



*Volunteers fighting for Northern Rivers koalas*

## Patron’s Message

The Northern Rivers is an extraordinarily diverse and beautiful region; a national biodiversity hotspot which has international significance. It is recognised as one of Australia’s major refuge areas that will be pivotal in enabling the survival of our damaged biodiversity into an uncertain future. Yet habitats and landscapes are at constant risk from development, whether urbanisation, infrastructure, agriculture or logging brought about by our growing population.

I’ve lived and worked here for nearly 31 years and throughout that time the pace of change has escalated, particularly along the coast. How do we as a community manage our need for economic development without further besmirching the natural beauty which has drawn so many of us here?

Koalas are a very special feature of life on the Northern Rivers. I couldn’t believe when I arrived in Lismore all those years ago that folk lived literally with koalas in their backyards. Many still do. To be able to appreciate, at such close quarters, free-ranging koalas, indeed all the wild animals which are found here, is a privilege, the price for which is responsibility.

It’s a truism that organisations are only as good as the quality of their people and Friends of the Koala is no exception. Of the wide range of interest groups and stakeholders that express concerns about the threats facing koalas and their survival in our region, Friends of the Koala has, over the past 31 years or so, positioned itself to be in the forefront of the conservation effort - no mean achievement for an entirely voluntary organisation.

The work is relentless (far more than a full-time job for several of the group’s volunteers) as pressures on the region’s koalas exacerbate their health and the community has become more responsive to their plight. This year has seen an enormous increase, approximately a third, in the number of admissions over previous years. Whether it becomes a trend remains to be seen but in any case Friends of the Koala and its veterinary partners are already considering strategies for managing the situation.

It has been my privilege to be patron of Friends of the Koala for eleven years and the contribution this dedicated group makes to koala conservation across the Northern Rivers region continues to astound me. I sincerely thank the fantastic volunteers who, in various ways, work so selflessly to protect and conserve our region’s wild koalas and commend to you the past year’s outstanding endeavour summarised in the following pages.

- **Margot Sweeney**

**Our cover photo:** Joy came into care on 18 October 2016 with chlamydia and was with us for three months being treated. She was cleared and went into soft release at Caniaba on 18 January 2017 and then released to the wild there. She hasn’t been seen since so we hope this cheeky female is enjoying life and making some healthy joeys.

## About Friends of the Koala

Friends of the Koala is the peak koala conservation organisation in the Northern Rivers Region of NSW. It is a voluntary community organisation and registered charity receiving no recurrent government funding. Our services are financed by corporate sponsorship, donations, membership fees, competitive grants, sales of merchandise and plants, as well as general fundraising.

### Our Mission

To make a key contribution to Australia’s biodiversity by ensuring the conservation of the iconic koala and the preservation and enhancement of koala habitat particularly within our Region.

### Our Core Business

- ✓ Koala rescue, rehabilitation and release
- ✓ Habitat protection and enhancement
- ✓ Community education
- ✓ Advocacy
- ✓ Research assistance
- ✓ Active and expanded membership

### Local Government Areas of Operation

Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, Lismore,  
Richmond Valley, Tweed

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## President's Report

2016-17 has been an important year for FOK. We celebrated our 30<sup>th</sup> birthday; our habitat restoration program was boosted by Local, State and Federal government assistance; we developed strategies for delivering regional koala education and campaigns; our website took on a new life; the education and administration building became a reality; we tackled the challenges of organisational change and succession planning; lost the 12-year battle to re-route Section 10 of the Pacific Highway Upgrade; increased engagement in the reform of NSW's wildlife rehabilitation sector; improved our koala rescue and rehabilitation service delivery; koala admissions sky-rocketed and the year finished with a couple of significant donations! You'll read more about some of these and other matters in the following pages. I'll pick up on a couple.

Resilience and longevity are well worth celebrating. FOK has come a long way since its modest beginnings in the mid-1980s. Having developed a diversity of roles focussed on holistic koala conservation we have grown into a highly effective organisation respected for our unstinting efforts to protect and recover the region's koalas. FOKtober kicked off with a koala picnic and open day at the Koala Care Centre, followed by a month of daily celebratory posts to our Facebook page and website. We launched the second of our community advertisements, WildlifeLink pledged replacement of our rescue van and even the Commonwealth came to the party with its announcement of our successful application under its *National Stronger Regions Fund*.

The change to our operational environment being flagged by Government may create new opportunities. FOK's rescue and rehabilitation work is carried out under licence from the National Parks and Wildlife Service which itself is undergoing major re-structure. The draft biodiversity laws soon to be introduced have created a situation where it is in the Service's interest to further support the sector's self-reliance and to enhance its appreciation as a strategic partner among government, scientists and the general community.

Substantial data has been gathered for a discussion paper which will be released for comment later in 2017. FOK and like groups licensed to work with koalas are also the subject of recommendations from the Chief Scientist & Engineer's *Report of the Independent Review into the Decline of Koala Populations in Key Areas of NSW*. NSW's whole-of-government koala strategy is yet to be finalised, however three forums have already been held with rehabbers and partners.

