

Wombatised Inc.

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Wombatised

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**Wombatised Newsletter
Vol.5 20200801**

Dear Everyone,

We're now up to Volume 5 and we have over 160 Wombatised members! What a great achievement! It's testimony to the fact that so many people really do care about our wildlife.

Plans are underway for a BIG EVENT in September but we're holding our breath until we know where we stand with Covid. Wombatised's **Vision and Mission** statement is attached to the end of this newsletter with our aims and objectives. It also mentions ways in which people might like to offer assistance if/when this event is likely to take place.

Miss Wombat 2020

2020 is proving to be a very difficult year, with many people experiencing incredible hardships. However, here is a little story to brighten our lives. Previously there was just one wombat in line for the title, **Miss Wombat 2020** and that was Miss Lily Gundungara, but now there are three: **Miss Yvonne Attunga, Miss Sophie Elstead** and of course, the aforementioned **Miss Lily!**

There are three categories in this year's contest:

1) **Little Miss Innocent:**
Yvonne Attunga

2) **Little Miss Pertness:**
Miss Sophie Elstead

3) **Little Miss Feisty:**
Miss Lily Gundungara



Who will be the overall winner of **Miss Wombat 2020**?

Let's ask our **junior members** to be the judges!!

Emails please!!

***There were SIX in the bed
and the little one said...***

Feisty little Lily had been bothering the more mature members of Oxley's wisdom for some time, getting in their way and giving them the odd nip. Only Lochie has been incredibly patient and kind to her, but now at last she's been accepted more or less into Oxley's wisdom, making it a family of six:

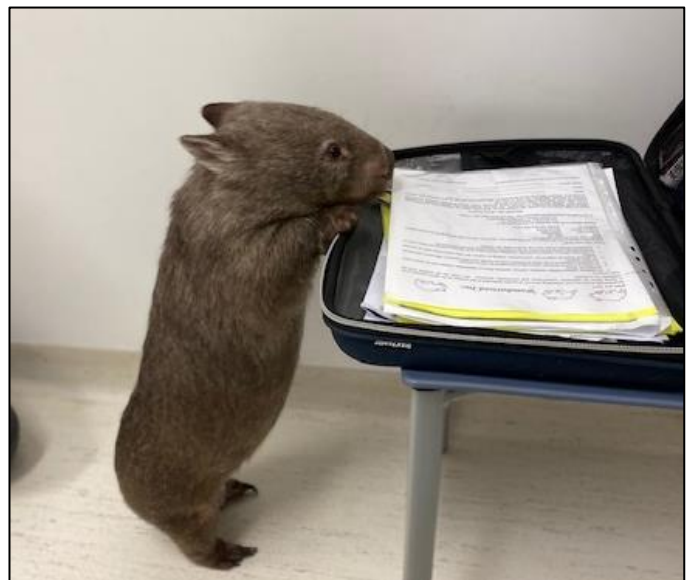
Oxley Forbes, George Cooinda, Robbie Hoddle, Gwen Throsby, Lochie Tugalong and now naughty little Lily Gundungara. If that's not a happy family.....

All wombats are now recovering from the respiratory infections which recently afflicted them. A virus from a wild wombat was the culprit and all wild wombats now have strict instructions to wear masks when they come near the wisdoms.

Dr. Lorenzo Costra (affectionately known as Saint Lorenzo) of Sydney University's Veterinary School at Camden has been closely monitoring the progress of two wombats in particular.

Little Robbie Hoddle (so named because she was found running down Hoddle Street, Robertson looking for her mum) was transported to the clinic and passed her check up with flying colours.

She was a little apprehensive at first but then summoned the courage to explore the waiting room!





Attention Vets, wildlife carers and other interested people!

A comprehensive account of the initial symptoms, medication, treatment and aftercare associated with these respiratory problems will accompany the September newsletter.

George the Cockatoo



What happens when a pet bird outlives his owner? White cockatoos have a lifespan of up to sixty years in the wild and over seventy in captivity.

