

## THE LOCALS SECTION THREE CANBERRA – THE CAPITAL CITY OF AUSTRALIA

### FOUR POEMS:

#### **The Choice of the Site**

**Queanbeyan Leader** 19th February 1907 poem by *The Jangler* – Thomas Kinlyside of Briar Farm. This farm cottage site is now covered by the buildings of the Southern Cross Yacht Club and is on the lower slopes of Gura Bung Dhaura on the south bank of Lotus Bay.

*Some people, no doubt, have gone Federal mad,  
On the brain have got Capital Site;  
And if you, on the subject, with them don't agree,  
Why they threaten to blow out your "Light"*

*Most people out here have sworn a big oath,  
That old Canberra shall come out first in the fight;  
For there is no better place on the face of the earth,  
For a "Federal Capital Site."*

*And they will point out to you, all the great "toney coves,"  
Who've extolled and praised up this site;  
And old Snailer's fate will be meted to you,  
If you hint that it's nothing but "skite."*

*And Chapman's [Sir Austin Chapman MP] chances they say are quite small,  
That he must be short-sighted sight;  
When he didn't for Canberra give a straight vote,  
And thus with electors keep himself right.*

*Now he'll lost his fine place in the Federal Camp,  
And by "Eden" it serves him just right;  
When he is blind to a fact that to others is plain,  
That old Canberra is the very best Site.*

*When Canberra's plains are all built upon,  
And "lit" up with the world's latest light;*

*This is the opinion of most people out here,  
And if we get fair play, they'll be right;  
But there are others who say our heads will not ache,  
When Canberra is picked at the Capital Site.*

*That Dalgety has already been picked as the place,  
That those Federal blokes were just doing a skite;  
Their trip around the country a howling big spree,  
And the Canberra jaunt just as Federal "Tight."*

*Well on Canberra's plains long gone by,  
Was waged a far different fight:  
When the "Triangle," and the "Cat" and the flogger was here,  
And it was not a Capital Site.*

*To see the brute methods that "boodle" employed,  
To enforce what they said was their right;  
The "lash" and the jail were in evidence then,  
On the slave's mind to impress great Capital's Might.*

*And still the same caper would the old plain be used,  
If not for grand Liberty's Light;  
And for floggers low hut the "Triangle" and the "Cat,"  
It would still be the Capital Site.*

*Then in Liberty's name let us all pull together,  
By action united put up a big fight;  
And show those lickspittles who lobber Victoria,  
That Old Canberra must be the Capital Site.*

*Then rally round Canberra ye sons of New South,  
And show grasping "Vic" that we know how to fight;  
To flatten the Chapmans and all others,  
That Dalgety shall be the Capital Site.*

*For situations for clime and for water supply,  
In fact all a great city needs, old Canberra has right;  
Then spite of "Vic's" greed and Sir Baker's mad blather,  
Old Canberra SHALL be the Capital Site.*

### **Post World War 1 – city in doubt.**

A poem written in the Visitors' Book in Yarralumla House (now Government House) in 1920 sums up the uncertainty of the times. Yarralumla House was used to accommodate important guests including politicians before the Hotel Canberra became available from December 1924.

Canberra's National Anthem  
*Billy, Billy, Billy, my boy,  
What are you waiting for now?  
You promised us Canberra sometime last June,  
As did Ministers, Poynton and Groom,  
All the Members Secs  
Keep asking me,  
Which day? What day?  
We'll get from Vic away.  
Billy, Billy, Billy my boy.  
What are you waiting for now!*

*Written, Composed and Sung by the Federal Members at Canberra for the First time on Tuesday 12/2/1920.*

*Billy* was Billy Hughes, Prime Minister of Australia. He like other dignitaries visiting Canberra before the Hotel Canberra opened in December, 1924, stayed at Yarralumla House. Griffin and Hughes did not see eye to eye. Conflict between Billy Hughes and Walter Burley Griffin increased with the result that Walter Burley Griffin resigned and moved to Sydney.

