

NOMINATION TO THE ACT HERITAGE REGISTER

Please note that the information below represents the indicative heritage values supplied by the nominator and are 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.

OLD PENSIONER'S CAMP MT PLEASANT NATURE RESERVE BLOCK 6, SECTION 119, CAMPBELL

The nomination was given to the Council on 20 February 2024 and accepted at Heritage Council Meeting 124 on 09 April 2024.

Early Canberra Workers Camps were a noted feature of the early construction phase of the Federal Capital Territory. The original workers' camp on this site was referred to as the Duntroon Reservoir Camp and was created for men employed in the construction of the Duntroon Reservoir between 1922 and 1925.

The Duntroon Reservoir Camp was never completely dismantled, moved or abandoned. Instead, the camp evolved into a place where single men having nowhere else to live gravitated and built their own private dwellings. For some years after the reservoir was completed there were two government dwellings still on the site and occupied by government workmen. One of the workmen was a local First Nations man, Roderick Williams, who lived in the camp from 1928 until he died in 1951 making his occupancy one of the longest.

The single men who gravitated to the camp were pioneer labourers forced out of other workers' camps as they were abolished during the Depression years when construction came to halt as Federal finances dried up. As the years moved on the area became known as a Pensioners' camp where men built their shacks on small plots of Commonwealth land with water and sanitary services provided by the Department of the Interior with a small charge. The shacks were roughly constructed by the men of materials probably collected from old building or construction sites and repurposed or refashioned to their basic requirements.

The old camp as we know it today is approximately 250 metres WSW of the Reservoir. The nomination suggests the site contains archaeological and historic artefacts and objects left over from the old camp. These were unearthed during weeding of the site in 2023.