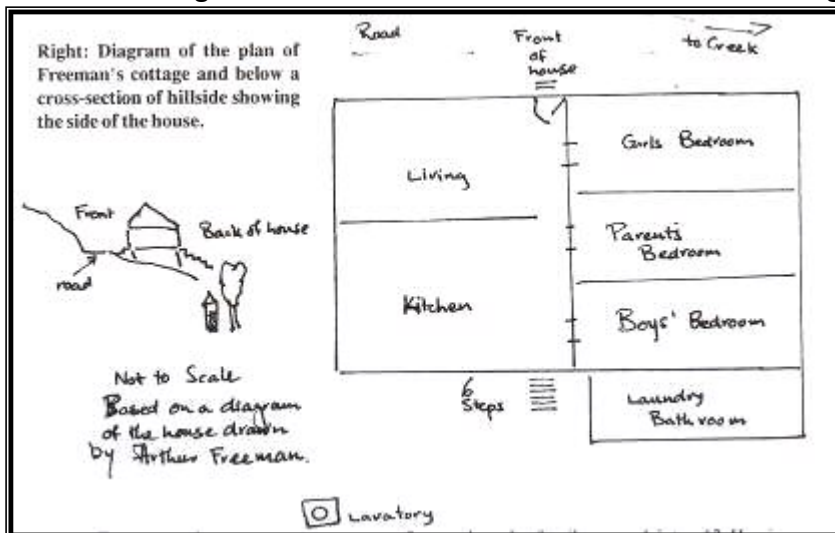


HOWIE'S SETTLEMENT, WESTLAKE, STIRLING PARK PART TWO

The Freeman Family, 13 Howie's Cottages

Below is a diagram of the Freeman's house – 13 Howie's Cottages.



The Freeman family moved in 1924 from No 3 Sewer Camp Mess (later the Westlake Hall) to a tent on the hillside opposite Lotus Bay where they remained until No 13 Howie's Cottages became

available in 1927. Arthur Freeman Jr described the interior of his house to me. The above drawing is based on that description and a diagram by Arthur. The bathroom had a tin bath – whether it was a full bath of the type put into the Westlake cottages or one of the smaller round baths is not known – but it probably the former. Arthur recalled during one conversation that the family painted the bath green and that he had a bath shortly afterwards when he thought the paint was dry. It wasn't and he came away from the bath with a green bottom. The building's exterior was clad with vertical timber planks.

Below are two photographs taken of the family in their backyard of 13 Howie's cottages. Arthur is the tall boy – eldest child. The youngest, seated on Mrs Ruth Freeman's lap, was born in late 1925 in the tent cottage near the Tradesmen's Camp. By that time Mrs Freeman was nearly blind. Note the garden in the background of the photograph on the right. Behind the children there appears to be a vine covered shed that may be the lavatory. A honeysuckle vine still grows on the hillside in the area of the lavatory of No 13.



The Dinnerville Family & others



A number of people who lived in Howie's Cottages moved into Westlake houses when they became available. Amongst them were the Butcher, Brown and the family of Laurence Dinnerville. Jacky Dinnerville, son of Laurence was photographed at Briar Farm. His family moved

to 15 Westlake and later to Mt Stromlo. Above: A photograph taken of Jackie on his motor bike at Briar Farm.

Below left is Harry Hamilton and his mother outside their home at Howie's Cottages. Harry was born there that year. Below right is a detail of children at Telopea Park School. Ken Dinnerville is the boy on far left. Next to him is Jack Dorman who then lived at Acton.



Although children were officially not permitted in the camps at least one boy, Ken Dinnerville did live with his father in the Tradesmen's camp before his father built at Howie's. Ken in his story in *Past Images, Present Voices* by Val Emerton had the following to say about his accommodation with his father at Westlake:

