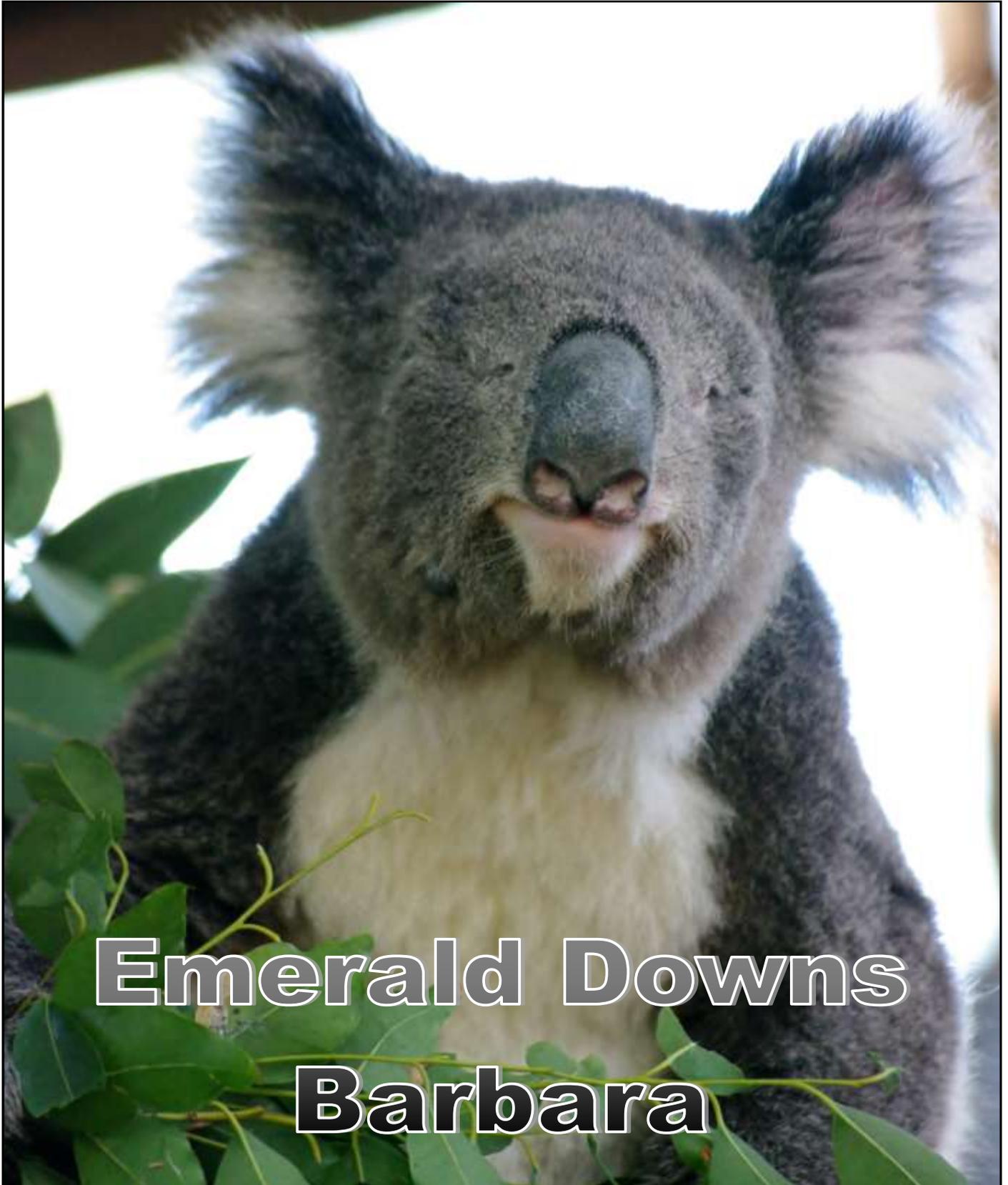




# Gum Tips

*Quarterly Newsletter of the  
Koala Hospital Port Macquarie*

Third Quarter 2014



**Emerald Downs**  
**Barbara**

# Emerald Downs

## Barbara

In March 2010 an aged female koala was brought into the hospital from the Emerald Downs Golf Course, with "bilateral corneal ulcers" - which translates to some form of injury to both eyes. How that happened we do not know.

With a course of treatment Barbara certainly improved in the left eye to the point her vision was reasonably well restored. Unfortunately the right eye did not respond well to treatment, and the only option was to remove the eye. As koalas do quite nicely out in the wild with one eye, staff were pleased with the final outcome and we were looking forward to releasing this "one eyed old girl" back onto the golf course to be watched over by all the players and the golf course staff.



As Barbara was nearing her release time, staff noticed the left eye had swollen somewhat and it was not looking too good after all. An eye exam

soon followed by our locally based vet Chris Livingston and it was discovered that her remaining eye was developing glaucoma as well!

Glaucoma is a fairly common occurrence in koalas, and as they do not tend to

respond well to conventional treatment, the usual option is to remove the eye. So what to do? One eye gone and then the other eye not much better!!!

As Barbara coped well with life in her yard, moving around well in her familiar surroundings, we decided that she would be an ideal animal to hold for research purposes to see how a blind koala would cope with her life in captivity. Obviously, if she did not cope, we would deal with that as it arose. So the second eye was removed and Emerald Downs Barbara became our "blind koala".

