

**Q** How well can you get your tongue around Sydmeladperbrisho? Where does this made-up word come from?

**Q** Can you think of another suitable name for our national capital, which would represent Australia for you? Justify your answer.

More information about the selection of the site for the national capital can be found in the temporary display, **A Capital Choice: The Selection of Canberra as the Site of our National Capital 1908 - 2008**, in section 10 of the National Capital Exhibition. Ask at the front desk for the teachers' resource on this display or download it from [www.nationalcapital.gov.au](http://www.nationalcapital.gov.au)

## The Ideal City – The Design for Canberra - Section 5

Ask your students to rise and move to section 5, where they can sit or stand in front of the panorama of Canberra by Marion Mahony Griffin. Make sure they don't rush to the Canberra Sound and Light Show and turn it on before you are ready!

### Setting the Scene

Now that the preferred location had been selected for the new national capital, a design had to be found to create a city that would be the finest capital in the world.

An international competition for the design of the new national capital was held. 137 entries were received from around the world. In 1912 entry number 29, by Walter Burley Griffin of Chicago, USA, was announced as the winner of the competition. The second place entry – by Eliel Saarinen of Finland – and third place entry – by Alfred Agache of France – are displayed in the glass case opposite.

### Exhibit

**View from the Summit of Mount Ainslie** This is an illustration of part of Walter Burley Griffin's plan by his wife and business partner, Marion Mahony Griffin. Marion was the first registered female architect in the United States. The view is from Mount Ainslie, where the lookout is today, looking south towards Mount Bimberi in the distance, along the Land Axis. The Water Axis follows the line from Black Mountain on the right through the lake. The city is built around these two lines, anchoring the design into the landscape.

The building at the base of Mount Ainslie is a place for recreation with entertainment and eating facilities (now the Australian War Memorial). Prospect Park (Anzac Parade) leads to the lake (Lake Burley Griffin). The large buildings lining the lake shore are national cultural buildings (galleries, concert halls, museums etc). On the other side of the lake in the national triangle are courts and government buildings. Parliament house sits half way up Camp Hill (near where Old Parliament House is now located). At the summit of Camp Hill is Griffin's Capitol building. This building was designed to celebrate the Australian national spirit and commemorate Australian achievement. It would house a national archive, national portrait gallery etc.

**Q** Does the Canberra of today reflect Walter Burley Griffin's vision of nearly 100 years ago? How is it different?

### Interesting Fact

Griffin's plan symbolised democracy and was designed to reflect the values of our emerging nation. He placed the Capitol building at the summit of Camp Hill to symbolically locate the people above the government (located in Parliament House further down the hill). However, when the decision was made as to where the permanent Parliament House would be located, the primary point in the Parliamentary Triangle was chosen by Parliament. Even so, the people can still be above the government when they walk over Parliament House.

## The Canberra Sound and Light Show

Ask your students to gather around the Sound and Light Show, making sure the touch panel is not pressed to start the show before you are ready.

### Setting the Scene

The Sound and Light Show gives an overview of Griffin's geometric plan for the city, explains his plans for the city and Canberra as it is today. The commentary points out the major national institutions.

Take the opportunity to view the other sections of the National Capital Exhibition:

- Charles Weston and the planting of Canberra – section 6
- Lake Burley Griffin – section 7
- Timeline of Australian Prime Ministers – section 8
- The future development of the capital – section 9
- *A Capital Choice: The Selection of Canberra as the site of our National Capital 1908 - 2008* display (teacher resource available from the front desk) – section 10
- Captain Cook Memorial Jet – great views are available from the viewing terrace (entry via the foyer)

## More Information and Teacher Resources

National Capital Authority

» [www.nationalcapital.gov.au](http://www.nationalcapital.gov.au)

National Capital Authority Education Portal

» [www.education.nationalcapital.gov.au](http://www.education.nationalcapital.gov.au)

National Capital Exhibition Virtual Tour

» [www.nationalcapital.gov.au/visiting/attractions/nce\\_tour](http://www.nationalcapital.gov.au/visiting/attractions/nce_tour)

### National Capital Exhibition

Regatta Point

Barrine Drive, Commonwealth Park off Commonwealth Avenue

### Opening Hours

9am to 5pm Monday to Friday

10am to 4pm Saturday and Sunday

Closed public holidays

Ph 02 6272 2900 | Fax 02 6247 1875 | Email [nce@natcap.gov.au](mailto:nce@natcap.gov.au)



