

The Quiet Environmentalist: The Geoff Naylor Story



Catchment Champion

Uriah Berg, Nikita Penrith
and Kayley Dowling

Brungle 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 Quiet Environmentalist: The Geoff Naylor Story

Authors: Uriah Berg, Nikita Penrith and Kayley Dowling

Teacher: Jen Lawlor and Rebecca Sini

School: Brungle 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



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Murrumbidgee

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This book is about Geoff Naylor who was the teaching Principal at our school, Brungle Public School.

Geoff is a champion for environmental education and helped regenerate native bushland around the school. He has been very involved with the local community and because of his work Brungle Public School was recognised as an Aboriginal and Environmental Education Centre.





Left: On family holidays at The Entrance. Geoff is in the front wearing a blue sweater.



Right: Geoff (youngest in the front) and his older brother and sister.

Geoff Naylor grew up in Perthville, near Bathurst in country New South Wales. He was born in 1953 and grew up in a family with his mother, father, his two brothers and one sister. Geoff's family still live around Bathurst.

They lived on a small farm where they raised sheep and grew vegetables. Geoff remembers helping out on the farm as a child.

Geoff Naylor attended a tiny primary school called St. Joseph's Catholic School in Perthville with only 14 children. His family moved to Bathurst because of a family illness when Geoff was 12.

He then went to Bathurst High School.



His favourite activities in primary school were reading, maths and playing rugby league. In high school Geoff liked maths, science, tech drawing and playing hockey and cricket.

From the age of 12 until he was 20, Geoff did various jobs to help raise money for his family. All of his family had to work because they lived on a farm and didn't have a lot of money. Some of the jobs included doing milk runs, bread runs and general farm work. Geoff says that this experience was important because he learned to grow things on the farm and in his mother's garden.



While Geoff was at college he got a job with a farmer clearing out the suckers and saplings on a hillside. He got paid \$7 per day, which was a lot of money then, to dig out the saplings with a mattock. Looking back now he isn't proud of that job because he worked to clear all the native vegetation from that hill.





Geoff's first teaching job was at St. Mary's North Public School, in Sydney's western suburbs. It was a huge school with lots of concrete everywhere. Geoff was asked by another teacher, Mr. Gardiner, to help with planting trees and shrubs around the school. He saw it made a difference with the students and also made the school look nicer.

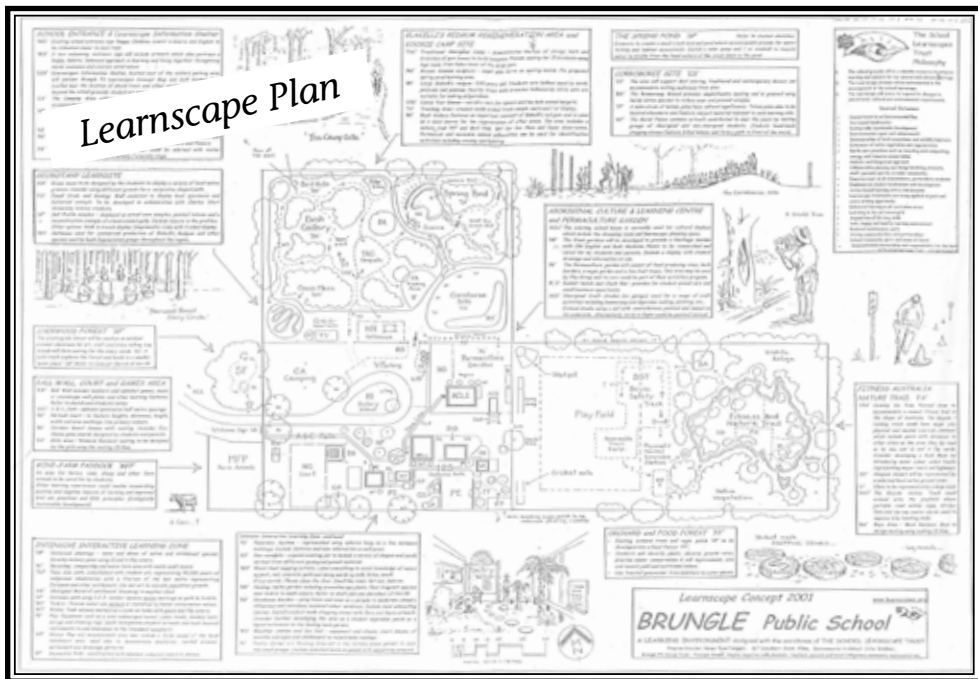




Geoff moved to many different schools (Emu Heights, Adelong, Franklin, Tumbarumba and Brungle) over the next few years. At all of these schools he thought the school grounds could be improved. He changed that. Geoff got the students involved in planning and then creating gardens around the schools.



He created School Environmental Clubs and built nurseries to grow and sell plants to the community. Geoff got local businesses involved in the planning and building of these gardens in the schools and also with tree plantings in the local communities.



Wetland Area



Chess Set

Geoff received a promotion as Teaching Principal at Brungle Public School. He continued with environmental education here. He got the school and community involved in the Learnscape program where they created a plan for the school. It included designing and building gardens, a vegetable patch, wetlands, a chess set, corroboree area, Aboriginal village and tree planting around the school.



As a result of working with the community Geoff realised the importance of incorporating Aboriginal Culture in our school. This included a Dreaming Room with Aboriginal artefacts, a Corroboree area, an Aboriginal village with gunyahs, Wiradjuri language lessons and Aboriginal murals and artwork around the school. All this innovative work led to the school being recognised as the Brungle Aboriginal Environmental Education Centre in 2008.





We thank Geoff for sharing his passion for environmental education and community involvement with all of us at Brungle. Geoff has been enthusiastic, caring and a role model for everyone he meets. We wish him all the best for the future.



Uriah Berg, Kayley Dowling and Nikita Penrith

2013 Year 6, Brungle 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



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Catchment Management Authority Murrumbidgee