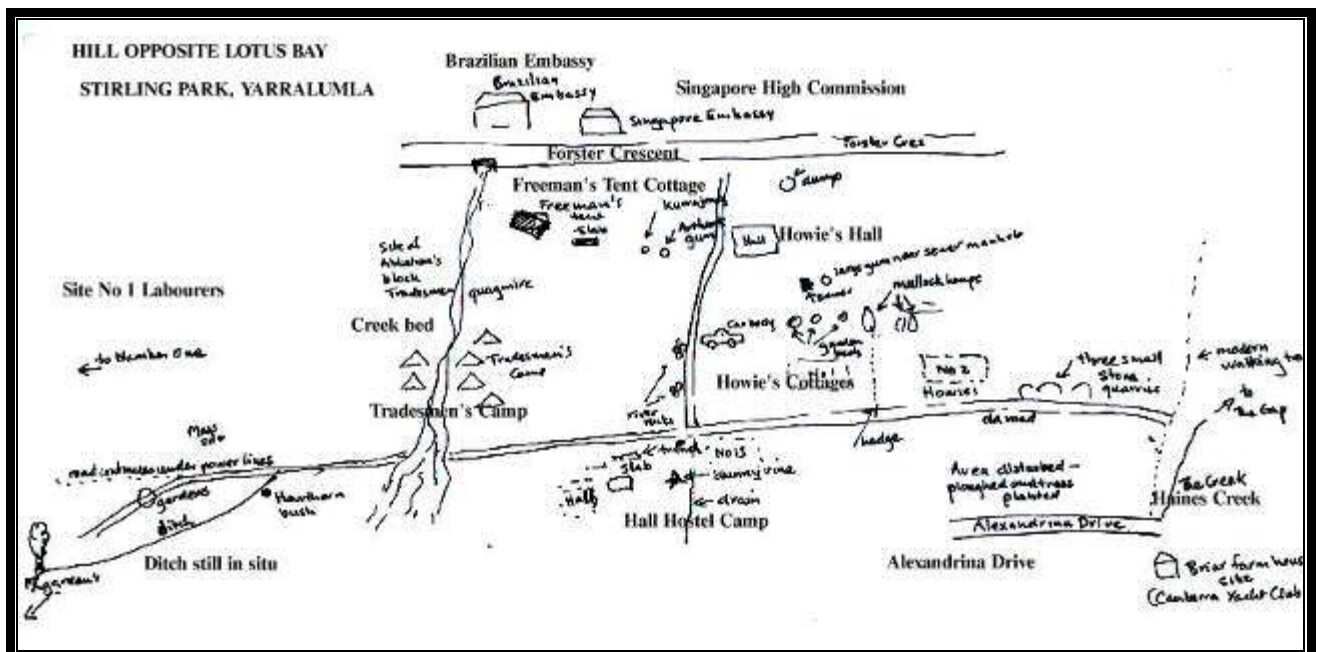
I was only ten when my father brought me here from Sydney. We arrived in Queanbeyan at 3am and drove to Canberra in Dad's horse and sulky in what I think was the biggest frost and fog I have ever struck. My first home was in the Tradesmen's Mess at the Westlake camp, which was all tents. The tents had wooden floors and were quite warm and comfortable but I found it very cold in Canberra. My bed was made of two corn bags stuffed with straw in between two shafts. The camp was pretty wild and woolly then. The men used to play two-up - it was illegal, but

they still played...[Ken's mother died during the time his father was in the armed forces and his aunts were concerned about the youngster staying in the camps and took him back to Sydney, but his father wanted him back]...so he [Ken's father] left the camp and built us a one bedroom house near John Howie's Cottages using left-over materials - the best of Pacific maple. When he finished he called it the "Ut". The front garden beds were edged with empty beer bottles - there were plenty of them around at the time... Ken's uncle Laurence Dinnerville (father of Jacky Dinnerville) lived with his wife and family at Howie's Cottages. Another brother lived in the Hostel Camp.



Left - track leading to the flat land Stirling Park on the far eastern end. This is the best site in the area for a football field and cricket pitch. The river flats below the Hotel Canberra was used from 1926 for the greens of the (Royal) Canberra Golf Club. The football field at Westlake was still in use in the early 1950s hence the river flats were not used by the Westlake men for footie and cricket.

SITE OF HOWIE'S COTTAGES AND HOSTEL CAMP 1990S-2003



On the map are a number of garden beds that have been re-evaluated as Aboriginal rock arrangements. There are growing on this hillside flowers and a strawberry patch – but they are not confined by rocks. Originally when the work began on the site of Howies and the nearby Tradesmen's Camp it was assumed that the rock

arrangements belonged to the European period just because they were there. These arrangements consist of circles, oval shapes, undulating lines etc that are too small for garden use. Some of the undulating lines are reverse curves that do not and would not hold water for plants.

