

The Passionate Environmentalist



Simone Walker, Nicholas Schulz, Ashton
Ingram and Alisha Pitcher

Lavington Public School



Creative Catchment Kids

Creative Catchment Kids is an initiative of the Murray Darling Association and Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre. It aims to improve engagement between the Murray Catchment Management Authority and school students by providing opportunities for positive and authentic ventures that encourage students to develop creative solutions to natural resource management issues. www.murray.cma.nsw.gov.au/creative-catchment-kids.html

Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre

The Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre is located in Burrumbuttock, north of Albury in southern NSW. Since 1995, the centre, which is adjacent to Burrumbuttock Public School, has provided opportunities for discovery and learning about the natural environment, the ecology of the local woodlands and the beauty of native plants. www.wirraminna.org

Murray Darling Association

The Murray Darling Association has membership of over 100 Local Government councils in the Murray-Darling Basin, as well as community groups, businesses and individuals with an interest in ensuring that the Basin continues as a valuable asset for all Australians. Since 1950, the Association has initiated various school and community education programs on managing the Basin's land and water resources. www.mda.asn.au



Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by PeeKdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area. www.envirostories.com.au

The Passionate Environmentalist

Authors: Simone Walker, Nicholas Schulz, Ashton Ingram and Alisha Pitcher

Teacher: Aana Nicol

School: Lavington Public School

Catchment Champions

In 2013, students involved in the Creative Catchment Kids program researched and wrote stories about 'Catchment Champions', people who have made important contributions to managing natural resources in their local community. The program was generously funded by the Murray and Murrumbidgee catchment management authorities.

The Catchment Champions books are part of the Enviro-Stories Education Program.



Catchment Management Authority
Murray



CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY



Catchment Management Authority
Murrumbidgee

Design by PeeKdesigns, www.peekdesigns.com.au

Copyright 2013 Murray Darling Association, www.mda.asn.au



If you visit Wirraminna you are likely to meet a passionate environmentalist, Stacee. Stacee Staunton-Latimer has been volunteering and working at Wirraminna for the past four years and loves teaching young people about the environment.

The Educator

Wirraminna is an Environmental Education Centre that is adjacent to the small rural school of Burrumbuttock. It is used as a learning centre about the environment for visiting schools. Stacee works both here and at the school. Her job at Burrumbuttock is Garden Specialist for the 'The Stephanie Alexander Garden Program'.

Stacee says with the help of Mr Owen Dunlop and by volunteering, "I just walked into the job".



Family

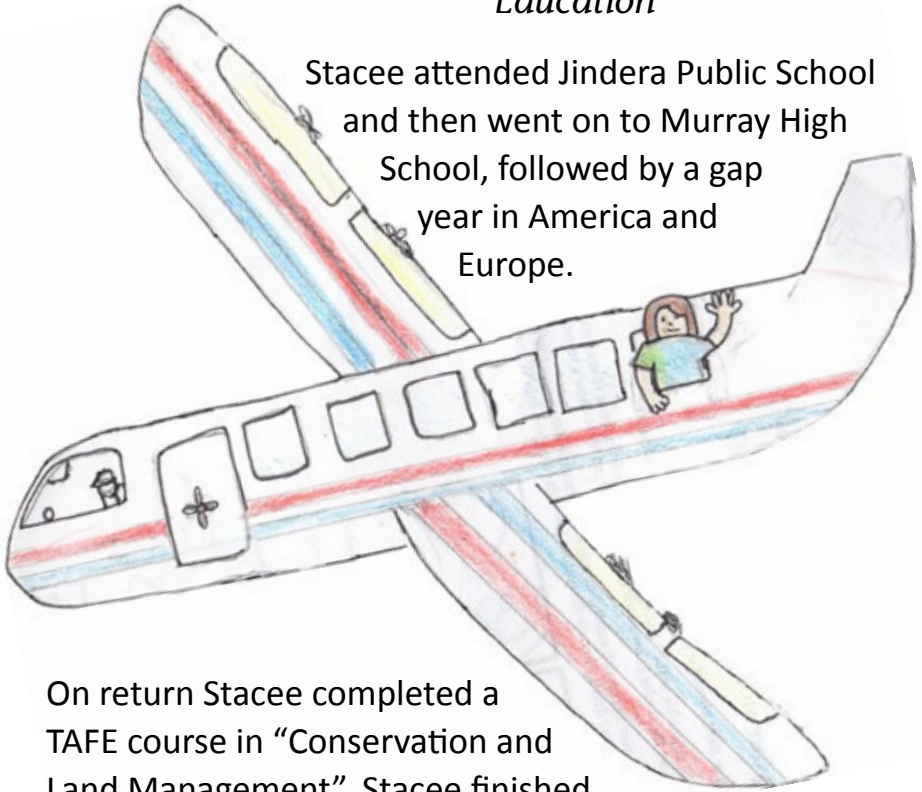
Stacee grew up with two sisters, Elizabeth and Emily and an older brother Cameron. Growing up, Stacee's house was always full of native animals because her mum was a member of WIRES. Stacee helped her mum look after possums, joeys, squirrel gliders, sugar glider, echidnas and cockatoos. Her house was a wildlife menagerie.

