

Mr Wymah

Our Champion Jim Corrigan



Catchment Champion

Khari Wood, Riley Heffernan
and Tahj Wood

Mullengandra 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

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Our Champion Jim Corrigan

Authors: Khai Wood, Riley Heffernan and Taj Wood

Teacher: Julie Twitt

School: Mullengandra 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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Catchment Management Authority
Murrumbidgee

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James Francis Corrigan, known to locals as 'Jim Corrigan', is a farmer in the Wymah-Mullengandra area. He is well known throughout the local community for his involvement in the Mullengandra Public School, Wymah Fire Brigade, Wymah Reserve and Landcare. Jim has not only revegetated his own farm but has also helped other farmers with ideas for improving their land.





Jim as a young boy on the family property

Early life

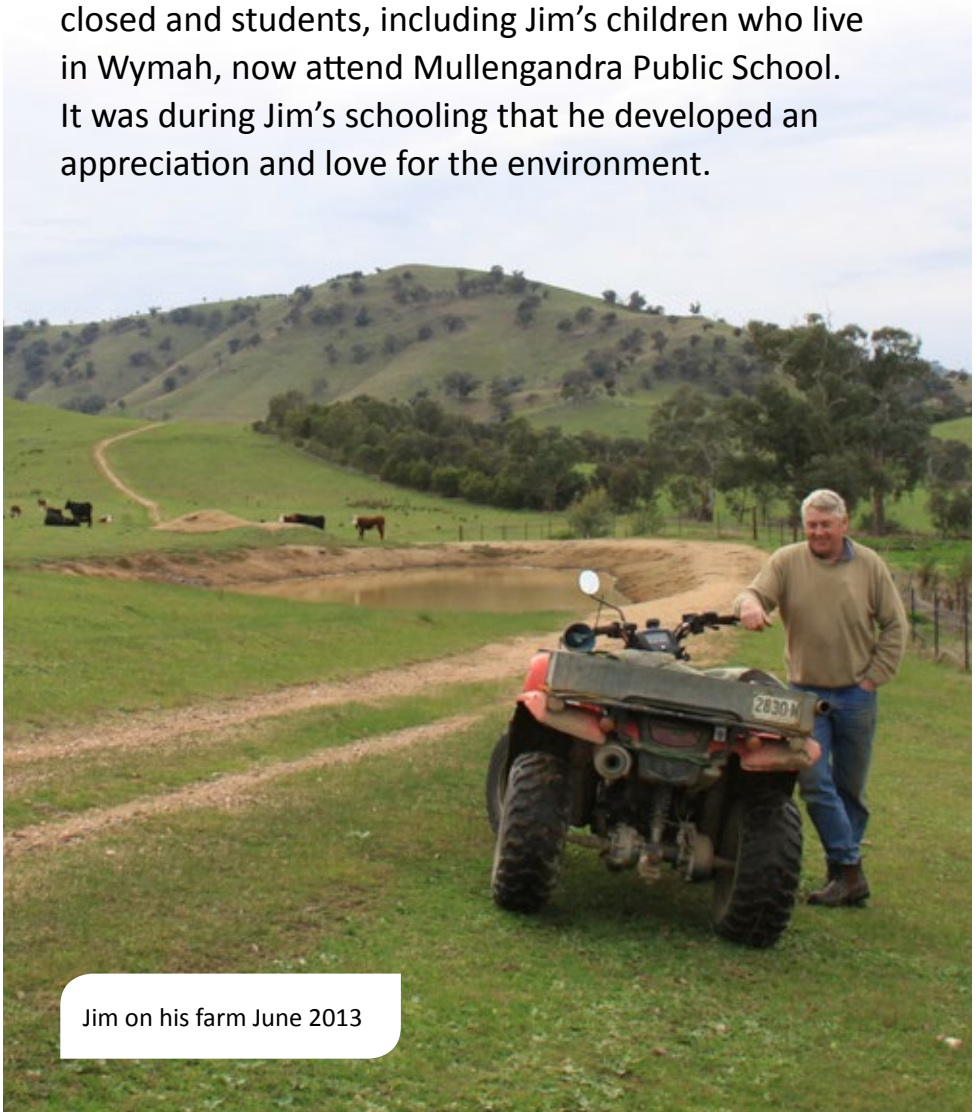
James (Jim) Francis Corrigan was the third child of Nan and Frank Corrigan. He was born in Albury on 26th of February, 1959. Jim has two sisters and a brother who has unfortunately passed away.