It was amazing to watch her every day, she coped very well. She certainly knew when the fresh leaf was arriving, she would first pace up and down her gunyah, then she would position herself at the end where the leaf was being sorted, placing her hands on the timber board, like she was waiting at the dinner table. Barbara would lift her head with her nose in the air sniffing and thinking "hmmm what's on the menu today". For 4 years Barbara enjoyed a clean enclosure, fresh leaf daily, the best of care and she was a very gentle, sweet koala, who remained in excellent health and body condition for that time and appeared to cope well with her disability.

As Barbara was an old koala when she first was admitted, all the staff knew she was not going to be with us for a very long time, and in early August this year, Barbara decided it was time to move to the big gum tree in the sky.



# Vale Max Starr

**T**he 24th June 2014 will be remembered as a sad day in the history of the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital.

It was on this day that Max Starr aged 84 years old passed away. An internationally recognised and devoted wildlife warrior, shared a life long passion for all things koala along with his beloved wife Jean (now deceased), they founded the society 41 years ago.

It was their devotion to this iconic native animal that brought about the formation of Port Macquarie Koala Hospital, the only facility of its kind in the world that treats sick and injured koalas. The Starrs' had rallied local businesses and many community groups to support the formation of the hospital and worked tirelessly in developing the hospital, and were instrumental in the culmination of what we see today.

In the Koala Hospitals first year, the Starrs' and a team of veterinarians cared for 3 koalas from their own home. About 24 koalas were cared for in the following year and in 1975 the Apex Club of Port Macquarie established the Port Macquarie Koala Hospitals first building.

The wildlife community across Australia were in awe of the Starrs' work with koalas.

Max and Jean had a chance meeting in the 80's with the country singer/balladeer John Williamson,



whose popular ballad Goodbye Blinky Bill, (which he wrote from the inspiration he received from the Starrs' for their work with koalas) raised \$300,000 and which was instrumental in the building of the Intensive Care wing at the hospital and is named in his honour.

At present the Koala Hospital treats between 200 and 250 koalas each year. When Max Starr's wife Jean passed away in 2012, the Jean Starr Walk was constructed through the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital rehabilitation yards.

Often referred to in the same realm of deceased wildlife expert Steve Irwin, Max Starr will also be fondly remembered for his love of golf and Rotary. He was the Port Macquarie Rotary Club's longest serving, and only honorary member - which is the highest accolade a Rotary Club

can give to a person.

Former District Governor Laurie Barber said Mr. Starr was also recognised in Rotary as a Paul Harris Fellow for his services. "In more recent years we recognised him with a silver friend of Australian Rotary Health and last year this was upgraded to a Platinum friend" Mr. Barber said. "Max participated in most Rotary activities, with the exception of President, as he was not the kind of person who worked from the front. He preferred to work behind the scenes."

As everyone associated with the Koala Hospital would fondly say "I'm sure Max and Jean will meet a multitude of their koala friends in the Big Gum Tree in the Sky."

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## Help keep our Koalas in Good Hands!

The Koala Preservation Society will gratefully accept bequests to help insure the continued work of the society. You can log on to our website, click on the *Act Now* section on the front page and read all the information under the *Bequest* heading.

***Make a commitment to protect an endangered and unique Australian icon***

# The Koala - The Inside Story!

## The Gut System of a Koala

**T**here are four marsupial species that feed on eucalypt leaf – the Greater Glider, the Common Ringtail possum, the Common Brushtail possum and the Koala, with both the Koala and the Greater Glider having eucalypts as their principal food source.

To deal with this diet of eucalypt leaves, koalas have not only a large and complex digestive system, but have adapted their whole lifestyle to suit.

Starting with the selection of the right leaf to eat, the koala then grabs a branch, sniffs the leaf to check the quality (and probably the toxicity level) for consumption. The leaf is then broken off with a strong biting action and then through various actions, is masticated (chewed), mixed with saliva to allow enzymes to begin the breakdown process, and swallowed – ending up in the stomach. Once there, further breakdown occurs through acids and enzymes, this is the stage where most of the toxic eucalypt compounds are removed (eg: phenols and essential oils) and are taken away via the blood to the liver to be filtered and excreted in the urine (part of the reason for the strong smell).

The phenols, essential oils and other toxic compounds, if they were consumed by other animals/humans would prove to be fatal.

It is important to note that koalas do not “chew” their leaf as such, but go through a single size reduction process (done in a methodical fashion). Provided they have unworn, sharp interlocking cusps (points) on their molars, this is efficiently done, but aged/old koalas with worn, flat teeth cannot achieve good breakdown of leaf. The result for them is an inability to make use of this food and they basically slowly starve to death.

The food then moves via peristalsis (an involuntary muscle movement) into the small intestine, where further breakdown occurs with fats, proteins and other nutrients being absorbed into the bloodstream.

The next destination is the unique and interesting caecum (which is 23% of the total intestinal length) an up to 2 metre long “blind gut” (no end) housing an amazing array of micro-organisms, which have the job of breaking down carbohydrates. The proximal colon (the next stage) also is a site for microbial activity, and as koalas lack the digestive enzymes to breakdown

cellulose and lignans, these micro organisms accomplish this (via fermentation) in the caecum and the proximal colon, and free up the carbohydrates for energy use.

Finally the remaining unused food waste moves into the distal colon (again by peristaltic action), where water is extracted and some is reused within the body. The final product is the dry, football shaped pellets that are then passed out and are broken down in the soil. This efficient extraction of water is one of the reasons why koalas drink very little available free water, enabling them to remain high in the trees.

Koala faecal pellets once dropped on the ground, have another use besides returning nutrients to the soil. There are species of moths that lay eggs in the dried pellets and their larvae feeding exclusively on the faecal material, grow and hatch out. Koala researchers wishing to observe how old a faecal pellet is, (to determine the time frame since koalas were in the vicinity), can ascertain this by examining whether the pellet contains a fresh larvae or simply a vacant shell.

