



NATIONAL TRUST

# NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA

## *Heritage in Trust*

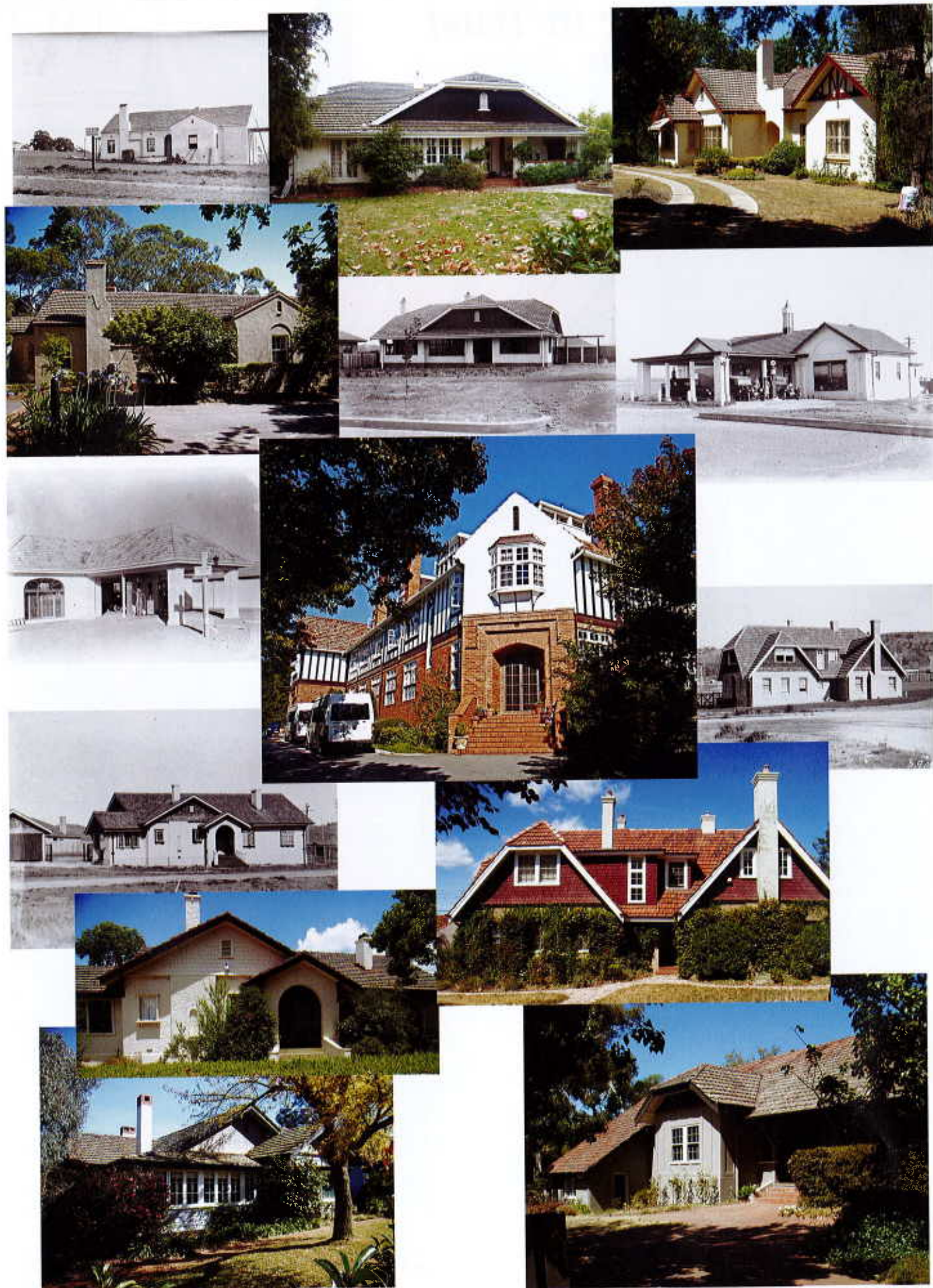
AUGUST 2010

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# A Promising Partnership: the architecture of Rudd & Limburg after St Gabriel's Girls School





*Continuing the Rudd and Limburg story begun in our last issue.*

Lawrance Rudd and David Limburg had an office in the Times Building at the south-east corner of present-day Mort and Cooyong Streets, Braddon.<sup>1</sup> For a site at 14 Mort Street, next to the Sheekey factory, Rudd had applied in December 1926 to construct the Ainslie Service Station and it was completed ten months later.<sup>2</sup> The symmetrical Mediterranean style design had elliptical arched fanlights over its display windows. They designed Brodie's Service Station, completed in October 1927 in the same style at Eastlake Circle, the eastern gateway to Canberra. It embodied "the latest features of garden garages", and had a lantern tower to "serve as a road lighthouse to incoming motorists".<sup>3</sup>

A succession of plans for residences, inspired by the English Arts and Crafts movement, flowed from the practice. English architects had reacted against industrialisation by recreating the vernacular, returning to homely materials and producing sophisticated versions of thatch-roofed country farmhouses. Some Australian architects followed suit, and by the 1920s they had produced unpretentious houses with a comfortably familiar character.<sup>4</sup> This style of architecture met with the approval of the FCC, as suitable for their concept of a Garden City. The first such house Rudd and Limburg designed can be seen today, addressing the intersection of Mugga Way and Moresby Street, Red Hill with a shingled gable from which an off-centre half-timbered gabled pavilion projects. Between this and another half-timbered gabled pavilion is the arched entrance porch. A timber residence for Mrs Alice Evans at the intersection of Paterson and Chisholm Streets, Ainslie followed. There are again shingled gables from which off-centre gabled pavilions with faceted bay windows project, linked by a glazed corner verandah. Two neat stuccoed-brick houses in Forrest for the contractor Warren McDonald continued the off-centre gables-within-gables motif. One survives at 32 Dominion Circuit, but the other, at 31 Empire Circuit which had twin north-facing bay windows, does not.<sup>5</sup>

The quality of Rudd and Limburg's domestic architecture reached a peak with the residence for Reginald Maguire at 31 Farrer Street, Braddon designed in June 1927.<sup>6</sup> The wide low-pitched hipped gable facing the street is a characteristic of the Inter-War California Bungalow style which was common elsewhere in Australia, but not in Canberra.<sup>7</sup> The house had dark staining on the woodwork and rough-cast rendering; earthy touches possessed by houses in that style.

The house and surgery for Dr Mollinson is another impressive design. The building is splayed across the intersection of Furneaux Street and Murray Crescent, close to the Manuka shopping centre, with a dominant

steeply-pitched terracotta-tiled roof over its attic floor. The hipped gables have pairs of small-paned double-hung windows. The proliferation of stained-timber shingles evokes the Shingle style introduced from America to Australia by Horbury Hunt forty years earlier.<sup>8</sup>

The Rudd and Limburg design for a residence for Ralph Hendra was approved on 22 December 1927, but the specification has "and Limburg" crossed out, pointing to this being the last of the houses by the partnership. The house was completed on 22 October 1929. One week later it was sold to Felix James Broinowski, the man who had praised Limburg two years earlier for his work for the Canberra Society for Arts and Literature.<sup>9</sup> The residence is on a commanding site where Baudin Street meets Dampier Crescent. The long, sheltering terracotta-tiled roof has dark stained-timber shingled hipped gables with louvred ventilators. The entrance steps lead onto a shady verandah where large brackets support the eaves. Beside it is the master bedroom, with a small hipped gable and imitation half-timbering on the stuccoed walls. Beyond the bedroom, the main roof extends as a cat-slide over a lower study, projecting further into the front garden.

