

Primary entry #21: Salt Ash PS



Salt Ash Script



FAMILY TIES: School captain Prue Upton and her mother Karen Upton. — Picture by Hayden Dixon

Three generations of students

By **KIEREN COOPER, JOEY SIMPSON** and **BRAIDON EWING**

THREE generations of one Salt Ash Public School family will attend the school's 125th anniversary celebrations in October this year.

A number of functions involving present and past students and staff, are being planned.

School captain Prue Upton, her mother Karen and grandmother Joy Anderson have all been educated at Salt Ash.

"A few weeks ago my nan showed me a few photos of the school," Prue said.

"She was school captain as well and so was my Auntie Narelle." Prue said she was proud of the school and her family's history of leaders.

Since Prue's grandmother came to the school, Salt Ash has expanded from one classroom of 20 students to a modern facility that includes six buildings and about 100 students.

The school's longest-serving staff member Mrs Jan Hinchey said she felt special and lucky about her 14-year association with the school.

The school also has a great connection with the local rural fire brigade, which visits the schools for demonstrations and to give a hand.

One lucky koala saved

By **MADI BRADLEY, KIANA DIXON, NADIA AURISCH** and **GEORGIA HUFNAGL**

VOLUNTEER koala rescuers John and Helen Mallam have helped the students and staff of Salt Ash Public School save an ill koala found in the staff car park.

The koala, later named Heidi by the retired couple, was found on the first day of term two by Year 3 student Tara Broadfoot.

Tara found Heidi in a tree suffering from the disease chlamydia, also known as "wet bottom", which is caused by stress and loss of habitat.

"I was in the playground and saw the koala running up a tree," Tara said.

"I went and told the principal (Miss Kerrie Jamieson) and she said it looked like it was sick."

Miss Jamieson saw that the koala had a wet bottom and was probably ill.

The school phoned the Native Animal Trust Fund and the Mallams came and captured Heidi using a special pole and rope.

Heidi was taken to the Mallam's home and treated for the disease before being released back into the school grounds.

Mr and Mrs Mallam have been saving koalas for three years.

"We like to help the environ-



TENDER LOVING CARE: Heidi recovers from her illness at the Mallams.

— Picture by Braidon Ewing

ment," the couple said.

"We think the environment in this area must be saved.

"Koalas are endangered and cutting down trees will cause this disease."

They also said that cutting down trees means koalas have to move around more when they become more vulnerable to

being hit by cars or attacked by dogs.

The Mallams said that they almost lost Heidi one day when she became very ill.

In the three years the couple have been saving koalas, they said it was the first time they had saved one from a public school.

"We think they are brave taking

care of koalas because they can really hurt," students said.

Mrs Mallam was once bitten on the finger by a koala at Medowie.

She said it was extremely painful but the only other injuries she has suffered were a few scratches.

But Mrs Mallam said that had not dampened their enthusiasm for helping koalas.



TRADITION: Sierra and Leah Nowlan.

Sisters waterskiing their way to the top

By **RUBY HUFNAGL** and **AMBER LYONS**

SALT Ash Public School's waterskiing sisters Leah, Sierra and Karina Nowlan are continuing a family tradition by achieving great results in competitions in Australia and around the world.

Year 2 student Leah recently competed for NSW in the Australian titles in Melbourne.

Leah, 7, competed in the under-10s and was placed seventh in the

trick and slalom events.

Sierra, 6, is now learning how to waterski on one ski and do tricks so she can achieve a rating to be allowed to compete at the next national titles.

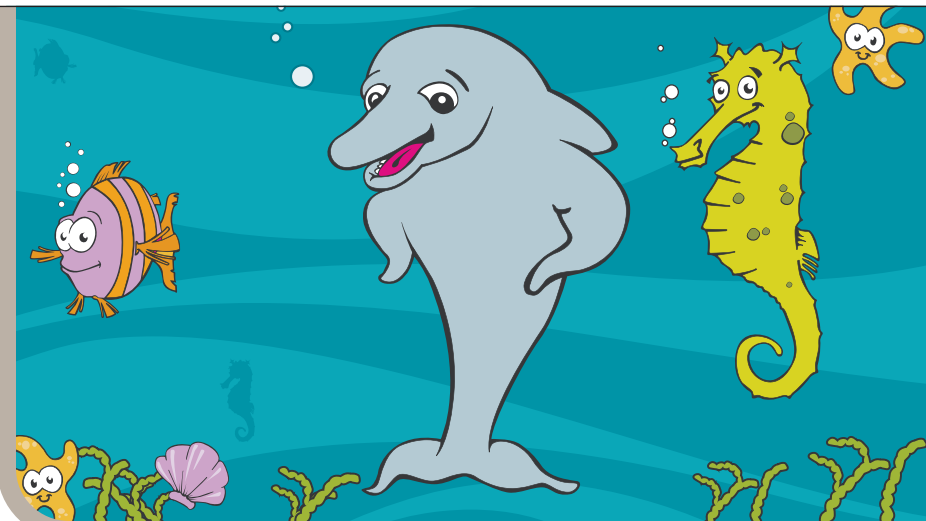
Their sister, Karina, 20, is in the United States competing.