So far not a lot of research has been done on these moth species. We don't know how valuable they are to the ecosystem – they may play a vital role. It maybe the koalas job in life to supply the food source for these moths, who knows???

Nothing is wasted in nature and each and every component can tell a story!!!!



### Great News!

We have been awarded a Certificate of Excellence for 2014. This award is based on the quality of the reviews and opinions earned on Trip Advisor over the past twelve months.

Thank you to everyone who added a review.

**Thanks go to  
all the People who  
have donated generously  
to helping our koalas too  
numerous to mention individually**

# An Initiation by Fire

Article by Field Correspondent Gaby 'Wet Bottom' Rivett

On the 15<sup>th</sup> July, the call went out that there was a search and rescue to be done at Bonny Hills after a hazard reduction fire had gone out of control. Cheyne thought that this would be a good initiation for some 'newbie firies'.

Cheyne stressed to us that we must be very careful of the burnt areas and to look out for not only wildlife but ourselves as well. Listen out for cracking sounds, check wind direction, watch out for bogs, keep away from burning logs, drink plenty of water, stop for lunch, keep in regular contact and please, please don't get lost! Her words are still resounding in my head!

So off Ken, Barry and I went in the capable hands of Cheyne, Steve and Mick. We had two areas to search and arrived at the first all excited and nervous (speaking for myself). Cheyne then explained how to conduct the search and how to operate our walkie talkies, (I thought...huh? Channels? and buttons? What's all this about pressing buttons to talk – I'm Italian – we tend to talk with our hands!). Also remember "direction guys"! Cheyne was so concerned about this. "Check where the sun is!".

We then spread out (with the sun on our left shoulder) and started to walk over the area in a 90 degree angle. So the sun would have to be around our right shoulder when we had finished. Ken was to be our pivot point hence his nickname Ken 'Pivot' McLaughlin. We covered quite a distance cooeing and saying "roger that" and stated that all was going well. Cheyne needed to return to the hospital and left Steve and Mick in charge, but trouble lay ahead!

I was walking around, the bush getting thicker, the scrub higher and I knew that I had to go ahead as there were large burnt areas up ahead, the next thing I see are reeds, heaps of reeds! Surely koalas don't go through this? Well don't

complain, don't turn back, keep your eyes open and say "roger that", "yep all good" often! Then, I lost my footing, and fell on my rear into a bog! "@\*\*#@@" I said. "Are you OK Gaby?" I hear. "Yep! All good!" - "Where are you?" - "In a bog!" - "Why?" - "Why not?" - "Need any help?" - "No, no all is ok".

I got back up, fell in again and then finally finding my footing, I was able to get out of there. Unfortunately, my backside was drenched. I hate walking around in a soggy sock and boot let alone wet knickers and overalls. Once we got into the clearing, rallied together and the boys saw

me I was then duly christened with my new nickname, Gaby 'Wet Bottom' Rivett. So while laughing so much at me and offering all kinds of help, I couldn't help but notice Barry. His face was black, he fell after tripping over a fallen branch landing on his face. His teeth stood out so much against his face I called him Barry 'Colgate' Lane. Cheyne, who had been calling regularly to see if we were all OK, was now nicknamed Mother Duck, we had a good chuckle, more cautions, then a loud "roger that!". Phew!

Steve and Mick were pleased with our efforts, we then continued onto our second area. This was easier to search

until we heard Mick say that we needed to get to the area on our left because the ground is starting to get boggy and the reeds are up to his 'small change'. But what was he doing on our right when he was originally on our left?

The areas that we searched were clear of any injured or dead animals and we saw three or four wallabies watching our progress. So, on behalf of Pivot, Colgate and myself, I would like to thank Steve and Mick for looking after us and to Cheyne for giving us this wonderful experience! And Steve, I haven't forgotten your nickname 'Smiles', for as hard as you tried not to laugh you thought the 'newbies' were quite entertaining.



L to R: Barry Lane, Ken McLaughlin and Mick Feeney

# Supervisor's Report



**W**ow a lot has happened over the last three months, with a number of admissions from both the local area, other areas on the coast, and also koalas from "over the mountains". Most of these admissions have been as a result of the dreaded chlamydia and some as a result of motor vehicle impacts.

Thankfully the dog attack side of things has been very low (hope this doesn't jinx that data!), weather conditions were getting scarily dry and we felt we may have been in for a very early horrid bushfire season with a number of fires occurring on the coast. But at last we have had a week of beautiful rain, which will hopefully slow the chances of fires down for a few months at least.

Preparations for the licence changes are almost finished and we are still implementing changes to

the yards, but everything is beginning to look ship shape. We are not sure why, but we have had a huge influx of enquiries for students, vets, researchers and wildlife carers all wanting to come and do work experience with us. We are swamped and cannot take anymore till 2015!!!

Our overseas volunteer programme also has been swamped and we are pretty well full up until 2016. Phew!!!

Our fourth edition of the Koala Rehabilitation Manual is almost complete and will be ready for the printer shortly. Finally!!! All in all things are going smoothly, staff numbers are great and everyone is happy.

**Cheyne Flanagan**

## A Volunteers Fond Farewell

**F**ive and a half years ago I came to this beautiful little sanctuary, "The Koala Hospital" to volunteer for few hours on a Tuesday on the advice of a friend who knew I would love it. Over the years I have come to know many weird and wonderful, crazy little creatures.....and some koalas too!

