



Dingo Sanctuary update

The Stead Foundation has put in a huge amount of time and effort in the past 2½ years to bring the Joint Operation between the Stead Foundation and the Australian Native Dog Conservation Society (ANDCS) to a successful outcome. However, it is with great disappointment that we have to advise our members that, due to an ongoing dispute between the ANDCS and the construction contractor, work has stopped and the dingo area is still not completed.

A preliminary inspection by the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) in January highlighted the necessity for the dingo area to be completed as soon as possible, and the Stead Foundation is doing everything in its power to help resolve the situation. However, because the entire project is to be funded by the ANDCS, with no cost to the Stead Foundation (as promised to our members), our involvement in the dispute is somewhat limited.

While the Stead Foundation has been assured by the ANDCS, before construction commenced and again in February 2009, that they have sufficient funds to properly complete the project, the Stead Foundation is not privy to the details of the commercial arrangements of either the construction contract or the dispute.

The Stead Foundation attempted to put in place a mediation and conciliation process in an attempt to resolve the dispute, but this was abandoned by the ANDCS in December 2008. We understand they are currently pursuing legal action. Because of this legal action and the commercial agreement between the Stead Foundation and the ANDCS (i.e. that the ANDCS is fully responsible for the actual construction), the Stead Foundation is unable to directly intervene in the dispute at this time. We are, however, continuing to attempt to assist in some resolution.

During the DPI inspection of the dingo area, it was encouraging when Dr Stephen Jackson commented that, once the site at Wirrimbirra is completed, it can be the best of kind in NSW, if not Australia. The Stead Foundation looks forward to that completion.

Wirrimbirra Volunteers

The New Year has seen another influx of volunteers to Wirrimbirra. We have several young people who are doing Animal Studies courses at TAFE, others are volunteering as part of their Centrelink agreement, and a media campaign, although on a smaller scale than last year's, has brought in a few new people wanting to give something back to their community.

With an average of four fauna volunteers per day, the care of our captive native animals is excellent, and having several additional volunteers in the nursery is a great bonus. The interaction between older and younger volunteers is wonderful, and the Sanctuary is looking better than ever.

All we need now is one or two people who are prepared to fill in as Duty Manager, particularly on Sundays, but also to relieve occasionally when someone's away. We could also do with a few more helpers for catered functions, as we are getting more buses and other groups booking in for morning teas or lunches, and helpers on these occasions are a bit light on. More volunteers are also needed for Wirrimbirra's night-time events, of which there are usually four in the year.

In addition, we take a stall to off-site events as often as we can, and we always need one or two extra pairs of hands on those occasions. These stalls bring in good income, as well as giving Wirrimbirra excellent exposure, so we try to be involved in off-site activities as much as possible.

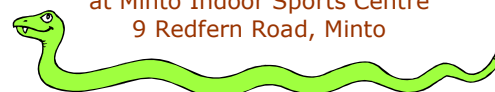
Our regular volunteers come from as far away as Bundanoon to the Campbelltown area, while event day volunteers travel from even further afield. Any members who could volunteer on a regular basis would be made most welcome! Give us a call, or just turn up. Remember, Wirrimbirra is closed on Mondays.

REPTILE EXPO

Sunday 29th March

10am – 4pm

at Minto Indoor Sports Centre
9 Redfern Road, Minto



ENTRY: Adults: \$10
Kids under 12: \$5
Family: \$25

Heaps of exhibits, activities and stalls.

LIVE SHOW at 12pm

with Anthony Stimson
of Australian Wildlife Displays.

*** Wirrimbirra will also be there ***

Enquiries: 0413 335 700

Country Music

Wirrimbirra's recent Country Music Night was a rather wet, but fun evening. Not a big crowd, but an enthusiastic one as usual, and we raised almost \$450, in spite of the small turn-out. Many thanks to the Wollondilly Country Music Club, who are always great entertainers, and to the volunteers who came to help.

WIRIMBIRRA SANCTUARY – A National Trust (NSW) property

3105 Remembrance Drive, Bargo NSW 2574
Phone: (02) 4684 1112 Fax: (02) 4684 3120

Postal address: PO Box 8, Tahmoor NSW 2573

Email: enquiries@wirrimbirra.com.au Web: www.wirrimbirra.com.au

Stead Foundation Membership Renewals Due

A reminder that Stead Foundation Membership Renewals were due on 1st January. A form is included with this newsletter for those who have not yet renewed their membership. In order to maintain your membership, your completed renewal form and payment must be received by 31st May 2009.

