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# THE VIEW FROM HERE

with journalist **GAIL BRUCE**

THIRTEEN years ago I raised a koala orphan after her mother was struck by a car on Mt Gravatt-Capalaba Road at Wishart.

Around her first birthday, Nicky was released along Bulimba Creek not far from the site where she had been picked up. It is Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service policy to release captured koalas back into their home range (or their mother's).

At the time, I had my concerns. Even though I had worked quite a few years on the Wildlife Ambulance and understood how territorial these animals are, I wondered just how many Wishart residents would even consider that a koala might be sharing their yards at night. And then there was the Gateway Motorway just a stone's throw away.

I thought about Nicky a lot: Whatever happened to her? Was there anyone looking out for her?

You can imagine my surprise when I received a phone call earlier this week – ironically Save the Koala week – to say that Nicky had been brought into Moggill Koala Hospital.

After 13 years, she was still alive, found just a block away from where she was released.

"She's had an amazing lifespan," they said, before giving her that fatal injection that would blank out her existence in a few painless seconds. Euthanasia was the kindest option; her teeth were worn down to the gums, and she could no longer eat.

Records show that Nicky was the oldest koala ever to be brought in to the hospital and might have raised six offspring in her lifetime.

Who said koalas couldn't survive in the suburbs?