

## Chapter 1 – Aspects of Life 1909-1929 in the FCT

In 1941, my parents moved from Collarenebri, near Lightning Ridge, northern NSW, to Canberra where my father obtained work at Brodie's Garage as a mechanic. He came to Canberra because work was available and akin to the many others who came to build and work in this new planned city, we left family, friends and all that was familiar and safe to come to the bush capital of Australia.

Accommodation was difficult to obtain. For a short period of time we lived with the Dunn family in Kennedy Street, Kingston. Later that year, we moved to No. 27 Westlake where we remained for eighteen years before the final move, in 1959, to Hackett Gardens, in Turner.

Canberra in the 1940s was still a series of small settlements dotted around the territory connected together by a number of main roads such as Commonwealth Avenue, which continued over the Molonglo River via bridges to Civic Centre. Smaller bridges were at Scott's and Lennox Crossings.

By 1941, with the exception of Capitol Hill and Causeway Mess, the majority of camps had been pulled down and Westlake (now Stirling Park, Yarralumla), Causeway, Acton, Westridge (now Yarralumla), Russell Hill, a few cottages at Molonglo and Oaks Estate were all that remained of the old settlements. The largest suburbs for Public Servants were at Ainslie, Braddon and Reid. On the south side, Kingston was the major suburb. The other suburbs of Griffith, Barton, Mugga Way and Forrest were also established.

Dotted around the landscape were reminders of the early years, such as the twisted rail lines and cuttings near the War Memorial – the remains of the railway platform, were behind the old Civic Theatre, on the site of the old Centre Cinema in Bunda Street, Civic, and the western part of Garema Place; and the huge concrete remnants of a botched foundation job of the Treasury Building.

Lake George was dry, and there was talk of the Molonglo River flood plain becoming a future lake.

The five o'clock whistle from the Power House heralded the end of the working day for my father and others. Father, like many men at the time, rode his bike to and from work. Our dog, Toby, a black kelpie cross, used to sit on the flat surface of our gatepost to wait each day for my father to ride his bike down the hill at the end of the day. On a Friday night, we would go to the Capitol Picture Theatre in Manuka, where we always sat in the three seats near the projection box in the *God's* (i.e. the Dress Circle, upstairs). On Saturday's, we shopped at Kingston, or Hall, or Queanbeyan – their shops being open all day. When I left school and sought a tertiary education, I had to leave home to study in Sydney, as there were no teachers' colleges in Canberra, and only one university, still in its formative years.

I grew up in a Canberra vastly different from the city of today. The book is based on my memories of Canberra in the forties, plus the memories of the others older than me who lived here in the early years, and appropriate material gained from local archives and libraries. From the information gathered, I have endeavoured to locate the sites of the camps and mark them on contemporary maps [geographic positions] and provide a basic history of Canberra's early camps, settlements and the few permanent suburbs built so long ago. The majority of the photographs are from private photograph albums.

In December 1913, the population of the Territory was just over 1,000 people. By 1940, the electoral roll registered just more than 8,000. The development of Canberra was put on 'hold' during the First (1914-1918) and Second World Wars (1939-1945). Construction activities following the First World War concentrated on the erection of Parliament House, some major administrative buildings and housing.

In 1944 when it became apparent that we were winning the war, plans were made to recommence building. Former brickwork's men away in the services and in factories in other cities were brought back to Canberra to re-open the brickworks to prepare for the post war-building boom. In 1946 a new 'temporary' suburb was under construction at Narrabundah and buildings for other places such as Tocumwal and Narellan moved to Canberra. By the time I left for Sydney Teachers College and Sydney Art School in 1955, Canberra was filling in the paddocks and spreading out to form new suburbs. Every time I returned home on holidays it seemed to me that a new suburb had sprung up almost overnight.

### **The First Camps and after**

**In 1909, the surveyors' camp was established on Camp Hill and other camps soon followed on the same site, lasting until around 1912. There were no public facilities other than those at nearby Queanbeyan, Hall and other small townships. In between 1912 and the end of June 1927, the nucleus of the new city had emerged, including a number of permanent suburbs, with the majority on the south side of the Molonglo River. The basic city infrastructure was now in place: roads, electricity, water supply and sewerage.**

**By 1915 the Power House provided electricity for the city and a few years later the Cotter Dam was pumping water to the reservoirs at Stromlo and Red Hill for the city. Work on the sewage system was commenced in 1915, but stopped during the war years and it was not until 1927 that this work was completed. In the meantime, the locals had to rely on a pan system with collections once or twice a week or communal septic tanks.**

Night soil was collected by horse and dray and taken to an area near Westridge where it was dumped. In July 1927, the Federal Capital Commission (FCC) added a new motorized collection vehicle to the service. In some of the settlements, such as Riverbourne, the caretaker was the man responsible for collecting and emptying the pans in the nearby riverbank. In the larger settlements, such as Westlake, Westridge, Causeway and Acton along with the permanent suburbs and permanent Hotels and Houses, septic tanks were provided.<sup>1</sup>

Many of the miners who worked on the sewer in the post war years came from Araluen and other mining towns. The foreman in charge was Jerry Dillon who lived at Westridge. The sewerage system has eight miles of deep sewers, constructed in concrete and with a specially constructed siphon under the Molonglo River.

Three of the 1925 sewer vents are still in existence and were classified by the National Trust of Australia and are heritage listed. One is on the southern side of the Cotter Road, opposite the Australian Defence College and RSPCA, and near the bridge over the Tuggeranong Parkway. The second is in the area of the former nursery at Yarralumla, now in the ground of the Royal Canberra Golf Club, and the third, the Westlake Vent, is on Stirling Ridge, Stirling Park, Yarralumla, close to the Mosque in Hunter Street, Yarralumla. In 1931, problems occurred when it was feared that the fumes had caused a diphtheria outbreak. The gasses smelt worse than they usually did, and when investigated, it was discovered that a number of Westlake children had lifted the metal lid to the inspection hole and thrown rocks down the hole. The rocks created a build up of the less liquid contents!

It was also common knowledge amongst the Westlake workers that there was a silver lode in the Westlake area and another under one of the piers of Kings Avenue Bridge.

Parliament House was completed, equipped and occupied in time for the opening of Parliament by the Duke of York on 9 May 1927. This building, in contrast to the rude dwellings occupied by

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<sup>1</sup> The only surviving example of a temporary septic tank is in Block 4, Section 128 Stirling Park, Yarralumla

construction workers, was centrally heated and contained ventilation and air conditioning. Yarralumla House<sup>2</sup> was remodelled by Mrs Lane Poole in time for the arrival of the royal visitors.

