

Australian Capital Territory

Heritage (Decision about Registration for Westbourne Woods, Yarralumla) Notice 2011

Notifiable Instrument NI 2011 -497

made under the

***Heritage Act 2004* section 42 Notice of Decision about Registration**

1. Revocation

This instrument replaces NI 2011-103

2. Name of instrument

This instrument is the Heritage (Decision about Registration for Westbourne Woods, Yarralumla) Notice 2011 -

3. Registration details of the place

Registration details of the place are at Attachment A: Register entry for Westbourne Woods, Yarralumla.


4. Reason for decision

The ACT Heritage Council has decided that Westbourne Woods, Yarralumla meets one or more of the heritage significance criteria at s 10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*. The register entry is at Attachment A.

5. Date of Registration

25 August 2011

Jennifer O'Connell
Acting Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
25 August 2011

 <p>ACT Heritage Council</p>	<p>AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY</p> <p>HERITAGE REGISTER (Registration Details)</p> <p>Place No:</p>
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For the purposes of s. 41 of the *Heritage Act 2004*, an entry to the heritage register has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council for the following place:

Westbourne Woods, Dunrossil Drive, Yarralumla

Block 2 Section 119, Block 1 Section 125, Block4 Section 118, Yarralumla, Canberra Central

DATE OF REGISTRATION

Notified: 25 August 2011 Notifiable Instrument: 2011-497

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

The Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
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IDENTIFICATION OF THE PLACE

Westbourne Woods, Dunrossil Drive, Yarralumla
Block 2 Section 119, Block 1 Section 125, Block 4 Section 118, Yarralumla, Canberra Central

n.b: see also separate Registrations –

- *Canberra's Garbage Incinerator*
 - *Canberra Main Outfall Sewer*
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STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

This statement refers to the Heritage Significance of the place as required in s12(d) of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

Westbourne Woods, together with Weston Park and the Yarralumla Nursery (which form separate registrations to the ACT Heritage Register), is of heritage significance for its technical and creative achievements demonstrating discovery and innovation, for its design and aesthetic qualities highly valued by the community, as important evidence of a distinctive function of exceptional interest, as a rare and notable example of its kind and demonstrating the main characteristics of that kind, for strong and special associations with persons and a cultural phase in local history of the ACT, and for its unusual diversity of flora.

Westbourne Woods, together with Weston Park and the Yarralumla Nursery, is a designed landscape, established in 1914 as a permanent nursery and trial arboretum to test the suitability of plantings throughout Canberra as a garden city and from 1913 the area was identified as parkland and planting for the edge of the future lake commenced. The nursery and arboretum went on to prove vital in the selection of trees and plant species which have characterised the garden city, through government and domestic plantings. Considerable scientific and research work was undertaken at the nursery and arboretum, in determining the trees best suited to Canberra's harsh climatic conditions, for the planting of Canberra's streets, parks, gardens and lake.

It is as a direct result of the research undertaken at the original 'Yarralumla Nursery', comprising today's Westbourne Woods and Weston Park, that Canberra today has developed its unique character and identity as a garden city with lakeside public amenity.

The early planting of Canberra with species trialled here formed a crucial cultural phase in the early history of the ACT in attempts to beautify the nation's capital, and remains highly evident within the landscape today.

A number of people have a strong and special association with the permanent nursery and arboretum including Walter Burley Griffin, TCG Weston, A.E Bruce, J.P Hobday and Professor Lindsay Pryor.

Technical achievement is evident in the research, selection, trial and development of species suitable for the Canberra landscape, while creative achievement is evident in the innovative solution to both drought damaged trees at Westbourne Woods and relocation of Royal Canberra Golf Club due to the creation of Lake Burley Griffin. This relocation of the golf club to Westbourne Woods ensured an ongoing home for the club, and, at the same time, ongoing resources and management for the trees.

The function of Westbourne Woods, together with Weston Park and the Yarralumla Nursery is of exceptional interest for its role in the early planning and design of Canberra and as a key component in the development and beautification of Canberra as a city in the landscape.

Westbourne Woods, together with the Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park, is a unique and notable example of a nursery for purposes of experimentation and trial arboretum, being the only one of its type in the ACT, and unique within the Australian context for its diversity of native and exotic species and grouped plantings. It is one of the oldest and largest collections of this type in Australia outside of traditional botanic gardens.

Westbourne Woods, together with Weston Park and the Yarralumla Nursery also demonstrates an unusual diversity of flora within the context of a designed nursery and arboretum containing native and exotic species.

Other place-related registrations

Two individual features with heritage significance unrelated to the values of this citation for Westbourne Woods are located within the area registered as Westbourne Woods. These places both form separate registrations in the ACT Heritage Register as follows:

- Canberra's Garbage Incinerator; and
- Canberra's Main Outfall Sewer (This citation comprises many features, of which one ventilation shaft - feature #22 - is located in Westbourne Woods).

Other theme-related registrations

Westbourne Woods was established as part of a larger nursery and arboretum on the western edges of Lake Burley Griffin. Separate citations have been prepared for two other places which form part of this same history, as follows:

- Weston Park;
- The Yarralumla Nursery.

