

**Alphabetical List of Accommodation for Single People  
With Emphasis on the 1930s to 1960s.  
&  
Selected Documents on Camps & Other Early Accommodation  
By Ann Gugler**

Temporary camps and hostels for single men and women were an integral part of the Canberra landscape from around 1910 to the mid to late 1960s. In the early days the residents of the camps and hostels were segregated according to sex, class and income level. Single people were rarely given a choice of accommodation. They were allocated to specific hostels by the appropriate government department.

Prior to the end of World War II the majority of single men's camps consisted of tents, small cubicles and a few timber barracks. Usually two men were allocated to each small room. After the Second World War the policy to directing people into particular hostels continued but with one major difference – it was no longer necessary to share a room.

Some men during the 1930s and later built humpies and some remained in their small *cottages* hidden in Canberra bushland until their deaths. One such cottage on the slopes of Mt Ainslie belonged to *Socks* and another at Causeway to *Why Worry*.

The acute housing shortage in the post World War II years forced the authorities to continue with the construction of temporary hostels. Such was the shortage of building materials that the authorities moved barracks from towns such as Mulwala and Narellan. Upon arrival these structures were renovated for further use.

In this post war era there were two classes of hostels – those for single male construction workers and the other for blue and white collar workers. In the latter that included Narellan, Mulwala and Reid House both men and women were accommodated. In the construction hostels however the practice of segregation continued – men only. One hostel was built for married couples – Ainslie. It is still in use as a hostel today.

At the time of writing (2001) one hostel buildings for single men remains in Canberra. It is Turner Hostel and probably because of its prominent site<sup>1</sup> was only used for a short time to accommodate single construction workers. The Turner Hostel for a time was converted into a government department and today the buildings are used by the ANU and a Senior Citizens' group. The site of the Hostel is at the corner of Kingsley & Boldrewood Streets.

One tent camp was built in the post war years at Fairbairn. It was later converted into hostel accommodation.

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<sup>1</sup> Most hostels were erected out of site of permanent Canberra.

In addition to these new camps two that survived the Depression and World War II years - Capitol Hill (spelt from 1940s – *Capital*) and Causeway were upgraded and continued to be used.

The documents in this section are a selection from the many held in the National Archives in Canberra. They are intended show some of the problems of those who lived in Canberra during the Construction time. One document refers to the use of Parkes Barracks during the Great Depression for single men passing through the territory. It includes a list of the basic foodstuffs given to each man.

### **ALPHABETICAL LIST OF "PERMANENT" ACCOMMODATION FOR SINGLE PEOPLE IN THE ACT BETWEEN 1930 –1960s**

Alan Foksett has put out a book called *Canberra's Hostels, Hotels and Guest Houses*. The following list is compiled from this book and information collected by me from sources such as Australian Archives.

#### **\* Hotel Acton - opened 1927.**

1933 converted into Patents Office and later used by ACT Police and ANU and Office of Prices Commission. In late 1940s returned service for accommodation. 1977 renamed Acton House and today is used by Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Affairs, the Resolution Centre and the Australian Federal Police. Because of the haste in building there was no time for new plans to be drawn and those made for the Hotel Kurradjong were used. In the 1950s there were 127 double and single rooms. Some had separate bathrooms and toilets together with central heating; converted lounges with no hot or cold water, but centrally heated. Central lounge with fireplace, also central heating, piano, writing room provided with wireless. Six small lounges in the various pavilions all centrally heated. Laundry with 2 steam heated coppers provided also ironing boards. 32 bathrooms, 32 showers, 33 closets, 2 billiards tables, 2 tennis courts, bicycle racks & 7 garages & telephone service.

#### **\*Acton Guest House**

Opened 1912 as The Bachelors Quarters. 1958 renamed Lennox House and in 1964 transferred to ANU for low cost accommodation for students. 124 single & 8 double rooms. Main lounge with wireless and piano, 2 small lounge rooms, Billiard & Ping Pong room, 2 laundries with 8 fuel coppers and ironing tables, 12 bathrooms, 12 showers, 17 closets. No garages, bicycle sheds and tennis court provided & telephone service. Below: The Bachelors Quarters 1912- renamed Acton Guest House. Additions were added to the buildings over the years.

**\* Hotel Ainslie - opened 1927.**

Privately run from 1930s and known to many as Spendlove's Hotel. Sold 8 June, 1950 and operated at Hotel Ainslie Rex. On 21 April, 1989 named changed to *Olims Canberra Hotel*.

**\*Ainslie Hostel**

Site near Haley & Quick Streets Ainslie. Opened 1949 – temporary workmen's hostel. From 1976 used by Commonwealth for low cost accommodation and called Ainslie Guest House. In the 1980's redeveloped and called Ainslie Village. In the 1950s room for 320 guests in rooms which averaged 10 feet x 9 foot. 22 baths, 22 showers & 43 lavatories, 1 large recreation room, 13 lounges, 1 public telephone.

**\* Barton House**

Brisbane Ave Barton. Opened 1940 and demolished 1981. An article in *The Canberra Times* dated 2.5.1940 noted that the construction of Barton House fronting Brisbane Avenue and bounded by Macquarie, Darling & Young Streets Barton had just commenced. The contractors were Gody & Witts of Sydney and the contract price for the builders, thirty-five thousand pounds. Accommodation was for 136 guests and the proposed tariff not to exceed 36/- per week. Because of the financial restraints imposed by the war economy of design, construction and fittings was observed. All walls were brick and rendered externally with exposed brick. The roof was covered with Marseilles pattern tiles. Tiles dadoes and floors will be included in the toilet rooms and kitchen, while all baths will be built in. Floors generally will be of radiata pine cut from the Mount Stromlo forest, and ceilings in the main will be of fibrous plaster.



Above: Beauchamp House 1927. Photograph in the December 1927 issue of *Canberra Community News*. Now named Ian Potter House.

**\* Beauchamp House**

(now Ian Potter House) opened 1927. 1972 converted into offices. This building is a reinforced concrete structure.

**\* Brassey House**

Opened 1927. This brick hostel was built on the wrong block and back to front. Today it is known as Hotel Brassey.

**\*Brickyards Hostel**

Remodelled circa 1947. This camp was on the left hand side of the entrance area of the brickyards and was originally constructed in 1927.

**\* Hotel Canberra**

Opened in December, 1924. It was designed by JS Murdoch and constructed by men employed by Contractor John Howie. 1976-1984 used as an annex for Parliament House. In 1988 it was bought by private enterprise and redeveloped to keep the character of the hotel and is now known as The Hyatt, Hotel Canberra.

**\* Capitol Hill Camp**

Original camp built in 1925 by John Howie & Sons. This camp was added to over the years - particularly around 1947 when cubicles from the Cotter were moved to the site. In 1952 new barracks were put on site. During the Great Depression for a time the camp was used by pensioners and men moving through the territory in search of work. After World War II displaced persons moved in – including married

- **Capital Hill Hostel 1948-1966**

This hostel was build near the old Capitol Hill Camp. It consisted of a series of barracks that had room for 320 guests - average size of rooms 10 feet x 9 feet- 22 baths, 22 showers, 43 lavatories. Dining room furnished similar to Eastlake, 1 large recreation room, 12 lounge rooms, 1 public telephone.

**\* Hotel Civic**

Opened in 1935. It was constructed in an Art Deco style from Canberra Cream bricks. It was demolished in 1984.

**\* Cotter Dam Camp**

Late 1940s - used to house men constructing a new dam.

**\* Eastlake Hostel**

Mildura Street, Griffith. Opened in 1947 for single tradesmen. It was closed in 1952. 550 guests. Pavilions - average size of room 9.9 feet x 7 feet. One large & one small recreation room - each with fire places, gymnasium - 1 public telephone.

**\* Fairbairn Hostel**

Opened 1948 - in grounds of RAAF base. Men were housed in tents. Later changed to hostel accommodation. Returned to RAAF in 1952. 500 Guests - average size of room (following the changeover from tents) 13.6 x 11.6 feet- shared by two men. Two baths, 43 showers, 41 lavatories, 2

large recreation halls, 1 public telephone yet to be installed.

**\* Forestry School**

Opened in 1927. The students were originally housed in a number of lined cubicles in the area of Solander Place. The first three cottages in this street were erected as shells of buildings for use as a mess, recreation and ablution blocks for the students. Later a Nissen Hut was added to the complex and was affectionately known as The Waldorf. In 1952 a new hostel for the students was built in Wilfe Carne Circuit.

