

Hackett: 50 years plus

Story of a North Canberra suburb



Hackett Community Association

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Hackett oval, 2018. (photo Chris Mobbs)



Snow in Gilbert St August 1965. (photo: Steve Glaznieks)



Hackett shops in 2018. (photo: Chris Mobbs)

'Each district would be comprised of suburbs containing about 4,000 people and centering on a primary school and small shopping centre. These would be within walking distance of every house.' (Source National Capital Development Commission, Planning the National Capital, May 1968)

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Front cover trees on the eastern side of the Hackett oval (photo: Chris Mobbs)

Back cover kangaroo resting at playground, Stanley Street (photo: Ellie Mobbs)

Rivett Street, September 2018 (photo: Chris Mobbs)

Open space between Mackenzie and Madigan Streets, September 2018 (photo: Chris Mobbs)

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Foreword

When the word history is mentioned, we often think of something that happened several hundreds or thousands of years in the past. In this context Canberra is relatively young, with its name officially announced in March 1913 when the Foundation stone was laid on Capital Hill.

While much has been written about the early years of Canberra, more recently there have been several books written about suburbs that were established in the 1960s; these include books about Downer, Watson, Hughes and Curtin.

The year 2013 was significant as there were many events held across Canberra as part of its 100 years celebrations. The suburb of Hackett participated by celebrating its 50th birthday in the same year with a ‘Big Birthday Bash’ at the Hackett shops. Organised by the Hackett Community Association (HCA), the event was well attended.

Several years leading up to the 50th birthday, the HCA commenced work on compiling material for a book to capture the history of the suburb. But the book was unable to be released in 2013. Five years later the book can be released; hence the title *Hackett - 50 Years plus*.

The suburb has gone through many changes. From the 1920-1960s the land was grazed by former Word War 1 men granted leases under the Soldiers Settlers Scheme. The 1960s, bought dramatic change to Canberra with the strong commitment by the Commonwealth Government, led by Prime Minister Robert Menzies, to build the national capital.

The suburbs of Downer, Watson and Hackett were gazetted in 1960; development started in 1960 in Downer and Watson. Work in Hackett commenced in 1963. Once started, the development was rapid; in 1963 the population was only 156 but increased to 2,067 in 1964 and then 4,018 in 1966. But as the population aged there was a decline in the numbers of primary school aged children. This led to closure of the Hackett Primary School in December 1990.

Longtime residents, like the late James Walker, recalled the impact on the broader community when the school closed, leading to the closure of some of the smaller businesses at the Hackett shops. But today the shops are thriving; there are many new houses being built or existing ones being renovated, as new people move into the suburb.

As noted in many of the recollections of people who grew up in Hackett in the 1960s, life as a child was relatively free and fun, with a lot of time spent exploring the adjacent Mount Majura for recreation. The fact that Mount Majura is captured in many of these recollections is testament to the foresight of the planners in the 1960s, who recognised the value of such hills to the character of Canberra:

‘But the beauty of Canberra will prove to be more enduring because it lies firstly in the splendour of the landscape. Mount Ainslie, Mount Majura, Black Mountain and Lake Burley Griffin are an integral part of the city. They tower over it or penetrate into it in every part.’ (from Planning the National Capital, National Capital Development Commission, May 1968)

This book celebrates Hackett’s first half century and hopefully captures the community spirit of its residents over this time. When the suburb celebrates its 100th birthday in 2063, the Hackett Community Association trusts that the young people of today will be able to look back and reflect on their life growing up in this splendid suburb.

Chris Mobbs
Chair
Hackett Community Association
October 2018

Dedication

In the 1980s, James Walker was an historical officer with the then Department of Civil Aviation. This passion for history continued when he retired; he was nominated as the Historical Officer on the first committee of the Hackett Community Association (HCA), which was established in 2002.

His interest in history was reflected in a note to the Canberra and District Historical Society in 2002, where James commented that ‘Hackett seems to have received little more than passing mentions in most of the published histories of Canberra... And as people pass away or move, the suburb is rapidly losing its collective memory.’

James set out to address this. He developed an oral history questionnaire which was used to record people’s early recollections of living in the suburb in the 1960s and 1970s. These recollections are included in chapter 7 of this book.

One of the Association’s first major activity was having a party at the shops to celebrate the 40th birthday of Hackett in 2003. The party was a great success.

The ‘party at the shops’ seed had been sown, and 5 years later, James would take the lead to have another party for the 45th birthday in 2008. But wait there were more! The really big one was held in 2013 for the 50th birthday, which saw several thousand people attend over two days.

James saw these gatherings as one way of creating a strong sense of community within the suburb. This was particularly important with the closure of the Shell Service Station in 1989 and then the closure of the Hackett Primary School in December 1990; the school closure really impacted the suburb and in particular the shops.

Celebrating a milestone with a party was one thing. But James had another proposal to celebrate the suburb and its residents. It was his intention to have a history book ready for the 50th birthday in 2013. However, this was not achieved. James sadly passed away in October 2017 without seeing the results of his idea.

Without the passion and foresight of James, this book would not have occurred and our community would be poorer without it.

This book is dedicated to James Walker – a great and passionate supporter for the past, present and future residents of Hackett.

James Walker 1936-2017



Sponsors

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QUICK FACTS ABOUT HACKETT

- The suburb of Hackett was gazetted on 19 March 1960 along with Downer and Watson.
- The gazettal noted Hackett would cover approximately 350 acres (141ha) with Downer and Watson each covering approximately 380 acres (154ha). Each suburb would have a population of 5,000.
- The streets are planted with 15 different species of trees including 11 exotic and four native species. The Red Oak (*Quercus borealis*) is the most common, planted in 11 of the streets, while the Red Box (*Eucalyptus polyanthemos*) is the most common native species.
- In 2016 there were 1,235 dwellings including units and single standing houses.
- There are 44 streets in Hackett with 1,125 blocks. But not all blocks have houses on them. They include the Hackett oval precinct, parks, small garden beds (e.g. on Mackenzie St, opposite the Bragg St park); walkways between streets are also allocated a block number. In some walkways there are separate blocks for power poles.
- The first area to be developed was sections 1-18, within an area bound by Antill, Maitland and Madigan Streets and Phillip Avenue.
- The first blocks were auctioned on 10 December 1962, with 50 blocks offered to building companies. The average price was £1,195 a block.
- On 13 December 1962, 67 blocks of land in Hackett, were sold at a restricted auction (open only to people who did not already own a block), at an average price of £662.
- Some of the larger blocks in Jukes St and higher parts of Rivett St were identified in the 1960s as VIP sites for possible use as diplomatic housing. These were not sold until 1972.
- November 1962, the NCDC announced that the first houses would be built in Hackett.
- The first houses for sale in Hackett were advertised in The Canberra Times on 27 July 1963.
- The houses on the north side of Grayson Street (section 37) were a ‘radical’ new type of building complex for Canberra known as ‘patio housing’. But builders were reluctant to buy these blocks because of covenant issues – one block was first sold in 1966 for \$575, then handed back in June 1968 and then resold for only \$100 in November 1968.
- The park on the northern side of these Grayson St houses is a flood bed for 50-year flood cycles.
- In 1963 the population was only 156 but rapidly increased to 2,067 in 1964; 4,018 in 1966; 4,203 in 1967; 4,313 in 1969; 4,500 in 1971 and thereafter declining steadily to 3,650 in 1980.
- Hackett Primary School opened in May 1966 and by 1974 had 573 pupils. By 1990 the numbers had declined to 148 and it closed in December 1990.
- Mt Majura is thought to have been named after a place that Robert Campbell (of Duntroon) had visited in India.
- The first shop to open was JB Young’s Value Plus food store on 9 June 1966. Over 3,000 people attended the opening day.
- The former Hackett Pharmacy was the longest continually operating business at the Hackett shops, opening in mid 1966 and closing in September 1991; a total of 24 years.
- In 2015, 29 houses were identified as containing asbestos insulation under the *Loose Fill Eradication Scheme*; the highest number for suburbs in north Canberra.

KEY EVENTS FOR HACKETT

DATE	EVENT
25,000 BP	Aboriginal people arrive in Canberra region.
December 1820	First Europeans arrive and camp near Mt Pleasant (Charles Throsby, James Vaughan, Joseph Wild and Charles Throsby Smith).
1825	James Ainslie established a sheep station called Pialligo for Robert Campbell. Lease covers much of Mount Majura.
1846	Robert Campbell renamed the property Duntroon.
1860	Darmody family arrived and purchased lease holdings on Mt Majura.
1909	First survey of Canberra City completed.
1911	Federal Capital Territory formed with NSW ceding 2,360 square kilometres, including the seaport of Jervis Bay.
1912	Walter Burley Griffin announced as winner of the design competition for the national capital.
March 1913	Foundation stone laid on Capital Hill and Canberra announced as the name.
1913	Construction began on infrastructure for the city.
1920	Soldier Settlement Scheme allocates blocks in the Gungahlin district: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percival Robertson - blocks 98J & 99 - Ewan Cameron - blocks 98G & 98H Hackett would later be built on the land covered by these leases
1928	Suburbs of Ainslie, Reid, Braddon, Turner, O'Connor and Lyneham gazetted under the <i>National Memorials Ordinance 1928-1953</i> .
1920-30s	An avenue of eucalypts and pines planted on east side of what would be the future Hackett oval.
1957	National Capital Development Commission established with the task of planning and developing Canberra.
1959 January	First group of Defence personnel arrive in Canberra from Melbourne.
1959 August	Second group of Defence personnel arrive.
19 March 1960	Suburbs of Hackett, Watson and Downer gazetted under the <i>National Memorials Ordinance 1928-1953</i> .
21 September 1961	Hackett's street names gazetted (see list in Appendices).
1962	First infrastructure work in Hackett commences on sections 1-18 (area bound by Antill Street, Phillip Avenue and Madigan Streets).
September 1962	NCDC calls for tenders to build the first houses in Hackett (in sections 1-18).
December 1962	First blocks of land in Hackett offered for auction.
15 December 1962	First advertisement for homes for sale in Hackett appears in the Canberra Times.
6 March 1963	Monaro Mall opens.
1963	Population of Hackett - 156
May 1963	Hackett reservoir goes into service.
30 July 1963	Contract let to J. Fletcher Co P/L for £159,848 pounds for construction of Hackett Primary School.

October 1963	Mt Majura District Girl Guides formed.
1 January 1964	New Presbyterian Parish for Northern Canberra Suburbs instituted – later called St Margaret's.
10 April 1964	First Presbyterian Minister Rev. Donald Erickson ordained and inducted.
April 1964	Lake Burley Griffin reaches peak water level.
May 1964	First classrooms in Hackett Primary School used from May 1964. Other sections were handed over later that year and in 1965. Other stages were completed in 1968 and 1969.
17 October 1964	Lake Burley Griffin inaugurated by Prime Minister Robert Menzies.
1964	Dickson Shops built.
1964	Population of Hackett - 2,067.
January 1965	Dickson Pool opens.
1965	Hackett Preschool opens.
June 1965	Tender for the Infants Department issued in June 1965 and handed over in 1966.
1965	Haddon Court 'Handed Over'.
April 1966	Ainslie rubbish tip opens.
9 June 1966	First shop opens - JB Youngs.
1966	Population of Hackett - 4,018.
1967	Canberra population reaches 100,000.
16 December 1967	Dedication of St Margaret's/Holy Cross Church Building.
1968	Mr Fluffy begins selling asbestos insulation for Canberra's homes.
1972	Canberra Revival Centre opens premises at corner of Maitland and Madigan Streets.
1974	Ainslie landfill tip closes.
1976	Dickson Secondary College opens.
1976	Hackett Art and Craft Exhibition began.
September 1976	Canberra Revival Centre moves.
December 1977	Knights of the Southern Cross purchase former Canberra Revival Centre and use it as headquarters.
1977	Hackett Primary School has enrolment of 429 students.
1982	Montessori Children's House opens in part of Hackett Primary School.
1988- 1993	Inspection and removal of Mr Fluffy asbestos insulation from homes across Canberra.
September 1989	Shell service station closes.
October 1989	Knights of the Southern Cross move to new headquarters in Turner.
April 1990	Ainslie rubbish transfer station closes.
December 1990	Hackett Primary School closes.
December 1991	Montessori Children's House closes.
1991	Meg's Toy Library opens at St Margaret's Uniting Church.
1993	Mount Majura Reserve gazetted as part of the Canberra Nature Park.

1995	Samaritan House opens.
1996	Girl Guides move out of hall at Holtze Close.
July 1999	Folk Dance Canberra holds ‘Hall Warming Party’ at former primary school hall.
April 2002	Hackett Community Association formed.
2005	Blue Gum Community School opened.
2006	Hackett Art and Craft Exhibition ends.
2009	ACT Government asks National Capital Authority to remove Monash Drive from National Capital Plan.
2013	50 th birthday of Hackett.
2014	NCA advises it was still waiting for ACT Government to provide information to enable process to removed Monash Drive from Plan.
2014	The ACT Government establishes the <i>Loose Fill Asbestos Eradication Scheme</i> to remove asbestos from over 1,000 homes in Canberra, including 29 in Hackett.



Suburb of Ainslie, October 1953, looking north-east to farmland where Hackett would be built. Arrow indicates intersection of Officer Crescent and Hawdon Street, Ainslie.

1. BEFORE THE SUBURB

Aboriginal people

Aboriginal people have been present in the Canberra region for at least 25,000 years.

In 2003, the ACT Government's Heritage Unit conducted an investigation of Aboriginal sites along fire trails in various Canberra Nature Parks across the urban areas of Canberra. In 2004 the ACT Parks and Conservation Service contracted a further investigation into Aboriginal sites along the fire trails in the same areas.

The information from both studies identified 72 Aboriginal sites across all areas, including 15 sites on Mount Ainslie/Majura Nature Park. All sites have placed on the ACT Heritage Register under registration number 20136, Aboriginal Places – Canberra Nature Park Fire Trails¹. According to the registration for these sites:

'The places comprise locations where scatters of Aboriginal stone artefacts have been recorded (n=21), scatters of stone artefacts with associated potential archaeological deposits (n=31), isolated stone artefacts (n=18), potential archaeological deposits (n=2) and their individually specified site buffer zones.'

'These places are all part of the physical evidence of a traditional way of life that is no longer practised within the ACT. The presence of artefact scatters in these localities demonstrates past occupation and use of these places by Aboriginal people. Stone was an extremely important element of Aboriginal culture, essential to their day-to-day living. Stone artefacts thus constitute an enduring record of Aboriginal technology and settlement patterns. The individual artefacts at the sites also have significance due to their potential to contribute to research about Aboriginal stone technology. Areas of identified archaeological potential are considered to be significant cultural resources because of their potential to contain buried evidence of past Aboriginal occupation, likely to be intact and in better condition than other surface exposed sites.'

'The heritage values of artefact scatters are based upon their Aboriginal and archaeological significance. All artefact scatters are considered to be significant by the Aboriginal community. Aboriginal people generally express the desire for all such sites to be left in situ wherever feasible. Their significance to Aboriginal people is primarily based on their provision of evidence of the occupation of land by their ancestors. Artefact scatters thus comprise a demonstrable link to place for contemporary Aboriginal people.'

For preservation purposes the exact location of these sites are not publicly available.

The presence of these sites on Mount Ainslie Mount Majura highlights the role of these areas not only for protecting biodiversity, but also archaeological history.

*'Mt Majura is covered in a hard rock called 'chert', which protrudes from the soil surface. Chert forms sharp shards when broken and was often used by Aboriginal people to make tools. Their presence indicates that there was sufficient food and material resources to support them, and trading with both inland groups and coastal groups extended their range of resources.'*²

No records could be found which indicated that any archaeology surveys had been done to identify Aboriginal artefacts or sites before Hackett (and other north Canberra suburbs) were developed in the 1960s. It is possible that stone artefacts would have been present, given that the Aboriginal people moved throughout the Canberra area. However, with the high level of disturbance that occurs with construction of roads, drainage and house blocks, it is very likely that items such as stone artefacts would have been either removed when top soil was taken away from excavations, or covered over by roads, footpaths and houses.

Further information about Aboriginal heritage can be found in the leaflet *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage of the ACT* at [website](#)³.

The first Europeans arrive

The first Europeans arrived in the Canberra district in 1820. Lachlan Macquarie, the fifth Governor of New South Wales (1810-1821) encouraged the exploration of the area south-west of Sydney. In 1820, he led a small party of men which included Charles Throsby, Joseph Wild and James Vaughan. Having left Moss Vale in October 1820 the party arrived at Lake Bathurst on 23 October where they waited for Commissioner Thomas Bigge and the Surveyor-General John Oxley who travelled from Bathurst to meet Governor Macquarie⁴.

On the 28 October 1920, Macquarie rode to the western side of a vast expanse of water which he names as Lake George in honour of the king. Throsby and Vaughan had set out earlier to find the Murrumbidgee River but the local Aboriginal people had said it was at least three days from the Lake.

Macquarie had to return to Sydney, but requested Throsby, Wild and Vaughan (and Charles Throsby Smith, nephew of Throsby) to make another attempt to find the Murrumbidgee. Setting out from Lake George on 3 December 1820, they travelled west and arrived at the Yass River between Sutton and Gundaroo.

On 7 December they travelled to a hill north of Gungahlin to which they could see the plains which would later form the northern part of Canberra. They then headed in a south east direction and camped below Mount Pleasant close to the Molonglo River, thus becoming the first Europeans to camp on the site of the future capital of Australia. (The Gungahlin suburb of Throsby is named after Charles Throsby).

Despite several attempts to find the Murrumbidgee River, they did not succeed until Throsby's determination to find the river paid off with another search in March 1821.

Early European settlement

the new Commonwealth Public Service as landlord set unrealistic lease conditions on the Soldier Settlers

By the 1830s, the Campbell family had established the 'Dunroon' property on the Majura foothills. It is thought that Robert Campbell named Mt Majura after a place he had visited in India. The region continued to attract early settler families and by the 1860s, the Darmody family arrived in the area and purchased lease holdings on Mt Majura for one pound per acre. A parish map of the Mt Majura area from 1911, shows that the Darmody family owned the majority of the Mt Majura land with a smaller holding still held by the Campbells.⁵

Soldier settlers 1920s-1960s

The following section is reproduced from the *Repat and Rabbits: WWI Soldier Settlement in the ACT* prepared by ACT Archives.⁶

'The implementation of a Soldier Settlement Scheme for Australia's repatriated World War 1 soldiers was designed as a mechanism to create employment opportunities for returned servicemen, open up new land to agriculture and to grow the economic wealth of Australia. During the decade prior to the commencement of the War, agriculture had expanding world markets and migrants had managed to be settled onto the land with a degree of success. The formation of a similar scheme for returned soldiers seemed appropriate.'

Soldier Settlement Schemes were established in all States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), now the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Land used in the schemes was primarily the subdivision of Crown land that had previously been unsettled or used on a leasehold basis, although purchases of large estates were made and turned into smaller farms. Also, some individual farms acquired by the State Land Settlement Authority were made available to soldiers.

Rabbits, weeds, isolation, financial hardship along with the high prices of stock and equipment, compounded by the lack of transport infrastructure in the FCT, were continual problems. Also, the new Commonwealth Public Service as landlord set unrealistic lease conditions on the Soldier Settlers. The small size of rural blocks allocated, along with falling commodity prices throughout the 1920s followed by the Depression saw most Soldier Settlers struggle to make any sort of profit from their leases. However, the leasehold system in the FCT did enable struggling lessees to transfer or consolidate their leases, allowing those who wished to leave the land to do so with relative ease.'

The area of Hackett covered four blocks leased to two former soldiers (see plates 1 and 2):

- Percival Francis Robertson - blocks 98J & 99 Gungahlin District⁷
- Leo Ewan Cameron - blocks 98G & 98H Gungahlin district⁸

'Percival Francis Robertson was born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1894 and studied at the Edinburgh College of Agriculture for three years before migrating to Australia in mid 1914. He spent the next nine months at the Rosenthal Government Experimental Farm in South Australia before enlisting in February 1915.

Robertson served at Gallipoli with the 27th Battalion but in March 1916, was transferred to the 2nd Pioneer Battalion in Egypt. He later served in France at Pozières, Bullecourt and the Third Battle of Ypres where he was shot in the thigh and sent to England to recover. He returned to his unit in July 1918, but was gassed a few days later. Robertson was Mentioned in Despatches for his work and finished the war with the rank of Lieutenant.

On the 27th January 1920, Robertson applied for a Soldier Settlement Block in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). He stated that he was still suffering slight weakness from his bullet wound, receiving a pension of just over 26 shillings per fortnight and had £260 in cash. Robertson was officially described as '*the best type of applicant interviewed*'. He had good local contacts as he was living in Gundaroo, NSW where his Commanding Officer in the 2nd Pioneer Battalion, John Donnelly, was a well-known grazier.

Although Robertson preferred a lease with a longer tenure at Jerrabomberra or Tuggeranong, he was allocated land in the Ainslie-Majura Subdivision. On the 17th December 1920, he signed five year leases for Gungahlin Block 98J, of 544 acres (220 hectares) at £108/16 per annum, and Gungahlin Block 99 of 539 acres (218 hectares) at £67/7/6 per annum. These two blocks covered most of the modern day suburb of Hackett, as well as the northern end of Ainslie.

Shortly after Robertson signed the leases and occupied the blocks, stock inspection reported a 73% lambing rate from his ewes giving him a flock of around 600 sheep. But like other Soldier Settlers, Robertson obtained an advance to purchase his stock. By April 1921, he was regretting that decision:

'The restriction caused through holding stock under mortgage to the Government', he complained is liable to place me under serious disadvantage.'

He claimed he had to pass up good business opportunities because of the constraints of the loans provided by the Commonwealth. The following month Robertson paid out his loans in full.

By September 1921, the Assistant Lands Inspector, Fred Cox, claimed that it was known locally that Robertson had '*sold*' his leases to Charles Masters, a grazier from the Gundaroo District. A man working the block told Cox that Masters employed him. According to Cox:

'Mr. Robertson discharged his mortgages some time ago, and that is when the sale is supposed to take place. The sheep now grazing upon the blocks are the property of Mr. Masters'.

Notably, the sale occurred without the agreement of the Commonwealth.

Robertson stayed in the district and was living near Bungendore, NSW when he got engaged to Miss Bertha Bannerman of Sydney in 1930. However the marriage did not go ahead. In 1935, he instead married Joan Zouch. Percival Robertson died at Forster, NSW in 1970 aged 76 years.'

Leo Ewan Cameron belonged to the Cameron family from Weetangera. He was born in 1897 in Murrumburrah near Harden, NSW and enlisted in Coonabarabran, NSW in June 1917, claiming to be 21 years of age. His father, like his grandfather, was a school teacher and although he did not object to his son enlisting, believed that Leo was '*being sent away in great haste before he has been properly tested. As a child he was very delicate. I don't think he is very strong.*'

Less than two months after enlistment, Cameron embarked with reinforcements for the 35th Battalion arriving in France in February 1918. During March 1918 the Germans launched their last major offensive of the war and quickly forced the British into retreat. The 9th Brigade of the AIF (which included the 35th Battalion) was rushed to the defence of the village of Villers-Bretonneux where, on 4th April 1918, they successfully halted the German advance towards Amiens. During the battle, Cameron was shot in the thigh and evacuated to England for treatment. He rejoined his unit in August 1918 as the AIF advanced up the Somme valley but he developed a septic knee which ended his active role in the war. Cameron returned home and was discharged on 28th March 1919.

Later that year the first soldier settlement blocks became available in the Ainslie-Majura Subdivision. This subdivision covered land north from Dickson towards Mitchell. Cameron was successful in obtaining Gungahlin Blocks 98G and 98H, with both leases being for twelve years commencing on 1st January 1920.

The annual rent on the lease for the 192 acres (78 hectares) of Gungahlin Block 98G was £48 and for the 307 acres (124 hectares) of Gungahlin Block 98H the rent was £76/15.

Cameron's blocks were, like those of his neighbours, plagued by rabbits and the Commonwealth regularly sent in their dogman to destroy the burrows. The Commonwealth also cleared weeds overrunning his blocks in October 1924. Cameron was warned that next time he would be asked to show cause as to why his leases should not be terminated. From then on Cameron appeared to keep pests under control.

By 1927 he was living on the property which he called *Banavie*, named after the village in the Scottish Highlands from where his great grandparents had migrated in 1838. When the leases expired in October 1927, Cameron sought to swap his land for Kowen Block 9, then leased by [Jack Donnelly](#).

Approval was given for Cameron to occupy Kowen Block 9 from 1 February 1928. Gungahlin Blocks 98G and 98H were allocated to a local man, Hector Hamilton, on a quarterly basis from April 1928 although Cameron made arrangements to farm the land with Hamilton in the short term. In January 1929 he agreed to accept £260/10 from the Commonwealth for his tenant's rights in the house and fencing at *Banavie*.

Hamilton continued to farm Gungahlin Blocks 98G and 98H until they were resumed for the development of Watson in the 1950s. Hamilton and his family remained in the cottage until it was demolished in the 1960s to make way for suburban homes.

Cameron married Viney Keating in 1936 and they farmed in the Young district of NSW where they raised their six children. He died aged 86, at Royal Canberra Hospital on 7 August 1984.'

Former farm sheds removed before construction started

In July 1961 the Department of the Interior invited tenders⁹ (*CTimes* 15 July 1961, p.20) for the removal of an old cottage in Acton, a bus shelter shed in Constitution Avenue, opposite St John's Church, and the following farm structures 'located at Hackett approximately 5 miles from Canberra City'. No further details of the exact location of these buildings have been found:

- woolshed about 50 ft. x 30 ft.
- grain shed about 30 ft. x 20 ft. together with tank and stand.
- machinery shed about 30 ft. x 20 ft.
- old shed about 27 ft. x 18 ft.
- garage about 21 ft. x 12 ft.
- wooden room about 11 ft. x 11 ft.
- wooden room about 11 ft. x 8 ft.
- two fowl sheds about 9 ft. x 12 ft. and 6 ft. x 12 ft.
- cattle yard and ramp. (10) sheep yards.
- tennis court fence about 100 yards netting 9 ft. high.
- windmill together with tank and stand.

2. NAMING THE SUBURB

On 19 March 1960, the suburb of Hackett was announced, along with the suburbs of Downer and Watson, with the gazettal of these names under the *National Memorials Ordinance 1928-1953* (CTimes, 19 March 1960, p.3).¹⁰

Each suburb would have a population of around 5,000 with a school, shops and recreational areas within 0.5 mile (800m) for most residents.

Naming of Canberra's suburbs and memorials at that time was the responsibility of the National Memorials Committee. This committee included the Prime Minister as Chair, the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives, the leaders of the Government and the Opposition in the Senate, the Minister for the Interior, the secretary of the Department of the Interior and three other members, which included two residents of the ACT. The National Memorials Ordinance required that the committee 'have regard to the names of persons who have made notable contributions to the existence of Australia as a nation.'

Hackett is an inner north suburb of Canberra and adjacent to Watson in the north-west and Ainslie to the south. It is bound by Antill Street on the north-west side, Phillip Avenue to the south, and the Mount Majura Nature Reserve along the eastern side.

The suburb was named after Sir John Winthrop Hackett (1848-1916). Sir John was a Legislator, editor of the *West Australian* newspaper and public benefactor and leading support for an Australian Federation. He represented Western Australia at the 1891 Constitutional Convention and 1897-98 Federal Australiasian Convention and was a member of the Constitutional Committee. He was elected to the WA State Legislative Council in 1894 and remained a Member until his death.



1960 – Hopetown, Hopetoun or Hackett?

Had some engineers had their way, the suburb may have had another name! In 1959, planning was underway to expand Canberra's network of water reservoirs, including one at the base of Mount Majura to serve the new suburbs of north Canberra.

In a file about the Construction of Hackett Reservoir¹¹, a 1959-60 map (plate 3) shows the route of the water network to link with the proposed 'East Dickson Reservoir'. The map also showed the suburbs of Watson and Dickson, while Downer was shown as 'North Dickson'. The area of Hackett was roughly defined by an unnamed Phillip Avenue and Antill Street, and the proposed Monash Drive along the base of Mount Majura. The area within these roads was shown as '*Hopetown*' with the number 5,000 next to it – an early estimate of the future population of a suburb (see Plate 3). Perhaps the engineers had a sense of humour...hope a town will be built here, or a spelling error?

Another document in this file (plate 4) includes the name of 'Hopetoun' with a population of 3,350; this may have been a reference to Australia's first Governor-General (1901-03), John Hope, the 7th Earl of Hopetoun. It is possible that Hopetoun was on the 'short list' of names being considered for the suburb by the National Memorials Committee.

3. PLANNING AND DEVELOPING THE NEW SUBURB

Influence of the National Capital Development Commission on Hackett

'give Canberra an atmosphere and individuality worthy of a national capital'

In 1956, Mr R Mendelsohn from the Prime Minister's department prepared a paper, *'The problems of Canberra – its future'*, which noted 'that Canberra's development was split between two departments, Interior and Works. They were not functioning together and seemed unable to manage development, particularly with respect to land and housing. The current situation was 'chaos', Mendelsohn wrote, and there was a need for a single authority that would have overall developmental responsibility.'¹²

The Commonwealth Government accepted the recommendation and on 12 September 1957, established the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) through the *National Capital Development Commission Act 1957*. 'The commission had four objectives:

- *to complete the establishment of Canberra as the seat of government;*
- *further the development of Canberra as an administrative centre;*
- *give Canberra an atmosphere and individuality worthy of a national capital; and*
- *further the growth of the national capital as a place in which to live.'*¹³

The NCDC would continue until it was abolished in 1989, a year after self-government commenced in the ACT. Many of its functions and staff were transferred to the ACT Government, but responsibility for the *National Capital Plan* was vested in the National Capital Authority which reports to a Federal Minister.

Hackett, along with Downer, Dickson and Watson, were the first suburbs to be designed and built by the NCDC; Woden and Belconnen quickly followed in the late 1960s. To appreciate the layout of Hackett requires some background as to the major changes that occurred in the 1960s, through the work of the NCDC. Its publication, *Planning the National Capital*, May 1968, provides a brief summary of the changes:

'Griffin planned a city for 25,000 people which could be extended to accommodate 75,000. At the end of' World War II only 13,000 people lived in it and it was often referred to as 'seven suburbs in search of a city'.

In the next decade, growth accelerated and by the mid 1950's it became evident to the Government that some form of co-ordination development would be necessary.

As a result of recommendations made by a Senate Select Committee which investigated the growth of the city, the National Capital Development Commission was established in 1957 and began operations in 1958.

One of the Commission's first tasks was to review the planning of Canberra and to formulate policies for its expansion. An outline of the plans for the period, 1964-1980 has been published in 'The Future Canberra'. (Angus & Robertson).

The plan provided for the completion of the original city of 75,000 and its extension by building a series of urban districts or satellite cities around it. The first of these, Belconnen, to the north-west of Canberra City is now taking shape.

The aim of the plan would be to build a series of cities which would not become unwieldy in size nor be choked by the traffic which concentrated on only one or two employment centres. The traffic, instead, would be dispersed by dispersing many centres of employment throughout the city.

The districts would be built in adjoining valleys and the intervening hill tops and ridges would be preserved in their natural state. This would give almost every resident of Canberra a view of tree-clad hills.

The population of each district would be about 100,000 people. Although physically separated, they would be strongly linked to the original city and to each other.

Each would have its own district centre and its own employment centres. Research and similar institutions would be located between the districts to provide additional local job opportunities.

However, the districts would not be self-contained employment units. There would be a constant flux of travel between districts and into the region around the city as workers availed themselves of the range of employment offered by a region that supplied all the facilities and resources required by a great metropolis.

A traffic system would be designed to give free movement and easy access to all employment centres.

Each district would be comprised of suburbs containing about 4,000 people and centering on a primary school and small shopping centre. These would be within walking distance of every house.

Larger shopping centres would serve groups of three or four suburbs and a high school would be provided for groups of about the same size.

...

The Commission's plan was not only to make Canberra a functional city but also to make it a beautiful one. In most cities, beauty is a transient quality which changes as the buildings change.

But the beauty of Canberra will prove to be more enduring because it lies firstly in the splendour of the landscape. Mount Ainslie, Mount Majura, Black Mountain and Lake Burley Griffin are an integral part of the city. They tower over it or penetrate into it in every part. (plate 8)

If the Canberra plan has any virtues apart from the usually pragmatic ones that planners aim for, they lie in the preservation of the natural beauty of the landscape.

To sum up, the Commission's outline plan provides for a city of 250,000 accommodated in a series of clearly defined districts, each of which is relatively self-contained but which jointly support the central areas, the city centres and the special institutional or functional zones.

Transport will be by way of buses and cars using a network of major roads located within the parkland system to provide easy cross-city movement with a minimum of interference to the other activities within the area.

Within the plan is the conception of a new category of lands defined as special areas and which include the important central areas, the hills and ridges and the system of parklands extending into the western mountains.

The Commission believes that its plan will provide a distinguished and efficient centre for the legislature and national institutions, that it will cater efficiently for the city's commercial and service needs and that it will retain the human qualities within its residential areas and provide the people with a ready access to the countryside.'(source ACTArchives Research guides)¹⁴



Mount Majura provides a backdrop to Hackett. (photo: Chris Mobbs)

The stages for developing suburbs in Canberra

In June 1965, the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Australian Capital Territory conducted an '*Enquiry into supply of residential land in Canberra.*' In its submission to the enquiry, the NCDC outlined the stages of neighbourhood design and land development. The submission noted 'The complete process of residential land design and development, which is arranged on the basis of projects of about 400 building blocks, takes approximately two years and nine months to the time the first blocks are available for leasing.' The submission also set out the eight stages in this process:

1. **District outline plan** - this involved compiling a base map from existing maps and aerial photos in addition to information obtained from field surveys. The plan showed the location of neighbourhoods with the locations of the 'district office', shopping centre, industrial areas and 'major road patterns.'
2. **Neighbourhood design** - the planner was required to undertake field inspections to understand features such as climatic conditions, prevailing winds, aspect, views, vegetation, topography, sub-surface features and other factors which may influence the design or impact on the development costs. The objectives were to 'create a good environment for homes, to obtain the greatest benefit from the site and to eliminate engineering problems as far as possible to facilitate the engineering design.' The draft plan was then checked by engineers and others within the NCDC before forwarding to the then Department of the Interior for survey.
3. **Land and engineering surveys** - the department surveyors computed the centre lines for the roads and identified their location by setting up flags on site. Joint inspections by the department and NCDC officers were done and where necessary made amendments to the plan before returning it to the NCDC.
4. **Block sub-division** - the Commission prepared the layout for the residential blocks within each building section. The neighbourhood was divided into two parts – each part equal to an engineering land development contract which was based on number of blocks ranging from 360-450 blocks. Drawings and supporting information concerning block frontages, block area and the final boundaries in relation to roads or other frontage. These drawings were then returned to the Department for computation and detailed drawing.
5. **Survey drawing** - The Department's drawings include longitudinal and cross sections of the roads, contours and any special features or 'site peculiarities'. They are very precise as they are used for the engineering working designs and for descriptions of the land for legal purposes
6. **Engineering design** - a consultant prepares designs for the water supply, sewerage and drainage works, road designs and other work. This was a two-step process – pencil drawings which were provided to the Commission for consideration before the final drawings were prepared.
7. **Tendering** - they allowed two months to call and receive tender, assess and draw up contracts.
8. **Land development** - the successful tenderer commenced developing the land, with the first 100 blocks to be ready after six months – another 100 blocks were handed over to the Commission every two months – this last stage could take up to 56 weeks.' *Source: NCDC (June 1965) Submission to Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Australian Capital Territory 'Enquiry into supply of residential land in Canberra.'*¹⁵

Building Hackett in stages

The editorial described the roll-out of the new suburbs of Downer, Watson and Hackett as 'breathtaking...'

The decision to commence development of Hackett was announced in April 1961 by the Associate National Capital Development Commissioner, Mr WC Andrews. He was addressing a meeting of the ACT Advisory Council on the evening of 17 April 1961, where he advised that the NCDC was preparing to develop and service 1,200 residential sites in Hackett and Watson (*CTimes, 18 April 1961, p.7.*)¹⁶

The roll out of new suburbs in the 1960s was progressing rapidly, as noted in a May 1961 editorial of the Canberra Times which was reflecting on the latest planning report from the NCDC. The editorial described the roll-out of the new suburbs of Downer, Watson and Hackett as 'breathtaking' and noted that Downer, Watson and Hackett would each have 5,000 residents within two to three years (*CTimes, 8 May 1961, p.2.*)¹⁷

As outlined in the previous section about the stages for building a suburb, the NCDC developed each suburb based around providing the road, drainage and sewage for 360-450 blocks. For Hackett the work was in three large stages (Stages 1-3) from 1962-64, with the smaller Stage 4 from 1966-68, and Stage 5 in 1972:

- Stage 1 - sections 1-18 (area bound by Antill Street, Phillip Avenue and Madigan Street).
- Stage 2 - sections 19-36 (area bound by Antill Street, north-east of Madigan to the reserve, Rivett, Tryon and Richards Street).
- Stage 3 – sections 39-48 (area bound by Madigan, Grayson and Mackenzie Streets).
- Stage 4 – section 37 - Grayson St Patio housing (northern side of Grayson St).
- Stage 5 – corner of Mackenzie and Burrell Streets, Jukes St and Jukes Place.



Hackett 1963, - courtesy National Archives of Australia series number A7973, Control symbol INT765/2 Barcode 11580430

Stage 1

'A disturbing trend evident during the past year was the tendency for housing costs to rise.'

Early 1962 saw commencement of the first work to develop the infrastructure of Hackett, with the NCDC announcing the letting of a contract to Citra Australia for £259,817. This would cover road, water, sewerage and drainage services for 363 residential blocks in sections 1-18 of Hackett (area bounded by Antill Street, Phillip Avenue and Madigan Streets). The work was to start immediately and to be completed by early 1963 (*CTimes* 27 January 1962, p.5).¹⁸

Creating a suburb from former farmland must have created some initial challenges for the company, in particular having to deal with long grass. It would appear that Citra wanted to start with a 'clean slate' by burning the area before construction commenced. The Bush Fire Council gave Citra Australia a permit to burn-off grass in sections 1-18 on 5 and 6 February 1962 (*CTimes* 5 February 1962, p.10).¹⁹ Interestingly, February is usually the hottest and driest time in Canberra, so doing a controlled burn at this time of year could have the potential to become uncontrollable. No records could be found to indicate the burn did get out of control.

In September 1962, the NCDC called for tenders to build the first houses in Hackett, in sections 1-18 (*CTimes 18 September 1962*, p.6).²⁰ The tender was awarded in November 1962 to AV Jennings Constructions and ACT Builders to build 35 houses to a total value of £135,000 in three areas bounded by Maitland and Newtown Streets, Antill and Gilruth Streets, and Mills and Madigan Streets. The houses were of brick veneer construction with ‘four to have two bedrooms, three with four bedrooms and the remainder to be three bedrooms and to be ready within 28-30 weeks.’ AV Jennings would build 23 houses for £88,464 (average £3,846) while ACT Builders would build 12 for £46,427 (average £3,868) (*CTimes 22 November 1962*, p 3).²¹

In December 1962 the NCDC awarded three contracts to build 38 houses: Paul Camilleri and Co. would build 14 houses for £32,275; ACT Builders 12 houses for £46,647; JJ Marr and Sons Pty Ltd 12 houses for £47,117. The Hackett houses would be completed in nine months. All houses would of veneer construction...Thirty-one of the Hackett houses would have three bedrooms, four two bedrooms and three four bedrooms (*CTimes 4 December 1962*, p.3).²²

‘Private builders to date have not built or have not been able to build houses which together with land may be sold for £5,500 or less. At the same time persons buying reasonably priced blocks with moderate cost covenants at restricted auctions do not appear to be willing or able to build low to moderate cost homes. These trends suggest that persons seeking moderate cost housing largely rely by necessity or choice, on the Government to meet their housing needs. A disturbing trend evident during the past year was the tendency for housing costs to rise.’ Source 1965 Eighth Annual Report 1964-65, National Capital Development Commission.

Stage 2

Leighton Contractors was awarded a contract for £242,587 in June 1962, to do road and drainage work for 387 residential blocks in the north-east part (sections 19-36) of the Hackett. Sections 19-36 covers the area bounded by Antill, Madigan, Grayson and Rivett Streets, up to the Mount Majura Reserve. The contract covered construction of roads, kerbs and gutters and installation of water, drainage and sewerage mains and was to be completed within 12 months (*CTimes 22 June 1962*, p.27).²³ In its 1962-63 Annual Report, the NCDC reported that it had developed 741 blocks in Hackett as at 30 June 1963.

In July 1963 the NCDC let two contracts to build houses in Gilbert and Selwyn Streets. A contract was let to AV Jennings to build 15 houses in Gilbert St for £53,946, while Clayton Homes would build eight houses in Selwyn Street, for £29,225. They would be brick veneer with eighteen having three bedrooms, three with two, and two with four bedrooms (*CTimes 11 July 1963*, p.14).²⁴

Stage 3

Development of Stage 3 commenced in August 1963, with the NCDC awarding Leighton Contractors a contract to build roads and hydraulics in sections 39-48, to be completed within 45 weeks. The 247 blocks were in the area bound by south of Grayson St, Mackenzie St, Phillip Avenue and Madigan St (*CTimes 27 August 1963*, p 27).²⁵ The first blocks of land in this stage were sold at auction on 30 June 1964.

Stage 4

‘Radical homes project for Canberra’

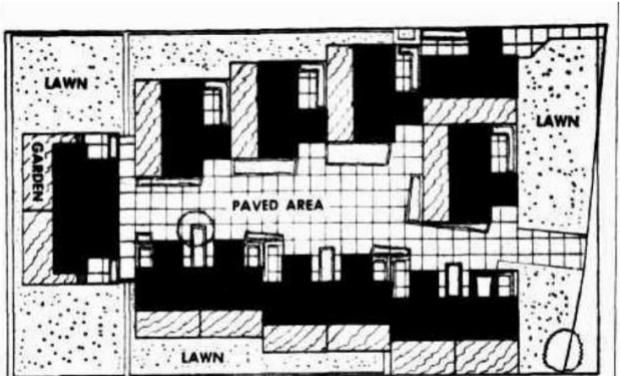
Stage 4 commenced in March 1966, when a site covered by section 37 on the north side of Grayson Street, would be offered for a radical medium density housing development new to Canberra. Known as ‘*patio housing*’, houses would be built around a common garden area with each of the 50 units having ‘a service yard and a garden court opening on to a common garden which, in turn, would open on to a pedestrian parkway.’ The area had been designed by Canberra architect, Mr Dirk Bolt. The lease conditions specified the exterior materials and colours to be used but the interiors were at the discretion of the builders. He submitted four different layouts to the NCDC for this development (‘*Non-Standard Housing, Hackett*’, by Dirk Bolt’(1960s) ArchivesACT, Research [Guide](#)). This document included the following description of the ‘developed proposal’:

‘The developed proposal links the development with the surrounding individual housing. The scheme divides the site into four blocks, each capable of independent development. Each block consists of a central entrance road which gives access to individual units.

The units consist of a house, a carport or garage, an adjacent service; yard and a garden court.

The garden courts, of various dimensions but not less than twenty feet wide, are open to a common green which borders onto the common green of the adjacent block. The boundary is, for maintenance purposes, defined by a concrete path which gives pedestrian access to the children's play areas and the Commonwealth-maintained park beyond. (The park is a flood bed for 50-year flood cycles.)

Adjacent to the park is an area, on Block 2, which may be used by the developers to construct a tennis court, swimming pool, or similar, for the use of the tenants.'



How houses will be grouped around common lawn and paved areas in a patio development. The black areas represent houses.

A typical house plan in a patio group prepared by NCDC. source *Canberra Times*, Monday 28 March 1966²⁶

Although the Canberra Times headlines described this development as a 'Radical homes project for Canberra', there was little interest shown by developers when the sites went to auction on 25 May 1966. The area was first offered in four blocks with the prices expected to be in the order of several thousands of dollars. However, the four blocks went for only \$550, \$575, \$550 and \$825; an average of \$625 (section 37, blocks 5, 6, 7 & 8). The auctioneer, Mr RH Webster, a director of LJ Hooker, said 'buyers were wary of the patio housing scheme because it had not been tried in Canberra yet. Investors would not be interested in high medium density housing in Canberra until strata titles were introduced' (*CTimes* 26 May 1966, p.1).²⁷

The lack of interest in this type of housing continued, resulting in two of the blocks (5 and 6) being handed back to the Government in 1968. The condition of their original sale was for work to commence within six months of auction and be completed within 18 months, or at such time as approved by the Minister for the Interior. (*CTimes* 22 June 1968, p.9)²⁸

In November 1968, the government put blocks 5 and 6 (nearest Madigan St) back up for auction but the sale price of only \$100 for block 6 and \$900 for block 5, again reflected the very cautious approach that developers had towards this housing type at that time. The *Canberra Times* of 30 November 1968²⁹ reported that 'that high covenants and costly building and landscaping requirements were probably a factor in keeping the premiums down.' The block carried a covenant of \$154,000 and 'ground rent' of \$845.



Grayson St patio housing, 2018 (photos: Chris Mobbs)

Stage 5

Some of the last areas to be developed in Hackett were sections 50 and 51 at corner of Mackenzie and Burrell Streets when blocks were up for auction in January 1972. Blocks in Jukes Street and Jukes Place were also sold in 1972, along with a couple of blocks in Richards Street.

The mystery of section 49

There are 44 streets in Hackett with 1,125 blocks. But not all blocks have houses on them. They include the Hackett oval precinct, parks, small garden beds (e.g. section 56 on Mackenzie St, opposite the Bragg St park); walkways between streets are also allocated a block number. In some of the walkways there are small annexes which have power lines or sub-stations – these are also allocated a block number.

Have a close look at the section map at plate 5 for Hackett. Can you find section 49? Noting that the sequence for sections 40-50 is mainly in the south-east part of the suburb, it could be expected to be in this area. However, section 49 does not exist.

The ACT Government has no paper records for Section 49 in Hackett, or any records in its databases. There were also no records of historic leases for Hackett section 49. It is not clear what may have happened – it either never existed, or may have been created and deleted within a short time period and not recorded.

First map of Hackett

On plate 6 is a map prepared by the NCDC in 1960 (source - NCDC Planning map F1 05-037). This may be the first map of Hackett and shows all the streets but no names (names were not gazetted until 21 September 1961 – see Appendix B - Hackett street names).

Interesting features about this map which differ from the Hackett of today include:

- A church was planned for the corner of Phillip Avenue and Kellaway St.
- The area between Bragg, Brennan and Mackenzie Streets was zoned for housing but was later left as open space.
- The area now occupied by 27, 29 and 31 Bragg St was zoned for community park (CP).
- The area now occupied by 30 and 32 Brennan St was zoned for pre-school (PS) and Mother Craft centre (MC).
- The shops were proposed to be opposite the school at intersection of Maitland, Madigan and Mills Streets (shaded blue), while the remainder of the block between Madigan and Mills Streets was zoned for public housing with no individual blocks. The shops were later built in the middle of this section with the creation of Hackett Place.
- A church was zoned for the area now occupied by units at the corner of Rivett and Madigan Streets.
- To the south-east of this proposed church, the open space between Mackenzie, Madigan and Grayson Streets is shown as open space and still remains – the architect for the ‘patio living areas’ noted that this ‘park is a flood bed for 50-year flood cycles’. The area between this open space and Grayson Street does not have any specific blocks marked; five blocks were later allocated in this area. In 1966 this area was advertised for development with a new style of development called ‘patio housing’ – see story under the section Stage 4.
- A pre-school (PS) and Mother Craft centre (MC) was proposed for the corner of Mills and Skeats Streets.
- A dotted rectangle at the southern end of the Hackett Oval, adjacent to 90 Maitland St, may have been the proposed parks depot for which residents of Phillip Avenue protested about in 1964 - see section *Some challenges building a new suburb - An early protest in Hackett*.
- Along the eastern side of Hackett was an ‘arterial road’ that was later named as Monash Drive. It was to be connected from Antill St by a ‘sub-arterial road’ and an extension of Phillip Avenue. Monash Drive was still on the National Capital Plan in mid 2018, despite the ACT Government asking the National Capital Authority to remove it in 2009 – see Monash Drive under section about *Mount Majura*.

Hackett oval trees – when were they planted?

On the eastern side of the Hackett Oval is an avenue of mature pine and eucalypt trees (see photo on book cover). They run from Phillip Avenue and cross over Madigan Street to the open space on the northern side of the Grayson Street patio housing.

The 1951 aerial photo below shows that the trees were well established before Hackett was built (see horizontal arrow). The photo of Hackett in the section ‘Building Hackett in Stages’, shows them to be large when the suburb was being built in 1964. Plate 7 shows a 1915 map of Gungahlin and north Canberra. The map was annotated in the 1940s and includes a green area in the shape of this avenue most likely these trees (it is possible that the green area was one of the annotations).

What is the origin of these trees and what was their purpose? The ACT Government has no records about their origin, though there are several possibilities:

- Plantings by Charles Weston - Weston was responsible for planting significant number of trees across Canberra from 1913-26 in his role as the officer in charge of afforestation, in Canberra. Some of these include Haig Park, that runs from Ainslie to Turner. A review by John Grey of Weston’s records of plantings across Canberra does not include the avenue in Hackett. It is possible that the then Afforestation Branch did plant them under the guidance of Weston but either the records were not made or they have been lost.
- Part of the revegetation of Mount Majura - large scale revegetation was done in 1919-20. Most of this work involved planting of kurrajongs on the actual mountain.
- Wind break for the original aerodrome at Dickson - The first airport for Canberra was in the area now occupied by Dickson. Files held by the National Archives of Australia did not show any reference to these trees. Given the prevailing winds in Canberra are from the west, the value of this avenue as a wind break is questionable.

Until actual records are found, the best estimate it that they were planted sometime in the 1920/30s.



‘1951 aerial imagery’. Horizontal arrow indicates tree plantation. The streets in lower left hand corner are Ainslie; vertical arrow indicates intersection of Officer Crescent and Hawdon Street. (source [ACTMap](#), ©ACT Government).

Blocks of land for sale

'prices for individual blocks across all suburbs were beyond the reach of the average buyer and were a problem for young home builders', auctioneer Mr R.O Wellsmore, October 1963

1962-1963

The first blocks of land in Hackett were auctioned in December 1962, with fifty blocks offered in seven lots. At the time, the Government was aware that builders and developers were pushing the price of land up at auctions. In an attempt to provide cheaper land for first home buyers, they conducted unrestricted and restricted auctions. Unrestricted auctions were open to all, including first home buyers, finance companies and builders. For the restricted auctions, the successful bidders were required to sign a statutory declaration stating that 'neither he nor his wife' had separate or joint interests in any other residential block in the ACT. Furthermore, they could not bid again once they had one block. The government later placed a restriction that the block could not be sold within five years of purchase.

The restrictions to first home buyers seemed an effective strategy. At a restricted auction on 12 December 1962, blocks in Ainslie, O'Connor, Watson and Hackett, averaged £712 a block, with those in Hackett selling for an average of £662. An unrestricted auction a few days earlier saw an average price of £1,510 a block.³⁰

Three months later, the prices had significantly increased at an auction held on 26 March 1963. At a restricted auction, forty-one blocks in Hackett sold for an average of £1,058, while a block in section 11 (bounded by Phillip Avenue and Maitland St), sold for £1,800 at unrestricted auction.³¹

There was evidence that builders got around these restrictions by paying people to act as dummies at the auctions in March 1963. The then Federal Member for the ACT, Jim Fraser, was quoted in the Canberra Times as saying 'that a Canberra syndicate had briefed a number of 'dummies' and provided them with cash to bid for blocks at restricted sales.' The allegations were serious enough for the Commonwealth police to investigate the March 1963 auctions. But Mr Greenish, president of the Chamber of Commerce and a member of the ACT Advisory Council, proposed even stronger measures to counteract these activities by builders; he wanted the 'sale or disposal of home sites bought at auctions should be embargoed for at least five years.'³²

At the unrestricted auction on 12 June 1963, finance companies and developers bought groups of blocks in Hackett; 'five blocks for £9,000, four for £8,500, eight for £14,300, 10 for £17,700, seven for £11,100 and 10 for £17,100.' The highest price paid for a block at the unrestricted auction was in section 28 (Rivett St) for £2,400. Restricted auctions were used for blocks offered on 13-14 June 1963, with these limited to people 'who had not held a residential lease in the ACT for two years preceding the day of sale.'³³ The blocks were located in Downer, Hughes, Red Hill, Yarralumla, Ainslie, Watson, Downer and Hackett. The Hackett blocks sold at the restricted auction for less than for less than £1,000; two police officers were in attendance.³⁴

Jim Fraser said that 'Only the wealthy can afford to buy land and build in Canberra today...The one answer to prices paid yesterday is to make enough land available to meet the demand. The Government has created an artificial lack of land and housing.'³⁵

The prices continued to remain high at the unrestricted auctions on 23 October 1963 which was attended by over 500 people and saw '58 individual blocks at Hackett sold for an average of £1,776.' The auctioneer Mr RO Wellsmore said that 'prices for individual blocks across all suburbs were beyond the reach of the average buyer and were a problem for young home builders'.³⁶

But three months later, the impact of having restricted auctions had a dramatic effect on land prices across all suburbs, with the average price falling by 40 per cent. 'In Hackett, three blocks sold for £300, £650 and £750.'³⁷

1964

At a restricted auction on 8 April 1964, few blocks sold for less than £700 which was the amount 'many couples had estimated as the maximum they could afford to pay for land... In Hackett, 18 were priced from £725 to £800, 17 from £825 to £950 and four from £1,000 to £1,300.'

