



CLEANING UP AUSTRALIA

Blayney Public School
Blayney

One of the goals in the Blayney Public School's mission statement is to develop an active concern for the world, and they do their very best to live up to it! Their approach to last year's Clean Up Australia Day is a great example.

Over an entire week, Blayney students monitored their litter collection in the playground, aiming for a litter-free Clean Up Australia Day. They also visited local preschools to spread the waste message, produced some fantastic posters for local businesses to display in the main street, and had a competition to see which class could reduce their waste the most. To make their waste-'conscious' week complete, they had a no-waste lunch day on Friday, and wrote a fantastic song to sing at the parent's assembly - an environmental anthem to the tune of Click Go The Shears - Clean Up Australia, Quick, Quick, Quick.

In just one short week, through just a few simple activities, Blayney's kids showed us the way to a much cleaner future. I love the fact that this little school with just 282 students is taking such big strides in encouraging the rest of their community to take an active concern for the world. They have a lot to teach us!

Clean up Australia (to the tune of Click Go the Shears)

*Clean up Australia, quick quick quick;
Show your next door neighbour the problem can be fixed;
Parents, teachers, boys and girls you can help us too;
Then on March the 2nd there'll be nothing left to do;
Then on March the 2nd there'll be nothing left to do;
Show Ian Kiernan that we love this land;
And we're not afraid to get in and lend a hand;
Pick up those papers and place them in the bin;
Make our school grounds as shiny as a pin.*

Chorus

*Spread the message further, take it down the town;
Show our own community we have changed our ground, we
can make a difference every single day:*

*So we have a beautiful place to live and play.
Reduce the amount of plastic while you're at the shops;
Recycle all your paper then the problem stops;
Recycle all your paper then the problem stops;
Find a use for all those things usually left around, then we
don't have to pick it off the ground.*

Words by Blayney Public School



MUDGEER MARVELS

Colin Jones and Peter Brooks
Mudgee

Colin and Peter are very different individuals, but they have an amazing bond based on their approach to waste. To them it's just common sense to reuse things; whatever's already to hand will probably be as good as something new, and reusing usually saves money and helps the environment at the same time.

Colin's been building with recycled materials for 20 years and tells me he drives everyone else crazy because he constantly preaches what he practises. But he's always saying yes to things that need doing in the community, and you can be sure it'll involve recycling something that's 'just too good to throw away'!

Peter's whole life is about reusing things 'like the pioneers did', and his entire home is an amazing example of 'readaption', as he calls it. My personal favourite is his barbeque, made from an old stainless steel washing machine barrel. An old office chair base acts as the stand, and swinging shovels and plough disks provide the cooking plates - and it works beautifully!

Colin and Peter are an unforgettable pair, always the first to jump in and help out and contribute all they can to the Mudgee community.



SHARING SHEDS

Len Wallace
Grenfell

The 'men's shed' isn't a new concept, but Len Wallace and other members of the Grenfell Men's Shed have given it a whole new purpose. Len established the Grenfell Men's Shed in 2003 to address the growing problem of depression amongst men in his community. He believed local men needed a place where they could have a yarn, share their skills, and build things for themselves and their community.

The Shed encourages men to socialise in a non-threatening environment, and to be active and creative in many different ways. It welcomes men of all ages and all ethnic and social backgrounds, and offers a lot of opportunities for mentoring and sharing skills. It's evolved around the needs of the Grenfell community, but the issues it addresses are common to many rural communities. In fact it's been held up as a success story from which other communities within the NetWaste Region have been able to learn, and now similar models are in different stages of development.

What a great concept! The icing on the cake for me is that waste materials have proved to be a very popular source of inspiration for many things men build at the Shed.

Along with Len, the Grenfell Shed members have encouraged and assisted in the development of many other sheds. It is their dream that there's a Men's Shed in every community: Let's hope their dream comes true!

Waste Wizards Our Community Heroes

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle



Stories from inspirational men, women and children who live in the NetWaste Region - they show us how to reduce reuse and recycle in useful and creative ways.



FORWARD

We're pretty much bombarded with gloomy stories about global warming and climate change these days, and it can make us feel there's not much hope for change. We've created a pressing problem for ourselves, there's no doubt. Every year we create mountains of waste, because we buy a lot of things and then throw a lot of them out. Much of what we throw out ends up in landfill, where it can sit for years – sometimes for generations – creating more waste in the form of methane gas and waste water. But we can help solve the problem together if we all get back to three simple Rs: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. Here are some inspiring stories to show how much we can achieve with just a bit of creative thinking!

Sue Clarke
NetWaste Environmental Learning Adviser

ABOUT SUE CLARKE

Sue Clarke is Environmental Learning Adviser with NetWaste. Her primary focus is on waste education, but more broadly, her work also involves raising awareness of what it means to live more sustainable lifestyles.