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the tremendous work of FOK's Management Committee. There's been a 60% change in Committee membership over the past two terms, indicating perhaps the increasing breadth of FOK's business and the significant undertaking of Committee service, particularly for the office-bearers whom I sincerely thank for their unsparing support. It's been a privilege to have worked alongside such inspirational colleagues. I am stepping aside, safe in the knowledge that FOK is in capable hands and well-positioned to meet the challenges ahead.

- Lorraine Vass

## 2016/17 Achievements in Brief

### Koala rescue, rehabilitation and release

- ✓ 429 koalas rescued
- ✓ 78 released
- ✓ 15 in care
- ✓ *Burrubi Education & Administration Centre* funded and in progress
- ✓ FOK won the *Golden Leaf Award for Excellence for a Wildlife Group* at the 2nd National Koala Conference
- ✓ *WildLife Link* funded a new VW Transporter AWD Rescue Van
- ✓ Koala Kindy with 54 koala food trees established at Caniaba.

### Habitat protection and enhancement

- ✓ 3947 trees issued
- ✓ 3,188 trees planted
- ✓ 2,561 trees sold
- ✓ \$ 8,007 income from sale of trees
- ✓ New potting shed and expanded nursery completed

### Community education

- ✓ 'Koala Watch: community-led koala recovery in the Northern Rivers' funded under the Environmental Trust's Environmental Education Program
- ✓ Regional Communication Plan launched and three meetings held with NR Councils
- ✓ Koala education workshops for the 'Wilsons River Catchment Schools Education and Restoration Project' run by Rous Water and EnvITE.
- ✓ Training and support for Tregeagle Public School Junior Landcare Group throughout the year.
- ✓ 3 issues of *Treetops* published and first *Treetops e-newsletter* designed
- ✓ 38 Media releases/articles produced
- ✓ 2 video ads launched
- ✓ *Live Ideas* poster competition with SCU visual arts students launched
- ✓ *Finding koalas in the Lismore Area* brochure revised

### Advocacy

- ✓ 11 policy-related submissions and letters lodged
- ✓ 4 responses to Development Applications

### Research assistance

- ✓ 123 ear samples collected and 55 necropsies completed

### Growing an active membership

- ✓ Membership list reviewed
- ✓ Period of membership changed to accommodate the date on which new members join rather than for the financial year
- ✓ 88 new members recruited and 3 rejoined

**OUR 2016/2017 EXTRA SPECIAL HEROES!!**

We're blessed with a wonderful group of amazing volunteers who carry out all the activities 24/7 that make Friends of the Koala a pretty special group. We're also always in debt to our vets at the *Keen Street Vet Clinic* and *Currumbin and Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospitals*. Without them we, and our koalas, wouldn't survive.

This year, however, we're acknowledging some pretty special people who contributed significantly either to our financial bottom line or pro-bono to the many changes we've had to make this year.



Our wonderful former Care Coordinator **Pat Barnidge** left us a bequest of \$100,000. *Burrubi*, our new Education & Administration building, will be dedicated to Pat for both her years of commitment as well as her love for koalas. Her generous bequest meant we could cover much of FOK's contribution to the Federal Government grant for construction of the new building without eating into our operating funds.



A great surprise, assisting us even more with the funding of *Burrubi*, came when **David Knappick**, representing the **Knappick Foundation**, appeared more or less out of the blue. He'd heard about us and wanted to have a look around and see how he might be able to assist. After learning about what we do, seeing the building at lock-up stage, and finding out that we were committed under our funding to having a paid employee, David asked whether \$50,000 might help! It surely did, enabling us to finish the building to a higher standard, purchase new

equipment, and breathe a sigh of relief looking forward to our staff wages commitment!



**Huw Jones** and his team at *Simply Clean* in Lismore came on board as our first formal sponsor on 1 April — what a great April Fool's Day gift!. They donate 5 cents from every bottle of their great **Simplyclean** products they sell, and each month a tidy sum appears in our bank account. It's such a comforting feeling to see that regular entry!



*WildLife Link*, the **Tony & Lisette Lewis Foundation**, which donated our original Rescue Van and trailer 10 years ago and fund the running costs each year, donated a new VW Transporter AWD Rescue Van with images of some of our koalas on it. It's essential to our work, looks great and gets some important messages out in the community!



**Lismore Council** entered into a partnership with us providing \$5,000 to establish several additional Koala Food Tree Plantations on Council land around Lismore. When finally established and harvestable they will make life a bit easier for our leafers given their proximity to the Care Centre.

**Damian Chapelle** and **Luke Fittock** from **Newton Denny Chapelle** prepared our Development

Application for the new building and assisted us with many aspects of its implementation on a pro bono basis. We've had a long-standing relationship with them and much appreciate their support.