In addition, the Yarralumla Nursery Records form an additional nomination to the ACT Heritage Register, and will be assessed separately.

FEATURES INTRINSIC TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PLACE

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

- The parkland setting, including the diversity of tree species and the open spaces between plantings, and planting patterns including regular formation of plantings;
 - The individual tree plantings noting that the trees may require removal and replacement due to age and/or safety concerns;
 - The three distinct areas of eucalypts, deciduous hardwoods and conifers, as identified in Figure 2 (below), AND the area of *Pinus radiata* adjacent to Dunrossil Drive;
 - Experimental circular plots throughout Westbourne Woods;
 - Relationship with the Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park;
 - Views and vistas to and from Lake Burley Griffin.
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APPLICABLE HERITAGE GUIDELINES

The guiding conservation objective is that Westbourne Woods, Yarralumla, 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 (and / or other heritage values) 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).

REASON FOR PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION

Westbourne Woods, Yarralumla has been assessed against the heritage significance criteria and been found to have heritage significance when assessed against seven criteria under the ACT Heritage Act.

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;**

Westbourne Woods demonstrates a high degree of technical achievement by showing qualities of discovery, and also demonstrates a high degree of creative achievement by showing qualities of innovation.

The original Yarralumla Nursery and arboretum, comprising areas of today's Westbourne Woods together with Weston Park and the Yarralumla Nursery, demonstrates the technical expertise and efforts undertaken in discovering suitable species for the planting of Canberra as a garden city.

Developed as a permanent arboretum in 1914, the trials and research undertaken for a wide range of native and exotic species informed the subsequent planting regime throughout early Canberra.

'These were part of the planned and systematic re-forestation of the ACT after Federation, and ornamental landscaping of the National Capital throughout most of the 20th century and into the 21st century as a response to the development of Griffin's garden city concept for Canberra' (Godden Mackay Logan, 2010: 69).

Through the plantings established here, Charles Weston developed an excellent knowledge of the trees and plants best suited to Canberra's harsh climate. This then formed the basis for street tree, public park, forestry and domestic planting throughout Canberra.

In particular, the arboretum at Westbourne Woods demonstrates orchard and other species, planted in groups of the same species, imitating natural forest conditions, to trial their suitability in Canberra's climate.

Creative achievement is demonstrated through the conversion and transfer of the Westbourne Woods area to a golf course. This innovation collectively solved challenges facing both Westbourne Woods, whose trees were damaged through drought conditions with limited government resources for management, and the Royal Canberra Golf Club, whose fairways were to be drowned by the creation of Lake Burley Griffin. In 1945 a preliminary golf course layout within the Woods was proposed and from 1949-1954 fairways were cleared and grassed. In 1962 the Royal Canberra Golf Club was granted a lease that included most of Westbourne Woods ensuring that the Westbourne Woods landscape and plantings received appropriate management, while providing a new home for the Golf Club.

Westbourne Woods meets this criterion.

(b) it exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group;

Westbourne Woods exhibits outstanding design and aesthetic qualities valued by the community.

The outstanding design qualities of Westbourne Woods are evident in the area's designed landscape setting, dating from 1914 as a permanent nursery and orchard with group plantings, and reshaped from the 1940s to eventually accommodate the fairways of the Royal Canberra Golf Club. The initial design of the Westbourne Woods area, which survives in the mature plantings and landscape today, was carefully developed initially by Charles Weston, followed by Alexander Bruce, John Hobday and Lindsay Pryor, among others.

The outstanding aesthetic qualities of Westbourne Woods are demonstrated in the pleasant parkland setting comprising the combined plantings of Australian species with deciduous and evergreen hardwood species from the northern hemisphere. Tree-framed views to and across Lake Burley Griffin enhance the setting's aesthetic qualities.

The broad ACT community values the outstanding design and aesthetic qualities of Westbourne Woods, as a prominent and visible feature within the Yarralumla and Lake Burley Griffin foreshore area. Although much of Westbourne Woods is under private lease by the Royal Canberra Golf Club, the shared pathway around Lake Burley Griffin, passing through the western edge of Westbourne Woods, along with other boundary areas of the Woods accessible to the public, allows the community a place for recreation and peaceful enjoyment.

Since 1963, and continuing to the present, walking tours have been led through Westbourne Woods by natural and horticultural groups, demonstrating the community's interest in the designed landscape, and their value for the aesthetic qualities of the area.

Westbourne Woods meets this criterion.

(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;

Westbourne Woods is important as evidence of a distinctive function of exceptional interest.

Together with the Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park, Westbourne Woods is important as evidence of the function of large-scale propagation, experimentation, trialling and recording of plant materials as a permanent nursery and arboretum established in 1914 by Charles Weston, and the subsequent early tree planting throughout Canberra. This function is of exceptional interest for the role it played in the early beautification of Canberra, with species trialled at the nursery and arboretum, and then propagated for landscaping purposes for the city of Canberra.

Westbourne Woods meets this criterion.

(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;

No information has been provided to demonstrate that Westbourne Woods is highly valued by the community or a cultural group.

