History tours in and around Canberra

Jill Waterhouse
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The files and publications of the Canberra and District Historical Society including the Canberra Historical Journal and the Newsletter are gratefully acknowledged and warmly recommended. In the National Library, Canberra, the McLaren Local History Collection is a good starting point for the researcher. Other useful reference works include Samuel Shumack, Tales and Legends of Canberra Pioneers, reprinted by ANU Press as a Canberra Companion in 1977, Alan Fitzgerald, Historic Canberra 1825-1945 (1977), L. Fitzhardinge, St John's Church and Canberra (1941), E. Lea-Scarlett, Queanbeyan (1968), and Gundaroo (1972), L. Wigmore, Canberra, History of Australia's National Capital (1971), and L. Gilbert, W. P. Driscoll and J. A. Sutherland, History Around Us, An Enquiry Approach to Local History (1974).
Preparing for a History Tour

A friend of mine who once went on a history tour almost fainted with boredom. ‘Who cares’, she cried to the tour leader who was busily discoursing on the merits of a four-poster bed, ‘how many pieces of wood went into making this bedstead?’

This book is offered as smelling salts for those who feel weak at the thought of having to trail behind a guide or who need convincing that Canberra and the surrounding districts have a visible past. Most of the tours described can be enjoyed without getting out of the car. But for those who want to explore old houses, churches and graveyards, who would like to understand the district’s pattern of development and who hope to make discoveries of their own, here are a few hints on preparation.

1. a) Buy the latest Canberra street map from any newsagent or garage.

    b) Obtain a Topographic Survey Map. Do not shiver at the thought! Survey maps are often much more interesting than street maps. The most important map is Canberra, Sheet 8727, Edition I, Series R 651. This may be supplemented by the adjoining maps of Yass 8628, Gunning 8728, Goulburn 8828, Braidwood 8827, Araluen 8826, and Michelago 8726. The Australian Capital Territory as a whole is shown on Natmap 1:100 000, Edition 2, 1976.

    The maps may be bought from the Australian Government Publishing Service Bookshop, 70 Alinga Street, City Centre, telephone 47 7211.

2. Taking the maps with you, go to the lookouts on Mt Ainslie, Black Mountain and Red Hill to see the general lie of the land.
3. Read the chapter of this book on identifying architectural styles then add your own examples as you travel.
4. To make a survey of a street or a scattergram of a graveyard, you will need paper with a firm backing, a pencil and rubber, a tape-measure and string, chalk for highlighting worn lettering on headstones, a crayon for taking rubbings and a camera.
5. Do not 'souvenir' items from any site. Take a rubbing or a photograph instead.
6. All the places in this book are, at the time of publication, accessible to (if not always open to) the public. Always ask permission before entering private property. Close all gates.
7. **WARNING**: Observe normal safety precautions, especially if a building, tombstone or mining shaft looks insecure. No responsibility is accepted for damage, injuries, inconvenience or untoward events arising out of the use of the information given in this book.

Only readily accessible buildings and clearly marked sites, showing more than a tree or a few rocks, have been mentioned in this book. Hundreds of other places deserve consideration, among them Duntroon Woolshed, Woden homestead, a school site and part of an old stone wall at Tuggeranong, Haig Park and the sites of the Cricketers Arms Hotel, the Causeway Hall and the Civic police stations. Some of these are on private property but the Canberra and District Historical Society and the Department of the Capital Territory may be able to help the serious researcher.

Anyone who embarks on a history tour in or around Canberra can make a worthwhile contribution to the records of the past simply by pinpointing all the places visited on a map (there is, as yet, no map of Historic Canberra) and by making notes of structures, particularly those under threat of demolition. As Walter Burley Griffin wrote, 'In the future, as sure as fate, our purposes, our strength, our insincerities, our foibles will be an open book in the remains or ruins of our buildings.'
1. What was Canberra called in the nineteenth century and when did it become known by its present name?
The first maps show the name Limestone Plains, referring to the type of rock noted by explorers. Early settlers also referred to Canburry, Canberry, Kamberra, all variations of an Aboriginal word that was simply spelt as it sounded. The earliest written use dates from 1826 when Joshua John Moore wrote to the authorities in Sydney, ‘The land which I wish to purchase is situate at Canberry . . .’ The current spelling, Canberra, appears in church records in the second half of the nineteenth century and the pronunciation, with the accent on the first syllable, was officially determined by Lady Denman at the ceremony to name the national capital on 12 March 1913.

As this book provides only a brief introduction to the district’s history, the name Canberra is used throughout.

2. What does Canberra mean?
Investigators have spilt much ink trying to give an accurate reply. Of all the interpretations ‘meeting place’ is the most widely accepted.

3. When was Canberra first discovered by white men?
It was in the winter of 1820 that a party of white explorers discovered Lake George to the north-east of Canberra. In the late spring, Charles Throsby and Joseph Wild were the first to see what is now the Australian Capital Territory. On 8 December Charles Throsby Smith
(Charles Throsby’s nephew) and James Vaughan trudged up Black Mountain to where Canberra’s television mast stands today.

In that year, 1820, Governor Lachlan Macquarie was being quizzed by Commissioner J. T. Bigge on the way he was running the thirty-two-year-old colony of New South Wales, George IV had just come to the British throne, the Americans were working out the implications of the Missouri Compromise and, to Australia’s north, China was struggling to abolish the opium trade.

But the wider world seemed far away to the explorers who were looking, not for a suitable city site, but initially for Lake George and, having found that, for the Murrumbidgee River. During the search various parties discovered many places in and around Canberra — almost everything, it began to seem, except the river which was the object of their expeditions. The honour of discovering the Murrumbidgee finally went to Charles Throsby in 1821.

4. Were there Aboriginal people in Canberra when the white settlers arrived?
James Ainslie (hence Mt Ainslie) was one of the first men to bring sheep to the district and it is said that an Aboriginal woman led him to good grazing land. She was probably one of about five hundred local natives. The main tribes in the area were the Walgalu and Ngunawal, which in turn were split into subgroups. Those who held their ceremonies where Corroboree Park is today are said to have called themselves the Kamberra people. Women and children were left in Canberra to prepare feasts for the return of young men undergoing initiation rites on Mt Tidbinbilla. There are some cave paintings at Gungenby but they are not open to the public.

5. Who were the first white landowners?
It would be satisfying to be absolutely certain as to the
identity of the first landowner near Canberra but the evidence is inconclusive. The honour probably goes to an ex-convict, Peter Cooney, who was granted land by Governor Macquarie in 1821. Although Cooney may not have taken up his farm straight away, he was well established at Gundaroo by 1825. Another ex-convict, Owen Bowen, and the Colonial Treasurer, William Balcombe, obtained land on the Molonglo Plains, west of Canberra's present site, in June and August 1824 respectively. Later that year, Lieutenant J. J. Moore's sheep and cattle were grazing on today's Acton peninsula, a definite 'first' within the modern city limits. The Campbell family, who were to become Canberra's most extensive landowners, sent a flock of sheep to the Limestone Plains in 1825. A long drought began in this year, accelerating the search for new pastures south of Sydney.

6. How did the landowners obtain their properties and what was the general settlement pattern?
There were initially three main ways of obtaining land: by taking a calculated risk, by being a deserving case in the eyes of the government and, after 1831, by bidding at auction.

The squatters were those who took a gamble by occupying land before they had legal title to it. The partners Johnston and Taylor at Tuggeranong were among those who ran into trouble when their land was granted to someone else before they had legally established their claim. Others, including J. J. Moore, were in a stronger position. He already had permission from the government to choose land. When he sent his stock to Canberra, he was fairly certain that he would be able to establish his claim by possession, and then make his purchase.

All the colony's land was Crown land, that is, owned by the government. Anxious to promote rapid settlement, the government initially gave land away or requested only a nominal rent. Responsible ex-convicts such as Peter
Cooney were often given a fresh start with a farm block. Larger tracts were granted to others in recognition of public service, including part of present day Belconnen given to the explorer Charles Sturt. The government, which did not yet have many other resources, also turned to land in compensation cases and so Richard Popham received land at Ginninderra when he lost all his possessions in the wreck of the Letitia. Landowners often supplemented their grants by buying additional pastures as their livestock increased. After 1831, sale by auction replaced grants although special arrangements equivalent to grants were made for senior military and naval officers. Because Canberra was far away from the centre of the colony’s activities many of those whose names appear in the early records, including J. J. Moore at Acton and Robert Campbell at Duntroon, were absentee landlords. The first landowner who actually lived in Canberra was a Scotsman, John MacPherson, who received a small grant at the foot of Black Mountain as a reward, so it is said, for helping to capture a bushranger.

By 1837 all the best land in the Limestone Plains and the surrounding district had been taken. But this did not mean that the occupiers lived cheek by jowl with their neighbours. Campbell’s original grant was 400 hectares around Duntroon to which was added, by grant and purchase in various parts of the Canberra region, another 3000 or so hectares. His brother-in-law, John Palmer, had 800 hectares at Jerrabomberra, Edward Weston owned 1440 hectares in the area now called after him and there were many other substantial holdings. Widely-spaced homesteads had to be as self-sufficient as possible and this helps to explain why Canberra did not develop a village centre.

In 1861 a third way of obtaining land was introduced: Robertson’s Land Act gave the ‘small man’ a greater chance. Any person could select a block (usually forty acres or about sixteen hectares) of Crown land, whether
or not it was already part of someone else's pastoral lease. Many who had come to the district as employees were now able to buy their own farms at £1 an acre, provided they paid a deposit of 5 shillings an acre and took up residence immediately. Although there were regulations to protect the rights of both the original 'squatter' and the new 'selector', friction was inevitable. There was an outbreak of fence-building with the parties fiercely delineating their holdings even if it meant cutting off other people's access to their homesteads. Speedy fence-building required considerable dedication. These were the days of hand-split post-and-rail fences; wire-fencing was not introduced until the late 1870s. Although there was a flurry of activity on Canberra's outskirts, the Land Act barely touched the present city centre because most of the land was freehold not leasehold. This is perhaps the main reason why the area around the Molonglo River did not become a medley of small farms.

The district's economic strength lay in wool, supplemented on some properties by wheat. Many landowners had a hobby or special interest such as horse or bullock breeding.

There was a major change in land ownership in the early twentieth century when the Commonwealth government resumed (regained control of) the present city area. One of the first properties to be resumed was Acton House, on the site of J. J. Moore's original settlement. Much of the property taken was subsequently leased out. The first new leaseholder was Colonel Miller of Belconnen.

7 In what ways is Canberra's history linked with that of nearby settlements?

Canberra was a slow developer considering that its site was discovered in the same year as the sites of Bungendore, Queanbeyan and Gundaroo. Unlike these settlements, Canberra did not have a village centre and
constantly looked to its neighbours, particularly Queanbeyan, for clergymen, doctors, shopkeepers, newspapers and railheads.

Land transactions and marriage strengthened the ties among the district's families. Administratively, Canberra was in the County of Murray, officially created in 1829, which embraced most of the places mentioned in this book. To see the kind of vehicles in which the early inhabitants travelled around the district, visit the stables at Lanyon.

8. **How many convicts were there in the district?**
In 1836, convicts made up half of the County of Murray's population of 1728. After transportation was abolished in 1840, the proportion fell rapidly. In the grounds of Tuggeranong property (not open to the public) there is the stump of a convict whipping block . . . or could it be an old butcher's block? The former speculation has at least some foundation because the records show that there were convicts at Tuggeranong just as there were on nearby Lanyon, where the convict gaol is open for public inspection.

9. **Were there any gold rushes?**
Yes, the district's mining history is peppered with many evocative names such as Nuggety Gully and Blackguard gully at Brooks Creek and the Amalgamated Perseverance workings at Mac's Reef but, with the exception of Captain's Flat, the yields of local mines were low. Visit the deserted gold mine at Bywong Reefs along the Federal Highway. The turn-off is on the eastern side of the road, about 6 kilometres north of the Sutton-Gundaroo intersection with the highway, and is adjacent to the gates of Phelazu. For a description, see another Canberra Companion, *Undiscovered Canberra*, by Allan Mortlock and Bernice Anderson. Many minerals have been discovered during Canberra's construction,
especially silver under the pylons of Kings Avenue bridge.

10. When did Canberra officially become the national capital of Australia?
After nine years of rivalry between Sydney and Melbourne and lengthy investigations of proposed sites, the Federal Capital Territory was transferred from New South Wales in December 1909. The Commonwealth officially assumed control of the Territory on 1 January 1911. Jervis Bay to the north of Canberra was transferred in 1915 to give the Territory access to the sea.
Rude Huts and Undressed Stone

Looking for architectural incongruities
Many old buildings contain a mystery. It may lie in a bricked-up door or in a chimney without a fireplace. These puzzles illustrate a vital point: most buildings have a history rather than a date. The common pattern is one of maintenance, extensions, modernisation, part demolition and restoration, all of which are evidence of technological improvements, changes in the building's function or in the owner's prosperity.

When exploring a building, it is a good idea to begin by walking around the outside. Look at the shape and material of the roof, the position and decoration of the chimneys, the size and placement of the windows and doors, the material and preparation of the walls, and the presence of distinctive features such as verandahs and outbuildings. Then check inside to see whether the interior features match the exterior ones. The external roof of Sally Paskins' Store at Gundaroo is made of corrugated iron but inside the older wooden shingles are still visible. The interior fittings of next-door St Mark's Anglican Church confirm its religious function but from the outside the square shape and high position of the windows lead one to suspect that originally the building was not a church but a courthouse.

Nineteenth and early twentieth century rural styles
Slab
Slab huts represent a pioneering phase of settlement rather than a particular decade because the materials and methods remained the same for generations. Three easily accessible slab buildings are the shed at Blundell's
Farm House, the Old Canberra Inn, Barton Highway, and Sally Paskins' Store, Gundaroo. They are all open to the public.

Both Australian and American pioneers built wooden houses but whereas Americans often had a good supply of straight logs Australians were forced to be more economical with timber. Australian settlers split slabs from tree trunks with hammers and iron or wooden wedges. Careful wedging could yield thirty or more slabs from a single tree.

