



“At one stage I had a combined practice for all species. People would arrive with two children, one dog, a blue tongued lizard and grandma, all for treatment.”

tures were often being overlooked by a profession dedicated to pets and domestic animals.”

The renovated wildlife care facility in Braidwood has up-to-date medical equipment and supplies. It came to fruition without any government funding. SCWC relies on donations from friends and supporters and fundraising events.

In May this year Dr Ralph was called to an animal sanctuary in Nepal for emergency surgery on sheep, goats and other rescued creatures. Earlier in the year, he attended bushfires in Victoria and NSW, and flood and cyclone affected areas in QLD to rescue and treat injured wildlife and undertake training programmes for wildlife carers and National Parks personnel.

On behalf of the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), he has travelled to South Africa where he helped assess, treat and rehabilitate the 22,000 South African Penguins that suffered in a major oil spill near Cape Town. Howard will travel anywhere, if possible, to care for creatures affected by environmental disasters or situations of neglect and cruelty. He has also travelled to Indonesia to establish a wildlife hospital, teach wildlife care, anaesthesia and welfare. In Borneo he provided emergency relief anaesthesia and taught anaesthesia. In Australia he often works in emergency situations and regularly conducts training programmes for wildlife carers and others, in all states. He lectures in Animal Care at TAFE in NSW, gives presentations to Veterinary Science students about wildlife veterinary



and treatment, education and training for communities and carers, in Australia and other countries, whenever the need arises.

Glenda, his wife, is a registered nurse and physiotherapist working at the Braidwood hospital. She also qualified as a veterinary nurse to assist Howard. She says that no wild creature in need that passes through our doors is ever rejected. ‘Howard never gives up even on the most apparently hopeless of cases. I work with him most nights and every weekend. Some

wildlife carers come to us from hundreds of miles away. We treat more than 2000 native animals every year, many of whom have been hit by vehicles on our busy highway.’

Glenda recalls, ‘Howard would travel to Victoria and NSW in duck hunting season, wading through the water and needs to retrieve the injured birds and attend to their pain relief and other treatment. It was during this period that he started thinking seriously about establishing a wildlife care sanctuary. He felt that indigenous crea-



**BRAIDWOOD PHARMACY**

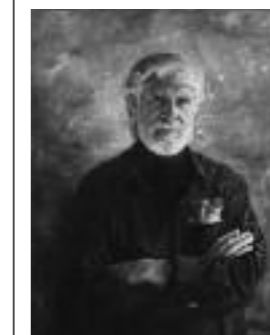
**Julie Ballard & Bente Hart**

Mon – Fri 9am - 5.30pm  
Saturday 9am - 12.30pm

ABOUT THE COVER ...

**Face of Extraordinary: Volunteers**

Stephanie Brown is a portrait artist, teacher and writer with a passion for culture and a remarkable story. She chose Howard Ralph as one of the twenty-two extraordinary volunteers in her local community to showcase in this project. Howard splits his time between Sydney and Braidwood. He fitted the profile of a quiet achiever working tirelessly in the background to share a unique love and dedication for the wildlife cause and a better world. The exhibition celebrates and brings awareness to those whom we rarely get to hear about, yet as a community we all benefit enormously from their generosity. Howard’s portrait was hung in Parliament House at the end of last year. Accompanying his portrait, are Howard’s words: “Life would be a lot easier if I had never known about it.



However, once you reach that degree of enlightenment about what is actually happening, I suppose it becomes the original agony and the ecstasy. The ecstasy is being able to help. The agony is to witness the suffering and be aware of it.” [stephaniebrown.com.au](http://stephaniebrown.com.au)

medicine and community group presentations about wildlife.

On announcing the winner of the prestigious IFAW Action Award – Most Outstanding Contribution from a Veterinarian, IFAW said Howard’s passion for animal welfare had involved the development and application of many surgical and anaesthetic techniques that benefit animals. He has contributed to a number of publications related to wildlife welfare, rehabilitation, conservation and fine arts.

“Initially my practice and hospital work were in the same location. One day when working as a doctor in the local emergency department I was treating a gentleman whom I had met previously. He looked quizzical and finally asked “Do you have a twin brother who is a veterinarian?”.

“Certainly, I replied.”

“Wildlife patients can be challenging as they are often assessing the surroundings and personnel with regard to opportunities to escape. Constant vigilance is necessary to preclude loss of a patient, loss of a piece of oneself and loss of dignity. Reptiles in particular seem to be able to withhold a bowel motion until their next visit to the veterinarian at which time one learns skillful avoidance. Some human patients are also not without surprises and may provide bites, scratches, and vomitus for the unwary doctor.”

For more information about Howard or how to make a donation visit: [www.southerncrosswildlifecare.org.au](http://www.southerncrosswildlifecare.org.au) or checkout the Facebook page for lots more great photos.