George the cockatoo had been living comfortably for many years with his elderly owner who suffered from emphysema. Not only had he acquired an impressive vocabulary but George had also learned to cough in sympathy, even politely placing his foot over his mouth when he did.

When his owner died, George needed a new home as he still has a few decades left before he himself falls off his perch. However, he has one severe character flaw: George dislikes women, so we

needed to find a male foster carer, capable of coping with a misogynistic bird with a persistent cough!



Job done! George has found a lovely man with whom he instantly bonded. Jacqui provided him with a larger cage and he now lives on a 300 acre property, visited regularly by the local cockatoo population (left). One bird in particular seems to have caught his fancy (and vice versa!)

Roll out the Roller Doors Enclosures Update!

One of Wombatised's aims is to raise healthy wombat orphans so that they can eventually be released back into a safe area away from roads, shooters, and development sites where they could be buried alive. However, before this can be achieved, animals need to spend many months in soft release enclosures to help them transition from full time care to living in the wild.

In addition to our existing infrastructures, we are presently working on seven more enclosures, not only for wombats but for other native animals. Wombatised's long term plan is to subsidise the construction of these release pens, although we have a long long way to go before this can be achieved. This is where we need your help as so often we have to employ people with expertise in construction.

In a previous newsletter we mentioned the delivery of two truckloads of recycled roller doors – fifty-five in total. It took four burly men working tirelessly, to roll out these doors in preparation for a much needed wombat soft release enclosure. The internal cogs had to be removed as they are not required but it was hard work! Inserted vertically, deep into a trench these doors become an impenetrable fence which not even a determined little wombat can push over or dig under.

The next stage is the actual construction which involves hiring a machine for two days to dig the trenches. This job has had to be postponed due to the recent heavy rain. Work is due to resume soon, just as this newsletter goes to air, or rather, cyber space!

Meanwhile, work continues on another enclosure which is almost ready to house some wombats. The threat of rain and the availability of workers and volunteers always result in time delays.



However, it was all stops go to finish installing the corrugated iron sheets before the trenches, which had been so laboriously dug, became flooded.



Mission accomplished.

Well done Tania and Colin for all that arduous work! All that needs to be done now is to dig the nursery burrows. Once the weather warms a bit, a little wombat wisdom will call this their home!



Talking of rain...

How do wombats fare in heavy rain?

In short: with difficulty. However, wombats are great swimmers as well as very fast runners and always very protective of their young. When their burrows become flooded and they are trapped inside, miraculously they can float, keeping their noses up in a pocket of air and even digging to enlarge this cavity. Their stoicism is incredible.



It's not always a happy outcome, of course, and in severe weather conditions, wombats can drown in their burrows. Farmer and wombat lover Andy McLeod (right) has been laboriously



pumping water out of the many burrows on his property during last week's heavy rain. He deserves our **Wombatised Above-and-Beyond-the-Call-of-Duty** medal for this month.

Grass, undergrowth and bush are filters for containing and dispersing rain, but extensive tree felling, overgrazing and poor land management



generally have resulted in torrential rain being unable to be absorbed into the top soil and ground cover. Silt and storm water runoff flow into creeks, rivers and ultimately the ocean, instead of soaking into the soil.

The Southern Highlands used to be wet woodlands but now our interference has changed the landscape, making life very difficult for wombats.

This delightful photo (left) taken a few days ago of a mother wombat and baby wandering beside a swollen creek near Bega is both heart-warming and worrying. We can only hope they found refuge somewhere as their burrow is most likely flooded. I remember in primary school learning about the devastating effects of soil erosion and yet nothing seems to have changed. Maybe primary school children today will say the same thing about global warming when they are our age!

Wombat Rescue Pamphlet



Along with this newsletter is another copy of our Wombat Roadside Rescue document, so that people going to the snow can print off a copy and put it in their glove box.

Wombats at this time of year are particularly vulnerable to road kill. Brendan has made some pamphlet holders, decorated with his cartoon of a friendly little ski clad wombat, to hold copies of this document and these have been placed at both southbound and northbound Macdonalds at Sutton Forest (the most popular stopping place for Sydney travellers) and at a service station at Mittagong.