The city continued to grow as public servants transferred to Canberra. Houses, shops and other facilities, including two churches were constructed at Ainslie and on the south side, the Convent School of St. Christopher's at Manuka, and the Church of England Girls' Grammar School<sup>3</sup> at Blandfordia<sup>4</sup> were in the process of construction. The city already boasted a new school, Telopea Park, which opened in 1923 and was extended in 1927 to cope with the growing numbers of school children. By the end of the financial year 1926-1927, a total of 545 houses had been constructed and another 279 were commenced with the approval granted for another 27.<sup>5</sup>



*The Convent School of St. Christopher's, Manuka, c.1920s*



*Canberra Girls' Grammar School, Melbourne Avenue, Blandfordia  
(later Forreast), 1927. (Mildenhall Collection, National Archives of Australia)*

The majority of stories I heard of the workers' camps era, tell of hardships suffered by the workers, but told with a stoicism that seemed to make the extraordinary, ordinary. By 1928, when over half of the workmen employed for the building of Parliament House were sacked, there were still 4,000 people registered on the first electoral roll for the Territory, of whom three quarters were 'blue collar' workmen. This number represented only the Australian and English nationals over the age of twenty-one years. In the Territory, but not recorded on the roll, was a significant number of Aboriginal and foreign residents.

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<sup>2</sup> Government House was at this time, still called Yarralumla House.

<sup>3</sup> The foundation stones were laid on Sunday, 8 May 1927, the day the Duke and Duchess of York arrived to open Parliament House the following day. (T. Frei, former pupil, 2009)

<sup>4</sup> Blandfordia was later renamed Forreast.

<sup>5</sup> Third Annual Report of the Federal Capital Commission for the period ended 30<sup>th</sup> June, 1927.

## Stories told to me

### *Olive Dawson*

Olive Dawson's father arrived in Canberra in 1923 to find work and accommodation for his family at No. 4 Molonglo. His wife followed some months later bringing with her, their family of small children. They travelled in a cattle truck for most of the journey, completed in winter. Mrs Dawson was very ill and died a few months after the family's arrival in Canberra, on 11 December. Following her mother's death, young Olive, aged eight years, looked after her father and two brothers. Two other children were sent to Salvation Homes at Arncliffe and Bexley. One of her father's sayings was: *You take acquaintances to the lounge, but you take your friends to the kitchen.* Olive married Eric Menzies and they lived in a number of settlements, including Molonglo, Causeway and Westlake.

### *Evelyn Kelly*

Evelyn Kelly arrived in Canberra with her parents in 1925. The family lived at the Brickworks at Riverbourne, in a house lined with sacks, which her mother used to cover with paper. Later on they moved to a cottage behind the Power House.

Originally there were four cottages behind the Power House, but these were reduced to three by the time the Kelly family moved there. Neighbours were the Witts and Saunders families. Arthur Witt worked at the Power House and was responsible for blowing the whistle during each day. This was the time signal for the whole Canberra community, including for those blasting rocks at Mugga Quarry. It was also used as an air-raid warning during the Second World War.

### *Jack Jenkins*

Jack Jenkins came to Canberra as a young apprentice in 1925. He lived at Molonglo Tradesmen's Camp. He later boarded at Causeway with the Biddles and the Crockford families. Many of his photographs were used in this book. Jack joined the *Druids*, a branch of which began in Canberra in 1925. The first Arch Druid was Arthur Lambert, who later became the Mayor of Queanbeyan. Jack was a keen member of the Rifle Club and designed the logo for the club blazer. Sir John Butters opened the Rifle club on Saturday, 27 March 1926, and he scored a Bull. Jack scored 23 at 600 yards and Les Brill of Westlake scored a 33 for the 600 yards. Jack was a redhead and as a young man, had freckles. It was Jack's wife who remembered *Double Strength Kintho* was one of the remedies used to remove freckles.

Jack, following the completion of Parliament House, worked at Ainslie with Lasseter. He said of Lasseter: *He had the gift of the gab and once salted a creek at the base of Mt. Ainslie with brass including bolts, which he had cut into small pieces...* Jack also said that Lasseter spoke about a creek at the base of Mt. Ainslie being of good gold bearing type of country and took a friend to the area. When the friend found gold, Lasseter cautioned him not to tell anyone. Naturally the secret was passed on, which resulted in a mini gold rush! It was only when one man found a piece of gold with the remains of a thread that the ruse was revealed. Lasseter was a well-travelled man. He claimed to be the inspiration for Zane Grey's novels and the hero was named after him.

When interviewed, Jack said that he often visited Acton. I said: *To attend church?* His reply was in the negative. Behind the Acton Hall, on the hill, was the place where the Two-Up games were held. Jack did attend church regularly. Once, when chided by the Church of England Minister for non-attendance, Jack promised to attend the next Sunday. The river rose and the only way to keep the promise was to strip off, swim the swollen river, attend church and, following the service, swim the river again.

## **Jean McCrorey**

Jean McCrorey lived at 63 Russell Hill before moving to the Causeway. Her father had a horse and dray and Jean as a young girl was responsible for driving a team of horses to be broken at a site 14 miles out of town. One day she overturned the dray and her father was more concerned about the horses than about Jean. Horses were the means of earning a living. Her brother, Terrence, was the first boy to be apprenticed to the newspaper, *The Canberra Times*.

The construction workers travelled to Canberra using an assortment of modes – horse with or without a dray or sulky, by train or simply walking. After May 1913, many workers arrived by train, as did the majority of Public Servants after 1926. This means of transport left much to be desired, as the following letter to *The Canberra Times*, 3 May 1927, illustrates:

*A Cheerless Welcome...It is indeed a cheerless welcome which greets the arrival in Canberra in the early morning as he disembarks at Eastlake Railway Station. At some expense a new railway station has been provided and in it have been installed certain facilities intended for public comfort, but the comfort is not yet in evidence. There are for example, waiting rooms in which one may wait if he stands, fireplaces where there are no fires, and lights that are not lighted...There are no railway attendants who can give information or direction...Even when the train does arrive there is no civil tongue to direct the stranger to his destination and should he decided to wait until the first city bus runs nearly two hours later... (The train arrived at 5 a.m. and the first bust at 7 a.m.)*

Even in the 1950s the train from Sydney would stop at Queanbeyan, where a new engine was coupled to the carries for the short journey to Canberra. Often one had to wait several hours before the final stage of the journey was completed.

