

European Occupation of the land known to the Ngunawal at Gura Bung Dhaura, Colonials as Klensendorlffe's Land, Construction workers as Westlake and today as Stirling Park & Capital Hill.

Settlers [1820s-1911]

The history of the Canberra Plain (part of the Limestone Plains) and the arrival of the early settlers is relatively well documented and the names of those who were granted the land well known to include JJ Moore, McPherson, Campbell (Robert, George, Frederick), TA Murray, and W Klensendorlffe. Many of the owners were absentee landlords and the majority seem to have leased parts of their lands to tenant farmers. The history of this period of local history is currently being rediscovered and updated by family and local historians.

In the case of Klensendorlffe who was granted the land in 1839 comparatively little is known other than he and his wife did not have children and he was a hard taskmaster on his convicts.

However, Klensendorlffe's claim to fame may be that the parliamentary triangle, Stirling Park and embassies in Yarralumla are on his land. In the 1920s this land was part of the larger area known as *WESTLAKE* that stretched from Capital Hill to Yarralumla and back from the Molonglo River to Red Hill. Up until the early 1960s it was part of the *suburb* of Acton. It is now part of Yarralumla.

Westlake was the area chosen by the Federal Capital Advisory Committee to house construction workers employed to work the nearby building sites of Hotel Canberra, Provisional Parliament House and the main intercepting sewer.

In the 1920s two tenant farm cottages in the area of Westlake were still in use – Kaye's who took over Klensendorlffe's stone villa in 1854 and remained as tenant farmers until the land was resumed for Commonwealth use in 1924. They also took over the land vacated by the tenants of Briar Farm in 1913 – at that time Thomas Kinlyside. The site of Kaye's villa which from the early 1890s was used as a barn following the construction of a new slab cottage is in the lake in the below Lennox Park behind the Hotel Canberra and Albert Hall. The site of Briar farm is on the western side of Lotus Bay. The cottage was pulled down in the early 1950s and the Southern Cross Yacht Club is now on the site. From 1913 Briar Farm was tenanted by a number of Commonwealth employees the last being Charles Foster Day and his wife Francis who moved into the cottage in 1927 and left in the early 1950s.

William Klensendorlffe

Klensendorlffe bought the land from John Stephen in 1829, but it was not until 1839 that he was officially granted it. By that time he had already built the previous year a stone villa (22ft c 66 ft) that he named after his wife, Elizabeth (nee Guise). He, like all

the big landowners in the area had convicts assigned to him and a number of free born men working for him. He probably leased some land to tenant farmers.

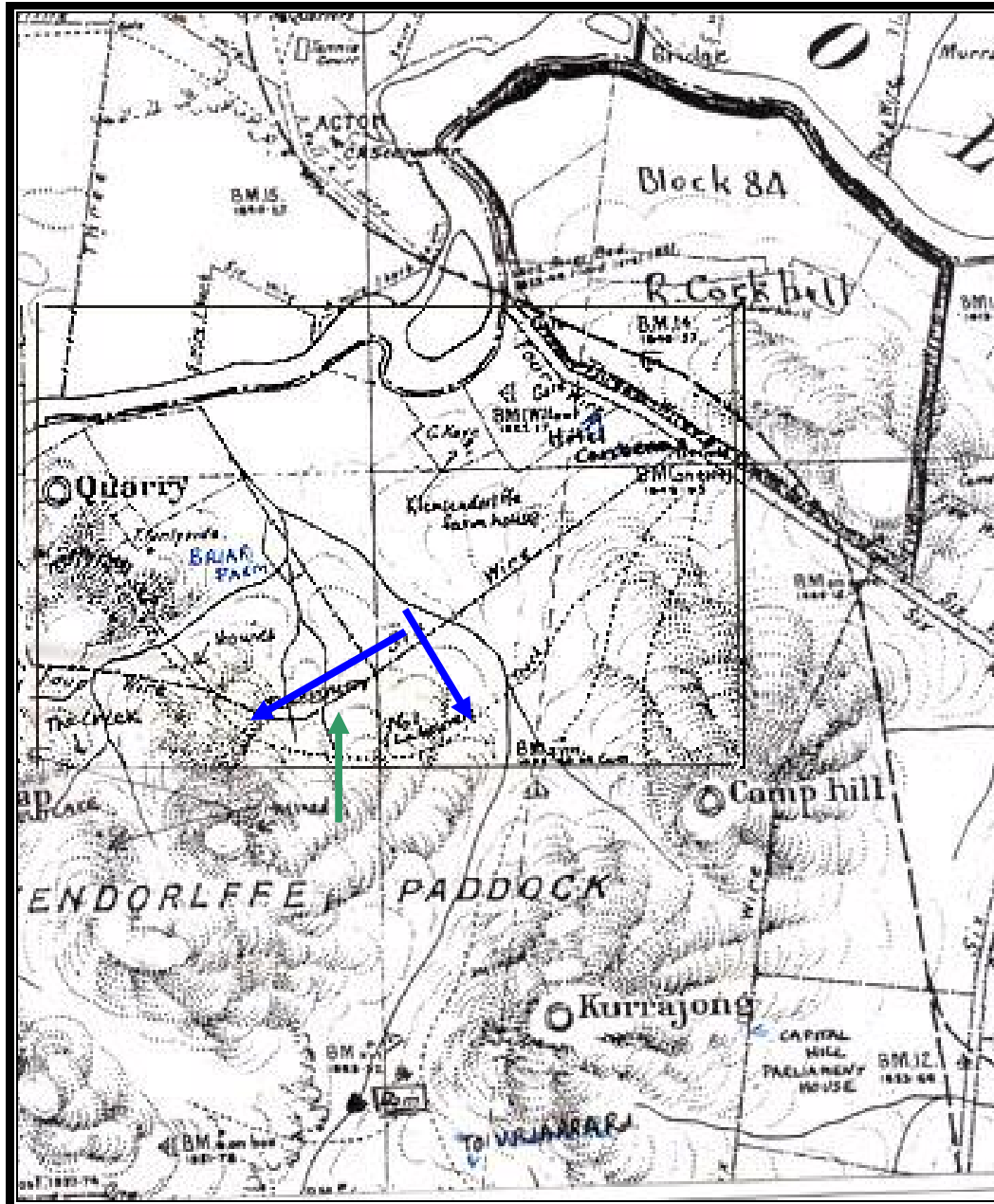
Following the big drought in the early 1840s Klensendorff became a bankrupt and in 1847 the land passed to Peter Plomer and his wife Ann – both of whom were absentee landlords. They leased to Terrence Aubrey Murray who owned the property on the western side of Klensendorff land and in turn Murray sub-leased to his friend Stewart Mowle who in turn leased to tenant farmers.

In 1854 the Mowles left the district and the tenant farmer, Charles Kaye moved into the stone villa and leased around 80 or so acres of nearby land. In March 1860 the land was sold to George Campbell of nearby Duntroon who continued the practice of leasing to tenant farmers.

Following formation of the Federal Capital Territory in 1911 Moriarty had the job of listing all properties in the newly formed territory. His detailed information included names of tenants, descriptions of land and structures on it such as dwellings and their age and condition, fences etc. From these documents we are provided with a date of the old road that cuts across the hillside opposite Lotus Bay – 1890. [I believe that this road was earlier and may have been the one used to take stone in the early 1860s from the Quarry (now Attunga Point) to St John the Baptist Church in the modern suburb of Reid to be used in the rebuilding of the church tower.] His detailed records are kept in the National Archives of Australia in Canberra and the information collected is recorded on the strip maps produced sometime between 1912 and 1915.

The two farm houses still in use in the Westlake area in 1912 were Klensendorff's, tenanted from 1854 until 1924 by the Kaye family and Briar Farm tenanted by Bryant, Cook and Kinlyside families from 1870 to 1913.

In 1913 tenant farmers on Commonwealth land were given the choice of an annual leasing arrangement. They could remain until the land was required by the Commonwealth. The Kinlyside family chose to leave and towards the end of 1913 moved to Oaks Estate. From that time the farm cottage was tenanted by construction workers and the leased land reduced to four acres around the farm cottage.



The above 1913 strip map that has Moriarty's¹ information shows part of the area of land of Westlake on the left of Kurrajong Hill that today is known as Capital Hill, site of the new Parliament House. The Quarry today is Attunga Point. Briar Farm, one of the tenant farms on Klensendorffs's land is marked nearby and from it is a track put down in 1890 (or as early as the 1860s). It is the old road that cuts across the hillside within the tree line (blue arrows). This road was used by Howie's and the single men's camps

¹ CW Moriarty was employed by the Commonwealth to list all the properties in the FCT that noted details such as condition of the land, buildings, roads etc – he valued the properties. His detailed information is found in handwritten and typed reports held in the Australian National Archives.

as an access road. The blue arrow on the left points to Howie's area and the green arrow to the general area of the Tradesmen's camp that was on the right hand side of the creeks.

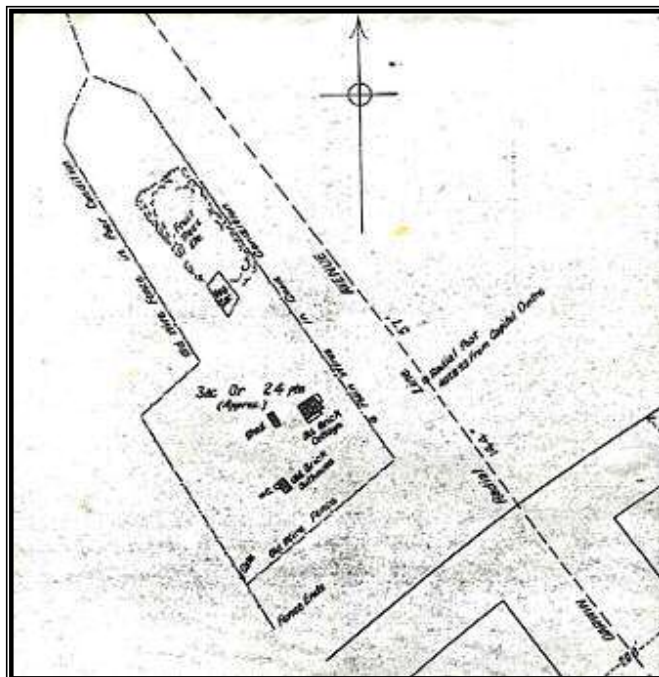
In the central area of the map on the south side of the Molonglo River is Kaye's Farm. Klensendorlffe and Kaye dwellings are now under the waters of the lake. However, the site of the old entrance is marked by one of two surviving pines planted in 1919 by one of the sons returning from the Great War. A second pine to replace the old dead one was planted in a ceremony on 24th July 2003. Bill Wood (local government member) along with a young Kaye descendent planted the pine and unveiled a plaque remember the Kaye family. On the right below is a photograph of the surviving pine and on the left Bill and young helper unveiling the plaque.