### **1926 the year before the move of the Federal Parliament to Canberra.**

#### **CANBERRA**

*Oh! stately hills that stand so mutely round;  
Like mounds of silence with all-seeing eyes,  
Set up to witness all misdeeds and sound,  
Look on our labours from those heavenly skies,*

*Indefinite age but makes you fairer seem,  
Each season tends enchantment to thy view,  
And mortals toiling daily at their scheme  
Salute thy "Youth like Age," and ask that you*

*Look down upon this Babe with loving eyes,  
Cradled within thy lap;  
Thy tender care bestow upon it; let no strife arise  
To mar the growth of this Canberra fair.*

*Protect it with thy peaks from icy blast,  
Thy nearness unto heaven use to plead 'fore God  
That she may grow and last,  
A monument of virtue for our need.*

*Tend it that charm that thou most surely can,  
Of peaceful quiet, bereft of all things base,  
That makes your mountains named blue by man  
A goodly charm the "Heavenly Blue" to grace.*

*Canberra Community News 1926*

### **1934 – Height of the Great Depression**

*Canberra Annual 1934*

*Page 4*

#### **CANBERRA**

*Encircled by the hills her throne is set  
In pleasant fields where once the olden race  
From time unstoried oft in council met  
Or by the firelight danced in savage grace.*

*Here 'mid her changing seasons all year long  
She glows in richest colours – wattle gold,  
Fruit blossoms and the rose, the myriad throng  
Of tinted petals that her gardens hold.*

*Still in her childhood, quietly she dreams  
Of glories yet to be, of unborn power  
Of love and pride, the tribute that the steams  
Of Time will bring her when she breaks into flower.*

*She is to be the Nation's beating heart,  
The centre of ambition, faith and song.  
Here shall beloved leaders play their part  
In panoply of wisdom, swift and strong.*

*And she shall be the symbol through the years  
Of all we stand for, all that we uphold,  
Of Victory won against all ancient fears  
In battles that our fathers fought of old.*

*And she will hear grim mutterings from afar  
Full charged with threats of enmity and hate,  
Will hear the menace of impending war  
Beyond the ramparts of her eastern gate.*

*Then in the sky reflected she will find  
The watchfires of her kindred oversea,  
And distant voices calling in the wind  
Will give her pledge of trust and loyalty.*

*She shall know sorrow and the gloom of night:  
The bitter storm shall find her undismayed,  
And smiling she shall greet the dawning light,  
And take the guerdon of the price she paid*

RA Broinowski



Swagger Camp circa 1913 near the Power House. Red Hill in the background.]



Commonwealth Avenue, Albert Hall, Hotel Canberra and top left West Block – Parliament House off to the left. December 1929. The bowling green in the grounds of the Hotel Canberra is just above the roof of the Albert Hall on the left. The tennis courts are on the other side of the Albert Hall's roof on the right and the golf links were established at the rear of the grounds of the hotel. Courtesy of National Library of Australia nla.pic-an 11030057-178v

*The British Australian and New Zealand* issue dated February 11, 1926

#### **AUSTRALIA'S NEW CAPITAL**

#### **CANBERRA TO-DAY.-GETTING READY FOR THE GREAT TREK**

*In recent numbers of the Melbourne Herald, a special correspondent of that paper has a series of very interesting articles on Canberra, as seen by him a few weeks ago, from which we extract the following:-*

*Three thousand people are to-day fashioning the national capital – Canberra. The city is beginning to reflect signs of establishment. Something substantial is now visible to indicate just how more than 3,000,000 pounds has been spent in the creation of the nation's headquarters.*

*Few people in the rest of the Commonwealth realize what has been done here to produce a city worthy of our heritage and creditable to our conception of nationhood.*

*Most of the critics of the Federal ideal, as exemplified by this city in embryo, have never taken the trouble to see it. They talk and write without the knowledge which is essential to convey in an accurate and reasoned way just what has been done and is being done. There are those people, perfectly genuine in their criticism, who say Canberra is the conception of the crank, forgetful, of course, that the establishment of the city is the inescapable price of federation.*

*The 'bush' capital, however has been created in spite of hostility. It is a real live factor in our national make-up and in the not far distant future it will arise as Australia's first city – not in the sense of commerce and industry, but rather as the foundation from which will spring the laws intended to make this country a better place to live in. Within two years the national parliament will have shifted from Melbourne.*

#### *As it Really is*

*I have been fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to travel over the Federal Territory from end to end. It is ideally situated. The city itself occupies a vast amphitheatre with beautiful vistas. It is favoured with an equable climate. Its wide spread spaces reflect Australia's vastness. Its citizens of the future should possess the wide outlook.*

*Everyone in Canberra to-day has a whole hearted faith in its destiny. The workmen with whom I have talked on the many jobs now in process of completion exhibited an enthusiasm which one could not help but admire. They seem to fully realize they are playing their part in the moulding of a city which will one day rank amongst the world's great centres of learning and legislation.*

*Standing out prominently and conspicuously above everything else to be seen here in the picturesque landscape is the new white-faced Parliament House, a huge noble structure which when completed will have cost more than 250,000 pounds, mostly distributed in the purchase of Australian material and labour.*