In early 1928 private building activity was suffering a downturn, and Rudd was practicing alone. He called tenders in June for the second stage of St Gabriel's school and for a residence at 10 Wilmot Crescent, Forrest for the prominent politician Colonel Goodwin. Its Georgian Revival style face brick walls with mock quoins and hipped roof are also present in the residence by Rudd and Limburg completed in June 1928 at 4 Tennyson Crescent, Forrest. Rudd designed another motor garage and residence, at Mort and Girrahween Streets, Braddon in 1928.<sup>10</sup>

Houses designed by Rudd in 1929 failed to match the architectural quality of those from his partnership with Limburg. A red-brick residence at 3 Rous Crescent Forrest has steeply-pitched gables within gables and half-timbering, but awkward massing. The design of the modest residence at 5 Gipps Street, Barton is also unconvincing. Rudd applied in March 1929 to construct a residence at 32 Mugga Way, Red Hill for F.A. Bloomfield. It has the exact Mediterranean style gabled pavilion as Rudd's own 1926 house. In fact Rudd had applied in December 1927 to build a house there when his wife was the leaseholder.<sup>11</sup> He probably used the same design in 1929. Later that year Rudd left Canberra and in 1931 he was practicing as an architect in Wollongong.<sup>12</sup>

The Limburg family had increased in 1927 with the birth of David Grant Limburg, who emulated his father by becoming an architect. The family moved first to Sydney, where their second son, Allan, was born in 1929.<sup>13</sup> In the early 1930s, after riding out the Depression in a house he built for his family near Wyong and selling socks and ties on the streets of



Sydney, Limburg took up a position in 1934 with the Works Branch of the Commonwealth Department of the Interior in Sydney. Before and during World War II he worked on the designs of many defence facilities, including those at North Head in Sydney, Lithgow, St Marys, Rottne Island and Fremantle. He was responsible for major camps and ordnance workshops in NSW and was indeed "A real, unsung wartime hero". After the war he directed the disposal of NSW defence installations and materials. He returned to Canberra in 1947 as Assistant Director of Works before being transferred to Sydney in June 1950.<sup>14</sup> He was promoted to a higher position in Canberra in 1955<sup>15</sup> and later became Director of Works.<sup>16</sup>

Of the six Limburg children, Elizabeth and Moira were educated at the Canberra Church of England Girls' Grammar School, renamed after the Sisters of the Church relinquished the school in 1933.<sup>17</sup> Elizabeth remembers her father "as a very quiet reserved person ... When he smiled he had a lovely twinkle in his eyes, particularly if he was in the company of his family or friends". She later presented the school with a photograph of her father, which now hangs in the school reception hall.<sup>18</sup> Her cousin Jocelyn was also a pupil at the school. She recalls her mother pointing out houses designed by her 'Uncle Eddie' Limburg. One, at 45 Limestone Avenue, Braddon, is a Department of Works War Service Home Type 334. This red-brick house has an unusual steeply-pitched terracotta tiled roof with eyebrow dormer windows to the attic bedrooms. The working drawing was signed by the principal architect E. Miller in 1951, but Limburg could well have designed it and possibly other war service homes built in Canberra.<sup>19</sup>

David Limburg died in 1973,<sup>20</sup> having contributed to Canberra's architecture through his work at the Federal Capital Commission on public buildings, then with Lawrance Rudd in a promising partnership cut short by the downturn in the Canberra building industry and the Great Depression. The surviving privately-built houses produced by the partnership complement the more well-known government-built houses of the 1920s and some of them deserve our appreciation for their high architectural quality.

The author wishes to thank Elizabeth Limburg (daughter of D.E. Limburg) and Jocelyn Ladyzhynsky, (neice) for their advice.

**Ken Charlton AM FRAIA** B.Arch, Dip. Conservation Studies is a Canberra architectural historian.

- 1 Tender notice in *Canberra Times* 27 Jan 1927.
- 2 FCC 'Record of Building Applications and permits issues'.
- 3 *Canberra Times* May 1927.
- 4 Richard Apperly, Robert Irving and Peter Reynolds, *Identifying Australian Architecture*, 1989, p 140.
- 5 FCC 'Record of Building Applications and permits issues'.
- 6 *ibid.*

- 7 Apperly, p 206.
- 8 Peter Reynolds, Lesley Muir and Joy Hughes, *John Horbury Hunt, Radical Architect 1838-1904*, Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, 2002, p 144.
- 9 ACT Building file 2048.
- 10 FCC 'Record of Building Applications and permits issues'.
- 11 *ibid.*
- 12 John Sands Directory for Wollongong, 1931.
- 13 Elizabeth Limburg, pers. comm. to Ken Charlton.
- 14 Allan Limburg, 'A Civvy in Wartime', in *Bravo! Recollections & Reflections of the Veteran Community*, 43rd Story Writing & Art Competition, 2005 and *Canberra Times* 19 May 1950.
- 15 Commonwealth Gazette, 5 May 1955 p 1422.
- 16 Jocelyn Ladyzhynsky, neice of D. E. Limburg, pers. comm. to Ken Charlton.
- 17 Ransome T. Wyatt, *History of the Diocese of Goulburn*, 1937, 1998 reprint, pp 126-7.
- 18 Elizabeth Limburg.
- 19 Canberra Housing - War Service Homes file 1009 and file L106/47/7.
- 20 NSW death index.



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The 2010-2011 financial year poses an enormous challenge for the National Trust.

Commonwealth funding is now project based, and while it will support some of the projects we have undertaken in the past such as the Magazine, there is no income for general administration.

The Council has accepted a substantial deficit budget for the second year in a row. The 2009-2010 financial year has ended slightly better than previously anticipated with a lower deficit than we budgeted for.

We must now find ways to increase our income and control expenditure to enable us to survive. This is a major challenge and will involve a new strategic plan and consideration of range of measures including increasing fees, increasing volunteer effort where we can and exploring other innovative ways to increase income on an ongoing basis.

The Shop's contract with Old Parliament House formally ended on 30 June 2010. I express my sincere thanks to Dianne Dowling for an enormous effort over twelve years; the shop has generated substantial income been the public 'face' of the Trust. This would not be possible without the assistance of volunteers. Many volunteers have 'worked' in the shop since it opened in 1994 and their assistance is to be commended. My sincere thanks to each and every one of them.

Heritage issues continue to confront the Trust, including the current review of the ACT Heritage Act. The biggest concern is the backlog of nominations which the Trust believes must be processed more quickly. There also needs to be greater flexibility or arrangements between the Territory and the Commonwealth to ensure all the ACT Heritage is effectively protected, rather than continuing with the situation of non-Commonwealth buildings on designated land having no protection.

There has been an increase in volunteers assisting the Trust which is greatly appreciated. We are facing a massive challenge in front of us and I hope to present a better picture in forthcoming editions.

Eric J. Martin, AM

## CHARTER

At the National Trust of Australia (ACT) we see that:

- Our **Vision** is to be an independent and expert community leader in the conservation of our cultural and natural heritage.
- Our **Purpose** is to foster public knowledge about, and promote the conservation of, places and objects that are significant to our heritage.
- Our **Organisation** is a not-for-profit organisation of people interested in understanding and conserving heritage places and objects of local, national and international significance in the ACT region.

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Membership renewal reminders are generated one month before the anniversary of due dates.

The National Trust of Australia (ACT) is a non-profit, community-based organisation that aims to preserve Australia's heritage for future generations. Membership of the National Trust offers a number of benefits.

Among them are:

- Free entry to National Trust properties around the world
- Complimentary copy of National Trust magazine(s) quarterly
- Discount of up to 15% at National Trust Shops
- An opportunity to participate in travel organised by the Trust
- Access to the National Trust's special events and activities
- An opportunity to help the Trust protect your local & cultural heritage



*This Members page is an information page for all current and prospective members of the National Trust ACT. Our aim is to pass on any information that may be of assistance to members and also to notify members of activities that have been organised by the various committees of the ACT National Trust.*

### Novi Scripti

The National Trust (ACT) warmly welcomes the following new members:

Maris and Chris Adams	Terence and Suzanne Hogan
Mark Barber	Mark and Maureen Hopkins
Judi Barton	Wendy Hudson
Rosemary Bell	Julia and Jack Kearslake
Claire Braddeley	Rachael Kitchens
Ian Campbell	Barbara Leahey
Raymond and Christine Charlton	Phillip and Sally Low
Marie Clarke	Rosetta Ann and Stephen Maloney
Philip and Heather Curruthers	Carina Manning
Paul Cusack	Barbara Marshall
Susan Devic	Sheila McAlpine
Keith and Mary Donohue	James McKenzie
Rosalyn and Bronis Dudek	Joanne Meers
Mandy Elliott	Rosemary Pijpers
Everyl and Graeme Ellis	Brian and Sowchan Power
Margaret Flinn	Janette and Andrew Rawlings
Bruce and Sylvia Frazer	Mary Anne and Michael Rosier
Patricia Gardner	Andrew Paton
Ross and Pam Garfoot	Dianne Pentland
Frank Geurts	Michael Reay
Kerrie Glennie	Prasona Reddy
Glen Graham	Mark Scott
Richard Gray	Phillip and Marilyn Smith
Marie and William Hampson	Kellie Stephenson
Keith and Deborah Harrison	Ferdinand and Marie Tilse
Wayne and Ros Henschke	Kate and Harriet Torrens
Rachael Hilton	Russell Walls
Fran Hinton	Dianne and Peter Wennberg

## Do You Need Heritage Advice?

**Free heritage and architectural advice is available for heritage property owners and purchasers.**

The **Heritage Advisory Service** provides guidance on renovating or extending a heritage home. The service is provided by Philip Leeson Architects Pty Ltd.



