

A Short History of Gungahlin



Ginninginderry [i.e. Ginninderra] Plains, Robert Hoddle, 1794-1881.

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Canberra Archaeological Society Inc

This project was assisted through funding made available by the ACT Government under the
ACT Heritage Grants Program

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March 2010



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A Short History of Gungahlin

This story has been compiled by the Canberra Archaeological Society to provide a quick reference for those interested in the history of the pioneers of Gungahlin. Gungahlin nestles in the valley of Ginninderra Creek and continues a tradition of people who made their marks on the landscape.

There is evidence of the cultural heritage of Gungahlin in Indigenous sites, buildings that are still used or lived in, some that are waiting for conservation and others that are ruins or interpreted memories. The stories of the people who lived in these places are part of your history.

We take you through time from the earliest inhabitants as we head north-east from the big roundabout at the Barton Highway/Gundaroo Drive intersection, along Gundaroo Drive. The booklet 'Gungahlin's Treasures' available from the Conservation Council has maps and locations which will help so you can travel along with the people in the story if you wish.

You can read more about some of the ACT's significant places in reports on the Canberra Archaeological Society Inc website: www.cas.asn.au. The books by Lyall Gillespie are full of interesting information about local people; these are available in the ACT Heritage Library at Woden. The National Trust (ACT), the Canberra and District Historical Society and the Queanbeyan Historical Society also have libraries and lectures on ACT history.

The first inhabitants

The area now known as to us as Gungahlin was originally called after the major waterway, Ginninderra Creek, which begins at Oak Hill, just over the NSW border, and flows west into the Murrumbidgee through Ginninderra Falls. *Ginin-ginin-derry* is said to mean 'sparkling, throwing out little rays of light' in the local Ngunnawal language, and is possibly a description of the waterfall.

The Aboriginal people of this area belong to the *Ngarigo*, *Wolgal* or *Wolgalu* language group, spoken throughout the Australian Alps from here to Omeo in northern Victoria. The language and cultural groups run roughly in bands, parallel with the coast, with coastal people called *Katungal* - the sea. The Aboriginal people still share family ties along the east coast from south to northern NSW and southern Queensland. The people inland from the coast were called *Paiendra* – tomahawk, useful in their well wooded homelands, taking possums for food and skins. The *Bemeringal* mountain people were generally taller and more robust than the plains people and remarkably athletic, perhaps due to climbing hills every day.

The Ngunnawal people were *Bemeringal* who accessed mountain territory with bogong moth grounds; these little moths come from the north to spend the summer in the cool of granite tors in the mountains. The Aboriginal people stupefied them with smoke and scraped them out of their niches, then roasted them on rock slabs pre-warmed by fire and enjoyed eating their fatty little bodies. Not far from Gungahlin, Uriarra is a version of the Aboriginal term for 'running to the feast' and on Uriarra property itself there is a large, flat rock where moths were roasted. The moths do not arrive in great numbers every year, having to steer through storms, wind and light distractions such as Sydney and new Parliament House, and in some years the snow has not melted and reflects light which lures them to a soggy death.

However in a good year the moths provide an abundant, easy food source and the Ngunnawal people took advantage of this banquet to invite their neighbours to feasts and ceremonies. Important business could be conducted, betrothals sealed, goods exchanged and alliances strengthened. The ability to predict good moth supplies and arrange the invitations – and decide who not to invite – involved complex domestic and foreign policy strategies, all without written language.

The Ngunnawal people found plentiful resources in the Ginninderra area. There were springs and wetlands with numerous species of plants, animals and birds, many of which were used for food, wood and fibre for implements and skins for clothing. There is abundant evidence of Aboriginal use of the area and at times large gatherings were held, particularly in the Mulligan's Flat and Tea

Gardens areas. If you would like to know more about the Aboriginal people of the area, visit the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Centre on Lady Denman Drive at Yarramundi Reach, www.burringiri.org.au.

Percival Hill

A prominent feature in the Gungahlin area, Percival Hill rises 662m on the northern side of the Barton Highway/Gundaroo Road roundabout and may be reached via a gate at Schow Place off Temperley Street in Nicholls; it has no clear walking trail but will reward the stalwart climber with magnificent views and an appreciation for the area covered in this history. Some Aboriginal artefact grinding grooves have been recorded on Percival Hill but the exact location is unclear.

Aboriginal people lived all over the area that is now Gungahlin, holding large gatherings at several sites in Mulligans Flat and Tea Gardens near creeks and wetlands with plentiful food resources. Other sites were used sporadically and little evidence has survived in the built-up suburbs. Aboriginal artefacts were made from any handy, suitable stone, often small pieces of quartz.

Girrawah Park

Some types of stone were valued by the Aboriginal people for hardness and good flaking qualities, including a reef of metamorphic tuff (or chert) which lies under Gungahlin and is found at the surface in several locations. Aboriginal stone procurement sites are where there is evidence of Aboriginal people quarrying the stone to make artefacts.

In Girrawah Park on Gamberra Street, Ngunnawal, the site has been conserved beside a children's playground; a large sculpture of a goanna and an interpretative sign describe the Aboriginal heritage value of the site. *Girrawah* means goanna in the Ngunnawal language; many other Ngunnawal words and names are used in the street names of this suburb.



Girrawah Park play sculpture, 1994. H Cooke

The Ngunnawal people chose to have a playground at Girrawah Park so that other families could enjoy the trees and the view and learn more about how their Aboriginal ancestors lived in this area.

This reef of stone is also exposed on the surface at a site called PH 12 (for Percival Hill) in a park at the end of Quist Place, Nicholls and another in Little Mulligan's Flat; these sites also show

evidence of quarrying by the Aboriginal people.

Palmerville

The first European to take up a selection in Ginninderra was George Thomas Palmer who established 'Palmerville' in about 1826. He was introduced to the area by his father, John Palmer the Commissary-General, who had come to Sydney on the Sirius with Governor Phillip¹ and was granted land in Jerrabomberra in exchange for land he had purchased in Sydney.

Convicts were assigned to work the large Palmerville estate which included much of the north of what is now Belconnen and the southern end of Gungahlin. By 1831 Palmer had installed an overseer on his property and had built stone convict barracks and several other buildings of locally hand made bricks, stone and local timber to house the workers². One of these was Ginninderra Cottage, one of the most comfortable and up-to-date residences in the area³ and the Palmer family stayed in it at times.

In May 1829 George Palmer lodged an application to purchase 14 portions of land on Ginninderra Creek from the Crown. He had to write to the Colonial Secretary a few times to move the bureaucracy along, but he made the purchases between 1833 and 1836. This method of squatting on a choice piece of land, erecting buildings to support residency, applying for permission to purchase and taking up the options was the common method of acquiring land in the early days of settlement.

Squatters held most of the profitable land in Ginninderra by the mid 1830s, most of them absentee landlords running the properties with overseers and convict labourers.⁴ From 1833 the NSW government decided not to remove "squatters" who had established unauthorised stock stations in the interior due the difficulties of removing them and their increasing political influence and respectability⁵.

Women of the squatters' class felt the isolation in the new estates and social occasions were eagerly sought, including visiting the houses of the other squatters at Duntroon and Lanyon. In January 1845 some visitors from Woden visited the Palmers at Ginninderra where 'Miss Palmer played the piano while Pemberton Palmer showed some polka steps'.⁶

Palmer's eldest daughter Catherine married Charles Campbell, son of the Squire of Duntoon, in 1837 and they lived at Ginninderra for several years. Charles agreed to buy the estate and put down a deposit but was unable to meet the installments due to falling wool and stock prices, and the property was resumed by Palmer.⁷ So even the comparatively well-off squattocracy did not always have an easy life.

What is there to see now of the first estate in Ginninderra? Low foundations, all that remains of Old Ginninderra Homestead, convict barracks and other buildings, are hidden under earth mounds in Heritage Park, Charnwood, beside William Slim Drive, across the highway in Belconnen.

Free settlers, encouraged by assistance to migrate, worked on the Estate's crops and flocks and as tenant farmers built huts, planted orchards and achieved a measure of self sufficiency. The workers lived alongside the former convicts who had completed their prison terms, obtained their pardons and 'tickets of leave' and became respected members of the flourishing community. The locations of the huts were strategically placed to watch over fords across the creek, permanent water or good land for crops, so the presence of families also kept squatters off the choice parts of the Estate. These families did not own their own land but earned a living, many of them saving

¹ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series p23

² Ibid

³ Davis Wright, J, 1923, Canberra, Wohn Andrew and Co, Sydney, pp10-11

⁴ Gillespie LL, 1991, Canberra 1820 - 1913, Commonwealth of Australia, p 22

⁵ Society of Australian Genealogists http://www.sag.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=57

⁶ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series p23

⁷ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, p 12

enough to purchase land when it became available later.

Surveyor Robert Dixon and party traced Ginninderra Creek from the Murrumbidgee to its rise on 6 June 1829, but Palmer's lands were not surveyed until between 1832 and 1835 by Robert Huddle and by James Larmer in 1836.⁸

The Estate workers did not have to go far for social contact and their interactions have been recorded in newspaper reports of sporting events and marriages to the sons and daughters of neighbouring families. A clue to the locations of the vanished huts is the presence of some hardy introduced plants from the former gardens of Ginninderra, flowering plants like *tamarisk*, *periwinkle* and a dwarf *iris* called 'flag lilies' by the locals. All these are easy to grow from cuttings or bulbs, so one can imagine the working class women visiting a new wife to the area with a basket of scones and some plants to brighten her cottage garden.

