

Wombatised Inc.

President: *Brendan Akhurst*

Vice President: *Tania Clancy*

Secretary: *Adrienne
Bradney-Smith*

Treasurer: *Eric Savage*

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Wombatised

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Wombatised Newsletter

Vol. 15 20220201

Wombatised is authorized by
Wildlife Rescue South Coast

Dear Everyone,

A slightly belated Happy New Year to you all! However, with eleven-twelfths of the year still to come it's not too late to wish everyone a happy and fulfilling remainder of the year!

We at Wombatised have had a sad start to 2022. We had to farewell our beloved friend and president of Wombatised, Brendan Akhurst, who lost his valiant battle with pancreatic cancer on the 20th January. A tribute to this wonderful man who loved wombats so dearly is included at the end of this newsletter.

Wombatised carers have been busier than ever looking after road kill orphans and sick or injured animals and the recent heavy rain has taken its toll again with flooded burrows requiring wombats to be evacuated.

*Now for that tricky subject: **membership!!** Many thanks to all those who have already renewed their membership for 2022. Wombatised relies heavily on membership contributions and we encourage all those who have yet to renew to please do so if you can. We also most heartedly welcome new members to join us.*

The details are as follows:

Wombatised Membership renewal details:

- *Premium membership. Come and meet us!* \$50.00
- *Family membership (2-4 people)* \$30.00
- *Individual membership* \$20.00
- *Child membership* \$5.00

A/C name:

Wombatised

BSB:

802101

A/ C No. **membership:**

100075892

We need your contact details in order to issue you with your 2022 membership and receipt so please send a brief email, either to

wombatisedinc@gmail.com or adriennebradneysmith@gmail.com

Donations to Wombatised

For donations to be **tax deductible**, the money must be deposited in a **public fund**, separate from our everyday expenses account which covers membership renewals etc. This explains why there are now two bank account numbers in the top, right hand corner of this page. The account name and BSB remain unchanged for both accounts, but for **donations requiring tax deductions**, the public fund must be used, the details of which follow:

A/C name:	Wombatised
BSB:	802101
A/ C No. for donations :	100078422

Once a donation is deposited in the Wombatised public fund, we will issue a standardized receipt **provided we have your contact details**. Please send your name and email address either to wombatisedinc@gmail.com or

adriennebradneysmith@gmail.com

IMPORTANT INFORMATION about **FRENSHAM** and the **LOWER HOLT BUSH** **ACCOMMODATION**

Early in January, Frensham School lodged with the Council another amended plan for a controversial Student Bush Accommodation in an area of the Lower Holt that has been undisturbed for a hundred years.

Submissions on this amendment close 2

February and the case is scheduled to be heard in the Land and Environment Court on 18 March.

We are asking you once again to make a submission to the Council objecting to this location. (Even if you have already objected twice, every new objection helps).

To view the amended plans

<https://www.wsc.nsw.gov.au/Development/DA-Tracker>

Click on the "e-Track" link. Development Application No 20/0747.



Please address your objections to:

Ms Lisa Miscamble

General Manager

Wingecarribee Shire Council

POB 141 Moss Vale NSW 2577

mail@wsc.nsw.gov.au

Objections ideas

Frensham Development Application No 20/0747 is fundamentally inconsistent with the aims of Wingecarribee Local Environment Plan 2010 (the L.E.P.).

The DA is inconsistent with and does not support a number of principal aims of the **Wingecarribee Local Environment Plan 2010** listed below:

(a) to conserve and enhance, for current and future generations, the ecological integrity, environmental heritage and environmental significance of Wingecarribee.

(d) to provide opportunities for development and land use activities that do not adversely impact on natural systems and processes and the overall quality of Wingecarribee's natural environment.

(f) to provide for a range of living opportunities that address differing lifestyle needs without compromising the environmental quality of Wingecarribee, and the value of its natural resources such as water, biodiversity and agricultural land.

(l) to develop an ecologically sustainable future for Wingecarribee through the conservation, rehabilitation and regeneration of native vegetation (particularly threatened species populations and ecological communities), soil, waterways, riparian land and water quality (surface and groundwater).