Whether they were huge or tiny, chilled out or feisty, missing bits or as old as Methuselah, I have found the joy of being in their company an experience I will never, ever forget. The happy times and the very sad ones. These koalas are wild animals with formidable claws and teeth and incredible strength, but within hours of admission they would trustingly prop themselves up on a gunyah and slop down the formula while gazing into my eyes as I chat away or hum some song that has popped into my head.

Then with either a dismissive wave of a paw (Barry) or a big, black nose diving into the empty pot with tongue flapping and a soft, but "vice like" grip holding your hand just right (Steve) they are done. The magic of watching joeys play and kookaburras fight over a lizard, rainbow lorikeets splashing and squawking above, brush turkeys leaving mysterious crop circles in our bark chips or the screams of a new volunteer stumbling over a land mullet sunning himself near the poo bin.



*Ros with her mate Greenmeadows Alex*

It is a place full of life and never dull!!! Volunteers from every corner of the earth or just around the corner, regularly come and keep this place a hub of friendly, buzzing energy with many entertaining stories. Cheyne and her crew do a fantastic job in the treatment room and are always trying to keep the mood up, as it can be soul destroying having to witness the all too common devastating results of koala vs car/dog or disease.

In my time at the Koala Hospital I have had some amazing opportunities, learnt so much and made so many "vollie" friends along the way. I have loved it here and will miss everyone terribly.....so thank you for having me!

**Ros Bayly**

# From the *President's* Pen



**A**nother small step for The Koala Preservation Society, a giant step for the koalas! We are now almost at the point of receiving the exhibitors' licence for which we have been striving so long.

One of the last obstacles, the perimeter fencing, has almost been completed and a few minor constructions are in progress, then it's all go.

It was an exciting day at Emerald Downs Golf Club recently at the launch of the Hello Koalas Sculpture Trail. It was amazing how the different artists projected their ideas on to the metre high statues, however it was unfortunate that John Williamson was unable to attend due to a last minute change of date for the launch.

His koala was superb, with a tribute to Jean Starr beautifully painted on the front, which brought tears to my eyes. My thanks go to Mike Feeny, who has stepped in to the position of the Media Co-ordinator and is doing such a wonderful job.

He certainly has the gift of the gab and I'm sure not many visitors would have gone home that day without hearing all about the work of the Koala Hospital.

Thanks also to our hard-working volunteers, all is going well at the hospital. I haven't heard any of the koalas complain yet, some of them have been known to turn up more than once on our doorstep, as they know they will be well looked after.

I've been fortunate to be able to return to working in the yards, so this will be my only report as the koalas need me!!

**Mary Stewart**

## Online Shopping

- Tees and Polo Shirts, Visors, Caps, Bibs
- Educational material and Recipe Book
- DVD's and CD's - John Williamson
- Adopt a Koala - choice of 33 of our koalas
- A range of toys to choose from + Barry!
- A range from stickers to Child Gift Packs

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

## Thumbs Up

(Koalas have 2 thumbs on each hand)



Thumbs up to the ladies who moved a koala off the side of the road and then stood in the rain holding an umbrella over her until we arrived.



Thumbs up to the couple who offered to bring a koala into the hospital one night after he had been hit by a 4 wheel drive. It was only a glancing blow and he had a sore jaw for a couple of days.



Thumbs down to the people who are using the RFS 10m ruling as an excuse to get rid of koala trees in the urban areas, when the ruling is meant for bushfire prone areas. Shame on You!



Thumbs up to the man who willingly removed his dog from his yard while there was a male and female with joey in the same yard. Happily they all moved on and the dog came back home.



Thumbs up to the generous people who have brought in towels for the use of the Koala Hospital. We are always grateful for these towels.

## Overseas Volunteers in Focus

**Name:** Susanne Scheuter **Age:** 47

**Resides:** Switzerland (near Berne)

**Occupation:** Owner/Manager of a Cycling shop

**How did you find out about the Hospital?:** When I came to Australia for the first time in 1998, I visited the hospital as a tourist. I was very impressed by the work being done and have never forgotten the place.

**Why did you Volunteer and for how long?:** Since I was a child I have always had the desire to help sick and injured animals. I wanted to do something good and give back to nature. I worked at the hospital for the first time in January 2014 for a month and worked every day, it was such a great experience I came again and stayed for two weeks in August 2014. It won't be the last time.

**What was your experience like?:** The experience was invaluable. I could work in the koala yards, go on rescues and releases, fed selected animals by hand and cleaned up the yards, the smell of eucalyptus in the air and with many emotions in my heart.

**Who was your favourite Koala?:** It was and still is Roto Randy (deceased) he touched my heart in a very special way and I had a strong bond with him. We were like best friends and he has a place in my heart forever.

Susanne with  
Salamander Bay Tallimba



# Barry's Adventures in Wanderland

**B**arry woke up one morning at the Koala Hospital feeling very brave and very adventurous so he was thrilled to be invited to go to Sydney to do a skydive with his pal, Sarah. He watched and listened



carefully while Sarah took instructions about the jump and put on her parachute. As the little plane climbed high in the sky Barry felt all wobbly inside and climbed into her pocket for the free-fall and parachute ride. He missed the amazing views on the way down but felt much happier with all four paws on the ground.

While he was in Sydney Barry went to visit 4 year old Verity and all her friends at the Crow's Nest Kindergarten. She wanted him to stay a while for Show & Tell but he was too shy to be the centre of attention.



Barry's friend Blandine took him off to visit the campus at the University of New South Wales where he felt quite at home amongst the clever students. He was tempted to take up some serious study but then realised it

would not fit in well with his adventurous travels which he enjoyed so much.