#### *On With the Job*

*Since the Federal Capital Commission, with Mr JH Butters at the head, took over the control of this great national work a little more than twelve months ago, the undertaking has made rapid progress. "Get on with the job," was the instruction given to Mr Butters by the Government. With ample funds at his disposal he certainly has answered this direction.*

*It is a good thing that political control has disappeared from Canberra. Too long was the city a plaything of politics. The Commission has mapped out a programme this year*

*involving the expenditure of 1,250,000. There are adequate signs here that the money will be spent within the appointed period.*

*Looking across the city from Parliament House, the scene is one of tremendous activity. "To speed up," is the call of the Commissioners. Huge steam shovels are avariciously eating into hills and eminences which the city lay-out commands to disappear. Hundreds of horse drawn drays in strings of dozens shift the earth to where it is needed. Sturdy caterpillar tractors draw ploughs behind them to scarify and finish off the job of the big mechanical shovels. Dynamite is blowing up outcrops which have to go. A fleet of motor lorries is bringing in tons of metal from the quarries to build roads designed to last forever.*

#### *Killing the Dust*

*A new low level bridge is being constructed over the Molonglo [Lennox Crossing Bridge] to provide a short route between the Administrative Offices and the Parliament House. Steam rollers pulverize the road building material and they are followed by the asphalters who give the highways an evenness not excelled by St Kilda road.*

*So early in its life Canberra is out to fight the dust imp. A modern motor sprinkler passed twice daily over the complete city network of well built roads. Around Parliament House ploughs and scoops are at work giving the necessary levels to the gardens. A hillock is being removed so as not to obscure the view between the House and the magnificent Hotel Canberra. Thousands of trees are being planted around the Legislative home. A bowling green and tennis court for the use of the members is being prepared without regard to expense.*

#### *Mr Hughes Prepares*

*Despite opposition the city is to have its lake. Along the course of the Molonglo scores of men are cleaning up, removing the snags, and the fallen willows. Under construction, near Yarralumla, not far from the centre of the city, is a weir which will hold back six feet of water covering the low lying areas and thus provide a lake of ample dimensions on which there will be a boating and sailing.*

*Between Queanbeyan and Canberra a fleet of modern buses is plying bringing out daily people anxious to get rich quick by applying their enterprise to the growing capital. Most of the visitors here have come to seek out a block, for either business or residential purposes. Mr Hughes and Mrs PG Stewart have already secured allotments at Red Hill, the "Toorak" of Canberra. Both contemplate building.*

#### *High Prices*

*At Eastlake, the industrial centre, modern shops are being constructed. Two Queanbeyan merchants have established up-to-date departmental stores, so that Canberra residents can do their shopping now in their own city. But prices are high – much higher than in New South Wales provincial cities. Competition, however, is*



*expected to bring about adjustments. As far as business is concerned the present trend is in the direction of over-optimism. Not until 1927 will the big influx from Melbourne take place. In a way, however, it is a good thing that so many business people should concentrate their enterprise upon Canberra. The Commission, however, is limiting the number of blocks to be made available for business purposes, so there is no likelihood of 'wild-cat' speculation or boom condemned suddenly to burst.*

#### *Housing the legislature*

*I spent half a day in an inspection of the new Parliament House. The structural work is complete but there is still much to be done as regards interior fittings. Responsible officers say that at the very least ten months will be required to complete the job. The completion of the administrative offices and the provision of housing for the central staff will take longer.*

*The estimate for the construction of the Parliamentary buildings was in the vicinity of 250,000 pounds. The actual cost will be in the region of 300,000 pounds. Money is being lavished upon the structure and its surroundings. When finished it will be worthy of Australia.*

*It is a noble, widespread edifice, the architecture of which follows no particular period. All the principles of modern building science have been combined to produce a Parliament House replete with every convenience.*

*The material employed in construction include 4,000,000 bricks, 2,810 tons of cement, 20,000 tons of sand and gravel, 533 tons of Oregon, 621 tons of hardwood, 250 tons of other timbers, 1,500 tons of iron and steel and 91,000 tiles.*

#### *Tour of the Building*

*Immediately behind the imposing entrance, from which an uninterrupted view of practically the whole city is obtainable, is a wide public hall, plainly but artistically decorated. From here the huge reception hall is entered. It is the equivalent of Queen's Hall at the Federal House Melbourne, but more spacious and lofty. A statue of the King will be prominently placed in the hall, while the walls will carry the pictures of past Prime Ministers, Presidents of the Senate, and Speakers of the House of Representatives. Other decorations are contemplated. On State occasions this huge central chamber will be used as a banqueting hall and for other purposes as may be directed.*

*Immediately adjacent on either side are the Senate and House of Representative Chambers. The former is nearing completion, enabling some idea to be gained of the places where oratory will flow, and the laws of the country moulded into shape. There will be no cramping or crowding in either chamber. Both have been designed to accommodate substantially more members than are now allotted to each House.*

All senators will be seated on the one elevation. Each will have a seat and a writing desk, and the exits are arranged so that entry and departure from the Chamber may be made without interrupting the debates or distracting attention.