At the restricted auction on 30 June 1964, 26 blocks in sections 42, 43 and 44 (southern end of Madigan, Mackenzie and lower part of Bragg St) ranged in price from £875 to £1,300, at an average of £962. At the unrestricted auction the following day, the prices increased, ranging from £1,375 to £1,800 at an average of £1,402

for 32 blocks in sections 35, 45, 47 and 48. According to the NCDC the cost of developing land in 1963-64 was between £600 to £800 per block and this covered the costs of providing roads, electricity and sewerage.³⁸

Hackett leads the way in house construction

On 20 August 1964 the Commonwealth Statistician, released data which showed ‘More houses but fewer flats were built in Canberra in the 1963-64 financial year, compared with the previous year.’

Overall, however, building activity increased. A total of 1,764 houses and 150 flats were completed in 1963-64. The greatest home building activity was in Hackett, where 603 houses and flats were completed; or almost one third of all dwellings in Canberra.³⁹

1965-1972

On 14 April 1965 an unrestricted auction attracted only 100 people, with builders being the main buyers. In Hackett the average price was £1,950 but this higher level was due to the very few blocks being available.⁴⁰ The 1966 Census reported that Hackett had 1,093 dwellings.

In its 1965-66 Annual Report,⁴¹ the NCDC presented a table showing the prices for blocks of land sold at restricted and unrestricted auctions from 1962-63 to 1965-66. Although no breakdown based on suburbs were given, these figures probably included blocks in Hackett and suburbs being developed in the Woden Valley. *Note - decimal currency commenced on 14 February 1966, so the figures pre 1966 would have been converted from pounds to dollars.*

	1962-63		1963-64		1964-65		1965-66	
	Blocks	Average premium \$						
Unrestricted	349	3,508	349	3,141	581	3,338	507	2,414
Restricted	345	1,736	334	1,577	508	1,351	490	935

On 7 March 1967 three blocks were sold at restricted three blocks in Hackett making an average of \$2,083. Section 42, block 13 \$3,100, Section 46 block 1 \$1,050 and Section 47, block 19 \$2,100.⁴²

The NCDC identified eight blocks across Canberra in the early 1970s which could be used for VIP ‘executive type housing’. These included a block in Gellibrand Street, Campbell, for the then Minister for the Interior, Mr Ralph Hunt. Other blocks were located in Astley Place, Garran; Booth Crescent, Cook; Gouger Street, Torrens; two in Sheehan St, Pearce; one in Shackleton Circuit, Mawson; and one in Nullagine Street, Fisher. In addition to these, the Canberra Times reported on 10 August 1971⁴³, that there were other large blocks ‘with views and backing on to reserves at the upper end of Strickland Crescent, Deakin, Raoul, Pillar and Dennes Places in Lyons; and in the cul de sacs of Jukes and Verco Streets, Hackett. Most of these sites have not been marked out in block and section maps, but this can be done easily and without gazettal.’ In 1972, the VIP blocks in Jukes Street and Jukes Place sold for \$6,120 to \$8,160.

Development of a smaller area in Burrell St (blocks 50 and 51) did not proceed until January 1972 when ten blocks were auctioned,⁴⁴ along with a 1.5 acre site on Grayson Street. At the same auction, blocks 5, 6 and 7 in section 34 (Richards St) went for \$10,100, \$10,000 and \$8,000 respectively.⁴⁵

Some challenges building a new suburb

'The response might be greater in more remote suburbs such as Hughes and Hackett.'

Reducing traffic entry to the suburb

In announcing the three new suburbs in 1960, the Minister for the Interior, Mr Freeth, noted that each suburb would have a population of about 5,000. (For Hackett, this figure was never reached, with the highest population of 4,384 recorded in the 1971 census.) Mr Freeth also said that planning would ensure that the main traffic routes for these areas would go **between the suburbs** and not through them.⁴⁶ As plans for these suburbs were not released at this time, it is highly likely that this decision came to fruition with the creation of streets like Antill St which separates Hackett and Watson, Dickson and Downer, and Phillip Avenue which separates Hackett from Ainslie. As shown on the following diagram⁴⁷ by the NCDC, these two roads are referred to as 'Sub-arterial' roads. Although not shown, the proposed Monash Drive, that was to run along the western base of Mount Majura and Mount Ainslie, was also consistent with this approach. Madigan St was identified as the 'main distributor road,' with Rivett, Mackenzie and Maitland Streets the 'collector roads.'



The northern suburb of Hackett provides a clear example of the types of road used in making suburban areas safer for both cars and pedestrians. The suburb is bounded by sub-arterial roads – Antill Street and Phillip Avenue. The main distributor road in the suburb is Madigan Street, while the collector roads are Rivett, Mackenzie and Maitland Streets.

Source Canberra Times, Thursday 6 April 1967, p17

This intention seemed worthy at the time, and would appear to have ensured that excessive traffic did not travel through these suburbs for at least the first 40 years. The creation of Gungahlin in the early 2000s would rapidly change this situation. As the suburbs in Gungahlin were built, their residents soon found alternate ways of travelling to the city or the offices in east Canberra (e.g. Russell and Barton). Many would come down the Federal Highway, turn into Antill Street and drive to Majura Avenue by either turning into Madigan St and then into Phillip Avenue, or to Phillip Avenue past Dickson College.

A strong local campaign by Hackett and Ainslie residents to protect Mount Majura and Mount Ainslie, would lead to the ACT Government in 2009 recommending the removal of Monash Drive from the National Capital Plan (see chapter about Monash Drive). The Hackett Community Association (HCA) also led community efforts to reduce traffic through the suburb (see chapter about Issues considered by the HCA)

Pathway problems

Awarding tenders for construction work is one thing; keeping up the demand to provide infrastructure would challenge the capacity of the NCDC dealing with the rapidly growing suburbs. While they had provided the roads for Watson and Hackett, they had a backlog of footpaths, kerbs and gutters.

The NCDC's approach, as set out in its 1961-62 annual report, was to 'follow a plan of providing one footpath in the more heavily trafficked areas such as routes to schools, shopping and community centres.'⁴⁸ This is probably

why Maitland, Madigan, Mackenzie and Rivett Streets have footpaths, whereas most of the smaller loop streets and places have none. One upset mother wrote a letter to the Canberra Times saying Hackett was an overlooked suburb and was alluding to the lack of pathways:

'...I have lived in Hackett for nearly three years and yet the children still have to walk on the road in winter to keep their feet dry.' MOTHER OF THREE (*CTimes* 29 March [1966](#), p. 2)⁴⁹

Over the decades this lack of paths continued to be of concern to some residents worried about children and elderly having to avoid cars when walking on these streets.

New road sealing mixture used on Hackett streets

The NCDC *Sidewalk Supervisor*¹ column in the Canberra Times, May 1963, announced that the street surfaces of Hackett would be sealed with a particular surfacing material known as 'bitumen hot mix'. 'The mix was prepared at the Department of Works Mugga Quarry and included crushed aggregate, with a small amount of finely crushed limestone filler, bound together with hot bitumen.' The hot mix was delivered to the site where the spreaders could adjust the thickness from half to four inches thick (12-100mm); the normal thickness used in new suburban areas was three-quarters of an inch (20mm) while new roads had a thickness of two inches (50mm). The NCDC said the finished surface lasted longer, had better ride qualities and less likelihood of skidding (*CTimes* 10 May [1963](#) p 39).⁵⁰



French St

New drainage system

In February 1965, a house in Grayson St, Hackett was a demonstration site for the installation of a new type of plumbing system for houses. Taking only three hours to lay, the pipes used rubber joints which clicked into position and then were immediately covered. Other pipes used mortar which required the trenches to be left open while the mortar dried. The Ballarat manufacturer, Martin Stoneware Pipes, had been awarded a two-year contract to supply pipes and joints to the Commonwealth Government (*CTimes* 26 February [1965](#), p. 11).⁵¹ It is possible that many of the government houses built in Hackett post February 1965 would have used this system and may still be providing effective plumbing today.

Dickson to be new area centre

In February 1962, the NCDC announced it would begin developing the Dickson shopping centre and industrial area in 1963. 'The shopping area will be a district centre, similar to Kingston. It will be supplemented by smaller suburban shopping centres planned for Downer, Watson and Hackett. The industrial area will contain service industries similar to the Braddon minor industrial area. It will be screened from the shopping centre by trees.' The NCDC said that the Dickson shopping centre would serve 'Canberra's fastest growing area' with Watson and Hackett expected to be completed by the end of 1962.⁵²

¹ The *Sidewalk Supervisor* was a weekly column prepared by The Canberra Times in conjunction with the NCDC and the Department of Works, 'to keep Canberra people and visitors informed on progressive stages of projects under construction in the Capital.' The first column appeared on 28 July 1961.

Anaemic architecture

In early 1965, the NCDC came into criticism from some Canberra and interstate architects for promoting ‘anaemic, and niggardly architecture’ in Canberra, and referred to some flats to be built in Hackett.

The criticism was in the Melbourne University’s Department of Architecture *Cross Section* magazine. It said the architectural control drawings of proposed buildings in Canberra were an ‘open and gratuitous insult’ to architecture and architects. The article said that at an auction of leases for residential flat sites in Hackett, instructions were issued that the buildings were to conform generally to a prepared site layout plan and architectural control drawings. While supporting the need for sound design and site planning, the article said that ‘dictatorial suggestions of an anaemic and niggardly architecture can only defeat the ideals they are supposed to protect.’

The magazine quoted a Canberra architect as saying that ‘he could not understand the reason for forcing ugliness on private enterprises.’ Another architect, Mr M Moir, said that in some respects there were not enough controls - particularly over poor quality housing. ‘The last thing I would want to see is a repetition of the Australian National University, where there is no harmony between the various buildings,’ said Mr Moir. Other architects agreed the need for controls but were critical that they were sometimes haphazard in their application (*CTimes 9 February 1965*, p, 3).⁵³

Canberra's ugly street furniture

The installation of power poles on parts of Madigan St in early 1966 led to several Hackett residents writing letters to the Canberra Times expressing their concerns. Mrs D Whitfield said ‘those who enjoy the lovely view across to the mountains will in future have to admire it through a screen of thick black wires.’⁵⁴

Mrs J Oreskovic wrote ‘I am one of the unlucky people to have one erected on my front lawn, only two feet away from a tree. As we recently bought our house from the Department of the Interior, I am wondering whether the government valuer knew the light pole would be erected and consequently allowed for the lowering in value of the house.’⁵⁵

G Kelleher wrote about this ‘ugly street furniture’. ‘A section of Madigan Street in Hackett is now lined on both sides with 40 feet high timber poles, and on one side with concrete light poles.’⁵⁶

The Federal Member for Canberra Jim Fraser followed up on this concern and was told by the NCDC that it wanted all electricity lines put underground. But this would require a change to the legislation (*Australian Capital Territory Electricity Supply Act 1962*) that set up the ACT Electricity Authority. The Act did not require the Authority to take into account the special requirements of Canberra as a garden city. ‘It was necessary to construct the high voltage line on its present site because, on the other side of the street, it would have involved the removal of a huge tree and this would have provoked the anger of tree lovers,’ Mr Fraser said.⁵⁷ (editor’s note - The tree may be the large Blakelyi’s red gum still standing on the path near 31 Madigan St?)

In many of the pathways that run between streets, there are small annexes which are shown as separate blocks on the Territory Plan. These were intended to have a ground level transformer as part of the proposed underground power lines (pers.comm Pat McNamara, July 2018) but instead were used for the power poles.

Today, power lines run north-west from Skeats St along the southern side of Madigan St to the Maitland St intersection.

Keeping the Canberra map up to date

The rapid expansion was causing problems for the city map makers as reported by the Canberra Times in June 1962. The Department of the Interior Lands and Survey Branch printed the Canberra Tourist Map and other maps and city guides. It had to revise the map every 12 months since 1954 to keep up with expansion. ‘The new 1962 map contains the street names in the new suburbs of Watson and Hackett and in the rest of Downer.’

A comparison with the 1954 city map showed the new suburbs included Red Hill, Campbell, Lyneham, Dickson, North Ainslie, Downer, Hackett and Watson with additions to O’Connor, Deakin and the R.M.C. area. ‘Overall size of the reproduction of the city area will have to be reduced to fit these new suburbs on the map.’⁵⁸

A horse track and showground in Hackett?

While the map makers were having trouble keeping up with the ever changing face of north Canberra, it would appear some reporters at the Canberra Times were faced with the same challenge. An article on 7 September 1961 described the development of the new race course in Hackett. Yet the aerial photo shows the race track is on the western side of the Federal Highway. The article stated that:

'Canberra's new race-course takes shape in Hackett. The A.C.T. Council of Race Clubs is building the new track. It will replace the Acton track...' (CTimes 7 September 1961 p 30).⁵⁹

A case of mistaken identity occurred again three years later when the National Agriculture Society held its first Canberra Show at its new grounds near the race track on 6&7 March 1964. (Previous shows had been held at the Hall Showground.). All reports leading up to and post the show referred to the show being held at the new grounds near Lyneham. But when reporting on the annual general meeting in late July 1964, the Canberra Times reported that thousands of people gate crashed the event at the 'ACT showground at Hackett'.⁶⁰



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TOP:

Gouged earth
and scarred riverbanks
at the Canberra Lakes
Dam site make a
strange contrast with
the formal grounds of
adjoining Government
House in this aerial
photograph taken yes-
terday.

The Dam will hold
back six and a quarter
miles of water.

The Lakes are due
for completion in 1963.

LOWER: Canberra's new race-course takes shape in Hackett.

The A.C.T. Council of Race Clubs is building the new track.

It will replace the
Acton track, due to
disappear under the
Canberra Lakes in
1963.

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Excavations and
levelling for the course,
saddling paddock and
approach roads are
nearly completed.

The Canberra Drive-
In Theatre in the same
area is in the top left-
hand corner of the
photo, on the opposite
side of the Canberra-
Sydney Highway.

The Dam will hold
back six and a quarter
miles of water.

The Lakes are due
for completion in 1963.

LOWER: Canberra's new race-course takes shape in Hackett.

The A.C.T. Council of Race Clubs is building the new track.

It will replace the
Acton track, due to
disappear under the
Canberra Lakes in
1963.

NUDIST FEEL
THE PINCH
LONDON, Wednesday (A.P.)—Nudists at two "sun
clubs" in Hertfordshire were
having trouble with pick-
pockets, the Daily Mail said
yesterday.

Someone has been taking
wallets from the changing
rooms where they leave their
clothes.

Now club members are
faced with the problem of
finding somewhere to put
money and valuables while
they bask in the sun.

WILLIAMS
Yass - Canberra Passen-
and Freight Service

Twice daily from Canberra to
Melbourne and Riverina Express
Departs Yass 5.45 a.m. — Arrives Melbourne
Departs Canberra 10.30 a.m. — Arrives Yass
Departs Yass 5 p.m. — Arrives Canberra
Departs Canberra 6.30 p.m. — Arrives Yass
Fare 12/6, Children Half Price
Day parcels to and from Yass
Night parcels depot, Atlantic Service Station

Thousands 'crashed' the show

Avoiding gatekeepers
was a popular pastime at
the last A.C.T. show.

According to the treasurer
of the National Agricultural
Society, Mr. R. T. Winch,
thousands of people sneaked
into the show — the first
held at the A.C.T. show-
ground at Hackett.

Sources - Canberra Times 7 September 1961

31 July 1964

The remote suburb of Hackett

In April 1964, Hackett was considered a ‘remote suburb’ by the then ACT Road Safety Council. The Canberra Times reported that the Council had expressed concerns that drivers remained confused about dual carriageway regulations in Canberra and that the ‘Department of the Interior was producing a special pamphlet to enlighten drivers on dual carriageway regulations.’ The Council also proposed that the police should inspect school children bicycles at schools. The Council had also run film evenings (no location given) but the response ‘had not been good. The response might be greater in more remote suburbs such as Hughes and Hackett.’ (*CTimes 15 April 1964*, p 11).⁶¹

An early protest in Hackett

At the southern end of the Hackett Oval, between the change rooms and Maitland Street, is open space with scattered large eucalypts. But in 1964 this area could have become a parks and gardens depot which would have had a fenced area containing equipment, work sheds and piles of soil. Some residents raised concerns about the proximity to their houses and that the depot would spoil views onto the open area and ultimately reduce the value of their blocks. Jim Fraser, the Federal Member for Canberra, raised the matter with Doug Anthony, the minister responsible for the ACT (*CTimes, 2 October 1964*, p 12).⁶² A depot was eventually built on the edge of this open space in Holtze Place and is now used by the ACT SES Majura Unit.

Vandals attack drain pipes

The fact that no houses had been built and therefore no one living in Hackett in September 1962, would seem to have made the developing suburb an easy target for vandals. Two hundred and thirty, 4 foot long ceramic pipes (total length 280 metres) were smashed on a Friday night, a night before they were to be tested for leaks on the Saturday. Costing over £1,000 to replace, the company demonstrated to police that kids throwing rocks on them were not the cause – ‘a strong man, or several men would have to had used picks to break holes in these pipes.’ (*CTimes 10 September 1962*, p 1)⁶³

Vandals attack trees

Although people had moved into Hackett in 1963, it would appear the presence of people was not enough to deter vandals doing further damage to the growing suburb, this time targeting trees. ‘According to the police, trees have been ringbarked, slashed, felled or lopped.’ From the description in the Canberra Times, they may have been some of original large eucalypts that had been ‘set aside’ by the NCDC for preservation. Unfortunately, details of the location were not provided. (*CTimes 10 September 1964*, p 3)⁶⁴



Open space with playground between Mackenzie and Madigan Streets. (photo: Chris Mobbs)



Hackett Oval. (photo: Chris Mobbs)

Bringing water to the new suburb

'his water went off just before 7pm and only began to trickle through the pipes again about 8.10pm.'

With houses been built in Hackett it was essential to provide a reliable water supply. Planning for a new water supply for the northern suburbs began in late 1959, with the NCDC working with the Department of Works to plan the construction of an 'East Dickson Reservoir² - to be known later as the Hackett Reservoir, at the base of Mount Majura, behind Rivett St. This reservoir would supply Hackett, as well as Downer and Watson.

By September 1962, the foundations for the reservoir had been completed by Transfield. Made from reinforced concrete, the reservoir is 48.7 meters in diameter and 10.2 metres high, with a capacity of 15.14 million litres (4,000,000 gallons). It would increase Canberra's overall water supply from 29 to 33 million gallons. 'A low concrete ring wall was built first followed by the pouring of a concrete floor, then the circular concrete wall. The wall is of 'stepped' construction in three stages, narrowing from a maximum thickness of 2½ft. at the base to 1ft. at the top. The pouring of the wall is expected to be completed in mid February 1963 for a total cost of approximately £51,000.' (*Sidewalk Supervisor, CTimes 15 February 1963*, p 31)⁶⁵

The reservoir went into service in early May 1963. The roof was not included in the original construction, which was not uncommon at the time; it was added in 1968.⁶⁶



Hackett reservoir behind Rivett Street. (photo: Chris Mobbs)

Some of the higher parts of Hackett (Verco and Jukes Streets), nearby Watson and the Australian Federal Police complex in the Majura Valley, would be served by a separate, higher level reservoir to be built on the saddle, south of Mount Majura, in 1968-69. The map at plate 3 has the Verco and Jukes Streets area annotated with the note 'High areas above 2,075ft. Probably require booster pumping.'

In 2016-17, Icon Water showed that the average water consumption per person per day in the capital was 304 litres - about 40 per cent less than before the Millennium drought (2001-09). Canberra was using the same amount of water as the 1970s, despite the city's population doubling in the past 40 years. (source *Canberra's frugal water usage equivalent to 1970s when city half the size* *Canberra Times 18 September 2017*).

Using these figures, the Hackett reservoir could provide the daily supply of water for around 50,000 Canberrans. Or based on the 1976 Australian Census data, the population of Hackett was 3,968; these would have used around 1.2million litres day – with no topping up, the reservoir would have enough water for about 12.5 days.

² The suburb of Hackett was not announced until March 1960.

A connected network across Canberra

According to Icon water, today there are 47 primary and secondary service reservoirs in the Canberra water supply system. The Hackett reservoir was the 11th to be built and is connected to the reservoir on Bruce Ridge (behind O'Connor).

Construction of the supply line between the Hackett and O'Connor reservoirs was undertaken in 1962 with the aim of increasing ‘the water storage capacity in the city area and serve the north-eastern sub-divisions.’

Before the O'Connor reservoir was built, there was a more complicated supply arrangement via reservoirs on the south side of Canberra and a main on Commonwealth Avenue Bridge. In 1964 a reservoir was built on Oakey Hill (between Lyons and Weston Creek) to improve the supply of water to north Canberra. The O'Connor reservoir has been getting its supply via a pipe from Stromlo since about 1968⁶⁷.

But the construction of the O'Connor to Hackett pipeline caused concerns for some residents. The Canberra Times in 9 November 1962⁶⁸ reported that parents in the suburbs of O'Connor and Lyneham were worried about the potential danger to children of the exposed pipe going through their suburbs. The Works Department said they could only fill in the trench after leak testing had been completed.

Capacity not meeting the demand

Despite this new water supply, in late 1965 early 1966, the Canberra area experienced dry conditions which impacted on the reservoir network capacity to meet the demand.

The then Minister for the Interior, Doug Anthony, appealed to Canberrans to try and reduce their water use in January 1966. He said that due to the record consumption, the Cotter pumping station had not been able to keep up with demand, leading to the city's reservoirs being about half full. ‘He appealed to the public to be economical in the use of water and to avoid waste, particularly by refraining from the unnecessary use of garden sprinklers.’ It was reported that water was off in parts of Hackett for up to an hour one night. ‘A resident of Rivett Street told the Canberra Times that his water went off just before 7pm and only began to trickle through the pipes again about 8.10pm.’ The drop in pressure was due to the low level in the Hackett reservoir. (*CTimes* 13 January 1966 p 3)⁶⁹

Over twelve months later, residents in McKenzie, Brennan and Richards Streets, as well as residences at the top of Rivett Street again experienced water shortage when their supply was reduced between 7pm and 8.30pm. While high consumption was a factor, on this occasion it was exacerbated by painting being undertaken at one of the O'Connor reservoirs. (*CTimes* 7 February 1967 p 1)⁷⁰

In his weekly telecast on Friday 24 February 1967, the Federal Member for the ACT, Jim Fraser, highlighted the poor supply for residents in Mackenzie, Richards, Grayson, Brennan, Bragg, Dunlop and Russell Streets and parts of Rivett Street. He said he asked Mr Anthony for an early inquiry and urgent action. The NCDC responded by saying that work on a ‘break-pressure system would be completed at Belconnen in the next few months and a 36 inch main then would carry additional water into the Antill Street main. This would add substantially to the inflow of water into the Hackett reservoir and should solve the problem affecting this area of Hackett.’ (*CTimes* 25 February 1967 p 3)⁷¹

A Hackett resident followed up with a letter to The Canberra Times in March 1967 in which they noted that certain blocks in the higher parts of Hackett had not been sold, as the NCDC was waiting to build a higher reservoir in Hackett. (*CTimes* 7 March 1967 p 3)⁷². These blocks were possibly in Jukes and Verco Streets which were not sold until 1972.

An Upper Hackett reservoir was built on the saddle, south of Mount Majura, near the pine forests in 1968-69.⁷³

Houses for sale

Four bedroom brick veneer. Full price £6,250, December 1962

First advertisement for house for sale

The first advertisement for homes for sale in Hackett appeared in the Canberra Times on 15 December 1962.⁷⁴ As with many real estate advertisements at this time, the actual street names were not provided. It is most likely these houses were somewhere in sections 1-18 which were the first areas to be developed. The advertisement states that the plans for the Beverley Homes could be inspected at the agent's office, suggesting that they had not been built, or were in the process of construction. LJ Hooker advertised a house under construction on 16 January 1963.⁷⁵

REAL ESTATE

BUY A BEVERLEY HOME FOR BETTER LIVING

Situated in a tree-shaded street in Hackett

Three bedroom "B" type brick veneer. Full price only £5750
Three b'room "Wyene" timber home. Full price only £5605
Three b'room "Karana," brick veneer. Full price only £5635
Three bedroom "Dawn" brick veneer. Full price only £5545
Four bedroom brick veneer. Full price only £6250

Inspect plans at office. Finance arranged.

Prestige Home in Red Hill £13,400

Large lounge and separate dining room, 3 bedrooms, study (robes optional), will be built-in if required. Luxuriously appointed bathroom, ducted oil heating, double garage. Excellent position. Total area of 30 squares.

Excellent Food Business

Showing net profit of £100 per week—books to prove. Plant valued at £3,700. Walk-in, walk-out, including stock. £6,000.

To Let

ARCADE SHOP—Civic: No premium. Ideal sandwich bar or small espresso.

OFFICE SPACE: Various sizes, from £6 per week.

CANBERRA ESTATE AGENCY
Phone 41781 After hours 77343

Source *Canberra Times* 15 December 1962

First special offer — HACKETT

Under construction by one of Canberra's most reputable builders, cream brick veneer with cavity brick in laundry, bathrm. and toilet. Excellent site—comprising 3 bedrms. 13.4 x 12, 9 x 12 and 10 x 9.6 2 having B.I.W., ent. hall, Inge. 19.6 x 12 (internal fireplace), sep. din. 10 x 10, kit. with double bowl sink, fully tiled bathrm. with S.R.—Complete with oil heating, E/stove, light fittings and flyscreens. PRICE £6,300—DEPOSITS FROM £1,000.

Canberra Times 16 January 1963

Special features of houses in the 1960s

'Ready for lady to choose her own colour scheme'

The advertisements from the mid 1960s seemed to highlight a lot of features that are probably taken for granted in today's homes such as:

- tiled bathroom, shower and toilet and Nobel oil heater
- paths, drive strips, fences and rotary hoist
- light fittings, flyscreens.

Another house was advertised by Capital Real Estate in the *Canberra Times* on 20 March 1963⁷⁶ as 'brick veneer home on min (sic) two-way highway, 3 bedrooms (two with built-in robes), separate lounge and dining rooms, separate shower recess and toilet. Ready for lady to choose her own colour scheme. £6,300.'

The heights of Hackett

The top of Mount Majura is 888 metres above sea level (ASL) and Mount Ainslie at 842 metres. Hackett water reservoir is approximately 639 metres ASL, while the lowest point in Hackett is near St Margaret's Church (corner Antill St and Phillip Avenue) at approximately 590 metres ASL.

The term 'Hackett Heights' has been used to loosely describe the elevated parts of Hackett, nearest the Mount Majura Reserve – broadly along Mackenzie, Richards, Rivett and Verco Streets and Jukes Street. Other descriptions have taken a broader approach - anywhere north and east of Madigan St. Although not identified on

any official maps of Hackett, the term would appear to be largely of the making by real estate agents wanting to promote these areas of Hackett.

It is certainly not a recent term. A search of the mid 1960s Canberra Times found what could be the first use of the term in an advertisement for two homes placed by Wellsmore and Co Real Estate of Garema Place, in the Canberra Times 27 July [1963](#):

'HACKETT HEIGHTS'

We have two special buys in this really delightful area. In an elevated position, both properties command wonderful views of the city and ranges. In brick veneer, they have 3 and 4 bedrooms with B.I.Cs. in 2. Garage, oil heating, flyscreens, paths, etc. The large home is priced at £9,500. Get in early before everybody discovers the beauties of this spot!!⁷⁷

Another term describing the higher parts of the suburb included '*Hackett on the Hill*' used in an advertisement for seven homes at the northern end of Antill St and three in Jukes Street. The homes were built by Canberra Homes and advertised by Laurrie Scheele Real Estate in February [1964](#).⁷⁸

From pounds to dollars

Australia changed from pounds, shillings and pence, to decimal currency on 14 February 1966. One of the first homes in Hackett advertised with the old and new currency value was on 16 February 1966; one pound equalled two dollars:

'HACKETT \$17,600 £8,800'

Red textured brick/veneer home, 6 months old. Front lawn est. and gardens planted. Comprising entrance hall, LDK, 4 bedrooms, 2 with built in robes, tiled bathroom and sep. toilet. Garage attached, 15½ sq. living area. Includes aluminium window and flyscreens, O/H, automatic E/S, carpets and blinds. Situated in high part of Hackett, close to transport and 2 doors from parkland.' R.A McKillop & Co, 10 Petrie St, Canberra City⁷⁹

Small government houses criticised by Hackett 'Troglodyte'

The size of government houses being built in the new northern suburbs, including Hackett, led to one Hackett resident writing a letter to the Editor of the Canberra Times in 16 December [1963](#)⁸⁰:

'Government Houses'

Sir, - In Saturday's article on small homes, you have quoted Mr Luker as saying that the Government houses were quite well finished with tiles, etc.

I feel that Mr Luker has not seen any of the Government houses built within the last 18 months or so.

These have neither tiles nor adequate kitchen cupboards, not forgetting the 'baby's bath' and tiny rooms, into which it is almost impossible to fit wardrobes and chests of drawers.

This applies to houses in Hackett, Downer, and Watson, as well as Hughes.

TROGLODYTE Hackett.'

Begin saving in primary school to help buy your home

SAVINGS GOALS

Throughout your life, there will always be something you want—something worth saving for. Here are some suggested savings goals:

- Camera • Transistor radio
- Boat • Underwater gear
- Record player • Skis

Make up your mind what you want and save for it every week.

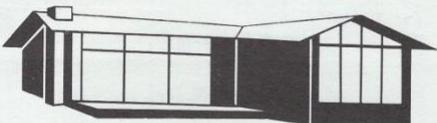
SPECIAL PURPOSE ACCOUNTS

High School students may deposit to "Special Purpose Accounts" through School Agencies. The special purpose will be shown on the Pass Book cover.

Special purposes which would be particularly suitable include:

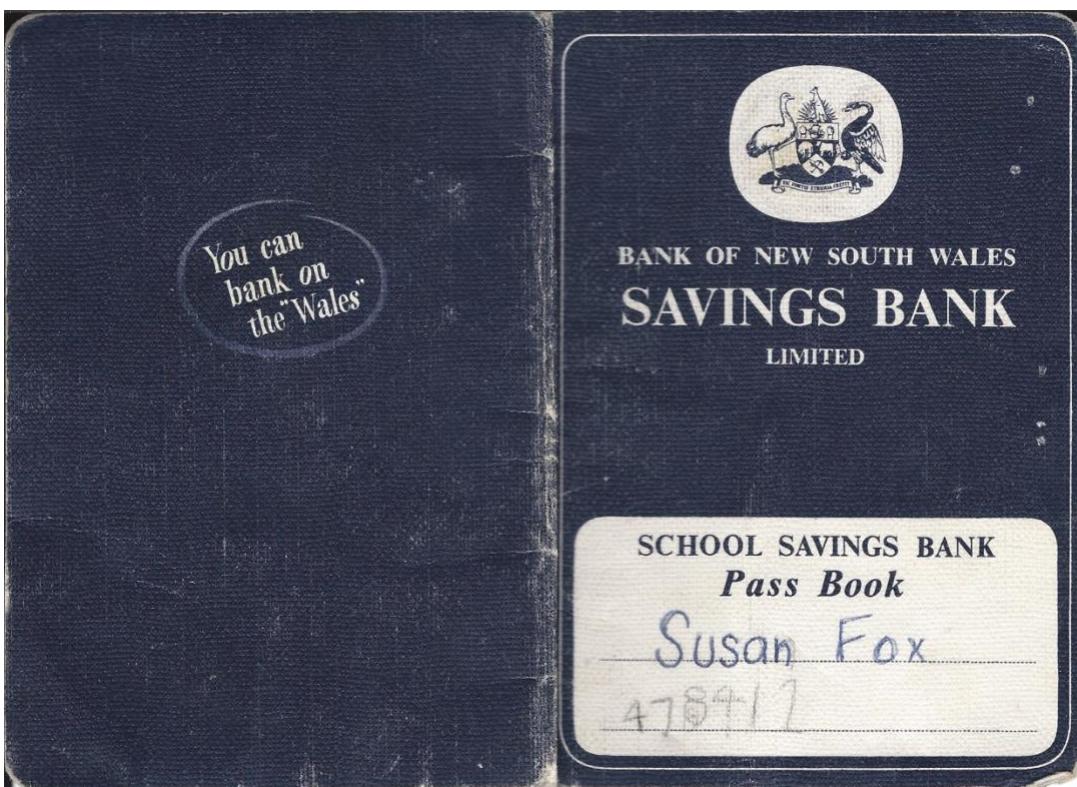
- Higher Education
- Holidays and Travel
- Motor Car
- Home Savings (*see opposite*)

HOME SAVINGS ACCOUNT



On leaving school, or even before, it would be to your advantage, either to open a special "Home Savings Account" or to ask the Bank to make your existing account a Home Savings Account. This could help you to claim the Government Home Savings Grant when you come to buy or build your own home. The grant is a tax-free gift to encourage saving and home-ownership. For full details about how to qualify for the maximum grant, enquire at any branch of the Wales.

Such an account can be used like an ordinary savings account: your money is not tied up and you can draw it out and pay in, in the normal way. It is your account and you can withdraw your money at any time, but continuity in saving for this purpose is desirable.



Primary school children were encouraged to start saving early by the Bank of New South Wales in the 1960s (Source - Suzi Levington)

Costs of purchasing a house in Canberra in 1965

In 1965, the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Australian Capital Territory conducted an ‘*Enquiry into supply of residential land in Canberra*.’⁸¹ In its submission to the enquiry, the NCDC included the costs for people buying a moderately priced house and land for £5,000 (£1 = \$2.00). The example included the following financing:

- family savings including Commonwealth Government Housing Subsidy of £500.
- Department of the Interior first mortgage housing loan of £3,500. Maximum pay-back period of 45 years at 4.75% annual interest, annual payments and interest of £189.
- second mortgage hire purchase type loan £1,000. Paid back over 10 years, with annual interest rate of 12%, annual payments of £172.

Other annual house and land charges included:

- comprehensive insurance £5
- land rent £33
- rates on the UCV £10-15
- water rates at 1 shilling/1,000 gallons with a minimum charge of £5, £5 per year
- repairs and maintenance £50

The annual total for paying off loans, house and land charges totaled £464, but they assumed that as the repairs and maintenance would be low for the first ten years, the costs would drop to £414 per annum for the first ten years. The costs would drop to £242 after ten years when the second mortgage was paid off.

The submission assumed that these outlays should absorb no more than 25% of the family ‘breadwinners’ gross income. This would require a gross annual income of £1,660 to pay the annual outlays of £414.

The changing value of houses in Hackett

Here are some milestones in relation to the property values, starting with the sale of the first blocks of land in 1962, through to the current day based on newspaper advertisements and real estate websites – it is possible that there were private sales which pre-date these records. In 1992-93 average unimproved capital value was \$68,700, according to ACT Revenue Office.

Amount	Date	location
£450-£850	13 December 1962	First blocks (total 67) in Hackett sold at auction
Average £662		
£5,545-£6,250	15 December 1962	First houses advertised (off the plan)
\$20,000	February 1966 ⁸²	No address given in advertisement
\$30,000	June 1968 ⁸³	No address given but described as “dress circle of Hackett Heights”
\$50,000	1973-74 circa	Hackett heights
\$100,000	March 1985 ⁸⁴	No address given in advertisement
\$320,000	February 1993*	Richards St
\$500,000	March 2001*	Mackenzie St
\$1,000,000+	December 2006*	Verco St
\$1,300,000	August 2017*	Verco St
\$1,600,000	February 2018*	Rivett St

*Source – Allhomes⁸⁵ - figures based on the contract date.

4. GONE SHOPPING!

'The centre of life in Hackett was the shops...For 20 cents the choices were challenging: a dentist's delight in buying lollies at Georges, the need to enlist a mate to help demolish the 20 cent serve of chips at Angelo's, or maybe a Matchbox car from the newsagent.' Recollections of the late 1960s, by Boyd Leo.

Building the shops in the 1960s

In one of the earliest maps (see First map of Hackett) produced by the NCDC in 1960, the shops were proposed to be opposite the school at the intersection of Maitland, Madigan and Mills Streets. The remainder of the block between Madigan and Mills Streets was zoned for public housing with no individual blocks. The shops were later built in the middle of this section with the creation of Hackett Place.

Although construction of the first houses in Hackett commenced in November 1962, development of the shops did not commence until September 1964 when the NCDC advertised tenders in the Canberra [Times](#) for the 'Hackett neighbourhood shopping centre.' The first stage would cover the site for a service station, a personal service block and a group of five retail shops. The providers would build roads and parking areas, kerbs and gutters, footpaths, hydraulic services and ancillary works. When all the buildings were completed, the NCDC would arrange for landscaping of the area.⁸⁶

In mid 1960s, Shell paid £85,000 for the service station site (now occupied by Madigan Gardens) while six blocks in the Hackett shopping centre sold between £10,000 to £39,000, bringing the total sales to £90,500 (these are in the space occupied by Wilburs, Monkey Wrench and IGA). A site for a 'non-retail commercial building' sold for £9,250 (building containing Siam Twist and others) ([CTimes 19 August 1965 p. 1](#)).⁸⁷

In most suburbs or towns, shops were located close to the centre. This was the approach with all suburbs established in Canberra and has continued today. The shopping centre tenants were carefully selected to provide a full range of essential services with most having a medium size supermarket as a central feature. Smaller stores were varied with take away food or restaurants common across many centres. Other outlets included hair dressers, pharmacies, post office, newsagents and service outlets like dry cleaners. This approach to shopping centres certainly worked in the 1960s when Hackett was built when there was limited public transport and private vehicles.

But like many suburban centres, be they in large cities or country towns, the make-up of the shops changes over time. Some shops remain for many decades, whereas others come and go within a few years or less. In the early 1990s, the Hackett shops changed due to a number of factors including closure of the Hackett Primary School, increased mobility of residents, establishment of larger town centres, and extended shopping hours. Over the next two decades many businesses opened and closed but since 2010, there has been far greater activity at the shops.



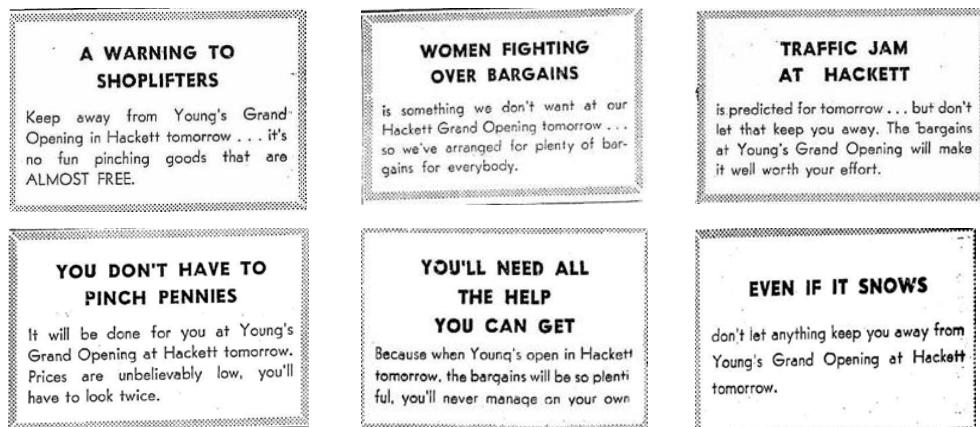
Hackett shops 2018. (photos: Chris Mobbs)

Main supermarkets

JB Youngs Value Plus

3,000 people attending the first day

The shops did not open until mid 1966 with the opening of the JB Young's Value Plus food store. Promotion of its opening involved some humorous advertising leading up to the big day, with the following ads scattered through the Canberra Times edition of 8 June 1966:⁸⁸



Young's **Value Plus** **FOOD STORES** **It's the total that counts**

GRAND OPENING
WE OPEN AT HACKETT TODAY

These specials shown here are available at Hackett only... just a few examples of what is waiting for you at the opening of Young's new Hackett store.

BONUS! 2 for the price of 1 <small>You get five products for the price of one. We've listed just a few examples. See the store for more details. All prices are per kilogram. No change from 50c up.</small>	4 oz. NESCAFE Instant coffee 6'6 <small>16oz 1/- 10c</small> WIN A JOLLY SWAGMAN BARBECUE <small>WATCH FOR THE LUCKY JARS</small>	EDGELL BEETROOT 3'4 <small>10oz 33c</small> MOUNTAIN Maid 3'4 <small>10oz 33c</small>
POTATOES 1'6 <small>5lb 15c</small>	CHERRIES 2'8 <small>16oz 27c</small>	
Packet tea cake biscuits, packet choc. biscuits 12oz peanut butter, 2/- packet peanuts 12oz mixed fruits, 8oz spiced red sauce Puddles Quill milk dessert, 2lbs S.B. flour Fox sweet corn, 16oz green peas Packet Stoll's Milk Nissauce, pkt cottage tea Packet chocolate assorted, pkt cottage tea 16oz Irish stew, fox Crown Pie 1 Marvelin Blanks, 1 OZ disinfectant Headache cleanser and Stomach-n-Brighten 1 Greasy light brown, 1 flavoured gravy Packet rice milk and 1lb white flour Packet envelopes and writing pads Packet tutti frutti, bottle cordial extract 1 common sardine, 1 Quill milk dessert Worcester relish, bottle cordial extract - meat rolls, 1 vegetable end sausages mustard and 1 horseradish seasoning 1 vegetable and sausages, 1 can spaghetti 1 boiled steak and vegetables, 1 spaghetti 1 dental cream, 1 toothbrush 4/- 1lb rolled oats, 12oz custard powder	Jeannette Parker 4'6 <small>45c</small> FONTEVYN HAIRSPRAY Giant 6'11 <small>13oz 69c</small> POTATOES 6d <small>12oz 19c</small> JELLIES 1'11 <small>12oz 19c</small> HY-PEAK 3'3 <small>22oz 22c</small>	

Advertisement for the opening of the JB Young's store 9 June 1966 Source Canberra Times⁸⁹

The store opened on 9 June 1966 and as reported in the Canberra Times of 10 [June](#), was a resounding success with over 3,000 people attending the first day. The store supervisor was reported as saying they had to keep the doors locked and let 50 people in at a time.⁹⁰

To maintain the momentum of its opening success, another ad was run the following week which promoted free shopping for three customers and that this would be televised! The wonderful world of television in Australia was still very young, with Channel 7 commencing transmission in Canberra in June 1962 and the ABC3 in December the same year. Whether the chaos of this shopping spree was captured and broadcast on local television is unknown.



*Follow-up advertisement to opening of the JB Young's store 15 June [1966](#) Source *Canberra Times*⁹¹*

Li'L Owl Market

However, JB Young's name would be short lived, with plans announced in late 1967 to change the shop to an Owl Discount supermarket.⁹² But it was almost 12 months after announcing the registration of the Owl brand, that the Li'L Owl Market opened in Hackett on 5 November 1968, and advertised with the Owl Discount Market at Queanbeyan. With Friday night shopping in Canberra, the [ad](#)⁹³ highlighted that the Hackett Li'L Owl operated 9am-9pm; both outlets proclaimed in their ad that they had 'Australia's lowest grocery prices' including:

- No.11 Steggles frozen chickens \$1.49
- 8oz Arnott's Scotch finger biscuits 21c
- 20oz OMO 30c

By 1976, other Owl stores had opened in Woden Plaza, Southlands at Mawson, Hughes and the Jamison Centre. JB Youngs were still operating stores at Deakin, Kingston and Manuka. The lease for the building that contained the Li'L Owl Market and newsagent (now Monkey Wrench) was sold at auction for \$427,000 in May [1979](#).⁹⁴

Shoprite and Festival

The Shoprite store opened in 1 August 1979, with its operating hours of Monday to Saturday 8.30am-7.30pm, late night Friday to 9pm and Sunday 10am-5pm. New management took over in June 1983 announcing a major reorganising of the store and prices. In August [1984](#)⁹⁵ they announced they had an in-store bakery that baked hot bread 7 days a week, as well as a delicatessen. Their motto at the time was 'Shoprite building better supermarkets, to serve you better, right where you live.' Shoprite continued operating until approximately mid 1991 when it became Festival. In late 1992 the store was advertising under the Festival IGA chain whose motto was 'Best and fresh and costs you [less](#)'.⁹⁶

IGA

Andy Haridemos opened the IGA store in the early 1990s and continued operating until the lease ended in October 2002 when he moved to the Watson shops. By mid February 2003 the new owners Pano, John and Con Lionis had reopened the store with a major face lift. John and Tony Krnc, along with Steve and Arthur Savoulidis, bought IGA in February 2006. Before they took over, the entrance to the store was on the north-west side of the shop. This meant that other shops in the centre were not getting people passing by when visiting the IGA. With the entrance repositioned to the eastern, or courtyard side, the new owners felt it would unify the shops in a more cohesive manner and enhance the shops for the whole community.

Small supermarkets and food outlets

'Offal Friday' dinner consisting of liver, brains, tripe and kidneys for \$30. Cafetopia 2003

As well as the large JB Youngs and L'il Owl, there were several other smaller grocery stores, often with take away food services, that started and closed over the years. Editor's note – it has not been possible to confirm the exact location of some of the following stores within the Hackett shops.

On 27 August 1965, Mr George Haridemos, applied for a Grocers [Licence](#)⁹⁷ under the *Liquor Ordinance 1929-1962*, for a grocery store at the Hackett Shops trading under the name of George & Haridemos. The renewal of the same licence in October 1966 referred to the shop as George and Haridemos and the same name in October 1968. The 1970 licence [renewal](#)⁹⁸ referred to Georges Food Centre.

Opening in April 1967, in the space now occupied by Wilburs Café and Bar, **Georges (Foodland) Supermarket**⁹⁹ provided extra variety for shoppers (plate 11). They were part of the Foodland Chain with other shops in Downer, Campbell, Hughes, Lyneham, Dickson, Braddon, Red Hill, Lyons, Curtain and Chifley. The Hackett store was still advertising in 1974.

Hackett Food Services Store probably started in 1966, as its owner, Mr Angelo Poulos, applied for a renewal of a liquor licence for another one year in November [1967](#).¹⁰⁰ According to notices in the Canberra Times, Mr Poulos continued the annual renewal until 1974. It was still operating in November [1976](#) when thieves stole \$584.91 - 'entry was gained by forcing a sheet of iron off the roof.'¹⁰¹ Steve Glaznieks (pers.comm April 2018) recalls that it had a fish & chip counter up the back:

'It must have also had a liquor licence because I remember all of the brightly coloured bottles of Vok in the window – there was so many of them and I could never understand why I wasn't allowed to drink something that looked so good (my parents weren't drinkers at all).'

An advertisement in the Canberra Times of 10 June [1989](#),¹⁰² referred to a closing down and clearance sale at the **Hackett Mini Market - Takeaway**. Shop fittings included pizza oven, deep fryer and grill hotplate and groceries including pasta, soft drinks, tinned foods, toys and other items.

'Resplendent in blue and white striped apron, the butcher talked about sirloin roasts with extra undercut, while the boys children gazed at the saw-dust covered floor' – recollections by Lewis von Stieglitz

Hackett Butchery and Delicatessen (plate 12) opened in 1 July [1966](#), following the frenzied opening of the Young's store. It was located in the space now occupied by Monkey Wrench. While decimal currency had commenced in February 1966, the adoption of metric measurements did not begin in Australia until 1971.¹⁰³



Source *The Canberra Times* 1 July 1966

Later ads showed the business had ties with Aro Meat Produce, Queanbeyan and ACT Butchery and Delicatessen, Garema Place. It continued operating until at least February 1990 when it was reported as sponsoring the men's social pairs at the Canberra City Bowling Club.¹⁰⁴

Angeomar Takeaway opened in July 1981¹⁰⁵ and was still trading in 1983 when it co-advertised with other shops (see combined shops advertisements at the end of this section about the shops).

King Ruby was a popular Chinese restaurant operating from the 1990s to March 2013 when it was forced to close by ACT Health.

Cafetopia was a small café outlet that Julie McCarron-Benson opened in February 2003 and offered gourmet food made in the ACT. In an advertisement in the Neighbour Watch November 2004 newsletter, they offered an 'Offal Friday' dinner consisting of liver, brains, tripe and kidneys for \$30. Non-offal eaters were also catered for. They also provided for dogs by offering a '\$5 Doggiuccino' which was a 'bowl of milk froth, with light sprinklings of chocolate, with side gourmet dog biscuit.' The accompanying human received a free coffee or tea. It closed in 2005.¹⁰⁶

Early Bird Bakery opened in the late 1990s and then changed owners in March 2002. The new owner in 2002 made organic bread free from artificial products. It continued operating until it closed sometime between 2005 and 2010.

Wilbur's Café and Bar opened in January 2010 when the Savoulidis brothers (Steve, Arthur and Andrew) decided to give the shopping centre another lease of life. Initially, Steve and Arthur ran Wilbur's, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner six days a week. Pizza was a big part of the family friendly menu which also included steaks, burgers, fish & chips etc; all designed to be affordable for locals to visit frequently.

Within six months of opening, there was much activity at the shops. As noted by James Walker, former Chair of the Hackett Community Association, in an article in The City Chronicle 29 June 2010, 'Just having it (Wilbur's) here has made a big morale difference – we thought we would lose the shops entirely.'

For the Savoulidis brothers, running food outlets must be in their genes, as their parents James and Helen Savoulidis were pioneers in bringing new culinary tastes to Canberra. They opened the Ponderosa Café in the Monaro Mall in 1963, and then bought the first pizzas to Canberra with The Pizzaria in Garema Place. In 1971 they opened the Plaka Restaurant at Mawson. In total, they opened and ran eight cafes across Canberra over several decades.

Corey Danvers and Sam Howarth took over in January 2013. Wilbur's opened from Tuesday to Sunday and provided a wide range of main meals and delicious desserts, as well as full bar service. It was popular with families who often visited with their children after school. Cyclists also enjoyed food and drinks after a long ride, or while waiting to have their bike repaired next door at Monkey Wrench. Wilbur's closed in September 2018.

Little Bean opened in 2013 in shop now containing Siam Twist. It was run by a consortium of people including Ari (later at IGA), Corey Danvers and Samantha Howarth and the silent partnership of Steve and Arthur Savoulidis. Little Bean changed to **Ten-deli** in May 2013 and was run by Andrew and Cherie Savoulidis. After one year of operation under Ten-Deli, the space was fully renovated to include a commercial kitchen fitout and re-opened in August 2014 as **Siam Twist**. Siam Twist is very popular with its delicious Thai food either as take away or eat in.

Hairdressers

Hairdressers have been one of the most common shops in Hackett, with one or two hairdressers being present from 1966, through to the present day.

The first, **Mirella Ladies Hairdressing Salon**, opened in December 1966,¹⁰⁷ but no details could be found as to when it closed. It advertised for a hairdresser in July 1969.

No records could be found identifying the opening date of the **Wallaby Hairdressing Salon** but it did advertise for a girl or boy willing to learn hairdressing, and for a qualified barber in December 1969. In the *Canberra News* magazine of 26 August 1971, a full page feature about Hackett included a picture of 'Mr Americo Spinapolice' of the Wallaby Salon. It would appear that the business was also referred to as the **Hackett Barber Shop**, when Americo advertised in December 1970,¹⁰⁸ by inviting 'customers to take advantage of his extended hours i.e. 8am

to 6.30pm' during the school holidays. In March 1976¹⁰⁹ the Hackett Barber Shop was offered for lease at \$20 week, for three years and then advertised for sale in March 1978.¹¹⁰

Former Hackett resident Steve Glaznieks (pers.comm April 2018) recalls his visits to the barber shop when he was young:

'I remember sitting in his chair many times and staring at the photographic wallpaper/backdrop (a lake and very tall trees, a forest I guess, lots of pink flowers too). Nearly every haircut you asked for turned out as a 'short back 'n' sides', but he gave you a lolly afterwards so that was OK!'

In March 1983 Luigi advertised his 'new barber shop' at the [shops](#).¹¹¹ Lyn Binns (pers. comm, April 2018), a long-time resident of Hackett, remembers one of the hairdressers spent most of his time playing the mandolin and then when the kids came to get a haircut he would give them 20 cents each.



Ritva Oravla took over the Hackett Barber Shop in 1990 and formed **Ritva's Hairdressers** which continued to about 2014 in the space now occupied by Saint Valentine florist. (pers. comm Jill Huntington, April 2018).

Just Hair first advertised in the Canberra Times in 1988 and operated until early 1990s.¹¹²

Star Hair studio advertised in the Neighbourhood Watch newsletter in 2002.

Tarquine Hair Salon opened in mid 2013 when Tanya Woodbridge moved from Ainslie to the Hackett shops. Tanya has over 25 years working in the hair styling industry. The name Tarquine is French for 'tease'. Tarquine is open Tuesday to Saturday, with late nights on Wednesday & Thursday and provides women's and men's hair styling. When Tanya opened the salon in 2013, the most common hair style for women was long hair with loose curls; in 2018, the trend has been for controlled waves.

Service businesses

Barnes Driving School set up an office in March 1977 but no records could be found to determine its length of stay at the shops. It was also operating in other offices across Canberra. Steve Glaznieks (pers.comm April 2018) recalls them having an office on Grayson St, a few doors up from the laneway that goes through to Brennan St.



Source -Canberra Times 12 March 1977, page 32

Hackett Newsagency was located to the left of the current entry into the IGA – entry would be approximately near the ATM machine. Steve Glaznieks (pers.comm April 2018) remembers that in the early/mid 1970s it was run by a couple called Tom and Angela (last name unknown) and was his main source of Matchbox cars. Around about 1975-76 it was taken over by Max and Elaine Stenlake.

Hackett Coin-op Laundry first advertised in February 1974¹¹³ for casual staff to work 5-9pm Monday to Friday nights. In 1980 the laundry was advertised as one of several locations across Canberra where people could leave their shoes for Star Shoe Repairs who were located in the Monaro Mall and Belconnen Shopping Arcade.¹¹⁴ It continued operating until 1984 when it owners, the Harveys, won Tattslotto and moved to Rockhampton, Qld (pers. comm Lyn Binns). The Ainslie Laundrette set up temporarily in November 2005 following a fire in their Ainslie premises.