Tim & Charlotte picked him up in Sydney and then hopped over to (pardon the pun!) Kangaroo Island off the coast of



South Australia, where they spent many hours studying the fabulous formations of the Remarkable Rocks. This group of precariously balanced granite boulders have been shaped by wind and water over some 500 million years. 'That's an awfully long time,' thought Barry as he played in the many caves and holes in the rocks. 'I don't think even we koalas were alive way back then!'

Barry caught up with Judith and John on their way to the Ukulele Festival in Cairns where John was one of about 1100 people who were playing their ukes for a Guinness Book of Records attempt. Barry thought he would be a very gifted ukulele player as he had the advantage of two thumbs on each forepaw, but after a few strumming lessons on a regular four string uke he was shown an eight string instrument and that was just too confusing.



Checking that he had his ticket and his passport, Barry joined his younger friends Sammie & Eddie on a trip to Bali where they met up with some

schoolgirls in Sanur, who taught them some of their traditional dances. Barry loved having his photo taken with a group of such beautiful and graceful young ladies.

Jane, who is a volunteer at the Koala Hospital, and her husband Julian, who were touring in Europe had agreed to meet up with Barry in the Swiss Alps. At Interlaken they took the train up to the Aletsch Glacier just under the Jungfrau where the temperature was



a very frosty minus 5 degrees. They were amazed to be able to walk into ice caves in the glacier but Barry got a fright when a huge ice-eagle seemed to be chasing him.

Their next big mountain visit was the Matterhorn on the Swiss-Italian border and Barry thought it was very mysterious that the four steep faces of the mountain pointed towards the four compass points. They got the best view from Gornergrat looking straight at the east face and here Barry made a new friend of Will, the marmot. Marmots are large squirrels that live in Alpine areas and usually hibernate in Winter, but hearing Barry's tales of Australia, Will asked if they could smuggle him home with them for a bit of summer weather. 'Best not', thought Barry, as he contemplated problems at Customs on their return!

Seeking some warmer weather himself, Barry joined Laura in Castricum near Amsterdam on the North Sea coast where they visited the colourful tulip farms. Barry got a bit carried away among the flowers and remembering his recent ukulele lessons, he did an imitation of Tiny Tim singing his timeless classic, 'Tiptoe through the Tulips' which made everyone smile.

Barry thought his friend Chris had said they were going to cross the English Channel on a 'fairy'. He got all excited by thoughts of flying round with Tinkerbell. Then he realised she meant the 'Ferry' and so they had a great time on board the boat exploring the cafes and gift shops and trying to ignore the rough weather.



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Then he was off to the city of York in Yorkshire, England to catch up with Nigel and Janet for the Tour de France's 'Grand Depart'. They were really excited to be at the start of Stage 2 – a race from York to Sheffield that would be a real challenge for the peloton – up hills and down dales. Barry had his pass for the 'Mix Zone' that let him get up close and



personal with the riders.

Although he didn't actually ride in the race, Barry was keen to have his photo taken on one of the yellow bikes that are on display all around Yorkshire for many weeks after the race. The bikes are painted yellow in honour of the winner's yellow jersey.



While he was in the Yorkshire Dales, Barry stopped off at the Ryedale Folk Museum with his pals Diane and Kevin and they had fun inspecting all the old agricultural machinery. He did think that 'Hutton-le-Hole' was a peculiar name for the local village and kept looking for a big hole in the ground and being careful not to fall into it!

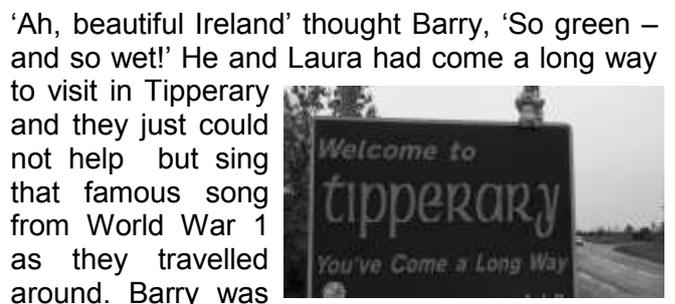


Nigel and Janet picked him up again and they crossed the country to Liverpool where they saw the famous Liver Building overlooking the River Mersey. It was built in 1911 and was one of the first in the world to be made of reinforced concrete. They saw the metal statues of the 'Liver Birds' on the roof that are fabled to watch over the city – if they ever leave it's said that the city will cease to exist. 'Not while I'm here!', thought Barry, as he quickly prepared to leave the building.



'Ah, beautiful Ireland' thought Barry, 'So green – and so wet!' He and Laura had come a long way to visit in Tipperary and they just could not help but sing that famous song from World War 1 as they travelled around. Barry was surprised to find out that the father of Ned Kelly, the infamous Australian bushranger, had been born in Tipperary and had been one of the earliest convicts transported to Australia because he stole two pigs.

'Hi Ho Silver!' yelled Barry as he flew over to Canada to join Bea at the Calgary Stampede.





He was so excited to see the rodeo and chuck wagon racing events in the huge stadium and had a giggle when he heard that the city of Calgary was called Cowtown in

honour of the Stampede. He thought being a cowboy would be so exciting – until he saw the size of some of the bulls in the competitions!

As he travelled down to California to meet Emma and her partner, also named Barry, he was flexing his muscles in anticipation of a big rowing adventure – from Monterey across the Pacific Ocean to Hawaii as part of a four-man team in the Great Pacific Race. But Barry had to stow away in the boat or he'd have disqualified the team by being a fifth member – it sure saved him a lot of rowing as Team Battleborn took 45 days 7 hours and 24 minutes to row the Pacific and finish in 2<sup>nd</sup> place with no penalties. Well done to them all!