## **Sergeant Phillip Cook**

Sergeant Phillip Cook, a most well regarded and well liked man, recorded many reports of car and horse drawn vehicle accidents (some of which were fatal) and of men whose tongue loosened with drink allowed a few swear words to make them eligible for his book. One inquest report, dated 26 Jun 1926, at Molonglo Settlement Station, outlined the cause of death of Charles Bruce, otherwise known as Charlie Jackson, aged 52 years, a native of England, who had lived at No. 1 Mess. He died at 1 a.m. on 26 June 1926. The report in part, stated:

*Deceased had been employed as a builder's labourer at Canberra for the past four years and was well known hers; he had been on a drinking bout for a few days which was often his custom...he and a mate named Francis J. O'Rourke, after spending the day in Queanbeyan, consumed a considerable amount of liquor in the latter's tent at No. 1 Mess, Canberra, suddenly and without any warning at about 11.30 p.m. Bruce fell from a bunk... and was found dead...Deceased was a returned soldier...Burial took place on the 28<sup>th</sup> June at Canberra Church of England Cemetery at the expense of his camp mates.*

Sergeant Cook was the second police constable in Canberra and he moved from the Blue Mountains to the Molonglo Settlement Station in 1923. *The Argus*, 26 March 1938, printed a full-page article titled: *When Canberra Was Young and Wild*. This story was a tribute to the good Sergeant on his retirement in 1937. A few quotes from this article follow:

*As he drove in he saw a string of wooden tenements divided up by wooden partitions, with no yards or verandahs...It did not take him long to discover that one of*

*his most onerous duties among the camps was to be that of chief umpire in domestic disputes.*

*'The community life naturally led to a bit of squabbling,' he said. 'The most serious difficulty was that there was a community washhouse, and it was impossible for all the wives to wash the clothes on the one day. So different days had to be allotted to groups of families. But that didn't bring peace. There was a beaten track up to my house. I had Mrs O'Reilly pounding on my door to tell me that Mrs McTavish was a wild spalpeen of a woman who couldn't for the life of her keep out of other people's business, and leave the clothes-line alone when she had no right to be using it: and as for her putting in her tablecloth in the copper when it wasn't her washing day...well she ought to be locked up, and that would be doing her a favour. And, Mrs McTavish arriving in a cloud of dust, with the glint of her Highland ancestry in her eyes, would announce that she would put her tablecloth in the copper if she wanted to, and if she had much more cheek she would put Mrs O'Reilly in with it...'*

*I was once asked to give an estimate of the amount of liquor consumed on the territory...Strange to say, just about that time the first bottle-oh arrived on the scene and helped me with my estimate. The man had seen his opportunities. They were stacked in huge piles in various parts of the camp; not in little heaps, but real stacks. He got busy with his chaff bags. He collected 170,000 dozen bottles – or 2,040,000 single bottles – and sent them by special train to Sydney! That helped me make my estimate...*

Each settlement had an S.P. Bookie. Two-Up was a major sport played in the camps and many youngsters of the 1920s stated that they were not allowed near the camps because of the gambling.

### ***Bob Norgrove***

Bob Norgrove lived as a child at Molonglo Settlement and he spoke highly of his parents, and in particular, his mother. The women were house-proud and even swept the dust in front of their houses. My mother continued this tradition, which would have been kept by many of the women of the day – Monday, wash day; Tuesday, ironing day, and so on. Many women kept their houses and families, 'as neat as pins'. Hazel Williams remembers her mother polishing the lead floor of their cottage with kerosene, which made it shine with a high gloss. The cottage was one of the three behind the Power House. She also recalled with pride, the white washing hanging on the line. The line was wire held by two posts and a stick in the middle, which was used to hold the heavy washing up from the ground. The washing was often done in a 'copper' – generally a large container made of copper, filled with water and placed on top of an open fire to boil.<sup>6</sup> The washing, which usually took all morning, was wrung out by hand. When living at Riverbourne, Hazel's mother boiled the washing in a kerosene tin over an open fire. The William's family, at that time, consisted of nine children and one can imagine the nappy line!

### ***Frank Clowry***

Families were left behind in other states as many men came to the FCT to work. Many of these remained in single camps for years because of the lack of accommodation for married couples. One

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<sup>6</sup> Copper containers were also inserted into a stone or brick enclosure, or if portable, sat on a cast iron or enamel stand. A fire was lit in an opening underneath, or via a gas burner. When the water was brought to the boil, the soap was added from a soap bar, then the clothes, and boiled for 30 minutes. It took some hard scrubbing to get them clean, creating much backache and weariness. By 1937, 'Rinso', a washing powder made by Lever, was advertising the 2-minute boil, and this faster wash provided a 'whiter wash', with a tablespoon of 'Rinso' added to the pre-soaking of clothes, left to soak for 30 minutes in warm water, then boiled for two minutes. Wringing was either still by hand, or a hand wringer. (Advertisement for 'Rinso', *The Canberra Times*, 15 Jul 1937.)

infamous case was that of Frank Clowry, a carpenter foreman at Parliament House. He used to ride his bicycle home to Reidsdale, near Braidwood, every second weekend. On one of his trips home, a man in a T-model Ford stopped to offer a lift. Frank thanked the man in his usual gentle manner, and declined the invitation because he, himself, was in a bit of a hurry! Frank Clowry was also known as *St. Joseph*, because of his carpentry work for St. Christopher's Church.<sup>7</sup>

*The Angelus*, July 1928, had the following to say about Frank:

*Frank Clowry, expert wielder of the carpenter's hammer, must be thanked for the predella on which the beautiful Altar rests at St. Christopher's Church, Canberra. It was the work of many hours duration, but a genuine labour of love to the most undemonstrative man "on the Federal". Digonesses of old, stumbling along with his lanthorn, questioning in vain for an honest man, would have howled with glee had he happened upon Westlake's tall and bashful carpenter.*

### **Ex-Gunner Buie & Baron Richtofen**

An article in *The Canberra Times*, 22 January 1930, mentioned a workman working on the Institute of Anatomy<sup>8</sup> at Acton. Ex-Gunner R. Buie, a crane car driver who handled heavy stone masses on the building site<sup>9</sup>, was a celebrity from the First World War. Together with Gunner W.J. 'Snowy' Evans, he was responsible for firing the shots which brought down the air ace, Baron Manfred Von Richtofen, near Corbie on 21 April 1918. Buie disputed a new book on the air ace's demise, which gave credit to Canadian, Captain Brown. He stated that an Australian doctor found the airman was "killed by a bullet fired from the ground, probably while banking. Captain Brown could only reach Richtofen from above...[and] Brown was not in range at the time."<sup>10</sup>

### **Lifestyle**

Many families kept a cow for fresh milk, and chickens for eggs and for food. The veggie garden was in the back yard, and flowers were in the front. Very few people, living in any of the camps and settlements, had a lawn. Lawns were only planted around permanent cottages.