**Jane Oliver**, who in her professional life is HR Manager: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (Qld), gave us her valuable time on 3 Sundays to facilitate 3 workshops with our Management Committee. The focus was on the significant changes we've had to make to our organisation in the lead-up to the new building and consequent employment of a part-time Facilities Administrator. Change is never easy for everyone, but Jane made it as smooth — and even enjoyable — as it could be. We learnt a lot, achieved a lot and are very grateful.



**Jeff and Julie Wicks** of the **ACME Foundation** gave us a donation of \$10,000, which has been earmarked for the upgrade of the Koala Care and Research Centre into a Triage, Treatment & Pathology Clinic to be completed by the end of July next year. This will lead to much better outcomes for our koalas, and this generous donation, combined with a successful later submission for funds, means that we can complete this upgrade without dipping into our operational funds. This has made a huge difference to us and we're very grateful.

**Anika & Henk Lehmann** gave us a donation of \$5,000 to help establish our first Koala Kindy at Caniaba, which has 59 koala food trees in it and had its first group of 5 hand-raised orphan joeys placed there in June. Such a huge relief to have a place near Lismore where orphan joeys can learn to climb and cope in a natural environment.

## Koala Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release Statistics 2016-2017

This year has been our busiest on record - 429 admissions compared to approximately 300 annually for the past 5 years. The increase of over 40% has left volunteers, responsible for all aspects of the Care Centre operations, exhausted. Our Care Centre has run at capacity (or just below) for over 18 months and we're not expecting the numbers to reduce until at least next Winter. Our leafers have been amazing, sourcing leaf during flooding as well as in near drought conditions, finding enough good quality leaf to ensure the rehabilitation of our koalas in care, which is paramount to our operation. Our afternoon shift workers have worked tirelessly with some amazing superstars working multiple times each week, 3 - 4 hours each shift, to help fill vacancies and get the hard work done. Our rescuers, called out at all times of the day and night, continue to answer the call again and again. But the numbers are devastating.

While disease (48%) is still far and away the highest cause for mortality, vehicle strikes increased to over 25% this past year resulting in 86 koalas losing their lives on our roads. Dog attacks also increased but thankfully we were able to save 7 of the 33 koalas brought in. These particular incidents are time sensitive as the dog bites become septic very quickly. The increase in numbers seems to be across the board which makes us think that weather may be a factor. Our Winter in 2016 didn't really last long which meant Spring weather came early. What that means for koalas is mating and territory claiming started early too. Koalas on the move means koalas on the ground, and koalas on the ground leads to koalas in trouble.

With the bad came the good! We had 78 releases, including 17 joeys who were hand raised and returned to the wild. These are the cases that keep us motivated, energised and working hard year after year.

LGA	Sightings/ Advice	Admissions	Outcomes	Mortalities	Cause of mortalities
<b>BALLINA</b>	17	25	Released 0 In care 1	24	Disease 15 Car hits 6 Dogs 1 Geriatric 1 Other 1
<b>BYRON</b>	76	69	Released 7 In care 2	60	Disease 25 Car hits 19 Dogs 5 Geriatric 0 Other 11
<b>KYOGLE</b>	13	21	Released 2	19	Disease 12 Car hits 3 Dogs 3 Geriatric 0 Other 1
<b>LISMORE</b>	269	256	Released 60 In care 9	187	Disease 94 Car hits 42 Dogs 13 Geriatric 4 Other 34
<b>RICHMOND VALLEY</b>	29	25	Released 2 In care 2	21	Disease 6 Car hits 8 Dogs 1 Geriatric 0 Other 6
<b>TWEED</b>	63	33	Released 7 In care 1	25	Disease 10 Car hits 8 Dogs 3 Geriatric 0 Other 4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>Released 78 (18%) In care 15</b>	<b>336 (78%)</b>	<b>Disease 159 Car hits 72 Dogs 26 Geriatric 5 Other 57</b>

## Habitat Protection & Enhancement - Funded Projects

We had a successful second year implementing **Lismore City Council's Community Grant** to extend the area and capability of the FOK nursery. A potting shed was constructed capable of comfortably taking 5 - 6 workers in a purpose-built structure in a pleasant environment with excellent views of Southern Cross University's artificial lake and waterbirds. We also extended our Tree Nursery to incorporate the potting shed, and Mark Wilson, FOK's Trees Officer, used the facility to train five Green Army teams for Conservation Volunteers Australia and EnviTE. Team members from the FOK Green Army team propagated in excess of 2000 koala food trees that will be sold to the community or used on FOK funded and plantation sites. Next year will see an upgrade of the germination igloo which will ensure that FOK operates in the future with a high class nursery facility.



Our first year of implementing the **NSW Environmental Trust** grant 'Restoring Koala habitat and expanding corridors between Southern Cross University and the Wilson River' was most successful. Ten bush regeneration contractors were engaged to work with FOK partners; **Lismore City Council**, **Southern Cross University** and **Lismore Workers Golf Club**, to restore the conservation values of threatened species habitat and facilitate the movement of Koalas from urban areas to peri-urban riverbank corridors. 478 volunteer hours went into making this project so successful with feedback from the funding body giving the project an 'Excellent' rating.

