

APPENDIX B: HISTORY FROM 1997 CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

The following history is reproduced from Gray (1997). The figures noted have not been included.



Despite the great cultural significance of Parkes Place to the Nation a detailed history of the manner in which these gardens have evolved and been used by Australians has yet to be written. Much of the history of the area remains buried in official and other records which are yet to be researched.

This chapter is not intended as a definitive history of Parkes Place but rather as a broad description of the sequence of key events surrounding the area from pre National Capital days to the present time so as to provide the basis on which a statement of cultural significance can be formulated.

2.1 Cultural Background - pre 1913

The area now known as Parkes Place is located within the traditional lands of the Ngunnawal Aboriginal people². According to Tindale's maps and tribal listings, three tribes inhabited Canberra and the nearby NSW area - Ngarigo, Ngunnawal and Walgalu, Ngarigo being the language group name.³ The Ngunnawal Tribe's territory included the Limestone Plains and extended as far as Boorowa and Goulburn.⁴

Research has indicated evidence of Aboriginal activity in the general vicinity of Parkes Place. According to the Australian Heritage Commission the area was:

traditionally used by Aboriginal people as a gathering and meeting ground.⁵

Gillespie states that an Aboriginal:

axehead was found when the lawns around Parliament House were being formed ...

and adds that a:

Mr Moss in 1925, found scrapers and points on the sandy ridge between Parliament House and the Molonglo River.

Gillespie also notes that there are records referring to the finding of Aboriginal implements in the sand pits near the Old Parliament House.⁶

Following European settlement in the 1820s, the area was included in the grant in 1825 of 5000

² Australian Heritage Commission, *Aboriginal Embassy Site*, Brochure of Australian Heritage Commission, 1995

³ David Dexter, *The ANU Campus*, ANU, Canberra, 1991, p.13

⁴ Lyall Gillespie, *Canberra 1820-1913*. AGPS Press, Canberra, 1991, p.44

⁵ Australian Heritage Commission, *Aboriginal Embassy Site*, Citation on the Register of the National Estate, 28 February, 1995

⁶ Lyell Gillespie, *Aborigines of the Canberra Region*, Canberra, L. Gillespie, 1984



acres of land (figure 1) to Robert Campbell as part compensation for the loss of one of his ships while under charter to the Colony. The land granted was just to the east of the first settlement of Canberra.⁷ On this land which encompassed the present Canberra suburbs of Reid, Campbell and Parkes, Robert Campbell built Duntroon House on the northern side of the Molonglo River.

The area remained as rural land until 1912, when it was acquired by the Commonwealth as part of the creation of the Australian Capital Territory. This was followed on 12 March 1913, by the official commencement and naming of the National Capital - an event which would eventually lead to the creation of Parkes Place at the heart of Canberra's Parliamentary Zone.

2.2 Origins as a terrace court - Walter Burley Griffin's plan, 1911-1920

The place which would ultimately take the official name of 'Parkes Place' was seen by its founders as the key landscape centrepiece of Walter Burley Griffin's plan for Australia's National Capital. It was to be located at the heart of Griffin's 'Government Group', referred to in the present day *National Capital Plan*⁸ as the 'Parliamentary Zone'- ie. the triangular area surrounded by Kings and Commonwealth Avenue and the southern shore of Central Basin. It was to straddle Griffin's 'land axis' which links Capital Hill and Mt. Ainslie.

Griffin's vision for the Government Group (figures 2 & 3), which changed little during his term as Federal Director of Design and Construction from 1913 to 1920, was for a 'Capitol' building on Capital Hill at the apex of the triangular 'Government Group' zone while on the land axis at progressively lower levels towards the Central Basin would be the Parliament House on Camp Hill followed by a 'terrace court', the key feature of which would be a fountain and long 'reservoir'. Flanking this terrace court were to be departmental buildings linked in series by colonnades and low wings. The view along the terrace court would extend:

uninterrupted across the Basin and the water front of the Public Gardens (now Commonwealth and Kings Park) and along a broad plaisance (now Anzac Parade) to Ainslie.⁹

Griffin's formally arranged road system at right angles to the land axis was intended to respond sensitively to the progressively falling terrace while at the same time providing access from the two avenue sides (now Kings and Commonwealth Avenues) of his triangle.¹⁰

Griffin's influence over his vision concluded however with the expiry of his term as Federal Capital Director of Design and Construction in 1920 and the creation of a Federal Capital Advisory Committee early in 1921.

2.3 Proposal for a Provisional Parliament House - John Sulman and the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, 1921-1923

It is apparent from the first report of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, chaired by Consulting Architect Mr (later Sir) John Sulman, that the manner in which the terrace court was to evolve would be greatly affected by the Committee. In particular it revealed a commitment to a temporary Parliamentary building to be constructed on a site in front of that proposed for the permanent Parliament House in Griffin's plan. (figure 4) The Committee stated:

⁷ Lyall Gillespie, *Canberra 1820-1913*. AGPS Press, Canberra, 1991, p.9

⁸ NCPA, *National Capital Plan*, NCPA, Canberra, December 1990

⁹ Walter Burley Griffin, *The Federal Capital: Report Explanatory of the Preliminary General Plan*, Department of Home Affairs, Commonwealth of Australia, Melbourne, October 1913, p. 6

¹⁰ Walter Burley Griffin, *The Federal Capital: Report Explanatory of the Preliminary General Plan*, Department of Home Affairs, Commonwealth of Australia, Melbourne, October 1913

The site selected for the temporary parliamentary buildings would afford a vista along the main governmental axis, overlooking the ornamental grounds. It would be clear of the site for the permanent Parliament House, which could be constructed in the future without disturbing Parliament.¹¹

The committee also indicated their commitment to the establishment of 'the ornamental grounds' (rather than Griffin's fountain and reservoir) in the vicinity of the temporary building by:

suitably laying out and planting with shrubs the environment of the temporary Parliament House, temporary Administrative Offices and Hostel.¹²

The Government, then located in the Victorian Parliament House itself surrounded on three sides by ornamental gardens, concurred with this approach at Cabinet level. Early planning for the temporary Parliamentary building then appears to have commenced in 1922 assuming this site, which was about 210 metres in front of Griffin's and some 15 metres below it.

