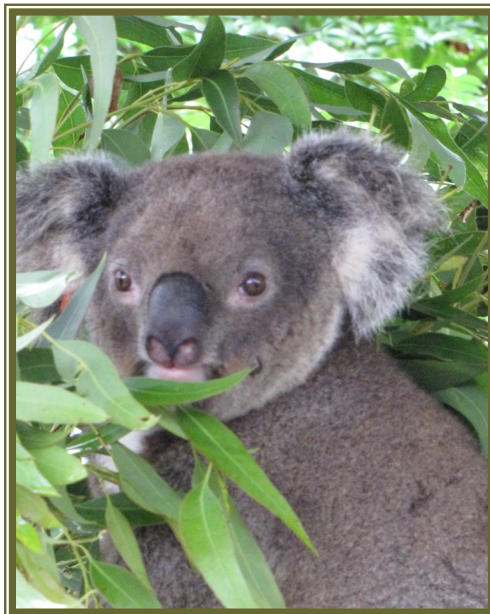




# Pacific Choccy

As we all know all koalas are stars but this mature female is a particularly important star. Pacific Choccy was a very dark furred big bodied female koala from Pacific Drive in Port Macquarie (which is the road that follows the beaches in town).

In early 2012 Pacific Choccy was admitted to the hospital with a rather nasty case of urogenital chlamydial infection. We did the normal pre-treatment screening process on her (ultrasound, bloods, taking swabs and clinical examination etc) and found her reproductive organs and tract were not exactly in good shape. As she was in good health otherwise we decided to go ahead and treat her anyway. Unfortunately Pacific Choccy did not respond to treatment and thus her prognosis was not good. Meanwhile we had been in communication with the Australian Centre for Wildlife Genomics at the Australian Museum about a number of possible projects and out of this contact came something pretty important.



The Australian Museum was looking to sequence the koala genome.

Now to the average person this may not seem significant but to the science world this is huge. To be able to sequence the koala genome means that the DNA of a koala can be mapped. This has been done a number of years ago in humans and the impact this has had in assisting research to understand a lot of disease processes and consequently how to deal with them and also to look at inherited diseases etc is enormous. There are also a lot of animals that have had their genome sequenced but not the koala.

Were we interested in assisting in this project???? Absolutely!!!!!!!

So mid way in 2012 Pacific Choccy became a very very special and very very important koala to science.

In April 2013, the Australian Museum and the

University of Technology in Queensland made a joint announcement to the world's media that they had indeed completed the first stage of sequencing the koalas genome.

Pacific Choccy was the koala who supplied the female genetic material and a koala from Australia Zoo in Queensland supplied the male genetic material in this story.

The fact that Pacific Choccy had quite advanced chlamydia was also very important to this research work because it enabled the geneticists to really look at chlamydia in koalas at the same time.

Yes it was very sad that Pacific Choccy did not make it to be released back into the wild but her contribution to the welfare of koalas in this country (and overseas in zoos for that matter) is absolutely enormous.

We are very proud to have been part of this research work and very proud that Pacific Choccy has been able to contribute so much.

The work with the Australian Museum is ongoing. We are currently working with them on a few projects which involve DNA. For example when we eartag a koala a tiny piece of ear tissue is harvested, fixed in a special liquid, all the data from the animal is recorded with a numbering system and this small piece of tissue is sent to the Australian Museum for use in these projects.

As the Koala Hospital is a scientifically based research centre as well as a wildlife hospital we feel its vitally important to be involved in as many research projects as possible. Every bit of information gleaned is one step closer to protecting these precious creatures.

We salute Pacific Choccy for her contribution to science.

# National Koala Conference 17th, 18th, 19th May 2013

## “Their Future is in our Hands”

The first National Koala Conference kicked off to the embrace of a beautiful Autumnal day in Port Macquarie on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May at the Westport Conference Centre in Buller Street. After many, many months of planning and organising by Cheyne Flanagan and her dedicated organising committee from the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital the day had finally come and there was a real buzz of anticipation in the air, ABC broadcasted their live morning show from the foyer as vets, scientists, carers, rescuers, politicians and public servants mingled together.

The usually unflappable Cheyne was visibly nervous as the conference room began to fill with speakers and delegates from around the country and indeed from around the world.

Her nerves were not helped when she introduced the opening key note speaker only to find he was not in the room and was still doing a live interview for ABC radio in the foyer! But it was nothing more than a hiccup and very soon Assoc. Professor Mark Krockenberger from the University of Sydney appeared and took to the stage to give us an account of 35 years of research association between University of Sydney and the Koala Preservation society of NSW. Dr Damien Higgins then followed on to outline some of the current and ongoing research projects underway at the faculty of Veterinary Science at the University of Sydney, not least their ongoing research into Chlamydia in Koalas, and stressed that “The most effective way to improve the health, welfare and status of the koala is to continue to build and maintain strong partnerships between koala researcher, koala veterinarians, koala hospitals and community groups.”

Next up was the Hon. Cate Faehrmann MLC, Greens MP in the Parliament of NSW who used an example of what is happening in the Leard State Forest in north-west NSW to present her speech “Homeless and Orphaned – what logging and mining is doing to Koalas under government watch.” I think we can all agree with her assertion that “Destruction of koala habitat continues and is the biggest of many threats to our national icon. There is no question that to succeed in conserving the koala in the wild, adequate areas of koala habitat must be preserved. The koala is a protected species yet its habitat must be afforded the highest level of protection if the koala’s threatened species status is to bear any weight.” I think despite any political bias we may have that we can probably also all agree with Cate that NSW Environment Minister Robyn Parker was not correct when she infamously stated that “logging protects koalas’.

The ever effervescent Dr Stephen Phillips from Biolink Ecological Consultants was next to the podium. A longstanding friend of the Koala Hospital Dr Philips gave us “A personal perspective on 40 years of koala conservation – is the cup half empty, half full or not there at all?” Billed as “a wide ranging presentation dedicated to the visions of Jean Starr and which discusses a variety of issues and experience associated with the conservation and management of koalas over the 40 year time period since initial establishment of the...(now KPSNSW) in 1973.” Dr Phillips also discussed the very uncomfortable question: “Are koalas here because of us and what we do for them, or are they still here in spite of us and what we do to them? Will they continue to survive into the future?” The conclusion: “Interestingly and in the case of the more severe populations, survival appears more due to circumstance, history or plain old good luck than it does any other measure or legislative action on our part. Therein lies the future perhaps.” On this bombshell we broke for morning tea and once again the conference centre bustled with enthusiastic conversation and debate.