Sue has worked with participating NetWaste councils for nearly 10 years now, and says the best part of her job is connecting with the people she meets: 'I'm always inspired by the passion some people have for the environment and the lengths to which they'll go in order to make a difference. This brochure is about just a few of these amazing individuals. Thank you to them all for sharing their stories with me.'

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MENINDEE MIRACLE-WORKER

Marie Coombe
Menindee

Marie started recycling 8 years ago when her granddaughter Billy Jo was raising money to enter a country music festival in Broken Hill. Billy Jo didn't win, but Marie realised recycling was a great way to help her community and her favourite charity, the Royal Flying Doctor Service at the same time.

Since then this 71-year-old dynamo has set up a highly efficient back-yard recycling centre. She sorts recyclable waste into different streams: aluminium, cardboard, glass and plastic; then crushes it and puts it into wool bales for collection by a recycler from Broken Hill.

Marie loans out metal drums so people can help her collect recyclables. She also takes time to walk around Menindee to collect cans and bottles herself. When someone asked her if she was embarrassed about collecting 'rubbish' she quickly replied, 'I wasn't embarrassed when the RFDS picked up my husband when he was sick!'

As of this year, recycling has enabled Marie to donate more than \$40,000 to the RFDS – an incredible achievement! She works five days a week to stay on top of her recycling, but she doesn't see this as anything special; she simply says: 'I have to do something with my time, and I like to keep busy.'



WORMS WITH WOW!

Hugh Browning
Narromine

He's only small, but nine-year-old Hugh Browning from Narromine has a big job. One of his teachers introduced him to the world of worm farming last year, and since then he's built a bit of an empire – he has his own worm farm at home, and has helped his friends to build farms as well.

Hugh's always been interested in gardening, and since learning about worm farms and what they can do for his veggie patch at home, his garden has been thriving. He says home-grown fruit and veggies are much yummiier than shop-bought; his favourites are strawberries and snow peas. The secret to Hugh's green thumb is the juice from his worm farm, which he mixes with water to help fertilise the garden: 'It's better than normal water because it gives vitamins to the plants.'

With a bit of help from his mum and dad, Hugh makes taking care of his veggie patch a daily priority. His mum told me having the garden near the back door was the key, because it reminds Hugh to water his garden every time he walks into the back yard – a very useful tip!

One final tip from Hugh:
'You can have a worm farm ... as long as you don't have chooks.'



RESOLUTE REUSER

Herb Clarke
Orange

A rocking chair made from old pallets on their way to landfill? It sounds unlikely, but for 89-year-old Herb Clarke it's just a matter of daily life to put other people's cast-offs to this kind of ingenious use!

Herb loves a challenge, and there's no stopping him. He always has a project on the go and it inevitably involves reuse of some material or another. It doesn't matter what needs to be made or fixed – he'll work out how to do it.

Like many folk around Herb's age, his resourceful attitude was borne initially of necessity rather than concern for the environment. He's lived through tough times when people threw very little away – just in case this or that object or utensil might come in handy – so reusing is a long-established habit.

He used to be a carpenter by trade, so he knows his way around everything to do with woodwork, but he seems to be able to turn his hand to almost anything, and family and friends take full advantage. They often turn up with something they've found at the 'tip' or in the back shed, and ask Herb to fix it, knowing if they suggest it's an impossible task he'll take great delight in proving them wrong.

WHAT IS NETWASTE?

NetWaste is a collaborative waste management venture between 28 NSW councils. Its initiatives serve a population of more than 300,000 and an area of around 317,942 square kilometres – representing more than a third of NSW. We aim to:

- Establish a waste management model that ensures cost-effective best practice for participating councils
- Develop education strategies that support this model
- Undertake specific projects identified through our planning process.

NetWaste initiatives include:

- A Regional Resource Management Plan detailing a coordinated approach to waste management and resource recovery
- Regional contracts for scrap metal collection, household chemical collection and drumMuster
- Research into other waste management and resource recovery opportunities such as e-waste recycling, event waste management and used oil collections
- Waste To Art – an annual community event celebrating reuse of waste through art and craft
- Ongoing community collaboration, which is central to the achievement of best practice
- Environmental learning, which is a crucial part of building sustainable communities

PARTICIPATING COUNCILS

Bathurst Regional	Forbes Shire
Bland Shire	Gilgandra Shire
Blayney Shire	Lachlan Shire
Blue Mountains City	Lithgow City
Bogan Shire	Mid Western Regional
Bourke Shire	Narromine Shire
Brewarrina Shire	Oberon
Broken Hill City	Orange City
Cabonne Shire	Parkes Shire
Central Darling Shire	Walgett Shire
Cobar Shire	Warren Shire
Coonamble Shire	Warrumbungle Shire
Cowra Shire	Weddin Shire
Dubbo City	Wellington

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