

The story of Belinda Anderson: Mother, Farmer and C.E.O.



Mariah Burton, Jasmine Butler,
Caitlin Wenke and Piper Lockley-Hinschen

Hume 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 agriculture and 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: Mariah Burton, Jasmine Butler,
Caitlin Wenke and Piper Lockley-Hinschen

Teacher: Nicole Smith

School: Hume 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.



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Belinda Anderson was born on the 7th July, 1970 in West Wyalong. She was raised on a farm. In Year 7 she went to boarding school at St Paul's College, Walla Walla. While attending school she met her future husband, Garry.

She attended her first Henty Machinery Field day in 1984. Together, they have rarely missed the event because they only live 25 minutes from the field day site.



Belinda and Garry later married and have four children. Their son Thomas, 21, is a machinery mechanic. Sophie is 18 and studying podiatry at university. Sarah is currently in Year 10 and Hannah is in Year 6. They work together on the farm. They enjoy family dinners on Sundays together and talking about their schooling, university, careers and farming.

HENTY MACHINERY™

HENTY MACHINERY FIELD DAYS

In 2013 Belinda was offered the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Henty Machinery Field Days. She previously had been in the role of company secretary. She accepted this position because it was close to her home property and her passion is farming. She became the first female chief executive officer for the cooperative. Belinda described the new role as an 'exciting challenge'.



The Henty Machinery Field Days are a three day event held in September. They require ten months of organisation and planning, skills that Belinda rates highly in her position of C.E.O. She enjoys working with a supportive team of directors, staff and the wider Henty community. This year the H.M.F.D. will feature more than 1,200 sites and over 800 exhibitors.



Photos courtesy of Henty Machinery Field Days media



The Henty Machinery Field Days are the biggest agricultural event in southern Australia. Around every corner there is a place to sit, talk, eat or drink. Besides machinery, there are cooking demonstrations, fashion parades, guest speakers, household goods and natural products you can try or buy. Belinda is proud that the field days have raised over \$500,000 to support Henty district organisations.



Photos courtesy of Henty Machinery Field Days media



We were fortunate enough to visit the 1,100 hectare family property “Cressy Park” at Pulletop. The Andersons run 3,000 Merino and Dohne ewes and plant 500 hectares of cereal and oilseed crops. They enjoy the challenge of working on the property together. They were nominated for a conservation farming award in recognition of their conservation practices.



Conservation farming systems are dynamic and call for innovation and continual improvement. The Andersons are always striving to improve their farm. The objective of conservation farming is to reduce run-off and erosion. The Andersons have worked hard to improve the quality of their pastures and reduce erosion.





We received a first-hand experience in tillage equipment, precision guidance and conservation when we visited the property. With grants received from the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority, we saw all the trees they have planted. Garry rotates his crops and pastures. He showed us on his tractor how he directly plants crops into the soil.





Belinda has a great love for the environment. Her property adjoins a National Park so she has kangaroo proof fences and tree belts where kangaroos can graze in the protected land. They keep spraying to a minimum and they do not burn-off, this promotes healthy pastures and encourages native wild life.

Belinda and Garry are always researching better practices for farming sustainably. The Henty Machinery Field Days promotes new and exciting methods of farming. Garry is travelling overseas to England, France and Germany to visit some research facilities and research farms as well as some working farms. He hopes to bring back new ideas to trial on his property.





We would like to thank Belinda for sharing with us her love for farming, the Henty Machinery Field Days and how she looks after our environment. She shared her stories and passion with us. Belinda is a true *Local Land Hero*.



Caitlin Wenke, Mariah Burton, Jasmine Butler
and Piper Lockley-Hinschen

2014 Year 4 and 6, Hume Public School