Hackett Dry Cleaners advertised their prices (3 jumpers for \$6 or 3 trouser or plain skirts for \$7) in the Canberra Times in April 1982.¹¹⁵ It was then advertised for lease on 24 July 1982 as the owner had to return to Sydney. Jim and Nancy Robb took over the business in November 1982.¹¹⁶ They previously owned the Quikleen Dry Cleaners at Jamison and to ensure that customers from this store could continue the service, had drop-off facilities at petrol

stations at Macquarie, Hawker, Weetangera and Braddon. In mid 1984, Jim and Nancy sold their business to Max and Barbara Russell.¹¹⁷

Focus Inn Video Shop first advertised in 1984 and continued to 2002; the shop was in the space now holding Siam Twist. In the early part of 1985, the ads showed they also had a store at the Scullin shops. Costs were \$3 per night, or two of the latest movies for only \$5 in either VHS or Beta format.¹¹⁸

Friends of Blue Gum Lounge was set up in 2007 by families and friends of Blue Gum Community School after creative parents did a makeover of the former video shop space and the school leased the space. At this time, many of the shops were vacant and the centre felt abandoned. So Blue Gum felt excited by the opportunity to help revitalise it and bring families back into its heart. The Lounge offered a meeting place for school parents and the local community – Blue Gum's Playgroup met there; the school community ran an Op Shop and its Book Club met there. Even a break-in through a smashed window at one point didn't dampen spirits; the police simply followed the trail of blood spots to find the culprit nearby! Community groups were also welcome, such as the Hackett Community Association which held its meetings at The Lounge from early 2007 to end of 2008 when the lounge closed (as Blue Gum gained access to additional space at its school site).

Monkey Wrench Cycle Repairs opened in August 2012 and has become well known for the quality service they provide. One thing that differentiates Stan and Joel from many of the other bike shops around town is that they attempt to fix anything so long as it has pedals and a few wheels. As well as repairing bikes they sell a range of parts and accessories. They are sponsors of the Majura Pines Trail Alliance which maintains the 20km of mountain bike trails in the pine plantation on the eastern side of Mount Majura. Many cyclists drop into Monkey Wrench when they damage their bike on these trails.

Snail and Petal Florist was opened by Anna Bieler in June 2013. The Snail and Petal specialised in bespoke designs and arrangements, for everyday arrangements to weddings and events. They also sold handmade designer cards, salts and spices as well as a small range of giftware. The shop closed in April 2015 and was taken over by Caroline Ollerenshaw.

Orchid and Vine Florist was opened by Caroline Ollerenshaw in May 2015. Caroline had worked in the floral industry for a number of years and decided to use her creative skills to open the shop with the aim of using local flowers for making creative floristic arrangements. As well as flowers, the store sold jewellery made by ACT based Tangs Design, Australian bush scented soaps, Australian designed cards and handmade floral scented candles. They also made their own terrariums. Caroline moved the shop to her home in July 2017 and the shop space was taken over by Saint Valentine.

Saint Valentine Florist opened in October 2017 and is run by Rachel Wallis who completed a course in floristry in 2016. As well as making floral arrangements, Rachel sells locally made art, ceramics, tea towels and other small gifts. Rachel aims to source native and English flowers from local growers which she uses to create stunning arrangements for weddings, workshops and other special events. Rachel also holds workshops for people wanting to do their own floristic artworks. One workshop was inspired by the Dutch Masters paintings and shows how to create overflowing floral arrangements in urns, with fresh produce surrounding the piece.

Health related businesses

Professional suites were advertised in November 1966¹¹⁹ with the ad stating they were adjacent to shops, and post office. This suggests they were in the building occupied in 2018 by Siam Twist, St Valentines, Flawless Boutique Skin Clinic North Canberra Osteopathy and Tarquine Hair Salon.

Almost 12 months later in August 1967, real estate agents were reporting on the difficulties of attracting tenants for these types of spaces across many of the new smaller shopping centres in north and south Canberra, including Hackett. These rooms were more aimed at the medical and dental professions but some doctors had their consulting rooms at their homes. A report by LJ Hooker noted:

'...that neither the adjoining Watson nor Hackett centres serving about 9,000 persons, can attract a dentist. Doctors are using residential space for their needs. Other professional men and banks are concentrating in the larger shopping centres.

'It appears that some minor variations of purpose may have to be permitted to enable these vacant buildings to be utilised. Consideration in the future should be given to smaller buildings in this category' (Canberra Times, 21 August 1967 p.8)¹²⁰

Dr Peter Norman used a room in this block (where Flawless Skin Beauty Boutique now located) in the late 1960's to early 1970's (pers. comm Steve Glaznieks, 2018). **Dr Adele Hanstein** moved into the same room in 1978¹²¹ and remained until early 1991.

Hackett Pharmacy opened in mid 1966 advertising for a junior assistant in May that year. According to their ad in December 1966¹²², they were the only 24 hour pharmacy in Canberra at the time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CANBERRA'S DAY AND NIGHT
CHEMIST

The Hackett Pharmacy

Madigan Street, Hackett. Phone 41001

Canberra's only 24 hour pharmacy service

Open Christmas morning 9-11 o'clock and Christmas evening 7-8 o'clock

Source - Canberra Times, 17 December 1966, page 26

The pharmacy, owned by John and Margaret Moore, continued operating for around 24 years until its closure in September 1991, ending the longest on-going business at the shops. The Canberra Time's reporter, Phillip Hobbs, was a Hackett resident and reported it as 'Hackett's heyday draws to an end'.¹²³ The Shell service station, the corner shop and take-away closed in 1989, and Dr Edelstein had closed earlier in the year. Phillip also noted that other closures included the post office in 1988 and the dry-cleaners, which closed in 1986, due to increasing rents.

The closure of the pharmacy was attributed to a number of factors – Federal Government policies, closure of the primary school in 1990, departure of the doctor, and changes in residents shopping habits.

Cubby House

Margaret Moore set up the Cubby House inside the chemist in 1970 to offer 'toys, kiddies' clothes and the latest ideas in nursery décor...' The shop offered 'fashions for under-eights' and 'curly cane bed-heads (single size) in two colours (pastel pink, or hot orange) for \$15, cane chain room dividers that serve a hundred decorative purposes for 55 cents and 60 cents a 4 foot and 6 foot length.' (Canberra Times, 13 September 1969, p23).¹²⁴ Other fashions included 'corduroy knickerbockers (\$7.85) and Viyella shirt (about \$7), black velvet pants for ones and twos (\$5.99) and frilly blouse (about \$7), and grey wool mini skirt with broad belt (\$6.35) plus navy Viyella blouse (about \$7).'

WHO'S CHARLEY HORSE?

Hackett mothers tried to keep it a secret, but now it's all over town.

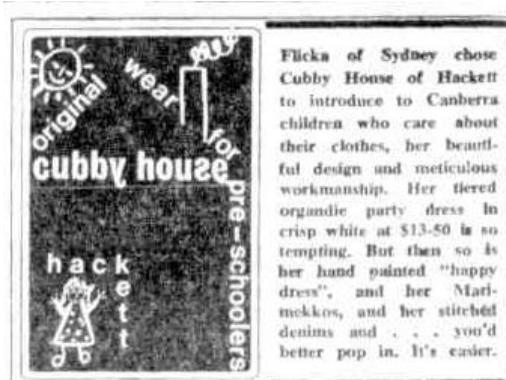
He knows little boys love dressing up too, so he created tyrolean-inspired denim pants, with a dashing red military shirt, and just for fun, he did a girlfriend's version, in a denim pinafore with red frilly blouse.

He's clever, is Charlie

He sends them only to

Cubby House of Hackett

the new meeting place for the discriminating pre-school set



Source - Canberra Times 13 September 1969, page 23 Canberra Times 29 October 1969, page 20¹²⁵

A new **Hackett pharmacy** opened in 2012 but remained for less than six months. The Federal Government has certain conditions by which pharmacies can qualify to provide prescriptions under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). One of the conditions is that a new pharmacy cannot operate within 1.5 kilometres of an existing pharmacy. Hackett shops are 1.345 kilometres from Watson where there was a pharmacy. Other conditions include the requirement for a general practitioner to be within 500 metres and a supermarket of at least 1,000 square metres within 500 metres.

Despite not receiving government approval, in mid 2012, pharmacist, Rhonda Warne, began steps to establishing a pharmacy in the space now occupied by Tarquine Hair Saloon. It opened in November 2012, while still waiting for the PBS approval. While Rhonda could sell a range of products, she could not dispense PBS products without the government subsidy available under the PBS.

The Hackett Community Association took up the cause by organising a meeting of residents and a petition which received over 1,500 signatures in support of the chemist. Rhonda also approached the ACT Government about using the community centre (now Maitland House) near the Blue Gum School. This location was beyond the 1.5km requirement and if she could remain there for two years she could then move to the Hackett shops.

However, the shop was short-lived and closed on 26 April 2013. Rhonda now runs the very busy Capital Chemist at the Dickson shops.

The original south-east corner of the block next to Madigan Street was Just Hair, then another hair dressing salon, and for a short time housed the Ainslie laundry/dry cleaners while they were repairing their Ainslie premises after a fire. The entrance was on the east side. (pers. comm Jill Huntington, April 2018)

The **Ye Olde Herby Medicine Shop** was opened in late October 1995 by well-known women's health practitioner Roe Redmond. The shop also included the **Clinic of Preventive Medicine for Women** – it was referred to in the November 2002 Neighbourhood Watch newsletter. Prior to opening in the shops, the clinic was run at a home in Maitland St, Hackett and in the former Royal Canberra Hospital.

Flawless Boutique Skin Clinic was opened in 2013 by Dimi Poulakis and offers skin health and beauty treatments for men and women. Dimi has over 20 years of experience in the beauty industry. She moved to the Hackett Shops after operating businesses in Belconnen and Canberra city. Her clients come from all over Canberra.

The Massage Studio was opened in June 2006 by Ashleigh Jefferson, in the space now occupied by North Canberra Osteopathy, but no details were found as to when it closed. It advertised in a few of the Neighbourhood Watch newsletters in mid 2006.

North Canberra Osteopathy opened in October 2015. Its owner Anna Walton graduated in 1998 from RMIT in Melbourne, and has worked in various places around Australia as well as in Ireland and Papua New Guinea. The little two room clinic is now busy all week with two more osteopaths; Betsy Foskett and Lauren Bowman, three massage therapists; Luke Bartolomei, Pearl van der Straaten and Leah Dumas, and Clinical Nutritionist Jane McIntyre. When Anna first opened, lots of Hackett locals popped in to say hi. The most memorable was one lady who said 'I have no idea what an osteopath is, I'm just so glad someone has rented the shop!'

Playground Training opened in May 2018 in the space previously occupied by the King Ruby restaurant. Alicia Cummins is a fully qualified trainer and offers a range of training options created to the specific requirements/goals of her clients. Post natal mums are also provided for through the Kangatraining a low impact safe exercise option which allows mother and baby to exercise together.



Mural on wall of Wilbur's Café 2018. (photo: Chris Mobbs)

EVERYDAY IS THRIFT DAY

AT HACKETT SHOPPING CENTRE

HACKETT BUTCHERY & DELICATESSEN Ph. 480819

*Menu-Making
MEATS
Priced Right!*

SIDES OF PRIME LAMB.....	\$1.59 kg	WHOLE YEARLING
WHOLE YEARLING		ROUND..... \$2.69 kg (App. \$8)
T-BONE.....	\$2.99 kg (App. \$15)	WHOLE YEARLING
SHOULDER		RUMP..... \$4.59 kg (App. \$16)
HAM.....	\$3.69 kg Limit 1/2 kg	TASTY SAUSAGES..... \$1.55 kg

HACKETT PHARMACY

Guild Family Care Specials



Remember us
for all your
prescriptions

KLEENEX 224s.....	\$1.25	PINE-O-CLEEN 500mL.....	65¢
SKIN REPAIR 250g.....	\$3.49	SCOTTOWELS TWIN PACK.....	89¢
IPANA TOOTHPASTE 100g.....	75¢	NEUTROGENA SOAP.....	79¢

Ph 487001



TRY SAVING ON FOOD BILLS
YOU'Ll LIKE IT!!

HACKETT DRY CLEANERS

for top quality dry cleaning

Present this advertisement with your order for 25% OFF all drycleaning

Compare our Prices • Finishing • Service

SAME DAY SERVICE

Ph 486303 Trading Hours: Mon-Fri 7.45am-6pm. Sat 8am-1pm.

HACKETT SHOP 'n SAVE

SPECIALS

MAYFAIR DEVON.....	\$1.89 kg	3 kg BAGS ORANGES.....	\$1.50
HANDY ANDY 750mL.....	\$1.85 save 28c	GOLDEN CIRCLE SLICED GREEN BEANS 440g.	45¢ save 11c
CONTINENTAL "ADVOCaat" 20% OFF MARKED PRICE			

ANGEOMAR TAKE-AWAY — HACKETT



Open 8.30am to 8pm Mon to sat. Ph 489832

for an extensive range of take away food, pizzas, etc

THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL

CHARCOAL CHICKENS \$3.99 HOT DISHES Med \$2

HACKETT AUTO PORT



FOR COMPLETE CAR CARE & PERSONALISED SERVICE (full driveway service)

FREE WHEEL BALANCE & SAFETY CHECK WITH EVERY LUBE SERVICE

Ph 497575

A 1983 advertisement showing diversity of shops at Hackett.¹²⁶Source - The Canberra Times, 27 July 1983 p. 7

Where did the Freezer Food Plan man go?

Advertisements for the new Freezer Food Plan shop at Hackett, first appeared in the Canberra Times in 9 December 1967. For \$12.88 a week the buyer received an upright freezer unit for free and an on-going supply of cheap frozen foods as well as other household items.¹²⁷

Source - Canberra Times 9 December 1967, page 3

In the following week, the Canberra Times of 14 December 1967 reported a price war occurring across Canberra and Queanbeyan butchers, including the Freezer Food Plan. The report provided some sound consumer advice that the 'ultimate value of goods bought on the freezer plan is hard to calculate. A housewife needs to remember that although fillet steak is quoted at 34c/lb, this is the all-over carcase price and the less succulent cuts, scraps, fat and bones will cost her 34c/lb as well.'¹²⁸

In February 1968 it advertised in the *Hackett Highlighter* (see Appendix D - The Hackett Highlighter 1968) put out by the Hackett Primary School P&C:

'Have lots of food stored in your house,
Have FREEZER FOOD PLAN fares,
So that those unexpected guests
Can't catch you unaware.'

By March 1968, the store had expanded its merchandise to cover other household appliances. An ad in the Canberra Times 16 March 1968, was offering a free fridge, washing machine, or portable TV, plus a small appliance of your choice, if you purchased a 'beautiful 3 in 1 entertainment centre (25' TV radio stereogram).¹²⁹

- Amana is the only freezer food plan that comes with D.J.'s 130 year old guarantee of satisfaction or money back.
- With D.J.'s Amana Food Plan - you (and only you) - choose the food your family requires and the freezer that suits those requirements.
- Amana process only the best meat - to make sure you get the best. Amana have the most up to date equipment in Australia.
- Amana import the finest vegetables from sunny California - just for you.

If you need any more good reasons to choose Amana from David Jones, call in, we've got hundreds!

D.J.'s FAMOUS GUARANTEE - SATISFACTION OR YOUR MONEY BACK

Source - Canberra Times 16 March 1968

7 June 1968 page 3

Business seemed to be expanding with an ad in the Canberra Times, 30 March 1968, seeking 'two experienced salesmen or women', with own transport, and 'of pleasing disposition and smart appearance.'¹³⁰

But by April 1968, the business would appear to be having troubles, with an ad in the Canberra Times 17 April 1968, offering redundant stock and 'sale of bankrupt electrical appliances'.¹³¹

Two months later, consumer complaints about the store were being received by local authorities. In June 1968, the Canberra Times reported that 'Mr Gordon Walsh told the ACT Advisory Council last night that he would press for an inquiry into freezer food plans which are being offered to Canberra housewives'.¹³²

Rival businesses often look for opportunities to exploit the misfortunes of competitors and in this case it was David Jones. Although they had been marketing the Amana freezer plans since 1966, their ad in the Canberra Times of 7 June 1968¹³³ used words that seemed to reflect the concerns raised by Mr Walsh - 'Confused about Freezer Food Plan offers? Here's a few facts about Amana from DJs.' They also highlighted that the finest vegetables were 'imported from sunny California - just for you.'

By July 1968 the freezer shop was empty. There must have been many complaints from consumers, as the Federal Member for the ACT, Jim Fraser, was on the case, attempting to track down the owners in Sydney as reported in the Canberra Times (11 July 1968). The article also reported one family purchasing a 'freezer for \$659 through a finance company which he must repay at the rate of \$19 a month for four years in addition to buying frozen food at \$30 an order'.¹³⁴

In August 1968 the Department of the Interior announced an investigation into several consumer matters, including freezer-food plans.¹³⁵

Hackett Post Office

'Opposite that shop was a dry cleaner and post office. I remember a stamp machine where you would put in 5 cents, turn a dial and a stamp would come out.' Recollections by Suzi Leverington

On 23 August 1966 'the Member for the ACT, Jim Fraser, said yesterday he understood they (Watson and Hackett PO) would initially be staffed by PMG employees and later taken over by non-official postmasters.' (The Canberra Times 23 August 1966, p 15). The post office would also serve as an agent for the Commonwealth Bank. It was located in the building now occupied by Siam Twist and other businesses.

'Located in Hackett Place, Hackett, at the local shopping centre, 6 km north east of the city centre, Hackett post office opened as a post and telephone office with money order facilities on 26 September 1966. On opening, the office utilized Relief date stamp '107 ACT AUST' followed by Type 3D(i) 'ACT' date stamp recorded between 1966 and 1967. The circular date stamp was reported stolen on 9 August 1972. A Type 4A(i) 'ACT' post code 2602 date stamp is recorded between 1975 and 1991. A Type 4F 'ACT' date stamp is recorded in 1994.'¹³⁶ See Plate 15 for examples of Hackett post office postmarks, courtesy of Tony Curtis
<http://actpostmarks.blogspot.com.au/>

The stand alone post office would continue until it closed on 30 March 1988. Leading up to its closure, Australia Post said it had a trading deficit of \$18,000 in the 1986-87 financial year. The owner of the building had wanted a long-term lease and had increased the annual rent by 250 per cent, according to a report in the Canberra Times. The newsagency and video shops had been approached by Australia Post to gauge their interest in hosting the post office, but both initially expressed concerns about the lack of space. However, the newsagency later accepted the post office where it reopened on 29 March 1988¹³⁷ and would remain until its final closure on 4 May 1997.

Shell auto port

Shell paid £85,000 for a 99 year lease on a site between Hackett Place and Skeats St for a service station in August 1965. Known as the *Hackett Shell Auto Port*, it opened in 1966 and would operate until its closure in August 1989 (plate 13). With the announcement of the closure, businesses at the shops started a petition in June that year and quickly received over 1,000 signatures with the aim of seeking ACT Government intervention.

The Canberra Times (5 July 1989) reported that the pending closure appeared contrary to the findings of a NCDC review earlier in 1989 which would lead to more service stations in the ACT. This change was in response to then Prices Surveillance Authority inquiry into ACT petrol prices in December 1987 which found that petrol in Canberra was up to 5c a litre higher 'because of the policy of restricting the number and location of service stations.'

There seemed to be differing views between Shell and Ian Stewart, the station owner, in regards to the closure. Shell said it wasn't 'making any money at Hackett and economic pressures demand that we close. It is an old site, the volume has run down and it is not viable. We've also put money into new sites in the ACT.' Shell had supposedly advised Ian in 1986 about their intentions to close but Ian said he never received such a letter.¹³⁸

Change to residential use

Any changes to the Shell site to use it for other purposes would require a lease-purpose variation via the ACT Supreme Court. Such actions would take some time and it wasn't until November 1990 that this change was reaching fruition with the Shell Company in talks with the ACT Government. The Canberra Times (10 November 1990)¹³⁹ reported that the site had 'become a graffiti target and a haven for skateboard riders' and that it could be used for townhouse development.'

Government houses, called Madigan Gardens, were built on the site in the 1990s.

The cost of groceries in the 1960s and early 1970s

small (18oz) eggs at 39c dozen (1968)

Monitoring of food prices in the 1960s was done periodically in Canberra, with a Hackett grocery store included in one survey in June 1967. The *Canberra Consumer* (CTimes 10 June 1967)¹⁴⁰ reported that a cost of a parcel of groceries ranged from \$5.44 at Watson, to \$5.81 at a store in Hackett, compared with the lowest price at another Canberra store of \$5.24. The report noted that to some customers, price variation is not as important as range of stock or parking facilities.

The cost of food was a regular topic in the Canberra Times with a report in 11 January 1968¹⁴¹ making special mention of the Hackett Butchery, along with other stores under this chain. The prices in the late 1960s make for interesting comparison with prices of today. Some of the prices included:

- roast beef 39c lb, eye fillet \$1.30 lb, coarse beef mince 40c lb, steak & kidney 52c lb.
- small (18oz) eggs at 39c dozen.
- vegetables - cabbage 30c each, carrots 22c for 1 lb, parsnips 25c lb, celery 25c bunch.
- fruit - delicious apples 25c lb, bananas 12 for 25c, pineapples 35c each, and mangoes 25c each.
- fish - flathead 50c 1b and king prawns 95c lb.'

In the early 1970s, the high cost of groceries in Canberra was partly attributed to the NCDC policy of developing the neighbourhood shopping centres. A 1971 report commissioned by the NCDC noted that Canberra is 'characterised' by the relative rarity of large supermarkets and that the main growth is in the number of small shops as new neighbourhood centres. As a result '*the existing low level of grocery retailing is being duplicated without any increase in the amount of competition between outlets*'. The report suggested that some discount shops and supermarkets, although small, have managed to set themselves in 'the closest situation that can be obtained in the Canberra situation to an independent, free-standing site', such as the Li'l Owl at Hackett and Hughes, Coles at Curtin and Tom the Cheap at Fyshwick.'

'The operators in the Hackett, Hughes, Curtin, Pearce and Fyshwick centres have successfully identified that centres with their particular operation and their ability to draw custom from other than the surrounding neighbourhood centres, is a serious reflection on the neighbourhood convenience-shopping criteria in practice'.

In its summary, the report said the results of the 1970 and 1971 surveys support the conclusion '*that the commission's attitude to neighbourhood centres on the pretext of convenience is costing the Canberra consumer more than would be the case if there were fewer small neighbourhood centres'. This point, however, cannot be completely proved 'until some reliable information is obtained on the expenditure patterns of households to establish the relative importance of neighbourhood centres to consumers.'* (CTimes 18 February 1972)¹⁴²

Break and entry at shops in the early days

'he had used the gloves so that he would not leave any fingerprints.'

The fact that Hackett in its early days was out of the way, may have made it more susceptible to thefts. The opening publicity for the Young's store, soon made the Hackett shops a new destination of choice for thieves. For example, on the night of 16 July 1966, only a month after it opened, the Young's store was broken into and had cigarettes and chocolates stolen. A young man of 18 years from Ainslie must have had a craving for these products, as he and a colleague broke into the Red Hill Food Bar the next night and stole the same items. He was released on a \$100 bond to be of good behaviour for three years (CTimes 13 August 1966, p 8).¹⁴³

But it wasn't people outside of Hackett who participated in these after-hours activities. A resident of Madigan St broke into the Young's store in August and September 1966 and helped himself to liquor, cigarettes and chocolates valued at about \$360. He was allowed bail of \$300, with one surety of \$300 (CTimes 13 September 1966, p. 9)¹⁴⁴

A larger theft occurred in the early morning of 19 April 1967, when 51,000 cigarettes, a transistor radio, \$80 cash and some canned cordials were taken from the Hackett Food Service Store. The total value was around \$1,250. The Canberra Times (20 April 1967)¹⁴⁵ reported that police said the same person had carried out raids every four days on eight occasions since 25 March. The police said he preferred to target the more secluded shops at

Fyshwick, Lyons, Deakin and Hackett, as well as the canteen at the Canberra Technical College Reid, Garema Place kiosk and Australian War Memorial kiosk.

On one occasion a more destructive action was taken when thieves blew open a safe at the L'il Owl Discount Market, and stole \$3,600 in cash in November 1971. The thieves gained access by breaking in through a rear door. (CTimes 29 November [1971](#) p. 3)¹⁴⁶

In February 1972, a man received 18 months jail for breaking into the Young's store and stealing three cartons of cigarettes. Police attended the Hackett shops and saw a man crouched behind a check out point. Police apprehended the man in the cold-storage room carrying gloves – he told police he 'had used the gloves so that he would not leave any fingerprints. This repeat offender had been previously put on a bond for \$10 to be of good behaviour for three years in March 1971, having broken into Commonwealth Motors and stolen S240.' (CTimes 9 February [1972](#), p. 12)¹⁴⁷

Later in November 1972 Georges Supermarket had a glass panel in the front door smashed and one bottle of burgundy worth \$2 was stolen and nothing else (CTimes 4 November [1972](#), p. 10)¹⁴⁸.

Unfortunately, in April 1993, a more serious hold-up occurred. Two men with sawn-off shotguns entered the Festival store on a Friday night around 8.30pm. They wore masks and tied up two of the assistants. (CTimes 27 April [1993](#), p 2)¹⁴⁹

Increased residential densities could help small shopping centres

The closure of the Hackett Primary School in 1990 had a flow on effect at the Hackett shops. By 1992 there were only five shops open out of the nine spaces available. The early 1990s placed added pressure on small supermarkets with extended trading hours offered by shops in the larger shopping centres like Dickson, Canberra City and Belconnen Mall. At the time, the ACT Government strategy was guided by its *Building Better Cities* proposal which had an emphasis on urban consolidation. The ACT Government's chief planner, George Tomlins, said proposals for increased, residential densities in urban areas such as Hackett would boost the fortunes of the shopping centres. The Canberra Times of 7 November [1992](#),¹⁵⁰ noted that the former tennis courts (between Maitland St and the shops) and former service station had been replaced by townhouses.

Excessive value placed on former pharmacy shop

On 13 April [1993](#)¹⁵¹ the Canberra Times reported that the former pharmacy at Hackett was valued around one third higher than its true value. The government valuer determined that its unimproved value was \$100,000 but the ACT Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) said it was nearer \$75,000. In making its determination, the AAT said that the valuer had not taken into consideration several key factors which warranted a lower valuation including closure of the Hackett service station in 1989 and the proposed closure of the primary school in 1990. Other factors included the empty adjoining premises and the premises in question were vacant because of the rationalisation scheme for pharmacies. The lower value determined by the AAT would lead to lower rates for the premises.

Upgrade of shops precinct in 1998

In 1998 the ACT Government set up a program called *helpShop* to assist 72 local shopping centres redevelop and prepare strategies to improve market share for shops. Following an open day and sausage sizzle to obtain the community views, a landscape architect designed the Hackett shops 'around an arts and meeting place theme.' The work involved repaving, new signs, upgrading of the outside appearance of the shops and improvement of the lighting and gardens around the shops.

In June 1999, the revamped centre was opened by the then Minister for Urban Services, Brendan Smyth, and included seats, rubbish bins, community notice board and the planting of building fascias and columns. As part of the work, the shop owners set up an 'Adopt-a-Shop' program so that residents worked with businesses on projects. Flower boxes were set up outside each shop and residents invited to donate and plant flowers.

In April 2002, community support for the shops was seen through a clean-up day where around 55 people, cleaned windows, removed posters, refilled the planter boxes and patched holes in the pavement.¹⁵²

Businesses at Hackett shops 1966 to 2018

The following table has been derived from a number of sources including articles, public notices and advertisements in The Canberra Times and The Canberra Chronicle, Hackett Neighbourhood Watch newsletters, and personal communication with residents, former and current business owners.

shop	opened	closed
Main supermarkets		
JB Youngs Value Plus Food Store	June 1966	November 1968
'Lil' Owl Supermarket	November 1968	May-June 1979
Shoprite	August 1979	at least mid 1991
Festival/IGA	mid 1991	2006
IGA	2006	
Small supermarkets and food outlets		
Georges (Foodland) Supermarket	April 1967	1974?
Angelos Green Grocer & Take Away	unknown	unknown
Hackett Shop n Save	unknown	June 1980
Hackett Mini Market and Take Away	unknown	June 1989
Hackett Food Service	unknown	July 1966
Hackett Butchery and Delicatessen	1971	at least 1990
Freezer Food Plan	December 1967	July 1968
Angeomar takeaway	July 1981	1983?
Early Bird Bakery	1995	2003?
King Ruby Chinese restaurant	1990s	March 2013
Cafetopia	2003	February 2005
Wilburs Café and Bar	2010	September 2018
Ten-deli	early 2013	May 2013
Siam Twist	2014	
Hairdressers		
Mirella Ladies Hairdressing Salon	December 1966	1970s?
Wallaby Hairdressing Salon (Hackett Barber Shop)	late 1960s	1978
Just Hair	1979	1988?
Ritva's Men's Hairdressing	1990	2016
Tarquine	2014	
Service businesses		
Shell service station	1965	September 1989
Hackett Newsagency	1974 approx	early 1990s
Electronics store (where Flawless Boutique Skin Clinic) – name unknown	1974 approx	1975?
Barnes Driving School	1977	circa late 1970s
Post office	Sep 1966	May 1997
Hackett Dry cleaners (where King Ruby was)	November 1982	1987
Hackett Coinop Laundry	1974	unknown
Focus Inn Video rental now Siam Twist	1985	2002
Monkey Wrench	2014	
Friends of Blue Gum lounge	2007	December 2008
The Crystal Gallery	circa 2000	unknown
Ainslie Laundrette (temporary move)	Nov 2005	unknown

Orchid and Vine	May 2015	July 2017
St Valentines	2017	
Cubby House (within the Hackett Pharmacy)	mid 1966	unknown
Dr and Divo* gift shop?	2011	mid 2012
Health related businesses		
Hackett Pharmacy where Wilburs located	mid 1966	September 1991
Hackett Pharmacy where Tarquine located	November 2012	April 2013
Roe Redmond's Ye Olde Herby Medicine Shop	October 1995	2003?
Dr Adele Hansteen	1978	1991
The Massage Studio	June 2006	2015
North Canberra Osteopathy	October 2015	
Flawless Boutique Skin Clinic	2013	
Playground Training	May 2018	

* spelling of name may be incorrect



Madigan St near the Hackett shops, with Mount Ainslie in distance. (photo: Chris Mobbs)

5. HACKETT SCHOOLS

Hackett Primary School

In 1961, the NCDC expected that the need for a school in Hackett would arise in 1964-65.³ The design brief envisaged a population of five thousand in Hackett and construction in three stages, a primary building to be built between February 1963 and May 1964 for 320 pupils, an infant's building for 280 pupils and additional classrooms for up to 800 pupils. A tender of £159,848 for the first stage from Fletcher Construction Co. Pty. Ltd. was accepted in August 1963.⁴ The design was similar to that for Cook Primary School.⁵ The building was originally required for the beginning of second term in 1964⁶ but in November the NCDC wrote to the Department of Works:

The Commission has been advised by the Department of the Interior of an urgent accommodation problem in the Downer, Watson and Hackett Primary School areas. Extensions are at present being planned to the Downer Primary School and these will provide a long term answer. Immediately, however, there is an apparent shortage of accommodation for the beginning of first term 1964 and the best possibility for meeting this seems to lie in expediting portion at least of the existing contract for the construction of Hackett Primary School.⁷

The NCDC considered that four classrooms at the western end of the primary block with toilet blocks could be available by January 1964.⁸ These were handed over on 31 January 1964.⁹ However, 'the education authority ...decided to staff the Infants Section of the new Primary School at Watson; at this date they do not propose to staff and commence teaching in the Hackett classrooms'.¹⁰ The construction of the first stage was delayed by bad weather and problems in getting bricks from the Bowral Brickworks and the Fletcher Organisation Pty. Ltd. sought an extension of time.¹¹ In May, Fletcher Organisation Pty. Ltd. advised 'partial occupation of the Primary Block section of the above project was accepted on Friday last, 15 May 1964, and that full occupation of the Primary Block was accepted on 19 May 1964 and is being used for school teaching purposes'.¹² There was partial handover of the general purpose block in September.¹³ In mid-October, a site inspection by the project architect revealed 'poor progress on the completion of the contract, due to inadequate labour force' and 'a considerable amount of work remains outstanding'.¹⁴ The architect referred to the 'contractor's inadequate general performance'; problems with bad weather, supply of bricks and labour persisted into 1965.¹⁵ The Director of Works, in March 1965, complained that 'the original contract period for this school of 39 weeks has now been extended to 62 weeks and the final completion was not achieved for a further 11 weeks'.¹⁶ The builders replied that '78% of the buildings was completed and handed over within the agreed revised contract period, the 22% outstanding being the G.P.Hall, which, although in a state of practical completion, was not acceptable until the covered way and courtyard were completed'.¹⁷ Work was finalised in July 1965.¹⁸

³ SA file 78/1302, N.R.Caffin to Department of the Interior, 24 May 1961.

⁴ Ibid., design brief of 25 September 1961.

⁵ SA file, 1970BKE/347, A.H.Ennor to NCDC, 22 October 1970.

⁶ NAA A660 KCA-6224 Part 2, note by K.E.Austin, 6 August 1963.

⁷ Ibid., R.B.Lansdown to Department of Works, 1 November 1963.

⁸ SA file 78/1302, R.B.Lansdown to Department of the Interior, 28 November 1963.

⁹ NAA A660 KCA-6224 Part 2., R.B.Lansdown to Department of Works, 7 November 1963.

¹⁰ Ibid., R.B.Lansdown to Director of Works, 20 January 1964.

¹¹ Ibid., L.W.Engledow to Director of Works, 11 May 1964.

¹² Ibid., E.H.Bates to Director of Works, 22 May 1964.

¹³ Ibid., note by Director of Works, 29 September 1964.

¹⁴ Ibid., Director of Works to Fletcher Organisation Pty. Ltd., 15 October 1964.

¹⁵ NAA A660 KCA-6424 Part 3, A.D.Leary, Project Architect to Construction Manager, 23 December 1964.

¹⁶ Ibid., A.Ferrari to Fletcher Organisation Pty. Ltd., 23 March 1965.

¹⁷ Ibid., H.K.Molyneux to Director of Works, 29 March 1965.

¹⁸ Ibid., A.Ferrari to Fletcher Organisation Pty. Ltd., 28 July 1965.



By October 1964, the Hackett P. & C. was expressing ‘alarm at the inadequacy of the buildings provided in view of the fact that the expected date of completion of the infants’ department is 1966’. It added that ‘the infants’ department is presently using classrooms not designed for infants’ classes’, ‘one kindergarten class has 46 pupils’ and ‘these numbers are far too high for the children to receive the competent instruction to which they are entitled’. It requested acceleration of the building programme as there had been 67 four-year-old children, 515 occupied houses and 111 unoccupied houses in June.¹⁹ In February 1965, the Director of Education and Welfare in the Department of the Interior, informed NCDC that ‘at the beginning of 1965 the school was required to take over the specialist rooms – sewing and manual training – and adapt them as classrooms’. He continued that ‘with the expected rapid development in this area this means that the library and the general purpose hall must be taken up shortly for classroom spaces’.²⁰ In April 1965, in the House of Representatives, Jim Fraser, Member for the ACT, referred to a previous question on 9 November 1964 and went on to ask the Minister for the Interior, Doug Anthony, about ‘pressures developing on school facilities in the newer suburbs of Canberra’. He referred to representations from the Hackett P&C and stressed that ‘the kindergarten population had increased by 50 per cent in the past four months’.²¹ In May, Anthony responded that the timetable for tenders had been advanced but ‘it would not seem practicable that it would be completed and made available for occupation before the beginning of the school year 1966’.²²

In June 1965, the contract for Stage 2, the Infants Department, was awarded to ACT Builders Pty. Ltd. for £74,197.²³ The NCDC issued a press release stating that ‘it will have five classrooms, two kindergarten rooms, staff and general purpose rooms and an office for the headmistress’ and ‘may be completed by the beginning of the 1966 school year’.²⁴ In September 1964, there had been a request, probably prompted by one of the teachers, for linoleum floor covering of a marbled pattern, not a plain colour, because ‘the latter perpetually shows scuff-marks from the shoes, and also it is very difficult for children to have a painting lesson without some paint being spilt and although it may be immediately mopped up, most of the paints leave some stain – particularly the red paints – which cannot be removed’.²⁵ The following year, the response was that a review was not possible as the floor covering had already been ordered.²⁶ However, while some work was still to be completed, the handover of Stage 2 occurred for the beginning of the 1966 school year.²⁷

At the beginning of 1967, enrolments in Kindergarten and first and second classes were 267, an average of just over 38 a class, and, with extra enrolments expected, the P. & C. sought a further temporary classroom for the

¹⁹ SA file 1971BKE/428, T.Kavanagh to G.F.Wynn, Director of Education and Welfare, 22 October 1964.

²⁰ Ibid., G.F.Wynn to NCDC, 16 February 1965.

²¹ SA file 78/1302, J.Fraser to D.Anthony, 19 April 1965.

²² Ibid., D.Anthony to J.Fraser, 11 May 1965.

²³ SA file 1971BKE/428, A.Ferrari to NCDC, 21 June 1965.

²⁴ Ibid., press release of 30 June 1965.

²⁵ Ibid., [N.McCrorie to Chief Construction Architect, 25 September 1964.

²⁶ SA file 78/1302, G.F.Wynn to Principal, 9 December 1965.

²⁷ SA file 1971BKE/428, A.Ferrari to NCDC, June 1966.

second term.²⁸ Stages 3 and 4 for Hackett Primary were the addition of one kindergarten and two infants' rooms with associated facilities for occupation by January 1968 and four primary classrooms and associated facilities by January 1969.²⁹ In September 1967, A.V. Jennings Industries Pty Ltd. was awarded the Stage 3 tender for \$58,337; the ultimate cost was \$59,969.³⁰ A.V. Jennings was also successful with a \$49,488 tender for Stage 4.³¹ At the end of 1967, it was agreed that Stage 4 extensions should proceed before Stage 3, with the Primary extensions to be completed by the beginning of 1968 and the Infants extensions by the beginning of 1969.³² In 1969, Inspector Brett complained of lack of storage space in the new infants' classrooms, inadequate staff rooms and toilets and lack of a duplicating room.³³ Remedial work included storage, a sick room, a female rest room and additions to the staff room by Frank Builders Pty Ltd., costing \$27,353, and was completed late in 1972.³⁴

Inspector Fairbrother reported in October 1965:

*Hackett Primary School opened in May, 1964, with both departments sharing the one building. Further construction work has seen the completion of a block containing separate general purpose rooms for each department, rooms which can be combined to form a large assembly hall complete with stage, a library, manual arts room and canteen, as well as a suite of rooms for medical and dental officers. Construction of a separate infants block is now well advanced and should be ready for occupation in 1966.*³⁵

The first Principal of Hackett Primary was Robert Robertson (known as Robbie). When he retired in 1971, David Lusty was Principal for a period of less than two years before Ted Armstrong took over. Ross Thomas was the first Deputy, although not until the beginning of 1966³⁶, and was followed by Neville Norris. Philippa Swan was the first Infants Mistress and initially had the Deputy's role as well; she was succeeded, in the 1970s, by Jean Bailey.

Again impressions of the senior staff reflected the personalities of the teachers giving them. Inspector Brett saw Robbie Robertson as 'a capable and experienced principal' who 'maintains excellent community relations'.³⁷ Cheryl O'Connor recalled that Robbie Robertson was 'fairly easy-going' and added:

He'd come into your class and disrupt it, get them excited and worked up. You'd think: 'Now I've got to start this lesson again'. They were in the days when things were very structural.

She remembered Ross Thomas as being 'very particular in checking my programming and giving of lessons and sometimes showing me how to do something in front of the class'. David Lusty 'encouraged me to experiment with my teaching' and she moved into 'small-group teaching and more open-ended teaching which was the flavour of the month'. He wanted her to transfer with him when he was moved to Holt Primary but she was transferred instead to the open plan school at Weetangera.³⁸ Olive Gower, who was on the staff from when the school opened, regarded Robbie Robertson as 'a gentleman':

I think he knew every child's name. He didn't just sit in an office. He used to get around and meet the children....He always had a word to say to the children at assembly every day.

She characterised Ted Armstrong as 'affable' but 'he never came round to the classrooms'.³⁹ Laura Turnbull regarded Robbie Robertson as 'one of the old school' and added:

²⁸ SA file 78/1302, J.M.Johnson to Department of the Interior, 28 April 1967.

²⁹ Ibid., R.A.Foskett (NCDC) to Department of the Interior, 16 February 1967.

³⁰ NAA, A660 K7286, A.Ferrari to A.V.Jennings Industries Ltd., 21 September 1967 and note of 16 October 1968.

³¹ NAA. A660 K7584.

³² SA file 78/1302, LR..Killeen to Secretary of P. & C. Association, 6 December 1967.

³³ Ibid., F.T.Brett to Department of Education and Science, 20 May 1969.

³⁴ SA file 1971 BKE/428, A.H.Ennor to NCDC, 3 June 1971 and A.Ferrari to NCDC, 14 June 1972.

³⁵ SR, 10/14710, inspection of October 1965

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ SR, 10/38028, inspection of June 1969.

³⁸ O'Connor interview op cit.

³⁹ Gower interview op cit.

When he walked into the room, everybody stood up and said: 'Good morning, sir'. On one occasion, he came into a class and, in front of the children called me 'Girly'. He didn't do it in a nice way. I went to him afterwards and said 'It's not right to do that'.

She regarded David Lusty as 'a breath of fresh air'. She regarded Ted Armstrong as 'on the ball' and considered that under his leadership, the School 'ran like a well-oiled machine'.⁴⁰ Tony Corp was at Hackett just before Robbie Robertson's retirement and saw him as 'a grandfatherly figure' who loved the children and would visit classrooms as relief from his office duties. He would steal a girl's shoe and put it on the ledge above the blackboard:

A little game transpired with all the children joining in. It was something out of the ordinary for a principal. He'd do that for twenty minutes or so, have a bit of a chat to the kids and then he'd go, leaving the kids all toey, in some form of disarray.

He saw Ted Armstrong as 'far more approachable' and 'a community minded fellow'.⁴¹

Inspector Fairbrother, in 1965, referred to 'very satisfactory community relations... so that the school receives the whole-hearted support of parents and friends'. Over £450 had been spent on the library since the opening of the school. He concluded that 'the school is establishing very worthwhile standards in the various subjects, but what is more important, is inculcating attitudes in the pupils which must have a considerable effect on their school careers'. Olive Gower was in charge of folk dancing and the Junior Red Cross.⁴² Late in 1966, the Infants Mistress, Philippa Swan, successfully applied for provision of a Christmas tree for her section for the last two weeks of school.⁴³ In 1967, Inspector Fairbrother reported that the infant's department 'now occupies its own building, the nine classes making it necessary to use a double demountable until extensions become available in 1968'. He also remarked on an 'abnormal number of transfers in the department, there being no fewer than six new teachers, during the last few months'.⁴⁴ By 1969, there were some 3,300 books in the library and the average total borrowing was 200 books per week. Inspector Brett characterised it as 'a happy school, a place of high ideals and hard work'. There was 'a small remedial class in fifth grade and a special migrant class serving primary pupils from all schools on the north side of the lake'. Neil Dilley was the teacher in charge of the latter.⁴⁵ Early in 1969, the P. & C. requested an equipment subsidy for it.⁴⁶ Cheryl O'Connor remembered that on the occasion of the first landing on the moon in 1969, teachers brought their television sets to the hall and all the children were taken there to watch it. She also recalled having forty-four pupils in her first class as a new teacher in 1966.⁴⁷ Tony Corp remembered that Cheryl O'Connor produced the musical, Joseph's Many Coloured Dream Coat, and that a very formal speech day, with book prizes, probably donated by the P&C, for first and second places, persisted into the early 1970s although 'the writing was on the wall for that'. He also recollects having forty-four children in his sixth class.⁴⁸

The Hackett Primary P&C was formed soon after the School opened. The initial subscription was two shillings and sixpence for the calendar year, payable in advance. The first President was Mr. R. Clark and the first Secretary was Mr. T.W. Kavanagh.⁴⁹ Early in 1965, the latter wrote to the Department of the Interior 'to support the application by the Principal for the provision of an assistant principal at Hackett Primary School', given that 'the present enrolment is 167 children in the primary section alone and more are expected as the new buildings in the school are occupied'.⁵⁰ The request was unsuccessful.⁵¹

⁴⁰ Interview with Laura Turnbull, 21 April 2008.

⁴¹ Interview with Tony Corp, 15 July 2008.

⁴² SR, 10/14710, inspection of 1965.

⁴³ SA, file 78/1302, P.Swan to Department of the Interior, 21 November 1966.

⁴⁴ SR, 10/38002, inspection of July 1967.

⁴⁵ SR, 10/38028, inspection of June 1969.

⁴⁶ SA file 75/136, M.Curnow to Department of Education and Science, 25 March 1969.

⁴⁷ O'Connor interview op cit.

⁴⁸ Corp interview op cit.

⁴⁹ SA file 78/1302, Constitution of 11 June 1964.

⁵⁰ Ibid., T.W.Kavanagh to Department of the Interior, 3 March 1965.

⁵¹ Ibid., reply of 12 April 1965.

In July 1972, Malcolm Fraser, the Commonwealth Minister for Education, announced that the Commonwealth would assume responsibility for staffing ACT schools and set up an Interim Authority. The Interim Authority administered most aspects of the school system from 1974 to 1976 while its ordinance was being drafted and legislated although the Commonwealth Department of Education retained overall authority and controlled building issues until the Schools Authority Ordinance came into effect early in 1977.

The first years of the Interim ACT Schools Authority brought major changes to Canberra schools. The inspectorial system disappeared overnight although many of the inspectors' roles were reassigned. Under the CTS, peer assessment replaced inspectorial assessment for probation and promotion. An assessment panel for promotion typically included three teachers from separate band levels and successful teachers became eligible for the appropriate band within which seniority was largely dispensed with. Panels of teachers consulted with principals of individual schools in making appointments across the ACT, primarily on the basis of efficiency and suitability for the advertised positions. Many of the older teachers were encouraged by superannuation conditions to transfer back to NSW and up to a third of the teaching force was recruited from across Australia. Vacant promotions positions were filled by relatively young teachers.

The number of ancillary staff was increased under the Interim Authority. School Secretary/Bursar positions were established in all schools and Jess Taylor occupied this position at Hackett Primary from 1974 until it closed in 1990.⁵²

Hackett Primary took school groups to the camp at Long Beach on the South Coast and Sturt Island but by 1976 saw the former as too expensive.⁵³

Peak enrolments had passed by 1974 and Hackett Primary had 573 pupils.

The Schools Authority Ordinance 1976 came into effect at the beginning of 1977. The governing body, known as the Schools Authority, consisted of six Ministerial nominees, two Legislative Assembly representatives, three ACT Teachers' Federation nominees, two ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Association nominees, one Pre-School Society nominee and the Chief Education Officer.

In 1978, the Hackett Principal had reported that 'Music has become a much more important subject in the school curriculum – two brass bands, a large recorder group and a singing choir are special outcomes but of equal importance are the classroom activities of singing, reading moving and appreciation'.⁵⁴ In 1977, Laura Turnbull successfully applied for an Authority curriculum grant of \$1330 for the Music for Everyone project to be spent mainly on sets of books of the Exploring Music Programme.⁵⁵ She managed the music programme across all the classes. She contended that the music curriculum materials were 'so good that the teachers didn't have to know a lot about music to enjoy it'. She added:

It was about the time I put the music in that Keith Curry put the band in. I had a Senior Band and a Junior Band, a sixth grade and a fourth grade. The fourth grade started off. It became a really professional band. In the ACT Band, we used to go around the whole of New South Wales with concerts.⁵⁶

With Laura Turnbull's retirement in 1979 and fewer pupils in the 1980s, the band programme was in trouble by 1985 and it was reported that:

Next year there will no longer be a brass band at the school because insufficient numbers in Year 4 do not justify the continuation of the program. The band instruments will be utilized by another school.

Attempts to replace it with a music-tutor system also faltered.⁵⁷

In 1978, Hackett Primary responded to the Authority's *Report of the Working Party on Community Education about Schooling* and outlined its community activities:

⁵² Interview with Jess Taylor, 18 April 2008.

⁵³ SA file 74/50, meeting of 3 March 1976.

⁵⁴ SA file 76/1954, Principal's Report 1977-78.

⁵⁵ SA file 77/1229, J.M.Grant to A.M.Wilkinson, 7 July 1977.

⁵⁶ Turnbull interview op cit.

⁵⁷ SA file 86/1000, 1985 School Board Annual Report.

In 1977 and 1978, successful Art Shows have been held in conjunction with Rosary Demonstration School....In 1977, a very successful International Night was held.... Each year, the school entertains residents from the Goodwin Homes.... The School Brass Band has participated in the Canberra Day procession, played at Shopping Centres, Pre-Schools and other schools. It has also played with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra at a concert for schools and has also taken part in the Northside Music Festival with the school choirs.⁵⁸

Its Art Show with Rosary School and annual entertainment of senior citizens continued into the 1980s.

Earlier, in 1977, the Hackett Primary Principal had written to the Commonwealth Minister for Education on behalf of the Board complaining about maintenance of the school building in matters such as ceiling deterioration in some rooms, leaking taps and playground seating.⁵⁹ Apparently unaware of protocols under the new Ordinance, he was informed later in that year that 'Authority communications addressed to the Minister will be redirected to the Authority for action' and 'the only school affiliated body able to petition the Minister would be the P. & C. Association'.⁶⁰ Maintenance was a 'continuing problem' into 1978.⁶¹ However, by the end of 1979, repairs to roofs and replacement of ceilings had been completed.⁶²

By the late 1970s, under-utilised space was becoming an issue, with several community groups seeking accommodation. Hackett Primary reported in 1979 that 'various outside bodies have approached the school for use of spare space' including TAFE for storage and the Art School for lecture rooms.⁶³ It also mentioned that the Noah's Ark Toy Library was seeking space.⁶⁴

From 1980, Hackett Primary was also considering moving into one building. Consolidation in the primary school building would mean loss of resource rooms for maths and reading programmes and separate audio-visual and music rooms while the infants' section would lose the kindergarten/Year 1 facilities and ready access to the adventure playground. Consolidation in the junior school would have to occur over a longer period. There was a hope that earlier development of Gungahlin might help with enrolments.⁶⁵

With strong support from the Principal, consolidation was accepted in principle later in 1980.⁶⁶ In 1982, the Principal referred to the 1980 proposal which entailed 'modification of the west wing of the building to accommodate the library, converting a standard classroom into a kindergarten area, upgrading the staffroom plus a few minor improvements' as then costing \$80,000. Instead, he suggested consolidation in the infants' wing would reduce renovation costs to \$15,000 and also lower heating costs.⁶⁷

This suggestion was adopted. In August 1983, the Schools Authority endorsed the proposal for the Department of Territories and Local government 'to use surplus space in the former primary wing for sporting and community groups'.⁶⁸ The west wing was formally handed to the Department of Administrative Services in 1985.⁶⁹ It was then occupied by the ACT Sports Directors Association and became known as Sports House; it continued to serve that function until the end of 2014 when the sporting bodies were relocated to the University of Canberra.

At the end of July 1990, the Government announced the closure of seven primary schools, including Hackett Primary, at the end of 1990 'in an effort to reduce educational expenditure without lessening the quality of educational programs offered or increasing class sizes'. The *Canberra Times* editorial commented:

⁵⁸ SA file 76/1954, 1978 submission.

⁵⁹ SA file 76/1954, N.T.Armstrong to J. Carrick, 25 February 1977.

⁶⁰ Ibid., meeting of 11 August 1977.

⁶¹ SA file 81/1504, Board Report for July-October 1978.

⁶² Ibid., Board Report for July-October 1979.

⁶³ SA file 81/1504, Board Report for the Second Half of 1979.

⁶⁴ Ibid., meeting of 29 November 1979.

⁶⁵ SA file 81/1504, meeting of 29 July 1980.

⁶⁶ Ibid., meetings of 2 and 30 October 1980.

⁶⁷ SA file 78/1302, G.McAlary to Chief Education Officer, 12 November 1982.

⁶⁸ SA file 79/908, B.Doherty to Principal, 9 September 1983.

⁶⁹ SA file 78/1302 Part 2, P.Leyshon to Chief Education Officer 15 February 1985.

When we look at the stark figures of the enrolment history of the seven schools to be closed at the end of the year, yesterday's decision, though touched with sadness, is as inevitable as it is necessary.⁷⁰

The criteria had included the projected number of enrolments of the schools, their distance from other schools, the capacities and quality standard of school buildings and grounds, and their operating costs.⁷¹ The rationale given for the closure of Hackett Primary, with Majura Primary as the receiving school, was as follows, with the criteria in brackets:

From 1983 enrolments at Hackett Primary have been below 200, reaching 148 students in 1990. Enrolment projections for the next five years indicate that enrolments will remain low. (1) From 1991 all Hackett students can easily be accommodated at Majura Primary giving a projected total enrolment of 475 in a 710 capacity school. (2) Walking distances from the extreme of the catchment area in Hackett to Majura Primary will be in excess of 2km. Although there are no route bus services between Hackett and Majura Primary there is a Route Bus 385 which currently provides a service to North Ainslie and Ainslie Primary Schools which some students may choose to use. (3) Majura Primary appears to offer the programs available at Hackett Primary. (4) As out-of-school-hours care operates at both Hackett and Majura Primary Schools the extra places required should be available at Majura Primary. (5) Due to recent refurbishment, Majura Primary buildings are in better condition than those at Hackett Primary. (6) Hackett Primary's operating costs per student are 10 per cent greater than the system's median operating costs per student for primary schools. (7) The Majura Primary grounds are adequate for the increased enrolments. (8)⁷²

The Alliance Government changed some of its decisions later in 1990 but not the one to close Hackett Primary. For the safety of pupils, Antill Street between Hackett and Watson was reduced to two lanes with some pedestrian refuges in the middle.