This new approach to the development of the Parliamentary zone became public on 9 March 1923 when the House of Representatives referred the matter of the erection of the 'Provisional Parliament House' to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works. This body then found itself in the position of having to adjudicate between opposing points of view on the matter.¹³ Opponents to the proposal, who argued for a nucleus of the permanent Parliament House to be constructed on the original site, included the President of the Federal Council of the Australian Institute of Architects, the ex-President of the Victorian Institute of Architects and architects Mr B. J. Waterhouse, Professor Wilkinson and Mr Walter Burley Griffin.¹⁴ The latter stated his strong opposition to building the provisional Parliament House on the '...reservoir site ...' and in particular said:

To build the provisional building just below Camp Hill would absolutely destroy the whole idea of the Government group, which is the dominating feature of the Federal Capital; it would be like filling a front yard full of outhouses, the walls of which would be the frontages of the buildings facing the yard. It would never be pulled down; history teaches us that such things are not changed, the pressure being too great to allow it.¹⁵

The Parliament itself decided on 26 July 1923 in favour of the Provisional Parliament House scheme, after the Committee failed to reach a decision. The first sod of the building was turned on 28 August 1923.¹⁶

2.4 Planning as Parliamentary gardens - Federal Capital Advisory Committee and Federal Capital Commission, 1924-1926

Further modification of the Griffin plan was to follow when, in the latter part of 1924, the Federal Capital Advisory Committee turned its attention to the 'Parliamentary gardens' (previously called the ornamental gardens) to be developed in the vicinity of the building now under construction.¹⁷

¹¹ Federal Capital Advisory Committee, *First General Report*, Melbourne, 1921, p.11

¹² *Ibid.*, p.15

¹³ Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, *Proposed Erection of Provisional Parliament House, Canberra*, Melbourne, 1923

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. xi

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.114

¹⁶ Jim Gibbney, *Canberra 1913-1953*, AGPS Press, Canberra, 1988, p.68

¹⁷ Australian Archives, A199 FC1925/236, 23 August 1924

In August 1924 it was apparent that consideration was being given to a proposal by T. C. G. Weston (known as Charles Weston), Superintendent, Parks and Gardens for a very large rose garden directly in front of Parliament House¹⁸ (**figure 5**), however this was dropped in favour of a 'strictly formal' design, reflecting more the formality of the Parliament building under construction.

The key proponent of this approach was Herbert Ross, a Sydney architect and Member of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, who may have been influenced by some garden design ideas being pursued at that time in the Sydney area. Tanner has, for instance, noted that architect Arthur Brown and his garden designer wife Jocelyn, who were greatly impressed during a joint visit to Europe in 1922 with townscape and gardens of the Renaissance, were pursuing similar designs during the 1920s - he provided the architectural framework and she the planting. Tanner states that:

Formal elements were grouped to provide 'a series of outdoor rooms - one surprise after another'.¹⁹

In developing the design an attempt was made to incorporate a water body, in recognition of Griffin's obvious use of a major water body along his land axis. Colonel Owen, an engineer and Member of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee, in a letter in August 1924 to John Smith Murdoch, the architect for the Provisional Parliament House stated:

The layout of the Government Group in Mr Griffin's scheme shows ornamental water on the Ainslie access (sic) - vide attached rough tracing - where we propose to make the garden. That plan also shows ornamental lake, presumably surface, at the 1870 level. This latter level is not feasible, but I think that in laying out the garden we should provide for ornamental water at some future date.²⁰

The general layout which emerged early in 1925 appears to reflect the combined views of the Federal Capital Advisory Committee and Mr Murdoch, who the Committee decided to consult, with perhaps Murdoch's views dominating,²¹ although the available records fail to confirm this completely. What is clear however is that the main and cross axes of Murdoch's Parliament House design and the desire to relate and link the gardens to the building, strongly influenced the final outcome. (figure 6)

In February 1925 the Federal Capital Commission commenced the laying out of the proposed garden area with a view to achieving final graded levels on as many areas as possible before the winter of 1925, so that planting could commence.²²

Public confirmation of these major modifications to Griffin's plan came on 11 November 1925 in *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* with the first gazettal of the 'plan of lay-out of the City of Canberra and its environs'. (figure 7) Quite clearly the Parliamentary gardens achieved by these modifications were entirely different to the 'reservoir and fountain' dominated approach of Griffin.

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Howard Tanner, *The Great Gardens of Australia*, Macmillan Co of Australia, North Sydney, 1976

²⁰ Ibid., 25 August 1924

²¹ Ibid., 28 October 1924

²² Australian Archives, A292 C3516

2.5 Gardens establishment - Charles Weston and the Federal Capital Commission, 1925 onwards

The use of Lombardy poplars to achieve 'sentinel' features at key points in the gardens almost certainly resulted from the involvement of Murdoch in the formulation of the basic planting structure,²³ although the Federal Capital Advisory Committee had already shown some interest in that particular tree.²⁴

The drawing at figure 6 indicates that most of these poplars were planted in June, July and August 1925 and they were probably the first trees to be planted in the Parliamentary Zone.

In July 1925, Charles Weston, Superintendent, Parks and Gardens, Federal Capital Commission, submitted a plan showing two selections of trees for planting in the Parliamentary gardens - one group were nearly all native evergreens, while the other comprised mainly deciduous trees. Weston commented that:

the Lombardy poplars already planted as the chief and outstanding feature of the gardens would appear to have made it very difficult to give an Australian atmosphere to the gardens so far as trees and shrubs are concerned.²⁵

The planting proposals were finalised by Charles Weston, and carried out under his and his successor's control from the winter of 1925 onwards.²⁶ (Weston was succeeded by Mr A. E. Bruce in November 1926). The scheme as executed (figure 8) reflected Weston's 45 years of horticultural experience, two thirds of which had been spent in Australia. His 13 years in Canberra had given him an intimate knowledge of the inhospitable nature of the Limestone Plains and their restraints for horticultural work. The composition by common name of the trees planted in accordance with this plan is set down in table 1.

Common Name	N/S paths	E/W paths	SE/SW sectors	lake	King E.	Totals
Exotic evergreen						
Atlas cedar	0	50	20	0	0	70
Arizona cypress	24	2	12	0	0	38
Golden cypress	0	48	0	0	0	48
Roman cypress	32	0	0	0	0	32
Lawson cypress	0	0	6	0	0	6
Exotic deciduous						
Lombardy poplar	20	8	0	4	0	32
Oriental plane	0	2	20	0	0	22
Pin oak	0	0	80	0	0	80
White poplar	0	0	8	0	0	8
Huntington elm	0	0	14	0	0	14
Totals	76	110	160	4	0	350
Exotic evergreen - 194 - 55.5% Exotic deciduous - 156 - 44.5% Native evergreen - 0 - 00.0%						
<i>Origin: FCC plan 1928</i>						

²³ Ibid., 24 July 1925

²⁴ Australian Archives, A199 FC1925/236, 18 September 1924

²⁵ Greg P. Murphy, *Parks and Gardens in Canberra*, Department of the Capital Territory, Canberra, 1979, p.76

²⁶ Australian Archives, A292 C3516

The design aimed to create through the use of a balanced mix of evergreen and deciduous trees, formally shaped grassed vistas and 'outdoor rooms' in scale with the Provisional Parliament House. Wide granite gravel paths were used within this tree planting - some would be under tree canopies, while others would be lined with narrow crowned Roman cypresses, reminiscent of Renaissance gardens. At key intersections and entry points, groups of two or four Lombardy poplars were planted as 'sentinels' in large square beds edged with privet. These poplars would reach great heights and would be seen at a distance.