Cheyne with her hi tech and hi cost pen hitting a glass vase system for keeping the speakers to their allotted times worked faultlessly and after morning tea we heard from Dr Merran Govendir from the University of Sydney on “The mysterious case of vanishing drug concentrations in koalas” which discussed research into “the efficacy of some commonly used anti-infective drugs..., for the treatment of systemic

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chlamydiosis in koalas.” Their finding showed not only low blood/plasma drug concentrations in these tests but in a later study they also found that meloxicam (Metacam) “demonstrated not only poor oral absorption, but rapid elimination”. In short meloxicam (Metacam) is virtually useless when administered orally to koalas. A fact that appeared to be met with great surprise by many in the room, not least our next speaker Dr Geoff Pye from San Diego Zoo who sportingly admitted that the zoo had spent a great deal of money on meloxicam for koalas as they were unaware of this research and interestingly the keepers at San Diego zoo had in fact reported their koalas as showing improvement after being given meloxicam. “A placebo for the keepers it seems”, he quipped.

Dr Pye went on to deliver a fascinating presentation on the phenomenon of “Hip and shoulder dysplasia in koalas’ at San Diego zoo and its loan partners in North America and Europe, which has seen more than 45 koalas develop hip and shoulder dysplasia, a condition uncommon in wild koalas. To cut an interesting story short, their studies have suggested a link to vitamin D deficiency from the animals being kept in inside enclosures. “Housing breeding females and joeys outdoors has resulted in a significant reduction in the severity of the hip dysplasia suggesting that exposure to sunlight and vitamin D play an important role in the etiology of this disorder.”

At this we broke for lunch many delegates including myself were seen heading outside to top up their vitamin D levels.

After lunch first off the rank was John Callaghan from Gold Coast City Council presenting “Translocation of koala population from Coomera –Pimpama, Qld.”

Josey Sharrad from the International Fund for Animal Welfare, a major sponsor of the conference, introduced herself and IFAW. “Founded in 1969... with projects in more than 40 countries, IFAW works to assist individual animals in crisis and also protect entire populations and conserve precious habitat.”

Sue Brookhouse next shared her heartbreaking story of the “Impact of Wildlife in the Warrumbungle Fires NSW January 2013”.

After a short break for tea and to wipe our eyes Ruth Lewis talked about the Ipswich Koala Protection Society and the great work they do there. She emphasised however that perhaps the key issue in the future of the wild koala is “Conservation and protection of koala habitat”. “We have come to realise over the years it is not enough to just rescue

and rehabilitate... Our message today is not new and doesn’t cost anything. Loss of habitat is the leading cause of disease, injury and death of koalas and all of our unique wildlife. Conservation and protection of habitat is the first, last and only step towards preserving and maintaining a healthy koala population.”

Emotions were once again pushed to the limits and tissues in short supply as we heard from Meghan Halverson representing the Sunshine Coast Koala Summit and the “South East Queensland Koalas’ Fate.” A dire but sadly all too familiar story of the demise of the koala and its habitat whilst local authorities watch idly on.

After a fascinating day we all retired exhilarated, inspired but I think a little emotionally weary.

Koala loving types are a tough lot though and at 9:00 on Saturday morning we gathered again in high expectation, revitalised and ready to hear the next part of the picture.

We were not disappointed when Colleen Wood from Southern Ash Wildlife Shelter, Victoria gave a very graphic and heart felt account of “Victoria’s Koala Dilemma – from a Carer’s Perspective”. And in particular the fate of the genetically unique Strezlecki koala. A familiar story with a strong message: “As koala custodians we can no longer be complacent. We have to evolve with the issues that continue to transpire. Information and research state wide and now interstate, overseas, must be collaborated. Trials, success as well as our failures need to be shared and a united front formed...”

“Knowing them gently. Cognitive justice through conversations with wild animals.” Now this was a change of pace, but from the first sentence I was hooked. Professor Steve Garlick of the University of Newcastle and the University of Technology Sydney certainly challenged our thinking, with a unique and highly memorable sharing of his thoughts about our interactions with wildlife in our care, and how cognitive justice in wildlife could and should “have significant ethical agency to offer in our learning about questions of environmental sustainability. It’s time we took some notice.”

Morning tea came just in time. Professor Garlick had certainly provided food for thought and I have been left asking myself over and over since “Not what I am good at, but what am I good for?”

After a much needed coffee you could feel the anticipation in the room as we waited for Dr Adam Polkinghorne from the University of Queensland to

tell us about their research into the “Origins of Chlamydia”. A subject far too scientific for me to attempt to summarise here, but suffice to say their ground breaking research “will help us to understand the complex relationship between this pathogen [Chlamydia] and its koala host.”

To take us through to lunch the by now much in demand Dr Stephen Philips took to the stage again to present his fascinating and perhaps surprising and to some challenging findings “Show me your data – countering assertions relating to the impact of wild dogs/dingoes on free ranging koala populations.” Despite domestic dog attacks on koalas being “widely recognized as a primary cause of koala mortality in urban and peri-urban landscapes,” it appears from “A review of predator scat-analysis data... from along the eastern seaboard of Australia from areas in which both wild dogs and koalas occur reveals that koalas comprise less than 0.05% of the dietary intake of wild dogs. The dangers of unsubstantiated claims and anecdotal observations relating to predation pressure from wild dogs can also be demonstrated as soliciting unwarranted persecution in some areas. It is sometimes easy to apportion blame, but let us not persecute what is otherwise a biodiversity asset in the name of koala conservation without adequate evidence, especially when there are more pressing problems to deal with.”

After lunch Dr Ben Moore from the University of Western Sydney climbed the stairs to the podium to present “The effect of rising CO<sub>2</sub> and Eucalyptus forests.” To summarize from his abstract “As the amount of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere continues to increase, and as the climate changes accordingly, we anticipate that the quality of eucalypt leaves will change – mostly for the worse... decreased protein levels, increased tannin levels and changing levels of some other toxins. We also expect that heat and drought will affect the quality of koalas’ food supply, as well as impacting koalas directly.”

Professor Ken Beagley from QUT our next speaker, presenting “Progress towards development of a Chlamydia vaccine in koalas”. Again a complex scientific subject, but to summarize QUT have made some great progress towards the development of a koala vaccine in koalas and “Mathematical modelling of vaccine induced protection at a population level suggested that the initial efficacy and longevity of vaccine-induced protection.” How, when and where the vaccine is used seem to now be the big questions.

Dr Amber Gillett from Australia Zoo took to the stage after a short tea break to give us another great presentation on “Diagnosis and treatment of

chlamydia in koalas at a Queensland wildlife facility”

Last but not least to finish another great day was Dr Damien Licari from Lismore City Council sharing his account of “Ecology, distribution and abundance of koalas in Lismore. Results of analysis of historical records.” “Results suggest that the Lismore koalas appear to be bucking state and national trends of decline.” He cautioned however that “Although encouraging, these results have arisen from an unintended ‘virtuous cycle’ encompassing a range of natural and human factors rather than good planning.”

