



ArchivesACT Finding Aid Floods

Introduction

This finding aid is aimed at assisting researchers using ACT Government archives on the topic of floods. The government files listed in this aid are not necessarily a full listing of records on the topic; they indicate the areas of government compiling the records and are older than 20 years and so on open access. Other contemporary sources, such as newspapers are also cited to give a different viewpoint.

Floods have occurred in the Australian Capital Territory from a variety of watercourses over a period of recorded history.

Town planning

Flood remediation, preventative measures and warning systems were proposed, planned and undertaken. Flood levels were recorded on the Molonglo, Queanbeyan and Cotter Rivers and Jerrabomberra and Sullivans Creeks. Flood levels of various watercourses impacted on town planning and the development of suburbs, for instance Ginninderra Creek 100 year flood levels meant that parts of Macgregor were withdrawn from the divisional plan.¹

Causes of floods

Besides watercourses overflowing through exceptional flows, flooding also occurs locally through blocked storm water drains, localised extraordinary deluges of rain and hail blocking downpipes.

¹ Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia. Joint Committee on the Australian Capital Territory. *Report on proposals for variations of the plan of lay-out of the City of Canberra and its environs (sixty-second series)*

Molonglo Lake Scheme in *National Capital Planning and Development Committee. Minutes of the 88th Meeting held at the Department of the Interior on Wednesday and Thursday, 3rd and 4th May, 1950*, page 10.

Files on these topics include:

File 770 Advisory Council Australian Capital Territory. Molonglo River; clearing of debris; floods.

69/2331 Department of the Interior. Floods in rivers and creeks with the A.C.T.

73/991 National Capital Development Commission. Ginninderra Creek. Block flooding prior to 1984

76/1231 parts 1 & 2 National Capital Development Commission. Exceptional floods in A.C.T.

77/2957 Department of the Capital Territory. Land Policy Branch. Flood storage proposals for Sullivans Creek.

Individual floods

Files also exist on individual floods; for instance:

71/266 parts 1 -6 National Capital Development Commission. Woden Valley floods 26 January 1971

71/344 Department of the Interior. Land Administration Branch. Yarralumla Creek flood - complaints and eye-witness accounts.

71/924 Department of the Interior. Woden Valley flood reports.

Related material deals with the dams and reservoirs of the Australian Capital Territory; for instance

74/493 National Capital Development Commission. Googong Water Supply Project - archaeological and historical matters



Photo 94. Yarralumla Creek at Cotter Road – downstream 22 March 1950, in Town Planning Section Photographs.

The full collection has been digitised and is available at our Archives ACT flickr page:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/archivesact/sets/72157610939343954/>

The following chart lists floods and sources of information on them.

Year	Date	Watercourse in flood	Source of data - Files	Source of data - Newspapers	Source of data - Other
1852	June 23	Queanbeyan, Molonglo		Goulburn Herald 10 July 1852	
1861	January 19	Molonglo		Golden Age 26 January 1861	
1870	May	Molonglo		Goulburn Herald 7 May 1870	
1891	June 27	Murrumbidgee		Goulburn Evening Penny Post 30 June and 3 July 1891	
1903	April 23	Murrumbidgee			Bureau of Meteorology : Climatic Survey, Canberra and the Australian Capital Territory (December 1968)
1915	September 20	Cotter, Molonglo, Murrumbidgee		Argus 21 September 1915	
1922	July	Molonglo		Argus 17 April 1923	
1925	May 26/27	Molonglo		Argus 29 May 1925;	
1926	August 1	Molonglo		Argus 3 August 1926	http://www.images.act.gov.au/duslibrary/imagesact.nsf/search/1365027A959C3DFC4A256CA70016FCEC?OpenDocument
1929	February 16	Molonglo		Canberra Times 18 February 1929	
1929	April 4	Molonglo		Canberra Times 5 April 1929	
1931	May 28	Molonglo		Canberra Times 29 May 1931	

Year	Date	Watercourse in flood	Source of data - Files	Source of data - Newspapers	Source of data - Other
1931	June 11	Molonglo		Canberra Times 12 June 1931	
1934	January 6	Molonglo, Murrumbidgee		Canberra Times 9 January 1934	
1934	February 25	Molonglo		Canberra Times 26 February 1934	
1934	October 25	Molonglo		Canberra Times 26 October 1934	
1947	December 15	Sullivans Creek	Town Planning Section - Land use - photographs 22.4.8		http://www.flickr.com/photos/archivesact/sets/72157610939343954/
1948	January	Molonglo	Town Planning Section - Land use - photographs 22.4.8		http://www.flickr.com/photos/archivesact/sets/72157610939343954/
1950	March 22	Yarralumla Creek	Town Planning Section - Land use - photographs 22.4.8		http://www.flickr.com/photos/archivesact/sets/72157610939343954/
1950	March 25	Molonglo			Bureau of Meteorology : Climatic Survey, Canberra and the Australian Capital Territory (December 1968)
1956	March 11-12	Molonglo	69/2331 Department of the Interior. Floods in rivers and creeks with the A.C.T.	Queanbeyan Age 13 March 1956	
1956	June 9-11	Molonglo, Queanbeyan	69/2331 Department of the Interior. Floods in rivers and creeks with	Queanbeyan Age 12 June 1956	

Year	Date	Watercourse in flood	Source of data - Files	Source of data - Newspapers	Source of data - Other
			the A.C.T.		
1956	June 25	Molonglo	69/2331 Department of the Interior. Floods in rivers and creeks with the A.C.T.		
1959	October 22	Molonglo	69/2331 Department of the Interior. Floods in rivers and creeks with the A.C.T.		
1961	March 3	Molonglo, Murrumbidgee	69/2331 Department of the Interior. Floods in rivers and creeks with the A.C.T.		
1961	September		69/2331 Department of the Interior. Floods in rivers and creeks with the A.C.T.	Canberra Times September 1961	
1971	January 26	Yarralumla Creek	71/266 parts 1 -6 National Capital Development Commission. Woden Valley floods 26 January 1971 71/344 Department of the Interior. Land Administration Branch.	Canberra Times 14 February 1972 Canberra Times 15 February 1972 Canberra Times 16 February 1972 Canberra Times 21 February 1972 Canberra Times 22	Department of the Interior. Report on Woden Valley Flood of 26 January 1971. Canberra, AGPS, 1971. http://www.emknowledge.gov.au/disaster-information/

Year	Date	Watercourse in flood	Source of data - Files	Source of data - Newspapers	Source of data - Other
			Yarralumla Creek flood - complaints and eye-witness accounts. 71/924 Department of the Interior. Woden Valley flood reports.	February 1972	
1976	October 8-9	Molonglo	76/1231 part 1 National Capital Development Commission. Exceptional floods in A.C.T.	Canberra Times 9 October 1976	Department of Territories. ACT Flood Warning Plan; sub-plan of the ACT Disaster Plan. Canberra, AGPS, 1985.
1976	October 16-17	Molonglo, Queanbeyan	76/1231 part 1 National Capital Development Commission. Exceptional floods in A.C.T.	Canberra Times 18 October 1976	
1977	February 25	Queanbeyan (Googong Catchment)	69/2331 Department of the Interior. Floods in rivers and creeks with the A.C.T.		