Canberra & District Historical Society Inc.

President: Nick Swain  
Vice-Presidents: Esther Davies; Richard Reid  
Immediate Past President: Julia Ryan  
Hon. Treasurer: Julia Ryan  
Hon. Secretary: Vacant  
Councillors: Patricia Clarke, Tony Corp, Peter Dowling, Allen Mawer, Frances McGee, Marilyn Truscott, Ann Tündern-Smith, Kay Walsh  
Honorary Executive Officer: Helen Digan  

CDHS Canberra Historical Journal  
Editors: Kay Walsh and David Wardle  
(Published two times each year)  

CDHS Canberra History News  
Editors: Karen Moore, Sylvia Marchant and Ann Tündern-Smith (Published four times each year)  

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Canberra & District History  
https://www.facebook.com/groups/829568883839247/  

Office Hours  
Tuesdays: 11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.  
Most Wednesdays: 11.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m.  
Most Saturdays: 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon  

Monthly Meetings  
Held from February to November on the 2nd Tuesday of each month  

Until further notice, in the Conference Room, just inside the entrance of ALIA House at 9-11 Napier Close, Deakin.

Front Cover: Pat Wardle, foundation member and then President of the CDHS, demonstrates a possible use of a hipbath in Blundell’s Cottage. The cataloguer has noted, ‘A lovely illustration of her sense of humour’. See Society Wins National Library of Australia 2018 Community Heritage Grant, p. 8-10. Photograph 2525 in the Society’s collection, not digitised.
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**Calendar of CDHS Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong></td>
<td><strong>ANNUAL DINNER</strong>&lt;br&gt;Marking the 65th anniversary of the Society [see p. 5]&lt;br&gt;After dinner speaker: Victor Isaacs on <em>Canberra - What If?</em>&lt;br&gt;The Deck, Regatta Point Barring Drive, Parkes&lt;br&gt;7 for 7.30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 December 2018</td>
<td><strong>Office and Resource Centre close for Christmas–New Year break</strong>&lt;br&gt;At or before 5pm...Helen and Michael have well-deserved time off!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong></td>
<td><strong>Office and Resource Centre reopen</strong>&lt;br&gt;Helen and Michael will be back to keep the Society organised and ticking over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 February 2019</td>
<td><strong>First Members’ General Meeting for 2019</strong>&lt;br&gt;Speaker, subject and venue to be advised by email in the New Year&lt;br&gt;5pm tea/coffee for 5.30pm start</td>
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<td><strong>Tuesday</strong></td>
<td><strong>CANBERRA DAY ORATION: Guest speaker, Dr Marie Coleman AO PSM</strong>&lt;br&gt;National Library of Australia Theatre, Parkes Place, Parkes, at 12 noon&lt;br&gt;Marie was the first woman to be appointed to head an Australian Government agency, in 1974. She was the ACT’s Senior Australian of the Year in 2011. She now heads the Social Policy Committee for the National Council for Australian Women and works with its Australian Women’s Archives Project.</td>
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<td>12 March 2019</td>
<td><strong>Heritage and History Book Fair at CDHS Curtin</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sale of new and used books, items of local, national and international interest. All welcome to join us for wine and cheese.</td>
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<td><strong>Open Day at CDHS Curtin</strong>&lt;br&gt;Book fair continues, plus plants, cakes and bric-a-brac.</td>
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**Other Events**

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<tr>
<td>13 April to 5 May 2019</td>
<td><strong>Canberra &amp; Region Heritage Festival 2019</strong>&lt;br&gt;More at <a href="#">Festival Website</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday</strong></td>
<td><strong>National Trust Open Day</strong>&lt;br&gt;Gungahlin Homestead, 44 Bellenden Road Crace, 10 am – 3 pm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 April 2019</td>
<td><strong>Regional Studies Network</strong>&lt;br&gt;CDHS, Curtin.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Third Wednesday</strong></td>
<td><strong>Living Stones exhibition and guided tours of the Church of St Andrew, 1 State Circle, Forrest. More information from Ann on 62812436 or David on 0402215303</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>every month, from</td>
<td><strong>Armistice and After exhibition, part of When Hall Answered the Call plus A Tale of Two Villages exhibition</strong>&lt;br&gt;Hall School Museum and Heritage Centre, Victoria St, Hall.&lt;br&gt;Groups by appointment with <a href="mailto:museum@halact.au">museum@halact.au</a> or phone: 0408 259 946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>February to October</strong></td>
<td><strong>Regional Studies Network</strong>&lt;br&gt;CDHS, Curtin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.30 – 1.30 pm</td>
<td><strong>Armistice and After exhibition, part of When Hall Answered the Call plus A Tale of Two Villages exhibition</strong>&lt;br&gt;Hall School Museum and Heritage Centre, Victoria St, Hall.&lt;br&gt;Groups by appointment with <a href="mailto:museum@halact.au">museum@halact.au</a> or phone: 0408 259 946</td>
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**Back copies** of the *Canberra Historical Journal* (Nos 1–60) are available from the CDHS Office for $1 each,<br>Issue 61 and onwards cost $10 for members and $15 non-members.<br>(If you have copies of the Journal which you no longer require, the Society would be pleased to receive these. They can be dropped off at the Society’s Office in Curtin—[details on page 2](#).)
ANNUAL DINNER