Jess Taylor reported that in 1990, when closure loomed again, the Principal, Angela Mawbey, ‘was completely behind it and ‘thought it was the right thing to do’. She added that ‘the Board and the P&C were more accepting’. She described the last days:

When the closure was inevitable, the teachers worked extremely hard to not make it affect the children too much....You had parents coming in who couldn't decide whether their children would go to North Ainslie or Majura. That made it difficult for staff. When it had to close, many of the staff had been in the school all those years with all those records. Things like tape recorders were a bit old and the other schools did not want them. There were the records, all those rolls and newsletters and all the things that happened over the school year. It was sad. I remember our last day there. I think Angela and I had to be in at the Authority by five. We came out, locked the door and said goodbye to the school.⁷³

Olive Gower who had taught at Hackett Primary from 1965 to 1984 had an emotional reaction to the closure:

For a school to just close like that, it's like a ship going down or an aircraft crashing. They're so much part of our lives. It was my school and I can't go back to it. People drive me and I say: 'Don't pass the school'. I was there at its first day and when I left, I said: 'I'm never coming back'. It was my favourite school because I was there for such a long time.⁷⁴

In 1991, the Hackett Residents Association lobbied the Labor Government, which had replaced the Alliance Government, to reopen the school as a public/private early childhood/junior primary centre. It distributed 1200 surveys and received 209 responses, with 178 favouring the re-opening of the school in some form and 86 supporting a public-private junior school.⁷⁵ The lobbying was not successful. The continued agitation may have

⁷⁰ *Canberra Times*, 1 August 1990.

⁷¹ News Release by the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts, 31 July 1990.

⁷² MINISTRY OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND THE ARTS: *Schools Reshaping*, 1 August 1990, document held by Barry Price, p. 5.

⁷³ Taylor interview op cit.

⁷⁴ Gower interview op cit.

⁷⁵ *Canberra Times*, 21 August 1991.

made it more difficult to integrate the Hackett pupils at Majura Primary than had been the case with the Downer pupils two years earlier.

Stella Smith summed up concerning the beginnings of Majura Primary:

I felt the amalgamation of Downer and Watson into Majura in 1988 worked very well. The wings had changed. The wing where the Smith Family had been was altered and even the Watson kids got lost because they had been used to another corridor. They weren't sure which way to go. That helped. The Downer kids had worried that they'd feel isolated. Because we had extra staffing that year, it was one of the best ways to amalgamate.

For the arrival of Hackett pupils in 1991, the back wing was opened up. She continued:

Our hardest year was when, in 1990, they closed Hackett and Hackett joined us because we didn't get extra staffing that year. Those parents were much more difficult. It was the parents having the trouble, not the children. We saw children that were fine and the parents were saying they were unhappy.⁷⁶

PUBLIC NOTICES

HOP ALONG TO THE

Hackett School Fete

Maitland Street, Hackett, Today 1.0pm

CHILDREN!!

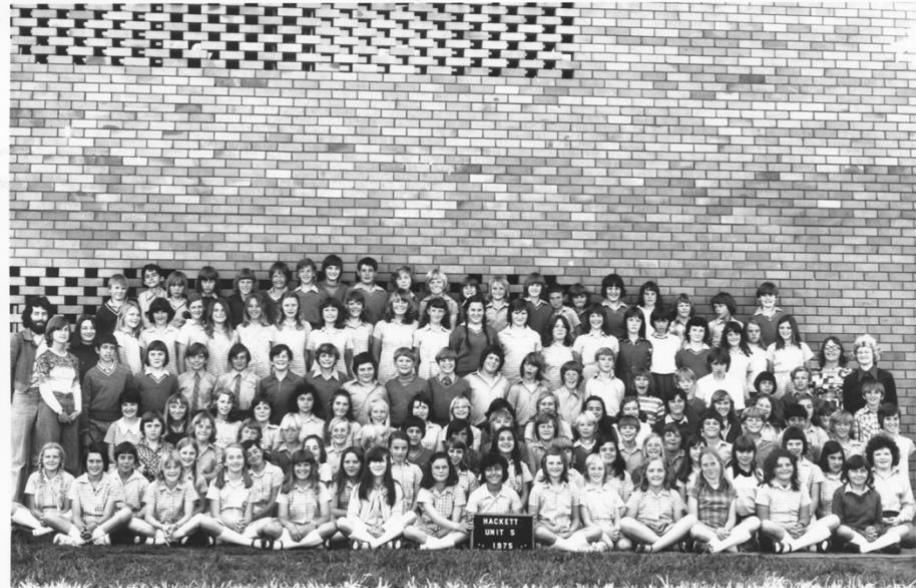
Cathy from TV 'Secret Garden' will be at the fete; also train rides, treasure hunt, lucky dips, merry go round, toffee apples.

PARENTS!!

Glass blowing, marching girls, bargain price garden pots, lucky 'parcel pick up' wheelbarrow and barbecue raffles, many stalls.

Low prices, bargains galore, fun for all!

Advertising (1966, October 29). The Canberra Times, p. 16. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article106943478>



Unit 5, 1975 source ACT Archives

⁷⁶ Smith interview op cit.

Memories of Hackett Primary School

During the 'Speech Day' concert, two students perform a rendition of the Simon & Garfunkel song 'Mrs Robinson' with lyrics adjusted as a tribute to 'Mr Robertson'.

The school motto was 'hope and honour', the origins of which are unknown. Perhaps it is an alliteration on the first letter of the school name, embodied social values at the time or reflects an optimistic perspective at the time the school commenced in 1964. The latter could accurately be attributed to the school's founding Headmaster - Robbie Robertson.

Was Robbie also seeking to engender ambition in us by naming the four houses after four of the highest peaks in the ACT - Bimberi, Franklin, Gudgenby & Murray? Perhaps ironically, each of these towering giants were not easy to access in 1964.

1964 was also an Olympic year and may have inspired the school emblem of the eternal flame. As the school opened in May, a cold snap could have found school pioneers seeking an inspirational emblem with the eternal flame providing hope as bitterly westerleys gathered more sting from the snow clad peaks of Bimberi, Franklin, Gudgenby and Murray honouring the Canberra winter tradition.

It can be argued the general purpose of schools is to provide students with the skills and abilities to make meaningful contribution to society. Beyond the acquisition of academic knowledge this also entails the abilities to learn, communicate, interact with others, pursue leisure and be creative.

The successful application of these concepts requires a healthy learning environment that encourages students to discover their most effective learning techniques and apply them without fear of ridicule or failure. Whilst Robbie Robertson and his colleagues deserve full credit for establishing this environment, their successors deserve equal acclaim for maintaining & developing it. School records repeatedly reflect this philosophy.

The school provided opportunities for creativity through the craft room, research through a well-stocked library, and active inter school sports competitions. In 1972 David Lusty (Principal) ran what was known as 'speed tests' of students multiplication skills. This was perhaps also one of the better uses for the school's public address system.

In the early 1970s, the school possessed a fully equipped dental facility which was staffed by a qualified dentist on a cyclical basis with all students receiving free dental care. This was enhanced by the free milk program (& undermined by the serving of cinnamon donuts at the tuckshop). During the preparation of this recollection, the unusual situation emerged of former students taking pride in the dental facilities provided by their school. It appears the smoke and mirrors were successful in disguising less appealing aspects of dental treatment at the time.

The school possessed an assembly hall to be proud of which featured an equally admirable stage, both of which were put to their designed purposes during the operational period of the school. In 1968 the school produced Ahmet the Woodcutter, then followed this up with Joseph's Many Coloured Dream Coat in a subsequent year.

During the mid 1970s a school song emerged which is believed to have been composed 'in house'. Reflecting the value of a communal creation, research has been unable to determine who composed the lyrics and music for this song. It remains a team effort. The musical element of school life continued to flourish as indicated in the late 1970s when the school had two bands, a large recorder group and a choir.

There were numerous volunteers who were essential for the successful running of the school and provision of additional learning aids. The Parents and Citizens Committee being a prime example of this generous donation of resources and skills. An example of a parent/citizen contributing with their expertise in a less recognised manner is Bill Gibson who for many years played the piano and provided musical guidance for school productions as well as accompanying the school choir at various eisteddfods and other musical events. This included countless hours of practice and preparation. Bill willingly gave his time and expertise inspired by the motivation of assisting students to enjoy and appreciate music. Bill is not alone in his voluntary efforts to assist the school and the efforts of all volunteers during the operational period of the school are appreciated.



Hackett Primary School

Marlborough St, Hackett, ACT 2602, Telephone: 489 711

May, 1983.

CANTEEN PRICE LIST, TERM 2 1983.

PLEASE NOTE CHANGES IN THE LUNCHES AVAILABLE.

LUNCH PACKAGES:

A nutritionist has been consulted to ensure the packages contain a balanced meal. Wholemeal bread is used in all lunches. Only the following combinations are available. Extras e.g. chips can be bought over the counter at lunch time.

<u>LUNCH A</u>	: Cheese sandwich, piece of fruit, 5 fruit drops	.70¢
<u>LUNCH B</u>	: Toasted cheese sandwich, piece of fruit, 5 fruit drops	.70¢
<u>LUNCH C</u>	: Egg sandwich, piece of fruit, 5 fruit drops	.70¢
<u>LUNCH D</u>	: Salad sandwich and slice of cheese	.70¢
<u>LUNCH E</u>	: Sausage roll, piece of fruit, slice of cheese	.70¢
<u>LUNCH F</u>	: Pie, piece of fruit, slice of cheese	.90¢
<u>LUNCH G</u>	: Hot dog, piece of fruit, slice of cheese	.90¢
"Kinder" packs for small children or children with small appetites:		
<u>LUNCH H</u>	: Vegemite sandwich, 5 fruit drops	.40¢
<u>LUNCH I</u>	: Peanut butter sandwich, 5 fruit drops	.40¢
<u>LUNCH J</u>	: $\frac{1}{2}$ sausage roll, slice of fruit or vegetable	.40¢

DRINKS can be included in the lunch package for the following prices:

300ml carton plain milk	23¢	Regency orange juice	28¢
Mooove (flavoured milk)	28¢	Reg. orange & mango juice	28¢
		Frozen Regency	28¢

MORNING RECESS SALES:

Piece of Orange	2¢	Cheese Triangles	20¢	Slice Iced Bun	10¢
Carrot Sticks	2¢	Fruit Balls	1¢	Cup of milk or juice	15¢
Packet Sultanas	20¢	Cheese Bites	1¢	Hot soup	15¢
Bread Crusts vegemite, peanut butter			3¢		
$\frac{1}{2}$ bread roll and veg. or peanut butter			15¢		

LUNCHTIME SALES: Same as recess plus the following items:

N.B. These are not sold in lunch packages.

Chips - plain only 30¢. Cheese twisties 15¢. Chicken twisties 15¢.

FROZEN LINES:

Frozen Juice	15¢	Frozen Flavoured Milk	28¢
Frozen Regency	28¢	Frozen fruit juice ice blocks	10¢
Other frozen Icy Poles	20¢ - 30¢	(depending on variety).	

<u>STATIONERY:</u>	Slope Cards	10¢	Sharpeners	15¢
	Rubbers	15¢	Lead Pencils	15¢
	Rulers	20¢	Biro Pens	25¢

PLEASE CHECK THIS LIST CAREFULLY as some items sold previously are not now available.

CANTEEN MANAGERESS: Mrs Helen Lineham. Phone: 959606 (home).

There is no direct phone line to the Canteen. School Phone: 489711.

Canteen price list May 1983 - source - ACT Archives

Of the previously listed attributes that comprise what may be defined as those evident in honourable citizens, perhaps awareness of and compassion for those less fortunate remains paramount. HPS was active in fund raising for a number of worthy causes including: the Red Cross, Legacy, the Salvation Army and the Smith Family.

The school was set in an ideal geographic, economic and social location (Hackett) with an enviable list of facilities and the taxpayer is entitled to ask about the dividend on this investment. The Hackett Primary School Facebook page contains former students involved in a vast range of occupations and activities demonstrating all of the aforementioned desirable attributes.

Whilst students are generally allocated to schools through geographic circumstances, staff have some say in their destiny. The school ethos was such that a number of staff remained there for many years when transfer was readily available. It would be unfair to name any teachers at the risk of overlooking others who are equally deserving.

Local creative talents and appreciation of the results of those so endowed were highlighted during the annual Hackett Art and Craft Exhibition which was held in the school hall from 1977. These annual events provided significant funds for the P&C which were invested back into the school through purchases such as gymnasium equipment.

In Australian society, particularly in regional areas, primary schools provide the opportunity for communities to gather and work together towards common goals. School fetes to raise funds for specific projects (such as purchasing musical instruments) are an example of such an institution. School halls invariably become the centre for meetings of various groups and social events. All members of society wish to see schools thrive. A successful school reflects well on the local community.

Whilst Hackett did not hold fetes (some of us were relieved we did not have to dance around the may pole) it is perhaps fair to observe that the Hackett community held the school in high regard as demonstrated by their opposition to the proposal to close Hackett Primary in the late 1980s. Whilst the opposition group was ultimately unsuccessful, they generated significant local support and bonded Hackett citizens in protecting what was theirs. The fact that they successfully delayed the impending closure of the school for eight years is testimony to their dedication and skill. This allowed an extra generation of children to benefit from the education provided by Hackett Primary.

The roots of this community spirit are more than evident through the dedicated P&C that Hackett Primary benefitted from during its material existence. The well-stocked library is an example of their achievements. Records from the 1960s show an active and successful P&C with a number of office bearers for specific roles demonstrating a committed and organised regime. This trend appears to continue through to the P&C Committees of the 1980s.

In December 2011, Suzi Leverington launched the Hackett Primary School Facebook site which, beyond providing a resource for members to share school memories, compliments the efforts of the Hackett Community Association.

Whilst preparing this chapter a number of documents and photographs relating to the school were located under the control of the ACT Heritage Library Service. These were copied and placed on the following website:
<https://www.dropbox.com/.../ztd6mv.../AABJQPM7siQR5qmFuBdji0a9a...>

In a unique twist of fate, and with no intended offence to Blue Gum, it can be observed that the school buildings trigger our memories of Hackett Primary as it was - a happy, supportive and constructive environment full of hope from which each of us has achieved our own honour. The closure of the school diminished the eternal flame but it is far from extinguished.



School band early 1970s (photo: ACT Archives)

Chronology of Hackett Primary School

This chronology is limited by the surviving documents and other records available.

1964	School opens with 167 students.
1965	Enrolment of 167 students in the primary section.
1966	Infants Department takes occupancy of the eastern wing.
	Introduction of a new maths curriculum to accommodate decimal currency.
1967	Enrolments for the Infants Department were 267 students.
	Drama Day held with four other schools.
1968	School produces 'Ahmet and the Woodcutter'.
	Western wing building extensions completed and occupied.
1969	School gathers in the Hall to watch man walk on the moon on black & white television
	School library reaches 3,300 books thanks to the generosity of the P&C.
1970	HPS Torch produced.
1971	Pies cost 20 cents from the Tuckshop.
	During the 'Speech Day' concert, two students perform a rendition of the Simon & Garfunkel song 'Mrs Robinson' with lyrics adjusted as a tribute to 'Mr Robertson'.
1972	Metric system introduced in Australia.
	The Japanese Club learns & performs several songs in Japanese.
	The Senior Girls 'A' Netball team wins the ACT Schools Championship.
1973	New mothers afternoon tea held.
	HPS was reclassified allowing for the employment of additional staff.
1974	Peak enrolment numbers reached with 573 students.
	Maths and music curriculums reviewed.
1975	Beer and pie night held.
	P&C seeks to have vehicle parking bays in Maitland Street extended.
1976	School philosophy document produced.
	ACT Schools Authority conducts an investigation into the starting age for children in kindergarten and what time of year schools should accept enrolments.
1977	School awarded an Authority curriculum grant of \$1,330 for the Music for Everyone project. The funds were spent on books titled 'Exploring Music programme'.
	Art and Craft Exhibition held in the School Hall for the first time.
	Melbourne Symphony Orchestra plays with the School Brass Band at a concert for schools.
1978	The Principal reported 'Music has become a much more important subject in the school curriculum - two brass bands, a large recorder group and a choir.'
	A local radio station held a fishing competition on Lake Burley Griffin with cash prizes for catching specially marked trout - it is believed they died of old age.
	One hard-boiled egg costs 12 cents at the Tuckshop.

1979	P&C purchased a new photocopier for the School.
	Supper dance held.
1980	School enrolment at 304 students.
	Family barbecue held.
1981	Large sausage rolls are 28 cents at the Tuckshop.
1982	Defend HPS action commenced.
1983	School consolidates into the eastern wing of the buildings.
	Iced bun slice costs 10 cents at the Tuckshop.
	Computer literacy introduced to the curriculum.
1984	After School Care program commences.
	School celebrates its twentieth anniversary.
	Students raise over \$3,000 for the National Heart Foundation through a 'Jump Rope Program'.
1985	The Hackett Herald, an in-house school newspaper was produced.
	School performs well in the NSW Mathematics Competition earning one high distinction, two distinctions and five credits.
	School Brass band performed at the Canberra Theatre, Bruce Stadium and The Lodge
1990	School closed
2011	Hackett Primary Facebook page launched.
2015	Hackett Primary Facebook page has 150 members.

Raising funds for the needy

In July 1965 the Hackett Primary School donated £1/5/-, mostly in pennies in a paper bag, to the ACT Children's Book Council fund for books for needy children. The Canberra Times reported that the funds were used to provide books to children of Dr Barnardo Homes and underprivileged children in Canberra.¹⁵³

Memories from former students and teachers

'The Old witch that thought she could teach sewing. GGGGGRRRRRRRRRR Old Bag.' Erica Saunders (1971).

'The tree in the park where the Canberra Revival Centre was built (circa 1972) had a large black steel plate covering a hole or broken branch. It was up pretty high, so of course we threw rocks at it. Donnngggg.' Ross Carnsew (1975)

'...she was a lovely Teacher (grade 3), I think I invited her home for afternoon tea.' Catherine Pearson (1972)

'Feeling proud to be asked to be 'milk monitor' & drinking our little glass bottles of milk through a straw which had been poked through the aluminum cap'. Suzi Leverington (1976)

Blues Poles - Stephen Harrison (1975) tells the story of Hackett Primary's response to the controversy caused by the Whitlam Government's purchase of an expensive painting in 1973. He and Ross Carnsew (1975) were asked to prepare a background scene for a function in the School Hall and used Blue Poles as their inspiration. Armed with a large canvas, several tins of various shades of blue paint, their bikes and several local dogs, they created what has been described as a 'memorable art work.' It is unknown if any of the dogs involved were blue heelers prior to their contribution.

'Mr Norris or 'Nobby' standing near his office, pointing to whoever was in trouble and beckoning them to him.' Suzi Leverington (1976)

'Commonwealth Bank...loved getting that stamp in my book. I think I only banked 50c but that was so much money to me then. I used to pinch the bottles out the back of Hackett shops and then take them around to George's corner shop for lollies.' Elaine Stanford (1975)

'Another time I tried to chop down one of those pine trees with an axe and then on another occasion I brought in some wine in my water bottle. Mrs O'Connor sent me up to see Mr Robertson who took about 4 or 5 swigs from my bottle in an effort to identify what type of wine it was.' Tony D'Amico (1971)

'The other thing I should mention is wagging. I'm sure we all did it but I turned into a fine art. My favorite is turning up home one day and telling my mum I didn't need to go to school for a whole week because the teacher said I was so far ahead of the class they needed to catch up. She fell for it hook, line and sinker! Bet you couldn't that today.' Tony D'Amico (1971)

'Mr Angel, the elderly janitor, had a bucket of that magic sawdust. He used to hang out in a room at the foot of the steps more or less between the tuckshop/assembly hall and the primary school foyer. I remember it being used at least once, in kindergarten.' Steve Glaznieks (1977)

'I remember that dentist made me cry because I was told I wasn't brushing my teeth properly!' Suzi Leverington (1976)

'I think Robert and I were banned from the library for squashing blowies inside books.' Ian Backhouse (1971)

'Saw my first ever brown snake in the gutter around the tank. I was wagging school.' Alison Young (1974)

'The sun warmed milk...oh the memories. I remember enjoying being picked to collect the stencils from being 'run off'. That great smell from the purple pages.' Felicity Williams (1976)

'I loved most of the teachers at the school - Mrs Volparto was a stand out. I loved the canteen and the big play ground area. One thing I miss is the closeness of our friendships. Ben Nicholson is still my friend and we met in prams as babies and both went to all the same schools apart from our posting to Wagga Wagga years 5-6.' Paul Huggy (1980)

'I remember physical education being important. Girls in sport campaign, jump rope for heart jump days. School camp's to Long Beach and H Ranch. I remember my time at Hackett PS as the best primary school (I went to a few). Teachers and principal were wonderful.' Kim Harriden (1988)

'Love a frozen moove! Also stairs at back of hall. Carpet one end and lino the other. In later years there were the stairs from office to hall and a disabled ramp which was funny because the only way to the quad on infant side was down narrow stairs off hall.' Imogen Miller (1983)

'For a school to just close like that, it's like a ship going down or an aircraft crashing. They're so much part of our lives. It was my school and I can't go back to it. People drive me and I say: 'Don't pass the school!'. I was there at its first day and when I left, I said: 'I'm never coming back'. It was my favourite school because I was there for such a long time.' Olive Gower (Teacher 1964-1984)

'Satellite banned

Members of the ACT division of the Association of Architects, Engineers, Surveyors and Draughtsmen at the Orroral Valley tracking station placed a ban yesterday on the reception of signals from the French satellite 'Tournesol', launched on a scientific mission on April 15, 1971. Eighty children from Hackett Primary School sent a letter to the French Ambassador. Mr Gabriel Van Laethem, yesterday protesting against France's current nuclear tests in the Pacific.¹⁵⁴ Source - Satellite banned (27 June 1972). *The Canberra Times*, p. 3.

Hackett Preschool

Well before the preschool was opened, parents were actively raising funds needed to provide equipment. In February 1965, parents organised a combined ‘pet show and decorated toy competition’ at the Hackett Oval. It was opened by Mrs Fraser, wife of the Federal Member for the ACT, Jim Fraser. For the decorated toys section, children were encouraged to ‘dress-up their bicycles, tricycles or scooters.’ The group had raised £450 and hoped that the show would increase the amount to £600.¹⁵⁵

By July 1965 the Hackett pre-school and mothercraft centre were nearing completion. The pre-school building faced Maitland St while the mothercraft centre faced Mills St. According to the NCDC’s *Sidewalk Supervisor* column in the Canberra Times of 5 July 1965, vinyl floor tiles were used on the floors in the preschool while vinyl fabric covered the ‘lower areas of the walls to a height of three feet. This will facilitate the problem of cleaning.’ The outdoor area was fenced and provided with ‘sand pits and pine bark play pits.’¹⁵⁶

Both opened in August 1965, but parents using both buildings were unhappy about the delays and in particular, the design of the mothercraft centre as noted in a report prepared by parents:

‘The footpaths are too narrow for prams; there is no outside cover for prams during wet weather; the waiting rooms are too small, and should it be decided to give injections at the centre, the building will prove to be totally inadequate. In addition there are no toilet facilities nor a phone.’¹⁵⁷

But the NCDC’s responses to these concerns were dismissive, saying that the footpaths were adequate and ‘few mothers took prams to the centre when it was raining. They preferred to travel by car. If they did take a pram they could take it inside the building.’ They also said a ‘lavatory would have limited use, and the cost could not be justified.’ The building cost £10,289.¹⁵⁸

Within a short period of opening there were calls from parents that addition facilities would be required to meet the demand. In response, the Federal Member for the ACT, Jim Fraser, asked the Minister for the Interior, Doug Anthony if they could enlarge the existing preschool or establish another one in Hackett including portable classrooms. However, the Minister declined this request.

In 2006 the ACT Government was planning to close the preschool but with strong community support against this proposal, the closure fortunately did not proceed. In 2006 the enrolments were around 15. Late in 2007, the preschool received a \$6,000 grant from the Community Water Grants program to install a water tank in the grounds. (plate 18).

The ACT pre-school system changed in 2008 when pre-schools became attached to their local primary schools and no longer operated as a separate entity - Hackett joined North Ainslie Primary School. This is also the year that it became an International Baccalaureate program pre-school as North Ainslie had adopted this program for all levels.

In 2012 the preschool was part time with a maximum of 25 children but it was not full. During that year the pre-school was extended and upgraded to comply with the new National Quality Standards which changed its capacity to a maximum of 22. In 2013, with numbers rising in the area, it went full-time (two classes and two teachers) with a new capacity of 44. Since then it has remained almost full every year with numbers slightly fluctuating due to overseas students and overseas postings. In 2018 there were 41 children enrolled.

In August 2015 the preschool celebrated its 50th year with its annual Garage Sale, along with a birthday cake, sausage sizzle, face painting, cake stall, preloved toys, children’s clothing, books and bric-a-brac

In recent years around 40-44 children are enrolled each year although not all are Hackett residents as they also take children from Dickson; the preschool is the overflow pre-school for North Ainslie residents. They also have quite a few international children whose parents are studying at the ANU and they are only temporary residents of Hackett.

The mothercraft centre no longer operates and is used as a storage area for the pre-school; it referred to as the ‘Rainbow Room.’

Montessori Children's House

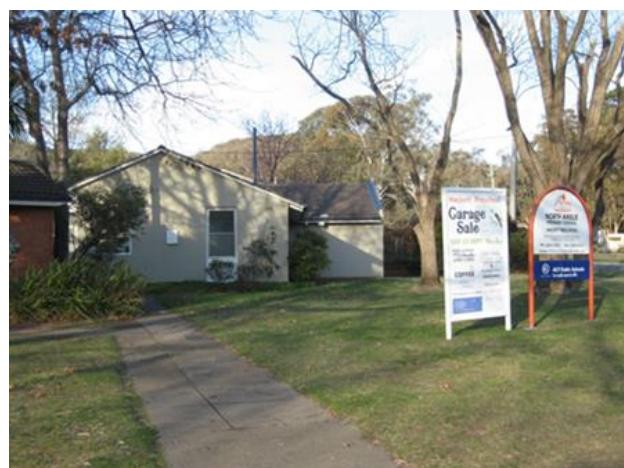
The Montessori Children's House was opened in 1982 in part of the former Hackett Primary School by the Canberra Montessori Society. At the same time the Society also opened a classroom at Manuka and this was followed by more classrooms at Yarralumla and Red Hill. The Hackett school could have up to 28 children ranging in age from 3-5 years. It later moved to the building owner by the Knights of the Southern Cross, at corner of Maitland and Madigan Streets.

On 7 August 1991¹⁵⁹, the Canberra Times reported that the Hackett school would ‘close on 31 December 1991 because the Knights of the Southern Cross, who owned the site, are seeking government approval for a change of use that would permit the organisation to construct medium-density housing.’

In 2004, the Society established its current purpose built campus in Holder.



Handprints to celebrate the 50th year of the Hackett Preschool, 2015



Hackett Preschool 2018

Blue Gum Community School

Based at Hackett's long-established school site, bordered by Maitland & Madigan Streets, Blue Gum Community School is a small community-based, secular independent school offering education programs for 0-16 year olds. These include sessional Playgroups for families with 0-2 year olds (including Bush Playgroup); extended-hours (8am-6pm) Preschools (Hackett & Dickson campuses) for 3-5 year olds; Primary/Middle/High School for 5-16 year olds. Graduates usually move into Canberra's college system for Years 11 & 12 – and appreciate their solid grounding as a self-directed learner/researcher with a strong sense of community.

The school values being at the heart of a wonderful local community, and is always looking for ways to enhance that relationship. Blue Gum is a strong advocate for the importance of small local schools in nurturing community connections.

Blue Gum first began leasing part of the former Hackett Primary School buildings in 2005, gradually accessing more and more space as the school has grown. Over that time, the school community has fund-raised, as well as successfully applying for Australian Government capital works grants, to refurbish and upgrade parts of the buildings. A strong priority has been the outdoor environment, which has been transformed into enticing nature discovery playscapes, including a Fibonacci Treehouse Stage, frog ponds, mini 'Stonehenge', Zen-like garden, Nature Studio, fire pit, giant chess board, kitchen gardens, chicken coop, beach volleyball court, dry creek bed fed by tank water channels etc. In early 2018, Blue Gum opened an additional preschool converting dark dilapidated rooms into beautiful wonder-full learning spaces, and rescuing tree trunks removed from Northbourne Avenue for the light rail to be reworked into sculptural garden bench seats within a landscape full of boulders and other natural materials.

Blue Gum Community School is 'Australian-made' and named after a robust Australian native eucalypt tree. The school values our Australian context, environment and inheritance, but connects globally – sharing with, and learning from, educators in other cultures. Blue Gum adopts a personalised, strengths-based approach to education where *every* student can be successful. Its smallness is its strength – students' individual interests and passions contribute to their learning community's exploration of unlimited research possibilities. Influential philosophical reference points include the Reggio Emilia experience, Big Picture Education, Slow Schooling, Nature Education, Place-Based Education, Project-Based Learning, Positive Psychology etc.

A powerful 'image of the child/student' as **Competent, Capable, Creative, Responsible, Resourceful & Resilient**, guides the educational approach at Blue Gum, and draws on the internationally-regarded work of educators in Reggio Emilia, Italy.

The learning environment and the curriculum are inseparable. The thoughtful and intentional organisation of the learning environment is vital for the implementation of the curriculum. Inspiring, functional, aesthetically-pleasing environments empower students to explore, be curious, investigate, strengthen relationships and make meaning of their world.

The classroom environment is de-institutionalised to provide welcoming, beautiful spaces, segmented into areas that cater for active collaborative engagement or quiet contemplation; individual endeavours, small group workshops or whole Class meetings; indoor or outdoor investigations etc. Students actively contribute to the aesthetics, arrangement of spaces, documentation and planning, thereby gaining ownership over their environment and learning and a deep sense of belonging. (plates 19-21)

Artyology Studio

Blue Gum students spend time regularly in a light-filled spacious Art Studio – dubbed "Artyology" by a student who relished immersing herself in creative ventures there. The name stuck. Artyology is a space in which to wonder, create, experiment, tinker, make and build...and be free to translate dreams into reality. Art 'taster' courses for adults equally inspire creativity in the broader community at night.

Community Classroom program

Students at all year levels regularly venture into the Canberra community and beyond. It might be to visit the ever-friendly shop-owners at the Hackett Shops, who welcome the students' custom and questions; or chatting to locals on neighbourhood ACTION buses while heading off for regular sessions at the Dickson Library and National Library of Australia. Even the youngest preschoolers are active citizens spending time researching different parts of Canberra – from the National Arboretum Canberra to Garema Place or New Acton to the Dickson Wetlands or

the Dickson Shops. Canberra offers an amazing treasure trove of resources for students' investigation. The ever-changing nearby bushland on Mt Majura is regularly explored by classes – establishing students' passionate connection with nature and an appreciation of the importance of the natural world in our lives and for our future. An annual end-of-term whole school *Bush School* day celebrates this reciprocal relationship.

All primary and secondary school students embark on extended Outdoor Education adventures, starting with overnight 2-day Camps for 5 and 6 year olds, through to 2-week High School Cultural Exchange Camps (e.g. linking up with indigenous communities in rural Australia or subsistence farming communities in Fiji). Outdoor education is a compulsory part of the curriculum as it connects students with Australia's rich physical and cultural inheritance. Experiences offer students an authentic context for meaningful learning and personal growth. These adventures are designed to include elements of serious challenge alongside significant time for reflection and relationship-building; to introduce students to new experiences beyond their 'comfort zone'; and to trigger powerful and joyful engagement in just being with their Class community.

Involving families and friends

Families & Friends of Blue Gum (FFBG) is the collective body of parents and carers at Blue Gum Community School (similar to a P&C in other schools). FFBG targets community-building, through events for families, such as pedal-powered cinema, spotlighting at the Australian National Botanic Gardens, camping get-togethers at the South Coast, supporting Blue Gum's *Slow Sunday* – an opportunity for families to slow down their busy lives to engage in joyful experiences together at the Hackett campus.

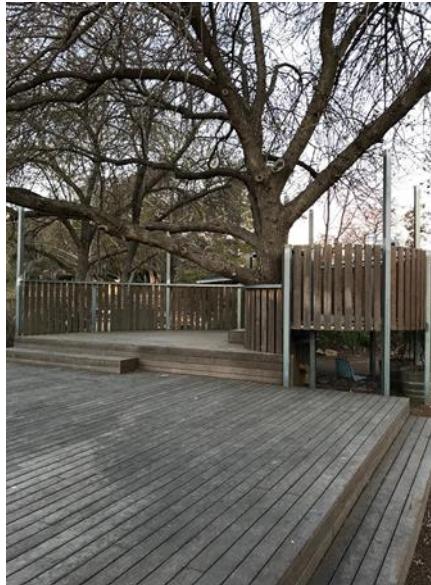
Increasing demand

Waiting lists for Playgroup and Preschool have generated increasing demand for the Primary/Middle/High School; with the school opening a second stream as from 2019, starting in the early years.

Further information about the school can be found on the website: <http://bluegum.act.edu.au/> or Instagram – Blue Gum Community School.



Blue Gum name in clay
(photos: Maureen Hartung)



Fibonacci treehouse stage



Mini Stonehenge

6. LIVING IN THE SUBURB IN THE 60S AND 70S

'Little time is spent in Canberra travelling to or from work; most people work for only five days a week and leave the office before five o'clock, so that there is plenty of time for relaxation.'
Canberra Australian Capital, 1966.

Cost of living in the 1960s

With the commitment by the Commonwealth Government to make Canberra the national capital, the mid 1960s saw the rapid expansion of suburbs, with the completion of Downer, Watson and Hackett and the commencement of suburbs in the Woden Valley. With the many hundreds of public servants moving to Canberra, the Commonwealth Public Service Board released a publication, *Canberra Australian Capital*,¹⁶⁰ to provide background about life in the capital. It included a brief overview of the costs of living and activities in the ACT in the mid 1960s, including transport, accommodation, education and entertainment. The advice provides for interesting comparisons with living in Canberra today:

'Transport'

Ticket prices for one way to Sydney and Melbourne.

'Airlines'

Sydney First Class, 87 flights weekly \$10

Melbourne First Class, 49 flights weekly \$22.50

'Railway'

Sydney First Class, 31 trains weekly \$6.88

Sydney Second Class, 31 trains weekly \$4.76

Melbourne First Class 4 trains weekly \$13.10

Melbourne Second Class 4 trains weekly \$9.85

'Parlour coach'

Sydney One Class, 14 coaches weekly \$7.30

Melbourne One Class, 14 coaches weekly'

'Transport within Canberra involves no serious traffic or parking problems. Although there are adequate bus services, many people prefer to drive to the office and go home to lunch.'

Accommodation

'Hostels' - most single people who move to Canberra to join the Commonwealth Service are initially accommodated in one of the Commonwealth hostels. Hostel rooms are furnished and provided with linen, towels and power points....The weekly tariffs for single accommodation and meals are:

Higher tariff hostels \$18.30 per week

Medium tariff hostels \$15.90 per week

Lower tariff hostels \$13.90 per week

Flats - Government flats, range from bed-sitter to two-bedroom types. The bed-sitters each consist of one large room, a small kitchen (equipped with a stove, sink and cupboard space), a cupboard room and a small bathroom with shower and toilet. Blocks of laundry facilities are separate. All flats are unfurnished and the waiting time varies from 18-30 months depending if you are married or single.

The rent for a bed-sitter type flat is comparatively low ranging from a little more than \$6 per week upwards. Private flats are more readily available but much more expensive. A single bed-sitter would cost approximately \$16 or more per week. Larger flats usually cost \$25 per week.'

Houses

'So that officers of the Commonwealth Service can obtain houses for a reasonable rental in Canberra, an allowance is paid towards the rental of a furnished house. This is payable from the date of registration for a government house until the date when one is allocated. It is usually possible to obtain a house for a rental of \$20 to \$25 per week and the following table sets out examples of the maximum cost to be borne by the officer renting such a house –

Salary	Maximum Rental
\$3001-3200	\$9.10
\$3201-3400	\$9.40
\$3601-3800	\$10.00
\$4001-4400	\$10.60
\$4402-4800	\$10.90

Government-built houses in Canberra make up a high proportion of the houses and flats now being built. However, due to the growth rate of the city, and the resultant pressure on accommodation, there is a considerable waiting list. The waiting period averages about three years. Rentals range from about \$8 to \$13 a week.

Upon renting a government house, the tenant has an immediate option to buy the house. The purchase prices for these houses vary from \$8,000 up to \$12,000 depending on size and location, but the average is \$10,000. These houses may be purchased on a deposit of 5% and repayment spread over 45 years at an interest of 4.75%. The option of buying government homes is widely exercised.'

Building or buying a house

The cost of building a house in Canberra ranges from \$10,600 for a two-bedroom house to \$20,000. A single-storey cottage with a floor area of 1,200 to 1,400 sq ft and containing 3 or 4 bedrooms may be built for about \$12,000. This does not include the amount paid for the land lease. For a ready-built house the cost will range from approximately \$12,000 to \$28,000 according to size and location.

Land

In the Australian Capital Territory all land is leased, not sold. Residential land leases (99 years) are regularly auctioned. Some blocks are restricted to married people who have not held a lease in the ACT during the preceding three years. Building on these must commence within six months of the purchase of the lease and be completed within 12 months.

At the auction held in April 1965, leases in the restricted auction sold within the range of \$700-\$1750 whilst leases in the unrestricted auction were sold within the range of \$1700-\$6800. More recently, however, it has been possible to obtain a block at the restricted auction for as little as \$50.

Entertainment

There are two television studios in Canberra, linked to Sydney and Melbourne by coaxial cable for many programmes. There are also three radio stations and four cinemas, including one drive-in-type and one in the adjacent town of Queanbeyan. Another is under construction.

Much of Canberra's entertainment is centred in clubs based on mutual interests, including national, trade union, ex-service and social groups. It would be almost impossible to list all of the societies but they embrace activities as widely separated as painting, flying, poultry, chess, jazz and philately.

Youth organisations, including Church groups, are numerous and dancing is very popular. There are no night clubs of high standard, but some of the better hotels have regular floor shows and there are some centres featuring popular music.

Sport

Little time is spent in Canberra travelling to or from work; most people work for only five days a week and leave the office before five o'clock, so that there is plenty of time for relaxation. And because Canberra citizens are drawn from all parts of Australia and the world, the range of sport is almost complete.'

Gas cut off at flats

In May 1967, tenants in the units at the corner of Phillip Avenue and Madigan St had their gas cut off for 30 hours due an unpaid bill of \$4,000. But it was not the tenants who owed the money; it was the company who built the units, Hackett Constructions, who owed the money to Philgas. It was made more complicated as the Finance and Guarantee Company had taken possession of the units from the builders.

About 60 people, including 15 families and four babies less than 12 months old, lived in the flats and paid weekly rents of \$21 for a fully furnished one bedroom flat and \$24 for a two-bedroomed flat.

The Federal Member for the ACT, Jim Fraser, commented, ‘It is very unfortunate that tenants of these flats should be used as pawns in a dispute between two companies.’(CTimes 4 May [1967](#))¹⁶¹

Law and order in quiet Hackett

Hoons on Maitland Street

A judge in December 1966 told a person of no fixed address that with his record and if he continued ‘would be one continuous traffic into and out of gaol.’ The offender had stolen a car from Ainslie and was reported in Maitland St, Hackett. The police attended and when trying to pull along-side the car, the offender began swerving violently. After a long chase the police forced the car off the road in Gilruth Street: the police said the offender had ‘passed at least six junctions at 55mph while swerving and showered the police vehicle with stones.’ (CTimes 21 December [1966](#), p 14)¹⁶²

In January 1967, an 18 year man from Dickson was observed travelling at 50mph on Maitland Street in an MG sports car. He had four passengers with him and forced an on-coming truck to take evasive action as well as crossing eight intersections without slowing. (CTimes 14 January [1967](#), p 6)¹⁶³

As well as being a popular strip for poor driving, Maitland St was occasionally used as a dumping ground for motor vehicles. In July 1967, police removed an unregistered 1954 Austin A-40 sedan in working condition that had been abandoned. (CTimes 14 July [1967](#), p 1)¹⁶⁴

Traffic going through Hackett would become an issue in the early 2000s with the development of Gungahlin.

Seizure of bomb

In early January 1970 police removed a home-made bomb from a car in Hackett. The device was a metal casing packed with nearly 3lb of dynamite, wired through a torch battery to a pocket watch. The two men, from NSW, were staying at a flat in Hackett and were planning to blow the head off a statue in front of the Serbian Centre at Forrest. They both received a sentence of nine months in jail. (CTimes 13 January [1970](#), p 8)¹⁶⁵.

Battling milk money thieves

‘One vendor said he knew of a ‘boy of 14 who went home after one expedition with six cheques in his pocket.’

Canberra’s milk supply in the 1950-70s was subject to much debate about the need to provide cheap milk and to stop prices increasing. The origin of this debate had its roots twenty years earlier when all of Canberra’s milk was supplied by local dairy farmers. In 1930s, the ACT dairy farmers formed the Canberra Cooperative Dairy Society - in effect they had a monopoly on milk supplies in Canberra. The Dairy Society would sell out to the Dairy Farmers’ Cooperative Milk Co. Ltd in the early 1950s.

In 1955, Professor LC Webb, conducted an inquiry into arrangements for the supply of milk and cream into the ACT. He noted that in ‘1947, the Society informed the Department of Interior that it could not carry out improvement plans unless it received an assurance that outside operators would not be allowed to operate in the ACT.’ (CTimes 30 October [1959](#), p 3)¹⁶⁶ The Minister for the Interior gave an undertaking that no further milk depot leases would be granted in the ACT until 30 June 1958. Following the easing of restrictions, the Bega Cooperative was given permission to build a second treatment house, and Murray Valley had indicated it would also like to enter the Canberra market.

In 1959, milk was home delivered by 30 milk distributors, who were members of the Dairy Farmers’ Cooperative; by 1963 this was renamed as the Canberra Milk Distributors Cooperative Society. They did not welcome the prospect of competition and were making a case for the establishment of a public authority to license vendors.

In 1963, the Society pushed for milk zones to ensure they could run a profitable business and also to support the creation of a milk authority. Again, there was no support for zoning from the public or from bodies like the National Council of Women (CTimes 26 March 1963, p 1)¹⁶⁷

As well as not receiving support from the government at the time, milk vendors delivering milk to the suburbs were not being treated kindly by some residents. In 1964, they were subject to thefts of milk money and cheques being left out by residents. One vendor said he knew of a 'boy of 14 who went home after one expedition with six cheques in his pocket.' This theft was mainly occurring around the Bega, Allawah and Currong Flats near the city. The vendors proposed that one way to address this theft was to deliver the milk at 6pm instead of 11pm. (CTimes 6 October 1964, p 1)¹⁶⁸

Thefts occurred in 1967 with reports of milk money being stolen in Hackett, Downer, Lyneham and O'Connor. In mid 1967 police arrested thieves in Hackett and 'northside patrols, both uniformed and plain-clothes, had been instructed to pay attention to the problems.' (CTimes 21 June 1967, p 3)¹⁶⁹

The calls for a milk authority were eventually heard in 1971 when the ACT Milk Authority was set up in November 1971 under the *Milk Authority Ordinance 1971*. In the lead up to its establishment, Hackett residents were advised in July 1971 that the suburb had been zoned for milk deliveries and that the vendor for the suburb would sell only one brand of milk. (CTimes 24 July 1971, p 3)¹⁷⁰ Post establishment of the Authority led to one vendor selling all brands of milk across most suburbs.

Body not found in dam

In August 1968, a pile of men's clothing was found near a dam behind Verco St, late on a Sunday afternoon. Police were able to identify the owner of the clothes but were unable to find him at places where he was known to frequent. On Monday morning the police and fire brigade began pumping water out of the dam, believing he had drowned. But around 1pm the man was found in the city. (CTimes 13 August 1968, p 1)¹⁷¹

People using land illegally

In 1978, the Government cracked down on 14 houses in Mackenzie Street illegally using land behind their houses backing onto Mount Majura. The Canberra Times reported that these uses included chook runs, gardens, parking spaces for trucks, cars and a caravan, piles of rocks and bricks, sheds and an incinerator. (CTimes 11 August 1978, p 3)¹⁷²

Children blamed for bushfire

As noted by many of the personal recollections (Chapter 7), the bush on Mount Majura was a great attraction for children. In August 1972, this attraction had a negative affect when a fire burnt about 30 acres of bushland. It was believed to have been started by children playing with matches around 1pm on Friday 25 August, which was the start of the school holidays. (CTimes 26 August 1972, p 1)¹⁷³

Birds killed by children

While many children enjoyed the natural environment of Mount Majura, there were several instants in February 1965 where children aged 13-15 years of age used airguns to kill birds. In a letter to the Canberra Times, a B Kennedy of Hackett said they witnessed eastern rosellas and magpies killed on Mt Majura and magpies and dollar birds on Black Mountain. One group was accompanied by their mother! (CTimes 13 February 1965, p 2)¹⁷⁴

Entertainment

Bad acoustics forced dance to close

In March 1966, the Dominican Blackfriars Priory opened near the corner of Antill St and Phillip Avenue, Watson. This building would later become part of the Australian Catholic University.

As noted in the *Canberra Australian Capital*¹⁷⁵, 'youth organisations, including Church groups, are numerous and dancing is very popular.' Soon after opening of the Priory in April 1966, the Black Friars Youth Club held a Saturday night dance party with The Limit Five band. But while most of the nearby residents of Watson did not hear the music, it would appear the sound travelled and disturbed the peaceful night for some Hackett residents. In response to complaints, the police attended the dance and the band agreed to turn down the sound. But this was not adequate and after further complaints, the police asked the organisers close the dance. It was reported that the 'noise was floating up from the wall-enclosed courtyard where the dance was under way and settling back on the

rising ground of Hackett.' At this time the Department of the Interior said ... that control of noise was covered by a section of the *Police Offences Ordinance* 1930. The ordinance stated that a person causing annoyance by the sounding of or playing a musical instrument shall be guilty of an offence. (CTimes 8 April 1965, p 4)¹⁷⁶

Seeing a UFO from the shops

On 17 July 1978, a Mr Potter of Lyneham, was reported as seeing a UFO to west of Canberra. Mr Potter said 'It was pointed out to me by a taxi driver at the Hackett shops. We watched it until it went behind a big cloud.' (CTimes 18 July 1978, p 8)¹⁷⁷

Playgrounds for children

Although most houses in Hackett were constructed in 1965 and 1966, it would be at least 12 months before children's playgrounds were provided. Tenders were not called by the NCDC until late 1967 when a notice appeared in the Canberra Times of 21 October 1967, for building play equipment in the Bragg St park.(CTimes 21 October 1967, p 20)¹⁷⁸

Some curious classified advertisements

Accommodation - sober men and beaut girls need only apply

FURN room for sober man
in quiet home, Hackett, use
cons. \$8. 42328 office hours.

ACCOMMODATION VACANT
BEAUT girl 20-23 to share
house Hackett £5/10/- pw,
own room. Linen, laundry fac,
elec incl. 70411 ext 253.

Source - *Canberra Times* 6 September 1967

21 October 1966

The bush comes to the suburb

With Hackett bordering the bushland of Mount Majura, and the north-east part adjacent to land still used for agriculture, interactions between Hackett residents and Australian wildlife and farm animals were a feature of early life in the suburb; strong evidence of Canberra, the Bush Capital!

There're snakes in the wardrobes!

The hot weather of summer usually sees reptiles more active and therefore more likely to be encountered in the suburbs. Some, such as blue tongue lizards, will make their home in a garden if there is adequate cover and free of dogs and cats. Snakes tend to be passing through looking for food and are less likely to become permanent residents. Snakes tend to be wary of people and will usually try and get away if they sense any danger.

But in the case of a resident in Rivett St, a young brown snake had somehow ended up inside a wardrobe in her house in February 1967. The resident, Mrs P Hatherly, said that she was going to get a pair of shoes out of the wardrobe and saw the snake. After the neighbour bought in a spade to cut off the snake's head, it was identified as a common brown snake. (CTimes 3 February 1967, p 1)¹⁷⁹ Mrs Hatherly thought it was a tiger snake because of the black bands along its body. However, young brown snakes have the dark rings which gradually fade after 12 months.

In January 1972, the Canberra Times (10 January 1972, p 3)¹⁸⁰ reported that a 4 foot brown snake was killed in the garden of a house in Richards St. Apparently this was the first snake seen in Richards St but others had been seen in Rivett St.

There're cows in the garden!

December is often a dry period in Canberra and as such, green grass in the paddocks may be limited. Sheep and cattle may need to be hand fed to keep them going. Or if they are not restricted by fences, will usually move around in attempt to find some green pick. And what better place would there be than the front lawns of homes in Hackett! In December 1971, a Hackett householder contacted the Canberra Times Voter's Voice (16 December 1971, p 16)¹⁸¹ concerned about the 15-20 cattle that enter her front lawn at night. Her flower beds were damaged and of course they left their calling cards! The then Conservation and Agriculture branch of the Department of the Interior said that the cattle would have had to get through two fences to reach her garden.

At that time, cattle were grazed in the paddocks along the Mount Majura side of Antill St towards the Federal Highway. Although no details of the location were provided, the house was possibly located close to this area, suggesting the garden may have been at the northern end of Antill, Jukes or Rivett Streets.

There're sheep in the garden!

Not only would cattle make appearances in Hackett, but sheep as well. In 1994, Hackett resident, Mike King, was helping his friend with sheep shearing and noticed two unhappy little lambs. Mick bought them home where he and his wife Beverley raised Jacko and Victa on bottled milk. The Canberra Times (11 September 1995, p 3)¹⁸² reported that they were fond of camellias and roses and had adapted well to life in Hackett.



Source - Canberra Times 11 September 1995

What a load of rubbish!

The collection of household rubbish and illegal dumping of rubbish has always been a challenge for municipal services, be they in large cities or small country towns. The suburb of Hackett has had its fair share of this, particularly due to its proximity to the former Ainslie rubbish tip at the end of Phillip Avenue. Over the years rubbish collection has gone from the twice weekly collections, when residents had the old metal or plastic bins, through to the once a week collection when the ‘wheelie bins’ were rolled out in 1994.

Weekly collection of garbage

Garbage collections in 1964 for most north Canberra suburbs were done twice a week on Tuesday and Friday (Ainslie, Reid, Allawah Flats, Dickson, Downer, Hackett and Watson). Residents were required to put out their garbage tins on ‘the night before the collection day.’

One-off collections

In 1957 the Department of the Interior commenced an annual one-off rubbish collection for material not collected during the normal weekly collections. Householders could leave out items such as metal, tyres, empty bottles and tins. This became an annual activity with the 1959 collection aimed mainly at public servants who had moved from Melbourne that year. ‘Rubbish which will not be collected includes kitchen refuse, garden rubbish, tree prunings, and building rubble such as broken bricks and tiles.’(CTimes 9 October [1965](#), p 3)¹⁸³ The last of these collections were held in Canberra in the early 1970s.

Hello wheelie bins

The sound of the metal lids being dropped on the ground by the garbage collectors early in the morning still rings loudly in some resident’s memories.

An ACT Archives Find of the Month in March [2015](#)¹⁸⁴ reported on the long process for rolling out the wheelie bins. ‘In October 1985, the ACT House of Assembly recommended the introduction of ‘*a mechanical, single operator big bin collection system*.’ There are several advantages of the big bins over the previous collection system. The larger bins meant a reduction in garbage collection from twice a week to once a week. This, along with only a single person required to operate collection trucks, provided ‘*overall economic benefits*.’ In addition, the mechanical lifting of bins provided a ‘*safer working environment for collectors and the elimination of unsatisfactory work practices*.’

But with self-government so close, the then Federal Minister for the ACT decided not to proceed with the bins. There was on-going public discussion through to the early 1990s about the merits of the wheelie bins, with many Canberra residents against them.

A ‘trial commenced in November 1992, with 2,600 Kaleen households supplied with two, 140L wheeled bins, one for garbage and the second for recyclables. The two bin system was to avoid the potential impact on recycling rates that a single 240L bin may have had. Three different combinations of bins were trialed.’

The Minister for Urban Services David Lamont launched the distribution of the big bins across Canberra on 1 September 1994. He stated, ‘*The new garbage service will be a significant improvement on the old one. Problems with dogs knocking bins over will be a thing of the past and the collection starting time will be 7am, eliminating the early morning disturbances.*’

Ainslie rubbish tip

‘One destination was the Ainslie Dump (later a waste transfer station) containing everything from working televisions, radios, tyres and other equipment.’ - recollections by Lewis von Stieglitz

In recent years, many Hackett residents have expressed their anger at the household items and rubbish that are sometimes illegally dumped at the end of Phillip Avenue. Unfortunately, this habit has a ‘tradition’ going back to when Hackett was first developed in the mid 1960s. One Hackett resident raised the matter about dumping when they wrote a letter to the Canberra Times (October [1965](#))¹⁸⁵ in a cynical tone saying that anyone can come to the end of Phillip Avenue where the sign says ‘Dumping of Rubbish Prohibited’ and ‘he can dump to his heart’s content. Some haste is advised as the space between the many and various piles of bottles, cans, boxes, rubble is fast filling.’ Other sites for illegal dumping of rubbish in Hackett included:

- the Hackett end of Antill St in mid 1965. An Antill St resident, interviewed by the Canberra Times, said she had seen dozens of people dumping rubbish. The paper reported that the NCDC was looking for a site for a third rubbish tip in Canberra; ‘this would probably be on the northern slopes of Mount Ainslie in an undeveloped area.’ (CTimes 9 June [1965](#), p 25)¹⁸⁶
- undeveloped land at the corner of Mackenzie and Tryon Streets which was used for illegal dumping of garden material and lawn cuttings in February 1970 and a source of complaint to the Canberra Times Voter’s *Voice*.¹⁸⁷

In August 1964, the Department of the Interior began liaising with the NCDC about the need to establish a new tip to serve the needs of north Canberra. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary of the Facilities Branch, to the NCDC noted:

‘that since the Turner tip was closed earlier this year there has been a marked increase in the quantity of rubbish being deposited on vacant Commonwealth lands, particularly on the lower slopes of Mt Ainslie.’¹⁸⁸

In October 1964, officers from the Department and the NCDC inspected areas behind Duffy St, Ainslie including a site off Kellaway St, Hackett that could be used for ‘three to four years.’ From this inspection they recommended that the NCDC ‘examine the site of Kellaway Street for suitability for use as a temporary dump.’

