

THE EASTLAKER

Issue 5/March 2019

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A free, bimonthly paper serving the inner south east Canberra suburbs of Barton, Forrest, Fyshwick, Griffith, Kingston, Manuka, Narrabundah, Red Hill

First the school, now school bus taken/ District News 3

Eastlake community group reports/ Community News 6

Design of Canberra's 'Initial Centre' / History Notes 12

Hot glass activity@Canberra Glassworks/ Art & Design 14

Traders, residents talk energising Kingston/ Business News 5

Watchdog sleeping as Phoenix rises again?/ Views & Letters 9

Group to promote benefits of local trees/ Environment 13

Finishing Dakar Rally as good as winning/ Sports Reports 16

A Womens' Suffrage Banner inspired the image projected onto Parliament House for the Enlighten Festival

Enlightened moment on the Hill



A banner made by Melbourne-born artist Dora Meeson Coates in 1908, for a London Women's Suffrage procession, aimed at encouraging the United Kingdom to give women the vote, like Australia and New Zealand already had, inspired the image projected onto Parliament House for the Enlighten Festival » Report P2

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Paying lip service to Manuka heritage



The dying London Plane tree, the Minister and the heritage marker



By John Mitchell

On 18.12.2018 Mick Gentleman (ACT Minister for Heritage, Planning and Land Management), David Flannery (ACT Heritage Council chair), Mary Johnston (ACT National Trust representative), Rebecca Scouller (Kingston Barton Residents Group chair) and several curious passers by gathered at the corner of Captain Cook Cres and Franklin Street, Manuka, for the unveiling of an historic marker.

The marker celebrates Some Early Manuka identities, and explains the significance of the precinct as A Garden City Village. Devised by architect Sir John Sulman, the Chairman of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, Manuka was modelled on an English village shopping centre, where retailers lived alongside their shops with their families in cottages, with front and back gardens.

Sites for retail trading in the block bounded by Franklin Street, Flinders Way, Bougainville Street and Furneaux Street were offered for sale at the end of

» P3

Clearly, Transport Canberra and City Services has a left hand, right hand problem

Waste cars 'cleaned out' at public's expense

By John Mitchell

On the eve of Australia Day, ACT Fire and Rescue (ACTF&R) received 50 calls alerting them to yet another fire at the Access Recycling waste recycling facility in Lithgow Street, Fyshwick.

Initially six vehicles attended the blaze and with the assistance of ACT Rural Fire Service, ESA Mapping, ESA Resource Centre and Aviation Rescue Firefighting the fire was contained and controlled. ACT ambulance was required to treat one firefighter for heat stress. The public cost of fire personnel and equipment was significant.

Throughout Fyshwick residents legally occupy leases and some of these are within 200m of Access Recycling yard where ACTF&R have attended fires eight times since 2014. The fires, most notably involving car tyres and interiors, result in cleaned out metal car bodies. In the process of this cleansing, a cocktail of black toxic smoke is belched out over the surrounding urban area.

Earlier on the same day, ACT F&R firefighters extinguished a rubbish fire at the Mugga Lane Resource Management Centre. Following their departure from Mugga, onsite staff used heavy plant to separate the burnt pile from unburnt material. As at Fyshwick, cars now minus tyres and interiors (floc) have been separated and piled up for processing, saving the cost of extraction and transfer of the floc to landfill.

Fires in waste facilities are common. In NSW in 2015 there were 5,600 fires attended in waste facilities. In Canberra, costly waste fires have occurred at Mitchell, Mugga Lane, Belconnen, Hume, Fyshwick and Pialligo. The Pialligo fire burnt for six days and is one of the case studies featured in the Australian Government's publication, Waste Fires in Australia: Cause for Concern? prepared by UTS Institute For Sustainable Futures. The Mitchell fire resulted in an emergency alarm over the suburbs of North Canberra with residents of nearby suburbs needing to remain inside.

Access Recycling is a joint partner with Capital Recycling Solutions Pty Ltd (CRS) in the proposed 300,000 tpa materials recovery facility (MRF), which will be located back to back with the scrap metal yard. In 2016 CRS combined with ActewAGL in seeking to establish Canberra's first Waste to Energy incinerator for the site. Under the Development Tables of the Territory Plan 2008 this urban IZ2 area of Fyshwick does not allow incineration or the railway use intended to transfer waste to Woodlawn landfill. ACTewAGL pulled out of the project, citing opposition from the local community, many of whom would be their customers and shareholders.

However, CRS maintains that because an MRF is allowable in this IZ2-Mixed use industrial area, the associated prohibited activities of the total proposal will be available to the company. It seems ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA) and Transport



Plan showing the area proposed for the waste transfer terminal (blue)/ The Australia Day eve fire at Access Recycling in Lithgow Street, Fyshwick

Canberra and Community Services (TCCS) will concur with CRS despite the increased fire hazard which will result in research established economic, health and social detriment for Fyshwick.

The ACT Government's Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) waste policy is for the Hume Waste Precinct to be the location of a centre of waste excellence in Australia. The Hume heavy industry zone permits such use. TCCS are moving towards curb side collection of food and garden organics for composting.

Astonishingly TCCS, as custodian of the ACT rail corridor has agreed to a rail use licence for CRS. This will enable CRS to construct a waste transfer terminal on the public land- the ACT rail corridor, in order to transfer waste (possibly brought into Canberra) to the Veolia landfill at Tarago. This will be in conflict with the ACT Government's waste policy and will make a mockery of the ACT Waste Feasibility Study. Clearly, Transport Canberra and City Services have a left hand which doesn't know what the right hand is doing.

P1 » Enlightened moment on the hill
By John Mitchell

The 2019 Enlighten Festival is now well underway and will conclude on Sunday 17 March.

The Parliamentary Triangle, and satellite venues, are transformed into vibrant arts precincts showcasing Australian talent, amazing roving artists, live bands and enchanting performances. And many of our iconic national attractions will stay open late to extend the festival experience.

Visitors can tuck into authentic Asian eats, bespoke dessert and a delicious drink or two.

This year the Australian Parliament House has joined the National Portrait Gallery, the National Library, the Museum of Australian Democracy, National Gallery of Australia and Questacon in the Enlighten Illuminations program, projecting thought provoking and moving large-scale images onto their buildings.

The projections appearing on the colonnade of the Australian Parliament House include an image based on a banner

» P3

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Peafowl Management Plan was published in response to complaints made over five years

‘Bundah provides refuge for peafowl



Narrabundah residents with their banner at a local rally/ A street warning sign for motorists

By Timothy DeWan
The Narrabundah peafowl have been part of our local urban landscape for over twenty years. No one knows how exactly they found their way here. One view is that peacocks were kept in a private zoo in Mugga Lane and, when that zoo closed, the peacocks were released and came to us. Others think they escaped from an embassy. Whatever their origins, one peacock (who was subsequently named Henry by the locals) found his way to Narrabundah and decided to stay.
Since then the population has grown to a static population of around 30 peafowl. Whilst every summer a number of chicks arrive, the peafowl suffer from local dog and fox attacks and the little ones are vulnerable to being taken by currawongs.
Many people in Canberra were unaware of the local peacock population until a draft report was released for public consultation by Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) in early 2018. The Peafowl Management Plan was published in response to a very small number of complaints that had been received over five years from a small

number of residents unhappy with the presence of the peafowl due to the sound of their honking, their scratching in some gardens and occasional soiling of footpaths.
Notwithstanding the small number of complaints, TCCS in the draft plan proposed to eradicate the entire population by relocation interstate and, where relocation was impracticable, to euthanise all remaining peafowl that could not be moved utilising a variety of
“.. eradicate the entire population by relocation interstate and, where relocation was impracticable, to euthanise all remaining..”
methods including, as an option, shooting.
The proposed response was totally unacceptable to the majority of residents in the local community. A community action group was quickly established to communicate the issue widely and to garner support to reject the eradication of the peafowl. After a campaign that attracted international attention from news organisations including the

BBC, the Hindu News and RT Television in Russia and after an unprecedented number of Canberrans wrote in support of the peafowl (including Chief Minister Andrew Barr who signed a petition!) the then Minister for TCCS, Megan Fitzharris, announced the peafowl would stay.
The publicity generated by the campaign has attracted visitors to our streets, including international tourists, fascinated with the presence of our colourful birds. Children come to visit to try and collect the beautiful feathers.
The campaign to support our precious peafowl continues. The Narrabundah Peafowl Group is now working with the government to significantly redraft a new Management Plan that supports the concept of peafowl living with the local residents. An important safety initiative we are currently pursuing with the ACT Government is the placing of warning signs near the intersection of Carnegie and La Perouse streets advising drivers of the presence of the peafowl.
We are always seeking new supporters. For further information on the Narrabundah peafowl, visit our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/narrabundahpeafowl/>


P2 » Honouring heritage as reg. tree wilts
1924, and the first shop was occupied by 1926. Soon after, in 1927, the Capitol Theatre, a grand building surrounded by trees and lawns, was built on the block surrounded by Franklin Street, Flinders Way, Canberra Avenue and Furneaux Street.
Addressing the gathering, Mr Gentleman conceded some “contentious developments” had happened over the years in Manuka, and went on to welcome the coming redevelopment of the Stuart Flats site nearby.
An aerial photograph of the precinct taken in 1953 shows many of the ‘shop, dwelling and garden allotments’ were still intact but another, taken in 1961 shows only a handful still there. Now, after the “contentious developments” referred to by Mr Gentleman, the Manuka lawns are all that remain of the original plantings in the Garden City Village’s ‘retail trading’ block and the huge London Plane tree at

“Mr Gentleman conceded some 'contentious developments' had happened over the years in Manuka..”
15 Franklin Street is the last vestige of the planted open space between the original Capitol Theatre and the neighbouring Manuka Post Office.

In 2012 the London Plane was recognised as being of exceptional value, significantly contributing to the surrounding landscape and representing an outstanding example of the species. It was included on the ACT Tree Register and therefore became protected by territory law against damage and/ or removal.
As reported in the December 2018 issue of The Eastlaker, the head of Mr Gentleman’s Planning Directorate, Ben Ponton, has joined a developer proposing a “contentious development” on the site, in an application to cancel the protection of the tree.
Even as Mr Gentleman was speaking at the unveiling, only a block away the London Plane tree at 15 Franklin Street, a last remnant of the Garden City Village, was starting to show distress as unauthorised excavation around its base is threatening its very existence.
It’s been apparent for some time that the Minister ‘doesn’t do’ planning and heritage. Clearly he ‘doesn’t’ do irony either.

