

# Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration of 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall, O'Connor) Notice 2010 (No 1)

Notifiable Instrument NI 2010—121

made under the

*Heritage Act 2004* section 34 Notice of Decision about Provisional Registration

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**1. Name of instrument**

This instrument is the Heritage (Decision about Provisional Registration for 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall, O'Connor) Notice 2010 (No 1)

**2. Registration details of the place**

Registration details of the place are at Attachment A: Provisional Register entry for 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall, O'Connor.

**3. Reason for decision**

The ACT Heritage Council has decided that the 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall, O'Connor meets one or more of the heritage significance criteria at s 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*. The provisional register entry is at Attachment A.

**4. Date of Provisional Registration**

11 March 2010

**5. Indication of council's intention**

The Council intends to decide whether to register the place under Division 6.2.

**6. Public consultation period**

The Council invites public comment by 15 April 2010 on the provisional registration of the 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall, O'Connor to:

The Secretary  
ACT Heritage Council  
GPO Box 158  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

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**Gerhard Zatschler**  
Secretary  
ACT Heritage Council

**12 March 2010**



ACT Heritage Council

**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**HERITAGE REGISTER  
(Provisional Registration Details)**

**Place No:**

For the purposes of s. 33 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, an entry to the heritage register has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council for the following place:

13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall, corner Hovea Street and Boronia Drive, O'Connor, ACT

Block 19, Section 24, O'Connor, Canberra Central, ACT

**DATE OF PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION**

Notified 11 March 2010 Notifiable Instrument: 2010—121

**PERIOD OF EFFECT OF PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION**

Start Date 11 March 2010      End Date 11 August 2010

**Extended Period (if applicable) Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ End Date \_\_\_\_\_**

Copies of the Register Entry are available for inspection at the ACT Heritage Unit. For further information please contact:

The Secretary  
ACT Heritage Council  
GPO Box 158, Canberra, ACT 2601

Telephone: 13 22 81      Facsimile: (02) 6207 2229

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## IDENTIFICATION OF THE PLACE

- 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall, corner Hovea Street and Boronia Drive, Block 19, Section 24, O'Connor, Canberra Central, ACT.
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## STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall is of heritage significance for its social, rarity and associational values.

The hall is significant for its role in community life since its construction in the 1920s - as a Mess Hall for construction workers building Old Parliament House; as a venue for the United Friendly Society in Kingston; and as a Scout Hall.

In particular, the Halls' use by the 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scouting Group has resulted in strong social value by families and young people who have been involved with the Group since 1959, playing an important role in the lives of many families, including, in some cases, association and use by several generations of the one family.

In addition, since its relocation to its current site in 1961, the building has had a strong association with Scouts Australia, the largest youth development organisation in Australia, as the meeting place for the 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Group.

The hall is of further significance for its associational value with Chief Minister, Jon Stanhope, as a scout and past president of the Group Committee plus scout leader. Other eminent Canberrans associated with the building and the scout group include Ray Travis Taylor, a key person in the initial establishment, Sir Dallas Brooks, Governor General who opened it, Jim Fraser MP who supported the group. Also Alois Mikula OAM a foundation member who continues and Graham Downe AM for his long and extensive service.

The hall also has rarity value as one of only three timber community halls within the ACT dating from the 1920s.

The hall while operating as the United Friendly Scouts' Hall was the venue for the establishment of the first Act ALP Branch of the NSW Labour Party.

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## FEATURES INTRINSIC TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PLACE

Features intrinsic to the heritage significance of the place which require conservation include:

- The timber hall building; and
  - The use of the building for community activity.
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## APPLICABLE HERITAGE GUIDELINES

The Heritage Guidelines adopted under s27 of the *Heritage Act* 2004 are applicable to the conservation of the 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall, corner Hovea Street and Boronia Drive, O'Connor, ACT.

The guiding conservation objective is that the 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall, corner Hovea Street and Boronia Drive, O'Connor, ACT, shall be conserved and appropriately managed in a manner respecting its heritage significance and the features intrinsic to that heritage significance, and consistent with a sympathetic and viable use or uses. Any works that have a potential impact on significant fabric shall be guided by a professionally documented assessment and conservation policy relevant to that area or component (i.e. a Statement of Heritage Effects – SHE).

Ensure that any actions impacting on the significance of the 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall are based on professional conservation planning and in accordance with social heritage values.

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## REASON FOR PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall, on the corners of Hovea Street and Boronia Drive, O'Connor, ACT has been assessed against the heritage significance criteria and been found to have heritage significance when assessed against four criteria (c), (d), (f) and (h) under the ACT Heritage Act.

The views of interested persons have been sought and there is support for the registration.

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## ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Pursuant to s.10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, a place or object has heritage significance if it satisfies one or more of the following criteria. Significance has been determined by research as accessed in the references below. Future research may alter the findings of this assessment.