The first thing to do with a rude hut is to peer at its foundations. Note the ground plates at the base. No, do not look for circular objects. A ground plate is simply a long, heavy log into which grooves have been cut to take the wall slabs. If the foundations are concrete or brick, this is a sign that the building has been moved from another site, as is the case with the Ginninderra School House Restaurant which comes from Gunning. Then look at the slabs themselves to see whether they were split or sawn. Most split-log houses and sheds in the Canberra district consist of vertical slabs with horizontal slabs for small extensions, as at the back of Sally Paskins' Store.

Of course draughts whistled through the cracks in the slabs. Individual owners coped with this problem by nailing wooden battens or tin strips over the gaps, or covering the walls with lath and plaster (narrow strips of wood with plaster between the spaces). The interior walls were commonly lined with newspaper, a tradition that both the Ginninderra School House Restaurant and Sally Paskins' Store have upheld.

The most common design for a slab home was a central door with a window on either side, a front verandah, an external stone or brick chimney (a necessary fire precaution in a timber dwelling) and a hipped roof. Many slab huts in the Canberra region originally had roofs of heated and pressed bark strips, but shingles were more durable than bark and just as cool. Even so shingles had
Examples of wall and roof construction

**PISÉ**
Remains of Butcher's shop, Gundaroo
rammed earth

**LATH AND PLASTER**
House, Morning Street, Gundaroo
plaster
lath
bark

**SPLIT SLABS**
Vertical slabs: Blundell’s farmhouse shed, Canberra
Vertical and horizontal: Sally Paskins’ store, Gundaroo
vertical horizontal sawn
ground plate

**CORRUGATED IRON CLADDING**
Blacksmith’s shop, Ginninderra
shingles
wall plate
tin strip sealing slabs

**RANDOM RUBBLE**
Stables (now house) Gibraltar Street, Bungendore
sometimes rendered (or covered) in cement
corrugated iron
stones not in rows

courses or rows

**COURSES STONEWORK**
1862 extension, Duntroon House, Canberra
sometimes rendered (or covered) in cement,
corrugated iron
quoin
pointing
Examples of wall and roof construction

ENGLISH BOND
House, Gibraltar Street, Bungendore
header
stretcher
short, short, short (headers)
long, long, long (stretchers)

FLEMISH BOND
Stables, Cooma Cottage, Hume Highway
header
stretcher
short, long, short, long
long, short, long, short

STRETCHER BOND
West Block Offices, Commonwealth Avenue
cavity
damp course
tie
long, long, long, long
long, long, long, long

WEATHERBOARD
Public School, Hall

HIPPED ROOF
School House Restaurant, Ginninderra
ridge
hip
often covered with bark, shingles &/or corrugated iron
(ends slope inwards)

GABLED ROOF
Canberra Church of England Girls' Grammar School, Deakin
gable
ridge
dormer window
valley
(ends are vertical)
a great disadvantage: they expanded and contracted with the weather and leaked. Sheet iron was popular but from the 1850s onwards corrugated galvanised iron, imported in large quantities from England, was generally preferred. Iron improved the waterproofing but made the homes hot and so it was customary to leave the shingles underneath for insulation.

Stone
The idea of stone being dressed or undressed may strike some readers as being distinctly odd. To add that stone is sometimes combed may well confirm that impression.

St John the Baptist's in Reid is, as befits a church, made of dressed stone, that is, quarried stone which has been shaped. The sandstone surrounding the windows has been 'combed' or smoothed. All these dressed stones lie in rows or 'courses'. Undressed stones are much rougher and are often fitted together like a jigsaw instead of lying in neat rows. Some stone walls, such as those of St John's Schoolhouse, have been covered with whitewash or stucco (plaster or cement) and one has to examine this 'rendering' closely to see what lies beneath.

Brick
Australia is geologically an ancient continent and the rocks have been broken down again and again. Tourists often laugh at the pride Australians take in their highest mountain, Kosciusko, which is a mere pimple compared with the less eroded Asian, European or American peaks. The ageing process tends to reduce the plasticity of clay and so when the early Australian settlers tried their hand at brickmaking they sometimes experienced more difficulty than did their European counterparts. Even so, assessing the quality of clay and brickmaking seems to have been a common skill among the pioneers.

The chimney of an outbuilding at Rose Cottage, Monaro Highway, is constructed of yellow hand-made
bricks. Sometimes bricks like these are described as adobe or sun-dried. Sun-dried brick crumbles easily and so, contrary to the popular view, adobe is comparatively rare. Even in isolated areas large buildings were probably made from kiln-fired rather than from sun-dried brick. But in the case of this small chimney, the clay may well have been placed in a mould resembling a bottomless seed tray, scraped smooth, removed from the mould and left to dry for about a month. At Rose Cottage, the bricks have been protected by cement rendering.

Other more ambitious brick structures include the stables at Cooma Cottage, Yass. When looking at brickwork, try to determine whether the bricks have been laid in English or Flemish bond. In English bond, courses (rows) of stretchers (bricks placed side-on) are laid in alternate courses with headers (bricks placed end-on). English bond 'reads': first row, long, long, long . . . ; second row, short, short, short . . . In Flemish bond the stretchers and headers are laid alternately in each course, and so a row of Flemish bond bricks 'reads': long, short, long, short . . .

**Pisé**

A pisé house is one with walls of rammed earth. This type of masonry was given its name by the French who in turn learnt the technique from the ancient Romans. Pisé blocks are made from earth, containing some gravel, which has been pressed into a large mould with a hardwood pisoir or rammer. It was claimed that a three-metre wall could easily be made in a day. It is difficult to know exactly how many settlers wielded pisoirs in the Canberra district because pisé houses quickly collapse once they lose their roofs. Even so, there are substantial pisé ruins at Hall, Bywong and Gundaroo.
Weatherboard
Weatherboard buildings with gabled iron roofs are common throughout the district. Hall Public School, opened in 1911, is one of many schools built in this style and similar weatherboard buildings are still being constructed in the 1980s. There are two main ways of determining if a weatherboard building belongs to the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries or is more recent. First, look at the heating arrangements: an external brick or stone chimney may help to establish the age of the structure. Second, examine the boards. In general, the more snug the overlap, the newer the building. Then measure the boards. Older timber tends to vary in width from 15 to 23 centimetres whereas more recent boards are usually narrower.

Colonial or Georgian
The Colonial or Georgian style, characterised by a hipped roof, balanced chimneys, a symmetrical facade around a central doorway and a verandah on three sides of the house is often thought to be typically Australian. It is certainly well adapted to the climate but whether Australians can claim all the credit is another matter. Houses in other British colonies also display similar features. Visit Duntroon House and Lanyon homestead, both begun in the first half of the nineteenth century. The earliest sections have attractive window shutters and verandah floors but otherwise the ornamentation is simple.

Gothic Revival Romantic style
Edged with carved bargeboards, the gabled roofs of the Gothic Revival Romantic are pitched too steeply for any bird to gain a claw-hold. The temptation to place a finial or an ornamental spike on the apex of a gable appears to have been irresistible, not only on churches, such as
Wattle Park, Hall, but also on sheds at Tharwa. The two-storied extension to Duntroon House is a fine example of the style.

Early Victorian, about 1850 to 1860
If an old house has a verandah there is one quick and reasonably accurate way to tell whether it was built before or after 1850. Look at the shape of the verandah roof. If it curves under it was probably built after 1850. As a rule of thumb, think of noses! Pre-1850 houses often have turned-up noses; post-1850 houses often have slightly hooked ‘bull’ noses. Straight noses were always common. But that was the problem, they were too common and the fashionable preferred to turn their noses up or down. In the Victorian age curves and asymmetry enjoyed a hey-day as the tops of verandah pillars were turned and drawing rooms jutted out in front. Sheet or cast-iron and weatherboard became increasingly popular.

Mid- and late Victorian, about 1860 to 1900
Decorative cast-iron sometimes called iron ‘lace’, first imported from England in the 1840s, was a great success in Australia and even reached as small a settlement as Bungendore.

Cast-iron panels, with their profusion of flowers and scrolls, were decorative, both in themselves and in the shadows they cast, durable, and easily attached to verandahs. Almost as important, especially to home-owners who had moved beyond the log-splitting phase of pioneering, cast-iron could be bought from a factory. The use of cast-iron was not limited by location or social class and it appeared on rural homesteads as well as town pubs.

Cast-iron was probably the period’s most popular decoration, but bow windows and decorated chimneys were also coveted. The 1891 extensions to Yarralumla,
Architectural Styles

TWO COMMON NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY RURAL STYLES (a & b)

(a) Sally Paskins’ Store, Gundaroo (slab construction, external fireplace, hip roof)

(b) Public School, Tharwa (weatherboard, gabled roof)

COLONIAL OR EARLY GEORGIAN c. 1820 to 1840
Lanyon (straight, sloping verandah roof, plain verandah posts)

GOTHIC ROMANTIC REVIVAL c. 1840 to 1870
Wattle Park Church-Hall (decorative bargeboards and finials, asymmetrical plan)

MID TO LATE VICTORIAN c. 1860 to 1900
Caledonia Store, Gundaroo (bull-nosed verandah roof, decorative urns)

TWENTIETH CENTURY (a & b)

(a) Melbourne Buildings, Civic (1920s Spanish Mission style)

(b) Australian Institute of Anatomy, Canberra (1930s geometric decoration)
now Government House, show what was involved. A three-storied wing was surmounted by tall chimneys with elegant brick-work tops, and a decorative iron railing ran along the ridge of the roof.

Although some semi-detached buildings were erected in the Canberra district and the remains of terraces exist in Queanbeyan, terraced housing on the scale of inner Sydney and Melbourne was unknown.

**Early twentieth-century styles**

One or two architectural styles popular in urban Australia virtually by-passed the Canberra district. There was little demand for the turn-of-the-century Queen Anne style, with its flurry of turrets and chimneys. Melbourne and Sydney's Art Nouveau craze was more or less whittled away to coloured window glass, leaded into stylised floral shapes by the time it reached this rural region.

Later in the century, when the planners of the national capital were looking for new ideas, they went farther afield than the Old Country. They drew much of their inspiration from America, where comparisons between climate and society were easily made with Australia.

The winner of the 1911-12 design competition for the national capital was a Chicago architect, Walter Burley Griffin. Using triangles and circles instead of straight intersecting lines, he broke with the traditions of gridiron town planning. Although Griffin did not determine the design of Canberra's buildings, styles popular in America exerted a strong influence. The general idea of colonnades, arches and tiles for Civic Centre came from the Spanish white-washed, terracotta-roofed mission buildings in California and Mexico as well as from the designs of nineteenth-century shopping arcades. Other major public buildings of the 1920s, particularly the Hotel Canberra, show the Californian bungalow style's emphasis on 'close-to-the-landscape' design.
The first houses for public servants in the national capital were single-storied weatherboards. The bungalow remained the standard design but later brick, with or without stucco, became the most popular building material. Some buildings looked back to specific historical periods. Tudor England enjoyed a revival in learning and this idea lay behind the design of a mock-Tudor day and boarding girls' school, Canberra Church of England Girls' Grammar School, in Melbourne Avenue begun in 1927.

The 1930s taste for decorating buildings with geometric designs and for flat roofs and vertical windows is clearly expressed in both the City Education Centre (formerly Canberra High School) and the Australian Institute of Anatomy.
Exploring Cemeteries

A wife most kind, a mother dear
A faithful friend lies buried here,
My days are past, my glass is run,
Oh! Husband dear, prepare to come.

This epitaph with its curious mixture of the sentiments of the bereaved and the departed is on the headstone of Maria Follet(t) who died in 1882 in a fit of temporary insanity. She was buried at St Thomas' Church, Carwoola, on the Captain's Flat Road. It seems that her husband, William, was unable to hasten; indeed he remarried in 1886 and it was not until 1902 that he joined Maria in the family burial plot.

Carwoola is only one of many readily accessible graveyards in and around Canberra. Others include those at St John the Baptist's at Reid, Weetangera, Cuppacumbalong, Murrumbateman, Bungendore, Upper Gundaroo, Gundaroo, Queanbeyan, Hoskinstown and Captain's Flat.

The casual visitor to a cemetery might find it rewarding to make a scattergram. Using a grid showing age at death (perhaps in ten-year spans) across the top, and date of death (again in ten-year spans) at the side, represent every grave by a dot marked in the appropriate square. The resulting pattern may raise interesting questions both about the district's history and the value of cemeteries as historical sources. A Bungendore scattergram, for example, pointed to the longevity (70+) of many local inhabitants and to clusters of deaths of children under nine (from diphtheria and typhoid?), particularly before a sanitation system was
introduced into the town at the beginning of the first world war. In a more detailed research, impressions from scattergrams must be compared with information in birth, marriage, death and burial registers because cemeteries rarely provide a complete record. On the other hand, some local registers are missing or incomplete and so even a crumbling headstone might provide the most comprehensive information available.

Inscriptions often reveal the pioneers’ countries of origin, the years in which illness swept through certain districts, and general information on infant mortality and life expectancy. They may also draw attention to the tragic deaths which are an integral part of historical anecdotes.

Headstones outside St John’s crypt showing two styles of nineteenth-century decoration, a draped urn, the traditional receptacle for the ashes of the dead, and the descending dove, representing the Holy Spirit
Try to determine the strength of certain religious denominations within a particular district. If the graves do not lie in clearly defined areas, the style of headstone may provide a clue to religious affiliation. Roman Catholic headstones, for example, are often the most elaborate and are also more likely to contain a reference to Jesus and the letters RIP (Requiescat in pace: May he, or she, rest in peace).

Headstones and surrounding railings often echo the simplicity or complexity of the designs popular in the houses of the period. The late-Victorian love of decoration, for example, is evident in the railings around the graves in the Weetangera cemetery, dedicated in 1873. Although cemeteries are a sensitive indicator of the district's culture, the record they present is usually incomplete. Some locals were buried in private plots near their homesteads or elsewhere in Australia. Sometimes there was more than one local cemetery, as in the case of the Bungendore and Carwoola graveyards which serve the same district. Not all graves were marked by headstones and many of those which were have long since decayed. Worn inscriptions can sometimes be read more easily if chalk is gently rubbed over the stone's surface but this must be done with great care in case the headstone topples and puts the investigator dangerously close to his subject.

