

TALKING TOADSTOOL
SCRIPT NO. 3
RED HILL LOOKOUT - CITY SIDE

INTRO 5 SECS. MUSIC THEN FADE DOWN AND UNDER FOR....

NARR: This lookout on Canberra's Red Hill, some two-thousand-three-hundred feet or about seven-hundred metres above sea level, is the city's oldest established vantage point. Red Hill's actual summit, to the left, is sixty-eight feet or twenty-one metres higher. The hill was given its name by early settlers, probably because of the area's red soil. Walter Burley Griffin, the American architect who won an international competition for a design of the basic city plan in nineteen-hundred-and-twelve, used the name on his original plans for Canberra.

MUSIC UP FOR 3 SECS. THEN DOWN FOR....

NARR: One striking feature of the view from this lookout is the clear distinction between the advanced tree growth in the older suburbs of Canberra and those on the southern side of Red Hill where civic and domestic plantings were not begun until the mid nineteen-sixties. The concept of Canberra as a garden city has been a well entrenched policy of the various administrations responsible for the development of the National Capital over the years. One feature of this policy is a scheme for the free issue to new home owners of forty shrubs and ten trees from the Commonwealth Nurseries. Apart from this, the city has something like ten-thousand acres or four-thousand-and-fifty hectares of parklands and an annual tree planting programme of seventy-eight-thousand trees. The concept of a city filled with a planned mixture of native and imported trees was pioneered by Englishman T.C.G. Weston, who came to Canberra in nineteen-thirteen to take charge of the city's then Afforestation Branch. Weston's contribution to the beautification of what was virtually a treeless river valley cannot be overestimated. One of the city's major lakeside recreation areas, Weston Park, is named after him. It is estimated that since civic and domestic planting began in the early nineteen-twenties at least eight million trees have been planted in and around the city. In addition, some thirty-thousand acres or twelve-thousand-one-hundred-and-fifty hectares of pinus radiata forests have been established in the hill country surrounding the city.

MUSIC UP FOR 3 SECS. THEN DOWN FOR....

NARR: Most major features of interest in Central Canberra can be seen from this lookout. On the extreme left is Black Mountain, with its two TV transmission towers. As with Red Hill, Black Mountain was given its name by the early settlers. Further right is Canberra Hospital at the end of Acton Peninsula and right of the hospital is Canberra City and Commonwealth Avenue Bridge. To the right of the Bridge, just in front of the small kiosk on Regatta Point on the opposite shore of the Lake, is the Captain Cook Memorial Water Jet. The kiosk houses a permanent display showing mainly present and future development of Canberra. When operating, the jet can reach a height of four-hundred-and-fifty feet or one-hundred-and-thirty-seven metres. Designed along the lines of its famous counterpart in Lake Geneva, Switzerland, the jet maintains a seven-ton column of water when operating at full capacity. Water, drawn from the lake, is pushed out of the jet's main nozzle at a speed of one-hundred-and-twenty-five miles or two-hundred-and-one kilometres an hour. The Water Jet, commemorating the bi-Centenary of Captain Cook's discovery of Eastern Australia in seventeen-seventy, was inaugurated by the Queen during her visit to Canberra on ANZAC Day, nineteen-seventy. During the same visit, the Queen officially opened two other features in Central Canberra, the Canberra Carillon and the lookout at Mount Ainslie.

MUSIC UP FOR 3 SECS. THEN DOWN FOR....

NARR: To the right of Regatta Point you will probably be able to pick out the top section of the National Library just beyond the Treasury Building. The low round hill directly this side of the Library and Treasury Building is Capital Hill, with its tall flagpole. It was on Capital Hill that the city's official naming ceremony took place on March the twelfth, nineteen-thirteen. The Hill is the focal point in Canberra's central area plan, being the apex of the Parliamentary Triangle. Over the years, various schemes have been put forward for the development of this historic site, including plans to erect a museum, exhibition hall and a national monument around its summit. When the naming ceremony took place in nineteen-thirteen, the assembled officials actually laid the foundation stone of a grandiose Commencement Column, but the structure was never built though the foundation stones remain

to this day. The latest proposal is to develop Commemorative Gardens on Capital Hill to accentuate the garden city character of Canberra on the highest ground near the centre of the capital.

MUSIC UP FOR 3 SECS. THEN DOWN FOR....