**\* Glebe Hostel**

This old house was the Rectory for the Church of England priest of St John the Baptist Church at Reid. In 1926 it was used by the church as a school – St Gabriel’s C of E Grammar School. In 1927 the school moved to its present site in Forrest. From 1930 until 1955, when it was demolished, it was used as a boarding house.



**\* Gorman House**

Opened in 1925 when it was then known as Hotel Ainslie. In 1927 the buildings were renamed Gorman House after the Commissioner Clarence Gorman. It was closed as a boarding house in 1972 and has been used for a number of purposes since then including Gorman House Arts Centre. Murdoch also designed Gorman House. In 1950s had 100 single & 20 double rooms, 4 main lounges, piano, wireless, ping pong table, 15 bathrooms, 15 showers, 15 closets, cold water to bedrooms, laundry with good wood burning coppers, separate ironing room, telephone service, bicycle racks but no garages or tennis courts (near Northbourne courts).

**\* Gowrie Hostel**

in Northbourne Avenue opened at end of 1965. The buildings were acquired by ANU in 1992 and are now known as Fenner Hall.

**\* Havelock House**

Same design as Lawley House. It was completed in 1951 and was used by white and blue collar workers.

**\* Hillside Hostel**

Constructed on Capital Hill in 1952. Another site opposite the present Lotus Bay was also contemplated for the Hostel but was discarded because of the proximity to Westlake cottages where women and children lived. Hillside was for single men only and like the old days, married and single camps were kept separated. Closed in December, 1968. This Hostel was probably erected on the site of No 1 Labourers Camp, Westlake, Capitol Hill (1923-1927)

Below is a photograph of front entrance to Hillside Hostel. It was taken in the 1950s. Courtesy of Christian Heidermanns.



**\* Hotel Kingston**

Opened in 1935.

**\* Kingston Guest House**

Opened in 1926 as the Printers Quarters. It consisted of twenty-four semi-detached brick cottages covered with a cream coloured stucco. Each cottage had five bedrooms, which were sparsely furnished. In the centre of the complex was a dining room. The builder was Mason of Queanbeyan. In 1969 the buildings were pulled down and Fraser Court was built on the site.

**\* Hotel Kurrajong**

Murdoch designed the buildings and the name came from Kurrajong Hill (Capital Hill). Opened 1926. Ben Chifley, Prime Minister of Australia died there 13.6.1951. The hotel closed in 1976/77 and used until February 1995 by government agencies. Today it is the

Australian International Hotel School and Hotel. In the 1950s 155 double or single rooms with hot & cold water provided to most rooms. Main lounge room centrally heated, also has large fireplaces, piano & wireless provided. 32 bathrooms, 32 showers, 32 closets, billiards table, telephone service, 6 garages & bicycle racks.

**\* Lady Hopetoun Club**

1926-27. It consisted of three/four houses in Blandfordia used to accommodate young single girls of the in-between class - ie servants etc.

**\* Lawley House**

Opened in mid 1949. Closed in 1976 and taken over by Australian Federal Police and in 1979 reopened by the Police as a training college. The house had 15 double & 135 single rooms, Bicycle racks and 6 garages. Hot & cold water in each room.

**\* Macquarie Private Hostel**

Barton. Occupied from 1969.

**\* Mulwala House**

in the city area. Occupied from 1947 - white & blue collar workers. Closed 1969. The accommodation consisted of 202 single and one double room in eight pavilions and main block. Hot & cold water in each room and eight lounges (one in each block). No garages but bicycle sheds, basketball and tennis courts provided.

**\* Narellan House**

Opened 1949 and used for accommodation purposes until 1976. Demolished 1993. Forty six single & two double rooms, main lounge room, piano and wireless provided. The laundry contained 2 fuel coppers, ironing boards etc. No Bicycle shed, garages nor tennis court. Pavilions.

**\* RAAF Huts**

*The Canberra Times* 16.4.1940 - Work has stopped on the hutment camp for the RAAF trainees at Kingston and the camp will be shifted to a new location, south-east of the Canberra Railway Station...The new camp will be on rising ground [above the flood level] and there will be adequate facilities for sports' facilities. It will be comparatively close to the Canberra Technical College where the trainees are undergoing engineering courses.

**\*RAAF Base –**

Information quoted from Summary of Events sheets Fairbairn (held in RAAF archives) - date September, 1945.

*It is proposed to quarter approximately one hundred & twenty (120) AWC Workers on the Station, and work is now in progress building suitable Mess Huts and Recreation Rooms. A number of pre-fabricated huts, previously used to provide accommodation for RAAF personnel have been made available for AWC Workers, who have transferred them to a new site at the southern end of the RAAF Barracks area.*

*Considerable apprehension was felt by the Station Commander at the prospect of having so many civilian workmen quartered on the Station, the matter was referred a higher authority for consideration. Instructions were received that the civilians would be quartered on the Station. Every assistance has been extended on behalf of the RAAF with a view to fostering a feeling of co-operation between the RAAF and AWC during their stay. A few difficulties have been experienced, one of which is the problem of workmen's families arriving at the camp site. The Commanding Officer has given a ruling that this is not to be permitted. A document dated April 1940 stated that the Station Headquarters (RAAF) were officially established on 1st April, 1940 under the temporary command of Squadron Leader PG Heffernan, AFC, Commanding Officer of No 8 Squadron which had been stationed at Canberra since 11/9/1939.*

The Diary also documented a very sad event, the passing on of the Late Prime Minister, Mr John Curtin.

*This station was called upon to assist in the funeral arrangements. A party of four guards in charge of an NCO were detailed to mount guard over the casket, whilst it was lying in State at Parliament House, The Casket was placed on a gun carriage supplied by Duntroon Military College, the cortege then proceeded by a predetermined route, through Duntroon to Fairbairn Aerodrome, on arrival at the main gate, a RAAF Guard of Honour, presented Service compliments. The roadway leading through the main gate and camp area, to the tarmac area, where a C!& Douglas Aircraft was waiting to convey the Casket to West Australia, was lined with Officers and Airmen, standing at attention. Preceding the Cortege, as it entered the human lane, was RAAF band supplied by RAAF Station, Bradfield Park. A line of highly polished cars over a mile long, conveying the Chief Mourner, Service Chiefs and members of Parliament, presented an imposing sight. Approaching the tarmac area, the band played Chopin's Funeral March, and the Cortege proceeded at the Slow March to the waiting aircraft. The Casket was transferred from the gun carriage to the aircraft, by eight RAAF members acting as pall bearers. At 1620 hours on July 6th, 1945 C4 & Aircraft VH-CIN, departed from Canberra conveying the late Prime Minister's remains to Perth, Western Australia...where the official funeral; was held.*

**\* Reid House**

Opened 1950 - closed 1971. It was constructed within the area of the present Glebe Park, Civic. 270 single rooms in pavilions of 54 rooms. Hot and cold water in each room was at time of report not available but to be provided as soon as possible. 20 baths, 20 showers, 70 washbasins, 16 lavatory stalls, 40 closets. Two large laundries with 7 fuel coppers in each laundry plus ironing boards. Provision of bicycle sheds and garages under consideration.

**\* Rex Hotel**

Opened early 1960s. This hotel was the first new hotel built in Canberra after World War II and it fronts on to Northbourne Avenue.



**\* Richardson House**

Ainslie Ave & Elimatta Streets. Completed 1966 . Closed 1989 and now operates as Acacia House Motor Inn.

**\* Riverside Hostel**

In use in 1947 and closed 1952. Sections of the hostel used by Canberra Repertory Society. Removed in the early 1990s. Pavilion style. This hostel had 360 guests housed in single rooms - each 7.6 feet x 13.6 feet. Dining room & 1 large recreation room similar with fire place & 1 public telephone. Below: Riverside Hostel – 1950s. The road that runs diagonally across the photograph is in a similar position to the one that now runs from Wentworth Avenue up to join Kings Avenue Bridge.