Some people may wish to begin all their history tours with visits to burial grounds. At the very least, trips to a number of cemeteries help the explorer to appreciate the length of white settlement in the area and also give a sense of geographical direction in an unknown district because Christian graves face east, to catch the rising sun.
Duntroon

(Entrances on Morshead Drive and Fairbairn Avenue. The College grounds are open to the public except on Christmas Day and Good Friday. Conducted tours start from the parade ground entrance by the Officers’ Mess at 2.30 pm Mondays to Fridays, except during November to March and public holidays.)

Duntroon is a fine illustration of the saying, ‘It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good’, because its origins lie in a ship wreck. During a famine in the infant colony, the government commandeered a vessel belonging to a prominent Sydney merchant, Robert Campbell, to sail to Calcutta for food supplies. The ship was lost before it could bring relief but in part compensation the government offered Campbell a slice of the colony’s most plentiful commodity, land. Campbell took up his grant which included Mt Ainslie and present-day Reid in 1825 and about eight years later built a homestead in an area know by its Aboriginal name, Pialligo.

The house remained in the Campbell family for seventy years, before being taken over by the Royal Military College in the early twentieth century. It is now the Officers’ Mess, Plant Road, and usually only the grounds are open to the public. Even so, it is worth visiting because the Campbell family appears so often in Canberra’s history and because the house’s distinctive architectural features can be clearly seen from the road.

First of all, look at the walls. Convict and ex-convict masons made the three-week trek from Sydney to hew local rock for the building. Substantial walls were the best protection against weather, fire and attack. When
finished they measured 91 centimetres, as thick as a man's arm is long.

As soon as the house was completed, it was a welcome sight for travellers, as the Polish naturalist John Lhotsky found in the summer of 1834. Lhotsky, who was on his way to the Snowy Mountains, trekked over the Limestone Plains in the parching heat taking occasional aerial 'baths' which meant no more than removing his shirt. He washed off the dust with arsenic soap and sipped a concoction of sulphuric acid and sugar which he claimed was essential to keep his blood from boiling. In view of Lhotsky's discomfort it is no wonder that Campbell's house appeared a clean, romantic haven, overhung with vines, and with the last windows he was to find south of Sydney. One can only hope that as a naturalist, his enthusiasm was not dampened by the spiders, reputed to be as large as a child's fist, which fell on his face at night.

The house, probably known at first as Limestone Cottage, was renamed Duntroon in the 1840s after Duntrune Castle, the Campbell's ancestral home at Loch Creran, Argyllshire, Scotland. Links with Scotland were strong. The local administrative district was known as the County of Argyle before it became the County of Murray. Moreover Robert Campbell, who preferred to hire free labourers rather than convicts, recruited shepherds in Scotland and transported them to Sydney in his company's ships. As late as the 1860s it was said that it was possible for Canberra children to reach their teens without being able to speak any other language but Gaelic.

Robert Campbell, like so many others in the district, was an absentee landlord even though, as it happened, he died in the grounds of Duntroon in 1846. His third son, Charles, managed the property until his father's death, when it passed to the fourth son, George, who took up residence in 1854.
The ground floor plan of the original house helps to conjure up a picture of domestic life at Duntroon in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The original Duntroon House, c.1833-61

The great oak, or ‘Fred’s tree’, which dominates the north-eastern section of the garden, was planted in 1861 to commemorate the birth of Frederick Arthur, George’s second son. George was known as the Squire of Duntroon and his style of living was reflected in the extensions his wife helped design for the house in 1862. The new wing was built in the latest Gothic Revival Romantic style. The care taken with sandstone window surrounds and carved
Victorian extensions to Duntroon House, showing the icing of bargeboards and finials
bargeboards speaks of increased affluence. In addition to bedrooms, nurseries, a breakfast room, a morning room, a servant’s hall and a cellar, the two stories contained hallmarks of a gentleman: a study and a library. Stables, lodges and a greenhouse completed the country seat.

Further modifications were made in 1876, all of them indicative of increasing social refinement. The greenhouse, for example, became a conservatory with a conical glass roof. This circular area is now screened by lattice work.

For a first-hand experience of the garden’s delights, explore the maze near Robert Campbell Road. Based on the Hampton Court maze, it had been planted by 1870. Allan Mortlock and Bernice Anderson’s book Undiscovered Canberra holds the key to the puzzle.

Although Duntroon became a centre for dances and parties, there was tragedy as well as pleasure. In 1885 Sophia Campbell and her friends went to see a female performer and tried to copy some of the tricks in Sophia’s bedroom. Gales of laughter were followed by piercing screams when Sophia put her feet behind her head. She died within hours and the memorials to her in St John’s Church indicate the depth of her family’s shock. Samuel Shumack, who recorded the incident in his autobiography, was more cynical, saying that had she led a more active life she would not have injured herself so badly.

During the nineteenth century the family increased their holdings with land in every direction: along the Cooma Road and at Woden, Narrabundah, Majura, and Belconnen, and a cousin owned Yarralumla station.

After Mrs George Campbell’s death in 1903, the house remained vacant until Lord Kitchener of pointing finger and your-country-needs-you fame recommended the establishment of the Royal Military College. The Commonwealth government acquired the lease of the estate in 1910, when William Throsby Bridges became
the first commandant. He was related to Dr Charles Throsby and so for all the change in Duntroon's function, there was also a sense of continuity with Canberra's past.

**Duntroon Dairy**  
*(Reached by track off the hill side of Morshead Drive near Lavarack Road.)*

Duntroon Dairy, built on the lower slopes of Mount Pleasant in the 1830s, was set well into the hillside to keep cool. The only people who could ever have been warm inside were those churning the cream to make butter. When St John's Schoolhouse was gutted by fire in 1864 the Dairy became a temporary classroom and no doubt the children found the internal tank (perhaps for storing water?) a source of great fascination. The Dairy is now an archaeological site and the exterior has been restored, though to be authentic, the roof eaves on the front should reach the ground, keeping the dairy even cooler.

**St John the Baptist and the Leaning Spire**  
*(Corner of Constitution Avenue and Anzac Parade, Reid.)*

The Anglican church of St John the Baptist was named after the man who preached in the wilderness. This allusion was appropriate in the 1840s when the church, the first on the Limestone Plains, stood alone at the foot of Mt Ainslie.

Robert Campbell donated land for the church and Bishop Broughton, the first and only bishop of the whole of Australia, helped to select the site. The original choice was near Duntroon but later it was decided that a site to the north of the homestead was more accessible to the whole district.

The newspaper accounts of the laying of the foundation stone on 11 May 1841 and the consecration on 12 March 1845 clearly reflect the British heritage and terminology of the early settlers. The locals were referred
to as 'gentry, farmers and peasantry', the similarity of St John's to 'an old English Village Church' was noted with pride, and hope was expressed that the 'native blacks' and 'any benighted people of whatever caste and colour may be shown the glorious light of the Gospel'.

To appreciate the size of the original church, go inside, walk down the aisle and near the pulpit on the south (right-hand side wall facing the altar) note the brass plaque which marks the original eastern end. The extension of the nave and the chancel, where the altar now stands, was added about thirty years after the original building. The stones for the extension were said to be those left over after the renovation of Duntroon House. It is not surprising that the Campbell family is prominent among the pioneer families commemorated. The Australian-made stained-glass window above the altar is one of the earliest of its kind and bears the Campbell family crest and motto *Agite pro viribus* — Work with all your might.

The tragedies as well as the triumphs of the pioneers are recorded in the wall plaques. One early tablet high on the nave's north side (left-hand side facing altar) pays tribute to the life of Catherine, wife of Charles Campbell. She died in 1863, aged forty-eight, 'after a lingering illness brought on by the death of her eldest son, a scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge'. The sad story was that at Duntroon her eldest son Walter, while playing with a bow and arrow, killed a boy named McIntyre. The Campbells were so devastated by this misfortune that they left Duntroon for England, where Walter went on to Cambridge. During bumps on the river, Walter was struck by another boat and died at the age of twenty-two. A window in Trinity College Chapel is consecrated to his memory.

Also on the north side is a plaque to Major-General Sir William Throsby Bridges, who died as a result of wounds received at Gallipoli and is buried on Mount Pleasant, in
an area open to the public reached by General Bridges Drive.

The font stands on the south side of the nave. The wooden cross pieces in the centre are from the altar rail of the church where Horatio Nelson’s father was vicar at the time of his son’s birth.

Walking out of the church, look up at the military banners hanging from the gallery and at the memorial to Herbert Vere Evatt, who was elected President of the United Nations General Assembly in 1947.

The steep stairs in the porch lead to the gallery and from here, observe the adze marks on the original cedar hammer-beam roof.

Outside the church, note the original section, constructed of blue-grey volcanic stone quarried in the present day suburb of Campbell. The buttresses, windows and door mouldings are of Black Mountain sandstone.

The spire has its own story. The original church had a square sandstone tower. But the foundations subsided, it listed badly, was struck by lightning and was finally demolished in 1864. The following year, Bishop Mesac Thomas, first bishop of Goulburn, optimistically laid the foundation stone for a replacement but this project was to take fourteen years to complete.

The architect of the new tower and spire was Edmund Blackett, an Englishman who migrated to Australia to escape parental disapproval of his marriage. He designed many major buildings, including the Great Hall at Sydney University and Goulburn Cathedral. But there were times when the building to which he did aspire, as one might say, encountered difficulties. He had trouble with spires and towers in Maitland and Geelong and the work at Canberra was a protracted business. When it rained and the land became boggy, the stones rolled off the drays. The situation was even worse in a drought, when there were no teams at all to haul the drays. The builder, one Mr James Burton (said by some to be called
Henry), had a good reputation in his trade, but in other respects, his standing in the community was less than sound and in the middle of the delays another builder was asked to complete the task. Samuel Shumack reports the rumour that Burton’s real name was Hodge and that he had a wife and family in England as well as a wife and children in Canberra. Burton’s Canberra family left him, he was ignored by his neighbours, and later his tools were found to have the letter ‘H’ stamped on them. There were sufficient grounds for the rumour for the story to be repeated at the inquest and subsequently in the *Queanbeyan Age*.

The present spire was completed in 1878. Because of a shortage of timber, the ribs were about four metres short of the stipulated height and when they were pulled together, the spire was asymmetrical. A sailor climbed up to put on a tin cap and in 1921 a finial was added to aid the eye, but the spire still has a definite tilt.

The Churchyard

The graveyard at St John the Baptist’s is distinctive in Canberra because it is the only one close to a church. It was also the first to be consecrated and pioneers from all denominations are buried here.

One of the most interesting graves is in the crypt which can be reached by stone steps at the eastern end. Here lie the remains of the first rector, George Edward Gregory, who drowned in the Molonglo in the winter of 1851. He had been visiting parishioners on the other side of the river from his rectory. Much to his friends’ surprise, he told them that he intended to swim the flooded river, an enterprise which frightened even his horse. But Gregory, a healthy twenty-five-year-old and a champion swimmer, would not be dissuaded. He was also anxious to return to the rectory because he was studying for his ordination examination and was soon to be married to the sister-in-law of the Reverend Edward Smith, Rector of
Queanbeyan, who had laid St John's foundation stone. Indeed, his fiancée’s furniture was already at the rectory. As he plunged into the river, a friend ran alongside holding out a coat but to no avail. Gregory was swept away by the current and sank. His grave originally lay outside the church but was covered by the extension of the chancel.

Also in the crypt, there are the remains of a Campbell baby and of Bishop Radford, the fourth Bishop of Goulburn, who hoped to be reinterred in the Anglican cathedral for which he worked so hard. The site for the cathedral is marked by a cross near St Mark’s library but the cathedral itself has not been built. Ernest Henry Burgmann, the first Australian-born Bishop of the Diocese, who died in 1967, also lies in the crypt.

The oldest marked grave is the vault erected in 1845 of the Guise family of Bywong. The inscription on Sarah and George Webb’s headstone nearby is often referred to by local historians as ‘prophetic’: ‘For here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come’. The Webbs once owned the property Tidbinbilla, now the name given to a nature reserve. Sarah Webb’s funeral procession contained some of the most dramatic elements of Victorian mourning. Her mother, who had arrived too late to see Sarah alive, insisted on having the coffin opened so she could cut a lock of her daughter’s hair.

St John’s Schoolhouse
(Open on Wednesdays 10 am to 12 noon; Saturdays and Sundays 2 to 4 pm; public holidays 10 am to 4 pm.)
This was inner Canberra’s first school from the early 1840s to the 1880s when it was replaced by one at Springbank, now the name of an island in the lake. St John’s Schoolhouse is a museum of local church and school history and contains many photographs and artefacts of early Canberra.
Blundell’s Farmhouse
(Wendouree Drive, Parkes. Open 2 pm to 4 pm daily, also Wednesdays from 10 am to noon; admission free.)

Blundell’s Farmhouse stands as a record of the Campbell family’s efforts to make life more comfortable and secure for their employees. The first occupants, William and Mary Ginn, had emigrated from Hertfordshire and in 1857 William became the head ploughman at Duntroon. Ginn’s popularity with the Campbells made other workmen jealous and one of them knocked out four of Ginn’s teeth and splintered his jaw with a frying-pan handle. In spite of these early difficulties, Ginn continued to work for the Campbells for the next ten or so years.

It is not recorded whether Ginn missed the green fields of Hertfordshire as he ploughed the dry limestone plains, but his new life certainly had one great advantage. Like all the Campbell family’s leading workmen he was given a well-built house and, in this case, the right to work eighty hectares of the surrounding land.

The stone cottage, located within five minutes walk of St John’s, was completed about 1860. The original section, which housed William and Mary and their four children, consisted of the four front rooms. The Ginns were squeezed for space but less so than their successors, George and Flora Blundell, who had eight children and were forced to build extensions: first the shed and later the short passage and two other rooms. Unlike William Ginn, George Blundell was born locally. George worked for the Campbells as a bullock driver and Flora became the district’s midwife. The Blundells and their descendants lived in the house for fifty years, an occupancy which justified giving the cottage their name.