(p) to protect and enhance waterways, riparian land and water quality in the drinking water catchments of Wingecarribee.

Crucial fact to consider:

1. Building a bridge and all-weather access road through the Nattai River Category 1 Riparian Zone on alluvial soils will be immensely damaging and is inconsistent with points in Wingecarribee L.E.P. as seen above.

2. Since 2016, the area has been a Land for Wildlife area. Native animals have been rehabilitated and released there. Frensham's plan is to collapse the burrows of those orphaned wombats. It is against NSW law to move wombats as it has been shown they almost definitely die as a result of relocation.

3. The amended plans have moved a few of the cabins a small distance but this has not changed the overall environmental destruction. 4.2 ha are required to be cleared as an asset protection zone for bushfire safety if buildings are placed in this WSC marked wildlife corridor.



4. Ongoing climate change means unpredictable weather conditions. If cabins are built in this high-risk flood zone, Frensham will need a full-time flood warden monitoring weather in order to alert students and teachers to impending danger.

5. Frensham is attempting to disguise the number of trees to be felled by not including pine trees in the count. Despite minor alterations shown in this new plan, there will still be in the order of **249 trees cuts down in this long-undisturbed, wildlife corridor.**



Severing this corridor eliminates the link from Mt Gibraltar through to Mt Alexandra and beyond. This action will result, not only in monumental wildlife habitat destruction, but will also, will create wildlife 'islands', with animals unable to move between habitats.

Re: APPLICATION NUMBER: 20/0747 AMENDED PLANS

- the grounds of objection are required to be specified in the submission
- refer to the Development Application (DA) number
- provide your postal address, email address and a contact telephone number.

Further action you can take:

1. Write a letter to your local newspaper editor outlining your concerns,
2. Call in to your local radio station to express your frustration.
3. Sign our petition to the Board of Frensham.

WINZERO.COM.AU/FRENSHAM

4. If you are able to, make a donation so we can continue the campaign to spread the Objections ideas.

Radiata Pines

(Thanks to *Cheryl* for pointing out the spelling error in December's newsletter. The Editor has vowed never again to pay attention to Goggle's red squiggly line!)

All too often wombat carers grieve over radiata pines being bulldozed into the ground in areas where wombats have lived for thousands of years. The original burrows were destroyed when the pine forests were planted but over time wombats have reclaimed the area and re-dug their burrows, only to lose them again thirty or so years later, when the pine forests were harvested. It is important to keep this in mind when reading the following article:



Radiata pines are a bit like coriander – you either like it or you don't.

One member, Alexandra (experienced wildlife carer and founder of Potoroo Palace native animal education centre) wrote:

Are those who hate radiata pines aware that Carnaby's Black Cockatoo, being deprived of their natural food trees, turn almost completely to using pine plantations?

Vanessa, another member wrote:

An addition to Tania's information on radiata pine trees - the yellow tail black cockatoos love the pine nuts when they are available and these are an essential food source. They used to all land on to the trees at Oxley College and at my house in Sydney to eat the radiata pine nuts.

Cathy, a member who lives in the Dandenong Ranges in Victoria wrote.

Tania's article on the need to keep the non-indigenous pines was most interesting. We have many of the Cedar pines in our area and though rather unpopular, they are loved as a food source by our Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos of which there are many in The Dandenongs.

According to Wikipedia, they prefer green cones, 'nipping them off at the stem and holding them in one foot, then systematically lifting each segment and extracting the seed. A cockatoo spends about 20 minutes on each pine cone.' So, I am always rather alarmed

when I see pine trees being cut down. We have a Cedar Pine next door which regularly drops branches into our garden, but before I complain, I have to remind myself how much I love seeing the black cockatoos living so happily in our area!

Whilst on the subject of birds, my son's property in Hay has been chosen (together with 9 others in NSW) by the Biodiversity Conservation Trust to set aside an area for the conservation of a very rare and endangered bird called The Plains Wanderer. James and Jane practise a kind of agriculture called Holistic Management (or Regenerative agriculture) where the land is grazed for a few days at a time before the cattle move on to the next paddock, so that large areas are rested for some months before being grazed again. The Biodiversity Conservation Trust do not want the grass to be either too short or too long so this type of management suits these shy little birds. They will receive a grant to help look after and provide ideal conditions for them.

