

What is Permaculture?

Bill Mollison (1928–2016) and David Holmgren (b. 1955) are the Australian co-founders of **permaculture**, a sustainable design system developed in the mid-1970s.

This [video](#) explains how Bill and David developed the concept of permaculture:



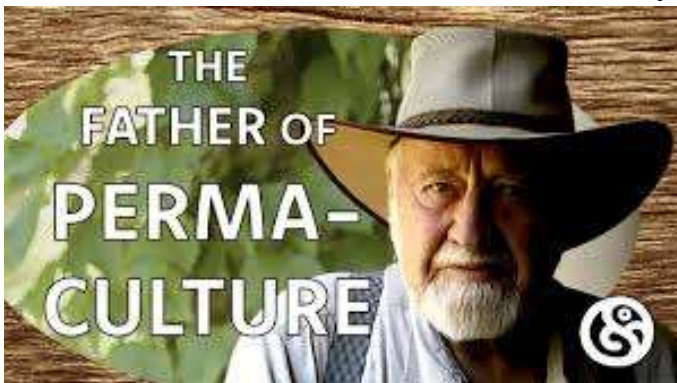
They published *Permaculture One* in 1978, establishing a framework for agricultural and social design based on ecological principles. Mollison focused on promoting and teaching, while Holmgren developed practical applications.

Key Details on Mollison & Holmgren:

- The pair met at the University of Tasmania, where they began developing the concept in 1974.
- **Mollison's Role:** Known as the "father of permaculture," he was a fiery advocate who established the Permaculture Institute and disseminated the concept globally.
- **Holmgren's Role:** A former student of Mollison, Holmgren provided the rigorous theoretical basis in *Permaculture One* and continues to lead in ecological design from his home, Melliodora.
- **Core Concept:** Permaculture is not merely organic gardening but a system for designing sustainable settlements and land-use.
- **Relationship:** While they had an intense, defining working relationship in the 70s, they later pursued different paths within the movement, with Holmgren focusing on retroworld and energy descent futures.

Both individuals have left a profound legacy on ecological stewardship. Mollison died in 2016, and Holmgren continues to practice and teach.

You can watch this [video](#) to see a documentary about Bill Mollison's life and work:



In setting up our "Truffleberry" farm in Trentham, Victoria, Justin, my son, our farmer, horticulturist and agronomist, spent a week in 2001, learning the principles and practices from Bill and David in nearby Daylesford.