The President's 'throne' dignified and artistically designed is situated beneath the Press Galleries, which themselves are of ample proportions, and considerate for the comfort of the newspaper men who will be called upon to tell the people of Australia of the doings of their representatives.

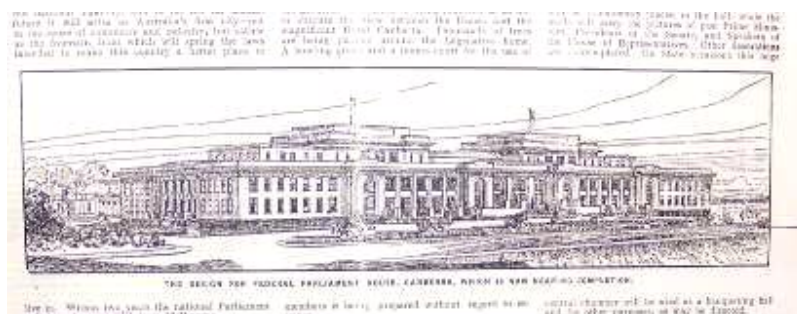
The 'distinguished strangers' galleries provide accommodation for more than 100. Those possessing of this tag of distinction will be separated from the politicians by an ornamental railing in the shape of a horseshoe extending around the Chamber. There is ample accommodation also in the strangers' gallery for 'ordinary folk' to sit and listen to the wise men of their race.

#### Like No Other City

The spirit imbuing the work at Canberra is well summed up in a phrase of the Assistant Secretary, Mr Waterman, which Mr Clarke quotes as follows:-

*"Whatever we are doing at Canberra, we know we are all helping to build a city, the like of which has never yet sprung up in virgin soil. The shops will come, cheap transport, theatres, and the other things that make life pleasant."*

And so Mr Waterman believes that all the legislators, public servants, and others who now may think of Canberra as a place of exile, will quickly, when they arrive there, feel that they are at home.



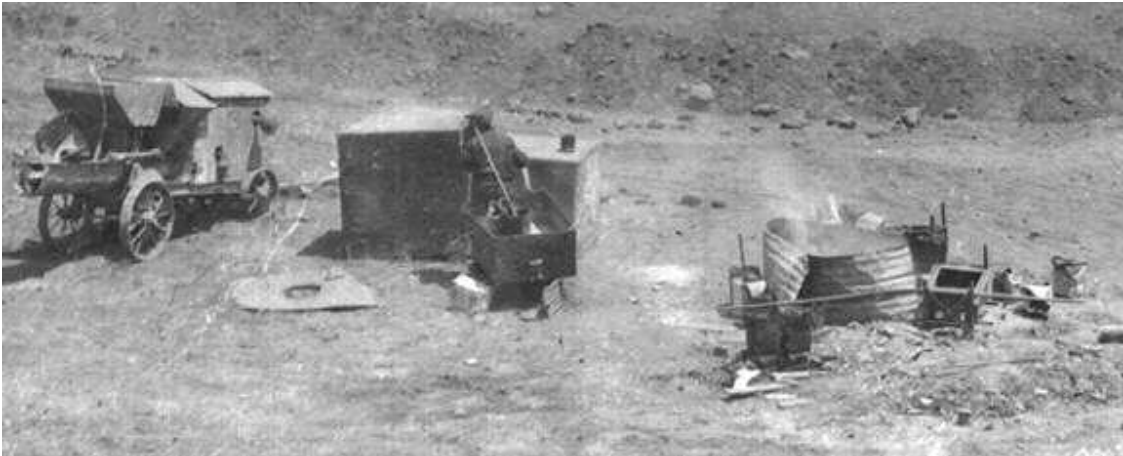
Detail showing the design for Parliament House published in the article AUSTRALIA'S NEW CAPITAL.



Mildenhall aerial photograph circa 1928. Lennox Crossing is mid left of photograph. Acton administrative area bottom section of photograph. Parliament House, East & West Blocks top left and Hotel Canberra and Albert Hall on Commonwealth Avenue. Courtesy of National Library of Australia nla.pic.an 11030057-345-v.]



Detail of a Mildenhall photograph taken of workmen near Hotel Canberra circa 1925



Burning rubbish – detail of a circa 1925 Mildenhall photograph taken near the Hotel Canberra.