For those attending the conference dinner, festivities re-commenced at 18:00 back at the conference centre with the promise of the ever popular complimentary first drink! The dinner was a splendid success. Entertainment included a short speech from Assoc. Professor Mark Krockenberger, and fantastic vocal performances by Ian Castle and our very own Amanda Gordon and later John Williamson. After a thoroughly enjoyable dinner Dr Jim Frazier took to the stage as guest speaker to see the night out. Many from the conference attended as well as others including some very special guests. Notably we were joined by our long-time supporter and patron and writer of Goodbye Blinky Bill... John Williamson, also present was our esteemed Mayor and sponsor Peter Besseling and his “colleague” Leslie Williams who shared a table with our President and other distinguished guests and as far as I am aware no food or insults were thrown. A testimony perhaps as to how koalas bring people together?

For a short while on Sunday morning there looked like there may be a few spare seats. Sore heads or travel arrangements it was impossible to tell until a sudden last minute influx suggested the former.

Dr Rebecca Johnson from Australia Museum started the day with her report on the amazing work they are doing with the Koala Genome Project. I urge you to read up about this as I cannot hope to do it justice here.

From the Office of Environmental & Heritage our next speaker was Dr Daniel Lunney with “35 years of Koala work”. A reflection “on the 43 years I have worked on koala conservation and management issues...”

After tea back to the stage was Dr Geoff Pye. As a follow up to his previous talk we were taken through San Diego’s Zoos experience with “Metabolic Bone Disease in Koalas.” A disease seemingly very closely



linked with their experience of hip and shoulder dysplasia.

Next John Turbill from the Biodiversity Conservation Unit, Office of Environment & Heritage presented “Koala conservation through Local Government Plans of Management – a summary of north coast plans and outcomes.”

Dr Stephen Philips and Cheyne Flanagan were next to present on “Translocation of koalas from Oxley Highway deviation to new habitat in the Lake Innes conservation area – principles, practice and implications.” Before Dr Amber Gillett returned to present “Diagnostic techniques and therapy options used in koalas with trauma related injuries.

Dr Natasha Speight from University of Adelaide finished the day and the conference with her studies on “Oxalate Nephrosis in Koalas.”

The 1<sup>st</sup> National Koala Conference was a great success in a great many ways. I wonder however what the stories will sound like 40 years from now. Will we have acted in time, done enough, done the right things? Despite the great people fighting the fight for this Australian icon, I can’t but help wonder ultimately if we as a species are capable of sharing our world?

I do hope so, after all **“Their future is in our hands.”**

*Barry Lane*

## CONFERENCE DINNER PHOTOS





## EAST MEETS WEST VIA J.W. AND A KOALA LINK

Kath Ffoulkes was a long way from home – from Western Australia in fact. She was visiting Port Macquarie, and with her son Callum, was at the Koala Hospital to check out the koalas.

While they were there, hospital volunteer rescuers brought in an injured koala. This young male had been found in a distressed state in an industrial yard in Acacia Avenue. Koalas arriving at the hospital are named by using the place they were found as the first part of their name, which in this case would be 'Acacia', and the second part is usually the name of whoever was involved with their rescue.

As Callum and his mother were on the spot, and showed an interest in him, it was decided to call the second part of his name 'Callum', in honour of our western state visitor.

After returning home, Callum and his mother kept in touch with the hospital to monitor the condition of "their koala". As he had shown signs of the disease Chlamydia, he was treated at the hospital and released a few months later. He may have been happy to be returned to the wild, as during his stay, occasionally trashed his unit and often refused to cooperate with the volunteers who looked after him.

Meanwhile, Callum Ffoulkes was a member of the band 'The Haptics', who performed in Perth, and perhaps a bit of "koala luck" was involved, as his band was chosen as the support group for John Williamson's gig there earlier this year.

Justin Amos, Jack Cooper, Callum Ffoulkes and Jack Ward are shown here with John Williamson, who is a much respected patron of the Koala Hospital, and actually composed his song 'Goodbye Blinky Bill' while on a visit to the hospital. Kath suggested that he might like to write another song, called 'Callum, the Koala with Chlamydia'!

What an amazing co-incidence! Shows how the love and concern for our koalas can stretch across the continent and bring us all together.





# Supervisor's Report



Well thank goodness the hospital has been quiet the last few months as with all the work going on for other things it might have been a bit of a meltdown.

Sadly we have had a couple of dog attack admissions which is very disappointing because these have dropped considerably over the years. Hopefully this is through better education of dog owners. One of the admissions did not make it but the other one is doing OK.

Chlamydial infection admissions are normal for this time of the year - low.

Thankfully the koalas have been resting up minding their own business for the last few months probably getting themselves all sorted for the upcoming breeding season which is due to start mid winter. The way the warm conditions are going weather wise though may have an impact on when this does actually commence. Global warming in action affects all sorts of things.

One really worrying trend is the amount of eucalypts coming out on a regular basis in town usually because they are "diseased" or impacting on a house. Yea right.

How can this region advertise the fact that we

have lots of urban wild koalas and then their trees are ripped out? It does not make sense.

On a brighter note - the National Koala Conference hosted by us on the 17th 18th and 19th May was an absolute roaring success. Everything flowed beautifully and everyone both learnt a lot and enjoyed themselves immensely. The quality of the speakers and what they had to say was awesome. Such a diverse and interesting lot of topics were discussed. So many of the delegates made new contacts and new friends. The conference dinner on the Saturday night was a dazzling night of entertainment. Our own team leader Amanda Gordon and her singing partner Ian Castle gave a stunning performance. This was followed by John Williamson our patron wowing the crowds with his amazing songs. And finally Dr Jim Frazier the incredible wildlife cinematographer gave a wonderful presentation on his life filming wildlife with Sir David Attenborough. Everyone enjoyed themselves immensely.

So that's it for another three years when we will do it all again.

Cheers

Thanks go to

All the People who

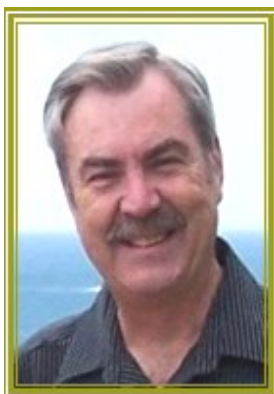
have donated generously to helping our koalas

—too numerous to mention individually



## *from the President's Pen*

As the Koala Hospital entered its 40<sup>th</sup> year we acknowledge the work of our founder Jean Starr. Her passing in October last year following an ongoing illness was a great loss. The work with koalas that she and her husband Max pioneered in 1973 in Port Macquarie has achieved worldwide attention. Those of us who knew Jean could see her passion and single mindedness to rehabilitate injured or sick koalas and to educate the general public the importance of retaining their natural habitat. For over 25 years Jean worked closely with Sydney University with their research identifying and treating koala diseases.



The Jean Starr Walk at the hospital was created to ensure that Jean will always be remembered for her work with koalas.