P2 » Enlightened moment on the hill
made by Melbourne-born artist Dora Meeson Coates in 1908, for a London Women’s Suffrage procession, aimed at encouraging the United Kingdom to give women the vote, like Australia and New Zealand already had. Meeson’s image has been amplified to include portraits of eight women who have had prominent roles in Australian life.

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Strategy Trojan horse for F'wick waste?

Must find proper, safe solutions for the young school children of Narrabundah

First the school, now school bus taken



Rail spur leading to former Shell depot

By Peter Moore
When Andrew Barr, then Education Minister, notified the residents of Narrabundah that he was closing down the Narrabundah Primary School he gave a solemn undertaking to the school children's parents that he would ensure that the children would have assured access to Red Hill and Forrest Primary Schools and that proper, secure school bus transport would be provided.

This early guarantee has been breached by the removal of school bus services to Narrabundah. The move was a separate part of the already unsatisfactory and highly criticised Narrabundah bus transport changes, which resulted from the Government's so called 'new integrated Public Transport Network.' The school bus removal has caused a great deal of additional distress to the Narrabundah community and justified criticism of the Government's handling of the bus transport changes, which have been unilaterally imposed on Narrabundah in spite of the community's strong representations.

The route changes and removal of the school bus have deprived many of Canberra's most disadvantaged and at risk children, some seven years old and younger, of a direct, accessible school bus which could safely and timely deliver them to and from their schools. These kids now have to catch the ordinary public buses which have limited and inconvenient pick up points and deliver the children to unsafe locations some distance from school entrances. »C4



School children boarding the about to be taken #591 School Bus

By John Mitchell
The Old Narrabundah Community Council, is deeply concerned by one of the issues raised in the Transport Canberra and City Services' (TCCS) draft document, Moving Canberra: 2019-2045: An Integrated Transport Strategy.

In a statement to The Eastlaker, ONCC Chair John Keeley wrote, "In the document, the government offers 'to support increased bulk freight movements.. and link with the developing rail freight (Fyshwick) networks to support Territory and regional economic growth.'

"As the Territory population grows, there will indeed be a need to cater for the increased freight that typically follows. The ONCC thus supports the development of a strategy that accommodates this emerging potential.

"However, the ONCC is deeply concerned at the notion that there is already a 'developing rail freight' facility at Fyshwick. There is no such facility, although ONCC is aware that some time ago a handful of trains, over an eight month period, departed the now abandoned Kingston freight »C2

»C1 terminal carrying scrap metal to Port Botany. Evidently, there was insufficient freight despite the importation by trucks from a wide area of NSW including Wagga Wagga, Cobar, Newcastle, Orange and Bathurst.

"Notably, the recently published NSW Freight and Ports Strategy 2018-2023 has excised Fyshwick as a suitable freight location proposed in its draft. We therefore request that TCCS similarly excise Fyshwick as the location for an intermodal freight terminal from its Transport Strategy.

John Keeley continued,"ONCC is also aware that developers are vigorously pursuing the creation of such a facility in the middle of Fyshwick in order to obtain a return from their purchase of the former Shell site at Ipswich Street.

"Because this site is heavily contaminated, its utility is compromised. But developments proposed by these investors have included a waste to energy incinerator, a major waste facility to identify and separate recoverables from putrescible waste, a facility to tranship all putrescible waste and remnant commercial and industrial to Woodlawn land- »C3

»C2 fill and a freight handling centre.

"For a number of reasons, the community has identified problems with these development applications. The latest proposal involves the alienation of much of the rail transport corridor to allow what freight industry experts would still see as an inadequate freight handling and storage site. With encroachment of more than 18m into the rail corridor, that alienation would of course compromise future rail passenger opportunities for the nation's capital, including light rail, for no nett benefit.

"Another issue is the congestion problems caused by insinuating a freight handling centre in the middle of Fyshwick which is already experiencing road congestion. The inner-Fyshwick road network is certainly not designed to accommodate the movement of many thousands of trucks that some proposals anticipate.

"To overcome the limitations of this Central urban location and to accommodate a properly designed and sized intermodal freight terminal, the ONCC recommends that the government identify a suitable site that can be developed as the Territory's »P5

C2 »First the school, now school bus taken

Narrabundah parents, like other school community parents have strongly protested this unsatisfactory situation but they have been ignored and Transport Canberra now appear to be refusing to take their calls or respond to their concerns. The residents of Narrabundah have noticed, with increasing concern, that the overtures of a number of private and church schools, in the same position, have been quickly responded to and their legitimate concerns addressed.

The Narrabundah parent's view is that it is just not safe and reasonable to impose these conditions and stresses on young, often six or seven year old children, or on their worried parents. It's about time that responsible Ministers, bus transport officials and local Assembly representatives did their jobs, focused on this problem and worked out a solution. Solutions were quickly found for other areas of Canberra, so it's about time that proper, safe solutions are found for the young school children of Narrabundah.

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Precinct continue to grow as a destination while still maintaining its community atmosphere

Traders, residents talk energising Kingston



Kingston Traders and Kingston Barton Resident Group members meeting at Winnings Appliances

By Rebecca Scouller, KBRG President
In February, the Kingston and Barton Residents Group (KBRG), Kingston Traders Group and several businesses met at Winning Appliances showroom to discuss ideas on how to energise the Kingston Shops. With Kingston being one of the most densely populated suburbs in Canberra, and with Barton nearby, we are working together to see the precinct continue to grow as a destination while still maintaining its community atmosphere.

There have been some big changes at, and nearby, the Kingston Shopping Precinct in recent years with the opening of the Ochre Health Medical Precinct and several nearby large residential developments. We will also have the Atria Apartments and Eyre Street Market (including a Supabarn and 13 new stores) on line in April 2020.

This year marks 94 years since the first commercial blocks were sold at Kingston, formerly Eastlake. As we monitor the slow progression of its heritage nomination, traders and locals are keen to embrace the old and the new to return Kingston to being the ‘most popular shopping centre in the

ACT’ as it was described by the Kingston Traders Association in 1958.

The KBRG and the traders have a long history of working together to bring positive change to the Precinct. We have worked on parking modifications and collaboratively with the ACT Government to introduce the share-way on Eyre Street when the Market opens. Extending from this, the meeting discussed ideas for improved pedestrian safety, easier parking, including more appropriate disability parking, and the possibility of more share-ways.

Other ideas to improve the area's public spaces included improving the installation of lights in the trees, especially on Kennedy Street, looking at how we can utilise the garden beds, rubbish management in High-gate Lane and a street art project.

We have been attempting to get some of these projects off the ground for some time. Sadly funding requests to the ACT Government have fallen on deaf ears but we will continue to seek funding either directly or through grants.

The meeting was a great opportunity for business owners to meet each other and for

us to meet them. Together we hope to be able to bring some exciting ideas to Kingston.

We will continue to meet to further develop and implement some of the ideas and will be looking for community representatives of all stages and ages to join us for these discussions.

Thank you to Winning Appliances for hosting the meeting.

P4 » Fyshwick waste freight needs require.

“Interestingly, The Railway Masterplan and the more recent 2016 Building an Integrated Network - Freight, both the result of community and government working together, did not identify Ipswich Street Fyshwick as a suitable location. Indeed, the 2016 strategy noted that with only short branch lines in Fyshwick it was unlikely to find a suitable site in the corridor. Whatever the chosen site, the ONCC suggests that it not be an inappropriate one determined by the needs of developers, but one that allows future growth as determined by the freight needs of the Territory,” John Keeley wrote

More properties sold under hammer

You may have noticed more properties are being sold under the hammer in the ACT than ever before. Why is this happening?

For decades the Auction method of sale has been very popular in Australia’s two biggest real estate markets, Sydney and Melbourne. Auctions in Canberra have only started to gain traction in the past 10 to 20 years. In the early 2000’s changes were made to the legislation that made it mandatory that only registered bidders could bid at an Auction. The process has become more transparent and consequently has been gaining in popularity ever since.

So why are Auctions so successful?

There are a number of reasons. Firstly, Canberra has the best educated population of any capital city in Australia. Canberrans are also very conservative and because of the transparency of auctions they are comfortable because they can see the others bidding as it takes place.

The second reason is more by accident than design. In 2003, 488 buildings were destroyed in the worst natural disaster to ever hit the National Capital. 300+ families were left homeless. Shortly thereafter Auctions became embedded in the Canberra

"The process has become more transparent and consequently has been gaining in popularity ever since."

real estate landscape, with fierce and emotional bidding.

Auctions are a win/win scenario with buyers being able to see the bidding process and participate to their own set limit whilst the sellers have a better than even chance of selling their property unconditionally, within 35 days, at their price!

Canberra’s Auction success rate, whilst being around 60%+ in 2017 eased a bit in 2018 to 50%+ due primarily to the flow on effect of the Banking Royal Commission and the Banks’ inability to approve loans in a timely fashion. You may notice that these days the real estate industry is reverting to a five week campaign rather than four. It is expected though that the banks will ease their requirements shortly or potentially face the backlash from disgruntled customers, investors and governments.

Some sellers are put off Auctions because they don’t want to see their property ‘not’ sell at Auction. It is interesting to note that the Auction success rate rises to between 75%- 85% within one month following the Auction where the property is passed in.

The best advice in regard to an Auction is to give a couple of Agents a call and discuss the best method of marketing, preferably at your home. The advice of course is free of charge and you can then decide which method is best suited to your property.

Michael Kumm, Peter Blackshaw Manuka

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Bi-monthly report from the Eastlake district resident and community groups

Griffith Narrabundah Community Assoc.

Like any group that represents local residents, the Griffith Narrabundah Community Association (GNCA) faces a large range of issues. We are a not for profit organisation whose committee is composed entirely of volunteers. Please visit our website at www.gnca.org.au/ or Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/TheGNCA> for more information. A newsletter is also hand-delivered to over 2,000 households in our area twice a year.

Current matters being addressed include reiterating calls on the ACT Government to honour its election promise to develop a Manuka Precinct Plan (to end incoherent piecemeal development around Manuka), maintenance and development of parks and open spaces, avoidance of degraded air quality and traffic congestion due to the proposed waste sorting facility in Fyshwick, improvement of building redevelopment processes and management, protection of verges and street trees, and engagement with the Government regarding the redevelopment of the Stuart Street and Gowrie Court flats.