In 1836 Henry Hall became the first resident landholder to settle in Ginninderra, at 'Charnwood', at the same time as the government introduced "depasturing licences" for an annual fee of £10.⁹ The tenure was from year to year, so the occupier made improvements at his own risk, the land was unsurveyed and the boundaries of the "runs" the subject of negotiation with neighbours.

In 1839 NSW established the "border police" to assist in controlling the situation between settlers and local Aboriginal people, with the cost funded by an annual charge of a penny per sheep, threepence per head of cattle and sixpence per horse. The "unsettled" lands were divided into a number of 'squattage' districts, each under the control of a Crown Land Commissioner. As pastoral expansion continued, the number and arrangement of the districts and the licensing arrangements were changed.¹⁰

European settlers: the first phase, squatters with large estates.

The late Lyall Gillespie, historian and descendant of two pioneer families, called Ginninderra 'the forerunner to Canberra'.¹¹ Ginninderra Village grew up as immigrants travelled into the region from Sydney via Gundaroo, seeking land and employment. The roads to Yass and Queanbeyan also passed through Ginninderra. Queanbeyan was the most populous and prosperous of the centres of population in the region and the interests of Canberra are closely interwoven with it,¹² but Ginninderra certainly had a role as a local hub of agricultural endeavour, community services and entertainment.

Canberra's early history was similar to most other areas of New South Wales, of which it was a part until the early 1900s. The settlement of Sydney received convicts transported from England ostensibly to relieve overcrowding in prisons but also to provide a cheap labour force for private land owners and consolidate an English settlement in the western Pacific region. Convicts made up more than a quarter of the colony's population and most of them were assigned, particularly in areas like Ginninderra, on the edges of settlement where labour was needed to clear land and build up the farming infrastructure.

There were also opportunities for immigrants who wanted to buy land and prosper, away from the social and economic constraints of Britain. A bounty scheme of assisted migration was established from revenue raised through land sales, and the Government granted \$30 per married couple to settlers to bring approved migrants to work in the new colony.¹³ The open park-like appearance of the new land with mature trees and grassy spaces reminded them of England. The fledgling, cash-strapped government rewarded some people who had provided services with large grants of land

⁸ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, p 8

⁹ Society of Australian Genealogists http://www.sag.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=57

¹⁰ Society of Australian Genealogists http://www.sag.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=57

¹¹ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series

¹² Gale, John; 1927, Canberra, history of and legends relating to the Federal Capital Territory of the Commonwealth of Australia; ; AM Fallick & Sons; Qbryn, p 6

¹³ Gillespie LL, 1991, Canberra 1820 - 1913, Commonwealth of Australia p 25

increasingly further away from Sydney. Others with their own capital purchased tracts of land, sight unseen, in areas being newly recorded with European names or anglicised versions of the Aboriginal names.

The landscape into which the settlers brought their way of life was already a cultural landscape, the result of humans bringing their way cultural practices to the land of marsupials and monotremes at least 60,000 years ago and beginning irreversible changes which continue today. All of the new animals (including human) and plant species made impacts on the indigenous landscape, changing the availability of the resident plants and animals by reducing the suitable environment for some and enhancing it for others. The impacts continue today as more species are threatened with extinction while the kangaroos flourish and possums live happily in introduced trees.

The first European to be recorded as entering this area of NSW was Charles Throsby who set out under a contract to define the line of a road to the Goulburn Plains in 1820. He had heard about a water body called *Wee-ree-wah* (Lake George) from Aboriginal people and probably crossed the northern end of the ACT when he made his way to the Yass River. In 1821 Throsby discovered the Murrumbidgee River near Tuggeranong¹⁴.

Word spread of good grazing land in the Limestone Plains and Yass. One of the earliest Europeans to see Ginninderra was Captain Ainslie, an employee of the successful merchant Robert Campbell, builder of Campbell's Wharf in Sydney. Campbell had heard of fine land from an Aboriginal man in 1810 and in 1823 received 7000 ewes as compensation for the loss of two of his ships commandeered by the government to sail to Batavia and procure food for the starving settlers¹⁵. Ainslie set out with a flock of Campbell's sheep to find this land. He found other settlers occupying the best land on the Yass plains and headed south, camping on Ginninderra Plains for a few days in the early 1820s.¹⁶ Ainslie was led to Pialligo by a young Aboriginal woman who later bore him a daughter, Nanny.¹⁷ Subsequently Campbell selected this land and called his estate 'Duntroon'. Campbell the merchant would not have been slow in telling other potential settlers how to get to these grassy plains, where they could select an estate and become his customers!

By 1826 much of the land within a radius of 200 miles of Sydney was occupied by farmers and graziers. Governor Darling specified the "limits of location" within which land could be occupied to try to limit the extensive unauthorised occupation of land. Annual rental was introduced through the "Tickets of occupation" issued to graziers from 1827¹⁸.

In 1829 the "settled areas" were extended to the Nineteen Counties, outside which the government would not sell or grant land, nor permit permanent settlement, as police protection could not be provided. Gungahlin was within the County of Murray: incorporating the Limestone Plains and Lake George, bounded by the Murrumbidgee River to the west, the south western extent of the limits of settlement.¹⁹ After 1831 most grants involved purchase and the money raised was intended to fund the immigration of labourers²⁰.

Crinigan Park and Hut Ruin, Wanderer Court, Amaroo

In the 1880s there were about 40 small huts along Ginninderra Creek, but as land ownership changed to consolidate several small holdings into one property and as families grew up and moved away, most were left to decay. One example, the site of Crinigan's Hut, has been

¹⁴ Bilney E 1983 ACT Heritage Conservation Plan Stage 1: Outline History of the ACT 1820-1982; Report to the ACT Heritage Cttee. Pp13-15

¹⁵ Davis Wright, J, 1923, Canberra, Wohn Andrew and Co, Sydney, p 5

¹⁶ Gale, John; 1927, Canberra, history of and legends relating to the Federal Capital Territory of the Commonwealth of Australia; ; AM Fallick & Sons; Qbyn, p 83

¹⁷ Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p20

¹⁸ Society of Australian Genealogists http://www.sag.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=57

¹⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nineteen_Counties

²⁰ *ibid*

conserved by descendants of the original inhabitants and the Canberra Archaeological Society and a park with an interpretive sign and a children's play area, now called Crinigan Park has been developed around the ruins.

John Crinigan was an Irishman, convicted for 'assaulting habitation' (possibly a political charge) and transported for life to Sydney on the Waterloo in 1836. He received his Ticket of Leave in 1844 and his Conditional Pardon in 1849. He and his free immigrant wife, Maria, lived in a three roomed stone cottage near a pool of permanent water in Ginninderra Creek from about 1842²¹. The Crinigans had ten babies but only one, (Eliza) Jane, survived. On 2nd November 1859, John bought four parcels of land near Tea Gardens in a land sale in Queanbeyan²². This included the block on which the hut stands. Maria died in 1863 and John died in 1899.

Jane Crinigan was born in 1850 and married Duncan McInnes in 1867; her father gave them the stone hut as a wedding present. They lived in the hut with the first four of their thirteen children until 1875 when they moved to live in Hall and the land on which the hut stood passed through John Crinigan's second wife, the widow Margaret Lowe, to her first family, the Cavanaghs²³.



Jane Crinigan. M Folger

In 1992 the Canberra Archaeological Society Inc received an ACT Heritage Grant to prepare the walls for conservation. This required removal of the deposit which was home to a family of brown snakes. All artefacts were recovered and conserved. A small excavation was also undertaken to establish the depth to bedrock and confirm construction techniques. ACT Heritage Grants have supported the Canberra Archaeological Society Inc in studying and conserving Crinigan's cottage. Excavation confirmed that the hut had three rooms and two stone fire places. The external dimensions of the whole structure are 13.10 x 5.5m; internally the end rooms north and south are

²¹ Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in *Canberra Historical Journal*, CDHS, New Series 2, p21

²² Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, p 14

²³ Folger, M 1998 McInnes Family of Gilbert and Mary Part 2, Our Folk CPN Publications Canberra, p 5

about 3m long x 4.5m wide, and the middle room 5 x 4.5m, so it was a reasonable living space.



Crinigan's Hut excavation by Canberra Archaeological Society 1992, H Cooke

The fireplace in the centre room is 245cm wide and 71 cm deep externally, with a 275mm apron of stone and brick to the front; and the fireplace in the southern room is 203 cm wide and 175cm deep. A toasting fork was found near the southern fireplace; mortar and charcoal were recovered from the hearth and iron fittings consistent with cooking supports and bone debris suggest that cooking was one of the functions of both fireplaces.

Bricks were used to line the fireplaces and extend out as hearths. The bricks are locally made with rectangular, 'V' and cigar shaped frogs and are poor quality, poorly pugged and fired. The mortar was a mix of coarse sand and clay, not very robust. There are a few small samples of whitewash on mortar, not enough to be sure that all the internal walls were whitewashed but sufficient to suggest that the fireplaces were whitewashed.

The quantity of stone at the site is consistent with the chimneys as well as the walls being constructed of stone. The chimneys fell into the hut and mainly to the western side where the quantity of stone was greatest.

The footings for the walls average 530 – 560 mm in width and there is a ledge of about 70mm on all internal walls to support timber floor joists.