Marking the 65th anniversary of the Society

Tuesday 11 December 2018
7 for 7.30pm
The Deck, Regatta Point
Barrine Drive, Parkes

After dinner speaker
Victor Isaacs: Canberra - What If?

Victor reading a 1945 edition of The Canberra Times

Long-term CDHS member and former Councillor Victor’s keen interests include transport history, turn of the century Australian history and Australian labour movement history. He founded the Australian Newspaper History group and edited the first editions of its newsletter. Now retired, he worked in the Prime Minister and Cabinet’s International division, with several eventful years in Ministers’ offices. Compulsorily moved to Canberra in 1973, he has never regretted it.

Cost: Members $70; non-members $80
Bookings: 62812929 or admin@canberrahistory.org.au or
Bank transfer: BSB 633-000; Name: Canberra & District Historical Society Inc; Account No.146738141

Please include your name and CDHS Dinner
Extra bookings urgently needed NOW so that we do not have a loss!
This report comes to you after the 3 November Federation of Australian Historical Societies’ (FAHS) Annual General Meeting in Perth. The CDHS has two delegates to the FAHS: Esther Davies (who is also the FAHS Senior Vice-President) and me. Julia Ryan has recently stepped down from the FAHS, having made some significant contributions. John Davies, our IT guru, is the FAHS Executive Officer.

Many historical societies share similar challenges, the main one being the reduction in support from all levels of government whether it be operational grants or the provision of accommodation. For whatever reason, they do not appreciate the value of history to our society or see any political value in supporting it. This is surprising when, for example, you look at heritage listed tourist attractions such as the Australian War Memorial, the Glassworks and the Old Bus Depot Markets. Increasingly historical societies rely on community support.

In some States heritage has come under significant threat from large development proposals such as those in Parramatta and the Victoria Markets in Melbourne. Here in the ACT we can relate to these threats with the 2016 unsolicited proposal for a massive redevelopment of the heritage precinct surrounding Manuka Oval.

This relevance of history to planning was very well illustrated by Jane Goffman in her talk to our October Monthly General Meeting about the history of Dickson and planning for its future.

Back to the FAHS. Improving access to historical information figured strongly. The FAHS is well advanced in upgrading its web site. An important feature will be ensuring it is accessible through the National Library’s Trove facility. Therefore, it is important that, as we upgrade our web site, we ensure our collections are accessible through Trove. Increasing accessibility to our resources is vital to our ongoing viability.

Our collection of awards continues! The Society was awarded a National Library of Australia Community Heritage Grant for a significance assessment of the papers of Patience Australia Wardle (née Tillyard). The Society also received a National Trust of Australia (ACT) award for significant contribution to ACT heritage for the Jefferis-Whelen Journal, a first-hand depiction of Canberra and the ACT during 1926-31.

We are fortunate to have a new volunteer, Allan Coop, who is able to contribute 15 hours a week. Initially his focus will be ensuring that all Canberra Historical Journal articles are entered onto the CDHS on-line catalogue. We will also consider adding significant member contributions from Canberra History News.

As this is the last newsletter for 2018, on behalf of our Council, I would like to heartily thank everyone who has contributed to the Society’s work during the year. I wish all our members the best possible festive season and a new year full of fascinating history.

Nick Swain

For the person who has nearly everything...

...the gift of a King O’Malley bust for only $5.00 from the CDHS Office could make their life complete. Or consider giving tea mugs emblazoned with Society’s emblem: again, only $5.00 each from the office.

Think! Who do you know who lives in the suburb of O’Malley?