A special brand of humour arose in the camps and settlements as people learnt to laugh at adversity. One story, often told by the old-timers, was of stolen firewood. A Causeway man liked to stack his wood along the back fence. Another liked to help himself to the same stack. Tired of having his wood 'nicked', the former gentleman added a little explosive to the wood. The culprit was found out when the metal plate from the top of his fuel stove went through his roof!

Life was difficult compared to today, but it would be wrong to suggest that it was all hard, unhappy and that life was drudgery. Compared with today there were fewer labour saving devices to assist with housework, or machines to make construction work lighter. Everyone commonly used *elbow grease* and went by *shank's pony*<sup>11</sup>. Men were encouraged to forward their ideas of 'how to improve...' to the Department. Lasseter forwarded a number of ideas including underground power lines, speed humps and rotary clothes hoists.

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<sup>7</sup> National Australian Archives – Title: White City camp general welfare matters: Series A6270/1, Control Symbol E2/28/2986.

<sup>8</sup> Now the National Film and Sound Archives.

<sup>9</sup> The marble, used in the interior of the Institute of Anatomy, came from the quarry nearby, now under the lake.

<sup>10</sup> The Canberra Times, 22 Jan 1930.

<sup>11</sup> Elbow grease: hard rubbing to make items shine, or literally, hard work. Shank's pony: walking between jobs. No transportation.



*The Canberra Times, 2 February 1931.*

Entertainment was quite different to today. Very few people owned a wireless and moving pictures did not arrive in Canberra until 1925, when they were shown once or twice a week at Rialto Pictures, Causeway Hall. Prior to that, you had to travel to Queanbeyan to see them. The piano was the centre of entertainment in the home and in the recreation halls. Nearly every settlement had a small hall, which was the focus of community life.

In October 1925, the largest hall in the territory was constructed at the Causeway. The Hall was used for church, smoko's, dances, benefits, concerts, boxing, a library, gymnasium, a reading room and numerous association meetings. Every Christmas a children's party would be held in the local hall, and trips to the Cotter were often arranged for children and adults. Entertainment in the settlements was organised by the people, for the people.

### **Sport**

Many people played some kind of sport.. Tennis and hockey were common to both sexes. Football and cricket were the two sports most favoured by men. Shooting and fishing were local sports, which fed the table – as did the pilfering of fruit from the Yarralumla Nursery!. The latter was such a problem that as early as 1917, Charles Weston, who organised the Nursery in 1913, complained to the Works Director that people helped themselves to the fruit and vegetables in the Yarralumla gardens on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Quite a number of charges for pilfering fruit are found in Sergeant Cook's book. Men from Westlake and Westridge seem to feature prominently as the culprits. Dr Neil Cromer, a former forestry student 1930-1931, has an excellent snapshot of a number of forestry students munching on apples, their shirts stuffed full of fruit!

An article on the first Bowling Club appeared in *The Federal Capital Pioneer*,<sup>12</sup> 17 January 1927. It described the green as being near the Hotel Canberra and the croquet ground. The Bowling Club was formed at a meeting at the Hotel Canberra, on 24 September 1926. Mr C. Francis was in the chair.

Cycling was another sport in Canberra in the 1920s. Mr Tootell, of Westlake, was one of the organisers of this club. The Canberra Cycling Club was formed at its first meeting on 15 November 1926. *The Community News*, 11 November 1926, reported that the club would have about 100 members, a number of whom were competitors at a national level. The report continued:

*The club has put on most interesting road races during the past month, and have met with every success. A.R. Newton, who invariably competes from the scratch mark, has met with particular success, and has secured first place in the following events:-*

<sup>12</sup> The *Community News* was the Federal Capital Territory's first newspaper. Its first issue was dated 14 December 1924.

*Highland Gathering, 2 miles Open Handicap; 2 miles Canberra Club Race; the mile Canberra Club Race; and 5 miles Road Race on the 27 March.*

*In the latter race, Newton put up the record time for the Club of 12 mins. 2 sec. this rider was also second in the 5 mile Road Race and the 8 miles Senior Road Race, held on the 13<sup>th</sup> March. A. Ganguer has also met with considerable success, securing one first, three seconds, and a third. In the 4 miles Road Race, the placings were: G. Blundell 1, C. Bottrell 2, E. Garrett 3. C. Horth has also ridden well, securing one first and two third places. The energetic secretary of the club, Mr. J.H. Tootell, secured 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the 5 mile Senior Road Race, on the 13<sup>th</sup> March and also occupied the same position in a similar distance on the 27<sup>th</sup> March.*



*Members of the Queanbeyan Racing Club, 1930s.*

*Nobby [Norman] Robertson of Oaks Estate, second from right, was one of the usual winners.*

Cricket was a major sport in the territory. A list of the major Associations and Cricket grounds used in 1926/27 is found in Appendix 1. The majority of camps put down their own concrete pitch and built a pavilion. Information about the tennis clubs is found amongst individual chapters on each of the camps.

All codes of football were popular and games were well recorded in the local newspapers of the period. Organised sport on a Sunday, however, was prohibited. The Indoor Recreation Committee, headed by Mr C.E. Pike, protested strongly against the attitude seemingly adopted by the Federal Capital Commission (FCC) in 'regard to Sunday sports as it seriously hampered the Committee'.

In a letter of reply, published in *The Canberra Community News*, 11 December 1925, Sir John Butters, Chairman of the Commission, stated that the FCC did not prohibit Sunday sport, but it did prohibit ORGANISED sport on Sunday. Butters assured the Committee that the Commission was not 'adopting an attitude', but had come, 'after careful thought and deliberation' that it was 'in the interests of Canberra and its present and future residents that ORGANISED sports, test matches which draw a crowd, engender excitement and turn Sunday from a day of worship, quiet meditation, recreation or amusement, in accordance with taste, into a day which...might be a Saturday.' The Commission, Butters declared, arrived at the 'determination to stand to the observance of Sunday as a "day of rest" in its widest possible interpretation, but cannot contemplate turning Sunday into Saturday.' A game within a club or a community **can be played**, along with a game of tennis, golf, football, etc. The Commission was attempting to 'lay the foundations, not only in regard to the city fabric, but also in regard to a tradition and a City spirit.' The determination, Butters stated, also applied to most of the British Empire and was followed in some Australian States.