By the way, our little Echidna has been visiting again. He arrived on Christmas Eve just as the family was arriving from Hay and Monbulk, so I was able to introduce 'Prickles' to them.

Another member, Clive wrote

(1) Pine forests do not support the same degree of biodiversity that native forests support ("Most studies have found that animal assemblages in conifer plantations are less diverse than those of native forests"

Murdoch University

https://researchrepository.murdoch.edu.au/id/eprint/4637/1/plantation_forests.pdf).

This is not saying that there is no biodiversity in pine forest, merely that it is less diverse and, therefore, inferior as habitat.

(2) No-one is advocating simply removing pines. Instead, if the trees are poisoned they will take several years to die and up to a decade to start falling to pieces. In the meanwhile, native species endemic to the area should be planted as succession plantings. This is particularly important where the surrounding forest is an Endangered Ecological Community (EEC), and there is legislation that protects the EEC. A pine forest cannot by law be an EEC in Australia, and the habitat, limited as it is, cannot be protected by legislation.

Something I was very doubtful about when Tania mentioned it to me, is whether koalas eat pine needles. In fact, there are some articles on the internet showing they can and do:

(1) Friends of the Earth, Melbourne [strzelecki koala research](#)

Koalas have been found 20m inside pine plantations with pine needles found in koala scats, which raises some interesting questions, including notable high risk areas in the interface between plantations and native forest.

(2) ECOS <http://www.ecosmagazine.com/?paper=EC69p3b>

Gum leaves it is Living off gum leaves is no easy feat and koalas need a specialised digestive system to do it. They can live off only a few species of Eucalyptus perhaps 10 or

20, of the more than 600 on the continent. Recent reports speak of koalas eating pine needles in a plantation forest. Pine needles, like gum leaves, are hard to digest and contain a range of toxins poisonous to most mammals, but koalas may gain some nourishment from them.

However, pine trees have not been identified as a koala food tree in extensive scientific studies of koala food trees

(<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Animals-and-plants/Native-animals/review-of-koala-tree-use-across-nsw-180385.pdf>).

I think it's safe to presume that eucalypts are the much preferred food for koalas, and that the identified eucalyptus should be planted in replacement of pine trees.

Let's continue this discussion in our next newsletter. Please send your views / comments by mid March in time for our April issue.

In Search of New Homes

Having a five-year plan is essential when caring for wombats as it's important not to release too many wombats in the one place.

Problems associated with finding new homes include considering, water supply, the existing resident wombat population and the prevalence of mange.

Land for Wildlife properties are our first choice as, by very definition, they are inhabited by wombat-loving humans. However, establishing a soft release site suitable for adolescent wombats transitioning back to the wild involves an enormous amount of work.

The owners of one such property in rugged bushland put up their hands, and this provided us with a wonderful excuse to have a day out. A thrilling Cook's tour in a four-wheel drive along



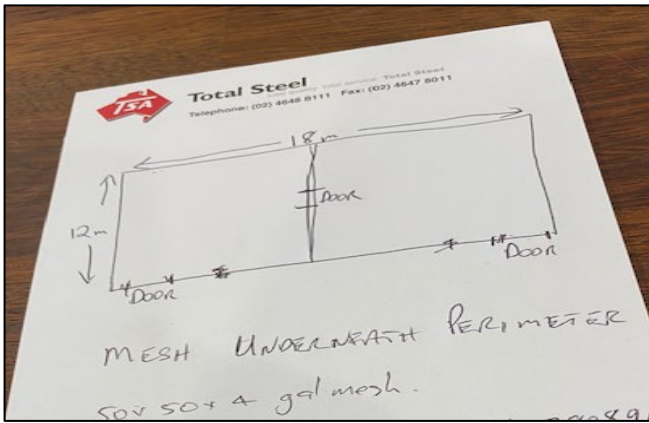
tracks which only the most experienced driver could manage revealed a huge diversity of landscape, rock formations, good water supply and vegetation.