Call Philip Leeson or David Hobbes on **6295 3311** for one free appointment either on site or at their Manuka office.

This is an independent service supported by the ACT Government

**Canberra Connect 13 22 81**  
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## Message from the Executive Director

Today our Office Manager and I are preparing a mail-out/E-News to members. It is interesting to reflect on how mail-outs have changed in a few years. We will be contacting about 750 households via E-News and 350 households via post. Being able to communicate via email saves the Trust on the cost of stamps and staff/volunteer time. Some years ago, volunteers spent days preparing letters and Heritage in Trust magazines for post. Now, a mailing house distributes our magazines. But there are very useful projects that our volunteers in the Office are currently doing.

Elizabeth Kennedy, Allan Kerr and Keith Farquhar are continuing their assistance with the transfer of our records about classified sites to digital form, with some already uploaded to our website. This will allow more public access to our important records. We are applying for NLA funding to establish the heritage significance of our collection. John Tucker is doing an audit of the tours that the ACT Trust has conducted in the past ten years or so, with a view to identifying tours that have been successful in the past, and which could be repeated. Members' input on past successful tours is welcome. It is great that John has been on many of the tours himself, and is a very enthusiastic tour participant. He has recently joined the Tours committee, as has Robert Abell, who is planning some geology focused local tours, including one to the Molonglo Gorge. Our local tours have been very popular. We hope to increase the number and variety to suit all ages and fitness levels. We are working on the development of some Regional Tours, including several Indigenous Tours. With our participation in the Cultural Tourism national initiative, we expect the National Trusts across Australia will have a more coordinated and accessible program of heritage tours.

Much staff work these days is on research and project management for funded heritage projects. For instance, Dr Peter Dowling has been researching for the Centenary Border Walks program. So far, the work has been funded by our allocation from the NTPP Federal Grant. We have applied for ACT Heritage Grant funding to continue to produce ten Centenary Border Walks. These will have self-drive brochures and signage to inform and celebrate the stories and landscape along the ACT border. Judging from the photographs and stories Peter is bringing back from his research Canberrans and visitors to Canberra have a treat in store. I have been project managing two Jobs Fund (Heritage) projects based at St Andrew's, All Saints, and St John's churches. The conservation work for these projects has provided jobs in the specialized area of heritage conservation, and a lasting legacy for the maintenance of the heritage significance of these three Canberra churches. We are waiting to hear the outcome of the allocation of funds to the ACT Trust from the 2010/2011 NTPP Federal grant. As mentioned in my last report, there are several national initiatives that we expect to participate in, and we will take the lead on the Cultural Tourism initiative. These heritage projects are not only worthy and of interest to Trust Members and the general public across Australia, they are critical for our financial survival as a National Trust in the ACT.

Looking ahead from September 2010 onwards, there are some key dates for Members. The AGM is to be held on Thursday October 21<sup>st</sup>, the Huntly Christmas Party on November 27<sup>th</sup>, and the Volunteers Day celebration is on 5<sup>th</sup> December. More details about these events can be found in this magazine, and on our website.

Sue Chambers  
Executive Director

### Trusted Recipes

#### PORCUPINES

(or hedgehogs if you're English)

1kg minced steak (500g for 4 people)	4 celery sticks cut into 25mm pieces
1 cup breadcrumbs, or bran or rolled oats	1 teaspoon salt
½ cup onion chopped	½ cup uncooked rice
1 teaspoon paprika	small whole onions (optional)
1 large tin tomato soup	chopped capsicum (optional)
2 eggs	

Combine meat, crumbs (or substitute), salt and pepper, beaten eggs, onion, washed rice. Shape into walnut-sized balls with floured hands. Heat soup and pour over meat balls in heavy pan. Add whole onions, celery, capsicum and simmer with lid on for ¾ hour. Serve hot with rice or noodles and peas or beans.

When they're cooked the rice sticks out all over the meat balls, giving them a spiky look – hence the name.

### OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE SHOP CLOSURE

*It is with a heavy heart that I say farewell. I have been with the National Trust ACT and the shop for 12 years, and during that time made many friends.*

*I would like to extend my thanks to the many volunteers and staff I have had the pleasure of working with during that time. Many have come and gone, too many to name here, but the memories remain.*

*The support of members made the shop a success and assisted the finances of the Trust. There will be hard times ahead for the ACT Trust without the shop, but you never know what could happen in the future.*

*Thank you all for your friendship and support.*

Dianne Dowling



## Heritage Officer's Report

In my last Heritage Officer's Report (Heritage in Trust, April 2010) I began with the statement, 'The first three months of this year have been a busy time.' Nothing seems to have changed; the last three months of this year have been equally, if not more, demanding for the Trust. In our role as an independent and expert community leader in the conservation of our cultural and natural heritage, we have been involved in a number of consultation and advisory roles.

The erection of a seventeen level residential and commercial building is taking place in the New Acton area. The erection of this building was opposed by the National Trust on the grounds of its adverse impact on the heritage values of the Shine Dome (Academy of Science building), Lake Burley Griffin and the former Hotel Acton. We requested that the project be referred to the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Arts, Mr Peter Garrett under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. Unfortunately the Minister has allowed this building project to proceed. The Trust has subsequently asked the Minister for further clarification on the reasoning for this decision.

We have also had a busy time providing expert advice and comment to Territory and Commonwealth planning bodies on the proposed Jerrabomberra Wetlands electrical infrastructure development, Molonglo Valley urban development, the former Belconnen Naval Transmitting Station Development Control Plan and planning works for York Park.

The Heritage Committee also made a substantial submission to the recent review of the 2004 ACT Heritage Act. In general we saw no need to make substantial changes to the present Act but made strong comments on its past administration. Our concerns centred on the enormous backlog of heritage nominations that still await consideration by the ACT Heritage Council.

The Trust first expressed its concerns over this backlog, numbering well over 200 nominations, in 2007. In our submission to the review we recommended that a concerted effort be made by the Heritage Council to ensure that nominations to the ACT Heritage Register are processed and assessed in a more timely fashion. We

also recommended that genuine consideration be given to deeming nominations accepted unless the Heritage Council decides otherwise within 2 years. The Trust also recommended that more financial support and resources be given to the Heritage Unit to enable it to better carry out the functions of the Heritage Council as specified in the Act.

The full submissions of the Acton development, Jerrabomberra Wetlands and the ACT Heritage Act 2004 are available on our website (from the sidebar on our homepage select 'Heritage Issues').

I have been assisting the ACT Government as a member of two reference groups for the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve Draft Management Plan and Old Canberra Brickworks and Environs Planning Strategy. The former has resulted in a draft document which is now available for public comment. The latter is in the early stages of development and will be available to the public in the near future.

The Trust will also be providing comment on forthcoming projects involving draft heritage management plans for Parkes Place including the National Rose Gardens and the National Carillon & Aspen Island.

To end on a positive note, the Trust was pleased at the recent decisions by the ACT Government to place the former Tralee and Couranga Homesteads, Hume, on the ACT Heritage Register. The Trust wrote to the Chief Minister in October 2009 expressing our concerns for the future of these buildings. We were very pleased to receive notice that a nomination of Griffith Oval No. 1 to the ACT Heritage Register, which we supported, has been provisionally registered. We are very encouraged by the recent announcement in the 2010-11 Budget of \$730,000 for upgrades and restoration to the Ginninderra Blacksmiths Workshop, Nicholls; 'The Valley' homestead ruin, Gungahlin; Robertson House, Red Hill; Cargills Cottage, Fyshwick and Tralee and Couranga Homesteads, Hume. This allocation of funds, although spread between these heritage listed places, is much needed for their long-term conservation and use. The Trust, together with the Canberra Archaeological Society, has been asking for further conservation and interpretation works to be done, particularly on the Blacksmiths Workshop and 'The Valley' ruin.



*Ginninderra Blacksmiths Shop and 'The Valley', two heritage listed ruins of early Canberra to receive finance from ACT Government for conservation works (Photos P. Dowling 2010)*



In the last report I outlined a project which we are working on to celebrate the 2013 centenary of Canberra. Centenary Border Walks will provide a number of self-guided walks to and along the ACT/NSW border which was surveyed between 1910 and 1915. This project is progressing well, with a number of areas selected. In

future editions of this report we will be presenting some of these walks for early birds to try. The object of the walks is to provide information about the fascinating history of the surveying of our border and to also provide pleasant and easy walks to areas of the border which are not often visited.