In 1932 the Blundells made way for Harry and Alice Matilda Oldfield. Mrs Oldfield lived at the cottage until her death in 1958, only a few years before Lake Burley Griffin covered the Molonglo River’s lucerne pastures. By
the 1960s Blundell's was the sole survivor of similar cottages on the Campbell's Duntroon property and has been carefully preserved in spite of all the changes within the 'parliamentary triangle'.

The farmhouse is maintained by the Canberra and District Historical Society which has produced an excellent illustrated guide. Very few of the items on display at Blundell's were used here, and it is certainly better furnished than it was in the days of the Ginns, but most of the objects come from homes in the surrounding district. The walls are of sandstone and porphyry, the same locally quarried rock used in St John's. The slab shed, once divided into the kitchen and boys' bedroom, has clay packing and tin strips between the slabs in an effort to keep out the draughts. Tools for making shingles are kept inside the shed. From the old Duntroon Dairy there is a large iron cauldron used for scalding pigs and from Hall, George Kinlyside's rabbit poisoning cart.

Inside the house, perhaps the one item which evokes the clearest picture of the past is the hip bath from the Brindabellas. A bath like this was used by the Blundells, who carried water up from the Molonglo River on sleds. On cold winter evenings when the eight children waited their turn for the bath, one can only hope that the kitchen fire was burning brightly.

**Government House, Yarralumla**

*Lady Denman Drive look-out, Yarralumla. Government House and grounds are not open to the public. Lady Denman Drive look-out is on the site of Taylor's hut (hence Mt Taylor) and from here there is a good view of Government House."

Yarralumla property was one of the first in the district. Its nucleus dates from 1828 and the old spelling, Yarrowlumla, which appears in Robert Dixon's survey map of 1829 is still maintained in the name of the shire. Yarralumla's colourful owners included Francis Mowatt,
a Sydney civil servant who conducted kangaroo hunts complete with fox hounds. Unlike Mowatt, Terence Aubrey Murray who purchased the land with Thomas Walker in 1837, was a resident landlord. The district's first member of parliament, T.A. Murray, was knighted after a distinguished career and was the father of two famous sons, Sir Hubert Murray, Lieutenant-Governor of Papua from 1908 to 1940 and Gilbert Murray, OM, Regis Professor of Greek at Oxford and an active participant in the League of Nations.

The property was sold to T. A. Murray's brother-in-law, Augustus Gibbes in 1845 and thirty-six years later passed into the ownership of Frederick Campbell, who made Yarralumla into a model station. The three-storied homestead built in 1891 was certainly one of the grandest in the district. Acquired by the Commonwealth in 1911, the homestead was used for the first Cabinet meeting in the Territory on 30 January 1924. The house was subsequently remodelled as the vice-regal residence, Lord Stonehaven becoming the first occupant of Yarralumla in its new role.

The shearing shed on the opposite side of the road from the look-out, dates from the beginning of the twentieth century. It contained twenty stands and up to five thousand sheep at a time bleatingly waited to have the wool pulled over their eyes.

**Rosebud Apiary (Hill View)**

*(Skinner Street, Cook — private property.)*

A slab hut in the middle of suburban development tells the story of Canberra's encroachment on rural areas. The hut has stood on two sites, first at Ginninderra and then at Weetangera. Dating from the mid-1860s, it was originally owned by Mark Southwell who leased it to George Harcourt, proprietor of the Ginninderra store. Harcourt was then in a position to help three local girls who were looking for a job and a place in which to work
Rosebud Apiary (Hill View) — a slab hut in the middle of a modern Canberra Street as seamstresses. He offered them the cottage and they set up business as the first clothing ‘factory’ in the district. They earned 4d. for each shirt made but unfortunately they were undercut by Anthony Hordern of Sydney and closed after about a year.

By 1879, Mark Southwell had been bought out by Richard Shumack under the provisions of the Robertson Land Act and, in that year, the Shumacks swept through their purchase with a new broom. They dismantled the house and re-erected it as the Rosebud Apiary on its present site.

Although the cottage was a simple structure, occupants took pride in its upkeep and the walls were lime-washed each year in time for Christmas. On one occasion the Apiary was severely threatened when flames destroyed the furniture and the hessian ceiling, but fortunately the hardwood slabs survived.
Honey and apples were kept in a nearby shed and it was from the bee hives in the orchard that the cottage derived its name. In the meat house smoked hams were strung from the ceiling and families made cream and butter from dishes of scalded milk.

The occupants on the present site have included members of the Shumack family, James Bell and Donald Tully. Donald Tully used the cottage for shearers' quarters but in the 1970s he relinquished a large area of excellent pasture to make way for the Belconnen suburban development.

Capital Hill

*(Summit Road leads off State Circle between Brisbane and Canberra Avenues.)*

One of the missing artefacts of Canberra's history is the inscribed gold card case containing the name given to the national capital. The Governor-General's wife, Lady Denman, had it on Capital Hill on 12 March 1913 when she named the city Canberra, and not Marsupiala, Eucalypta or Kookemuroo as others suggested. Perhaps it was not a card case but a cigarette case because Lady Denman enjoyed smoking (in private, of course). But where is it now?

Will the Commencement Column ever be finished? Once the Prime Minister Andrew Fisher, the Minister of State for Home Affairs King O'Malley and others had tapped it with their trowels, it was barely touched again, although it was supposed to be eight metres high. And will the original name People's Park ever be restored?

Only the concrete plan room at the bottom of the hill, opposite the South African Embassy is original and complete. Canberra's early surveyors kept their valuable maps here, not that the Hill had always been regarded as the safest place in Canberra as the landowner William Klensendorlffe could have testified when he was bailed up by the convict-turned-bushranger, William Westwood.
In 1920 the Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII who was to abdicate and marry Mrs Simpson) was attended by great ceremony on the Hill to lay the foundation stone of the Capitol, a building for celebrating Australian achievements. The Prince quipped that Canberra consisted chiefly of foundation stones and he was partly right. His stone has long since been removed to the War Memorial basement and the Parliament House now planned instead of the Capitol for the spot, may not be completed until 1988. This seems poor reward for a hard day. The Prince shook hands with hundreds of schoolchildren, until, withdrawing his aching fingers, he offered his left hand instead of his right. 'The other hand, please', said a small boy.

Mt Stromlo Observatory
*(Cotter Road and Stromlo turn-off through pine forest. Visitors’ Centre open from 9.30 am daily; admission free.)*

The site for the observatory, selected in 1910, was one of the first areas in the Territory to be designated for a specific purpose, and by the following year a dome was ready to receive a twenty-five centimetre refracting telescope. The observatory's first director, Dr W. G. Duffield, is buried on Mt Stromlo.

Australian National University Staff Centre
*(Balmain Crescent, Acton.)*

Early Canberra was a town of one-storied dwellings and so any two-storied house was sure to denote the high public position of its occupant. The office of the Commonwealth Architect John Smith Murdoch designed the impressive home now used as the ANU Staff Centre in 1912 as the official residence for the Administrator of the Federal Capital Territory.
The timing of the construction was partly the result of an icy relationship between the autocratic Secretary of the Department of Home Affairs, Colonel H. C. Miller, and the flamboyant new Minister of Home Affairs, King O'Malley. O'Malley strongly disliked the use of military rank in civil affairs and, to embarrass men such as Colonel Miller, O'Malley invariably addressed the messenger as ‘Brigadier General’. O'Malley and Miller could not agree on departmental matters and so it was arranged that Colonel Miller be transferred to the position of ‘Administrator of the Federal Capital Territory’ and that a suitable residence for him should be built in Canberra. O'Malley now had more freedom in Home Affairs and Miller enjoyed his Administrator’s status which carried the right to be called ‘Your Excellency’.

At first the building housed visiting senior public servants. The caretakers were an eccentric cockney couple, Mr and Mrs James Phillips, both of whom could have stepped out of a Dickens novel. Jimmie was extremely short-sighted and his wife suffered a mental disturbance for which she sought treatment outside Canberra. Jimmie recounted the story that when they presented themselves at the mental institution, the receptionist, after close scrutiny of the quaint pair, inquired which one was to stay.

One of the best known permanent occupants of ‘Canberra House’ or ‘The Residence’, was Sir John Butters who was appointed Chief Commissioner of the Federal Capital Commission in 1924. Later, it became the home of the British High Commissioner, the Commonwealth Club and, since 1965, the University Staff Centre. Despite extensions and modernisations, members can still enjoy the wood-panelled walls and an open fire in one of the original reception rooms.
Bachelors’ Quarters
(Balmain Crescent, Acton.)
The wooden buildings erected on the Acton Peninsula in 1912 were known by the 1920s as the Bachelors’ Quarters where men lived during Canberra’s construction period. Later the buildings became the Acton Guest House and subsequently part of the University.

The Power House, Kingston
(Wentworth Avenue, Kingston.)
It is perhaps strange to admit a sentimental attachment to a power house, but it was one of the first permanent buildings constructed in the centre of the national capital and it is a reminder that the city developed in the electricity age. The steel-framed concrete structure has close links with World War I. In August 1914, two German merchant ships, the Apolda and the Hamm, heavily laden with cement, were in Australian waters. They were promptly seized as prizes of war and the cement was used for the power house and the Cotter Dam.

Coal for the electricity came from Newcastle and Berrima. Once the coal had been unloaded from the railway, it was treated with an array of equipment, the very names of which seem to generate activity. There were Bellis and Morcom high-speed enclosed reciprocating engines and Babcock and Wilcox boilers with super-heaters and mechanical stokers. On Sundays, the power house knew quieter activities when Roman Catholics celebrated Mass there.

The power house supplied ice blocks wrapped in sawdust and wheat bags, and delivered to homes and the Bachelors’ Quarters by horse and dray.

Although the ACT Electricity Authority still operates from the site, the power house itself ceased operation in the winter of 1957 and many of its interior fittings have been sold.
The Commonwealth Brickworks
(Denman Street, Yarralumla.)
The transformation of the old brickworks to a major leisure and museum centre began at Yarralumla in the mid-1970s. The production of the characteristic orange-red Canberra bricks bearing the stamp 'Canberra Commonwealth' started in 1914, closed during the war years, and resumed in 1921. Those with a love of peripheral information might like to know that the 1927 Parliament House absorbed 4,000,000 bricks and the Hotel Kurrajong 544,000. The arches of the kilns make the disused brickworks look like the crypt of an old cathedral. Indeed, in the early days, the brickworks was used for Church of England services.

The Prime Minister's Lodge and the Forrest Housing Group
(Corner Adelaide Avenue and National Circuit, Deakin.)
The Lodge was first intended for the Speaker of the House of Representatives but when it was completed in 1923 it was occupied by the Prime Minister. Although the Lodge is not open to the public it is worth looking through the gates, to see the Oakley, Parkes and Scarborough design. There are other, if less prestigious, examples of this architectural firm's work nearby. Oakley, Parkes and Scarborough won the first Sulman competition for a housing group between Dominion and Empire Circuits. Forrest, mainly to accommodate Canberra's early public servants. Some of these houses have since been altered but originally they were brick, often with stucco finish, and with a hint of Spanish Mission influence in an arch or two. The first residents were not always happy with the chimneys, claiming that the wintery south-west winds filled the rooms with smoke. The suburb has one of the most confusing street plans in
Canberra but this is to be attributed to the work of another entrant in the Sulman competition and not to Walter Burley Griffin.

Hotel Canberra
(Corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Albert Street.)
The Hotel Canberra's guest book is a Who's Who of early Canberra history. Opened in 1924 as the Hostel, the building in Commonwealth Avenue was already the home of politicians, journalists and public servants by the time Parliament House was opened. It provided much needed accommodation but not alcoholic refreshment. The hotel was unlicensed from 1924 to 1928, in keeping with the policy of keeping Canberra 'dry' during the construction period.

Designed by John Smith Murdoch, who later drew up the plans for Parliament House, the main block included a dining room, lounge rooms, a drawing-room and, so that the gentlemen could retire in comfort, a smoking room and a billiard room. The surrounding garden originally contained tennis courts, bowling and croquet greens and a nine-hole golf course. Of these only the croquet green remains.

In 1929, at the beginning of the Depression, the Labor Prime Minister, James Scullin, and his wife lived in the Hotel Canberra rather than authorise the expense of living in the Prime Minister's Lodge. When Scullin's economic plans were being frustrated by both the Commonwealth Bank and the Senate, he adopted the touching if futile habit of asking the hotel's cashier to change notes for shillings which he then threw to people as he travelled by car to Sydney and Melbourne.

The hotel has had its fair share of intrigues. On 2 October 1941, the life of Arthur Fadden's government depended on the votes of two Independents, Alex Wilson and Arthur Coles. Victory or defeat ultimately rested with Coles but he would not come out of his room. In the
lobby, great schemes were laid to win Coles over and notes were pushed under his door. But it was no use. Next day Arthur Fadden gave way to John Curtin's Labor government.

The hotel, leased for many years by the beer company Tooheys, is now occupied by a government department.

Parliament House
*(King George Terrace, Parkes. Open 9 am to 5 pm Mondays to Saturdays; 9.30 am to 5 pm Sundays; 1 pm to 5 pm Good Friday and Anzac Day; closed Christmas Day; admission free.)*

The battle of the sites has dominated Canberra's history. First there were arguments over the best place to locate the national capital, followed by half a century of debate over the most suitable site for Parliament House.

Canberra's designer, Walter Burley Griffin, thought that Parliament House should be built on Camp Hill. The building would suit Australia's democratic tradition: it would have presence without looking authoritarian. A survey peg was duly hammered into the ground on 20 February 1913. But this was the last that this particular spot was to see of Parliament House.