There was lots of evidence of wombat habitation although the recent drought may well have considerably reduced the number of wisdoms.



A suitable site with lots of grass, within easy access of the homestead was chosen as having the added advantage of ease of checking both the wombats themselves and their water supply. However, before any animals can be rehabilitated here, much labour-intensive work has to be done, digging burrows, positioning recycled materials, attaching heavy grade metal and using lots of pegs and star posts to build the compound.



Plans for another site have progressed to the stage where measurements have been taken and materials sourced, including the heavy grade metal essential for building a new compound.

Compound construction



Independent Steel in Moss Vale always provides Wombatised with excellent service.



Existing burrows

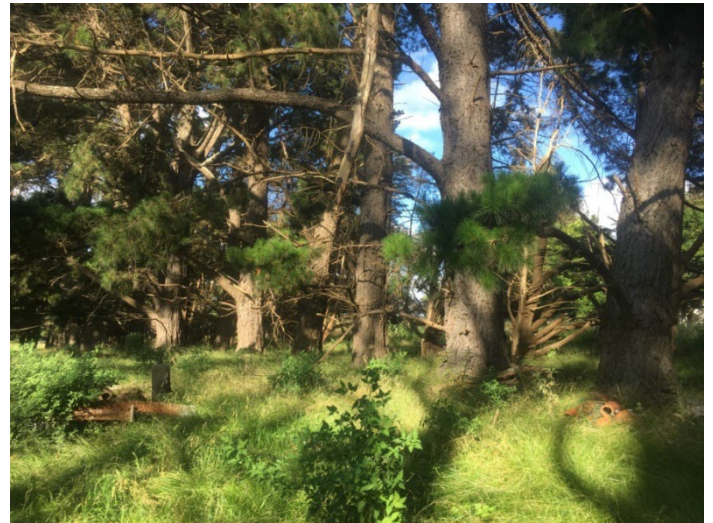
A disused large chook pen with a concrete floor 5 inches thick has been converted into the shelter of a compound in another local Land for Wildlife property. Hundreds of acres covered in lush grass and sheltered by a thick row of radiata pines will eventually become the riparian zone release site for several of our orphans. Much planting needs to be done to improve habitat for the wombats to reclaim their land with shelter and protection.



Many hours of work, using heavy gauge wire placed like an apron on and above the ground and secured with metal stakes was necessary to construct this soft release pen. Burrows have been hand dug within the compound, waiting to be enlarged and extended by the incumbent wombat. Adults have no difficulty starting a structurally sound burrow but teenagers usually require a little initial help.



The present occupants are ready for release but with flooded burrows in the surrounding countryside they will remain where they are for the time being, to avoid conflict with other wombats vying for dry burrow space.



Another seven or more burrows will be dug in the surrounding acres and when this is completed, the wombats ready for release will have their own burrows rather than having to become interlopers – wombat real estate in action!



So far we have been dealing with teenage wombats around 15 kilos or so in weight. However, Wombatised receives much smaller wombats in need of constant care and protection for several months from their foster carer.

A Land for Wildlife property has dedicated a room as a wombat nursery. Rather than surrendering the room to inevitable chewing and scratching, they have ingeniously

built an inner wall of plywood, complete with gate to protect the skirting boards, carpet and walls. This has to be wombat dedication in the highest degree!



Wombatised is forever grateful to all the property owners who have come to the aid of our wombats. What also must be mentioned is that our wonderful team that spends a huge amount of time driving between all these compounds, checking that each wombat is safe, well watered and happy.





Phil's Corner

Discussions with Phil

In praise of ANTIBIOTICS

Antibiotics are a godsend for wildlife foster carers, as they target harmful pathogens which can kill native animals. Oral Baytril is a powerful antibiotic which is highly effective in wombats, prescribed by the best vets and can be administered up until one

or two days after symptoms subside and need not always be applied for the prescribed five days. Some vets prefer Clavamox, others Alamyacin both also being broad spectrum antibiotics which target specific and pathogens, not so much the good bacteria vital to hind gut health.