On the left is a photograph taken in 1912 of the Duntroon Cadets Royal Military College Duntroon on exercise – the building is Kaye's barn – the former Klensendorlffe villa. On the next page: Kaye girls on the bank of the Molonglo River circa 1913. The willows were planted in the 1840s. The story told is that the original willows came from near Napoleon's grave at St Helena. Willows were planted after the great drought in the early 1840s as fodder for stock. Lyall Gillespie's cards hold a story about the willows: *In the olden times one of the striking features of the landscape at Canberra was the willows known as Blundell's willow and Bambridge's willows. These willows have a romantic history. In the year 1822 someone whose name is not known to was on his way to Australia called at the Island of St Helena and while there was*

allowed to cut some slips from the willows near Napoleon's grave. These he stuck into potatoes and brought to New South Wales where he planted them with perfect success. Fifteen or twenty years later Elija Bambridge bootmaker and farmer of Canberra got cuttings from these willow trees and planted them along the river at Canberra and Acton where they are growing today – no doubt to farming of the latter proposed will result in their destruction. Queanbeyan Age (old Canberra notes by EG Williams) 15.10.1929

Below are photographs taken in the early 1900s and loaned by Gordon Kaye showing the Molonglo River near their home.



Briar Farm

Map on left shows Briar Farm and the then proposed roads – Darwin Avenue bottom right.

Briar Farm was constructed from hand made bricks – probably by Bryant and Cook who were bricklayers by trade. One wall was pise. Nearby to Briar Farm is the Quarry that has white shale later used by the Canberra Brickworks to make the brick known as *Canberra Cream*. It is possible that shale from this Quarry was used to make the bricks in Briar Farm Cottage. The



cottage was never connected to the sewer, water or electricity. Cooking was done over an open fire. The map below left shows the proposed Darwin Avenue the led to the area of Briar Farm. This road was intended to be constructed off State Circle mid way between Commonwealth and Perth Avenues but was not built on that site because the topography was not suitable.



Above Bee hives in grounds of Briar Farm

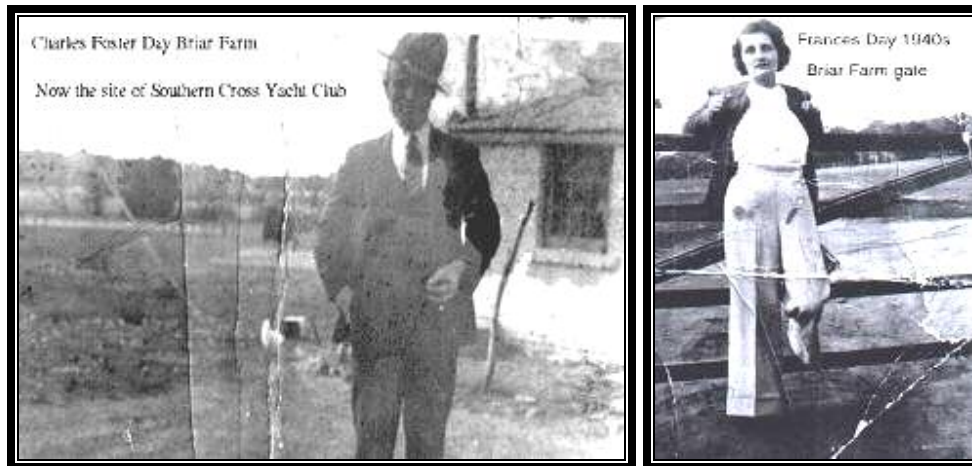
in the late 1880s during the period of Kinlyside tenancy. The site today is covered with the buildings of the Southern Cross Yacht Club. Right is a photograph taken in the late 1800s of the Kinlyside family at Briar Farm. The hillside in the background is probably leading to the Quarry - now Attunga Point.



Below is Don Boyd on the water tank at Briar Farm.



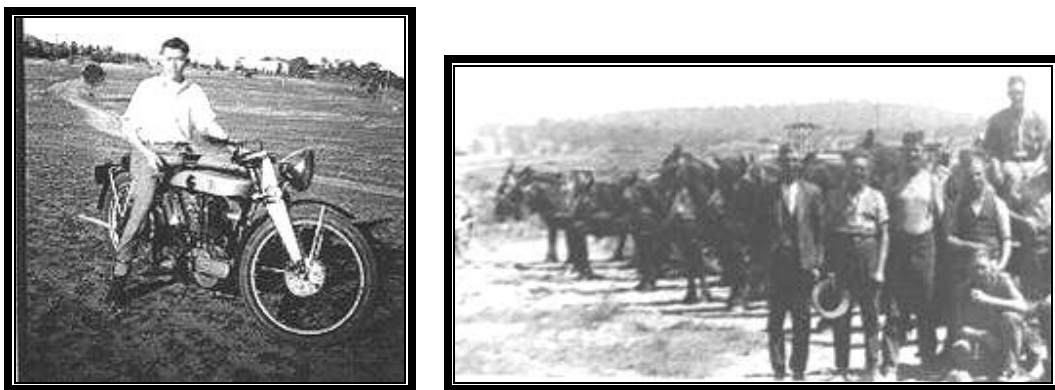
In the background on the right is the Albert Hall. The flat land in the background is now under the waters of Lake Burley Griffin.



Above left Charles Day outside Briar Farm and right, Frances Day at the farm gate. In the background is a Westlake hill.

The flat land between Briar Farm and Commonwealth Avenue that is now under the lake and land near Commonwealth Avenue is shown in a number of photographs taken in the 1924 and early 1940s.

Below left is Bill Convine (1940s) seated on his motor bike on the track between Westlake cottages and the Hotel Canberra. In the background is the Albert Hall. The tree may be the quince tree well remembered by all Westlake children for its fruit. On the right - 1924 - men of No 3 Sewer Camp on the land near to Hotel Canberra looking back towards Westlake. The track can be clearly seen and the cottages may be Howie's. In the background is Red Hill. The photograph loaned by Marjie Rundle (nee Hawke of Westlake).



The next photograph is another loaned by Marjie Hawke and taken in 1924 or 1925 that is of her father in a dray on the flat land opposite Lotus Bay. Between the drays and the tree is a line of earth that was dug from the sewer tunnels below. On the right is the same tree taken in the late 1990s. The road is Alexandrina Drive and the Hotel Canberra is behind the line of trees on the left. The water of Lotus Bay is just out of view to the left.



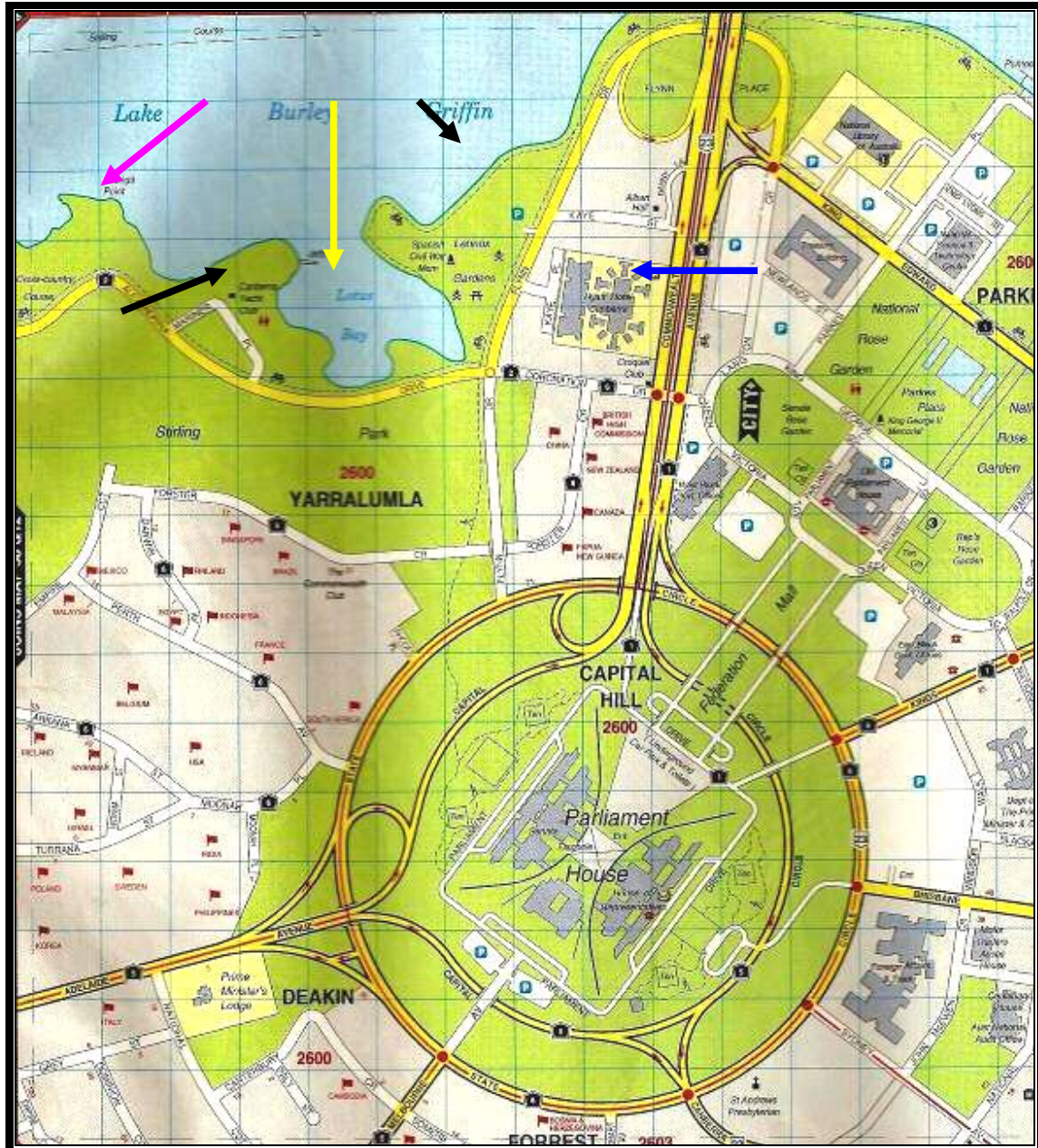
House site in Stirling Park on Stirling Ridge

This house site may have been the site of Morrison's cottage. John Morrison Jr was born in the area in 1870 – by this time Briar Farm was already tenanted by Bryant and Cook. Oral history gives the site of Morrison's farm as being in the area of the American Embassy which is closer to State Circle and it is possible that the site on Stirling Ridge may have been used by a construction worker in the 1920s. A letter of complaint was written by Corkhill who then was a dairy farmer who leased part of Yarralumla property known as *Rvierview* supports this supposition. He requested that a humpie built on his land be removed. This part of Stirling Ridge was used by Corkhill as night paddock for his cows.