The first world war and lack of money caused delay after delay. Although an international competition had been organised for the building's design, professional architectural bodies complained that too many of their members were away fighting. When the project was revived after the war, the Commonwealth architect, John Smith Murdoch, wanted to see Parliament House on top of Capital Hill. Griffin, not unnaturally, protested. The House of Representatives adopted a compromise solution. A provisional Parliament House was to be built on the lower slope of Camp Hill, enabling more careful thought to be given to the location and design of a permanent structure. Griffin was horrified. To build a 'temporary' Parliament House, which might never be
pulled down, right in front of the permanent structure, 'would be like filling the front yard with outhouses'. But the government decided to press on with a building on the compromise site.

Locals remembered lower Camp Hill as the place where a shepherd was badly injured by hailstones during a wild storm in 1876. Forty-seven years later, there was no time for even a foundation stone. On 28 August 1923, the Minister for Works and Railways, sat up proudly in the cabin of a steam-shovel and turned the first sod. By 1925 as many as two hundred and fifty people were working on the site. Bricks from Yarralumla were carried on a narrow gauge railway, but some entrepreneurs thought they had a better system. They bought T-Model Ford trucks for $250 each, carted bricks at a great rate and then sold the well-worn vehicles to unsuspecting Sydney buyers for about $100 each.

Parliament House was officially opened by the Duke of York (later, after his brother's abdication, to become George VI) on 9 May 1927. The day was a curious mixture of pomp and ceremony, disaster and disappointment. The Duke's gold key opened the door and Dame Nellie Melba sang the National Anthem, but an aeroplane crashed after the flypast killing the pilot, Flying Officer F. E. Ewen, and the huge crowds expected throughout the day never materialised. Somewhere on Camp Hill lies the unknown grave of thousands of untasted meat pies.

Inside Parliament House, immediately behind the main doors is King's Hall named after George V. The busts around the walls with their fixed stares all look very much the same. More life-like is the large painting depicting the Senate Chamber at the Federal Parliament's inauguration in 1927.

Two old documents deserve inspection. The first is a rare and valuable copy of the 1297 version of the Magna Carta; the second is the Commission signed by Queen
Victoria, making Australia a Commonwealth from 1 January 1901.

Parliamentary procedure is explained in an exhibition in the basement. The Australian parliament closely follows the Westminster tradition and there are many tangible links with Britain. In the House of Representatives, the Royal Arms over the Speaker’s chair are carved in oak from Westminster Hall (1399) and the hinged flaps on the arm rests are from Nelson’s flagship, the *Victory*, which fought at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. A bit of a ship is no doubt a handy thing to have when broadsides are being delivered.

The ceremonial dress of the Sergeant-at-Arms in the House of Representatives and the Usher of the Black Rod in the Senate tell of the days of jabots and knee-breeches. But as well as a host of traditions, the 1927 Parliament House was built with modern touches: a three-kilometre long underground pneumatic tube to the Government Printing Office and the provision of individually controlled heating to every member’s seat.

**The Albert Hall**

*(Corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Albert Street.)*

Those with a feeling for the minutiae of Canberra’s history find it satisfying to note that decades before the Albert Hall was planned, one of the district’s first pianos was played close by. The pianist was Mrs Mary Mowle, the daughter of the founder of Braidwood, whose home, Klensendorlffe’s farmhouse, now lies under the waters of Lake Burley Griffin.

The Albert Hall was opened in March 1928 by the Prime Minister, S. M. Bruce. It was given its name after the Albert Hall in London and also because the first name of the Duke of York, who had opened Parliament House, was Albert.

The designer, J. Hunter Kirkpatrick, used arched windows and a large gallery to give the ‘Renaissance
Revival' building a certain degree of elegance. But some of the Hall's style was lost when concert-goers trailed in blankets and hot-water bottles to protect themselves against icy winter draughts. Canberra audiences gained the reputation of being emotionally, as well as physically, cold. In 1963, Rita Streich of the Vienna State Opera criticised the audience for not clapping loudly enough. But the local residents were not always difficult to please. Performances by John Masefield, Joan Sutherland, Dame Sybil Thorndike, Isaac Stern and a multitude of others were heady highlights in the life of the bush capital. On the political scene, the Albert Hall saw the opening, in May 1954, of the Petrov Royal Commission into Russian spying.

Of the many dances, flower-shows and community gatherings held in the Hall, one of the largest was a party held in 1978 for Gough Whitlam on his retirement as leader of the Labor party. In 1975 his government had been dismissed by the Governor-General, Sir John Kerr.

Canberra University College and the Australian National University

(Acton.)

In 1930, when the national capital was feeling the pinch of the Depression, the government established the Canberra University College, which was officially attached to the University of Melbourne. Because money was tight, Canberra's planners were forced to believe with Milton that 'the mind is its own place'. For many years the academics and students lacked a permanent home. The first students, mainly public servants, attended lectures at the Telopea Park Intermediate High School. Practical work in Natural Philosophy was arranged with the Royal Military College, Duntroon. Classes were held from 1931 to May 1935 at the Institute of Anatomy and then from June, in the wing of a building formerly used as the Hotel Acton.
From the mid-1940s the College was housed above the arches of the Melbourne Building in Civic, until a fire broke out there on 11 April 1953. Thereafter, it moved to the fibro ex-hostel buildings in Childers Street, Turner. The occupants boiled in summer and froze in winter, enjoying that communion of discomfort which so often makes the old days seem so good.

The Childers Street Hall saw countless plays and revues. Its wooden walls also trapped students for the compulsory examinations, held in November. At least the hall had the virtue of many windows, which meant that the name of the winner of the annual Melbourne Cup horse-race could be paraded on placards outside for the benefit of the interred examinees.

In September 1960 the Canberra University College combined with the Australian National University, which had been formed in 1948 but consisted only of research schools. Although a spate of new buildings followed the merger, the University still occupies many of the Childers Street huts.

Then and now: The remains of some early landmarks

**Acton House**

Acton House was the site of the first permanent white settlement in Canberra. Joshua John Moore's overseer and stockmen built slab huts and yards in about 1824. These were replaced by a stone and pise cottage in the 1830s. A new owner, Arthur Jeffreys, called the building Acton House. Extended and renovated many times, Acton House was St John's first rectory (1850-73), a home for the surveyors of the federal capital site, a police station and a court house. It was demolished early in the second world war, partly because the United States wanted to build a base hospital, a project which was never carried out. It is commemorated by a fountain in the forecourt of the Royal Canberra Hospital.
Glebe House
St John's second rectory, Glebe House, designed by A. D. Soares, was painstakingly built in the early 1870s from bricks manufactured on the site. In 1926 it became St Gabriel's, the first Anglican girls' day and boarding school, and was later a boarding house. The 'Old Rectory' was demolished in the 1950s. Its site is marked by a plaque in front of Narellan House, Ballumbir Street, Reid. The oldest trees are those planted by the Reverend Pierce Galliard Smith, rector of St John's throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. Glebe House bricks were used for the Acton Football Club, Forrest.

Canberra Post Office
The old Canberra Post Office (c. 1880-1925, renamed Ainslie Post Office in 1913) is marked by a plaque at Kanangra Court Flats, Reid.

Public School
The Public School first opened in 1894 with twenty-three pupils. Popularly called the Crossroads School because it stood on the intersection of two roads on the Campbells' Madura (sic) property, its official title was Duntroon Crossroads School, and after 1904, Nerrabunda (sic). It closed in 1923 when Telopea Park, the first school built by the federal administration was opened nearby. It is commemorated by a plaque at the Fire Station, on the corner of Empire Circuit and Fitzroy Street, Forrest. The school itself was at the northern intersection of these streets.

Molonglo Internment Camp
The area used during the first world war for the internment of German nationals from the Commonwealth and the Pacific region is now part of the Fyshwick industrial area.
Railways
A railway from Kingston crossed the Molonglo River on a wooden trestle bridge to an area near the Australian-American Memorial and then to Lonsdale Street. It was destroyed by flood in 1922-5. The Griffin Centre, Bunda Street, City, is on the platform site. There was also a railway from Parliament House to the Brickworks, built in the late 1920s. This survives as the railway cutting in the pine plantation beside the North Woden-Yarralumla Uniting Church in Maxwell Street, Yarralumla.

Haslam’s Creek Receiving House
The Haslam’s Creek Receiving House was built at Rookwood Cemetery, Sydney in 1868. Funeral trains reversed into it so that the last coach, carrying the coffin, was the first to reach the platform. Bought for £100 in 1957, it is now All Saints’ Church in Cowper Street, Ainslie. The present vestries were formerly men’s and women’s retiring rooms.
Tours from the Federal Highway

Lake George
(North from Canberra City Post Office along Northbourne Avenue which becomes the Federal Highway. Distance to Lake George is approximately 33 kilometres.)

One of the best points to begin a history tour of the Canberra district is at the place the Aboriginals mentioned to the first white explorers in 1820. This was Wee-ree-waa, later to be called Lake George. Wee-ree-waa was by no means sacred to the local tribes but they thought it was mysterious. The explorers and the settlers who followed were soon to find out why.

It was on a freezing wet Saturday, 19 August 1820, that Joseph Wild, an ex-convict overseer under the instructions of Dr Charles Throsby, and Wild's two companions first stood on the shores of Wee-ree-waa. For the next week the men explored the lake and from a hill near present-day Bungendore Wild described snow-capped mountains, probably the Brindabellas. Around the lake he noticed kangaroos, emus, swans, geese and ducks but it was too cold to fish, if indeed there were any fish. The brackish water was undrinkable and the lake seemed subject to sudden changes in level. Wild reported that one night the water fell six inches. His was the first record of a phenomenon which was to puzzle many other observers.

In spite of the lake's shortcomings, Wild's reports of the surrounding countryside were good. Governor Macquarie was inspired to see it for himself. Led by Charles Throsby, he set out two months after Wild's first visit and renamed the waters Lake George after the reigning British monarch.
Of the men associated with the discovery and early recording of Lake George, three came to sad ends. Charles Throsby, who had enjoyed a career as a naval surgeon, administrator, grazier, road-building supervisor and explorer, committed suicide after becoming involved in a tangle of debts and court cases; Joseph Wild was gored to death by a wild bull at the age of eighty-eight and Joseph Lycett who engraved a view for Macquarie was arrested for forgery and bank-notes and killed himself rather than stand trial.

The lake shores were settled soon after Macquarie's visit. Some areas had been promised as 'rewards', others were bought. By 1828 the lake had been well surveyed and an important trigonometrical base line had been let down at the northern end in conjunction with Governor Darling's great project, a map of the nineteen counties. Surveyors thought that the lake was a good landmark and used it again for a survey of New South Wales in 1868. But their efforts were spoiled when the lake suddenly rose, covering the line and forcing them to move it well back to the south-eastern side. The stone pillars of this survey are still visible.

The rise and fall of the waters was a great puzzle. First there were minor changes in level such as those Wild had noticed. These were later shown to be an optical illusion caused by changes in light and land levels and the result of strong winds blowing the water in the shallow lake on to one side.

But there were more dramatic fluctuations. In some years Lake George was New South Wales' largest freshwater lake and Terence Aubrey Murray stocked it with cod transported there in casks. In the 1880s a New South Wales Observatory steam yacht plied the waters investigating the possibility of diverting the Snowy River into the Murrumbidgee and Lake George. A steam barge also operated on the lake, taking wool to Bungendore. But working parties were not the only ones on the lake.
On Queen Victoria's fifty-fifth birthday, *Victoria May* was launched by Bungendore residents. The event was attended by true nineteenth-century protocol. First the bandsmen took to the waters with a sprightly melody. Two loads of ladies went next, then alternating trips of ladies and gentlemen, and finally the festivities reached their height with a mixed passenger list.

In the early years of the twentieth century when sites for the Federal Capital were being discussed, Lake George was sufficiently full to make a water-side city at least worth mentioning. But, as had happened several times before, the lake dried up. 'Wizard Smith' the racing-car driver borrowed a steam roller from the Federal Highway road contractor and flattened out a long section of the lake bed as a speedway. By the early 1930s graziers were fencing their lake-bed leaseholds and putting in windmills to water the stock.

Less than two decades later the lake was full again and fishing was so rewarding that professional fishermen from Narooma were taking their Lake George catches to sell at the coast. One disadvantage of lake-side fishing was having to wade out through thick mud to stand in the deeper stretches of water. One man solved part of this problem by fishing from a step-ladder. The lake, though shallow, was treacherous. Wind quickly whipped up cold waves which overturned small boats and claimed the lives of even the strongest swimmers. Its strange behaviour has been attributed to a number of causes including volcanic activity. But the most likely explanation is the most simple. The changes in level are caused by the natural processes of rainfall and evaporation.

**Geary's Gap**  
*(On the Federal Highway, just before the descent to the lake shore.)*

In the nineteenth century, Geary's Gap was a favourite haunt of bushrangers. Ben Hall, John Gilbert and John
Dunn held up a coach there in March 1865. The impression this incident leaves is not so much that of a tough, well-organised gang but rather one of three men struggling to make bush-ranging worthwhile and to stay beyond the reach of the law. To prepare for their Lake George expedition the hungry trio had robbed a man of beef and damper. When they arrived at Geary's Gap they found that the male passenger, William Davis, was walking behind the coach as it went up the hill and he had left his rifle and revolver by his seat. The passengers' defencelessness made the bushrangers' weapons look more ferocious than they really were. Hall, holding a gun with a dagger in it, had a revolver in each boot which rattled as his knees trembled. John Dunn's hand shook on his gun and the passengers were frightened that they would be shot by accident.

The scene had the best aspects of a melodrama: the coachman complained piteously that he did not like being held up so often, one lady screamed herself into a fit, another put on a bold front and the bushrangers pulled out Valentines and bible-tracts from the envelopes instead of the hoped-for treasure.

Sutton
(Off the Federal Highway on the road to Gundaroo.)

When the site of Sutton village was being investigated in 1866, the surveyor decided to call it after the first man to come along the road. This man was Joseph Sutton. He was related by marriage to prominent local pastoralists, the Guise family, and he owned land close to the surveyed site. Unfortunately Joseph Sutton was also bankrupt and soon left for Sydney. If this story is true, then it seems that the surveyor named the site in this way for want of any distinctive feature or local Aboriginal name. But this did not mean that the area was without a history.