After that he needed a break so he spent a very



special day with Amy and Sam at the beautiful Hanauma Bay on the SE coast of O'ahu island. It is a remnant volcanic crater and the clear

waters were filled with tropical fish and green sea turtles.

Barry had to hurry back to Waikiki Beach to catch up with Jane and Julian, the friends he'd been to Switzerland with earlier, because they were all flying back home to Australia. But first they had a swim and sunbake and had a ride on the lifesaving surfboat in view of Diamond Head.



As much as he was pleased to get back home to the Hospital at Port Macquarie, Barry was very sad to learn that his dear friend and fellow resident, Emerald Downs Barbara, had gone to the big gum tree in the sky while he was away. He will always remember this very special koala very fondly.

## *The Hospital Volunteers remember Barbara*

### **Goodbye to our girl**

In the early morning of Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> August, our girl Emerald Downs Barbara passed away. She was admitted to the hospital in 2010 as an 'aged adult' meaning, she already was past the 10 year point. A home owner noticed her sitting quietly on the ground at the base of a tree near one of the fairways at Emerald Downs Golf Course and appeared to have diseased eyes. When she was examined at the hospital, it was found that this poor koala had very painful corneal ulcers.

Staff tried to treat the eyes with medications, with one eye responding and beginning to heal, whereas the other eye was so damaged that we had no choice but to remove it surgically. The other eye improved over a period of time. Barbara gained weight, her coat returned to a beautiful grey and was looking good for future release. As release date approached Barbara had a final check up and it was noticed that her other eye had developed glaucoma, and unfortunately she had to have her other eye removed.

That was in 2010 and she had amazed volunteers on how she negotiated her yard, knew the length of

her runners, and would sit at the end of her gunyah with her front paws on the timber panel and sniff the air and twitch her ears knowing the volunteers were preparing her breakfast. So farewell old girl, we'll miss you and your endearing ways. Your koala friends in eucalypt heaven, are waiting and have lots of tales to tell.

**Gaby Rivett**

### **Farewell to a sweet girl**

It was a big shock to hear of the passing of our blind koala Emerald Downs Barbara. She always seemed healthy, ate fairly well and had beautiful colour and she was always active. We will miss you little girl, I always talked quietly to her when I was in her yard replenishing leaf so she knew I was there.

I loved how she would sit up and take notice and sniff the air when her fresh leaf was coming in. She would sit on the end of her gunyah and seemed to watch us work. She will be up in the "Big Gum Tree", hopefully she will be with Kempsey Carolina another blind koala we had at the hospital. R.I.P. little sweetie!

**Pam Whippy**



## GUM DROPS

from

*Kaylee*

I can't believe how quickly time has flown since the last Gum Tips was published, and that is really saying something as everything runs on 'koala time' here at the hospital.

We are now approaching Spring and you can tell that the 'boys' are starting to 'groom' themselves in readiness for some romantic interludes in the coming months. All males have a scent gland in the middle of their chests which changes to a dark brownish colour during this time of year and it emits a 'fragrance' so they can attract all of us females, but someone should really tell them to go easy and not to use too much, it isn't exactly Calvin Kline or Hugo Boss! I've heard some of the volunteers call them 'stinky boys' and they're quite right!

My dear friend Westhaven Barry gave us some concern during the colder days this winter, with 'Alpha Mum' Cheyne coming out to see Barry quite a few times with her stethoscope in hand to hear how he was breathing as he was quite noisy and congested. She said that we should all be prepared for the worst and that his condition was 'guarded', but actually I never saw any guards around his gonyah.

He was taken in at night time so he could stay warm and was only allowed out on the warmer days. He's back outside now and he even gave me a wink to say that all is right. Unfortunately, my other dear friend and neighbour Emerald Downs Barbara passed away during the night just recently and all the volunteers were shocked, as she never showed any outward signs of illness.

She was already an aged adult when she was admitted back in 2010, so maybe it was her time

to visit eucalypt heaven. We will miss you Barb, I notice the volunteers keep looking in her yard as they walk by doing their 'chores'.

We also said goodbye to one of our volunteers Ros Bayly who has moved to Morpeth, she was a lovely, caring girl and looked after me so well. I hear there was a small goodbye party with the *BEST* chocolate and strawberry cake, photos were taken and lots of hugs all round. Someone else I will miss.

It does seem that I'm saying a lot of goodbyes this time and it's funny, but that's the way life happens at times but I can say that we have a new juvenile koala in our midst called Zenani. A very nice name and also important! Did you know that Nelson Mandela's daughter and great grand daughter have the same name!

Poor little Zenani had quite a hard time settling into her yard. She was a bush fire victim with damaged nail beds and now hasn't any nails, which means she won't be able to climb. So she was placed in home care and apparently had the run of the house and was rather wilful towards her carer Barbara. But Barbara has had lots of experience with home care joeys and slowly eased and comforted her in her new home.

Zenani still occasionally gives the volunteers a hard time when they try and feed her formula. She has taken a liking to Val Looi, an overseas volunteer from Singapore, and seems to eat well when Val is about, but I don't know how she will go when Val leaves. Oh dear, that's another goodbye! I think I will say goodbye now, as any more talk of goodbyes and I think I'll cry.

*Until the next Gum Tips, take care and be safe!*

### Congratulations

The following members have enrolled in the Captive Animal Management Certificate 3 Course

**Joy Barber**  
**Barry Lane**  
**Gaby Rivett**

I'm sure all staff and volunteers wish them every success.