Westbourne Woods has not been assessed 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

Westbourne Woods, together with Weston Park and the Yarralumla Nursery is a rare example of its kind, being a nursery and arboretum and part of an historic park plan.

Westbourne Woods, together with the Yarralumla Nursery and Weston Park, is rare and is the only permanent nursery and arboretum established by the government in the ACT. The establishment of such an arboretum for the purpose of trialling species for planting throughout the new city is unique in the Australian context, and provides Canberra with much of its distinctive character as a garden city.

The area has survived as a relatively intact example of a permanent arboretum since its establishment in 1914.

The area is one of very few arboreta in Australia where a large number of native and exotic tree species are grown in large, often replicated, groups.

Weston's use of group plantings to give some idea of their growth habits and form under forest conditions distinguishes the arboretum from older Australian botanic gardens where limitations on space meant that only one or two of each species were planted.

Westbourne Woods meets this criterion.

(g) it is a notable example of a kind of place or object and demonstrates the main characteristics of that kind

Westbourne Woods, together with Weston Park and the Yarralumla Nursery, is a notable example of a nursery and arboretum developed for purposes of trial and experimentation, and demonstrates the main characteristics of that kind.

It is a notable example of this kind of place as it is one of the largest and oldest collections in Australia of a diversity of tree species outside of traditional botanic gardens. It is of further note for Weston's groups of plantings of the same species, imitating forest conditions to test the suitability of trees for planting in Canberra, and for the research and hybridisation work that has been carried out since the establishment of the Yarralumla Nursery in 1914.

The main characteristics of this kind of place are demonstrated in the diversity of plantings, and the mixture of Australian and exotic species.

Westbourne Woods meets this criterion.

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

Westbourne Woods, together with Weston Park and the Yarralumla Nursery, has a strong and special association with a number of persons, and a cultural phase in local ACT history.

Strong and special associations with Westbourne Woods include those of Walter Burley Griffin who envisaged well-treed parklands at the western end of the lake system which he incorporated into a larger 'Continental Arboretum' to the west; TCG Weston Superintendent of Parks and Gardens who established the nursery and was instrumental in its success and in determining species of plants appropriate to the landscaping of the National Capital; Alexander Bruce who succeeded Weston and developed many of the flowering trees and shrubs still popular in Canberra; J.P Hobday who was chief nurseryman and later Superintendent of Parks and

Gardens; and Professor Lindsay Pryor, who was Superintendent of Parks and Gardens from 1944 to 1958 and was responsible for major plantings during this time.

Each of these people have contributed significantly to local ACT history, through the landscape design and planting of Canberra as a garden city, aspects which provide Canberra with much of its unique history and character.

The association of the place with each of these people is special, because of the nature of the association as the place where they performed their work duties which had a prominent, lasting and direct impact on the character of Canberra and the ACT. The association with each person is strong, given their commitment and dedication to the landscape planning, nursery, trial species, and landscape planting of Canberra.

Westbourne Woods, together with Weston Park and the Yarralumla Nursery, has a strong and special association with the cultural phase of the early beautification and landscape design of Canberra as a garden city. This phase is of importance in Federal Capital history as it has provided Canberra with much of its unique character and identity, distinguishing it from other Australian cities. The association is strong and special as much of the planting of inner Canberra has derived from the trials at Westbourne Woods and research and propagation conducted at Yarralumla Nursery.

Westbourne Woods meets 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**

Westbourne Woods does not meet this criterion.

- (k) for a place—it exhibits unusual richness, diversity or significant transitions of flora, fauna or natural landscapes and their elements**

Westbourne Woods, together with Weston Park and the Yarralumla Nursery exhibits unusual diversity of flora and its elements within the context of a designed nursery and arboretum.

There is no other arboretum or nursery in the ACT which exhibits the same diversity of native and exotic species.

Further, Weston's use of group plantings to give some idea of their growth habits and form under forest conditions distinguishes the arboretum from older Australian botanic gardens where limitations on space meant that only one or two of each species were planted.

Westbourne Woods, together with Weston Park and the Yarralumla Nursery, is one of the largest and oldest collections in Australia of such a diversity of tree species outside of traditional botanic gardens.

Westbourne Woods meets this criterion.

- (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: e, i, j, and l.

SUMMARY OF THE PLACE HISTORY AND PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

