

# Memory Tree



Catriona Ridley  
Narrabri Public School

ENVIRO stories



## **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.

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# Memory Tree

Author: Catriona Ridley

Teacher: Nicole Allison

School: Narrabri Public School

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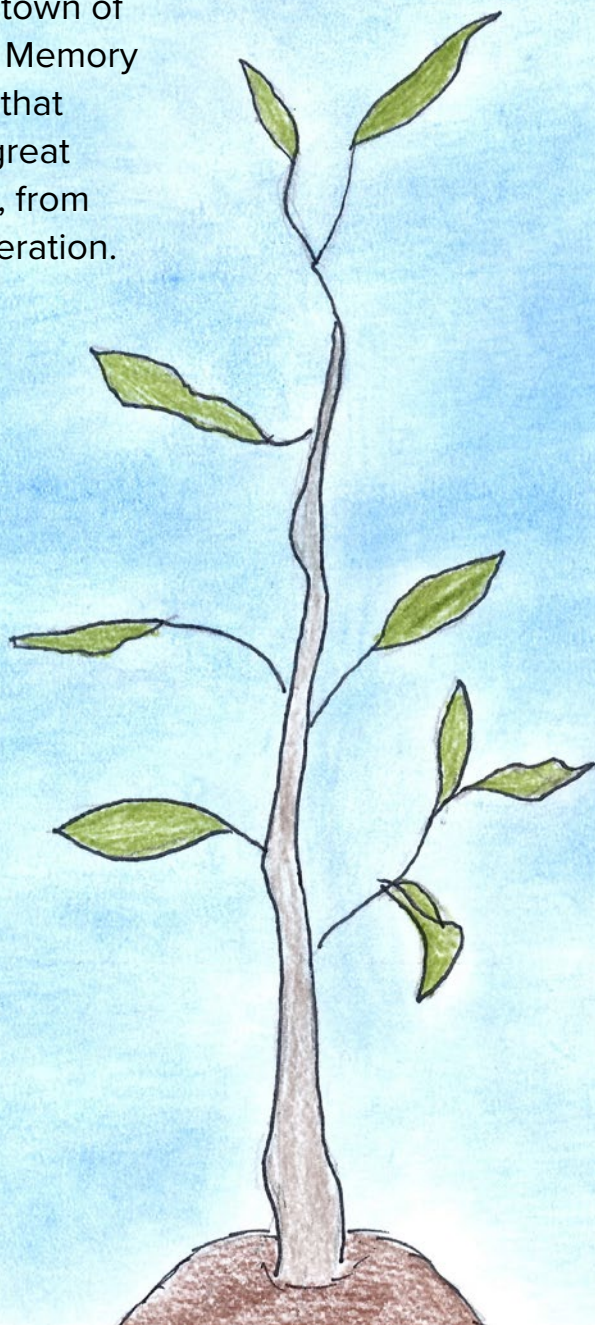
Enviro-Stories is a PeekDesigns initiative, [www.peekdesigns.com.au](http://www.peekdesigns.com.au).