The concern that animals develop a resistance to antibiotics applies perhaps to livestock, for example where pigs confined to their piggeries may have demonstrated a strain of resistance, but wombats being a different host often indicate a quick response .

However, there is an alarming discrepancy between the treatment of farm animals, which are a commodity, and the treatment of wildlife. Vets may be able to supply farmers with antibiotics which they in turn can administer to an animal in need, but because our wildlife is pseudo-protected, there are hurdles in place for such access to wildlife foster carers unless under veterinarian supervision. Who could pay hundreds of busy vets to administer antibiotics to a native animal in the bush and then follow up? Why should we make at vet trudge through the night to inject antibiotics to a sick native animal when foster carers should be trained and experienced enough to execute such a simple task.

Tania, working under vet supervision has witnessed the miraculous effects of antibiotics on wombats and kangaroos without any adverse result such as thrush. Coccidiosis and fungus, for example can infect wombat intestines, leaving holes which become havens for pathogens. Without life-saving antibiotics, the effected animals usually die.

Likewise, when a wombat is infected with severe mange, it must be treated with antibiotics to address the accompanying infection caused by thousands of rotting mites and their waste playing havoc on the immune system.

Wildlife carers, like farmers, also need access to antibiotics to treat animals on the field. Wildlife foster carers can take courses in antibiotic use and they can also learn from and work with vets, thus relieving vets to concentrate on domestic animals. Our wildlife need to have the same protection as our livestock and a relaxation in the present unfair regulations cannot come soon enough.

Evacuation!

Flooded burrows in one compound necessitated the removal of some wombats to another.



SAVE the DATE!!



**WOMBATS AND
WILDLIFE MAGNETISIM SEMINAR**

on

Sunday, 1st May, 2022

at the

MITTAGONG RSL

A fun and educative day of stories, advice, and learning from experienced members of the wildlife and conservation communities, presented by Andy Mcleod, a local farmer and wombat enthusiast.

Speakers will include:

- *Debbie Corbett – possum expert & long-time President of Wildlife Rescue South Coast*
- *Janine Davies – founder of the bat clinic in Nowra*
- *Anne Clements – environmental and botanical consultant*
- *Beth Godwin – retired school principal famous for forming community networks to initiate change and galvanise people into action*
- *Alexandra Seddon – well known conservationist and founder of Potoroo Palace*
- *Inga Tiere – bird specialist*
- *Noeline Bondfield – Wildlife pinkie specialist*
- *Sarah Cains and Heather Champion – environmentalists: Where the Greens are headed.*
- *Ray McGibbon – snake and reptile expert*
- *Tania Clancy – wombat and wildlife expert, Wombatised's founder and inspiration*

A Beautiful Tradition



Deeply buried in many cultures is the tradition of making toys in the off season, when weather conditions temporarily disrupt outside work. For example, farmers in the Tōhoku area of Northern Japan carved wooden dolls called kokeshi when their rice fields were buried under snow and Russian peasants made matryosha, wooden nestling dolls during the bleak winter months.

The earliest wooden toys found in Egypt date back to 21st century B.C. Rag dolls and stuffed toys

followed this tradition, culminating in the teddy bears of the early 20th century. Most Wombatised readers probably remember cuddling their own favourite childhood soft toy and the tradition continues today.



Beautiful Jane times TWO!



*We at Wombatised have our very own soft toy maker. Meet **Jane No.1 - Jane den Hertog**. Born in Australia of Dutch parentage, Jane is a devoted animal lover, with wombats undoubtedly at the top of her favourite animals list (perhaps after her cat!).*

Jane's parents migrated to Australia in 1952, arriving with just two suitcases, a tea chest and her nine months old brother. Jane's older sister was born soon after, followed by Jane herself and two younger brothers. Her father died in 1965, leaving her mother with five children under thirteen. Jane remembers how her mother instilled in

her children a strong work ethic, even though life was very difficult and fraught with setbacks.

