



# Light and sound

Lesley Lambert tells Paul Cockram what Braidwood means to her and where to from here

I came to Braidwood in 1982, I'd just finished an arts degree in Sydney, I had a young child and Braidwood was a really nice place to ground myself for a while and because it was full of artists.

I came originally from a smallish town in the south of England, then I came out to Adelaide with my family when I was about 11. I spent my young teenage years there and then I moved

to New South Wales. After years of travelling, including back to England and surrounds, a five-year stint as a hairdresser, eventually I stumbled upon this place and made it my base. It has been a wonderful part of my life.

I came to Braidwood with my young daughter and I wanted a job that I felt good about and that, it turned out, was music. As a little kid I was able to remember songs and all the words and I used to sing all the time. I remember one time I was helping my father on the farm and I was singing a song to him. My mother had taken me to an ice skating rink where I heard a song, I was only four but I remembered all the words.

I was singing to my father to show him I could remember all the words and while I was singing a moth flew into my throat. I was so upset that I had killed this little creature but my father said, "No, he's gone in there to help you with your voice — this is where your voice will come from, this little moth". From that moment on I just had to sing everything.

I remember going out on dates with boys in their hot cars, you know, but I would be paying more attention to all the songs on the radio than I would be to them. (Laughs). I didn't sing professionally until I was in my mid twenties, after I came back from England and a break-up in my relationship.



"TONY GREIG WAS SIX FOOT SIX. THEY HAD TO GO AND FIND THREE FOOD CONTAINERS FOR ME TO STAND ON SO THAT I COULD GET ANYWHERE NEAR HIM TO PRESENT THE AWARD." (LAUGHS UPROARIOUSLY)

## LA, LA, LA

With a small child I wanted a job that would not interfere with my parenting so I started singing at night when other people could mind her while she was asleep.

When I arrived in Sydney as a young inexperienced singer I had a list I'd been given of people to contact. I just started at the top of the list, I didn't know who these people were, like Graham Bell, but they treated me as if I'd been singing for lots of years and suddenly I was on tour with these top Australian musicians.

Then, because I realised I needed some assistance, I took myself to voice production lessons with a busy Macquarie Street operatic teacher called Florence Taylor and I begged her to take me on. I had to turn up at eight in the morning to be the first one there and everyone knows that it's a real no-no for a singer to start before midday (laughs). She transformed my tiny fine little voice into something far more substantial through a series of exercises that I still do today.

I've sung at the Basement, the Marble Bay, the Rocks Push and all those Sydney venues. In between gigs I signed on for P&O cruises around the Pacific.

I have, over the years, performed in Braidwood at earlier exhibition openings, at the club and the school. I've always thought that a Saturday afternoon of jazz at the Servicemen's Club would be a popular gig for the town. Quite a few years ago there was an upright piano at the Altenburg café and we did perform there.

I've also had a bit to do with sculpture



NETTA DAVIES ON THE PIANO WITH LESLEY IN THE LATE EIGHTIES.

## BRAIDWOOD'S GOT TALENT

in Braidwood. Years ago BCS asked me to run a sculpture class. They provided plaster and wire, paper and material. It was more economically viable than working with stone. We produced some lovely pieces out of it and everyone had a really good time.

A year or so went by and I received an invite to a sculpture exhibition by a girl whose name I didn't recognise. At first I was at a loss to know why I was invited to the opening as a guest but then she rang me just before to see if I got the invite. She had been inspired by my workshop and had gone on to become a ceramicist. Talking to my teacher friends made me realise that to have one student from a class of seven be inspired enough to take it on was quite rare. I think it was a lovely thing to happen — a mid eighties contribution to Braidwood (laughs).

There's no aspect of my life that isn't to do with art. Not a day goes by when I don't take a photograph, make some art or jewellery — even my main job which is hairdressing is art — making head sculptures.

Braidwood has been very good for me because I like a challenge and I like to be driven. Braidwood is good like that — it has a very high standard of artists. You know there are lots of



A NIGHT AT THE CAFÉ ALTENBURG. TONY HETHERINGTON ON BASS, STIRLING PRIMA PIANO, JOHN GUNN DRUMS, LESLEY AND LOCAL TEACHER BRIAN KILLE SAX.

places that do little crafty things, but they're not quite at that level and I love the fact that Braidwood is and it keeps you challenged. We have been, and still are, surrounded by really good writers, poets and all types of artists.

I think life comes in waves. I caught a

good one about twenty or thirty years ago and I think I'm riding another one now. Everything is working for me at the moment and that's what happens in the arts all the time. You spend your time re-inventing yourself and every now and then it all comes together. It feels like that's where I am right now.

## Airpower at its finest

Never let it be said that ground crews and engineers lack a sense of humour! Here are some actual maintenance complaints, generally known as Squawks, submitted by RAAF pilots to maintenance engineers to fix:

The problem logged by the pilot

**The solution and action taken by maintenance engineers**

Left inside main tyre almost needs replacement

**Almost replaced left inside main tyre**

Test flight is OK, except for autoland very rough

**Autoland not installed on this aircraft**

A2 Propeller seeping prop fluid

**A2 Propeller seepage normal - A1, A3 and A4 propellers lack normal seepage**

Something loose in cockpit

**Something tightened in cockpit**

Evidence of leak on right landing gear

**Evidence removed**

DME volume unbelievably loud

**Volume set to more believable level**

Autopilot in altitude hold mode produces FPM descent

**Cannot replicate problem on ground**

Dead bugs on windshield

**Live bugs on backorder**

IFF inoperative

**IFF always inoperative in OFF mode**

Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick

**That's what they're there for!**

Number three engine missing

**Number three engine found on right wing after brief search**

Aircraft handles funny

**Aircraft warned to straighten up, 'fly right' and be serious!**

Target radar hums

**Target radar reprogrammed with the words**

Reprinted from the *Tindal Times*, Katherine NT.

**Local poster hits the city**

Observant pedestrians who've looked in the window of the old 'Monterey' café, now the offices of *BWD* magazine, will have seen the "MINING CURES CANCER" poster. It was produced by an underground poster workshop at Mongarlowe to alert the world to the dangers of having mining magnates influencing our media.

One of the posters was sent to the *Sydney Morning Herald* to assist them in their struggle. A recent ABC 'Australian Story' on retrenchments in the newspaper industry showed that it was appreciated and prominently on display in the *SMH* newsroom.