Also for $5 each, and suitable for any occasion (even writing at an upwards angle on wall calendars), the Office also sells attractive CDHS-stamped burgundy ballpoint pens.
Minutes of Meeting to Form CDHS

As noted on page 5, our Annual Dinner this year celebrates 65 years since the meeting to found the Canberra & District Historical Society. One historic event which has occurred in the intervening years is the removal of the compulsory retirement age of 65. Thank goodness for that, since we are still going strong as shown by this issue of Canberra History News! Below is a transcription from CDHS Minute Book Volume 1.

A public meeting was held in the Senior Common Room of the Canberra University College on Thursday, 10 December 1953, commencing at 8 p.m.

Professor H. Burton took the chair.

On the motion of Mr W.P. Bluett, seconded by Mr G.P. Murphy, it was resolved:

That a Society be formed, to be known as The Canberra and District Historical Society.

On the motion of Mr L.F. Fitzhardinge seconded by Mr W. Dunbar, the objects of the Society were adopted with amendment as set out in Rule 2 of the Rules attached.

On the motion of Professor Manning Clark, seconded by Professor Spate, Rules 3 to 27 were adopted with amendments in the form attached.

The meeting then formed itself into the inaugural meeting of the Society and elected the following office bearers:

President Mr L.F. Fitzhardinge
Vice Presidents Mr A.D. Campbell
Dr J.H.L Cumpston
Hon. Secretary Miss Erica Campbell
Hon. Treasurer Mr John Bailey
Committee Mrs G. Rudduck, Mrs L. Gardiner, Professor Manning Clark, Professor O.H.K. Spate, Messrs W.P. Bluett, G. Murphy and A.T. Shakespeare.

Mr Long suggested that Mr Bluett’s speech should be recorded for inclusion in the minutes.

Motions expressing the gratitude of the meeting to Mr Bluett for his initiative in the formation of the Society and to Professor Burton for his chairmanship of the meeting were carried by acclamation.

The meeting closed at 10 p.m.

L.F. Fitzhardinge
Chairman 27/9/54’

[Fitzhardinge’s signature and date are in different ink so he has confirmed the minutes at a later date].

The typed Rules of the Society, with hand written amendments, were pasted into the next 3 pages of the Minute book.

Nick Swain

Who was WP Bluett?

Some of those attending the inaugural meeting are still well known 65 years later: academics LF Fitzhardinge, Manning Clark and OHK Spate, for a start. AT Shakespeare is still remembered as the proprietor of The Canberra Times. JHL Cumpston was the first Director-General of the Commonwealth Department of Health. They all have Australian Dictionary of Biography entries (although the comparatively recent death of Oskar Spate currently precludes one for him). Mrs G Rudduck has her own entry in the Australian Women’s Register as Loma Rudduck.

WP Bluett stands out among the others as the one who initiated the formation of our Society. William Philip Bluett was a pioneer settler of the Brindabella district, owning
Koorabri Station. Previously he had worked as a journalist with The Australian Star and The Sydney Morning Herald, and as a stock and station agent. He was an early member of the Progressive Party before becoming Secretary of the Country Party's Southern Tablelands branch from 1919 to 1932. He was a prolific correspondent and exchanged many letters with Dame Mary Gilmore. William Bluett died, aged 97, in July 1968. His papers and family photograph albums are in the collections of the National Library of Australia. How is our Society commemorating him?

Ann Tündern-Smith

Society Wins National Library of Australia 2018 Community Heritage Grant

On 30 October, the NLA announced that the CDHS had been granted funds for a Significance Assessment of the Patience Wardle Collection

A subcommittee, consisting of Pat Clarke, Julia Ryan, Nick Swain, Marilyn Truscott and David Wardle, prepared the submission. The Society has held the Patience Australie Wardle (née Tillyard) Collection since her death in 1992.

The Society’s Council nominated Michael Hall to attend an intensive Preservation and Collection Management Training Workshop in Canberra over the three days from 30 October to 1 November 2018, which formed part of the Grant.

The project will be a significance assessment of the twenty-four archive boxes of assorted paper material in the Patience Wardle Collection held by the Society. The collection includes diaries, correspondence, photographs, papers of assorted community and other associations, and newspaper cuttings covering the years from 1903 until 1992, including 64 years of Canberra’s growth from 1928.

The Collection has clear and defined provenance and is believed to contain unique and important historical information concerning the development of Canberra, its people and their contribution to the Australian nation.

Patience Wardle OAM, 1910-1992, was a foundation member of the Society as well as being a Councillor during 1960-1980, President during 1965-67 and Vice-President in 1970-71. She also edited the original newsletter until 1982. She bequeathed the papers to the Society as a record of her life, as well as that of her parents, Dr Robin and Pattie Tillyard, her three sisters, Faith Evans, Hope Hewitt and Honor Joseph, and her husband, Bob Wardle. The whole Tillyard family and Bob Wardle made major contributions to Canberra’s history and that of Australia.