Jane warmly remembers how her mother created a beautiful home, decorating it with her own paintings and art works. Jane certainly has inherited her mother's creative ability as she produces the most delightful soft toys, in all shapes and sizes. The cute teddy bears, monkeys, giraffes and alpacas she donates to charities supported by the Southern Highlands Inner Wheel but the wombats, koalas, kangaroos, cockatoos and galahs are for Wombatised and provide a valuable source of revenue.

Jane lives with her lovely husband Henk, Snoopy the cat, and three chooks: Catherine the Great, Mary and Houdini. There are not too many evenings when she is not crocheting some kind of little soft animal. We at Wombatised are amazed by Jane's expertise and heartily thank her for her incredible generosity.

Meet Jane No.2

(below, on the left) - **Jane**

Franklin, named after Jane No.1, of course. Jane is a beautiful, healthy wombat who has responded well to foster care. She was found wandering in the Bundanoon area having lost her mum in a road accident.



Jane is a little shy, very gentle and unassuming, and gets on well with the other wombats in her wisdom. Jane loves her food – wombat pellets and grass – and now weighs about 15 kilos. In short, Jane loves being a wombat. One day she will tell us when she's ready to leave her compound but so far she is living snugly and happily with her wisdom in wombat paradise.



Looking for a gift for a little person?

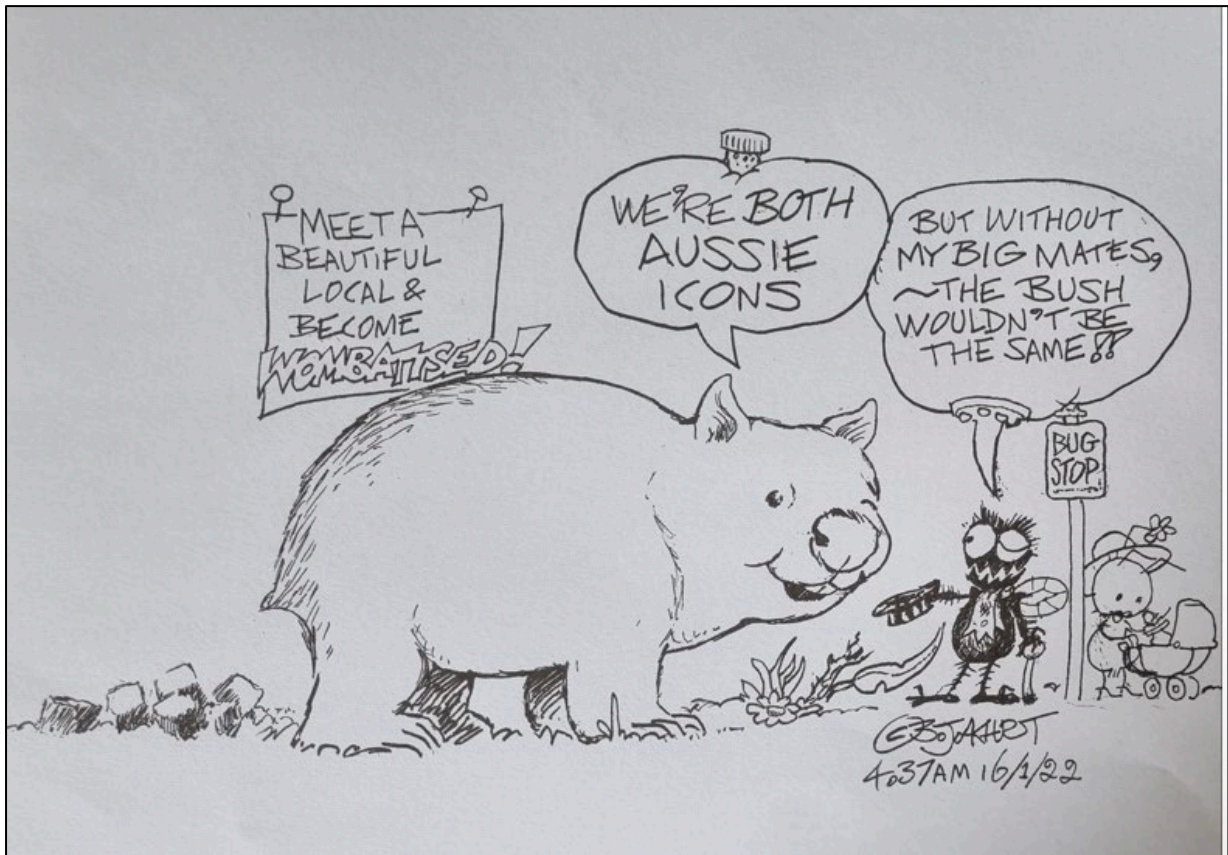
Jane's adorable hand crafted kangaroos and koalas are just \$20