A protest against organised sport not being played on Sundays was organised by two football teams, the Bluebells and the Magpies, on a particular Sunday at Queanbeyan Park, and resulted the following:

*On Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> July, members of two local football clubs, the Bluebells and Magpies, arranged for a football match in the Queanbeyan Park. They were aware of the fact that there were a number of objectors to Sunday Football in the Park, but the players wanted to test their right to play there on Sundays. Prior to the game commencing, the Sergeant of Police warned them that if they played, police court proceedings would follow, but they heeded not, donned their Guernseys, and took the field. The result was they were summoned to attend the police court and answer a charge of having played football to the annoyance of residents. At last court one case, that of Michael O'Rourke, was taken as a test. On the evidence of Sergeant Clarke, Revs Carter and Evans and Mr Colin Raff, the P.M. (Mr Adams) convicted the defendant and fined him 2/6d., 8/- court costs, in default three days gaol. Twenty one days was allowed to pay, as it was intimated that an appeal would be lodged. But the fine was subsequently paid. The other cases were adjourned till the next court and their names were called last Tuesday, as follows: George Forbutt, John Lucas, Cecil Rankin, Roy Carney, Bede Lupton, Gerald Primmer, Thomas Jordan, John Talbot, Clement Marsh, John Solomon, James Samuels, Warren Bradley, Robert Graham, Esmond Bourke, Edward Robertson, Bede Bourke, Frederick Thornton, Alfred Beveridge, Edward O'Rourke, Roy West. They didn't all appear but those who did pleaded guilty to the charge laid against them. Each defendant was fined 2/6d. and 8/- court costs, the alternative being three days.*

### **Cotter River Reserve**

Today it seems rather strange that men who lived all year in tents would take their annual holidays at the Cotter River Reserve – camping in tents! The Cotter River was a popular visiting place from the early 1920s. Buses conveyed people to the Cotter during the weekends. It had a kiosk and nearby, a number of cubicles for overnight accommodation. A large lodge was planned, but it was never built.<sup>13</sup>



*Jack Jenkins in a Druid parade.*

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<sup>13</sup> Daphne Davis.

## Associations and Societies in Canberra

Men belonged to various associations for all sorts of reasons, and P.T. McNamara, an Ainslie man, belonged to quite a few. The list of associations, to which he belonged, provides an indication of the organisations run during the 1920s. They were: Correspondent, *Canberra Community News*; President of the following organisations: Canberra Community Library; Ainslie Social and Recreational Club; Ainslie Cricket Club; Ainslie South Tennis Club; Chairman, Ainslie Social Service Association District; President, Ainslie Australian Rules Football Club; Vice-President, Canberra and District Social Service Association; a founder of, and first General Secretary, Canberra Mothercraft Society; first Secretary, F.C.C. Officers' Association; Committee Member, Canberra Racing Club; and Assistant Secretary, Australian Natives Association.<sup>14</sup> A story told about Percy McNamara was that he was able to move house frequently, because of his job. Each time he moved, he commented on the improvement in his living conditions. He returned to one of his early houses, perhaps having forgotten he had once lived there, and, much to the amusement of his friends, made the same comment!

In addition to the above clubs there were many associations in Canberra such as the Hibernian, Foresters, Druids, Returned Soldiers and Sailors Imperial League, Australian Natives Association, Unions and the Masonic Lodge. Formed in the early 1920s was the Canberra Philharmonic Society, the Canberra Band, and for those of Scottish heritage, the Canberra Highland Society and Burns Club. The Hon. Sec. for many years was Andy Stuart of 100 Causeway. Mr McCorkindale, foreman of the Joiners' Shop at the Power House, played the pipes. He had a reputation for sacking men without cause. On 11 September 1926, a Rowan tree with Scottish soil in its roots was planted at a ceremony in Canberra. A special poem was written by the NSW Secretary of the Highland Society, Mr J.D. Robertson, for the occasion.

For the women there were fewer societies to which they could belong. One was the *Housewives Association*. This club encouraged women in lady like occupations and crafts, such as embroidery and flower arrangements. They held exhibitions in the Albert Hall and were highly praised in the local paper for their endeavours. The Lady Hopetoun Club was short-lived club, later taken over by the YWCA. In addition to providing cheap accommodation for women, the club promoted women's sports such as hockey and swimming, and pressed for a women's only sports ground. The Social Service Association also formed a Committee for welfare of Women and Children. This was run by the men and one of their efforts led to the establishment of a Baby Health Centre at Eastlake, which was opened by Lady butters on 2 July 1927.

Women were permitted to work and provide refreshments for the various benefits, dances, concerts, bazaars and churches. Westridge Social Service Association was unusual in that women were elected members of the committee.

## Children's activities

Children's special activities were few compared with today. Boys could join the Scouts. A.J. Paynting was involved for many years as a scoutmaster, and Causeway had a clubhouse. There was a children's page in *The Canberra Times* for entertainment. Children were encouraged to play sport, including tennis, cricket and football. Swimming was often as not, in the river. Annual events included a Christmas Party with a tree and Santa, and this was held in the local hall with each child given a present by Santa Claus. Picnics were held at the Cotter River on the Annual Trades and Labour Day and other special occasions. Empire Night or 'Cracker Night', held on 24 May, meant the burning of a large growing tree in the bush and the explosion of fireworks! The concept of a mother arranging to entertain children in the holidays

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<sup>14</sup> *Canberra Community News*, A/490..

was almost unheard of in this period of Canberra's history. Children made their own entertainment and were expected to look after the younger ones.

### **Social services and welfare**

Country people have a long record of helping each other. Virtually as soon as a settlement was established, a welfare association or progress association was formed. These were official organisations with president, honorary secretary, treasurer and committee. Committees in these days were generally male orientated. In May 1925, John Butters, the first Commissioner, called a meeting of all the districts with a view to forming a Social Service Association (SSA). This Association existed from 1925 until 1929 when the population distribution of the Territory changed from mainly working class people living in camps and settlements, to a public service town. The SSA did much to improve living conditions in the early days and was responsible for the construction on the 50/50 basis. The appropriate department supplied the material, and the men supplied the labour for a number of facilities, such as tennis courts, cricket pitches, children's playgrounds and the Causeway Hall. By 1929, the SSA had become ineffective. It was denied funds and finally concluded activities on Tuesday, 28 May 1929. The last meeting was heated and indicated the strong passions of those who had worked very hard for the community.

From the early 1920s, the people of the Territory had demanded civil rights, as from its beginnings the Territory people were disenfranchised, not able to vote in any of the nation's elections. However, some votes were given to the locals – the 1916 and 1917 referendum on conscription and in 1928, the liquor ordinance to allow the return of sale of alcohol to the territory. In 1929 a limited vote to heads of households, with the exception of Russell Hill, for election of the third commissioner and then in the following years to elect the advisory council members.