The **FOK Green Army** added value to the project by planting 450 koala food trees to link two important remnants. The team also contributed to an increase in the 11.5 hectares that were restored in the first year and undertook mistletoe surveys to collect baseline data to determine whether this parasitic plant has a detrimental effect on Forest Red Gums, a preferred Koala food tree.

School education was an important component of the project with FOK volunteers taking the message to 73 students from four schools.



## Community Education

This has always been a major objective for us, but it was the \$12,000 grant we received from the **NSW Environmental Trust** in 2015/2016 under their *Lead Environmental Community Group* program that enabled us to make this a priority. Although most of the outcomes were achieved in that year, several came to fruition this year. The two ads produced as part of the grant funding were launched in October, generating a great deal of interest, and the *Northern Rivers Regional Koala Communication Plan*, prepared in cooperation with the local councils in our Region, was launched by Cr. David Wright (Ballina Mayor) at the Northern Rivers Organisation of Council's (NOROC) meeting on 3 February. Ann Lewis, NOROC Executive Officer, kindly organised the launch and the media coverage. We continue to meet with the Councils as a group and ensure FOK's communication campaigns are aligned with theirs. This regional approach is already reaping benefits.



Apart from the many local and interstate visitors who came to our education tours throughout the year, we had 167 international visitors from across the globe. Some of these visitors have become members and promote our work and koalas in their own communities, with some unexpected and pleasing results. For example, one American woman was interviewed on the **Ellen DeGeneres Show**. This resulted in a sudden spike in small donations but more importantly, spread the news internationally about koalas.

We moved hosting of our website to **GDStudio**, and during the year they completed a major redesign of the website and made it more user-friendly, adding electronic membership applications/renewals and much improved donation function. Electronic reporting of koala sightings has seen many more sightings, reflected in the statistics on page 5, with sightings being reported from Victoria through to Queensland (we don't record those outside our Region).

We decided to reduce the number of our hard copy *Treetops* to two issues a year in Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter. We did this as, like for many volunteer organisations, a quarterly newsletter is time-consuming and has an almost never-ending cycle which is onerous for the editor. To support the two *Treetops* issues an electronic version was designed and ready to go with the first edition at the end of the year.

A strong focus continues to be our work with schools. On Lismore City Council's *World Environment Day* event we provided information to 67 pupils from four primary schools. Workshops on koalas and habitat were delivered as part of the Wilson's River Catchment

Schools Education Project to Albert Park Public School, Lismore, Kadina and Richmond River High Schools, St Carthage's Primary School, Trinity Catholic College and St John's College Woodlawn.



School groups that visited the Care Centre include Wyrallah Road Public School, who visited over two days with 50 students on each, Evans Head K 12 with 30 students, 15 of whom were Italian guests of the school, The Channon and Tuntable Falls Public Schools.

Two community information workshops were held, the first with Tweed Council, Conservation Volunteers Australia and Friends of Cudgen Nature Reserve at Hastings Point and attended by over 30 locals. The second was held in conjunction with Byron Shire Council and 20 people from the Bangalow community and led to the formation of Bangalow Koalas.

### Research Assistance

The Partner Collaborative Agreement for the **University of Queensland-led Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage** project *Conserving and recovering the koala populations on NSW's Far North Coast* was finally signed off in December and recruitment of the Koala Field Ecology Research Assistant was completed in April. Good progress was made on data collection and analysis arrangements (including FOK records), the community survey component and an interactive map platform. Field work will commence in the Lismore local government area. .

South Australia was the focus of the second ARC Linkage project in which we are an industry partner, *Development of a vaccine in koalas against koala retrovirus (KoRV)*, which is led by the **University of the Sunshine Coast**. The KoRV vaccine was trialled in KoRV-positive and KoRV-negative koalas. Koalas in the Moreton Bay Region of South-east Queensland screened for KoRV were all found to be infected by KoRV-A, but only around 10-20% are infected with KoRV-B. Investigation of its role and whether it impacts koalas with chlamydial disease was commenced.

Contact was maintained with the **University of Sydney's Faculty of Veterinary Science** verifying fur sample details requested by PhD candidate Caroline Marschner and providing specific tissue samples for research projects in which the **Koala Infectious Diseases Research Group** (KIDReG) was involved.

FOK data-sets were provided to the Office of Environment and Heritage (Vehicle Strike 2008-2016) and Biolink (Byron Coast Koala Monitoring 2016; Koala Habitat and Population Assessment South-east Lismore).