During the last 12 months we saw the successful relocation of koalas following the realignment of the Oxley Highway, another first for KPS.

The committee made a decision to form a Conservation Foundation to provide funds that will assist KPS to protect and increase koala habitat. This is essential especially as Port Macquarie has the largest population of koalas on the East Coast.

The First National Koala Conference held in Port Macquarie this month was an outstanding success with top speakers and about 200 delegates from around Australia. Koala Hospital Supervisor Cheyne and her dedicated committee did an excellent job putting it together. I trust we will see the second conference here again in 2016.

As we continue to expand providing support and a greater connection to other organisations that care for koalas, this 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year is the start of a greater work for the Koala Preservation Society Australia through the Koala Hospital with

the many volunteers, without whom Jean's work could not continue.

**Bob Sharpham**

### **Thumbs Up**

*(Koalas have 2 thumbs on each hand)*



Thumbs up to Tanya and the staff of Westport Club for all their work in helping to make the first National Koala Conference an unqualified success



Thumbs up to all the speakers and delegates who attended the conference and helped it to make it great.



Thumbs up to all the Koala Hospital volunteers who helped put the conference folders together.



Thumbs down to the 4-wheel driver who it is believed deliberately ran a koala down. SHAME on you and you know who you are.



Thumbs up to driver of the following car who picked the koala up and brought it into the Koala Hospital.



Thumbs up to Peter and Liz Drinkwater from Crescent Head who delivered a sick koala to the hospital on Friday 17th May.

# Barry's Adventures in Wanderland

It had been quite a wet and rainy summer in Port Macquarie so Barry thought he'd have a change of scene and use up some of his frequent flyer points to go travelling and catch up with friends all around the world.

Before leaving on the flight though, he did a bit of practice running back and forth in his gunyah because he was off to cheer on his friend Kirsten who was running in the 'Heroes Half Marathon' race in Everett, Washington, USA. He was very proud to be a part of this event that is run to support military families under the banner, 'Honouring the Heroes Amongst Us'.



From there it was a quick flight across the USA to catch up with Cindy in Boston, Massachusetts for a visit to Fenway Park, home of the Boston Red Sox. The Red Sox are a professional baseball team that was founded way back in 1901 and they have won 7 out of the 11 World Series games they have competed in. Barry was very excited to watch them play against a team called



the Cleveland Indians but was most fascinated that they all actually wore red socks!

Stockholm in Sweden was next on Barry's itinerary so he rugged up for some cold weather. When his friend Corrina told him that they were going to the Royal Palace, Barry was thrilled because he thought he was going to meet King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia, however they were not in residence at the moment so Barry had a good chat to one of the palace guards instead. He was most impressed at having visited one of the largest palaces in Europe, but just a little anxious about the very large gun the guard was holding and hoping it wasn't loaded!



Moving on to London, Barry was met at Heathrow Airport by his friend Beatrice who introduced him to another travelling koala. Barry was so pleased



to meet CoCo, who came from Cairns in Queensland, but he was just a bit jealous of CoCo's very colourful jumper and bowtie.

While he was in England, Barry did a quick trip to Scarborough on the coast of North Yorkshire to catch up with Marian. He thought it was a very pretty town, backed by large limestone cliffs, and it seemed very popular with many other tourists. Apparently Viking Raiders had originally established the site of the town way, way back in

966AD. Barry had a rest in one of the parks and sat beside a very large but very quiet man. He had a bit of a giggle when he realised the man wasn't saying



much because he was a wooden carving – one of the many crated by local wood craftsmen.

On a quick trip to Essex in England, Barry and his friend, Jojo, joined up with thousands of warriors from 36 countries across 4 continents to help spread awareness on World IBD Day. Such important work, and Barry was delighted to help because he understood how very painful and debilitating nasty inflammatory bowel diseases like colitis and Crohns could be for his human friends.



Back in London, Kathy and Viviane introduced Barry to their furry friend – a Teddy named Little John. Barry and Little John got on famously, mostly because Barry ate eucalyptus candy

and didn't try to steal Little John's honey. They all went to visit the Harry Potter Studio where they met a lot of very strange creatures that had appeared in the movies.

Feeling like a bit of winter sports activity, Barry





crossed the English Channel and met up with Jean-Baptiste and Julia at Les Avanchers-Valmorel ski resort in the French Alps. It was great to see all that snow and stay in a ritzy resort, and Barry had a good laugh when Jean-Baptiste said with his French accent that it was 'frizzing'!

Other French friends, Mr & Mrs Monsaingean, invited Barry to join them at another ski resort not far away. Meribel, a village in the Vanoise National Park, had been the home of the Winter Olympics in 1992 and Barry was very impressed to see the Olympic flame that had been erected for the ceremonies there.



Barry's friend from Poland, Beata, asked him to join her for a tour of Brussels in Belgium where they did some sightseeing. Barry had never seen anything like the Atomium before – a huge building, 102 metres tall, that had been erected for the 1958 World Fair. The fact that it was built in the shape of a unit cell of an iron crystal really appealed to Barry's scientific mind, but he really enjoyed the fantastic view of the city from the top sphere.



Another famous landmark caught Beata and Barry's attention because it was built to celebrate the irreverent spirit of Brussels. The Manneken-Pis is a small 61 centimetre bronze fountain sculpture depicting a naked little boy urinating into the fountain's basin. It was designed by Hiëronymus Duquesnoy the Elder and put in place in 1618 or 1619. Although it has been broken or kidnapped a few times over the centuries, it has now been rebuilt as a piece of the local history. Barry could identify with the cheekiness of the statue as Aussies are also known for their larrikin spirit.



Barry was pleased to meet up with Ken who is a

volunteer at the Koala Hospital and they went to Red Square in Moscow. The first thing Barry saw was what looked like a fairy-tale castle, with coloured swirls of ice-cream cones on top. It was actually St Basil's Cathedral that dated right back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century when Ivan the Terrible had it built.

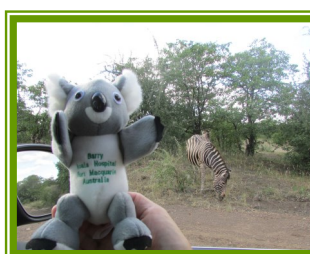


Right across the square was the Kremlin, which is an historic fortified complex of palaces and churches that now houses the head of the Russian Federation. However Barry preferred to think about its history of spies and dark secrets and scary stories of espionage and intrigue!



Finding some lovely little ladies of his own size was a nice surprise for Barry.

He wasted no time introducing himself to the Babushka, or Matryoshka dolls, that are a treasured symbol of Russia. First carved in the 1890s, each is a set of hand-painted wooden dolls of decreasing size resting inside each other. The last and tiniest is usually a baby carved from a single piece of wood. Barry thought they were very sweet and thought he might bring one home with him for company.