## Book review

reviewed by Peter Dowling

**Matthew Higgins, 2009, *Rugged Beyond Imagination. Stories from an Australian mountain region*, National Museum of Australia Press, Canberra.**



Living in the mountain regions described in *Rugged Beyond Imagination* is all about grazing, Brumby running, water harvesting, timber extraction, scientific exploration, engineering, skiing and other recreations.

Mathew Higgins explores these themes using oral histories of the region, drawing on written sources and the surviving physical record of human activity in the high country. With his extensive collection of oral histories recorded over many years and his own intimate knowledge of the mountains and the people, there is no one better to take on this task. Higgins explains that his mountain region, while taking in much of the present ACT, is not limited to its borders. He begins his narrative in the early 1820s when '...the first Europeans with their hard-hooved horses, sheep and cattle, splashed through the Murrumbidgee...' and entered the high country surrounding what was eventually to become Canberra.

As we know, the Europeans with their 'hard-hooved-horses' were not the first people to occupy the highlands of southern Australia. Aboriginal occupation of the area has been shown to date back at least 20,000 years. Higgins acknowledges this and deals with it early in his preface, before getting into the main themes of his book – the European occupation of the mountain regions. This is not a deliberate intention to side-line the Aboriginal history of the high country in order to concentrate on the European story. It is because of the real dearth of our knowledge and understanding of these Indigenous people and their own distinctive relationship to the environment. The reason for this is the lack of hypothesis-driven research.

The reader begins this fascinating adventure with the high country people with the first settlers who found their way over the rugged ranges to the small valleys and flats. The sense of the stark and real isolation is quickly acquired when considering the family names which have endured over several generations. The Bobeyan area in the south of the ACT for example, was first taken up by James Ritchie. After he left, it was the McKeahnie, Crawford, Brayshaw and Westerman families who were associated with area. Many of the families occupying

cattle runs in the valleys inter-married. In some cases brothers from one family married neighbouring sisters of another. Many of the families had strong Scottish links, and it is easy to imagine the skirl of the bagpipes echoing over the ranges as the clans of the homelands reinstated their lineages in the high country of Australia.

Higgins uses his oral histories to good effect, letting the mountain people tell their own stories their own way. Alex Crawford, down Bobeyan way, tells of the thrill of running wild cattle:

*No sport I have ever seen could equal that of chasing a mob of wild cattle down those same terrible mountains; no music equal to the crash of scrub, the rattle of horns, when a lot of old wild bullocks and bulls were started off from some well-hidden camp ... Nothing could be more exciting or dangerous ... The man who lost time by turning aside to avoid dangers would be hopelessly out of the chase, and any bushman of the olden days would consider himself disgraced should he not be down with the cattle and other horsemen when they reached the lower landing at the foot of the mountain.*

Remind you of someone?

Everard Oldfield often went into the mountains to the high snow leases during the 1940s and 1950s. He tells of more delights, 'We'd get there with the sheep, put 'em in the yard and unpack, cup of tea, six foot of fishing line and down with a bendy stick fishing.' After a night in the cold rain with no fire and wet to the bone he would think, 'Oh gosh, I'm mad going into those hills again when you have to do that – sit up all night, no sleep.' But he went back time and again.

The women's lives may not always have had the same excitement and adventure as their husbands. Their days at the homesteads were often long, with hard work the norm. Everard Oldfield made the point that 'there was smoke coming from most chimneys by dawn.'

When electricity came to these remote places it was often in the form of an outside generator. For Daphne Curtis of Mount Clear it was a great innovation; she had a washing machine, "A big old cumbersome Lightburn, more like a cement mixer. It was really good." No more had the washing to be done outside on fine days with clothes boiled up in kerosene tins by the nearby creek. Daphne also found that with the generator came electric lights; the children could now read their storybooks and complete their correspondence school work. No more pressurized shellite lamps, 'now there was a light in each room. It was fantastic.'

continued on page 13





## Travels with the Trust

### Cooma Cottage and Historic Yass

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September 10.00am-4.00pm**

The National Trust (ACT) will conduct a tour of Cooma Cottage and the Historic township of Yass. We will meet at Cooma Cottage, Yass for morning coffee, and have a guided tour through the house. After a picnic lunch we will explore historic Yass with an expert guide.

**Meeting Point:** Cooma Cottage, Yass at 10am

**Cost:** \$20 members, \$25 non members (including morning tea).

House tour additional charge: \$6 Adults, \$4 Concession, National Trust members free. Bring a picnic lunch. This is a self-drive tour.

**Booking essential:** 6230 0533 or book online [www.nationaltrustact.org.au](http://www.nationaltrustact.org.au) – click on Bookings under Events & Meetings tab.

### 5<sup>th</sup> Reid Open Houses and Gardens

**Sunday 10 October 1-4.00 pm**

The National Trust, with support from the Reid Residents' Association, is conducting its fifth annual guided visit on Sunday 10 October 2010 to homes in Reid originally constructed in the 1920s and 1930s. The three homes and their gardens have not been opened previously under this program. Here is your chance to view restorations and extensions to three privately owned dwellings in the heritage precinct of Reid. An introductory talk will be provided.

This event coincides with the opening of two other gardens in Reid under the Australian Open Garden Scheme. There will be time for you to also visit these gardens if you would like to do so, but an additional charge will apply – payable to the garden owners.

**Meet:** Cnr Dirrawan Gdns & Currong St, near the Reid Tennis courts.

**Cost:** \$20 National Trust and RRA members, \$25 non-members (includes a delicious afternoon tea and a copy of *The Heritage of Reid* by Shibu Dutta – published by the Reid Residents' Association).

**There is a limit of 30 persons, so don't delay with your booking!**

**Booking essential:** 6230 0533 or book online [www.nationaltrustact.org.au](http://www.nationaltrustact.org.au) – click on Bookings under Events & Meetings tab.

### Blandfordia 5 Heritage Precinct, Griffith and Forrest

**Sunday 17 October 1-4.00pm**

Enjoy a springtime viewing of one of Canberra's earliest planned town areas. Graceful streets, mature trees and significant parklands, and the distinctive architectural features of the Federal Capital Commission houses in their garden settings make this walking route attractive and of historical interest. The walk covers the middle area lying between the 'gentleman's residences' of old Red Hill and the amenities of Manuka, where an afternoon coffee will end your walk. Local residents will tell the stories that bring the area to life.

**Meet:** at the Lawns on Bougainville Street

**Cost:** \$20 members, \$25 non-members

**Booking essential:** 6230 0533 or book online [www.nationaltrustact.org.au](http://www.nationaltrustact.org.au) – click on *Bookings* under Events & Meetings tab.



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### Riverside Cemetery, Queanbeyan

**Sunday 31 October 1-4pm**

This cemetery is an example of where the state, not the church designed the burial ground incorporating multi-denominational sections. On a guided tour, you will notice the variety of tombstone styles from the earliest in 1847 to the more ornate Victorian ones through to the 1970s, where engraved information becomes very concise. Learn about the pioneers of our region. Join us for afternoon tea afterwards.

**Meet:** at the cemetery on Erin Street, Queanbeyan.

**Cost:** \$20 members, \$25 non-members

**Bookings essential:** 6230 0533 or book online [www.nationaltrustact.org.au](http://www.nationaltrustact.org.au) – click on *Bookings* under Events & Meetings tab.

### Molonglo Gorge and Reserve

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> November 9.30am-3.30pm**

This walk will examine how geology and geomorphology have underpinned the evolution of the gorge and its present status as a natural geographic corridor, influencing biodiversity and cultural development. Led by National Trust member, Robert Abell it will be a short day excursion starting at 9.30am at the car park near the gorge entrance and finishing at about 3.30pm. Distance is approx. 7kms but maybe a few kilometres longer if participants wish to return via tracks through Kowen Forest. Packed lunch to be brought and carried on walk by participant. Number limited to 19. Wine/soft drinks and nibbles will be provided at the end of the excursion (at carpark).

**How to get there:** Go along Pialligo Avenue (past airport); turn left into Sutton Rd and then right into Kowen Rd. Follow signs to Molonglo Gorge Forest Park where walk begins near the gorge entrance.

**Cost:** \$20 members, \$25 non-members.

**Booking essential:** 6230 0533 or book online [www.nationaltrustact.org.au](http://www.nationaltrustact.org.au) – click on *Bookings* under Events & Meetings tab.





### De Salis Cemetery Walk

*Sunday 14 November 1-4pm*

Join us for a walk upstream from Tharwa Bridge along the Murrumbidgee River southwards to the unique 19<sup>th</sup> century cemetery next to the Cuppacumbalong property. See how the De Salis family overcame hard rock and floods to build a private cemetery where there are 19 recorded burials. The flat track is 2.8km return. Wine/soft drinks and nibbles will be provided at the end of the excursion.