And her unique hand crafted little wombats and cockatoos \$18

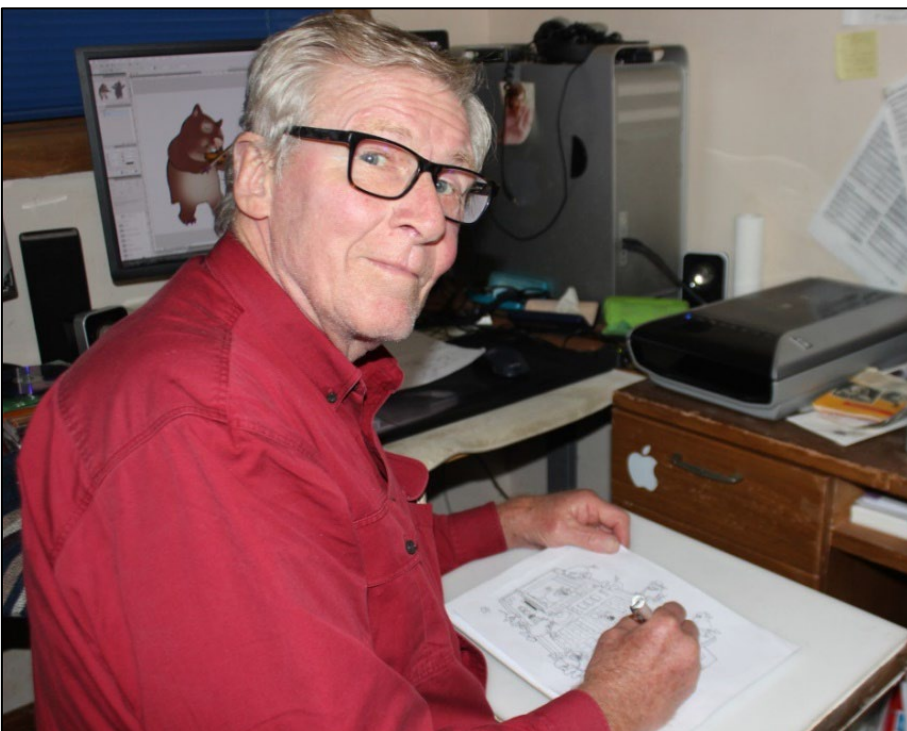
***If you would like photographs of a special event – a wedding, or a party –
or indeed photos of your precious pet,
please go to Tania's facebook page:
Tania Clancy Photography***



The Last Cartoon



Vale Brendan Akhurst - Wombatised Beloved President



After a valiant battle with pancreatic cancer, our beloved president, Brendan Akhurst passed away on 20th January. Many people will remember Brendan as a brilliant and witty cartoonist, in particular perhaps for his quirky renditions of Louis the Fly, but for us at Wombatised he will forever be the gentle, positive, funny and passionate lover of wombats,

always brimming with a sense of humour, unique and often sardonic, who fervently believed with Tania that Wombatised some day would become ‘bigger than Ben Hur, with an ever increasing number of sponsors from all areas of society.’

Tania remembers Brendan for his delightful friendship and chivalrous protection of Wombatised’s integrity, making sure we always kept to the principles in our Vision and Mission Statement, with animal welfare, followed by Education as our primary goals. He brought so many interesting ideas to our committee, most notably his relationship with Silicon Chip with whom he collaborated and invented a gadget which informs us on our mobile phones when a wombats is entering and exiting a burrow.