'Enough of the cold weather!' thought Barry as he arranged a flight to South Africa to join up with Kirsten and his human namesake, Barry, on an exciting safari in the Kruger National Park.

It was quite a thrill to see some zebra so close beside them on the road – Barry loved their zingy striped coats.

Heading back north and over the Equator again his friend, Lyn, met Barry





at Phuket in Thailand and Barry was thrilled to find an elephant his size to ride on. And he followed up this adventure by having a taste of the local Tiger Beer – just a small taste though, because it didn't taste nearly as good as his beloved eucalyptus leaves.



trip because the railway was about to be closed down from quite some time for upgrading work to be done – he thought he might just go back for another ride when it reopens in a year or so.

Heading back home to Port Macquarie and looking forward to seeing all his friends at the Koala Hospital Barry couldn't wait to tell them about his holiday. And he had a riddle to put to them – “What is a Koala's favourite drink?” He was sure they wouldn't guess the answer – “Coca Koala!”.



Heading south again Barry took the opportunity to go to Borneo in South East Asia and climb the 4095 metres to the top of Mount Kinabalu with Janne and Per.

Well, he didn't actually climb it – he hitched a ride in a pocket and thoroughly enjoyed the hike! He was a little disappointed that they didn't see any of the Orangutans that are said to live in the mountain jungles but very pleased they didn't run in a Leopard Cat that also lives there.

P.S. Barry had an important event to attend back home in Port Macquarie—the National Koala Conference Dinner. It was a must because he had heard that he was being specially catered for—lemon scented gum on each table—yum! Sure enough there it was and it was all his



because no one else wanted to eat it. Thanks to Tracey for making him a tuxedo for the occasion.

Travelling further south now, and back in Australia, Barry took a jaunt down to Tasmania with Lisa and Greg to have a ride on the Wilderness Railway from Strahan to Queenstown on the West Coast. He thought he might have missed his calling as a steam- train driver he enjoyed the journey so much. He was pleased they'd made the



WINNERS OF BARRY PHOTO COMPETITION

Lisa and Greg—Wilderness Train

Cindy—Boston Red Sox

*THANK YOU*

The koalas would like to thank members of the public for their generosity in filling up the donation boxes which are distributed around the area.



## GUM DROPS

from  
KAYLEE

Well now, dear friends, you'll have to allow me a little space for some wonderful news that has boosted my self-esteem. Apparently I am quite a star all round the world now - the documentary film that was made about the Koala Hospital in which I am a main character has won the award for "Best Conservation Documentary" at a glittering function in New York City. Isn't that exciting – and such a great way to publicise the work done here at the Hospital. So while Barry does the gruelling work of being the Hospital's travelling ambassador, I can sit in my comfortable tree while my image and story spread the word about koalas – it's very satisfying.

Closer to home, the news about the good work done here must be spreading because we recently had a koala check himself in to the Hospital for treatment on a Sunday afternoon. What a clever fellow! He'd obviously been feeling off-colour and had found his way here to a tree near the kiosk where a visitor noticed him looking a bit wobbly. He had not been to the hospital before so he was named Roto Gary, after the visitor who spotted him, and was given a full medical exam and some TLC to get him feeling better.

I have to keep my eye on five little joeys that are in the yards near me at the moment. Two males and three females, they have all come in to the Hospital as orphans because their dear Mums have been involved in accidents. While that is very sad, it is good news for the joeys who will be well-cared for until it's time for their release into the bush. They are cheeky little devils though, constantly amusing the visitors by jumping from branch to branch as they practice their climbing skills. Little Ruins Way Dallas particularly amazes visitors as she sits way at the top of her tree on the skinniest branches, waving about in the wind – she's quite a character.

I saw a lovely lady drive up the other day and unload a huge pile of towels that she was donating to the hospital to use for the care of all the koalas. This happens quite often and I really think it's such a generous thing to do. People are so nice! And I also see the regular deliveries of piles of out-of-date newspapers that are sent to us from the local library to use on the floor of the intensive care units. What a pity the koalas in ICU can't read the stories or do the

crossword puzzles!

Things have smartened up around here lately – I see all the volunteers wearing a new uniform. Dark green tops and jackets for the outside workers and dazzling bright green shirts for the office and kiosk staff, and Walk & Talkers. I think those bright shirts could be seen from outer space! They all look so proud to be identified as part of such an elite team of workers!

I think the uniforms are just part of the big celebrations that have been going on here. There was a festive open day for the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of when Max and Jean Starr started the Koala Hospital. From my comfy perch up here in my tree I looked down to see lots of visitors enjoying the stalls and food, speeches being made, presents being given to Max and a huge cake being cut up by the Mayor of Port Macquarie for everyone to share. I was quite worn out just keeping up with all the activity and fun and laughter.

And then I was on my very best behaviour when many of the Australian and International guests who had taken part in the first ever National Koala Conference held here in Port Macquarie came to visit us. These people were scientists and conservation workers, wildlife carers and researchers, and zookeepers and veterinarians who were all sharing their knowledge for the benefit of all koalas. They had all been very busy at the conference but still made time in their schedules to come and see all the koalas in care here. What can I say? They all thought I was particularly gorgeous – I'd have blushed if I knew how!

All that excitement and admiration has made me sleepy. Snnnnzzzz,

**Kaylee**



# OPEN DAY 2013

This was the special Open Day the Koala Hospital had been working towards for a long time – 40 years in fact.

40 years ago, in 1973, Jean and Max Starr had begun looking after sick and injured koalas in their own home. Thanks to their passion, it was amazing now to look around the grounds of the koala hospital, and realize just how much they had achieved over those years.

Following a welcome by Uncle Bill O'Brien, an elder from the Birpai Tribe, who are the traditional owners of the land on which the hospital is built, the celebrations were officially opened by our Mayor, Peter Besseling, who paid tribute to the efforts of Jean and Max Starr.



couldn't make it on the day, could tune in and keep up with the events.



There was a good crowd moving around the various stalls and amusements, and trying their luck with the on-going raffles for bottles of wine generously donated by Bago, Cassegrain,

Inneslake and Rose's wineries.

Children were well catered for, with the magic show by Troppo Bob keeping them enthralled and the goodie bags which were on sale at the kiosk.

Morning tea and the BBQ kept tummies well fed, whatever your preference, and Sing Australia were there for your musical appreciation.

In the midst of all this was our delightful koala mascot, True Blue, who is always a favourite with young and old alike.

He certainly had everyone laughing and enjoying his antics as he wandered around, greeting members of the crowd and spreading his own special brand of happiness.



Thanks to the efforts of so many of the hospital volunteers, under the co-ordination of Maree and Robyne, it was voted our best and most successful Open Day ever. With people like these, and a generous and caring public, the future of our koalas is in safe hands.



An album of photographs representing the different stages of development of the hospital over the past 40 years was presented to Max by Gerry Walsh,

who had painstakingly collected a photographic record and mounted them as a permanent memory of an amazing journey.

