

Wombatised Inc.

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**Wombatised Newsletter
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Wombatised is authorized by
Wildlife Rescue South Coast

Dear Everyone,

The main focus of Wombatised is and always has been on animal welfare and education. We strongly believe that it is only through education that people can appreciate the uniqueness of our Australian wildlife and the importance of habitat protection. In respect to our opposition to the Frensham D.A. we are hoping that common sense will prevail and that the school will choose another site in its huge acreage for their outdoor education facility, and thus protect its hitherto excellent reputation. For the most part, therefore, this month's newsletter concentrates on stories about animals in care, our liaison with local vets and an article on mange, that great killer of wombats. However, we will begin with an update on what has been happening in the Lower Holt as we've had many inquiries from concerned members of the community.



A recent road kill wombat, a beautiful female in superb condition found mutilated on the side of Range Road just east of Sturt, highlights the need to remind drivers to watch out for wildlife. Wombatised is called almost on a daily basis to rescue animals – wombats, possums, wood ducks, kookaburras - knocked by cars but still alive, but many times the outcome is hopeless. It was delightful therefore to come across this welcoming sign at the entrance to Callala Beach, in Jervis Bay.

*If you want a feel-good story, copy this link into your 'favourite search engine' and scroll down to the section on the **Compton Road Overpass**.*

<https://www.ssec.org.au/our-campaigns/koalas-and-resilient-habitat-in-the-sutherland-shire/>

*Then watch the **Gardening Australia** video below the story. It's inspirational and hopefully, a great idea to be emulated!*

Magpies have been in the news of late ... but am I (the editor) wrong in thinking our Southern Highlands birds are less aggressive than their counterparts in other areas? I fondly remember my days at A.N.U. (long, long ago!) when we had to protect ourselves every spring with bundles of gum tree twigs on our way to and from Bruce and Burton Halls to the General Studies Library!

Approximately 10% of male magpies swoop to protect their families from real or perceived threats. When there is an abundance of protective vegetation, they usually don't develop the need to attack. But habitat destruction brings them into close contact with humans, dogs and cats and can instil a negative conditioned response in these highly intelligent birds. The Southern Highlands have been spared these factors to a large extent which may account for the fact that our magpies are ... perhaps? ... less defensive than usual and even tame in some instances??



Please let us know if you have magpie encounters or any other interesting stories about wildlife you might like to share.

*All the very best to our valued readers and members,
From the Wombatised Team*

CALL FOR FRENSHAM SCHOOL'S BUSH CABINS TO BE SCRAPPED

Representative of **Australian Wildlife Society, Wildlife carers, Bushcare groups, Wombatised, Birdlife Southern Highlands, WinZero** and **Australian Native Plants Society** amongst others signed an **Open Letter** addressed to the **Frensham Board of Governors.**

<http://winzero.com.au/open-letter-to-frensham-board-of-governors>

Contacts of co-signatories:

Clive West: 0427 808 967

Sarah Cains: 0403 567 320. - an old girl

Suzannah Porter: 0401 246 913 - an old girl



Left: **Clive West**

Co-signatory to Open Letter.
Deputy Chair, WinZero, Berrima Bushcare Member,
Landcare Southern Highlands Network Member

Right: **Sarah Cains**

Co-signatory to Open Letter to the Frensham Board of
Governors
Frensham Old Girl,
Mt Gibraltar Bushcare Member, Horticulturist



Private school at war over bush plan

EXCLUSIVE

ELLIE DUDLEY

One of the country's most prestigious girls schools, Frensham, is at war with its influential alumni over multi-million-dollar plans to build a bush campus modelled partly on Geelong Grammar's famous Timbertop property.

The NSW Southern Highlands institution – which counts Lucy Turnbull, Cathy Whitlam and Kim Wran among its former students – has accentuated the environmental credentials of its \$7.6m project. Critics, however, claim the development will destroy 10 ancient wombat burrows.

Known as the Holt Bush Accommodation, the project would be used to house 72 students during their time in year 9, similar to the Geelong Grammar campus near Mansfield, Victoria, and The Scots College's Glengarry property in NSW's Kangaroo Valley.

