

NOMINATION TO THE ACT HERITAGE REGISTER

Please note that the information below represents indicative heritage values only, and not the views of the ACT Heritage Council (the Council).

This nomination is yet to be assessed by the Council against the heritage significance criteria established under the Heritage Act 2004.

Acceptance of a nomination is a preliminary, threshold step and ought not to be taken as indicative of any particular outcome concerning the Council's assessment of the nomination.

Block 5 Section 21 KINGSTON

Site of AJ Ryan's Radio and Electrical Store KINGSTON

The radio station 2CA started out in the back of A. J. Ryan's Radio-Electrical and Musical Service store in Kingston in 1931, reaching an estimated 1,000 listeners. From these humble beginnings the station quickly grew to the point where they were reaching over 17,000 licensed listeners by 1938. (Barlin, 2001; Castle, 1981) Ryan was the first individual, rather than a business, in the country to be granted a radio licence. From 1931 he ran the station from his store while his assistant, Mary Oldfield, took care of the shopfront and occasionally helping out with the radio broadcasts and it was not until 1933 that Ryan took on another employee, George Barlin, who helped out in the store as well as on the air and behind the scenes. (Barlin, 2001; Castle, 1981)

The station was quite successful and by 1935 it was doing well enough that Ryan, with Barlin's father as a business partner, was able to increase the licensed power output of the station from 50watts to 500watts, making it the most powerful country radio station in the country at the time. The higher powered facilities, including a small studio and transmitting tower, were erected on what was quickly coined Radio Hill in Molonglo, later the industrial suburb of Fyshwick. The expansion of the station also involved moving A. J. Ryan's Radio-Electrical and Musical Service store to a larger premises with an attached broadcasting studio that was connected to the Radio Hill facility via a land line. (Barlin, 2001; Castle, 1981)