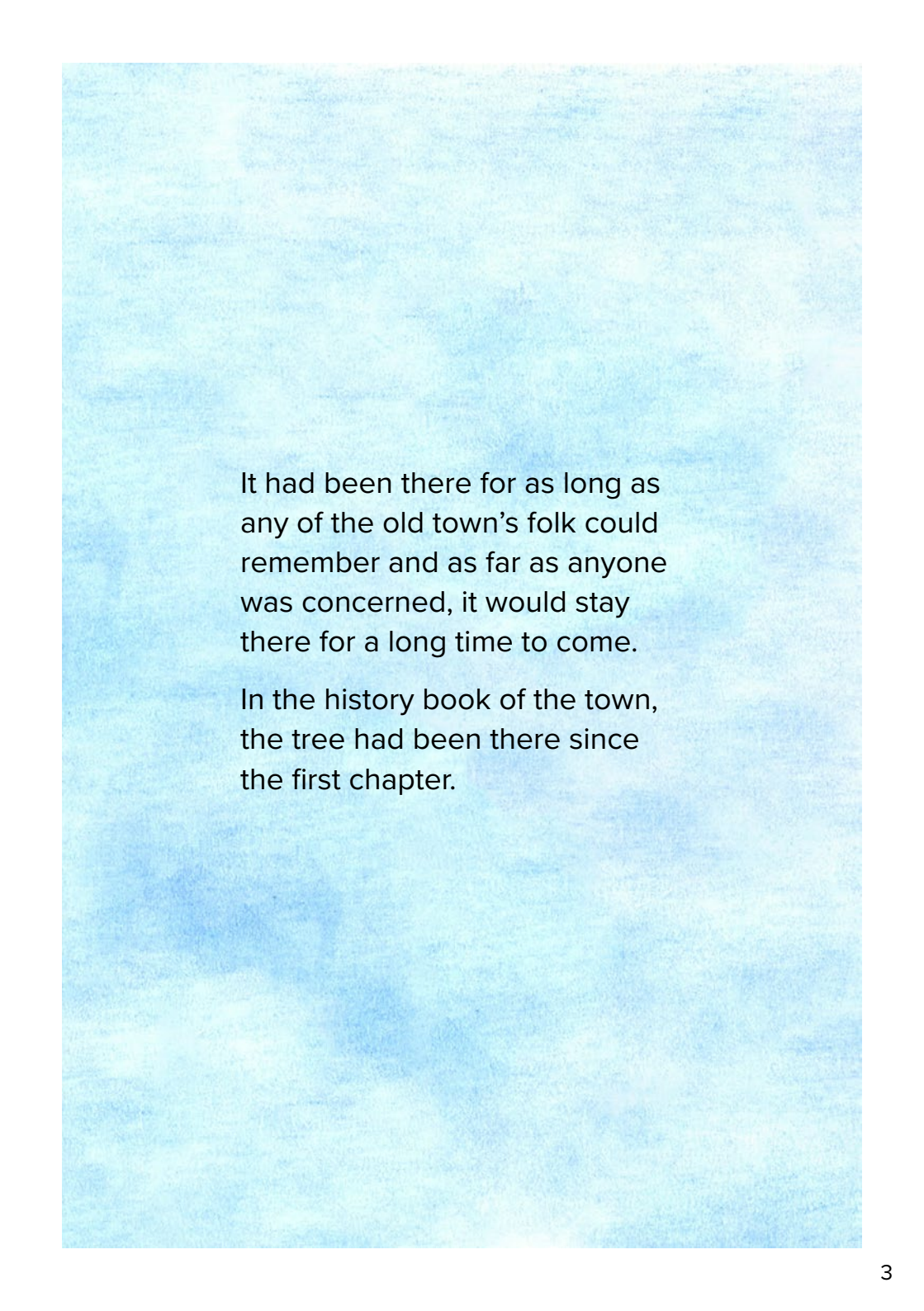
Ridley, C. 2020. *Memory Tree*. Cotton Research and Development Corporation, NSW.





Every adult and child in the small regional town of Narrabri knew the Memory Tree. It was a tree that brought it's town great happiness and joy, from generation to generation.