Most of the Tillyard family members, including Pat Wardle, were recognised by the award of honours,
and are acknowledged in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Most have key papers held in the National Library of Australia.

The project will assess the significance of the Collection according to the methodology outlined in the Collections Council of Australia publication *Significance 2.0, a guide to assessing the significance of collections*. The collection has been sorted and catalogued already, by Nick Swain, a project which took several years. In general, it is in sound condition and is accessible in the CDHS library in Curtin.

The significance assessment project will be undertaken by Anne Claoué-Long, a consultant professional historian with expertise in Canberra history, museum collections and heritage. The chosen consultant is experienced in the significance assessment of collections. Due to the size and extent of the collection, select and experienced members of the CDHS will assist in the project under the direction of the consultant.

*Julia Ryan*

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**Community Heritage Grants Training Workshops**

As part of its Community Heritage Grants (CHG) program, the National Library of Australia, along with other cultural institutions such as the National Archives of Australia and National Museum of Australia, ran a series of workshops on preservation and collection management from 30 October to 1 November 2018. I attended the workshops, on behalf of the CDHS, together with representatives from grant recipients from around the country.

Much of the first day focussed on assessing the significance of collections, the reason for which most of the attendees had received grants. Significance is about the values and meanings that items and collections have for communities. In the context of the CHG process, it is about the national significance of those collections and it is the step taken before conducting a preservation-needs assessment which, if required, can be funded through future grant applications.

Other sessions dealt with disaster preparedness, digitising collections (including negotiating rights and providing access to the digital records) and handling publicity both in traditional media and social media platforms. There were optional sessions held at the National Archives and National Museum repositories, in Mitchell, and at the National Library, which dealt with the different requirements for protecting, preserving and managing collections. The approach varies between libraries, archives and museums, which creates a unique problem for the CDHS because we are a bit of each of them.

The advice from the professionals in their fields is invaluable, in spite of the yawning gap between the resources available to them and a small organisation like the CDHS. There are some simple (and inexpensive) things we can do which will be included in a report to the Society’s council.

*Michael Hall*

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*Marie-Louise Ayres, Director-General of the National Library of Australia, presents our President, Nick Swain, with the certificate acknowledging our receipt of a NLA Community Heritage Grant on 30 October 2018*  
*Photograph supplied by the National Library of Australia*
Over the past four years, CDHS members will have heard a great deal about the on-going project associated with the Jefferis-Whelen journals. In that time, we have received two ACT Heritage grants for the restoration and conservation of the journals and for the publication of a limited number of facsimile copies for research and workshops. The journals have received listing on the ACT Heritage Register.

Further work has been done in preparing an introduction and an index for the three volumes. Workshops associated with the journals have taken place in locations ranging from the CDHS rooms to Lanyon Homestead. More information on this project can be found in the CDHS 2017-18 Annual Report.

It is therefore most gratifying that the CDHS has received public recognition for this work. This recognition has come in the form of an award in the National Trust of Australia (ACT), Heritage Awards 2018. The citation reads as follows: “For Significant Contribution to ACT Heritage – awarded to Canberra and District Historical Society for Jefferis-Whelen Journals – a first-hand depiction of Canberra and the ACT 1926-1931.

The award comes in the form of a framed certificate which will be hung in the CDHS rooms in Curtin. It is reproduced on the next page. Our thanks are due to the National Trust of Australia (ACT) for this award and to all who have given their time and effort for the conservation and promotion of these unique documents.

The National Trust Awards recognise projects in the ACT that make a significant contribution to the conservation of the built, indigenous and natural environment in accordance with the principles set out in the Burra Charter.

This document provides guidance for the conservation and management of places of cultural significance. The Charter sets a standard of practice for those who provide advice, make decisions about, or undertake works to places of cultural significance, including owners, managers and custodians. In the Charter, “Place” means a geographically defined area. It may include elements, objects, spaces and views. This is how the three journals, objects which we have been looking after for some years now, come under the scope of the Charter.

Esther V Davies
Annual General Meeting: 11 September 2018

A good attendance of thirty-one members showed their support for the Society at the AGM held at ALIA House in Deakin on 11 September. The President began proceedings by describing an ACT Government grant received by the Kingston and Barton Residents' Group to conserve and repair some of the original street signs in the suburbs of Reid, Ainslie, Kingston and Barton. The signs are made of pebblecrete with pressed metal sheets, and, both the repair work and painting were carried out by ten volunteers.