**Cost:** \$20 members, \$25 non-members.

**Meet:** Cross over Tharwa Bridge and park near the amenities block at the picnic ground. We will depart from the large Canberra Tracks sign.

Booking essential: 6230 0533 or book online [www.nationaltrustact.org.au](http://www.nationaltrustact.org.au) – click on Bookings under Events & Meetings tab.

### Flowers, Food and Whales

This has been postponed to September 2011 to give sufficient lead up time.

## AUCTION

**Keep a look out  
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[www.nationaltrustact.org.au](http://www.nationaltrustact.org.au)

## Plenty of Food for Thought at Lake Mungo

Dr Peter Dowling again conducted an excellent five day tour for 24 of us as we headed west to the world heritage listed Willandra Lakes area. After enjoying Griffith's hospitality we continued through Hay to Mildura. Recent rains greened up these plains and there was even a puddle of water in Lake Mungo—rare indeed!

Peter provided us with reminiscences of earlier archaeological expeditions in the area and documentation from related scientific publications of the human remains. It was also fortuitous that he grew up near the Murray River, as he certainly had answers for all our many question on the region. We were privileged to have Peter's input as it provided great balance to our Aboriginal guide, who looked after us on our sunny day on the lunette at Lake Mungo.

The bounty of the Murray was enjoyed at Stefano's restaurant in Mildura and at wonderful wineries in Echuca/Moama and again at Rutherglen.



## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 35<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the National Trust of Australia (ACT) will be held in the Menzies Room at the National Archives of Australia, Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2010, 6.30pm for the Annual General Meeting at 7.00 pm.

In accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the following Councillors will stand down at the AGM, but are eligible for re-appointment:

Antoinette Buchanan, Grahame Crocket, Paul Cohen, Di Johnstone, Scott McAlister, Linda Roberts and Meg Switzer.

Members are invited to nominate persons for election to Council. Nominations must be made and seconded, in writing and signed, by current members of the Trust accompanied by signed consent from the nominee.

Nomination forms can be obtained from the Trust office and must reach the National Trust Office by 5pm, Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2010.

Our guest speaker will be Mr Bruce Leaver, Chair of National Landscapes program, DEWHA. He will speak on the topic "National Landscapes Program: Selecting the Best".

For further information please check our home page on the website [www.nationaltrustact.org.au](http://www.nationaltrustact.org.au), or phone the National Trust Office on 6230 0533.



# The Arboretum

*Canberra, our nation's beautiful capital, is a sublime example of the contribution that trees make to the urban landscape. During nearly one hundred years of careful planning and skillful implementation, Canberra's trees have taken the city from barren sheep paddock to dense urban forest. Of the many people responsible for this wonderful achievement, a few names stand out. Emeritus Professor Lindsay Dixon Pryor AO is one, and on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin, the Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum stands as both a commemoration to the man and a place to continue his work.*

Lindsay Pryor served as Superintendent of Parks and Gardens in the national capital from 1944 to 1958. He was then appointed Professor of Botany at the precursor to the Australian National University, the Canberra University College.

In 1954, the Governor-General of the day, Sir William Slim, asked the Superintendent of Parks and Gardens to do something about improving the north-western view from Government House. These were days before the construction and filling of Lake Burley Griffin and the view in question was one of the meek Molonglo River and, as the Governor-General put it, 'a rank grassy paddock'.

With his trademark enthusiasm, Pryor embraced the challenge set by Sir William and commenced planting trees over an area which would eventually cover 26 hectares. While some of the trees planted were likely to have been sourced from stock available for street and park plantings of the time, Pryor also used the site as a place for continuing experimentation of tree species, planting patterns and landscape effects. In this regard, Lindsay Pryor continued the important experimental work commenced by Charles Weston decades earlier.

Despite being a generation apart, the similarities between the approaches of Pryor and Weston are remarkable. Both men had an intrinsic understanding of the value that careful tree planting could add to the landscape setting of the national capital. They each acknowledged the importance of wind breaks as a mechanism for improving site conditions and

believed in the need to conduct lengthy practical and scientific testing of potential street trees before commencing mainstream public plantings. The combination of these skills and attributes has seen the planting undertaken by Weston and Pryor produce some of the most successful and highly regarded aspects of the Canberra landscape.

Key among Pryor's successes are plantings in Canberra streets and parks developed in the 1940's and 1950's including Griffith Park, Captain Cook Crescent, the area around Rodway Street along the creek in Yarralumla, parts of Commonwealth Park and the grounds of the Australian War Memorial. He also made additions to Telopea Park and Westbourne Woods arboretum.

More than 50 years on, the Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum now contains around 55 different tree species. The arboretum has survived bushfires in 1976, 1977 and 2001 – although some major tree losses have occurred.

Recently, the National Capital Authority (the Commonwealth Government agency charged with guardianship of Canberra) commenced work on a \$1m upgrade project for the arboretum. The first stage included holding detailed consultation sessions and community workshops to assess and understand the values of the place prior to preparing conceptual draft master plans. To guide the renewal project, the NCA has sought assistance from an eminent Project Reference Group comprising His Excellency Michael Bryce (a renowned design professional and husband of the





Governor-General), Emeritus Professor Ken Taylor (Landscape Architect and former Chair of the National Trust (ACT)), Professor Peter Kanowski (ANU Fenner School of Environment and Society) and Dr John Gray (Landscape Architect and retired Director of Landscape Architecture at of the National Capital Development Commission).

Dr Gray has studied the work of Charles Weston and was a colleague of Lindsay Pryor for many years. In guiding the future direction of the Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum, he says, 'Pryor held a strong view that trees should be selected according to their suitability for the human-intended purpose – whether that be for environmental, aesthetic or even commercial purposes. He did not take sides in the 'native versus exotic' debates within the botanic professions and he often made use of combinations of exotic and native trees in his planting schemes. The Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum is not a place to collect trees for conservation purposes, but a place to demonstrate, and celebrate, the domestication of trees.'

Professor Kanowski occupies one of the current equivalents of the academic seat held by Pryor from 1958. He also sees merit in showing how humans have been able to modify and improve tree characteristics through selective breeding.

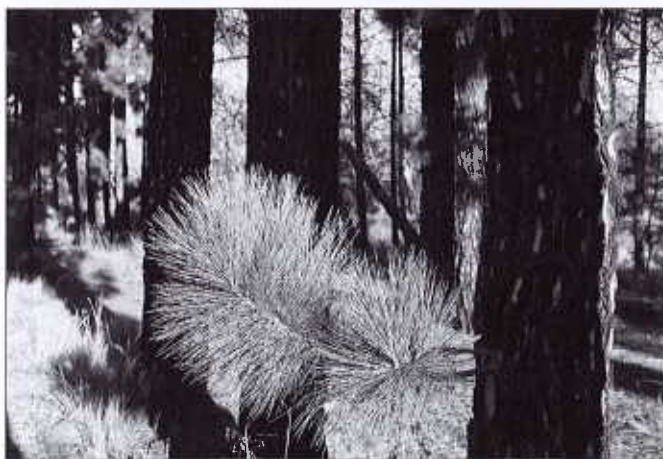
'The softwood forestry industry was an important part of the national capital's early years. The plantings originally completed by Pryor included a range of conifers. While many of those original trees have since died and been removed, there is an opportunity in the renewal project to reinstate that heritage in a manner which also helps tell a story'.

To achieve this, one of the proposed new plantings in the arboretum is a 'Provenance Walk'. The walk would be a path between rows of trees, accompanied by interpretative signage. The selection of trees lining the walk would progress from the original heavily branched specimens collected from the wild, through the tree-breeding and improvement stages, to the tall, straight, high-yield specimens currently preferred for commercial forestry.

In every element of the renewal design process, two key themes stand out. First and foremost, the arboretum stands as a living commemoration of Professor Lindsay Dixon Pryor's service to Australian botany, forestry, landscape architecture and the national capital. It is also a contemporary celebration, and reminder, of the importance of Canberra's arboricultural heritage.

At present, the Lindsay Pryor National Arboretum is one of the lesser-known treasures of the National Capital. Over coming years, the renewal of this beautiful lakeside collection of trees will create a pleasant and peaceful 'must see' visitor experience.