HLB Lasseter who came to Canberra in late 1925 or early 1926 where he worked as a carpenter wrote the following for *Canberra Community News* August 18, 1927:

*Some Suggestions by Gleaner*

*Canberra is often described as a marvelous city, and I marvel much on the why and wherefore. No doubt it is a marvelous plan. In an endeavour to solve the problem of how the plan came into being I submerged my back teeth in OVG, wrapped a wet towel around my head – and dreamed a dream. And behold I saw a ‘burley’ man spread a sheet of white paper on a table, then take a handful of coins of various denominations*



*and toss them on the paper; where each coin landed he drew a circle, and decreed thus. Each circle shall be the centre of a ‘subburb’ of this marvelous city. According to the various values of the coins used to locate these centers so shall the building covenant be: and the roads that shall connect these various suburbs a bush gridiron shall be used for a plan. Thereby will strangers be impressed with the magnitude of the city when the speedometer shall register 4 miles between Acton and Ainslie and so on.*

*The effect of the OVG having now worn off I will endeavour now to make a really democratic city of Canberra...<sup>1</sup>*

Early map of Canberra – note the circles of varying sizes that Lasseter equates to coins of various values thrown on white paper...

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<sup>1</sup> Canberra was a city that had suburbs segregated into different class groups. Lower paid public servants lived in Ainslie and the upper class lived in Forrest. Single men’s camps were also segregated – the bottom of the scale was the Labourers – then Pug (horse & dray), Tradesmen and top of the scale, Engineers and Surveyors.

## **AUSTRALIAN NATIVES ASSOCIATION –**

A handwritten document – typed copy follows – was given to me by Mrs Lorna Marriott, whose father, Charles Francis was Controller of Stores. He was also a member of the local branch of the Australian Natives Association. The original is lodged with the ACT Heritage Library.

### *Canberra*

#### *The National Capital*

*A few facts regarding the Capital of Australia compiled for the information of Australians by the Canberra Branch of the Australian Natives Association.*

*A limelight of press publicity recently thrown on Canberra, has realised in the minds of many Australians the question, of whether or not Canberra, as a National city should be scrapped; whether it is too great a drain on Australia's resources, and whether the seat of Government of the Commonwealth should not be located in or near a State Capital, whether to be truly great it should not be a centre of commerce rather than an administrative city only.*

*The Australian public has been kept well informed up to now the "facts" which go to support the claim that Canberra has been a costly mistake, which should be rectified at the earliest possible moment.*

*Fortunately the barrage campaign of misrepresentation has died down but an impression has been formed by many people unacquainted with the true facts which is sadly detrimental to the national sentiment and high national ideals as embodied in a Federal Capital City.*

*We feel that the Australian Natives Association, which played so important a part in the establishment of a Federal sentiment and in the adoption by the people of the Federal Constitution in which was incorporated the establishment of a National Capital City.*

*The first step has been taken and whatever objections may have existed to the selection of Canberra as the Federal Capital, when the sites were being considered.*

*It is now too late to revive them and Canberra must be accepted as an established fact. It will no doubt surprise many who have not had an opportunity to visit the Capital, to learn that Canberra already gives evidence of realising to the fullest the ideal of the master town planner who designed it, viz Walter Burley Griffin, and has already the appearance of a well established city at the same time showing clearly the well defined plans for its future expansion.*

*Before considering the questions outlined at the beginning we will first consider what is the ideal of a National Capital of Australia.*

*Briefly the founders of the Federal Constitution visualised a beautiful garden city which would rank amongst the most beautiful cities in the world; they saw it in a setting which typified the spaciousness of this young island confined and the broad ideals and high aspirations of a young and virile nation destined to play no insignificant a part in the councils of the nations of the world.*

*They desired that the setting for our future national parliaments should be such as would assist our legislators in realising their ideals of a glorious future for our country, far removed from the influence and distractions of a commercial city.*

*Does Canberra realise that vision? Most emphatically – yes. It now rests with our legislators to play their part.*

*And now to consider the first question – should Canberra be scrapped?*

*It is the embodiment of the principle laid down in the Federal Constitution that the Nation should own without any State dominance an area of land sufficiently large to enable all the services of the Federal Capital to be wholly controlled by the people through its National Parliament. A place where jealousy is unknown.*

*What is called the great cost of building Canberra is not so great when it is considered what is involved in the creation of a city with its various services and the establishment of a complete code of laws for the government of a area that a few years ago was wholly employed in grazing sheep and cattle and if the citizen will pause and think for a moment what the cost of the complete services for a modern town is, he will realise that a very large outlay is required at the outset and when it is considered that the services of the City which is to be the nations ideal are not for the present generation but for the generations of unborn Australians the problem becomes greater and the difficulties more acute.*