*Brendan has known and loved wombats since he was a child, when they would dig into the chook yard on his parents’ dairy farm at Fitzroy Falls. He, along with other readers of a similar vintage, fondly remembers Ruth Park’s **The Muddle Headed Wombat** on ABC radio Children’s Hour. (**Muddle headed** was a term of endearment and was never meant as an insult to our most intelligent marsupials.)*

Brendan began his working life as a police diver and has many gory tales to tell of his 10.5 years working from the Water Police Station at Dawes Point. When not on diving jobs he was on guard duty in Darlinghurst District Courts.

While sitting in court, guarding prisoners, he habitually sketched judges, prisoners including the infamous Darcy Dugan, workmates and others. This led him to an association with Joseph Morris Snr, crime reporter for the Daily Mirror, who introduced Brendan to various editors and publishers and so began his career of over forty years, cartooning, illustrating, writing scripts and meeting deadlines. His cartoons have adorned almost every newspaper and magazine including The Australian, the Sunday Telegraph, the Sunday Mirror (while it lasted) the Bulletin and The Women’s Weekly to mention just a few.





This jovial little ski-clad wombat was Brendan's way of drawing people's attention to a leaflet distributed at ski outlets and other traditional stopping off spots, to remind people to be on the lookout for wildlife if driving at dusk or dawn and with instructions how to do a pouch check if a wombat was accidentally hit by a car.

Brendan drew this little fellow for our segment Wombat Letter box to encourage our junior readers to ask questions about wildlife and wombats in particular.



But for us at Wombatised, Brendan's brilliant cartoon exposing so graphically Frensham's plans to decimat the Lower Holt will be a most lasting and poignant memory.

**FRENSHAM'S DA
WILL DESTROY
WILDLIFE**

& ITS REPUTATION

For more information go to: wombatised.org & winzero.com.au/frensham/



Wombatised Inc.

Vision and Mission statement

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 and Mission statement covers

- raising of healthy wombat orphans, guiding them to appropriate release sites to ensure their prosperous future.
- overseeing not only of wombats in care but those which have been released and are now free living.
- cultivating effective means of protecting wombats from mange and other welfare problems, saving them from all too common atrocities such as road accidents, being buried alive at development sites, being shot and poisoned etc.
- working with landholders and agencies with environmental focus to plant and protect trees and grasses, and to revegetate areas including riparian zones and wildlife corridors, protecting native habitat.
- liaising with experts in the fields of animal welfare, veterinary science, the environment, farming, construction and other skill areas to establish a cohesive network encompassing all aspects of wildlife care.
- maintaining treatment in the field of diseases such as mange and other parasitic afflictions introduced by early settlers.
- assisting and providing financial support for veterinarians and other experts in research / practise into areas such as respiratory problems, orthopaedic procedures and digestive ailments, learning from their experience and improving hospital facilities and medical provisions for native animals.
- educating and training foster carers and landowners, as well as alerting the community to the very real need to help our wildlife and to become actively involved in protection of wildlife and habitat.

How can you help?

We are now registered as a 'Deductible Gift Recipient' with the Australian Taxation Office. To make a **tax deductible donation**, please deposit your

donation into the **Wombatised Public Fund**, with your name and 'gift' as the reference.

Our bank account details are:

BDCU/Alliance Bank

BSB 802-101

Account No. 100078422

Account Name: Wombatised

Reference: Please use your full name

Please advise us of your donation by emailing either

wombatisedinc@gmail.com. or
adriennebradneysmith@gmail.com

We will then send your receipt.

Hands-on Assistance

Hands-on skills would be also greatly appreciated such as construction skills (e.g. building pens), technology (e.g. making cards, sharing information on Facebook) , the arts (e.g. photography, film making), tailoring (e.g. sewing animal bags, making burrow flaps), domestic duties (manning stalls), animal husbandry (cleaning enclosures), conservation work, marketing, as well as work on the field.

Because of licensing regulations and duty of care, we need interested persons to have working with children accreditation, character references and to demonstrate a willingness to acquire new skills.

Name:

Phone:

Email Address:

Thank you so much for your interest in Wombatised Inc.
Adrienne Bradney-Smith, Secretary