**Gary Rake**, CEO, National Capital Authority.





## The Murray Family of "Kurrumbene"

The Murray Family oral history project was made possible with a grant from the ACT Government under the ACT Heritage Grants Program. I conducted the first interview with Jim Murray, the elder statesman of the Murray clan. Jim's story ranges from his in-depth knowledge of his family's history, including the first Canberra bakery operated by his grandfather, John Murray, his father's soldier settlement block "Kurrumbene" to that of his own story. Jim's sister, Jean Whatman, was interviewed next. Jean's recording provides additional details about life at "Kurrumbene", especially growing up as one of two girls surrounded by brothers. The third and final recording was conducted as a joint interview with Chris Murray and Alan Swan. Chris is the daughter of Barry Murray, the youngest Murray sibling. This interview took place on their property "Kurrumbene".

*We're on the block on the corner of Hindmarsh Drive and the Monaro Highway ... it's about a 20 acre block ... it sits on the south-eastern corner of the old block and it's the last remaining block ... they built the suburbs of Narrabundah, Griffith, Fyshwick on the block...*

When I asked Alan to describe the size and location of the former "Kurrumbene" property leased to Ernest Murray, he replied as above. As a resident of Canberra and familiar with the intersection he depicts, my mental picture of the landscape had to be reinvented. It is hard for us to imagine today the sheer size and proportion of this property as it was in the early period of the Federal Capital Territory in the twentieth century. If not for any other reason (and there are many) this alone justifies why oral histories of this type are important documents for appreciating and understanding Canberra's rural past and social history.

The Murray family's links with the area extend back to George Edward Murray of Collector. It was his son, John Murray, who eventually found his way to securing a lease on land above the Molonglo River on its northern banks as part of the Glebe land belonging to St John's Church in 1907. Having decided on becoming a market gardener for the developing national capital he was waylaid by a plague of locusts and instead turned his hand to baking, one of the many skills he picked up during his goldmining days at Cowarra Creek, near Bredbo, NSW. The Murray's Bakery was the first of its type in the new city and it was here that he and his family settled until a fire destroyed it in 1923. The site of Murray's Bakery is in Commonwealth Park and marked as part of the ACT National Trust's self-guided walks "Canberra Central Parklands".

Ernest Murray, the son of John Murray, was one of the first Canberrans to enlist at the beginning of World War I. In Jim Murray's interview he retells his father's story of the Gallipoli landing. Ernest survived his time in Gallipoli but was subsequently gassed in the trench warfare in France. This injury scarred him for

the remainder of his short life. Jim spoke admiringly and proudly about his father and remarked upon Ernest's diligence in keeping a diary on the battlefield. Jim showed me a copy of this diary and I was greatly moved by the dedication of Mrs Murray. She had carefully copied in a beautiful copper-plate handwriting every word recorded by Ernest Murray. Although Mrs Murray most likely did this as a means of earning some financial assistance for her family during the Depression years, her work is no less admirable, as the Australian War Memorial was the purchaser of the original. Her action helped to preserve an important historical document for all Australians to research and review.

Under a nation-wide town planning scheme Ernest received a soldier settlement grant of land. Upon this block he built up his property which he and his wife, Sarah Ruby Elizabeth Murray nee Monaghan, named "Kurrumbene". The family believe it was their mother who named it in memory of her family home at Currumbene Creek, Nowra, NSW.

Beginning with sheep and wool growing, they turned to dairying as Ernest Murray was not a well man and Mrs Murray had experience with dairy cattle. Why did the Murray family turn the original sheep grazing property to a dairy farm? In her interview, Jean explained that it was her mother who pursued this livelihood following the death of their father.

*She went down to Nowra and bought cows from there and started up this dairy. It was quite small to begin with and that's when she sold the milk to the café that Mr Notaras owned. She said "I get a monthly cheque with the cows but I used to get only a yearly cheque with the wool"... "I couldn't manage it that way. So she found that it was easiest way. Then my brothers, they had to do all the milking [by hand], later we got machines, but they worked so hard.*

However, it was not only sheep and dairying which occupied the time of the Murray family on the land. Ernest was a keen experimenter and he introduced a variety of crops and grasses to improve his income and hence the family's living standards. In a letter to the Department of Interior in 1958 Mrs Murray vividly writes of her husband's work with growing lucerne on "light" soil. He even grew a plot of peanuts and cotton in the early 1920s. She also emphasised the significance of his achievements in light of his responsibilities as the recipient of a war service settlement grant:

*I feel that I owe it to the memory of my late husband to ask you to place on Department Records – the enterprise, the industry and the initiative shown, by one of your Department's Rural Leases – on his War Service Block of 604 acres, 12A & 110B as the two composite blocks were recorded and before closing also owe it to his memory as what he achieved to the War Settlement Commitment.*

Ernest died in 1935 and his wife and children took over the responsibilities of producing milk and milk



products for Canberra. One of their regular outlets was the Notaras' café in Kingston. Mrs Murray later became the only woman on the board of the Canberra Dairy Society in the late 1940s. Jim Murray, one of the subject interviewees, and his brothers worked the dairy and created Murray Bros who extended their business beyond dairying to sub-contracting.

Dairy farming was a family business, though, and even the children had their chores as Jean describes for us:

*The boys used to run the dairy and from the cow bails they would take the milk some yards down to what we called the 'separating room'. They sterilised things with a big copper and then this 'separator' which had to be put together. It was metal with a big bowl at the top and we would pour the milk into it, it had a handle and you'd then turn the handle. It had two spouts on the 'separator' – one spout was [for] the cream and the other spout was [for] the milk. We called it the separated milk. So we had to turn that and separate the milk into cream and into [separated] milk. ... It had a concrete floor, galvanised iron and those things had to be washed up and all the parts of the separator were pulled down. It was only about 4' high and it was all in pieces ... you had to clean it really well. It was cleaned in boiling water that we had in the copper, it had to be sterilised. So that would take you till the milking was done in the afternoon.*

As Canberra grew and the need for residential housing developed, the "Kurrumbene" leases were gradually resumed portion by portion. Whilst the Murray Bros folded and dispersed their assets, the younger brother, Barry, maintained a small block of land and agisted horses. The old homestead fell into disrepair and its final breath was subsumed by fire when it was used as a 'fire exercise' in the mid 1980s. Chris Murray, Barry's daughter, and her husband, Alan Swan with their family continue to live on a small portion of the original block and have successfully, and after a protracted negotiation with the ACT Government, have been granted a 20 year lease. The Murray family have managed to maintain their rural connections within the city limits. This story provides us and future generations with the knowledge that Canberra – grew out of the landscape of plains and hills, developed into a rural setting, was worked over as food source for its population and finally emerged as a fine example of a modern capital city. This was achieved, in part, by the commitment of entrepreneurs such as John Murray, his descendants and their families over a century at "Kurrumbene".

In a few poignant words, Jim Murray summed up his feelings about his Canberra home

*... if I was going home, I'd be going to Canberra. My ties are so very strong to Canberra...*

Ernie Oldfield had a fundamental philosophy about his education: 'As long as you know a good sheep from a bad one, a good bullock from a bad one, and you can sign your name to a cheque, that's all the education you want.' Besides, for all young children in the high country there was work to do around the home or in the fields.

Higgins paints a wonderful picture of the lifestyles of these hardy people. Some of the more mature readers will personally identify with many of the stories told and reminisce back to their own childhoods – "I did that", or "that happened to me too." For the younger generations this book captures a former period of human endeavour and a specific culture that was enjoyed at times and stoically endured at others.

The story of the ACT NSW border, which winds most of its way through the rugged ranges, is brought to vivid life by Higgins. He has done, and continues to do, an extensive study of this period in the history of the ACT. He has written much on this subject. Over time, these writings have become more difficult to access due to limits in publication. One of the many values this book offers is a new chapter on the surveying of the border. This is particularly so, as we approach the centenary of Canberra in, and the many celebrations and events which are now being planned for, 2013.

Higgins then returns to the story of the people who lived, worked, visited and experienced the high country. He tells their stories in chapters with evocative titles such as 'Fire, ice and axe' telling the story of bushfires and logging; and 'The skiing pioneers' relating the story of the early and dedicated people who saw the high country as a source of winter recreation and adventure. In 'Capturing a catchment', the story of the three dams supplying water to Canberra is told – Cotter Dam was begun in 1912, raised in 1949-51 (and now being raised again in 2010); Bendora Dam (1959-61) and Corin Dam (1966-68). The 40,000 hectare catchments of these dams had to be protected from intrusion. Higgins introduces us to two local bushmen who had the job: one would always wear a coat and tie as he patrolled the area on his horse, the other, known locally as 'Big Feller' would greet any interlopers with a loaded Winchester shotgun!