Conservation of Crinigan' Hut, 1992, M Folger

Over the years many artefacts were salvaged and stored by the descendants. Nearly 2000 artefacts, a representative sample, have been sorted, labelled, catalogued and analysed for another ACT Heritage Grant report. More bags of fragments have been left to provide material for future in depth analyses.

The purpose of analysing artefacts collected from this historic site is to corroborate the dates and nature of the occupation of the site and to reveal more about the lifestyle of its inhabitants. Details of the family that lived in this cottage have been researched and documented by their descendants and full time occupation of this site is established historically as between 1842 and about 1875, with some doubt as to any transient occupation and when the cottage finally fell into ruin.

This analysis confirms the dates of occupation as the great majority of the artefacts are consistent with occupation between 1840 and 1880, with concentrations in the 1860s and 1870s.

The domestic artefacts are similar to those on other sites in NSW of the same vintage and certainly do not show any impoverished state. Although Crinigan was transported as a convict, he and his family became respected members of the Ginninderra community. They lived in a substantial house and although sadly losing most of their children in infancy, they had a good selection of bought goods and a reasonably comfortable lifestyle.

At Crinigan's Hut crafts usually associated with women are represented by sewing implements such as thimbles, pins, needles, crochet hooks and one ivory bobbin for lace making.

Broken pieces of jewellery recovered, mostly from the middle room, include silver and gold plated lockets and brooches which although not expensive show that women did have some adornments for their Sunday best. Dress studs for men's shirts conjure images of the men in their good suits accompanying the ladies to church and local evening events, none of them letting the side down.

Pieces of a china dolls head, other fragments of toys and a slate pencil show that children had some entertainment at home.

The cottage may have been used for seasonal labourers such as shearers or fencing contractors. Some more "modern" artefacts such as a safety razor and a jam jar suggest some later use. By the 1920s the house was a ruin, but the descendants visited and picked fruit from the trees in the orchard.

During this time stone from the cottage was recycled and possibly some of the timber. John Cavanagh confirmed that stones from the site were used by other Cavanagh relatives to make a ramp for the animal yards at their property East View, further along Gundaroo Road.

Sites like this were often bulldozed and ploughed as they were considered to be a hazard to sheep. The evidence of broken artefacts around the cottage for at least 50m in all directions confirms this spreading by ploughing. All that remained of the cottage in the early 1990s was a pile of stones.



Crinigan's Hut with bush dancers and descendant, H Cooke 2009

The land was resumed in 1915 by the ACT Government for development of the suburb of Amaroo. The area including the cottage and the orchard was listed on the ACT Heritage Register in 1992 and planned into public open space.

The hut ruin is on the ACT Heritage Register with its remnant pear trees and other exotic plants. Every spring the 'flag lilies' bloom near the cottage and under the pear trees.

The original Aboriginal inhabitants of this area have also left signs of their activities in stone artefacts found nearby and stone resources quarried not far from here at Girrawah Park in Amaroo.

The Butlers of 'Malton'

John Butler went to the same land sale in 1859 as his neighbour John Crinigan and purchased his own land on which he built "Malton". Butler was another Irish convict who was transported for life on the same ship as Crinigan, the *Waterloo*; both men worked at *Palmerville* and both obtained their pardons in 1849. John Butler died shortly after this purchase but his wife Nancy (Ann), their son John, one of four surviving children, and their descendants lived on in the house until the early twentieth century.²⁴ Ann lived until 1895 and John Butler Jnr and his wife Euphemia Gillespie lived at Malton before moving to Mulligan's Flat.

²⁴ Heffernan, Ken, 1993, Archaeological Excavations at the Settlement of John and Ann Butler, Gungahlin, ACT, report for CAS; p 41

The best way to visit the site is to follow the path which leads from Crinigan Park (Wanderer Court, Amaroo) to the pedestrian bridge over Ginninderra Creek and walk 200 metres north. The site is on the verge of the east side of Mirrabei Drive.

Salvage excavations by the Canberra Archaeological Society in 1993 revealed that Malton was about 4.7 metres wide and 6 metres long, with a whitewashed stone chimney and brick lined fireplace at the southern end. The floors were of red clay and there is no evidence of permanent internal walls or veranda²⁵.



Paddock stone door step at Malton prior to excavation; 1992, H Cooke

John Butler Jnr played with the Ginninderra Cricket Team in the 1870s, excelled at shooting and helped organise athletic sports near the Cricketer's Arms in 1878. He was elected to the committee of the Ginninderra Protection Union at a meeting in 1888.²⁶

All that remains now to commemorate these generations of endeavour are two pear trees, one poplar and a plaque on a rock.

Ginninderra Estate

George Thomas Palmer Junior took over the Palmer Estate and came to live in it in about 1845 with his wife and two children, Edwin and Minna Close. Their next child George Charles Frederick was born there on 27 Feb 1846. When William Davis became the manager a year later the estate was known as 'Ginninderra'²⁷.

William Davis had arrived in the colony in 1837 and soon got a job with the Commercial Bank. Later he was engaged by Charles Campbell as overseer on Duntroon Estate where he gained his first pastoral experience. He and his brother Henry overlanded 1000 cattle to Adelaide in 1847. He established a cattle station for George Palmer Snr in Gippsland before returning to manage Ginninderra. William married Suzannah Adriana (Addy) the younger daughter of GT Palmer Snr in 1850 and when his father-in-law died in 1854 the estate was left to his wife with some interests to the Palmer sons. William bought out his brothers-in-law and became the Squire of Ginninderra²⁸.

Davis was a very successful farmer and Ginninderra Estate became a show place under his management. He was well liked as a boss and a great sportsman; he organised sporting teams and encouraged his employees to participate. His favourites were shooting and cricket, but he owned race horses and hunters and with his nephew took them to Sydney to compete. In 1876 his

²⁵ Heffernan, Ken, 1993, Archaeological Excavations at the Settlement of John and Ann Butler, Gungahlin, ACT, report for CAS, p 22

²⁶ Heffernan, Ken, 1993, Archaeological Excavations at the Settlement of John and Ann Butler, Gungahlin, ACT, report for CAS., p 8

²⁷ Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p 23

²⁸ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, pp23-24

mare Barbelle was the popular favourite in jumping events.²⁹

Davis maintained a cricket ground on his property and established the Ginninderra Cricket Team which was virtually unbeaten from the 1850s to the 1870s, playing teams from Queanbeyan, Goulburn and Braidwood. Cricket games drew large crowds and all the family members enjoyed picnics while they watched. Davis spared no expense in maintaining the ground, hired a brass band for important games and provided lunch for everyone attending, sometimes following with a social evening. Cricket was so important to this rural community that in 1863 games were played on almost every summer evening except for Sundays. William Davis was responsible for introducing the five and a half day working week to the whole region, appealing to employers to allow their workers time off to practice cricket on Saturday afternoons.³⁰

Three Aboriginal men are known to have played cricket with this exceptional team, Bobby Deumonga, Johnny and Jimmy Taylor. Johnny started playing when he was about 12 and went on to become their star player.³¹ Bobby was married to Nellie Hamilton, daughter of Nanny and granddaughter of Captain Ainslie, and they had a family; it is possible that all three men lived in the area. Good stories rarely grace the newspapers, so we don't hear much of them in the news except their astonishing batting and bowling prowess. Only the snobbish Duntroon team objected to playing against them on one occasion³².

William Davis prospered and acquired more land in Gungahlin in the early 1860s, building the original Gungahlin Homestead in 1862. The name 'Gungahlin' was derived from *goongarline*, which was said to mean 'white man's house' in the local Aboriginal language.³³

The two Estates flourished under Davis and were very productive; his good sense, kindness and encouragement of sports attracted competent workers. Farming practices in the nineteenth century included sheep grazing, clearing some of the woodland and ploughing the lower lying flats to grow crops. Horses were the workforce of agriculture and the landscape changed gradually to cultivated fields.

William and Addie Davis did not have any children of their own so virtually adopted her nephew Henry W E Palmer and his niece May Davis. In 1877 Henry was killed while taking a jump on one of his uncle's hunters, Gungarline, at Queanbeyan Recreational Ground. The whole region was saddened by the death of this popular young man. His uncle and aunt were so devastated that William sold his horses and both properties, moving away from the district.³⁴

In 1877 Edward Kendall Crace purchased both estates from Davis. In 1883 he added the imposing sandstone Crace wing, designed by one of his English relatives, to Gungahlin Homestead. The homestead is still standing and is currently occupied by CSIRO. The imposing facade is a fine example of an English manor house of the late nineteenth century, set in landscaped gardens including a pond which has now gone. The mature trees are echos of the formal garden setting. the homestead was a statement of the prosperity of the owner and brought a touch of English gentility to the bush.³⁵ Crace also purchased the Charnwood property and was the largest landholder in Ginninderra.

29 Ibid p 23-24

30 Ibid

31 Gillespie LL, 1991, Canberra 1820 - 1913, Commonwealth of Australia, p59

32 Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p 23

33 Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, New Series 2, p 23

34 Ibid p 24

35 Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, p 20



Crace Wing, Gungahlin Homestead, The National Trust (ACT) all rights reserved.