We sponsor two active groups engaged in improving park areas- the Friends of Blaxland Park (convenor Mac Howell: machowell@hotmail.com.au), and the Griffith Woodland Group (convenor Libby McCutchan: ianandlibby1@gmail.com). Volunteers are always welcome and it's a great way to meet friendly local residents!

The more members we have, the stronger our voice in the corridors of power. The cost is only about two cups of coffee a year (\$10). So please consider joining. The GNCA website has been updated to make it easier to renew membership or to become a new member. Do it all online in a few minutes! The new system (pronounced Ticketyboo) is at www.ticketebo.com.au/griffith-narrabundah-community-association/griffith-narrabundah-community-association-membership.html

The GNCA Committee elects a Committee of Management at its Annual General Meeting to administer the affairs of the Association. Members include Leo Dobes (President), Venessa Tripp (Vice-President), Deborah Price (Secretary) and Paul Russell (Treasurer).

Leo Dobes, GNCA President

Inner South Canberra Community Council

The ISCCC is preparing for another busy year. We are firming up key priorities for 2019, with feedback supporting advocacy on:

- Integrated and effective planning in the inner south and across Canberra
- Compliance with, and enforcement of, planning rules
- Integrated and effective transport, »C2



TCCS director Geoffrey Davidson speaking at the ISCCC meeting/ ONCC Chair John Keeley discussing the Boomanulla Oval/ The Stuart Flats in Griffith

»C1 traffic and parking management

- Effective community engagement on local planning, development and heritage
- Waste management strategies that minimise health and other risks
- Strengthening ISCCC and member groups' capacity and capability.

Let us know at info@isccc.org.au whether you think these are the most important priorities. Or contact us through Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/InnerSouthACT/>

This year the ACT Government is reviewing the planning legislation and Territory Plan that guide planning in the ACT. Changes may have far-reaching implications. The ISCCC will advocate for inner south residents to have meaningful opportunities for a say.

The ISCCC is mapping out a program of public forums and other community engagement activities for the year, which we will undertake in close cooperation with residents' groups.

Our public forum on 12 February sought community views on the ACT Government's Draft Moving Canberra 2019-2045: Integrated Transport Strategy. It is not too late to express your views on the Strategy, including:

- The proposal to reduce the speed limit to 40km per hour in residential areas »C3

»C2 • Proposed expansion in the use of drones as delivery vehicles

The Government has extended the deadline for submissions to the end of March. Find out more at: <https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/moving-canberra>

Like member residents groups, we remain frustrated that the ACT Government has not fulfilled its 2016 pre-election commitment to establish a community panel to develop a master plan for the Manuka Oval and surrounding precinct. Without such a master plan, individual developments at Manuka Oval, on the Canberra Services Club site, on the Manuka cinema/old post office sites in Franklin Street, and the Stuart Flats redevelopment, all risk major traffic and other impacts that are not being adequately planned for.

The ISCCC will continue to seek greater detail about implications of the Planning Strategy 'Refresh' released by the ACT Government in December 2018. With respect to planned urban intensification along the proposed light rail stage 2 corridor, we would like to ensure there is community engagement on land use along that corridor in advance of light rail construction, not at the end of construction, as has happened with light rail stage one.

Marea Fatseas, ISCCC Chair

Owners Corporation Network (ACT)

A submission by the Owners Corporation Network (OCN) resulted in the establishment of a Legislative Assembly Inquiry into Rates and Land Tax Methodology. The inquiry made six recommendations to Government and the ACT Government has now agreed to act on four of those recommendations, as follows:

Recommendation 1

That the ACT government propose to the Legislative Assembly amendments to Section 8 of the Unit Titles Act 2001 which, if passed, would provide greater transparency on the definition of 'Unit Entitlement' and provide more specific guidance on the calculation of Unit Entitlement.

Response 1

None.

Recommendation 2

That the ACT government devise a new method for determining rates and land tax for unit title properties.

Response 2

The Government acknowledges that there are challenges in appropriately balancing equity across all residential rate payers through the use of a single set of rating factors for houses and units and will consider whether improvements can be made either as part of the 2019- 20 Budget process or through the next five-year phase of tax reform commencing in 2022-23.

Recommendation 3

That the ACT government ensures that the ACT general public is aware of the effect of Section 68 of the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (ACT) in regulating increases of residential rents by including accurate and relevant information on the website of the ACT Revenue Office.

Response 3

None.

Recommendation 4

That the ACT government, in a future review of the ACT methodology for determining rates and land tax, address and respond to perceived disparities between land values attributed to unit title and freestanding dwellings and used as the basis for the valuation based charge component of rates and land tax.

Response 4

Unimproved values are an efficient basis for general rates. The unimproved value of a block is value of the land subject to its highest and best use under the lease conditions. This basis avoids undesirable outcomes such as disincentives for improvements and does not distort decisions regarding the use of land. Other bases can distort decisions of land owners, reducing the efficiency of the tax system.

Recommendation 5

That the ACT government propose to the Legislative Assembly changes to the regime for rates and land taxes which, if passed, would grant full access to progressive »P8

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Bi-monthly report from the Eastlake district resident and community groups

Old Narrabundah Community Council

The Old Narrabundah Community Council Festival is on Saturday 16 March from 10am to 2pm opposite the Narrabundah shops. Come along and enjoy a bbq, listen to some music, meet a local political and buy something from one of the many stalls representing organisations that support Narrabundah. It is a fun day and a good way to meet your neighbours, so come along.

Thanks to the ACT Government Narrabundah is undergoing a review of our playground facilities. A Play Space Design Group has been formed and with the support of Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate Open Space Planning and Policy the community engagement will commence at our festival on 16 March so please stop by their stall and give the Design Group your feedback to begin the discussions.

Interest has been expressed in revitalising the Narrabundah Tennis Courts and talks are underway between the stakeholders and the ACT Government. The options being proposed will inject much needed time and money into the courts and tennis as well as address health issues for our local residents. ONCC will keep the community informed of developments on this proposal.

A reminder to the wider Canberra community to drive by Mill Creek when going through Narrabundah and have a look at the Wetlands Development going on there (off Matina Street). We are excited about the prospect of better water flow into the Fyshwick Wetlands area with the potential for attracting a variety of bird life to this area as the vegetation matures.

Boomanulla Oval is once again starting to look like a first class sporting facility and community interest is heightened as to the likely outcome for the future use of the site. The community is unaware of the Government's intention for the site however we are aware that Expressions of Interest from sporting groups will soon be lodged with the Government. The local Narrabundah community would love to be involved in this process but like a lot of decisions made by Government representatives our community is being left out of the discussions; not the best way to bring a community along on the journey.

The residents of Old Narrabundah continue our fight to regain access to health facilities in the Woden area by public transport after our direct Action bus route was cancelled. To make this issue even worse our local primary students that are forced to go to another suburban primary school after Year 2 have had their school bus cancelled! Bad luck for those families that don't own a vehicle and will now have to walk up to a kilometre to the closest available school bus. We » C2



Members of the KBRG Tree Group at their inaugural meeting/ Concept for the development of Lake Burley Griffin's West Basin

» C1 wonder what Old Narrabundah residents have done to the Barr Government to deserve this treatment, but we vow to fight on.

If Old Narrabundah residents have any items of interest they wish to raise let us know by emailing narrabundah@tpg.com.au

John Keeley, ONCC Inc Chair

Kingston Barton Residents Group

Last month saw the formation of the KBRG Tree-subcommittee. The sub-committee will look at local issues such as the health of our public trees, including maintenance and replacement of trees within Telopea Park, prevention of tree root compaction from illegal parking, in particular on Giles Street outside Goodstart Early Learning and the Kingston Hotel, and broader policy issues for maintaining Canberra's tree canopy.

And speaking of trees, at the time of going to print the ACT Government has just identified that the protected London Plane Tree on the site of the Capitol Theatre Complex in Manuka has been found with a drill » C3

» C2 hole at its base. This explains its quite quick deterioration since December. We hope that the ACT Government takes appropriate action against whomever is responsible for attempting (and possibly succeeding) at killing a protected tree.

In the last week of February, we met with Kingston Traders to discuss ideas for energising the Kingston Shops. We have a long history of working closely with local traders and this meeting was a great opportunity to meet with more local businesses. Winning Appliances kindly hosted the meeting where we discussed a range of issues, including the slow progress of the heritage nomination of original shops to some ideas on safer pedestrian access, better parking, local gardens, street art, rubbish management, single use plastics and tree lighting.

Sadly, our request for funding and support from Minister Steel (Minister for Community Services, City Services and Roads) for tree lights in Kennedy Street was rejected however we will continue to look for ways to implement this idea. The Kingston traders and KBRG will continue to meet to further develop and implement some of the ideas for the Precinct. We will also be calling for community representatives to join us for these discussions.

Over the last few months we have also worked closely with local residents » C4

Lake Burley Griffin Guardians

The exceptionally hot summer we have been experiencing is giving us a taste of summers to come and the need to keep the shores of Lake Burley Griffin full of shady trees and grassy areas. Taking 2.8 ha of lake waters at West Basin, all of its beaches and wildlife habitat in order to fill the area with concreted board walks and tightly packed apartment blocks is abhorrent. Furthermore with the increasing apartment dwellers on Northbourne Avenue and the planned population boom promised from the Barracks complex, West Basin is needed more than ever as a green space for recreation. Although West Basin is degraded with redundant ugly futsal courts it has enormous potential as a significant urban recreation landscape beside our iconic lake.

ACT politicians need to be fully aware that the Guardians and our supporters believe the green resource of West Basin should be protected for future generations. Selling this critical public component of the Lake and lake-shore for apartments will preclude Canberrans use of this valuable resource forever. The lake and its landscape parkland desperately needs dedicated protection like our beaches and like Adelaide Park Lands.

The Guardians are liaising with political candidates for the forthcoming election to establish their attitude to protecting the Lake Burley Griffin landscape resource. Recently, the Guardians gave a presentation on West Basin to the ACT Labor Black Mountain sub-branch and on Sunday 17 March, the Guardians will be participating in an event at Manning Clarke House commencing at around 2.30 pm.

Follow us on Facebook and check out the information on our website: lakeburleygriffin-guardians.org.au

Juliet Ramsay, Convenor Lake Burley Griffin Guardians

» C3 in Belmore Gardens, the Kingston Foreshore and Gosse Street on submissions on nearby Development Applications. We also made our third submission on the same Development Application (it was reopened three times for comment) for the removal of the concessional lease at the Services Club site adjacent to Manuka Oval. We have asked that any decision on the removal of the lease be suspended until the Community Panel (promised by local member and Chief Minister Barr in 2016), Conservation Management Plan and Master Plan for the Precinct has been finalised.