An Englishman, John Butters, was the first commissioner (1925-1929) placed in charge of the administration of the FCT. He was found, by some, to be paternalistic in his attitude towards the people and in his administration of territory affairs. He refused to discuss civil rights with the elected representatives of the districts of the SSA and the Unions. During this period of time, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) continued to have decisions made and implemented by the first Commissioner, who was appointed by the Federal Government to rule the territory.

In 1929, a concession was made by the federal government permitting a third commissioner to be elected by the locals. His right to influence policy was severely restricted by the provisions made by the first commissioner, with the result that each of the elected third commissioners resigned relatively soon after being elected. Comments in *The Canberra Times* at that time mention that Mr Butters was an engineer by profession and perhaps lacked the skills necessary to deal with civil matters. The result was that Sir John Butters resigned in late 1929 and did not seek to renew his contract.

An Advisory Council elected by the people, was formed in March 1930 and continued in its advisory role until self government in 1989. In 1949, Dr Lewis Wyndamere Nott was elected as Canberra's Federal Member to the House of Representatives. Jim Fraser eventually replaced him, and remained Canberra's representative for a number of decades. However, in the early years Canberrans were only able to vote on local matters.

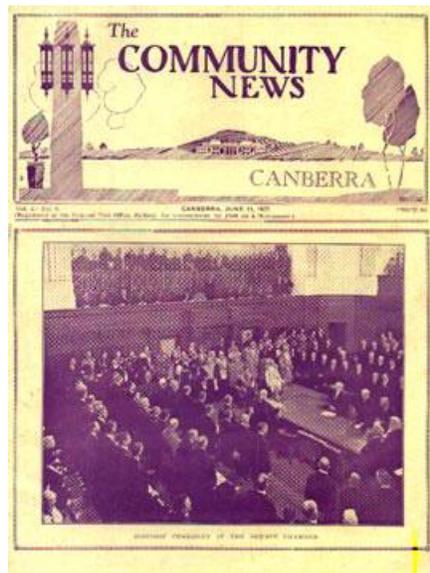
Until legislation was passed, many basic rights and welfare assistance available in other states were not available for those residing within the territory boundaries. If, for example, the family was destitute, there was no financial assistance available in the territory other than to seek help from charities. One means of survival was your workmates, who passed a hat around for a collection, or a benefit arranged

to assist families in need. It was not until 1930 that the FCT began registering births, deaths and marriages. Until this time the *BDMs* were registered in NSW.

### **Canberra Community News**

Another Englishman, Joe Honeysett was the secretary of the SSA, and a man genuinely interested in the welfare of the people. He was also the editor of the SSA magazine, the *Canberra Community News*. This monthly magazine was written by the local people and is full of details of people's ordinary daily lives. The National Archives of Australia retains many letters between John Honeysett and Lewis Hubert (Harold) Bell Lasseter. From these letters it is evident that Honeysett respected and thought highly of Lasseter, who wrote for the *Canberra Community News* under the nom-de-plume of *The Gleaner*.<sup>15</sup>

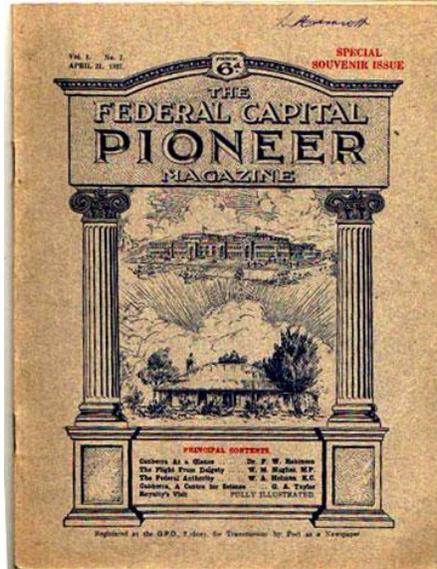
The *Canberra Community News* was followed by Canberra's first newspaper, then a magazine – the *Federal Capital Pioneer*, and from 1926, *The Canberra Times*.



*Front cover: The Community News, Canberra, 11 June 1927.*

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<sup>15</sup> See Chapter 6 for articles by Lasseter on the camps.



Front cover: *The Federal Capital Pioneer Magazine*, 21 April 1927.

## Families

Married men supported – or were supposed to support – their wives and families. When a woman married she left her job to look after her husband and when ‘it’ arrived, her family. Married women could continue to earn money by, for example, taking in boarders, ironing, cleaning, washing and sewing. The legal minimum age, in the teen years of the last century, for children to leave school was 12. This was later changed to 14, then 15, and it was the norm for girls to leave school at the legal minimum age. The majority of working class boys also left school as soon as legally possible and if necessary, for family reasons, children could be given permission to leave before the legal age.

## Education

Many school children did not have shoes to wear, especially to school, and those that did, saved their shoes by taking them off when school finished and ran barefoot. Telopea Park, which opened in 1923, was perhaps the first school in the district to have a school uniform consisting of a black tunic, white blouse, black shoes, white socks, or black stockings. Hats were an integral part of the early uniforms. School textbooks were not provided. Necessary texts were purchased by each family, but by the 1940s, the school magazine was provided free of charge to all children. At this time, children covered their exercise books in brown paper, generally pre-used and ironed to remove creases. Flour and water constituted glue, which was used to make the cover firm on the book.

In the period prior to the end of World War One, the major schools in the city area were at Duntroon and Narrabundah – on the site of the Fire Station, Empire Circuit, Forrest. From 1919-1920 there was a short-lived school at Acton, and following the First World War, the Molonglo School opened, then Telopea Park in 1923, Russell Hill and Ainslie Primary in 1927. During the mid-1920s, schools in the FCT totalled twelve, most of which were quite small, one teacher or part time teacher, schools.

Telopea Park School, on the southern side of the Molonglo River, opened as a primary school on 11 September 1923, but secondary students were also accepted from the beginning. By 1927, one wing was accommodating secondary education and it was declared a district school since secondary classes

were in progress. Ainslie Primary School, on the northern side, opened on 19 September 1927 for primary and infants education.<sup>16</sup>

Education was always of prime importance. Many parents were concerned that the FCT had no tertiary institutions or trade schools in the Territory.

