



LARGER THAN LIFE

BEST SCULPTURE/PUBLIC ART PROJECT

Shortly after Steve Irwin's untimely death in September 2006, the Maroochy Shire Council and Mayor Joe Natoli approached the Irwin family with the idea of honouring the TV personality and wildlife conservationist with a statue. After receiving their approval, acclaimed Australian sculptor Silvio Apponyi was commissioned to complete the sculpture.

The result is an impressive statue of the late Steve Irwin with his children, daughter Bindi and son Robert, holding a small crocodile. It was carved from a 3 x 1.7 x 1.7 metre block of Bianca Mist marble in six weeks in the council depot in Maroochydore.

Silvio explained, "I was a great admirer of Steve Irwin and I was honoured to be given the task of creating the statue from a large single block of marble."

The statue sits on the Mooloolaba foreshore on Australia's Sunshine Coast, facing the ocean. Steve Irwin lived for most of his life in Queensland, and co-owned and operated Australia Zoo in Beerwah. He often promoted the

state and was described after his death – off the Queensland coast – as one of its greatest cultural ambassadors by State Premier Peter Beattie.

The statue cost A\$89,000 and was funded by Mayor Joe Natoli's own capital works allocation. Natoli wanted to honour Irwin not just for his conservation work but also because he once worked for Maroochy Shire Council as an apprentice diesel fitter.

The sculpture was unveiled on 4 December 2007, with Terri Irwin and her children in attendance. Terri said, "It's beautiful; it looks amazing; it feels amazing and I think it's just so special. [Like] a time capsule, a moment in time when we were all a family and it covers everything of importance to Steve, children, wildlife. It's just magnificent and I'm overwhelmed."

Specifications

Project:

Statue of Steve Irwin and children

Sculptor:

Silvio Apponyi

Commissioner:

Maroochy Shire Council, Qld

Stone:

Bianca Mist marble,
3 x 1.7 x 1.7 m block

Supplier:

Cairns Marble

Location:

Mooloolaba, Qld