LIFE MEMBERS are also requested to return the form to confirm their contact details, if they have changed in the past twelve months.

NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS must be received before 28th March to be eligible to vote at the AGM. If you have any queries about your membership status, please don't hesitate to contact us.

NB – Please address all mail to the Stead Foundation or Wirrimbirra to:- **PO Box 8, Tahmoor NSW 2573.**

National Trust News

The Stead Foundation congratulates Ian Carroll OAM, on his appointment as President of the National Trust (NSW). John Neish, Executive Director of the National Trust, has recently completed a tour of all NSW National Trust properties, including Wirrimbirra. The purpose of those visits was to discover what help was needed and to learn from the volunteers who make up the backbone of the organisation.

The After-Hours Committee of the National Trust is planning a coach trip from Sydney to visit Wirrimbirra and also Harper's Mansion, a National Trust property at Berrima, on Sunday 24th May and we look forward to their visit.

The Stead Foundation once again took a Wirrimbirra stall to the annual *Berrima Village Fayre* at Harper's Mansion on 22nd March, and had an excellent day.

Board News

The Stead Foundation welcomes new Board Director Anthony Bastow who has recently filled a casual vacancy on the Board. Tony is a manager with the Department of Housing and comes with a wealth of experience both in the volunteer and commercial world. We look forward to working with Tony, and to his input into the Stead Foundation and Wirrimbirra.

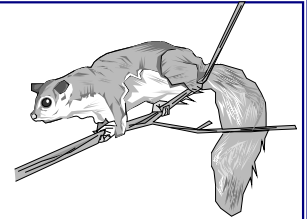
Many thanks to Vince Benedetti who has stepped down from the Board, but continues his wonderful work as a volunteer. Vince has been a tireless worker for Wirrimbirra for many years, and the Board thanks him for the enormous contribution he has made to the Stead Foundation.

News from the Wildlife Walk

We are sad to report the death of one of our beautiful wombats, Woorak. She had been ill and under vet care for some time, and passed away in February. Woorak was among the animals that came from Wonderland in 2004 and was a favourite with Wirrimbirra's volunteers. She was one of the few animals at Wirrimbirra that enjoyed being handled, and was a great ambassador for Wirrimbirra during her earlier years here, with appearances at local school fetes, Steam Festivals, Australia Day celebrations, etc. We are hoping to find another female wombat soon to keep Warren company.

WILDNIGHT WALKABOUT

at Wirrimbirra
Saturday 18th April, 7pm



Experience the magic of Wirrimbirra at night. Start with a delicious light meal in the café, then join a spotlight tour of the Sanctuary. Bring your torches and prowl the beautiful bushland of Wirrimbirra before returning to the café for coffee and dessert.

COST: \$15 pp, \$5 for kids under 13
BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL – Phone 4684 1112

Reptiles & Puppets

Wirrimbirra's Reptile Day on Sunday 22nd February was a great success, with around 700 visitors. The "Crocodile Encounters" shows were extremely popular, as was Garth's reptile display. WIRES, Sydney Wildlife and the RFS all set up displays, and the Wallaby Playgroup Mums organised plaster painting for the littlies – their plaster turtles, crocs, etc, were brilliant. Stead Foundation member Christine Anderson's dingo "Bindi" was a very popular addition to the day. Visitors come into Wirrimbirra asking to see dingoes almost daily, so we are grateful to Christine for bringing Bindi along.

Special guest, Syd Smith, launched Wirrimbirra's Puppet Theatre, and we are very grateful for his attendance. Syd has had over 40 years in Education, having taught in primary and secondary schools in NSW and London and, in more recent years, has worked as a curriculum consultant and educational resource developer for the NSW Department of Education and Training. In 2000 he led the team to develop the new **Environmental Education Policy for Schools** which ultimately led to the **Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative**. Syd now works as a part-time private consultant in Environmental Education and Education for Sustainability.

Thanks to Vicki Oliveri who wrote our first puppet play "Tails & Scales", and helped Stead Director Janine Kitson perform it, and also to volunteer Andrew Armstrong who was a great puppeteer. A huge THANK YOU to all the volunteers who came to help on the day.



Special guest, Syd Smith, cuts the ribbon to officially launch Wirrimbirra's Puppet Theatre at Reptile Day