- (a) **it demonstrates a high degree of technical or creative achievement (or both), by showing qualities of innovation, discovery, invention or an exceptionally fine level of application of existing techniques or approaches;**  
*not applicable*
- (b) **it exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group;**  
*not applicable*
- (c) **it is important as evidence of a distinctive way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function that is no longer practised, is in danger of being lost or is of exceptional interest;**

*The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall demonstrates three functions since its construction in the 1920s: a Mess Hall for the workers constructing Old Parliament House; a Friendly Society Hall; and a Scout Hall.*

*The first two of these functions are no longer practiced, and the building remains as evidence of functions now lost.*

*The place meets this criterion at a local level.*

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- (d) it is highly valued by the community or a cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations;**

*The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall in O'Connor is highly valued by the community for its strong and special educational and social associations as a Scout Hall since 1960.*

*Supporting the activities and aspirations of Scouts Australia, the hall has been a site for the development of physical, craft and outdoor activity skills of several generations of boys, girls and young men and women within the Canberra community.*

*The building's association and use as a Scout Hall has fostered many lifelong friendships and has played an important role in the lives of many families, including, in some cases, association and use by several generations of the one family.*

*The voluntary labour and fundraising efforts of the community to first obtain the hall in 1960 for the Scout group, as well as the ongoing contribution of the many children, young people, parents, leaders and friends demonstrate the history of community value attached to the use of the place as a Scout and community hall.*

*The formation of the 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Group soon after the development of the O'Connor area demonstrates the development of community life in the inner north in response to a growing suburb and city.*

*The hall also provides a venue for a number of different functions and community activities, garnering a strong place in the hearts and minds of the community.*

*In addition, the hall's former roles as the Old Parliament House Mess Hall and the United Friendly Society in Kingston demonstrate additional community uses and social associations. While operating as the United Friendly Society Hall it was the venue for the establishment of the first ACT ALP Branch of the NSW Labour Party. As a Mess Hall in the 1920s, the building fostered many friendships between some of Canberra's earliest families.*

*The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall meets the threshold for heritage listing in relation to this criterion.*

- (e) it is significant to the ACT because of its importance as part of local Aboriginal tradition**  
*not applicable*

- (f) it is a rare or unique example of its kind, or is rare or unique in its comparative intactness**

*The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall is one of three timber community halls within the ACT dating from the 1920s, therefore making it a rare example of this kind of place. The other two timber halls are located in Corroboree Park and at the Causeway.*

*The building has a reasonable level of integrity and intactness.*

*The building's relocation for each of its different purposes (as a United Friendly Society Hall and later a Scout Hall) is unusual by today's standards.*

*The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall meets the threshold for heritage listing in relation to this criterion.*

- (g) it is a notable example of a kind of place or object and demonstrates the main characteristics of that kind**  
*not applicable*

- (h) it has strong or special associations with a person, group, event, development or cultural phase in local or national history**

*The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall has a strong association with Scouts Australia, a component of a worldwide movement and the largest youth development organisation in Australia, which encourages the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development of young people (aged 6 to 26) to help enable them to reach their full potential in life.*

*The building also has an association with a number of community leaders within Canberra and the ACT, including Chief Minister, Jon Stanhope. Stanhope was a scout, scout leader and past president of the Group Committee of the 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scouts. Other eminent Canberrans associated with the building and the scout group include Ray Travis Taylor, a key person in the initial establishment, Sir Dallas Brooks, Governor General who opened it, Jim Fraser MP who supported the group. Also Alois Mikula OAM a foundation member who continues and Graham Downe AM for his long and extensive service.*

*In addition, the Hall has an association with the construction of Old Parliament House in the 1920s, and the United Friendly Society from the late 1920s to the late 1950s, as well as an association with the ACT Branch of the Australian Labor Party (ALP).*

*The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall meets the threshold for heritage listing in relation to this criterion.*

**(i) it is significant for understanding the evolution of natural landscapes, including significant geological features, landforms, biota or natural processes**  
*not applicable*

**(j) it has provided, or is likely to provide, information that will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of the natural or cultural history of the ACT because of its use or potential use as a research site or object, teaching site or object, type locality or benchmark site**  
*not applicable*

**(k) for a place—it exhibits unusual richness, diversity or significant transitions of flora, fauna or natural landscapes and their elements**  
*not applicable*

**(l) for a place—it is a significant ecological community, habitat or locality for any of the following:**

- (i) the life cycle of native species;
- (ii) rare, threatened or uncommon species;
- (iii) species at the limits of their natural range;
- (iv) distinct occurrences of species.

*not applicable*

*The place is assessed as not being significant in relation to the following criteria: (a); (b); (c); (e); (g); (i); (j); (k); and (l).*

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## **SUMMARY OF THE PLACE HISTORY AND PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

### **HISTORY**

The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall in O'Connor has a history of relocation and reuse.

It was first constructed prior to 1924 as the Mess Hall for the construction workers of Old Parliament House. During this time, as food is so often the focal point for social activities and engagement, the venue fostered many of Canberra's earliest friendships among the families who resided here in the early 1920s.

