



Early days at Taronga Zoo. Photo courtesy of NSW State Library Archives

Taronga Zoo's first 100 years

By Cameron Year 4

Built in 1916, Taronga Zoo has undergone major changes, raising millions for conservation and entertaining visitors from the world over.

What changes have occurred and why?

They have made so many plans for the next 10 years.

Female Zookeepers

Before, when the zoo was first opened female zookeepers were not allowed into the zoo because of the people saying that females are too scared of all the animals and they cannot do a good job but that is now proven to be wrong and there are now lots of female zookeepers and they all do a good job and enjoy it.

A couple of Haberfield Public school students went to Taronga zoo to interview a few of the zoo keepers to find out what it is like working as a zookeeper in Taronga zoo and what are all the problems with it now.

Step away from the wire and concrete cages

The zookeepers are not letting certain people in certain places of the zoo because of the animal. Then what is the point of all that effort getting into to the zoo when you are not allowed to see some animals? But they aren't just doing it for a weird reason. Some people get badly hurt because of all of the wire and concrete cages because of lack of caution. But still I don't think it is a good idea to let only a few people into certain areas. So Zoo Keepers don't have the right to let the people only in a few areas. Only the people know themselves more than the zoo keepers do.

For Regent Honeyeaters, for the next 10 years

Once seen in flocks of thousands, the striking yellow and black Regent Honeyeater is now elusive in the wild. Extinct in South Australia, with only small populations left in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, these beautiful birds have been rapidly disappearing from their native habitat in the forests of the Great Dividing Range at an alarming rate. This is due to the dramatic loss of the Box-Ironbark forest which make up their homes and food source.

Taronga has committed to expanding their successful breed and release program in Sydney to their operations at Taronga's Western Plains Zoo in Dubbo. Over the years Taronga Zoo Sydney has bred almost 200 Regent Honeyeaters and released them into the wild. Additionally, Taronga is working

to rebuild honeyeater habitat in the Capertee Valley, planting trees every year and monitoring wild honeyeater populations.

The next 10 years

The Zookeepers are very proud of what they have already done and they are still pondering about the next 10 years to make the zoo a better place and raise more money for conservation projects.

Since the creation of their foundation in 2000, their supporters have helped Taronga Conservation Society Australia build world class exhibits and facilities and supported vital scientific research, education and breeding programs.

Taronga Zoo keepers are excited to be celebrating the zoo's 100th birthday this year and are keen to keep animal conservation at the forefront of everyone's minds.

"We all can't wait for the next 100 years and we are planning the next 100 years already," a Taronga Zookeeper said.