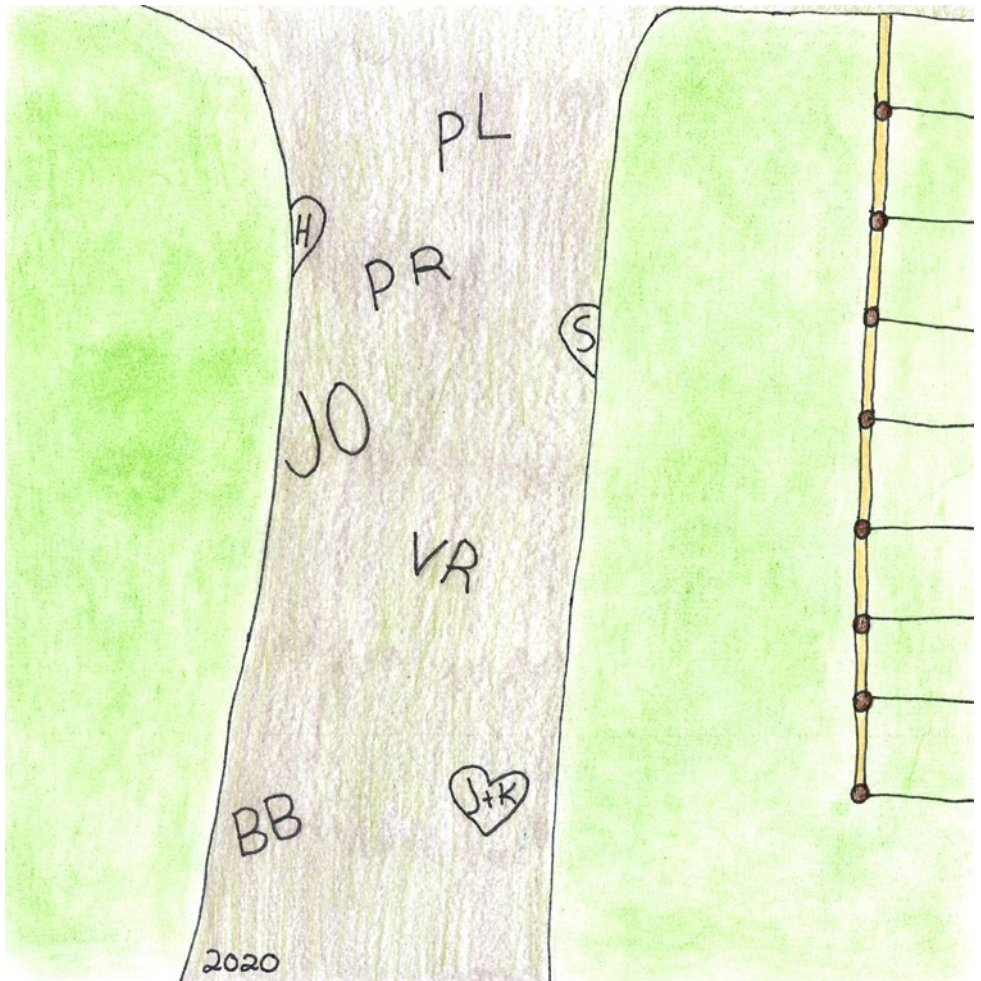




It had been there for as long as  
any of the old town's folk could  
remember and as far as anyone  
was concerned, it would stay  
there for a long time to come.

In the history book of the town,  
the tree had been there since  
the first chapter.





Generations of children had played in amongst its many limbs and each had carved their name onto its trunk... it was a ceremonious thing. City kids wouldn't understand.

It was a magnificent old gum tree, rich and bursting with life. It had silvery, grey leaves and a massive thick trunk. The tree was a place for all. It didn't matter who you were or where you came from.

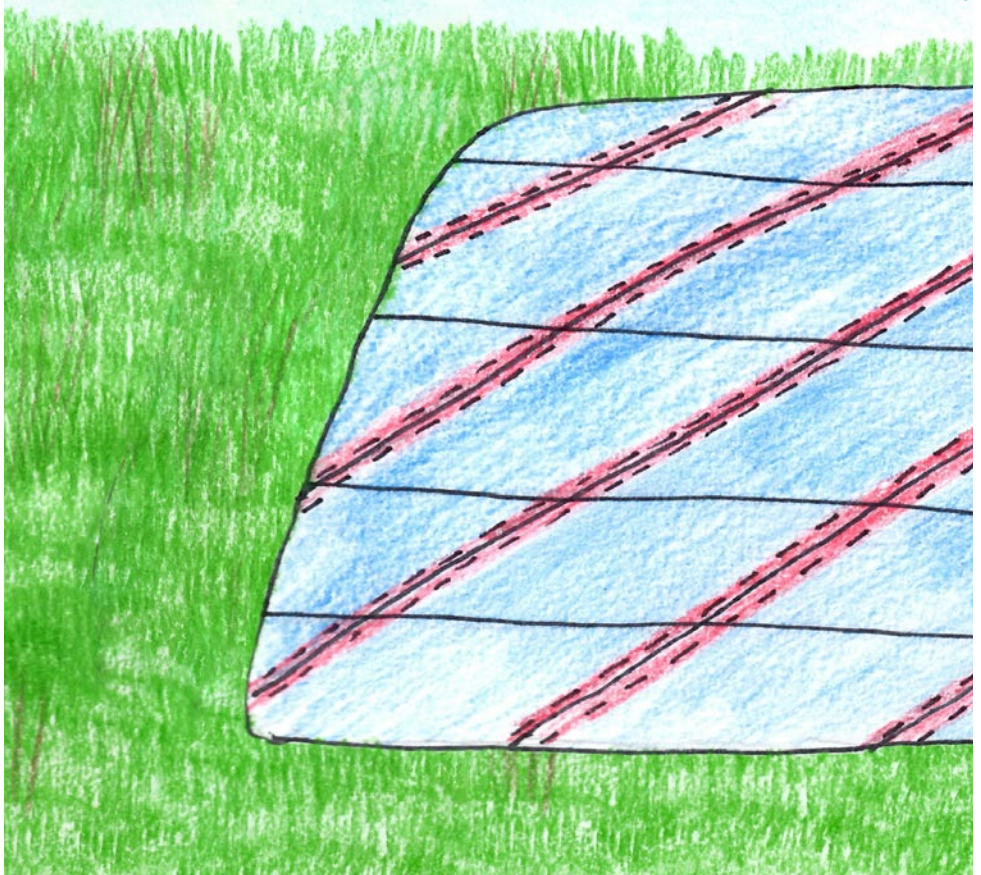
The tree meant many things to many different people.

