

# Di Holding Agronomist Extraordinaire



Rose Kennedy and Rachael Galvin

Yerong Creek 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/](http://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](http://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](http://www.envirostories.com.au)**

# Di Holding

## Agronomist Extraordinaire

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**Teacher:** Jenni Wall

**School:** Yerong Creek 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



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Di grew up in Sydney with her parents Robyn and Graham and sister Jocelyn. As a young girl Di use to spend a lot of time with her Grandpa at his hobby farm with two donkeys and about 10 Hereford cows.

Di went to James Ruse Agricultural High School and then studied agricultural science at Sydney Uni. She did work experience on four different farms and as a research assistant.

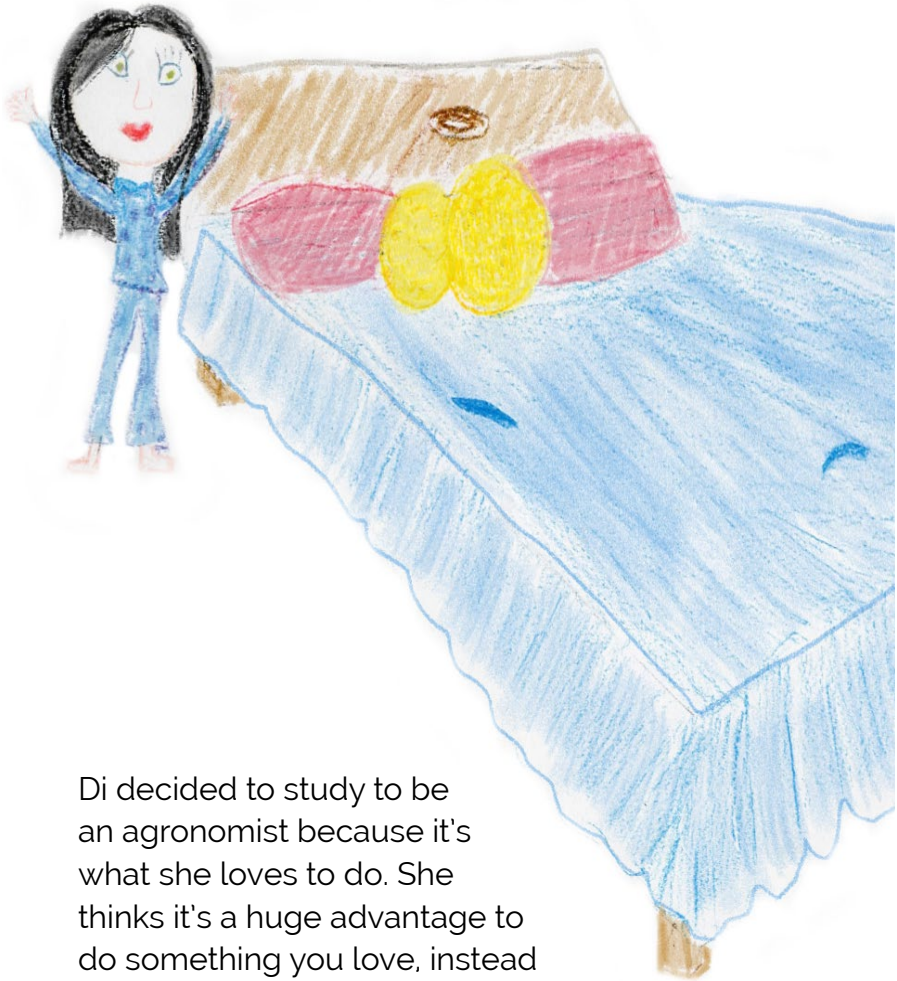


Di and sister Jocelyn at Grandpa's farm



Di lives with her husband Warwick at Glen Lynn. They bought the property when they got married and have lived there ever since. They now own three farms (1100 acres) and lease five (3900 acres). Di has seven chickens and a cat named Turbo. She loves her farm because it involves doing what she loves and because there is so much space.





Di decided to study to be an agronomist because it's what she loves to do. She thinks it's a huge advantage to do something you love, instead of getting up each morning and dreading going to work. She doesn't consider her job as work but a great opportunity when she is always learning.



Di enjoyed working across NSW and all around Australia better than working in one place because she got to meet lots of people and see how crops grow in different areas. She enjoyed going to Western Australia for work because they manage their crops differently to us. Now Di doesn't travel as much but enjoys it when she can.



Di spends time during the cropping season checking the crops for weeds, slugs, mites and diseases. Slugs eat canola when it's really little and mites eat canola and lupins. Weeds carry disease and reduce the amount of grain grown. Di checks canola for windrow timing and to see if the wheat is ready for harvest. Di drives the chaser bin at harvest.





Di and Warwick like to plant all the crops between the rows of last year's wheat stubble. The crops grow well and it saves burning the stubble. They use auto-steer to sow the crops, and for spraying and harvest. They run all their tractors on permanent wheel tracks. The soil where the crop grows becomes soft and even grows mushrooms.



Di and Warwick have helpers to get the jobs done. Ryan is part of the team full time; he helps with planting, spraying, harvest and machinery maintenance. At harvest they have four extra helpers including a cook, because you can't have hungry workers. Their business team also includes an agronomist, an accountant and of course the bank manager.





Di runs her own editing and design business. She helps clients make their brochures and magazines look attractive and easy to read (like this book). Mostly she does agronomy publications, but this year she helped research and designed the Yerong Creek Centenary of ANZAC book. She likes this work because she enjoys making books look pretty and sharing information.



Di and Warwick have been planting trees on their farms for over 18 years. They have planted trees to join a swamp and the creek so that birds and animals can move from one area to the other. Di likes to go bird watching and each year she sees a few new ones in the tree lines as they grow.





Di won the GRDC Seed of Light award a few years ago. It is presented each year to someone who makes a significant contribution to communicating agricultural research. She was also part of the highly successful WeedEd program which was recognized with a national innovation award. Di is proud to be recognized for good communication, especially as she enjoys the work.



Di loves living on the farm, being involved with the farm business and also spending time in the garden and growing vegies. She also thinks it is important to go on holidays, especially to the beach. We would like to thank Di for being our Local Land Hero and sharing her time with us. From the Year 6 class at Yerong Creek, we thank you.





Rose Kennedy and Rachael Galvin

2015 Year 6, Yerong Creek 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