Stacee recalls, "Animals were coming out of my ears".



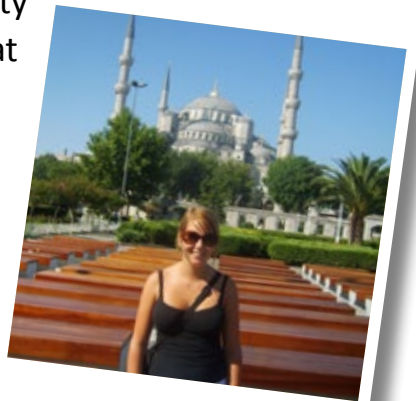
Education

Stacee attended Jindera Public School and then went on to Murray High School, followed by a gap year in America and Europe.



On return Stacee completed a TAFE course in “Conservation and Land Management”. Stacee finished this course in half the time and because she did so well, it earned her the Betty Carrasco TAFE Award. Later Stacee was to find that Betty Carrasco had been a volunteer at Wirraminna.

Further studies in Natural Area Restoration and Animal Studies lead her closer to her real passion, to pass on her knowledge.

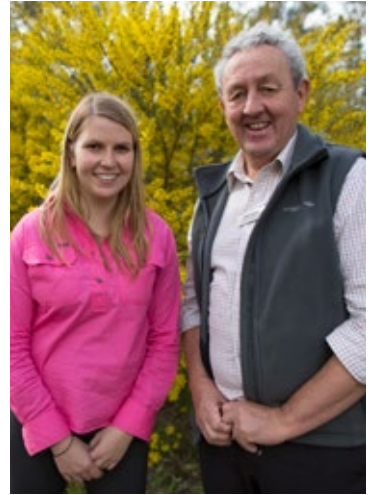


Passing on the Passion

One day while at work, the Murray Catchment Management Authority called Mr Dunlop. He then came to Stacey and said “We have a job for you”.

“Stacey, we would like you to be the Support Officer for the Creative Catchment Kids program”.

She was very excited about this, because it meant she could work with kids and pass on her knowledge. Stacey organises the workshops, edits our books and liaises with publishers and the website designers for this program.



Projects

Stacee's other project is making DVD's with Dr Dave. She started by reading out a script while Dr Dave showed animals in their environment. Stacee's now co-starring with Dr Dave and has completed several videos on her own.



Recently she came back from Bourke having made 10 videos on outback New South Wales. TAFE have also asked her to front DVD's on sustainability and promotion which will be used for businesses and schools.





Projects

Stacee has got her finger in lots of environmental pies. She has plans to complete more DVD's, one on Indigenous Culture and another on the Celebration of Irrigation. She has worked with Moulamein Public School and put together a DVD on the Edward River and she also has one on the Water Cycle in the Murray Darling Basin. Our Stacee is a real movie star.



The Corroboree Frogs

Stacee has also been involved with a new display at Wirraminna that houses eight Southern Corroboree Frogs. As there is only around fifty left of these frogs in the wild, Stacee says that it is very important that Wirraminna can display them and educate people on how important endangered Australian species are. A part of Stacee's job was to go to Taronga Zoo and be trained in keeping them. Stacee now looks after them and takes tours so people can come and see these amazing creatures.





Passing on the Passion

When asked about what Stacey's favourite project was, she said that the Creative Catchment Kids, gives her the opportunity to, as she put it, "Transfer her knowledge and plant a seed in children so, that they can be inspired and develop a passion for their own environment." She says this is the future and the only way to avoid frustration brought about by peoples ignorance about natural resource management issues.





The Future

Stacee is an inspirational young go getter who we enjoyed talking and working with on this project. She has encouraged us to further our own studies about the environment and if others wish to go into this field her advice would be go to university.





We wish to thank Stacey for sharing her stories with us and inspiring us. We will now be more aware and considerate of our world.



Alisha Pitcher, Simone Walker, Stacey Staunton-Latimer,
Ashton Ingram and Nicholas Schulz

2013 Year 6, Lavington Public School

The 2012 and 2013 Creative
Catchment Kids writing
program was showcased
at the Seventh World
Environmental Education
Congress, held in Morocco
during June 2013.



Catchment Management
Authority
Murray



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY



Catchment Management
Authority
Murrumbidgee