The President summarised the minutes of the previous AGM before moving on to matters covered in the Annual Report. He thanked the members for their generous donations and referred to the contributions of Jean Stewart and Alan Roberts during their time on Council. Mention was made of the award of a Fellowship of the FAHS to Richard Reid and the Award of Merit presented to Father Brian Maher by Don Garden and the Irish Ambassador. The life and work of the late Barry McGowan was also honoured, and it was noted that Alan Foskett and Dawn Waterhouse have been included on the ACT Honour Walk. The meeting was advised that the Hotel Kingston has been nominated for inclusion on the ACT Heritage List. A ruling on this nomination is pending.

The Society's income exceeded liability during the year with an operating profit of $4161.51 and a value of $42,035.59 placed on CDHS assets. Copyright profit of over $3,000 should further increase funds. A thank you was extended to Helen Digan for her voluntary work in maintaining the financial information, and the processes associated with reporting and accountability. Trish Parsons was also thanked for her work with MYOB as was the Honorary Auditor, Scott McAlister.

The Returning Officer, Victor Isaacs, informed the meeting that he had received nominations from the Public Officer, Tony Corp, for the positions of:

- President: Nick Swain
- Vice Presidents: Esther Davies and Richard Reid
- Immediate Past President: Julia Ryan (nomination not required)
- Councillors: Pat Clarke, Tony Corp, Peter Dowling, Allen Mawer, Frances McGee, Marilyn Truscott, Ann Tündern-Smith, Kay Walsh.

There being enough nominations to fill the vacant positions on Council, it was not necessary to conduct a ballot for any of the positions. The Returning Officer declared them duly elected. There being no nominations received for the positions of Secretary and Treasurer, nominations were then called from the floor of the meeting for those vacancies. There being none received, the meeting then approved the continuation of Scott McAlister as the Hon. Auditor.

The meeting then finished after discussion on several matters of general business and forthcoming events.

Tony Corp

Our award from the ACT National Trust
for preservation of the Jefferis-Whelen Journals
Jane Goffman is an urban planning consultant, principal of Active Planning and convenor and driving force behind the Dickson Residents Group. After living in Europe and the United States, she moved to Canberra with her husband in 1992 and has expanded her professional role to include that of community advocate and public defender.

In March this year, after four years of challenging a controversial redevelopment proposal, Jane’s group was pleased to see the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal overturn the ACT Planning and Land Authority’s decision to approve a major mixed-use complex of supermarkets, shops, offices and apartments at Dickson. The proposed redevelopment breached a very large number of key rules. Jane emphasised that it is the Precinct Code that carries statutory weight, not the Master Plan for an area, which can be easily disregarded.

This watercolour by the first surveyor of land in Canberra, Robert Hoddle, believed to have been completed between 1832 and 1835, of the Ginninginderry (Ginninderra) Plains is a reliable source of information about the original landscape of north Canberra. Source: National Library of Australia PIC Drawer 3249 #PIC/9220

Jane spoke of the early days of the area and the naming of the suburb of Dickson after Sir James Dickson, thirteenth Premier of Queensland and Federal Minister for Defence for a
short period. Dickson was gazetted as a Division in September 1928 after being earmarked as an industrial area by Walter Burley Griffin, but the earliest houses were not built until 1958. In the intervening period Dickson continued to be used as grazing land by the Shumack family. It hosted Canberra’s first airport in the 1920s, and the CSIRO’s experimental farm covered the eastern third of Dickson plus most of Downer from 1940 until 1964.

A De Havilland DH9 taking off from Northbourne Aerodrome
Photographer, WJ Mildenhall, sourced from Mildenhall’s Canberra, NAA series A3560, item 1517

The remains of 3 Squadron RAAF’s DH9, serial number A6-28, on Northbourne Aerodrome on 11 February 1926, with Black Mountain in the background. The crash killed two airmen who had been arriving from Richmond Aerodrome to make aerial surveys for the Federal Capital Commission
Photographer, WJ Mildenhall, sourced from Mildenhall’s Canberra, NAA series A3560, item 440

Between March 1924 and October 1926, the original airport, then called Northbourne Aerodrome, was located where the Dickson Library, the playing fields, the wetlands, and suburban streets surrounding the Emmaus Christian School are now found. It covered most of the suburb of Dickson east of Cowper Street and south of Antill Street.
Jane has located the 1926 air crash site by overlaying an old Canberra street plan (black lines), which showed the original Northbourne Aerodrome site (red) against modern arterial roads (white) and a recent vertical aerial photograph (with brown contours).