How lucky we are to have a cartoonist as our Vice President! (Incidentally, not all places we approached were willing to take these pamphlets so we would like to thank Macdonalds, Sutton Forest for their interest and concern.)

It would be great if anyone who happens to pass by Macdonalds, Sutton Forest were to check if we need to top up the supply of pamphlets. Please let me know if this is the case.

Query Corner



Question: *Do kangaroos make suitable pets?*

Answer: *If there is adequate fencing and if they have a buddy, kangaroos make good pets as they are gentle, very affectionate creatures, but they are very undervalued. Kangaroos have fewer rights than rats as it is illegal to keep them as pets but legal to have a pet rat. We have cleared the forests and farmed the land making life precarious for kangaroos. They can multiply because cleared land and dams suit their needs but sadly they are so often cruelly treated. In the past we revered them. We even took a kangaroo*

to Gallipoli as a mascot but now, more often than not, kangaroos are treated as vermin.

Question: *Do you think kangaroos are a sustainable food source?*

Answer: *Definitely if they are treated humanely. Kangaroos are much less harmful to the environment than sheep and cattle and their meat is lean, low in saturated fat and high in protein, zinc and iron.*

Question: *Is it true that kangaroo mums throw their joeys out of the pouch?*

Answer: *When kangaroos are suddenly under threat, the sphincter muscle around the pouch involuntarily loosens. While trying to save their babies from falling out, kangaroos have mistakenly been accused of throwing out their baby when in fact they've been trying to clutch hold of them. It's a bit like humans having 'butterflies in their tummy' when something triggers the adrenalin glands. Kangaroos are excellent mothers and the mob as a whole is very protective of the young.*

Question: *Are there any farmers and land owners who are favourable to having kangaroos on their properties?*

Answer: *Fortunately yes! These joeys are little road kill orphans who have been rescued and cared for, and subsequently released back into the wild. Under the Land for Wildlife program there are farmers who value having our most famous icon sharing the land with their stock.*



***Meet our Wildlife Consultant and Raison D'être,
Tania Clancy***

Tania has always loved animals, particularly dogs, horses and wildlife, and rumour has it that she was a wombat (or maybe a kangaroo) in a previous life.

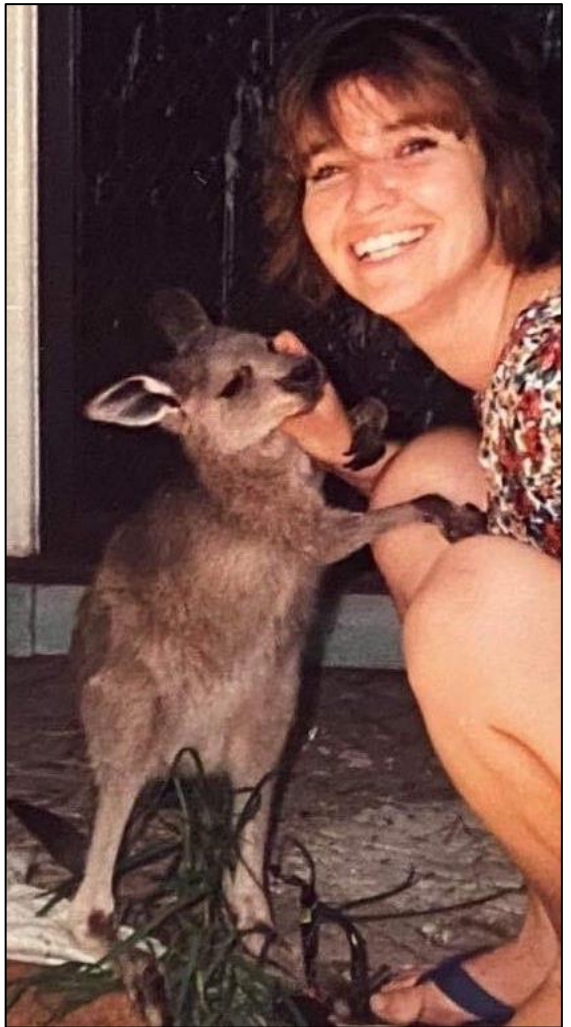
She grew up with a lovely blend of city and country as her father had a farm on the Lachlan River although Tania herself lived in Sydney. Her life on the farm brought her in close contact with wildlife and taught her the importance of conservation and animal husbandry. She became a superb horsewoman and polo cross player as well as an expert on native animal behaviour.