Australian Government

National Capital Authority

# The National Capital Exhibition

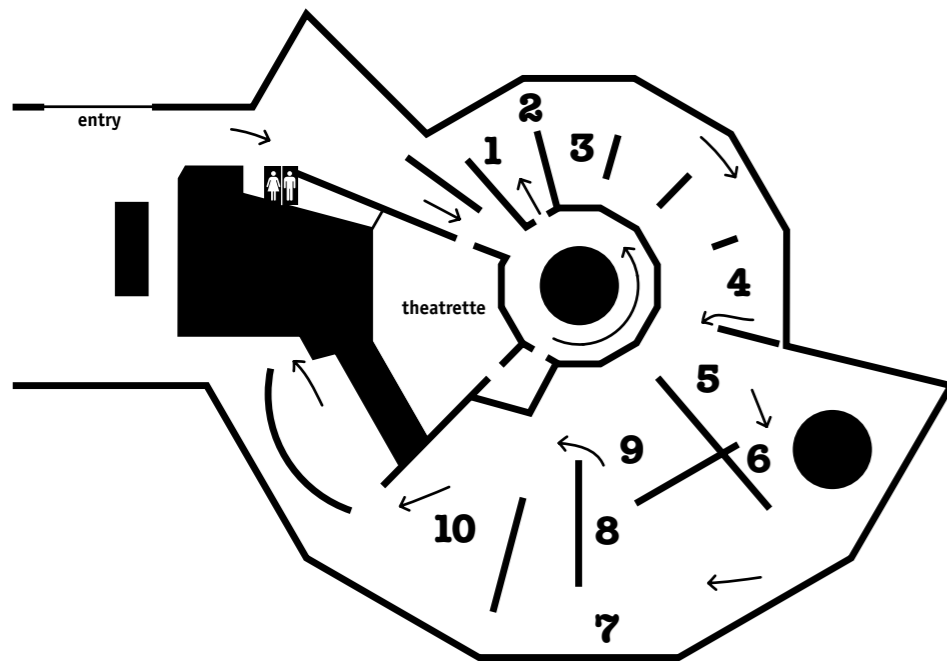
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## National Capital Exhibition Map



# National Capital Exhibition

## *The Story of Canberra film – Theatrette*

This short film tells the story of Canberra, from its pre-national capital history to Federation and the present day. The film provides an overview of the themes of the National Capital Exhibition.

### Exhibit

**Canberra 1913** (light box image on the ramp leading to the theatrette) This photograph was taken from the base of Mt Ainslie, near where the Australian War Memorial is now located and looks towards The Glebe (the clump of trees in the middle ground, now a park in Civic) and the Molonglo River (now dammed to form Lake Burley Griffin). Black Mountain, without Telstra Tower, is the large hill in the centre of the image.

**Q** What do you think this land was used for? Do you think many people lived here?

*You may wish to point out the building styles in the photograph. This theme will be explored in section 3 – European Settlement.*

### Interesting Fact

A key difference between Canberra in 1913 and today (apart from all the buildings) is the lack of trees in this photograph. The original settlers to the area cut down most of the trees to make way for fields and pasture for their animals. When the building of the city started, a program of tree planting was undertaken. By 1945 (32 years) 20 million trees had been planted – that is 625 000 a year. No wonder Canberra is called the bush capital!

## Indigenous History of Canberra – Section 1

Ask your students to sit or stand in the enclosed area of section 1, ensuring they are not blocking the passage for other visitors to the Exhibition.

### Setting the Scene

Canberra has a much older history than as the national capital of Australia. Indigenous people have lived here for over 20 000 years. The local Indigenous people are the Ngunnawal.

### Exhibit

**Bogong Moths** Each summer the Ngunnawal and neighbouring Indigenous peoples gathered in the high country south of Canberra to collect Bogong moths. Billions of moths came to the cool mountains to aestivate (hibernate during summer). The moths are highly nutritious and were roasted or ground into a paste to eat. Important ceremonies were held, art was painted in rock shelters, marriages arranged and goods traded.

**Q** What do you think Bogong moths taste like?  
(Apparently like peanut butter)

### Interesting Fact

The name 'Canberra' comes from the Ngunnawal word 'Kamberra' or 'Kambarri', and is believed to mean 'meeting place'.

## European Settlement - Section 2

This section of the Exhibition can be presented from section 1.

