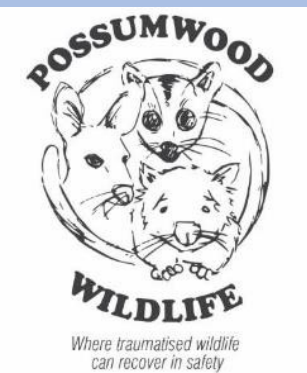


# Burns- A Carer's Perspective: Rescue, Treatment and Rehabilitation

- ❖ The Devastation
- ❖ The Rescue
- ❖ The Burns
- ❖ Stress & Housing
- ❖ Treatment
- ❖ Recovery & Release
- ❖ Lessons for the Future



**Carwoola Fire 2017:  
Rosemary rescuing  
'Flame'**





# The Devastation





# The Rescue

Because of the crash of the American firefighting plane and the death of the three airman (Rick, Paul & Ian) we were not able to go onto the site for rescues for five days. There was sparse food and very little water for the surviving animals. Thank you to Marcus





# The Burns: Steff & Louisa





# Steff & Louisa



Steff 31/1/2020 CK 6825, Cort 112  
15/4/2020 CK 4867, Cort 36







Shannon  
26/1/2020 CK 2568, CORT 362  
15/3/2020 CK 9965, CORT 98



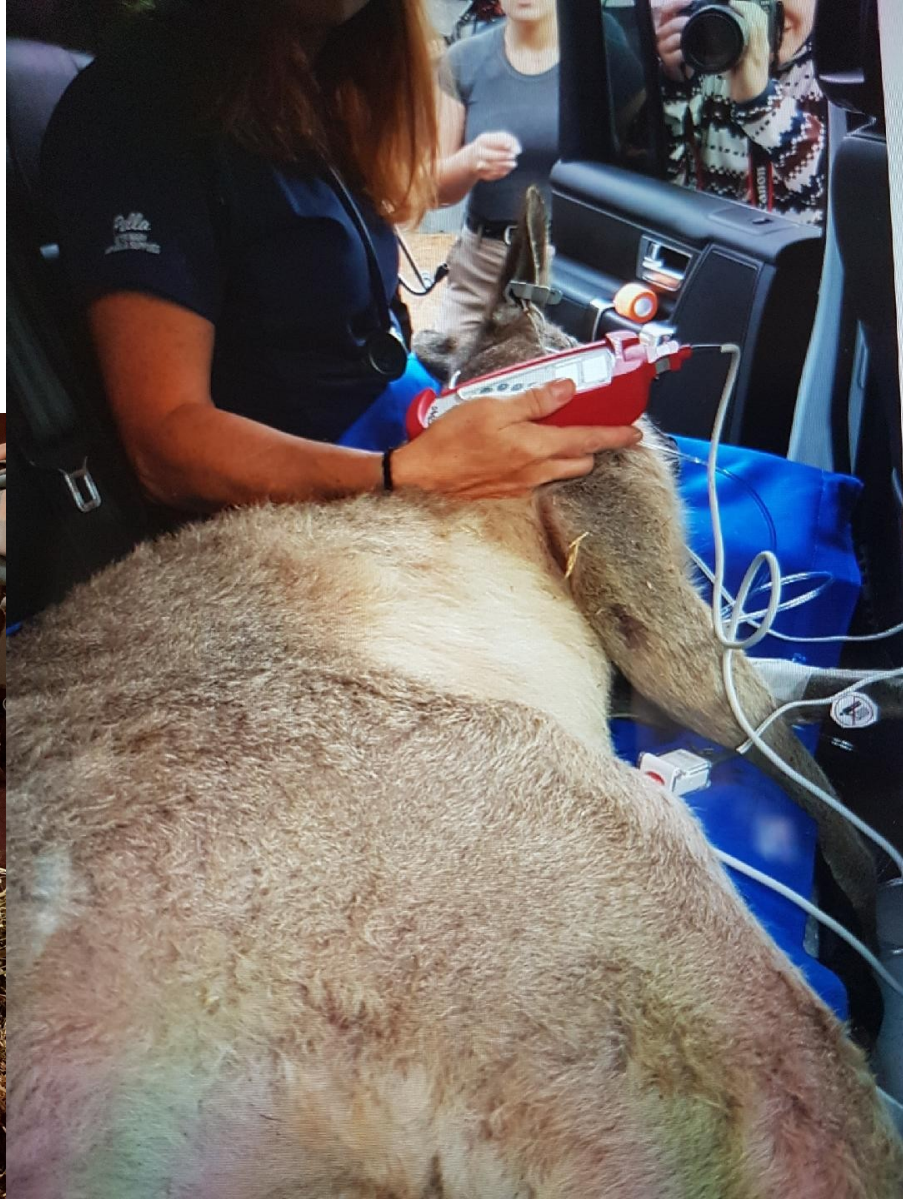


# Kenny





# Kenny





# Swallow & Nellie





ss &  
sing

Macropods housed indoors, allowed to mingle and not in isolation. Wallabies were provided with a cave-like large wooden box on its side.





# Treatment: Possumwood Approach

## KISS Principle

**Keep  
It  
Simple  
Stupid**

- **Frequency of dressing changes**

- First 1-2 weeks every three days to once weekly depending on condition of burn. If burn is stable, then once weekly is adequate. Dressings changed immediately if they got wet.

- **Sedation for dressing changes**

- Injectable **not** inhalational requiring pre sedation by darting. We use Zoletil (1-2mg/kg) & Xylazine (2-3mg/kg) IM by rapid hand injection when the animal is otherwise engaged.

- **Initial treatment**

- On arrival from the fireground any foot leather hanging off was trimmed and the feet were cleaned with normal saline and gauze. Silvazine cream applied liberally, then impregnated gauze (eg jelonet), NAD, synthetic soffban and vetwrap.
- Given subcutaneous fluids (NS) @ 3%. Betamox & baytril given for two weeks.
- Blood tests were carried out to measure renal function, CK, cortisol. If there was any infection as swab was taken and sent for culture to identify the pathogen and direct the antibiotic treatment.

- **Ongoing treatment**

- Weekly dressing changes with IM sedation by hand injection using the above protocol
