

# Life on a Farm: The Story of Mac and Betty Wallace



Alec Buckley, Jacob Dawe, Eliza Ford,  
Liam Hunt & Ruby Murphy  
Deniliquin South 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](http://www.murray.cma.nsw.gov.au/creative-catchment-kids.html)

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## *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](http://www.wirraminna.org)

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## *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](http://www.mda.asn.au)

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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](http://www.envirostories.com.au)

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Authors: Alec Buckley, Jacob Dawe, Eliza Ford,  
Liam Hunt & Ruby Murphy

Teacher: Susan Champness

School: Deniliquin South 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

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Mac and Betty Wallace live on 'North Run', a farm near Wanganella. They have raised four children, Sarah, Helen, Susan and John and have two grandchildren, Jack and Isabelle, who live on a farm near The Rock. John lives on 'North Run' and will be taking it over soon. Mac and Betty have lived on 'North Run' since 1975.



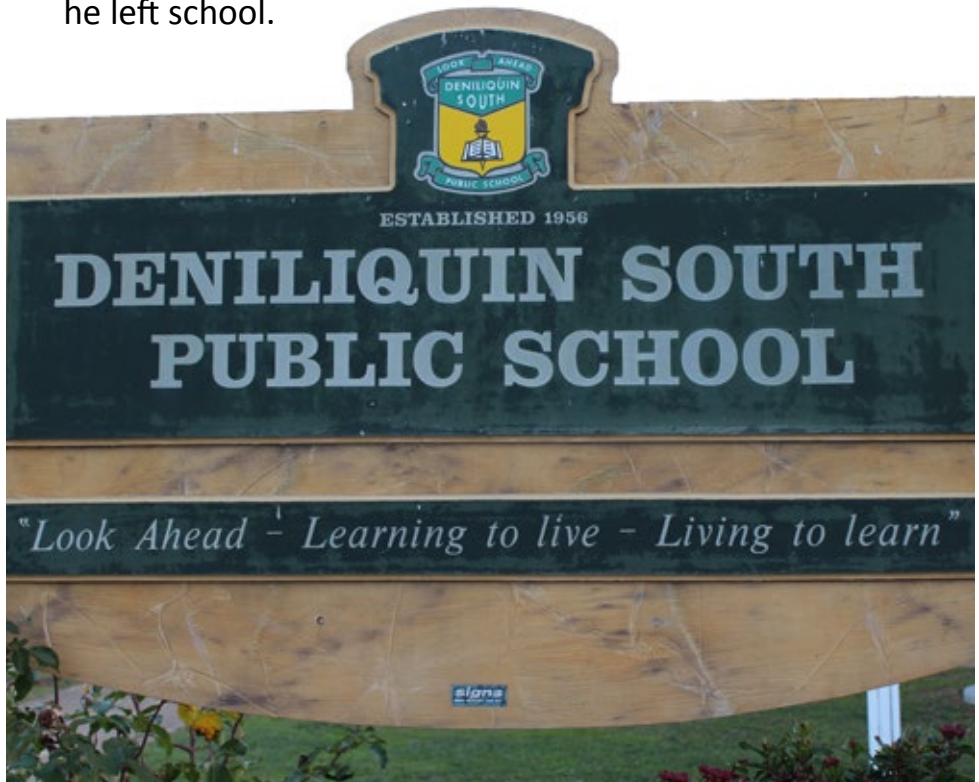


Mac inherited part of 'North Run' from his grandfather and he bought the rest. Many years ago 'North Run' was a part of 'Booabula' (a very big farm). It was split into three different sections; they called their farm 'North Run' because it was the northern run of Wanganella Station, when the area was one big property.



Betty did her school work by correspondence that was mailed from Sydney. She only went to “school” from 8am till 12 noon. Betty then went to boarding school at The Hermitage House in Geelong. Mac went to Deniliquin Public School on George Street, then Deniliquin South Public School before going to boarding school at Geelong Grammar. At school they learnt how to measure for chemicals, read and many other vital skills needed for farming.

