



# THE MYALL KOALA & ENVIRONMENT GROUP INC.

## Annual Group Report for 2010-11

### General

**This year** has been very quiet for our Group for a number of reasons:

1. We continue to look, without success, for a President to replace Helen Dauncey. Without her innovative ideas and energy I have struggled to keep up the momentum. I would be happy to take on the role but only if we can find someone to replace me as Secretary - it only needs a little training and some computer skills.
2. Although we did have a Koala Working Group meeting this year it did not result in any action from Great Lakes Council or the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water. We were hoping to see a flow of funds (which WE would add to) that would then be used on habitat restoration.
3. It was decided to change to quarterly meetings to reduce the workload on the small committee. The first quarterly meeting was well attended and everyone enjoyed the supper prepared by Gwenda Collins.
4. Unfortunately, the Bitou Bees have fallen into abeyance. I would like to see them put back on the agenda. It is amazing how much weeding can get done in five or six working bees in a year. Jill Madden has agreed to co-ordinate itou Bees in the coming year

**Financially the Group is very strong** with funds from membership fees, donations, raffles and stalls continuing to flow in while, because of the quiet year, expenditure has been less than last year. I really must thank Anne Haskew here as she has done a fantastic job keeping the books in great shape.

### Koalas

**The state of the current koala population** in town will be discussed in full in the Koala Report. Gail and Ian Morphett are to be thanked for nurturing our koala population by rescuing duties, regular reports and maintaining the sightings database which enables us to continue to monitor our population.

Deb Tabbart, CEO of the Australian Koala Foundation continues to lobby the Federal Government to declare koalas a threatened species. The most recent assessment by the Scientific Committee again decided that this is not warranted. At this very moment Deborah is giving evidence to a Senate Committee hearing on the "Status of the Wild Koala" which was established largely at her instigation.

### Development Issues

**North Hawks Nest.** Unfortunately, Crownland Developments, the proponents of the North Hawks Nest redevelopment, have withdrawn their interest. We had strongly supported their plans for the area because they had proposed ceding all of the land on the western side of Mungo Brush Road to the National Park and only planned to build on about one third of the



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land on the eastern side. With these plans falling through, individual landowners are beginning to submit plans to build their own dwellings. Fencing has commenced on at least one property. We have major concerns about the integrity of the wildlife movement corridor between the National Park and the Hawks Nest township.

**North Shearwater.** We have been pleased to support the proponent's plans for the North Shearwater development because it included excellent provisions for the environment, particularly wildlife movement corridor linkages. The draft LEP was approved by Council in March this year and the application will now proceed to the next stages of detailed design and Development Applications.

**Riverside at Tea Gardens.** A year ago Crighton Properties had submitted a revised application to the State Government under Part 3A. We are not aware of the contents of the revised application. There have been no public pronouncements on the progress of this application since. With the new State Government stating that most Part 3A applications will be handed back to local government for assessment, this may cause further delay. We will have to see what happens.

**Nursing Homes.** Crighton Properties have nearly completed construction of the aged care facility opposite the Grange in partnership with Gosford RSL. We continue to hope this will take the pressure off the Mirreen and Tuloa Streets block of wonderful bushland where the RSL have long wished to build an extension to the existing facility there. There does not seem to have been any action on this front in the past year.

**2 The Boulevard.** A DA to build a large "residence" (60 metres long, three floors high, tennis court and retreat, gatehouse and swimming pool) was approved by Council in 2009. This year, huge quantities of sand were pumped from the river channel to build up the land to the foundation level. Unfortunately, even larger quantities of salt water came with the sand which then killed much of the surrounding bushland. Council has instituted a regeneration plan but so far many of the new plantings seem to have died. The proponents of the DA have requested Council to approve a variation on the approval to INCREASE the height of the building by a further .91 of a metre. We and many Winda Woppa residents have vigorously objected to this request.

### **Fun and fundraising**

**The Easter Stall** made a profit of nearly \$1200 which was a great result (\$580 stall sales, \$600 raffle). Reasons? Maybe 3 good prizes, a terrific lot of donations to the stall and a bumper crowd in town because of the five-day long weekend. The **October raffle** was also successful with nearly \$600 raised at the Riverside Festival where we had a stall and gave away hundreds of trees and shrubs. This year the organisers were much better organised and we had a really good position for our stall. Unfortunately the quality of the trees supplied by Great Lakes Council was below par.

The **Wild Side Festival** was not run by the Chamber of Commerce this year because they didn't have the funds. Instead it was organised by a committee of community groups



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(including us). In fact I instigated this committee because I didn't want to see the WOWS Festival fold after all these years of effort, particularly our Group in putting on the walks and talks. The festival was held on the Saturday of the Federal election and was only mildly successful. Not as many voters stopped to participate as we had hoped.

**The Christmas Party** was, as always, a pleasant night on the waterfront with delicious food organised and cooked by Gail and Ian Morphett. It provides an opportunity for those people in town who don't want to come to meetings to get together for a bit of cheer and chat and as always, it was well attended.

**The Committee.** I would like to thank my other Committee members for the support they have provided this year. Kevin Haskew has been a tower of strength as Vice President as he continues to gain strength after his major operation last year. Pat Pritchard and Roger Humpreys have been great support to us.

To all those who have sold raffle tickets, made cakes, donated bric-a-brac, worked on stalls or just spread the word about the group, many thanks.

Ian Morphett  
Secretary