Source: Jane Goffman, available online at Sacrifice during the Survey of Canberra

In 1940, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) was granted a lease for its Dickson Experiment Station. It began growing test plots of opium, rubber and pyrethrum as well as researching ways to prevent disease in vegetable crops and improving pastures for grazing stock.

Jane referred to the 1919 release of Soldier Settler blocks granted to Leo Cameron and Percy Robertson, and other key figures in early development, including Dr Bertram Thomas Dickson, a Canadian botanist. After serving in WWI in France, he was recruited to Australia as first Chief of the CSIR Division of Economic Botany (renamed Plant Industry) in 1927.

Members of the Women’s Land Army cultivating opium poppies at the Dickson Experiment Station

Courtesy Jane Goffman, sourced from the CSIRO Archives
When he retired in 1951, the first town planners working for the Department of the Interior, Trevor Gibson and Oskar Pumpurs, could begin laying out the streets of Dickson as the city's first post-war suburban district centre. Together with Jack Venn, Gibson and Pumpurs went on to form the nucleus of the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC).

Between 1960 and 1965, the Dickson Experiment Station (on the left) had completely given way to the new suburbs, with this aerial photograph centred on Dickson

Source: National Museum of Australia Food Stories, Majura, ACT

The Dickson Library, commissioned by the NCDC and completed in 1969, is regarded as one of the two most important works of architecture in Canberra by the leading local and nationally significant architect, Enrico Taglietti.

Enrico Taglietti's Dickson Library building contains a plaque commemorating the nearby 1926 air crash, but the date on the plaque is incorrect

Photographer Harry Sowden, sourced by Jane Goffman from a brochure produced by the Tagliettis in the collection of the National Library of Australia

Jane accompanied her fascinating discussion with an array of historical images, including the Women's Land Army, photographed in 1943 in an opium field at Dickson; an image of the 1915 Federal Territory and the 1918 Griffin Blueprint showing Dickson as an industrial area with an aerodrome. An intriguing photo of the 1926 air crash at the Northbourne Aerodrome in which two young RAAF airmen met their death, demonstrated the care and attention to detail displayed by Jane. An 1835 watercolour by Robert Hoddle, possibly of Ginninderra Creek, captured our imagination as did a selection of pre-suburban aerial photos.

Jane's talk was a fine example of the importance of historical considerations, balancing competing interests and giving due weight to community aspirations when arguing for good
planning outcomes. A vote of thanks by the President of the CDHS was warmly supported by the appreciative audience. Thank you again, Jane!

**Tony Corp**

### Monthly Meeting: 13 November 2018

**Members’ Night**

Members’ Night at ALIA House, Deakin, was a great success with interesting speakers covering a variety of fascinating topics.

**Jean Stewart** intrigued the audience with her title, *Can-Parra Competition*, which we discovered referred to the interschool visits between Parramatta and Canberra High Schools for around twenty-five years from the late 1940s.

Students were billeted with families while participating in sporting contests, debates, dances and visits to local attractions. The two schools competed for the much-coveted Can-Parra trophy represented by a stuffed koala, later the Koala Cup.

A Canberra victory was once celebrated with a rendition of the school war cry at each railway station on the trip home. The Canberra High *Yarralumlan* and the Parramatta High *Phoenix* magazines as well as local newspapers reported the excitement of these successful interschool visits.

Jean could not find out when and why the competition finished but perhaps one of our readers knows.

**Victor Isaacs** examined the complexities of Australian public holidays in his summary of dates declared as national holidays and those identified by States or Territories.

The Queen’s Birthday holiday is held in June, on the birth date of King George V, despite the Queen’s actual birth date being 21 April, and Victor was able to explain why. Melbourne Cup Day on the first Tuesday in November has been a holiday in Victoria since 1875, Anzac Day, first commemorated in 1916 and there are many others.

Did you know that Royal Hobart Regatta Day was first celebrated in 1838 and that Fiji—despite a succession of coups—still celebrates a Queen’s Birthday holiday? There is the mystery of the semi-public holiday in NSW in August.

Do you remember the Trades and Labour picnic day in the ACT—when attendees had to produce their union ticket and when a lot of people instead went shopping in Queanbeyan? It curiously was celebrated one week after the Labour Day holiday. What about Family and Community Day, swapped for Reconciliation Day?

The list goes on so the variations in all States and Territories might well be the subject of a future book by Victor!

