

NATIONAL TRUST (ACT) MONTHLY HERITAGE WALKS

APRIL 2020 UPDATE

Hi everyone

Our Monthly Heritage Walks will be back! We don't know when yet, but you can keep in touch, as these Updates will continue to arrive in your email each month. Meanwhile, why not join our DIY Heritage Walk for April, Duntroon Diggings (see below)?

Carry on Walking...

The good news is that Heritage Walking does not have to stop. You don't have to lock yourself away completely, not yet anyway, unless of course, you are self-isolating because you have returned from overseas, have tested positive to COVID 19, or are awaiting test results. You can walk alone, or as a household, plus one other person, maintaining a social distance of 1.5 metres, so easy enough to maintain a conversation. You should also maintain a safe distance from other walkers. Why not invite a friend or neighbour to walk with you? There are plenty of uncrowded places where you can do this in the ACT, particularly on a weekday. The weather is great for walking now, and will be through to at least November when we may already be back to a regular Monthly Heritage Walks program.

At present it is OK for most of us to go outside for exercise - and beneficial to both our physical and mental health. But you should keep up to date with the latest advice from ACT Health – what you should and shouldn't be doing to keep yourself safe:

<https://health.act.gov.au/about-our-health-system/novel-coronavirus-covid-19/protect-yourself>

While we can't invite you to join our Heritage Walks at present, we can suggest where you might like to go to look and learn more about ACT history and heritage. We'd like to keep this feature going each month until things get back to normal. So if you have any suggestions for heritage related walks do get in touch at heritagewalksact@gmail.com

And if you've enjoyed one of our DIY Heritage Walks, do let us know about it!

Last month we featured two do it yourself heritage walks – Mount Painter and Weston Park. We've included these again below in case you missed them.

DIY Heritage Walk of the Month for April - Duntroon Diggings:

This month we take you to two very different and important heritage sites associated with the history of Robert Campbell's Duntroon - Duntroon Dairy and Duntroon Trenches. As you will discover, for rather different purposes, both involved considerable digging. The Dairy is the oldest standing structure in the ACT, dating from about 1832, and Duntroon Trenches, dating from WWI, are claimed to be the best system of military trenches in Australia. At both Duntroon Dairy and Trenches there is plenty of helpful interpretive signage to guide you. Below are some links to websites which will give you further information and might be useful as pre-visit reading.

These two sites are joined by a pleasant flat walk (total distance about 4km), along the Molonglo River and the edge of Jerrabomberra Wetlands. Take care when walking on the shared cycle path and keep to the left. We suggest that you park in one of the riverside car parks off Morshead Drive (westbound), Campbell, and walk westward along the river. Then cross Morshead Drive when you see Duntroon Dairy, tucked low on the wooded slopes of Mt Pleasant (100m or so east of Kelliher Drive, Russell).

Following your visit to the Dairy, recross Morshead Drive and walk back along the river and past your car. Continue eastward along the river before crossing it at Monaro Highway on the cycle path signposted to Fyshwick. Continue on the cycle path (parallel to the disused Dairy Road) until you reach the Duntroon Trenches on your right, about a kilometre from the bridge. Return to your car by the same route.

You will enjoy both sites so much more if you do a bit of research before you go. Below are some resources to start you off:

Duntroon Dairy

https://www.environment.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/148313/56.pdf

<https://www.canberratracks.act.gov.au/heritage-trails/track-2-the-limestone-plains/duntroon-dairy>

ABC Audio: <https://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2011/02/10/3135143.htm>

Duntroon Trenches

<https://the-riotact.com/explore-duntroons-buried-ww1-training-trenches/201545>

http://www.markbutz.com/trench_book/best_system_of_trenches_in_Australia.html

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54518c4be4b0bea70c60aab5/t/5b1077a12b6a2861d7d515f7/1527805870929/1-2018-web.pdf>

DIY Heritage Walks of the Month for March

Mount Painter:

<https://australianhiker.com.au/trails/mount-painter-summit-walk-act-3-7km/>

This is an excellent walk to do now as it is so green after the rain and there are wildflowers and birds around. The start point is where the cycle path passes under Bindubi Street (off William Hovell Drive). Do follow the instructions in the link above, and follow the road and formed path to the summit, avoiding the badly eroded informal path you will see on your left as you approach the mountain. There are wonderful views across Canberra and the Brindabellas - pick a clear sunny day. There are some excellent interpretation signs which identify the mountains etc you can see, explain how this area relates to early settlement, and how through the hard work of Friends of Mount Painter over many years it is slowly being rewilded. This is a fine example of how local initiatives have improved and raised awareness of our natural heritage. People do care about our heritage – enough for many to work tirelessly to protect it. Mount Painter is an example to us all.

Weston Park:

This is an easy, flat, loop walk on the cycle track/pedestrian path around the edge of the peninsula, about 3km. It can be busy here at weekends with family groups enjoying picnics and BBQs along with great views of Lake Burley Griffin and Black Mountain, but really quiet at other times.

Read about the history and heritage values of this park at:

https://www.environment.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/195444/297.pdf

Park at or near the Yarralumla Nursery and walk back to Weston Park Road which leads towards Black Mountain. Cross the road and follow the cycle path northwards along the eastern side of the peninsula. As you enjoy the great views of the Lake and this lovely park, contemplate the fact that

there was serious talk some years ago about turning this area into a suburb. Admire the wooded slopes of Black Mountain from the end of the peninsula, continuing on the path southward towards Yarralumla Nursery. You will notice exotic pine trees along the Lake edge. These trees were planted by Charlie Weston and his men, nearly 50 years before the Lake was filled in 1964. He knew exactly where the lake edge would eventually be, as surveyor Charles Scrivener's plan to have the lake surface at 1825 feet about sea level had been adopted. Eventually on your left you will see the fence around Yarralumla Nursery, established by Charlie Weston in 1915 to grow trees for the new city, a task it still fulfills. A little way along, behind the fence you will see what looks like a wooden shed. Look closely and you will see that it is a shed on metal wheels. This is one of the original mobile offices that would be towed out to an area where street trees were being planted. As an important reminder of that era, it deserves to be preserved. Further along the fence you will see some buildings with red painted corrugated iron roofs. These are the original nursery offices, from 1915, still in use. Read about the history and heritage values of the Nursery at:

https://www.environment.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/195444/297.pdf

Keep safe!

Trevor Lipscombe and Mary Johnston, Walks Organisers

We respect your privacy. If you don't wish to receive these Monthly Updates please let us know at heritagewalksact@gmail.com