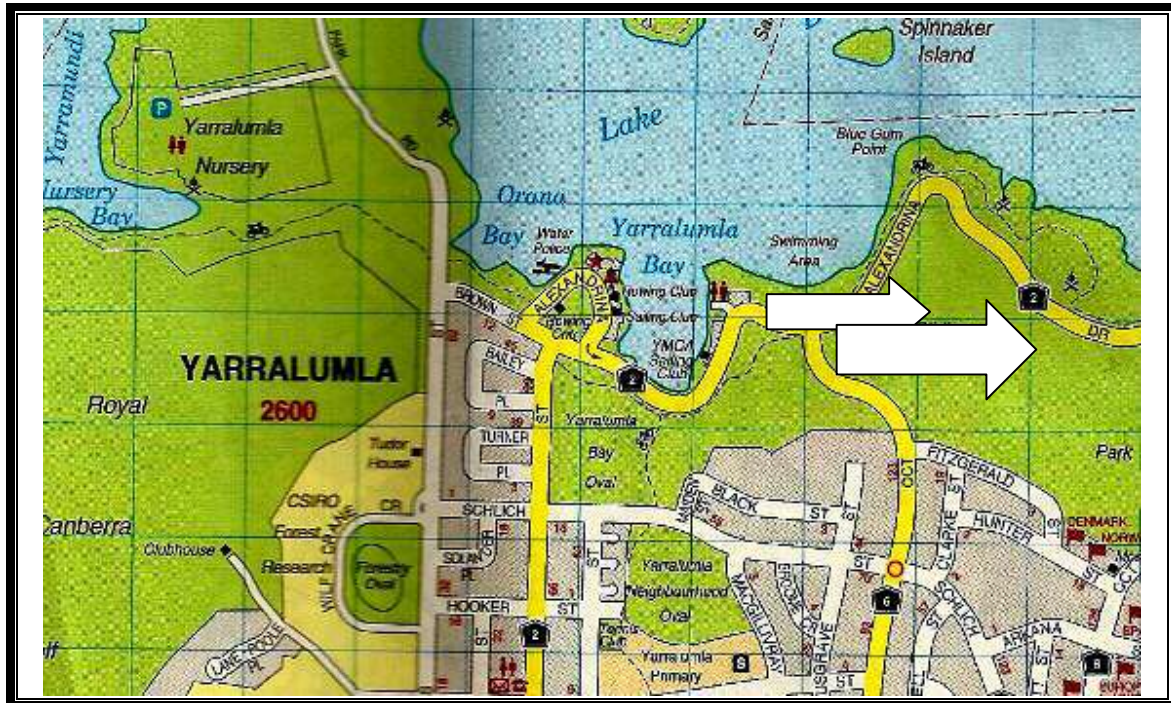


The three photographs above were taken of the site in July 2003. Left is a detail of the house site with Rowan trees - centre photograph shows a hole that may be from an earth closet or for drainage. On the other side of the track is an area that may have been used to hold horses or a cow. On the right is a detail of box thorn bush - one of many found on and near this site. These bushes were often used as a hedge fence. Off to the left in the first photograph is a circular rock lined garden bed.

The map below shows the eastern side of Stirling Park below Lake Burley Griffin. L-R Purple arrow points to Attunga Point (old quarry); Black to Briar Farm (now Southern Cross Yacht Club site); Yellow to Lotus Bay; Black Klensendorff & Kaye's farm house sites; Blue Hotel Canberra. The Albert Hall is the small black dot above the Hotel Canberra. Commonwealth Avenue is the long road from Capital Hill to the Lake.



The following modern map shows the western side of Stirling Park. The white arrows points to the area of Stirling Ridge.



The Construction Era 1913-1930s

Historical Background – Early years transition from paddocks to city.

Work began on the infrastructures of the city in 1912 and continued until 1916 when the financial and manpower constraints caused by Australia's decision to join Britain in her war against the Germans caused work to almost cease. During the early years the major centres were at

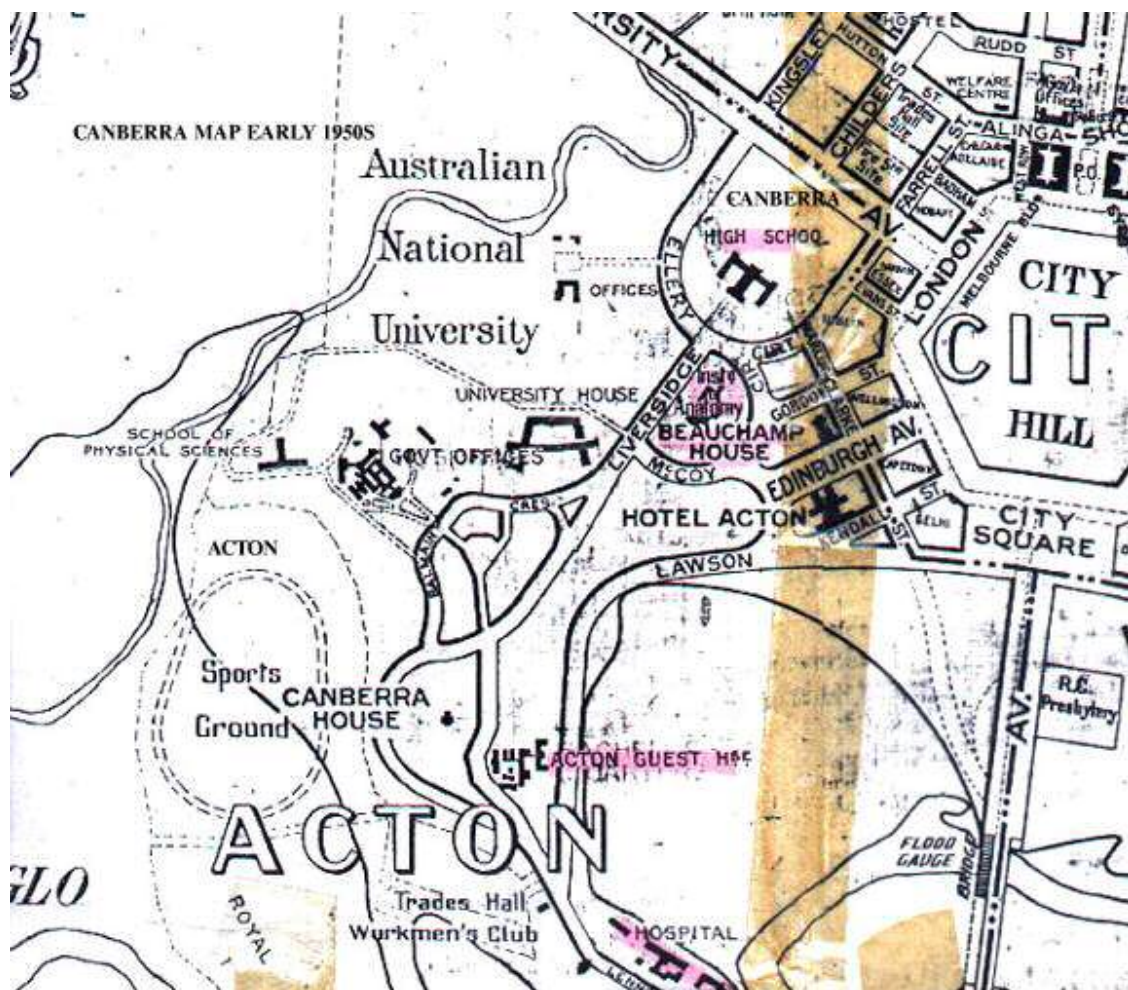
- Cotter Dam – construction of the dam
- Power House – electricity and industrial area
- Brick Yards (bricks, tiles etc) & Main Nursery – 1917 renamed from Brickyards to Westridge
- Acton – Administration area and Experimental Nursery
- Duntroon – RMC College constructed – completed by 1911

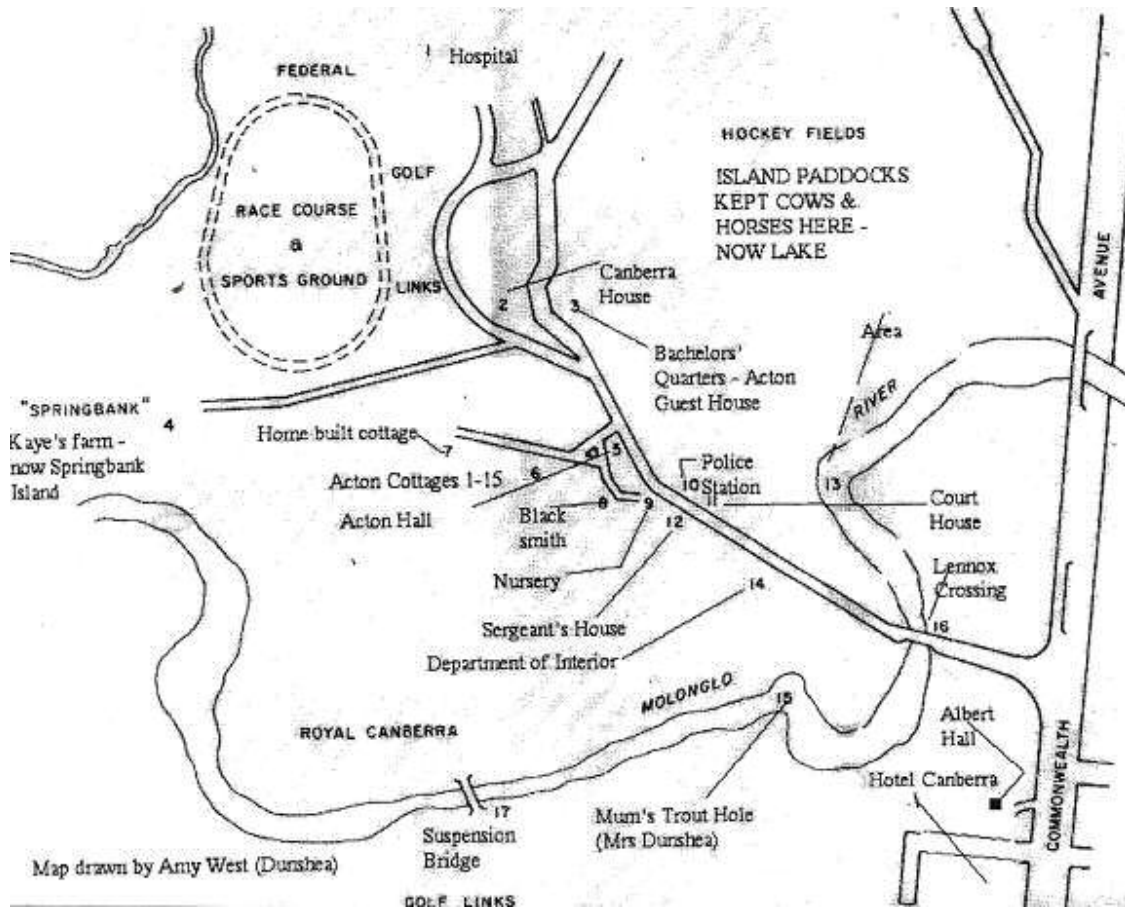
In 1915 work also commenced on the main intercepting sewer. Camps were established at all the centres. Married men constructed their own dwellings and the majority of the humpies were built with Hessian walls and tin roofs. Some dwellings were far more comfortable such as the Dunshea house at Acton. Single men were provided with canvas tents that were usually shared by two men. The camps were segregated into married

and single men's. The next two photographs show Dunshea's well built cottage (early 1920s) and *The Swagger Camp* near the Power House circa 1913.



Below is a 1930s map of the Acton area. The cottages built by the locals were nearby to the area of the Tradesmen's Club. In 1924 these self built cottages were replaced with HM Rolland cottages of the style built in *The Gap* at Westlake. The building marked Acton Guest House was the original Bachelors Quarters erected for lower class male public servants occupied from 1912. Canberra House was the residence built for the Administrator, Colonel Miller. It was begun in 1912 and Colonel Miller and his family moved in January 1914.





Above is a mud-map of the Acton area drawn by Amy West (nee Dunshea) of the Acton around the 1930s. The hospital marked on this map is the original one that is now part of the Australian National University. In the early 1940s a new hospital was built near the Dept of Interior buildings.