Ginninderra roads developed over the original bush tracks and disputes arose when land holders fenced across public roads. Crace was involved in several litigations including a case against Thomas Gribble in 1884; Crace used his power as magistrate to install police to protect his interests and the NSW Attorney General refused to file a case against such an influential landowner. The Department of Mines sidestepped the issue of illegally closed roads by having a new road surveyed that did not pass through Crace's land.³⁶

Ginninderra Creek used to rise in flood, spreading nearly a quarter of a mile wide between Gungahlin Homestead and Ginninderra Village in 1891. It carried along 'fences, sheaves and stooks of wheat and oats'³⁷. Crace was drowned in 1892; he made his coachman take him to the Ginninderra post office to send a telegram despite very heavy rain, and against all good advice he insisted on returning through the swelling creek³⁸. His coachman, George Kemp, and the horse also perished; many people attended the funeral for Kemp.

Crace's widow Kate carried on the property until it was acquired by the Commonwealth for the Federal Capital in 1915 and her son leased part of the property and lived there until his death in 1928.

The Ginninderra Blacksmith's shop

The Ginninderra Blacksmith's shop, now a derelict bush pole shed with earthen floor and gable roof of corrugated iron (but with close-spaced battens under the iron which indicate an original wooden shingle roof) dates from 1859 and was the first substantial establishment in the village. The northern skillion extension has vertical slabs and houses the bellows and furnace remains. This was and is the only village blacksmith in the ACT, (not associated with a homestead) and it played an important role in the development of the village community.³⁹

The first blacksmith was James Thompson Hatch who arrived in the district about that time and may have built the shed but did not stay in the smithy for long. He was followed by the son of another settler, Florence McAuliffe, who purchased land in Ginninderra around 1862 and stayed

³⁶ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, pp 175-177

³⁷ Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p 22

³⁸ 38 Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p 22

³⁹ LL Gillespie: Gungahlin, analysis of history; report to NCDC 1985, pp 24-26

as blacksmith for ten years.⁴⁰

The next smith was George Curran who stayed until 1889. George was very active in sporting and political organisations in the local district, a member of the Ginninderra Free Selectors' Association and Vice President of the Ginninderra Protection Union. He played cricket with the Ginninderra cricket team and was a foundation member of the One Tree Hill Jockey Club. Many meetings of these organisations were held in the shop or in George's house.

During his tenure as blacksmith George Curran took on his young nephew, Henry (Harry) Roland Curran, and taught him the trade. George and Harry stayed a few years then moved to Bungendore and Alexander Warwick operated from the shop. Warwick stayed only two years, leaving in March 1891, then Harry Curran returned to Ginninderra and took over the workshop. Harry is credited with extending the building; adding on a skillion and cladding the walls and roof with second-hand corrugated iron which remains today. Harry continued at the Blacksmith's Shop until 1949, finally retiring in his eighties. There was no-one to take over the business and from that time the Blacksmith's Shop has not resounded with hammering. It slowly fell into ruin while being used for storage by various graziers who agisted stock in the nearby fields. The building was heritage listed in the 1990s and conservation work on the building, organised by the National Trust (ACT) and funded by the ACT Government, was completed in 2004.⁴¹



Ginninderra Blacksmith Shop bellows 1992 H Cooke

As well as serving the needs of the district when horse transport and power were essential to the livelihood of the residents, the smith made tools, machinery parts, nails, gates and their fixings and door furnishings.

The smithy was also a social centre where the residents tended to congregate for company, especially in winter when the forge made it one of the warmest places in the village. The large bellows is still inside the workshop and many horse-shoes were retrieved from the site. One of the famous cricket players of the Ginninderra Cricket team, Johnny Taylor, a local Aboriginal man, worked for the blacksmith. Several Aboriginal artefacts were found near the workshop, including two made of pieces of glass from old bottles. These could have been used by Johnny, using his skills to make a sharp blade quickly from discarded glass.

⁴⁰ LL Gillespie:1985 Gungahlin, analysis of history; report to NCDC, pp 24-26

⁴¹ Dowling, P, ?? report, pp



Ginninderra Blacksmith Shop 1992 H Cooke

The Blacksmith's Workshop is protected by a fence, but you can see much of it from outside. If you would like a tour of the site, contact the Heritage Officer at the National Trust (ACT). The site is owned by the ACT Government.

The homestead, 'Deasland', was built on or next to an earlier homestead complex in 1890 by George Harcourt when rural life in the area had become more prosperous. The house has undergone extensions and 'lacks integrity', having once had 'unique timber decorations' but the dairy is close to original condition and has been included as a significant place on the ACT Heritage Places Register. Harcourt, a prominent figure in the early history of Ginninderra, was the storekeeper and for 20 years the postmaster.⁴²

Ginninderra Village

The first Ginninderra store and Post Office was opened on 1st April 1859 near Ginninderra Homestead by William Davis for the benefit of his many employees on the Estate and the other people in the district. When the Yass - Queanbeyan Road, near the route of the present Barton Highway, began to carry more traffic, the store was moved across the road near to the Ginninderra Blacksmith's Workshop and the first village in what is now the Canberra region grew along the road. This store was badly damaged by fire in 1863 and a fire sale of the damaged goods was held. When it was rebuilt George Harcourt took it over and ran the Post Office with it.⁴³

The small stone-built former St Francis Church still stands. It was completed in 1872, the first Roman Catholic church in what is now the ACT, on land owned by George Harcourt. It was first used as a school and occasional masses held, but from 1880 until 1907 it was the official Catholic Church for Ginninderra, and then the Church residence until 1966.⁴⁴

The Ginninderra Schoolhouse and teacher's residence is built of squared local stone with a corrugated iron roof. Brick quoins on the corners and doorways define and support the courses of stone in the walls. The school was opened in 1884 and closed in 1910.

⁴² LL Gillespie:1985 Gungahlin, analysis of history; report to NCDC, pp 22-23

⁴³ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, p27

⁴⁴ LL Gillespie:1985 Gungahlin, analysis of history; report to NCDC, pp 18-19



Ginninderra School House, The National Trust (ACT) all rights reserved.

The former church and school buildings are now maintained through adaptive reuse as commercial premises, reminders of the flourishing community that once was here. Sadly the new commercial centre has not even preserved the historic name of 'Ginninderra'.

The Ginninderra Store was operated for many years by George Harcourt, then by H L Jones and finally by the Queanbeyan firm of Hayes and Russell. After the store closed in 1897 the building was used for social functions, a library, a school of arts and a residence. It burnt down during a bushfire in January 1905.⁴⁵

As well as the store and Post Office, a bootmaker and tannery and possibly several other small businesses stood between the Blacksmiths Shop and the School, but these have disappeared without trace. Entertainment was also supplied by travellers around the district, such as Burtons Circus which visited Ginninderra in the 1850s.⁴⁶

Henry and Hannah Morris arrived by bullock dray from Camden and built a house near the Ginninderra store, also setting up a tannery and bootmaking store in the early 1860s. William Henry Jones operated as a hawker before he opened his store in the Village.⁴⁷

An electric telegraph was installed in Ginninderra and the office opened on 12 July 1879 in the house previously occupied by George Curran the blacksmith. Ernest Marsden, the first operator, was replaced in November 1881 by Francis J Colls who was only 16; his salary was £52 a year with an additional £22 pounds for postal work.⁴⁸

Ginninderra's population had increased with the selections taken up after the Robertson Land Act implemented in 1862, however its growth was restricted as most of the land was held by one wealthy landowner, Crace, within the Ginninderra and Gungahlin Estates.⁴⁹

The thriving community around Ginninderra held many public events around the Village. In September 1886 the first Ginninderra annual ploughing match was held opposite the Cricketers Arms Hotel and won by John Butler of Malton.⁵⁰

The Annual Cricketers Ball was held at Ginninderra from the 1880s, in the Ginninderra or

⁴⁵ Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p 22

⁴⁶ Gillespie LL, 1991, Canberra 1820 - 1913, Commonwealth of Australia, p 63

⁴⁷ Ibid p 164

⁴⁸ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, p 96

⁴⁹ Gillespie LL, 1991, Canberra 1820 - 1913, Commonwealth of Australia, p 180

⁵⁰ Gillespie LL, 1991, Canberra 1820 - 1913, Commonwealth of Australia, p 61

Gungahlin woolsheds or in the Cricketers Arms Hotel.⁵¹ This hotel was considered part of Ginninderra although it was on the northern outskirts of the Village. The 1882 Ginninderra Bachelors Ball was quite an event with printed dance cards for those attending.

