

Australian Capital Territory

Heritage (Decision about Registration of John Knight Memorial Park, Belconnen) Notice 2009 (No 1)

Notifiable Instrument NI 2009 - 87

made under the

Heritage Act 2004 section 42 Notice of decision about registration

1. Revocation

This instrument replaces NI2008 – 303

2. Name of instrument

This instrument is the Heritage (Decision about Registration for John Knight Memorial Park, Belconnen) Notice 2009 (No 1).

3. Registration details of the place

Registration details of the place are at Attachment A: Register entry for John Knight Memorial Park, Belconnen.

4. Reason for decision

The ACT Heritage Council has decided that the John Knight Memorial Park, Belconnen, 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

6 March 2009.

The Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158
CANBERRA ACT 2602

.....
Gerhard Zatschler
Secretary ACT Heritage Council
GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2602

6 March 2009

 <p>ACT Heritage Council</p>	<p>AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY</p> <p>HERITAGE REGISTER (Registration Details)</p> <p>Place No:</p>
---	--

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:

- **JOHN KNIGHT MEMORIAL PARK at Belconnen**

DATE OF REGISTRATION

Notified: 10 March 2009 Notifiable Instrument: NI2009-87

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: 132281 Facsimile: (02) 6207 2229

IDENTIFICATION OF THE PLACE

- John Knight Memorial Park, Section 65, Block 33, Belconnen, bounded on the west by Lake Ginninderra, on the north by Townsend Place, on the east by Aikman Drive, and on its southern edge by the footpath running east-west from the underpass at Aikman Drive to the footbridge at Lake Ginninderra.
-

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The John Knight Memorial Park is a significant landscape achievement in the comprehensive planning and development of Canberra during the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) era. It demonstrates international town planning models for city growth where open space development is a primary element, as expressed in Canberra's Y-plan, consisting of a series of new towns each with its own open space system. As such, John Knight Memorial Park is significant as an excellent example of this generation of Australian city parks created in the mid-1980s, including its harmonious design of varied lakeside spaces.

John Knight Memorial Park has created a space that includes distinct and consciously designed different landscape areas that creates a sense of harmony between the design elements, artfully created to resemble nature at the site. These include the southern valley with its exotic deciduous trees, the central ridge with the children's play area, the northern area with native plantings with both passive and active recreational elements, with lookouts and secluded spots, to children's play areas, and the island.

The name of the park gazetted on Canberra Day, 1982 is linked to an important figure in Canberra's history, Senator John Knight, who played a major role in ensuring the preservation of much of the shores of Lake Ginninderra for public recreation. Today, the park is central to the recreational lives of Belconnen residents and workers.

FEATURES INTRINSIC TO HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The physical features of the John Knight Memorial Park that particularly reflect its heritage significance are:

- Integrity of the overall design intent and pattern with a sequence of major components developed progressively in seven stages from 1980 to 1987:
 - Northern valley developed with extensive plantings of native shrubs and ground covers leading to a water park designed for active and passive recreation with pools for paddling and wading, water slides, waterfalls, spray jets and bubblers, model boat areas.
 - Central ridge planted as a eucalypt forest and including children's play areas - in particular the tree house and snake sculptures - and fitness track.
 - Southern valley developed as a gently undulating bowl shaped grassy space surrounded by bold masses of deciduous trees.
 - Lakeshore promenade and island which emphasise the strong association between the park and the water body of Lake Ginninderra.

-
- The memorial to the late Senator Knight which is centrally located in the park and which offers a quiet contemplative area overlooking the lake.
-

APPLICABLE HERITAGE GUIDELINES

The Heritage Guidelines adopted under s27 of the *Heritage Act 2004* are applicable to the conservation of John Knight Memorial Park, Belconnen.

The guiding conservation objective is that John Knight Memorial Park, Belconnen, 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. A conservation management plan (CMP) would help to guide conservation and future use. Any works that have a potential impact on significant fabric (and/or other heritage values) which are necessary prior to the development of a CMP shall be guided by a professionally documented interim assessment and conservation policy relevant to that area or component (i.e. a Statement of Heritage Effects - SHE).