Weston's scheme is clearly in contradiction with Murdoch's views of a '... loose and low...' effect²⁷ and he made use of much larger trees, at closer spacings than suggested by Murdoch, employing at the same time a good balance between evergreen and deciduous species. He obviously set out to create an environment in microclimate and aesthetic terms which would be appreciated by the many who would visit, in the decades ahead, the environs of the Parliament House. He also deliberately over-planted the site having in mind a quick effect and possible species performance difficulties and he would have assumed a thinning in about 20 years. This was a common feature of Weston's large scale plantings on the Limestone Plains. On top of this he also used a lot of advanced trees to achieve an immediate effect for the Parliament House opening day.

While no Australian natives found their way into Parkes Place at that time, Weston did however plant Australian eucalypts around the periphery of the nearby future House of Representatives and Senate gardens. The inclusion of these species reflected his determination to include those Australian species which he had tested in the Canberra conditions.

2.6 Floral display gardens and ornamental lake on terrace court - Federal Capital Commission, late 1920s.

There are indications that the Federal Capital Commission intended that floral bedding displays be located within the vistas and 'outdoor rooms' of Parkes Place. In January 1927 for example, a design was prepared which located 26 large floral beds on the vista in front of the front door of Parliament House (figure 9). Floral beds to this design were eventually established there in the 1930s. (see section 2.13)

The Federal Capital Commission also prepared detailed drawings in September 1926 for the 15 cm high kerbing, pedestals, gargoyles, and excavation for the intended lake in the central vista,²⁸ however these plans were not executed by the opening of the Provisional Parliament House. Records indicate however that its initial excavation was carried out about 1930.²⁹ In March 1933, A. E. Bruce, Superintendent, Parks and Gardens, Department of the Interior, proposed that the 'Reflection Lake' be completed by concrete lining and estimates to do this were prepared.³⁰ No further action was taken and the excavation remained until 1969, when a system of pools and fountains set in a large paved area was constructed over the original excavation, greatly changing the original intended design character.

2.7 Commemorative tree plantings - Empire Parliamentary Association, 1926 and Young Australia League, 1927

On 11 October 1926 an event of great historic significance for the fledgling Australian Federation took place in Canberra. On this day the new House of Representatives chamber was

²⁷ Ibid., 24 July 1925

²⁸ Australian Archives, A2514/1 P185 & 186,

²⁹ Ibid., 20 March 1933

³⁰ Ibid., 20 March 1933

used for the first time for official purposes, when the Right Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury, in the presence of the delegates to the Empire Parliamentary Association conference in Australia, and '... a large gathering of officials and citizens ...' presented to the House of Representatives its Speaker's chair which was a replica of the one in the British House of Commons at that time.³¹

In association with the ceremony twelve commemorative trees were planted to mark the event. Two Lombardy poplars were planted in the courtyards of the Old Parliament House by the Marquis of Salisbury and Mr Arthur Henderson, MP (both from the UK), while ten Roman cypresses were planted adjacent to the western north-south path of Parkes Place by the Marquis of Salisbury and nine other members of the Empire Parliamentary Association from eight different countries.³²

A photograph of the event is at plate 2. A copy of a plan on which the planters' signatures and the location of their trees are documented has been located.³³

In 1929 the Empire Parliamentary Association arranged for twelve plaques to be designed and manufactured by the Australian War Memorial in Melbourne. The Memorial claimed their design, a photograph of which is at plate 3:

contains a suggestion of symbolism, the rising sun standing for Australia and the wavy lines for the seas crossed by the Delegates who planted the trees.³⁴

At table 2 the names of those who planted the ten trees in Parkes Place are documented. Only six of these trees and their associated plaques remain.

<u>Tree number</u>	<u>Planted by</u>	<u>Condition in 1994</u>
B 107	The Right Hon. The Marquess of Salisbury (United Kingdom)	satisfactory
No number	Senator the Hon. E. L. Schaffner (Canada)	Tree removed- Plaque lost
B110	I. S. Dickson M.P. (New Zealand)	Tree removed- plaque lost
B111	I. P. Van Heerden M.P. (Union of South Africa)	Electricity pole needs removal - otherwise satisfactory
B114	Major Bryan R. Cooper M.P. (Irish Free State)	Tree removed - plaque lost
B115	Hon J. Alexander Robinson M.L.C. (Newfoundland)	Suppressed by other trees
B118	Sir Darcy Lindsay M.L.A. (India)	Trunk growing around plaque
B119	Senator Lt. Col Achilles Samut (Malta)	Satisfactory
B122	Mrs E. Tawse Jollie M.L.C. (Southern Rhodesia)	tree removed - plaque lost
B123	Shanmukham Chetty M.L.A. (India)	suppressed by other trees

Origin: NCDC Tree Survey 1982, field inspections and AWM Files

³¹ Federal Capital Commission, *Third Annual Report (1926-27)*, Canberra, 1928, p.16

³² *Ibid.*, p.14

³³ A copy of this plan is held by the Director, Landscape Architecture, NCPA

³⁴ Australian Archives (Australian War Memorial), 93 13/1/49 (1928-29)

On 24 January 1927 an additional commemorative Roman cypress tree was ceremonially planted in Parkes Place by Master Ray Smith, a drum-major of the Young Australia League of Western Australia. The precise location of this tree planting has yet to be confirmed but it was almost certainly adjacent to the eastern north-south path. (plate 4)

Mr J. J. Simmons, the leader of the Young Australia League contingent from Western Australia and founder of that organisation, dedicated the tree to the League in recognition of their 718 members who had visited Canberra that summer - 352 from Western Australia and 366 from Queensland and NSW³⁵ He expressed the hope that:

the uprightness of the tree would typify the behaviour and conduct of all League members now and in the years to come.³⁶

The Young Australia League is a non-denominational youth welfare organisation operating on the principal of 'education by travel'. It was founded in 1905 in Western Australia and has grown to become a national body admitting girls also as participants.³⁷

During the day, the League band:

rendered several airs in impressive style in King's Hall, Parliament House, thus gaining the honor of being the first band to play in the new home of the Federal Legislature.³⁸

It is possible that there may be more commemorative plantings in Parkes Place. In this context it should be noted that the Federal Capital Commission inaugurated a scheme in 1926/27 by which representative organisations in Australia might identify themselves with Canberra by presenting trees for planting in main avenues or special positions.³⁹

2.8 A place for public assembly - 9 May 1927 onwards

The first of many major official gatherings occurred on Parkes Place at the opening by the Duke of York of the Provisional Parliament House on 9 May 1927. Temporary stands bordering the central lawns were constructed while behind them, where the National Rose Gardens are now located, were erected refreshment marquees. Prior to the opening the Duke and Duchess' carriage was driven around Parkes Place in front of the stands. The official attendance was 35,000 persons, although some felt this figure to be excessive.⁴⁰

Prior to the opening of the Australian War Memorial in 1941, official ceremonies for Anzac and Remembrance Days were held in front of the Provisional Parliament House, where a temporary cenotaph was erected. Attendances in the mid 1930s ranged between 1500 and 2000 persons.⁴¹

Numerous official gatherings in Parkes Place were to follow over subsequent years.