The Roads

Howie's Cottages were erected along the eastern side of Haines' Creek that runs through *The Gap* and on either side of the old road that came from Briar Farm across to a gate near the site of the Hotel Canberra. This road, constructed in 1890 (and probably on the site on an earlier track) has another that cuts across it. This road, shown in the diagram above also veered off to the east above the hall area and continued along on the hill above the Tradesmen's Camp.

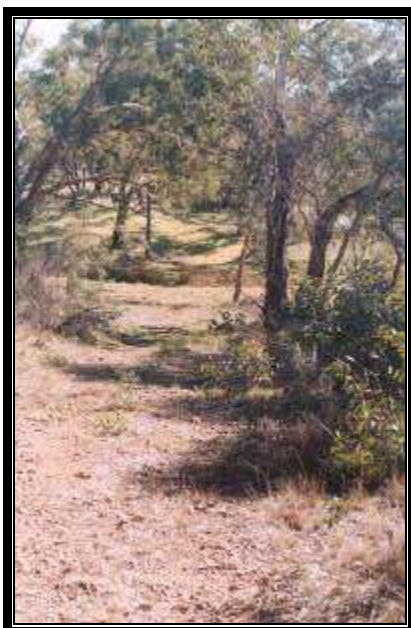


The old roads provided ready made access for the men of Howie's and the later Tradesmen and No 1 Labourers' Camps to and from work.

Left is a photograph of Arthur Freeman Senior on his way to work at the Power House. Behind him in the distance is the Hotel

Canberra. This photograph was taken below No 13 on the open land.

Below on the left is a photograph taken from the old road looking west towards Haines Creek. Off to the left of the road are the sites of two or three small quarries that may have supplied rock for reinforcing the road. On the right is a photograph taken from the road looking west at the road that cuts across this one.



Below left is a view taken from the corner looking down the road towards the flat land. On the right is the view looking up the hill. One of the large pile of river rocks dumped to stop erosion is seen in this photograph. A detail is shown in the photograph below these two.¹



The red car body that has a timber frame found on the western side the river rocks and the road that cuts up over the hill on a house site is shown below. There are also remains of a metal flu nearby. The car body has a timber frame.



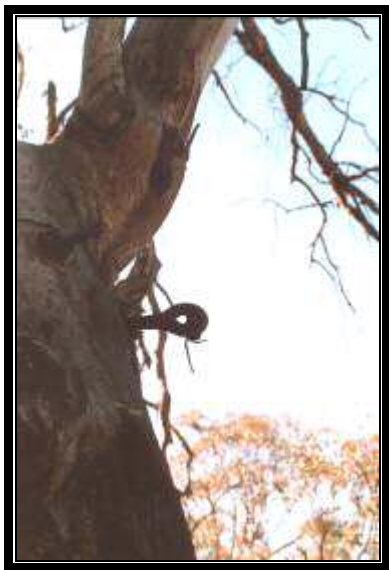
House Sites

The house site on which the car body sits is defined on the western side by a hedge. At the rear of the block are a number of old wattle trees encircled with rocks. This pattern is also found around trees next door. Recent work on the site near the Hotel Canberra – not part of any of the camp sites – also has circles of rocks around now cut down wattle trees. There is a pattern of this type of activity that may be Aboriginal rather than European? Ngunawal mourning trees and shrubs have circles

¹ This pile of rocks may also be Aboriginal – it seems logical that they were dumped by Europeans in this area to stop erosion but there are piles of similar river rocks found on Stirling Ridge that have been used by Aboriginals – Another possibility is that the rocks were dumped there by Sewer Workers and in turn they were utilized by the Aboriginal people.

of rocks around them. Several such arrangements are found on Stirling Ridge – the major one being a large circle some feet out from an old scribbly gum tree. Another pattern emerging as common throughout Stirling Park is a circle with undulating line nearby. These are Ngunawal rock arrangements.

At the rear of the house site on the western side of the road that cuts over the hill are a number of irregular shaped undulating trenches dug down the slope – may be used for drainage. At the rear of the block where the house stood is a concrete manhole from sewer works. Near the sewer man hole is old concrete dump, a power pole and a large old gum tree with metal pieces inserted for use during the sewer workings. Below left is a detail of the tree with two metal pieces protruding from the trunk. On the right is a general photograph of the tree on the left.