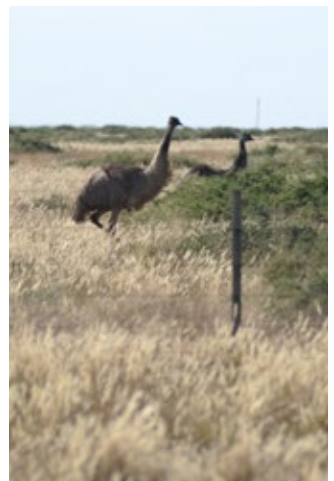
They both have a passion for farming, which came from Betty growing up 60 miles from Hay (past Booligal) and Mac also had family in farming and was a jackeroo when he left school.





‘North Run’ is 6 600 hectares, they also have another property which is 15 000 hectares. On ‘North Run’, they have 6 dogs, some chickens, 5 000 sheep, approximately 40 cows and lots of calves.

The sheep are divided up into paddocks and they eat native grasses. There is also a variety of native animals roaming in the paddocks, such as kangaroos, emus and lizards.







There are many different native plants growing on the farm. Some varieties include Black Box trees and Old Man Saltbush. There are also everlasting daisies and native grasses growing wild in the paddocks. Mac and Betty get John to help fence the plants off to keep the stock out. They use milk bottles (with top and bottom cut off) to protect seedlings from being eaten by rabbits, hares and kangaroos. Mac buys trees from the council and Betty has planted 300 this year, and many more in previous years.





Mac and Betty collect seeds off the saltbush with a seed collector from the Catchment Management Authority. They have also tried collecting seed by putting a Hessian bag over the bush and shaking it.





On the farm there are many types of machinery. They have tractors, a plough, a truck, a grader, motorbikes and water pumps. They also use machines to collect seeds and plant them.



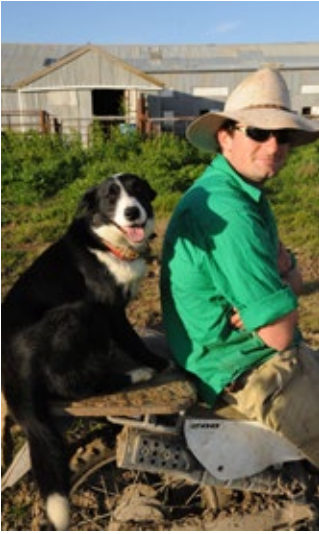


The Billabong Creek runs at the base of the farm. Mac and Betty have a license to pump an allocated amount of water for animals and crops, such as rice, sorghum and wheat. They pump water into dams in every paddock on 'North Run' for their stock. They have water stored in tanks for use in their house.

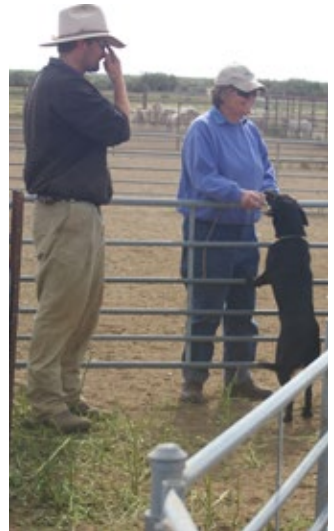


They volunteer for the Wanganella Hall Committee. They make food for ANZAC Services and special functions. The volunteers raise money for improvements to the local facilities and for the community.





Mac and Betty are thinking about their future on 'North Run'. Their plans are that John will take over the farm in the future.



Thank you to Mac and Betty Wallace for being the wonderful people you are, allowing us to take a look into your lives on the farm. We are truly grateful for the help you gave us and for giving up your time. We wish you all the best in the future.



Alec Buckley, Ruby Murphy, Eliza Ford, Jacob (Roach) Dawe and Liam Hunt

2013 Year 5/6, Deniliquin South 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.



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