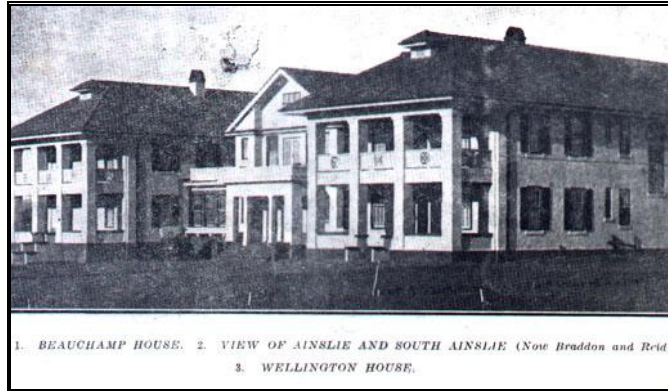
Riverside and Eastlake Hostels in 1947 applied to have liquor licenses provided. The sale of alcohol was to be permitted for a few hours only. The men at one hostel preferred a drink after work before dinner and the men at the other preferred a social drink in the evening. Who finally won is uncertain but a liquor license was allowed at each canteen. In 1950 Mr PV Funda took over the operation of Riverside Hostel Canteen. He proposed to continue using Hut 16A.

**\* Turner Hostel**

Completed 1949 and used only until 1952. Buildings used by ANU and Canberra Pensioners' Club. Pavilions - 342 guests housed in single rooms each 12 feet x 10 foot. 23 baths, 28 showers, 30 lavatories, 1 large recreation room, 13 lounges & 1 public telephone yet to be installed.

### \* Hotel Wellington

Opened 1927. Pulled down in 1980s and in 1988 Pavilion Hotel opened on the site. Below is a photograph from the December 1927 issue of *Canberra Community News*. It names the Hotel as *Wellington House*.



### \* YWCA Hostel

Opened in mid 1930s. In some ways this hostel took over from the Lady Hopetoun Club. Closed 1986. During the war Leave House was set up next to the main building and run by the YWCA.

### Flats

It should also be mentioned that only a few flats were built before World War II. Some were Manuka Arcade, Barton Courts (1930) and those above the shops and banks in Sydney & Melbourne buildings in Civic. During the 1950s many flats were constructed in Canberra including the Allawah, Bega and Currong Flats at Civic and Northbourne Flats.

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Australian Archives A/361/1 DSG17/2008

*The Chief Surveyor*

*Melbourne*

*re Houses, Cottages etc. Federal Territory Control of.*

*In accordance with your instruction on the accompanying paper, herewith please find schedule as desired by you, also a list of other buildings, which contain particulars which may be of service; cottages noted as "included in lease of Block" may be regarded as only possessing a residential value, if desired a sketch will be forwarded which will better illustrate the situation of the different buildings referred to on the attached list.*

*District Surveyor 29th August, 1917*

*Locality & Building Required by Works, Vacant, Remarks*

### **Cotter**

*Mess Room - 6 rooms (empty), lavatory, telephone vacant*

*Pumping Stations 2 brick buildings Yes Machinery & electrical appliances*

**Stromlo**

*Observatory, Balloon House*

*Kite House vacant Keys with WD*

**Uriarra Road**

*old cottage, Hatley Yes*

**Brickfield**

*Transformer, Brick Kilns machine shop, Grinding house, Fan House, Small office Yes*

**Brickfield Site**

*Mess Room at Brickyards*

*Bath Rooms*

*29 Camp Site buildings*

*(one owned by Commonwealth) vacant Looked after by White*

**Uriarra Road**

*Gate House - Hughes Ownership doubtful - thought to be Hughes' property*

**Power House**

*Pumping Station Yes*

**Acton**

*Pumping Station Yes*

**Brickfield Site**

*Pumping Station Yes*

*Locality Premises Controlled by Occupier etc*

**Duntroon**

*old cottage FCD LR Smith (Works employee) 5/- pr week*

*do old cottage ? NJ Stores 4/- pr week*

*do Workmen's mess CS RMC employee 2/- pr week*

*do old house & store CS J Murray (included in lease of block)*

*do house (Rectory) CS C of E Rector (included in lease of block)*

*do old house CS J Curley (included in lease of block)*

**Springbank cottage** *CS Assistant stock inspector 9/- pr week*

*do old cottage CS Ex works employee 6/- pr week*

*do old cottage CS " " " 4/- pr week*

*do old cottage CS Office Cleaner 4/- pr week*

**Brickyards Iron cottage** CS Late Brickwork's manager quarters allowed Mess Room Key with White

Locality Premises Controlled by Occupier etc

**Tuggeranong**

Homestead cottage CS Vacant

do cottage CS Mrs McIntyre (Caretaker Tuggeranong House)

do 2 rm hut CS D Grady 2/- per month

**Canberra Administrator's Residence** CS vacant

do Acton House FCD AL Richmond 1 room 5/- pr week

do Bachelors' Quart FCD Single officers 5/- pr room per wk

do 7 Cottages FCD Married officials 10% of salary

do 1 Cottage FCD Medical Officer in charge Quarters allowed

do 1 Cottage FCD Bank Manager 82 pound 5 shillings per annum

do Temporary workman's cottage FCD

do Cottage (2 rms.) CS Officer-in-Charge Aff, stn quarters allowed

do Temporary workman's cottage FCD Ex employee 2/- pr week

do Old cottage CS L&S employee 6/- pr week

do Old cottage CS C Kaye (includes lease of block)

do Old cottage CS Works employee (included in lease of block)

**Yarralumla official visitors** FCD Official visitors

do Coachman's Qrs CS Vacant (10/- pr week)

do Tem'py workman's cottage CS Afforestation employee 3/- pr week

do Old cottage FCD Works. Bullock driver 5/- pr week

do Old Cottage CS L&S Boundary rider 6/- pr week

do (nursery) Cottage CS Nursery foreman 6/- pr week

do Dairy & cottage CS E Corkhill (includes lease of block)

do Old cottage FCD Works - Roads maintenance man

do Brick & Stone FCD Vest

**Power House**

2 Cottages FCD Works Supt & Stores Officer 5/ pr week each

do 2 Cottages FCD Official chauffeurs (quarters provided)

do Old Cottage CS G Rottenberry (included in lease of block)

do Old Cottage CS J Scott (included in lease of block)

do Old Cottage CS W Avery (included in lease of block)

**Canberra Administrative offices ?** Official offices

do Works Office FCD do

do Post Offices &

**Residence FCD Post office**

do C'wealth Bank & quarters FCD Commonwealth Bank  
do Afforestation, sheds etc CS Afforestation work  
do Official stables FCD Stables  
do 2 rooms at rear of stables CS Vacant  
do Blacksmith shop

**Store room & Implement shed CS Tool shop, implement shed etc**

do Recreation Hall FCD Amusement Hall  
do Laundry FCD Mrs Davis 1/- pr month (Official laundress)  
do Iron Shed FCD Old store room (plumber)  
do Bath rooms etc FCD  
do Workmen's kitchen FCD vacant  
do Fire Station quarters FCD G Wilson (Works Employee)

**Locality Premises Controlled by Occupier etc**

**Power House Engineers' Mess FCD Works Employees 3/- pr room per wk**

do Workmen's Mess FCD vacant  
do Power House workshops, store etc FCD  
do Railway Station FCD Canberra Co-operative Society ( Store) 20 pounds pa & outbuildings

**Works Office**

**Duntroon Recreation Hall FCD Recreation (Military control?)**

**Brickworks Workmen's Mess FCD**

**Cotter River Official Mess FCD**

**Majura Recreational Hall CS**

**Ginninderra Recreational Hall CS**

**Ainslie Arsenal Bdgs FCD (5)**

**Ginninderra Store etc CS H Curran 3/- per week**

**Hall Hotel etc CS M Lazarus on compensation**

**School Houses:** Narrabundah, Duntroon, Ginninderra (Gungahlin), Mulligan's Flat, Majura, Cotter(crossed out), Tuggranong, Tharwa, Gibraltar, Williamsdale.

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Australian Archives CP698/9/1 Bundle 1/8/4  
Social Service Building  
Canberra  
11th May, 1926

Mr LHB Lasseter Hon Secretary  
Northbourne Camp Welfare Committee  
Northbourne Camp

Dear Sir,

Receipt is acknowledged of your communication of the 8th instant with reference to organising a charitable effort on behalf of your camp steward to take the form of a fancy [dress] football match...