The first settler, with the down-to-earth name of John Brown, had arrived over three decades earlier. But
To Gundaroo
St Peter's Church
New School
Sutton Hall
Gold ore crusher from Bywong
To Bywong Reefs & Gold Mine, approx. 6 km
To Canberra
To Queanbeyan

Sutton

Ore-crusher and steam engine, Sutton
drought ruined his crops and distemper killed his animals and in 1833 he was forced to sell out to the Guises. By the 1860s there were high hopes that the Sutton area would prosper from gold discoveries at nearby Mac's Reef. As it turned out, the gold nuggets were few and far between: there was no El Dorado.

Many of Sutton's visible historical sites lie on the eastern side of the road. First there is the weatherboard school first established in 1871. Gold-mining machinery from the Bywong Reefs has a place of honour near the playground. Sutton's combined store and post-office stands at a major bend in the road. It was originally the Sutton Hotel for which Thomas Darmody obtained a licence in 1889. The first store, also owned by Darmody, once stood opposite the hotel. The general locality became the town's recreation centre with Darmody deliberately, if illegally, filling in nearby drains so that he could run horse races across the road.

The present Sutton Hall, which dates from 1919, lies to the west over the paddocks. It flourished during the roller-skating craze which began in the late 1880s and lasted well into the 1920s when even the Capitol Cinema at Manuka was used as a rink. Further along on the right is St Peter's Church of England erected in 1925. When Sutton built this church to replace an earlier weatherboard one, the village, though isolated, was influenced by the Spanish-style architecture of the 1920s.

Approximately four kilometres towards Gundaroo, a copse of elm trees on the right marks the site of John Brown's property. He called his land Jerrabiggery and knowledge of its subsequent history increases the word's hocus-pocus aura. It was the scene of the 'Brownlow murder' in which a pregnant woman stabbed her husband with a butcher's knife and, after her child's birth, was hanged for the crime. The case aroused great sympathy for the woman, Mary Ann Brownlow. Both husband and wife were well known in the district. Mary
Ann was the daughter of William Guise and George Brownlow was a superintendent of Acton estate, Canberra. Although Mary Ann killed her husband in a drunken fit of unprovoked jealousy and her guilt was undeniable, she was said to have repented and reformed. She studied the Bible, no longer drank, and named the baby born to her in Goulburn gaol, George. But when Goulburn's shops and businesses closed for the execution on 11 October 1855, the district's residents knew that all pleas for mercy had been in vain. As a sad sequel, Mary Ann's son, George, died in infancy.

Gundaroo

(Distance from Federal Highway turn-off approximately 16 kilometres.)

It is ironic that the remoteness of many towns is the very reason why hundreds of tourists wear a track to them. In the late 1960s Gundaroo became a major attraction after decades of isolation.

Gundaroo means 'big water-hole' and probably referred to a good fishing spot in the Yass River. Large this hole may have been, but it was certainly not the Murrumbidgee for which the first explorers were searching. Throsby Smith, Wild and Vaughan camped near Yass River in December 1820 and then moved on. But they noted that the area was fertile and the first settlers were well established by the end of the decade. All the district's best land was occupied by 1848 and Gundaroo was declared a town. But as it was not on the explorers' main routes, and was later missed by the highways and the railway, its population never rose above five hundred.

Travelling to Gundaroo from Canberra past Sutton, just before the Bungendore road junction, Bywong is on the right-hand side of the road. This property was owned by William Guise, a sergeant in the NSW Corps who, it is said, was related to Louis XVI's wife, Marie Antoinette.
William Guise allegedly left France for England and then Australia when Marie Antoinette was arrested by the Paris mob. William Guise now lies in the oldest marked vault in St John's churchyard.

Continue on until the main road is joined by the Bungendore road on the right. Turn into this track. What can you see on the right? Only a ruined church, a few lumps and bumps of vanished houses, and a cemetery. This is Upper Gundaroo, still 5 kilometres from Gundaroo itself, once known as Lower Gundaroo. Upper Gundaroo held the honour of having the post office, but its strength gradually waned when Lake George's rising waters tended to divert traffic to the northern settlement. By the mid-1890s, when Upper Gundaroo had lost its post office after a successful campaign by Lower Gundaroo, it was eclipsed by its rival and even the church's name was forgotten. The Anglican church, built in 1849, had been called St Philip's. Note the hearts in the handmade bricks and take a rubbing with paper and crayon. The church had been used as a school but had not been consecrated. In 1915 an attempt was made to rectify this situation but the Bishop, unaware of the church's earlier name, called it St Luke's.

Rejoin the main road. Across the bridge over the Yass River, on the left-hand side, is the site of the Old Harrow Inn. Gundaroo residents, frightened of bushrangers, arranged for a lantern to be flashed from the inn if suspicious looking travellers were sighted. The road leads straight into Gundaroo.

Take the top off Gundaroo by exploring Cork Street. First on the left is a derelict pise building, once a butcher's shop. The house nearby is the former police station and behind it stands the lockup.

Pause in front of St Mark's Anglican Church, former court house, telegraph station and school. It was built in 1875. Can you tell what features were added before it was dedicated as a church in 1941? The porches and the
arches. Look closely at the walls to find traces of the old verandah roof.

Next door is Sally (Sarah) Paskins' store, built in 1886. The shop was popular with children who liked to talk to the cockatoo Mrs Paskins kept on the counter. Later the building was the headquarters for the ever-hopeful Gundaroo Mutual Improvement Society, a club for local footballers, and today it is a store. Sally Paskins' shop boy, James Chalmers, was one of those who operated the Gundaroo Arcade (Store), built next door by Thomas Coleman in 1893. It is still a centre of activity with a retail outlet, exhibition and craft demonstration area. Probably only the most devoted historian will stop to 'read' the brickwork: long, short, long, short. Yes indeed, and for what it is worth, this is the code for Flemish bond!
The history of the impressive two-storied Caledonia Store a few paces on is suggested by its name. Caledonia was the old Roman term for northern Britain and later it came to be synonymous with Scotland. The link between Scotland and Gundaroo was provided by an ex-convict and his nephew. Joseph Wishart, a Scottish wine merchant, was convicted of forgery and transported to New South Wales for fourteen years. As a ticket-of-leave man he opened a store near Gundaroo then moved into the town itself. In response to Wishart’s letters, some of his Scottish relatives, the Affleck family, emigrated to Australia and in 1857 took over his Caledonia Store. It was then a simple slab hut but the Afflecks prospered. Wishart’s nephew, William Affleck, was mainly responsible for building Gundaroo village to the point when it, and not Upper Gundaroo, was the dominant centre. For over forty years, Affleck threw himself into a host of activities and the result of his efforts stand all around Gundaroo: the present Caledonia Store dating from 1880, the bridge across the Yass River, the Presbyterian Church, the school, the library, the park, the post office and even the Royal Hotel. In addition he served in parliament. His name, first occupation, and his squint eyes captured the imagination of his fellow parliamentarians who called him ‘Ah Flick, the Chinese storekeeper from Gundaroo’.

Next to the Caledonia Store is ‘Hazelville’ built in 1889 as ‘Kilamaroy’. The bull-nosed verandah (not inappropriate because it was owned by a butcher), wrought-iron work and fancy chimneys help to establish its age and its reputation as one of Gundaroo’s finest houses. And so on to the Royal Hotel. Of course it is purely historical interest that makes one hasten to its doors. Although William Affleck was a strong advocate of temperance, he served alcohol. In his defence it must be said that the Royal was not only a pub. It was also a much needed assembly-hall where school children received their prizes
and Christians sang hymns. Notice the high roof. Although the pub is one-storied it was designed to provide extra accommodation in the attics. The Royal operated from 1865 until the end of 1927. Then its licence was transferred to the Hotel Queanbeyan, partly to bring relief closer to Canberra residents who were thirsting in the prohibition Federal Capital Territory. In the late 1960s, Ron Murray, a tourist coach owner, converted the Royal into a restaurant specialising in Australian ‘bush’ food and entertainment. Almost every country town has a Royal but this one is certainly different.

The lockup, Gundaroo
Directly opposite the Royal on the corner of Cork and Harp Streets is the Clemenger Memorial. William Ralph Clemenger was a shortish man with straight, clear features. It is a pity that his dark moustache is so droopy that in old pictures it looks as though a photograph corner has slipped onto his face. Clemenger arrived in Gundaroo in 1882 at the age of seventeen as the town's first telegraph operator. He had a great enthusiasm for writing and for organising sports and entertainments. Stimulating interest in boxing, rugby union and the relatively new sport of bicycling, contributing to local concerts and helping to organise the first show, Clemenger succeeded Affleck as the King of Gundaroo.

From the Clemenger Memorial, cross Harp Street and walk by the Anzac Memorial and Affleck's library, and the Commercial Bank. Most good history tours should include as many resting places as possible, so call in at the next building, the Commercial Hotel. It was established in 1872 by a blacksmith, Noah Cheesman, and built by his father-in-law who gloried in another Biblical name, Jeremiah Barrett. The Commercial Hotel is believed to be the oldest established wine bar in Australia. It was licensed as such by Alfred Crowe in the mid-1890s and has been run by the Crowe family ever since.

After the Commercial, cross Lot Street and walk over to the Presbyterian Church, a neo-Gothic building dating from 1864. Only its shell remains; the inside has been torn out by vandals. In its prime it was used as a place of worship for Anglicans as well as Presbyterians and was also a school. William Affleck, who promoted the building, hoped for the best. He established a trust fund to pay a minister to preach not less than once a fortnight but stipulated that two pounds would be deducted every time the minister failed to turn up. But as the years wore on no minister was readily available in Gundaroo, and Affleck, who was always willing to deliver the sermons himself, died in 1923. The church rapidly fell into disuse.
Until 1952, it was the custom for a Queanbeyan minister to come to Gundaroo on Sundays and ring the bell. Often he was the only one at the church but he qualified for the small stipend. Finally inflation and the pointlessness of the exercise ended even this effort.

Walk up Lot Street to the Public School on the next corner. Not all the early settlers felt that formal education was necessary for their young, an opinion which seems to have been shared by at least one teacher in the 1890s, who had the habit of leaving his pupils in charge of a senior student while he went prospecting for gold. It must have been a shock for him to return one day to find the School Inspector teaching his class.

From the school visit St Joseph’s Roman Catholic Church on the corner of Harp and Morning Streets. The foundation stone was laid in 1879. After the first Mass in 1881, the congregation was informed that the Church debt amounted to only £121, for which one of the faithful wrote a cheque on the spot.

It is worth crossing to the other side of Morning Street from St Joseph’s to walk by some old houses. In places the rendering has fallen off the walls, revealing early methods of building construction. A slab hut in Harp Street is falling into decay with the corrugated iron roof slipping off the shingles but if school children wanted to use a building as a model for a miniature slab-hut construction of their own, here is a good place to start.

Stop at Gundaroo Park, another of Affleck’s achievements, at the corner of David and Cork Streets. It was here that John Clemenger, who became captain-manager of the 1928 Davis Cup team, developed his love for tennis. Also look at the old farm buildings near the park and the home of William Affleck’s parents, Camden Villa, in Lind Street on the park’s eastern border.
Queanbeyan  
(*Canberra Post Office to Queanbeyan Post Office, 14 kilometres.*)

Joseph Wild and Charles Throsby Smith came upon the site of Queanbeyan (meaning clear or running water) shortly before Christmas 1820. This discovery was all very well but the river junction at this spot was not the Murrumbidgee. Throsby Smith, who had been told by his uncle that the river was nearby, gnashed his teeth for having been sent on a wild goose chase and settled down to marry and to the more definite goal of raising seventeen children.

Although the sites of Queanbeyan and Canberra were discovered in the same year, Queanbeyan lay on more favourable crossroads and was quicker to develop a nucleus. Proclaimed a town in 1838, Queanbeyan became the centre of the local administrative district whereas Canberra was merely a dependent. By 1851 Queanbeyan’s population had risen to 208, in comparison with 274 at Yass and 30 at Bungendore. Like most of the colony’s towns, early Queanbeyan was well populated with sly-grog sellers. It was in an effort to stop the illegal sale of spirits, particularly rum, that an inn was licensed in 1838. The random stone building is now a private residence near the corner of Hazel and River Streets on the Oaks Estate, a small settlement close to Queanbeyan but still within the borders of the ACT.

Continue to the centre of Queanbeyan and cross the river to the streets on the eastern bank. Some of the first houses in Dodsworth Street were occupied by Irish emigrants and the area became known locally as Irishtown.
Queanbeyan
Dodsworth House (now demolished) was built in 1838 as the residence of the first police magistrate, Captain Alured Tasker Faunce.

The early inhabitants of a village sometimes show a strange inclination to settle on the most uncomfortable sites and to return to them time and time again in spite of predictable disasters. And so it was with Queanbeyan's residents. They clustered on the river's east bank, a handy spot for drawing the daily water but a most inconvenient place to be when the river flooded. Trinculo Place, the site of the town well, was repeatedly under water. The floods often covered the river end of Macquoid Street which was originally Queanbeyan's main thoroughfare. When the construction of St Gregory's Roman Catholic Church began in 1849 on the corner of Macquoid and Molonglo Streets one comforting thought was that the church would be a welcome refuge if ever the waters reached this far.

Flood threats did not deter the citizens from concentrating many of their activities in the area. The present-day Kent Private Hotel was built on the corner of Trinculo Place and Macquoid Street in the same year as St Gregory's and at different times served as a court house, a bank and a hospital. The Leagues Motel in Macquoid Street stands on the site of the Harp of Erin Inn, opened in 1853. The Harp of Erin was a central meeting place where nineteenth century residents discussed matters close to their hearts including the abolition of convict transportation and the establishment of annual horse races.

Cross the Queen's Bridge again to west Queanbeyan. This was the first bridge of any appreciable size in the district and its construction in 1857-8 caused tremendous excitement with police firing a salute as each pile was driven in. It has been replaced several times, most recently in 1973. The Leagues Club in Monaro Street was first opened on that spot in 1965, was burnt down, but re-
emerged in even grander form in the 1970s. Nearby, J. B. Youngs and the former Woolworths occupy the sites of two of Queanbegan's earliest stores. By the 1860s Monaro Street was recognised as the main business centre and many of the town's most substantial buildings were erected on the west rather than the east side of the river.