³⁵ *Canberra Times*, 31 December 1926, 27 January 1927

³⁶ *Canberra Times*, 27 January 1927

³⁷ *The Australian Encyclopaedia*, Grolier Society of Australia, Sydney, 1977, Vol. 6, p.458

³⁸ *Canberra Times*, 27 January 1927

³⁹ Greg P. Murphy, *Parks and Gardens in Canberra*, Department of the Capital Territory, Canberra, 1979, p.77

⁴⁰ Jim Gibbney, *Canberra 1913-1953*, AGPS Press, Canberra, 1988, p.130

⁴¹ *Canberra Times*, 27 April 1936, 12 November 1936, 26 April 1937

2.9 Official naming - Canberra National Memorials Committee, 1928

As the building of the Provisional Parliament House proceeded, and the great significance of the forthcoming transfer of the Commonwealth Parliament to its new home was starting to be realised, it was perhaps inevitable that Parliament would turn its thoughts to an appropriate nomenclature system for the National Capital's streets and public places. Such a system should, it was believed, appropriately reflect the contribution of Australians to the development of the Nation and in particular to the achievement of the Federation.

The Federal Capital Advisory Committee commenced work on such a nomenclature system in 1924⁴² and this was continued from 1925 onwards by the Federal Capital Commission. The latter body concluded that:

national sentiment must necessarily prevail in the case of every name to be chosen.⁴³

In its first report on the subject in December 1927 the newly formed Canberra National Memorials Committee proposed that in the Government area eleven of the names of the fourteen most prominent statesmen connected with the establishment of Federation would be used for the streets in the vicinity of Parliament House, ie.:

Barton, Braddon, Deakin, Dickson, Forrest, Fysh, Griffith, Kingston, Lyne, O'Connor, Parkes, Reid, Symon, and Turner.

The central place in front of Parliament House was to be given to the so called father of Federation, Sir Henry Parkes.⁴⁴

While the name 'Parkes Place' was eventually adopted officially the remainder of the recommendation was not although, as will be noticed in figure 10, some of the names were already unofficially in use in 1928. A parallel recommendation for thirteen districts to be named after such statesmen was however adopted. These decisions were formalised in *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* No 99, 20 September 1928., the citation for Parkes Place and the District of Parkes reading :

after Sir Henry Parkes, Legislator, Federalist and one of the Founders of the Constitution.

The streets on the eastern and western boundaries of Parkes Place became known as Parkes Place West and Parkes Place East, however the northern and southern boundaries remained officially un-named for the next 24 years.

The eventual approach adopted in 1952 to naming in the Parliamentary Zone differed markedly from that envisaged by the original Canberra National Memorials Committee. In *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* No. 69, 9 October 1952, the northern and southern boundary roads of Parkes Place were designated as King Edward and King George Terraces, these designations being linked to the first 50 years of Federation. The citations read:

King Edward Terrace - after King Edward VII and King Edward VIII. Reigning Monarchs during first 50 years of Federation.

King George Terrace - after King George V and King George VI. Reigning Monarchs during first 50 years of

⁴² Federal Capital Advisory Committee, *Final Report*, Melbourne, 1926

⁴³ Federal Capital Commission, *Fourth Annual Report (1927-28)*, Canberra, 1929

⁴⁴ Canberra National Memorials Committee, *Report in regard to the Naming of Canberra's Streets and Suburbs*, Canberra, 1928

Federation.

A similar approach was followed in the naming in the same gazette of a number of nearby streets including Queen Victoria Terrace, Langton Crescent (after Archbishop Langton who forced King John to sign the Magna Carta in 1215) and Walpole Crescent (after Robert Walpole, the First British Prime Minister).

2.10 Supplementary tree plantings - Federal Capital Commission and other departments, 1920s, 1930s

During the late 1920s or early 1930s a row of deciduous tree planting was added to both sides of the northern east-west path. These trees are clearly visible in air photography.

The reasons for this supplementary planting is unknown but it may well have been motivated by a desire to extend the avenue planting of King Edward Terrace, or alternatively to achieve a deciduous effect perhaps having in mind winter use of the path. All the golden cypress along the southern side of the path were presumably removed at that time.

The likely composition by common names, after this supplementary planting is as indicated in table 3.

Common Name	N/S paths	E/W paths	SE/SW sectors	lake	King E.	Totals
Exotic evergreen						
Atlas cedar	0	50	20	0	0	70
Arizona cypress	24	2	12	0	0	38
Golden cypress	0	34	0	0	0	34
Roman cypress	36	0	0	0	0	36
Lawson cypress	0	0	6	0	0	6
Exotic deciduous						
Lombardy poplar	20	8	0	1	0	32
Oriental plane	0	15	20	0	0	38
Pin oak	0	28	80	0	0	108
White poplar	0	0	8	0	0	8
Huntington elm	0	0	14	0	0	14
Totals	80	140	160	4	0	384
Exotic evergreen - 184 - 47.9% Exotic deciduous - 200 - 52.1% Native evergreen - 0 - 00.0%						
Origin: FCC plan 1928 and photographs						

2.11 Founding of National Rose Gardens- Canberra Horticultural Society, 1933

An important new step was taken in the further development of Parkes Place on 12 September 1933 when the then Minister for the Interior, Mr J. A. Perkins carried out the first planting in the National Rose Gardens being established there by the Canberra Horticultural Society in association with the Department of the Interior. (plate 5) This followed the first announcement of the garden in August 1932, which in turn had been preceded with a considerable amount of planning work stretching back some years under the leadership of Mr A. E. Bruce, the then Superintendent, Parks and Gardens.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Dianne Firth, 'The National Rose Gardens: Canberra', in *Canberra Historical Journal*. September, 1994

The development and continued presence of these rose gardens in Parkes Place reflects the great interest in Australia throughout this century in the rose - an interest which has shown no signs of waning even now.

The idea of establishing rose gardens in the vicinity of the Provisional Parliament House appears to have arisen in earlier years while that building was still under construction. As indicated in an earlier section of this chapter, the first suggestion appears to have been made in 1924 by Charles Weston, who went as far as preparing a rough sketch of a rose garden (figure 5) to be established directly in front of the House. This was followed in 1926, when the National Rose Society of NSW made a suggestion about associating the states with a national rose garden in Canberra. In response Prime Minister Stanley Bruce suggested that the rose gardens be established in the grounds of Parliament House, however the intervention of the depression appears to have prevented any further action for the next few years.⁴⁶

The design developed by Mr A. E. Bruce for the garden (plate 6) was based on the plan of the petals of a fully opened bloom, and placed symmetrically on each side of the central terrace in front of the House. Consideration was given to colour arrangement with the central and circular beds red, progressing out through yellow, white, pink and coppery shades. The form of the plant was also taken into consideration; climbing varieties were to be trained onto pergolas. Accessory beds, available for mixed planting, were to elaborate the layout.⁴⁷ Access paths were to be provided as indicated on the plan. (figure 11)

An important feature of the scheme was that it would involve:

cooperation between the citizens of the various states and the Federal Capital Territory and the governing body of the Territory.⁴⁸

Donations of rose plants were made by rose societies, other organisations and individuals across Australia. Some 80,000 roses were to be planted ultimately. The gardens were also regarded as a testing ground for Australian raised roses.

