

Our Farming Heroes

The Campbells



Lochie Gow, Blythe Williams,
Daniela Leones and Ivana Skok

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 Local Land Services and school students by providing opportunities for positive and authentic ventures that encourage students to develop creative solutions to natural resource management issues.

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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Authors: Lochie Gow, Blythe Williams, Daniela Leones and Ivana Skok

Teacher: Liz Dick

School: Albury North Public School

Local Land Heroes

In 2014, students involved in the **Creative Catchment Kids** program researched and wrote stories about 'Local Land Heroes' - people, businesses or industries who contribute to productive agriculture and healthy environments along the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers. The program was generously funded by Murray Local Land Services and Riverina Local Land Services.

Local Land Heroes acknowledges the United Nations 2014 International Year of Family Farming.
www.fao.org/family-farming-2014/en/



Local Land Heroes is part of Enviro-Stories, a Peekdesigns education program.



Australian Government

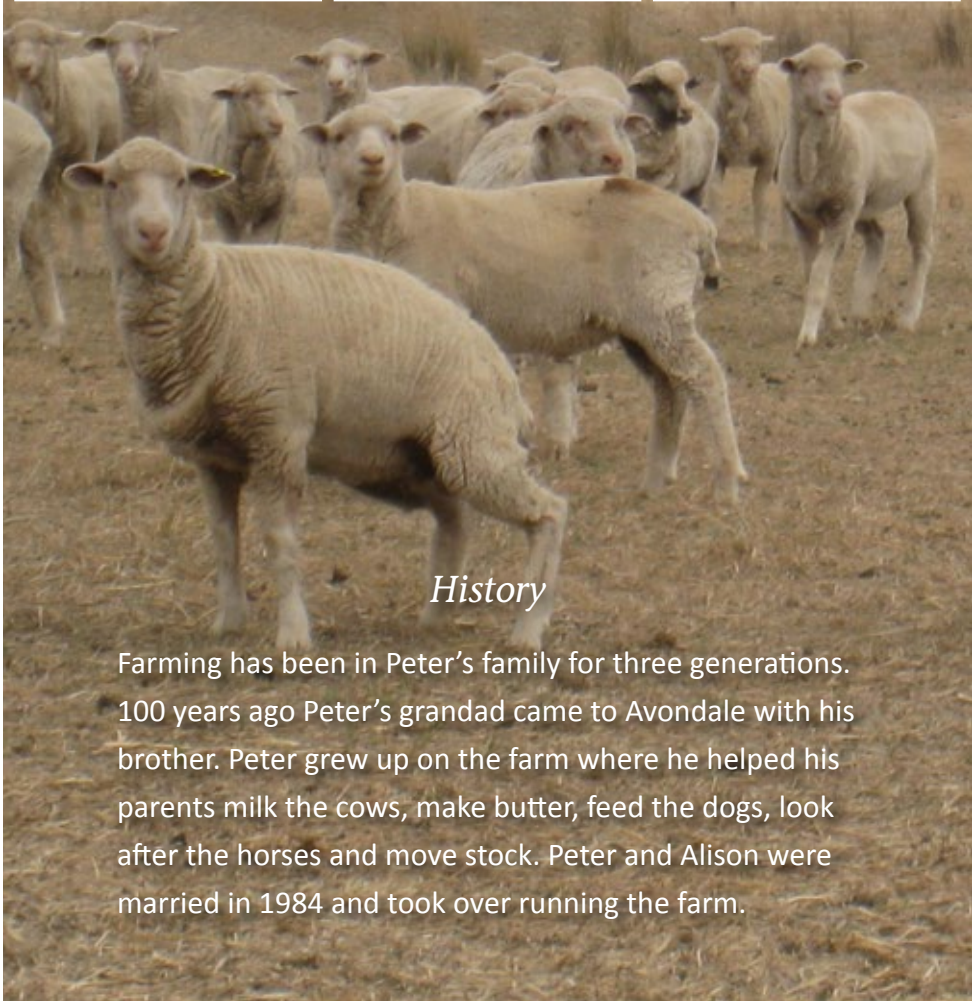
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This is the story of Peter and Alison Campbell, whose farm at Avondale, 17 kilometres west of Henty, has a mixture of sheep and crops.

They have given their lives to farming and are passionate about making a difference to their local area and environment.



