

Clarkie the Controller of Magical Merriola



Lanta Clark, Angus Gardiner, Emma Jones,
Brait Headon, Iona Cullenward, Hugh Crighton,
Zoe Books and Charlee Masters



Hay Public School

Creative Catchment Kids

Creative Catchment Kids is an initiative of Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre. It aims to improve engagement between our funding partners 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.

www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/

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

Enviro-Stories

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

Clarkie the Controller of Magical Merriola

Authors: Lanta Clark, Angus Gardiner, Emma Jones, Brait Headon, Iona Cullenward, Hugh Crighton, Zoe Books and Charlee Masters

Teacher: Fleur Cullenward

School: Hay Public School

Local Land Heroes - Securing Our Region

In 2015, students involved in the Creative Catchment Kids program researched and wrote stories about their 'Local Land Heroes' who are involved in pest management in the Murray and Murrumbidgee regions. These heroes are local individuals, couples, a business or industries that have made a difference in their local community by contributing to the management of pest animals and plants. The program was generously funded by Murray Local Land Services and Riverina Local Land Services.

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



Local Land
Services



Australian Government



© 2015 Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre, www.wirraminna.org
Design by PeekDesigns, www.peekdesigns.com.au

I can see majestic red gums dancing proudly along the eroded river bank.

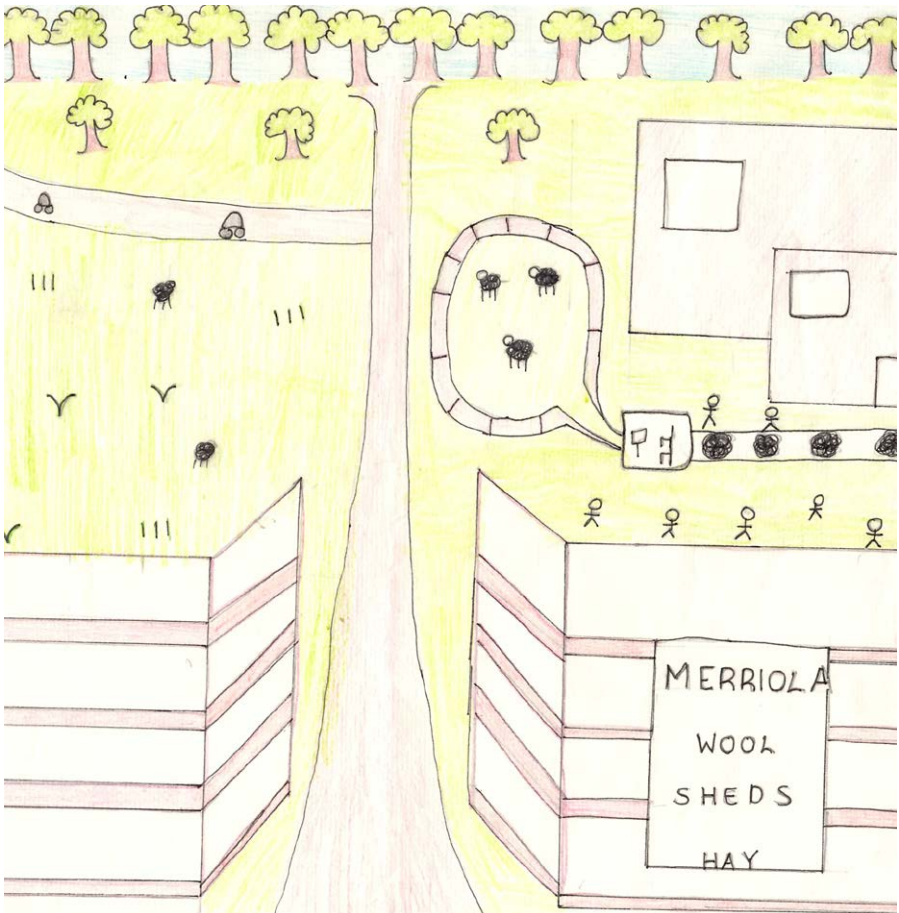
I can smell the mud smeared wool on the huddled flock.

I can hear the loyal sheep dogs shoving the sheep towards the yards.

I can taste the fresh, crisp gum scented air.

I can feel the splintered aging planks along the narrow race.

The Clark's magical Merriola.





Cameron and Lynn Clark live on a property called Merriola. Cam has lived around Hay his entire life. When he finished school, he went droving on the long paddock, contract mustering and doing tractor work.

Lynn lived on a farm in Victoria and then moved to Melbourne after school. She came to Hay and met Cam. They later married and had three children.





Cam, Lynn, Lanta, Lachlan and Ben live happily together on their farm. Merriola is 7500 acres.

The sheep Cam runs are Poll Merino ewes and rams, cross-bred ewes and White Suffolk rams. They breed merinos to sell for their wool. They join their ewes to the white Suffolk rams to sell the lambs for meat.





Cam and Lynn also have a sheep scanning business. Sheep are scanned by an ultra sound machine. The scanning shows the farmer if the ewes are pregnant with a single lamb, twins and sometimes triplets. If the ewe is less than five weeks pregnant the scanner may not see the baby, so he scans the ewes at six weeks.





Cam and Lynn started scanning in 2008. After his first three years, Cam was scanning 220,000 ewes and 18,000 cows per year.