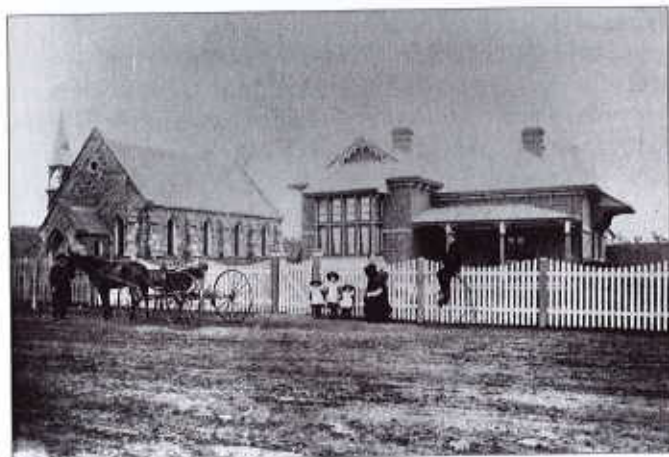
This book is essentially about people and how they related and adapted to the high country environment – ranging from hot and windy summers to cold snow-bound winters. It is a story of isolation, struggle and adventure, of coming to terms with what the land threw at the people who chose to venture into the high country. While these stories, related to Higgins over the years by the people who experienced them first hand, make a wonderful read, the author has also created a valuable contribution, not only to the history of the south-eastern highlands, but to the human history of Australia.

#### References:

- Flood, J. 1980, *The Moth Hunters. Aboriginal Prehistory of the Australian Alps*, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra.
- Flood, J., David, B, Magee, J. & English, B, 1987 'Birrigai: a Pleistocene site in the south-eastern highlands', *Archaeology in Oceania*, 22: 9-26.



# A Private Domestic Building by James Barnet, NSW Colonial Architect\*



The work of James Barnet, New South Wales Colonial Architect from 1865 to 1890, is well represented in the general Canberra region. He designed the Court Houses at Tumut (1875-76), Yass (1880), Young (1884), Goulburn (1885-87), Cooma (1888) and Junee (1890), as well as the Post Offices at Goulburn (1881) and Yass (1884).<sup>1</sup> The buildings he is known to have designed are almost all public structures or, in other words, government buildings; his known corpus of works includes no surviving private domestic structures.

There is, however, one private domestic building that can definitely be assigned to him. This is the handsome St Stephen's Presbyterian Manse in Queanbeyan. It stands in Morisset Street, where it forms a unique and harmonious combination with St Stephen's Church which was designed by the Reverend Alberto Dias Soares and erected in 1872-74.

The manse is one of very few private or non-government buildings that Barnet designed during his long career in NSW. Before he entered government service, he was the architect for a couple of houses in Phillip Street, Sydney, some shops in Sussex Street and the Chalmers Presbyterian Church in Chalmers Street, Surry Hills. Of these, only the church now survives. Known today as the Welsh Presbyterian Church, it and St Stephen's Manse are the only remaining examples of Barnet's work as an architect of private buildings.<sup>2</sup>

Barnet designed the manse free of charge for the Reverend Robert Alexander Steel, MA, his wife Amy and their family in 1881. Amy Steel was Barnet's eldest daughter. When the Reverend Steel was appointed to the Queanbeyan charge in May 1881, there was no manse in the whole charge nor even any other suitable premises in the town for him and his family

to occupy. They were forced to put up in Bungendore until a manse was provided for them in Queanbeyan. For this purpose, the church formed a Manse Building Committee soon after Steel's appointment.<sup>3</sup>

Barnet produced plans and specifications for the manse by September 1881. It comprised a six-room brick cottage on a stone foundation, with an attached kitchen and 'Servant's Room'. No early start was made on construction, however, because the Building Committee was unable to raise sufficient funds. Probably in a bid to cut the costs of construction, the committee approved some unspecified modifications to the plans. In the end, it was to be more than twelve months before the committee members felt that they had just enough money in hand to call for tenders. Inevitably, of those contractors who submitted tenders, the committee chose the cheapest.<sup>4</sup>

It was not a wise option. Within three months, it became clear that the successful tenderer, a builder from Woodhouselee near Goulburn, was unable to fulfil the contract. In fact, he had not even made a start. At this impasse, the committee turned to a trusted local contractor, John Kealman. Although his final price of £650 was well above the £509 quoted by the failed Woodhouselee tenderer, Kealman and his work were well known to church members. Not only was he a member of the church's congregation, but in the 1870s he had carried out the carpentry for St Stephen's and had even designed, built and donated the pulpit to the church.<sup>5</sup>

Kealman was well credentialed and equipped to perform the work. After working as a carpenter on George Campbell's Duntroon property in the 1860s, he had learned how to make good quality bricks and moved into the building trade as a contractor in his own right. In 1875, he built the original St John's Presbyterian Church in Bungendore and, in 1876-78, rebuilt the spire of St John's Church in Canberra. A string of government contracts soon followed. He constructed additions to the Queanbeyan Court House and Gaol in 1877 and 1878 respectively, and erected the Bungendore Public School in 1879, the Queanbeyan Post Office in 1879-80, the Gundaroo Court House in 1882-83 and the Sutton Public School in 1882-83.

To enhance his business and the quality of his work, Kealman had established an imported brick making machine on the Garryowen Estate in Queanbeyan in

1 \*Thanks to the Reverend Andrew McConaghy, Minister of St Stephen's, for enabling the author to inspect the interior of the manse.

Peter Bridges and Don McDonald, *James Barnet Colonial Architect*, Sydney, Hale and Iremonger, 1988, p. 132; Chris Johnson, Patrick Bingham-Hall and Peter Kohane, *James Barnet: The Universal Value of Civic Existence*, Balmain, Pesaro, 2000, p. 42.

2 Johnson et al., *James Barnet*, p. 26; Bridges and McDonald, *James Barnet Colonial Architect*, pp. 28, 29.

3 *Queanbeyan Age* [hereafter QA], 27 March 1883, p. 2; *The Presbyterian and Australian Witness* [hereafter P&AW], 4 June 1881, p. 5; *Goulburn Evening Penny Post* [hereafter GEPP], 24 May 1881, p. 4.

4 GEPP, 29 September 1881, p. 4; 1 November 1881, p. 4; QA, 26 September 1882, p. 2; 17 October 1882, p. 3; 14 November 1882, p. 2.

5 QA, 30 January 1883, p. 2; 27 March 1883, p. 2; P&AW, 31 March 1883, p. 5; Jan Armour, *And This Stone: The Story of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Queanbeyan*, Queanbeyan, 1974, p. 27.



1879. This enterprise, the first of its kind in southern New South Wales, produced 4,000 high-quality bricks per day. Kealman would have used these bricks in the construction of the manse.<sup>6</sup>

It was distinctly in Kealman's favour, too – and a reassurance to the Manse Building Committee – that Barnet was familiar with and approved of his work. During a visit to Queanbeyan in October 1881, Barnet had carried out a careful inspection of the construction of further additions to the Court House, for which Kealman was the contractor. On completing the inspection, Barnet expressed complete satisfaction with the standard of workmanship.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Barnet probably had previous acquaintance with Kealman's work. Kealman had erected the Queanbeyan Police Barracks or Police Sergeant's Residence – now the Queanbeyan Historical Museum – in 1875-76 and the town's Post Office in 1879-80, both of which Barnet may have designed or at least would have been closely associated with.

Kealman signed the contract to build the manse in January 1883 after 'certain deviations from the plans' had been agreed upon.<sup>8</sup> It is likely that the purpose of these 'deviations' was to lower costs. One such deviation may have comprised the laying of Kealman's bricks in colonial bond on the less visible western side and rear of the building, in contrast to the use of English bond on the front and eastern sides. This strategy would have reduced the number of bricks and hence the cost of the construction.

The work of construction commenced in February 1883 and proceeded rapidly. The foundation stone of the building was laid at a ceremony on 22 March 1883 and, in May, work had advanced to the point where Kealman was able to roof in both the main building and the kitchen attachment. But a shortage of funds threatened the completion of work. At the end of June, the Building Committee remained £200 shy of the figure required. Steel, thereupon, decided to launch an appeal for funds from the wider Presbyterian community. Through weekly advertisements in *The Presbyterian and Australian Witness*, he entreated Presbyterians in Sydney and other parts of the colony to make gifts of work or money so that a fund-raising 'Sale of Work' could be held in late September. The appeal was evidently successful. The manse was completed in November, enabling Steel and his family to take up residence from their temporary refuge in Bungendore.<sup>9</sup>

A photograph dating from *circa* 1886 shows the manse just a few years after its completion. Apart from the

white picket fence which has been replaced by a brick fence, the front aspect of the building is unchanged. The roofline, chimneys, bay window, verandah, unrendered brickwork, awning over the windows on the eastern side and even the bargeboards remain today exactly as they were when the manse was erected. The interior of the building also remains largely intact. It retains original fireplaces, architraves, some pressed metal ceilings, and mantelpieces donated by Hudson Brothers Timber Merchants of Sydney in 1883.<sup>10</sup>

While the original roof has been replaced by a new CGI roof, the principal change to the manse has been the building of an extension onto the eastern side of the structure at its rear. Now largely hidden by shrubs, the extension was built to match the original brickwork and window details. It may have been erected in the late 1880s or early 1890s, perhaps by Kealman, to accommodate the Steels' growing family. They eventually had seven children.