REASON FOR REGISTRATION

This John Knight Memorial Park, Belconnen, has been assessed against the heritage significance criteria and been found to have heritage significance against 4 of the heritage 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:

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

John Knight Memorial Park combines a series of designed settings to create a multi-purpose park appealing to a wide range of age groups, by taking advantage of the sloping topography from Aikman Drive down to Lake Ginninderra opposite Belconnen Town Centre. Its water edge areas with lookouts and secluded spots, artificial creek with imaginatively placed boulders, children's play areas, open grassy swathe all culminating at the lake edge where water birds congregate create a distinctive ambience to the park. There is a sense of harmony between the design elements, artfully created to resemble nature, and the site.

(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;

John Knight Memorial Park is enjoyed by all age groups and offers a tranquil place for enjoyment by children, adults, lakeside joggers and strollers, birdwatchers, model boat sailing. It is a community asset with strong social associations.

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

John Knight Memorial Park is a notable example of urban park design from the later 1970s/1980s and is one of a generation of Australian city parks developed in this era. It demonstrates a successful approach to park design rooted in the tradition of the picturesque where design mimics and reflects nature creating places where people and nature coexist harmoniously. It demonstrates the vision of the Y-plan for Canberra, consisting of a series of new towns each with its own open space system.

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

John Knight Park is associated with Senator John Knight. He was one of the first senators to represent the ACT in 1975 and later in 1979 as Chairman of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory, played a major role in ensuring the preservation of much of the shores of Lake Ginninderra for public recreation.

The early design concept for the park and its picturesque nature was inspired by Beryl Mann working with Mockridge, Stahle and Mitchell in 1974. Beryl Mann was a significant figure in the formative years of the development of a landscape architecture profession in Australia.

The following criteria were found not to be applicable: (a), (c), (e), (f), (i), (j), (k), (l).

CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Draft provisional registration entry was released for public comment on 21 July 2008 and period for public comment closed on 21 August 2008.

SUMMARY OF THE PLACE'S HISTORY AND PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

History

The John Knight Memorial Park was designed and constructed in a series of stages, by landscape architects Denton Corker Marshall Pty Ltd. Work began in 1980 with the final stage of works completed in 1987. The Park was named on Canberra Day 12 March 1982 after the late Senator John Knight (1943-1981) who, as Chairman of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory, played a major role in ensuring the preservation of much of the shores of Lake Ginninderra for public recreation.

The park is an integral component of Canberra's Y-Plan. Developed in the late 1960s/early 1970s, the Y-Plan was the linear model for city growth upon which Canberra is now based, incorporating a series of four new towns each with its own open space system. The John Knight Memorial Park together with Lake Ginninderra was to provide the open space system for the Belconnen town centre. In total 122 hectares of land were designated for the park.

In March 1982 the Town Park was gazetted as the John Knight Memorial Park to commemorate Senator John Knight who died in 1981. A plaque carries the following inscription:

This park is named in honour of Senator John Knight (1943-1981)

Description

John Knight Memorial Park is the most developed part of the extensive foreshore parklands of Lake Ginninderra adjacent to the Belconnen town centre.

In keeping with the original outline design intent John Knight Park consists of four distinctive zones:

- Southern valley developed as a gently undulating bowl with grassy spaces and large plantings of deciduous trees.
- Island joining onto a lakeside promenade which leads to the timber bridge linking to the town centre.
- Central ridge developed as a Eucalypt forest with the children's play area with timber tree house and snake sculptures
- Northern valley surrounded by native shrubs and ground cover and developed as a water garden and children's water play area designed for active and passive recreation with waterfalls, pools for paddling and wading, water slides, spray jets and bubblers and model boat areas.