In September 1932, it was reported that the Canberra Horticultural Society had:

agreed to extend the scope of the National Rose Garden of Canberra to include the area which is being developed in Parliament House grounds by the Joint House Department of Canberra.⁴⁹

This agreement followed some acrimonious communication between the Society and Mr R. Broinowski, Secretary, Joint House Department who had commenced a few months previously the development of rose gardens in the Senate garden nearby. The Senate and House of Representatives rose gardens continued to be developed and managed by the Parliament throughout its occupation of the Provisional Parliament House till 1988, however they are now open to the public.

The rose gardens of Parkes Place continued largely in their original form although at times there was deterioration in their condition. Modifications were made by the Department of the Interior (and its later derivatives) to the layout of the beds with an additional outer ring of beds and new rectangular pergolas which replaced the original pyramid style supports for the climbing roses.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.32

⁴⁷ Ibid., p.32

⁴⁸ Ibid., p.32

⁴⁹ *Canberra Times*, 16 September 1932

Still later modifications were made to the two outer rings of rose beds breaking them into smaller beds, and a wider range of varieties was planted, while the timber pergolas were replaced by painted metal trellises.⁵⁰

The 60th Anniversary of the first plantings in the National Rose Gardens was celebrated by 130 people on 12 September 1993 with a re-enactment of the original ceremony. Mr John Langmore MHR Fraser, planted a *Dame Edith Helen* rose bush with the silver spade used for official public occasions. This was one of the original varieties of roses planted sixty years earlier.⁵¹ (plate 7)

In 1991, Landscape Architecture students at the University of Canberra completed a set of measured drawings and a brief history of the Rose Gardens under the tutelage of their Lecturer Ms Dianne Firth.⁵²

The rose gardens of Parkes Place are listed in both the *Australian Capital Territory Heritage Places Register* (27 April 1994) and the *National Estate Register* (15 December 1994). They are classified by the National Trust (August 1993).

2.12 Vale Charles Weston, MBE, 1935

In accordance with the wish of Charles Weston, MBE, (plate 8) Canberra's first Officer in Charge, Afforestation and Superintendent, Parks and Gardens, who died on 1 December 1935, his ashes were quietly distributed during the month of his death in the gardens and plantations of Parkes Place. The distribution was by his successor, Mr A. E. Bruce, Superintendent, Parks and Gardens and other officers of the Department of the Interior in the presence of his son-in-law Mr L. Willis. The Minister for the Interior, Mr T. Paterson said that it was fitting that Mr Weston's ashes should find their resting-place among the trees and shrubs of the principal park area of Canberra as he would always be remembered for the distinguished part which he played in the foundation and development of Canberra's parks and plantations.⁵³

Parkes Place was the last gardens area laid out by Weston prior to his retirement late in 1926.

The ashes of his wife Mrs Minimia Weston were also distributed in the same area during December 1937.^{54 55}

2.13 Netherlands presentation tulip display beds - mid to late 1930s

In the mid to late 1930s a large number of tulip display beds were established in Parkes Place, directly in front of the Provisional Parliament House (plate 9) in accordance with the garden bed design prepared in 1926 (see section 2.6). The tulip bulbs used in these beds were a gift of Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands to the Commonwealth Government.⁵⁶

Gillespie believes that this gift was related to the London to Melbourne Centenary Air Race in October 1934, the handicap section of which was won by K. D. Parmentier and J. J. Moll of

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 34

⁵² *60th Anniversary of National Rose Gardens*, Brochure, Australian Institute of Landscape Architects(ACT), Garden History Society(ACT), Horticultural Society of Canberra, and National Trust (ACT), 1993

⁵³ *Canberra Times*, 17 December 1935

⁵⁴ Mrs Barbara McIntosh, Interview, 20 July 1992

⁵⁵ Records of Northern Suburbs Crematorium, Sydney, 25 September 1992

⁵⁶ *Canberra Times*, 25 October 1941, p.2

Holland flying a Dutch-built Douglas DC2.⁵⁷ This was the first modern airliner seen in Australia.⁵⁸ Research is continuing to enable confirmation of Gillespie's view.

By the mid 1940s the tulips were becoming virus infected and the beds were gradually phased out.⁵⁹

2.14 Major tree thinning program - Lindsay Pryor and Department of the Interior, 1940s

In 1946 the new Superintendent, Parks and Gardens, Mr (now Emeritus Professor) Lindsay D. Pryor initiated a program of tree thinning in the Parliamentary Zone.⁶⁰ This program arose out of a concern for obvious root and crown competition between trees and was an inevitable consequence of the deliberate over-planting practices followed by Charles Weston. As a result of this thinning program all the remaining golden cypress on the paths and the pin oaks, white poplar and Lawson's cypress on King George Terrace were removed, attracting community criticism through letters published in the *Canberra Times*, during the months of June and July 1946. Arizona cypress was planted in King George Terrace to match the same species on the opposite side of the road.

The new composition of the altered planting design was then probably as indicated in table 4.

Common Name	N/S paths	E/W paths	SE/SW sectors	lake	King E.	Totals
Exotic evergreen						
Atlas cedar	0	30	20	0	0	70
Arizona cypress	24	2	20	0	0	46
Golden cypress	0	0	0	0	0	0
Roman cypress	36	0	0	0	0	36
Lawson cypress	0	0	0	0	0	0
Exotic deciduous						
Lombardy poplar	20	8	0	4	0	32
Oriental plane	0	18	20	0	0	38
Pin oak	0	28	68	0	0	96
White poplar	0	0	0	0	0	0
Huntington elm	0	0	14	0	0	14
Totals	80	106	142	4	0	332
<p style="text-align: right;">Exotic evergreen - 132 - 45.8% Exotic deciduous - 180 - 54.2% Native evergreen - 0 - 0.0%</p>						
<i>Origin: FCC plan 1928 and photographs</i>						

2.15 King George V Memorial - erection and relocation, 1953, 1968

In March 1936 Federal Cabinet decided that a memorial to King George V, who had died in January that year, should be in the form of a group of symbolic bronze statuary in Parkes Place on the land axis immediately in front of the Provisional Parliament House. This statuary was to symbolise:

⁵⁷ Lyell Gillespie, Personal communication, 1 September 1995

⁵⁸ Reader's Digest Services (Ed.) *Australia's Yesterdays: A look at our recent past*, Sydney, 1976, p.38

⁵⁹ Professor L. D. Pryor, Interview, September 1995

⁶⁰ Professor L. D. Pryor, Interview, February 1994

- the association of the late King with the birth and first 25 (sic) years of Federation;
- the growth of the idea of Empire unity as a Commonwealth of Nations under allegiance to one sovereign; and
- the main events of Australia's national life, such as for instance the first Federal Convention; the King, as Duke of York, opening the first Federal Parliament; Australian participation in the Great War; the next Duke of York opening the first Parliament in Canberra.⁶¹

Mr G. Rayner Hoff was selected from three Australian sculptors invited to submit competitive designs. Hoff died suddenly and his design was completed by his assistant John Moorfield.⁶²

The memorial comprises a cast bronze figure of King George V which is:

set against a Hawkesbury (sandstone) pylon. It is backed by a carved stone figure of equestrian St. George in armour with gunmetal lance, and decorated with nine circular bronze portraits.⁶³

The nine bronze portrait plaques cover: the Duke of York; the Duchess of York; Sir Edmund Barton; a sailor; a soldier; an airman; a nurse; Sir Henry Parkes; and Sir Samuel Griffith.