HISTORY

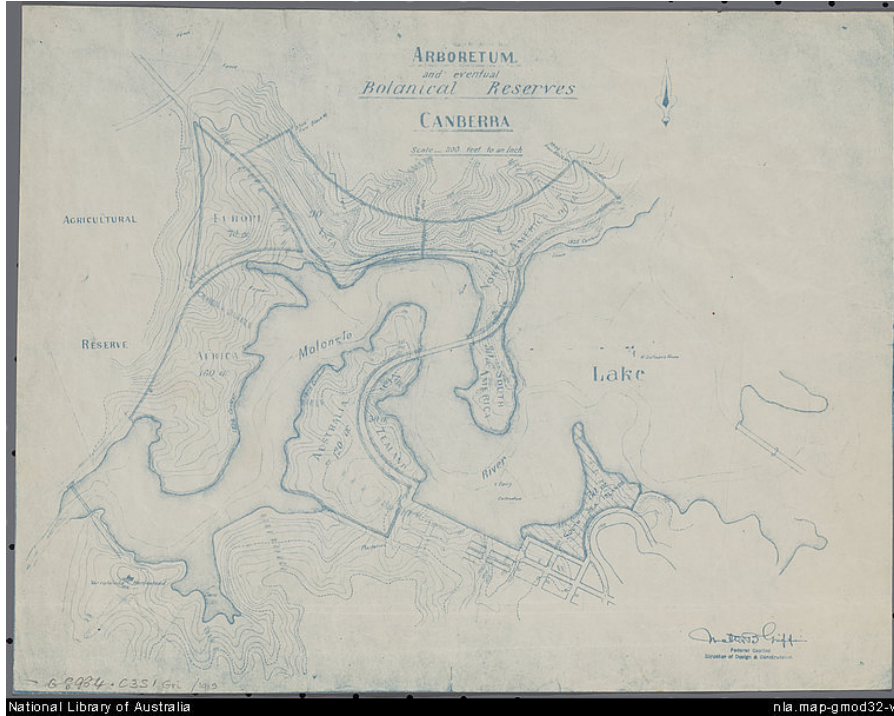
Early planning for an arboretum and nursery

The competition for the design of Canberra was won by Walter Burley Griffin in 1912. The lake and its environs were a major element, but little is known of Griffins planting concepts for the area, except that the area to the west was designated parkland incorporating an arboretum. Griffin in his 1913 Preliminary Plan to accompany the *Report Explanatory* shows extensive parkland in the area of present day Weston Park. [see figure below]. His 1915 plan illustrates his vision for the western lake area as an arboretum. His final plan of 1918 also shows a continental arboretum in the area containing plantations grouped to the continent of origin.

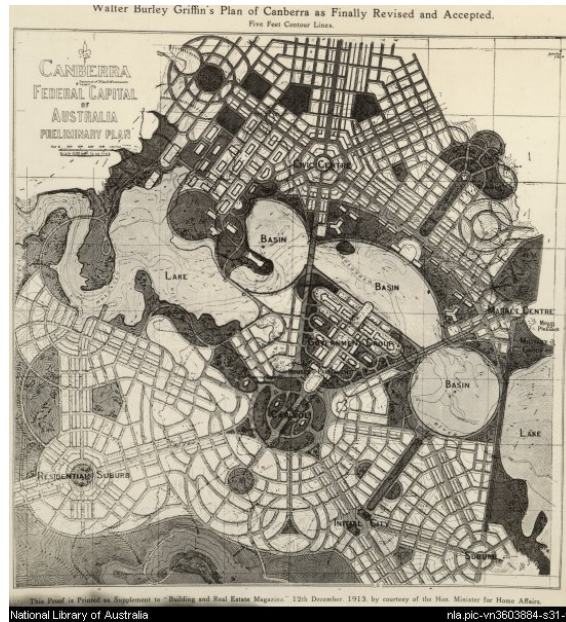
His last plan of 1918 illustrates his vision for the western lake area. His plan was for a continental arboretum containing plantations grouped to the continent of origin (National Library of Australia vn-3603884-s31).



Walter Burley Griffin's Preliminary Plan of Canberra 1913, showing parklands in the area of today's Weston Park.
NLA MAP G8984.C3S1 Gri 1913



Arboretum and eventual botanical reserves, Canberra 1915
NLA 1909771 MAP G8984.C3s1 Gri 1915



Walter Burley Griffin's Plan of Canberra as finally revised and accepted 1918.
NLA vn-3603884-s31

The first nursery

Prior to the finalisation of plans for the nation's capital, a nursery was established in 1911 to propagate seed for trees, an essential feature of the city proposal.

On the advice of Thomas Charles George Weston, who was then working as head gardener at Federal Government House, Sydney, and following his visit to the new Territory in 1911, the nursery was established at Acton.

In 1912 Weston again visited the nursery site 'to examine the ploughed site and irrigation provisions', and commence the process of ordering plants (GML, 2010: 9).

Later that year Weston was appointed officer-in-charge of the Campbelltown Nursery in New South Wales and C.R Scrivener, the Director of Commonwealth Lands and Surveys, reported his concern that Weston would not accept the position of 'Superintendent of Nurseries' at Canberra. However, in May 1913 Weston accepted the position and arrived to take charge of the Afforestation Branch.

After arriving in Canberra on 'a bitter cold day which gave me the shivers', Weston set out the objectives he was to pursue. These were:

- to establish a first-class forest and general nursery;
- to raise a large stock of all subjects likely to prove suitable for all purposes;
- to reserve at an early date mountains and hills such as Black Mountain, Mt Ainslie, Mt Stromlo etc. with a view to
 - a) allowing natural reforestation
 - b) testing in these areas a variety of trees with a view to ascertaining the best to plant and
 - c) testing various methods of planting, from broadcast sowing to preparing of ground and planting out strong healthy nursery stock;
- and to continue procuring from all sources as opportunity offers, all seeds likely to prove useful or ornamental (Murphy, 1979).