Shooting was a popular sport; hares were introduced to Ginninderra in 1880 and increased in a few years to pest proportions; shooters were invited to a hare drive at Gungahlin in 1892 and destroyed 1100 hares. Lunch was provided but there is no record of it being juggled hare!⁵² In May 1882 pigeons were the targets in a paddock opposite the Cricketers Arms Hotel which was between Ginninderra and Hall.⁵³

An official site for a village was finally surveyed in 1881 by Surveyor Potter, but instead of confirming the existing village as the community expected, the site was surveyed on Hall Creek about two miles north. The new site was notified in the NSW Government Gazette in 1882 but there were complaints that there would be confusion with the two nearby sites. In true bureaucratic style the name of the new village was changed to Hall, further annoying the residents. The new name was retained but Hall got off to a slow start with its first land sale in 1886 and its first house built by John Southwell in 1888.⁵⁴

In 1900 Ginninderra was still a thriving community with a school, police station, Post Office, blacksmiths, library, gymnasium, sporting clubs and community associations. In 1905 the Ginninderra Farmers' Union was formed and invited the Director of Agriculture in NSW to address them. In 1906 the Union built a hall used for meetings and social evenings and a School of Arts.⁵⁵

A bushfire threatened Ginninderra in 1905, but valiant fire fighting by the residents saved all the buildings in the Village, Deasland, Henry Curran the blacksmith's residence and Gungahlin Homestead, but all the outbuildings, hay, wheat and straw were lost.⁵⁶ Clarke's Ginninderra store and residence were almost completely destroyed but their furniture was saved by taking it out to the main road.⁵⁷

In 1916 the Ginninderra Farmers' Union disbanded when many members left as their land was taken over by the Federal Capital Commission. Some of them formed an Advance Society in Hall and held annual shows from about 1919 until 1964 when the ACT took over with the Canberra Show.⁵⁸

More settlers

People all need the same basic resources to live a healthy and comfortable life – shelter, food and water – so the settlers from Europe and other parts of the world pitched their tents and built their huts in the same locations that the Aboriginal people had favoured for millennia, in sheltered nooks with good views of encroaching dangers, close to water, firewood and animal and plant foods. As more immigrants arrived they brought more flocks of sheep, dairy and beef cattle, dogs, poultry, pigs and commercial crops including pasture grasses, wheat, oats and barley, vegetables, fruit, ornamental trees and garden plants and some unintended species such as rats, mice and weeds in with the seed crops. Homesick immigrants also brought blackbirds, foxes and rabbits which spread all over the land; skylarks could still be heard in Ginninderra and further south at Lanyon Estate in the 1990s.

The new NSW Legislative Council gained its first representative for the area of Canberra, the counties of Murray, King and Georgiana, in 1842 when Terrence Murray of Yarralumla was elected

⁵¹ Gillespie LL, 1991, Canberra 1820 - 1913, Commonwealth of Australia, p 73

⁵² Gillespie LL, 1991, Canberra 1820 - 1913, Commonwealth of Australia, p 67

⁵³ Ibid p 68

⁵⁴ Ibid

⁵⁵ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series. p xxi

⁵⁶ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, p142

⁵⁷ Ibid p 28

⁵⁸ ibid, p 73

unopposed; he was relected in 1848⁵⁹. Government representation and increased policing encouraged more settlers. In Ginninderra more intensive agriculture was possible as more immigrants arrived to work in the new land; increased need for food, crops and wool for the larger population and for trade led to more clearing of the woodlands, more grasslands, and increased stream flow instead of water soaking into bogs and marshes.

Ginninderra was like other rural parts of NSW where the earliest phase of settlement on land grants was characterised by large estates worked by convict labourers and tenant farmers. By the late 1850s the demand for smaller farms increased with the prosperity of these workers, and portions of land outside and on the fringes of these estates were sold at auction to new settlers and the old tenants.

This new closer settlement needed new names to distinguish the areas and from 1857 to 1861 more settlers purchased land in 'Mulligan's Flat' and 'Tea Gardens' in the Parish of Goorooyaroo. 'Tea Gardens' was the name given to Portion 123 in the 1860s when Anthony and Catherine Rolfe and their family settled there.⁶⁰

Tea Gardens Homestead

Anthony and Catherine Rolfe arrived in Sydney on the *Harbinger* on 12 February 1849 with five children and lived temporarily with his brother William in Canberra. They selected Portion 123, 320 acres in the Parish of Goorooyaroo at a land sale in Queanbeyan on 20th February 1857 and quickly took up residence, calling their property 'Tea Gardens'.⁶¹ This area of the Creek had been on a grant to absentee landowner Captain James Morrisett and used to be home to larger birds such as the wild turkey or bustard and broilgas. The brush turkey, emu and wedge tailed eagle were also common in Ginninderra in the early days of settlement⁶².

Tea Gardens homestead was built of local red brick in the 1860s, possibly replacing an earlier slab or pise temporary building.⁶³ In 1858 the Rolfes increased their land holdings with further purchases of blocks.

Anthony Rolfe died first, then Catherine ended her days in the house by 1876⁶⁴. Their daughter Martha must have looked after her mother; she married John Ryan in 1868 and they lived at Tea Gardens for forty years until 1916 until the land was acquired for the Federal Capital. Their son Edward lived on there until it was bought by Norman Coulton in the 1950s and built a larger house around the four original brick rooms in the centre of the building.⁶⁵

After the land was acquired by the Commonwealth, the house became a residential riding school called 'Ginninderra Park', on an area of land under lease until it was resumed in the 1990s.⁶⁶ The riding school also had a large stable with a half-round raised mid section and many nails and saddle trees with pony names written beside them.

This historic house looks much as it did when it was the riding school; it is on the ACT Heritage Register and can still be seen at 10 Yirawala Street, Ngunnawal. The large stables have gone; they used to be nails and pegs in the wooden internal beams for the saddles and bridles, each with the name of a pony. As Tea Gardens is private property, it can only be viewed from the road.

⁵⁹ Gillespie LL, 1991, Canberra 1820 - 1913, Commonwealth of Australia, p 41

⁶⁰ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, p 14

⁶¹ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series P 14

⁶² Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p 22

⁶³ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series p 14

⁶⁴ ibid

⁶⁵ ibid

⁶⁶ Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, pp 21-22

Tea Gardens- TG1

A mystery site was recorded near Tea Gardens Homestead. It was probably all that remained of a pisé (rammed earth) hut and might have been the first dwelling at Tea Gardens, later replaced by a brick homestead.



TG1 in 1992, H Cooke

However it could have been a pisé hut that was built near Tea Gardens in 1905 by Thomas Gribble Jnr when he married May Flanagan of Bywong Station. This hut may have been struck by lightning not long after it was built and stood unroofed until it was finally knocked over by cattle rubbing against it.⁶⁷ The site is preserved as an archaeological site under the front garden of the house at 12 Mura Close and commemorated by a brass plaque in the footpath. One day the site could be excavated and more learned about the construction and use.



TG1 is under the garden of the house ahead, H Cooke, 1995

⁶⁷ Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p 22

The Gribbles at 'The Valley'

Another new settler was Thomas Gribble who emigrated from England in 1857, bought some land in the parish of Canberra and married Catherine Warren, a Ginninderra lass. They began married life in a slab hut in the Tea Gardens area, purchasing land early in the 1860s.

The Gribbles had several children and in a newspaper report of December 1877 they are described as successful farmers cultivating 60 acres and harvesting crops with one of the first new steam reaping machines in the area.⁶⁸ Their house was under construction, a 'commodious' five roomed stone house, no doubt grand in comparison to the one or two roomed slab or timber dwellings housing the former tenants along Ginninderra Creek.

The Gribbles also built a large separate living room of pisé or rammed earth (the walls built up of mud between formwork) an ancient, cheap method of construction. Their original slab hut continued in use, possibly temporarily as a school and later as a shed and finally a garage for the last occupants of the house.

Little remains of this house but sections of stone walls and some parts of the pise room. Exotic plants include feathery tamarisk trees that survive drought and produce pink flowers for a short time in spring and the very tenacious periwinkle (*Vinca*) sprawling creeper that can also be seen surviving at Tea Gardens, Mulligan's Flat School site and many old gardens around Canberra.



Thomas and Catherine Gribble's House, The Valley. 1992 H Cooke

The Gribbles were successful horse breeders and many ploughing contests and horse races were held on the racetrack on his land.⁶⁹ Thomas and Catherine's children, including George, Thomas Jr and William, and grand-children were well known for their sporting prowess and played in the seldom defeated Ginninderra Cricket Team. They also hosted social gatherings, entertaining their neighbours and guests from Murrumbateman and Gundaroo with music and singing. William Morris, the local bootmaker, was also popular at such evenings, balls and dances with his skill on the violin.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p 22

⁶⁹ Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p 22

⁷⁰ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, p 101

Thomas was a progressive farmer who was one of the first in the region to introduce farming technology to replace manual labour. The Gribbles had a large steam engine that would roar along the roads at four miles an hour to be set up in successive paddocks and thresh the crops. As farming was mechanised, larger paddocks could be ploughed, more crops harvested and the wetlands and woodlands disappeared at a faster rate, reducing the variety and locations of indigenous faunal and floral species.

After the selection of Canberra in 1908 for the site for the national capital, the Federal Government began acquiring the land from its freehold owners. The land in Ginninderra was then leased out and in 1916 William Moore took up Thomas Gribble's lease and it became known as 'The Valley'. The last person to rent the house was an artist who lived there until the late 1950s.

When the lease was added to larger holdings the house was no longer occupied. Some of the stone was taken to build a pioneer wall at St. Ninian's Uniting Church in Brigalow Street, Lyneham, and the roof was removed as the loose corrugated iron was becoming dangerous in high winds.

The remains of Thomas's outbuildings were recorded by the Canberra Archaeological Society in 1992 to the north of the house ruin, near Burgmann Anglican School. Archeologists found evidence of stables, barn, milking shed, dairy and a meat hanging shed, all arranged in a square formation about the same size as the original fence around the house paddock.

Gold Creek

Gold Creek Homestead on Gungahlin Drive was built by Edmund Rolfe, son of Anthony Rolfe of Tea Gardens between 1856 – 1860. There is no gold and no creek; it was named after a racehorse that was spelled there for a while.



Gold Creek Homestead, The National Trust (ACT) all rights reserved.