*In order to consider the problem in its proper perspective one must know the local conditions. A few statistics are therefore appended.*

*The area of the Territory is 576000 acres and the amount paid by the Commonwealth for this area was 882033 pounds.*

*A great portion of the Territory is in mountainous country and is set aside for a catchment area to provide the city with pure water for all time.*

*Approximately 429000 acres are subdivided into allotments varying from 50 acres to 2000 acres principally devoted to sheep raising, mixed farming and orchards. The annual revenue derived from the rural area is 40,000 pounds per year.*

*The City area is approximately 2,700 acres and is sub-divided and laid out in accordance with the plan drawn by Walter Burley Griffin who as everybody knows was the successful designer in the world wide competition instituted by the Commonwealth Government to find an ideal plant for a national city.*

*The plan is most comprehensive and provides for the development of the city as the population of the Nation grows. It preserves the zoning of various Government activities so that in years to come it will not be necessary to have Government Departments scattered over the city as we know them today in our State Capitals.*

*This causes some criticism that the city is spread over too wide an area, but Canberra is the third city in the world to be built to a set plan and the average citizen had only experience of the towns of which he knows which have developed into the cities because of their natural position to create trade and commerce.*

*Canberra is planned to develop a set ideal in the same way that an architect plans the building of a Cathedral. Although only portion may be built at a time the design remains the same and as each part is added the structure comes nearer to the completion but it is not possible to materially amend the design and preserve the ideal.*

*1350 acres of the 27000 comprising the city area are reserved for Parliamentary and other public purposes and the balance less provision for roads and footpaths is for residential and business purposes.*

*The whole of the land is held by the Commonwealth and leased on a 99 year lease, the lessee paying 5% on the appraised value as rental.*

*The roads of the City have total length of 80 miles and in addition roads extend throughout the rural area making a total of 190 miles all maintained and controlled by the Civic Authority.*

*The Public Parks are not developed except the reserve around Parliament House but the main thoroughfares are planted with various types of trees, Acacias, Eucalypts and silver Poplars predominating. The work done in this direction is undoubtedly a credit to the Director of Parks and Gardens who has controlled the work which is so thoroughly organised that the history of every tree planted by his Department is recorded thereby enabling trees to be selected for the most suitable positions for their growth consistent with the aesthetic requirements of the city beautiful.*



*The citizens are encouraged to beautify their homes with shrubs and flowers and it must be said that the response is good and there are many houses with very beautiful and well kept gardens wholly cared for and planted by the residents themselves and not by a benevolent government as has been erroneously stated in some quarters.*

*The water supply is derived from the Cotter River which has a daily flow of approximately 53,000,000 gallons. A dam has been thrown across this river with a storage capacity of 380,000,000 Gallons.*

*From the Cotter Dam pipes pass through a tunnel of a total length of 2,000 feet. They are then taken down and continue under the Murrumbidgee River to the Pumping Station where electrically driven pumps lift the water at the rate of 100,000 gallons per hour to a reservoir of a capacity of 3000000 gallons at Mt Stromlo a distance of 17900 feet with a rise of 800 feet above the Pumping Station; from Mt Stromlo it gravitates to Red Hill Reservoir to supply the capital in the South Side of the Molonglo River. To supply the North Side of the river the water is carried to Mt Russell from miles sway where there is a Storage tank with a capacity of 1,00,000 gallons.*

*As to the buildings they are principally of bricks manufactured in the Territory faced with white cement or rough cast. The first idea was to create a white city but this idea was not proceeded with in its entirety. Some building remains the natural colour of the brick. The main building in the City is Parliament House. Architecturally it is ornate, but is a solid structure that will serve the Parliament until the Nation is in a position to build an ornate structure in keeping with the Houses of Parliament of other Nations. It is*

*flanked by other buildings which house the Departments that have been transferred with some exceptions, which are housed temporarily in the Civic Centre of the City, in buildings erected by private enterprise.*



The opening of Civic Centre in December 1927

*The permanent offices will occupy positions in the Parliamentary group. One of these buildings has had its foundations laid, but no further work has been proceeded with. Other public buildings are the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research which are specially designed laboratories and research work in Botany, Entomology, Vetenary Science and Agriculture. Also there is the Australian School of Forestry which has a*