Water has been used in various ways in the park's design. The lakeshore promenade with its island and model boat jetty provides pedestrian and cyclist opportunities for quiet enjoyment at the water's edge. In contrast, the northern valley's lower cascades and waterfalls provide for water play whilst the upper water garden offers a place for quiet contemplation and education.

The central native forest ridge and the southern valley offer views to and across the lake and different park experiences. The former provides opportunities for active recreation with a Woodlands Fitness Trail provided in 1979 by the Rotary Club of Belconnen and an adventure play sculpture; while the latter is the place for large picnic groups.

There is no provision for swimming, which is accommodated at the Western Ginninderra Foreshores.

References

ACT Parks and Conservation Service, *Lake Ginninderra Draft Management Plan*.

Gray, J 1997 *The Historical and Cultural Background of Selected Urban Parks in Canberra*.

Gray, J 1990 *The Management of Lake Ginninderra and its Foreshore Open Space: A Discussion Report*, Internal Report 90/3, ACT Parks and Conservation Service.

<http://parksandplaces.act.gov.au/parkslakesponds/johnknightpark.html>

Mockridge, Stahle and Mitchell 1974 *Lake Ginninderra – A Landscape Report*. Report prepared for NCDC.

National Capital Development Commission Files:

80/1117/Part 1.

80/1613 Part 1 and Part 2.

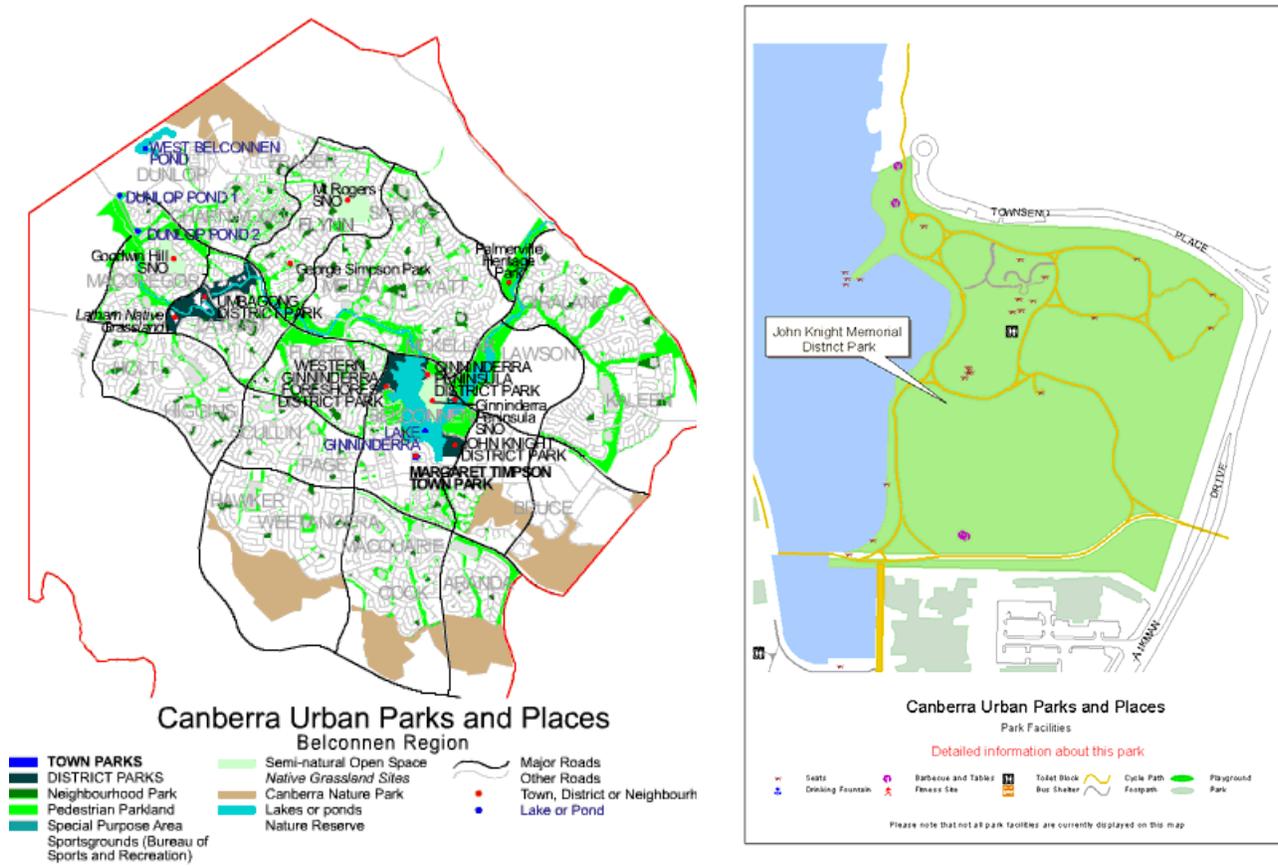
83/454.