*Amethyst Simon*

### **Adopt Amethyst Simon**

A local home owner Simon, went into his garage one morning to do a few odd jobs, heard a noise, looked around and there was a small koala sitting on the tyre of one of his children's bikes. Staff from the hospital "rescued" the offender and he was brought in for assessment.

Amethyst Simon turned out to be in superb condition and as he had been found in an area not known for having a good koala habitat, so he was assigned for re-colonising. As staff at the hospital had decided to release three other koalas all of similar age and health into a new area for re-colonising, Amethyst Simon certainly fitted the criteria to be part of this new venture. He with another young male, and two juvenile females were released into what is arguably some of the best koala habitat in NSW.

**For Adoption details login to [www.koalahospital.org.au/adopt](http://www.koalahospital.org.au/adopt)**



# Koala Hospital Activity Report

Admitted	Name	Reason	Result
11.07.08	Westhaven Barry	Scoliosis of spine	Permanent Resident
26.09.09	Oxley Hwy. Kaylee	Hind leg amputated	Treating
12.03.10	Emerald Downs Barbara	Blind R. Eye - limited vision	Died 05.08.14
26.10.12	Ocean Summer	Limited sight	Treating
19.07.13	Barrington Xavier	Bilateral Conjunctivitis	Treating
06.11.13	NATF Steve	Lethargic	Treating
12.11.13	Ocean Drive Pat	Motor Vehicle Accident	Treating
15.11.13	Salamander Bay Tallimba	Loss of Habitat - Bushfire	Treating
22.12.13	Merinda Nina	Orphan Joey	De-humanising
16.03.14	Koala Lou Joey	Diseased right eye	De-humanising
06.04.14	NATF Burrell	Chlamydia	Treating
08.04.14	NATF Yengo	Bilateral Conjunctivitis	Released 19.07.14
10.04.14	Koala Neale	Conjunctivitis left eye	Released 19.06.14
21.04.14	Armidale Kerry	Conjunctivitis	Died 16.06.14
22.04.14	Elparra David	Conjunctivitis	Released 02.06.14
23.04.14	Hart Ken	Chlamydia	Treating
11.05.14	Roto Cherokee	Chlamydia	Released 23.06.14
11.05.14	Mitchell Pascoe	Chlamydia	Released 02.07.14
22.05.14	Narani Fleagle Joey	Abandoned	Died 30.5.14
22.05.14	Nicholls Greg	Conjunctivitis Right eye	Released 22.07.14
25.05.14	Dunbogan David	In dangerous area	Released 28.05.14
26.05.14	Ellenborough Howard	Bilateral Conjunctivitis	Treating
30.05.14	Lake Geobbrie	Motor Vehicle Accident	Released 11.06.14
30.05.14	Comboyne Clutch	Lethargic	Euthanased 03.06.13
03.06.14	Karalee Carla	On ground	Died 04.06.14
03.06.14	Sherwood Fly	Unknown	Dead on Arrival
04.06.14	Granite Chyopper	Motor Vehicle Accident	Dead on Arrival
05.06.14	Marbuk Sue	Dangerous area - checked	Released -06.06.14
10.09.14	Pacific Simon	On ground	Euthanased 23.06.14
18.06.14	Long Point Kev	Suspect Chlamydia	Released 07.07.14
19.06.14	Macquarie Peter	On ground - checked	Released 20.06.14
20.06.14	Burrawong Kevin	In yard with dogs -checked	Released 20.06.14
21.06.14	Bangalay Susan	Chlamydia	Euthanased 24.06.14
26.06.14	Amira Cadence	Dog attack	Released 08.07.14
03.07.14	Emily Angie	Suspect Chlamydia	Released 04.07.14
03.07.14	Kamona Andre	Motor Vehicle Accident	Died 05.07.14
03.07.14	Hudson Nick	Motor Vehicle Accident	Released 17.07.14
08.07.14	Hockey Place 1	Unknown	Dead on Arrival
09.07.14	Davis George	Conjunctivitis Right eye	Treating
10.07.14	Kooloonbung Sage	On ground - broken spine	Euthanased 11.10.14
10.07.14	Kooloonbung Basil	Joey of Kooloonbung Sage	Home Care
10.07.14	Granite Julian	Poor Condition	Euthanased 06.08.14

Admitted	Name	Reason	Result
11.07.14	Waterlily Sweet Pea	Motor Vehicle Accident	Dead on Arrival
12.07.14	Emerald Downs Ashley	Cloudy eyes	Euthanased 19.07.14
14.07.14	Koala Neale	On ground drinking water - observation	Released 15.07.14
15.p07.14	Morecombe Magic	Dog attack	Euthanased 23.07.14
16.07.14	Pacific Robyn	Debilitated	Euthanased 16.07.14
21.07.14	Long Point Kev	Extremely Debilitated	Euthanased 21.07.14
26.07.14	Leanda Cheyenne	In yard with dogs -checked	Released 27.07.14
26.07.14	Kundabung Squished	Motor Vehicle Accident	Dead on Arrival
01.08.14	Celestial Dominic Juv.	In yard with dogs -checked	Treating
04.08.14	Black Mountain Jess	Motor Vehicle Accident	Died 21.08.14
07.08.14	Ocean Jesse	Fell from tree - observation	Released 08.07.14
09.08.14	Plymouth Gummy	Chlamydia	Euthanased 20.08.14
11.08.14	Lord Eddie	Fell from tree - observation	Released 12.08.14
11.08.14	Pappinbarra Solange	Conjunctivitis	Treating
15.08.14	Tilpa Tilly	Chlamydia	Treating
16.08.14	Bellevue Rob	Dog attack	Released 25.08.14
16.08.14	Macquarie Peter	Debilitated	Treating
17.08.14	Rainbow Ridge Charli	On ground	Died 18.08.14
19.08.14	Ocean Crissy	Motor Vehicle Accident	Euthanased 20.08.14
22.08.14	Pacific Hwy Jaws	Motor Vehicle Accident	Dead on Arrival
23.08.14	Koala Tommy	Motor Vehicle Accident	Released 27.08.14
28.08.14	Beechwood Keith	On ground	Euthanased 28.08.14
30.08.14	Shelley Beach Scratchy	Limping hind right leg	Treating