The architectural part of the memorial was completed by 1941, however the bronze figure had to wait until after the Second World War.⁶⁴ It was unveiled by the Governor General the Rt. Hon. Sir William McKell on 4 March 1953.

The Memorial continued to attract great criticism for largely interrupting the view from the entrance to Parliament House thus blocking out the view of the Australian War Memorial.⁶⁵ (plate 10) It was relocated, with the approval of PM Sir Robert Menzies, to its present position (plate 11) in 1968 thus restoring the openness of the vista along the land axis to the War Memorial and Mt. Ainslie.⁶⁶

The memorial is located within the '*Parliament House Vista*' which is entered on the *Register of the National Estate*. It was entered in its own right on the *Register of the National Estate* on 12 February 1992. It is classified by the National Trust.⁶⁷

Restoration of the memorial was completed recently following a National Capital Planning Authority conservation study.⁶⁸ In September 1995 it was announced that the two poplars flanking the memorial were to be removed and replaced due to root invasion of its foundations⁶⁹ and they were removed shortly afterwards.

⁶¹ Alan Roberts, 'Memorials in the National Capital' in *Canberra Historical Journal*, September 1990, p.11

⁶² *Ibid.*,

⁶³ Rodney Garnett and Danielle Hyndes (Ed) *The Heritage of the Australian Capital Territory*, National Trust of Australia(ACT), Canberra, p.132

⁶⁴ Alan Roberts, 'Memorials in the National Capital' in *Canberra Historical Journal*, September 1990, p.12

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.12

⁶⁶ Eric Sparke, *Canberra 1954-1980*, AGPS Press, Canberra, 1988, p.118

⁶⁷ Rodney Garnett and Danielle Hyndes (Ed) *The Heritage of the Australian Capital Territory*, National Trust of Australia(ACT), Canberra, p.132

⁶⁸ National Capital Planning Authority, *King George V Memorial: Conservation Study*, (3 volumes), Freeman Collett & Partners Pty Ltd, in association with David Young and Colin Pearson, Canberra, January-February 1994

⁶⁹ *Canberra Times*, 29 September 1995

2.16 A place to celebrate a Jubilee - Canberra Jubilee Pavilion, 1963

The revival of interest in Canberra in the mid 1950s, followed by the creation of the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) in 1957 and the major development programs to follow, inevitably drew greater attention to the forthcoming 50th anniversary of the founding of Canberra as a National Capital on 12 March 1913.

The focal point of the Jubilee celebrations in 1963 was a large pavilion built in Parkes Place directly in front of the Provisional Parliament House. There on 12 March, before 10,000 people, the Queen delivered a special message officially opening the exhibition. (plate 12)

The crowd included children from Norfolk Island, New Guinea, Nauru, Cocos and Christmas Islands, pioneers of Canberra and representatives of all phases of the city's life.⁷⁰

The Canberra Story exhibition traced the growth of Canberra from early settlement days. After its official opening a number of pioneers were presented to the Queen. The exhibition remained open to the public until 15 April 1963.⁷¹

2.17 Modifications and new plans - National Capital Development Commission, 1960s, 1970s

The 1958 report *Observations on the Future Development of Canberra, ACT* by Sir William Holford became amongst other things a catalyst for a continuing debate over the next 27 years about the future of the Parliamentary Zone including of course the gardens created as Parkes Place in the 1920s.

Lord Holford's report was to have a major influence over NCDC planning for the Parliamentary Zone throughout the 1960s and 1970s. His report did not propose any significant change to Parkes Place as such, but it did envisage an extension of it towards the lake as a great forecourt to the future permanent lakeside Parliament House. (figure 12) On either side of this large forecourt were located sites for future government buildings following largely the set-back example of the already constructed Administration Building on the eastern side of Parkes Place. (figure 13) This enlarged Parkes Place was a feature of all Parliamentary Zone plans throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

When Parliament rejected in 1968 the siting of Parliament House on the lakeshore and relocated it to Camp Hill or Capital Hill this large open space continued as a 'National Place' open to the lake. The Provisional Parliament House was to be demolished following construction of the new Parliament House. (figure 14)

The following modifications were made in or near Parkes Place within the framework of these Parliamentary Zone plans:

- Cork Hill (together with much of its original planting) on the northern side of King Edward Terrace was removed and the Parkes Place landscape extended towards the site of the future lakeside Parliament House using largely Australian native tree species (figure 12) (1963);
- the curved roads at the south west and south east corners of Parkes Place were removed to

⁷⁰ *Canberra Times*, 13 March 1963

⁷¹ *Ibid.*,

facilitate the construction of right angle intersections of the Parkes Place roads with King George Terrace thus adding two triangular areas to Parkes Place (1950s and 1960s);

- the King George V Memorial was relocated from its position in front of the Provisional Parliament House to the western edge of the open grass terrace (1968);
- a paved terrace was constructed on the north side of King George Terrace to match the new terraced parking arrangements in front of the Provisional Parliament House (approximately 1969);
- four fountains in each of two pools which flank a larger square central pool were constructed within a large paved area on the land axis in Parkes Place over the excavated site of the ornamental lake proposed by the Federal Capital Advisory Committee in the 1920s. This was intended to achieve a formal assembly and ceremonial area in front of the Provisional Parliament House (1969); and
- King Edward Terrace was realigned to remove its displaced alignment adjacent to the northern boundary of Parkes Place as part of the works to facilitate ceremonial access and approach roads to the High Court, thus enlarging Parkes Place (1979).

These modifications had the effect of converting Parkes Place to a more formal assembly and **ceremonial area in front of the Provisional Parliament House. (plate 13)** The scale of these new ponds and their associated paving was such that they altered considerably the original intended design character for Parkes Place. With the vacation of Old Parliament House by the Parliament in 1988 there is no longer a need for such a large paved area.

2.18 A place for leisure, sport and horticultural appreciation

For those who visited the Provisional Parliament House, Parkes Place with its now famous National Rose Gardens, presentation tulip displays, open green lawns and colourful trees were an attraction to many.

With the construction in the Parliamentary Zone during the 1960s and 1970s of departmental buildings and government institutions and the expansion of the Provisional Parliament House, Parkes Place with its now mature landscape became increasingly used by workers and tourists. The larger open grassed areas became favourite places for lunchtime sporting activities (plate 14) while the National Rose Gardens continued to attract increased numbers of visitors during the warmer months.

In 1968 a tourist restaurant (now known as the Lobby Restaurant) was constructed on King George Terrace near the National Rose Gardens.⁷² A kiosk was built close to this restaurant in 1968/69.⁷³ Until 1988 the restaurant was popular with both tourists and also Parliamentarians and their staff. A public toilet was also built adjacent to the restaurant and kiosk.