On 6 June 1928, Telopea Park Technical and Trades School opened, together with the Kindergarten and Infants wing. Telopea also became host to an adult Evening Continuation College in 1928 and included courses such as typing and some trade courses. Typing was also included as a special day class to prepare girls for entry into the Commonwealth Public Service as typists. In 1930, the Canberra University College was established.<sup>17</sup>

## Employment

The jobs available for working class girls were far more limited than today. Some of the major occupations available were: shop assistant; secretary; typiste; nurse; domestic or general servant; or as a laundress, working in hotels, hostels or the new Steam Laundry in Mort Street, Braddon, which opened in 1927. Trade apprenticeship positions were the major occupation for youths, or they could get jobs as messengers; clerks; labourers and as 'billy boys'. Very few working class children were educated past the age of 15, the standard Intermediate Certificate, because of the costs involved. If a family could afford to educate a child beyond that stage, then usually a boy was chosen as a female's education was considered a waste of money. It was better to be married off as soon as possible, since jobs were limited.

Prior to 1926, men worked a five and a half day week until a referendum was held, resulting in the adoption of a five-day week. This move was welcomed by many single men who returned home to their wives and families in Sydney, Melbourne and other centres, as often as they could. The majority of men belonged to unions and there were strikes. The first strike was held in 1922, when the unemployed ex-servicemen moved to Canberra to No. 1 Labourers Camp and found that the promised wage was reduced and the living conditions poor. One of the biggest was the 1925 Sewer Workers' Strike and a big stop work meeting was also held at Capitol Hill in 1926.

Conditions under which men worked were quite different to today. Men and boys were often sacked for what we would consider to be quite trivial reasons. Men were not allowed to stop for morning tea, and any man stopping was sacked immediately. *Sack-em* Southwell was one of the foreman of the period who received his nickname for quite obvious reasons! One tale told by Selwyn 'Cork' Wark and Tom Robertson about *Sack-em* was as follows. A workman was in a hole leaning on his shovel. He was not moving. Southwell ordered one of the men to go down into the hole and sack the man for not working. He approached various men to go down and tell the man, but all refused. In the end, Southwell went down to do the job. When he got down into the hole, he discovered the man had set him up. The 'workman' was a piece of stick dressed in clothes and a hat!

Men had to start promptly at the appointed hour. At Parliament House, the plumbers commenced work at 7.30 a.m. Their soldering irons, heated on an open fire, had to be ready at the same hour, so they were required to arrive at work by at least 7 a.m.<sup>18</sup>

The Great Depression, which officially began in 1929, commenced in June 1927 in the FCT when the dismissal of workmen began in earnest once Parliament House was opened. By 1929, the workforce had

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<sup>16</sup> Kate Power, Lyall Gillespie, Alec McPherson, *A Pictorial History of Telopea Park School 1923-1983*, The Telopea Park High School P & C Association, [Canberra ACT, 1983], p. 15.

<sup>17</sup> Kate Power, Lyall Gillespie, Alec McPherson, *A Pictorial History of Telopea Park School 1923-1983*, The Telopea Park High School P & C Association, [Canberra ACT, 1983], p. 15.

<sup>18</sup> Tom Robertson.

halved. A priority system of who could be employed was instituted from 1927-1928. Former married servicemen were high on the list, followed by single ex-servicemen with dependents. To work in the FCT, men had to live in the Territory.<sup>19</sup>

## Transportation

Oaks Estate, once part of Queanbeyan before the boundary changes made it part of the FCT, was Queanbeyan's old industrial area and close to the town's amenities. Men, living on the Estate, were a long way from their place of work in Canberra. Since men were paid 'walking', or travel time, the majority were housed in camps, close to their place of employment. The authorities did little to provide transport for those living far from their work place. For many years, the train into the Power House was the major form of transport at Oaks Estate. The train also stopped at Molonglo Siding to pick up workmen living there. Canberra children, who attended Queanbeyan's Catholic School, also used the train to go to and from school until the timetable was changed, making it too difficult to attend school in Queanbeyan. The Convent School of St. Christopher's, Manuka, opened on 26 February 1928<sup>20</sup> and alleviated the problem for those requiring a catholic education.

Transport to work for the majority of men consisted of walking, riding pushbikes or motorbikes or catching the bus. If they were lucky, they drove or were driven in a car or motor lorry. In 1927, a special bus was arranged for workmen living in the weatherboard houses in Corroboree Park, Ainslie. This bus arrived before 7 a.m. and returned the men home in time for tea. One day, a busload of men was on the way home after the six o'clock pub closure. A middle-aged lady was on the bus with a bag of fruit, from which pieces kept falling out. Each time she bent over to pick up the fruit, she broke wind. Finally, one Westlake man said: *That's right lady, if you can't catch them, shoot them!* The laughter that followed nearly stopped the bus! Buses had a smoking section at the rear of each bus for the men – and ladies could use this section too, if game!

The only taxi service was owned and run by George and Gay Sykes, of Westlake, who worked from Friday night through the weekend non-stop, transporting men back and forth to Queanbeyan. Horace Cleaver, of Westlake, owned and ran the first hire car business in the Territory and Mrs Helen Barton ran the buses, the 'Safety Coach', for many years.

## The 'dry' city

Canberra from 1913 to 1928 was a dry city. King O'Malley, a non-drinker, declared the city 'dry'. It took a special vote in 1928 to reverse the condition of the Territory. The move to allow alcohol in the city had commenced with the removal of the Parliament from Melbourne to Canberra. A Parliament without liquor was considered unthinkable. Sailors, who were camped at Westlake for the opening of Parliament in May 1927, commented upon the 'dry' condition of the Territory. Charles Law, a Westlake youngster, said the sailors set up a racetrack in the Horse Paddock, marked by stones, which were painted white. Boys were paid to racehorses on the track. When they left the district, the sailors piled the stones into a cairn. On it, they placed a sign saying:

*Here lies the remains of HMAS Sydney [sic Renown], who founded on these shores in May 1927 and died of thirst.*

On payday, one could see the clouds of dust rising from the yet unpaved road between Canberra and Queanbeyan. The men were on their way to buy some 'grog'. It was rumoured that one Queanbeyan Hotel changed hands for a very large sum of money because of the expected trade with Canberra. Although banned, alcohol was quite freely available in the territory. It depended upon who had

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<sup>19</sup> Selwyn Wark.

<sup>20</sup> The Canberra Times, 27 Feb 1928.

transport to and from Queanbeyan and in one case the butcher delivered it. Following the 1928 Liquor Ordinance Vote, the sale of alcohol was allowed in the territory. In the post Second World War era – and perhaps before – pubs closed at 6 p.m. and the drinking hours were referred to as ‘the 6 o’clock swill’. The pubs were not open on Sundays.

### **Road conditions**

The roads, if one could call them that, were generally not sealed. When wet, they became quagmires and in the dry windy months, the raw earth was whipped up and blown into eyes, noses, houses, shops and every nook and cranny. The grit often cut the faces of those exposed to the winds. A few roads were made of concrete. Wentworth Avenue, now covered in bitumen, was one of the experimental concrete roads, as was Commonwealth Avenue, opposite the Hotel Canberra. The original gaps between the concrete slabs can still be seen today.