We would like to thank local member, Ms Elizabeth Lee, for writing to Minister Steel on our behalf requesting a water refill station for Telopea Park. We hope to be able to report positively on this next edition.

And on a final note we would like to say Happy Birthday to the Popp Inn who celebrated their second birthday at Telopea Park in February.

Rebecca Scouller, KBRG Chair

Developing away or Bush Capital?

Join the discussion on planning, heritage and urban environment in Canberra

Hear talks by Jack Waterford, Members of Lake Burley Griffin Guardians and John Mitchell
A gathering of journalists, architects, heritage, planning & urban environment experts

3-5pm Sunday 17 March 2019, Manning Clark House, 11 Tasmania Circle, Forrest, ACT



West Basin concept, City to the Lake Strategic Urban Design Framework 2015

Your Local Liberals

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Canberra’s planning mess/ late answer avoids questions

Canberra’s planning is in a mess

In recent years, the private concern of planning professionals with the state of strategic planning and development approvals in the ACT has turned to public outrage as the community has become aware of the extent to which planning and approvals have been compromised

Over the years successive ACT governments have worked over the planning system at considerable ratepayer cost and professional effort. So, what has gone wrong? There are four main areas where the current planning system is failing. These are:

- 1. Confused strategies. Lack of clear, evidence-based strategic planning to inform and direct the provision of sustainable infrastructure and urban development as the city grows.
- 2. Half baked legislation. The current planning legislation, including the Territory Plan and the National Capital Plan, is vast, complex, difficult to work with and yet not comprehensive (eg. Heritage and Tree Protection provisions are in separate legislation).
- 3. Inconsistent process. Development approval processes, including design review, public consultation, decision making and review, are complex, legalistic and inconsistent.
- 4. Biased approvals. The Implementation/ enforcement of development approvals and conditions and consequent actions (eg. lease variation, building certification, tree protection and other environmental matters) is often missing or patchy and seemingly biased in favour of developers and builders.

These four areas of concern will be examined in the next four issues of The Eastlaker by two principal authors who are experienced in the ACT planning system, having previously worked for many years in the ACT Planning & Land Authority (ACTPLA) and its predecessors including NCDC. They are:

- Richard Johnston, former Senior Executive ACTPLA (until 2006)
- Mike Quirk, former Senior Strategic Planner ACTPLA (until 2016)

Part [1] Confused Strategies

Canberra’s high quality urban environment is largely a legacy of the Griffin’s ‘city in the landscape’ and the planning of the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC).

P6 » Owners Corporation Network

scales for rates and land tax to the owners of unit title properties.

Response 5

As noted in the response to recommendation 2, the Government will consider these issues and whether any further improvements can be made as part of the 2019-20 Budget process and the next stage of tax reform.

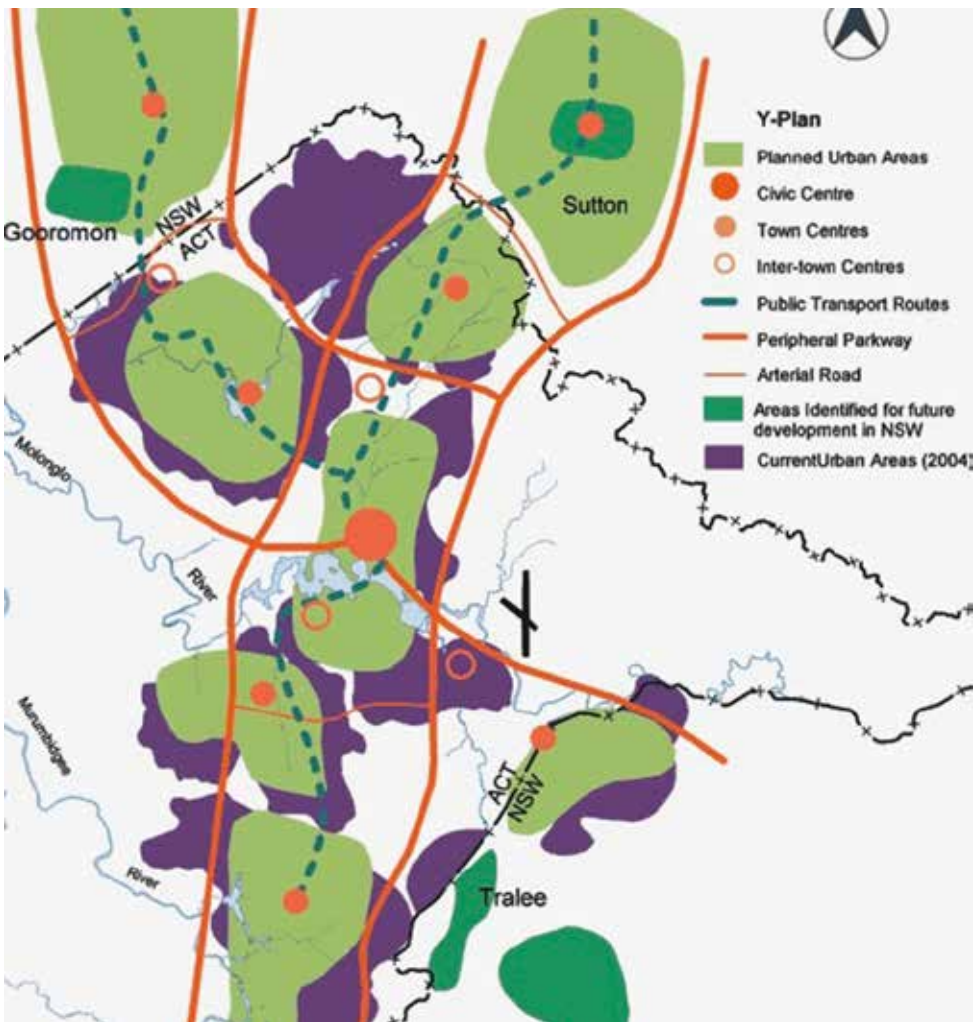
Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that the ACT government conduct a public review of the ACT system for rates and land tax, including and especially rates and land tax for unit title properties, to ensure fairness and consistency, and legislate accordingly.

Response 6

Stage Two of the tax reform process is due to be completed in 2021-22. As part of preparations for Stage Three, which will commence in 2022-23, the Government will analyse the impacts of the Stage Two reforms. We will make the detail of this analysis

Although the responses are perceived to be positive by the OCN there is considerable disappointment in the suggested timing for reviewing reforms. The timing suggested is likely to take any further positive action for strata property owners and tenants out beyond the next election. This suggests these rating and land tax inequities could be an election issue for the strata sector and affected constituents.



The Y-Plan was a key legacy for Canberra from the National Capital Development Commission

» C1 A key legacy of the NCDC, which planned, developed and constructed the city between 1958 and 1989, was the Y-Plan, key elements of which were the development of the Woden-Weston Creek, Belconnen and Tuggeranong new towns, each with a town centre providing significant employment, services and facilities, the facilitation of cross town movement by peripheral road parkways and the inter-town public transport route linking the town centres. Other features of its planning included a supporting centres hierarchy, the provision of integrated pedestrian and cycle networks and the National Capital Open Space System.

NCDC’s planning was an effective response to the planning parameters of its time, especially the availability of cheap fuel and a preference for low density living. The Territory Plan (1993), the Spatial Plan (2004) and the ACT Planning Strategy (2012) progressively recalibrated the Plan in response to the forces shaping Canberra’s development including difficulties in dispersing employment, demographic changes, greater environmental awareness and changing housing preferences.

The major policy shift was an increased emphasis on redevelopment. This, it is claimed, reduces the amount of travel and car use and associated greenhouse gas emissions by placing additional population close to existing employment; supports public transport, walking and cycling; makes better use of existing social and physical infrastructure; eases infrastructure demands on the fringe; widens housing choice and contributes to a more diverse, vibrant, urban environment.

However, the response has been inadequate, with Canberra becoming an increasingly difficult place to live, work, travel around and obtain affordable housing. The implementation of redevelopment policy has been flawed, with widespread community concern over: major development proposals including City to the Lake and the Yarralumla brickworks; the poor design and construction of redevelopments with inadequate greenspace, access to sunlight, protection from overlooking and noise and diminishing the quality of residential streetscapes.

Concerns have also been expressed about the failures to: develop signifi-

» C2 cant employment at the Gungahlin Town Centre (partially a result of uncontrollable development at the Airport); justify light rail; provide sufficient public transport and social housing; and justify ad hoc land purchases to the west of the city.

Unfortunately the recently released Planning Strategy “refresh” does not provide a sound basis to guide development as it fails to analyse the merits of alternative residential and employment strategies and housing preferences or demonstrate light rail is the most cost effective approach to increasing the use of public transport.

Its weakness is demonstrated by its adoption of a 70 per cent infill/ 30 per cent greenfields target despite NOT:

- (a) Substantiating the relative cost of greenfield and infill development including the extent of spare capacity in infrastructure in established areas;
- (b) Demonstrating Kowen (east of the city) has significantly higher infrastructure and environmental costs than the preferred western areas. Given its extensive pine plantations and proximity to employment it could have lower environmental and travel costs;
- (c) Evaluating strategies to increase employment in the new towns such as advocacy, rate holidays and land grants in response to the identified mismatch between jobs and population. The current laissez-faire approach where employers locate regardless of the congestion and other costs they impose is inadequate.
- (d) Providing a costed infrastructure plan indicating when and where development is to occur;
- (e) Substantiating the assumption that the trend to smaller households represents a preference for higher density housing. The increase in demand for such housing could be a product of congestion and high housing costs;
- (f) Analysing the water and energy use of alternative dwelling types;
- (g) Recognising that if insufficient land is provided for detached housing, demand will shift over the border resulting in increased travel and associated greenhouse emissions, reduced population based grants from the Commonwealth, reduced conveyancing and rates revenue to the Territory and additional costs to the ACT in servicing the regional populations.

The Eastlaker publishes without fear or favour, but writers are encouraged to deal with issues, not personalities.

Five month late answer avoids questions

Those who can remember that the Old Narrabundah Community Council wrote to the planning minister, Mr Gentleman, on 7 June and 15 August 2018, can now rejoice that the minister replied, on 22 January this year.

ONCC had asked the minister to establish an inquiry to examine why the government had made two decisions under the Planning Act— concerning a proposed material handling facility at Fyshwick— that were illegal. An inquiry was especially warranted because local residents had told the government of the illegalities many months before the government got around to rescinding the decisions.