The busiest time of the year is the first half, which suits Cam as he then can spend more time on Merriola. Cam scans in Queensland and all over New South Wales. He likes to scan 600 ewes per hour.





Cam scans his own sheep on Merriola. If a ewe is not in lamb (dry), then he and Lynn will attempt to rejoin the ewe with a ram. If this doesn't work, he will either sell it straight away or just grow wool on it and try again next year.

If they get no lambs they get no income. Scanning helps them improve farm efficiency to give the ewes a better chance.



Harshly pushed back into some sort of box.

The humid air rushed through my wool as

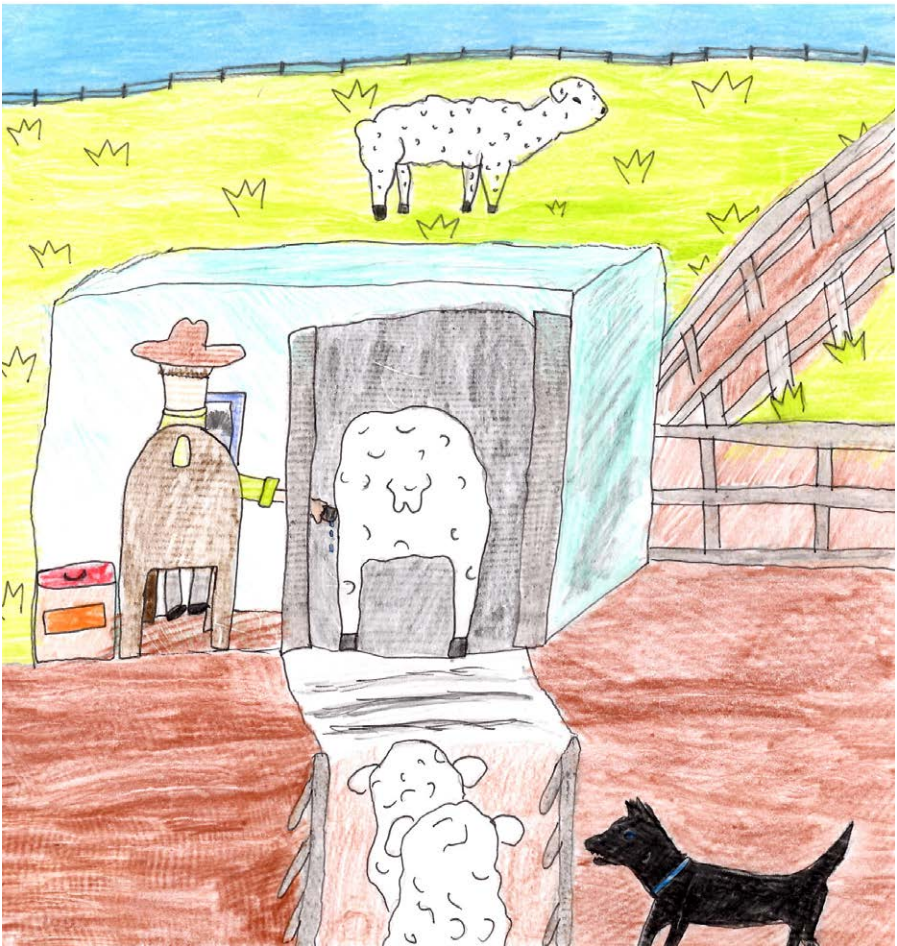
Bleak water streamed onto my belly.

The rattle of the gate guided me to my pen.

I relaxed.

A lean man stumbled through the rugged pen.

He gave me my freedom.





Brucellosis is a bacterial disease that affects sheep. It affects the ram's testicles and reduces the ability to create lambs. Brucellosis spreads from one ram to another and, in some occasions, can result in abortions in ewes.

The local vet, Mr. Gardam, takes blood samples from the ram's neck with a needle and a vacuumed vile. The samples are then sent to a lab to be tested.





Foxes are one of the biggest pests at Merriola. They can be either shot or baited with a poison called 1080. Cam buys poisoned chicken wings from the Local Land Services.

He drags a trail with old meat then puts fox baits around the boundary of his lambing paddocks. He informs his neighbours he is baiting by displaying warning signs.





Foxes can smell a bait up to 800 metres away. Cam digs a hole and places the blue stained bait in the hole and covers it. He marks where he has buried the bait with tape.

After a couple of weeks Cam checks the baits to see if they have been taken. Very rarely does he find a remaining bait. He does find lots of old fox carcasses.



The parched land writhed
As red dirt curled through the lashing air.
A string of lambs stumble
Across remnants of saltbush
The diseased fox, ever greedy, stalks a lamb
Hidden 1080's aroma twists to the fox
Battered paws, feverishly claw
At the dirt, retrieving a blue stained chicken wing.
The fox perishes, destroyed by the guardian of the lambs...
Clarkie.





Lanta Clark, Angus Gardiner, Emma Jones, Brait Headon,
Iona Cullenward, Hugh Crighton, Zoe Books and Charlee Masters

2015 Year 6, Hay Public School

CONGRATULATIONS

Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre and
the Creative Catchment Kids Program won the
2015 NSW Junior Landcare Team Award and will be
competing in the 2016 National Landcare Awards.



Local Land
Services