Jim is the fourth generation of his family to farm 'Springfield'. His great-grandfather bought the 13,000 acre property in 1936.

Jim loved growing up on the family farm.

School years

Jim attended Wymah Public School which had an enrolment of just nine students. He was then sent to St. Patricks Boarding College, Ballarat for his high school years (1200 students). Wymah Public School is now closed and students, including Jim's children who live in Wymah, now attend Mullengandra Public School. It was during Jim's schooling that he developed an appreciation and love for the environment.



Jim on his farm June 2013

After school life

Jim didn't enjoy boarding school and all he ever wanted to do was to work on the family farm. After boarding school, when he returned home to 'Springfield', he enrolled in a Farm Management Course at Albury Technical College.

The only job Jim had other than working on the farm, was wool classing for local farmers.

When Jim was 22 his father tragically passed away and Jim was left to run the farm.





Top: Rosie and Tim

Right: Lachlan, Jim and Anna



A family of his own

Jim met his wife Rosie at a Holbrook B&S (Bachelor and Spinster) Ball in the original Kinross Woolshed. Jim and Rosie have three children, Timothy, Lachlan and Anna. Jim's children all attending Mullengandra Public School where Jim was the President of the P&C (Parents and Citizens) Committee for many years.

Jim involves his children in all aspects of the farm and local community, especially when there is tree planting to be done.

The change in farming ways

Jim's father was a typical farmer of his time and never planted a tree in his life. When Jim took over the farm he wanted to implement some of the environmental practices he had heard about at school. This caring for the land led him to become involved in Landcare and become the first treasurer for the Upper Murray Landcare Group.



One of the paddocks that has been revegetated by Jim

Jim was innovative. He planted native trees making shelter belts for his cattle so they could be protected from strong winds. He planted along the ridgeline of the hills to stop the hilltops from eroding. Jim, along with his neighbours, created a biodiversity corridor which ran through his farm all the way to 'Wingadel', a property about 3 kilometres away.



Planted ridgelines on the hills at Jim's farm

Jim was not afraid to be experimental. He identified the need and then successfully changed the course of the 'Fowlers Creek' which runs through his property. Jim moved the creek line, planted trees on the bank and installed mesh to stop the major erosion. Visiting environmental groups commended Jim for his work to revitalise the creek.



Above: Erosion on the creek



Below: A revitalized area of the creek on Jim's farm

Jim has also fenced off the creek line. In some parts this has become ineffective as saplings have started to grow in the middle of the creek. When there is a flood, debris gets stuck in the saplings and the water is unable to pass freely downstream. This makes the creek swell. Jim has plans and is keen to fix this problem in the near future.



Fencing and tree lines near the creek

Jim also uses tree planting as a way of stock management. He plants in identified areas to direct stock through gates to assist with their movement from paddock to paddock. Jim can't put a number on how many trees he has planted as there have been so many. Jim doesn't employ people to plant trees on his farm, as he prefers to do it himself.

