

Colourful koalas represent region

THIRTY two sponsors are now supporting the Hello Koalas Public Sculpture Trail which will see 50 one metre artistically decorated koala statues placed across the Hastings, Camden Haven and hinterland.

The latest community champions to sign on for the outstanding program, expected to bring tourists to the region from September until April 2015, are McDonald's Port Macquarie; The Little

Brewing Company, Southern Cross Austereo, and Ascot Park. This brings the total to 33, with more to come.

The Hello Koalas Public Sculpture Project was conceived by Arts and Health Australia and auspiced by Port Macquarie-Hastings Council.

Other community champions include Bago Vineyards, Billabong, Carbon Reduction Institute, Cassegrain Winery, Charles Sturt

University, Emerald Downs Residential Estate and Golf Course, Focus magazine, Forestry Corporation of NSW, Observatory Hotel, Koala Hospital, Port Macquarie Panthers, Primary Health Care, Ricardoes & Strawberries, Sails Resort Port Macquarie, Sea Acres Rainforest Centre, The Corner Restaurant at Macquarie Waters Boutique Hotel and Apartments, Rydges Port

Macquarie and World ParTea.

About 150 artistic submission have been received nationally and internationally many being aimed at specific community champions.

Little Nipper, by Natalie Woodham of Port Macquarie, represents Tacking Point Surf Life Saving Club.

"Little Nipper wears his club colours - a red and white skull cap, a red long sleeve rashie and red swimmers,"

Woodham said.

He also wears a high visibility pink rash vest which is now compulsory to wear in all surf clubs.

The white zinc on his nose protects him from our harsh sun.

"I think Nippers is a great community group. Our little Nippers will grow up to be surf life savers one day and could actually save someone's life."

Woodham grew up in Port Macquarie and her

great loves are the beaches and koalas.

Woodham has 20 years experience a graphic designer.

Ironman Koala, by Suzanne Fischer, represents those athletes who dedicate themselves to training for the annual Ironman triathlon hosted by Port Macquarie.

"I founded Balmoral Triathlon Club in 1989, when I lived in Sydney, and have wonderful memories of my triathlon days," Fischer said.

"I moved to Port Macquarie three years ago and look forward to Ironman every year when I cheer on my old friends from Balmoral and my new friends from Port Macquarie."

Fischer grew up in an "arty-crafty household" but hadn't practised her craft as an adult.

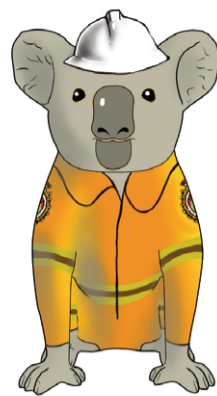
Retiring to Port Macquarie three years ago, she took up sculpting and has since won the Kempsey Art Prize.

Rural Fire Service Koala, by David Pride, is a tribute to our deserving Rural Fire Service.

Pride works in many mediums include wood and metal and has created special effects for many blockbuster films.

Any business or community group wanting to become a community champion and sponsor a koala for the trail can contact Linda Hall at linda@hellokoalas.com or on 0428 975 650.

For information visit www.hellokoalas.com



■ Rural Fire Service Koala.



■ Ironman Koala.



■ Little Nipper.

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