But the plans have led to a backlash from Frensham alumni, led by Jane Stanham, from the area's prominent Macarthur family of pastoralists.

In a letter to Frensham principal Sarah MacGarry, Ms Stanham – whose daughter, mother and grandmother also attended the school – writes the project is “a cheap copy of the Glengarry/Timbertop approach”.

“To call the buildings eco huts when they will quite literally ruin the ecosystem of the (area) is just wrong,” she writes in the letter, obtained by The Australian.

“There will be Frensham girls standing in front of the bulldozer not because they don't support the school, but because they do.”

In a separate letter to Ms MacGarry, Ms Stanham alleges the project has been “if not of dishonesty, certainly one of stealth”.

“How did that work for Rio Tinto,” she writes, a reference to the significant controversy over the mining giant's destruction of the Pilbara rock shelters known as the Juukan Gorge last year.

Ms Stanham is not the only former student to raise concerns about Holt Bush, which will have six student cabins, two staff cabins, a hall, kitchen and laundry facilities, an amphitheatre and a central fire pit.

Dozens of alumni have signed a petition urging the school to reconsider the plans. Many point out that while Timbertop and Glengarry are far away from the main campuses of their respective schools, Holt Bush will be just metres away from Frensham's Mittagong classrooms.

But the school has hit back at its critics, with Ms MacGarry describing the development in a letter sent to parents last month as an “extremely exciting proposal”.

Frensham, established in 1913, takes in 100 acres of bushland and

‘Without the trees there is no habitat, and without the habitat there are no animals’

SARAH CAINS
HORTICULTURIST AND FORMER
FRENSHAM STUDENT

has focused on the educational benefits of being near nature.

According to the schools development application, the Holt Bush development will have “no unreasonable environmental, social, or economic impacts”. The application makes no mention of wombats, but does acknowledge the site may be a koala habitat.

A local environmental group, however, says the project will be a “cruel and heartless persecution toward ... wombats”.

Sarah Cains, a local horticulturalist who graduated from Frensham in 1964, said the development would destroy the ecosystem's “nature corridors”.

“The loss of the trees would be a super tragedy, but you've got to think about all the animals that inhabit the area as well,” she said.

“Without the trees there is no habitat, and without the habitat there are no animals.”

Suzy Porter, another former student, said the decision made by the school to destroy the bush “proved it wasn't the school I remembered it to be.”

“The parents of the school these days are not the lovely country people I went to school with,” Ms Porter said.

“We're now dealing with business people who are used to getting their own way and shelling out for this, that and the rest of it.”

Letter to the Editor: Michelle Gunn

Dear Michelle

I represent a group of residents of the Southern Highlands who are concerned about the local prestigious boarding school Frensham's proposal to build "eco cabins" within an identified essential native animal habitat corridor and core koala habitat.

Whilst we are appreciative that your reporter, Ellie Dudley, was raising awareness of this inappropriate proposal in her article [NSW private school Frensham at war over bush plan 25 August 2021](#) however some of the facts of Ellie's article were incorrect or at best incomplete. She quoted a letter from the Frensham Principal, Sarah MacGarry that states "The building footprint which is being proposed is 0.8 hectares out of the 18 hectares referred to as the Lower Holt area". Whilst this may be true for the size of the proposed cabins she neglected to mention that 4.2 hectares of the surrounding area (which is approximately 249 of the 515 trees in the area) will be cleared to comply with RFS bushfire requirements.

There is significant community concern over the potentially devastating environmental impacts of the proposal and the requirements by the Council for the school to meet with the local community groups and refer the DA to the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) have not occurred. In fact, the school have refused all community requests to discuss the proposal since its announcement and have taken the matter to the Land and Environment court.

Whilst we are not opposed to the school continuing their long standing tradition of teaching their students about the importance of the environment we hope they will consider moving the location of these "eco-cabins" so our precious wildlife won't die and parts of this curial habitat corridor won't be destroyed.