*number of students drawn from all parts of Australia. The School of Anatomy which house the collection of specimens of the Australian Aborigines, Marsupials and animals peculiar to Australia as collected by Sir Colin McKenzie and donated by him to the Australian Nation. Sir Colin is in residence in Canberra and retains the Directorship of this research work. In addition there is the Prime Minister's House and Government House. Temporary wooden buildings house the officers of the Administration and the Department of Works. The hospital is a wooden structure with up to date equipment and the residence for the workmen is also of wood. The main business centre is designed on the north side of the river, and is built to a plan which is signed by each lessee. The buildings are of two storey surrounded by a colonnade, and is striking in its appearance. The banks are housed in this area. There are two other business centres, one at Kingston and the other at Manuka. At present the main shopping centre is at Kingston. The picture Theatre erected by private enterprise is at Manuka.*

*The residential area is on both sides of the Molonglo and as far as numbers are concerned they are about equally divided. The South side of the river has the greater number of more expensive houses. The Government has erected 750 houses each occupying about one-third of an acre and private enterprise has erected 168 houses which are practically all occupied by the owners. The Capital value of the residences erected by the Government is approximately 990,000 pounds and the annual rent received is 98,500 pounds which covers interest, maintenance and rates and depreciation. Rates have been struck and the annual return from this source is 10,000 pounds.*

*The education of the children is provided by two public schools and three Denominational Schools. On the north side of the River is a Primary School capable of housing --- children is placed in a playground of --- acres, laid out with trees, shrubs and flowers. [Ainslie Primary School] Children of this class are educated to sixth grade. On the south side of the River is a combined primary, secondary, and High-school together with a Junior Technical School [Telopea Park]. Students here can obtain their Leaving Certificate and enter the University. Trade classes can be taken for mechanical turners and fitters and the plumbing and carpentering trades are taught. Arrangements have also been made with the University of Sydney for certain subjects to be taken by students studying for University degrees. University extension lectures are given. the school is also surrounded by shrubs, trees and flowers and has an excellent playing ground. The Denominational Schools are the Church of England Grammar School for boys and St Gabriel's for girls. The Roman Catholic Church has St Christophers for boys and girls. [footnote – There were temporary schools at Cotter, Acton, Duntroon, Molonglo and Russell Hill. ]*

*A bus service is established throughout the city area and conveys the children to the various schools at concession rates [1d each way], and connects both sides of the City. This service has been made necessary because of the present scattered nature of the*

*various districts. They are not self-supporting and cannot be expected to be with the small population, at present in the City area.*

*Accommodation is provided for Civil Servants in five Hotels, two girls' hostels, one Guest House and two Bachelors Quarters. At present some of these buildings are unoccupied as they were primarily built for the housing of Civil Servants, for which residences were not available; but as the transfer of Departments has not been pushed on with some of these buildings are at present vacant, because of Government policy.*

*Recreation reserves have been provided for by permanent cricket grounds and football ovals on each side of the River. Public tennis courts are leased to Clubs in each locality. A Bowling Green is provided for on the North and South side. An up-to-date Swimming Pool has recently been constructed [Manuka Swimming Pool – original name – the Swimming Pookl] and there are numerous reserves in various parts of the City that are used for the playing of Cricket, Hockey and the various codes of football.*

*From the foregoing the reader will have gathered that much has been done for the National Capital, and the foundation for the development of an ideal city have been set out. He will have recognised that the change of the area from a sheep run to a City with the amenities of modern life is no small accomplishment to have been carried out in the space of approximately ten years. He will recognise that this cannot be, without the expenditure of money.*

*Unfortunately the public are informed of the mistakes that are made but not of the successes. The policy of the Government of pressing on with the establishment of the City at a given date caused the Capital to function at an earlier period than it otherwise would have, but it also made necessary expenditure that might not have been incurred if the work had been proceeded by easier stages.*

*However that is past history and what is done cannot be undone. There are certain activities that return a very handsome profit on the outlay.*

*Various sums have been given from time to time, as to the cost of Canberra, but the actual capital expenditure has been approximately 8,000,000 pounds. The balance of 4,000,000 is made up of interest and compound interest and at the present policy of the Nation's development of the City is proceeded with this interest must necessarily grow. It can be said with a fair degree of accuracy that the civil activities of the Capital will be reproductive at a very early stage. The population is approximately 8,000. It cannot be said to be inconsiderable but the main expenditure on Canberra has been in connection with the activities that are clearly national in their character.*

*If the Government proceeds with the full transfer of the whole administrative staffs it can be said that the civil side of the National City will be practically on a reproductive basis. Interest, maintenance, depreciation and general charges in regard to those works*

*which have been purely national in their construction or erected for the convenience of the National, will be charged on the people as a whole for some considerable time, but when this is worked out to a percentage per head of the population it becomes almost infinitesimal, approximately one shilling per head will be the Nation's contribution to the payments of interest and depreciation on the expenditure on national buildings.*