Below is a photograph of Lennox Crossing taken in 1926. The crossing was on the south side of the river just before the first of two Commonwealth Bridges were built. The small bridge at Lennox Crossing led to Acton. It is now under the waters of Lake Burley Griffin.



The Acton Swimming Hole was near Lennox Crossing. It was a very deep hole that may have been part of the cave system that is throughout the river flats. Many who swam in this

swimming hole said that they never found the bottom. However, one Westlake lad, by

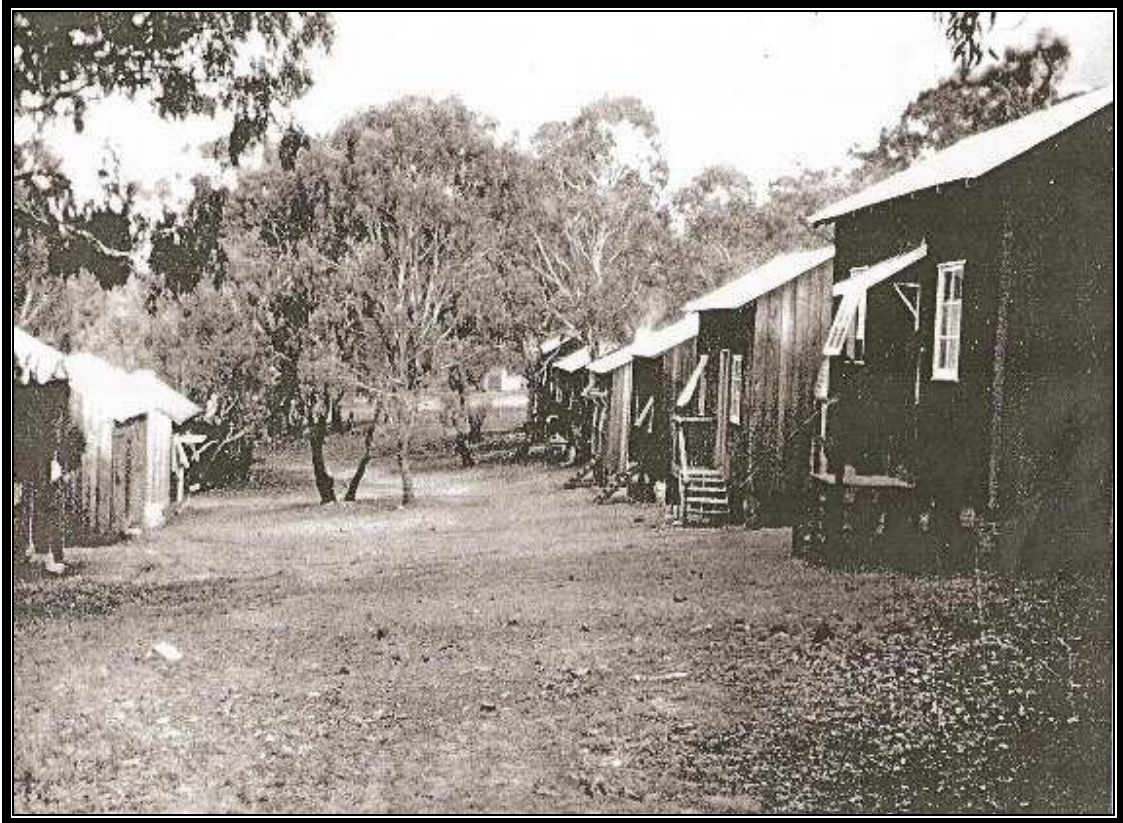
the surname of Leech, dived in and hit his head on something. He died. This lad was responsible for saving the life of Ken Dinnerville when he got into trouble in the waters of the 1925 flood.

The Post War One - Period & Resumption of Construction of the City

General Information About the Times

The war ended in 1918 and at this time like that of the Great Depression (1929-early 1940s) many called for the abandonment of the project to build a national capital. However, work did recommence in 1921 and high on the priority list was a House for the Parliament for without it the Commonwealth government could not move from Melbourne to Canberra. Because of the monetary constraints a decision was made to build a Provisional Parliament House to be replaced at some time in the future with a grand building. The first sod to mark the beginning of construction on the parliament building was turned in August 1923. Another essential building to house the visiting politicians was a hostel and it was commenced in 1922 not far from the parliament building. It was later named Hotel Canberra and the first half opened in December 1924. It was completed the following year. Contractor John Howie won the contract to build the Hotel Canberra.

Contractor John Howie won the contract to build the hostel and he established his settlement that consisted of 25 two and three bedroom timber cottages for married men and a Hostel Camp for his single men on the western side of Haines Creek and along the old road from Briar Farm on the lower slopes of the hill opposite Lotus Bay. Below: Howie's cottages circa 1926 (Canberra & District Historical Association collection)



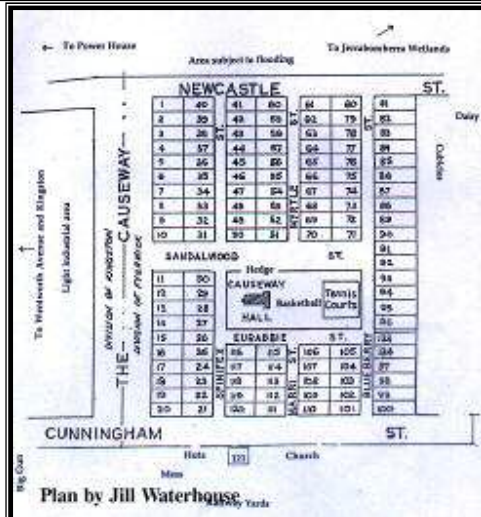
Around the same time work on the main intercepting sewer reached the area and in 1922 No 3 Sewer Camp was established on the lower slopes of Stirling Ridge in *The Gap*. Evidence on Stirling Ridge shows that in addition to the tents of No 3 a number of humpies were constructed probably for married sewer men and families. In 1923 No 1 Tradesmen's Camp was established on Capital Hill Westlake and the following year the Federal Capital Advisory Committee (FCAC) chose the hillside opposite Lotus Bay and Capital Hill as good sites to erect the tents for single tradesmen.

Westlake thus became the major centre to house men working on the Provisional Parliament House, Hotel Canberra and nearby Administrative buildings of East and West Blocks along with the men working on the main intercepting sewer.

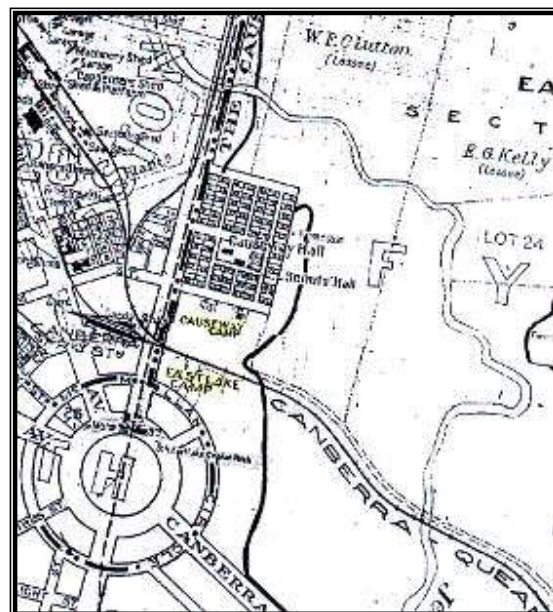
The first attempt to provide decent housing for married construction workers consisted of the conversion in 1921-1922 the barracks of the ex-Molonglo Internment Camp into cottages. The barracks were divided into 120 cottages that consisted of rental or three or six rooms. The buildings were unlined and the facilities for lavatories, bathing and laundry were shared. Insufficient coppers were provided to the needs of the locals and water for the tin baths had to be heated in the wood fired coppers and carried up three steps in buckets to the bath. Needless to say this led to many arguments. In 1926 or 1927 the barrack houses were subdivided into individual cottages. One section of the ex-internment camp was converted into shared rooms for single tradesmen.



Above left Molonglo Settlement in the early 1920s before the barracks were separated into cottages. Left plan of Causeway cottages that has the modern street names



used in post World War 2 period. Below map showing the Causeway settlement and the Causeway and Eastlake Camps (marked in yellow)



In

1925 the third major temporary settlement was established near the Power House – and the area of the intended Causeway across the Molonglo from the Kingston Railway Station to the north side of the river. The flood of 1922 damaged the bridge across the Causeway and it was never rebuilt. The settlement of 120 cottages built in the same plan as the Westlake houses (1925-1926) by the Federal Capital Commission (FCC) was named Causeway.

In the central area of the Causeway cottages is the Causeway Hall that was put up in one day by the men of the settlements and camps. It is still in use by the Causeway community today. The timber houses at Causeway were replaced with small brick cottages in the mid 1970s.

Oaks Estate, formerly a part of Queanbeyan until the railway line used to mark the edge of the FCT near Queanbeyan removed Oaks Estate from NSW and Queanbeyan and it developed into a workmen's settlement.

These five major settlements – all temporary – were insufficient for the needs of the workers and in 1925 the FCAC permitted 80 humpies to be erected at Riverside (on the

south side of the Molonglo River opposite modern Harman Naval Station). The following year another 120 sites were made available at Russell Hill (near the modern Campbell shops) for married men to built their own homes. Riverside closed in 1926 or early 1927.



In 1925 three semi-permanent camps for single men were established – on the north side near Civic Centre was White City Camp – on Capitol Hill, Capitol Hill Camp and on the south side, Causeway Camp. White City was initially tents – 1926 cubicles built; Capitol Hill galvanized iron dwellings and Causeway, timber huts. Other camps for single men were erected near work sites – the major site between 1923-1927 being Westlake.

Photograph on left: Capitol Hill Camp circa 1928. Photograph loaned by Cecily Hinchcliffe whose mother, Mrs Stanley was Mess Caterer at Capitol Hill Camp 1928-1930.

The tents in the Westlake area, like all the other camps, as were the cottages in the major settlements of Causeway, Molonglo, Riverside and Russell Hill, were arranged in neat rows that formed a rectangular whole. The Westlake Cottages in *The Gap*, however were unusual in that they followed the old tracks and their numbering indicates the order in which they were built. Below a detail of No 1 Labourers Camp on Capitol Hill, Westlake.



Westlake – cottages in *The Gap*

Westlake was the site where the FCAC constructed the first cottages for married tradesmen. The reason for the construction of cottages by the FCAC was the shortage of construction workers who were not keen to leave the building booms in the major cities and the facilities in those places not provided for men with families in Canberra. In

1923 the FCAC made the decision that to attract the married men it was necessary to provide a number of small temporary timber houses for their use.² (Previously men were expected to build their own humpies.) The result was that HM Rolland, government architect designed a cottage based on those he saw at Contractor Howie's settlement. Initially - in 1923 - 20 cottages were erected in *The Gap*³ and tenanted from March 1924 and these were soon followed by another 32. In 1926 another 10 were built on the sites of the tents of No 3 Sewer Camp. A total of 61 cottages remained in the settlement until post World War 2. No 21 is a mystery cottage. It was built but was moved or burnt down early in the settlement's time. In the early 1950s No 53 burnt down and in mid 1965 the last remaining cottage in the settlement - 29 - was severely damaged by fire. All the cottages with the exception of those mentioned above were sold as tenants left in the late 1950s and moved to new sites.