Prior to 1929 the building was relocated to Kingston where it became known as the 'Friendly Society Hall' and the venue for the 'United Friendly Society'. Australian Friendly Societies had strong nationalistic aspirations and provided sickness, medical and funeral cover for its members.

In Kingston, the building was also used as a dance hall and meeting place. The first meeting of the ACT Branch of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) was held at the hall in its Kingston location in 1930.

The hall remained in this location for over 30 years until 1960, when the Department of the Interior opened a tender for the disposal of the hall.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scouts submitted a tender of £5/-/- for the building, having already received approval from the National Development Committee to relocate the building to a site on Macarthur Avenue, O'Connor.

The tender was successful, and the relocation of the hall took place on 14 and 15 May, 1960.

'The hall was transported by scouting parents and helpers from Kingston, to an open land site at the corner of Hovea Street, Boronia Drive and Macarthur Avenue, and became the 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall' (Martin, 2009: 8).

Repairs and renovations were undertaken, including a small extension, by the scout and local communities. A total of £676/3/3 was spent to relocate and renovate the building. An additional £102/3/2 was spent on equipment for the scout group.

Of these costs, £300 had been raised by cubs, scouts and their parents. The Group Ladies Auxiliary baked cakes, sold sweets and held other fundraising activities. In addition, families contributed a shilling a week to a Building Fund.

The whole exercise was a significant community effort for the time.

On 15 April 1961, the Administrator of the Commonwealth, Sir Dallas Brooks, officially opened the hall, although it had already been in use since September 1960. Jim Fraser, MP, also attended the opening.

The hall has since been used for scouting activities, including cub, scout, rover and venturer groups to develop the physical, craft and outdoor activity skills of boys and young men.

The hall has also been used in its current location for other community pursuits, including the Canberra School of Ballet, soon after its relocation, in 1964. Canberra's Tongan community hold regular meetings at the hall for the guidance and support of young Tongan males. Other regular users of the hall include an aikido practice group, the Canberra Historical Radio Society and Canberra's home school community.

## **Canberra Scouting Association**

The Boy Scout movement first came to Canberra in October 1925, through a small meeting in the Acton Hall, where a lecture was given by the Director of Organisation of the NSW section. Following this meeting, the first Canberra group was formed at Acton, under the instruction of Mr C.W Guthrie.

Soon after, five additional groups were formed at Duntroon, Causeway, Eastlake, Westlake and a fifth group was restricted for Catholic boys.

In November 1959 a Cub Pack formed the basis of the new 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Group in O'Connor. This occurred soon after the development of the O'Connor area (1947-55). The newly formed group needed a new home in which to base their activities, and hence the former United Kingston Friendly Society Hall was purchased for this purpose.

In 1970, the first girl joined the organisation.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Group has produced many community leaders over several generations.

The chief Minister, Jon Stanhope, was a past president of the Group Committee.

Other people associated with the 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall in O'Connor include Ray Travis Taylor, who contributed much to the early foundation of the group; and Alois Mikula OAM, a long standing member of the 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Group.

Taylor had been a club leader in Tasmania prior to his relocation to Canberra, as well as having been a POW in Singapore, and worked on the Burma Railway.

In 1996 Mikula was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the Scout Association of Australia and Veterans. In 2001 he was also awarded a Centenary Medal for many years dedicated service to Scouts ACT. Mikala's three sons have all been members of the 13<sup>th</sup> group. In addition, his daughter was the first girl admitted to the 13<sup>th</sup> group.

Scout leader, Graham Downie, has also been awarded an AM for his long service to the group.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Group is one of the oldest continuously operating scout groups within the ACT.

Today, scouting emphasises community service, respect for diversity, and environmental and ethical awareness.

## **DESCRIPTION**

The 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall is set within parkland in the suburb of O'Connor, adjacent to tennis courts and playground facilities. The hall is located to the eastern section of the park, with a gravel parking area to the north of the hall. The setting comprises dry grassland, with a few trees, mainly exotic.

The original 1920s hall has been added to and extended in its current location.

The building consists of a main hall with a pair of rooms either side of an entry hall.

Toilets and a tea room have been added to the rear, and a series of small rooms added to the south side. At the front, a verandah has been added, and is partly enclosed.

The timber structure is supported on brick piers and is lined with wide horizontal weatherboards. The building has a gabled roof of painted corrugated iron sheeting, with small, unlined eaves and a brick chimney.



At the top of the west gable is a timber louvre and to the east end is a small window.

Externally, the building is in reasonable condition, and the main hall has a reasonable level of integrity reflecting its 1920s origins.

Within the ACT there are only three timber community halls dating from the 1920s. The other two are located at Corroboree Park in Ainslie (1923), and at the Causeway (1926).

#### **REFERENCES**

Martin, E. and Associates, 2009, '13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall O'Connor – Conservation management Plan', report prepared for the 13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Group. March 2009.

# SITE PLAN



13<sup>th</sup> Canberra Scout Hall, Block 19, Section 24; corner Hovea Street and Boria Drive, O'Connor  
As indicated by the black shaded area