Karina, who has had one bad fall in which she suffered broken ribs and a cut to her head, is a professional waterskiier who won her first Australian open women's title at 13.

She holds the junior world jump record and the world under-21 slalom record and is the number one-ranked female waterskiier in Australia.

The girls' mother Cathy Nowlan said that Leah and Sierra had become involved because of the family.

"Their plan for the future is to improve and keep having fun," Mrs Nowlan said. "They get up very early in the morning in the cold to go to the river to practise."



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Taking care to keep koalas alive

Editorial

By KIEREN COOPER

PEOPLE would not like it if a giant koala came and destroyed mankind's homes but in the past 200 years Australians have destroyed or degraded more than 75 per cent of the country's native vegetation.

The earth's trees are oxygen providers and if we don't stop clearing the trees the koalas will have no home or food and we will run out of clean air, which will contribute to us all getting sick and dying.

Koalas die because we have cleared their habitat for our homes and roads. We have dogs that are not fenced in properly or restrained on leads. And on their way from tree to tree koalas now have to cross roads and unfortunately get hit by cars, trucks and buses. These man-made factors are worsening the effect of natural causes that affect the lifecycle of koalas.

In NSW, koalas have disappeared from 50 to 75 per cent of their range and are now mostly found on the north coast, while they are uncommon, rare or extinct in other parts of the state.

A still low 25 per cent of koalas live in habitat reserves, zoos and native reserves. That is not good enough and we still need to try to save their homes.

In June, 1999, after a series of koala deaths in Port Stephens, the Hunter Koala Preservation Society was called in to increase the protection of koalas in this area. It was feared that if the population decline continued at the existing rate there would be no koalas left in Port Stephens.

A good example of the decline in koala numbers in Port Stephens is that one Salt Ash family, who moved in eight years ago, used to see and hear koalas almost every day but now are lucky to see or hear one at all.

Dogs have attacked koalas that were moving from tree to tree and there has been too much clearing of land by people who don't care about the koalas.

Land management techniques need to change swiftly to protect the remaining bush and its natural species so our future generation can enjoy the bush and the koalas.

Take the challenge today. Next time you are visiting a native area or come in contact with one of these declining animal species, think conservation and take a productive step for the future.



Illustration by Tyler Matthew



WATER WORLD: Salt Ash Public School's Teegan Kafer and Prue Upton with Andrew Tindale. — Picture by Angie Simpson

Tourist frenzy to feed sharks

By PRUE UPTON and TEEGAN KAFER

THE thrill of feeding sharks and stingrays can be experienced by visitors to the Australian Shark and Ray Centre at Marsh Road, Bobs Farm.

People can see, touch, feel and swim with fish, sharks, stingrays, seahorses, crabs and octopuses.

The centre took three years to plan and build and opened earlier this year.

"I love the job I have and it is very educational for children when they come to visit," owner Mr Andrew Tindale said.

Visitors are supplied with wetsuits, goggles, shoes and gloves to

wear when they swim with the creatures.

Children from two can get up close and personal by standing knee-deep in water to feed sharks.

"They will help you with the animals and anything you want to know," two Salt Ash students said.

"The animals are very friendly, great to watch and swim with.

"They eat squid, prawns and fish. They are great to be with in the water when you hand-feed them."

For more information, visit www.ozsharkandray.com.au, email info@ozsharkandray.com.au or phone 4982 2476.

Teacher's many great memories

By EMMA BROADFOOT and CHLOE WEDLOCK

SALT Ash Public School's longest-serving teacher Mrs Jan Hinchey has seen many changes at the school since she arrived in 1994.

Mrs Hinchey, who has been teaching for 33 years, said that one of the biggest changes at the school had been the replacement of demountables with new classrooms and a new library.

Some of her favourite memories of her time at the school have been going to Star Struck for the first time and the amount of native wildlife that is found in and around the school's playground.

The Year 3/4 teacher said she had already seen some former students of the school come back with their own children.

Originally from Canberra, Mrs Hinchey has also taught at a small school in the snowfields, on the South Coast and at several other schools in NSW.

At Salt Ash, she has taught every year except for kindergarten.

"I am as happy at the school now as when I first arrived," Mrs Hinchey said.



STILL HAPPY: Mrs Jan Hinchey.

Paul's puts in claim for world's best yoghurt

By HAYDEN DIXON, JACOB REID, DANIEL ENNIS and JACK DAGGER

YOGHURT from Paul's Corner store that tastes like creamy ice cream is causing a taste sensation among Salt Ash residents.

"It just is (the best yoghurt in the world)," said Janelle Johnston who makes the 97 per cent fat-free blend. "You have to try it to believe it."

"We puree all our own fresh fruit. It's a little more time-consuming but the

consumer can tell the difference."

The store sells 50 kilograms of yoghurt during winter and 100 in summer.

Paul's Corner, at the five-way intersection of Nelson Bay and Richardson roads and Hideaway Drive at Salt Ash, has a convenience store, petrol station, bakery, butcher, deli, liquor store and fruit shop. It is owned by Peter Boshev, whose father Paul bought and began redeveloping the site in the 1970s.



TASTE SENSATION: Daniel Ennis, Jacob Reid and Hayden Dixon with Steven Boshev, nephew of Paul's Corner owner Peter Boshev. — Picture by Jack Dagger

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