Gaye White
Mittagong NSW 2575

The following letter below published the following day in The Australian.

Editor

The Australian

Re Frensham School Eco Cabins

The article regarding eco cabins at Frensham school quotes the figure of \$7.6 million for the project. They must be super eco cabins for that price! One wonders if that huge amount of money could be better spent teaching the girls about climate change, true environmental principles and social justice and equity – all of which could be done in an existing classroom with the odd excursion. There might even be a few dollars left over for a good cause which the students could determine themselves via a democratic process.

*Joanne Babb
56 Oxley Drive
Mittagong 2575*



Map showing area affected by the Frensham project which will obviously be an annihilation of this precious remnant shale forest.



One of the recent class activities (only just the end of last term) with the Frensham Year 9 girls wishing to protect a mother wombat's burrow. Due to human encroachment, flash floods and storm runoff, this ancient flood zone

burrow became slightly eroded. The sign on the right was to warn the groundsman on mowers who encroach on the banks of the river.

This beautiful description of a sanctuary below, by Alexandra Seddon, the Queen of Potoroo Palace in Bega, is included here with her permission.

SO WHAT IS A SANCTUARY?

Definition: a holy place, where fugitives (wildlife?) are entitled to immunity from arrest or execution, a place of refuge, asylum, a protected place where animals can live and breed without interference.

Before whites arrived, the whole of Australia was a sanctuary. The animals were hunted for necessary food, but there was no meaningless huge slaughter and destruction of their homes. We can learn so much from the traditional custodians who cared for the land so beautifully for thousands and thousands of years.

Many species are now hated -- snakes, flying-foxes, wombats, dingoes -- and killed when seen. I was brought up to kill snakes on sight. Now I know the heightened sensitivity (far far greater than the sensitivity of any human) and fear that snakes have and I have a deep respect for them.

Samantha Kennedy – a Wombat in Need



One of our 'Land for Wildlife' owners, alerted Tania to a wombat in need of help on his property. This wild wombat had pneumonia, multiple injuries including a broken wrist and was infested with ticks.



*The bites on her back indicated she had been involved in some kind of territorial dispute, probably over the limited amount of burrows available after the floods. She was immediately christened **Samantha Kennedy**.*

Dr. Tim Westwood from the Bowral Veterinary Hospital administered anti-inflammatories and anti-biotics, and x-rayed her broken wrist. His compassion for this wild, severely emaciated, beautiful girl was truly heart-warming. We are so grateful to our vets for all they do for our native wildlife.



The back of Tania's truck became her hospital for a short time.

Samantha politely refused the pellets which many of our rescued wombats adore but enjoys copious amounts of fresh grass, lovingly cut for her by Chloe. Samantha is now on the way back to good health.



This is the second wombat I (the editor) have witnessed near death upon rescue and brought back to life by Tania's magic powers. The first was Charlie Chomp who was the inspiration for our Wombatised logo!

Looking for a gift for a little person?

***Adorable hand crafted kangaroos and koalas \$20
and unique hand crafted little wombats and cockatoos \$18
Ring 4871 2731 for free delivery within Southern Highlands!!***



Nici Lane and her Heroes

*One dark wet morning in July, a mother wombat was accidentally killed by a car in the Joadja area. She was carrying a little female joey just 1.4 kilos in weight, officially described as 'just furred' which means she's just beyond the pinkie stage but not quite 'velvet'. A recently arrived Joadja resident saw the mother wombat in the middle of the lane and soon realised there was a joey in the pouch. This was **Hero No. 1** – José, a young man named who had read about Tania and had ingeniously uploaded her number into his phone in case he might need it. What a hero!*



*Moments later, **Hero No.2** in the form of Leanne from The Glass Café in Mittagong stopped to help and immediately cut open the pouch with scissors from the wombat rescue kit she always carries with her. This was her third or fourth pouch rescue for which she received a special Wombatised certificate!*



*Meanwhile **Hero No.3**, Tania of course, had arrived and carefully took the little joey to Southern Highlands Veterinary Clinic in Moss Vale as the baby wombat had been injured by the car impact and had a badly broken femour. **Hero No.4**, Dr. Chris Watson, an orthopaedic specialist, x-rayed the leg and made history by inserting a pin into the broken bone.*



Nici pushed her pin out within ten days and is now making a miraculous recovery, drinking marsupial milk and eating sustainably. It has taken her a while to realise that her carers are not her enemies.