The minister said he had not received the first letter, notwithstanding that he acknowledged its receipt. And he apologised for taking five months to respond to the second.

Unsurprisingly, there will be no inquiry. Mr Gentleman assures us that his planning authority has undertaken “significant work” to ensure all is well. Those officers who made unlawful decisions acted in good faith and there was no political interference. Mr Gentleman did not mention the fact that he was advised that the chief minister had approved one of these related decisions before he (Mr Gentleman) exercised his discretion under the Planning Act.

Those of us who wonder why we are blessed with one of the worst planning authorities in Australia— one where taller buildings are always better and developers are never to be disappointed— will find no solace in Mr Gentleman’s views.

Tony Harris
Captain Cook Cres, Narrabundah

» C3 Evidence is still needed to determine how best to accommodate growth whilst promoting liveability, affordability and long-term sustainability in the context of demographic, social, economic, environmental and technological changes. Further work is required to identify the implications of alternative patterns of development, the infrastructure required and the mechanisms available to implement a preferred strategy.

The ongoing strong demand for detached dwellings and the desire of people to age in place suggest that the vision of a higher density city, with cafes and bars (and the often associated congestion) is not the desired lifestyle for all. While such areas have appeal, especially to the highly valued creative class, opportunities also need to be available for people wanting a detached dwelling well serviced by transport, retail and community infrastructure and employment.

Planning since self government has become dominated by short term revenue considerations reflecting the influence of the election cycle and the unquestioning acceptance of advice from the development lobby and bureaucrats in Treasury and the Chief Minister’s departments. Planning agencies have been relegated to development facilitation.

Improved outcomes require the establishment of a well-resourced planning and development authority with skills and power to recommend and implement evidence-based and community-supported planning strategies.

An authentic metropolitan assessment is needed for Canberra to avoid a low amenity, low liveability future and enable it to become an exemplar of a liveable, financially, socially and environmentally sustainable 21st century city.

NOTE » Part [2] Half baked laws will be in The Eastlaker #6 which will appear in June 2019.

Kingston's public infrastructure substandard

Kingston is a great place to live with excellent bus services and close access to shopping. Supermarkets in Kingston and Manuka, fresh produce at the Fyshwick Markets and the Old Bus Depot Market at weekends offering local produce, jewellery and clothing made by Australian designers, all within walking distance. And nearby, the Fyshwick Outlet Centre shops offer household goods and clothing.

I live in Cunningham Street, in the older area of Kingston. Here the pavements, and walkways are shabby and neglected, with narrow, broken, old pavers, and nature strips with more dirt than grass. Very ugly. When the sun sets the street lights are totally inadequate and you have to find your way home in the pitch black night if you are walking or, when driving, with your car headlights on high beam. This is most unsatisfactory for safety reasons and also creates a lack of pride in the area.

The rates paid by the large population of Kingston residents must swell the coffers of the ACT government. I would like to know how much revenue Kingston residents contribute. Surely monies could be made available to fix up the substandard public infrastructure in the older part of Kingston.

Lucille Rogers
Cunningham Street, Kingston

Trees compromising plan for Bush Capital?

I refer to the report 'King and Queen, Hatter, Rabbit, Alice and Tree' in the last issue of The Eastlaker which noted that the ACT Chief Planning Executive Ben Ponton had joined the developer in an application to cancel protection of the London Plane tree at 15 Franklin Street, Manuka. He argued that protection of the Tree will significantly compromise the broader strategic planning objectives of the Territory Plan.

If the existence of a healthy tree compromises the broader strategic planning objectives of the plan for the Bush Capital then, clearly, the plan itself has become seriously compromised. Trees were at the heart of Walter Burley Griffin's plan for Canberra and, over time, have come to define the character of the city. If the current planning administration have different strategic objectives for our city, and particularly the areas

"If a healthy tree compromises the plan clearly, the plan itself has become seriously compromised."

developed pre WW2, they need to start explaining and justifying them.

Canberra has plenty of examples of new commercial development happily coexisting with existing trees, to the benefit of developers and the community. The Aubergine restaurant at Griffith shops (see photo) proves that a new building can be built incredibly close to an existing large tree. With appropriate design, the tree has thrived and the business has gained from the ambience provided by the tree. The tree also contributes significantly to the amenity of the upper floor dwellings, community space and shopping area adjacent to the restaurant development.

It should be remembered that the developer strongly resisted the idea of retaining the tree. Like most short-sighted, money focused operators, they saw the tree as an impediment instead of an opportunity. Community objections forced them to retain the tree. Now, no doubt, they will be taking credit for the tree being there and the restaurant being such a success. If they had removed or poisoned the tree, however, it would be a very different story.

Stan Bevanda
Narrabundah



The kept tree at Aubergine, Griffith/ When sun sets the Howitt Street lights are totally inadequate/ Defects at Elara apartments, Bruce/ "their harsher and their milder greys."

Watchdog sleeping as Phoenix rises again

The very recent Apartment Building catastrophes with Elara in Bruce ACT, Opal in Sydney and 200 Spencer Street in Melbourne (cladding fire) have created significant interest and concern for apartment new buyers, owners and occupiers in Canberra. The defects in Canberra apartments was first raised by the Owners Corporation Network (ACT) in 2010. We now have an ACT Minister for Building Quality so there is little debate that the defects exist and that it is a major problem for our community and economy.

Despite several Government reports following on from many public forums and government focus groups the defect problems continue to surface. A Legislative Assembly inquiry has now been established and has received around 100 submissions covering up to 80 apartment complexes where consulting engineering reports have been completed and legal action is in progress. Proposed Public Hearings and Interviews should begin during March and continue through to August 2019.

Compliance management of the complexes against the plans approved by the Government (Access Canberra) remains a serious concern. Recently the Government suggested buyers and owners should carry the responsibility for compliance. With more open information on the quality delivered by named developers and builders, purchasers could make more informed choices, but this should not replace the Government's responsibility which is paid for by the rates, stamp duty and land tax collected by the Government.

Lack of approved detailed design and then combined supervision by original architects and engineers supporting an independent certifier, remain as serious contributors to defects. It should also be recognised that for most developments the developer, as the initial owner, will only remain the owner until sales are complete usually within a couple of years. This suggests medium to longer term sustainable quality does not rate as their highest priority; profit is often a higher priority than quality.

With regard to Phoenixing, the Hansard record of the Legislative Assembly »C3



Our lake captured in a poem titled 'Lake'

*Thranging with its silent carp
and rich with blue green algae,
it has no meaning in itself*

*and yet each day it draws me back,
each morning with its separate sky,
gunmetal grey, cerulean blue,*

*ruffled slightly or quite still
inverting our expensive buildings.
Arrive too late, the wind's already*

*cancelling reflections
and, like the sky, the water's dull.
The day has lost its blue enamel,*

*its rippled answer to the sun.
Such days one's tempted not to count
and yet they rise so often with*

*their harsher and their milder greys.
Swans and wood ducks, coots and gulls
supply a definition,*

*bobbing on the rise and fall
or, on a perfect day at ten,
bouyant on the stillness.*

*Each day I walk the concrete edge
heading for a well-wrought coffee.
It too will vary slightly.*

Geoff Page
Narrabundah

» C3 be 3.1 per cent, a little over inflation. Worse, the Environment suffered a real fall in its budget which was to increase by 1.8 per cent. But spending on Social Protection suffered more. Its budget involved a nominal fall of 6.2 per cent, about a 9 per cent fall in real terms. Perhaps the Government is not aware of the increasing needs of the poor.

None of this seems to meet the stated aims of a Labor Government. Indeed, the increased provisions-10.6 per cent-for Public Order and Safety could allow voters to wonder about the government's priorities.

The February mid-year review updated these figures, though few details were provided. Territory taxation is now estimated to be growing by nearly 11 per cent and expenses will now grow by an expected 5.7 per cent. While total revenue growth has fallen to 3.8 per cent, revenue and spending are still way above inflation.

Partly because spending is outstripping income, the operating surplus is almost negligible. True, nett debt at June 2019 is expected to be \$30 million less than last year's, but nett financial liabilities will grow by nearly \$140 million.

All in all, the budget does not allow any confidence in the Government's fiscal skills. In 2011/2012- in the aftermath of the great recession- the ACT recorded a healthy operating surplus and had no nett debt. Since then, notwithstanding good economic growth, we have had nothing but deficits and nett debt has increased to an expected \$2.1 billion. Let us hope that the next recession is still far away.

Tony Harris
Narrabundah 2604

» C2 question time for 20 February 2019 relative to the alleged defects on Elara in Bruce provided the following answer from Minister for Building Quality. "Can I say again that that builder's licence has been surrendered. They will never build in the territory again. Ten years have passed and the builder is no longer licensed. The developer has been wound up." Interestingly, in the Canberra Times on 21 February, reference was made to the same family name associated with development and building of Elara, for a hotel complex in Bruce. Is it possible there is a name connection here and that Phoenixing is still up and running in the ACT?

Buyers need to be particularly aware of all of the above points when buying off the plan. And our Government Regulator needs to start taking his job seriously and provide ACT apartment owners with the protection they deserve (and pay rates, duties and taxes for).

Gary Petherbridge, Owners Corporation (ACT) Network Chair

Government playing with budget numbers

The relatively small ACT budget means it is easily buffeted by factors such as its asbestos removal program or the shift from stamp duty to land tax. But a look at the Budget brought down last June and revised this month suggests that the Government has been playing with numbers.

One thing is clear, the ACT's growth in total revenues, revised down to 3.8 per cent, is much stronger than the expected 2½ per cent increase in wages. And the growth in the Territory's taxes, budgeted to be 10 per cent, also dwarfs wage raises enjoyed by residents.

One might expect that such a surfeit of revenue would be allocated to critical areas of expenditure or even a reduction in debt. But budgeted spending shows no emphasis on matters that are highly valued by voters. The Government originally allocated a 0.1 per cent increase in Health spending, much too little to meet the needs of an ageing and growing population, let alone the increase in health costs from new drugs and technology.