### **Camps and settlements – conditions**

Tents were made out of hessian and canvas, and from 1926 onwards, unlined cubicles served as homes for the majority of single men. Many working class married men lived in humpies. The lucky ones lived in wooden unlined cottages at Westlake, Acton and Causeway. Most houses had only two bedrooms. The houses built for larger families were rarely large enough to accommodate the numbers and it was not unusual for children to sleep head to toe in a double bed.

Those people who lived in the unlined wooden houses were better off than those who lived in hessian humpies. In winter, water pipes had to be wrapped with rags to prevent freezing. The only heating in homes was a wood fire. At Westlake and Causeway, the chimneys were made of tin, which made the heating ineffective. People living at Molonglo initially had no stoves for heating. The Molonglo Tenements also had the added problem of being built of uncured wood. Wood battens were nailed over the gaps but they did little to prevent the wind coming through the gaps in the walls. Some people tried to improve the situation by papering the walls. One medical inspection recommended that this practice be discontinued as the paper harboured ‘visitors’ living in the walls.

Settlement houses were provided with ‘coppers’ for washing. In places such as the Eastlake and Molonglo Tenements, the washing facilities were shared. Cottages usually had a laundry. Those people, who were not provided with a copper, used a kerosene tin suspended over an open fire in the yard. The washhouse/bathroom situation was similar. Each settlement house had a tin bath. In the early years, this was filled with water from the copper. Later a chip heater was used to heat the water. Molonglo Tenements, when first converted from the internment camp barracks into cottages, had a shared laundry, lavatory and bathing facilities. Around 1926, the barracks were converted into separate cottages containing their own facilities including a bath in each house. Water for baths was heated in wood fired coppers and carried across to the baths.

The refrigerator was almost unknown. Some people had an ice-chest, but the majority used the Coolgardie safe, or a ceramic pipe in the ground, covered with a lid. The latter two methods were an effective means of keeping food fresh.<sup>21</sup>

### **Shopping**

Shopping was always a problem. From circa 1913, a co-operative store was opened near the site of the Railway Station. Following the first auction in December 1924, shops were built at Kingston and later, Civic and Manuka. The main shopping centre was Kingston, with shops such as J.B. Youngs. J.B. Young had fought at Khartoum and was a well-known identity at Queanbeyan, and later, Canberra. He

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<sup>21</sup> Footnote missing from p. 436.

treated his employees very well and built a number of houses for them at Kingston. He took them all to dinner at the Hotel Canberra following the opening of the store. Civic was never popular for shopping. It boasted the O.K. stores, banks, hairdresser and newsagency. Hall was also popular during the Second World War as a shopping centre. However, until after the Second World War (1939-1945), the preferred shopping centre was Queanbeyan. There were no buses between the towns and it was not uncommon for women with baby in pram and another at her heels, to walk the distance from home to Queanbeyan and back.

The shops opened all day on Saturday, and from 1925, Friday night shopping was instigated in Canberra. Unfortunately for members of the Molonglo community, the bus only went to and not from the shops! The majority of camps had some form of canteen. Arbuckles owned the hairdressing shop at Westlake and a general store at No. 1 Camp, Westlake. C. O'Keefe had a general store at No. 4 Sewer; A. Campbell a general store at White City, and Mr J. Downey, of White City, used the recreation room as a hairdressing saloon. G. Gauge had a general store at Molonglo, which also served as the fire station. Hawkers were not officially allowed at camps, but did go around to each camp on paydays.<sup>22</sup> The greengrocer, milkman, baker and butcher all delivered to the settlements.

The mail order catalogue from stores such as David Jones, Mark Foys and Grace Brothers, provided an added range of goods available for Canberrans. From the 1940s, the Rawleigh's man travelled around the suburbs and settlements with patent medicines, while another trader arrived with household linen, and purchased on the 'never never'.

## Floods

All who lived in Canberra have stories about the floods. The two big ones, after the First World War, were in 1922 and 1925. The latter was the bigger of the two and part of the cause was that earthworks had been constructed in the Commonwealth Bridge area to enable the building of one bridge instead of two. This caused the waters to back up the embankment and on Tuesday, 26 May 1925, flood waters banked up, causing the worst flood known in Canberra.<sup>23</sup> People living in the new houses close to the river at Causeway were evacuated and their houses, along with those at Eastlake Tenements, were submerged by the floodwaters. The families living in the three cottages behind the Power House were evacuated to Yarralumla House. Mrs Kaye, of the Dairy, was moved to Acton Hall. There was only one death, that of Harry Leach of the Tradesmen's Mess, Molonglo. He was a passenger in a car, which was swept into the floodwaters near the Power House, and he was unable to escape.

The 1922 flood destroyed the rail bridge crossing over the Molonglo River, behind the Causeway. The supports were swept away leaving the railway line hanging like a washing line across the river. The line used to continue between the War Memorial and St. John the Baptist Church, through to a stop near the Steam Laundry in Mort Street. Another railway line was constructed from the brickworks and it went along State Circle to Hotel Kurrajong and Parliament House. It also travelled across the river to Civic. When the line was taken up, it was discovered that one engine was left behind at Civic Centre. The cutting on State Circle, near to Kings Avenue, was constructed for the rail line.

Canberra continued to be subjected to flooding over the years prior to the lake filling in 1963. I remember the old Royal Canberra Golf Links being covered with layers of foul smelling mud up to an inch or more in thickness. This soil was excellent for growing crops. The market gardens, for example, were near Scott's Crossing. During his stay in Canberra in the 1920s, Lasseter commented on the waste of this good land, most of which just grew thistles. Jack Jenkins said that he often walked to work along

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<sup>22</sup> Footnote missing from p. 436.

<sup>23</sup> Selwyn Wark.

the river's edge. The cabbage tree thistles growing on the banks, through which Jack and others made a path, were taller than a man.

Canberra changed little between the years of 1929-1945, the end of the Second World War. The planned lake finally eventuated with the closing of the valves at Scrivener Dam on 20 September 1963.<sup>24</sup> The expansion of the city began in earnest in 1955 with the formation of the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) from which time, whole new suburbs seemed to spring up every few months. Canberra began the real change from a small country town, consisting of isolated villages, to Canberra, the Capital of Australia. The workers, and the few officials who built the city of Canberra are largely forgotten by history. This is an attempt to redress that issue.

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<sup>24</sup> Eric Sparke, *Canberra 1954-1980*, AGPS, Canberra ACT, 1988, p. 140.