Above is a photograph of Ann Austin (right) and Vagi Varo taken 1952. In the background is 27 Westlake. The house site today is opposite the Mexican Embassy in Empire Circuit near the corner of Forster Crescent. The room on the right was a bedroom and on the other side, the living area.

Because of its proximity to the worksites Westlake was an ideal site for the accommodation for workmen. The population of the area in 1924 was 400 and by the

² In 1921 the FCAC also had around 50 small brick cottages erected in permanent Canberra for tradesmen and converted the Molonglo Internment Camp into 120 cottages and accommodation for 150 tradesmen. A few Molonglo buildings were transported to other sites including Westridge - shown in the background of the photograph showing the sewer line workings.

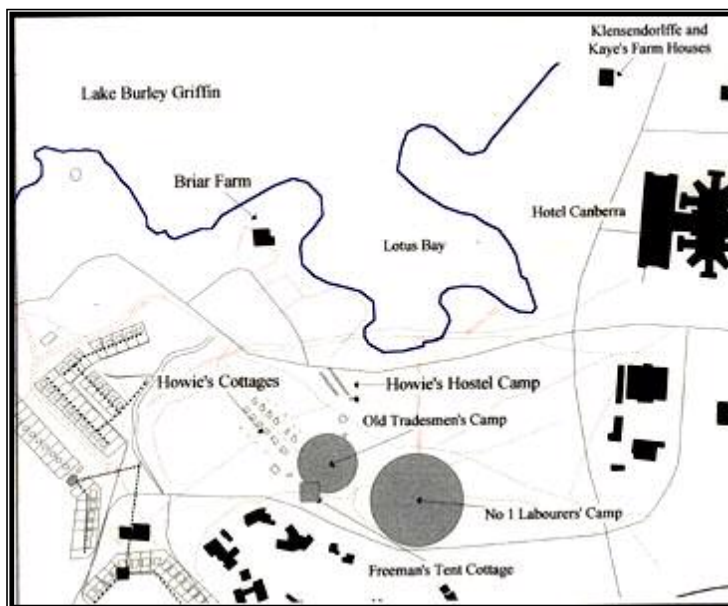
³ These cottages were erected in between the modern roads of Darwin Avenue, Forster Crescent and Empire Circuit. This is land where embassies are now erected or about to be erected. The sites of 21-28 are in Stirling Park in the area opposite Empire Circuit down to Forster Crescent. The sites of the remaining houses are in *The Gap* Stirling Park.

following year it had swelled to 700. Safe removal of sewerage and waste water was a major health concern.

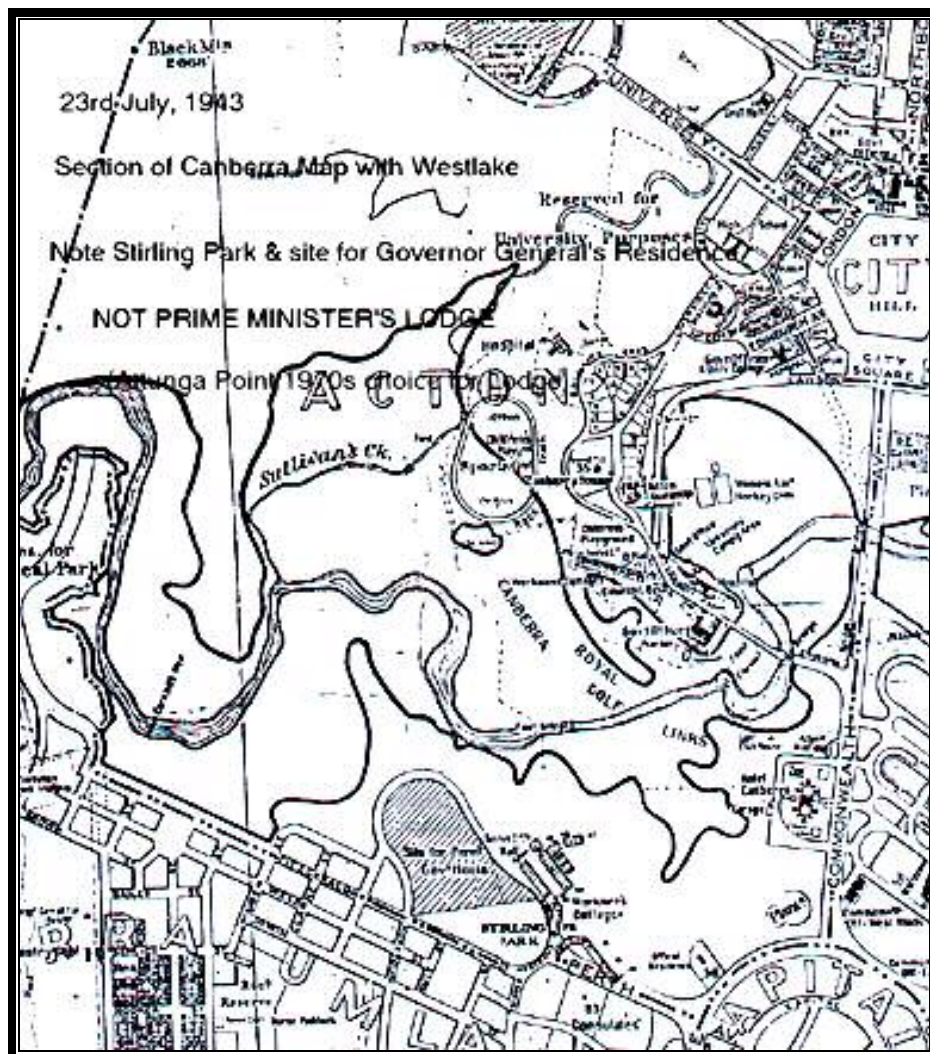
Water and electricity was connected to houses, and service buildings in the camps. Briar and Kaye's farm cottages missed out on both.



Above – aerial view of area of Westlake circa 1952. The yellow arrow points to the Westlake Hall (former No 3 Sewer Mess); green arrow to the sewer vent and earth dump – from sewer tunnel below; purple arrow to the earth dump between cottages 28 on right and 53 (missing because the cottage burnt down in early 1950s); black arrow – Quarry – now Attunga Point; blue arrows site of Howie's settlement and



light blue area of Old Tradesmen's Camp. The area above the purple arrow is part of the Canberra Golf Club (later Royal Canberra Golf Club – that later moved to Yarralumla into the old nursery area). Left: map showing the sites of Westlake - Howie's Cottages, Hostel Camp and single men's camps - Old Tradesmen and No 1 Labourers. No 1 Labourers' Camp is now known to have been erected on Capital Hill. The area marked on the above map as No 1 was the area where the shortlived May 1927 camp for police and others that probably included the sailors of HMAS Renown.



Above is one of the early maps that shows the sites of the Westlake cottages and notes that part of the area of Stirling Ridge was set aside for a Governor General's Residence and park named Stirling. Hotel Canberra is mid way along Commonwealth Avenue on the right.

The next photograph is an aerial one taken circa 1952. Note the tracks between the Westlake cottages in *The Gap* and the Hotel Canberra. At the point below the Hotel where the main track divides into two the one on the left was the walking path. It went down a gully and crossed over the dry creek via a plank bridge before continuing up to the Hotel Canberra. People using this track then cut through the grounds of the Hotel Canberra near the Croquet grounds. The Hotel Canberra was one of two bus stops used by Westlake people. The other was on State Circle below the American Embassy.



Cottage No 1 Westlake commences bottom right and then around and up the hill to 20. No 22 starts near 4 Westlake (No 21 missing) and down to 27 on the corner before turning to 28. Across the road is 29 that goes up to the corner - 39 where it turns and



goes across the hill to 47. No 48 starts opposite 36 and goes to 52. The last ten buildings were built on the site of the tents of No 3 Sewer Camp. They (minus 53 - burnt down) are the cottages in a line near the bottom centre of the photograph. The hall is partly hidden by two trees at the end of the line of cottages. Of to the left of the cottages - shown as a white patch - is the Quarry - now Attunga Point. Above left is a photograph taken in

the late 1990s from the hill just above the quarry - Attunga Point. Mt Ainslie in the background.

The Land Stirling Park - Post Settlement Period

The area of Stirling Park is full of reminders of the men and women who have lived there. Old hedges in *The Gap* have grown to full sized trees and every spring flowers push through the surface of the earth in the old gardens to bloom. Paths, old tracks and roads - some almost overgrown - remain in the park. Drains, holes for earth closets, bricks, tins, glass and numerous dumps litter the park. Haines Creek is full of rubbish. Every old tree bears the marks of human use. Every walk reveals something not seen before.

The park may be divided into three distinct areas - Stirling Ridge, The Gap, and hillside opposite Lotus Bay. Land in *The Gap* where the 61 cottages stood for around 40 years reflects the work of keen gardeners who enriched the soil with compost and grew their vegetables in the backyard, flowers in the front, grape and ivy vines on trellises and fruit trees such as plumb, apple, apricot and quince. Planted along fence lines were briar roses, pines and a few flowering plumb trees. Following the removal of the cottages the land was levelled and the majority of fruit trees pushed over. A few remained such as the apple tree outside the entrance to the tennis court. It was cut down accidentally during a woody weed clearance, but is now regrowing.

The hillsides have been left to regenerate. From around 1921 part of Stirling Ridge became Corkhill's paddock where the cows were kept at certain times of the year. This area has been less disturbed than the other hillsides. Here the majority of stone arrangements may be found. On the lower slopes of Stirling Ridge within Corkhill's paddock is the site of a house with rowan trees. Members of the Corkhill family who knew this land well have no knowledge of the house site which suggests that it may be a tenant farm site rather than a sewer worker's home?



Above: Gardening 29 Westlake 1960s. Marianne Heikarinen on left.

A number of bricks collected by George Sykes of 29 were used to build the flats at the rear of 29 and edge garden beds. The floors of the flats are still in situ and others are found lying around and in Haines Creek. Above right is a photograph taken of a pet Kookaburra in the backyard of the Box family home - 25 Westlake. The bird is a little lost in the details of the garden, but gives some indication of the types of gardens in *The Gap*. In the background is the sewer vent and one of the two earth dumps from the era of the sewer miners.



The above photograph shows the details of the cross roads - the road off to the right turns from the road in front of 29-39 across in front of 39-47. The other road leading off to the left originally went towards the quarry. Now it finishes at Alexandrina Drive and has a locked

gate at that point. In the area between the roads was the Westlake Tennis Court.



On the left is a photograph in the *Canberra Community News* that shows the Thompson Brothers standing on the Westlake Tennis



Left is a vine covered gum tree near the Hall site. The area shows that a humpie had been built there - probably belonging to a sewer miner. On the right is a tree in the yard of 29 Westlake. The garden shown in the photograph above right was near this tree. Like the majority of old trees in Stirling Park branches have been cut off probably for use as firewood.



This tree (centre) was in the grounds of 29 Westlake.