### Overseas Adoption



This is part of an email we received from Jita Jedlickova a young 12 year old girl from the Czech Republic who adopted one of our koalas.

Gum Tips has certainly spread its wings to all parts of the world!

“ I and my mum have read your Gum Tips recently. Barry’s Adventures in Wonderland is an interesting theme. We were reading about the restaurant in Prague called “*tlustá koala*” (the Fat Koala) we had to laugh. It is funny! And the tales about koala rescuers (Gum Tips December 2013) too. Your Newsletter is excellent!! And it is also good for practising of our English.

Our neighbours have 2 granddaughters, Terezka and Zuzka. Both girls are my friends and I talked to them about my adopted koala called Matilda. I also showed them books and a leaflet about koalas. Terezka i Zuzka also decided to adopt a wild koala and help it. In our republic some people also adopt animals in Zoo’s.

It’s a pity that Australia is so far. We would visit koalas every week! In August we are going to visit Vienna in Austria, there are koalas too. We haven’t seen a real koala yet.”

### Overseas Volunteers in Focus

**Name:** Erin Sullivan

**Age:** 22

**Resides:** Aurora, Ohio USA (near Cleveland)

**Occupation:** A recent Graduate with a Bachelor’s Degree in Environmental Science

**How did you find out about the Hospital?:** My mother recorded a documentary for me 3 years ago, because she knew I loved koalas. I then looked up the hospital and found they took overseas volunteers.

**Why did you Volunteer and for how long?:** I have wanted to “save the koalas” for the past 10 years after seeing the deforestation of eucalyptus display in the Cleveland Parks Zoo. I spent the month of June 2014 volunteering in the mornings at the Koala Hospital, and would never have gotten this up close & personal experience without this trip. I learnt more in a month, than I would have in 2 years of reading and research.

**What was your experience like?:** The experience was great, I got to feed koalas and clean their yards. I also got to help with screening after their treatment, it was unforgettable.

**Who was your favourite Koala?:** Reading Steffi, a quiet girl who doesn’t get into trouble, but loves to climb up her tree to get a good view .

Erin with her favourite girl  
Reading Steffi



## 2014 Calendar

September 11	Management Meeting
September 14	General Meeting
October 16	Management Meeting
November 20	Management Meeting
December 18	Management Meeting

## Gum Tips

Gum Tips the official newsletter of the  
Koala Preservation Society Australia  
Incorporated published quarterly

*Editor in Chief:*

**Ken Rivett**

*Contributors:*

**Karen Brown**

**Marilyn Lees**

**Gaby Rivett**



### DISCLAIMER

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### Koala Hospital worldwide websites

Netherlands—Carla Sluiter  
Germany—Lutz Michel  
Liechtenstein—Viktor  
Switzerland—Viktor  
Europe—Viktor  
Australia

<http://www.koalaziekenhuis.nl>

<http://www.koalahilfe.de>

<http://www.koala.li>

<http://www.koalahilfe.ch>

<http://www.koalahilfe.eu>

<http://www.koalahospital.org.au>

### Port Macquarie Koala Hospital Committee

#### **Management Committee**

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

**Sighted a Koala? Help us locate our wild koalas - Contact us at [sightings@koalahospital.org.au](mailto:sightings@koalahospital.org.au)**

# What's happening at the Hospital?

Every day at the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital brings new patients, visitors and activities



Find us on Facebook  
Koala Hospital Port Macquarie



John Williamson finalising his artwork on the koala sculpture to be located at the Koala Hospital.



The Koala Hospital ambulance always on the ready For any "pick ups or deliveries"



"Wet Bottom", "Pivot" and "Small Change". Article on page 5



HKS Richardson Jane saved from the ravages of a bushfire, but sadly killed in a road accident in June, 6 weeks after her release.



Bangalay Susan undergoing an ultrasound check on her kidneys and also a check up for any disease



A chunky Barrington Tops Xavier "Oh! How I long for the mountains"



Team Leaders and Supervisors L-R: Pam, Robyn, Sheila, Jan, Sharyn, Joy and Edda enjoying A sunny morning at the Hospital.



Cute Koala craft work supplied by the kindergarten pupils at St. Columba Anglican School.



A group of Singaporean Tourism operators visited the Hospital in July as part of the "Legendary Pacific Coast" promotion



At 8pm every night Barbara our joey carer rugs up in beanie and dressing gown and Basil "climbs!"



**Koala Preservation Society Australia  
Incorporated**

ABN 74 060 854 479

PO Box 236 Port Macquarie  
NSW 2444 Australia

Licensed to rehabilitate and release sick,  
injured and Orphaned native fauna under  
Licence No. 10044



**Koala Emergency Rescue Line**

If you sight a Koala in distress our Rescue Line operates 24 hours a day / 7 days a week  
**Call 6584 1522**