It is not quite clear from your letter whether it is proposed to play a fancy dress Soccer, Rugby or Australian Rules game. Possibly you would have a mixture of all three! ...

ooOoo

JH Honeysett Social Service Officer Federal Capital Commission  
Personal letter from Lasseter to Joe Honeysett

Dear Editor,

Had I known as much this morning as I do now I would have erased the word "gentle" in my request that you ask the Police to give Andy a hint. He brought six dozen of beer into the camp last night and as a result we have lost two of our best soccer players. A booze-bred quarrel and a sudden decision to pull out. By the way they pulled out with the club outfit on them.

Seeing I've started it, I'll try to carry thro' the benefit for Andy but if he brings any more grog into the camp I'll ask the Commission to "Abolish" him.

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A6266/1 G/27/2045

FEDERAL CAPITAL COMMISSION

22nd March, 1927

MEMORANDUM to -

The Secretary

Home & Territories Department

61 Spring Street

MELBOURNE

*Referring to your communication of the 10th March 1927 with which you forwarded an extract from Hansard in which the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Charlton, asked a question concerning the accommodation provided for workmen at Canberra, I am directed to reply that it is not considered that complaints in regard to the majority of the workmen having poor accommodation are justifiable.*

*At the present time there are three thousand (3,000) workmen employed in Canberra. These include principally tradesmen, builders labourers, sewer workers and general labourers and the disposition of these men in regard to housing is as follows:-*

*Cottages 222*

*Cubicles 784*

*Residing at Queanbeyan, Riverbourne, Mt Russell or privately 810*

*1,816*

*Accommodation in tents 1,184*

*Total: 3,000*

*The accommodation in tents is similar to that provided in any construction camp and such accommodation is occupied by single men whose employment is not likely to be of such lengthy duration as that of tradesmen and married men who have brought their families to Canberra.*

*In many of the camps, however, the men have constructed humpies which, although built in a temporary manner, are nevertheless very comfortable, many of them having fire places.*

*The Commission has recently increased the number of cubicles. These are built of weatherboard, twelve feet by ten feet with iron roofs; they contain iron bedsteads and are provided with electric light: stoves are being installed for the winter months.*

*The Commission is increasing the number of these cubicles to provide the accommodation of such forms for 1,184 men. It is anticipated that, with the provision for married accommodation and making allowance for workmen living at Queanbeyan [including Oaks Estate] and other places, this will provide adequate accommodation of a comfortable character for a number of workmen in excess of those likely to be employed*

*in the Federal Capital after the present programme finishes, when it is expected that the number will be reduced to about half of the present strength, diminishing gradually.*

*This will enable the whole of the tent accommodation in camps to be done away with, except for parties doing special work in outlying localities for short periods.*

*It should be emphasized that the employees who have been occupying tents, which is certainly no hardship in the summer climate are those temporarily employed in connection with the present urgent programme. It is not possible or economically advisable for the Commission to provide accommodation for such employees in any other form at the present time.*

Secretary  
22nd March, 1927.

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A6266/1 G27/2045

EXTRACT FROM HANSARD OF 15th MARCH [1927]

*I wish to bring under the notice of the Minister representing the Minister for Home Territories the conditions under which some of the workmen in the Federal Territory are compelled to live. I have received from the president and secretary of the Canberra Branch of the Australian Workers' Union the following letter:-*

*"I presume you are not aware of the fact that our members have been living under most trying conditions in Canberra for the last five years. Eight feet by six feet tents have predominated. We have been asking for better conditions in the various camps for two years, and at last have succeeded in getting the Federal Capital Commission to build cubicles; however they are not general yet. But instead of building decent huts, the Commission have built cubicles eleven feet nine inches or nine feet by five feet six inches, not lined or ceiled, out of half inch second grade Baltic pine to accommodate two men each and are charging four shillings per week rental for same, the capital cost of erecting being thirty pounds which works out at approximately thirty seven percent per annum. This charge we think is exorbitant considering that the officers of the Commission live in comfortable houses are only paying from ten to twelve and a half percent rent on the capital cost of their residences. We have interviewed Mr Butters [First Commissioner] on two occasions with a request that the rent should be reduced to two shillings per week, but without result. He has also refused to give us the basis on which the rent is calculated.*

*Under our award we are entitled to ground rent, firewood, water and sanitation conveniences free. The persons running the messes at the camps are being charged rent for the dining rooms etc, at the rate of one shilling per man. Therefore the cost of these buildings cannot be added to the huts.*



*My members feel keenly that we should be singled out for such unjust treatment and at a meeting of the local branch of the AWU held last week it was decided to ask you to place the grievance before Parliament, with the full weight of the party behind you so that a reduction may be secured. Already the huts have cracks of fully half inch between many of the boards. You can therefore imagine what our members will have to put up with during the trying winter weather. Members of Parliament are provided with a magnificent building here, containing over 2,000 steam radiators, which will keep each enclosed room at a uniform temperature of 52 degrees (Fahrenheit); still we understand the Government*

*consider the climate too severe to hold Winter Sessions here. Visualize then, our men living in huts with the wind whistling through the cracks from April to September. In the event of the Commission putting in heating stoves and electric light, a further charge of one shilling per week is to be made, bring the rent up to five shillings per week.*

*If the statements in the letter are true, injustice is being done to several thousand workmen in the Territory. Men should not be asked to pay four shillings a week as rent for a cubicle which costs thirty pounds. I want the Minister to send this complaint to the Federal Capital Commission and ask for a full inquiry, so that the workers in the Territory may be provided with decent conditions at a reasonable cost.*



Above: Molonglo Hall before it burnt down.

A361/1 DSG23/806

*Molonglo Settlement  
March 22nd, 1923  
To Mr Goodwin,  
Director Lands & Survey Dept  
Sir,*

*At a meeting of the Progress Association of the Molonglo Settlement a motion was carried to ask you if you could assist us in obtaining a few necessary improvements.*

*Letter after letter has been sent to the Works & Railways Director and have been totally ignored. Chief amongst the various needs are:-*

*No 1. Sanitary convenience for Amusement Hall.*

*No 2. A new hardwood floor (in reference to this I would point out that the existing floor is of oregon pine. Long splinters are constantly peeling off to the danger of dancers). This matter has been before the Department since January and no reply has been received.*

*No 3. At a meeting held just about one year ago it was decided to ask the Department for an extra copper for each of the communal laundries. This is the position of things here. There are ten families using the laundries, there is only one copper boiler between them. If there should be one set day in the week one or two people cannot get through their washing. I think you will see that the ladies up here are against it in this matter.*

*No 4. When the horse paddock was fenced no provision of any kind was made for water. There are fire hydrants in the paddock and the men here carried a length of trough in to one of them but this is filled from a hydrant and in a few minutes it is empty again, and our horses and cattle are thirsting for water when plenty could be there at all times with a proper length of trough and stand with a ball valve fixed.*

*No 5. Stormwater drains. These were promised more than a year ago, but are still in abeyance.*

*No 6. The laundries and water closet roofs are still covered with rubberoid. When it rains they are flooded out. Iron roofs have been promised fully nine months ago but are still conspicuous by their absence.*

*No 7. The next item, Sir, is one that you could only appreciate by seeing inside these tenements. It is the need of some sort of fire place for the coming winter. All the outer walls of the building are so shrunken from exposure that the boards are gaping open anything from three eighths of an inch to one inch apart, a cover strip is over this but the dust and cold winds drive through and make these places at times unsuitable for habitation. The suggestion is that a brick fireplace could be provided for each tenement and the outer wall to be lined with say half inch lining or even rubberoid.*

*Sir, this may seem like a lot of complaints but they are real needs for the coming winter. The Association invites you cordially to inspect for yourself and would be obliged to you if you could arrange to meet us at an early date if possible Saturday or Sunday morning as all the men are at home then. If you could manage it a phone message to Mr Bland would be sufficient to find us here to meet you.*

*I am yours faithfully, Harry Woodlands, Hon Sec Molonglo Progress Association.*

---

A6266/1 G27/4505

Westridge  
May 2nd, 1925

To the Commissioners,  
Canberra.