The stone section of the schoolhouse in Rutledge Street dates from 1843 while the original Anglican Christ Church was consecrated by Bishop Broughton on 8 March 1845, four days before he performed the same ceremony at St John's, Canberra. Fifteen years later the present stone church was erected, with its characteristic rounded arched windows designed by the Reverend Alberto Diaz Soares. Of Portuguese descent, Soares sailed from Southampton to Australia in 1852, arriving on the seventy-fifth day out, the quickest passage then known. His brother, Gualter, taught at Christ Church school and helped with ecclesiastical duties, but more than one suspicious eye-brow was raised in his direction when the rumour went around that he was a former smuggler.

The Methodists, exceptionally active for a small group, built a church in Rutledge Street in 1859. In parallel Isabella Street the Sisters of the Good Samaritans founded St Benedict's Convent in what was formerly the telegraph office, and in March 1879 the Convent 'High School for Young Ladies' opened its doors to five pupils at No. 7 Macquoid street. The present convent dates from the 1880s. Excellent scholars can come from the smallest of schools and the first boarder, Sarah Octavia Brennan, later became the first Catholic woman to graduate as a Master of Arts from Sydney University.

Another denomination, the Presbyterians, built St Stephen's in 1874 and a manse in 1883 in Morrisett Street. The bricks were some of the first to be made by machine instead of by hand in southern New South Wales. At the foot of Morrisett Street, by the river,
market gardens were established by Chinese, who had been drawn to the area by goldrushes at Braidwood and Kiandra. Byrne's Steam Flour Mill, in Collett Street, now a craft and entertainment centre, was built in 1883. Also by the river, a little further north, is the old Queanbeyan cemetery. Its location was not ideal. In time of flood, some former residents were precipitated into a watery grave.

**Bungendore**

*From Canberra Post Office to Bungendore Post Office via Queanbeyan, 39 kilometres.*

Bungendore was officially proclaimed a town in 1837. It was a mere speck in the new Queen Victoria's empire and not much more noticeable in a colony absorbed in the great debate over the abolition of convict transportation. Nevertheless, it had the supreme distinction of being the oldest settlement directly south of Lake George. It benefited from its location at the junction of the Queanbeyan, Goulburn and Braidwood roads. The Queanbeyan road, east of today's highway, was convict-built. The Goulburn road was a major link with Sydney but a considerable amount of traffic also came on the Braidwood road in the pre-railway days when stores were sent by sea from Sydney to Bateman's Bay and then hauled inland by bullock waggon. The old police barracks stand at the junction of Molonglo and Malbon Streets, where most tourists turn right to go to the coast. The white two-storied building bears the date 1864 and was one of the first substantial structures built in a town renowned for sly-grog selling.

Turning down Malbon Street, note the variety of architectural styles. First on the right there is a neatly executed home of sandstone, a material more reminiscent of Sydney than of this area, although it is also used to good effect in Bungendore's court house. Further down, on the corner of Malbon and Ellendon Streets is the
Carrington with its wrought-iron lace work still in good condition. It was built in about 1889 by William Winter who baked 20,000 bricks in a hand-made kiln. The Carrington had a hotel licence until the late 1890s, when it became Bungendore's general store, then a house and later a number of flats. The Antique Shop on the diagonal corner was built at the end of the first world war.

On the corner of Gibraltar and Butmaro Streets is St Philip's Church of England, opened in 1865 replacing an earlier brick church. The similarity of St Philip's to the extension of St John the Baptist, Canberra, is unmistakable and, indeed, they were both designed by the same architect, A. D. Soares who was also active both architecturally and ecclesiastically at Queanbeyan and Carwoola. In the small Bungendore community, weddings were conducted with great pomp and ceremony. The main district newspaper, the *Queanbeyan Age* carried one ecstatic description after another of marriages in St Philip's. On these occasions, the church was converted into a bower of ferns, chrysanthemums or roses with an arch over the communion rail, of ferns and flowers, from which hung a huge white wedding bell.

Although the Anglicans opened the first church, the Roman Catholic community was strong as many residents were of Irish descent. In 1853, when Bungendore's population had reached seventy, Roman Catholics founded the first school. In 1861 St Mary's Church was begun on the corner of Ellendon and Turallo Streets and in 1888 St Joseph's Convent was established, first near St Mary's, and later on its present site on the corner of Turallo and Butmaro Streets. The central portion of the Convent belongs to the 1890s; the external archways date from the early 1930s. When it was built, the Convent was a massive landmark on the wind-swept plain. It was indeed the purpose of Mary McKillop, founder of the order of St Joseph, to bring the Church to small rural
communities. Mother Mary of the Cross (1842-1909) encountered considerable opposition in pursuit of her aims, including being excommunicated by the Bishop of Adelaide, but in the 1970s she was being considered for the honour of Sainthood.

In Gibraltar Street, the Anglican school dropped its denominational status in 1868 and became Bungendore’s first Public School. Walking up and down the streets, one soon notices that the roads lie in a grid pattern, very

A delicate handkerchief for a bullnosed verandah roof, Gibraltar Street, Bungendore
much in accordance with Governor Darling's planning regulations of 1829 which had been designed to ensure uniformity and set sizes for allotments.

Bungendore was a planned town but even 'the best laid schemes o'mice an' men Gang aft a-gley'. During coaching days, St John's Presbyterian Church was built on a slightly elevated eastern site near the Braidwood road but when Bungendore was surveyed for a railway, the church was found to be in the middle of the proposed line. The railway took precedence over the church which was demolished in 1883 and re-built on its present Butmaro Street site.

Bungendore's foremost industrial site is in Gibraltar Street. A concrete block was once the site of the flour mill, saw mill and the rabbit freezing works. Rabbit and hare hunting had always been a popular local sport. In 1899, at a hare and wallaby drive held at the Rutledge's property, Gidleigh, 211 hares and 79 kangaroos, wallabies and rabbits were shot.

But rabbits were also a commercial enterprise. Ebb and Ross Brown of Hall would buy as many as seven hundred pairs of rabbits each week and take them to Queanbeyan to be railed to Bungendore. At the time of the first world war, the cannery, operated by Messrs Curtis and Curtis, exported tinned rabbit meat. Bungendore's volunteers, sitting in the damp trenches in France, were able to enjoy home-grown rabbit stew.
Tours from the Barton Highway

St Ninian’s Presbyterian (Uniting) Church
(Corner of old Barton Highway and Brigalow Streets, Lyneham.)
Scotsmen who had come to Canberra with their families to work as shepherds and farm hands were among those who most warmly welcomed the opening, in 1863, of a Presbyterian Church. It was the first of this denomination, not only in Canberra, but also in the entire Queanbeyan district. Previously Presbyterians had worshipped in St John’s Schoolhouse but when fiery words and actions were exchanged between a number of dissenters and the schoolhouse’s owner, George Campbell, the Presbyterians moved into their own modest slab and bark building. The present stone church, begun in 1873 and subsequently extended, was built nearby. After a history of fluctuating congregations and decay, the church was restored in the 1940s and named St Ninian’s after a Briton trained in Rome who was sent to convert pagans in Scotland.

The Old Canberra Inn
(Barton Highway, Lyneham.)
Beer is still served at one of Canberra’s oldest inns, the third to be licensed, if one counts the Elmsall on Oaks Estate and the Cricketers Arms, sometimes called the One Tree Hill Hotel, near Hall, as numbers one and two. Built in the 1860s and licensed in 1876, Joseph Shumack’s Canberra Inn, a coaching stop on the Yass to Queanbeyan route, traded until 1887. It later became a house known as The Pines but was licensed again in the 1970s. The ceiling shows that the renovations have been ex-
tensive but the character of the old split logs, both in the main bar and in the stables outside has been retained.

Gold Creek Homestead
(*Gold Creek Road, Ginninderra.*)

When Gold Creek was named, it was more a matter of wishful thinking than proof of mineral wealth. Although Edmund Rolfe, who lived there for over half a century, would have been grateful for a pot of gold to help support his fourteen children, he made a satisfactory living from sheep, wheat, horse-breeding and from carting goods including the stones for St John the Baptist's new tower. His racehorses, particularly one called Gold Creek, galloped past the winning post sufficiently often to be a better source of investment than the Hall Gold and Copper Mine.

It is not known precisely when the original slab hut was built at Gold Creek but it was inhabited by the early 1860s. The cottage knew an early sorrow. Edmund's wife died in childbirth with her fourth baby. He married again, this time to Margaret Keefe who had created a fuss in the district by running away the night she was to be married to her former fiancé. The Rolfe family expanded to a happy combination of seven sons and seven daughters. Many of the children slept in the roof and at night were no doubt entertained with stories of their distant relative John Rolfe who married the American Indian Princess, Pocahontas. The cottage still has three of its original walls, the Rolfe's fireplace and their pantry shelves in the kitchen.

Ginninderra

Of all Canberra's present residential areas, Ginninderra can claim to have had the most clearly developed village centre in the nineteenth century. It was settled early in the district's history. George Thomas Palmer, who had fought in Egypt at the time of Horatio Nelson's Battle of
the Nile, 'squatted' at Ginninderra (then spelt Ginninderra) Creek about 1826. The first settlement was often referred to as Palmerville but the Aboriginal name Ginninderra eventually gained precedence. The district received a boost in the 1860s when a number of small holdings were taken up after the Robertson Land Acts were introduced. The population was less than half the size of Queanbeyan or Bungendore, but its sporting achievements put the village well and truly on the map. The Ginninderra cricket team, at its best when captained by the 'squire' William Davis, was acknowledged to be the finest in the colony. Pigeon shooting was also popular. By contrast, there was the gentler activity of the storekeeper, George Harcourt, who took an interest in the Acclimatisation Society and is reported to have tried to make twenty-one English skylarks take to the Australian bush.

Ginninderra declined when the Commonwealth government resumed land for the Federal Capital Territory. Many of the district's leading families including the Rolfes of Gold Creek and the Ryans of Horse Park left rather than accept a lease of their former freehold property.

With a Mounted Constable and his assistant blacktracker on duty from the 1880s, Ginninderra had the most obvious show of law and order in Canberra. The lockup, built in 1905, is on the Barton Highway, on the opposite side of the road to the schoolhouse, about one hundred metres back towards Canberra. It is out of sight of the road and is on Commonwealth property but it is accessible with the permission of the tenants of the weatherboard house. The gaol's hatch through which the prisoner, usually a drunk, could be observed and given food is similar to the hatches of the Gundaroo and Bungendore lockups (the latter was demolished in 1979).

Ginninderra Schoolhouse turn-off is on the eastern side of the Barton Highway approximately 1 kilometre past
the bridge over Ginninderra Creek. Back towards Canberra about one hundred metres the dilapidated corrugated iron shed was the blacksmith's shop, which was especially important to the community after the middle of the nineteenth century when horses replaced bullocks for ploughing.

Next door to the Ginninderra Public School and Residence is a building in heavy disguise. The stone St Francis' Roman Catholic Church, where many of the Rolfe children attended both church and school, is now part of a house.

The Ginninderra Public School and Residence, begun in 1883, was opened the following year. There had been schools in the area before but education was largely hit-and-miss. Even if children stayed at school until they were fourteen years old, they often missed weeks of classes during the ploughing and harvest seasons. The new stone school, with the windows in the single classroom set high to prevent the pupils from being distracted, had a no-nonsense air about it and was attached to the schoolmaster's residence. But at first it was only half-time. The schoolmaster divided his attention between Ginninderra and Gungahlin, back towards Canberra. Ginninderra became full-time in 1906 but five years later it was closed because most of the pupils were living in Hall.

Next door, the Ginninderra Schoolhouse Restaurant serves afternoon tea at the weekend and dinner from Thursday to Saturday. The slab cottage was brought from Gunning and re-erected in 1973. Like the Old Canberra Inn, it is a cosy slab building where one can warm one's toes by an open fire.

Hall
(From Canberra City Post Office to Hall Post Office, 18 kilometres.)
The small settlement to the north-west of Canberra came
To Murrumbateman and Cooma Cottage

Within 2km to
St Francis Xavier Church
pise house and
Wattle Park Church

Original school building
St Michael's and
All Angels Church

Bootmaker
Hall Service Station
(wheelwright and coachbuilder)
Antique Shop (Kinlyside Hall)

To Cemetery

Post and rail fence and Commemorative plaques

0 250 metres

Halls

To Canberra

Hall

78
to be known as Hall after the owner of Charnwood property. Henry Hall arrived in Australia from Loughborough, England in 1823. The following decade he took up his grant where he and his wife raised ten children. Henry Hall became one of the Queanbeyan district’s first magistrates. The names of Hall’s streets provide a clue to the period of the village’s development. The first southern streets, for example, are called Victoria and Gladstone.

Entering Hall from Victoria Street, the sports ground is on the immediate right, bordered by a good example of post and rail fencing. Measure the lengths of the rails. Two rails, with their middle overlap, should measure about 16.5 feet, or 5 metres. This was the length of the rod, the measurement by which fencers were usually paid for their work. Directly inside the fence, notice the small brass plaques fixed onto the posts beside the trees commemorating those local men who enlisted in the first world war. The plaques to the two men killed in action are on either side of the gate.

Continuing up the right-hand side of Victoria Street, note the long building now called Hall Antiques. This was Kinlyside Hall and has been used as a dance hall, a church, and a cinema in the 1920s and 1930s. The man who built the hall, George Kinlyside, was famous for inventing the Kinlyside Poison Cart (or Patent Pollard Distributor), which made furrows and dropped phosphorus and pollard baits to kill rabbits. A little further up is the Hall Service Station where George Kinlyside commenced business in 1898 as a wheelwright and coachbuilder. Later he conducted a hire-car business with his pride and joy, a Model T Ford.

