



THE SEED STORAGE AREA AND WHERE THE SEEDS ARE KEPT CAREFULLY LABELLED.

SEEDY SIDE OF LIFE

We came from an English background where there were rolling hills and fields, all divided up very neatly with hawthorn hedges and so on.

There was the incentive that you had to clear a certain percentage of your land within a certain amount of time before the consideration of the land grant was given.

You've also got to remember that we were settled over 175 years old here in Braidwood. Steam power came along in the mid to late 1880s and suddenly there was a massive thirst for timber as a fuel. It was used to fire steam-powered water purification plants for the township, to drive sheering plants for big sheep operations, to drive mills and dairies — you name it. Steam was the electricity of the time, and there was this massive thirst.

We're on the edge of Australia's first inland city, which is Goulburn, so there were plenty of jobs to go and cut and collect timber. When the railways came through there were bridges to build so all the best trees, like yellow box, went in a very short amount of time.

It's interesting that when I first came to Braidwood in the early 1980s, where Braidwood Wilson's grave is, there was still the remnants — big dead standers up on top of that hill. There are historic photographs that show it as a beautiful woodland.

Unlike the bush outside your window now [Paul's house in Mongarlowe] here it was woodlands. Aboriginal people had managed the land really, really well. You read accounts of early explorers who say they could gallop a horse through a woodland. You'd have no chance of galloping a horse through your place now. The land was managed for the herbivores to get the very sweet grasses growing under the shade of our native trees.

**BWD: How long did it take you to learn to do everything with one arm?**

Constantly learning, Paul. It's been over thirty years but there's not a day goes by where I don't develop a new trick. We are just advanced monkeys after all.

I'm constantly trying to evolve ways of doing things more effectively, more efficiently and more simply. I've found simplest is best. I had a prosthetic when I first lost my arm, but I found I couldn't rely on it. I kept on breaking it. And so, I gave up because I thought, "Oo, if I rely on this thing and I don't learn how to do things single-handedly and this thing breaks on me, it won't be good."

I've just always had the will to solve problems one at a time. One of the things that I really appreciate about my parents and about that generation of people is they had a saying, "You've always got to get back on the horse that throws you."

For me as a kid growing up, it was literally that because we had horses and you did come off them. Dad would stand over you and help you up — but it was like, "Come on, get back up in that saddle." And that's a metaphor for life, I think.

Don't give up, because the challenge is good. It's the challenge that exercises your brain. It might be a 3 am moment when you think, "Ah, that's how I could do that."

One of the things I haven't attempted is getting back on the motorcycle. I still own a motorcycle, but I haven't gotten back on it yet. I haven't quite worked that one out yet — but anyway, that may yet come.

planting programme. He is not even close to 30% of land that he owns.

But I was just driving past the other day and watching the sheep trickle to the trees on the lee side of the westerly that was blowing. They were all heading there because the wind must have been a bit chilly or a bit hot.

If you can establish an island in the middle of a paddock, and particularly if you make it a little bit kidney shaped so that the animals can move around and the wind is blocked from every direction, it's going to do well for your enterprise.

**BWD: Why did farmers knock all the trees down?**

I would put it squarely at the fault of the governments, particularly the Department of Agriculture at the time. In that, initially, when the colonies were settled, you were given a land grant under the condition that you cleared that land.



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HOME GROWN GOODNESS

**Wynlen House Village Farm Winter Workshops**

Wynlen House Village Farm is sharing the secrets of their 12 year success as market gardeners and micro farmers. Learn from the people who know how to grow and how to teach. These two on-farm workshops will help you become self sufficient or commercially viable growers in cool climate Australia. Courses are taught by Helen Lynch and Bronwyn Richards. Helen is a university qualified, experienced adult educator, Bronwyn is an experienced small farmer and principal gardener at Wynlen House.



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<https://www.wynlenhouse.com/growing-in-a-cool-climate.html>

April and May are wonderful months in the market garden. The weather is cooler and generally there is little rain to keep plants happy. The skies remain bright and the days warm. It's time to feed the soil in preparation for winter and to plant the last of the seedlings that will add to your larder during the colder months.

Feeding the soil means making sure there is plenty of animal manure, mineral amendments and — most importantly — organic matter, dug into your beds or mulched over (for the no dig folk). This is to make sure the worms, beneficial in-ground insects and microbes have lots to eat over winter.

The action of the microbes is very important as it is often their work that helps plants take up nutrients in the soil. Making and using a simple microbial culture can be of great benefit by supplementing your soil's natural load of good microbes. Lantasia Compost has a simple recipe on their website for making a lactobacillus serum. The

serum can be put into the soil via a watering can vey easily — it's rather fun to make the serum and it does make a great difference to your plant health. While you are making that get to planting your seedlings of leafy greens — silverbeet, spinach, asian greens, a hardy lettuce variety. These can cope

with the winter and will grow slowly but produce a crop you can eat in July and August.

Let's enjoy the cooler months and keep our fingers crossed for more rain this autumn.

Bronwyn Richards  
Wynlen House Urban Micro Farm