Gentlemen

*At a date recently a circular letter was received by Mr Noble also a similar one by Mr T Apps. Both were submitted to the employees and a meeting was then called for the 23<sup>rd</sup> April. It was continued on the 27th and the enclosed was a copy of the minutes of that meeting. I had the honour of occupying chair. As a body the residents of Westridge regret it is necessary to send in a list of complaints but desire me to emphasize the fact that there are real needs. Since the meeting it has been decided to reconstruct the Westridge Progress Association and I have been elected Secretary to that Association.*

*The Residents*

*desire me to say that in no way they can...[unreadable] they will do so if the necessary instructions can be given and all they ask is to be treated as well as in the other parts of the Federal Territory. There is one part of the type written copy of the minutes that I would like to emphasize. The typist did not place this case strong enough. Most of the men here own a horse which is on agistment the charge being deducted from his earnings. When his horse is not in use he is placed in the agistment paddock safely. There are I believe 10 different (or indifferent) gates and dilapidated fences. The owners of the horses has work perhaps a week before he again requires his horse and then he often cannot find it. It has however been found for him perhaps at the Hostel or somewhere else and the policeman arrived with a summons charging the man with allowing his horse to stray. It is an injustice to charge a man with what he cannot possibly help and we respectfully ask you to look seriously...to us, serious matter. Trusting that I have not caused you much delay or trouble.*

*I am yours faithfully,  
Harry Woodlands Chairman.*

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A/1 34/4662

FEDERAL CAPITAL COMMISSION

October 15th, 1929

MEMORANDUM for:-

The Chief Administrator

Dear Sir,

*I desire to inform you that the Commission has a number of cubicles at Red Hill and Parkes Camp sites which it is prepared to sell to rural lessees at fifteen pounds each, purchasers to take delivery at the camp sites mentioned.*

*Would you kindly be good enough to furnish this information to the Members of your Association, who should be advised to forward application to this office accompanied by cheques.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Chief Lands Officer*

FEDERAL CAPITAL COMMISSION

Mr A E Wright

Secretary

Federal Territories Lessees' Association KINGSTON FCT

A1/1 34/4662

FCT BRANCH DEPT OF THE INTERIOR

29th April, 1932

*I desire to report that action has been taken to remove all the cubicles from No 4 Camp. [In front of Provisional Parliament House on banks of Molonglo River]. Seventeen of them have gone to Capitol Hill to house 34 men and the balance removed to the Acton Depot for disposal. The buildings now at No 4 Camp are the dining room, kitchen, bath houses, lavatory and laundry. The electric light has been disconnected and the camp is being maintained as a rest camp for the travelling unemployed. The number is fluctuating but will, I consider, not exceed twenty.*

*In regard to Capitol Hill the cubicles have been placed in position; two men to each cubicle, and bedsteads have been supplied. A request was received that only one man should be allotted to each cubicle owing to difficulties in regarding cooking, but this was refused, and the men were allowed to use the kitchen for that purpose. A request was also received for the electric light to be connected to the cubicles which have been transferred, as it is already supplied to the other cubicles at Capitol Hill. However, in view*

*of the fact that the men now transferred there are not ex-employees, as are the other men in the camp, and as the installation of electric light would be costly, the request is recommended for refusal.*

*The action so far taken is only part of the Ministerial direction on this subject, as the proposal put forward by the Chief Officer of the Commonwealth Police was that a number of cubicles should be moved to the Ainslie Camp and used for the accommodation of travelling unemployed. The existing accommodation at Ainslie is full, it being occupied by married people and invalids. Ainslie camp is not sewerred and in addition to moving the cubicles there it would be necessary to incur expenditure in provision of lavatory and bathing accommodation. This expenditure, if the proposal is proceeded with, would be additional to the cost of demolition of the buildings and the removal of sanitary and water fittings. However, the greatest objection in my opinion to extending Ainslie camp for such a purpose is that a number of women are at present living in this camp and the introduction of travelling unemployed would bring about a situation which would be practically impossible to control and which would, in my opinion, owing to the conditions under which the people live in such a camp, lead to immorality.*

*The present arrangements of using the remainder of the buildings at No 4 camp for travelling unemployed appears to be functioning satisfactorily and I consider that it would be wise not to build up the Ainslie camp but to abolish it, as early as possible. Four families are at present in the camp and some of the members are registered for unemployment so as opportunity offers, it is considered that those registered should be transferred to Molonglo and the cubicles at Ainslie demolished. It is obvious that so long as shelter is provided for married travellers, difficulty will be experienced in getting rid of them after a reasonable time. If it is still desired to remove the single travelling unemployed from the vicinity of Parliament House, then my previous suggestion for the establishment of a separate camp outside the immediate boundaries of the City should be adopted.*

*(JC Brackenreg)  
Chief Lands Officer*

FEDERAL CAPITAL COMMISSION

24th May, 1930

MEMORANDUM for  
The Secretary, Department of Home Affairs  
CANBERRA FCT

*Further to my letter of 17th May, 1930, to the Honourable the Minister and our recent discussion with respect to the establishment of a Camp for the unemployed, the following additional particulars are also submitted so that the proposal may be fully and finally considered.*

*From the analysis which has been made of all men registered for employment to 20th May, 1930 it will be seen that the maximum number to be provided for in a camp is 152, but I have no doubt it will be found that many of these have left, and I would suggest that initial arrangements be made for 80 which is the capacity of the permanent accommodation at Parkes Barracks, additional numbers, if required, can be housed in tents.*

*The weekly ration scale adopted in New South Wales for single men for relief is:-*

*Bread 3 loaves, 12lbs (or 7lbs bread & 5 lbs potatoes)*

*Meat 3lbs*

*Tea 4 oz*

*Sugar 1 lb*

*Jam 12 oz*

*Condensed Milk 1lb (or Powdered Milk)*

*Butter quarter lb or margarine*

*Soap 1 bar*

*On this scale the cost for rations would be between 7/ and 8/- per man per week.*

*If it is decided that a camp be established and rations supplied I would suggest the following arrangements:-*

*Bedsteads, trestle tables and forms to be provided from stock. Electric light to be connected and operated by a time switch from half an hour before dark until 10 pm. Firewood to be cut in the bush by the men and carted to camp by our lorries. Bread and meat to be delivered daily by tradesmen. Groceries to be delivered twice weekly by our transport. The men to select 3 as a Committee to whom rations, equipment, etc will be handed and be responsible for distribution and safety, also orderliness etc of the camp.*

*Men to provide their own bedding, eating and cooking utensils (there are no cooking utensils in stock). (Australian Archives A/1 34/4662)*

Handwritten letter A1/1 34/4662  
Parkes Barracks  
Canberra  
Sept 2. 32

*Dear Sir,*

*As you are a member of the Ministry, no doubt your influence will have a far reaching effect, so I appeal to you to assist us to the best of your ability. As you know there are eight men who have been domiciled here for a period of ten to twenty months and it is useless for them to depart elsewhere for they are disenfranchised. These men are waiting patiently, eager to grasp any opportunity to better their present condition. This state of affairs exists through us not voting at the advisory council election. We have been under consideration for some time with a view to getting registered for work.*

*I now enclose a list of the names referred to.*

*A Stivens, C Jordan, J Bourke, G Fisher, J Ryan, PA McWilliam, R Giles, A Hatton.*

*Thanking you in anticipation,*

*Yours Truly  
James Bourke.*

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Capitol Hill Camp was built in 1925 by John Howie & Sons. Mrs Stanley took over in 1928 from Bill Mitchell (Mess Caterers). In the early 1930s Mrs Stanley had to leave her business because of failure of men living at the Mess not able to pay their bills. During the 1930s men out of work used the camp. Shortly after the end of World War 2 – in 1947 - the camp was upgraded using a barrack type of accommodation for use by displaced persons and single tradesmen. Following are a number of documents re the camp/hostel.

#### CAPITOL HILL CAMP

*Secretary*

*With reference to the communication addressed to the [? Unreadable] from the Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of Australia [St Andrews] Canberra, under the date 11<sup>th</sup> November, 1936, and the Minister's minute thereon, I ... to advise as follows:*

*The camp was established many years ago during the time of the Federal Capital Commission. The original cost of same was in the vicinity of 7,550 pounds. The cost since*

1931 for ordinary services such as electric light, garbage removal, camp steward, water supply and firewood is 1,337 pounds. Outstanding rentals at 3/- per week as at 14th July, 1936 amounted to 1,124 pounds 16/10d.

I understand that no independent record is kept by the Accounts Section regarding the annual receipts from the camp. The number of men in the camp at present is 65, 20% of whom are considered by the Inspector as undesirable tenants.