For Charlie of 5/6A, it was the perfect place to carry out his crimes. The tree had great hiding spots for shooting people with his hand-made pea shooter.

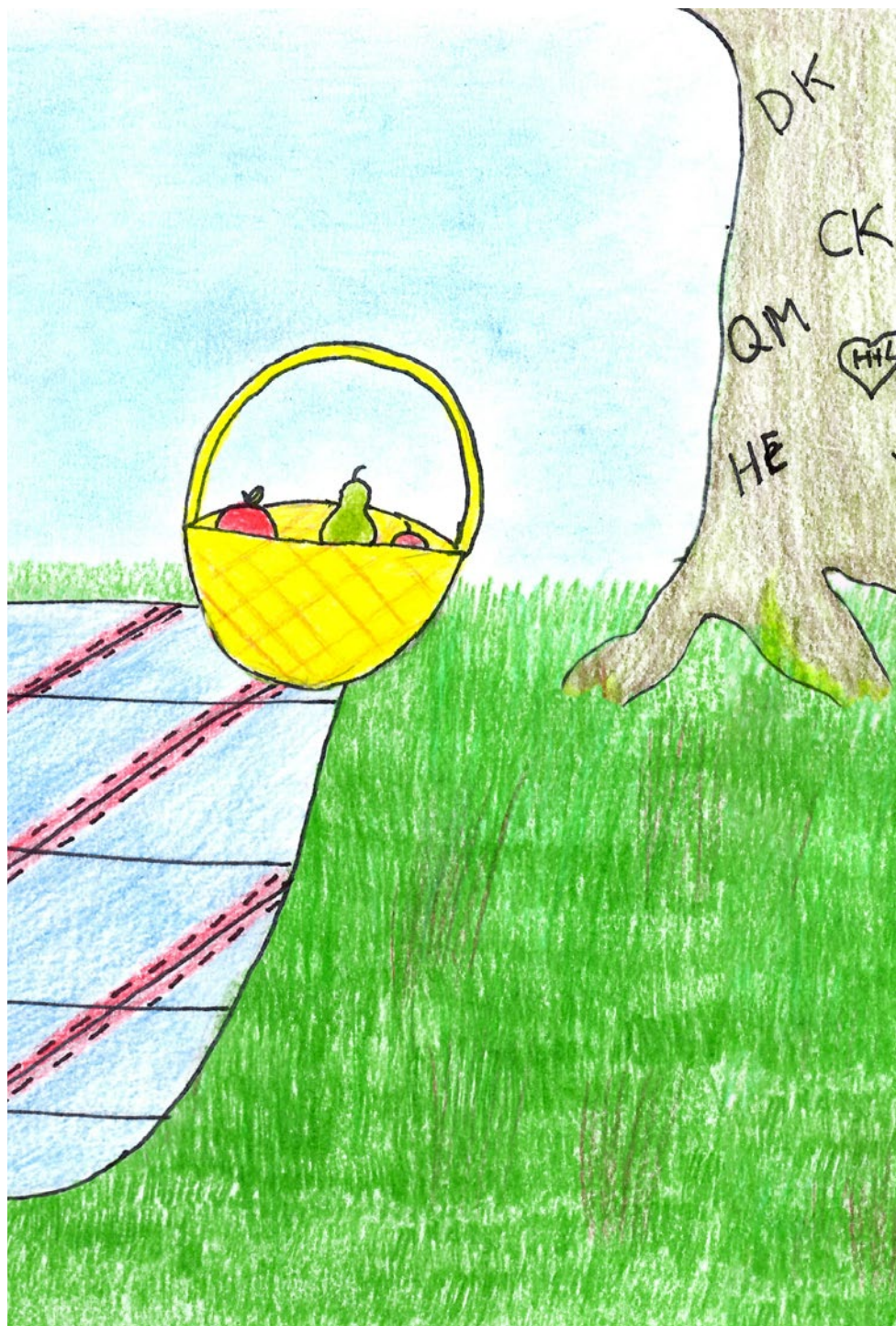




Mrs. Pillpot used the tree to admire the cockatoos that came every year. Many younger children from Narrabri used it to climb and play on. Over the years, people from the town had built onto the tree: platforms, ladders and even a tyre to launch themselves into the river that flowed below. It was the place my sister had shared her first kiss and where all of the mums took their rug rats for picnics.







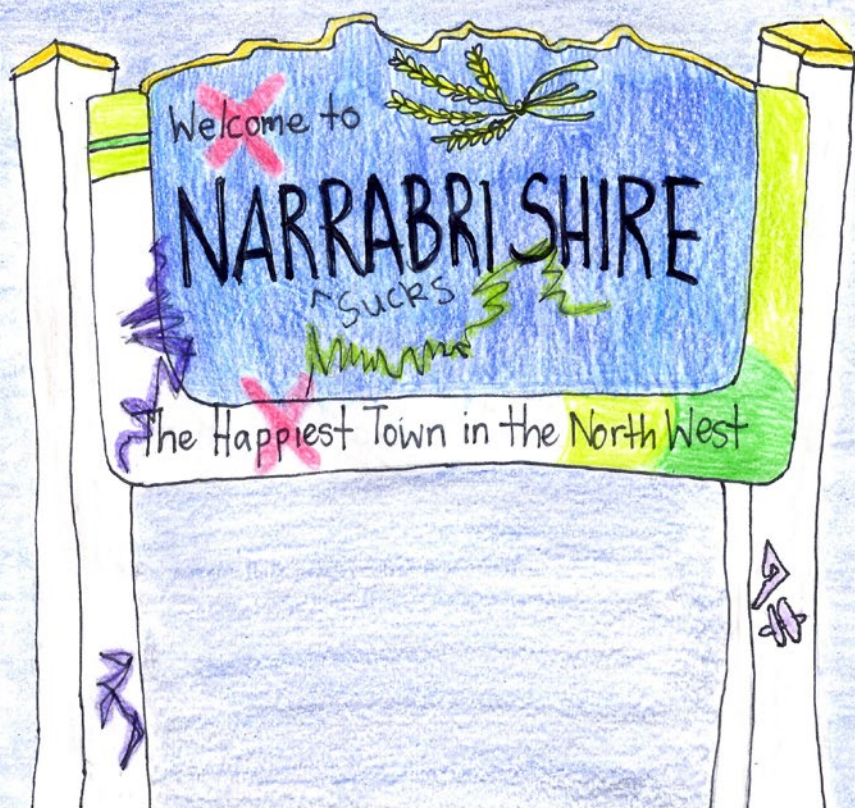


Then one day, after many days without rain, the river started to dry up. So did the grass and all of the other plants that grew by it, including the Memory Tree.





For months on end there was no rain.  
The tree appeared to be withering and  
dying and so did the town's spirit with it.





Even Charlie seemed upset.  
He could no longer use his pea  
shooter on oblivious passers-by  
from his favourite vantage point.



The town seemed to be swallowed by a cloud of gloom and despair.



The town's people didn't seem to be their cheerful happy selves and didn't come outside to enjoy nature. They had realised how important this plant was to them and without it, their world crumbled away and left them with nothing.





And then one day, the cloud of gloom was replaced by real grey storm clouds and fat clear raindrops fell, but it was too late! The tree was dead and there was no bringing it back.



One day as I was running my hand along its rough bark, reminiscing about the great joy it brought me since I was young, a small green sprout caught my eye.





In the months to follow, the tree grew back to what it had once been. The rains that came helped fill up the river.





The town was as it had been; happy and laughing faces everywhere you went. It was a beautiful community.



For me, the Memory Tree symbolises the town people's strength and resilience through hardship.

*It is our tree, our happiness, our memories.*









Catriona Ridley  
Narrabri Public School, Year 6 2020



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