

VISIT BY THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES

(Statement by the Acting Prime Minister,  
The Rt. Hon. J.D. Anthony, C.H., M.P.)

I announced on 7 December that at their request, The Prince and Princess of Wales, accompanied by Prince William, would be provided with a home base in New South Wales during their visit to Australia in March and April 1983.

The base will be at Woomargama, a property north of Albury, which is owned by Mr and Mrs Gordon Darling, of Melbourne.

Mr and Mrs Darling have kindly agreed to make their house available to the Royal party for the duration of the visit, from 21 March to 17 April.

As I stated previously, the purpose of the base is to provide the Royal couple with an opportunity for rest, without official engagements and in complete privacy, between their visits to each State and Territory. Prince William will remain at Woomargama for the duration of the visit to Australia.

Canberra  
19 December 1982

\*(note to media: background paper attached)

## Background Note

### MEDIA VISITS TO WOOMARGAMA

Mr and Mrs Gordon Darling have agreed to allow Media representatives to visit their property, WOOMARGAMA, on Wednesday 22 December 1982.

As announced by the Acting Prime Minister today, WOOMARGAMA, north of Albury, is to be the home base for The Prince and Princess of Wales during their visit to Australia in March and April 1983.

Mr and Mrs Darling will be at the homestead on 22 December to meet Media representatives. Photography will be permitted only of the grounds and the outside of the homestead.

Please note that this will be the only opportunity for Media representatives to inspect the property and Mr and Mrs Darling will not be available for interviews prior to 22 December.

Media representatives who want to visit the property must notify CHRIS FREEMAN, Assistant Media Liaison Officer for the visit of The Prince and Princess of Wales, on 02-569 3365 at the weekend, 02-239 3439 or 02-239 3434 on Monday 20 December or 060-21 5366 on Tuesday 21 December.

Mr and Mrs Darling have agreed to have two Media inspections on 22 December, one at 9.30 a.m. and another at 2.00 p.m.

### Transport Arrangements

Media representatives can either drive direct to the property which is off the Hume Highway approximately 55 kilometres north of Albury and 14 kilometres south of Holbrook or fly to Albury.

Bus transport from Albury to WOOMARGAMA will be provided on 22 December for Media representatives who will be flying to Albury. Please advise Chris Freeman of requirements.

### Property

WOOMARGAMA is a property of some 1,800 hectares, situated in undulating country 55 kilometres north of Albury and 14 kilometres south of Holbrook. It is 5 kilometres east of the village of WOOMARGAMA on the Gingellic Road.

Mr and Mrs Gordon Darling acquired the property from the Fairbairn estate in 1965.

WOOMARGAMA runs Poll Hereford cattle and also Merino Crossbred Sheep. It has a Suffolk Stud and some crops.

The homestead, overlooking a small artificial lake was built nearly 70 years ago and was extensively renovated by Mrs Darling in 1967 to meet the requirements of a comfortable family home.

Its main living areas comprise a large hall with two sitting rooms, a dining room and kitchen.

The house has a paved courtyard and verandah on the north side, a swimming pool and approximately half a hectare of lawn with trees and gardens, including a rose garden.

Like many other parts of eastern Australia, the district has been affected by drought. It was declared a drought area on 1 September 1982 and so far this year, has received less than half of its normal annual rainfall of about 750 millimetres.

#### The Owners

Mr Leonard Gordon Darling, 61, has been a Director of the BHP Co. Ltd since 1953 and was a Director from 1953 and Chairman from 1967 - 1982 of Rheem Australia Ltd. He has been Director since 1966 and Chairman since 1979 of Koitaki Ltd and was a Director of Steamships Trading Co. Ltd from 1980 - 1982 and of Watkins Consolidated Ltd in 1980 - 1981.

Mr Darling has been Chairman of John Darling Pty Ltd since 1963 and a Director from 1965 and Chairman since 1971 of New Guinea Industries Pty Ltd.

He was a member of the Federal Government's Economic Consultative Group from 1976 - 1980 and a trustee of the World Wildlife Fund (Australia) from 1978 - 1980. Mr Darling has been patron of the Australia Papua New Guinea Business Co-operation Committee since 1980. He has been a member since January 1982 and Chairman since June 1982 of the council of the Australian National Gallery in Canberra.

Mr Darling and his wife, Margaret, have two sons and two daughters. They were married in 1945.

Chris Freeman  
Assistant Media Liaison Officer  
Visit of The Prince and Princess of Wales 1983

17 December 1982