### Advocacy

The year has been a rocky one for koala conservation and for the environment in general. At the state level, there has been the unstoppable passage of NSW's weakened biodiversity laws, the green light given to Section 10 of the Pacific Highway, continuing uncertainty around SEPP 44's application and the status of comprehensive koala plans of management. At the local level, it was disheartening to see the majority of Councillors on Lismore Council reject Environmental Protection Zones on agricultural land unless requested by a landowner, as well as the onslaught of legacy and proposed subdivisions.

Approval of the Ballina Koala Plan and the Koala Plan of Management last August effectively brought Friends of the Koala's 12 year campaign to re-route Section 10 of the Pacific Highway Upgrade away from the Blackwall Range to an end. With no recourse in law we chose to cut our losses; for the sake of Ballina's koalas we would work with Roads & Maritime Services as best we could. The Koala Interest Group which met in December, February and April is proving to be a useful forum in which to share information and to air and address concerns. While not disparaging the goodwill of all parties, translating the approvals-based actions into workable on-ground solutions for koala protection is extremely challenging.

In early December the Chief Scientist & Engineer's *Report of the Independent Review into the Decline of Koala Populations in Key Areas of NSW* was released. The NSW Government's decision to invest \$10 million over five years to acquire vital koala habitat and embark on a whole-of-government koala strategy to secure the state's koala populations was a surprise. The report didn't add to our knowledge that koala populations are under increasing pressure and despite a range of regulations, recovery programs, strategies and numerous community initiatives, overall koala numbers in NSW are in decline. However, commissioning the review and publically stating an intention to act on its recommendations was a step in the right direction.

Friends of the Koala's involvement continued in implementing the region's two active Comprehensive Koala Plans of Management (CKPoMs) - the *Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management for South-east Lismore* (2013) and the *Tweed Coast Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management* (2015). Particularly noteworthy was the welcome impetus for Lismore's CKPoM brought about by the special rate variation to implement Lismore's Biodiversity Management Strategy. This enabled commencement of a koala population and distribution study in the south-east in April. Soon after completion of the first year of the five-year works program incorporating the Tweed CKPoM's 45 actions, the Tweed Coast Koala Management Committee's inaugural meeting was held in March.

## Preparing for Change — Our Greatest Challenge in 2016/2017

By June 2016 the Koala Care & Research Centre was literally bursting at the seams. We were finding it increasingly difficult to cope with the number of animals coming into care as well as all the related activities that centred on, and in, the one small building.

We knew we needed new premises and had many decisions to make, including how we could fund a new building, what it might look like, how it would impact on our operations and volunteers, and how we would cope with the change.

Whilst we had been saving for this purpose for many years, we realised our financial position dictated a modest building close to, and sympathetic with, the Care Centre. The agreed colorbond building formed the basis of our successful submission to the Federal Government through its *National Stronger Regions Fund*.

One of the criteria for gaining the grant was providing evidence of continuing employment post construction. This was a huge challenge for us culturally as well as operationally. We realised that introducing a paid position into our entirely voluntary organisation, comprised as it is of people from all walks of life, depth of engagement and capacity for change might need an element of persuasion and certainly sensitivity. Becoming an employer meant complying with employment legislation and regulations, including Workplace Health and Safety. Despite always adopting the Volunteering Code of Practice, employer responsibilities were new to us.

Meeting our obligations entailed a review of our organisational structure, policies, practices, risk management and particularly volunteer positions to ensure that a paid position would be distinct from any of our volunteer positions.

Sure enough, it became apparent that the transition from 'the way things have always been' to one that could cope with the changes required of us would not be easy for all.

We wanted to ensure we didn't lose any volunteers, particularly those we know as our local heroes, who have been there in the middle of the night to rescue or treat an injured koala, and gone those extra yards, always, for our koalas and our volunteers. We know who they are. They were, and are, in our hearts!

We also knew moving from 'knowing' to making it happen and be effective needed someone with exceptional skills outside our organisation. Enter **Jane Oliver**, who had worked in the past with, and was introduced to us by, Katrina Jeffery. After an initial meeting with some of the Executive we accepted her generous offer to facilitate three workshops in the lead-up to construction of the new building and employment of a paid employee.