At the moment the camp is not fully occupied. There are 16 semi-detached cubicles vacant and 4 portable cubicles vacant.

It is considered that it would be well to endeavour to arrange for the ultimate demolition of the camp by first removing all unoccupied buildings and utilizing the structures so removed for additional accommodation to tenements where such is necessary or elsewhere.

The camp is being used to some degree by swagmen who move from place to place similar to the use that was made of Parks barracks in front of Parliament House until this encampment was removed some three years ago.

The facilities offering at the low rental of 3/- per week, such as water supply (unlimited) sewerage, electric light, laundry and bath accommodation with bath heaters and the use of a lorry to obtain firewood, make the camp very attractive, so much so, that the men are not inclined to remove from there.

I consider that action should be taken definitely to demolish this class of habitation in the Capital. I therefore recommend the removal of all untenanted structures and, if possible, the removal of the remaining occupiers to a site known as Ainslie Camp where the occupants will be away from interference with the City homes or institutions, and that a notice as suggested by our Inspecting Officer in his memorandum of the 18.11.1936 herewith, be placed at the camp so that the Police will be able to take any requisite action therein.

The matters referred to by the Inspector in his report are brought under your notice for consideration.

A Percival  
Surveyor General and Chief Property Officer. 20.11.1936

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*The Truth* Sunday December 27, 1936

SCANDAL OF CANBERRA RELIEF CAMP  
CAPITOL HILL SITE A DISGRACE TO FEDERAL CAPITAL  
(From "Truth's" Canberra Representative)

*The paying-off last week of the Canberra Relief workers before the Christmas holidays once again raised the scandal of Capitol Hill Camp, to which "Truth" had previously directed attention.*

*These single relief workers, normally receive from the Commonwealth Government one week's work in five, but before Christmas they have four weeks of continuous employment. To offset this liability they will have no further work until February.*

*This sudden acquisition of wealth has been too much for some of the men, with the result that this week scenes in the Capitol Hill camp and in its vicinity have been witnessed which would be tolerated in no other town in Australia.*

*The camp is less than half a mile from Parliament House and while visitors admire the public buildings the neat homes with gardens, the parks and tree lined streets, the Capitol Hill Camp is mercifully hidden. It consists of about 80 cubicles, housing that number of men. Each cubicle is 8 feet by 6 feet and built of unlined pine.*

THE SYSTEM OF PUTTING UNEMPLOYED MEN INTO CAMPS IS A FEATURE OF GERMAN  
ADMINISTRATION, BUT IS ABHORRENT TO AUSTRALIAN IDEALS.

*For years these men have lived together in the same surroundings. Sometimes one dies and another homeless man takes his place. Some of them are old-age or military pensioners.*

*It is well known that men isolated socially in such surroundings for any length of time quarrel among themselves. The result here is, therefore, a camp divided into several rival camps, denouncing each other as "pimps", "shelves" or "crooks". Every man regards his neighbour with distrust. Fights and drunken brawls are numerous and among these submerged citizens of the Commonwealth, "metho" parties are frequent.*

CONDEMNED

*Some months ago one man at such a party was covered with methylated spirit, and a match applied to him. For months he was in hospital in a serious condition, but no police action was taken.*

*Within recent weeks another man was shot with a rifle in the camp. As soon as the shot was fired the camp appeared to be empty, so that when the police made the inquiries nobody knew anything and even the injured man suddenly suffered from loss of memory.*

*Many a man there has tried to keep a dog for company but it is always poisoned.*

*The cubicles themselves are infested with vermin. They have been condemned by the Health Department, and are not in conformity with the housing regulations laid down for the national capital.*

*Not only does the Commonwealth Government ignore its own laws in allowing such a camp to exist, but it actually makes a profit from the camp.*

*A charge of three shillings per week is made for each cubicle, and the rent is deducted from the pay envelope.*

*During the worst of the depression when there were no pay envelopes for months the men fell into arrears of rent. These arrears are now being deducted for the pay at the rate of six shillings per week.*

*It is safe to assert that the capital cost of the camp has been paid by those poor workers over and over again.*

List of (semi-detached) Cubicles with tenants 26.3.1936 at Capitol Hill.

*6 Blocks of 8 - 48 @ 3/- per week*

*2 Blocks of 10 - 20 @ 3/- per week*

*Total - 68 @ 3/- per week*

*J Elliott, J Harrigan, G Mankellow, A Anderson, G Bennett, H McKenna, G Davidson, C Hodge, W Senior, M Keane, M Coogan, A Manly, A Shank, A bell, W Staples, J Mearns, C Standing, W McKonnon, M McLeod, EP Ryan, J Woods, H Williams, W Low, J Clues, F Wade, F Kelly, J Flood, WG Neill, W Scholes, J Smith, V Callaghan, J Foster, W Brown, M McKee, P Kelly, C Foster, E Egan, J Murray, W Mills, P Evers, W Ryan, J Scott, A Rolfe, M Conroy, F O'Donnell, F Stewart, B Wheatly, A Cummins, F McGrath, G McManus, JW Mason, W F Webb, P Fitzsimmons, WG Lynch, C Coggin.*

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Another letter written in the early 1940s states:

**CAPITAL HILL CAMP:**

*There are at present thirteen tenants at this camp, viz:- two old age pensioners:- J Sturgess 1/6d weekly, R Wheatly 1/6d weekly.*

*Seven Department employees: O'Malley & C Turner 9/- weekly (chef's old quarters), M Kavanagh, J Mills, T Fulford, S Hall, G Mankellow [all 3/- weekly] Casual Employees, mostly gardeners & odd job men:*

*M Kane, W Caldwell, J Mathews, T Smith [each 3/- per week].*

*Rental is deducted from Dept employees fortnightly, but not in advance so that a week's notice would suffice if accommodation was available.*

*No tenancy form has however been signed by any of the tenants. Practically the only arrears of rent in this camp are the cases of Department employees whose rent should be deducted by the Accounts Department from pay. This camp was declared a relief camp during the depression period and the present rentals were fixed by the Department.*

*Electric light, provision of transport to get their own fuel, caretaker, sanitary & garbage collection were provided. The Manuka shopping area cleaner visits the camp twice weekly to wash out lavatories and wash house; this being the only service provided at present besides electric light and garbage collection. Owing to the intention of closing the camp and demolishing the buildings at the earliest possible moment, no renovations have been carried out on the remaining buildings during the last ten years and the premises have not been painted since erection, so that the buildings generally are in a bad state...*

*Canberra Times July, 1944*

#### **CAPITAL HILL PENSIONERS ORDERS TO VACATE**

*Pensioners at the Capital Hill Mess, some of whom have been resident there for 15 years, have received verbal instructions from the Department of Interior to be prepared to evacuate their quarters at a moment's notice.*

*The Secretary of the Department (Mr JA Carrodus) said last night that he did not know that the men had been asked to leave but he was certain they would not be thrown into the streets.*

*Mr Bob Wheatley, who was interviewed yesterday, said that he had lived in the mess for 15 years with other pensioners who paid a rent of 1/6d to 3/- per week. He had been asked to leave, and was told that the department was not prepared to find another home for him. He was aged 70 years and was in ill-health. Others who were asked to leave included Messrs Joe Sturgess, 89 and George Manley, 68.*

*Rooms in which the pensioners lived measured 9 feet by 11 feet, with sloping low ceilings. The men cooked, ate and lived in the small cramped space into which furniture and belongings were stacked. The walls were cracked and the wind whistled in, but the men said that the rooms were better than the open in the winter and were the best they could get.*

*The camp is being renovated. Nine huts from the Cotter have been placed near the mess and the three roomed cottages from the camping reserved added. The cottages are*

*being subdivided into four rooms each 10 by 11 feet, designed to accommodate one man to each room, providing a total accommodation for 21.*

*Painters are at work. When questioned, one painter declared they were not renovating but camouflaging the filth.*

*Officers of the Department of Interior stated that the alterations were designed as a temporary measure to cope with an influx of men for building projects.*

*Dr LW Nott said last night that the men had approached him in respect to their position. The conditions they had and they lived in pokey dens, badly-lit and ventilated, cold in winter and hot in summer. The problem of the pensioners was one which needed the serious consideration of every citizen of the ACT.*