History

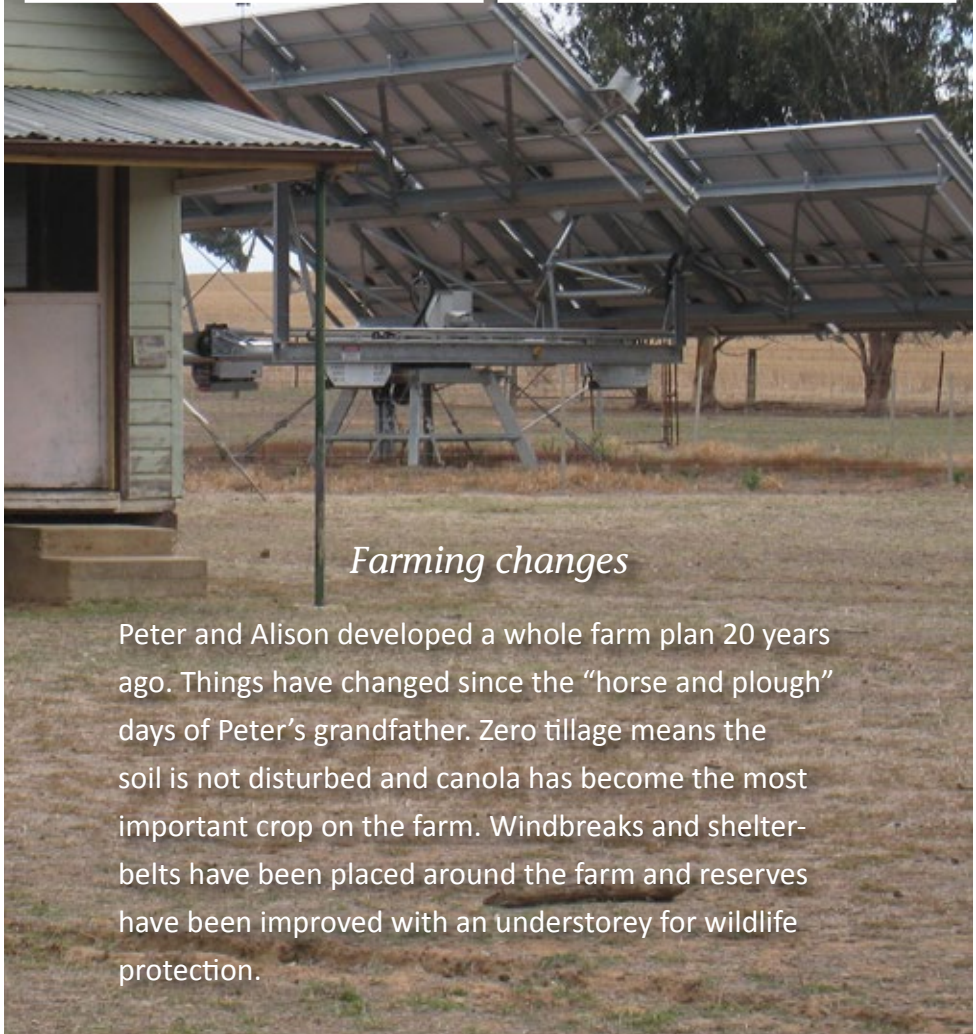
Farming has been in Peter's family for three generations. 100 years ago Peter's grandad came to Avondale with his brother. Peter grew up on the farm where he helped his parents milk the cows, make butter, feed the dogs, look after the horses and move stock. Peter and Alison were married in 1984 and took over running the farm.



Farming

On the Campbells' farm, 70% of the farm area is used for crops. Canola and wheat are grown and exported to China and Japan. They also raise sheep for lambs and wool. The wool is exported to Italy and China to make fabric and clothes.





Farming changes

Peter and Alison developed a whole farm plan 20 years ago. Things have changed since the “horse and plough” days of Peter’s grandfather. Zero tillage means the soil is not disturbed and canola has become the most important crop on the farm. Windbreaks and shelterbelts have been placed around the farm and reserves have been improved with an understorey for wildlife protection.



Revegetation

Peter and Alison plant trees and collect native seeds to help revegetate their farm. The local species that they've used include: Golden wattle, Dean's wattle, Punty bush and Silver wattle. With the help of a Landcare grant, a disused railway was fenced off and trees were planted. As a result, there has been an increase in small bird numbers.

Bird life

Peter and Alison have created a program to try and attract little birds. The noisy miners have always scared them away in the past.

Planting wattles created an understorey to encourage birds such as weebills, thornbills, and honeyeaters.

Robins and finches were also attracted to help eat the insects and grubs that attack trees.

Superb parrots have also been attracted back to the area.





Drought and disease

To prepare for drought, the Campbells store grain and hay for their stock. They spray the weeds that grow in summer and retain all their stubble. Water is conserved through storage in the many tanks and dams on the property.

To prevent disease, they monitor their crops and sheep regularly and treat them when necessary.





Farmer of the Year

In 2012, the Campbells hard work, innovation and passion for their job was rewarded when they won ‘Farmer of the Year’, awarded by the NSW Department of Primary Industries. The judges thought they were worthy winners because they ran a very well-managed farming business, they cared about the environment and were leaders in their local community.



Community involvement

Peter and Alison are very involved in their community. Peter has served on the NSW Farmer's Council and he has been deputy mayor of Lockhart Shire Council. He's also involved in Landcare, Henty Rotary Club and the Henty Community Club. Alison is on the catering committee of Henty Machinery Field Days and a Director/Secretary of the Henty Community Bendigo Bank.



The future

Life on the Campbells' farm is always challenging and changing. Tractors are already steered by GPS and the use of solar power is becoming more common. Drones will become an important part of farming. The future will be influenced by new technology, the effects of global warming, research into new crops and farming in an eco-friendly way.





We would like to thank the Campbells for letting us visit their farm and sharing with us their amazing love of agriculture. The Campbells are extremely passionate, hardworking and dedicated to their farming and caring for the environment. They are true farming heroes.



Lochie Gow, Blythe Williams, Ivana Skok, Daniela Leones,
Alison Campbell and Peter Campbell
2014 Year 6, Albury North Public School

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Local Land
Services
Murray



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Riverina



Australian Government