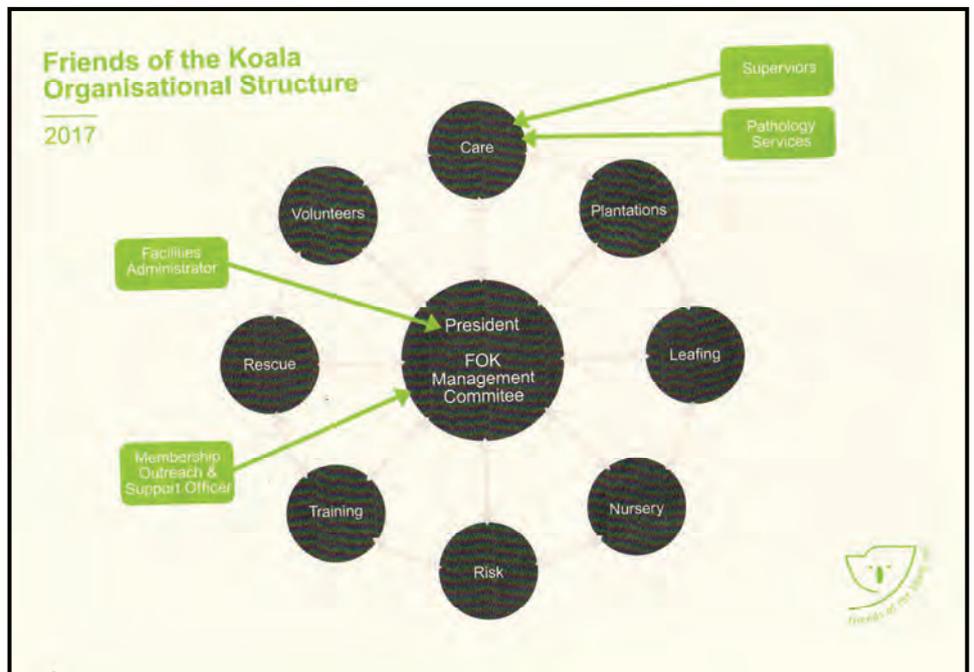
The first, just after our last AGM, explored opportunities and risks for our people, for FOK, with the new building, and discussed our Operational Plan theme of 'Our People', particularly for any new committee members. This included a focus on the transition the new building presented and why a greater public focus could strongly impact on our activities. It also included discussion about appropriate duties for a paid employee.



The subsequent two workshops focused on our organisational structure, roles of our volunteer coordinators and moving forward with a paid Facilities Administrator and a flatter, organisational structure.

We agreed unanimously that maintenance of the existing Care Centre, the new building and all our physical assets required systems and time that could no longer be combined effectively with our licensed activities given the increasing demands on our volunteers so decided to find a 'Facilities Chris' to take on the paid position.

This was hard work, requiring huge inputs after the workshops from a small group of the Executive. By the end of the year we had agreed on a way forward, carried out many of the required reviews, and prepared for recruiting our Facilities Administrator with the assistance of Wendy Poole from Southern Cross University's HR department. We still have a long way to go, but so far we're on track and looking forward to the full transition next year.



### Treasurer’s Report

What an incredible financial year we had. Our income compared to the previous financial year tripled due to a huge increase in donations and sponsorships, a significant number of grants won, and the bequest from Pat Barnidge.

We registered for GST which meant some significant changes in accounting practices and are grateful to our Accountants *OnTrack Chartered Accountants* for preparing our BAS each quarter.

Our financial position has never been stronger as the Balance Sheet shows clearly with our Equity nearly doubling in a single year.

Even though *Burribi* was not complete at the end of the financial year the significant impact of the new building on our Assets and Equity is reflected in the Balance Sheet. Due to Pat’s bequest and another significant donation of \$50,000 we were able to complete *Burribi* without touching our hard-earned savings.

Our ability to win grants and report our success on these projects puts us in a strong position for winning future grants. This is going to be a critical strategy for surviving in the political climate we are now in.

In order to continue surviving we need more volunteers experienced in grant applications and project management.

When we turn to the Profit and Loss it is not surprising that our expenses have also risen with the huge volume of koalas we have seen through the centre this year. Our expenses have increased by 40% across the board, however this is covered more than comfortably by our increased income.

I would like to congratulate the Management Committee for bringing FOK through a Financial Year that involved plenty of challenges but brought many rewards and accomplishments that will see us move forward in a position of strength.

### Public Fund

*The Friends of the Koala Care Fund* is an endorsed deductible gift recipient. It’s been entered on the *Register of Environmental Organisations* since 1994 and is entitled to receive tax deductible donations. The Fund’s Management Committee members are Patron, Margot Sweeny, Lorraine Vass (Chair), Dr Ros Irwin, Katrina Jeffery and Mark Wilson. At 30 June 2017 the Fund balance stood at \$159,380. Through the year 118 donations totalling \$71,480 were received. Veterinary expenses of \$5,321 were drawn from the fund during the year.

### Profit and Loss

<b>Income</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>%</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>change</b>
Bequests	100,633		
Donations	86,503	27,172	218
Fundraising	1,490	2,352	-37
Grants	125,327	54,750	129
Membership fees	3,850	2,869	34
Merchandise sales	326	1,256	-74
Nursery sales	41,317	23,681	74
Other income	7,477	13,259	-47
Sponsorship	53,897	4,989	980
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>420,820</b>	<b>130,328</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Audit fees	782	957	-18
Care Centre	27,597	14,983	77
Computer	1,114	767	45
Conf/Seminars	3,483	1,310	166
Depreciation	7,260	5,088	43
Grants expenditure	36,131	15,724	130
Koala Care	13,742	10,645	29
Merchandise	334	56	496
Motor Vehicle	6,451	5,489	-17
Newsletter	517	1,627	-68
Nursery	25,496	22,105	15
Other	23,803	26,413	-10
<b>Total</b>	<b>147,047</b>	<b>105,164</b>	<b>40</b>