### Setting the Scene

The first Europeans to see the Limestone Plains (as the Canberra area was known) were explorers looking for suitable farming land. The first property in the district was 'Canberry', on the site now occupied by the National Museum of Australia, in 1823. Life on the Limestone Plains was not easy, with drought, flood, rabbit plagues and isolation being constant factors of life. Farmers raised sheep and cattle, and grew crops. The largest landholders in the area were the Campbells of Duntroon, who built cottages around their property for their workers' and their families. Blundells Cottage (photograph in the strip of images on the wall) was the home of the Duntroon bullock driver and his family.

### Exhibit

**Embroidery Sampler** This embroidery sampler was made by Margaret Shumack in 1887 when she was 12 years old. Margaret and her sisters lived on a small farm and attended the Stone Hut School. Stitching samplers was typical school work for girls. A sampler was evidence of a girl's skill with the needle and good examples were often hung on the wall at home.

**Q** The people who lived in Canberra were very isolated and there were no shops nearby – it took a six week round trip to get supplies from Sydney. Therefore, why do you think it was important for girls to learn how to sew?

(All clothing and household linen had to be stitched and decorated by hand.)

### Interesting Fact

**Pisé House** (image on the floating wall, titled 'Greetings from Canberra 1908 – 1909'). Pisé houses are made from rammed earth. A frame for the walls is made and a layer of soil is poured into the frame. This is then rammed down hard, then another layer of soil is added and rammed, continuing until the wall is the right height. The earth walls are then covered in lime wash or plaster. Without this covering the walls crumble and disintegrate as water seeps into the earth, as can be seen on the chimney of this house. Pisé houses were inexpensive and made from local materials.

This pisé house was built on Springbank Station and was submerged when Lake Burley Griffin was filled.

## Federation - Section 3

Ask your students to rise and move to section 2 where they can sit or stand in the enclosed area, ensuring they are not blocking the passage of other visitors to the Exhibition.

### Setting the Scene

On 1 January 1901 the six Australian colonies united to become a nation. This was an obvious turning point in the history of Canberra, as it led to the need for a national capital.

Federation was not a forgone conclusion. Debate raged for many years as practical considerations and political idealism proved difficult to reconcile.

### Exhibit

**Victorian Electoral Register** Victoria was the only state to save its electoral rolls for the Federal Referenda. This is just one page from the roll.

**Q** What does this page of the Victorian Electoral Roll tell us about the people who voted for Federation?  
(You may want to look at the sex of the voters, their names (Anglo-Celtic) and occupations)

Prior to the first Federal election in March 1901 both women and selected Indigenous people above the age of 21 were given the right to vote in the colonies of South Australia and Western Australia. In the other colonies women and Indigenous people were not entitled to vote. Women were given the right to vote federally (and to stand for Parliament) in 1902. (New Zealand women were the first in the world to be given the vote in 1893.) Indigenous people were not given the right to vote until 1962.

### Interesting Fact

The voters of the Canberra region did not support Federation. In both Referenda (1898 and 1899) they voted against the proposed Australian Constitution. How did your state vote for Federation? Check the numbers for the 1899 referendum on the map on the other side of the wall.

## Siting and Naming of the National Capital - Section 4

Ask your students to rise and move to section 4 where they can sit or stand in the enclosed area, ensuring they are not blocking the passage of other visitors to the Exhibition.

### Setting the Scene

Now that Australia was united as a nation, a national capital was required. But where would the national capital be? Would Sydney, the oldest and most populous city, be the national capital? Or should it be Melbourne, the richest city in Australia? A compromise was found – the national capital would be neither city. Instead, the Constitution stated a new city would be built in New South Wales, not less than 100 miles (160 km) from Sydney.

### Exhibit

**Map on Wall** Many towns vied for the honour of becoming the national capital. Dalgety in the south-east of the New South Wales was chosen for the national capital in 1904. When (future Prime Minister) Billy Hughes visited the site, on a bitterly cold day, he exclaimed that it would not do to build the national capital in an ice box!

Dalgety was not a popular choice for the nation capital. Instead, Yass-Canberra was selected as the site for the national capital in 1908.

### Interesting Fact

A national competition was held to name the new national capital. Over 700 entries were received, some serious, some not so serious. Selected suggestions are written across the map on the wall. Despite all the suggestions, the name chosen for the national capital was the name already used for the area – Canberra. The word comes from the Ngunnawal word 'Kamberra' or 'Kambarri' and is believed to mean 'meeting place' – a fitting name for a place where the nation comes together.