In December 1965, the NCDC announced that a ‘permanent’ tip would open at the end of Phillip Avenue. As soon as this was announced, residents in Duffy St and other nearby streets, signed a petition against the proposed tip; two residents from Hackett also signed¹⁸⁹. But all to no avail, as the landfill tip opened in April 1966, leading to a reduction in the incidence of illegal dumping for many years. A Department of the Interior notice in the Canberra Times¹⁹⁰ of 2 April [1966](#) advised that the new tip would accept:

‘All normal household rubbish, paper, old clothes, worn-out equipment. Household garbage – putrescible matter – will not be accepted. This should be taken to the garbage dump at Pialligo.’

In 1970, other ACT tips were located at Pialligo (south of the airport), Fyshwick, Belconnen (now covered by a car park at Bruce CIT), Deakin (Kent St) and Long Gully. At that time it was estimated that the Ainslie landfill tip would be full by 1972. (CTimes 22 September [1970](#), p16)¹⁹¹



Ainslie tip 1971 - looking south and to the west (photos: Ivan Fox)

New hoppers see the closure of the landfill tip

In May 1973 the NCDC announced it would provide metal recycling hoppers for separate collection of metal, glass and paper at the Ainslie tip. Residents were asked to divide and place their waste into the appropriate hopper ‘from whence it will be taken for recycling.’ (CTimes 18 May [1973](#), p 3)¹⁹²

In August 1973, the Department of the Capital Territory announced plans to replace several of Canberra’s smaller rubbish tips with hoppers, with a ‘pilot refuse disposal hopper installation to be established at the Ainslie tip by the end of 1973.’ (CTimes 29 August [1973](#), p 9)¹⁹³ By May 1974, six hoppers were in operation. In 1979-80 Annual Report of the Department of the Capital Territory, it estimated that the Ainslie station received over 14,000 tonnes of rubbish.

A Canberra Times article (22 May 1974, p 3)¹⁹⁴ stated that ‘Builders’ rubble and soil would not be accepted at the hopper site, but would have to be deposited at the site of the former Ainslie tip.’ In August 1974, the Department of the Capital Territory directed that garden refuse, especially tree prunings, would not be accepted at the tip or the hoppers.¹⁹⁵ This suggests the landfill site closed in early 1974 for receipt of general refuse but kept open for soil and rubble as this material may have been used for landscaping the tip.

In January 1988 an eight day strike by garbage collectors lead to a pile of rubbish being dumped at the entrance to the Ainslie transfer station.

Closure of Ainslie hoppers impacts the Hackett shops

It is possible that Hackett residents enjoyed the convenience of having a tip almost on their door steps. When it came to the ACT Government decision to close all facilities at the site in April 1990, there was strong public support to have them remain open. A petition against the closure quickly received 1,000 signatures and the Trades and Labour Council wanted it to remain open until further consultation was held with the community. (CTimes 30 April 1990, p.2)¹⁹⁶

How many signatures were from Hackett residents is unknown, but in response to the public outcry, the ACT Government provided recycling facilities at Dickson and Hackett shops. The recycling containers were placed on the nature strip outside the shops. While they were provided immediately after the closure of the hoppers, their presence in the Hackett shops was not entirely appreciated by some residents. The Canberra Times reported on *Page Three* (1 May 1990, p 3)¹⁹⁷ that long-time residents ‘cursed them as an eyesore and insult and to the delight of children who deemed them perfect playground equipment’. Four days later, a 17 year old Katie Nicholson of Hackett wrote a ‘Youth letter’ to the Canberra Times saying the bins were an eyesore and ‘detract from the previously pleasant surroundings at Hackett shops.’ (CTimes 5 May 1990, p 8)¹⁹⁸ No details could be found as to when these bins were removed.

The tip today

Given the chance, natural ecosystems have a remarkable ability to recover from human impact, especially with some assistance. Walking across the old tip site area today, there are very few clues to suggest its previous use. Bushwalkers will weave between eucalypts around 6-8 metres high. Many of these have been planted since 2000 by the Mount Ainslie Weeders and some have grown from seed.



Revegetation on the former tip, 2018. (photo: Chris Mobbs)

The postman always delivers twice

The distant suburbs ... for telegram delivery

Providing regular mail services to the rapidly expanding northern suburbs would stretch the resources of the Post Master General in the 1960s.

In 1962, areas north of Macarthur Avenue, were considered a long way out for the Post Master General (PMG) when it came to delivering telegrams after hours. Telegrams delivered after 5.30pm to Dickson, Watson, Lyneham and Hackett would incur a 12/6 portage fee while the rest of the city received free delivery.

The Chamber of Commerce said that ‘charging people in Dickson, Watson, Lyneham and Hackett is ridiculous when the rest of the city gets free delivery.’ A PMG spokesman said the normal delivery boundaries throughout the Commonwealth extended to three miles from general post offices. Macarthur Avenue was the three-mile boundary limit from the General Post Office in Canberra located at Queen Victoria Terrace, Barton. (CTimes 10 November 1962, p 9)¹⁹⁹

Where are the posties?

The rapidly development of Canberra’s suburbs was placing demands on the postal service in 1963. In September that year, a review was done of the ‘established mail delivery routes in Canberra...which could lead to minor adjustments, including the extension and reduction of rounds and additional postmen.’ ‘The rapid development of northern suburbs, particularly Watson and Hackett, was being considered in the review.’ In 1963 there was a turnover of 200-300% of posties in Canberra. (CTimes 5 September 1963, p 7)²⁰⁰

Mail deliveries cut

The provision of regular postal deliveries was a challenge in the mid 1960s again due to staffing. Mail was delivered twice daily but this was reduced to one a day due to staff shortages. On the north side, Civic, Acton, Braddon, Campbell, Reid, Ainslie, Turner and O’Connor were receiving two deliveries. But the ‘far northern suburbs’ of Dickson, Watson, Downer, Lyneham and Hackett were receiving one daily delivery for several weeks. (CTimes 9 July 1965, p 3)²⁰¹ This reduced deliveries continued to around mid October 1965 when the Canberra Times reported on 27 October 1965 the return of two deliveries a day to these far northern suburbs.

PMG is not superstitious

Providing any additional postal services in Hackett in its early years was good news and the installation of new post boxes in 1964 received humorous accolades from Jim Fraser, Federal Member for the ACT; Friday 13th would appear to have been the main reason to get Mr Fraser’s interest in such a trivial issue. ‘Apparently the PMG Department was not superstitious and did not suffer from ‘triakaidekaphobia,’ he said. He had been advised by the PMG that two new ‘letter receivers’ (also known as letter boxes) had been installed in Hackett; one at the corner of Newton and Maitland Streets and one at the corner of Madigan and Skeats Streets.... They would be cleared at 1pm and 11pm Monday to Friday, 12.15pm on Saturday, and at 10am and 11pm on Sundays and holidays. (CTimes 17 March 1964, p 6)²⁰²

In 2018, there were two ‘Red Street Posting Boxes’ in Hackett; one near the bus stop at the shops and one near 81 Rivett St. Interestingly, under the *Australian Postal Corporation Act 1989*, Australia Post is required to inform the local Federal MP of any proposals to move an existing post box. (source - Australia Post Group *Street Posting Box Policy*).

On the buses

In September 1962, the Department of the Interior announced that Hackett would be served by buses from June 1963, by extending Route 28, which came through Ainslie and finished at the end of Majura Avenue. In announcing this new service, the Department said it would enable ‘Hackett residents to use the Ainslie shops until a local shopping centre was built’. (CTimes 22 September [1962](#), p 9)²⁰³ The bus would continue along Phillip Avenue, turn into Madigan St and finish at the intersection of Madigan and Maitland Streets – this last stop would be referred to as the ‘Hackett Terminus’ (see Plate 14).

A lot of people were travelling from the southern suburbs of Red Hill, Griffith, Narrabundah and Manuka to the northern suburbs. In response to community demands, in August 1963 the Department provided a new Route 1 that left Red Hill at 6.45am and travelled by Manuka, City and Watson to Hackett, where is arrived at 7.25am.

Schools and buses

The challenges of moving into the new suburb of Hackett without a local school required children to attend school at Downer or Watson. This led to one Hackett mum pleading for some action in relation to buses.

‘Sir, — Please will someone hurry up and build Hackett School, or change Canberra’s ‘transport system’?

On Monday last, my sons (and others) stood in heavy rain from 8.45 am to 9.30 am. The bus driver, on a previous morning, could not give a more specific time of departure for the school bus than ‘somewhere between 8.45 am and 9.05 am,’ nor is there any school bus time shown in the ‘new’ timetable.

A similar thing occurred on Tuesday morning, but for the rain. This is the fourth or fifth time that the school bus has disappeared.

To be honest, I dread my two charming boys staying at home any longer than is absolutely necessary, but I object even more strongly to their walking the long, long road to Downer School.

HARASSED HOUSEWIFE Hackett’ Source *Canberra Times*, Saturday 28 September [1963](#), page 2

But returning to Hackett after school from either Downer or Watson Primary, was also a challenge as highlighted by an article in the Canberra Times 13 February [1964](#).²⁰⁴ While school finished at 3.30 pm, the bus to take children to Hackett would not arrive until 4 pm; it was worse for the kindergarten children who finished at 3pm. Fortunately this problem was quickly addressed, as two days later the Canberra Times reported that the ‘Department of the Interior has rearranged its bus schedule to provide a service leaving Watson Primary School at 3.30 pm each afternoon for Hackett.’ This service would continue until late 1964 when the Hackett Primary opened.

Cry for buses to serve the outskirts of Hackett

A lady living in Rivett Street wrote a letter to the editor of the Canberra Times raising concerns about the bus service in Hackett.

‘Woeful lack of buses

Sir, - I have read all the letters about Canberra’s bus services or lack thereof: I am one of the ill-treated pedestrians who lives on the outskirts of Hackett.

The walk to the infrequent bus is not too bad, but the basket-laden walk home is far from pleasant whether the weather is fine or wet. Added to the inconvenience of not having a bus route reasonably close is, of course, the woeful lack of buses.

Last week I had to go to Civic to meet an interstate bus which arrived here between 6.20pm and 6.30pm. There was no bus at all from the Hackett terminus after 4.42pm and the only one I could travel by was a 5.24pm service from Watson.

The stale of my health and the distance from the bus stop, necessitated my leaving home at 5pm.

Hackett Heights’ - Source letter to the editor *The Canberra Times* 27 September [1966](#), p 2.

Dickson shops and buses

In 1966, some shops at Dickson were reporting that high rents and low trade were impacting on business and that some may close. At this time it lacked paving, a public toilet and an access road from Antill Street, and was served by only one bus a day from Hackett. The Dickson Traders Association then arranged for the 28 bus to continue through the Hackett terminus on weekdays and Saturdays at 9.54am to arrive at Dickson at 9.59am. It would return at 11.02am arriving at the Hackett terminus at 11.07am.²⁰⁵



Source Canberra Times, 20 July 1966

But the response from Hackett was poor, with only 1.6 people using the service a day; the service was cancelled until November 1966. Inclement weather was one of the reasons put forward for the low numbers. The Government tried again in December 1966 by running special Christmas shopping buses for two weeks. Again, patronage was low with less than 5 passengers a trip and the service stopped. (CTimes 24 December 1966, p 19)²⁰⁶

Routes

'Prams and shopping jeeps, collapsible or otherwise, will not be carried at anytime.' Bus routes 1971.

In 1968 Hackett was served by two bus routes:

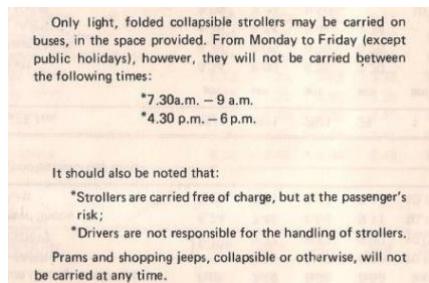
- route 25 - Hackett terminus Madigan St, Antill St, Cowper St, Ipima St, Northbourne Ave, City
- route 28 - Hackett terminus Madigan St, Phillip Ave, Officer Crescent, Ebdon St, Wakefield Ave, O'Connell St, Cox St, Campbell St, Chisholm St, Donaldson St, Cooyong St, Northbourne Ave, City.

Both routes operated every 30 minutes, starting at 6 am and continuing to around 10.30 pm. They would continue to the south side of Canberra under a different route number (people could stay on the bus if travelling through):

- route 25 to route 2 - city, Patents Office, Manuka, Red Hill
- route 28 to route 6 - city, Patents Office, Kingston, Narrabundah

In 1967, the routes were published in a small book and cost 10 cents. But in April 1967 these were replaced with free bus schedules (departure times only) printed on six different cards. Five cards covered five regions of Canberra. For example, Card one covered Lyneham, O'Connor, Turner, Civic, Watson, Downer, Dickson, Civic; Card two Hackett, Ainslie, Dickson, Civic, Pialligo, Duntroon, Russell Offices, Campbell, Civic. A sixth card provided details of the routes and general information. (CTimes 1 April 1967, p 22)²⁰⁷

In 1971, the buses were not entirely friendly towards people with prams or shopping trolleys as shown by these directions on a 1971 timetable:



Source ACTBus <http://www.actbus.net/gallery/History/Timetables/>

Fares

'In 1980 the fare was 40 cents cash which was placed in the glass fronted box.' Recollections by James Walker

In 1960s bus fares were set by the Commonwealth Government after considering advice from the ACT Advisory Council. In 1964 the fares varied depending on the number of sections travel e.g. 6 pence for once section and then an extra 3 pence for each section travelled. Children's fares were half price. In November 1964 the Government abolished the 1 penny surcharge for weekend and holiday travel.

In 1970, the fares increased by 5 cents per section so that one section costs 10 cents. In November 1974 the Government introduced a 50c ticket for unlimited travel all day; this complemented an \$8 monthly ticket that provided unlimited travel on all routes.

Noisy buses disturb some residents

In October 1969 a Hackett resident close to the Hackett terminus contacted the Canberra Times Voters Voice to express his concern about the buses idling their engines early in the morning. Mr K said 'Some of the buses have bad engines and the noise is unbelievable. I have spoken to many of the bus drivers; some of them switch off the engines, some of them told me to complain to the officers and some are not very polite.'

The Department of the Interior, said they would send inspectors to the terminus to instruct drivers to switch off the engines which seemed to work – buses waiting more than two minutes turned off the engines, whereas shorter stays kept the motor running. (CTime 21 October [1969](#), p 12) ²⁰⁸

New bus shelters

The concrete and plastic bus shelters were installed across Canberra in mid 1975 as a cost of around \$2,000 each.²⁰⁹



Bus shelter on Madigan Street - still functional after 40 years. (photo: Chris Mobbs)

7. RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY HACKETT

Some may recall the ‘flower man’ who frequented Hackett Oval.

James Boyd Yeo

This contribution relies on the memory of an 11-year-old at the time with predictable subjective influences such as the innocence of youth, incorporating limited experience, which results in an optimistic vision of life as being inherently sweet.

The centre of life in Hackett was the shops which featured a full range of outlets including George’s Supermarket, John Moore’s Pharmacy, butchers, Angelo’s green grocer & take away, the ‘corner newsagency’, ‘Lil’ Owl supermarket, the barber, Post Office, a dry cleaners plus a launderette. At times shoppers had to park in the service lane behind the shops parallel with Mills St.

For 20 cents the choices were challenging: a dentist’s delight in buying lollies at Georges, the need to enlist a mate to help demolish the 20 cent serve of chips at Angelo’s, or maybe a Matchbox car from the newsagent. Some may have chosen to send 4 letters with the standard 5 cent stamps, but this endeavour was not widely pursued by 11-year olds. In a time when flowing locks and side burns were the trend, a trip to the barbers was unlikely to enhance such customs as the subject barber was a specialist in ‘short back & sides’ despite what the customer requested.

At the Shell service station adjacent, twenty cents bought a gallon of fuel (which wasn’t of much use to 11-year olds). Across the road was the local bus (subsequently known as ACTION) interchange where commuters could choose between routes 25 (via Dickson) and 28 (via Ainslie) which both went through Civic at comparable times. Route 25 finished at Red Hill and Route 28 at Narrabundah.

Indeed, now outdated community facilities were in demand such as the post box near the corner of Rivett and Verco Streets, plus the public telephone booths in Newton St and Madigan St (near the Mackenzie St intersection).

In the block now occupied by the Hackett Pre-school, this was the only structure. No tennis courts or Canberra Revival Centre. The latter created some confusion as my undoubtedly sound educational background at Hackett Primary School instilled an interpretation of the term ‘revival’ as some sort of rebuilding of past ethos, yet Canberra was only 60 years old and most of the original was more than evident.

At the southern end of Hackett Oval there was a dirt track running to Maitland St which was perhaps not on the Department of Capital Territories master blue print but served a useful purpose for athletes seeking a 20 cent serve of chips from Angelo’s before he closed or misdirected claims at the Canberra Revival Centre. Hackett Oval was extremely well maintained with a systematic sprinkler system coming into effect at what appeared to be opportunistic times – mainly during lunch time at Hackett Primary.

The foundations of the suburb remained unchanged with the exception of the construction of town houses between Grayson and Tryon Streets in this era. The demography reflected young families in an environment that whilst five kilometres from Civic, nestled on bushland abound with native flora and fauna. Locals would regularly gather mushrooms on the slopes of Mt Majura witnessing kangaroos in full flight and set their dogs on the rabbits. Reliable sources indicate yabbies were even caught in the Mt Majura dams and it is probably insignificant that it wasn’t until 1976 that a second practising medical surgery was established in Madigan St (near the western intersection with Maitland St); the first being in Mackenzie St (also out of a domestic residence) near Dunn Place.

The centre of the universe for me in 1972 was Hackett Primary School and always living by our motto of ‘Hope and Faith’. The suburb was the same age as we (& remains so) thus there was a sense of growing together. Late in the year we had the new French designed flash passenger aircraft Concorde fly over the school which was special at the time. I readily acknowledge such a description did not spring to mind in 1972.

Some may recall the ‘flower man’ who frequented Hackett Oval (I understand he would have caught the route 28 bus). He was an aged citizen of Greek origin who sang songs in his native tongue and always wore flowers as a reflection of his affinity with nature. A harmless bloke who was perhaps embittered by society but of course found sanctuary in Hackett.

At the end of Phillip Ave was what we will always know as the ‘Ainslie dump’ that fortunately transformed from a landfill site to a modern ‘Waste Transfer Station’. Modern green inspired citizens perhaps justifiably question where rubbish was transferred to but in 1972 it was away from Hackett.

As keen cyclists (when 3 speed hub gears were a luxury) we indulged in an eternal debate about which was the steepest street in Hackett and I have never researched topographic data to resolve the issue as it would spoil speculative conversation at Wilbur's Cafe. I maintain Harris St was the toughest to climb; whilst a relatively short clamber it was the most demanding.

In 2010 I have images of current locals out with theodolites disproving me and encourage such activities to enhance the Hackett spirit. In September 2010, I called in at Wilbur's Cafe for a refreshing ale with a peer from Hackett Primary. Whilst the atmosphere of Hackett Shops had diminished over 38 years (no challenges in finding a car park) the original bike racks at the south-eastern corner remained unmolested.

Hackett – fond memories, lifelong friends and an innocence that instigated optimism. Life was sweet.

James Walker

James came to Canberra in January 1979 while his wife and son remained in Dharruk (western Sydney) until December that year when they also moved to Canberra. They rented a house in Lyons while looking for permanent housing. As he and wife both worked in Civic, they were attracted to north Canberra. They inspected houses in Ainslie, Dickson, Downer and Hackett; the last one appealed to all. James and his son liked a house in Hedley St but his wife liked one in Madigan – Madigan won the day! They moved into their new home in February 1980.

James says that he has always found the adjoining nature reserves of Mount Majura and Ainslie significant attractions and that they are an important part of the unique Hackett lifestyle. He spent many hours visiting Mount Majura and to a lesser extent Mount Ainslie over the years as a means of relaxation and inspiration.

The family shopped for many of its non-grocery needs in the city. Groceries were bought at the local shopping centre and James can recall the very distinctive red and yellow paint scheme of the then Shoprite supermarket at the Hackett shops. On occasions the butcher sold mutton chops.

James said that they rarely visited the Dickson Shopping Centre in their early years. They did however visit the Belconnen Shopping Centre a couple of times a year in the early years and more frequently in later years.

James recalls the local GP, Dr Hanstein, distrusted air-conditioning and was inclined to provide very generous time off work for relatively simple ailments which led to patients quickly running out of sick leave. James also recalls Dr Hanstein's love of exotic cars. The doctor's practice was also a major drawcard for customers for the pharmacy and shops; when the doctor relocated, the pharmacy closed shortly afterwards followed by many other shops.

James also recalls a café called Cafetopia (where Wilbur's is currently located) which opened and closed after a short time.

There was at least one culinary success story at the local shopping centre according to James. For a while, in the early 80s, Hackett had some of the best hamburgers in the ACT.

James and his family, like most families in the 80s, relied heavily on public transport to get around. James continued to use local buses almost daily since arriving in Hackett. In 1980 the fare was 40 cents cash which was placed in the glass fronted box, for a quarter hourly service, taking nearly twenty minutes to Civic. Now it's considerably more for full fare paying passengers for a half hourly service taking nearly twenty minutes to the Canberra Centre, although it's free for pensioners. There have also been numerous changes with route numbers over the years (currently Route 2).

James was a parishioner at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Forrest for a long time as there was no local Presbyterian church.

James happiest memory of Hackett was the first 'Birthday Bash' in 2003 as it was attended by huge crowds despite many locals doubting that many would come. James says that people were still talking about the event for many months afterwards.

On the flipside the saddest moment that he can recall is the psychological devastation caused by the closure of the primary school. A close second was the run-down look of the shopping centre during the 90s and until the last few years as all the shops closed with the exception of IGA. James died in October 2017.

Lyn Binns

Entertainment was largely self-made as most parents had very little spare money.

Lyn moved to Hackett in 13 December 1978 with her husband Arthur and three boys, Geoff, Stephen and David, following Arthur's posting to Canberra with the Royal Australian Navy. They decided to buy in Canberra rather than live in Defence housing because Defence rents had gone up which made owning your own home more attractive.

The bus stop across the road and nearby shops were big attractions as Arthur would use the car to get to and from work. There were two buses in those days. One would go to Civic and the other would go to Dickson and the bus stop was just across the road. Lyn said that she didn't go to Dickson as it was just too far away. A neighbour used to walk to Ainslie to shop as buses were infrequent.

Lyn recalls that the Hackett Shopping Centre consisted of the Li'l Owl supermarket, a butcher, a chemist, a newsagent, a post office and other shops which was pretty well everything that she needed. There was also a laundromat (where Siam Twist is now located) and the owners won Tattsлотto. They then moved to Rockhampton. The laundromat then became a video shop.

Lyn and her family were also close to the Hackett Preschool and Hackett Primary School which was very convenient.

The local doctor, Dr Adele Hanstein, lived just down the road in Madigan Street and practiced out of her house. The Hanstein's owned a big property in Majura and Dr Hanstein's husband was very successful. Dr Hanstein used to drive a red Jaguar. But prior to Dr Hanstein there was a doctor practising in a house on the corner of Madigan and Skeats Streets. The Lights then bought that house. In the 1980s, doctors were no longer allowed to operate out of houses, so Dr Hanstein moved to the shopping centre where the Flawless Boutique Skin Clinic is now located.

Lyn also recalls the tennis courts and the Knights of the Southern Cross facility up the road. The Knights were all hush hush and nobody knew what they did.

Lyn said for entertainment she and her husband would take the boys to the former Starlight Drive-in, on the Federal Highway, Watson. She remembers taking them to see Star Wars. 'It was absolutely freezing and we had a heater in the car and nearly burnt ourselves in the process. 'Entertainment was largely self-made as most parents had very little spare money. You might take a dish and a bottle of wine to someone's house which was a very common way of socialising.'

There were also sports commitments with the kids as they got older and they were also involved with the Majura cubs and scouts. A lot of the leaders were service people. Arthur used to train the local soccer team. The kids also loved the yabba ponds up in the Mount Majura Reserve and on cracker night we would go up into the bush and build a bonfire.

There was a lot of socialising with neighbours in those days, but according to Lyn, now you would be lucky to know your next-door neighbour. Although she felt that she was lucky in her street as she knew her neighbours and some others living close by. The population was very transient, particularly the service people who moved every couple of years. Lyn can only recall one person in her vicinity being born in Canberra which was very unusual in those days. She and Arthur used to have great fun mixing with fellow preschool and primary school parents.

They decided to retire in Hackett once Arthur left the Navy as they liked Canberra. What they loved about Canberra was that it was safe and it had numerous parks to take the kids to. They would often leave the house with the front door unlocked and the windows open.

Lyn feels blessed to have lived in Hackett with such great neighbours. 'We all look out for each other and I go to the shops each day with my two little fur balls (Sandy and Freya) and if I didn't turn up for a couple of days someone from the shops would either ring or turn up at my house to see if I was alright'.

Lewis von Stieglitz (formally Thomson)

the school days in summer with the sound of the big sprinklers and smell of cut grass

For the Thomson/von Stieglitz boys (Frank, Lewis, James and Henry), early recollections of Hackett are excitement and enthusiasm. Irrespective of rain, sun, warmth or snow; they operated on full throttle.

Like many children in that quiet suburb nestled against the bush and away from the main highways, they found Hackett was very much a cosy home base. 'It was a very nice world where we could easily visit friends, hike in the bush, bicycle to school or go to the shops.'

For children, events however mundane were exciting. Parents Edgar and Eileen wanted somewhere away from the Parliament area and close to a decent butchers shop. As a Queenslander, Edgar appreciated good meat! Like everyone they joined the list for a 3 bedroom ‘G’ government house but were delighted to eventually get a four bedroom home. Efforts to buy neighbouring blocks for space were prevented by the NCDC as ‘unfair’.

Frank and Lewis arrived as infants in 1965 just in time for the blanket of snow which covered the district that cold winter. James was next born in 1966 and on a bright cold day in August 1968 Granny, visiting from Queensland, lined the boys up to see Edgar swing the mottled green 1961 VW Beetle into the driveway with Eileen holding brother Henry in the passenger seat. He completed the quartet destined to entertain and plague the neighbourhood.

From the 1960s to the mid ‘70s a garden developed and blossomed out of red dirt. No power tools but hard work with push-mowers, spades, picks and mattocks. Childrens’ small plots produced endless squash, melons and beans. Edgar and Eileen augmented this with binge tree planting from the Dickson nursery to mark important events such as the Queen’s Birthday and Australia Day. Often gardening included ‘slap up’ morning or afternoon tea. The large metal pot perched on an old stump supplied endless good strong tea - black for Edgar, Eileen and Frank; milk and sugar for the others. Home-made buns all round. Around 50 years Henry is still trimming out the overplanting.

Edgar, a stockman turned economist, came off the land after serving in the RAAF (and surviving at least two crashes), liked order, though the house was in constant movement and chaos. A formidable man; boys visiting his study would knock and wait to be invited in. If the visit was for punishment - walking stick over the knuckles, they would suffer in silence knowing a tiny glass of whisky would follow, with the admonition ‘I trust you have purged your contempt’.

Not all disciplinarian, Edgar could have the boys in stitches. Sitting in splendour one Sunday lunch he once held his plate to his chin, using a fork to yard green peas into his mouth, as cattle are rounded up, while Eileen pretended to be astounded. Shrieks of laughter.

Frank, Lewis and James started school at Northside Infants (Canberra Grammar) then to Hackett Primary School in the years to 1976. ‘I enjoyed it, being unconcerned at my lack of success,’ said Lewis.

Lewis remembers the school days in summer with the sound of the big sprinklers and smell of cut grass drifting into the class room. ‘Likewise, playing outside in winter in the cold, breaking ice in puddles and freezing our hands on handlebars before having cocoa at home.’

Hackett Primary was a large, buzzing hive of activity barely containing the amalgamated children of the suburb. Monday to Friday in term time the boys would ride (usually no hands) down Mackenzie St, across the school grounds and chain bikes securely to the white cement racks. Twice a week the school would assemble in dazzling sun on the tarmac parade ground to sing God Save the Queen, later augmented by Advance Australia Fair.

As noted by other former Hackett Primary students, Lewis was one of many children who greeted the Queen at Fairbairn in 1973-74. ‘I was furious at the time’, said Lewis. ‘I spoke to her for longer than anyone (probably all of eight seconds) but the newspaper carried a story and picture of Melanie Kelleher there!’ ‘I remember dad (who was there) putting aside the paper at breakfast and saying gravely, ‘I say old man, didn’t you speak to HM? You seem to have missed getting any credit’

School was a cheerful place, where Mrs Turnbull would ensure nervous young ones would get in line to pay four cents for two slices of iced bun. The biggest worry was that Eileen, a stay at home parent, would embarrass everyone by not being up to serving in the tuck shop. ‘We did not regard her as a working person and were horrified when she volunteered. I recall lecturing her in how to cut frozen oranges’ said Lewis. ‘We were unaware that she was a graduate of Sydney and Oxford Universities, a senior school teacher and social worker. In later life (after Dad died and we moved to Queensland) she returned to accomplish greater and greater things to our astonishment.’

The school included Croatians, Italians, Greeks and many others who had the good fortune to come to Australia. Multiculturalism hadn’t been invented, but some kids carried the tag ‘wogs’ or more politely, ‘New Australians’, though I never saw anyone teased on racial grounds. Amid the pushing and shoving, and occasional fights at the bike racks, the only time I saw anyone bullied was when a young swine wouldn’t let up on our younger brother Henry, forever pushing and hassling him. Resolution was characteristic of the time. One morning walking up from the bike racks, Frank reached back over into his backpack for the bike pump. It came slamming down. The kid was left howling in the dust, digesting the message.

After the school system was transferred from NSW to ACT control, teacher driven impetus to work declined, as did supervision. Boredom often set in. Warm summer afternoons in the class room listening drowsily to power sprinklers beating water over the ovals were soothing. But on a cool morning or after a rousing from distressed teachers, action was needed. Down the man holes into dank Hackett drains, using candle light or the odd torch to navigate.

One destination was the Ainslie Dump (later a waste transfer station) containing everything from working televisions, radios, tyres and other equipment. Frank said, ‘The gate manager who wanted the treasures for himself, tried to coordinate action with the person in a hut at the dumping point. When we worked this out we took the phone cable. In the chaos of succeeding months we got the handsets as well. The spoils were used in a small private phone network up Mackenzie St’.

An alternative was to bicycle behind Ainslie to the War Memorial, or what is now Old Parliament House. At that time, security was less prevalent and politicians weren’t locked away as they are now. The boys would wander about, occasionally being shown out of the Cabinet ante room, or kicked from the Senate or House of Representatives gallery for rolling red jaffas down the polished wood boarding. Lewis remembers ‘I watched Gough Whitlam lie down and unfold sections of newspaper until fully covered for a nap. Efforts to land a jaffa on him failed.’

Bread and fruit were delivered to homes for many years. They built up a supply of wooden boxes, some of which are still in the house. David Jones in town was for treats, Young’s at Dickson for everything from hardware to bedware. Other hardware shopping at Horton the Elephant on the other side of town.

When travels took them to Dickson, downstairs at Youngs (later Alans and now Harris Scarfe) was the business end of town. It held hardware - red and black wheels, metal axles and split pins essential for billy carts. Built of wood to a simple pattern of a rear platform seat and steered by outstretched feet augmented by ropes to the front axle, they were robust and fast. But wheels were the key. Lewis remembers Frank (aged about 10) storming up and down shouting ‘what’s the use’ as men in long grey coats regretted lack of the right ones.

The Thomson/vs. boys, Reeds, Milans and others would drag carts laboriously to the gate at the top of the hill behind Kellaway St, on Mount Ainslie. All aboard, then rattle at alarming speeds down the hill, ending down near the current car park. Braking was rudimentary, gingerly lowering the heels of gym boots. A common result was an ugly heap in a ditch. Home to mum for band aids and tea, then back up the hill.

The Hackett shops were a hive of activity. A pervading smell was the dry cleaner (in what is now a café), belching starch and other chemicals into the air with abandon.

The main store was The Li’l Owl (now an IGA) for groceries, particularly Lackersteins marmalade and baby food. ‘Mum was skilled at keeping the trolley in the middle so little ones could not add to the shopping from shelves.’ Very skilled cash register operators would bash out the numbers on tape as they pushed items to be packed in heavy greased paper bags. They could go as fast as people scan nowadays’ Lewis recalls.

Specialties shops were crowded, included the newsagent where the ATM is now, specialising in Coke and Fanta yoyos, string and stationery.

Last and not least, the butcher and chemist kept them in beef and aspirin respectively. Resplendent in blue and white striped apron, the butcher talked about sirloin roasts with extra undercut, while the children gazed at the saw-dust covered floor, before heading to the chemist for bulk aspirin (served crushed in honey as a last resort for the aches and pains of headaches) and bee sting medicine. One day they noticed the chemist had changed. ‘Asking Mum what happened, she remarked that he ‘drove his car up a tree’. I recall thinking it curious but unimportant,’ said Lewis.

Later they would bicycle down to the end corner shop (now Wilbur’s café) for 2 or 3 cents of mixed lollies and later Coca Cola (20 cents included a refund for returning the bottle)

‘It was only years later that I realised so many differences for us. For one thing, neither of our parents ever swore. Without being in any way wealthy we were unaware of anything from domestic violence to poverty. We were aware of someone on Mackenzie St whose mother was divorced but didn’t know what it was about.’

Edgar did not allow a TV until about 1975 and most entertainment was playing in the back yard, hiking, or visiting friends. They played lots of scrabble, monopoly, dressing up as cowboys and indians, knights etc. Most afternoons Lewis, his brothers and others would climb a tree, read, rush around and all the things young children did.

Lewis would also spend a lot of time on Mt Ainslie. ‘We often hiked to the ‘bottom and top’ gates and occasionally further. We spent hours and hours traipsing over the hills, racing billy carts down the tracks and just exploring. Occasionally we did a ‘day camp’ where we would hike up, light a fire and boil a billy and fry eggs.’

They attended the Holy Cross Anglican Church but their attendance was patchy as ‘we boys played up too much for Dad. Must have done something, for we all attend Church today.’

‘We loved digging gardens, seeing the results in flowers and food. Climbing trees and all the outdoor fresh air you could want. With no air con and only a few fans, summer was taken as warm and winter as cold. It made no difference to the endless activity of a small child.’ Perhaps the only downside were the magpies; ‘Wretched things swooping and screeching. One day my brother was attacked on the front veranda.’

Queen’s Birthday Cracker Night was huge in Hackett with exploding penny bungers, ferris wheels nailed to trees, rockets, and Catherine wheels. The boys would build a huge fire outdoor BBQ with sizzling meat in gridirons and potatoes baking in the coals. The night sky would light up as rockets and explosives delivered value for money.

Lewis said ‘We never saw (or were immune to) any racism or prejudice and were never subject to any. We thought it was pretty exciting to have Hungarians, Italians, Greeks, Croatians, Russians, Indians and Germans within a couple of hundred metres. I was very vaguely aware of tensions between some groups but if anyone had asked, it would not have been in my top 100 worries. I sometimes heard the term ‘new Australian’ but only as shorthand for many different backgrounds.’

Ann Gibson

Ann arrived in 1964 after purchasing a block in 1963. Ann and her husband, who worked for the CSIRO, originally came from Sydney. She described the small house they built as a ‘Sydney Morning Herald small house’, modified by the Canberra government architect. Their three children went to Northside Grammar school and then to Hackett Primary for years three to six. She remembers the olive green and orange colours of the school uniform. (from interview by James Walker in 2002)

Pamela Ellis and daughter Suzi Leverington

‘helping a dog catcher catch a stray dog in their garden also created a memorable moment.’ Suzi

Pamela Ellis (Fox) and husband Ivan, arrived in Hackett in 1963, as part of the move by the Department of Defence from Melbourne to Canberra. They built a new house at 8 Brennan Street as Hackett was just newly open and they were eligible for land. They loved Canberra and wanted to make their life here. Their daughter Susan was born in the Canberra Hospital just before they moved, to their new home from their rental accommodation at the Currong Flats, Braddon.

Their first impressions of Hackett were the beautiful natural environment close to Mt Majura and Mt Ainslie, where they would spend a lot of time hiking. Living in Hackett was further enhanced by the friendly neighbours, who were also new to the ACT, and just wanted to make new social connections; they were all about the same age with young children.

Suzi and Marina went to Hackett Primary School from 1970-79. Entertainment was sought in Civic centre where they would also shop. Buses were the main form of transport which Pamela found very helpful for a new mum with baby and pram. Their second daughter was baptised at Saint Margaret’s Uniting Church, Hackett, in 1968. Pamela fondly remembers the snow in August 1964, as it was her daughter Suzi’s first birthday. ‘I was happy because of the snow but sad because no one would venture onto the roads to attend her party’, Pamela said. Much joy was provided by watching magpies perform crazy ‘stunts’, but helping a dog catcher catch a stray dog in their garden also created a memorable moment. A more dramatic event was watching the TV news announcement about John F Kennedy’s assassination in November 1963.

Susan (Suzi Leverington) said ‘growing up in Brennan St gave them plenty of opportunity to ride their bikes (‘deadly treadlys’) through the Hackett streets, sometimes venturing into Watson. Suzi’s friends (Tracey Kent & Melanie Kelleher) had their own bike club which they named the Ivy Club and they rode around on the weekends. They paid fees which we wrote in a little book and spent the money on lollies from the milk bar. When the bike paths were made, they rode all the way to Dickson Pool in summer. Suzi recalls that ‘I can still see and feel the wings of the magpie swooping me on the corner of Antill & Madigan Streets!’

Much enjoyment was had playing hide and seek with Marina and the neighbour’s kids, in Brennan Street until the street lights turned on - the signal to go home. We would then wake up the next morning listening to the

currawongs while lying in bed. Suzi and Marina would climb the trees in their backyard, swing on the clothesline and play in the park between Brennan and Bragg Streets. A real highlight for Suzi, Marina and some of the neighbour's kids was going to 28 Brennan St and playing a pianola. This freedom to move around the neighbourhood was taken seriously by her sister, who 'ran away' from home a few times; but she only went to the top of Brennan St, so only a few houses away! She packed her school case with her toys, but not sure she took anything else.

The family walks up Mt Majura provided opportunities to have some fun, such as poking at the huge ant nests with sticks. This walking clearly gave Suzi good orientation skills. Once day her dad dropped her off at a friend's house in Panton St, Downer (near the Barton Highway intersection) just on dusk as it began to rain but no one was home. 'He had driven off, so I ran crying the whole way home in the rain and dark. I would have been about 12 years old', said Suzi.

The Owl Supermarket was their main shop to visit. A highlight was visiting the fish and chip shop where they would buy take away on the weekend and 20c worth of mixed lollies. You could get heaps of lollies for 20c then! There was a very nice man that worked there. Opposite that shop was a dry cleaner and post office. Suzi remembers a stamp machine where you would put in 5 cents, turn a dial and a stamp would come out.



Suzi with mother and grandmother at Li'L Owl 1967. Mr Whippy (photos: Suzi Leverington)

While at Hackett Primary, Suzi played the trumpet in the band for a couple of years (1975-76) and remembers playing their first 'concert' at the shops out the front of the Li'L Owl supermarket. Suzi has very positive memories about Mrs Turnbull. 'She was the best teacher I ever had. She encouraged me to sing a solo in front of the Goodwin Homes and was very supportive and enthusiastic'. Suzi contacted her about a year before she passed away in October 2012 and will always be grateful that she had the chance to tell her. 'The song *'Thank you for the music'* by ABBA still makes me teary'. Pamela also remembers that Laura broke her foot when she dropped a frozen chicken on it.

Suzi used the bus as a teenager and felt pretty cool to have that independence. She would always sit up the back with her friends, going into Civic in her high school years. Suzi still remembers when the first orange bus shelters were built; they looked like spaceships!

Alma Brotherton

Alma was born 27 February 1911 in the country near Bourke, NSW. She was number four in a family of twelve children. Her father died when he was 52 and her mother, a dress maker, took the family to live in Bourke. The eldest four children had to go to work to help the family. Alma did housework for others and helped her mother in the home. She became sick, because of the extreme heat and was advised to move to a cooler climate, so she went to live in Bombala where a sister of her mother lived. She worked for a chemist, doing house-keeping at their home for 10 years. Alma went home occasionally to Bourke where most of her brother and sisters married and lived.

She met Wallace (her husband to be) at her Aunt's house and then he went served for five and half years in the second World War. On return they married at home in Bourke and then moved to south-east NSW where he managed properties near Pambula. They had four children (including twins) and their eldest (Frances) was at Bombala High School when they moved to Canberra because of Wallace's health. Frances also wanted to be trained as a nurse. They bought a home from a builder in Verco St, using a returned soldiers loan, and moved in 1964. Priority was given to establishing the lawn and gardens. At that time some other homes were completed and people were moving in. The twins went to Dickson High (now Dickson College) and the youngest to Hackett Primary.

Wallace worked at HMAS Harman as a gardener and then moved to the Canberra Rex where he continued gardening until he retired. Alma worked part-time at a nursing centre in Campbell and had to catch two or three buses a day. Later she worked for a barrister's wife looking after their house, washing and ironing. She retired when Wallace retired and together they travelled to Tasmania, Queensland and Western Australia on organised tours. Wallace died in 1987.

Tracey Kent

Tracey Kent arrived in Hackett in August 1973 with her brother and parents. Having moved from the warm climate of Murwillumbah, on the north coast of NSW, their first impressions of Hackett was the cold. Tracey went to Hackett Primary, Watson High and then Dickson College, with sporting activities spread across netball for Hackett Primary, North Canberra athletics at Dickson playing fields and Dickson swimming club.

In her younger days Tracey played with friends in the neighbourhood at their homes or riding bikes around the suburb. The family would walk the dog most days up the access road between Mt Ainslie and Mt Majura.

Tracey joined Mt Majura Brownies, Guides and Ranger Guides at the Guide Hall at the southern end of the oval. She particular enjoyed camping with the Ranger Guides at Paddy's River with fond memories of eating contraband lollies with five to six other girls all squashed into a two person tent. As she got older Tracey would visit the city to go to the movies.

Although Tracey left Hackett in 1991 when she married, she still returns to the former primary school to partake in activities with the ACT Embroiderer's Guild.

Simon Jones

he saw a man wearing no clothes walking down Phillip Avenue from the rubbish tip at 6am

Simon was born at the former Royal Canberra Hospital in January 1970. He recalls spending time at several locations in the suburb including the Bragg St park, the oval and the Hackett shops to play arcade games. Mt Majura and Mt Ainslie were popular for building BMX tracks, catching lizards and going yabbing in the two dams on the saddle road. Simon said spending a whole day in the reserve was a memorable experience. One of the funniest scenes was in the 1970s when he saw a man wearing no clothes walking down Phillip Avenue from the rubbish tip at 6am! Mt Majura and Mt Ainslie were favourite locations but it would appear the concrete drain along Phillip Avenue was also popular. Simon said 'in the late 1970s, the big kids would skate board in the drain at the end nearest the former tip. They would park their Holden panel vans and stay all day with their girl friends watching on. We would yell insults until they chased us away!'

Andrea Leigh

Andrea was born in 1967 and recalls her first memories were the large eucalypts hanging over the fence of their huge backyard. Like many residents of Hackett she enjoyed spending a lot of time walking on Mt Majura. Rescuing and nursing back to health many injured animals including bluetongue lizards, a sugar glider and birds also provided enjoyment. Hackett shops were popular as she would go down and buy paddle pops and then at the takeaway shop she would play space invaders at 20cents a game.

Andrea went to school out of Hackett but it required a one hour bus trip in the morning and same on the return trip. But catching the bus was not always a simple affair; one day their Mum dropped Andrea and her brother at the bus stop near the shops. Mum did some shopping and on leaving, did not check if the kids had gone... the bus did not arrive, so the kids were sitting patiently waiting.

Marion Jones

the deal was done with a handshake in the front yard under the broiling sun!

Marion and her then husband Brian left Melbourne and moved to Canberra for work in January 1967. They had contracted to buy a house at corner of Brennan and Mackenzie St, but problems arose and lack of building approvals resulted in the purchase not proceeding. They spent 6 weeks living out of two suitcases in a tiny flat in Yarralumla, during which she discovered she was pregnant with their first child. Brian was working interstate every second week and Marion spent much of her time looking at properties all around Canberra – at that time Curtin was on the outskirts.

But Hackett appealed to them with its proximity to the bush and in particular 79 Mackenzie St which was being built by Ezio Marinolli for him, his wife and brother. But his brother made other plans and the Marinolli's felt the house would be too big for them. Enzo was a meticulous builder so the house was beautifully built but he was asking for \$22,000 which was beyond their reach.

Marion and Bruce would visit the house many times and one very hot day Ezio was toiling away in the clay with sweat pouring down his face and obviously a bit over trying to sell for his asking price. He suddenly offered the house to them in his thick Italian accent for 'ten, oit' (pounds). With heart in mouth, Marion checked that he meant ten, eight and not ten, nine and he agreed (editor's note - in February 1966 Australia's currency changed from pounds to decimal currency. One pound equaled two dollars). They had budgeted down to the last cent and knew that \$21,600 was the maximum – even that was a stretch – but the deal was done with a handshake in the front yard under the broiling sun! They moved in March, a few days before the final inspection which was against the rules, but they were desperate to stop paying rent as soon as possible.

They were ecstatic about the new house but apprehensive about how they would eat for the next ten years, especially with a baby on the way. They were also somewhat appalled at the amount of work needing to be done on the large property consisting it seemed mainly of clay. But they also had a lavish supply of bricks. Marion spent the last few weeks of pregnancy digging bricks out of the back garden- enough to build a modest house! Their first priority was to prepare the front and back yards for lawn, at a time when Canberra would experience one of the hottest and driest summers on record. Marion spent every evening at the permitted time with the permitted hand-held hose watering the expansive lawn. But daughter Andrea had colic so much of the watering was done with hose in one hand and the other rocking the pram. If Andrea was screaming, too bad, the watering had to be done. With no air-conditioning Andrea spent much of the day in the pram with a fan blowing directly on her.

Each week Marion would walk to the local health centre but this was risky given that many of the streets did not have paths – at that time footpaths were considered a detraction from the no-front fence policy which was one of the few annoying aspects about Hackett.

Their second child, Simon, arrived in January 1970, at the same time they considered starting their own business. The ideas eventually came into being with the creation of Canberra's first courier company, Delfast.

As the children grew and finances allowed, they added to the house and built a pool. Backing onto Mt Majura, the water was an attraction for snakes. On one occasion, their cat Pepe, tangled with a snake which fortunately the cat winning having neatly beheaded the snake!

The bush was an added attraction for the whole family be it for walking, bike riding, collecting and eating mushrooms or building BMX tracks and forts. The bush was also a source of wildlife. One day Simon arrived home with a possum; but given he was only dressed in shorts he had a number of bloody scratches on his chest to go with ear-to-ear grin on his face! They look after injured magpies, blue-tongued lizards and a sugar glider (which did not survive); their most notable rescue was a newly hatched sparrow. Marion was determined to raise this little bird and followed a steep learning curve as she tried to feed it with cut up worms. After researching sparrow diets at the Dickson Library it was changed to pureed baby fruit which proved to be more acceptable. Given the name Peterson (although female), it soon became a loved member of the family as it grew feathers and then finally flying. Marion had been taking it to work every day in a shoe box lined with tissues where one day it decided to test its wings. Amidst the excited and anxious shrieks of Jenny Hume (now Stensred), Peterson flew around the office while the duties of answering phone and drivers on the two-way radio took second place.

At home they would let Peterson free in their backyard where on a few occasions she stayed away for several hours or overnight; they would stand in the backyard and call her name and she would eventually come out of the trees and land on their heads. Keeping the bird separated from the cat was always a challenge but they overcame this by getting Peterson into her cage. But after 5 months in mid-summer, friends were over for a swim and one of the children went inside but did not shut the door. Peterson made a dash for the outside but the cat wasted no time

and grabbed her. Peterson had become so much a part of the family, they were all sad about the loss and soon forgave Pepe the cat for following its instincts.

During the early years when money was tight and baby-sitting infrequent, we would occasionally go to the drive-in at Watson and less often across town to the Narrabundah drive-in. Most entertainment was having friends over for dinner and a few games of 500. They would picnic at Lake Burley Griffin and sometimes take a packed lunch to Pine Island or Kambah Pool – locations that were considered an all-day excursion.

In around 1970-71, Marion witnessed an horrific event next door. Two men were trying to jump start their truck on the steep driveway when it got away from them. In a desperate attempt to stop it, Jock (the house owner) dashed to the driver's door but became wedged between the tray of the truck and the house. He was unable to move and although conscious for some time they were powerless to help him. Marion called Athol Morris, who dispatched a tow truck, plus the police and ambulance. By the time Jock was freed, he had stopped breathing. Although briefly revived in the ambulance he died soon after. Looking back, Marion wonders if with modern emergency vehicles, the outcome could have been different. She was grateful that her two small children and another were playing on the floor and unable to see the scene.

The children were not so unaware of a drama which occurred about one year later at the same house. This time, the children were woken by sooty hands banging on their bedroom windows in the early hours of the morning, accompanied by shouts of 'we're on fire, call the fire brigade'. Marion looked out the window to confirm before calling the fire brigade. But the fire destroyed the house and there was nothing standing by the morning. Marion later attended an inquest which determined the fire had been arson by person/s unknown.

Their neighbours were Betty and Stuart Wall who moved from Queensland. Marion recalls receiving an invitation to their daughter's wedding, with their address given as 'Hackett Heights' which forever after was referred to 'ackett eights'!

Bushfires were a constant threat for those close to Mt Majura, with one coming close to the back fences along their house and the neighbours. Marion recalls another fire which came close to houses on Rivett St, backing onto Mt Majura.

Marcia Holden

'Most things change but I am very happy to say that the community is still as strong and caring as it always was.'

Marcia arrived in Hackett with her siblings and parents Terry and Patti Holden in Jan 1964; we were the first family to move into Gilbert Street, opposite the park. Her father, along with two other scientists, were sent from Melbourne to set up the CSIRO Division of Computing Research.

Marcia was only five when they arrived and the suburb had just been built; lots of flies, dust, no gardens or mosquitos and was just like the sheep paddock which it previously had been. With both front and back yards rotary hoed they planted the lawn. Marcia remembers the oak trees as thin as a pencil when they were planted by the government soon afterwards.

Her mother worked at the Botany Department at ANU as Professor Lindsay Pryor's Assistant (one of Australia's leading botanists). Later she taught as an art teacher and was a well-known painter and printmaker.

Marcia started school at Watson Primary for a short time in 1964 until the new Hackett Primary school opened. Mrs Swan was the principal of the Infants school. She has very happy memories of her school years there, playing netball in the school team at Southwell Park on Saturday mornings.

When she was about six years old she fondly remembers her mother taking her to the Civic Footwear Shop in East Row where she bought a pair of red ankle boots with fur edges for a birthday party. 'My interest in shoes is ongoing,' said Marcia.

Her mother shopped at 'Tom the Cheap' where the Hackett IGA now is. The flag poles on the building used to fly the flags. They bought meat from 'Clarkes Butchery' and then followed when he moved to Watson. On the corner where Wilbur's is now was Georges super market where Marcia bought lollies and ice-creams. Next door was the 'Pharmacy owned by Mr Moore' and a few doors down was the 'Takeaway'. 'We had a post office and newsagency, all gone now.' Ritva's Hairdresser was a long time landmark where the florist is now.

The year they arrived it rained very heavily; Lake Burley Griffin filled around Easter and because many gardens up from the park weren't established, their front yard flooded and went under the house. Marcia remembers when it snowed heavily (1967 when she was about eight years old), a man skied down the park from French St straight past her house and reportedly got all the way down to the end of Watson.

The block between the shops and the school was vacant for all of her years at primary school and the park up from the school to Mackenzie Street and adjacent to Grayson St was a dumping area for building soil. Marcia remembers the gum trees being very large and old, but she thought most were knocked down and then replanted after the park was constructed.

The one thing which was so good about Hackett and Canberra was that people from very different social/economic backgrounds lived next door to each other. For example, academics from the ANU or CSIRO lived next door to a chauffeur for the Air-Vice Marshal from Fairburn or Defence families. Public servants lived next door to tradesmen who helped build this fabulous city. 'We were all pioneers in a new city sparklingly clean, safe and quiet.'

There wasn't much to do as a teenager but when Friday night shopping was introduced, the Monaro Shopping Mall was the weekly ritual along with the dances at the Albert Hall and O'Donnell Youth Centre in Braddon on Saturday nights.