Her mother was still warm when Nici was discovered and the car impact, the broken leg and pouch removal all happened within a few minutes, so Nici understandably thought all humans caused her pain and tragedy and was severely traumatised.



Many people have been interested in Nici's situation including vets from Sydney University's Camden campus, Noline Blomfield from WIRES Wollindilly, the Glass Café, concerned Joadja residents and of course all here at Wombatised.

Many thanks to Noline and Leanne for their donations towards the veterinary costs.

*Stay tuned for a **Nici Lane Update** in our December newsletter.*

Mange, the big killer of wombats



Thanks to the WPS, John Crieghton and Phil Hazzard for their input and time helping us understand the spread of mange and its devastating effects on wombats and the need for expert care, including the use of antibiotics and dehydration drips. The Gib Gate area around Gibbergunyah and down to behind the Centennial winery is a hotspot for mange. We have got to get our community involved otherwise we will lose many wombats south west of Mittagong.

Landowners should be able to treat the wombats on their property. However, some very misguided legislation has been introduced whereby only licenced carers able to treat wombats for mange. There are simply not enough licenced people to look after this problem which should involve all property

owners as mange is everywhere. There is a huge safety margin with the treatment for mange. The biggest threat to the wombat under treatment is infection from more dead mites. This must be treated with antibiotics. The cattle industry are allowed to give antibiotics to their suffering cows but wombats don't have the same rights.

Tania sent Wombatised's objections to the draft government guidelines. They asked her to

contribute which was at least a step in the right direction. It is legal to medicate farm animals but not wombats. Where is the sense in that? Surely our native animals deserve the same treatment.



Left: This wombat was still salvageable if only he could have been monitored. However, he was euthanised.

If people would act sooner rather than later and call a wildlife agency or even get online help from the WPS about how to treat them, many animals could be saved.

How to treat a wombat with mange?

The best ways to treat a wombat with mange is

- to follow him or her to the burrow and install burrow flap (filled with Cydectin) on the mouth of the burrow or along a wombat track or fence lines etc.*
- to net the animal by a licenced carer and have it treated by a licenced carer, under veterinarian advice.*
- to treat the animal with Moxidectin and ongoing, long acting antibiotics. After medication, the rotting dead mites inside the body pose an even greater risk of infection, particularly if the mites surround and affect the vital organs. Death from infection is the biggest risk and advanced mange must be treated with long acting antibiotics.*
- to supply food, water, sedatives as well as a heat pad for a seriously advanced victim.*



These pictures are of a heavily manged wombat on the right receiving



the poll and scoop method where medication is poured onto the animal's back and repeated weekly. The vegetable dye on his back was for identification. This wombat was from Aylmerton and although he may appear to be a lost cause, he actually survived with ongoing treatment. His eyesight returned as the crusts left over from the mites fell away from around his eyes. The fact that this wombat made a full recovery is testimony to the fact that with diligence and care, wombats need not be euthanised but be given a second chance. Remarkably it was the landowner who administered this care, under the guidance of Tania.

We are currently trialling a method by which we contain the wombat around their burrow, restrict their movement and provide treatment, food and water within a monitored and confined area. This is a huge job but may guarantee a full recovery due to providing safety and repeated access. After treatment, the mites die and the animal may feel much colder as the parasites are no longer pulverising and burning the skin as they chew into the flesh.

An effective ongoing treatment for wombats in the wild is to administer cydectin in burrow flaps placed at the entrance or exit of burrows. Made from recycled ice cream lids and tuna cans, the cydectin in the centre of the flap spills on to the wombat's back when the animal enters or exits the burrow.