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In 1947 Capital Hill Camp was "upgraded" and additional barrack accommodation provided. At this time the Hostel became home to tradesmen and others who came to Canberra to find work. For a short time married couples from war torn Europe – New Australians – were housed in the Hostel. Because many of these residents were not eligible for the electoral rolls their names for the most part are lost. Some lists of tenants etc are now with ACT Administration and a few who resided at Capital Hill Hostel in 1951 are:-

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1. Sinchenko Ukrainian       | 2. Two boarders Australian  |
| 3. S Osbust Ukrainian        | 4. I Hordijenko Ukrainian   |
| 5. S Demianchyk Ukrainian    | 6. S Kobut Ukrainian  |
| 7. Two Boarders Australians  | 8. I Fedorko Russian  |
| 9. S Kusek Ukrainian         | 10. M Hulak Ukrainian   |
| 11. Kischbak Ukrainian       | 12. S Senchuk Ukrainian   |
| 13. Magotin Russian          | 14. Boarder Australian  |
| 15. Musyka Ukrainian         | 16. M Migus Ukrainian   |
| 17. Boarder Australian       | 18. Boarder Australian  |
| 19. Zesalenko Ukrainian      | 20. J Morgan Australian   |
| 21. S Ilyk Ukrainian         | 22. Rolfe Australian  |
| 23. A Ponjetwoskyj Ukrainian | 24, M Jazysbyn Ukrainian  |
| 25. P Stefyn Ukrainian       | 26. Eastbrook Australian  |
| 27. I Sheremeta Ukrainian    | 28. B Drecovic Yugoslav (later moved to Westlake?)                                |
| 29. M Falko Ukrainian        | 30. Mrs Vigans Latvian  |
| 31. W Kostiuik Ukrainian     | 32. J Lambert Canadian  |
| 33. M Besklubi ...           | 35. Turner Australian   |
| 36. Tschumak Ukrainian       | Private S Schlarenko Ukrainian - paid one pound per week for use of conveniences. |

A letter from JN Rogers, Surveyor General dated 30 November, 1949 lists the men living at Capital Hill Mess at that time and also notes *In addition there are 17 married couples*

*(Displaced Persons) plus 17 children accommodated at the Mess. The names of the single men and their Departments are:*

C Allen Dept of Information, W Swanson Dept of Information, P Beale Parliament House,  
B Kennedy Dept of Information, J O'Keefe Jennings Construction, P Rolfe Dept of  
Information,  
M McLaughlin Dept of Information, F Turner Dept of Information, W Lovett Dept of  
Information,  
P Deeney Post-Master General's Dept, J Cotter Dept of Information, E Cotter Dept of  
Information,  
W Cotter Tile works, J Brennan Dept of the Interior, F Hallman Dept of Information,  
W Munro Dept of the Interior, W Tobin Dept of the Interior, J Quirk Jennings, F Royley  
Dept of Information, A Stewart Postmaster General's Dept, M O'Dwyer Dept of  
Information, P Roach, J Grants  
M McKeanid Dept of Information, Joe Morgan Dept of the Interior

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Another list dated 1/11/1949 List of New Australians who were accommodated at Mr  
B.... Capitol Hill Mess.

Mr & Mrs Kostiak & one child approx 2 years  
Mr & Mrs Sharenmetz & 2 children - 11 & 9 years  
Mr & Mrs Falko & 2 children - 12 & 2 years  
Mrs Vigana's & 1 child aged 2 years  
Mr & Mrs Bashluby & 1 child aged 10 years  
Mr & Mrs Mychaluk & 2 children aged 3 and one & half years  
Mr & Mrs Dyriw & 1 child aged 2 years  
Mr & Mrs Tschumak & 1 child aged 4 years  
Mr & Mrs Poniatowky  
Mr & Mrs Ilyk & 1 child aged 2 years  
Mr & Mrs Megas & 1 child aged 2 years  
Mr & Mrs Kisak & 1 child aged 2 years  
Mr & Mrs Drakevitch & 1 child aged 3 years (later moved to Westlake)  
Mr & Mrs Odzust & 2 children aged one & half & 9 months  
Mr & Mrs Julak  
Mr Jacyszyn

---

*PROPERTY & SURVEY BRANCH  
CAPITAL HILL MESS, CANBERRA  
The Surveyor General*

*The Capital Hill Mess is leased to Mr B..... on a monthly tenancy at a rental of twelve pounds per month for the purpose of board and lodging establishment. The premises comprise dining room, kitchen, shower and laundry block, cubicles and galvanised iron quarters.*

*2. Renovations and repairs to buildings. Painting of kitchen and store and the laying of linoleum in the Mess Room were completed by the Commonwealth towards the end of last year at a cost of four hundred and forty two pounds.*

*3. Several displaced persons have been provided with accommodation at the Mess and in some cases married couples with a child occupy small cubicles in which they sleep and cook their meals on small stoves. This arrangement to provide accommodation was made with the lessee by the Dept of Immigration without reference to this Department.*

*4. Under the lease the lessee is required to also:*

- a) To keep the land clean and tidy and all buildings thereon free from vermin;*
- b) To comply with the provisions of Public Health Ordinance of the ACT and other*

*law,*

*statute, ordinance regulation or by-law which requires or imposes any obligation on a keeper of a boarding house or lodging house.*

*It is mutually covenanted that if the rental shall be one month in arrears or the lessee shall fail to observe or perform any of the covenants in the lease the Commonwealth may by notice in writing determine the lease.*

*5. An inspection of the premises was made recently by an officer of this Department who observed that the grounds were in an untidy condition and the management of the Mess was generally of an unsatisfactory nature.*

*6. In his memorandum (tabbed) of 22nd March, 1949, the Director-General of Health drew attention to several acts of contravention of provisions contained in Regulations having application to board and lodgings houses in the ACT and in the memorandum dated 18<sup>th</sup> April, 1950 stated that continuance of such conditions was considered to be most undesirable and could result in unfortunate consequences. Since then there has been no great improvement in conditions from a hygienic aspect.*

*7. The Accountant advises that the present indebtedness of the lessee is as follows:- lease rent to 3rd October 1950 - forty four pounds and electricity charges to 4th August, 1950 amounting to eighty pounds seventeen shillings and eleven pence, a total of one hundred and twenty four pounds, seventeen shillings and eleven pence.*

8. *If necessary, the Department of Works and Housing can make available fifteen beds in hostels controlled by the Department for personnel now resident at the Mess. This would provide accommodation for the majority of boarders excluding displaced married couples.*

9. *After a careful review of the advantages and disadvantages associated with the continuance of the Mess as lodging and boarding house, it is recommended for approval:-*

*a) that Mr ..... be given one month's notice of termination of his lease of the Capital Hill Mess;*

*b) for the progressive removal of cubicles to other sites as the opportunity arises;*

*c) the most suitable buildings be used by the Commonwealth for storage purposes;*

*d) that action for recovery of outstanding indebtedness be taken by the Accountant of this Department.*

*A notice of termination for service on the lessee has been prepared by the Crown Solicitor and is herewith for signature.*

*F Mitchell*

*Acting Senior Clerk Clerical Section 19/10/50*

**WORKS DIRECTOR ACT  
WORKMEN'S CAMPS**

*Mr Toy has made application to the National Service Officer for six (6) bricklayers and two (2) hod carriers for his contract for eleven (11) cottages in Turner, I understand Mr Lucas has applied to the Director of Manpower, Sydney for three men. Mr Toy informed me that he was unable to find accommodation for the men.*

*2. Capitol Hill Camp is at present being renovated and prepared to accommodate approximately forty (40) men, but this will not be in readiness to receive men for sometime.*

*3. Mr Edwards, Housing Officer, informed me that the Causeway Camp is in a position to take ten (10) men to bring it up to capacity, but the question of the supply of bedding and blankets has to be considered and the position can be briefly explained as:-*

*a) Mr Lucas informed me that the Industrial Trades Awards in the ACT and NSW do not make it incumbent upon an employer to provide blankets or bedding.*

*b) If blankets and bedding were supplied to men brought to Canberra, it would be inconsistent with conditions at present operating in the ACT where men are required to camp out on distant jobs - tents and beds are the items supplied.*

*c) I understand that the Lessee of the Causeway Mess was supplied with a certain number of blankets and mattresses as part of the equipment of the lease.*

*4. As the men are coming from Sydney and as there is not any normal boarding house accommodation available, I consider that arrangements should be made to supply the Lessee of the Causeway Mess with sufficient blankets and mattresses to enable him to accommodate these men; the question of tariff would be a matter between the men and the Lessee.*