For most of her life, Marcia walked on Mt Majura, both on and off tracks and knows most of its environs. In the five decades she has observed a lot of changes, mainly due to erosion but still revels in the pleasure of having the bush so close to where she lives. 'I am a happy wonderer on our beloved mountain and have taken many hundreds of photos of my dogs and I in the 'Mt Majura Shadow series'" said Marcia.

Marcia moved away from Hackett around 1979 and then returned in 2003, but still walked Mt Majura in those years away. She has many friends who live here; many are fellow artists in Watson and a day doesn't pass without her waving or stopping to talk to her neighbours. 'Most things change but I am very happy to say that the community is still as strong and caring as it always was.'

The Harrisons

'Yes, the time has gone when people were required to live in the better areas.'

Phil Harrison, his wife and three boys arrived in 1974 following his appointment to the then Australian Information Service.

Phil said 'Rented accommodation was extremely scarce then and we just answered an advert. We had little idea or knowledge of where to live in Canberra. We were one of about 14 families who turned up in response to the advert and were lucky enough to be chosen as the tenant.'

At that time, Hackett was on the northern fringes of Canberra and they were struck by the country-like atmosphere and ease of travel.

His wife at that time was devoting her time to homemaking and the care of their three boys. She resumed working many years later in Belconnen with the children of mainly Vietnamese refugees.

Their two youngest boys went to Hackett Primary and the oldest to Dickson High School (later became Dickson College).

Recreation involved trips to the Cotter Dam for picnics and barbecues or Corin Dam for sightseeing. Dickson swimming pool was the popular local attraction.

Phil remembers a convenience store at the Hackett shops called Johnny's – one of the great advantages was Johnny sold beer and wine on Sundays – in contrast to the ban on Sunday alcohol sales in NSW.

Phil remembers the great neighbours, with weekends often spent in each other's garden. The family enjoyed the proximity of various amenities and ease of getting to them, though at the time Hackett was described as on the outskirts of Canberra. For instance, his oldest son used to ride his bike to ANU and the primary and secondary schools were only a short walk away.

When they first arrived, Phil's boss threw a party for his staff and asked how he was settling in and where he was living. When Phil said Hackett, the boss (who lived in Red Hill) said: 'Yes, the time has gone when people were required to live in the better areas.'

Paul Harrison initially went to Hackett Primary School, then Campbell High School and finally Dickson College – it was the later that he enjoyed so much that he got up one Saturday morning, arrived at the College only to find it was closed!

Paul enjoyed visiting the Putt Putt Arcade at the old Putt Putt Golf Course in Dickson, as well as spending many hours on Mount Majura and Mount Ainslie. He also enjoyed riding his bike, even riding it home one day with a puncture! The other great advantage of living in Hackett was its close proximity to Dickson and Civic.

The quiet streets of Hackett could sometimes be interrupted by the uglier side of life. Paul recalls getting burgled after he came home from work one night. Paul left Hackett in July 2002.

Ross and I would do drawings for people some lunchtimes, for ten cents a drawing.

Stephen Harrison was described as the Jackson Pollack of Hackett. One story goes that a Hackett Primary School Ball was in the works, and Ross Carnsew and Stephen, being the resident arty ones in the school (they are both still artists) were asked to do a backdrop for the school hall.

‘Blue Poles had just been purchased by ‘ol Gough’, in 1973 to much furor and gnashing of teeth; nothing ever changes - now it’s public sculpture some people get worked up over’, said Stephen.

‘Ross and I decided to do our own Blue Poles, so we lay an enormous sheet of square paper on the primary school’s quadrangle ground (exactly how Jack the Dripper worked) and spattered lots of multi-coloured paint on it, rode our bikes, got dogs to walk through etc.’

‘In the end it was a big Pollocky abstract masterpiece, even if I say so myself, and in my mind’s eye, can see it at the end of the hall, hung up in all its glory, ready for the Ball.’

‘Ross and I would do drawings for people some lunchtimes, for ten cents a drawing. Was a good earner, usually for spending it all on big bags of lollies at the corner store in Hackett shops.’ (now Wilburs).

‘Mount Majura writ large in all areas of after school and weekend playtime, from yabbying, to plunging down the slopes on our bikes. We played brandings at school lunchtimes, and there was always a newcomer being thrown in the prickly bushes by the resident bullies. These bullies were usually the ones who fought everyone down at the bike racks, too, almost every arvo after school’ said Stephen.

Vicki van Dijk

she was sent to the school principal for throwing an acorn...and hitting a teacher on the back of the head

Vicki van Dijk parents, Margaret and Gijsbert van Dijk, came to Hackett in 1963 as newlyweds from Melbourne. Gijsbert was an accountant in Treasury, while Margaret became canteen manager at Campbell High School once Vicki commenced high school.

Hackett appealed to them as it was affordable and they wanted the opportunity to have their say in the design of a new house.

She loved Hackett and spent a lot of time on Mt Majura catching yabbies in the dams, or riding her bike around the streets of Hackett until it got dark.

Vicki went to Hackett Primary School, Campbell High School then Dickson College. Vicki enjoyed a variety of sports including netball at Corroboree Park, soccer and Little Athletics at Dickson Oval, tennis at Reid Courts and cross-country at Lotus Bay, Yarralumla.

The themed school socials at Hackett Primary were special occasions, as she would wear outfits her mum designed and made for her. On one occasion at primary school, she was sent to the school principal for throwing an acorn from high up in the acorn tree and hitting a teacher on the back of the head – these tall trees are still standing at the northern end of the oval.

Vicki remembers one of her best friends, Narelle Smith, stealing her first boyfriend Ian Scott, but all was quickly forgiven! Vicki left Hackett in 1986 to go to University in Sydney.

Keith Burnett

Keith arrived in Easter 1964 by himself, while his family was still in Sydney. At the time, government housing was available in Watson, Dickson and Hackett; Keith was allocated a house in Selwyn Street, Hackett and was later joined by June and their two children, Jillian and Peter. Keith was working for the Federal Minister, Hugh Robertson.

Keith's first impressions of Canberra – 'it was a country town.' But they found Hackett a very pleasant, convenient place to reside and raise a family, though like so many long-time residents, were saddened by the closure of the Hackett Primary School in December 1990.

As the Hackett Preschool had not been built (it would not open until August 1965) their children initially went to the Rutherford Crescent Pre-school, Ainslie. They later went to Hackett Primary School and then to Watson High School. As the Hackett shops had not been built when they arrived, they shopped at Ainslie.

For entertainment Keith and family socialised in the street with their neighbours. Keith enjoyed golf and spent many hours at the Yowani Golf Club, Lyneham, which opened in 1955. They also attended the Holy Cross Church in Hackett; Keith still attends services even though he left Hackett in 2006 to move to a retirement home,

One of the funniest events was the day (August 1965) it snowed very heavily. They had planned to have dinner at Queanbeyan but as the snow was so thick they couldn't get the car out of the driveway!

While June passed away in 2015, Keith maintains a close connection with Hackett by having 'Selwyn street lunches' several times a year with families they got to know in the early years. There is also connection with Jillian who has been a teacher at the Hackett Preschool since 2012.

Judy Haddrick

Judy recalls an incident when one of her brothers rolled their mother's car on Grayson St.

Judy Haddrick, with brothers Jeff and Andrew, arrived in Hackett in 1966 when her parents, Murray and Sheelagh, built a house at 74 Mackenzie St. They had previously lived in the Hotel Acton, Yarralumla and then rented a house in Ainslie while the house was being built. Their father worked in the Attorney-General's Department and their mother was a teacher at Queanbeyan High School and later Watson High School.

Being so close to the bush, they would spend many an afternoon after school exploring Mount Majura where they built cubby houses and caught yabbies in the dams.

The family used to go ten-pin bowling in Civic every second Friday night, with occasional picnics by the lake, or out to Uriarra Crossing or Mt Stromlo or Cotter River. For holidays they often went camping on the south coast.

Civic was also the place to shop, though as she got older Judy and her friends would catch the bus to Manuka where the shops were a bit smarter.

Judy and her brothers went to Hackett Primary and then on to Dickson High School. Judy recalls an incident when one of her brothers rolled their mother's car on Grayson St.

She played with the primary school netball team and then in high school she played with the school's various sports teams, as well as with the Barton Hockey Club. Her brothers played Aussie Rules with the Ainslie Football Club and also cricket.

Judy left Hackett in 1975 to go to the University of Sydney to study medicine.

Elaine Stanford

Elaine would often ride her bike to the shops to buy lollies, potato scallops and ice blocks.

Elaine Stanford parents moved from Cowra and settled in Hackett in 1963; Elaine was born the following year.

Her dad got a job as a Commonwealth Police Officer where his duties included guarding Robert Menzies at The Lodge. Her dad and mum later bought the cake shop at Jamison Shops when they were being built, and then her dad had the Golden Fleece service station at the Macquarie shops.

As the Hackett Primary School had not been built, Elaine went to Baker Gardens preschool in Ainslie, while her two sisters and brother went to Downer Primary. They later moved to the Hackett Primary when it opened in the mid 1960s.

Overall the family enjoyed Hackett because of the kids and families playing at the ovals and parks, the local shops, and great neighbours. Elaine would often get home in the dark, after playing all day. They would walk around the block in their pyjamas with mum and dad. Not having to lock-up the house was an added bonus. Elaine fondly remembers the snow-fall in 1965 as they built a snowman in their front garden.

They spent a lot of time on Mount Majura and Mount Ainslie as the family had a horse in the government paddocks, off Antill St. Elaine can also recall driving up Mt Majura and Mt Ainslie in her father's restored World War 2 jeep.

Sport was played at school and Elaine later did ballet at the Bryan Lawrence School of Ballet, Dickson.

Elaine remembers a girl in a Mini Minor getting hit by a bus at the corner of Caldwell and Madigan Streets, and recalls a gentleman referred to as the 'Flower Man' who was well known around Hackett and Watson.

Her parents shopped at the Li'l Owl supermarket, but Elaine would often ride her bike to the shops to buy lollies, potato scallops and ice blocks. Elaine remembers a number of the shop owners including the Clarke family at the butchers, the De Smets at Just Hair, Mr Moore the chemist, the Stenlakes at the newsagency, and Joe and Maria at the corner store. Like many other children at the time, buying stamps at the machine on the wall outside the post office was an added attraction to the shops.

Her mum used to walk to Ainslie shops where the post office was a tin shed.

Elaine later worked on weekends at the Hackett Video shop which was great because she was able to watch free videos. Her sisters were girl guides and brownies and went to the guide hall at the southern end of the oval. Elaine moved to Downer in 1987.

Lorraine Mason

On another occasion, the family woke up to hundreds of people all searching for something in Bragg St park

After marrying in June 1964, Lorraine and Lindsay Mason, moved from Sydney to Canberra and stayed at the Black Mountain Caravan Park, O'Connor. Lindsay built houses and Lorraine worked for an accounting firm.

In December 1964 they paid £750 (approx. \$1,500) for their block at 30 Bragg St. It would be another six months before they moved their caravan onto their block in June 1965.



The Mason's block in the big snow fall of August 1965. (photo: Lorraine Mason)

Lorraine said 'they had power installed, and built a dunny shed and a large builder's shed. The builder's shed was divided: at one end was a second hand bath and a washing machine which could also heat the water for the bath, the other end was for building equipment. There was no plumbing. When finished we just pulled the plug and the water ran on to our block. The government would replace the dunny can each week! It was a simple yet happy time.'

'We designed our own home, and obtained the government loan of \$7,000 in order to build it. From then on Lindsay built the home, while also working full time. This meant we didn't have to carry a large debt; in fact we saved a lot of money this way. The big bonus was that the land in front of us became a park.'

They liked Hackett because it was nestled against the mountains, with no through road. Their children, Leanne and Adam, later enjoyed roaming and playing on Mount Majura and Mount Ainslie. 'They, and their friends, were literally 'mountain bikers' but of course not in the way that we know the sport today; they were simply kids on bikes on the bush paths behind our houses. They also went yababying in the dams and caught lizards. It was a true wonderland for children.'

Lorraine would later become an active member of the Hackett Community Association in the 2000s and still lives in the same house...and still loving it!

Leanne Scott (née Mason)

Leanne was born 30 September 1966 at Royal Canberra Hospital. Leanne's first memories of Hackett were grasshoppers, the local shops and the family next door. She remembers exploring the bush behind Hackett with Heather Wilkinson and finding a 'fort' which was obviously made by local boys - they had hidden their 'Playboy' Magazines inside the fort. An unexpected education!

On another occasion, the family woke up to hundreds of people all searching for something in Bragg St Park. 'I think a local radio station had a promotion involving money or tickets and all clues pointed to the park.'

Leanne went to Hackett Pre-School, Hackett Primary, Watson High School, Dickson College, and to the Canberra College of Advanced Education (now University of Canberra). Brother Adam also went to Hackett Pre-School and Hackett Primary, but then to Campbell High School, Dickson College, and the University of NSW in Sydney.

Leanne's first job was at Dickson Woolworths, then Ainslie School After School Care, and for a while had a job at CTC TV as a production assistant working on the 'Saturday Morning Live' programme. All three were casual jobs while she studied at school and then the Canberra College of Advanced Education. Her first full-time job after completing studies in journalism, was as a cadet journalist at 2CC. She then secured a position as a journalist at *The Canberra Times* where she worked from 1989 to 1991.

While at primary, high school and Dickson College, Leanne's entertainment was found mostly through local sports clubs but also at the Dickson Roller-skating Rink in Woolley St, the Monaro Mall, Civic Cinemas and Dickson Pool. During university years, Leanne and her friends socialised at the Workers Club Civic, City Club, Private Bin, ANU and CCAE student unions.

Her Mum shopped at the Little Owl supermarket. As a very small child, Leanne remembers trying to help with the shopping but unfortunately broke a jar of pickles at the checkout as she tried to put the goods on the counter. 'I was mortified,' said Leanne.

Leanne married Ian Scott, also of Hackett, and they have two children, Georgia and Thomas. In the year Georgia was born, the family lived at 30 Bragg St. 'Both my daughter and I came to the same home 28 years apart.'

Melanie Kelleher 28 March 2018

the corner store which sold mixed bags of lollies for 50 cents

Melanie Kelleher was born at Royal Canberra Hospital and came home to Hackett in April 1964, joining her older brother, Wade (born 1963). Her father (Graeme) supervised construction of Corin Dam in the 1960s, and then was on the Ranger Uranium Inquiry in the 1970s that was looking into the feasibility of uranium mining in Australia. In 1979 he became Chairman/CEO of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

Her first impressions of Hackett were the young gumtrees that eventually shaded the garden, and the vegetables growing in the big back yard. Hackett provided a simple life. Everything was familiar and didn't change much, which was nice for a kid. There was great freedom for Melanie and her friends charging around the suburb on their bikes, playing barefoot at the parks and running around until mums started calling everyone in for tea as the street lights started coming on. They would often enjoy many adventures in the bush of Mt Majura and recalls the dramatic scene of Mt Majura and Mt Ainslie glowing red at night with the flames of bushfires in 1974 or 1975.

On the down side, Melanie remembers the hoons driving on Madigan Street.

The shops were a popular spot, especially the corner store which sold mixed bags of lollies for 50 cents and the lovely lady always said ‘Thank you very much come again’ with her strong Greek accent.

Once she was in high school, Melanie used the bus to go to and from Civic. As a child, on one occasion she was sick on the inward journey to the city with her mum. Carl was one of the regular friendly drivers.

By the age of ten, Melanie was doing regular doorknocks for the Salvos, Heart and Stroke Foundation, and did the 40 hour famine for World Vision for many years.

Hackett Primary was memorable for several reasons, mainly due to the activities of the senior boys (grade 5 and 6). One very hot day, the boys decided to have a sprinkler fight on the oval during lunch and then Deputy Principal, Mr Neville Norris, caned all of them. ‘The line ran out the door and all the way to the quadrangle,’ said Melanie.

The senior boys in 1975-76 also played-up during assemblies on the quadrangle. After every pause by Mr Norris or Mr Ted Armstrong (Principal) during announcements, they would all hum ‘mmmmmm’. ‘The teachers could never catch them. Must have driven them batty!’ said Melanie.

A major highlight for Melanie was the 1973-74 visit by Queen Elizabeth. Melanie’s class went to Fairbairn Airbase where Melanie (aged 9) presented the Queen with a bunch of flowers. The Queen thanked her and moved on. ‘A strange man came up and started talking to me; it was Prince Phillip,’ recalls Melanie.

Melanie has fond memories of Laura Turnbull, one of her teachers, who passed away in October 2012. ‘Although saddened by her passing, her funeral gave me a chance to reconnect with other teachers and students from my Hackett Primary school days, including Miss Taylor, Bev Scott, Mrs Forrest, Mrs Ginane, my old piano teacher Mr Bingham and others. This turned the sad into a happy.’

Melanie left Hackett in 1984 when her parents moved to Aranda.



View from 5 Haddon Street. Shops and school in the background 1967. (photo: Melanie Kelleher)



Melanie Kelleher gives a posy of flowers to Queen Elizabeth at Fairbairn, 1973. (photo: Melanie Kelleher)

8. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, COMMUNITY ACTION

Providing the physical infrastructure such as roads, pathways, power and water is only one element for creating a place for people to live and work. It is what the people do for themselves and others in the community that really brings people together to have a common sense of purpose. Within Hackett over its 50 plus years, there has been many community groups be they associated with community advocacy, schools, churches or youth groups.

Hackett Community Association

Hackett Residents Association

In early 1991, a group called the Hackett Residents Association, was formed to lobby for reopening of the Hackett Primary School which closed in December 1990.²¹⁰ The Association conducted a survey in mid 1991 and found strong support for a joint public and private junior primary school that would include a Montessori School. However, the Association said they were aware of concerns by the Australian Teachers Union and the ACT Government about such joint arrangements, and opted instead to push for a single junior primary school (kindergarten to Grade 2). In October 1991 the ACT Government made a final decision to not reopen the school.

In December 1991 Hackett Residents Association supported the decision to close the Ainslie transfer station and open a new site in Mitchell. No further records about the work of this Association could be found beyond December 1991.

Initial meetings of the Hackett Community Association

It would be almost a decade before the community would come together again to raise their voices about Hackett.

In mid 2001, the ACT Government held elections for Canberra's six Local Area Planning Advisory Councils including the Majura Local Area Planning Advisory Committee (LAPAC) which took in Hackett. Terry de Luca was elected as the residential representative for Hackett.²¹¹ Less than 12 months later the LAPACs would be replaced with Neighbourhood Planning Groups and trigger community action.

On 3 April 2002, Terry and Jochen Zeil chaired a Hackett community meeting with the main issues for consideration including neighbourhood planning, Hackett shops, traffic, Monash Drive, airport curfews and proposed dragway development in the Majura valley. The Canberra Times on 16 April 2002 reported that over 150 people attended this meeting. Terry de Luca said:

'The impending closure of the Majura Local Area Planning Advisory Committee (LAPAC) and the formation of Neighbourhood Planning Groups had hastened the need for the community to come together and share its views. We wanted to pre-empt it - so we could be ready for the neighbourhood planning groups. We really didn't feel we could approach people, like the Minister, without knowing we were representative of the suburb. But with the number of people that turned up, we know we have that now. It's about the whole notion of community and neighbourhood identity.'

The original redevelopment concerns that provided the impetus for the formation of the HCA never materialised as the Government seemed to have dropped the idea of implementing new planning laws for concentrated development around shopping centres by 2006.

The foundation of HCA was actively fostered by the North Canberra Community Council (NCCC) at the time and received a lot of support, both personally from Neighbourhood Watch, and through the Hackett Neighbourhood Watch newsletter. The HCA is one of several community residential groups in North Canberra, including the Watson Community Association, the Lyneham Community Association, the Turner Residents Association and the Downer Community Association. These associations combine under the North Canberra Community Council (NCCC) which takes the lead on issues which run across North Canberra – particularly ACT Government policies on urban development and major development proposals. See Appendix G for more information about the NCCC.

The inaugural meeting of the HCA was held on 20 June 2002 where a provisional committee was elected, including Terry DeLuca, Len Crossfield, Margaret Simpson, Dorothy Mackenzie, Lynne Hall, Tony Steel and James Walker. Over the next few weeks they met in the Holy Cross vestry and member's homes, to work out a constitution; they decided to use the Watson Community Association constitution by replacing Watson for Hackett. Once formed the HCA found itself busy with other issues such as the threat of a dragstrip in the Majura Valley,

increasing rat running traffic, and the proposed unrestricted operating hours for the Canberra Airport. One of the slightly contentious issues was the idea of a membership fee – some were for; some were against a fee. A yearly fee of \$2 was initially put forward but this was later increased to \$5 per person and \$2 concession in 2005-06. Fees were seen as one way of raising funds, working out who could vote and who could stand for committee positions, and demonstrating the size of the organisation to governments. In October 2017, the Committee decided that given the amount of money raised and the administration involved, there would be no joining or annual membership fees.

Since its inception, the committee has held meetings in several locations around Hackett including the homes of several members, St Margaret's Church hall, Blue Gum lounge at the shops, and the room behind the hall at the school, courtesy of Folk Dance Canberra. AGM in recent years were held in a meeting room in Maitland House, adjacent to the school hall. They aimed to meet once a month except in July and January though from September 2009 the meetings reduced to being held every second month.

an annual ‘Hackett Day’ was put forward by James Walker

As well as sorting out the framework for how the body would operate, the Committee was keen to take action to get their presence known in the community. The idea of an annual ‘Hackett Day’ was put forward by James Walker which would involve a range of activities at the Hackett shops that would later evolve into the *Party at the Shops*.

Issues considered by the HCA

Traffic

An early problem needing attention was the continuous and rapid growth in traffic through Madigan and Maitland streets. This first came to the attention of the HCA Committee because of the ACT Government linking of a street’s traffic with the provision of surfaced footpaths. It was obvious that traffic statistics for Hackett were way out of date.

Complaints were being received from residents in Madigan and Maitland streets about their inability to exit their driveways during peak hours, and from other parts of the suburb about their difficulties exiting e.g. Rivett Street. Concern was growing over the safety of children on their way to school. It was increasingly obvious that, because of the continuing growth of Gungahlin and the development of North Watson, this situation could only get worse, not better.

As the traffic statistics were way out of date, the HCA Committee decided in March 2004, to conduct its own traffic census at Antill and Fison, Antill and Madigan, Maitland St and at Phillip Avenue. The results were worrying, and an approach was made to ACT Roads who carried out their own (mechanical) survey which not only confirmed the HCA results, but showed a slight increase had occurred.

A number of public meetings were held to discuss the matter, including one attended by ACT Roads, but these created ‘more heat than light’. Discussions continued with ACT Roads who were sympathetic, and a number of interested parties attended some Committee meetings. Many options were canvassed. Most options were considered objectionable by one section or another of the community. Traffic calming was opposed by Maitland and Madigan residents as being ‘too noisy’. The suggestion of closing Stott Street during peak hours brought a great deal of criticism from Hackett residents; banning left and/or right hand turns into Madigan ‘would badly affect the shops’ and besides there were the buses that travelled along Madigan St.

Finally, traffic lights at the intersection of Phillip and Majura Avenues, pedestrian lights on Antill St opposite the Australian Catholic University, and some raised pedestrian crossings on Madigan St near the shops seemed the best achievable. Even here, there was some dissent, with one resident wanting a round-about instead of lights at the Majura Avenue which ACT Roads quickly knocked on the head. The Phillip and Majura Avenues intersection lights were installed in mid 2011.

Planning

Problems with ACT Land and Planning and a perceived lack of consultation were some of the main reasons for the creation of HCA.

Generally speaking, the NCCC has been the lead body in this area, with HCA playing a more supporting role. A number of HCA Committee members were involved in keeping NCCC going at a time of great difficulties and in turn the NCCC provided HCA with considerable support. The HCA has, however, been involved in a number of

issues directly bearing on the suburb particularly during 2003 when the ACT Government was developing its plan for the future of Hackett – see section 8 (Hackett Today) for more details on this process and the outcomes.

Future Development sign – in 2006, the ACT Government erected numerous large signs across some Canberra suburbs with the words ‘Future Development’. Hackett received one of these signs near the ACT SES depot, Madigan St. For many residents this sign was a bit of a mystery, as there were no details or map as to which area it was referring to in the oval precinct. The HCA followed-up and found out that it was referring to Block 14 Section 12 – an area less than the size of two suburban blocks on the north side of the SES depot. Section 12 includes the oval and Blue Gum School precinct between Madigan and Maitland Streets.



Source Territory Plan <http://www.actmap.act.gov.au/>

It is one of 60 sites across Canberra with these signs:

‘to make the community more aware of which blocks of land are available for development in the future so there are minimal surprises in later years when an undeveloped block of land is sold and built on.’

‘Signs have been installed on vacant, unleased blocks of land that are reserved for future development. These are individual sites within existing suburbs still owned by the Government that have been confirmed as being part of the ACT’s land stock. They may look like open space to the community, but have been for some time zoned for different types of development.’ Source - ACT Land and Planning Future Development [signs](#) webpage

Monash Drive

See Monash Drive in section about Mount Majura.

Canberra Dragway

In 2004-05 budget, the ACT Government announced funding of \$8m for development of a dragway in Block 52, an area north of the Canberra Airport. This was to replace the former dragway near Pialligo (on Commonwealth land) which had closed in 1998. The new site was seen as suitable as it fell within the Canberra airport noise umbrella, and was ACT land, making it an ideal location. The dragway would be used on weekends around 34 times a year, with some events starting on Fridays and going into the weekends. There could have been up to 120 entrants at each event, with each participating in three qualifying rounds and three races – this would have created considerable noise for extended periods of time.

The HCA participated in a Dragway Advisory Committee set up in 2005 by the ACT Government to provide advice on the suitability of the proposed site. A group led by Hackett resident, Jenny Savigny, set up a lobby group *Dragway-away* with the aim of not letting the dragway proceed. On 28 March 2006 the group organized a ‘lawn-mower’ orchestra outside the ACT House of Assembly rooms to highlight the potential noise from the dragway. By August 2006, the group has collected over 3,000 signatures from people protesting about the dragway. At the end of 2006, the government decided not to proceed with the proposal.

Canberra Airport Curfew

In 2008 the Canberra International Airport released its Preliminary Draft Master Plan for comment. One of the proposals was for the airport to operate 24 hours a day to act as a major freight hub to mainly serve Sydney – Sydney airport at the time had night curfews. Geoff Willans of Hackett and the North Canberra Community Council Airport Aircraft Noise Working Group, chaired by Jochen Zeil, received a lot of support from Neighbourhood Watch, both personally and through the Hackett Neighbourhood Watch newsletter. The group actively lobbied Federal ministers with submissions, petitions and letters which led to a number of changes including the redirection of flight paths, noise monitoring, and formation of a noise complaint website.

Other community groups in north Canberra, Gungahlin and Jerrabomberra formed an action group called *Curfew 4 Canberra*. Its membership drew on the residents associations of Pialligo, Hackett, Watson, North Canberra, Gungahlin and Jerrabomberra. Its core objectives were to:

- secure an 11pm-6am curfew
- oppose Canberra Airport becoming a 24 hour freight hub
- oppose Canberra Airport becoming Sydney's 2nd Airport
- oppose the construction of a parallel (third) runway.

Canberra Airport continues to operate without a curfew and strives to become a 24 hour freight hub.

Aircraft noise was nothing new to Hackett.

In December 1969, a Mr H of Hackett, wrote to the Canberra Times Voter's Voice to complain about low aircraft flying over the suburb between 7.30-8.30pm one day in November. He said they were probably RAAF, 'because he had noticed that commercial flights generally kept clear of that area and flew high enough not to be annoying.'

The repeated low passes made by jets on this occasion had made considerable noise inside the house even with all doors and windows shut. There were many young families in the area around Mr H.'s home and this noise had prevented young babies and small children from sleeping. The RAAF apologised but said that 'regular sessions of landing and take-off practice were an essential part of the training of aircrews.' The spokesman said the RAAF would do everything possible to minimise the inconvenience to Canberra residents, given the limitations created by the need for training aircrew and the requirements of air traffic control.²¹²

In July 1972, J Hughes of Hackett wrote to the Canberra Times expressing concerns about planes taking off and turning over Mount Majura and flying over residential areas at low altitudes. The writer asked that the planes fly out 'well beyond Mount Majura' which would 'give a considerable reduction in the unpleasant noise... Canberra. Further, many aircraft, particularly RAAF planes, fly over all parts of the city with no apparent justification.'²¹³

Shops

As discussed in the section about the shops, there have been many changes to the businesses over the years. In some cases the changes resulted in some of the spaces being vacant for a long period. This unfortunately created a negative feeling about the whole shop precinct. The HCA has been active in ensuring the ACT Government and members of the House of Assembly were made aware of issues.

But with change can come some very positive benefits. For example, the entrance to IGA used to be on the northern side of the shop, which meant that other shops did not get shoppers passing by and dropping in. Changing the entrance to the court yard side made a significant improvement.

The shops are surrounded by mature trees that provide pleasant shade on the northern side. In 2011 the HCA pushed for the provision of a seat and table that could encourage people to seat and relax. A combined seat/table was eventually provided around 2015.

The HCA also supported the move for the new chemist to obtain a PBS number in 2015, but unfortunately despite this community support, as well as support from local MPs, approval was not given, because of the PBS rules about the distance between pharmacies – the Hackett shops are too close to the existing pharmacy outlet in Watson.

Having community events at the shops has required access to electric power points. As there is no public power point, the HCA has been kindly supported by businesses allowing access to their premises. The HCA approached the ACTEW in 2016 about installing an external public powerpoint but they did not agree to such a proposal, due to costs, ownership and safety matters.

Public toilets at shops

There are public toilets at all shopping centres in north Canberra, except at Hackett. The provision of toilets has been a case of ‘on again, off again’ since the suburb was first developed. In October 1966, the NCDC issued a call for tenders to construct toilets:

Commonwealth of Australia
Department of Works
For and on behalf of the National Capital Development Commission
Closing 12 noon, Tuesday, November 1, 1966
Erection of Public Toilets and covered way at Hackett Shopping Centre.²¹⁴

Yet in 1971, the NCDC and the Department of the Interior advised that neither organisation ‘had plans to provide lavatories at Hackett shopping centre,’ despite the call for tenders five years earlier²¹⁵.

Lavatories for centre

SO many mothers with young children have asked shopkeepers if their offspring can use the staff toilets that Mr J., of Hackett, asked whether the Department of the Interior intended building public lavatories at Hackett shopping centre.

Public toilets were very much needed because the shopping centre was such a busy one, he said.

* * *

A department spokesman replied that neither the NCDC nor the department had plans to provide public lavatories at Hackett shopping centre.

The HCA took up this cause in 2007 by lobbying the ACT Government and members of the ACT Assembly. Hopes were raised when funds were allocated in the 2011-12 ACT budget and the site surveyed in April 2012. However, in mid 2014 the ACT Government did a reverse flip when it advised that there were no funds available for the toilets. While there has been broad support for the toilets, some residents have expressed their concerns that it would be an eyesore at the shops.

Sir John Hackett memorial

The idea of a memorial at the shops featuring John Hackett has been on the Committee’s agenda for some years, however there has not been support from the ACT Government for a memorial. Canberra suburbs named after Prime Ministers have large metal signs near their main entrance. Despite asking the ACT Government to consider signs for a Hackett memorial, there was no support. The HCA will continue looking at ways to recognise John Hackett.

Footpaths

In 2007 the committee was looking at approaching the government to provide footpaths in areas where there were none, and repair those in poor condition. As discussed in the section about the development of Hackett, paths were only provided on the larger connecting streets like Madigan, Maitland, Mackenzie and Rivett Streets.

The HCA was successful in getting a pathway built on the eastern corner of the shops (near Tarquine Salon) to connect with Madigan Street.

Bus shelters

A number of the bus shelters on Madigan Street and Phillip Avenue over the years became run down including some having poor lighting. The HCA requested the Government to clean them up and to consider ways of improving lighting. The ACT Government commenced a bus shelter upgrade and one of the old shelters was moved to the bus stop at the shops. A new bus stop was placed at the Hackett shops following a request by James Walker.

Community garden for Hackett

In 2008, the HCA was approached by several residents interested in developing a community garden in the open space between the primary school and the oval. In 2012 the ACT Government announced plans to establish 10 community gardens across Canberra, but unfortunately Hackett missed out. Proposals had to demonstrate adequate finances to support the garden. However, this did not progress possibly because the majority of Hackett residents live in free standing houses, often with their own garden. If there were more unit dwellings, there may have been a stronger demand for this community facility.

Sustainable Hackett

Commenced in February 2007 by Jochen Zeil, this idea was aimed at providing residents with information about use of energy, water, garden designs and advice on house renovation. Several workshops were held, with some Hackett residents (Edwina Richardson, Tony Steel and Jenny Savigny) featuring on an ABC Statewide program in September 2007, talking about their gardens.

Communicating with residents

In 2007, the Committee identified the need to have a website through which it could provide information to the community. In 2009, the HCA was able to have a page on the North Canberra Community Council website. In 2011, October Greg Haughey proposed a separate website for the HCA. Following the committee's endorsement, Greg commenced developing the site and by April 2012 was up and running with minutes of meetings, and Pay Pal to accept membership fees. A separate website for Hackett businesses was also developed.

Greg was also instrumental in developing a colour brochure, with a membership form, as another means of promoting the association and increasing membership. The green and orange colour scheme is based on the colours from the former Hackett Primary School.

The Committee also contributes updates in the monthly Hackett Neighbourhood Watch newsletter. Greg Haughey also sends out monthly newsletters to all members of the Association. Membership has ranged from as low as 50, up to 200, with membership around 150 in 2018.

Community Contact Days

James Walker played a key role in setting up Community Contact Days as a means for the Committee to engage with Hackett residents to find out what their concerns were. They were held two-three times a year, usually on a Saturday, by setting up a table at the Hackett shops and having Committee representatives available. Later they invited Friends of Mount Majura and Hackett Neighbourhood Watch to join as well as other organisations, operating in Hackett e.g. Folk Dance Australia and members of the ACT House of Assembly; the later found these days to be a valuable way of engaging with residents. The contact days also had the aims of:

- promoting the HCA, spreading the word and where possible increasing the membership of the HCA; and
- supporting the shops, short term by providing increased business on the day and long term by bringing them to the visitors' notice.

Essay competition

In 2009, the committee, with support from the National Centre of Biography, agreed to run an essay writing competition for Hackett children. The theme was about 'the person after whom your street in Hackett is named.' It was opened for students from years 5 to 12. Prizes would be a \$30 book voucher for the winner and \$25 for the second prize. Unfortunately, there was little interest from schools for this competition and no entries were received.

Polling place

In October 2008, the Committee discussed a proposal to have an election polling station in Hackett. They wrote to the Australian Electoral Commission seeking their support to provide this facility, however, they did not provide such a station for the 2013 and 2016 elections.

Hackett Oval trees

The avenue of trees on the eastern side of the Hackett oval, are at least 70 years old and possibly older. A number of the pines have died in recent years and were removed, but no replacement trees were planted. There was a risk that the Government may decide to undertake large scale removal without consulting the community as what species could replace them. In early 2016, the HCA contacted the ACT Government who recognised the need for the trees to be replaced, but believed that there is no rush for this to be done. They agreed, however, that while there is no urgency, they will develop a plan to identify the trees for replacement in sequence.

Bragg/Brennan St park

Through the HCA, a group of around 40 residents have approached the government to have some improvements undertaken including tree planting and development of a low key nature playground for children. In mid 2018, the Government gave in-principle support for this work but the details were yet to be agreed on.

Naming of open spaces

There are five open spaces in Hackett, which have various types of play equipment and seats (between Bragg and Brennan; Madigan through to Mackenzie; Harris/Gilbert/French; Calwell to Stanley St; Maitland St/cnr Gilruth St). In 2016, the Committee wrote to the ACT Places Names office who agreed to consider proposals to have these spaces named. While a name would not mean any additional funding or more maintenance, it would assist in guiding emergency services to incidents in these areas. Rather than trying to name all five open spaces at the same time, the office asked that initially it be one park only, with the Bragg/Brennan park being the pilot.

Illegal dumping of rubbish

Dumping of rubbish has long been an issue in Hackett as discussed in the section ‘What a load of rubbish!’ But even with the provision of bins, rubbish was still being dumped illegally as shown by the example of two hopper bins behind the change rooms at the oval. One was provided for the SES and the other for users of the oval. But as the lids were not locked, they were being filled by people dumping household rubbish and unwanted items – a free service! After the HCA wrote to the government, the bins were locked and illegal dumping stopped.

HCA actions also resulted in a bin being placed near the Maitland House end of the oval and better placement of bins at the shops.

Clean Up Australia Day

Every year since 2003, Terry de Luca has organised a clean-up Hackett as part of the nationwide Clean Up Australia event. Areas targeted over the years have included Phillip Avenue, especially near Kellaway St, Antill St, Hackett oval precinct, and around the shops. The Friends of Mount Majura also participate with removal of rubbish in the reserve.

Community survey

At the 2016 Party at the Shops, the HCA did an informal survey to seek the views of residents about what they liked about Hackett and what improvements were required. Of the 77 forms completed, people said that they valued the reserve, shops, and community, but would like to see toilets at the shops and improvements to the playgrounds. Interestingly, the median length of time in Hackett of the responders was 3 years, with most falling in the age group of 31-45 years.

Partying at the shops... developing a sense of community

Fortieth birthday 2003

In 2002, when HCA was being formed, it needed a way to publicise the Association’s existence and to bring the residents of the suburb together. James Walker pointed out to the provisional committee that Hackett would be forty years old in 2003 and suggested a big party be held at the shops (this being the most suitable place available). While a few people opposed on the grounds that it was beyond the HCA capabilities, the Committee decided to

proceed with the Big Birthday Bash on Saturday 17 May 2003. The day was a huge success with an estimated 800-900 people attending from 10am to 3pm. This was largely due to the variety of activities that appealed to all ages and included:

- flag raising ceremony – Mountain Scouts of Majura raised a 1960s flag from the former Hackett Primary School (see flag at plate 17).
- ecumenical service led by several ministers including Reverends Lyn Thaw, John Stead, John Wakefield, Alex Vickers and Don Erickson; the later was introduced at the first minister of St Margaret's Uniting Church. The theme of the services was that we all part of the rhythm of life – we are born, live, search for meaning, make choices, churches and homes. There was reflection on places of significance here in Hackett such as the shops, parks, schools and sporting fields.
- formal opening by Leanne Scott, a former journalist with the Canberra Times who was born in Hackett. Leanne talked about her childhood and going to the former primary school (see Leanne's personal recollections in chapter 7)
- Canberra Active Learning Model (CALM) was a pilot program run by the YMCA for people in the 60-70 year age group. It demonstrated a range of physical exercises.
- music provided by the Canberra City Band, North Ainslie Primary School Wind Band and Jake Roff, a solo singer and guitarist.
- dancing by Folk Dance Canberra who got the audience involved in various international circle dances, and an Egyptian belly dance troupe.
- information tables and displays by the HCA, Northside Community Service, ACT Health Services, neighbourhood planning, and Edwina Richardson landscape design business. Chris de Luca and Margaret Erickson sold craft items while Lyall Benjamin sold second hand books.
- wine tasting provided by IGA, raffles by Cafetopia and the Clinic of Preventive Medicine.
- BBQ sausages, tea, coffee and cordial provided by the HCA. A large cake decorated with cream, fruit, iced flowers donated by the Early Bird Bakery. The cake was cut by 95 year old Eileen Pateman and 10 year Ara Steel.
- Federal MPs including Senator Gary Humphries, Steve Blume for Bob McMullan, and ACT MLAs Kerry Tucker, Greg Cornwall and his wife Margaret. Senator Kate Lundy was unable to attend but instead donated \$50.
- old photos from the former Primary School and artworks by children from the Hackett Preschool.

Forty-fifth birthday 2008

On 2 May 2008 the HCA organised the second big birthday bash to celebrate the 45th birthday of the suburb. This was considered even more successful than the 40th birthday party with over 2,000 people attending (plates 22-25). Activities included:

- welcome to country by Ngunnawal Aboriginal Council
- church service conducted by Reverend Harvey Smith
- singing by the Warrani choir, music by the Canberra City Band
- Folk Dance Canberra and Egyptian Belly dancing
- children's activities provided by the Blue Gum School and Hackett Pre-school.

Fiftieth birthday 2013

Building on the success of previous parties, the Committee decided to hold yet a bigger one to celebrate the 50th birthday (plate 26). Held over two days on 22 and 23 September 2013, between 3,000 and 3,500 enjoyed the activities at the shops and nearby schools including:

- Robyn Archer opening the event and oversee the cutting of the cake. She had been appointed by the ACT Government to run the 2013, 100 year birthday celebrations for Canberra.

- Hackett Primary School reunion, pupils and teachers, with a magnificent display of photographs.
- several stalls including books, jewellery and wood products
- bands, clown, juggler and Acra yoga
- sausage sizzle by the HCA
- Blue Gum Community School Open Day and Fete on the Saturday and Hackett Pre-school open day.
- attendance by local and Federal politicians, including Chief Minister Katie Gallagher, Senator Kate Lundy and Andrew Leigh.

One highlight was the bus driver who stopped the bus for five minutes while he and the passengers got off the bus and looked at the party.

Other parties

The committee also organised parties at the shops in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017.



Canberra City Band performing at the 40th birthday, 2003. (photo: HCA)

Committee members of the HCA

Since the establishment of the HCA in 2003, many members of the Hackett community have participated on the committee in various positions. Some have participated for one or two years, while some have been on the committee since its inception.

Name	Positions	Years on committee
Jochen Zeil	Chair of meeting 2001, Chair (2007-08)	2002-08
Terry de Luca	Chair (2002-04), Deputy Chair (2004 -07) General committee member (2008-09) Assistant Treasurer (2009-10) Treasurer (2010-18)	2002-18
Len Crossfield	Deputy Chair (2002-04, 2007-09) Chair (2004-07) General committee member (2010-18)	2002-18
Dorothy Mackenzie	Secretary (2002-06) Deputy Secretary (2007-10), (2012-13) General committee member (2010-12)	2002-13
Lynne Hall	Deputy Secretary (2002-05)	2002-05
Margaret Simpson	Treasurer (2002)	2002
Tony Steel	Deputy Treasurer (2002-06) Public Officer (2007-08) General committee member (2008)	2002-09
Laura Turnbull	Public Officer (2002-08) General committee member (2005-12)	2002-12
James Walker	Historical Officer (2002-17) Chair (2008-10), Vice Chair (2012-16)	2002-17
Maureen Hartung	Membership Secretary (2004)	2004-06
Lorraine Mason	General committee member (2004-07) Treasurer (2008-10), Assistant Treasurer (2010-12)	2005-12
Max Huntington	General committee member (2004-07) Deputy Chair (2008-09)	2005-09
Bruce Smith	Secretary (2007-18)	2007-18
Greg Haughey	Assistant Treasurer (2010-11), Chair (2011-17)	2010-17
Kaye Murphy	General committee member (2012-13) Deputy Secretary (2013-18)	2012-18
Chris Mobbs	Deputy Chair (2015-17), Chair (2017-18)	2015-18
Waltraud Pix	General committee member	2004-09
S Farrell	General committee member	2004-05
Maureen Howe	General committee member	2007
Jenny Blaik	General committee member	2007
Harriet Spring	General committee member	2008
Keiran Vaughan	General committee member	2009
Marian Williams	General committee member	2012-18
John Carty	General committee member	2013-18
Erika Alacs	General committee member	2013
Jennifer Pearson	General committee member	2013
Jean Chesson	General committee member	2016-18

Folk Dance Canberra

There has been a lively presence in Hackett of Folk Dance Canberra since 1999. Members come from all over Canberra and sometimes beyond, to enjoy the music and dances of many different nations.

Our beginnings

It all started in February 1991 when Christine and Jim Battisson advertised that folk dance lessons were to be held in Ainslie's Corroboree Park Hall. Thirty people turned up for the first class. Their enthusiasm for folk dancing resulted in a class being added each year. In 1994, with almost 100 members attending, the decision was made to formalise the group into Folk Dance Canberra Incorporated. What began as one class had grown into four and some of those dancers are still with us. Looking for a more permanent home for FDC, Christine began searching for a new dance venue. In December 1990, the ACT Government had closed the campus of the Hackett Primary School, with most of its pupils joining Majura Primary School. This had opened in the previous year with students from the former Dower and Watson Primary schools. The Hackett School closure left the school buildings needing new tenants. The hall from the school was more than suitable, a rent was arranged and Folk Dance Canberra moved into their new hall in May 1999.

Although the hall had been used by a few groups over the years, it was in dire need of a thorough clean. The first weekend of possession saw a great number of dancers attend, armed with mops, buckets, brooms, vacuum cleaners, dusters and cleaning agents as well as tools to remove the undergrowth outside (see plate 29).

Some of the ivy had even ventured inside! This was removed, windows and cupboards were washed and some painting was done. The large curtains in the hall were dry cleaned and the broken venetians taken down. Over the next few weeks curtains and many other items were donated for use in the kitchen. Chairs for the hall were purchased and furniture for the carpeted room was found. The floor was given a thorough clean, was found to be too slippery and so was scrubbed back and had Tung oil applied to it. Since then the hall floor has had regular maintenance to keep it in prime dancing condition (see plate 30). It is mopped after every use and all day working bees are held once a term.

The Great Hall Warming Party was held on Saturday, 31 July 1999. It was a wonderful celebration which included the dancing of the 'Hackett Hall Hop' – a dance specially created by Andre van de Plas, a guest dance teacher from the Netherlands (see plate 31). There were guest speakers and then the Official Opening by Bill Stefaniak, MLA, Minister for Education, Sport and Recreation. This was followed by dance displays by the performing group and also by the children's classes. Andre taught some new dances and then a magnificent supper was enjoyed. The evening finished with a happy round of general dancing.

A wedding

Another joyous occasion was the wedding of two of our members, David and Grace, on 1 November 2003 (see plate 32). They had met at folk dancing and so it was appropriate that their wedding was in our hall, which for this special occasion was bedecked with flowers, masses of greenery, bows and balloons.

All of the members had been invited and they came dressed in colourful costumes from many different countries. David and Grace wore Bulgarian costumes (which Grace had made); hers was navy with white braiding and his was white with navy braiding – an impressive sight for all the family and friends who attended. The celebrant led them through their vows and then the dancing began with the beautiful Starodavny Mamenka, a Czech wedding dance which all classes had learnt. Other favourites followed and then it was time for a wonderful dinner, the cutting of the cake and speeches...and then more dancing.

The hall also contributes to the life of the wider community in that it is, and has been, regularly used for YMCA exercise classes, meditation groups, calisthenics classes and by our neighbour, Blue Gum Community School.

Our teachers

Our three current (2018) teachers - Lesley Rose, Theresa Orchard, and Rebecca Lane are all qualified folk dance teachers, having done the Folk Dance Australia (FDA) Teacher Training Courses. They upgrade their skills and repertoire by attending FDA courses, and seminars in Europe and Australia. In 2013, three went to Bali to attend a seminar run by international dance teachers Tineke van Geel (Netherlands) and Yves Moreau (Canada) who taught a variety of dances from Armenia and Bulgaria! Some international teachers come to us, like Andre van de Plas from the Netherlands – he teaches a workshop in Bowral every year and there is always a large contingent attending from Canberra. Our teachers also run workshops in our own hall, some recent ones being for Bulgarian

and Israeli dances. They have also given workshops at the Multicultural Festival and the National Folk Festival. On other occasions they have taken a group of dancers for demonstrations at Floriade, for Seniors Week and in nursing homes and shopping centres (see plate33).

Our classes

Regular classes are held during school terms. For Adults - the Beginners' class is on Wednesday evenings and this is followed by an Intermediate class – some dancers go to both. Other Intermediate classes are on Tuesday mornings and Thursday evenings. Monday evening is for the teaching of advanced dances. Many of our members go to several classes which greatly enhances the memorisation of dance steps. For many years, Maria Jenkins (now retired from dance teaching) held a Greek Dance Party night on the first Friday of every month which was open to everyone. These were wonderful occasions with each dance taught and background information given as well. In 2016, a change of direction was taken for the focus to be on a different country and for the dance party to be on a Saturday afternoon. The year 2016 was our 'Silver Anniversary' year during which our very busy Events Committee organised something special for almost every month!

In the past, children's classes (for three different age groups) have also been held as well as a class for mothers while their little ones were minded on site. Now we cater for children on Friday afternoons after school. Two classes, firstly for younger, and then older children are taught by Rebecca.

Out in the community

In previous years there has also been a performance group which performed for a wide variety of audiences throughout the community. They danced in authentic looking costumes made by the dancers themselves. Now when a group is requested for Seniors Week, or to dance in a nursing home or at Hackett shops (see plate 34) other places, volunteers are called for and the chosen dances are practised in class.

Our dances

Our dance repertoire is truly international. It covers many of the European nations with the majority from the Balkan states. Many other favourites come from Israel, Turkey and Russia. We have also learned a few from Japan, USA, Mexico, Brazil, Africa and even the Cook Islands. They have interesting names like North Cornwall Furry, Asjino Oro, Sibirski Chorovod, Horehronsky Czardas, Esmer and Hora Fun Moldova. Some are slow; perhaps sad but beautiful or dreamy. Most are cheerful, some stately, and a few are energetic and exciting. There are wedding dances, ones associated with religious festivals or which tell a story of the season's activities (fishing or farming etc); and many with a 'young man desires lovely maiden' or 'how can I attract that handsome young man?' themes. Some of our dances are very old, dating back to the 1700s and 1800s. Others are old folk songs or music which has been choreographed recently, while many, of course, are traditional dances. Dance formations include square sets, long-way sets, couples, but by far the majority are in circles or short lines, so having a permanent partner is not necessary.

A typical dance class begins with warm-ups (which will include practising some of the dance steps – grapevines, yemenites, tcherekessias etc) and stretches. We then revise recently taught dances, learn a new one, have a break for a cuppa and socialising, and then finish with requests and more stretches. Lesley often reminds us of a country's national day by telling us a bit of its history, showing the flag and teaching us one of its easy dances.

Special Events

Melbourne Cup day has been celebrated by the Tuesday morning group (and we invite all other members) for quite some years now. It's true that there are not many horse-related dances, but we have fun wearing our hats, enjoying a shared lunch together and betting with chocolate coins in the sweeps!

The highlights of the year are our dance parties at the end of each semester. Members of every class take part. The program is compiled from the lists of requests, each person having had the opportunity to write down his or her favourite. Our wonderfully creative Events Committee chooses a theme and decorates the hall accordingly – it always looks marvellous. Various members dress up as well which contributes to a very festive atmosphere. For the end of year party, each class presents a dance they have learned, and which hopefully the other classes have not seen. We linger over a sumptuous supper and then return to the dance floor to work some of it off.

Our busy Events Committee also organises 'Family Dance Days' and 'Come and Try' sessions from time to time. These are designed for people who haven't danced before but would like to try. These are held on a weekend and follow the pattern for regular classes. The dances chosen are easy, mainly circle dances, it is a fun time and most

adults find it well within their capabilities. Another opportunity to try out folk dancing occurred when FDC went to the Botanic Gardens and held an audience participation session during the Gardens' 'Sounds of Summer' program each January.

You are welcome to join us

We are always happy to welcome new members. People join for various reasons. Some, on seeing a performance, find that a desire to dance has lain dormant for some time and realise that folk dancing is a really easy way to fulfil that need. Others are drawn by the multicultural aspect and especially enjoy the great diversity of folk songs and music. A lot of us began because we recognised that we needed some gentle exercise; we subsequently discovered that it was also stimulating for the 'grey matter', and fun! As fitness levels increase more vigorous dances can be enjoyed.

Each class is like a group of friends who really look forward to seeing each other. Participating in folk dance classes truly enriches our lives. For current information please see our website folkdancecanberra.org.au.

Hackett Art and Craft Exhibition

The Hackett Art and Craft Exhibition began in 1976 as a fund-raising effort for the Hackett Preschool and Hackett Primary School. What began as the idea of four mothers from the Preschool P&C Committee (Denise Rope, Fay Franklin, Kay Murphy and Mary Martin), evolved into a huge community project lasting several decades. With no venue in which to stage an exhibition, the preschool mothers approached the Primary School Board with a view to conducting a joint fund raiser. They were happy to come on board.

Months of preparation involving numerous sub-committees, and rosters of school parents were required to set up, pack up, display and manage the 400 artworks and hundreds of craft items. Entries were judged, and prizes awarded in various categories. The official opening took the form of a Wine and Cheese Night and was regularly compered by the late TV news reader, Peter Leonard who was a Hackett school parent.

The inaugural exhibition was not only a huge success financially, but was popular with exhibitors for the professional way in which works were presented. Display screens were borrowed from the ANU the first year, then the committee made their own screens using old house doors which were hinged together and painted black. Scaffolding for the lighting tower was loaned free of charge from a hire company in Fyshwick, and the lights themselves were borrowed from Dickson College. Setting up of the lights was done by schoolboy Chris Dodds (who went on to establish his own events lighting business).

With their preschool children moving on to Hackett Primary School and Rosary Demonstration School, Watson the following year, the committee suggested that these two schools unite and share the profits, while continuing to stage the exhibition at the Hackett Primary School. This unique undertaking was agreed to and fostered a special community spirit.

The Hackett Art and Craft Exhibition continued to thrive and attracted both local and interstate exhibitors. The organising committee changed over time, as parents were no longer involved with children at the schools. Then in 1990, Hackett Primary School closed, so the Exhibition was moved to Rosary. It only lasted there for about three years due to the inability to cope with the considerable resourcing required to run it.

Daramalan then became the obvious choice as some parents became involved with that school. The extra space at Daramalan also provided the opportunity to expand the show, and with its increasing reputation, that is what happened.