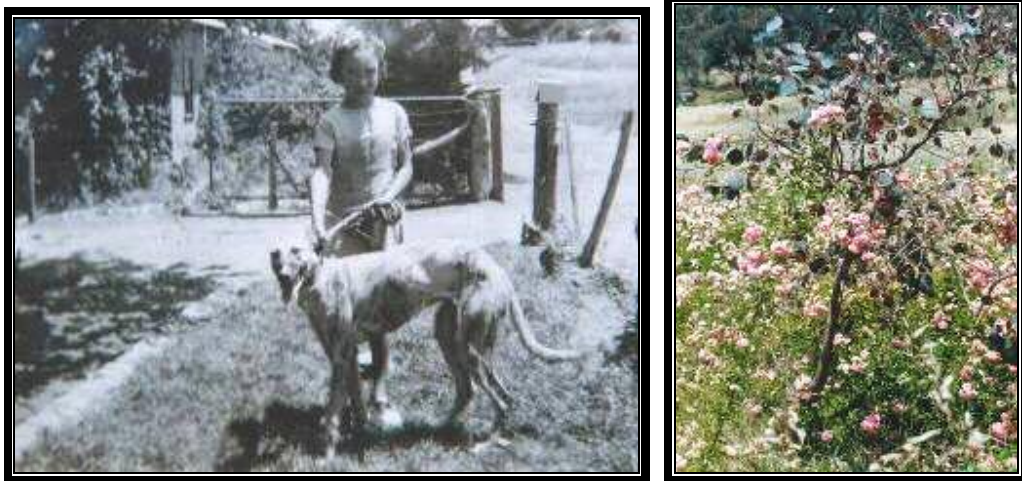
In the background of the photograph on the left is a brown trunk tree. It is the tree that grew near Freeman's Tent cottage. On the right is a part of the old road from the Quarry – it is opposite Lotus Bay. Below left is a photograph of the remains of a water tank found on the lower slopes of Stirling Ridge on the site of a humpy probably owned by a sewer miner. Below right is a photograph of Ann Austin, Loris and Colleen West in the yard of 27 Westlake early 1940s. The land in the background was part of the area of the children's playground and is now in the grounds of the Mexican Embassy opposite Forster Crescent.



The Rubbish Dumps

During my walks through the parkland I have come across a number of rubbish dumps. They range in size from a garbage bin load of rubbish to dumps used over a number of years. Some still to be examined are in Haines Creek and the old air raid shelters and trenches that were dug in Westlake during the time of World War 2. The sites of the Westlake houses have underground pipes that connected cottages to both the septic and sewer. Not known is how many of the water pipes are still in situ. Many of the garden beds that include the Canberra Tile edged front garden of 61 lie just under the surface of the earth. A number of concrete slabs from backrooms, laundry and small sheds are found in situ.

Below left Shirley Dixon in her front yard 42 Westlake with her brother Phillip's dog and right part of the briar rose hedge 1990s - out of sight in the photograph on the left.



The majority of dumps dug have been found on the hillsides. The largest dump is in a section of the old Quarry - now Attunga Point. The base is some eight feet below the surface. This dump contains artifacts from Howie's Settlement and the Hotel Canberra where it appears that from the amount of broken crockery found with the motif of the Hotel Canberra that there were people who had a few problems with holding same. It would have been used from around mid 1924 when the men of No 1 moved to the area where the dump below Lord Casey's had been used from around 1922. Amongst the rubbish from the hotel were numerous tea spoons, knives, the odd fork and several small silver plated salt spoons. Found also were a number of oyster shells and a range of bottles. The greater majority by far were broken beer bottles and condiment bottles - both broken and unbroken. There were also a number of broken soda bottles - the majority being a range of Schweppes and Sheeky bottles. Pieces of crockery dolls and a rubber doll have been found. Below left - the rubber doll; centre - Hotel Canberra spoons and egg cup and right fragments of crockery dolls, cup and bottles from Attunga Point dump.



Four major dumps have been found on the hillside opposite Lotus Bay. One was in the quagmire near the site of buildings - probably ablution - belonging to the Tradesmen's Camp. Objects found in this dump brought to light a number of artifacts that included a broken ceramic soft drink container and pieces of the brown lino that once covered the floors of camp buildings. Another dump was found in the backyard of No 2 Howie's cottages. Finds from this dump are documented in the section on Howie's cottages and it appears from it's contents that it was used at the time of departure of one of the last residents. Two other dumps recently found (May-June 2003) may have been ones belonging to Howie's settlement and used between 1922 and 1924. The first that is the nearest to the sites of the cottages and hostel camp may have been used until 1923 when the Tradesmen's camp settled nearby. The other is in the area below Lord Casey's and I think may have been used up until the labourers of No 1 camp arrived in 1924. I think is probable that the Attunga Point dump that contains rubbish from both Howie's and the Hotel Canberra may have been used from late 1924 until the period of the departure of Howie's settlement around 1930/31. Below a photograph taken in the 1990s above the quarry dump. The two Howie's dumps recently found are on the way to work. Attunga Point site required the men dumping the rubbish to go past their cottages.

Below left an unbroken Johnson Brothers Royal Ironstone ware. It has the flower and wheat sheaf motif -





Above left - details of the plate with bows and right - plate, stopper and piece of cod bottle turning purple. This bottle would date from before 1916 and was originally clear glass. The manganese on exposure to light has turned purple. Also found on the hillside were small pieces of a Sheekey brown glass ginger beer bottle. These have Britannica with a shield along with the name on them. Sheekey provided the soft drink for the opening of Parliament in May 1927. In the recently found dump near Howie's Cottages a piece of ceramic ginger beer container has been found with SH... on it. It is likely that this is also one of Sheekey's.

Excluding the Tradesmen's dump in the quagmire the link between the other three is crockery with a gold motif found in all dumps. Another is Johnson Brothers white plate that has an embossed pattern. The two dumps recently discovered have bottles that have dates of 1918 and 1921 and in the dump near Lord Casey's a penny with the date 1922 was found along with a small crockery doll's leg. Bottles in the dump near Howie's cottages have internal thread and glass stoppers. In the dump below Lord Casey's the majority of condiment bottles are *TAYLOR BROS SYDNEY*. A number of broken tops still have the metal caps adhering. There are also bottles from the early part of the twentieth century.



Left dump site near Lord Casey's. The earth here indicates that much of the rubbish was burnt. The burnt earth is around one foot or more above the base earth. This dump like many of the others, have broken bricks and rocks in them probably used to hold down lighter materials. The majority of bricks used for this purpose and building work

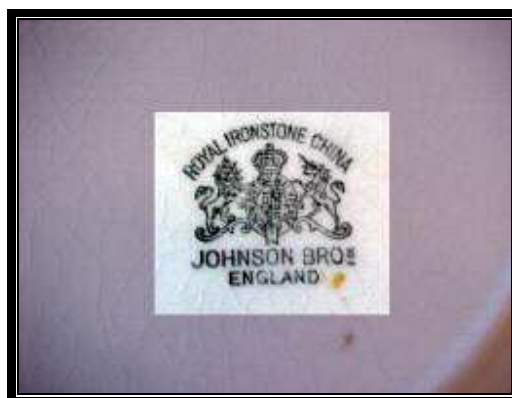


found on all sites on the hillside opposite Lotus Bay have the simple recessed rectangular frog mark. Some of the bricks are recessed on both side. This type of Canberra brick is known to have been used in the foundations of the Provisional Parliament House and would have been used in the work on the Hotel Canberra. In *The Gap* the Canberra bricks found have frog markings of this and later periods. The bricks with *Canberra C'Vealth* and *C'Vealth Canberra* were bricks used in the

1920s. By mid 1930s if not earlier the frogs were marked *Canberra*. In post World War 2 the mark was changed to *CB*.

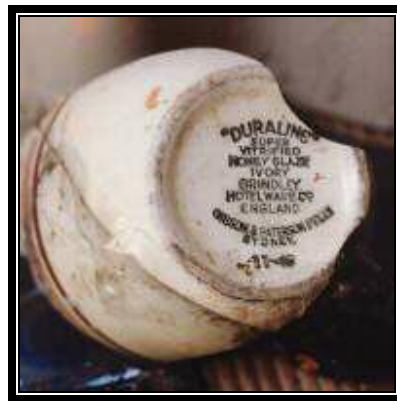


Above a detail of a photograph taken in 1926 showing the Hotel Canberra. Cutting across the picture in front of the Hotel is Commonwealth Avenue. The Molonglo River is in the foreground. The building above left of the Hotel is Hotel Kurrajong. The building and trees below left of the Hotel is Kaye's old property. The stone villa built by Klensendorff in the 1830s and used by the Kaye family from the early 1890s as a barn was pulled down and used as fill in Commonwealth Avenue. The old slab cottage built by the Kaye family was also pulled down and the stone fire place left to become part of the club house Royal Canberra Golf Links. The crock on the right is an example of the containers used for soft drink. This would date from the 1930s when the Commonwealth Cordial Company opened.





Above left glass found in the Attunga Point dump. Amongst the glass finds were numerous broken jam dishes - see centre. Above right examples of the plate, jug and bottle found in the dump.



Right, Hotel Canberra cups found in Westlake dumps. The earlier Hotel Canberra crockery had a black and white motif using intertwined letters HC - see photograph bottom left. Below right is a detail of the base of one of the Hotel Canberra cups. Tea-cup and small coffee cups have been found.



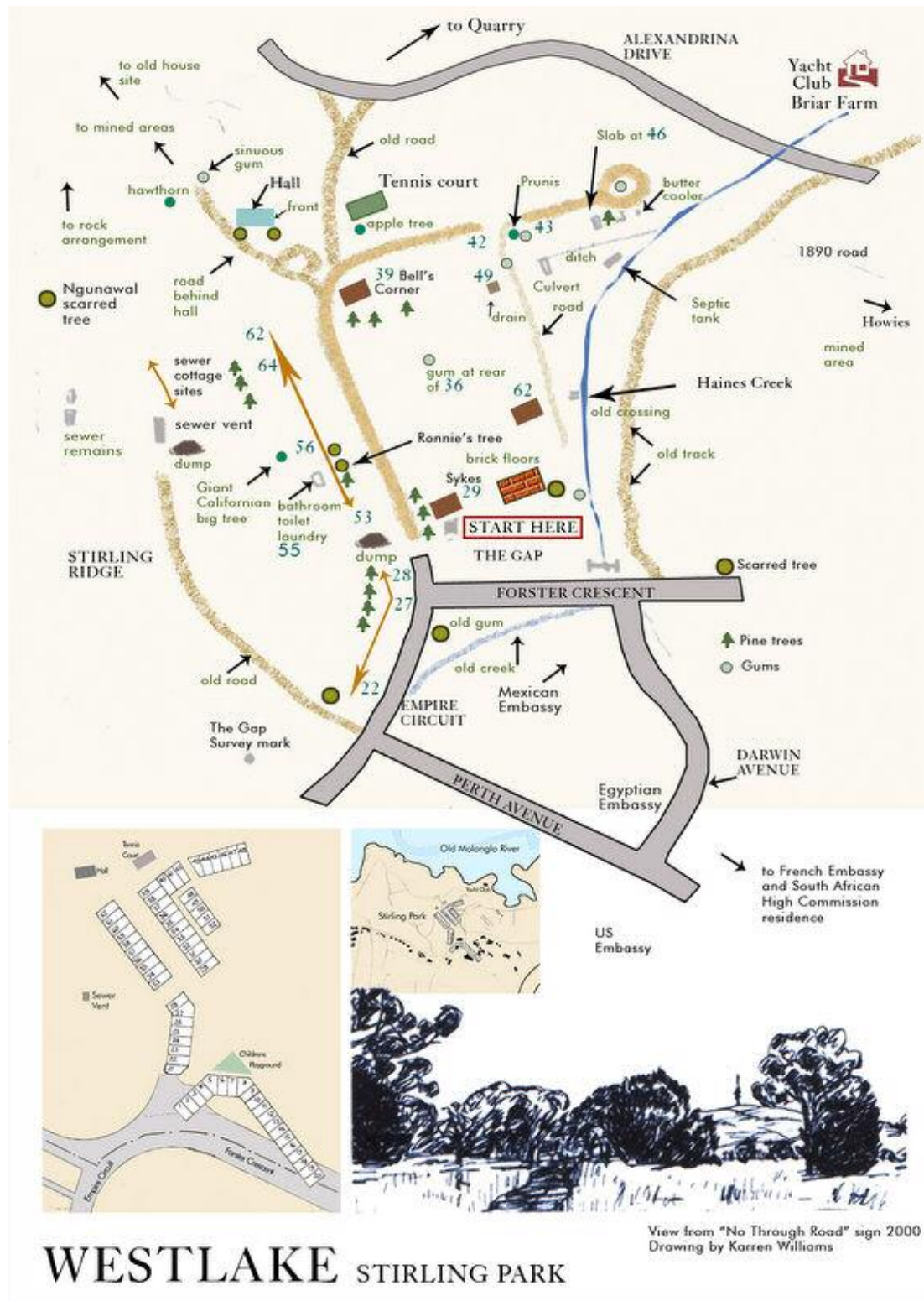
Above left pieces of crockery found in the Attunga Point dump and a full set of one of the types found in the dump. This set was made in Japan. Above right one of the vases found in the Quarry Dump.