The Rolfe's were descendants of the same family as John Rolfe, who married the Indigenous American princess, Pocahontas. Gold Creek Homestead blocks 357 and 354, Gungahlin. Large homestead with 3 distinct building techniques. Oldest built by Edmond Rolfe in early 1860s is typical of the small detached slab and stone cottages with normal height doors and ceilings of this period and a single stone fireplace with associated drying and storage compartments. Homestead proper 2/3 built of squared stone with the additional 1/3 in brick, has been extensively renovated inside. Slab outbuilding and English style garden with dams and pools⁷¹. The homestead and is now a function centre and takes tour groups for shearing and bush experiences.⁷²

⁷¹ LL Gillespie:1985 Gungahlin, analysis of history; report to NCDC pp 34-35

⁷² Gillespie LL, 1992, *Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series*, p 14

Site B, the remains of a small hut, Amaroo

Another small hut site excavated by the Canberra Archaeological Society Inc in 1992 is now on the northern shore of Yerrabi Pond, Amaroo, on a rise close to the back-yards of houses on the southernmost part of Diamond Street. The site is fenced and marked by a plaque.

There are no historic records of the hut or the occupants, but it was most likely occupied by labourers assigned to Palmerville (Ginninderra Estate)⁷³. The assemblage of artefacts recovered suggests that it was inhabited during the 1860s to 1870s.

The hut had a stone hearth and two rooms, one with a timber floor and the other with a levelled red clay floor. It was probably a slab hut with a bark or shingle roof. No above ground features remained, but the stone hearth seems to have been built twice and charcoal under the floor suggests that the hut burnt down once and was rebuilt.⁷⁴

The bricks are poorly pugged and fixed and the mortar also of poor quality, mixed with very coarse sand and a little clay. The window glass is all 1mm or more thick suggesting construction in the second half of the nineteenth century.⁷⁵



Site B, H Cooke 2009.



Impression of Site B, H Cooke, 2009

The Site B archaeological deposit included wild animal bone from koala and possum as well as butchered pig, sheep and cow bones, indicating that some foods were hunted. Possum and koala stew were common in a dish known as 'Gundaroo bullock'.⁷⁶ A supply wagon went around the Duntroon estate and possibly Palmer also provided a source of rations for his indentured labourers.

The hut looked down on a boggy area where crops were grown and a wooden yoke for bullocks was found half-buried near the site. This once solitary hut site is now surrounded by modern houses and the ploughed fields are under Yerrabi Pond.

⁷³ Cooke, H and P Saunders 1996 Archaeological investigations at Site B Gungahlin ACT, report to CAS, p 11

⁷⁴ Cooke, H and P Saunders 1996 Archaeological investigations at Site B Gungahlin ACT, report to CAS, p 10

⁷⁵ Wilson G 1994 Analysis of the artefacts recovered from Site B and Malton grader sweeps Gungahlin ACT, Report to CAS, p 5

⁷⁶ Cooke, H and P Saunders 1996 Archaeological investigations at Site B Gungahlin ACT, report to CAS, p 11

The 1861 Robertson Land Act and smaller farms

In 1861 the Crown Lands Acts 1861 (NSW) were introduced by the New South Wales Premier and Minister for Lands John Robertson and later prefaced with his name, passed and came into effect on 7 January 1862, the date that the 14 year leases granted under the 1848 regulations expired⁷⁷. This allowed unsurveyed Crown lands held under lease in an area which had been declared an agricultural reserve in designated unsettled areas to be selected and bought freehold in lots of from 40 to 320 acres for £1 per acre on paying a deposit of five shillings per acre, the balance to be paid within three years, an interest-free loan of three-quarters of the price.⁷⁸

Alternatively at the end of the three years, the balance could be treated as an indefinite interest-free loan, as long as five percent interest was paid each year. Selectors were required to live on their land for three years and to make improvements worth £1 per acre.⁷⁹ Speculation was prevented by requiring actual residence on the land. Pastoralists were protected by granting them, at the conclusion of their present leases, annual leases in the settled districts and five yearly leases elsewhere, with a maximum area or carrying capacity and an increase in rent after appraisal of the runs. The pastoralists retained the right to request the survey and auctioning of large parcels of their lease. This meant that they could bid at short notice for such land while other potential bidders were unaware that the land was on the market.⁸⁰

Subsequently there were struggles between squatters and selectors; the laws were circumvented by corruption and the acquisition of land by various schemes, such as the commissioning of selections to be passed eventually to squatters and the selection of key land such as land with access to water by squatters to maintain the viability of their pastoral leases. The Land Acts accelerated the alienation of Crown Land that had been acquired under the principle of *terra nullius* and hence accelerated the dispossession of indigenous Australians.⁸¹

Thomas Warren selected some land at Gungahlin earlier occupied as a squatter by the Squire William Davis; he eventually succeeded in gaining possession of the land but had to pay Davis for the improvements.⁸²

Most of the good land along the Molonglo, Murrumbidgee, Ginninderra Creek and Gooromon Ponds had been taken up by 1862; only the hilly and timbered land in Ginninderra remained for selection under the new Act.⁸³

Selectors across many parts of NSW could only access small parcels of land in marginal areas, often remote, and insufficient in size so they struggled to survive leaving little trace of their existence and activity.⁸⁴ As families grew some farmers prospered while others struggled on poorer land or in times of drought, so small properties were often sold by families moving on to find other work. These larger amalgamations of land then included surplus houses and many of the older dwellings were left to fall into ruin.

Many newcomers and relatives of established farmers selected land in Ginninderra and Goorooyaroo parishes between 1862 – 65 and did manage to survive. These new settlers increased the population of the area, attracting more craftsmen and service industries to support their increasingly comfortable lifestyle.

The fortunes of new settlers were very much at the mercy of the weather. Droughts were severe in this area in 1859, when settlers had to cart water 10 -12 miles for domestic use, and in 1865 when Ginninderra and Duntroon Estates lost half their sheep. William Davis sank several wells along

⁷⁷ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, p 15

⁷⁸ Robertson Land Acts http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robertson_Land_Acts

⁷⁹ Starr, Joan and Mike Nicholas, Pioneering New England, Rigby, Adelaide, 1978

⁸⁰ Robertson Land Acts http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robertson_Land_Acts

⁸¹ Robertson Land Acts http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robertson_Land_Acts

⁸² Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, p 15

⁸³ Ibid pp 15-16

⁸⁴ Carter C P 1994 The archaeology of the Robertson Land Act; Unpub BA Hons thesis Dept Arch and Anth ANU, pp108-109

Ginninderra Creek with little success. The crops failed again in 1866 except on a few farms on the west of Ginninderra Creek where a couple of local thunderstorms resulted in the best crop being harvested from Crinigan's farm⁸⁵. In 1867 local thunderstorms gave the Butlers and Crinigans farms the best crops in the district and 1870 was marked by floods.

Palmer Trigonometrical Station

Palmer Trig is a stone cairn, wooden pole and metal circular vanes, erected in 1875 at the top of an unnamed hill as part of the original survey of the area – measured by chains from Lake George. It is typical of early survey "trigs" which formed a network across New South Wales and were used by surveyors during the course of original land grant surveys and mapping projects.

Trigs were built on high ground with good visibility so that the surveyors could sight back to it as they measured and calculated their way across the landscape. Once the whole valley could be seen from here, but now there is just a glimpse of Yerrabi Pond through the town houses.

As selections were made ahead of the survey, when the official lines were drawn on maps it revealed that some of the landholders had laid claim to parts of the land which were not officially theirs.



Palmer Trig, 2009, H Cooke

The cairn and vanes of Palmer Trig were reconstructed by the Institution of Engineers, Australia, Canberra Division and a plaque erected. The poor trig once stood out proudly on this small hill at Roderick Street, Amaroo, but the view is hard to appreciate now that high houses have been built around it.

Old Gundaroo Road

The old roads used by the early settlers often followed tracks used by the Aboriginal people. As more immigrant people settled here and services increased, the roads became more defined.

The Gundaroo Road was the link to Sydney for the early residents of Ginninderra; it began as a track along which settlers came to find land to purchase and set up homes. The road was progressively surfaced to assist travel, particularly in wet weather. Manufactured goods and food also came by wagon and dray along this road, and for a while in the 1860s bushrangers held up travellers and in 1866 even ransacked two stores and the post office at Gundaroo.

⁸⁵ Gale, John; 1927, Canberra, history of and legends relating to the Federal Capital Territory of the Commonwealth of Australia; ; AM Fallick & Sons; Qbyn, pp 106-107.



Old Gundaroo Road at James Kirk Street, Gungahlin. H Cooke 2009

The old Gundaroo Road can still be seen in many places where its original trees have been conserved for their cultural and natural significance and are now included within pedestrian and equestrian paths. The route of Gundaroo Drive is close to that of the old Gundaroo Road between the Barton Highway and James Kirk Street. At the James Kirk Street intersection, with a little enterprise you can see the original alignment of the road, in Nellie Hamilton Avenue and in the verge of Strayleaf Crescent; two parallel lines of mature eucalypts mark its path. The old road crosses into Forde, travels through Heritage Park and follows the pedestrian path adjacent to Amy Ackman Street.



Old Gundaroo Road at the corner of Francis Forde Blvd and Amy Ackerman Cres, H Cooke 2009

As you walk along it remember the settlers, many of whom would have walked and ridden horses along this road to visit their neighbours or to work as domestic or agricultural labourers. Children walked along in their leather boots to attend school, having first milked the cow, fed the chooks and completed other early morning chores.