### Members of Management Committee

<b>President</b>	Lorraine Vass
<b>Vice President</b>	Ros Irwin
<b>Secretary</b>	Aliison Kelly
<b>Treasurer</b>	Katrina Jeffery
<b>Care Coordinator</b>	Susannah Keogh
<b>Care Centre Coordinator</b>	Lola Whitney
<b>Training Coordinator</b>	Yasmin Cabôt
<b>Leafing Coordinator</b>	Marley Christian
<b>Risk Management Coordinator</b>	Mark Ambrose
<b>General member</b>	Fiona Dawson
<b>General member</b>	Christie Budd
<b>General member</b>	Mel Yakas
<b>General member</b>	Nick Bourke

*FRIENDS OF THE KOALA ACKNOWLEDGES THE GENEROSITY OF ALL THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED SO SIGNIFICANTLY TO OUR WORK FOR KOALAS THIS YEAR. WE CAN NEVER THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR MAKING THE OUTCOMES FOR OUR KOALAS SO MUCH BETTER.*



**Our Local Government Partners**



**THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS MADE SIZEABLE FINANCIAL DONATIONS TO FRIENDS OF THE KOALA THIS YEAR**

<i>Kendra Porter</i>	<i>Fox Photo Den</i>	<i>Pat and John Edwards</i>	<i>Myrelle &amp; Peter Hurst</i>
<i>Nick Fuad</i>	<i>Norm Clarke</i>	<i>Wladimir Budnik</i>	<i>Mary Wallace</i>
<i>Caroline Newstead</i>	<i>Brett Abakhai</i>	<i>Noel Wilson</i>	<i>Lyndall Brown</i>
<i>Sarah Brasch</i>	<i>S Easton</i>	<i>Tanya Fountain</i>	<i>Clara Lawson</i>
<i>Nimbin Garden Club</i>	<i>Andrea Richardson</i>	<i>Crystal Creek Miniatures</i>	<i>Ken Wakefield</i>
<i>Katrina Jeffery</i>	<i>Joyce Cootes</i>	<i>Stephen Gray</i>	<i>Angela Christodoulou</i>
<i>Chris &amp; Shirley Warn</i>	<i>Nicole Beaumont</i>	<i>Rhonda James</i>	<i>Rare Bags</i>
<i>Dianne Mackey</i>	<i>Barbara Campbell</i>	<i>Robyn Marshall-Jung</i>	<i>Tregeagle Public School</i>
<i>Jan Meeve</i>	<i>John Lindsay</i>	<i>Catherine Conliffe</i>	
<i>Robyn Wilkins</i>	<i>Carolyn Tebbutt</i>	<i>Damaris Boisne</i>	

**Many more individuals gave us smaller but very important donations, and all of these help meet the costs of caring for our koalas. We are very grateful.**

## Acknowledgements

**Friends of the Koala acknowledges with deep gratitude and thanks the following volunteers who give their time to rescue, care for and look after our koalas. They are truly our champions, because without them Friends of the Koala could not survive and the future for Northern Rivers koalas would be so much bleaker.**

Our **Care Centre Supervisors and all our care workers** do such a great job of caring for the animals we admit to the Care Centre on a daily basis, giving them fresh leaf and maintaining their runs. This gives the koalas the best chance of recovering and being released back where they belong. It's no coincidence that the entry to our runs is signposted as **Pathway to Freedom** and these supervisors and their assistants help make it happen.

<b>Yasmin Cabot</b>	<b>Susannah Keogh</b>
<b>Marley Christian</b>	<b>Bev Smith</b>
<b>Craig Handy</b>	<b>Jane Tsicalis</b>
<b>Katrina Jeffery</b>	<b>Lola Whitney</b>

Our **senior and regular leafers** who went out this year, often alone, and all the others who went out with them irregularly over the past year gathered the best leaf for the koalas in care. Without this essential commitment every day the health of our koalas would be compromised.

<b>Marley Christian</b>	<b>Dot Moller</b>
<b>Michelle Haworth</b>	<b>Paul O'Donnell</b>
<b>Ros Irwin</b>	<b>Bill Sheaffe</b>
<b>Graham Jordan</b>	<b>John Stock</b>
<b>Frank Keitel</b>	

However, some of our senior leafers are now finding it difficult physically to meet the demand for leaf by the increasing number of koalas in care. They're hoping that there might be some fit 'older' members of the community out there who are prepared to volunteer their time for this most important activity for koalas. If you'd like to become a leafer, email Fiona Dawson at [coooeey@myplace.net.au](mailto:coooeey@myplace.net.au)

Our **wonderful home carers** who look after our orphan joeys, sometimes for many months. It's akin to looking after a newborn child and just as tiring (but also rewarding). Special thanks to:

<b>Marley Christian</b>	<b>Jenny Graham</b>
<b>Susannah Keogh</b>	<b>Anika Lehmann</b>
<b>Sam Longman</b>	

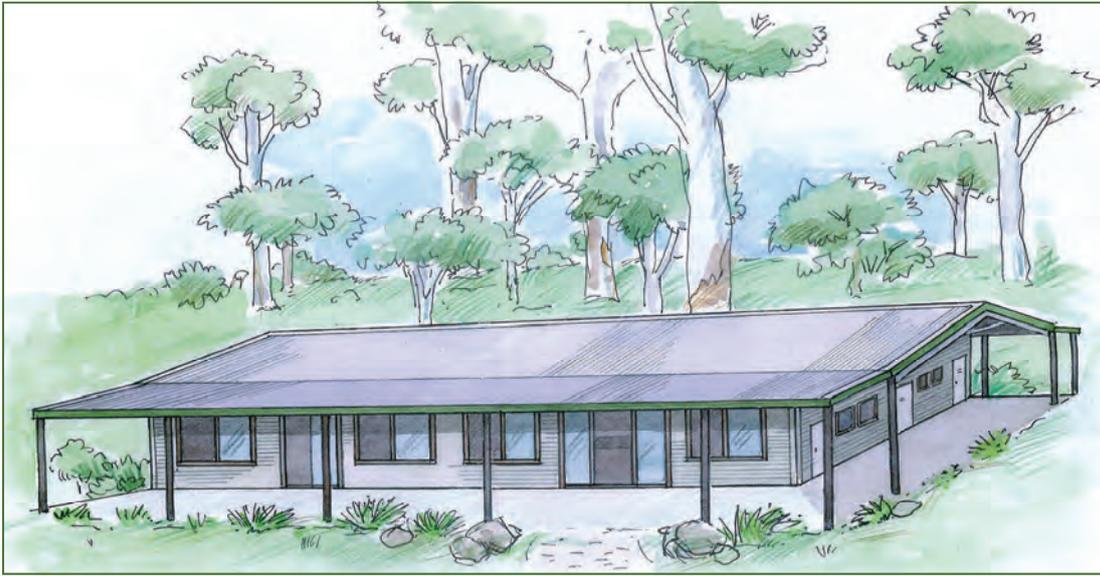
**These wonderful rescuers who go out 24/7 in all weather to rescue koalas in trouble, were called on during the year.**

Alstonville	<b>Jane Tsicalas</b>
Bagotville	<b>Maria Matthes</b>
Caniaba	<b>Ros Irwin &amp; Bill Sheaffe</b>
Crabbes Creek	<b>Sue Johnson</b>
Dorrroughby	<b>Cheryl Cochran</b>
Dunoon	<b>Helen Hargreaves</b>
Eureka	<b>Susannah Keogh</b>
Federal	<b>Kirsten Chambers</b>
Goonellabah	<b>Luke Kane</b>
Goonellabah	<b>Lyn Olive</b>
Goonellabah	<b>Lyn Baker</b>
Goonellabah	<b>Malcolm Garraway</b>
Kyogle	<b>Jo Hoskins</b>
Lismore	<b>Rick Stewart</b>
Lismore	<b>Lola Whitney</b>
Lismore	<b>Paul O'Donnell</b>
Modanville	<b>Jane &amp; Gerard Konz</b>
Myocum	<b>Wendy Reynolds</b>
Numulgi	<b>Fiona Dawson &amp; Steve Wood</b>
Numulgi	<b>Marley Christian</b>
Rock Valley	<b>Don Metcalfe &amp; Renata Phelps</b>
Rosebank	<b>Tracy Sanna</b>
Tullera	<b>Aliison Kelly</b>
Tweed Heads	<b>Rhonda Miller</b>
Tyalgum	<b>Jenny &amp; Terry Graham</b>
Wyrallah	<b>Marg Russell</b>

**If you'd like to become a rescuer, contact Susannah Keogh at [sjki@iinet.net.au](mailto:sjki@iinet.net.au) .**

**Also many thanks to our Membership & Outreach Support Officer Sharon Pratten who updated our membership list and introduced the new system of paying membership annually but from the date of joining, not 1 July which has seen more members renewing their membership.**

**And last, but certainly not least, our members. Without your interest and support Friends of the Koala would not exist .**



*Jeni Binns's concept drawing for our Burrubi Education & Administration Centre*



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**If undeliverable return to:**

Friends of the Koala  
PO Box 5034  
EAST LISMORE NSW 2480

**Koala Care & Research Centre**, 23 Rifle Range Rd., East Lismore NSW 2480  
**24 Hr Rescue Hotline:** (02) 6622 1233  
**Koala Care Centre Phone:** (02) 6621 4664

**Licensed by:**

Office of Environment and Heritage (NSW) to rescue, rehabilitate and release koalas **Licence No.** MWL000100225

**ABN** 69322819171 **Fundraising Authority CFN** 17840