Weston at this time considered the Acton nursery site to be relatively unsuitable for this purpose.

Establishing the Yarralumla Nursery and arboretum

During May 1913, Weston inspected several sites for a forest and general nursery and recommended that it be established on a site to the north-east of Yarralumla Homestead buildings. He suggested that the Yarralumla Nursery, of some 400 acres, be divided into four equal areas to be devoted to:

- nursery work proper,
- the permanent planting of Australian trees and shrubs,
- an arboretum and
- a pinetum (Murphy, 1979).

Rout and Eldridge (1983) record Weston's reasons for the choice of site:

'In May 1913 he recommended an area for this purpose which he felt had generally good soil, a permanent water supply and was big enough to give scope for nursery extension so that all classes of trees etc could be planted, experimented with and tested with a view to being planted throughout the territory. Also being on the fringe of the future city it could 'be so planned to be an added ornament to the city'. He drew up a proposal for the 160 hectare area that contains the present Westbourne Woods and Yarralumla Nursery sites. The proposal divided the land into four parts of equal size – Division A for the nursery, Division B for Australian trees and shrubs, Division C for an arboretum and Division D for a pinetum'.

Later Weston reported that: 'the site chosen for the experimental nursery was fully calculated to impose a very severe test upon the trees and shrubs planted there, as it was fully exposed to prevailing winds from the west, south-west and north-west' (Rout and Eldridge, 1983). Shelter belts and windbreaks were established to the north and west of the nursery and from the 1920s planting to edge the future lake commenced (Murphy, 1979).

The first plantings took place in 1914 and by 1918 the initial planting of Westbourne Woods was completed including an experimental orchard where 17 species of fruit trees were trialled along with cereal crops and fodder grasses (Rout and Eldridge 1983).

In May 1914 Griffin arrived in Australia to take up his appointment as Federal Capital Director of Design and Construction in Canberra. By this time Weston had been in Canberra for a year, had established the Nursery at Yarralumla and had provided a report giving a list of trees recommended for use in Canberra. Griffin's plans for the landscaping of Canberra included particular types of plantings he wanted to establish, including a Redwood forest and a Cork Oak plantation. A plantation of Redwood was established by Weston at East Lake Park using seeds obtained by Griffin. However, the trees generally did not do well in Canberra's dry climate. By contrast, the Cork Oaks have grown well at Green Hills.

As a result of his experimentation, Weston had developed an excellent knowledge of the trees suited to Canberra's climate and there is evidence to suggest that Griffin's instructions to Weston in relation to the types of trees to be planted were not well received. J H Maiden, Director of the Sydney Botanic Gardens, commended Griffin for his desire to cultivate native trees, but stated that he believed Weston was able to make a better selection of tree species for planting in the National Capital. He also suggested that Weston not be given too many detailed instructions (Murphy, 1979).

Early plantings

Weston used Yarralumla Nursery and the adjacent Westbourne Woods and Weston Park as trial grounds for a wide range of native and exotic species. The nursery was very significant in the establishment of the garden capital. A very extensive list of tree species was tested for suitability to local conditions and propagation and distribution of successful species was undertaken in great quantity. Most of early inner Canberra was landscaped with plant material grown by the government nursery.

Trees and shrubs were used for ornamental purposes to 'provide shade, seasonal colour and mark out major avenues and public parks in the city. Trees were also used to clothe the bare or semi-bare hillsides, and provide a backdrop of bush setting to the city. Trees were also important to provide shelter from the strong and dusty winds of the district' (Godden Mackay Logan, 2010: 10). In addition, trees raised at the Yarralumla Nursery and trialled in Westbourne Woods were also planted to stabilise the water catchment for the new city dam at the Cotter and contributed to the water security of the city' (Godden Mackay Logan, 2010: 10). Fruit trees also played a part in food security for the new capital, by providing fruit and nut trees suitable for Canberra home gardeners and included apples, almonds, apricots, cherries, figs, currants, nectarines, nuts, olives, pears, peaches, persimmons, plums, quince and grapes. (Godden Mackay Logan, 2010: 10). Wheat and other food crops were also trialled at the Yarralumla Nursery.

Obtaining an interesting and successful range of plant species for the beautification of the new city was a major challenge. Weston obtained seed from suppliers and nurseries in Australia and overseas. Australian suppliers included the State Nursery in Campbelltown where he had worked before coming to Canberra, and long-standing suppliers in the nursery trade such as Yates & Co., Brunning and the Goulburn Nursery Company. He also collected both native and exotic seeds in the local area (Boden, 1996). Walter Burley Griffin was also active in obtaining seeds to be raised at the Yarralumla Nursery.