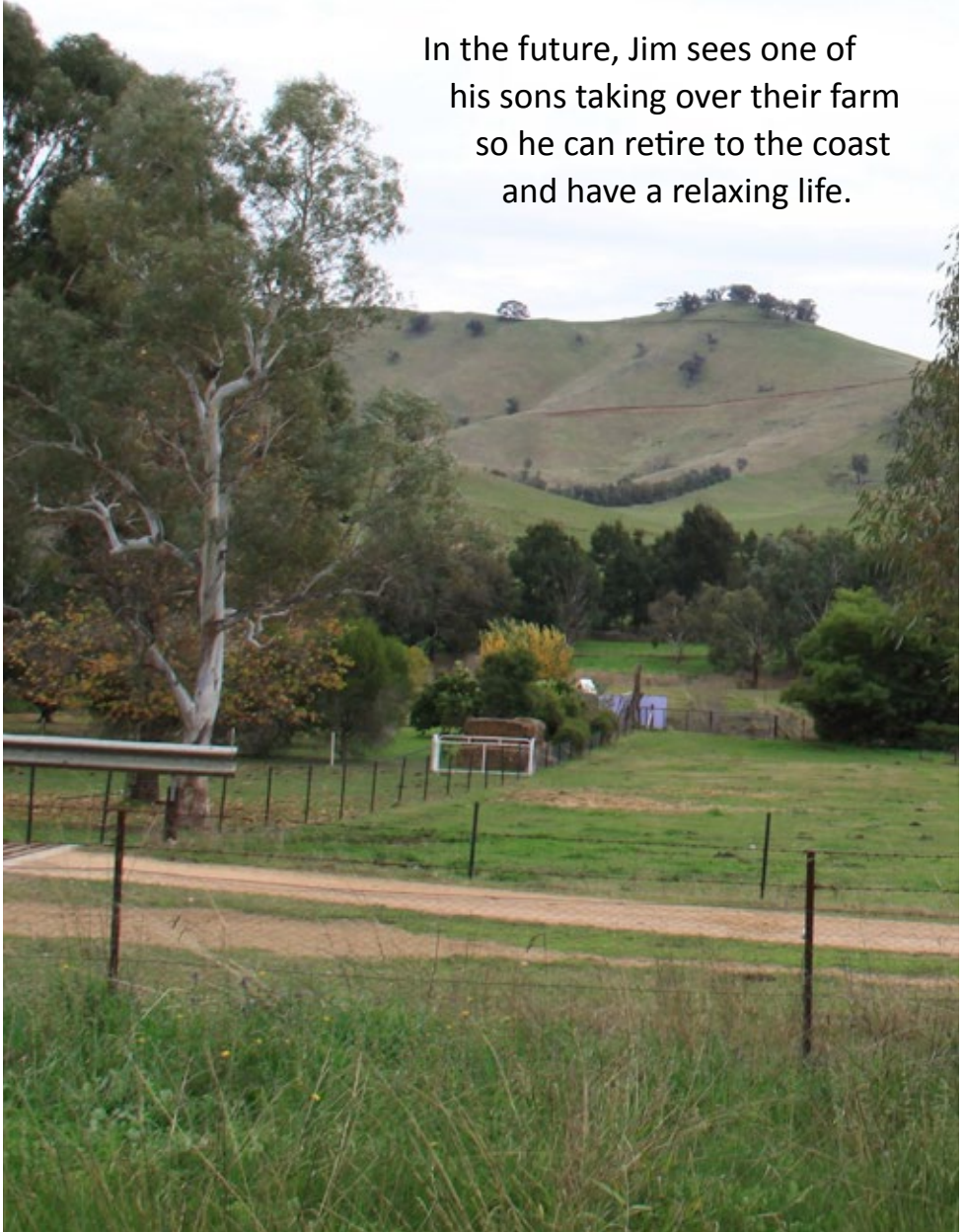


Stock management planting

Jim's other interest and the future

Jim enjoys waterskiing, motorbike riding and having a barbeque with family and friends.

In the future, Jim sees one of his sons taking over their farm so he can retire to the coast and have a relaxing life.



We would like to thank Jim for taking the time to share his story with us, so we can share his story with you. Jim is very passionate about his farm and the environment, which makes us very grateful and lucky to know our land is being cared for by farmers like Jim.



Riley Heffernan, Tahj Wood, Khai Wood and Jim Corrigan

2013 Year 5/6, Mullengandra 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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