From an early age she showed remarkable artistic talent so it was no surprise she became an art teacher with the Department of Education. Since 1984 she has been teaching art at various high schools. Wherever she was, people would bring her animals in need, from baby alpacas to kangaroos and wombats. She had the reputation of being an 'animal whisperer'.

Harry the kangaroo (top right) was brought to Tania by a total stranger when she was teaching art at Goulburn High School in 1989. Harry's mother had been shot along with her mob and the following week, when farmers were pulling up carcasses, the little joey was discovered and taken to Tania.

Tania nursed him back to health and he was loved by everybody at the school. He even used to attend the school's art exhibitions in the library of Goulburn High.

Tania is a naturalist painter and it's hardly surprising that



her work features native animals.

She also paints huge murals. Do you remember the mural at Vin Santo's Italian restaurant in the main street of Mittagong?

That was Tania's masterpiece – an amazing mural painted with great difficulty onto a brick wall.

Tania has sadly abandoned her art as she now devotes her life to full time wildlife rescue and

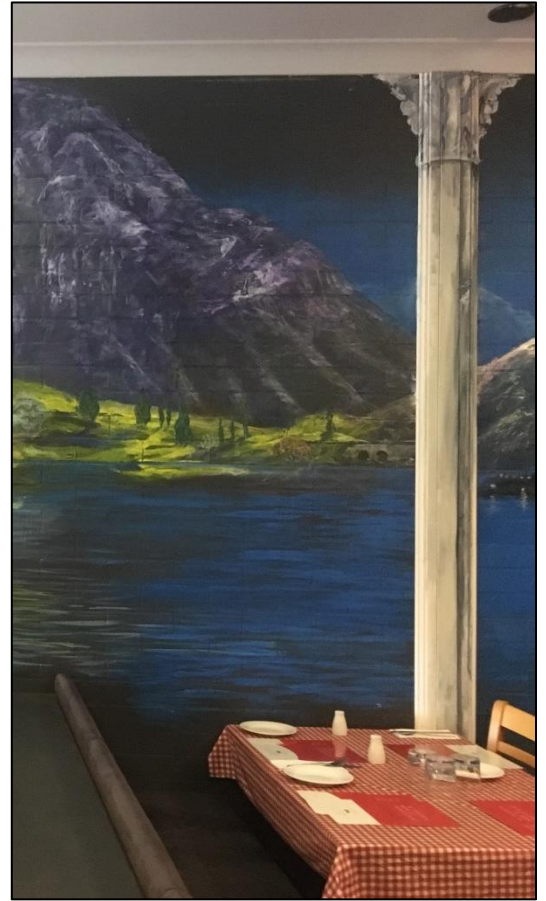
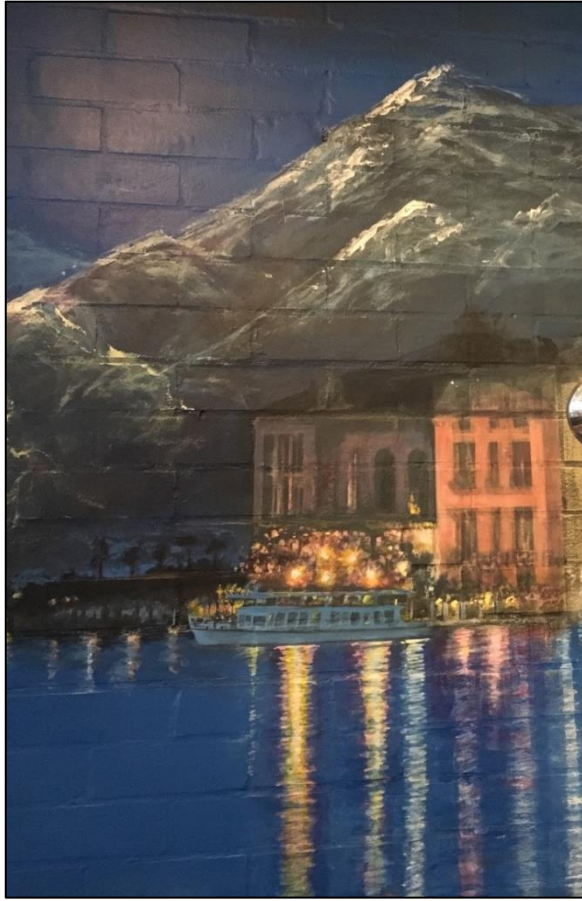
care but in her non-existent spare time she also works as a photographer.