While there were many 'art and craft exhibitions' held in Canberra in those years, the Hackett show was one of the best. Entries included oils, pastels pen and ink, acrylics watercolours, black and white drawings, photography, Japanese paper collage, pottery, ceramics, batik, weaving, copper enameling, wood turning and carving, quilting, china painting, macramé, needlepoint, copper work, dolls and puppets. As well as the artworks being professionally hung, the pottery and craft items were attractively displayed on tables decorated with bark, flowers and driftwood to compliment the exhibits. (see plates 35 and 36)

The Art and Craft Exhibition celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2006. Around this time the original team felt that they could no longer meet the huge demands on their time, and as they were not able to find sufficient people willing to continue, the exhibition finally folded.

Despite the closure, one of the long term legacies of the exhibition was the on-going relationships between the communities of the Hackett Primary and Rosary School involved over its thirty years.



CANBERRA MAGIC KITCHEN

Canberra Magic Kitchen

Antonia and Saša Basić and two daughters, Rossa and Mara, emigrated to Australia from Croatia in 2014, both hoping to pursue their careers. Saša is an agronomist and Antonia a travel agent.

But jobs were scarce in their fields of expertise and so they decided to change their careers and spend their talent on making delicious vegan foods available at their home in Gilruth Street, Hackett under the banner of *Canberra Magic Kitchen*.

Although both of them felt as though they'd landed 'on the right spot', there was just one thing missing, community. The couple started a community project called Canberra Honesty Box, a shed that sells chemical-free vegetables to the public out the front of their house to attract neighbours, sell surplus produce and build a community through sustainable organic foods. Over the course of a few months, neighbours became reliant on weekly visits and fresh produce. Three other houses in the street soon joined in, turning a small cul-de-sac in Hackett into a mini community of friends.

Once a month their front yard has an air of excitement as people queue to enjoy the pop up café with delicious vegan food and live music performed by local musicians.

The couple are keen to build a community by bringing local artists and musicians to perform at their place and entertain the neighbours and the broader community.

They utilise home grown produce from the street for their vegan, organic catering company and host monthly crepe mornings.

They have a fridge on the front lawn in which they put take away containers of plant-based meals like stews, risottos, lasagne, pasta dishes and cakes which people pay using an honour system...something that one normally sees in country towns or farms.

Saša's agronomy skills have been put to good use with him growing many of the ingredients in their garden using organic principles. These are grown throughout the year and include spinach, silver beet, lettuce, tomatoes, cabbages, zucchinis etc.

Antonia turns these vegetables, pulses and grains into dishes with names such as 'Cauldron of Nourishment', 'Self Love' and 'Life's Purpose' stews. And a meal is not complete without some sweet desserts like homemade chocolates and raw vegan cakes.

They have expanded their business and in 2018 were providing their creations at several other Canberra outlets including Dickson Health Food store, Ainslie IGA Supermarket and the Capital Region Farmers Markets at Mitchell. They also cater on regular basis for the ANU and occasionally for different government departments.

Saša and Antonia have certainly weaved their magic to create a true sense of community in Hackett.

Mount Majura

Mount Ainslie Majura Protection Association

Mount Majura was practically tree-less and barren until it was reserved from grazing in 1919 to permit the natural regeneration of the native species, with the idea of forming a fodder tree reserve. With this end in view about 20,250 trees, mostly kurrajongs, were planted during the years 1919 and 1920. The natural growth consists of mountain oak, wattles, stringybark and gums. (CTime 21 June 1927 p 1)²¹⁶

In early November 1976, the NCDC announced a proposal to use the foothills of Mount Majura and Mount Ainslie for low and medium density housing. This proposal resulted in swift action by the community to oppose such in-fill.

On 24 November 1976, a group of residents organised a public meeting which was attended by about 350 people. From this meeting a committee was formed with the task of advising the Minister for the Capital Territory, the level of community opposition and to ask that he declare the whole area down to the level of the existing houses as a Nature Reserve: in Hackett this proposal would come down to the houses backing Mount Majura along MacKenzie, Rivett, Richards, Verco and Jukes Streets.

This committee would subsequently be known as the Mount Ainslie Majura Protection Association (MAMPA) and met with the Minister to convey the objections of the community. The Trades and Labour Council also supported MAMPA's position of no in-fill and that the area be preserved.

By early December 1976, a petition against the in-fill with 4,000 signatures, was presented to both Houses of Parliament. The MAMPA asked the NCDC to provide details of their proposal and any alternate plans but did not receive responses. The MAMPA commented that 'it would appear that the proposals have been put forward without being properly researched beforehand.' MAMPA organised another meeting (probably late 1976) at the Ainslie Primary School at which representatives from the NCDC attended and talked to over 400 people.

In February 1977, the NCDC mounted a public exhibition in several places across Canberra where they provided information about the proposed in-fill. At the same time MAMPA organised its own public display and invited Canberrans to sign another petition which received over 2,000 signatures.²¹⁷

Monash Drive

The proposal to build a road along the base of Mount Majura-Mount Ainslie had its origins with Walter Burley Griffin, as noted in an ACT Archives '*Find of the Month*', [March 2015](#)

'The Road That Never Was'

Walter Burley Griffin's 1925 'Statutory Plan for Canberra' outlined a road running along the base of Mount Majura and Mount Ainslie, linking Canberra's northern suburbs with the City. In May 1956, the Commonwealth Government gazetted this road as 'Monash Drive'.

By the 1960s, while still unconstructed, maps showed Monash Drive extending from the end of Stirling Avenue in Hackett, to the east of Ainslie and Campbell, terminating at Morshead Drive near Russell. Despite being planned for so long, the proposed road finally became a contentious issue with residents during the mid 1970s. Its construction, flagged to begin in the early 1980s, would remove the easy access people enjoyed to Mount Majura and Mount Ainslie. There was also a wider concern about the visual impact a proposed housing development would have to the 680m line along the base of Mount Ainslie.

In December 1976, the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) released its proposal for this area as part of an overall urban infill plan taking in the suburbs of Ainslie, Hackett, O'Connor, Yarralumla, Campbell and Deakin and comprising over 2000 houses. In the National Capital Plan, the NCDC had zoned the vacant land between Monash Drive and the suburbs of Hackett, Ainslie and Campbell for over 1000 of these homes. This resulted in the formation of a residents' action group called The Mount Ainslie-Majura Protection Association who protested the development on the grounds of environmental and heritage concerns as well as the contradictions between the infill proposals and the Griffin Plan.'

The proposal to remove the road from the Territory Plan has been a drawn out process over several decades. The NCDC was abolished in 1989 and its functions transferred to the National Capital Authority (NCA), which is a Commonwealth statutory authority.

The road continued to be shown on maps, and in the mid 1990s it was considered from time to time by the ACT Legislative Assembly as shown by this exchange in late 1995:

'MR WOOD: My question is directed to Mr De Domenico in his capacity as Minister for Urban Services. In the letters to the editor in today's Canberra Times you state:

... there is no current proposal for Monash Drive being considered by the ACT Government nor, based on current plans, is there a likelihood of such a proposal in the next 10 to 15 years.

Why are you still holding over the heads of North Canberra residents a threat to build this road, when the former Government took action to see that this destructive road would never be built?

MR DE DOMENICO: I thank Mr Wood for his question. I do not think that I can make it any plainer than to say once again what the letter said. There are currently no proposals to build Monash Drive, and there appear not to be any proposals for the next 10 to 15 years. If I am still the Minister after 15 years and I change my mind, I will let you know.'

Source Legislative Assembly for the ACT: 1995 Week 11 Hansard (12 December)

In 19 October 2009, Zed Seselja asked the Minister for Planning, Andrew Barr, about Monash Drive. Mr Barr advised:

'On 19 March 2009, the ACT Chief Minister wrote to the Commonwealth Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon Bob Debus MP, seeking the NCA's agreement to remove Monash Drive from the National Capital Plan. The NCA advised that it agrees with the removal of Monash Drive - 'given the other transport planning and development that the Territory has undertaken'.

(2) The NCA will add the removal of Monash Drive to its work program for 2009-10 and has undertaken to discuss details around the removal with ACTPLA.

(3) The Government is committed to removing Monash Drive from the National Capital Plan.'

Source - Legislative Assembly for the ACT: 2009 Week 13 Hansard (12 November) QoN No 361Page. 5037

In 2009, the ACT Government requested that the NCA remove Monash Drive from the National Capital Plan. However, the removal was not a simple administrative decision.

The proposal would have to be considered by the NCA Board. If the board agreed to propose an amendment, the NCA would issue a draft amendment to the Plan for public consultation. The consultation period would run for 30 business days and include a consultation forum.

Following consultation, the NCA would then consider public comments and alter the draft amendment in response to comments made. A consultation report is then issued to the public along with the modified draft Amendment. After that, a recommendation is made to the Commonwealth Minister for Home Affairs that the Plan be amended.

In October 2009, Draft Amendment 72 was brought to the NCA Board and was supported on the provision that the ACT '*provide the NCA with the relevant traffic modelling and environmental assessments to support the amendment.*' This information has never been provided by the ACT Government.

In 2014 the NCA released a report about the National Capital Open Space System. At a February 2014 hearing of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories, the status of Monash Drive came up. The following exchange between ACT Labor Senator Kate Lundy and Andrew Smith, Chief Planner, NCA, highlights the complexity of the process:

'Senator LUNDY: We discussed it at length at a previous inquiry, so that is not quite right.

Mr Smith: So this report is proposing a seven-year review with community engagement at each of those seven-year terms.

Senator LUNDY: Just one more question: does this finally resolve the issue of Monash Drive and remove Monash Drive from the plan?

Mr Smith: We have asked for some information on that removal proposed by the ACT government, and that information has not been forthcoming. So we are still waiting on that.

Senator LUNDY: Okay, but are the recommendations in this report likely to be able to address the continued presence of Monash Drive on the plan?

Mr Smith: No, because from the land-use point of view Monash Drive is a road—kind of independent—and roads are allowed in the NCOSS.

Senator LUNDY: So that is a separate process?

Mr Smith: That is a separate process.'

Source - Official Committee Hansard, Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories National Capital Authority. Thursday, [13 February 2014](#).

As at mid 2018, Monash Drive still remains on the National Capital Plan, but the ACT Government indicated that by the end of 2018, it will ask the National Capital Authority to formally remove it from the Plan.

Not all people were against the Monash Drive. In 1969, a Mr H of Hackett wrote to the Canberra Times wanting to know when Monash Drive would be built as it would ‘cut travelling time for Hackett residents’ travelling to Russell. Mr H also asked if the ‘road to the top of Mount Ainslie could be extended to Hackett and so give an approach from both sides.’ The NCDC said work ‘was not expected to begin before the late 1970s.’ They also said that the Mount Ainslie summit road could continue to Hackett as there were no physical impediments. ‘But as Mount Ainslie was a visitor attraction the road had been built to give access from an arterial road serving many areas of the city.’²¹⁸

Friends of Mount Majura

they have treated well over 20,000 woody weeds such as cotoneaster, firethorn, African olive and Cootamundra wattle

The Friends of Mount Majura (FoMM), is one of three ParkCare groups that undertake voluntary work on Mount Majura and Mount Ainslie Nature Reserves and neighbouring bushland.

Mount Ainslie Weeders work on Mount Ainslie, with their main efforts revegetating the old Ainslie Tip since 2008, removing invasive plants and monitoring rabbits.

The Watson Woodland Working Group (WWWG) focuses on the Justice Robert Hope Park on the western side of Antill Street, Watson. The park contains remnant Yellow box/Red gum grassy woodland and provides an important linkage between Watson and Mount Majura. FoMM and WWWG played a key role in lobbying the ACT Government and developer of The Fair in North Watson, to modify the proposal to protect the adjacent reserves, and promote a cat containment policy.

The three groups address the many issues associated with urban bushland areas such as pest plants and animals, illegal rubbish dumping, protecting native species and controlling erosion.

FoMM was founded in 2003 with the main aim to ‘promote the wellbeing of the natural and cultural heritage protected within the Mount Majura Nature Reserve.’

As at August 2018, FoMM had close to 250 subscribers on their mailing list, although between 10 and 15 people are more actively involved in on-ground conservation work. The group holds regular working parties which attract between 1 and 10 participants, unless it is a planting event on National Tree Day where they once had over 300 participants. For the financial years 2006-07 to 2012-13, the person hours spent on volunteering each year averaged over 4,400. This includes everything from on-ground work and monitoring (>80%) to administration, generating website content, promotion, funding applications, reporting, meetings, lobbying and training. If these people were paid \$30/hour then the average cost per year would be over \$132,000. (see plate 39)

FoMM’s main activity is controlling herbaceous and woody weeds which the group carries out within the whole Mount Majura Nature Reserve. In addition, the group undertook more intensive conservation work at 6 project sites that cover a combined area of approximately 30ha. They have planted around 800 local trees (Eucalyptus species, Drooping she-oak), over 2,000 local shrubs to replace woody weeds and well over 5,000 native ground cover plants that had been lost in the grassy woodlands. On top of the plantings, they have collected and direct-seeded a combined area of approximately 15ha with thousands of native grass and forb seeds; unfortunately the forbs and grass do not prevail due to overgrazing by rabbits and kangaroos.

In any one year the FoMM conduct 2-4 field activities every month including:

- weed removal e.g. Paterson’s curse, saffron thistle, horehound, St John’s wort and woody weeds
- planting seedlings, mulching and installing guards to protect plants
- monitoring pest plants and animals
- work to control erosion and track maintenance
- collecting seeds of native grasses and shrubs.

In addition to this work, the group has conducted guided walks and Environment Day events to showcase the work at project sites, created and help to maintain a walking track behind ‘The Fair’ housing complex, Watson, and undertook monitoring of the impact of grazing by kangaroos, rabbits and hares on grasses and herbs.

Removal of exotic plants

While predominantly covered in native species, parts of Mount Majura have been invaded by exotic plants which have come from nearby suburban gardens by either deliberate dumping by householders, or by the seeds being spread by birds.

Some garden escapes such as English ivy, periwinkle or Japanese honeysuckle, can grow from stems after being dumped as garden waste. Birds spread seeds in their droppings after eating the berries of woody plants such as hawthorn, broad-leaved privet, cotoneaster, firethorn or African olive. These species are one of the biggest weed problems since gardens and public land provide a continuous source of these weeds.

Since FoMM started, they have treated well over 20,000 woody weeds such as cotoneaster, firethorn, African olive and Cootamundra wattle. For instance, each year they have removed around 300 privet, 30 nettle trees and 20 other woody weed seedlings from a very small site along the drainage line below the Hackett water reservoir behind Rivett Street. They started work there in 2006 which means $12 \times 350 = 4,200$ woody weeds. This comes on top of the initial removal of large amounts of honeysuckle, English ivy, firethorn and other weeds from this small part of the drainage line.

The FoMM target many herbaceous weeds including St John's wort, horehound, Paterson's curse, thistles of all kinds, mustards, capeweed, serrated tussock and African lovegrass. There are numerous other herbaceous weed species which they tackle either regularly, such as blackberry and nightshade (nearly gone), or opportunistically. Over the years they have probably treated millions of these species. (see plates 37 and 38)

Many herbaceous weeds require a persistent and consistent approach over many years. For instance, work to control St John's wort behind Rivett and Mackenzie Streets in an area approximately 100ha started in 2006. Seeds of this species survive 13 years which means they have followed up the initial weed treatment each year for at least 10 years. The area behind Rivett Street where they began treatment now requires little work.

Rehabilitating a former sheep camp

One area on the saddle between Mount Majura and Mount Ainslie, known as the 'Old Sheep Camp', has been an on-going project for FoMM since 2004. When Mount Majura was grazed from the 1860s to 1970s this site was used by sheep as a resting site. The nutrients from their droppings created a suitable environment for exotic weeds like horehound to grow. Since 2004 the group has removed over 30 truckloads of weeds from this site and replanted the area with native species. In the first 4 years after initial weeding they spent approximately 300-400 hours per year as it takes quite an effort to deplete the weed seed bank. In the last couple of years FoMM now spends only 20 hours per year hand weeding at this site. (see plate 40)

Explaining Change – Mount Majura

The aim of this project was to demonstrate the relative importance of climate and of herbivore grazing on the ground vegetation of the grassy woodlands of Mount Majura.

This project began in late October 2009 and involves an 'Animal Sieve' and the monitoring of the ground vegetation layer over a number of years. The Animal Sieve divides an area of grassland into three small 10m x 10m plots. Specially designed fencing keeps kangaroos out of one plot but allows rabbits (and hares) in. It keeps both kangaroos and rabbits out of the second plot. It allows both to graze in the third plot. The native Eastern grey kangaroo and the introduced (European) rabbit are the two main herbivores that graze the grasslands of the Reserve.

Comparing the plot grazed by rabbits only and the plot grazed by rabbits plus kangaroos after 4 years, clearly demonstrated that kangaroo grazing far exceeds that of rabbits. Even under very favourable rainfall conditions (October, 2010 onwards), the grazing induced changes to the grassland persisted.

Therefore, without managing kangaroo population, the grassy woodlands of Mount Majura Nature Reserve will remain a marsupial lawn and will eventually disappear.

Mapping of rabbit warrens

Starting in 2008/09, FoMM worked with the Mount Ainslie Weeds and WWWG to map rabbit warrens. The groups initially trained each other in the use of GPS units before working with the ACT Parks and Conservation Service to provide assistance with training volunteers. In the mapping season 2011-12, 55 volunteers spent 754 hours mapping 1,167 warrens over more than 1,300 hectares across the three reserves and adjacent bush land, and recorded the data in a format that has been used to assist control programs. In addition they spent 343 hours training, processing the data and project coordination. This integrated approach was very successful and has become a model for how Land- and ParkCare volunteers can assist rabbit control programs in the ACT.

Nomination for National Landcare Awards

The three groups were nominated as one of 88 finalists in the National Landcare Awards in 2012 for their significant contribution towards community education and on ground works towards combating local environmental issues. Commencing in 1991, the Awards celebrate the achievements of individuals and groups that make a valuable contribution to the land and coast where they live and work.

FoMM has been recognised for the substantial conservation work with a number of awards and nominations for awards such as the ACT Landcare Awards 2007 (Community Group Award), the ACT Sustainable Cities Awards 2008 (Urban Habitat), the ACT Landcare Award 2009, and the ACT Volunteer of the Year Award 2006, 2009, 2018 (Environment).

Educational programs

Beside their conservation work, FoMM also organised a public lecture series in 2008 ‘Hilltop to Backfence’ covering a range of local environmental issues and exploring biodiversity at our doorstep. The group continues to organise guided walks at Mount Majura with experts on ants, birds, trees, spiders and wildflowers.

Sources

Friends of Mount Majura <http://majura.org/>

Mount Ainslie Weeders <http://actlandcare.org.au/taxonomy/term/505>

Watson Woodland Working Group <https://www.northcanberra.org.au/watson-woodlands-working-group-2/>



Tree walk 2006 (photo: Walruad Pix, FoMM)

Neighbourhood Watch

Neighbourhood Watch in Australia was started by Victorian police in 1983. It aimed to lower crime rates by getting community members to protect their property and personal safety and to take a greater interest in the welfare of their neighbours and community. In the same year, the idea was taken up by ACT Police, who promoted Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) with radio announcements and letterbox drops. When a suburb had 200 people signed up, police set up a committee and then handed over responsibility to them. In the initial years of NHW in the ACT, the police continued to play a major role in its overall management, and this is still the case in other jurisdictions. In the ACT, however, for legal reasons, it was necessary to establish NHW as a separate organisation.



NHW came to Hackett in the mid 1980s. Initially, two areas were established:

- NHW Hackett 84 was set up in 1985 covering the southern part of the suburb in the area closest to Ainslie.
- NHW Hackett 85 followed in 1986 and covered the area around the shops plus some of Watson.

Four years later, in 1990, ACT Police reorganised NHW borders, and created one NHW area for all Hackett, and, since then, it has been known as NHW Area Hackett 84/85. The Watson section of Hackett 85 was hived off as a separate area.

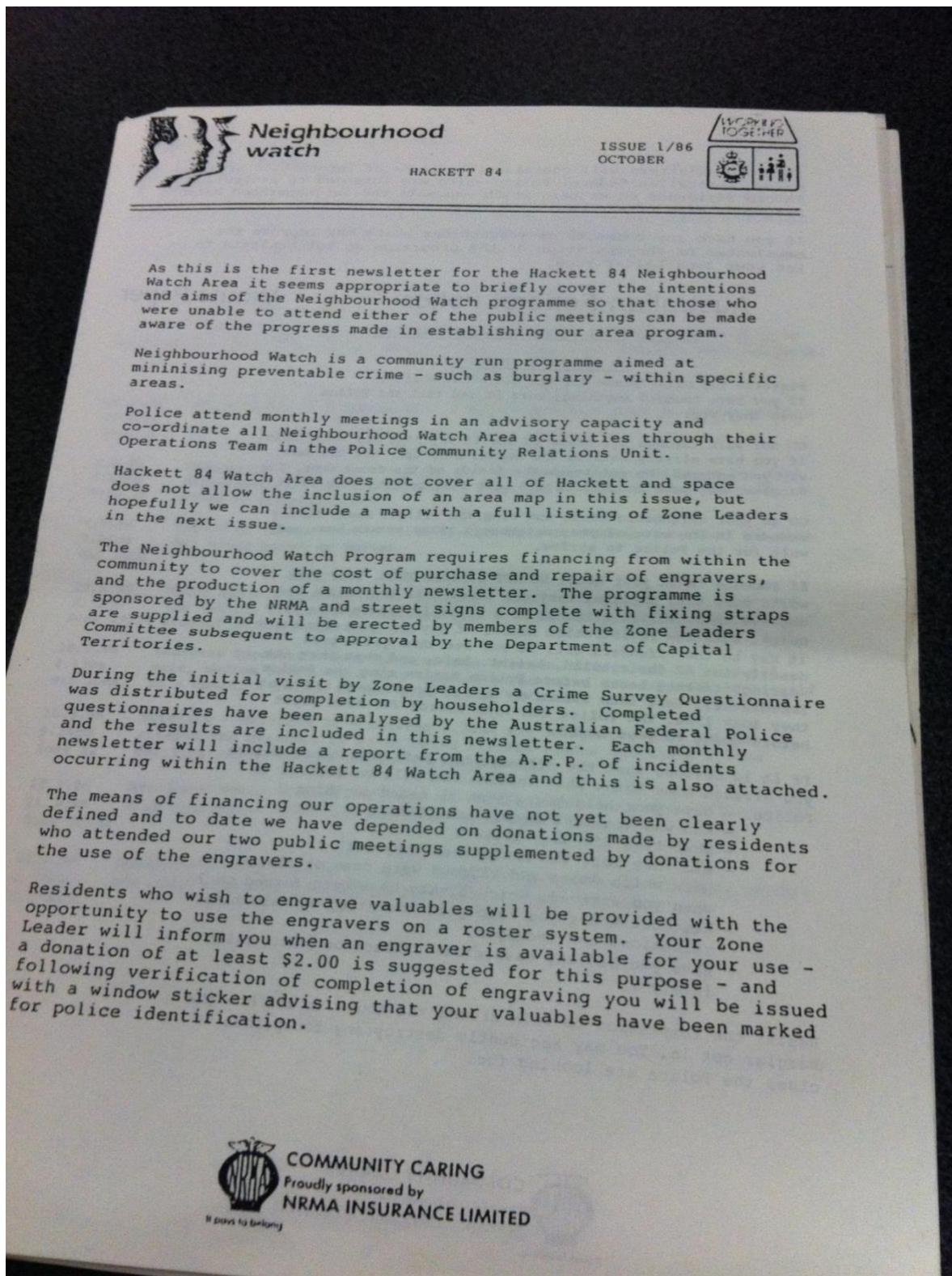
When Area 85 was established in 1986, police first called a meeting at the old primary school on 7 May to explain NHW aims – protection of residents and their property - and how it worked – marking valuables, looking after your neighbours and being careful about security. Community support was massive and the hall was overflowing with residents. Police called for volunteers and a follow up meeting on 14 May set up a committee, appointed an area coordinator (chairperson), a secretary, and three sub-committees to manage finance, newsletter publication, and engravers.

A first, one-off, job facing the new committee was to erect NHW signs on the suburb's power poles. They were provided free under a sponsorship deal with Tattersall's, but NHW had to do the actual job of climbing power poles and strapping them on with metal tape. The signs set up in 1986 lasted for 18 years, after which many were bleached white by the sun and needed replacement. On that occasion NHW had to pay for the new signs itself.

Erecting the replacement signs was not as easy as it had been in 1986. In the meantime, ACTEWAGL had been set up, and declared its poles to be “worksites”, subject to “occupational health and safety” regulations, and there was no way it was going to allow elderly gentlemen from NHW to climb them. For a while, it looked as though NHW might have to pay contractors to do the work, but then it had a stroke of luck; in 2004 the *Canberra Times* published a photo of a certain ACT Government minister, up a ladder and affixing a NHW sign to a power-pole in a newly established area. After that, ACTEWAGL compromised and erected the signs for NHW, at no cost.

The three on-going jobs of the new committee were to produce a monthly newsletter, to assist Hackett residents to mark their valuable belongings, and to generate some funds to finance activities. By today's standards, newsletter production in the 1980s was archaic. A paper master copy was produced on a typewriter, and, in those early days, the term “cut and paste” meant real paper, real scissors, and real paste. Publishing software has made things much easier today. The editor then had to hand-deliver the master to the printer. Printing costs were surprisingly low. Those were the days before the concept of “corporate governance” had entered our lexicon, and the newsletter was produced as a “pirate job” by the in-house printers of a certain government department in the parliamentary triangle, and it only cost NHW a slab of beer delivered to their back door. Alas, it now has to pay commercial rates.

Initially, the newsletter was a folded A4 sheet giving the month's crime statistics, articles about security and a few advertisements. In the late 1980s, the then editor, the late Terry Holden, increased the newsletter size to a folded A3 sheet, and invited contributions from residents. There were sufficient advertisements in the newsletter to cover the extra cost of printing.



First newsletter published October 1986

Today, the centre piece of each newsletter is the police report, a summary of crimes reported in Hackett in the previous month (except domestic incidents). Police, send the raw data to NHW, and the newsletter editor makes a summary for Hackett and nearby suburbs. Other items in the newsletter include notices of forthcoming activities, such as activities of the Hackett Community Association, working parties for Friends of Mount Majura, local news and information to increase resident safety and security. Recent editions have included a profile of a Hackett resident.

Current newsletter circulation comprises over 1,300 paper copies delivered to homes and units in Hackett plus about a dozen electronic copies emailed to Federal and ACT politicians representing north Canberra. It is also posted on the internet, although, at the direction of police, without the crime statistics. From time to time there is talk of producing only an electronic newsletter, and emailing it to residents. This obviously would save time and effort, but is there is still a strong preference for a paper copy, particularly from older residents.

Producing a paper newsletter, however, brings with it the labour intensive task of distribution, something that hasn't changed since the first days of NHW and that hasn't been helped much by the internet. Someone still has to drive out to Mitchell each month to collect the newsletters and bring them back to Hackett. Bundles of newsletters are then counted for each zone, and then distributed to the people who walk the streets, putting them into letterboxes.

The second on-going job was to acquire about a dozen electric engravers and lend them out to residents so they could mark their valuable possessions, such as TVs, computers, and anything that might be stolen. Residents were advised to engrave their valuables with a unique identifier, namely the letter "A" (for ACT) followed by their drivers licence number. This gives a unique identifier that enables police anywhere in Australia to immediately identify the true owner of any item they suspect is stolen. Initially Peter Coen and then, for many years, Volker Hillig held the stock of engravers, and lent them out to residents as required, but technology changes, and today's recommended method of marking is to use an invisible ink marker.

Apart from free street signs and promotional material, Hackett NHW was on its own from the beginning as far as finance was concerned. There was a collection at the first public meeting, and, for many years after its start-up, donations collected at an annual sausage sizzle held at the shops. Annette Wurm and her late husband Wally were driving forces in this enterprise, the sausages being donated by the supermarket. Some income also came from donations made by people borrowing engravers.

The major source of revenue, however, has come from advertising in the newsletter. Given its relatively small circulation, it's perhaps surprising that there has never been a shortage of tradesmen and small businesses wanting to advertise in it. For tradesmen living in Hackett, its great attraction is that any jobs in the suburb involve virtually no travelling time. Indeed, NHW often has to reject requests from would-be advertisers due to lack of space, because advertising is limited to one page, and it's usually full. On a few occasions, NHW has rejected requests because it was dubious about the quality of the service to be advertised or the qualifications of the service provider.

Over its first two decades, the NHW committee held monthly meetings, at first in the primary school, then later in Dickson College and Holy Cross Church Annex. Meetings followed a standard format: minutes, sub-committee reports, and then the crime report for the suburb, the last usually delivered by a police officer. Sometimes there was a talk from a guest speaker, usually 20 minutes or less. And everything had to be finished within 60 minutes. That was the iron-rule of NHW meetings; they had to finish within the hour.

In 2002, some Hackett residents were invited as guest speakers to give talks on their area of interest or expertise. Topics included railways, aircraft design, a wartime escape (an ex RAAF Hackett resident shot down over Holland in WWII), design faults in the RMS Titanic, gardening design, residential aged care, land salinity and music therapy. This was popular with residents and attracted great numbers to NHW meetings. For various reasons, in later years, public meetings were discontinued and the size of the executive fell away to its present size of only three: a chair, Dorothy Mackenzie, newsletter editor Barbara Inglis, and treasurer, Pat McNamara.

In past years, a committee of this size might have been too small, but in the age of the internet it's adequate to keep things ticking over. The email was a wonderful invention, and is an effective substitute for a monthly meeting. In many ways, it is quicker and more effective. Otherwise, support for NHW in Hackett is still strong. NHW has about 90 members who have received police security clearance, of whom just over 40 are actively involved in delivering newsletters each month, and about a dozen businesses that give financial support by advertising in it. Great credit is due to both groups.

Compared to some areas in Canberra, Hackett NHW has done very well since its inception. Other areas have closed down, or produce only a few newsletters each year, but Hackett has put out a monthly newsletter, without break, since 1985. Even so, members of the current committee are all senior citizens, and new blood will be needed if operations are to continue.

Unfortunately, long term statistics on crime in Hackett are not available for the last 30 years, but, even if they were, it would be difficult to discern the exact effect of NHW, because so many other factors affect crime levels. From time to time there have been upward spikes in one type of offence or another but, generally speaking, Hackett has been a safe and low crime area over all these years.

Well then, what difference has NHW made to Hackett? First, it has definitely made residents much more aware of the need for security. As one long-time resident recently commented, ‘until the start of NHW most people were not aware of the dangers that lurk in our suburbs. We lived in our cosy houses and didn’t worry about security for ourselves, our families, or our property. People often left doors and windows open when they went out.’ At the very least, then, NHW has made people security conscious; they take care to secure their own property and valuables, and, look out for their neighbours.

Second, NHW has helped develop social networks among residents. In addition to NHW itself, its newsletter has operated as a virtual ‘village newspaper’, keeping residents informed of local activities, and it has promoted the work of other groups, like the Hackett Community Association. The end result is that more Hackett residents know each other, and this leads to greater sense of community, and, one hopes, it makes Hackett a happier and safer place to live.

The following table shows residents of Hackett who have been committee members of Hackett NHW since its inception in 1984. There are no lists of committee members extant, so apologies if anyone’s name has inadvertently been omitted.

Alan Asquith	Keith Gorman	Chris Pilgrim
Bruce Barrie	Bruce Hall	Don Richards
Arthur Binns	Volker Hillig	Paul Robinson
Peter Coen	Terry Holden	Merelyn Southwell-Keely
Paul Cornelly	Barbara Inglis	Michael Southwell-Keely
Jan Focken	Peter Leonard	Sarah St Vincent-Welsh
Yolanta Gallagher	Frank Levi	Anthony Thompson
Roseanne Garrison	Dorothy Mackenzie	Anne Wantenaar
Francis Hessler	Patrick McNamara	Annette Wurm
John Gill	David McReynolds	Walter Wurm
Carmel Gray	Anthony Overs	Jochen Zeil

In addition to committee members, Hackett NHW has relied on the many stalwart residents who have delivered newsletters, many of them for years and years. Their willing and unstinting support has been vital for the continued publication of the newsletter without a break since Hackett NHW was formed.

Samaritan House

'in excess of 6,500 men have accessed the House and been supported by the program'

Samaritan House is located in Hackett near the local shops and is operated by the St Vincent de Paul Society of Canberra/Goulburn. It provides crisis accommodation, drop in and referral support for males in Canberra who are homeless or at the risk of homelessness. The first St Vincent de Paul homeless shelter opened in MacKay Gardens, Turner in 1958 and provided overnight accommodation, meals, showers and clothes. It closed in 1972 when Ainslie Village began providing crisis accommodation.

The need for crisis accommodation and support continued to rise, and following a government investigation, Samaritan House was tasked to meet that need. The four staff enabled the House to operate 24/7 opening its doors on 27 April 1995 and being full ten days later. Statistics indicate that the House operated at over 100% occupancy until the ACT Government began to control the access to the House through "First Point" (now Onelink).

The building that Samaritan House occupies was specially built for The Richmond Fellowship. After 10 years of providing support to youth, the building was handed to the ANU for student accommodation. The building was conveniently vacant in 1995 ready for its new mission.

The thirteen beds in Samaritan House are the only crisis accommodation for men in the ACT. For this reason, Samaritan House must continue to be "crisis accommodation". Resident's stays need to be short term only and residents must be actively seeking long term/permanent accommodation options. The main referral options for Samaritan House residents include Ainslie Village and Havelock House. Canberra's accommodation shortages pose a significant hurdle in this quest.

In the 23 years Samaritan House has been operating, in excess of 6,500 men have accessed the House and been supported by the program. During a stay, men are provided accommodation, case management, assistance with applying for and accessing longer term accommodation, access to supports consistent with identified needs (whether that be physical health, disability, mental health, drug and alcohol, legal, family, or trauma supports), access to food, showers, washing machine, computers and internet, transport, living skills assistance and development, (including meals, personal hygiene, maintaining their accommodation, interpersonal skills to exist with other residents in communal living).

In addition to the wider St Vincent de Paul Society homelessness support systems, including the Night Patrol Van, Street to Home and Blue Door programs, the Samaritan House Team now consists of a Coordinator, Case Manager, nine Duty Managers and six volunteers who staff the premises and are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The program is designed to work from a strength based, person centred model, utilising case management supports for the residents. The aim of the House is to provide a supported environment where staff are available to listen to the guests and walk with them as they access support so as to re-establish themselves in a stable life in the community. Many services, organisations and agencies, in addition to the Hackett community, make up a vast network that assists in this task.

If people would like to assist in any way they should contact Vinnies through its website www.vinnies.org.au.

Local Youth Groups

Majura Brownies and Girl Guides

As the suburbs of Hackett, Dickson, Downer and Watson were being rapidly developed in the mid 1960s, community groups were taking action to make their presence felt. The girl guides were one such group. In October 1963 they held a meeting at the Downer Primary School and formed the Mount Majura District Girl Guides. It initially had one Guide company and one Brownie pack.²¹⁹

In 1966 the Commonwealth Government provided a grant to help the Black Mountain Girl Guide district build its own hall in Clianthus Street, O'Connor. At the opening of this hall on 19 July 1966, the Black Mountain district gave a cheque of \$2,000 to Mount Majura to go towards its own guide hall. The Canberra Times reported that the then Minister for the Interior, Doug Anthony, 'promised \$1 for every \$2 the local association raised to build a hall for the Mt Majura district.'²²⁰

It would almost three years before the Mount Majura Guide Hall was opened on 22 February 1969 in Holtze Close, at the southern end of the Hackett Oval (see plate 41). The opening ceremony was attended by past and current members of the Mount Majura Guides. The Canberra Times noted that guides and brownies from other groups across Canberra would attend and be dressed in the uniforms of guides from the UK, USA, an Asian country and an African country. The guides would speak about the countries they represented.²²¹

The hall would continue to be used for another 27 years until the guides moved out in 1996. Today the building is used by the Christian Community Church (refer to The Christian Community, Holtze Place).



Source - Girl Guides badge courtesy Suzi Leverington

Happy memories of Majura Brownies by Beryl Miller

As a young girl in Britain I have happy memories of the Girls' Life Brigade but I never had any contact with the Brownies until I came to Australia and my eight year old daughter, Catherine, joined the Fifth Majura Pack of Brownies in 1973. They met each week for an hour and a half in the hall next to the Hackett oval in Madigan Street.

After a few weeks Margaret Young, who was Brown Owl at the time, asked me if I would be willing to be her assistant. I said 'yes' after some thought and that's how I became Tawny Owl of the Fifth Majura Pack. They were a great bunch of girls and I never remember any unpleasantness or bad behaviour.

We encouraged the girls to come with a neatly pressed uniform, clean yellow scarves and clean hands and nails. Perhaps that sounds old fashioned these days, but we thought it helped their self-esteem.

The girls joined wholeheartedly in all the activities, singing, games, working for badges etc. Some girls gained a whole armful of badges. We knitted squares to make bed covers for a group house, made cards for Mothers' Day and Christmas.

We had some outings to the former zoo on Macks Reef Road, the swimming pool in Dickson, for the swimmers badge and Innabanya Guide [Camp](#) site at the base of the eastern side of Mt Majura.

Later, when Margaret Young retired I became Brown Owl. I know some Brownies went on to become Guides and others had interests in different directions, but I hope they all had happy memories of their time as Brownies.

Scouts

'Over its first forty years, over 600 boys and girls from Hackett have been members of the Hackett group'

The following information was compiled from earlier research carried out by Gwenda Hollis, Assistant Scout Leader, as well as information provided by John Hood and Craig Robilliard.

Scouts started in the Hackett area in 1962/63 when the ACT was part of the NSW branch of the scout movement. All groups at that time were designated by the title 'Canberra' and a number indicating the date of formation. Some present day groups still retain that early title, such as 1st Canberra (O'Connor), 13th Canberra (Turner) and 19th Canberra (Downer).

The Hackett group were originally 7th Canberra, and first formed in January 1962. They met initially in the Youth Centre at Corroboree Park, Ainslie, with 21 cubs and 12 scouts.

In September 1964, the 7th Canberra was promised a site in Hackett by the NCDC at the corner of Phillip Avenue and Madigan St. A Hall Committee was formed and set about fund raising. On 29 March 1965, the 7th Canberra Group was officially redesignated 1st Hackett. However, as noted in the previous section about the Majura Brownies and Guides, a Girl Guide's hall was built in Holtze Place - a dedicated hall for scouts was not built in Hackett. 1st Hackett used the Ainslie scout hall at first before using Watson's new hall before amalgamation with 1st Watson in 1975.

The 1st Hackett's scarf was green with brown stripe.

In April 1966 the members of the Group first began what was to become a major source of funds – the collection of empty bottles for cash; egg cartons were also collected. This activity continued to be a fundraising activity for almost 15 years. The sight of scouts and their parents stacking bottles at the Ainslie Transfer Station, was a commonplace for many years. (pers. comm John Hood)

Sat 14 May 1966 / Page 18 / Advertising

HACKETT residents support Hackett Scouts and cubs, save bottles, egg cartons for quarterly drive. Phone 491839 for special pickup. 1439	JUMBLE sale Ainslie Hall Saturday 2.30pm, OSCR.	Supply me with their name and address, as the urgency of the matter in question requires their immediate attention, as well as mine; entirely a good result will be realised. B. G. STUART
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Source Canberra Times 29 October 1966 ²²²

In May 1972 the first Watson/Hackett joint committee meeting was held. The records show that the idea of amalgamation was accepted at that date, even though formal amalgamation did not take place until 1975. A joint committee meeting between the two groups, dated 25 May 1972, records the suggestion that the new name could be 1st Majura. This was not adopted, however, until late 1975. One reason for this may have been the fact that 'Mt Majura' was used as a District name, of which both Hackett and Watson were part. However, the district name was changed in November 1974, to become Mt Ainslie District, and the name Majura Scout Group was adopted by Hackett and Watson in October 1975. Thereafter, the history of 1st Hackett became part of the Majura Mountain Scouts.

The Majura Scout Group was given permission by ACT Scouts to adopt a program dedicated to the alpine/mountain environment and to rename itself Mountain Scouts of Majura. This was to be equivalent to Sea Scouts and Air Scouts, groups that specialise in sea and air environments. Some years later, 19th Canberra Scouts (Downer) joined the Mountain Scouts of Majura and the group adopted a modified group scarf. The program and name change had taken place before this amalgamation.

Over its first forty years, over 600 boys and girls (girls could join the scouts from 1971) from Hackett have been members of the Hackett group. (pers. comm John Hood). In 2018 the group had about 100 youth members in 6-7 years Joeys, 8-10 years Cubs, 11-14 years Scouts and 15-17 years Venturers. Over the last ten years, Mountain Scouts of Majura would have had about 300 youth members in the group, moving through each of the sections. The groups meet at their hall in Watson. In 2003 the group helped to celebrate Hackett's 40th anniversary by raising the former 1st Hackett's flag by youth members dressed in the original uniforms and scarf of 1st Hackett. Today, Mountain Scouts of Majura conducts many activities on Mt Majura including navigation, bushcraft, nature appreciation, games and helping the Friends of Mount Majura.

Leaders and committee members

The success of any community based organisation is largely due to the significant number of hours that volunteers commit over months and in some cases many years. This has certainly been the case with the various scout groups that have operated in Hackett and Watson since the 1960s. The identities of all the early leaders and committee members have not yet been discovered. However, the following are some of those involved as uniformed leaders and as committee members:

- The Cub Pack was led by Miss Dimpsey until January 1971. No record has yet been found of Miss Dimpsey's service before this date, and little is yet known of her. From 1971 until 1974, however, her place was taken by Wendy Griffin, who appears to have been a very effective and hard-working leader. Wendy's name appears frequently at Committee meetings, and she was farewelled at the Cub Christmas party in 1974. She was assisted from 1972 onwards by Mary-Anne Read (Mackenzie Street), who is first mentioned as a Cub Instructor before taking up a warrant as Assistant Cub Mistress.
- The earliest known Scout Master for Hackett was Dr Oliver Raymond (Bragg St), whose name is recorded during the years from 1970 to 1974. It is possible that Dr Raymond was Scoutmaster before 1970. At any rate, his contribution, like that of Wendy Griffin, was considerable. He was followed by Fred Turnbull (Hedley St) and then Hugh Collis (Selwyn St).
- During the period from 1970 to 1971, 1st Hackett's Group Leader was Robert McGregor. There is no record of his predecessor/s, and it is possible that he may have been the very first. His name does not appear from 1972 onwards, and there seems to have been a leadership vacancy until the arrival of Don Donnelly, who led the group from 1974 until sometime in 1975.
- As far as the Group Committee is concerned, Ian McDougal (Rivett St) was the Group President from 1973 to 1975, and before this, the position was held by Mr Backhouse (1970) Richard Lea (1971, Jukes St) and John Read (1972, McKenzie St).
- Hackett residents who have served as leaders in the group since 1st Hackett became Majura Scouts include:
 - Ken Hird, Newton Street. (Scout Leader and Cub Leader from mid 1970s to present.)
 - John Hood, Stanley Street. (Joey leader, 1988; Group Leader 1993 - 2003)
 - Bill Parkins, French Street. Group Leader 1985 - 1990
 - Lachlan Buchanan, Venturer Leader 1994 - 2002
 - Danielle Higgs, Joey Leader
 - Dr. John Knight, Maitland Street. Treasurer
 - Janette Condon, Committee, Rivett Street
 - Richard and Suzi Corney, Rivett Street
 - Dr. David Stevens, McKenzie Street



Billy cart derby 1971. (photo: John Hood)

State Emergency Service arrives in 2009

'The ACT State Emergency Service (SES) took its current form in 2004, following recommendations that came out of the 2003 Canberra Bushfires. However, it has existed in other forms since 1936.

In 1936 the Commonwealth and States agreed that a Civil defence organisation was required to ensure the States should protect the population against gas attack, and train personnel for essential civil services, such as rescue and evacuation management. To supplement State efforts, the Commonwealth agreed to train key personnel and provide equipment, manuals, technical information and key advice.

This was the start of the modern SES of today. Over the period 1936-1966 all states and territories established civil defence directorates. During the 1950s and 1960s Australia experienced destructive storms and floods. At this time no one agency had responsibility to manage these natural disasters. It became clear that the principles and skills of managing wide spread operations, that the Civil Defence already had, lent themselves very well to managing natural disasters. As such, the Civil Defence organisation started to manage the planning and response to storms and flood, yet in many cases, without the legislative authority.

This process remained unchanged until 1974 when the Natural Disasters Organisation (NDO) was established and services across Australia changed from Civil Defence to SES. For the ACT this saw the ACT Emergency Service created. Its focus was to undertake operations, in particular search and storm operations. Also at this time we changed our uniform from dark blue (and for about a two year period ACT wore white overalls) to orange.²²³ On the first July 2014 ACT Emergency Service changed its name and was recognised in ACT legislation as the ACT State Emergency Service.

'Made up almost entirely of volunteers, the ACTSES undertakes:

- community education activities, particularly in relation to storms and floods
- storm and flood planning, preparation and response, including the use of flood boats
- land-based missing person and evidence searches in support of the Australian Federal Police (AFP)
- air search in support of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA)
- Multi-Casualty Incident support to ACT Ambulance Service
- urban search and rescue in support of ACT Fire and Rescue (ACT F&R)
- the provision of portable power and lighting towers during emergencies
- a range of support at community and other events.

Their 300 volunteers, based at seven units across the ACT and the HQ Support Group, are able to provide community response to flood, storm, searches and other emergencies 24 hours a day, seven days a week.²²⁴

The Majura SES Unit moved into the former band hall, at Holtze Close, Hackett in 2009 (see plate 42). There are 50 members volunteers attached to this unit, ranging in age from 18 to 70. They meet once a week during which they do training. The training covers storm and flood, working at heights, search techniques with the AFP (missing person/forensic), first-aid, flood boat training, navigation training, driver training, chain saw training and operational management systems.

Since 2009, the Majura SES has been involved in storm and flood operations, missing person and forensic searches, interstate deployments (Newcastle floods, Tropical Cyclone Yassi, Brisbane floods, Victorian fires), community events and flood boat rescue.

The seven units across Canberra have common activities to all such as ability to do land searches, logistical support, community events and community education. In addition to these functions the Majura Unit has capacity to respond to storms and floods, and a specialist role of flood boat capability.

Other SES Units are located in the town centres of Belconnen, Gungahlin, Pialligo, Tuggeranong and Woden. Rivers SES is located in the Stromlo region while the Headquarters Support Group is collocated with the Belconnen SES Unit.

Source - ACT State Emergency Service

Churches

Land for the Holy Cross Anglican Church was provided by the Department of the Interior on the corner of Antill Street and Phillip Avenue, Hackett. A planning committee was formed in 1964 to consider the development of a church and other buildings on this site. But instead of going it alone, a collaborative proposal saw the St Margaret's Presbyterian Church agreeing to a combined building with the Holy Cross Church.

The first joint service between the Methodists and Presbyterians was held on 21 February 1967 at the Watson Primary School.

Construction commenced in early 1967 and the combined Church of the Holy Cross and the Parish Centre of St Margaret's were officially dedicated on 17 December 1967.

These two churches are the only remaining congregations from rival denominations in the Australian Capital Territory that continue sharing a church, hall and grounds, and on occasions ministers and even services.

St Margaret's Uniting Church

The Church was founded in 1964 as a shared congregation of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches in the then newly built North Canberra suburbs of Watson, Dickson, Downer and Hackett. In doing so it predated by over a decade the family of churches it now belongs to, the Uniting Church in Australia, which was formed in 1977 when the Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian churches came together.

Services were initially held in school rooms until the completion and official dedication of the Church building on 16 December 1967.

St Margaret's is home to Meg's Toybox, the major toy library for North Canberra, and the Stepping Stones for Life disability support organisation.

Meg's Toy Library offers toys, puzzles and games for children aged from three months to five years. Toys can be hired for as little as 50 cents per week to member families. Meg's Toy library had its origins in the late 1980s when a few church parents realised there was no toy library available to them, particularly on the northside of Canberra. With the help of the Uniting Church and St Margaret's in particular, they were able to start up a toy library for the community in late 1991. They have around 130-150 families each year. On average they hold around 800 toys for lending. In 2012 they received a grant from the ACT Government to provide improved storage facilities adjacent to the church who also contributed funds. It is opened for a couple of hours on Wednesday and Saturday.

Stepping Stones for Life has over time provided a range of support activities which commenced in 2001 as an initiative of St Margaret's Uniting Church.

Activities continue to be run by Stepping Stones for a group of people who are ageing or living with a disability. These include an exercise class, run in conjunction with the YMCA; a music group; and an art and craft group. A Book Club is operated at Ross Walker lodge and the residents there are also taken on regular informal outings.

For several years with the support of the ACT Community Services Directorate, Stepping Stones employed part time professional staff known as SSFL Family Facilitators who worked closely with families to support and advocate on their behalf. A major role was to work with designated families to help them plan and implement long term arrangements for the time when the parents are unable to continue providing the care which they have been giving for as many as 30, 40 or 50 years. With the advent of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), this role was transferred to Uniting Care and subsequently to Uniting working in conjunction with Capital Community Housing.

Stepping Stones has also been involved with people who have made the move to a level of independence. A number of those live in houses at Ainslie and Hackett. The most recent of these, the Hackett property known as Ross Walker Lodge, is located behind St Margaret's on church property and was constructed in 2011.

Holy Cross Anglican church

Philip Bligh has written a book titled, 'The story of Holy Cross: the first thirty-eight years in the life of a North Canberra Anglican church' which provides a comprehensive history of Holy Cross Church from its inception in 1963. Copies of this book can be viewed at the ACT Heritage Library, call number H 283.9471 BLIG.

Canberra Revival Centre

Speaking in tongues, or glossolalia, is a religious happening

On 7 April 1967,²²⁵ Mr Kirkwood of Gilbert St Hackett, applied to register the Canberra Revival Centre as an incorporated association in the ACT. The Centre conducted its services in the hall in the Hackett Primary School, before constructing (plate 43) its own building in 1972, at the corner of Maitland and Madigan Streets, across from the school. They also included two tennis courts on the land (plate 44).

Pastor Kirkwood became a regular writer of letters to the editor of the Canberra Times in the late 1960s and had several articles about the centre. In an article (2 August 1969²²⁶, p 3), the Pastor was quoted as saying that several members of the Centre could speak ‘in tongues.’ ‘Speaking in tongues, or glossolalia, is a religious happening which occurs to Christians as a sign of the spirit of Christ entering their bodies.’

In September 1976, the Centre was on the market for sale. Pastor Kirkwood was quoted in the Canberra *Times*²²⁷ as saying that the building was too small for the growing congregation. ‘It could take only about 200, while provision for 1,000 was needed to provide for the future.’ The NCDC was supportive of the Centre moving to larger premises elsewhere in Canberra so as to avoid ‘excessive parking blight.’ At the time the lease conditions for the block stated it could only be used ‘for church purposes’ under the *Church Lands Leases Ordinance*.

Knights of the Southern Cross

The Knights of the Southern Cross (KSC) is a Catholic male order that was founded in Sydney in 1919. It established a presence in the ACT in the mid 1970s. On 5 December 1977²²⁸, it finalised purchase of the former Canberra Revival Centre. At the time of purchase, the complex included a main hall that could seat 250, a smaller hall, several small rooms, kitchen, two tennis courts and parking for 50 cars.

The complex was used by the KSC as its Canberra office until October 1989 when they moved to new premises at Mackay Gardens, Turner. The building continued to be used by the KSC, as well as by the Canberra Montessori Society Montessori for a Children’s House until December 1991. The KSC were ‘seeking government approval for a change of use that would permit the organisation to construct medium-density housing.’ (CTimes 7 August 1991, p 16).²²⁹ No precise details could be found to determine when the buildings and tennis courts were demolished to make way for housing. However, in an article about Hackett in the Canberra Times of 28 February 1993,²³⁰ it noted that ‘New townhouse and unit development each side of the Hackett shops are now being occupied.’ This was probably referring to Madigan Gardens where the former Shell auto port was located, and Gerard Court where the KSC building and tennis courts were located – this suggests the later were demolished in late 1991 to early 1992.

The Christian Community, Holtze Place

The Girl Guides used the purpose built Girl Guides Hall in Holtze Place, at the southern end of the oval, up until 1996. The Christian Community in Canberra then sub-let the building from the Girl Guides starting in 1998. At the time, the lease did not provide for the building to be used as a place of worship (see plate 41). The Church was able to obtain a variation to the lease purpose clauses in mid 2018.

The Christian Community was founded as a worldwide movement for Christian Renewal in 1924 in Germany by a group of priests including ministers and theological students from other denominations, most notably the prominent German Lutheran preacher Friedrich Rittelmeyer. It was founded with the assistance of Austrian philosopher, social reformer, architect and esotericist Rudolf Steiner, and so has had a close association with the Orana Steiner School, Yarralumla.

There are three services a week and the building is sometimes used by other community groups, for activities including yoga, meditation and choir practice. For further information see their website <http://www.thechristiancommunity.net/canberra/>

9. HACKETT – 2000 to 2018

'Hackett in the future will be a neighbourhood that respects its rich garden suburb legacy and its close relationship with Mount Majura,...'

In many respects Hackett still retains the features that made it such an enjoyable place to grow up in the 1960-70s as reflected in the personal recollections. For example, many people talked about the enjoyment and freedom of exploring the bush on Mount Majura. In 2003 the ACT Government undertook community consultation as part of developing a neighbourhood plan for Hackett. One of the most popular features was Mount Majura and Mount Ainslie.

The efforts of the many Friends of Mount Majura are helping return the former grazing land back to what was present 100-150 years ago. Other people enjoy Mount Majura on foot, or riding their bikes over the ridge and head into the challenging rides offered in the Majura Pines on the eastern side of the mountain. Following their ride, many will return to the Hackett shops and enjoy a meal and refreshments at Wilbur's or Siam Twist, adding a sense of excitement and vigour to the centre. A contrast to the shops of the 1990s and early 2000s where there were numerous closures.