*Canberra's climate is on the whole pleasant and equable in the winter months although cold and frosty at night consist mainly of bright sunny days and the summer months seldom reach a temperature of 100 degrees the heat is dry and pleasant and however hot the day the night is invariably cool and pleasant: the only drawback being the cold and searching winds which pervade the city in the spring months.*

*The visitor to Canberra need not worry about selecting any particular time of the year to make a visit. Canberra extends a welcome at any time; however the best time, and there is always a time when any city can present an appearance which outdoes its efforts at any other time of the year, is the autumn. Then the Territory is an artist's Paradise, a riot of color, sunsets and sunrises defy description. Poplars bathed in the glory of the departing summer, the tints and colours of hill, plains, gullies and the far distant dividing range defying analysis. No nature lover can fail to be impressed with the transcendent beauty of this his national capital.*

*If the visitor comes by car he is fortunate for he will find good roads almost anywhere within the Territory where it is possible for him to travel and he is advised not to leave until he has explored the Territory thoroughly.*

*He will be amply repaid by a trip to the Cotter Dam, the charming village of Tharwa on the Murrumbidgee, Naas a few miles further along a picturesque and well made road. A trip may be taken in almost any direction out from the city and the rewards in the shape of variety and charm of scenery coupled with the pleasure of travelling good roads is manifold.*

*The residents of Canberra and the Rural portions of the Territory in spite of the deprivation of their civic rights and privileges which loss is felt keenly as has been evidenced on numerous occasions have developed a strong and civic pride and are enthusiastic and vigorous in their efforts to assist the development of the National Capital.*

*Private enterprise has shown its faith in the future of the capital to the extent of investments in building and other enterprises amounts in over 1,000,000 pounds on the North side of the City alone.*

*Now that the Federal Capital is an established fact it is feared that the enthusiasm which brought it into being has faded somewhat and one is led to suspect that it was not so much National sentiment as a desire to sever the National Parliament from its*

*temporary home since Federation that was the determining factor in hastening the building of the Federal Capital for those enthusiasts who pressed so strongly for the building of Canberra are not so ready to rise in defence when malignant misrepresentation is abroad.*

*Washington suffered for seventy years from the same blight on its development. Now let any stranger or any American speak ill of Washington.*

*Australia does not want to allow its National Capital to suffer the same want of appreciation. Remember Canberra is designed as a garden city, not as a great commercial centre, however, commercial interest necessarily exist to some extent showing that some people have faith in the future of the Capital.*

*But large industrial or other similar commercial interest are not needed to make Canberra great - all that is needed is sufficient national pride in our people to realise that here is some tangible evidence of our nationhood, something to be developed until it earns the recognition and esteem of the rest of the world.*

*We are not ashamed to be distinguished as Australians when "Anzac" is spoken of we don't shy as their designation when the Australian Eleven proves the superiority of the Australian best, then why not in all things present the same united face to the world and allay the suspicion that we are still a group of jealous states each fearful that the others should have the impudence to question its priority in status and importance.*

*Here is a subject in our National Capital for the finest expression of our unity as a nation. Nothing to be ashamed of it is on the contrary a city already to be proud of expressing the most modern and scientific principles of town planning and already maintaining itself in all but the interest on and repayment of the capital outlay.*

*Finally, Australians need not fear that Canberra is too great a drain on the pockets of the people. The city was built in time of prosperity, the capital outlay could then be spared. It was built quite naturally with an eye to the future its services were planned at the outset for a city of more than 20,000 inhabitants in order to save additional expense in the future as the city grew, therefore all that has be met now is the interest on the capital outlay and repayments of principal if Canberra were scrapped tomorrow that liability would still remain and would still have to be met. Whereas the capital as it grows will return more and more revenue and will eventually be able to assume some portion of the burden.*

*It is not desired to weary readers with figures when an obvious fact such as the foregoing is sufficient argument to show that it is to the advantage of the country to hasten the development of Canberra in order that it may be able to take some portion of the burden of its cost rather than to destroy it and increase the burden.*

*A population of 8,000 cannot of course pay for the whole cost of services provided for 50,000 such as water conservation, electric lighting, road construction most of which services pass through undeveloped land which with the growth of the city cannot be spoilt for that and as it is the revenue return for some services is already adequate and in the aggregate has already passed the 200,000 pounds mark annually a quite respectable contribution from such a small population.*

***After reading the foregoing it is hoped that citizens will be in a better position to answer the question would it ever be raised again by little Australian - Should Canberra be scrapped - the answer will be most assuredly NO.***



Photograph loaned by Jean Oldfield nee Boyd of Westridge. Government House – former home of Frederick Campbell who was the last owner of Yarralumla property.