85/1287/Part 1.

83/454.

Taylor, K, S Marsden, E Martin and C Griffiths 2003 *Beyond FCC: Scoping the Heritage Values of Post-1945 Urban Development in Canberra*; report on behalf of the National Trust of Australia (ACT) for Environment ACT, Heritage Unit.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND PLANS



Figures 1 and 2. Location of John Knight Memorial Park, Belconnen. Images from (www.tams.act.gov.au/play/parks_forests_and_reserves/parkslakesandponds/urbanparks/districtparks/johnknightmemorialpark)



Figure 3. Boardwalk at John Knight Memorial Park. Image from: <http://www.aila.org.au/information/PROFILES/pilton/pilton.htm>

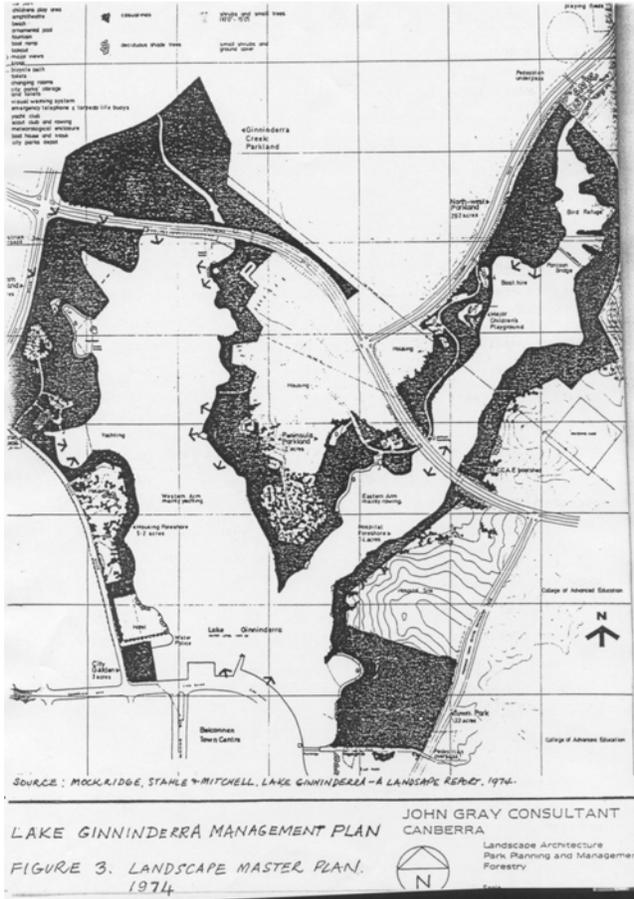


Figure 4. 1974 plan showing open space, including Town Park, later John Knight Memorial Park, around Lake Ginninderra. Source Lake Ginninderra – A Landscape Report prepared in 1974 by consultants Mockridge, Stahle and Mitchell reproduced in Gray J (1990)



Figure 5. Plan of 'Lake Ginninderra Town Park' as designed by Denton Corker Marshall Pty Ltd, later named John Knight Memorial Park, 1908s