Horse Park

John Gillespie and his wife Mary Ann and children George and Elizabeth Jane had arrived on 11 November 1841 on the Lascar. John worked for William Klensendorffe at Canberra for two years before settling at Ginninderra where their son James was born in 1844.⁸⁶ In 1852 John purchased

⁸⁶ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series Pp 13 - 14

a 30 acre block, Portion 28 in the Parish of Goorooyaroo, at Dead Horse Gully. He named the property 'Horse Park' and built a home in 1853; the original separate slab kitchen survives as the oldest occupied homestead in the district.⁸⁷ 'Horse Park' has been added to over the years in styles and materials appropriate to the time of each extension.⁸⁸ In 1858 the Gillespies increased their land holdings with further purchases of blocks.



Horse Park. The National Trust (ACT) all rights reserved

The Horse Park wetland is of some antiquity and is under several treaties with China and Japan to protect a migratory wren. There is also abundant evidence of Aboriginal use of the banks of the swamp which would have been a lake at times.

The first domestic wagon in Ginninderra was introduced by John Gillespie in the late 1850s⁸⁹; prior to that substantial loads were hauled around properties and neighbourhoods on rough slides and sledges. There was some evidence that wagon wheels cut such deep grooves in the track to 'Horse Park' that a new creek formed. There was a wash pool in the old Horse Park Creek where sheep were washed prior to shearing.⁹⁰

Elmgrove

John's son James selected Portion 186, Gooyooyaroo to the north west of his father's house in 1882 and built a homestead, 'Elmgrove'. James married Isabella Jones and lived in the house until his death in 1926; his widow lived there until she died in 1938, and their son Harold remained there until he died in 1974. The separate kitchen burned down in 1911⁹¹. This property is still a working station, growing some crops and shearing their sheep in the shed built by the Gillespie family in the 1950s.

One record of a prank has been handed down in history: Frank Morris made and repaired saddlery and travelled with his wares. One night he was camping with his covered van in the lane between 'Horse Park' and 'Elm Grove' when the van started moving up hill. His nephews, the Gozzard boys of Aston, Mulligan's Flat had tied fencing wire to the van and moved it slowly with a strainer attached to a tree.

Another resident, James Burton, was a stonemason at Duntroon in the 1860s and moved to

⁸⁷ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series P 12-14

⁸⁸ Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p 21

⁸⁹ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series P 14

⁹⁰ Gillespie LL 1985 Gungahlin, Analysis of History, Report to NCDC, no 45

⁹¹ Gillespie LL 1985 Gungahlin, Analysis of History, Report to NCDC, no. 33

Mulligans Flat in the 1870s. He worked on some of the stone work on the Rectory for St John's Church Reid in 1873. His second home which he probably built in the 1870s and where he died in 1896, was beyond 'Elm Grove'; the house disappeared in decay but an old pear tree struggled on until the 1970s.⁹²

Strayleaf

John Butler Junour built the original home at 'Strayleaf', further east along Gundaroo Road. This home was then purchased by Clarence Cavanagh, son of Patrick; the Cavanagh owners were related to John Crinigan's second wife, the widow Margaret Logue and the old Crinigan's blocks passed into their property.⁹³ John Cavanagh and family were the last residents to live on the property under lease before the ACT Government resumed it in 1994⁹⁴ to build the suburbs of Amaroo and Gungahlin.



Stray Leaf sheds left abandoned H Cooke 2009

The house and sheds remain but are soon to be demolished. It is commemorated by the naming of Strayleaf Crescent which follows the old road close to where the property stood.

East View

'East View', on the southern side of the Gundaroo Road, was originally the site of a slab and bark hut occupied by the bachelor brothers Matthew and John Walsh, sons of Davey, who settled in the region in the early 1860s⁹⁵. Patrick Cavanagh followed with his son Michael who married Ethel Harris, a schoolteacher at Mulligans Flat School. Michael's nephew Ernest Cavanagh and his wife Beatrice were the last occupants, building a gracious house in the 1940s,⁹⁶ which with the

⁹² Ibid no.28

⁹³ Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p21

⁹⁴ Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p21

⁹⁵ Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p21

⁹⁶ Gillespie LL 1985 Gungahlin, Analysis of History, Report to NCDC, no 65

outbuildings and substantial shearing shed were recently demolished.



East View driveway 1992 H Cooke.

All that remains of 'East View' are the old square stone cairns that supported the gate and some cypress pines from the garden, now at the edge of the playground next to the Forde information centre on Francis Forde Boulevard. The stone wall bordering the path at this point includes some of the original garden wall, which was made from stone salvaged from Crinigan's Hut.



Old East View driveway, gate cairns and cypress trees, H Cooke, 2009

Mulligans Flat

Poor Mulligan is not remembered in historical records, but he may have been a convict who had a hut somewhere in the area well before the main settlement phase. The Mulligan's Flat Reserve takes the name used for this area as more smaller portions of land were being sold from 1857, so it must have been in common use to define the area.

Aboriginal people hunted, gathered and maintained a rich cultural tradition in and around this region for thousands of years and surveys of these areas have identified many sites containing stone artefacts, all of which are protected under the ACT Heritage Act. An Aboriginal stone procurement site lies within Mulligans Flat and is commemorated by an interpretative sign on the northern side of Mulligans Flat road, nearly at the ACT border, in the part of the nature reserve known as 'Little Mulligans'.



Mulligans Flat Aboriginal Stone Procurement Site sign, H Cooke, 2009

William Ryan was an Irish convict who arrived in Sydney on the *Sir Godfrey Webster* on 3 Jan 1826 and was assigned to JJ Moore at Canberry station. He was one of the first settlers in Mulligan's Flat about 1841, in a group of buildings opposite the future school site.⁹⁷ His nephew, also William Ryan, and his wife Margaret (nee Byrne) arrived on the *Orontes* in 1841 and settled there with his uncle. No evidence of this site can be located.⁹⁸

William and Margaret's son John was born under a dray near Collector on 9 June 1842. Margaret had accompanied her husband on a trip to Sydney as she was afraid to stay home where large numbers of Aboriginal people had gathered.⁹⁹ Old Billy Ryan disappeared from the farm in March 1843 under mysterious circumstances and was never seen again in spite of intensive police investigation which confirmed that he had not returned to Ireland as some thought.¹⁰⁰

Walter was described as a leaseholder of Mulligan's Flat in 1856 but was killed in a fall from his horse in 1857. Margaret Ryan and their son John purchased more land three months after his death¹⁰¹.

Mulligans Flat School

The first Mulligan's Flat School was erected by the residents on land alienated for a school and opened in 1896 in a small slab hut (5' x 10'6' x 7'), with white washed walls and a bark roof. Originally it had 4 desks and 4 forms; James Gibson was the first teacher and another of the early teachers was not impressed with the style of architecture and departed shortly after she saw the school.

⁹⁷ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, *The Wizard*, Canberra Local History Series, p 13

⁹⁸ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, *The Wizard*, Canberra Local History Series, p 14

⁹⁹ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, *The Wizard*, Canberra Local History Series, p 3

¹⁰⁰ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, *The Wizard*, Canberra Local History Series, p 123

¹⁰¹ *Williams Barber Arch Services, 1999, Prelim Cultural Resource Survey: MF Nature Reserve areas B & C, p 15*



Remains of concrete steps of Mulligans Flat School, 2009, H Cooke

A new substantially bigger weatherboard building with a corrugated iron roof was erected in 1913, but the old slab hut was still used as a lunch shelter.



National Library of Australia: Boland, Frank H. Public School Mulligan's Flat, [1910s] nla.pic-an23694889

The School's fence was erected in 1919 and on Arbour Day in 1920 young pine trees from Yarralumla Nursery were planted by the students after the school teacher fetched them in her pony trap.¹⁰²

¹⁰² Gillespie, LL; Sept 1978, 'If Ginninderra Creek could speak' in Canberra Historical Journal, CDHS, New Series 2, p 20

Two lines of *Pinus radiata* trees still sigh in the wind on the north and western sides of the site; the old concrete steps up to the second building remain in a broken pile and there is a mound of stone and brick where the chimney once stood. Other exotic plants such as *Arbutus uneda* and the ground cover *Vinca* (periwinkle) struggle on as reminders of the garden.



Two lines of pines planted beside the Mulligan's Flat School, H Cooke, 2009

The Old Coach Road

Walk into Mulligans Flat Reserve from the Gundaroo Road Car Park and you will be walking along the Old Coach Road. The surviving section runs 1.9 km to the ACT-NSW border and is well defined by mature eucalypts on either side. The Old Coach Road was surveyed in 1880, opened in 1886 and was the main route to link the early rural settlements in the Gundaroo, Ginninderra, Canberra and Queanbeyan areas to the railway at Bungendore. When the railway was extended to Queanbeyan in 1887 the coach road was allowed to fall into disrepair.¹⁰³



The Old Coach Road, Mulligans Flat, H Cooke 2009

There is evidence of some earlier rural properties along this coach road. On a fork to the left of the old road are sheep yards and a rectangle of concrete stumps which once supported a small two-stand shearing shed built of timber frame and corrugated iron by Henry Curran in the 1940s and used up until 1994.¹⁰⁴ The structure burnt down a few years after the Reserve had been declared,

¹⁰³ National Trust (ACT), A heritage tour of Gungahlin, Northern Gungahlin, p 1

¹⁰⁴ Saunders P; 1992 CAS Inc ACT Sites Inventory Project Stage 3: Fieldwork Report 23 November 1991 - Sites at Mulligans Flat, Gungahlin, ACT, p 5

but the stockyards have been retained.