After trialling in Westbourne Woods, the Yarralumla Nursery was the primary source for suburban trees and shrubs, resulting in 'common' plantings. Species grown in Ainslie and Braddon were initially the same as those in Blandfordia and Red Hill. New residents were entitled to receive plants free on request from the Yarralumla Nursery, and Weston recorded in 1922 that 22,668 plants had been distributed between 1912 and 1922 (Boden, 1996). Godden Mackay Logan (2010: 11) state that 'by controlling the species available to homeowners, the planners wanted to create a link between private gardens and public landscapes'. The scheme provided for up to 10 trees, 40 shrubs and additional hedging plants.

The Nursery was also used to raise pine seedlings for plantation forestry in the Territory. Early hybridisation experiments were also carried out at the Yarralumla Nursery (Godden Mackay Logan, 2010: 11) and tested in Westbourne Woods.

New residents were entitled to receive plants free on request from the Yarralumla Nursery, and Weston recorded in 1922 that 22,668 plants had been distributed between 1912 and 1922 (Boden, 1996). Godden Mackay Logan (2010: 11) state that 'by controlling the species available to homeowners, the planners wanted to create a link between private gardens and public landscapes'. The scheme provided for up to 10 trees, 40 shrubs and additional hedging plants.

The production Nursery initially occupied more than 28 hectares (70 acres). Until the early 1970s some of this area was used for the Parks and Gardens research department and the Department of Health plants quarantine. Another 130 hectares (330 acres) was to be used for various permanent plantings. All of this larger area became part of Westbourne Woods (now Royal Canberra Golf course) or Weston Park (http://www.tams.act.gov.au/live/yarralumla_nursery/nursery_history, accessed 2/9/10).

The Weston period

Charles Weston worked as Officer in Charge of Afforestation until 1926. By this time the Yarralumla Nursery was well established and earning a reputation for being one of the finest research nurseries of the time. It was at this nursery that trees, which now form the avenues of Canberra were tested and propagated. Pine shelter belts, the elm avenue and the shrubbery specimen area were established as part of the Nursery. Weston's aims were to moderate the harsh local climate of 'summer heat, winter frosts and strong dusty winds; to provide seasonal effects to the aesthetics of the landscape with both regionally indigenous trees and exotic trees most likely to succeed, and to do so within the shortest possible time; and continue experimentation with trees likely to succeed in the locality' (Godden Mackay Logan, 2010: 12).

Weston was primarily concerned with the nursery and arboretum (later Westbourne Woods), but also planted parts of the future Weston Park (Godden Mackay Logan, 2010: 12).

Special arrangements were made to retain Weston after his retirement in a consultative capacity up until the opening of Parliament House on 9 May by the Duke and Duchess of York. Weston was awarded the MBE which was invested by the Duke of York. Before leaving Canberra, Weston recorded the principle native trees and shrubs which had been tested in the nurseries at Canberra since 1913. Weston retired to Turrumurra in Sydney, where he died in December 1935.

The Bruce period

After Weston's retirement, A.E. Bruce became Director of Parks and Gardens and continued in this position until 1937. As well as continuing Weston's vision, Bruce developed a range of flowering trees and shrubs with an emphasis on spring and autumn effects.

The establishment of a Commonwealth Forestry Bureau was proposed by the Government in 1925 and in 1927 the Australian Forestry School (AFS) was opened in the woods. Students began using the woods for study and field exercises.

That the trees had grown well at Westbourne Woods is confirmed by the transplanting of several large trees in 1926 to the grounds of Parliament House, for which a special wagon had to be built (GP Murphy).

In 1929, with the onset of the Great Depression, the Federal Capital Commission requested the reduction of the Yarralumla Nursery by two thirds as the land was required for park purposes (Ramsay, 1989).

The Hobday period

John Peace Hobday, who was appointed Chief Nurseryman in 1923, became Superintendent of Parks and Gardens in 1937, following Bruce's retirement, and occupied this position until 1944 (Murphy, 1979, Ramsay, 1989). He lived with his family in the Chief Nurseryman's Cottage within the Nursery grounds. Little expansion or changes in relation to planting and cultivation occurred during this time, due in part to the constraints applying during World War II.

It was during this period that the Reverberatory Incinerator was installed at Westbourne Woods in 1939 (see separate citation).

The Pryor and Moore period

Following Hobday, Lindsay Pryor was appointed Superintendent of Parks and Gardens in 1944 and held the position until 1958. Considerable hybridisation and research work was undertaken during this period. Trial plots of trees, raised from seeds collected by Pryor from different parts of the world, were established in generic groups in the research area to the south of the Nursery. Pryor was also involved in Grevillea hybridisation trials and the well-known hybrid grevillea, Canberra Gem, was conceived at the Nursery. A trial orchard was established to the east of the Nursery.

Infill planting, consisting of additional circular plots of eucalypts, was carried out in the Weston Park area. At this time Weston Park was grazed by stock.

In 1945 the woods were made available for public recreation.

Dr Max Jacobs, from January 1945 the Principal of the AFS which adjoined the arboretum, suggested that a permanent golf course be established within the woods, to ensure better management of the whole area, to the benefit of the trees by limiting public access and controlling damage. A golf course within the woods was proposed with a preliminary layout planned by J. Scott. Between 1949 and 1954 the fairway for an 18-hole golf course was cleared and grassed, and further plantings were carried out.