You can't have a birthday celebration without a cake, and today was to be no exception.



The huge birthday cake was a work of art, and showed the koala hospital logo in great detail. It not only looked good, it tasted wonderful!

In the background, during the day, 'Strawney', from 2MC was conducting a live to air radio programme from the grounds of the hospital, so those who







Thank you, Cheyne for providing me the privilege of returning to the Koala

Hospital as an International volunteer for the third time in 2012.

As I drove through the nature reserve that first day, I felt an exceptional beam of excitement and anticipation as I approached the Koala Hospital. My heart fluttered with joy as I realised that I would be once again a caregiver for the beloved koala population of the hospital. I quickly observed that Yard 2 was now the permanent home for Koala Barry. I remembered our most senior resident Barry in Yard 10 with severe arthritis and scoliosis of the spine. He now seemed to flourish as the chief tourist attraction in Yard 2. During the cool evening and night hours our Barry resides in a warm and cosy room inside the hospital. At first sunlight he quickly moves to his outside yard to enjoy the warmth of the morning sun and his morning formula. Yes, our Barry definitely receives five star treatment.

I also remembered Koala Kaylee in yard 4. Even after losing her right eye and left hind leg, she magically sprints with precision balance and confidence within the limbs of her tree. Behind Kaylee's angelic smile and sweet disposition lies a fiercely proud and brave koala. Kaylee is definitely the koala that all volunteers watch in admiration. Yes, I do salute our Kaylee in her determination that no handicap shall interfere in her incredible quest for adventure.

I met Koala Barbara in yard 5 this year. Her beauty and large furry ears created a Kodak moment for both local and international visitors. Even after losing her sight in both eyes she easily takes command of her leaf eating and unfamiliar territory with grace and dignity. And yes, Barbara loves to pace back and forth on her gonyah until her carer surrounds her with fresh morning leaf.

Every Sunday I worked in Yard 10 with volunteers Roslyn and Pat. This yard was home to some quite unique and dominant personality male koalas. We called them "our boys". Koala Brodie was recovering from a snake bite, but his friendly disposition and unforgettable smile left you speechless. Then there

## A VOLUNTEER'S STORY

*Shirley Manchek – overseas volunteer*

was Koala Cutie with wet bottom. His adorable face and eyes wished you had a suitcase large enough to take him home with you. Cannot forget Koala Cherokee with Chlamydia. Yes, he wins the award for being the most handsome and serene koala ever admitted to the hospital. Sorry America, but Cherokee easily wins the "Next Top Model" contest. Our team leader Peter would never forgive me if I did not mention Koala Alex. Alex with a locked hind leg appeared to respond to Peter only. Peter loved to bring Alex his favourite leaf and the spiritual bond between them was felt by all. Yes, the mating call in yard 10 was quite strong. After all, it was the beginning of mating season and 'our boys' were eager to be discharged.

I was very fortunate to have attended a "Burnt Wildlife Seminar". This was presented by Cheyne. The seminar went into detail about the anatomy and physiology of Australian wildfires. The focus was on the medical care of the koala at the site of the fire as well as back at the hospital. Great information for all koala caregivers. If any koalas are reading my article: Please do not climb to the top of a tree during a fire. Your best chance for survival is at the base of a tree and finding the safest exit,

During my last weekend I volunteered to work at the Koala Hospital Family Fun Day. The residents of Port Macquarie filled our landscape to capacity. It was a day filled with live music and numerous booths filled with crafts, cakes, books and plants. Children were entertained by Magic Bob and face painting. Hungry adults were fed sausage sandwiches. I served tea and biscuits with Roslyn and Pat. And our beloved koalas were at centre stage during the walk and talk tours. Needless to say, our fun filled fund raising day was a success.

Yes, I'm already looking forward to my return to the Koala Hospital in 2014. Cheers to Cheyne and her dedicated staff of volunteers. They have created a safe and loving environment for all sick and wounded koalas.

I dedicate this article to my sister Sonia who sent a substantial financial donation to the Koala Hospital in 2012.

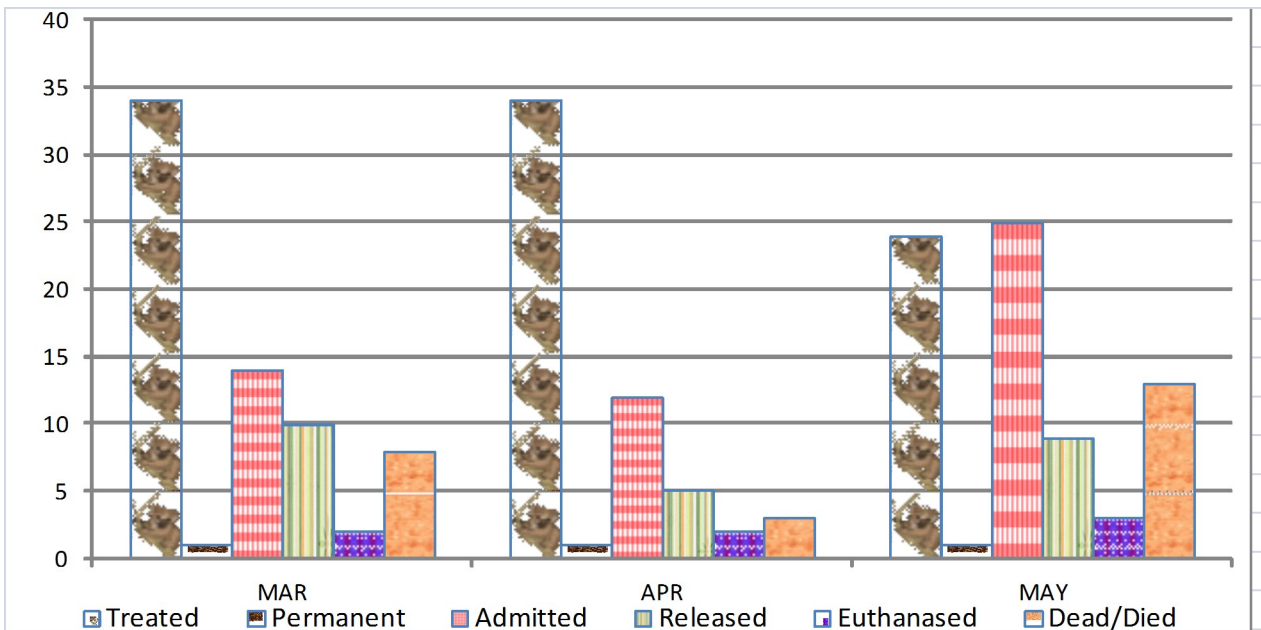
SHIRLEY MANCHEK  
USA INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER

# Hospital Activity Report



| Admission | Name                    | Reason                          | Result              |
|-----------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| 11.07.08  | Westhaven Barry         | Scoliosis of spine              | Permanent Resident  |
| 26.09.09  | Oxley Hwy Kaylee        | Hind leg injury                 | Treating            |
| 12.03.10  | Emerald Downs Barbara   | Blind R. Eye - limited vision   | Treating            |
| 19.09.12  | Lake Batesy             | Orphan joey                     | Released 04.04.13   |
| 11.10.12  | Telegraph Pt. Matt      | Motor Vehicle Accident          | Released 12.04.13   |
| 24.10.12  | Cairn cross Gerry       | Abscess under Right Eye         | Treating            |
| 26.10.12  | Ocean Summer            | Joey of Ocean Therese           | De-humanising       |
| 07.12.12  | Hibbard Alex - Joey     | Orphaned                        | De-humanising       |
| 10.12.12` | Ocean Ezza - Juv.       | Tick Infested                   | Released 04.04.13   |
| 16.12.12  | The Meadows Neil - Joey | Abandoned                       | Home Care           |
| 18.12.12  | Koala Laurie            | Badly damaged right eye         | Released 14.03.13   |
| 20.12.12  | Acacia Callum           | Chlamydia                       | Released 28.05.13   |
| 22.12.12  | Chisholm Chris - Joey   | Orphaned                        | Released 04.04.13   |
| 26.12.12  | Stoney Creek Sue        | Debilitated                     | Treating            |
| 28.12.12  | Salamander Bay Buster   | Orphaned                        | De-humanising       |
| 29.12.12  | Wyandra Gracie          | Diseased right eye              | Released 25.03.13   |
| 03.01.13  | Treetops Alice          | Chlamydia                       | Euthanased 12.03.13 |
| 04.01.13  | Dent Crusty             | Conjunctivitis                  | Released 28.05.13   |
| 04.01.13  | Gunnedah Martine        | Chlamydia                       | Re.eased 14.03.03   |
| 06.01.13  | Ruins Way Dallas        | Co-ordination loss hind legs    | Treating            |
| 08.01.13  | Lake Geobbrie           | Fungal condition                | Treating            |
| 14.01.13  | Allunga Janelle         | Low in tree - checked           | Released 08.03.13   |
| 20.01.13  | Gunnedah Toby           | Motor Vehicle Accident          | Released 14.03.13   |
| 23.01.13  | Byabarra Allison        | Chlamydia                       | Released 10.03.13   |
| 02.02.13  | Rushcutter Sandy        | Chlamydia                       | Euthanased 26.03.13 |
| 09.02.13  | Ocean Josie - Joey      | Orphaned                        | De-humanising       |
| 09.02.13  | Catherine Hudson        | On ground—observation           | Died 02.03.13       |
| 15.02.13  | Macquarie Peter         | On ground - observation         | Released 08.03.13   |
| 28.02.13  | Catherine Hudson        | On ground - observation         | Treating            |
| 28.02.13  | Kennedy Mark - joey     | Orphaned                        | Home Care           |
| 02.03.13  | Gore Robin              | possible motor vehicle accident | Released 13.03.13   |
| 04.03.13  | Watonga Billy           | possible motor vehicle accident | Released 05.03.13   |
| 05.03.13  | Crescent Head Karen     | Conjunctivitis                  | Euthanased 08.03.13 |
| 05.03.13  | Munster Tahlia          | On road - checked               | Released 05.04.13   |
| 05.03.13  | Cathie Kelly            | Chlamydia                       | Died 07.03.13       |
| 05.03.13  | Granite Vicki           | In yard with dogs               | Released 08.03.13   |
| 06.03.13` | Roto Gary               | Leg Injury                      | Released 28.05.13   |
| 09.03.13  | Lake Road Peta          | In shopping area - checked      | Released 28.05.13   |
| 10.03.13  | Lady Nelson Woody       | decomposed                      | Dead on arrival     |
| 13.03.13  | Jonas Absalom Lucy      | On ground                       | Died 19.03.13       |
| 18.03.13  | Pacific Hwy Stephanie   | Motor Vehicle Accident          | Dead on arrival     |
| 19.03.13  | Pacific Oliver          | Motor Vehicle Accident          | Died 20.03.13       |

| Admission | Name                | Reason                   | Result              |
|-----------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 20.03.13  | Lake Barton         | Motor Vehicle Accident   | Dead on arrival     |
| 20.03.13  | Pacific Hwy Dennis  | Motor Vehicle Accident   | Dead on arrival     |
| 23.03.13  | Rose Buster         | Infected knee            | Euthanased 28.05.13 |
| 28.03.13  | Marbuk Sue          | Weepy eye                | Released 10.05.13   |
| 02.04.13  | Moondara Ken        | Conjunctivitis (R) eye   | Treating            |
| 05.04.13  | TAFE Chris          | Chlamydia                | Treating            |
| 06.04.13  | Capella Maggie Mae  | Chlamydia                | Treating            |
| 09.04.13  | Lord Missy          | Motor Vehicle Accident   | Dead on arrival     |
| 09.04.13  | Lord Boo            | Pinky of Maggie Mae      | Euthanased 12.04.13 |
| 12.04.13  | Elparra David       | Conjunctivitis           | Treating            |
| 20.04.13  | Kennedy Gabe        | In yard with dogs        | Released 20.04.13   |
| 28.04.13  | Livingstone Sage    | Chlamydia                | Died 29.04.13       |
| 20.04.13  | Invergowrie Brad    | Motor Vehicle Accident   | Euthanased 30.04.13 |
| 09.05.13  | Gamack Nikki        | Dog Attack               | Euthanased 09.05.13 |
| 11.05.13  | Topaz Arthur        | Conjunctivitis           | Treating            |
| 12.05.13  | Little Owen Peter   | On telegraph pole        | Released 12.05.13   |
| 17.05.13  | Crescent Head Rusty | disoriented              | Died 18.05.13       |
| 30.05.13  | Comboyne Kat        | decomposed               | Dead on arrival     |
| 31.05.13  | Crescent Head Troy  | Bilateral Conjunctivitis | Treating            |



*Adopt*

**Kooloonbung  
Paula**



[www.koalahospital.org.au/adopt](http://www.koalahospital.org.au/adopt)



## Retirement of Ted Slater

Ted Slater and his wife Carol moved to the Port Macquarie area from Avalon in Sydney (sadly, Ted is still a Manly Sea Eagles supporter). Soon after, he rang the Koala Hospital to see if he could help out in some way and while speaking to Cheyne Flanagan confessed that he was a carpenter. Cheyne eagerly told him to get up to the hospital the next Wednesday and she would introduce him to Maintenance Team Leader Brian Westoby. So began a very rewarding 10 year association for both Ted and the hospital.