Large Aboriginal open camp sites comprising various types of flakes and blades and manuports of chert, volcanic material, silcrete and quartz have been found nearby, corroborating the historical reports of large gatherings of Aboriginal people in this area.

Dungarvon

Walter Ginn was one of three settlers who selected land near Dungarvon Waterholes in Mulligan's Flat in 1858. Walter was the son of William and Mary Ginn; he came to Australia with his parents in 1857. A bachelor with significant other land holdings in Mulligan's Flat, he built 'Dungarvon' a small homestead on the slope just below the ACT/NSW border fence in about 1886 but had probably already been living there for some years.¹⁰⁵

Weather conditions could make or break small farmers but after several years of drought, 1867 was a bumper year for Walter Ginn.¹⁰⁶

Walter died unmarried in 1925¹⁰⁷ and although 'Dungarvon' was on the 1915 Federal Capital map, it had apparently been in ruins most of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁸ The ruin is about 1km along the Old Coach Road, beside a small dam. Only a few bricks and some large field stones remain beside a rectangular mound of earth, indicating that a chimney once stood at the eastern end of the structure. Bricks with a cigar shaped frog are said to have been made at a nearby kiln.¹⁰⁹

An apple tree 6m from the north-east corner of the mound is still alive and next to it a small thicket of quince trees. These may bear fruit in good years, but you will be lucky if you beat the birds and kangaroos to the produce.



Old local brick embedded in Coach Road, H Cooke 2009.

¹⁰⁵ National Trust (ACT), A heritage tour of Gungahlin, Northern Gungahlin, p 1

¹⁰⁶ Gale, John; 1927, Canberra, history of and legends relating to the Federal Capital Territory of the Commonwealth of Australia; ; AM Fallick & Sons; Qbyn, pp 106-107.

¹⁰⁷ Williams Barber Arch Services, 1999, Prelim Cultural Resource Survey: MF Nature Reserve areas B & C, p 10

¹⁰⁸ Saunders P; 1992 CAS Inc ACT Sites Inventory Project Stage 3: Fieldwork Report 23 November 1991 - Sites at Mulligans Flat, Gungahlin, ACT, p 2

¹⁰⁹ Saunders P; 1992 CAS Inc ACT Sites Inventory Project Stage 3: Fieldwork Report 23 November 1991 - Sites at Mulligans Flat, Gungahlin, ACT, p 2

Inglewood

'Inglewood' was built by Joseph Winter in about 1893 on land originally owned by Thomas McAuliffe. The ruins are about 600m, south west of Dungarvon, crossing an old fence line marked by a few lonely, eroded wooden posts¹¹⁰.

Following the death of Joseph's wife Elizabeth in 1906, Joseph left the area and his brothers William and David occupied the house. Sydney Burton lived there for a short time until the property passed to Ernest Jones who had married Joseph and Elizabeth's daughter¹¹¹.

The house was occupied until 1925 but then fell into ruin. The stone chimney remains, about 3m high, are almost obscured by apple saplings, scatters of bricks and stone and the remains of an orchard of pear and plum trees mark the old property. There is also a large peppercorn tree south of the chimney, some elms and *Robinia* trees further to the south where there may have been sheep yards.¹¹²

Gungaderra

The property was originally called Red Hill, possibly because Aboriginal people used ochre from this area but it could also have acquired the name after the soil was exposed through erosion due to drought and rabbit infestation. It was first purchased by John Winter in 1861; he built the house about the time of his marriage to Jemima McPherson on 13 June 1862. Some interest was shown in mining of an iron ore lode in the area around 1895. This did not prove to be viable and the mining was abandoned but a considerable deposit of pipe clay was found and used by the Ginninderra residents to whitewash their large fireplaces.¹¹³

A substantial addition to the house was built for the Winters in 1902 by Sid Greig of Murrumbateman. After Jemima died in 1913 John moved away and the property was leased to Patrick Donnelly after it was resumed by the Commonwealth. Richard Crace, son of E G Crace held the lease by 1937 and renamed the property Gungaderra, a combination of the names of the two large estates, Gungahlin and Ginninderra.¹¹⁴ The property is still privately leased.

Well Station

Well Station is named for the sole well on the property, Charles Archibald Peden held the lease after the land was acquired by the Federal Capital Territory from his father-in-law Archibald McKeahnie on 21 October 1915.¹¹⁵

Wells Station included 2020 acres under lease with 2150 sheep when it was sold to John Howard Joseland in January 1926¹¹⁶.

The homestead and associated outbuildings represent a very good example of a medium scale pastoral and domestic work environment of the second half of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The buildings constitute an important collection, now rare in the Australian Capital Territory. Although it is a private residence and cannot be visited, Well Station can be easily seen from a park at the north-east end of Eric Mawson Street.

¹¹⁰ *National Trust (ACT), A heritage tour of Gungahlin, Northern Gungahlin, p 1*

¹¹¹ Williams Barber Arch Services, 1999, Prelim Cultural Resource Survey: MF Nature Reserve areas B & C, p 10

¹¹² Saunders P; 1992 CAS Inc ACT Sites Inventory Project Stage 3: Fieldwork Report 23 November 1991 - Sites at Mulligans Flat, Gungahlin, ACT, p 3

¹¹³ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, p 115

¹¹⁴ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, pp1-2

¹¹⁵ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series, p 176

¹¹⁶ Gillespie LL, 1992, Ginninderra Forerunner to Canberra, The Wizard, Canberra Local History Series P 176

ACT/NSW Border

In October 1909 agreement was reached between Prime Minister Deakin and the Premier of NSW, Charles Wade, on the area to be ceded by NSW to the Commonwealth for the Federal Capital Territory. The surveying and marking of the boundary between the Federal Territory and New South Wales began in June 1910 and was completed in 1915. The first section of the border surveyed (by Percy Sheaffe) was the straight-line section from Coree Trig to One Tree Trig at the northern corner of Gungahlin.

Fisher obtained services on loan from NSW of the surveyor Charles R Scrivener who appointed in 1908 to survey the FC site and later became Director of Lands and Surveys in the Dept of Home Affairs, retired in 1915.¹¹⁷

The ACT/NSW border was surveyed from 1910 to 1915. Field books were used by surveyors to record the details of the survey and marking of the boundaries of land to be excised from New South Wales to create what was then referred to as the Federal Capital Territory. The field books, which have passed to the various sections of the Commonwealth and ACT Governments responsible for surveying in the ACT, are now held by the ACT Planning and Land Authority, as are the associated FC18 series of plans drawn from them.¹¹⁸



ACT Border Marker, H Cooke, 2009

Surveyors marked the boundary by hammering in 200 millimetre square wooden posts, several of which remain along the fence and making lines up to 2 metres long with large paddock stones to further confirm the line being surveyed. There are many such stones along this fence line, especially at the corners; most have moved from their original alignments but are still identifiable as placed stones.

¹¹⁷ Gillespie LL, 1991, Canberra 1820 - 1913, Commonwealth of Australia, p 247

¹¹⁸ Border survey historyHistory of the original ACT/NSW border survey

http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/tools_resources/maps_land_survey/surveying_data/surveyors_information/field_books/border_survey, p x



Surveyors blaze, H Cooke, 2009.

It was also common practise for surveyors to blaze and number trees near surveyed points. A stringy bark tree with a surveyors blaze cut with a steel axe with a 'marker' carved at the bottom of the blaze and an inscription chiselled deeper into the heartwood of the tree. Regrowth around the edge of the blaze, which is 1.2 metres long and at present 20 m wide, has obscured some of the inscription.¹¹⁹

The new town of Gungahlin

The land in this area was acquired between 1913 and 1915 by the Federal Capital Commission for the nation's capital. The town of Gungahlin was part of the 1957 plan for future development in the ACT and was officially launched as Canberra's fourth 'town' by the ACT Chief Minister in 1991. Cultural and environmental surveys were undertaken in the early 1990s, the cultural heritage surveys were the most intensive and thorough undertaken in the ACT at that time.

All heritage places were assessed for significance; some did not meet the criteria for significance, some were registered with the intention to preserve them *in situ* and others were recorded and the artefacts salvaged by archaeologists in the hope of future study.

Although some places of historic significance were retained there has been little conservation or management of these by the ACT Government. Crinigan's Hut has been conserved with the assistance of ACT Heritage grants and a lot of hard work and dedication by Crinigan's descendants and the Canberra Archaeological Society Inc (CAS).

The National Trust (ACT) received an ACT Heritage Grant to undertake minimal conservation of the Ginninderra Blacksmith Shop. The CSIRO takes good care of Gungahlin Homestead and the remains of its formal gardens. Deasland, Gold Creek, Horse Park, Well Station and Gungaderra are in private hands and conserved through use.

But other archaeological sites are sadly neglected. If you would like to help to raise awareness of the need to conserve, interpret and promote these sites of significance to our culture, contact CAS through our website: www.cas.asn.au.

¹¹⁹ Williams Barber Arch Services, 1999, Prelim Cultural Resource Survey: MF Nature Reserve areas B & C, p ?