**Richard Reid and Esther Davies** spoke about the graves of William Reid (d.1933) and Sarah Reid (d.1929). They were the parents of WW Bruce Reid, killed at Passchendaele, Belgium, in 1917 aged twenty-three. William Reid worked a gold claim in the Brindabellas, which led to twenty-eight years of litigation over the claim and a Select Committee of the NSW Parliament.
Richard moved to St John's Church in the Canberra suburb of Reid, which has its own war memorial, moved outside after collapsing inside the Church. The Church graveyard contains the resting place of Olive J Reid, who died on 11 September 1917. Her gravestone has an additional inscription reading, ‘Also W.W. Bruce Reid, Killed in Action at Passchendaele, France, Oct. 13, 1917, aged 23 years’. Observant readers will have noted that the gravestone inscription records the wrong country.

In 1992, Richard and Esther produced a kit for schools called, In Flanders Fields, a Canberra Soldier in the First World War, a Case Study. This kit focussed on the evidence and circumstances surrounding the death of WW Bruce Reid. His name is one of the many with unknown graves listed on the Menin Gate Memorial in Belgium.

Richard emphasised that references to local WWI soldiers often point to stories of earlier European settlers such as William Reid at Brindabella, where he had selected land as early as 1878.

The final speaker for the evening, Esther Davies, spoke on a most unusual item from the Society’s collection. It is a framed photograph of an unknown young man, with an inscription on the back explaining that the frame is made of metal from the wreckage of a plane which

Bruce Reid’s commemoration on the headstone of Olive Reid in the St John’s Cemetery in the suburb of Reid

The War Memorial outside St John’s Church, the crack across the middle resulting from the fall inside. WW Bruce Reid is recorded in the lower half of the right-hand column

Photographs this page courtesy Richard Reid
crashed and burned at the old Northbourne Aerodrome on 11 February 1926. (See page 13.)

The crash resulted in the deaths of Flying Officer Philip Mackenzie Pitt and Air Mechanic / Photographer William Edward Callander. It was witnessed by Mr Walter Johnson who later received an award from the Royal Humane Society for his efforts to rescue Callander from the burning wreckage.

This event was also described in an address by guest speaker, Jane Goffman, at the Society’s October monthly meeting. A plaque in the Dickson Library commemorates the event (see page 15).

Two other framed photographs displayed by Esther showed young servicemen in the First World War posing for their families before departure to an unknown future. At the conclusion of the meeting, Esther revealed that the photographs were, respectively, Mr Cecil Henry, first Headmaster of Telopea Park School (later photographed with his staff in 1925) and the school’s second Headmaster, Mr Harold Filshie (photographed with the school prefects in 1931).

It was generally agreed that the evening’s talks were all top rate!

Tony Corp

Below: Front and rear of the photograph framed in metal taken from the wreck of the De Havilland DH9 which crashed on Northbourne Aerodrome on 11 February 1926

Framed photograph of unknown man in the CDHS collection, these photographs of it by Nick Swain
This is the last report for the year. Thanks to the speakers who generously provided their time, knowledge and enthusiasm. We all enjoyed some really interesting talks and, of course, it was a good chance to catch up and do some networking.

At our August gathering Alan Foskett presented an overview of how Canberra has grown over the years in his own story telling style. He gave an enthusiastic big picture talk with many anecdotes and was very well received.

Mark Butz gave us an update of the history of the Jerrabomberra Wetlands area in October, following on from his previous talk to our group on this subject in August 2014. The main development has been the work done on the state-of-the-art World War I training trenches. Mark is highly professional in his presentations and his book about the trenches is available at the National Library of Australia.

November saw a small group head off for lunch at the George Harcourt Inn to celebrate the past year. As usual our conversations ranged far and wide.

Nick Swain

This year, the Canberra District Heritage Symposium took place on Saturday 18 August on the Australian National University campus. The Symposium’s title was Heritage on the Edge: Continuity with Change in Canberra? with the focus on Canberra Modern architecture of the mid-twentieth century.

The day was a success with papers about architecture at its most Brutalist, conservation and development issues for such buildings, community activities, school playgrounds, Canberra’s urban parks, and oral histories, with interstate examples from Armidale and Hobart. Almost seventy people attended, and the papers resulted in impassioned discussion about keeping and valuing heritage in Canberra while change takes place. Many felt that the right balance has yet to be struck in this capital city, internationally valued as a planned city.

As always, the four partners convening the symposium were Australia ICOMOS, the Canberra Archaeological Society, the National Trust of Australia (ACT) and the Canberra & District Historical Society. I represented the Society on the organising committee. We were again supported by the ANU which provided a free venue at the RN Robertson Building. Thanks also go to sponsors Eric Martin and Associates, Canberra Modern, and Philip Leeson Architects.