Photograph taken April 2003 of the same flat land as seen in the last photograph. This photograph looks back towards the hillside where the tents of the Tradesmen's Camp was erected. Cutting across the hillside in front of the large gum tree is one of the old drains. Many drains are found on the hillside that lead to the quagmire, creek and the bigger drains cut diagonally across the hillside. The concrete marker near the apple tree marks the site of one of the two plaques erected by Westlake people to commemorate their old homes. The other plaque is opposite the grounds of the Mexican Embassy in Forster Crescent on the site of 29 Westlake. Standing erect into the sky on the right hand side of the photo is the flag pole of the new Parliament House. On the right is a view of the drain taken from the right and above the drain.



NO 3 SEWER CAMP IN *THE GAP* AND ON STIRLING RIDGE

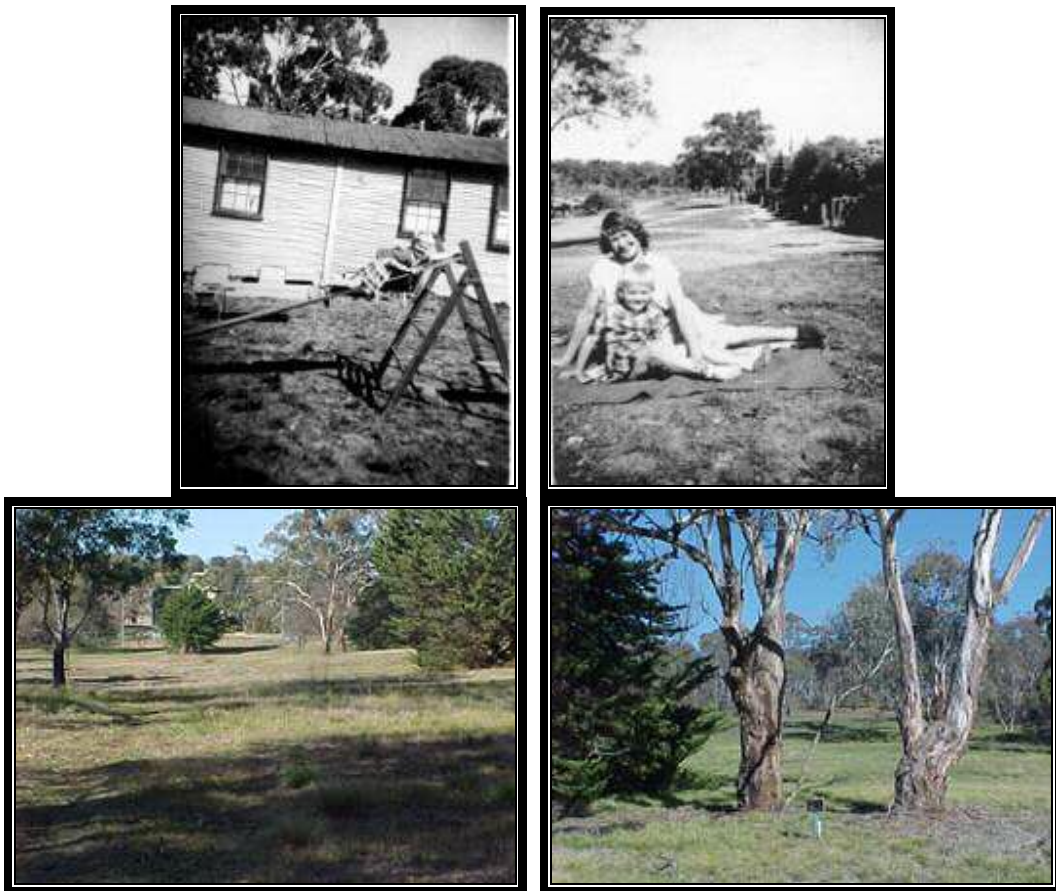
The men of No 3 Sewer Camp lived in tents and some humpies. The tents were 8ft x 10ft with two men sharing each of the 100 tents on site. Arthur Freeman Jr whose father was Mess Caterer No 3 Sewer Camp recalled that the tents were erected in two rows across the hillside on the sites later taken over by the last ten cottages erected in Westlake in 1926. The Mess rooms of the Camp became the first Westlake Hall that was enlarged some years later.



The above mud map of Westlake Cottages in *The Gap* that shows the cottages in near the modern roads of Forster Crescent and Empire Circuit are not quite in the correct position. They need to be moved to the

left and up with 29 near the road that juts into Stirling Park. (NB note typing error – Karen Williams not Karren)

Below left: View of side of Westlake Hall circa 1953. It had been enlarged from the original mess of No 3 Sewer Camp. The first mess caterer for the men of No 3 was Arthur Freeman who lived with his wife and family in rooms off the main mess area. He later moved into a tent⁴ in the area of the Tradesmen's Camp and then into 13 Howie's Cottages. Angela Ivanovici on the slide. On the right is Angela and her mother outside the all Hall. The cottages on the right are 62 to 53 and were erected two years after the first 52 cottages on the site of the two rows of sewer camp tents. The two tall gums on the right in the photograph are still in the park and marked by a sign - *Cocky's Tree*. This was the tree used by *Cocky* (Ronny) O'Rourke who was the Cockatoo for the SP Bookie *Lofty* Harrington who lived in 55 Westlake.

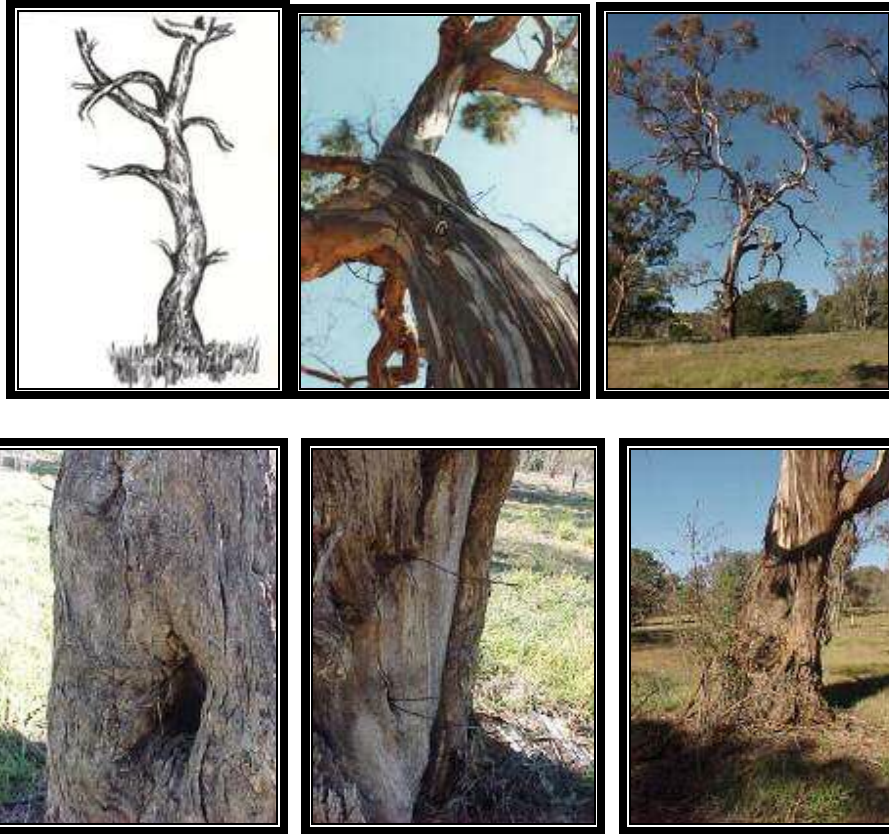


Above left is the view in June 2003 from the Westlake Hall looking along to old road. On the right is a photograph taken from the house site looking towards the hillside where cottages 43-47 were erected.

The hall was the central to the life of the Westlake Community. The site may have been used earlier for a farm cottage. Nearby to the site is an old tree that was used during the period of occupation of the sewer men to hold electric wires. In its trunk are signs of other use that indicate that it may have been used earlier for a post and rail fence.

⁴ This tent had timber sides and floor. It is likely that it belonged to the Mess Caterer of the Tradesmen's Camp who moved in 1924 into a Westlake cottage shortly after it was ready for occupation.

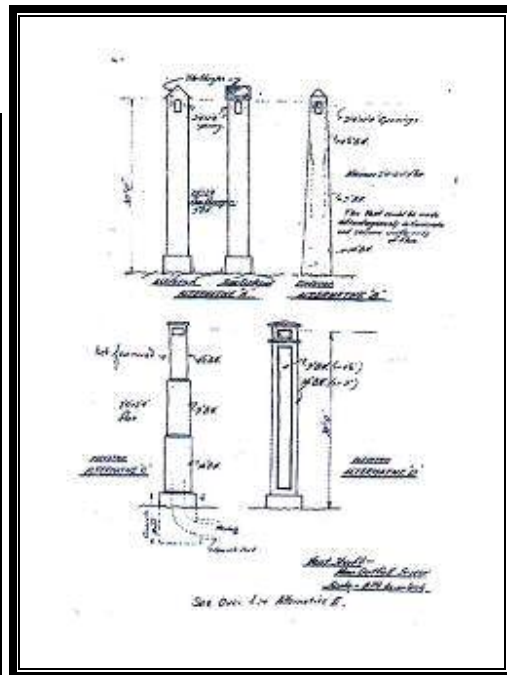
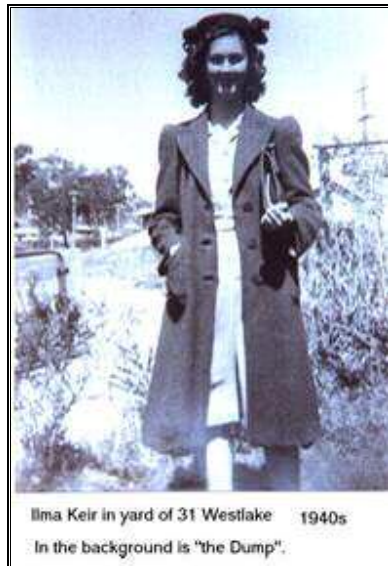
Below left is a drawing by Karen Williams used in the Walk Around Stirling Park (National Trust ACT) brochure and right a photograph of the same tree taken in the mid 1990s and later photographs taken in June 2003.