Next Door

The photograph taken below in 1927 shows the cottage in the background left that was probably the one tenanted by the Patrick family. On the right is the site of this cottage taken in the 1990s. It is from a different angle to the earlier one. The hedge is left to middle of photograph. On the ground in the area of the house the small ditch formed by rain water dripping off the roof is clearly marked along with the holes where the concrete piers that held up the building once stood



The photograph below left was taken at the rear of the cottage shown above. It has earth dug away from the hillside to form a depression which was probably used for waste water from the house and storm water from the hill. Another channel was dug between the two house sites (referred to earlier - see arrow pointing to mound in photograph on the right). The photograph on the left shows an ant mound in lower centre left. Nearby to this is a burn up dump. In it was found the remains of household throw outs before leaving such as *Ipama* toothpaste tube, clasps from a suitcase, suspenders from a corsette, sardine tins, broken beer bottles (1927 the first found), metal fold up clothes hanger, and a pile of nails that filled a plastic ice cream container. The crockery had a gold pattern that is found on numerous dump sites. The lavatory site on the hillside above and to the west of this site has been found.



On the eastern side of the road that cuts up over the top of the hill are the sites of at least two houses. One left behind a slab on which the lavatory building sat. This was later used by the Freeman family during their time in the tent. It is discussed in detail in the section on the Tradesmen's camp.

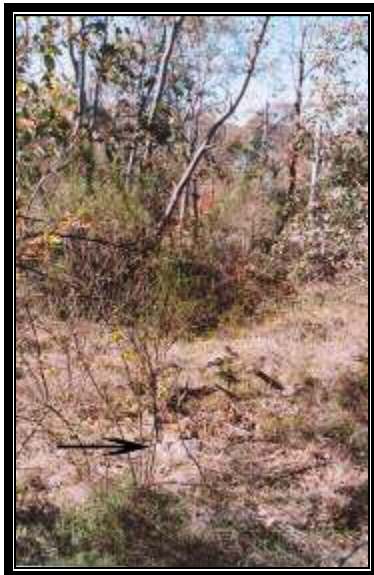
Below on the left is a section of the road – cuts across the lower section of the photograph – and the area of the backyard of the house site. On the left is another detail of this area. The trunk of the kurrajong tree that has a rock arrangement near it is on the far right. In the background of the photograph on the left are embassy buildings in Forster Crescent.



Below is a photograph of the house site next door to the above site. The arrow points to rock arrangements first thought to be European but re-evaluated as probably Aboriginal.



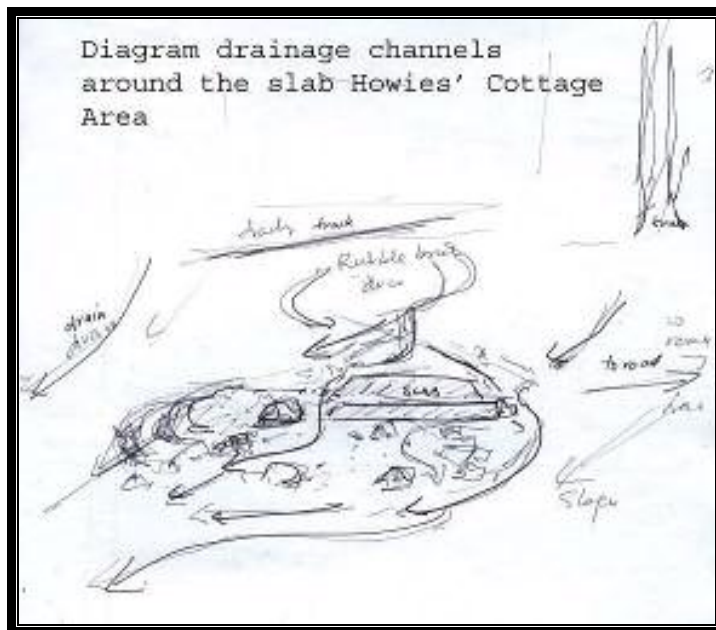
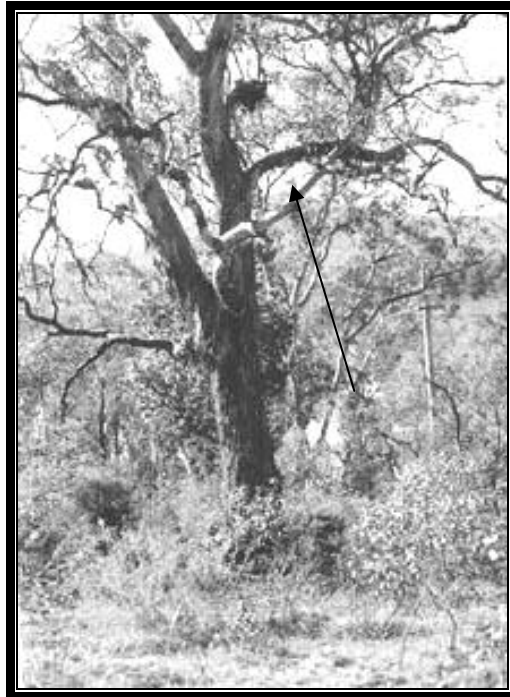
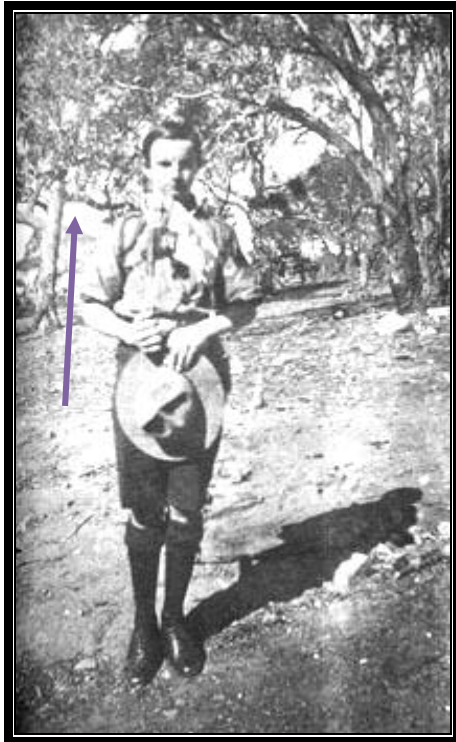
Below are details of the rock arrangements shown in the photograph on the previous page.