Education was also a neglected area. Increased sending was budgeted to »C4

Christmas Carols/ Invasion Day Rally/ Brodtman farewell

Christmas Carols at High Court



The Canberra City Band played to a full house at the Christmas Carols Concert, held at the High Court in December

Invasion Day Rally at Tent Embassy



Hundreds of people marched through Canberra to the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Parkes to protest Invasion Day In January

Christmas Carols in Telopea Park



A 100 strong crowd gathered in Telopea Park for the Canberra Baptist Church's annual singing of Christmas Carols

Brodtman farewell



Marea Fatseas and Rebecca Scouller at farewell for member for Canberra, Gai Brodtman

Benignetti Duo



Eleonora Spina and Michelle Benignetti performing at the High Court in February

'House of Bubbles'@Bowen Park



the 'House of Bubbles' served champagne, cider, beer and sparkling water from a restored Citroen 'H' van in February

Three exhibitions at M16 Gallery



Crowd at the opening of exhibitions of works by Pfeiffer, van Gorsel, Costa, Mohell, Scheidel, Pollock, Dudley, Chancellor, Yu, and del Castillo at M16 Artspace

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The Richie Benauds/ Test Match ‘success’/ Enlighten Festival brightens/ Bauhaus celebrated

The Richie Benauds in Kingston



Members of the Richie Benauds choir walked through Kingston on their way to the Test Match at Manuka Oval

Manuka Test Match hailed as ‘success’



Part of the crowd that flocked to Manuka Oval for the Test Match

Enlighten Festival brightens Parliamentary Triangle



An illuminated ‘soft’ sculpture and a rocking band enlivened and enlightened the Parliamentary Triangle



Photo Access celebrates the Bauhaus



Visitors to the Photo Access exhibition which celebrated the the influence of the Bauhaus School on international art an design

‘Pop in’ pop up bar in Telopea Park



The ‘Pop in’ pop up bar recently celebrated its birthday in Telopea Park

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An overall design approach, public open space and tree-lined streets

The design of Canberra’s ‘Initial Centre’

A 1912 plan of Canberra, prepared by Walter Burley Griffin, labelled the site of Manuka as an ‘Initial City’ to serve the new city, pending completion of the major centre proposed at Civic. Drawings for the development were completed in 1924 and the first shop completed late in 1925. However, in an act of bureaucratic bastardry, not the first and far from the last in the planning of Canberra, a rival proposal for a centre in Kingston (then Eastlake), waved through in the absence of the chair of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, was completed earlier in 1925.

The following essay on the design of the Manuka Centre, written by architectural historian Ken Charlton, appears in the centre’s definitive history, ‘Manuka; History and People 1924-2014’ by Nick Swain and Meryl Hunter.

The design concept for the Manuka centre was devised under the direction of Sir John Sulman (1849-1934), during his term as Chairman of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee. Since the late nineteenth century, Sulman had promoted the understanding of town planning for Australian conditions, culminating in his 1921 text book *An Introduction to the Study of Town Planning in Australia*.

His concept for the Manuka Centre reflects the principles he espoused, particularly the garden city traditions of stressing the importance of an overall design approach, and the provision of public open space and tree-lined streets. He had written “In the shopping district the needs of the retailers would be better served by co-operative building in large blocks, rather than by small places erected by themselves, or by others for them as tenants.” He seized the opportunity to do this. Sulman may well have recalled his childhood in England as the son of a shopkeeper, when he realised how convenient it would be for a family to live in a cottage beside their shop. He believed single storey cottages were ideal for Australia, complete with front gardens and rear yards, which explains their presence in Manuka.

The initial design was a response to the site occupying a crescent between what became Franklin and Bougainville Streets shown in Griffin’s 1918 Plan of Canberra. The axis through that crescent was on Griffin’s 1912 original plan, from the centre of East Basin to his “Initial City.” The layout of the centre was quite mannered in its strict symmetry and generally complied with a remarkably thorough set of drawings entitled ‘Building Plans For Retail Trading, Manuka Centre, Canberra.’ Griffin’s axis was to be continued, first through a rather chic arcade of shops, with offices above. Shoppers would be able to emerge from the arcade, still along the axis, across a service lane to a reserve flanked by single-storeyed shops– the beautiful space we appreciate today as The Lawns. Although the press



A 1933 Department of the Interior map of Canberra showing the Manuka Centre (Shops) and the Capitol Theatre sites/ A 1953 aerial photo of the two sites showing some of the ‘Garden Village’ sites still intact

reported in 1926 that the reserve was the site for a post office, the architects seemed to have no such intention in 1924, as no building was shown there in the detailed design.

Control drawings of the Manuka Centre, dated 18 November 1924 were prepared in the Works and Railways Department,

“.. the needs of the retailers would be better served by co-operative building in large blocks..”

Melbourne, at that time headed by John Smith Murdoch (1862-1945).

Sulman wrote in 1890 “As a source of beauty the curved line is of inestimable value,” so the shopfronts were planned along the curves of Franklin and Bougainville Streets, but in segmental lines for practicality. As the Canberra climate was bright and sunny, he preferred buildings in the “Modern Italian” style, having low-pitched

roofs hidden behind parapets and cement-rendered masonry walls with “ornament therein.. flat and delicate rather than bold and projecting.”

This is well illustrated in the design of the arcade which largely survives externally. It was a refinement of the arcade shown in the Works and Railways drawings. Facades similar to that of the arcade, each with a central semi-circular upper window, were repeated in those drawings on two-storeyed portal buildings spanning the entrances to the service lane from today’s Furneaux Street and Flinders Way. They would have resembled medieval gateways. The Canberra Times reported this was to provide “a neat design without undue gaps in the external architecture.”

Building proposals were left to the private owners, and each pair had the same owner. The pair in Flinders Way was acquired by the Canberra Building and Investment Co, but probably because of the company being in financial trouble in 1927, only single-storeyed shops were built. The

pair in Furneaux Street were also built of single storeys, although two-storeyed shops were being planned in 1926. Entrances to the lane from Bougainville Street were also distinguished by single-storeyed portal buildings. The cottages, in pairs set back behind more or less square gardens, each had a verandah under the main terracotta tiled roof, just as Sulman, who criticised ‘flimsy’ verandahs, advocated.

There were some adaptations to classic Garden City principles. Rear lanes were considered a relic of bygone eras when night soil was collected. However in this combined business and residential area service rear access was needed. Today the internal laneways have contributed to the ease of pedestrian access through the centre, albeit shared with delivery vehicles.

Home ownership was strongly advocated by the Garden City movement but in Canberra public servants preferred to rent from the government. By contrast, the Manuka shops and cottages were private sector owned. Many of the Manuka cottages were owned by the shop owners, although in some cases they were rented out.

The schedule on a poster for the 1924 sale of leases.. specified what should be built on each block(1). Sixteen blocks were to be

“..very explicit location of cottages with small front gardens next to most of the shops.”

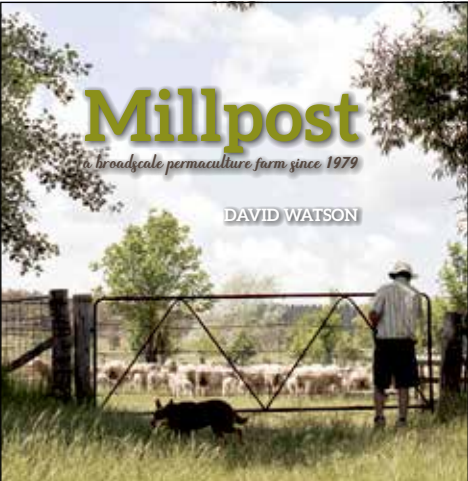
single storey buildings including a shop and dwelling attached. The attached dwelling would have a garden plot fronting the street. Four blocks were smaller and were for a shop only. Two large blocks alongside the reserve were for a maximum of five shops each. The remaining block was for a two storey building with up to 12 shops on the ground floor and the ‘upper floor to be used as offices, consulting rooms, work rooms, sample rooms, with or without business connexion with shops on ground floor.’

The Manuka Centre was not the only Garden City shopping centre in Australia. Others were built at Yallourn in Victoria and Daceyville in Sydney. All departed from the traditional High Street model. If Manuka had a major distinguishing feature it was the very explicit location of cottages with small front gardens next to most of the shops. Not everyone appreciated this feature. Jim Gibbney wrote that “..the planned mix of shops and cottages deterred shoppers, who called it ‘hit-one miss-one Manuka.’”(2)

The Manuka Centre owed much in its early decades to the skill of many architects, and despite considerable rebuilding later, the best features of the original concept can be appreciated today.

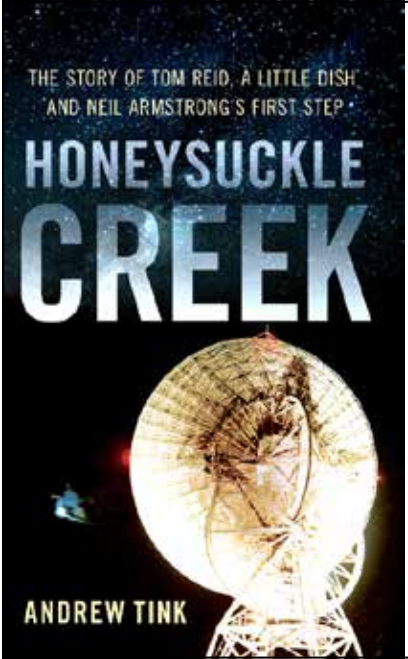
(1) Poster for the first sale of leases in the Federal Capital territory, published 12 December 1924. CDHS Collection.

(2) James Gibbney / Calthorpe’s Canberra: the town and community in 1927/ AGPS, Canberra, 1986, p18.



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THE STORY OF TOM REID, A LITTLE DISH AND NEIL ARMSTRONG'S FIRST STEP
HONEYSUCKLE CREEK
ANDREW TINK

Most of us have seen the movie *The Dish* but few know the reality behind the televised images of Neil Armstrong’s first steps on the moon. *Honeysuckle Creek* reveals the pivotal role that the tracking station at Honeysuckle Creek, near Canberra, played in the first moon landing. Andrew Tink gives a gripping account of the role of its director Tom Reid and his colleagues in transmitting some of the most-watched images in human history as Neil Armstrong took his first step. Part biography and part personal history, this book makes a serious contribution to Australia’s role in space exploration and reveals a story unknown until now. “A wonderful and inspirational story, beautifully told. As hard as it is to do this extraordinary yarn justice, Andrew Tink has done it.” Peter Fitz Simons

Published by NEWSOUTH/ RRP AU\$34.99

ANDREW TINK is the author of celebrated books including *Lord Sydney: The life and times of Tommy Townshend, Air Disaster Canberra and Australia 1901–2001*. His biography *William Charles Wentworth* won The Nib award for literature in 2010.