2.19 A place for dissent

From the 1960s onwards Canberra became increasingly a scene for dissent over controversial issues. This practice reflected the growth of Canberra, the increasing diversification of its population in the post war years and the advent of television.

⁷² NCDC, *11th Annual Report*, Canberra, 1967-68

⁷³ NCDC, *12th Annual Report*, Canberra, 1968-69

Mass protest rallies, demonstrations, tent camps of dissent and related events were seen more frequently in Parkes Place with at times damage to the gardens. Events of this nature included:

- a mass meeting of 600 people on 15 April 1956 protesting against restrictions in the Canberra building program resulting in large sackings;⁷⁴
- an Aboriginal tent 'embassy' protest commencing on 26 January 1972 and lasting until 12 September;⁷⁵
- a seven day vigil of prayer by a Canberra anti-casino lobby in the 1970s;⁷⁶
- an emotional public meeting protesting against the Black Mountain Tower proposal in 1973;⁷⁷
- a rally, attracting 4,000 persons, addressed by former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam and other Labor and union figures following the dramatic events of 11 November 1975;⁷⁸ and
- a very large farmers' rally on 1 July 1985 attracting 30,000 to 40,000 demonstrators.⁷⁹

Perhaps the largest and best organised of these was the farmers' rally on 1 July 1985 (plate 15). Farmers:

had come from all over rural Australia - in droves from Victoria and from southern, western and northern NSW. In substantial numbers from Queensland, with contingents from Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania.⁸⁰

2.20 Aboriginal Embassy Protest- 1972, 1992

The Aboriginal Embassy protest referred to above commenced on 26 January 1972, to urge the Federal Government to recognise Aboriginal claims of a legal right to land.⁸¹ It was a direct response to the Australia Day Statement by Prime Minister William McMahon. The protest gradually expanded until a permanent tent camp existed on the lawns of Parkes Place.⁸²

The presence of the Embassy ultimately resulted in the passing of a special ordinance dealing with trespass on unleased land in Canberra. Following its proclamation on 20 July 1972, police dismantled the tents and arrested eight people including five Aborigines.⁸³ The tents were re-erected on the lawns on a number of occasions subsequently, the fourth and final re-erection

⁷⁴ Eric Sparke, *Canberra 1954-1980*, AGPS Press, Canberra, 1988, p.52

⁷⁵ Scott Robinson, 'The Aboriginal Embassy: An Account of the Protests of 1972', in *Aboriginal History*, V. 18, No. 1, 1994

⁷⁶ Eric Sparke, *Canberra 1954-1980*, AGPS Press, Canberra, 1988, p.245

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.265

⁷⁸ *Canberra Times*, 13 November 1975

⁷⁹ *Canberra Times*, 2 July 1985

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 2 July 1985

⁸¹ Australian Heritage Commission, *Aboriginal Embassy Site*, Brochure of Australian Heritage Commission, 1995

⁸² Scott Robinson, 'The Aboriginal Embassy: An Account of the Protests of 1972', in *Aboriginal History*, V. 18, No. 1, 1994

⁸³ Gavin Souter, *Acts of Parliament*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1988, p.502

occurring on 12 September 1972.⁸⁴

During the 20th anniversary of the original embassy on 26 January 1992, the embassy was re-established on the original site. (plate 16) Aboriginal groups have remained at the site since. A 'Fire of Justice' was lit in April 1993 for the memorial service for freedom fighter and poet Kevin Gilbert. A portion of his ashes was sprinkled into the fire.⁸⁵ The Aboriginal Embassy Site was entered on the *Register of the National Estate* on 28 February 1995.

2.21 A place for concerts and festivals

Parkes Place has been used on numerous occasions as the venue for concerts and festival activities.

The first YMCA Canberra Carols by Candlelight Concert held there was on Christmas Eve 1945 and that function continued at the site every Christmas thereafter until the completion of Stage 88 in Commonwealth Park in 1988. Numerous finale concerts of the Canberra Festival have been held in Parkes Place since the 1970s.

A number of concerts have been televised there including the major New Year's Eve Concert marking the commencement of the 1988 Bicentennial Year.

2.22 Modifications and new plans - National Capital Development Commission, 1980s

The fixing of the site for the Permanent Parliament House by the passing of the Parliament Act, 1974 and the decision by the Government in November 1978 to complete its construction by 1988, was the catalyst for the NCDC's planning and design study of 1980 for the Parliamentary Zone.

This study proposed a reinstatement of the principles of the original Walter Burley Griffin plan for the Parliamentary Zone and it greatly increased the potential for change in Parkes Place. (figure 15) The report stated:

The land axis would be treated as a more active space, with two central plazas and a mall or shaft of space, framed by a symmetrical disposition of buildings. The plan also reinstated Griffin's lake embankment and terrace front of buildings.⁸⁶

This study was followed progressively through the 1980s with three NCDC plan reports which are summarised below:

- *Parliamentary Zone Draft Development Plan - June 1982*

A major conclusion was that the best location for further building development in the Parliamentary Zone was on the flat ground to the north of the Provisional Parliament House which was to remain. The principle of developing the Parliamentary Zone about a mall was continued. It was possible that building development could occur on the National Rose Gardens sites and the open grassed cross axis between the Administrative and Treasury Buildings. The alignment of King George Terrace was to be altered in front of the Provisional Parliament House.

⁸⁴ Scott Robinson, 'The Aboriginal Embassy: An Account of the Protests of 1972', in *Aboriginal History*, V, 18, No. 1, 1994

⁸⁵ Australian Heritage Commission, *Aboriginal Embassy Site*, Brochure of Australian Heritage Commission, 1995

⁸⁶ NCDC, *Parliamentary Zone Development Plan*, Canberra, June 1982, p.27

A strong eucalypt planting, intended to frame the landbridge between the Permanent and Provisional Parliament Houses, would extend northwards from the Provisional House across Parkes Place and towards the lake edge. The paved roads proposed on the inside of this new planting would enable vehicles to traverse the length of the mall.⁸⁷

- *Parliamentary Zone Development Plan - September 1983*

This contained refinements to the 1982 plan. The proposed mall roads were shifted slightly away from the mall and placed between the proposed lines of the Eucalypt tree planting. The inside rows of trees, instead of the mall roads, would now define the edge of the grassed mall. The existing mall fountain would be narrowed.⁸⁸

- *Parliamentary Zone Development Plan - 1986*

The purpose of this plan was to establish a basic pattern of roads and land subdivision, to identify sites for two buildings (National Science and Technology Centre & National Archive building) and to indicate in general terms how landscape would be used to delineate roads and pathways and enclose gardens and recreation spaces of various kinds.