Below are photographs of other rock arrangements in the area. The one on the far right is a detail of rocks around and near the kurrajong tree.



The arrows in the above photograph show the line of a road that cuts across the hill just below the modern Forster Crescent. It joins the road that cuts down the hill to meet the 1890s road. This road formed an access road to houses and pan lavatories. Below is another view of the area. Note the tree in the background far right. Near to it is the kurrajong tree – green branches only shown on right. On the next page is a photograph of the same area taken in May 1927 from a different angle. Arthur Freeman is in his scout's uniform ready to take part in the ceremony for the opening of parliament. Note in the background is the family sulky. The tree on the far right is also clearly shown in this photograph – the 2003 tree has lost one of it's big limbs.



Harry Hamilton's Family & Photographs



Above and following are photographs loaned by Harry Hamilton. Harry was born at Howie's in 1927.

Below setting off for an outing that was probably to do with a soccer match. The photographs were probably taken near the Hostel Camp. The group of three on the left of the above photograph are Harry's parents and uncle. The group on the right may be the Patrick family. The little girl with the hat may be the same girl seen in the photograph with Ken Dinnerville?



Contractor John Howie decided to retire in 1929. This was the year that the Great Depression officially started in Australia. It began in the FCT after the opening of Parliament on 9th May 1927. Three men's names were noted on document relating

to the running of Howie's business in Canberra. They are Patrick, Scott and Knight. It is known that in February 1929 when Jeanne Patrick died in her home at Howie's cottages that her husband was in Sydney looking for work. Scott and Knight had moved earlier from Howie's. Alfred Knight and his wife Emily moved in 1924 (probably) from a Howie's cottage into 1 Westlake where he stayed with his family for at nearly twenty years. His wife Emily died from TB 14th July 1928 and is buried in St John the Baptist Church Cemetery.



Above is a photograph taken in 1935 of the Westlake Women's Cricket Team and friends. The members of this team also played in a combined ACT team against a visiting English team at Manuka Oval – and won. The young lady being nursed by Colin Kilpatrick of

Queanbeyan is Peggy Knight. The couple later married. The girl on the far right wearing a school uniform is and O'Rourke. Below is Jene Baker's (nee Saunders) photograph at the Cotter mid 1930s. Betsy Knight – ex-Molonglo and in 1935 resident of 1 Westlake is second from the right front. Jene is seated with her younger sister next to her and her husband to be on the other side.



The last Howie's Cottage was removed sometime towards the end of 1930 or early 1931. Stan Brill whose family moved to Westlake in 1924 recalls being carried over the hill to watch some of the cottages being pulled down. They would have been the first lot. His father collected a number of nails left behind and straightened them up for reuse.