She particularly enjoys taking photos of bridal couples in beautiful, unusual settings as well as conventional poses, and of course, photographing nature and wildlife.

Tania proudly maintains she has only ever worked with the best people in all aspects of her life – people

who have inspired her to become the person she is. She has attended a multitude of wildlife seminars and courses ranging from echidnas to birdlife. Her beloved mentor and continual source of inspiration is Alexandra Seddon who, like Tania, devotes her life to wildlife protection and who understands the intrinsic intelligence of our native animals.

Wombats face a precarious future as mange and road kill decimate their numbers and there is no legislation to prevent them from being buried alive by developers. Tania and her closest associates



believe passionately in giving every animal a chance. Community education and training are keys to providing enough people to care for orphaned or injured animals so that those needing around-the-clock care are not simply euthanised. This is Tania's philosophy.

Tania believes there is a fine line between poor humanising an animal and being a responsible custodian. Orphaned wombats in particular need a surrogate protector to love them, feed them, medicate them if necessary, keep them warm and clean, at the same time allowing them to exhibit their natural behaviour and interact with other wombats. This cannot be done if they are raised in a cage or in isolation from the world. Experience has shown that wombats always prefer their own species to humans, although it is not unusual for a grown wombat to return to the nursery burrow when under stress.

Educating the Australian public of the very real threat to wombat survival, training people to care for our wildlife, and providing suitable release sites for rescued animals form the core of Tania's philosophy. It is Tania's devotion to wildlife and her vision and inspiration which keep us working hard at Wombatised.

This video is amazing!

Tania Clancy: Rhythms of Art for Wildlife Sanctuary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPKdcsNwggQ>

Here's another:

Tania Clancy: Photography

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Photographer/taniaclancyphotography/posts/>



Brendan Akhurst

Hot off the Press!!



Wombat Whiskers

By Adrienne Bradney-Smith

A book for young children and adults of all ages

\$25

This little book is based on a 28 line ditty about wombats, aimed at introducing these delightful animals to children and raising awareness of how precious they are and the precarious situation of our wildlife.

The poem is accompanied by stunning photographs of the baby orphan wombats presently in the care of a wildlife specialist.

All these orphans will proceed from full time care to a soft release sanctuary in their eventual transition back to the wild.

All proceeds from the sale of this book will go to Wombatised Inc.

If you would like to order a copy/copies (!!), please email adriennebradneysmith@gmail.com

Postage: 1 copy \$5.00

2 or 3 copies: \$7.00

Our Wombatised merchandice

Hand crafted unique soft toys

\$15



Wombatised fridge magnets and key rings

\$5



*Thanks to Natalie, one of our Wombatised members,
for modelling our merchandise
and
thanks as ever to our
Wonderful Wombatised supporter,
Jane den Hertog
for her never ending supply of beautiful, hand crafted soft toys!!*



Wombatised badges

\$3

Heart Melting Moments

Here is another Noel Plunkett video:

Wombats matter with Dr. Howard Ralph
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioKGL1hY0Qc>



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 adriennebradneysmith@gmail.com . We will then send your receipt / membership e-certificate.

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), **the arts** (e.g. photography, film making), **tailoring** (e.g. sewing animal bags, making burrow flaps, making items for sale), **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.