A nearby building was once owned by a bootmaker. He had two halfpennies stuck some distance away from each other on the counter to show customers the size of his largest order, which he claimed were the biggest boots ever made in the state.
The bell swinging from a stand in front of St Michael’s and All Angels formerly rang at St John the Baptist, Canberra. The foundation stone of the Hall church was laid in 1941, the year of St John’s Centenary and the church was built by an exceptionally tall (211 cm) Englishman, Martin Midmer.

The old bell from St John the Baptist’s, now at Hall

On the left-hand side of the road the present Store was erected in the early twentieth century, although there was trading near this site from the late 1880s when goods were brought from Queanbeyan by bullock or horse-team. Inside the shop there is a long counter and floor-to-ceiling shelves, the highest of which can only be reached by a ladder. The tempting smell of hot meat pies wafts into the post office, at the back of the shop.

The blue-stone St Francis Xavier’s Roman Catholic Church replaced the church at Ginninderra in the early twentieth century. Most of it was built by volunteers on an excellent location overlooking the Murrumbidgee.
The descendant of a prominent pioneering family: Miss Jean Southwell mixing milkshakes in the Hall store, 1979
hills. Across the ACT-NSW border on the Canberra side of Wattle Park Church and on the same side of the road as the Church are the substantial ruins of a pise cottage, formerly owned by the builder of Hall School, George Morris. This cottage is said to have been struck by lightning. Wattle Park Church is intimately connected with the Southwell family. When Thomas Southwell and his wife decided to leave England they were ready to embark on the first available ship, whether it was bound for America or Australia. An Australian-bound ship happened to be in port and the Southwells finally made their way to the Ginninderra-Hall district, bringing with them their staunch Methodism, which culminated in the opening of the church in 1882. The Southwell's property, Parkwood, may soon be opened as a tourist centre.

Hall Cemetery
(From Canberra turn left into Gladstone Street and right into Wallaroo Road. A short track on the right leads off Wallaroo Road to the cemetery.)

One remarkable feature of the cemetery dedicated on 22 March 1883 is the longevity of the people buried there. Relatively few headstones record a death under sixty-five and when they do, it is often a story not of a disease, but of an accident. This was so in the case of Ernest W. Gribble who was crushed to death at the age of twenty-four when he fell into the fly-wheel of a traction engine. Some of the older inhabitants also died painfully. In August 1927, seventy-four-year-old Jacob Blundell, the brother of George who lived at Blundell's Cottage, Canberra, was suffocated and seared when his bedroom caught fire.

Continuing on the highway to Murrumbateman note the sign 'Gooromon Ponds'. It was probably from this area that the first white explorers saw the Australian Capital Territory.
Murrumbateman
*(40 kilometres from Canberra.)*

Murrumbateman owes its origins to a wrong being put right. 'Granny Davis' received a grant of land as compensation for being unfairly convicted of stealing a gold watch, for which she was transported to the colony.

Turn up Dog Trap Road on the left from Canberra and at the first bend look for a sign on the road pointing to the cemetery. Unlike old and crowded graveyards Murrumbateman cemetery has clear divisions between denominations.

The bull-nosed Murrumbateman Post Office on the Barton Highway was once the Murrumbateman Hotel and many a beer has passed across its counter. The Union Church also on the Highway was an early ecumenical venture by Anglican and Presbyterian families. It lasted from 1876 until the end of the first world war. Then the Anglicans erected, in the middle of the village, the All Saints' Soldiers' Memorial Church of England, with its distinctive square tower and window bosses.

The first school was opened at Murrumbateman in 1869. Rebuilt and refurbished many times, the present building on the Highway is one of the finest in Murrumbateman, but it closed its doors to pupils in 1972. A little further on, note the slab residence which is still occupied.

Cooma Cottage
*(At the junction of Barton and Hume Highways. 60 kilometres from Canberra.)*

Cooma Cottage is situated near the Yass River where the explorers Hamilton Hume and William Hovell made camp on their southbound expedition of 1824. An early Yass settler built a house on the spot in 1836 and later Hamilton Hume returned to live there. He built the brick extensions and the stables in about the 1840s. The round openings in the stable walls allowed owls to fly in and
catch mice. The ruts in the stone flagging at the rear of the house show where carts drew up and deposited their goods in the nearby cellar. It was no hovel for Hume!

Lath and plaster exposed during the restoration of Cooma Cottage by the National Trust in 1979
Tours from the Monaro Highway

Environa
(From the Monaro Highway, pass under the railway bridge near the Tralee National Speedway. Turn hard right and follow the railway line for a few hundred metres. The property is not open to the public.)

At Environa, one can see the stone remains of a bright idea. When the Commonwealth government resumed all the land in the Federal Capital Territory in 1915, a Sydney man, Henry F. Halloran, decided to establish a town called Environa, just beyond the Territory's borders. The town's location meant that its future inhabitants could own their land instead of leasing it and still live close to the national capital. With this incentive he even managed to attract potential buyers from England.

Without trespassing on the property, look at the stone arch at the entrance to the estate and a column supporting a bust of Sir Henry Parkes, the father of Federation. The town was to be built on a radial principle, similar to some of Walter Burley Griffin's designs, and the streets were to bear names from around the world: Piazza di Roma, Rue de Paree, Tokio Dora, Estrada Lisbon. Halloran's grand schemes were nipped in the bud by the Depression of the 1930s. Though the bandstands can still be seen today, they never rang to the joyful music of happy freeholders.

Sacred Heart Church, Tuggeranong
(Tharwa Road, Tuggeranong, on the left-hand side from Canberra.)

The land on which this isolated Roman Catholic Church stands was the gift of James Cunningham to Father
Collender of Queanbeyan. Father O’Gorman from Michelago celebrated Mass at the opening of the weatherboard church on a winter’s day, 29 June 1902. Perhaps it is not surprising that one of the parishioners’ first projects was to plant the grounds with pine trees. For many years Sacred Heart was the scene for wonderful Sunday picnics, interspersed with church services.

**Lambrigg and the Farrer Memorial**
*(On the Murrumbidgee River near Point Hut Crossing. The property is not open to the public.)*

Lambrigg (a Westmorland name meaning ‘the hill of the lambs’) was the home of the district’s most renowned agricultural scientist, William James Farrer.

Farrer was a relative newcomer to Canberra, not having arrived in Australia until 1870, but it was not long before he was well known as the tutor to George Campbell’s children at Duntroon. He later married Nina, the only daughter of Leopold De Salis of Cuppacumbalong. In his experimental paddock and pise laboratory Farrer developed a strain of wheat resistant to rust (a powdery red fungus). His work was a major contribution to wheat-farming.

Before he died, Farrer marked the spot on his property where he wished to be buried. When the time came on 16 April 1906, men began to dig at the nominated place but soon struck rock. Although they hoped to inter Farrer at 2 pm, it took twelve hours blasting to excavate the grave, and he was not buried until 2 am.

**Lanyon**
*(Tharwa Road. Open 10 am to 4 pm Tuesdays to Sundays and on public holidays.)*

A death occurred at Lanyon in 1837 well before the present homestead was built. One of the three young English owners, William Wright, was accidentally shot getting out of a log canoe and died after several days of
agony. He was buried on the property but to ensure that dingo-does did not disturb his body, the coffin was packed in with heavy stones. His brother, James, took over his share as well as that of their friend, James Hamilton Mortimer Lanyon, who returned to England but left his name behind.

Lanyon became a self-contained community. In the absence of a nearby church — for even St John the Baptist had not yet been built — a marriage ceremony was performed there in 1842. It amazed the Aboriginal onlookers who were surprised that white people invested such a trivial matter with so much importance. The property had a blacksmith's shop, meat house and dairy, store rooms, coach house and stables, a private cemetery and later even a post-office. The convict gaol, with iron rings for chains, lies across the paddocks from the present driveway.

Under Andrew Cunningham, who bought Lanyon in 1847, and his sons, who took over after his death, the property gained a reputation for innovation and elegance. Andrew Cunningham Senior first introduced fencing, eliminating the need for shepherds and sheepfolds. Candlelit meals and dances on polished floors were held in a new homestead, built in 1869. Lanyon now houses a collection of Sidney Nolan paintings, many of them of Ned Kelly.

Tharwa

(Turn off about 30 kilometres along the Monaro Highway. Tharwa is about 10 kilometres from the turn-off.)

The bushranger John Tennant would no doubt have been pleased if ever an entire settlement had lain at his feet. Denied this, he at least had the posthumous pleasure of having the mountain which dominates Tharwa named after him. Tennant made many forays from his mountain hide-out including a raid on the overseer's hut at Dun-
troon from which he stole, among other items, James Ainslie's nightcap. Although Tennant's pickings were generally petty, he often threatened violence. He was finally captured in 1828.

Tharwa was given in 1882 that all-important mark of civilisation, a post-office, but it was always a tiny settlement. The 1891 census showed that there were only thirty-eight dwellings and 255 inhabitants. Not included were twelve Aboriginals. Nor does one read much about Aboriginals in other records, although Queanbeyan's Queen Nellie was a celebrity. Old Timers remember her greeting them at the opening of Tharwa's famous truss bridge in 1895 and being surprised to find that her hands were soft.

There was a public school at Tharwa from the late 1890s but it was half-time until 1905. The present school was built in 1912 and boasts a bell from the old Tuggeranong school. Part of the Tharwa school's playground is said to have been an Aboriginal camping ground. St Edmund's Church of England was built during the first world war and dedicated on 7 May 1919.
St Thomas's Church, Carwoola
(Travelling from Canberra, the turn-off to the Captain's Flat Road is about 4 kilometres from Queanbeyan on the right-hand side of the Highway. The church is approximately 13 kilometres from the turn-off and is on the left-hand side of the Captain's Flat Road.)
Designed by A. D. Soares and opened in 1874, St Thomas's is one of the largest Anglican Churches in the district. It was built by William Follett, who is buried in the cemetery nearby.

Captain's Flat
(Canberra Post Office to Captain's Flat, 53 kilometres.)
Captain's Flat was named, so it is said, after a bull called Captain who grazed in one of Foxlow's southern paddocks. Captain's level pasture was unusual because the surrounding country was hilly, good for shelter, as outlaws found, and even better for minerals as prospectors discovered.

As the story goes, men digging the grave of an employee on one of the local stations found a metallic substance which everyone hoped was gold. By the 1880s, sufficient lodes of copper, silver and gold had been found to make Captain's Flat a boom town. Though small partnerships were satisfactory for gold-mining, they had less success with copper which required more sophisticated techniques. It was not long before larger proprietors stepped in. Of the two substantial new mines established in 1886, the first was called El Capitan. Captain the bull would no doubt have appreciated the Spanish allusion. The second was Ko-i-noor, a name
derived from that of an enormous diamond. The subsequent story of the companies is complicated but, in brief, El Capitan was mismanaged and gave way to the Commodore Vanderbilt which operated until 1896. Then Commodore Vanderbilt combined with Ko-i-noor to form the Lake George Mining and Smelting Company which worked the ore until 1899. There were many byways to the transactions but the general move was towards consolidation.

The population of Captain's Flat leaped from 104 in 1886 to 650 in 1889 and to 1700 in 1897. Perhaps leaped is the wrong word: many of the new inhabitants trudged from as far away as Braidwood looking for work. In the township of Captain's Flat men outnumbered women by a hundred or more and there were always a few Chinese.

The initial group of buildings, little more than hessian shelters, huddled in a low-lying area and became known as Bogtown. It was only after the second world war that the name was changed to 'Oakvale'. Newtown, which became the main residential area, developed on a low hill. As in all mining towns, the pubs flourished, glorying in a drink called skunk, a mixture of rum and orange. The bar in the present Captain's Flat Hotel, built in the 1940s, was reputed, at 33.3 metres, to be the longest in Australia.

In the mines there was sometimes trouble between the management and unionists. In 1891 the manager of Commodore Vanderbilt broke up the local carriers' union and employed non-union carting teams. Shortly afterwards, three working bullocks owned by a widow, Mrs E. Harrison, were shot by persons unknown. But the motive was believed to be revenge because the bullocks were used by Mrs Harrison's non-union sons to draw coke to the Commodore Vanderbilt mine.

In spite of occasional discord there was no unemployment and by the 1890s Captain's Flat was a fully-fledged town. Residents had their own newspaper and were
proud to have one of the first telephones installed in the Queanbeyan district. Children were taught in the present Library-Kindergarten building of Captain's Flat School, constructed in 1889. Residents roller-skated on a fine rink, and enjoyed billiard saloons, a skittle alley and Cooper's dance hall.

In 1899, Captain's Flat became worked up over the Federal Convention Bill. Those in favour held a torch-light procession on voting night singing the old American ballad, 'Hurrah, hurrah, for the Flag that set us free'. Despite this fervour, Captain's Flat voted against the Bill. The same year, 1899, the town's bubble of prosperity burst. Copper, which had long replaced gold as the most important metal, became uneconomical to smelt because of the large quantities of lead and zinc found in the ore. There was very little work over the next few years and finally the crunch came. James Hickey, a fitter who repaired burst pipes, was there: ‘The last shift at the mine was a Sunday midnight shift in 1902 and we came up on Monday morning to be greeted by the bosses, all toffed up in their suits, to tell us we were dismissed.’

Hope sprang again in 1937 when Lake George Mines Pty Ltd began mining, using new techniques. After much stopping and starting and huffing and puffing, the railway finally came through from Bungendore in 1941. A peak year in Captain’s Flat’s history was 1950 when 185,200 tons were milled, and valued at over two million pounds.

But boom years like 1950 were not enough to secure the town’s future. By the end of the decade the ore deposits had been depleted and further exploration proved fruitless. Talk of imminent closure brought dismay and nostalgia and virtue was seen in even the town’s most unlovable characters — including Billy the Bag Snatcher who had been heavily fined for eating his neighbour’s guinea-pigs.
Which Canberra church was once a railway station? Who is the famous bushranger associated with Lake George? How did Captain's Flat get its name? Who sang the National Anthem at the opening of Parliament House? This book will answer these questions and many more for everyone interested in the history of Canberra and the surrounding area. As well as descriptions of tours to places of historical interest there are many useful hints for the amateur historian, including chapters on recognising local styles of architecture and discovering history from graveyards.

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