Marilyn Truscott

Image source: https://canberramodern.com/canberras-modern
Cook’s 50th Birthday Celebrations
10 November 2018

Cook had a very successful fifty-year anniversary on Saturday 10 November with an estimated three thousand attending the celebrations at the Cook Shops, from 2 to 7 pm. Helen Digan and her daughter, Alexandra, set up a display of photographs and information on the history and development of the Cook suburb. Helen outlined the early settlement in the area and the development of the suburb in a talk to the crowd. Alexandra and CDHS member Harrie Quince helped at her stall throughout the afternoon.

Helen gives her talk

Helen, left foreground, with Harry behind her, talks with visitors

Taking photos of the photos:
Note the crowd at the back of this photograph

Catching up with friends in the sunshine, near the Cook history display

Text: Helen Digan; Photographs: Alexandra Digan
**Membership Matters**

We welcome new members Monique Fienberg of Curtin, Barbara Edwards of Watson and David Denham of Griffith, ACT. We regret two resignations, by Jed Bartlett and Kerry Hine and wish these former members well.

Generous donations of books have added important material to our Resource Centre. *From the Bush to The Battle: Gunning District and the Great War* by Terry-Anne O’Neill has been donated by Ben Digan. David Pearson has donated *Fighting on All Fronts: The MHSA battle series Vol 1, 1916-1917*, edited by Paul Skrebels for the Military Historical Society of Australia.

James McDonald has donated his recent publication on *Three Henry Currans: A family history*. Ann Claué-Long has donated a copy of *The Cottage in the Parliamentary Triangle: a social history of the building known as Blundell’s* by Beth Knowles, published by our Society in 1990.


_Helen Digan and Ann Tündern-Smith_

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**Books for Sale at Members’ Prices!**

_The Neighbourhood of Hughes_ by Jenny Tyrrell, $30.00  
_Campbell Community Revisited_ by Alan Foskett, $20.00  
_Cotter Country: a history of the early settlers, pastoral holdings and events in and around the County of Cowley, NSW_ by Bruce Moore, $30.00  
_A Little Bit Australian: a journey from Kharkov to Canberra_ by Alex Jurkievicz as told to Carol MacKay, $17.00  
_Bonegilla’s Beginnings_ by Ann Tundern-Smith, $25.00  
_Building a City: C.S. Daley and the story of Canberra_ by Jennifer Horsfield $25.00  
_On the Back of Two Sheep: a history of George Solomon Webb and his family, pioneer Settlers on the Tidbinbilly and Urayarra Runs_ by Claire Lewis.

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**Membership Subscriptions**

Payments by MasterCard and Visa credit cards and bank transfer accepted

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Contact the Office ([details on page 2](#)) if you would like to join.  
This newsletter four times a year is one of the benefits of membership.
Note to Contributors

*Canberra History News* welcomes article up to 1500 words in length about your research into the history of Canberra and the broader district. Longer articles should be offered to our sister publication, the *Canberra History Journal*. Priority is given to articles from CDHS members. On matters of writing style, our authority is the 6th edition of the *AGPS Style Manual*, on the shelves of the Main Reading Room in the National Library of Australia.¹ The *News* can cope with most word-processing outputs, but not PDF. A PDF file will be accepted for publication only in exceptional circumstances, such as advertising. Photographs should be in the JPEG format, although GIFs are acceptable also for simpler images. This is not an academic journal but, as the CDHS takes copyright law seriously, all sources used should be cited, even if not previously published—for example, personal communications and manuscripts. The *News* uses the Harvard-AGPS referencing system. You can use the Website at https://www.citemaker.com/students/agps/ to help in the AGPS formatting of citations for a reference list, but the correct method of setting them out as footnotes is at Pages 208-215 of the *Style Manual*. Credits must be supplied for all photographs, including those taken by the author.

Deadline for the March issue is Tuesday, 5 February 2019

Be on radio!

ArtSound FM

has asked if we would contribute small articles about local history to be read out on air.

We need five more articles of 200-300 words in length.

Please contact Nick Swain through the CDHS Office (details on page 2) if you can help.

Note to Advertisers

*Canberra History News* welcomes advertisements of interest to our members, which help with the cost of production. We thank local real estate agent, Shane Killalea, and the Barlins of Brindabella Station for their support. Our reasonable rates are below.

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¹ Style manual for authors, editors and printers 2002. 6th edn, John Wiley & Sons Australia, Milton, Qld.
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