BEN AND HIS MATES

The War diaries, letters and photographs of Lieutenant Ben Champion 1st AIF, 1915-1920
Edited by Penny Ferguson
Available from 13 November 2018 at:
Paperchain Bookshop, Manuka
National Library Bookshop, Parkes
Portrait Gallery Bookshop, Parkes

Canberra's collective Urban Forest is one of the most famous urban treescapes in the world

Group to promote benefits of local trees

Press Release

In her report in the Community section of this issue, Kingston Barton Residents Group (KBRG) Chair Rebecca Scouller noted the formation of a subcommittee of the Kingston Barton Residents Group to raise public awareness about trees in our suburbs and promote their numerous environmental, historic and aesthetic benefits. The KBRG Tree Group is already working on several projects and welcomes those who may be interested in joining.

Benefits of Canberra's urban forest

The wealth of trees in our parks, streets and on private land help to make our suburbs highly desirable places to live and Canberra's collective Urban Forest is one of the most famous urban treescapes in the world.

Recent CSIRO research on surface urban heat identified the importance of urban trees and lakes in keeping our city cool and people healthy. And an ACT government Information Paper identified multiple 'ecosystem services' benefits of our local trees while acknowledging that more needs to be done to retain and extend Canberra's Urban Forest.

Why register trees?

Following informal discussions with the ACT Government, the Group is identifying exemplary trees that are strongly valued by the community so these can be nominated to the ACT Tree Register, focussing on public land.

The Tree Register (https://www.tccs.act.gov.au/city-living/trees/act_tree_register) records information including heritage, landscape and aesthetic contributions and scientific values of trees. This enables the ACT Tree Protection Unit to monitor important trees and coordinate with other agencies to protect against inadvertent removal or damage. Trees on public land are managed by the ACT government, although funding is constrained with only four staff working

"..monitor important trees and coordinate with other agencies to protect against inadvertent damage."

in the Tree Protection Unit to cover the whole ACT. Water issues are an ongoing concern—while contractors to the ACT government do water newly planted trees for several years, residents need to take care of their nature strip and should water trees to keep them in good condition.

Having grown up in Morocco, where every tree is so precious in a dry climate, Group co-convenor France Meyer helped to replant the double circle of trees that once shaded the oval of Telopea Park School and also volunteers in the Friends of Jerrabomberra Wetlands group. "I love the trees in Canberra and I want to find ways that community action can help ensure their survival in facing



KBRG Tree Group co-convenors France Meyer and Janet Hughes with a group of cedars in Telopea Park/ A 1950 aerial photo showing early planting of the park

climate change, development pressures and neglect. Currently there are only three registered trees in Barton and five in Kingston, yet we know there are many additional important trees that should be registered," said Ms Meyer.

Approach to the task

The Tree Group is organising 'field visits' to record details of the relevant trees, and to enter this information on the website for nominating the trees. The group has also identified sources of information on the history of trees planted in our area. The group is not currently planning to undertake maintenance work such as pruning, although this is being done by other tree groups with government agreement. However, the group will notify Access Canberra where damaged or missing trees are identified on public land.

"It is important to ensure professionals are engaged to conduct work that requires specialist training and equipment and we want to advocate adequate resourcing of the dedicated and hardworking staff who do this work," said Dr Janet Hughes, the other group

co-convenor, who has a background in policy, heritage and environmental issues.

The Group has already received requests for help from the community regarding how to protect nesting trees for rare fauna on apartment blocks, how to find where a tree approval is permitted, etc and received many queries asking what government agencies are doing about elm beetle infestations. "We have certainly found that forming this Group is a good forum for listening to community concerns about our trees and we will progressively try to draw attention to key issues," said Dr Hughes.

"We know that it is unrealistic to expect to keep every tree in every situation and there are good reasons why trees sometimes need removal but this should be based on fair and clear reasons. We must all consider the net positive benefit of trees and support policies to ensure planting of trees on private land to complement street trees and those on the increasingly scarce community land," added Ms Meyer.

If you would like to be involved with the group contact kingstonandbarton@gmail.com

P16» Australian Nationals@CORMCC

The Australian Nationals for 1/8 scale Buggy 1C were held at the Canberra Off Road Model Club's (CORMCC) track at Narrabundah last weekend.

CORMCC President Nick Chatzigeorgiou said the four day Buggy Race meeting was a complete success. The weather was favourable for all of the four days and, with Australia's best drivers attending, we saw some very competitive racing.

"The newly built nationals track grooved up half way through the first practice session and provided a perfect surface. Canberra's 'blue groove' clay, has a hard cement like surface, allowing highest grip and traction and is known to provide the fastest grooving in Australia.

"The track is complimented by our well designed wash bay, large driver stand and tall race control, making it the best facility in the country.

Some of the results are:

Buggy 1 hour

Main race after 6 X 10 minute qualifiers/ 68 buggy entries

(1) Kyle Mc Bride (2) Aaron Stringer (3) Craig Laughton (4) Alex Bernadzik (5) Zac Ryan (6) Shane Kelly

Truggy 45 minute

Main race after 6 X 10 minute qualifiers/ 28 entries

Racing was fierce and with scrutineering after every race ensuring cars are all within specification.

(1) Kyle Mc Bride (2) Alex Bernadzik (3) Caleb Noble (4) Peter Sekold (5) Aiden Palant (6) Michael Stone

"I would like to thank all involved in making these nationals a success," Nick said.

By John Mitchell

The Eastlaker is published by John Mitchell

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Autumn exhibitions around Eastlake

By Barbie Robinson and Richard Scherer
The National Photographic Portrait Prize is showing at the National Portrait Gallery until 7 April. Thirty nine portraits are on display and these will then travel to other national venues. See <https://www.portrait.gov.au/>
Whilst in the parliamentary triangle do visit the National Gallery of Australia (Love and Desire– pre-Raohaelite masterpieces from The Tate London until 28 April) MOAD/OPH (Behind the Lines 2018: The year’s best political cartoons), the National Library of Aistralia (Frank Hurley in the Middle East until 25 August) and the Canberra Glassworks (check the website for changing exhibitions).
Our big institutions need your support and how lucky are we to have these world class venues on our doorstep. Don’t wait till you have interstate visitors to get in there.
However do also spare time to support our small and sometimes less well known galleries; M16 Artspace in Griffith, PhotoAccess in Manuka, ANCA in Dickson and the major arts centres in Tuggeranong, Belconnen, Civic and Watson. In all of these you will find the work of local and national artists with regularly changing exhibitions, artist talks, education programs, community arts programs, workshops and the like. The helpful folk at these places are always happy to talk to you about what’s on.



At school holidays the Glassworks’ hosts programs to keep young hands and minds active

Hot glass activity@Canberra Glassworks



A young glassworker enjoying a hands on glass making activity at the Canberra Glassworks

By Melissa Delfino
With the shiny new furnace running 24/7 at a temperature never dropping below 1170 degrees Celsius, you will find a whole lot of hot glass activity at Canberra Glassworks.
Let’s begin with Canberra’s Enlighten festival! (enlightencanberra.com) Canberra Glasswork will once again come to life with colour and fun on Friday 8 March from 5pm–9pm.
Be captivated by neon magic as international artists Richard Wheater and Harriet Schwarzrock challenge us with their contemporary artwork at the Canberra glassworks. Watch live hotshop demonstrations as glass blowers showcase the transformative properties and fascinating practise of glass making.
Get hands on with family friendly glass making activities. Make night themed glass tiles, or swirl some colour together with an artist turning molten glass into a beautiful rainbow paperweight. Maybe you would like to participate in a neon inspired lantern making class to then join in on a lantern walk, as you journey into an autumn evening weaving a path of bril-

liant lights into the night.
To participate in a class, you can purchase your tickets on the enlightencanberra.com website.
As the Easter school holidays approach, you will find the Glassworks’ hosts programs to keep the hands and minds of the young ones active. There are seven classes to choose from over a two day period, April 17-18.
Glass blowing, engraving, casting, kiln forming, flameworking and beadmaking. Curious? Specially designed Creative Workshops are hands-on short courses and workshops offered at Canberra Glassworks throughout the year. Things will get heated (so be sure to follow the guidelines) as you learn to make your very own glass art guided by experienced teaching artists. They teach at all levels of abilities, from beginners to advanced and encourage inquiries from people who may feel they have barriers in participating.
Every Saturday and Sunday you can book the popular one-on-one session joining a teaching artist on the Hotshop floor to make your very own glass paperweight or vessel. Booking online is essential to securing a time slot. And if you don’t know your local history, each Saturday at 11am, a highly recommended free historic tour is available. Spaces are limited and you must book.
But if you are a little too nervous to get close to the fire, Gather, the alluring retail store, carries unique hand-crafted glass product made by some of Australia’s glass artists.
All further information can be found on the Canberra Glassworks website or by calling 6260 7005.

CAN YOU HANDLE THE HEAT?
//What’s on at Canberra Glassworks

CREATIVE WORKSHOPS

Learn how to make glass art with our hands-on short courses and workshops guided by some of the most experienced and skilful glass artists both in Australia andinternationally.

We offer inclusive workshops and short courses for beginners to advance in glass blowing, engraving, casting, kiln forming, flameworking, beadmaking and more.

See our website for multiple class dates and information. canberraglassworks.com/create/creative-workshops/

FREE HISTORIC TOURS

Every Saturday at 11am. Bookings essential.

EASTER SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM

17TH APRIL

MAKE AN EASTER PLATTER

Design an Easter plate in glass. Use templates to create bunnies and chicks. Learn to cut, fuse and arrange coloured glass. Apply colour accents in crushed glass to layer soft atmospheric effects.

10.00am to 12.30pm, 2½ hour workshop.

EASTER HOLIDAY TILES

Work from a template or cut, arrange and fuse your very own Easter themed tile.

4 sessions to choose from.

Please note: minimum age limits apply. See our website for times, age limit and prices.

18TH APRIL

BUNNIES AND BILBY’S

Create your own Easter bilby, bunny or chick with scrap glass. Attach a hook and place your Easter decoration on the wall to see.

10.00am to 12.30pm, 2½ hour workshop.

SMASHED EGGS

Stick assorted mosaic glass pieces onto a 3 dimensional egg form. Create decorative patterns and textures in coloured glass.

10.00am to 12.30pm, 2½ hour workshop.

The three exhibitions part of M16's Regional Initiative

'one, two..' etc at M16



Eva van Gorsel, Tree, 2018, digital photo/ Susan Chancellor, Monaro, 2018, oil monotype on paper.