Pryor took the opportunity that resulted from clearing from fairways and earlier tree mortality to add many *Eucalyptus* species to the collection.

The Chief Nurseryman during this time was Percy Moore and under his direction general nursery work continued with horticultural trials for improving selection of street trees, garden shrubs, hedging plants and exotic grasses.

In the immediate post-war period and up to 1957 when the National Capital Development Commission took over the role of planning the city, Pryor was responsible for overseeing the landscaping of the rapidly growing city. He introduced many new species to Canberra's parks, streets and gardens.

Later periods

The Molonglo River was dammed in 1963 and by 1964 the lake had filled. A lakeshore landscape of inlets, small peninsulas and islands were created. Westbourne Woods, together with Weston Park now offered considerable lake edge recreation opportunities.

Together, the Yarralumla Nursery, Weston Park and Westbourne Woods played an important role in the early beautification of Canberra. Weston and his successors sought not only to monitor orchard and other species, but also to promote the Woods as a feature of the garden city landscape, with wonderful spring and autumn colours.

DEVELOPMENT OF WESTBOURNE WOODS

The planting pattern adopted by Weston in Westbourne Woods was generally a circle '...with an outer ring of six trees surrounding a seventh in the centre.' (Rout and Eldridge, 1983).



An image of False Acacia, Westbourne Woods, 1961
Showing six trees planted around a central one.
CREDIT: NAA A1200, L38066, 11658726

In 1927 the Australian Forestry School was opened adjacent to Westbourne Woods. The school brought new uses to the plantings in Westbourne Woods—'students could use the trees for their exercises in measuring and other studies. A plot of *Pinus radiata* dating from 1914 and sited just to the northwest of the Forestry House was much studied. It was important in confirming, with much other evidence from arboreta in the hills to the west of Canberra, that this species was by far the most suitable for commercial forestry" (FACTA, 2011: 4).

The years 1941-1944 were severe drought years and also periods of manpower shortage due to World War II. The arboretum suffered badly through neglect and drought. Dr Max Jacobs, Principal of the Australian Forestry School which adjoined the arboretum, suggested that a permanent golf course be established within the Woods which should ensure that better management of the whole area occurred to the benefit of the trees. This option would limit public access and would control damage to the Woods.

In 1945 the Woods became available for public recreation and a golf course within the woods was proposed with a preliminary layout planned by J Scott. Between 1949 and 1954 the fairways for an 18-hole golf course were cleared and grassed and further plantings were carried out by Hobday.

After 1958 the National Capital Development Commission took over control and planning for the lake commenced. The existing course for the Royal Canberra Golf Course (RCGC) on the Molonglo river flats was to be flooded and the RCGC needed to find a new home. After considerable public debate the Club was granted a lease of 93 hectares which included much of the Woods and access to the Lake for water to irrigate the greens and fairways. The Commonwealth retained the responsibility for care and maintenance of the trees.

In 1988 the ACT Parks and Conservation Service prepared a management plan for the Arboretum. However following the introduction of ACT self-government in 1989 responsibility for the trees became blurred and the ACT discontinued active tree maintenance but retained an advisory role.

There is a degree of experimentation in any arboretum growing a wide range of species. Some species thrive, others may fail. As trees age some become unsafe and need to be removed and replaced. Some unexpected losses through wind-blow led the RCGC to seek advice on tree condition. This led to a plot by plot assessment, a database and a revised draft management plan.

In 2001 the Club began a series of trials of new tree cultivars as a participant in the Australian Tree Evaluation Program (AUSTEP) sponsored by Flemings Nursery. This continues the Weston objective of testing a wide variety of trees to find those most suitable for Canberra.

The area is one of the largest and oldest collections in Australia of tree species outside of traditional botanic gardens.

Westbourne Woods is considered one of Weston's great achievements and in 1925 it was adopted as a venue for the Australian Forestry School and Commonwealth Forestry and Timber Bureau because of the excellent educational and seed bank resources it provided.

Chronology of Main Events in the History of Westbourne Woods (based on Rout and Eldridge 1983)

- 1913 Weston proposed that the area be developed as a permanent nursery and arboretum
- 1914 Weston's proposal received ministerial approval and planting began with 12,400 trees in the area known as Shale Hill Reserve.
- 1915-20 Large scale plantings continued and brought the total tree plantings to 44,900.
- 1925 The establishment of a Commonwealth Forestry Bureau was proposed by the Government.
- 1926 Trees from the woods were transplanted to Parliament House ready for its opening in 1927.
- 1927 The Australian Forestry School opened at Westridge (Yarralumla). Westbourne Woods used for teaching purposes
- 1941-44 Severe drought killed many trees
- 1945 Proposal to develop area as a golf course
- 1949-54 Proposed fairways cleared and further plantings carried out
- 1952 Forestry House (accommodation for AFS students) and oval opened.
- 1962 93 ha leased to Royal Canberra Golf Club, including much of Westbourne Woods
- 1967 Buildings for the Forest Research institute (CSIRO from 1975) were opened.
- 1980 The present lease for 50 years covering 116.96 hectares was granted to the RCGC for the establishment of a 27-hole golf course.
- 1981 Monthly public walks commenced in Westbourne Woods and have continued ever since.
- 1983 Westbourne Woods guidebook published.
- 1985 The original course layout was modified, requiring further tree removals.
- 1988 A Tree Management Plan was prepared for the woods.
- 1997 The golf course was expanded to 27 holes by opening nine additional fairways.
- 2001 Selected plantings of new cultivars of deciduous trees were commenced as part of AUSTEP
- 2001-09 Persistent drought
- 2010 Drought broken and followed by a very wet period, leading to wind blow and some tree deaths.