NARR: To the right of Capital Hill, on the opposite shore of the Lake, are two portal buildings flanking the end of ANZAC Parade. These are Government offices occupied by the Department of Supply and the Bureau of Mineral Resources. At the far end of ANZAC Parade stands the copper-domed Australian War Memorial which undoubtedly houses one of the world's unique collections of battlefield relics. The city's highest lookout, Mount Ainslie, rises behind the War Memorial. In the foreground, between Red Hill and the right portal building, is the spire of Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church and to the right of the Church, nearer the Lake, the sombre grey form of the Government Administration Building. This was used to house some of the initial Defence Department transferees during the early stages of the post-war movement of public servants from Melbourne to Canberra in nineteen-fifty-eight. Among others, it now houses the offices of the Department of Foreign Affairs. To the right of the Administrative Building is the Trade Group of offices.

MUSIC UP FOR 3 SECS. THEN DOWN FOR....

NARR: The white tower on the far shore of the Lake, left of Kings Avenue Bridge, is the Canberra Carillon, one of the major Lake features. The Carillon stands on tiny Aspen Island, at the eastern end of the lakeshore King's Park. Its three towers, faced with white reconstructed quartz masonry, rise to one-hundred-and-sixty feet or forty-nine metres. The tower was designed by a Perth firm of architects, Cameron, Chisholm and Nicol, who won a world-wide competition promoted by the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations. The Carillon was a gift from the United Kingdom Government to celebrate the city's jubilee. The tower contains fifty-three bells, the largest weighing six tons or six-point-one-two tonnes and the smallest only fifteen pounds or six-point-eight kilograms. Regular Carillon recitals are given but, between-times, visitors may hear the sound of the bells every fifteen minutes as the chimes of Westminster automatically ring out from the Campanile tower. The Carillon and Water Jet were sited to create two balancing vertical elements in the central lake area.

MUSIC UP FOR 3 SECS. THEN DOWN FOR....

NARR: Off the far end of Kings Avenue Bridge, to the right of the Carillon, is the massive group of Government Defence buildings and the tall column of the Australian-American Memorial. The small hill to the right of the Defence Buildings is Mount Pleasant, reached by General Bridges Drive running from the grounds of the Royal Military College, the group of buildings to the right of Mount Pleasant. The College, often referred to simply as Duntroon after the original pioneer sheep station, was opened in nineteen-hundred-and-eleven. The College's first Commandant, General William Bridges, is buried on Mount Pleasant. He was killed in action in the Gallipoli campaign and his was the only soldier's body brought back for burial in Australia during the First World War. The College was transferred to Victoria Barracks, Sydney, in nineteen-thirty-one but returned to Canberra and its old site in nineteen-thirty-seven. Now affiliated with the University of New South Wales, the college trains selected staff cadets for both the Australian and New Zealand armies.

MUSIC UP FOR 3 SECS. THEN DOWN FOR....

NARR: To the right of Duntroon lies the broad sweep of Canberra Airport. The group of buildings in the background is the Royal Australian Air Force base, Fairbairn, named after the Honourable James Valentine Fairbairn, Member of the House of Representatives for the electorate of Flinders from nineteen-thirty-three to nineteen-forty. He was killed when the aircraft in which he was travelling with a number of other senior Government and Service chiefs crashed while approaching Canberra airport in nineteen-forty. At the time he was Minister for Air and Civil Aviation. A memorial to the disaster has been placed in the pine forest east of the airport. The Fairbairn base is headquarters for the Air Force's VIP fleet and its Number Five Helicopter Training Squadron. The other group of buildings to the right of the airport, and a little closer to Red Hill, is the light industrial area of Fyshwick. Fyshwick is named after Sir Phillip Fysh, one of Tasmania's great workers for Federation. He was Premier of Tasmania from eighteen-seventy-seven to eighteen-seventy-eight and again from eighteen-eighty-seven to eighteen-ninety-two. He represented the State at the Federation Conventions in the eighteen-nineties. He held several Commonwealth portfolios before retiring from politics in

nineteen-hundred-and-ten. Streets in Fyshwick are named after Australia's industrial and mining areas. There is no heavy industry there, the majority of establishments being involved in building and automotive support services. Beyond Fyshwick, in the foothills of the background mountains, is the New South Wales town of Queanbeyan. The broad sweep of pastoral land running away to the right has changed little since the early days of settlement. In fact this area gives a very good idea of what the original site for Canberra was like before the city was developed - before the Lake was filled in nineteen-sixty-four, before the trees were planted and the houses and government and civic buildings erected, before the vision of a National Capital became the reality it is today.

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NARR: For more information about Canberra's attractions and the visiting times for various public buildings obtain a free copy of the brochure "Canberra Points of Interest with Map Guide" from the A.C.T. Tourist Bureau, London Circuit, Canberra City (PAUSE)

NARR: This has been a Toadstool Automatic Advisory Service presentation (BEAT PAUSE)....Post Office Box Sixty-three, Mudgee, New South Wales. Thank you for your patronage.

MUSIC UP FOR 5 SECS. THEN DOWN AND FADE OUT.

8 minutes