In the case of Parkes Place, it was envisaged that the grassed mall would be further developed into areas of varying character to create useful and visually attractive active and passive recreation spaces. A large forecourt with underground parking would be created in front of Old Parliament House and King George Terrace would be cut.⁸⁹

The 1986 proposals which are illustrated in figures 16 & 17 were approved by the Parliament in April 1987 and incorporated into the *National Capital Plan* in 1990.⁹⁰

Arising out of these reviews of the Parliamentary Zone during the 1980s the following works were executed in or near Parkes Place:

- a short section of the western mall road (now called Mall Road West) was constructed north of King Edward Terrace to facilitate access to the National Science and Technology Centre which was the first building designed to address the edge of the new mall (1988).
- two of the four planned rows of Eucalypts (river peppermints) were planted on either side of the land axis between the Provisional Parliament House and the lake shore. (The planting of the other two rows was to await final decisions on the construction of the mall roads.) (1988)
- in the event that the mall roads were eventually constructed in Parkes Place and in consequence the 1926 Roman cypress commemorative plantings removed, a planting of oriental plane and pin oak was carried out on what would be the outside verges of the future mall roads in the vicinity of the National Rose Gardens (1988).

2.23 Deterioration and refurbishment - National Capital Planning Authority, 1990s

⁸⁷ NCDC, *Parliamentary Zone Development Plan*, Canberra, June 1982

⁸⁸ NCDC, *Parliamentary Zone Development Plan*, Canberra, September 1983

⁸⁹ NCDC, *Parliamentary Zone Development Plan*, Canberra, January 1986

⁹⁰ NCPA, *National Capital Plan*, Canberra, December, 1990, pp. 22 & 77 & figure 29

During the early 1980s, there was increasing concern for the condition of the ageing trees of Parkes Place. The NCDC carried out a comprehensive survey of all trees in the area in 1982 with a view to assessing tree condition and as input into the Parliamentary Zone planning studies.⁹¹

This was followed in 1991 with a National Capital Planning Authority (NCPA) Landscape Management and Maintenance Study for the Parliamentary Zone which addressed the need for better management of the ageing landscape of the zone.⁹² This study identified, deficiencies in the condition of the landscape including:

- deterioration in the character of the 1920s landscape of Parkes Place and its associated pedestrian path system;
- an erosion of the evergreen component due to ageing and death of trees;
- public safety concerns due to tree decline;
- deficiencies in path condition and design; and
- deterioration in irrigation systems.

Further studies were carried out in 1993⁹³ and 1994⁹⁴ and arising out of these the following works (plates 17 & 18) have been executed in Parkes Place since 1993 or are in progress:

- reconstruction and resurfacing of the path system;
- removal and replacement of ageing dangerous Lombardy poplars;
- reconstruction of the square shaped surrounds to the Lombardy poplars and reinstatement of the shrub plantings in these areas; and
- installation of new irrigation systems to facilitate appropriate standards of maintenance of these historically important gardens.

Today, as illustrated in figure 18 and table 5, the composition and arrangement of tree planting in Parkes Place is very different to that which applied in the 1920s when the area was first planted. (figure 8 & table 1) In comparing the two tables and figures it is important to appreciate that Parkes Place has been considerably enlarged since the 1920s through modifications to King Edward Terrace and Parkes Place East and West Roads and that in addition new planting was added or old trees subtracted from time to time as indicated in sections 2.10 and 2.14.

⁹¹ NCDC, *Parliamentary Zone Development Implementation: Tree Survey*, Denton Corker Marshall, Canberra, October 1982

⁹² National Capital Planning Authority, *Parliamentary Zone Landscape Management and Maintenance Study*, SF Landscape Consultants Pty Ltd, Canberra, 1992

⁹³ National Capital Planning Authority, *The Mall-Parliamentary Zone: Tree Assessment Queen Victoria to King Edward Terrace*, Robert Boden & Associates, Canberra, February 1992

⁹⁴ National Capital Planning Authority, *Axial Pedestrian Paths Tree Planting - Parkes Place, Parliamentary Zone - Canberra: Tree Restoration Program*, John Gray Consultant Canberra, Canberra, April 1994

Common Name	N/S paths	E/W paths	SE/SW sectors	Lake	King E.	Totals
<u>Exotic evergreen</u>						
Atlas cedar	0	44	19	0	0	63
Arizona cypress	11	0	18	0	0	29
Golden cypress	0	0	0	0	0	0
Roman cypress	18	0	0	0	0	18
Lawson cypress	0	0	0	0	0	0
Incense cedar	0	0	0	0	13	13
<u>Exotic deciduous</u>						
Lombardy poplar	22	7	0	0	0	29
Oriental plane	0	9	16	0	9	34
Pin oak	0	24	58	0	13	95
White poplar	0	0	0	0	0	0
Huntington elm	0	0	6	0	0	6
Black locust	0	0	1	0	0	1
<u>Native evergreen</u>						
Yellow box	2	0	0	0	0	2
River oak	15	0	0	0	0	15
River peppermint	43	0	0	0	0	43
White gum	0	0	0	0	9	9
Totals	111	84	118	0	44	357
<i>Origin: Field inspections 1995</i>			Exotic evergreen - 123 - 34.5%			
			Exotic deciduous - 165 - 46.2%			
			Native evergreen - 69 - 19.3%			

2.24 Old Parliament House and its gardens - Department of Communication and the Arts, National Capital Planning Authority, 1988 onwards

With the Commonwealth Parliament's vacation of the Old Parliament House and its gardens in 1988, the impact on Parkes Place of public use arising from the Parliament's nearby presence was greatly altered. The building continued to remain closed until mid-December 1992, when it was officially re-opened for public use by past Prime Ministers, Sir John Gorton and Gough Whitlam.

The re-commissioning of Old Parliament House for a diverse range of new uses under the control of a number of Commonwealth agencies, centred principally on the past role of the building has brought increasing numbers of visitors to the buildings and its gardens. In 1993 and 1994 the gross public attendance figures for the building were 104,000 and 196,000 persons respectively.⁹⁵

Interpretive tours have been introduced and a range of exhibitions and other functions have been staged, while the first part of the National Portrait Gallery has been established there. The gardens, previously the private preserve of Parliamentarians and their staff, are now open to the public.

The re-opening of Old Parliament House has been accompanied with the on-going preparation of conservation plans, followed by restoration proposals. In 1994, the Commonwealth Government announced that it:

will commence an extensive refurbishment program for Old Parliament House as a place for all Australians to celebrate our constitutional, political and social history and extend public access to this popular and nationally significant building.

Refurbishment will commence this year on the Member's Dining Room and King's Hall and further work in the Old Parliament House will continue in stages over the next several years, leading up to 2001. Old Parliament House will provide a focus for important national events, such as the Centenary of Federation in 2001, and for a range of cultural, ceremonial and commercial activities.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Australian Estate Management, *Old Parliament House: Monthly Attendance Chart 1993-1994*, January 1995

⁹⁶ Commonwealth of Australia, *Creative Nation: Commonwealth Cultural Policy*, October 1994, p. 73

A masterplan for the restoration of the House of Representatives and Senate Gardens was completed in 1994. (figure 19) This plan envisaged the linking of these gardens with the gardens of Parkes Place to the north.

The establishment of a new heritage based role for Old Parliament House and its gardens, the linking of this to the Centenary of Federation and the consequent execution of restorations programs, provides an important starting point for the conservation planning of the Parkes Place gardens to the front of the building.