Frensham girls have been actively engaged for some years in making these flaps and placing them strategically at the mouths of the burrows in the Lower Holt. The article below appeared in the Southern Highland News on 14th December 2018.



The Miracle Workers

Headed by Tania, Wombatised has some wonderful Miracle Workers who devote so much time to our wildlife. Each person has his or her own particular skills which slot in like a jigsaw puzzle.



Clive and Eric, for example, observed the enormous loads of daily washing Tania was doing to keep the all the bedding and towels clean so they purchased an industrial washing machine, installed a special clothes line and are now delivering loads of beautifully clean laundry which is such an enormous help.



Clive also donates loads of hay necessary for the nursery burrows and for 'hospital' bedding. He later returns to collect the soiled hay which has now 'morphed' into wonderful mulch for his roses!



What an amazing and probably unique example of recycling!!



Super duper handyman, Michael is another Miracle Worker who spends many hours each week constructing fencing, maintaining the sanctuaries' infrastructure and ferrying large adult wombats from one place to another. Michael is one of those people who when he sees a problem, knows just what to do! Wombatised has been indebted to Michael now for a number of years.

The Celestial Wombat must have been around last February when animal lover and vegan Chloe Moore decided to take a gap year and serendipitously met Trina at a street party who then introduced Chloe to Tania! The rest is history!

The saying goes that Chloe was thrown in the deep end with wildlife care and emerged as an Olympic Gold medallist!! She has taken courses in wombat and kangaroo welfare, in fire safety, has set up the Wombatised website, has transported wombats to and from the vets, has helped administer medications, feed orphaned wombats and kangaroos, and has even ventured down wombat burrows when necessary.





Very tangible evidence of Chloe's commitment to wildlife was when she traded in her first car for a second hand four-wheel drive vehicle which enables her to access our sanctuaries regardless of the road conditions.

It is essential for wildlife carers to be humble, compassionate, dependable and willing to learn as it's such a new science. Even many vets hesitate to work on our wildlife as so much is unknown. Chloe is well aware of this and time and time again shows an amazing ability to apply what she has learned to new situations.

Chloe is also on call 24 hours to rescue injured or orphaned animals and as Wombatised's Educational



Officer, she has addressed many groups of people, young and old, about caring for wildlife. Who would have thought that when she was sitting for her HSC last year, a year later she would be lancing a wild wombat, Samantha Kennedy's injured leg!



Tania, Chloe, Clive and Michael are now a formidable team looking after a host of animals in care. If only we could clone them, our wildlife would really be in good hands!

COMMUNITY FORUM

On 29th September a community forum was held to discuss concerns associated with the Frensham development. If you would like to watch this very informative session, please click on the link below.

<https://youtu.be/gzVBQbthZ4w>

Wombatised Inc.



Vision and Mission Statement

Who are we ?

Wombatised covers an ever expanding network of people dedicated to the welfare of our native animals with a strong focus on education, conservation and community inclusion. We work for all wildlife with an emphasis on wombats.

Our vision is

- to continue raising healthy wombat orphans, guiding them to appropriate release sites to ensure their prosperous future.
- to improve hospital facilities and medical provisions for native animals.
- to maintain treatment in the field of diseases such as mange and other parasitic afflictions introduced by early settlers.
- to provide financial support for veterinarians, willing to explore the often untravelled path of wombat health.
- to cultivate effective means to relocate wombats, saving them from all too common atrocities such as road accidents, being buried alive at development sites, being shot and poisoned etc.
- to educate people on the very real need to help our wildlife.

How can you help?

We would welcome any donations to Wombatised Inc. However, we are still awaiting our tax deductibility status. Our bank account details are:

BSB 802 101
Account No. 100075892
Account Name Wombatised
Reference: Please use your full name

Please advise us of your donation by sending this form
The Secretary, Wombatised Inc.
22 Payten Street, Mittagong NSW 2575.

or

by emailing wombatisedinc@gmail.com

or

adriennebradneysmith@gmail.com

We will then send your receipt / membership e-certificate.

Thank you so much for your interest in Wombatised Inc.