Press Release
Exhibitions of works by Pfeiffer, van Gorsel, Costa, Mohell, Scheidel, Pollock, Dudley, Chancellor, Yu, and del Castillo are showing at M16 Artspace until 17 March. At Gallery 1, in the 'one, two..' exhibition, artists Manuel Pfeiffer and Eva van Gorsel ask the question "We are all living on the same planet- or are we?" Our perception of the physical world can be quite different and even more so our interpretation of past and present events. The works by one couple of two artists, working on one project in two media

(photography and painting) in one environment, with two perceptions, in one world, with two interpretations. The one exhibition provokes a thousand thoughts. At Gallery 3, in 'Road Trip' Susan Chancellor has created an immersive series of painterly monotypes evoking a sense of these oft repeated journeys between her regional home and the city of Canberra. This exhibition forms part of M16's Regional Initiative in 2019. Where M16 supports regional artist to be part of the M16 gallery program.

There are 360 entries from Australia and around the world

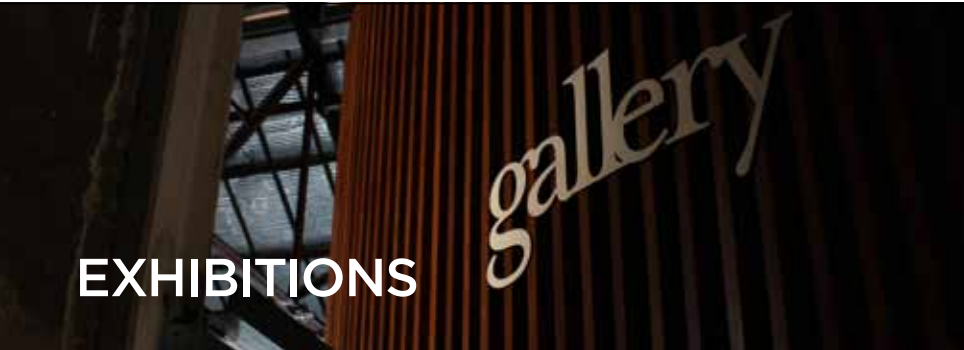
International Print Prize



A montage of the entries in Megalo Gallery's International Print Prize

Press Release
An exhibition of the very first Megalo International Print Prize entries is showing at the gallery until Saturday 16 April. The calibre of entries received in 2018 was exceptional leaving a difficult and long task for our panellists, Dr Jane Kinsman, Basil Hall and Ingeborg Hansen. Thirty seven works were selected as finalists from a pool of over 360 entries from Australia and around the world. Entries were submitted by artists in 31 countries. The prizes are \$10,000 (First), \$5,000 (Second), \$1,000 for People's Choice and \$2500

for the Lerida Estate Acquisitive Prize
Voting for the People's Choice award is open and The Award announcements will be made on Friday 15 March. The selected Australian artists include: Kay Abude (Aus), Antonia Aitken, Surya Bajracharya, Darren Bryant, Marilou Chagnaud, Dianne Fogwell, David Frazer, Silvi Glattauer, Robert Hague, Rew Hanks, Nicola Hooper, Kyoko Imazu, Marketa Kemp, Damon Kowarsky, David Nixon, Glenda Orr, Jim Pavlidis, Belinda Reid, Luisa Romeo, Annika Romeyn, Elmar Steyn, Anna Trojanowska, Cleo Wilkinson, Katy Woodroffe.



LONG HELD CUSTOMS
Spike Deane, Peter Nilsson & Luna Ryan
21 March - 12 May
Gallery 1

PERCEIVED INDIFFERENCE
Mariana del Castillo
21 March - 12 May
Smokestack

Both exhibitions open 20 March, 6pm

G.W BOT GLASS GLYPHS
G.W.BOT
23 May - 23 June
Gallery 1

GILES RYDER
Giles Ryder
23 May - 23 June
Smokestack

Both exhibitions open 22 May, 6pm

11 Wentworth Ave, Kingston
T 02 6260 7005
canberraglassworks.com
Open Wed to Sun, 10am to 4pm



»C4 concerts, food stalls and a vast array of merchandise stalls. Day passes or season tickets are available. Performer details and program at <https://www.folkfestival.org.au/> The Canberra International Music Festival is directed by the ebullient Roland Peelman and runs from 2 to 12 May. There's always something for everyone at this festival but traditional will love the Bach for Breakfast program and many people will be delightfully surprised by some unexpected musical pathways, for example with the Ntaria Ladies Choir. Program details and ticketing at <http://www.cimf.org.au/>. At the National Film and Sound Archive visitors can experience Carriberrie via virtual reality and small screens- contemporary Indigenous dance and music from around Australia. For lovers of film and fashion there is a treat in store with The Dressmaker exhibition from 18 April until 18 August. This has a suite of events attached including a 1950s vintage ball, floor talks and screenings of the film. Getting close up and personal with the glorious costumes designed by the brilliant Marion Boyce and worn by Kate Winslett, Liam Hemsworth, Sarah Snook, Hugo Weaving and the rest of the cast, will be an unmissable experience for fashionistas. <https://www.nfsa.gov.au/> for program details. And just to start you off on the string of fabulous foreign film festivals (and others) we are so lucky to enjoy here, Palace Electric starts the year with the Alliance Française French Film Festival, now in its 30th year. You'll have 54 films to choose from including documentaries, animation, romances, dramas and comedies, all done with that unmistakable French panache. Bookings at the cinema and information at <https://www.affrenchfilmfestival.org> Find radio interviews and information about many of the events and exhibitions mentioned below at www.livingartscanberra.com.au. Living Arts Canberra is a not for profit Canberra region online arts and community destination with website, podcasts and internet radio stream.

Performances around Eastlake

By Barbie Robinson and Richard Scherer
Autumn is a beautiful season in the Canberra region and a very comfortable time to be outside. It's also festival season and we'd like to draw your attention to a few: The Bold Festival directed by award winning choreographer/dancer Liz Lea and with Patron Dr Elizabeth Cameron Dalman OAM, runs from 13 to 17 March in several local venues. BOLD showcases legacy, dance elders, inclusion in all the arts and the wealth of cross-cultural and multi-cultural dance traditions in our region. Information at <https://theboldfestival.com/> The Four Winds festival at beautiful Bermagui is held over Easter and brings to audiences an inspired mix of mostly classical music in a superb relaxed bush setting near the ocean. You can enjoy a single day of Beethoven in the Bush on the Sunday if you can't spare the whole of Easter and there is bus transport to and from the venue from Canberra and other towns. Information at <http://fourwinds.com.au> The National Folk Festival at EPIC over Easter hardly needs an introduction. Audiences can enjoy acoustic, trad, roots, blues, Celtic, Indie and country sounds and spend the day schlepping between »C3



Many of us visited our 'fallen' mates- the 85 patients with injuries resulting from Dakar accidents- in Lima hospital

Simply finishing the Dakar Rally as good as winning



Bikes setting out from Pisco on Stage 9 of the Dakar Rally/James Ferguson with his factory replica KTM bike

By John Mitchell

Canberra born and bred James Ferguson has realised a life long dream of riding in the Dakar Rally, staged in Peru, which is regarded as the most physically and psychologically challenging endurance motor event in the world.

For many years James had success in downhill mountain riding events at Mount Stromlo and other popular Canberra venues, and three years ago he moved to Newcastle.

There he had a purpose bike built but, as the deadline for getting it to Paris in time for scrutineering for the Dakar approached, it developed serious problems and James decided to buy a more competitive bike. To qualify for the Dakar he raced in Abu Dhabi last year, and was able to procure a factory replica KTM from the Dutch team he rode with.

The bike arrived in Lima, Peru on time and James flew out of Australia early in January.

The race started on 6 January and, over 10 days, the riders

and drivers covered more than 5000 kilometres (70% over sand) through some of the world's most inhospitable terrain. He finished 67th out of 150 entrants in the bike class and 11th out of 36 starters in his category, which allowed no outside help in maintaining the rider or the bike. The other classes included quad bikes, cars and trucks. One of the truck teams had six racing trucks, a further six trucks as backups, 60 staff members and a multi-million dollar budget.

James has many stories to tell from his adventure. "On day one, when being presented on the podium, all the participants were treated like rock stars, in front of tens of thousands of spectators who were seeking autographs and photos. They had no idea who I was, but I lapped it all up, just the same. I was also featured on a segment broadcast worldwide by Red Bull TV and by NBN TV on the North Coast of America.

"Near the end of stage 5, at 11 pm, I came off my bike at 100 kph. My main concern was not being hit by other vehicles on a single lane

highway. After arriving at the finish I worked on the bike until 2 am, replacing the front wheel, handle bars and various other bits. The following day, which was a rest day, was spent dismantling and rebuilding most of the front of the bike, as there were also problems with the electronic scrolling system and electric fuel pumps. I tested the bike, had a couple of hours sleep and then I was up at 4.30am the next day to start stage 6.

James continued, "In the final stage one of my riding mates came off in the dunes and broke both his wrists. I tried in vain to splint them and get him going, to no avail. Then about 100ks from the finish, with the end in sight, another riding mate was hit by a car and broke his arm. He finished the stage and crossed the line with me! After the event, many of us visited our 'fallen' mates- the 85 patients with injuries resulting from Dakar accidents- in the Lima hospital.

"In the end, I've achieved a long time dream of participating in the Dakar and finishing, and on the way I've had a great adventure and

made life long friends," James concluded.

The open bike category (bike with support team) was won by world champion off road rider, Toby Price, who also won in 2016. In a recent interview Price described James as "an absolute legend," adding "not only did he finish the race, but he did it in the most difficult category, where the rider has no assistance. So, at the end of a day racing 500 plus kilometres through deserts, he had to work well into the night doing essential maintenance. There was very little time for sleep. He showed exceptional enthusiasm and courage," Price said.

Proud parents, Neil and Penny Ferguson of Kingston, said the event also took its toll on family and friends at home in Canberra and Newcastle, waiting anxiously each morning to check that his name come up as having finished that stage of the race. "The Dakar in Peru is an event designed to test every bit of human endurance and for any rider or driver, in any class of the event, simply finishing the race was as good as winning," Neil added.

Nationals at CORMCC



Drivers with their remote controls at the Australian Nationals for 1/8 Buggy IC, held at the Canberra Off Road Model Club's track at Narrabundah last weekend » REPORT P13

Trials@N'bundah Velodrome



Canberra Cycle Club riders of all ages turned out for time trials at the Narrabundah Velodrome on Sunday 10 February