- No toenail infections occurred



# Treatment: Possumwood Approach Cont.

- **Analgesia**

- We observed the animals at the fireground and the animals were hobbling and obviously in pain. After the hind feet were dressed, which included the softban padding, the macropods were able to punt around the Possumwood building comfortably or just lay around eating hay or sleeping. For most of the burns victims analgesia was not required.



# Treatment: Veterinary Protocol

- **Frequency of dressing changes**
  - Twice weekly, more frequently if infection.
- **Sedation for dressing changes**
  - Inhalational without intubation. One animal died because none of the five vets present could intubate this animal. Some of the macropods could have had lung injury due to the fires.
  - The macropods at another triage centre were darted or injected using a pole syringe twice weekly for dressing changes – significantly more stressful than rapid hand injection.
- **Treatment**
  - At every dressing change the feet were washed in a bag of normal saline. We feel this practice likely resulted in the high incidence of nail infections occurring with this protocol. If an animal lost its nail, the distal toe bone was amputated unnecessarily.



# Treatment: Veterinary Protocol

## Cont

- **Analgesia**
  - Gabapentin was given to the burnt macropods daily



# Lessons for the future

- **More darters**

- Government has made it almost impossible for rehabilitators to get a darting licence. You need to show that a darting licence is necessary to earn a private income. Darters are essential to the rescue of burnt macropods.

- **More trained rehabilitators**

- An accredited course could be designed for experienced wildlife rehabilitators so they can treat the less severe front paw and hindfoot burns (the most common burns scenario). Macropods could be triaged by experienced wildlife veterinarians.

- **More facilities for housing burn macropods**

- Wildlife groups could compile a list of local facilities (eg barns) that could be used to house burnt macropods.

- **A simple burns protocol**

- This should be developed in consultation with experienced wildlife rehabilitators.