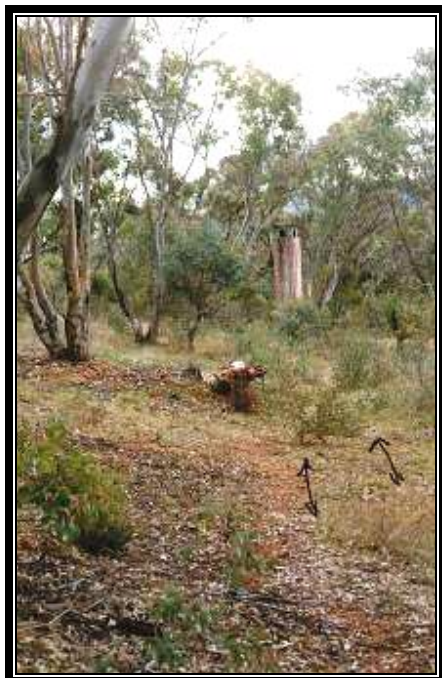
Following photographs - left drawing of old Californian Big Tree near the backfence of 56 Westlake. Next to it is a photograph of the same tree taken in June 2003. Near it's base is the body of Oscar Maxwell, fox terrior born the same day his mistress, Carmel. Whether this tree was planted by the sewer men or the Phillips family of 56 is not known. The Maxwell family moved into 56 after the departure of the Phillips family. Nearby on the upper side of the hill is part of the ditch dug across the hillside. This was most likely put in at the time the tents were in situ to prevent water flooding into the tents in times of rain. It may have been planted during the era of No 3 Sewer Camp. On right is a photograph of one of the concrete trenches on top of Stirling Ridge used by the sewer miners. Another slab not shown in this June 2003 photograph, still had bolts attached to the slab. Bottom left one of the two concrete slabs used by sewer miners and on the right another photograph taken in June 2003 of the trench.



One of the slabs I have been told, covered the shaft down to the tunnel that comes across from Western Creek, through Yarralumla, Stirling Park to the area of Commonwealth Bridge. The shaft on Stirling Ridge is the deepest in the system and goes down around two hundred feet. At a depth of forty foot the sewer miners found a silver load. The men were lowered and raised in a 'cage' or platform (not known) that was driven by a steam powered traction engine. The mullock dug out from the tunnel was brought to the surface, put into a small skip and pushed along a light rail to areas along the hillside and dumped. Evidence of this light rail track is still in situ on the hill. Near the sewer vent and between cottages 28 and 53 were two earth dumps where earth brought up from the tunnel was dumped. Each was known as *The Dump*. A photograph of Ilma Keir taken outside her cottage - 32 - in the early 1940s shows in the background the dump between the cottages. (See next page). Four sewer vents were built in the territory. The one on Stirling Ridge was erected in 1925 and is one of three remaining vents. The others are near the corner of Tuggeranong Parkway and the Cotter Road and in the Nursery (now the Royal Canberra Golf Club greens) near the Incinerator Yarralumla. The one near Commonwealth Bridge was removed.



Above left Ilma Keir and The Dump. Right plans for the sewer vent. The bottom right design was the final one chosen. Below views of the Sewer Vent on Stirling Ridge. The gum tree in the background left is in the grounds of the Mexican Embassy.



An old track leads to the site of the sewer vent. It can be seen from Perth Avenue where it joins Empire Circuit. The photograph on the left shows the track. A number of humpies were constructed along this old road.



Above left, metal from a water tank and concrete filled kerosene tins from an old house on Stirling Ridge. On the right is a details of an overgrown rock lined garden bed near the sewer vent. In it grow white iris plants. Prior to a woody weed clearance in the early 1990s nearby to this garden bed were three straight lined rows of shrubs and briar roses that suggested the boundaries of a property.

Up until the period when the cottages in Westlake were being removed (from mid to late 1950s) the two huge dumps of earth - each known as *THEDUMP* remained at Westlake. The earth of the dumps was spread on the surface of the land sometime in the late 1950s or early 1960s.

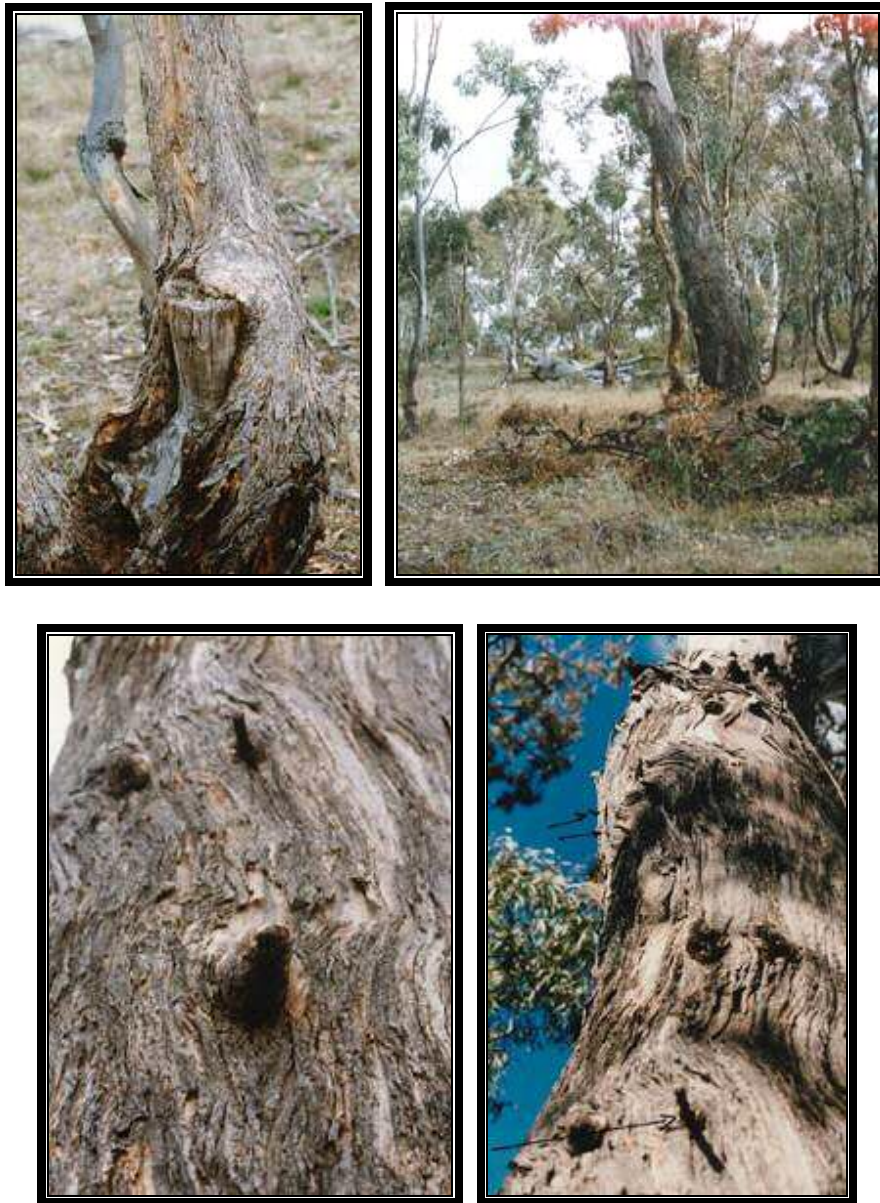
OTHER EVIDENCE OF MAN'S OCCUPATION OF THE PARKLAND

The majority of old gum trees in the park show evidence of use by human beings. The Ngunawal people used the *Scribbly* gums to cut out oval and rounded pieces of bark. One tree bent over at right angles may have been used when a sapling as part of living quarters (left). Below centre is one of the scarred trees on Forster Crescent and right scarred tree on Stirling Ridge. Photographs taken June 2003.



During the time of European occupation of the land straight branches provided building materials and others fed the cottage fires. The photographs below were taken on

Stirling Ridge in the area of the humpies. Top left shows an old cut into the tree and the other three are of another tree that has a number of metal stakes hammered into the trunk. On the next page the top right photograph shows the trunk of the tree and the bottom photographs details of the metal stakes. In the background of the top right photograph is an old gum that has fallen. Near it out of sight in this photograph is another that was pulled over with a metal cable that is still around the trunk.

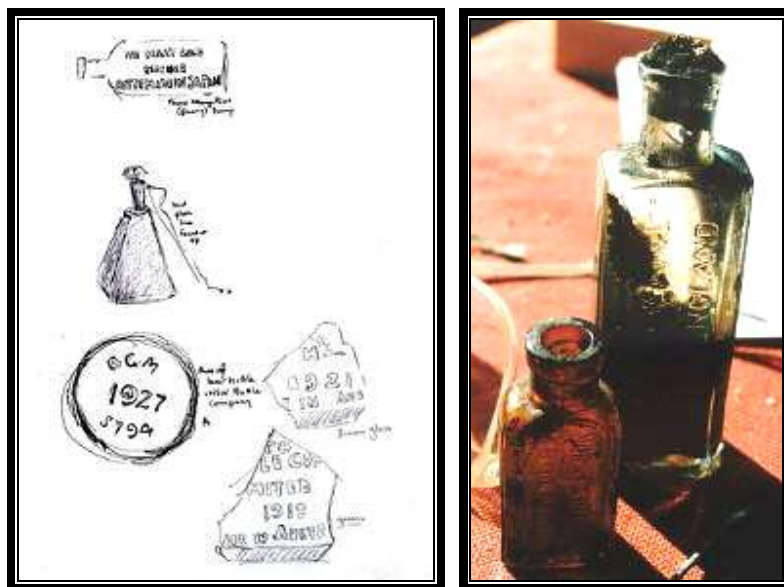


Top left is a photograph of a bolt in the trunk of a tree on Stirling Ridge. There are a number of such trees in the park.

Below left is a detail of one of the metal pegs in the tree trunk shown in photographs on previous page. Centre is a bike part wedged into the trunk of a tree opposite Lotus Bay. Right is a photograph of the tree. Note the growth in the area of the trees. This is part of the quagmire creek that runs from the top of the hill opposite Lotus Bay near the site of the Singapore Embassy. It would start from a spring.



More examples of finds on the site.



Above left drawings of the lead plumb line, bottle fragments and bottle with *MARY GOLD ESSENCE BOTTLE MADE IN JAPAN* embossed on the side. Above right - Morse Root Pills and Wiltshire black ink. When this bottle was washed some water made its way into the bottle and mixed with the dry remaining ink.

Gary Skewes is marking on a modern map using GPS equipment sites of waterpipes found throughout the park and other metal objects left behind by the construction workers. Following are some examples.



Above left: Silver whistle and right half penny. Below tap, lock and child's toy. Below, tap and a lock





To date (June 2009) no thorough investigations of the area of Stirling Park have been carried out.

Ann Gugler