*5. It is therefore recommended that the Commiserate Section be asked to supply the necessary mattresses and bedding as soon as possible; men may arrive from Sydney at any time now.*

*6. The above recommendation will only suffice to supply the immediate needs until such time as the Capitol Hill Camp is completed; the question of operation of this camp arises and consideration might be given to the following:-*

- a) the camp should be reserved wholly for tradesmen transferred to Canberra.*
- b) the number of men to be accommodated will fluctuate especially in the beginning as the required number is being built up;*
- c) it is considered that the camp should be operated on the lines of a boarding house;*
- d) beds, bedding, mattresses, should be supplied for each man;*
- e) the tariff should not be more than 32 shillings per week;*
- f) it does not appear possible at this juncture to state period for which the camp should operate...*

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**Following is a list of Maltese Tradesmen for Canberra. Many of these men were housed at Fairbairn Camp.**

On 13 November, 1948 the Minister for Immigration agreed to a Maltese Assisted Passage Scheme to commence operation. This scheme was to commence from January, 1949 and allowed at this time only selected tradesmen to come. Wives and families could come at a later date. The Department of Works & Housing nominated 250 skilled tradesmen from Malta aged between 21-45 in the following categories:

150 carpenters, 10 bricklayers, 20 painters, 30 plumbers, 4 electrical fitters, 6 electricians, 10 engine fitters (diesel engine experts), 6 drivers (heavy plant), 14 concrete workers.



This group of tradesmen were to travel to Australia on the Asturias which also carried 172 British migrants. Works & Housing also nominated another group who arrived in Sydney in January, 1949. They included

Name	Date of Birth	Name	Date of Birth
Agius, Carmel	6.8.1927	Agius, John	11.6.1927
Azzopardi, Paul	21.1.1925	Balzan, Carmel	10.6.1921
Bunagiar, Dominic	15.4.1915	Calleja, Tarcisius	20.2.1927
Caruana, Joseph	7.11.1927	*Carter, Joseph	3.3.1912
Ciantar, Joseph	25.6.1925	Darmanin, Carmel	30.11.1926
Debatissta, Carmel	20.7.1928	Facciol, Victor	11.4.1926
Francalanza, Joseph	15.12.1924	Galea, Emanuel	23.3.1924
Gauci, Carmel	18.7.1928	Gravina, Raphael	17.9.1927
Mercieca, Joseph	16.5.1925	Portelli, Hector	23.4.1924
Pulis, Francis	26.6.1925	Zammit, Anthony	31.1.1927

\* Carter came out as an unassisted migrant. The men who were brought out as assisted migrants had to work for two years for the government.

The Forestry Section, Department of Interior also had a number of New Australians working for them. Names listed in the 1940s or early 1950s were:

Csatlos, Frank O'Grodnik, Tadensz, Gasiunas, Josep Ondrackek, Vaclar Gajewski, J Osatovic, Zivorad  
 Godbelny, F Pacholak, Marian, Gorski, Jan Pajic, Zirko Janyckyj, Oleska Pawlus, Andrzej Kendra, Mieczslaw Popexki, Wladislaw Keiszkowski, Maksymilian Proc, Michall Knezevic, Bdmir Savic, Dobrivoje Koutnik, Josef Semen, Bartolomiej Lahiczyneec, Petro Slowinski, Antol Lusic, Janos Szabo, Otto Szytk, N Speth, Janos Mokazycki, Wladislaw Mirski, Witold Wyszadko, Kelmens Zalitis, Zanis  
 Wyszadko, Edward Miltins, C Zolj, Zagn Myszkelewics, L Zuricic, Danilo.

*DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR  
 CIVIC BRANCH*

*8th September, 1948  
 MEMORANDUM  
 THE SECRETARY*

*WORKMEN'S HOSTEL, TURNER.*

*1. The Minister recently indicated that he had received some objections to a proposal for the building of a Workmen's Hostel in Turner and he asked me by his Private Secretary and I suggested that the Minister might inspect the proposed site in company with the*

*Director of Works and myself. He was unable to do this last week and has now requested that the facts of the matter be stated in a report. The following information is accordingly submitted.*

*2. The urgent necessity for additional workmen's hostels arises from the fact that steps are being taken to bring a comparatively large numbers of workmen to Canberra from overseas according to arrangements made between the Department of Works and Housing and the Department of Immigration.*

*3. For the accommodation of additional artisans and others two workmen's hostels have already been approved and are under construction, one on the slope of Mount Ainslie [Ainslie Hostel] and the other on the western side of Capital Hill [Hillside Hostel]. The Director of Works stated that two additional hostels were needed and the matter was the subject of discussion and consideration between departmental officers and the National Capital Planning & Development Committee, various sites being suggested as suitable.*

*4. The Minister for Works and Housing, who was interested in the establishment of the hostels as a result of an inspection of sites suggested by the Planning Committee on the lower slopes of Black Mountain, in Ainslie and Barton, stated that he was anxious that the building should not be provided on the outskirts of the City but should be reasonably near shops and other amenities. The Director of Works asked the planning Committee accordingly to collaborate in consideration of alternative sites and as a result the Committee accordingly to collaborate in consideration of alternative sites and as a result the Committee expressed the view that provided suitable architectural treatment were given to the buildings there would be little objection to the erection of one of the workmen's hostels on land bounded by Hutton, Kinsley, Childers and Boldrewood Streets in the Division of Turner.*

*5. In making this suggestion the Committee realized that it would not be desirable for the type of buildings proposed to remain for a long period in such locality as the lane would, sooner or later, be required for permanent development. It felt, however, that for a number of years, and pending the provisions of the scheme for permanent general hostels to accommodate both workmen and other members of the community, it would not cause any serious embarrassment to allocate the site mentioned for the immediate purpose of a workmen's hostel on a temporary basis.*

*6. The Director of Works arranged accordingly for the preparation of preliminary plans for the hostel, adopting a scheme for such compact building than had previously been designed for such hostels, and including reasonable provision for recreation and services...*

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Names of people living in Hostels recorded by Betty Forster from *The Canberra Times*.

#### Hillside Hostel

Boyko, Michael 1/10/1954, Clbrychtowicz, Dionizy 7/9/1952, Gawdunyk, Dmytro 18/1/1955,  
Mediansky, Feodor 24/8/1954, Sirk, Vladislav 1/9/1953, Wiszniewski, Stanislaw 2/11/1954

#### Other Hostels

Baranovskis, Antonia Gorman House 27/11/52, Blackburn, Valeria Lawley House 12/2/1951, Bosnich, Peter Captain's Flat, Brokman, David Barton House 4/11/1953, Buchta, Henryk Hotel Canberra 1/9/1949, Calabrese, Paola Weston 1/3/1955, Capek, Frantisek, Paola Reid House 6/1/1954,  
Covaein, Joseph George Hotel Canberra 14/5/1954, Czepul, Joseph Reid House 6/1/1955, Dabrowski, Jan Lambert Cotter Dam Hostel 29/11/1949, Gdowski, Jozef Riverside Hostel 26/8/1949, Jadwidzic, Wladyslaw Tadvusz Turner Hostel 17/10.1950, Lapiene, Vilius Capital Hill Hostel 18/5/1953, Lewis, Edward Henry Causeway Quarters 12/11/1928, Lobarzewski, Roman Capital Hill Hostel 3/10/1952,  
Markowski, Wladyslaw Tadeusz Juljusz Turner Hostel 17/10/1950, Mortello, Domencio Molonglo 16/1/1940, Naar, Lembitu Mulwala 15/2/1952, Pajewski, Mieczyslaw Capital Hill Hostel 29/3/1954,  
Pala, Stefan Capital Hill Hostel 5/6/1954, Polimeris, Chris Mulwala 15/10/1954, Pozzols, Guiseppe Dal Westlake 2/10/1937, Rakowski, Wacław Eastlake Hostel 10/1/1950, Rodis, Nicholas Capital Hill Hostel 30/10/1953, Ruff, Oskar Riverside Hostel 10/1/1950, Schuls, Inge Mulwala 28/10/1955, Soave, Anonio Zefferine White City camp 4/6/1930, Truus, Helgi Mulwala 28/10/1953, Yaxa-Ladyzynsky, Jaropolk Mulwala 8/3/1955