Although as a private dwelling the manse is a departure from government buildings that Barnet designed, in some degree it resembles some of the smaller official structures that either he personally or the Colonial Architect's Office designed in the 'house style' he had established. These structures included police barracks and quarters for staff of lighthouses. Nevertheless, where these buildings embody the sober and solemn quality that Barnet intended for official structures, the manse exhibits a rather more homely, genial and welcoming character while still retaining an air of dignity and respectability. This Barnet achieved without resorting to the use of Picturesque and other new-fangled architectural ornamentation to which, by temperament and professional inclination, he was in any case vehemently opposed.<sup>11</sup>

The manse is unique as the lone surviving example of the very few private residences that James Barnet ever designed in New South Wales. With the Welsh Presbyterian Church in Sydney, it is one of only two extant private architectural commissions that he executed. The position of the manse next to the Soares-designed St Stephen's Church, moreover, is a unique architectural association. For all that, the manse is virtually unrecognised as a Barnet work. The local LEP bundles it together with the church and the church hall and makes no mention of Barnet at all. The manse and, for that matter, the Welsh Presbyterian Church deserve greater recognition as rare representatives of Barnet's work in the private domain, displaying his abilities in a sphere outside the government structures he usually designed.

<sup>6</sup> QA, 18 June 1879, p. 2; 9 August 1879, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> GEPP, 13 October 1881, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> QA, 27 March 1883, p. 2.

<sup>9</sup> QA, 6 February 1883, p. 2; 27 March 1883, p. 2; 8 May 1883, p. 2; P&AW, 5 May 1883, p. 5; 30 June 1883, pp. 5, 6; 3 November 1883, p. 5; *Goulburn Herald*, 29 November 1883, p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> P&AW, 31 March 1883, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> Bridges and McDonald, *James Barnet Colonial Architect*, pp. 13, 51-2, 54-5.



# PLENTY OF FAMILY FUN AT ELM GROVE by Linda Roberts

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The most perfect of autumn weather greeted well over 600 people at the recent Elm Grove Open Day as part of the 2010 Canberra and Region Heritage Festival on 17 April. The National Trust partnered with the owners to present a day bursting with activities. The heritage of this fully functioning farm was officially recognised with the unveiling of a three panelled interpretive sign by Alan Kerlin, President of the Gungahlin Community Council. And thus started a very successful day!

Visitors came from all over the region to watch the bush dancing, listen to the Sing Australia, join in the archaeological dig supervised by Canberra Archeological Society (CAS), marvel at the skills of the Gungahlin Rural Fire Service and enjoy the homemade ice creams, the sausage sizzle and Devonshire teas courtesy of our hard working volunteers. The car display attracted interest and also helped ferry across staff from the Chinese Embassy who delighted in the sheep shearing and the wonderful Australian setting and entertainment. The National Trust ran a stall with goods from the shop and the ever popular badge making was in full swing.

Local film maker Richard Snashall, who spoke at our last AGM, sold out of all his Canberra Stakeout DVDs which were screened in the 'cinema shed'. The film actually begins at Elm Grove at the 100 year old border marker on Oak Hill to the north.

Dressed to play her part to a tee, local National Trust member Elizabeth Burness engaged with old and young with her tales of rural northern Canberra and old artefacts. Owners Paul and Marjorie Carmody also had on display photos of the property they purchased in 1987. Queanbeyan Art Society added to the atmosphere with painting and displaying their artworks.

The biggest drawcard was without a doubt Mark Carmody and his garden tour around the Elm Grove cottage. Mark was involved in the restoration of the old well-loved garden when his brother bought the farm.

Another sign is to soon be installed at the top of Oak Hill, eventually forming a portion of the Canberra border walk. Stay tuned for a tour out to Elm Grove to check out this new sign and the panoramic view.

In all the National Trust contributed eight popular events to this year's program. In partnership with the CAS a tour headed out to London Bridge at Googong; with the NCA and ACT Government an overflowing bus headed up to the National Arboretum Canberra then to the Lindsay Pryor Arboretum; and with the Reid Residents' Association a stroll around this garden city precinct was again well patronised. Aboriginal heritage was celebrated with a walk to Yankee Hat rock art site. There was the annual Heritage at Risk bus tour and two cruises on Lake Burley Griffin again experienced our capital in the glorious autumn weather.



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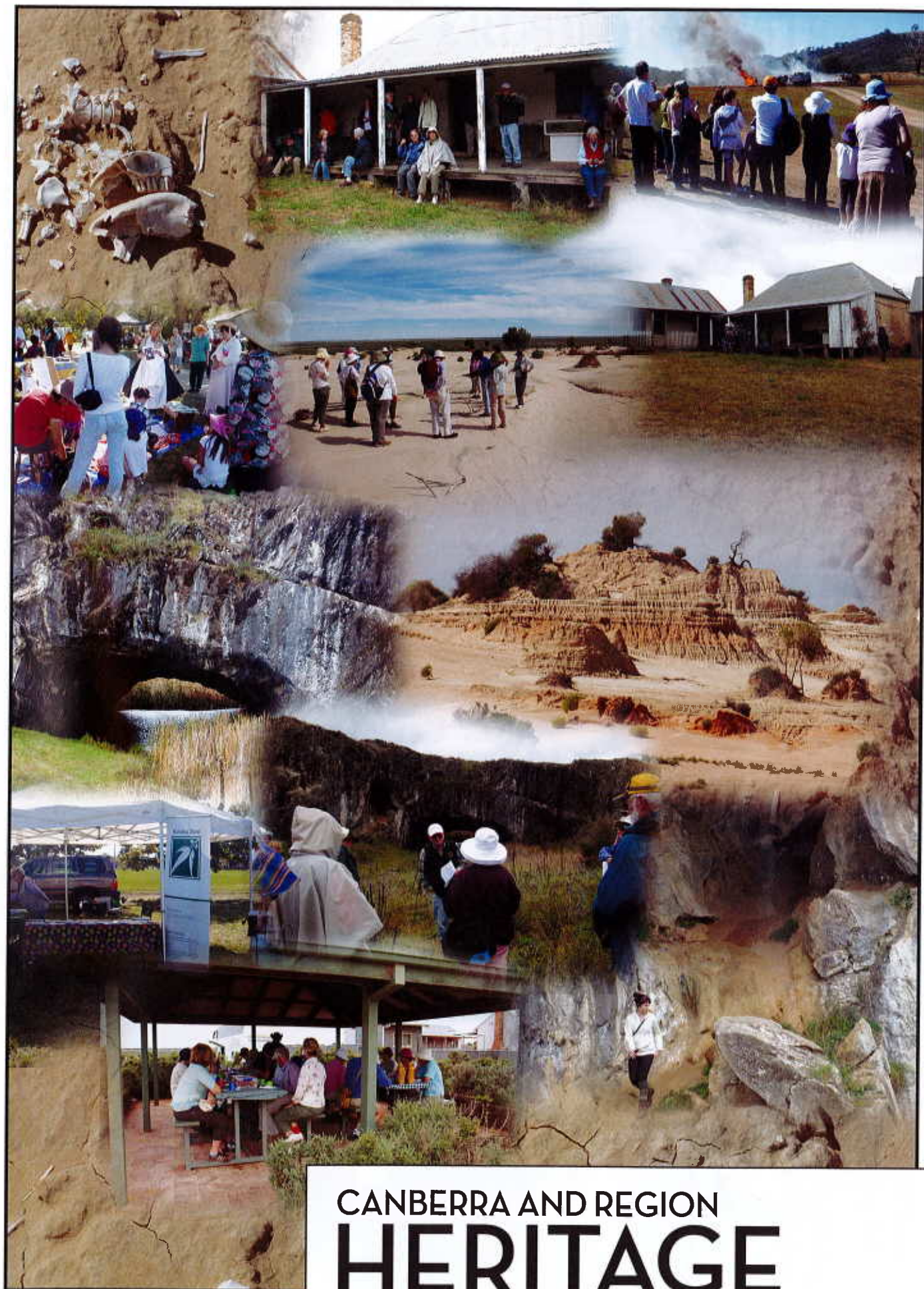
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