Additional historical information is available from Friends of the ACT Arboreta, 2011, *The History of Westbourne Woods*.

Pictorial timeline

The images below illustrate stages of development of Westbourne Woods from 1950-1965, showing:

- the early impact of the golf course greens and the breaking through of the edge planting to the south.
- the forestry planting of *Pinus radiata* between the edge of Westbourne Woods and Dunrossil Drive,
- the growth in the trees in the old Westbourne Woods in the decade of 1950s, and
- the changes to the edge of the Woods with the filling of Lake Burley Griffin.



1950-11-29 Run 2 Print 5099 credit: ACTPLA, map room



1958-5-21 Run 7 Print 5059 and 1958-5-21 Run 7 Print 5061, credit: ACTPLA, map room



1961-4-28 Run 12 Print 178, credit: ACTPLA, map room



1965-2-15 Sortie 84 Print 215, credit: ACTPLA, map room

DESCRIPTION

Westbourne Woods Arboretum occupies an area of approximately 120 hectares. The majority of this is within the lease held by the Royal Canberra Golf Club. Part is within the grounds occupied by the CSIRO on a leaseback arrangement following sale by the Commonwealth.

The Arboretum contains about 187 species and 49 genera. These include species of pines, other exotic conifers, exotic deciduous species, exotic evergreens, species of eucalypts and other Australian tree species. The most common species is Radiata pine (*Pinus radiata*) (RCGC, 2001).

A row of the conifer species *Pinus ponderosa* var. *scopulorum* was planted at the western edge of the original fenced site. Today, the planting appears as a hedge, though this appearance is due to the close plantings of the conifers. They are resistant to wind and are expected to have served as a wind break.

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SITE MAPS AND PLANS



Figure 1: Site plan showing place boundary, as indicated by the solid red line.

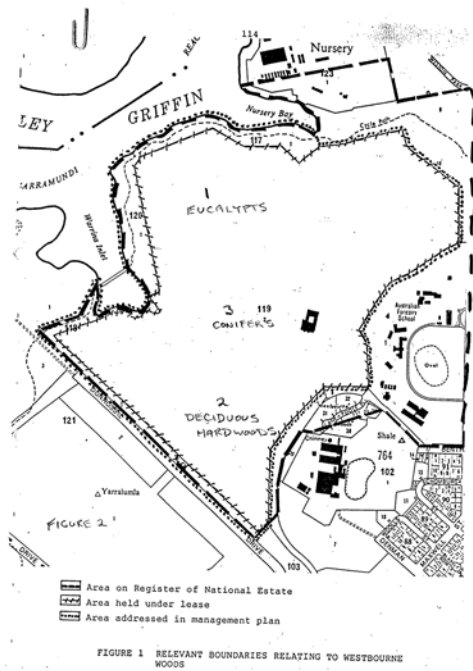
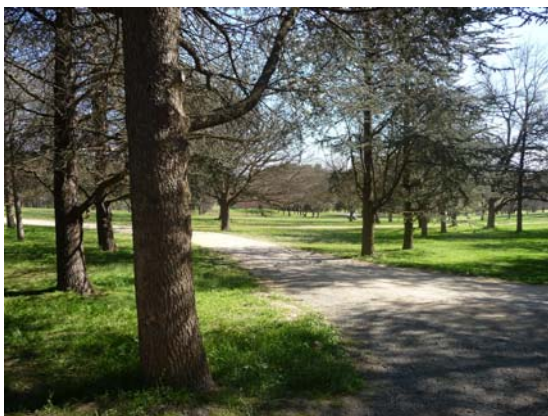
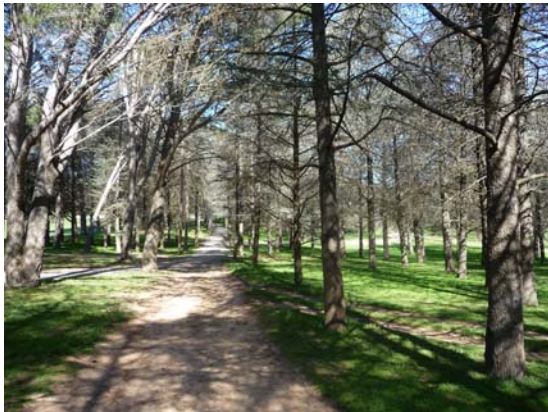


Figure 2: indicative site plan showing broad areas of Eucalypts, Conifers and Deciduous hardwoods.



Images taken 23 September 2010