In the aerial photo of Hackett taken in 1963 (see chapter 3) one of the most striking features is the lack of trees, especially in the area between Antill St around to Phillip Avenue. Any trees planted at that time would have been only small saplings. Today, they provide cool shaded avenues during summer and then provide colourful tones as they change in autumn. Students from the Blue Gum School can often be seen walking along the streets studying the trees, or playing among the large eucalypts and pines near their school and the oval. In the same photo, the Hackett Oval trees can be clearly seen and appear to be well established before the suburb was built. While some have died, these trees provide one of the visually striking natural features of the suburb. There are very few ovals in Canberra that can offer such a backdrop.

The connections with the bush are also shown by the many eastern grey kangaroos that come from the bushland and move through the streets at night to enjoy the lush grass at the oval. Mobs of over 50 kangaroos have been observed, sometimes gathering at one end of the oval while waiting for the soccer players to finish their practice under the lights – an image of a true bush capital! Some residents speak fondly of the occasional kangaroo that spends the day in their front or back garden, instead of going back to the bush. While many do get killed attempting to cross the roads, the fact that they still move through our suburb after 50 years, is in part a positive legacy of the good planning in the 1960s which provided open spaces with connections to the bush.

Today, the suburb is changing for the better as new people move in, and renovate houses, or build completely new ones on the blocks affected by Mr Fluffy. New people, new families, new shops, people out and about walking, riding, taking the dog to the oval – all signs that Hackett is a community on the rise.

Development of the Hackett Neighbourhood Plan:

In 2003, the ACT Government undertook public consultation as part of its '*2003 Neighbourhood Planning Program - Watson, Hackett and Downer*' under the '*Garden City Variation V200*'. This document outlined 'ideas' for improving the three suburbs for which the following were proposed for Hackett:

'Key sites

Key site C – Hackett Shops

Currently includes Hackett Shops and curtilage roads.

'Consider community space as part of a redevelopment of the shops allowing shop style residential housing in addition to commercial use to assist in renewing the centre. Possible expansion east and west'

'Design and layout of current centre is a major constraint and consideration be given to complete redevelopment to achieve required renewal.'

'An (sic) positive expectation exists that the scope for complimentary new uses such as a greater range of convenience stores will follow with the success of increasing the population immediately surrounding the shops making a redevelopment feasible. (a neighbourhood level regeneration)'

Key site D – former Hackett School and grounds

Currently used by community groups including ACT Sports.

Represents an asset for future community need for education and local community use. Retain community use designation. Recognise under optimal use and obsolescence of building. Consider partial site for redevelopment. Retains the grounds associated with the former school and treat as accessible public space.

Opportunity sites

06 Opportunity Site – Sites adjacent Churches at corner of Antill and Philip Avenue

Allow ‘soft core’ redevelopment adjacent church sites in Sections 3 and 1 (part). Allow block amalgamations and unit titling.

07 Opportunity site – corner Phillip Avenue and Kellaway St.

Currently Hills, Ridges and Buffer Area land use policy allow redevelopment of this site with a sensitive low key development ideally suited to aged persons housing respected existing remnant trees and positive outlook to open space. The site is serviced by surrounding streets and presents an opportunity for contained development in keeping with surrounding suburban character.

Opportunity 8 –corner Phillip Ave and Madigan St

Currently part open space and community facility use the site represents an opportunity for redevelopment along a bus route and adjacent open space. The site is currently under utilised and the scout hall could be relocated into the former Hackett school site or purpose built on site with the advantage of being closer to the Hackett shops.

09 Opportunity 9 – section 11 Hackett

Allow ‘soft core’ redevelopment adjacent Phillip Ave taking advantage of wide treed divide, bus route and proximity to sports ground open space. Allow limited block amalgamations and unit titling. (section 11 is bound by Phillip Ave, Stott and Maitland Sts.)

Residential Core Areas

C2 Hackett residential core area

Residential Core Area to sections with immediate proximity to Hackett shops and along Madigan Street bus route and where blocks benefit from adjacency to Open Space. Allows multi-unit housing under certain circumstances. Allows subdivision of blocks and amalgamation of blocks. Attic and basements may be permitted in addition to 2 storeys.’

As part of the consultation process in April 2003, ACTLPA delivered a survey form to every house in Downer, Watson and Hackett (approximately 1,300 dwellings in Hackett). Around 150 forms (12% of dwellings), were returned from Hackett and a summary of the responses were later provided in a newsletter *Neighbourhood Planning in Watson, Downer and Hackett – your values and visions*. The responses included:

- **Hackett's favourite places** - Mount Majura/Mount Ainslie Nature Reserve; open space (Hackett oval, parks in Harris Street and Bragg/Brennan Street); Hackett shops; streetscape (McKenzie, Gilbert, French and Rivett Streets); Dickson (shops, library, pool, aged care centre); Hackett in general; Ainslie (football club, shops, pub); Watson (shops, Carlo's, Watson woodland).
- **What is the one thing Hackett would like to see more of?** improve the shops; increased protection and maintenance of Mount Majura; housing (maintenance of existing and quality of new); transport/traffic calming; lighting; maintenance of infrastructure (footpaths etc); birds; young people; peace and quiet; security; control of small business; reduced aircraft noise; underground power reticulation.

As well as the survey, ACTLPA held a workshop in May 2003 (details of the participants not found) that came up with three key visions for each suburb. For Hackett they included:

1. develop the corner of Phillip Avenue and Kellaway Street into either a retirement village or a town house-style residential development.

2. redevelop and revitalise Hackett's shops. The community's vision for this area incorporates multi-storey mixed commercial and residential use that includes community housing and facilities, underground parking, a pedestrian mall and open green space for community-based activities.
3. redevelop the old school site into a medium density integrated housing development, including small businesses, aged persons units and community gardens and facilities. Participants also voiced strong opposition to the previously proposed extension to Monash Drive.

As with many planning matters, there are often diverse views. In response to the proposals, the HCA held meetings and provided a collective response to the Residents Reference Group²³¹. In short the Hackett responses were:

- *'the whole suburb is freaked out' about the Design Team's Ideas Plan*
- *a majority of the attendees wished to see the Design Team's Ideas Plan removed from consideration*
- *softer development is required*
- *some options should be discussed*
- *there's been a 'big brother' mentality to the collaborations to date*
- *confusion over V 200 The Garden City Variation.'*

The HCA supported a group of Mackenzie St residents who were opposed to the proposal to develop the block at the corner of Phillip Avenue and Kellaway Street. The HCA also supported the Watson Community Association in providing comments about proposed medium development of the land on Stirling Avenue, Watson and the need to protect the Watson woodlands (now Justice Hope Park).



Open space corner Phillip Avenue and Kellaway Street. (photo: Chris Mobbs)

The end result of the consultation was the release in September 2004 of the *Hackett Neighbourhood Plan: a sustainable future for Hackett*. This plan sets out a Neighbourhood Vision for Hackett and strategies for achieving this vision:

'Hackett in the future will be a neighbourhood that respects its rich garden suburb legacy and its close relationship with Mount Majura, whilst striving to be a model of healthy, liveable, and sustainable living. It will continue to offer a quiet and safe suburban environment as well as maximise the benefits of its close proximity to Civic. The neighbourhood's parks will not only be conserved but also enhanced, and the local centre will be a thriving community and commercial heart serving the local neighbourhood.'

Key strategies for achieving the vision include:

- **Hackett Local Centre:** Support and enhance the community and commercial life of the Hackett Local Centre in order to continue to offer convenient local shopping and popular meeting places for the Hackett neighbourhood.
- **Residential Areas:** Promote high-quality residential development that is sympathetic and appropriate to the existing garden suburb neighbourhood character in terms of scale, form and landscape setting. Provide

a diversity of housing choice for singles, couples and families of different sizes and ages in appropriate locations.

- **Urban Open Space:** Redevelopment will not encroach on areas designated as Urban Open Space under the Territory Plan.
- **Community facilities:** Retain the integrity of land defined under the Territory Plan as Community Facility. **Movement networks:** Provide a diversity of accessible transport options.'



Bragg St park. (photo: Chris Mobbs)



Blue gum students exploring the trees near the oval. (photo: Maureen Hartung)



South-east Hackett close to Mount Ainslie, with Canberra City in distance. (photo: Chris Mobbs)

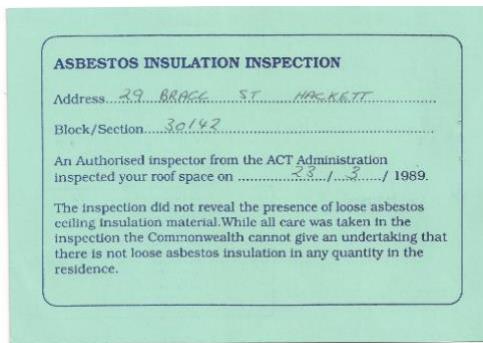
Mr Fluffy Homes

Insulate your home from between \$82-50.

The following section includes information from the ACT Asbestos Response Taskforce website
<http://www.asbestostaskforce.act.gov.au/home>

'Between 1968 to 1979, a company, D Jansen & Co. Pty Ltd and its successor firms, installed loose fill asbestos insulation in more than 1,000 homes throughout Canberra. The material comprised raw asbestos, crushed and blown into roof spaces and allowed to settle across the battens and ceilings, and behind the cornices. Mr Fluffy is the commonly used name for the asbestos fluff insulation.' An advertisement in the Canberra Times from 30 March 1968²³² showed that the cost for installation of Asbestosfluf was between \$82-50 for an average 11 square home.

From 1988 to 1993 the Commonwealth and ACT Governments undertook a jointly funded program to remove visible and accessible loose fill asbestos insulation from affected homes in the ACT. That program, designed by the Commonwealth before the commencement of self-government for the ACT in 1989, was largely delivered by the newly-formed ACT Government.' As part of this work, inspections were done of the roof cavity spaces of all houses built before and up to the end of 1979. Houses found to have no loose asbestos fibres received an *Asbestos Insulation Inspection certificate*.



Certificate courtesy C & B Mobbs

'In 2011, a house in Downer was discovered to have been missed in the 1988-1993 removal program. The house was subsequently purchased in 2012 and forensically deconstructed and demolished in 2013. The forensic deconstruction process revealed new information on the extent to which asbestos fibres had migrated through the structure of a house.' As a result of these findings, a program was announced in October 2014 which would result in the demolition of over 1,000 homes across Canberra which had been identified as containing the loose asbestos. Known as the *Loose Fill Eradication Scheme*, the ACT Government received a \$1 billion loan from the Commonwealth to 'buyback affected properties at a market rate as at 28 October 2014 and demolish each affected house surrendered to the ACT Government to remove loose fill asbestos from the Canberra community once and for all.'

With 29 houses identified for demolition, Hackett had the highest number of affected houses of all the north Canberra suburbs. Some streets had several houses, often adjacent to each other. Most of the blocks were sold at auction in 2016 and 2017, ranging in price from \$600,000 to just over \$1million, at an average of approximately \$747,000; a small number were still for sale in 2018.



Hackett	29
Watson	16
Ainslie	16
O'Connor	15
Campbell	7
Downer	7
Reid	3
Turner	3
Lyneham	3
Braddon	2
Total	106

17 Newton Street	27 Rivett Street
4 Skeats Street	29 Rivett Street
37 Maitland Street	87 Rivett Street
27 Hedley Street	98 Rivett Street
29 Hedley Street	Unit 10, 102 Grayson Street
31 Hedley Street	Unit 11, 104 Grayson Street
13 Steele Street	67 Mackenzie Street
36 Mills Street	6 Brennan Street
25 Madigan Street	23 Brennan Street
14 Gilbert Street	2 Bragg Street
40 Gilbert Street	6 Bragg Street
10 Verco Street	7 Bragg Street
35 Harris Street	18 Bragg Street
320 Antill Street	48 Russell Street
324 Antill Street	

For Sure Comfort and Fuel Savings



NEW
'ASBESTOSFLUF'

The perfect thermal insulating material

Greatly reduces internal summer temperature. Retains winter warmth. Large savings on winter heating bills. ASBESTOSFLUF is the perfect insulating treatment for all types of dwellings, garages, sheds, recreation rooms and other industrial areas. In fact anywhere insulation is desirable. Completely incombustible. 2in thickness of ASBESTOSFLUF has more greater thermal and sound absorbing properties than equivalent thickness of any other type of material. It sprays onto ceiling area quickly and cleanly.



Prices range from \$82.50 for average 11 square home
Finance readily available on 10% deposit with
repayments over 12 months

ASBESTOSFLUF

Source 30 March 1968, The Canberra Times, p.6.

In October 2016, a number of residents in Bragg Street, with support from the Hackett Community Association, formed a representative group and commenced discussions with the Government's Mr Fluffy taskforce. Their principle concerns were the impact on local traffic from the concentration of demolition and reconstruction vehicles and the impact on the streetscape from the construction of new homes. Assurances were provided to the group that demolition and construction would probably extend over a number of years and traffic issues would be manageable. As to streetscape concerns the taskforce assured the group that all new homes would have to comply with planning laws including set back provisions, but the choice of landscaping would be up to the owners.

APPENDICES

Appendix A - The changing population of Hackett

Since the establishment of Hackett in 1963 the population reached its peak in 1971 and then declined to its lowest in 2001. The most rapid growth was in its first three years with a population of 156 in 1963, increasing to 2,067 in 1964 and 4,018 in 1966. The following figures have been derived from the Australian [Census records](#).²³³

	1966	1971	1976	1981	1986
Total population	4,018	4,384	3,968	3,403	3,216
Males	2,026	2,206	NA	1,674	1,576
females	1,992	2,178	NA	1,729	1640
Median age					
Children 0-15 years	NA	1,577	1,253	NA	532
% of total population aged 0-15 years	%	35%	31.5%	%	16.5%
People aged 65 years and over	NA	102	NA	NA	230
% of total population aged 65 years and over	NA	2.3%	NA	NA	7.1%
dwellings	1,093	1,206	1,253	1,243	1,254

NA – not available at the suburb level

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total population	3,050	2,909	2,787	2,881	2,914	2,991
Males	1,516	1,395	1,324	1,384	1,381	1,453
females	1,534	1,514	1,463	1,497	1,533	1,545
Median age	33	38	38	39	39	39
Children 0-15 years	543	513	463	477	556	629
% of total population aged 0-15 years	17.8%	17.6%	16.6%	16.5%	19%	21%
People aged 65 years and over	350	387	433	523	493	471
% of total population of people aged 65 years and over	11.4%	13.3%	15.5%	18.1%	16.9%	15.7%
dwellings	1,267	1,312	1,308	1,181	1,299	1,271

How we lived in the early 1970s

According to the 1971 Census, of the 1,206 dwellings in Hackett:

- 965 had television
- 1,002 were connected only to electricity
- 153 were connected to gas and electricity
- 72 had no motor vehicles, 601 had one, 474 had two and more, and 13 not stated
- Rent for a furnished house cost an average of \$32.44/week while a furnished flat cost \$25.23/week.

Where do you work?

A common question that often comes up early in conversations when people meet for the first time is... Where do you work?

For 1,902 in the labour force of males and females over 15 years of age in 1971, the occupations included:

Professional	316
Administrative	149
Clerical	535
Sales workers	145
Farmers	25
Miners	2
Transport workers	69
Craftsmen	381
Service workers	151
Armed services	45
Other and not stated	58
Unemployed	26

The marriage status was:

Never married	467
Married	1,351
Other	84

Appendix B - Hackett street names

In 1927, the Canberra National Memorials Committee, in a report to the Federal Parliament on the Naming of Canberra's Streets and Suburbs, proposed that street names in Canberra's suburbs follow a theme. This policy (one of the oldest in the ACT) has been followed to this day.

In keeping with this thematic approach, Hackett streets were named after prominent Australian scientists. In some cases, there are two namesakes for the same street. In more recent times the ACT Government has dedicated several streets to commemorate Victoria Cross (VC) winners with the same name by adding a VC symbol to these streets. These include French Street, Kenny Place and Newton Street.

Hackett's street names were gazetted on 21 September 1961 under the *National Memorials Ordinance 1928-1959*. But it was not simply a list of the street names. The gazette included a description of the direction of each street such as **Madigan St** - From Phillip Avenue, north of Kellaway Street, generally north-easterly and north-westerly to Antill Street.

Information on street namesakes has been obtained from the ACT Government, Australian Dictionary of Biography and Wikipedia.

Street name	Named after	When lived	Short biography
Antill Street	Henry Colden Antill	1779-1852	Aide-de-camp to Governor Macquarie; soldier and pioneer settler of New South Wales
Bragg Street	William Henry Bragg	1862-1942	Physicist; after distinguished academic career in Australia and England he became Director of the Royal Institution, 1923; awarded Nobel Prize in 1915, in conjunction with his son, William
Brennan Street	Christopher John Brennan Louis Brennan	1870-1932 1852-1932	Inventor. Invented torpedo 1874 and subsequently was engaged on its development. Also worked on aircraft design.
Burrell Street	Henry James Burrell	1873-1945	OBE; Naturalist; studied the platypus and the spiny anteater and became the chief authority on them; wrote 'The Platypus', 1927; collaborated in writing 'The Wild Animals of Australasia', 1926; Fellow of the Royal Zoological Society of London.
Caldwell Street	William Hay Caldwell	1859-1941	Noted zoologist who carried out important research on Australian marsupials and lungfish.
Dakin Place	William John Dakin	1883-1950	William Dakin - Noted zoologist; Professor of Zoology, University of Sydney, 1928-48; adviser to Commonwealth Government on whaling and fisheries
Dunlop Street	James Dunlop	1793-1848	Astronomer; assisted in establishment of observatory at Parramatta in 1821; appointed Superintendent in 1830
Dunn Place	Edward John Dunn	1844-1937	Geologist educated in Australia; prepared first geological map of South Africa, 1872; returned to Victoria, 1886; Director of Geological Survey of Victoria, 1904-12
Fison Street	Lorimar Fison	1832-1907	Missionary and anthropologist; undertook valuable work on Australian anthropology
French Street	Charles French Sir George Arthur French Cpl John Alexander R French	1842-1933 1841-1921 NA	Charles French - horticulturalist, naturalist and entomologist; George: Soldier. Commandant Queensland Military Forces 1883-1891 and New South Wales Military Forces 1896-1902. Cpl John French awarded Victoria Cross, 4 September 1942, at Milne Bay, New Guinea Services.
Gilbert Street	John Gilbert	1815-1845	Naturalist; worked with John Gould in connection with his work, 'Birds of Australia'; researched bird life of Tasmania, Western Australia and Northern Territory; joined Leichhardt's 1844 expedition.
Gilruth Street	John Anderson Gilruth	1871-1937	Scientist and administrator; Administrator of the Northern Territory, 1912-20; Chief of Division of Animal Health, CSIR, 1930-37.
Grayson Street	Henry Joseph Grayson	c1856-1918	Scientist who accompanied J W Gregory on 1901 expedition to central Australia; developed machines assisting plant

			microscopy
Hackett Place	Sir John Winthrop Hackett	1848-1916	Legislator, pioneer of Federation, educationalist and philanthropist of Western Australia; Editor of 'West Australian' newspaper; elected to the State Legislative Council in 1894 and remained a Member until his death
Haddon Street	Alfred Cort Haddon	1855-1940	Ethnologist; led an expedition to Torres Strait and New Guinea in 1888-89
Harris Place	John Harris	1754- 1838	Pioneer surgeon; surgeon to New South Wales Corps, 1792; appointed Magistrate, 1800; took part in several early explorations of New South Wales.
Harris Street	Laurance Hershel Levi Harris	1871-1920	Radiologist and surgeon; pioneer and one of the leaders of science of radiology in Australia.
Hedley Street	Charles Hedley	1862-1926	Prominent naturalist who carried out valuable research on the Great Barrier Reef
Helms Place	Richard Helms	1842-1914	Naturalist with Sir Thomas Elder's expedition to central Australia, 1891-92; biologist, Department of Agriculture, 1896-99; wrote many papers on flora and fauna
Holtze Place	Maurice Holtze	1840-1923	ISO; Botanist; arrived in Australia, 1872; worked for the Government at the Palmerston Botanic Gardens, 1878-91; appointed Director and Secretary, Adelaide Botanic Gardens, 1891, and was the first Director to open the Gardens to the public; had many species named after him including <i>Sida holtzia</i> .
Hull Place	Arthur Francis Bassett Hull Hugh Munro Hull	1862-1945	Arthur Hull - noted ornithologist and philatelist. Hugh Hull - Pioneer of Tasmania 1819.
Jukes Place	Joseph Beete Jukes	1811-1869	Geologist and naturalist with expedition surveying north-east coast of Australia, 1842-46, in HMS Fly.
Jukes Street	See above	See above	See above
Kellaway Street	Charles Halliley Kellaway	1889-1952	Medical scientist; Director of Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, 1923; Director of Pathology to Army during World War II
Kenny Place	Elizabeth Kenny Private Bede Kenny	1880-1952	Nurse; responsible for devising a treatment for poliomyelitis during an epidemic in Queensland in 1933. Her methods were investigated and officially recognised by the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis in the USA in the 1940s. Private Kenny awarded VC at Hermies, France on 9 April 1917.
Mackenzie Street	Sir William Colin Mackenzie	1877-1938	Anatomist; founder of Colin Mackenzie Sanctuary for native animals at Healesville, Victoria; first Director of the Institute of Anatomy, Canberra.
Madigan Street	Cecil Thomas Madigan	1889-1947	Geologist and explorer; member of Antarctic expedition, 1911-14; made a number of expeditions to central Australia, 1927-39
Maitland Street	Andrew Gibb Maitland	1864-1951	Geologist; surveyed and mapped vast areas of Western Australia, 1903-06; successfully predicted artesian water on Nullarbor Plain and near Derby.
Mills Place	Richard Charles Mills	1886-1952	Professor of Economics, University of Sydney, 1922; Member, Royal Commission on Banking, 1936; Chairman, Commonwealth Grants Commission, 1941, Uniform Taxation Committee, 1942, and Australian National Advisory Committee for UNESCO, 1947; led Australian Delegation to First Session of UNESCO in 1946 and again in 1951; Chairman of Interim Council during formation of Australian National University.
Mills Street	See above	See above	See above
Newton Street	Sir Hibbert Alan Stephen Newton F/Lt William Ellis Newton	1887-1949	Hibbert Newton - noted surgeon; President of the Walter and Eliza Hall Research Institute; Consulting Surgeon to the Army, 1940-42; Chairman, Medical Equipment Control Committee, 1939-45; Director of Clinical Studies at University of Melbourne.

			F/Lt William Ellis Newton awarded the Victoria Cross in New Guinea, March 1943
Phillip Avenue	Arthur Phillip	1738-1814	First Governor of New South Wales, 1788-92; chosen in 1786 to lead the expedition destined for Botany Bay, reaching the Bay on 18 January 1788; first Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of New South Wales; discovered and settled Sydney Cove at Port Jackson
Prell Place	Charles Ernest Prell	1856-1946	Pastoralist of New South Wales; pioneered pasture improvement in Australia by use of fertilisers and subterranean clover.
Richards Street	Henry Caselli Richards	1884-1947	Geologist associated with University of Queensland from 1911-47; involved with the foundation of the Great Barrier Reef Committee, 1922; published fifty-five research papers
Rivett Street	Sir David Rivett	1885-1961	Rhodes Scholar, 1907; Professor of Chemistry, University of Melbourne, 1924-1927; Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, CSIR, 1927-46; Chairman of the Council, CSIRO, 1946-49; President of Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, 1937-39
Russell Street	Henry Chamberlain Russell	1836-1907	Astronomer and meteorologist; Government Astronomer at Sydney Observatory, 1870-1905
Selwyn Street	Alfred Richard Cecil Selwyn	1824-1902	Geologist; Geological Surveyor of Victoria, 1852-69.
Skeats Street	Ernest Willington Skeats	1875-1953	Geologist associated with the University of Melbourne for thirty-seven years, from 1904-41; received Medal of the Royal Society of New South Wales, 1929; awarded Mueller Medal from the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, 1937.
Stanley Street	Sir Arthur Lyulph Stanley Owen Stanley	1875-1931 1811-1850	Arthur Stanley - 5th Baron Stanley of Alderley and 5th Baron Sheffield of Roscommon, (1875-1931); Governor of Victoria, 1914-20. Owen Stanley - Naval officer and marine surveyor. Carried out valuable hydrographic surveys along south coast of New Guinea
Steele Street	Bertram Dillon Steele Major General Sir Clive Steele	1870-1934 1892-1955	Bertram Steele - Scientist and inventor. Professor of Chemistry, University of Queensland 1910-1931. Played conspicuous part in successful campaign by Queensland Government for the eradication of prickly pear. Invented type of gas-mask and instrument for detection of submarines. Major General Sir Clive Steele - Chief Engineer, Second A.I.F. 1939-1942. Engineer in Chief A.M.F. 1942-1946
Stott Street	James Winchester Stott	1830-1907	Blacksmith of Alma, South Australia; in 1881 constructed an early model of a stump-jump plough.
Taylor Place	George Augustine Taylor	1872-1928	Artist, inventor and journalist; pioneer of radio broadcast in Australia; made first Australian flight in a motorless aircraft constructed by himself at Narrabeen, New South Wales.
Tryon Street	Sir George Tryon Henry Tryon	1832-1893 1856-1943	George Tryon - First Admiral in charge of Australian Station, 1884; advocated formation of Australian Navy. Henry Tryon - Prominent Naturalist and Scientist-Carried out work on sugar cane and prickly pear in Queensland
Verco Street	Sir Joseph Cooke Verco	1851-1933	Leading physician of Adelaide for many years; prominent conchologist; presented extensive shell collection to South Australian Museum.

Hackett's street names as gazetted on 21 September 1961

No. 74.—21st September, 1961

3432

Commonwealth Gazette

SCHEDULE "A"—continued.
8. Division of Griffith.

(a) Alterations—			
(1) Hume Circle	..	..	Omitted—name now given to Hume Place
(2) Leichhardt Street	..	..	Extended at eastern end, north-easterly to Wentworth Avenue
(3) McMillan Circle	..	..	Those parts north of Canberra Avenue omitted
(4) McMillan Crescent	..	..	That part of McMillan Circle south of Canberra Avenue to be renamed McMillan Crescent
(b) Additions—			
(1) Hely Street	..	..	That part of former Hume Circle between Canberra Avenue and Wentworth Avenue renamed Hely Street
(2) Hume Place	..	..	Intersection of Canberra, Sturt and Wentworth Avenues
9. Division of Hackett.			
(a) Alterations—			
(1) Antill Street	..	..	Now extended north-easterly to Stirling Avenue
(2) Monash Drive	..	..	Now extended north-easterly from Phillip Avenue, south of Kellaway Street, generally north-easterly and north-westerly to Stirling Avenue
(b) Additions—			
(1) Bragg Street	..	..	From Russell Street, east of Mackenzie Street, generally northerly and easterly to Mackenzie Street
(2) Brennan Street	..	..	From Mackenzie Street, south of Grayson Street, generally north-westerly, south-westerly and south-easterly to Mackenzie Street
(3) Caldwell Street	..	..	From Maitland Street, south-west of Stanley Street, generally north-westerly and south-westerly to Maitland Street
(4) Dakin Place	..	..	Cul-de-sac generally easterly from Maitland Street between Caldwell and Steele Streets
(5) Dunlop Street	..	..	From Mackenzie Street, south of Bragg Street, north-westerly and south-westerly to Russell Street
(6) Dunn Place	..	..	Cul-de-sac north-westerly from Mackenzie Street between Madigan and Kellaway Streets
(7) Fison Street	..	..	From Antill Street, north-east of Madigan Street, south-easterly to Rivett Street
(8) French Street	..	..	From Rivett Street, south-easterly of Harris Street, generally south-westerly, south-easterly and north-easterly to Rivett Street
(9) Gilbert Street	..	..	From Rivett Street, north-east of Madigan Street, generally south-easterly north-easterly and north-westerly to Rivett Street
(10) Gilruth Street	..	..	From Maitland Street, south-west of Madigan Street, generally northwesterly, south-westerly and south-easterly to Maitland Street
(11) Grayson Street	..	..	From Madigan Street, south of Rivett Street, generally south-easterly to Mackenzie Street
(12) Haddon Street	..	..	From Madigan Street, north-west of Rivett Street, generally north-easterly and south-easterly to Rivett Street
(13) Harris Place	..	..	Cul-de-sac generally north-easterly from Harris Street and south-east from Rivett Street
(14) Harris Street	..	..	From Rivett Street, north-east of Gilbert Street, generally south-easterly and north-easterly to Rivett Street
(15) Hedley Street	..	..	From Maitland Street, north of Caldwell Street, generally easterly and northerly to Maitland Street
(16) Helms Place	..	..	Cul-de-sac generally north-easterly from Rivett Street between Verco and Richards Streets
(17) Hull Place	..	..	Cul-de-sac generally north-westerly from Mackenzie Street, south of Russell Street
(18) Jukes Place	..	..	Cul-de-sac generally northerly from Jukes Street
(19) Jukes Street	..	..	From Rivett Street, north-east of Fison Street, generally northerly and easterly to end in a cul-de-sac
(20) Kellaway Street	..	..	From Phillip Avenue, south of Madigan Street, generally north-easterly to Mackenzie Street
(21) Kenny Place	..	..	Cul-de-sac generally north-easterly from Mackenzie Street, south of Russel Street
(22) Mackenzie Street	..	..	From Madigan Street, north-east of Phillip Avenue, generally southerly, easterly and northerly to Rivett Street
(23) Madigan Street	..	..	From Phillip Avenue, north of Kellaway Street, generally north-easterly and north-westerly to Antill Street
(24) Maitland Street	..	..	From Madigan Street, south-east of Antill Street, generally south-westerly, southerly and north-easterly to Madigan Street
(25) Mills Place	..	..	Cul-de-sac generally south-westerly from Mills Street
(26) Mills Street	..	..	From Maitland Street, west of Madigan Street, generally south-easterly to Maitland Street
(27) Newton Street	..	..	From Maitland Street, north of Stott Street, generally westerly, northerly, easterly and south-easterly to Maitland Street
(28) Phillip Avenue	..	..	From Northbourne Avenue, north-east of Panton Street, generally south-easterly to Monash Drive
(29) Prell Place	..	..	Cul-de-sac generally southerly from Grayson Street
(30) Richards Street	..	..	From Rivett Street, north-east of Mackenzie Street, generally southerly to Mackenzie Street
(31) Rivett Street	..	..	From Madigan Street, south-east of Antill Street, generally north-easterly, south-easterly and south-westerly to Madigan Street
(32) Russell Street	..	..	From Mackenzie Street, south of Taylor Place, generally easterly to Mackenzie Street
(33) Selwyn Street	..	..	From Rivett Street, east of Haddon Street, generally north-westerly, north-easterly and south-easterly to Rivett Street
(34) Skeats Street	..	..	From Madigan Street, south-east of Maitland Street, generally south-westerly to Mills Street
(35) Stanley Street	..	..	From Maitland Street, south-west of Mills Street, generally north-westerly, south-westerly and south-easterly to Maitland Street
(36) Steele Street	..	..	From Maitland Street, south-east of Dakin Place, generally northerly to Caldwell Street
(37) Stott Street	..	..	From Phillip Avenue, south-east of Antill Street, generally north-easterly to Maitland Street
(38) Taylor Place	..	..	Cul-de-sac north-easterly from Mackenzie Street between Madigan and Russell Streets
(39) Tryon Street	..	..	From Mackenzie Street, northwest of Grayson Street, generally south-westerly and north-westerly to Rivett Street
(40) Verco Street	..	..	From Rivett Street, south-east of Jukes Street, generally easterly and northerly to Jukes Street
10. Division of Lyneham.			
(a) Alterations—			
(1) Dunsmore Street	..	..	Extended north-westerly
(b) Addition—			
(1) Fox Place..	..	..	Cul-de-sac north-westerly from Goodwin Street, north-east of Wattle Street

Appendix C - The verdant splendour of the tree lined streets

Street trees are an integral part of Canberra's landscape and design. They bring shade and beauty to each suburb and over the years, planners have chosen different types. Early suburbs of Ainslie, Braddon and Reid were predominantly populated with exotic species, such as oaks, plane trees and pines. In later years, native species became more popular due to their ability to better cope with droughts. Hackett streets are predominately lined with exotic species, with red box (*Eucalyptus polyanthemos*) the most common native species. In September 1964, the NCDC set out its approach for the street trees of Hackett:

'In the new suburb of Hackett the characteristic setting of the existing bushland background of Mt. Majura and Mt. Ainslie will be retained and in fact will be made to penetrate into the housing area.

The tree planting programme at Hackett has been planned within the framework of an Australian character. Colour patterns of spring flowering trees will be established within the overall area.

The trees have been planted on a neighbourhood basis rather than by individual streets. Care has also been taken to ensure that they have been planted to gain the greatest aspect benefit without cutting out winter sunshine from the homes.

One of the other areas to receive attention has been the showground where, in addition to general planting, pines have been planted to provide a boundary and a protective wind break.'

(source Sidewalk Supervisor, *The Canberra Times* 14 September 1964, National Library of Australia, Trove) 234

The note about the bushland penetrating into the housing area would appear to be reflected in the retention of eucalypts in the open space that connects Mackenzie St to Madigan St (this space also set aside because of potential to 50 year floods), and the open parkland between Bragg and Brennan Streets. The planting of red box along Mackenzie and Rivett Streets may have also been a deliberate attempt to form a connection with the nearby bushland.

The establishment of 'colour patterns of spring flowering trees' is interesting; it is questionable about the visual offerings of the flowers of trees like the plane tree, liquid amber and red oaks – these species have small discrete flowers. These trees, like so much of the inner parts of Canberra, are probably better known for their colourful tones in autumn as the leaves change colour. The most obvious plants noted for their spring flowers would be the Japanese cherry (*Prunus serrulata*) planted on Madigan St and the Japanese pagoda tree (*Sophora japonica*) on Gilruth, Hedley and Skeats Streets.

In 2008 the ACT Government undertook a program to replace old Plane trees and Prunus trees along Madigan St and plant trees in the median strip near the shops. - source - letter *Replacement of Street Trees in Madigan St*, letter to residents, 24 April 2008, Scenic Landscape Architecture, for ACT Government.

Street	Scientific name	Common name
Antill Street	<i>Eucalyptus bicostata</i>	southern blue gum, Victorian blue gum
	<i>Eucalyptus mannifera ssp.</i>	brittle gum
	<i>Quercus lusitanica</i>	Lusitanian oak gall oak, or dyer's oak
	<i>Quercus robur</i>	English oak
Bragg Street	<i>Quercus borealis</i>	Red oak
Brennan Street	<i>Quercus borealis</i>	Red oak
Burrell Street	<i>Not planted</i>	
Caldwell Street	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	Liquidambar or American sweetgum
Dakin Place	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	Liquidambar or American sweetgum
Dunlop Street	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos 'Shademaster'</i>	Honey locust
Dunn Place	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos 'Shademaster'</i>	Honey locust
Fison Street	<i>Quercus borealis</i>	Red oak
French Street	<i>Eucalyptus polyanthemos</i>	Red box

Gilbert Street	<i>Quercus borealis</i>	Red oak
Giruth Street	<i>Sophora japonica</i>	Japanese pagoda tree
Grayson Street	<i>Eucalyptus polyanthemos</i> *	Red box
Hackett Place	<i>Eucalyptus polyanthemos</i>	Red box
	<i>Fraxinus oxycarpa 'Raywood'</i>	Claret ash
Haddon Street	<i>Fraxinus oxycarpa 'Raywood'</i>	Claret ash
Harris Place	<i>Quercus borealis</i>	Red oak
Harris Street	<i>Quercus borealis</i>	Red oak
Hedley Street	<i>Sophora japonica</i>	Japanese pagoda tree
Helms Place	<i>Not planted</i>	
Hull Place	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos Shademaster</i>	Honey locust
Jukes Place	<i>Quercus borealis</i>	Red oak
Jukes Street	<i>Quercus borealis</i>	Red oak
Kellaway Street	<i>Quercus borealis</i>	Red oak
Kenny Place	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos Shademaster'</i>	Honey locust
Mackenzie Street	<i>Eucalyptus polyanthemos</i>	Red box*
Madigan Street	<i>Platanus orientalis</i>	Plane tree
	<i>Prunus serrulata</i>	Japanese cherry
Maitland Street	<i>Eucalyptus pauciflora</i> *	Snow gum
Mills Place	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos 'Shademaster'</i>	Honey locust
Mills Street	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos 'Sunburst'</i>	Honey locust
Newton Street	<i>Eucalyptus pauciflora</i>	Snow gum*
Phillip Avenue	<i>Platanus x acerifolia</i>	London plane tree
Prell Place	<i>Quercus borealis</i>	Red oak
Richards Street	<i>Eucalyptus polyanthemos</i>	Red box
Rivett Street	<i>Eucalyptus polyanthemos</i>	Red box
Russell Street	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos 'Shademaster'</i>	Honey locust
Selwyn Street	<i>Fraxinus oxycarpa Raywood'</i>	claret ash
Skeats Street	<i>Sophora japonica</i>	Japanese pagoda tree
Stanley Street	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	Liquidambar or American sweetgum
Steele Street	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	Liquidambar or American sweetgum
Stott Street	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	Liquidambar or American sweetgum
Taylor Place	<i>Quercus borealis</i>	Red oak
Tryon Street	<i>Eucalyptus polyanthemos</i> *	Red box
Verco Street	<i>Quercus borealis</i>	Red oak

* native species found on Mount Ainslie-Majura Reserve

Scientific names obtained from the ACT Beekeepers ACT Street trees list, March 2001
<http://www.actbeekeepers.asn.au/pdfs/ACT-STREET-TREES-1.pdf>.

Appendix D - The Hackett Highlighter 1968

The Hackett Highlighter was put out by the Hackett Primary School P&C as a means of communicating with the parents of the school. Interestingly it included advertising from the local shops – Georges Foodland (alcohol included), J B Youngs, The Freezer Food Plan and Mirella Ladies Hairdressing, each with a humorous little ditty about the business. – Source - ACT Archives

The Hackett
HIGHLIGHTER

(To help our school children)

26th February, 1968

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the P & C Association I wish you all the very best for 1968. To all those parents whose children have joined the school this year for the first time I extend a cordial invitation to join the P & C Association. Your help and assistance will indirectly help with the education of your child.

1967 proved a most successful year, with the association providing a great deal of finance to help purchase more books for the library. However there are still many bare gaps on the library shelves, and I feel sure your efforts this year will be directed to filling some of these gaps.

Last year's activities culminated by a very successful social held for parents in early December. All those who attended enjoyed themselves thoroughly, and no doubt many who were unable to attend felt disappointed when they heard an account of the evening. Those in that position will be able to make up for it at the end of this year.

R E M E M B E R:

Annual General Meeting
28/2/68 at 8 p.m.
Hackett Primary School

In George's FOODLANDS grocery store
They serve the whole day through,
But late night shopping every night
Is George's service, too.

George's Food Centre,
Your Local FOODLANDS Store, PHONE: 49-7286
HACKETT.

Groceries, beer, wine, spirits, fruit, etc.
Mondays-Thursdays: 9.00-7.30 pm; Fridays: 9.00-9.00 pm;
Saturdays: 9.00-8.00 pm; Sundays: 9.00-7.00 pm.

EDITORIAL: P & C?

What and why is the Parents and Citizens Association? The 'what' in this problem is a question of fact; it can be answered by simple observation of what the P & C does. Why it exists is not so easy. In a future issue of HIGHLIGHTER we might run an opinion poll on this question, and so, perhaps, decide whether we need a P & C organisation or not.

Meanwhile, the question: "What is the P & C?" might best be satisfied by describing what it was in 1967, and, better still, what it did. Last year, the Hackett P & C bought books worth hundreds of dollars for the school library. It bought sporting equipment and physical training gear. Hundreds of dollars were spent on Cuisenaire sets and other educational aids. Soap dispensers were provided in the wash rooms; nor did these dispensers run dry. An honour roll board appeared, together with school pennants. Finally, school red tape (yes, even schools suffer from office cramps!) was cut by a desk calculator provided by the P & C.

Admittedly this is only a rough description, yielding but a rough idea of the function of the P & C. But I hope it is enough to whet your appetite, enough to set you thinking about the kind of education your child gets, and about the part played by the P & C in that education. I hope it is enough to persuade you to attend the next meeting to help decide what should be done in 1968.

Have lots of food stored in your house,
Have FREEZER FOOD PLAN fares,
So that those unexpected guests
Can't catch you unawares.

Freezer Food Plan, PHONES: 49-6708
Hackett Shopping Centre, 49-6834

Why have shopping problems? Have your own supermarket in the kitchen. Pay nothing more than your outlay right now to have the FREEZER FOOD PLAN operating for you — YES, all your groceries, too.

Why troop to town through heat and dust
To make your hair look cute?
MIRELLA does the job right here:
She sets and perms real beaut.

MIRELLA,

Ladies Hairdressing Salon,
HACKETT.

PHONE: 49-8273

Latest techniques in up-to-the-minute salon.
Girls' haircuts a specialty. Wigs washed and set.
We sell all kinds of wigs, too. Come and talk it over.

BE A PROOF-READER

Well, unfortunately the prize in the first competition was not won. Therefore we shall jackpot the prize by having two prize vouchers for \$10 each in this, the second, competition. The rules are the same as last time: two copies of HIGHLIGHTER will be distributed bearing an intentional mistake in one of the ads. E.g., a word may be misspelt, duplicated, or omitted; in any case, the error will be obviously intentional. In the first competition, the unique copy had a superfluous "the" on the end of the 2nd last line of the McEwan ad, and this time it is no harder. If you think you have found it, phone the editor to claim your prize. The competition closes with the next issue of HIGHLIGHTER.

When stocking up, buy locally,
Avoid that city fuss;
The local YOUNG'S have all you want
For service VALUE PLUS.

J. B. Young Ltd.

PHONE: 49-7303

HACKETT.

Groceries, kitchenware, fertiliser, liquor, paints, etc.
You don't need to put up with bus & bustle, or parking
problems: shop with us in friendly comfort.
Mondays-Fridays: 9.00-5.55; Saturdays: 9.00-11.30.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR (Who regrets the infrequency of publication; this letter was received in November, 1967)

Dear Sir,

As a parent and grateful member of this year's P & C Association, I would like to take this opportunity, through this new venture, "HIGHLIGHTER", to tell some of the parents and citizens of Backett my story.

My son began school in the first term of this year and so I had my first taste of his growing up, and also my first introduction to school life and the role I was to take as a parent in this field. gingerly I attended my first P & C meeting, and I have never looked back. The work and interest shown at these meetings have never caused to astound me.

Just what the people accomplish towards education is truly a wonder. Apart from the P & C Assn., there are also other working bodies, such as the Combined Council of Parents and Citizens, who hold seminars and conferences with parent bodies from other States, and so form A.C.S.O. (The Australian Council of State School Organisations), another unit involved in education.

I can recommend further the interest and stimulation you can receive from participating at these meetings. But I hope you will take courage and go along to find out for yourself. From my own experience I can assure you of a warm welcome, respectful and sympathetic hearing to all your opinions and problems. But, most important, you are helping towards a better education for your children and the development of Australia.

Wishing all a merry Christmas, and give yourself a happy and prosperous new year by attending the P & C meetings.

Yours sincerely,
Helen A. Porter.

EDITOR: F. Stalting, 24 Gilbert St, BACKETT, 49-7185
(bus. hours: 63-2096)

TYPED & DUPLICATED BY: Koomarri Workshop, 4-4147

Appendix E – Hackett Primary School speech night 1972 Agenda

Page 1

SPEECH NIGHT

5th December, 1972

1. Introduction by Chairman: Mr. Norris
2. Welcome by School Captain: Andrea Martin
3. Principal's Report
4. Presentation of Junior Class Certificates: The Principal

<u>JA:</u> 1. Ruth Blank	4G: 1. Helen Michail
2. Sally Hookey	2. Amanda Woolmer
Robert Smith	Timothy Yare
Janet Whitfeld	
ANDREW SAWRS.	
<u>JN:</u> 1. Leanne Howie	4C: 1. Denise Smekal
2. Geraldine Binks	2. Jayne Hardy
Adriano D'Amico	Julie Fekete
Francesca Palombi	Christopher Hansen
Brett White	Keith Vanderslacht
- 3G: 1. Kenneth Ahern
2. Darryl Whitford
3. Owen Thomson
- 4T: 1. David Collis
2. James Faulkner
- John Londos
- Julie Atkinson
- Androula Sarri
- Needlework: Ruth Blank
Geraldine Binks
Suzanne Wannell
Wendy O'Meara
Julie Fekete
Michelle Reiter
Yvette Halkiewicz
Sofia Wicik
5. Sports Report and Presentation of Sports Trophies & Pennants: Mr. Dilley
McQuiston - Sportsmanship - Susan Simmons
Grimshaw - Best & Fairest Footballer - Peter Patterson
Baker - Swimming Carnival - Gudgenby - Andrew Sauer
MacKay - Soft ball - Gudgenby - Susan Simmons
Gowar - Cricket - Bimberi - Todd Baldwin
P. & C. - Athletics: Track & Field - Franklin - Nicole Siska
Tuckshop Committee - Athletics: Novelty Events - Bimberi - Kerry Demetrio
Robertson - Athletics: Total Points - Franklin - Mark Love
Pockets & Certificates:- Suzanne James; Jenny Kaus; Andrea Martin,
Nada Novinc; Karen Atkinson;
Boyd Gibson; Robert Creaser, [REDACTED]
Russell Vance; Donald Peterson; Craig Martin.
6. Address & Presentation of Prize for Dux of School: Mr. Terry Calheun to
Andrea Martin.
7. Presentation of Senior Class Certificates: The Principal.

<u>E.S.L.:</u> Maja Salajec	5H: 1. Catherine Nadin
Mirislav Antonyevich	2. Russell Vance
Elpinika Tzefka	Ann Hessler
<u>SD:</u> 1. Christopher Preston	Patrick Hookey
	Julia Reed

2. Geraldine Binks
Adriano D'Amico
Francesco Palombi
Brett White

2. Jayne Murray
Julie Fekete
Christopher Hansen
Keith Vanderslacht

- SD: 1. Kenneth Ahern 4T: 1. David Collis
2. Darryl Whitford 2. James Faulkner
Owen Thomson

Needlework: Ruth Blank
Geraldine Binks
Suzanne Wannell
Wendy O'Meara
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Russell Vance; Donald Peterson; Craig Martin.

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Andrea Martin.

7. Presentation of Senior Class Certificates: The Principal.

<u>E.S.L.:</u> Maja Salajec Miroslav Antonyevich Elpinika Tzeifa	<u>5H:</u> 1. Catherine Nadin 2. Russell Vance Ann Hessler Patrick Hockey Julia Reed
<u>SD:</u> 1. Christopher Preston 2. Julianne Hansen Fiona Asquith Mark Thomson Vjekoslav Novinc	<u>5R:</u> 1. Helen Dunstan 2. Tracy Bird Kevin Power - Absent Kim Richardson Andrew Cunningham

Appendix F - List of Hackett residents in 1967

The 1967 Commonwealth electoral rolls for Canberra provided a listing of people based on streets in each suburb as shown by this first page of the Hackett roll. Details of the person's occupation were omitted after 1983. To view the complete roll for Hackett, visit the website [Hidden canberra](#)

HACKETT 1967

	ADAM COURT , Rivett Street SAUER, John theatre manager BREINER, David draftsman	
4		
9		
Block I		
16	BOYD, Anna hd	
2	BUCHNAYER, Anne hd	
9	CAUSER, Leon draftsman	
8	COLEMAN, Edwin student	
17	MURRAY, Margaret shop assistant	
15	O'LOUGHLIN, Edmund pc (police constable?)	
16	RUDD, William plumber	
4	SAUER, John theatre manager	
15	SHARPE, John ps	
10	SHORTILL, Barbara stenographer	
Flat 9 – 129 Rivett St BYFIELD, Donald draftsman		
		ANTILL STREET
332	BAMBRICK, Susan & Rayno research assistant & ps	
254	BARBER, Patricia & Keith hd & bank officer	
212	BEATTY, Alice, Geoffrey & Robert hd, storeman & estate salesman	
264	BRANSON, Margaret & John hd & geophysicist	
324	BRAY, Norma & Robert hd & contractor	
316	BURMEISTER, Nell hd	
238	CHEESEMAN, Lesley & Graham hd & liaison officer	
230	CONLAN, Josephine & Neil hd & electrical mechanic	
230	COULTON, Anne, Elizabeth, Jessie & James stenographer, stenographer, hd & grazier	
226	CURBISHLEY, Ruby & Frederick laundry presser & RAN	
328	DAVIES, Doris & Harry hd & manager	
272	DAVIES, Mavis & Ellison hd & soldier	
252	DAWSON, Vivienne & Robert hd & airman	
318	EVERITT, Isobel & James clerk & clerk	
320	EWIN, Mabel, Alexander & Edwin hd, motor mechanic & ***	
228	FOGWELL, Kathleen & Percival hd & soldier	
224	GILLIES, Patricia & Peter hd & accountant	
220	GRAY, John pharmacist	
248	GEOGHEGAN, Irene & Anthony hd & clerk	
222	GREEN, Catherine & John hd & technical assistant	
223	GREEN, Dorothy hd	
326	HARSTE, Audrey, Lilian, Alan & Williams clerk, hd, fitter & turner & electronics technician	
294	HICK, Edna & Herbert hd & joiner	
300	HOLLOWAY, Lynette & Graeme hd & electronic technician	
274	JARDINE, Margaret & Sydney hd & book binder	
320	JOHNSTON, Helen hd	
234	LESLIE, Jean hd	
266	MCDONALD, Nora & Douglas hd & mail officer	
312	MAHON , Judith & Denis hd & bank officer	
256	MANSON, Patricia & John cook & labourer	
268	MAYNARD, Faye & John hd & fireman	
322	MILLER, Lillian & Arthur hd & surveyor	
308	MOORE, Margaret & John hd & pharmacist	
292	NANCARROW, Tessie & Maxwell hd & draftsman	
242	NOTARAS, James milk vendor	
318	PARKIN, Anne & William hd & diesel fitter	
236	PECK, Gerry labourer	
276	POIRRIER, Elizabeth & Barry hd & soldier	
270	RANKIN, Maria & Kenneth hd & plant operator	
244	RAYMOND, Marjorie & Norman hd & yardman	
328	REED, Martha hd	
304	RYAN, Daisy & Alfred postal clerk & postal clerk	
312	TABLEY, Patricia & Ronald hd & executive officer	
214	TAKACS, Eva hd	
302	TANNER, Jeanette & Dayrell hd & assistant manager	
250	THOMAS, Mary & Ronald hd & programmer	
296	THOMAS, Theresa clerk	
216	VARGA, Eszter & Zoltan hd & fencing contractor	
216	VAUGHAN, Nora & John hd & surveyor	
330	WILKINSON, Agnes & Kenneth ps & clerk	
240	ZAPPALA, Vincenza & Giuseppe hd & barber	
		BRAGG STREET
14	BOOTH, Beryl & Charles hd & ps	
21	BUNSELL, Helen & Ian hd & ps	
2	DAVIES, Ida & George waitress & head waiter	
12	EDWARDS, Anne & Gordon hd & electrical engineer	
7	ENGLAND, Ruby hd	
11	HALL, Mahel hd	
18	HARRAGAN, Betty & Derek hd & ps	
24	HESSON, Margaret & Hugh hd & plumber	
20	HEVESI-NAGI, Susan & Sandor hd & cabinet maker	
17	HILHORST, Kathleen & Reijer hd & painter & decorator	
31	LENNARD, Valentine ***	
10	LEONARD, Ellen & Eric hd & quantity surveyor	
2	LEONARD, Gwyneth & Peter secretary & announcer-accountant	
15	HARSTA, Afina & Jacob hd & painting contractor	
4	IVANKOVIC, Helen & Branko shop assistant & dental mechanic	
30	MASON, Lorraine & Lindsay secretary & builder	
11	MEANEY, Cora & Kenneth ps & ps	

Appendix G - North Canberra Community Council

The North Canberra Community Council (NCCC) is the officially recognised peak community body representing the interests and concerns of the residents and businesses within the Inner North region of Canberra. It liaises with the ACT Government, the community and other interested parties to promote and enhance the economic, cultural, social and environmental wellbeing of the North Canberra community.

The NCCC is made up of volunteers who regularly engage with the various suburban groups and residents in the area so they can work together to preserve what is best about North Canberra and ensure that as it grows and redevelops that it is always a great place to live, work and play. A committee is elected annually by the community of North Canberra. NCCC will consider all sides and positions on community issues and will endeavour to convey the concerns of the community to the government.

The NCCC addresses a wide range of issues affecting North Canberra residents, and has a strong focus on issues such as development and transport which cross suburban boundaries and affect North Canberra more generally. Issues addressed by the Council include the re-development of the Dickson Group Centre, the provision of community facilities and the design of major transport linkages such as light rail.

Membership is open to all North Canberra residents aged 16 years; there are no membership fees. All members of the committee are volunteers and no one receives payment for any activities.

The community groups covered include:

Canberra City Residents' Association	Pialligo Resident's Association
Dickson Residents Group	Reid Residents' Association
Downer Community Association	Russell Reservists
Hackett Community Association	Turner Residents Association
Hackett Neighbourhood Watch	Watson Community Association
Lyneham Community Association	Watson Woodlands Working Group
O'Connor Community Incorporated	

The NCCC is one of seven community councils supported across Canberra by the ACT Government:

- Belconnen Community Council
- Gungahlin Community Council
- Inner South Community Council
- Weston Creek Community Council
- Woden Valley Community Council
- Tuggeranong Community Council

Collectively these councils meet under the Combined Community Councils ACT.

For further information visit the NCCC website - <https://www.northcanberra.org.au/>

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