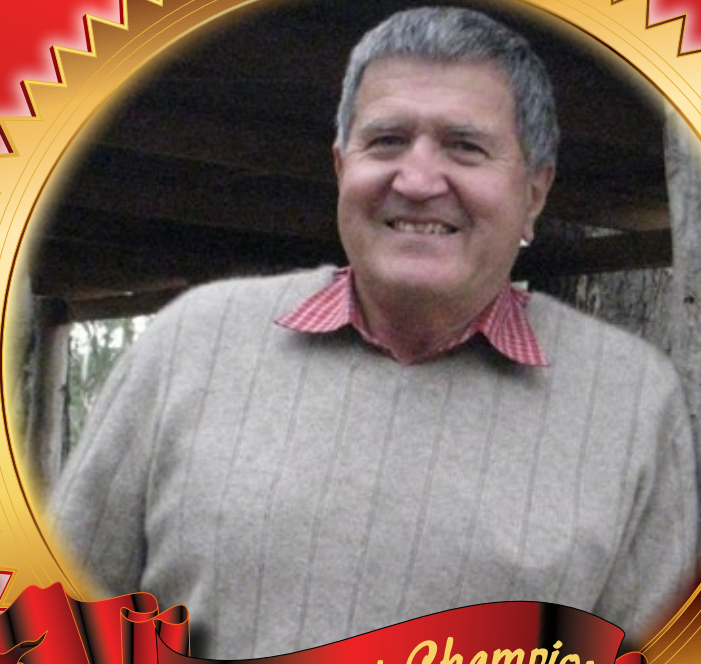


The Story of Mike Copland



Catchment Champion

Czelene Villanueva and Kaori Livsey

Albury North 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 Story of Mike Copland

Authors: Czelene Villanueva and Kaori Livsey

Teacher: Liz Dick

School: Albury North 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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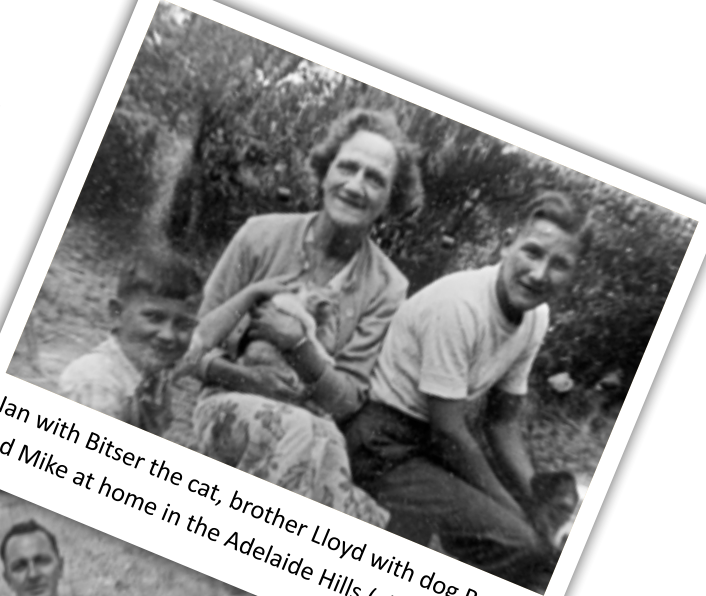


This is the story of Mike Copland, a local teacher, biologist and environmentalist, who has dedicated many years of his life to the Albury-Wodonga area.

Michael Edward Copland, known as Mike to all who know him, has had a very interesting and inspiring life and we would like to share this with you.

Mike's story is an inside look at a man who has dedicated his life to the environment and the people and creatures he has met along the way.

Birth & Family



Nan with Bitser the cat, brother Lloyd with dog Buster and Mike at home in the Adelaide Hills (about 1950)



Mike with his Mum Jean, Bill his Dad, cousin Leonie and brother Lloyd at Bondi Beach (about 1946)

On the 8th of November 1945 Michael Edward Copland was born in Ashfield, a suburb of Sydney.

Mike grew up with a family of four including his dad Bill, his mother Jean and his brother Lloyd, who is six years older than Mike.

Jean was a dressmaker and Bill was a salesman.

Growing Up

As Mike was growing up he moved around Australia, a lot!

He first lived in Sydney, then in the Adelaide hills. Another move was to Melbourne, to the city. A welcome move was then made to Upwey in the Dandenong ranges, back to the bush. Here he met his wife Jenny at Upwey High School.

After becoming a teacher and marrying, Mike and Jenny moved to Wodonga, Victoria and they still live there now. They have a daughter, Fiona.





School life

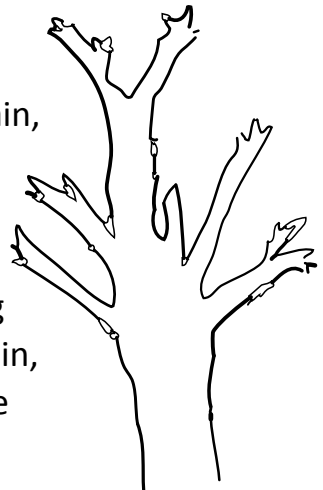
Mike went to university/teacher's college in Melbourne to become a science teacher.

In 1969 Mike graduated and he taught science, biology, chemistry and geography. He has taught grades from kindergarten to year twelve. Some of the schools he has taught at are - Wodonga High School, Wodonga West High School, the Murray Darling Freshwater Research Centre and at the education centre of Wonga Wetlands.



Wonga Wetlands

Located on the Murray River floodplain, Wonga Wetlands was restored from grazing land using Albury City's environmentally treated wastewater. With lagoons and billabongs covering 80 hectares of Murray River flood plain, Wonga is home to a variety of wildlife and century old river red gums.





Working at Wonga Wetlands

In 1999 the Albury City Council asked Mike if he would like to set up an education centre at Wonga Wetlands. He said yes of course! This enabled him to combine his two loves - education and the environment.

In the wetlands Mike loved the birds, the animals and the plants. It was the best classroom he could ever imagine - a dream come true.

Working at Wonga Wetlands

When Mike came to Albury-Wodonga, the problems of salt and blue green algae were becoming evident in the river. Luckily he was in the right place at the right time with the knowledge of these problems, so Mike formed a Landcare Group. In 1974, when Albury-Wodonga became the growth centre, Mike became chairman of both the Albury-Wodonga environment committee and the education committee.



Latham's Snipe



Magpie Goose



Southern Grey Bandicoot



Animals at Wonga Wetlands

During Mike's many years at Wonga Wetlands he discovered a lot of fascinating and rare animals.

From all the sounds, scats (poo), burrows and left over food, Mike has carefully observed and found out what animal it is.



Travel

Mike has travelled extensively over his years as a teacher. The highlights of his travels were several trips to the Galapagos Islands with family, friends and students. They were able to observe and interact with the wildlife, an experience he will never forget. Mike has also travelled to Europe, the USA, New Zealand and Sabah in Malaysia.



Now and the Future

Mike is now retired, but he still enjoys going to Wonga Wetlands and sharing his knowledge and passion for the environment with people of all ages. Mike is travelling, enjoying life on his property and still caring for the environment - and he always will.



We would like to thank Mike for sharing with us his love of our environment and his fabulous stories. Mike is a true catchment champion.



Mike Copland, Kaori Livsey and Czelene Villanueva

2013 Year 6, Albury North 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



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