In the early days, when dollars were scarce and helpers were few, those on the team often brought their own tools to get the job done. Ted was also very skilful at painting, welding, plumbing and had a good sense of assessing what and who was needed to complete a project. Some of the bigger projects were Cheyne's office, store rooms in the day room and adjacent to the leaf shed, caging pens in yard 10, paving from the day room to the staff toilet and outside the Education Room, construction of the

plant nursery and the new Post Mortem Room. There have been numerous day to day jobs that were resolved thanks to Ted's skills. In addition, Ted is a very personable fellow who kept everyone in a good mood and amused with his various stories.

A huge bonus that came with Ted were the delightful goodies that his wife Carol provided for the team's morning teas. She did this voluntarily for about nine years and is possibly the main reason the Maintenance Team will miss Ted.



### EMAIL ADDRESSES

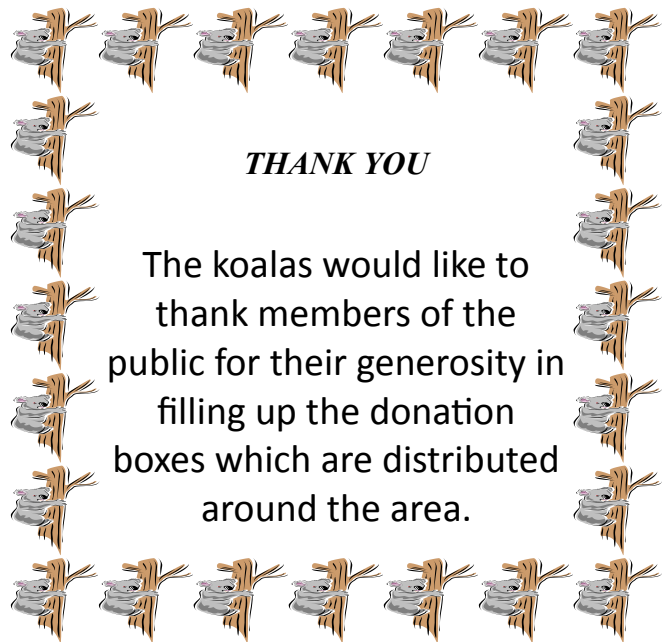
Some KPS members are receiving posted meeting notices because we don't have their email addresses.

If you are one of those members, please send an email to the Secretary at

[secretary@koalahospital.org.au](mailto:secretary@koalahospital.org.au)

To allow us to update your records. This will save quite a bit of labour and postage costs as well.

Geoff Best  
Secretary



*Adopt*

*Edwards Montana*



[www.koalahospital.org.au/adopt](http://www.koalahospital.org.au/adopt)

## 2013 Calendar

|            |                    |
|------------|--------------------|
| 19 July 13 | Management Meeting |
| 16 Aug 13  | Management Meeting |
| 18 Aug 13  | General Meeting    |
| 20 Sept 13 | Management Meeting |
| 18 Oct. 13 | Management Meeting |
| 15 Nov. 13 | Management Meeting |
| 17 Nov. 13 | General Meeting    |

### Koala Hospital worldwide websites

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Netherlands—Carla Sluiter | <a href="http://www.koalaziekenhuis.nl">http://www.koalaziekenhuis.nl</a>     |
| Germany—Lutz Michel       | <a href="http://www.koalahilfe.de">http://www.koalahilfe.de</a>               |
| Liechtenstein—Viktor      | <a href="http://www.koala.li">http://www.koala.li</a>                         |
| Switzerland—Viktor        | <a href="http://www.koalahilfe.ch">http://www.koalahilfe.ch</a>               |
| Europe—Viktor             | <a href="http://www.koalahilfe.eu">http://www.koalahilfe.eu</a>               |
| Australia                 | <a href="http://www.koalahospital.org.au">http://www.koalahospital.org.au</a> |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Telephone: <b>(02) 6584 1522</b>  | Fax: (02) 6584 2399   |
| Email: <a href="mailto:info@koalahospital.org.au">info@koalahospital.org.au</a> | Web: <a href="http://www.koalahospital.org.au">www.koalahospital.org.au</a> |

|            |                 |  |
|------------|-----------------|--|
| Supervisor | Cheyne Flanagan | <a href="mailto:supervisor@koalahospital.org.au">supervisor@koalahospital.org.au</a> |
|------------|-----------------|--|

#### Management Committee

|                |              |  |
|----------------|--------------|--|
| President      | Bob Sharpham | <a href="mailto:president@koalahospital.org.au">president@koalahospital.org.au</a>         |
| Vice President | Mary Stewart | <a href="mailto:vicepresident@koalahospital.org.au">vicepresident@koalahospital.org.au</a> |
| Secretary      | Geoff Best   | <a href="mailto:secretary@koalahospital.org.au">secretary@koalahospital.org.au</a>         |
| Treasurer      | Herbie King  | <a href="mailto:treasurer@koalahospital.org.au">treasurer@koalahospital.org.au</a>         |

#### Committee Co-ordinators

|                |                       |  |
|----------------|-----------------------|--|
| Hospital       | Mary Stewart (Acting) | <a href="mailto:coordinator@koalahospital.org.au">coordinator@koalahospital.org.au</a>                   |
| Education      | Marilyn Lees          | <a href="mailto:education@koalahospital.org.au">education@koalahospital.org.au</a>                       |
| Ecology        | Milicia McCosh        | <a href="mailto:ecologcal.consultant@koalahospital.org.au">ecologcal.consultant@koalahospital.org.au</a> |
| Maintenance    | Brian Westoby         | <a href="mailto:maintenance@koalahospital.org.au">maintenance@koalahospital.org.au</a>                   |
| Media          | Helen Meers           | <a href="mailto:media@koalahospital.org.au">media@koalahospital.org.au</a>                               |
| Adoptions      | Jan Campbell          | <a href="mailto:adoption@koalahospital.org.au">adoption@koalahospital.org.au</a>                         |
| Souvenir Kiosk | Robyne Leadbeatter    | <a href="mailto:kiosk@koalahospital.org.au">kiosk@koalahospital.org.au</a>                               |

#### Other Co-ordinators

|                   |                |  |
|-------------------|----------------|--|
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| eKiosk            | Val Shakeshaft | <a href="mailto:ekiosk@koalahospital.org.au">ekiosk@koalahospital.org.au</a>         |
| Friends           | Maree Bell     | <a href="mailto:friends@koalahospital.org.au">friends@koalahospital.org.au</a>       |
| WH&S and Security | Herbie King    | <a href="mailto:security@koalahospital.org.au">security@koalahospital.org.au</a>     |
| Donation Boxes    | Brian Crisp    |  |
| Membership        | Mary Stewart   | <a href="mailto:membership@koalahospital.org.au">membership@koalahospital.org.au</a> |



**Koala Preservation Society Australia  
Incorporated**

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NSW 2444 Australia  
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injured and Orphaned native fauna under  
Licence No. 10044

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## Gum Tips

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