

# DISCOVER & LEARN

## AIM

Students will explore the Cottage and its surrounds, comparing the landscape from today to the past to see how Canberra has changed and evolved over time.

By actively engaging with hands-on objects, students will develop insight into how families have lived in the Cottage over time. Students will gain early understanding around concepts of continuity and change.

Having completed the onsite program, students will build an understanding of the historic significance of the Cottage as a reminder of the past before Canberra existed as our National Capital.



## LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- ▶ **DISCOVER** what life was like in Canberra from the 1860s to the early 1960s.
- ▶ **DISCOVER** that life in Canberra's early development was very different to life in Canberra today.
- ▶ **DEVELOP** an understanding of Blundells Cottage as a historic landmark within the National Capital.
- ▶ **DEVELOP** early understanding around concepts of continuity and change.
- ▶ **UNDERSTAND** that innovations in technology have brought about changes in our daily lives.
- ▶ **THINK** about life lived in the past. Consider the advantages and disadvantages, from then to now.
- ▶ **UNDERSTAND** that Blundells Cottage is a heritage site and that it must be maintained for future generations.



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## Blundells Cottage



PRE-VISIT INFORMATION

## Home for history



Australian Government  
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## INTRODUCTION

Blundells Cottage was originally constructed as a home for the workers on Duntroon Estate. The estate was a sizeable sheep grazing property owned by the Campbell family. The Campbells had many people working for them. There were originally about 27 workers cottages on the estate, however Blundells Cottage is one of the few that remains intact to this day.

The Cottage was built in 1859, from local materials. Stones were collected from Mount Ainslie and Black Mountain. Originally, the stone dwelling would have had a shingled roof. Water, gas and sewerage have never been connected to the Cottage. Electricity was only connected when Blundells Cottage became a museum.

When built, the Cottage was surrounded by paddocks and overlooked the Molonglo River, which was located about 400 metres away. It was a small working farm, with a collection of outbuildings, haystacks, animals and vegetable garden. The families who lived at the cottage throughout The National Capital's formative years had a relatively subsistent lifestyle.

## FAMILY HISTORY

### The Ginns

The Ginn family were the first family to live in the Cottage. They moved in in 1860 and stayed for about 14 years. William and Mary Ginn were immigrants from England. They were given the Cottage as a reward for William's hardworking nature. Mr Campbell is recorded as saying that William was the best farm hand that he ever had. Mary was identified as house servant and could read and write. She had four children - Walter, Henry, Agnes and Gertrude. Her life in Canberra during the cottage years was as a wife and mother.

### The Blundells

George and Flora Blundell lived in the Cottage for the longest period of time. They moved in during 1874 and remained for about 60 years. It is for this reason that the Cottage is so named. George Blundell was a bullock driver for the Duntroon Estate, delivering wool bales to Sydney regularly and returning with valuable supplies for the Campbell family.

Flora was a respected midwife as well as busy wife and mother. During their tenancy, they had eight children and added two rooms to the Cottage in 1888 to create more space for their growing family. The older boys slept in the slab building at night. The girls all slept in the added bedroom and the baby slept in the brick floored room. The Blundell children's names were Florrie, John, Charles, George, Herb, Ada, Alice and Lyle.



## Blundells Cottage



### The Oldfields

Alice and Harry Oldfield married later in life and moved into the Cottage in 1934. Harry worked as a shepherd during his cottage years, tending sheep in the surrounding paddocks near the Molonglo River. Alice developed a small produce farm supplying fresh vegetables, eggs, milk and poultry to the newly arrived public servant residents. After Harry died in 1942 Alice took in boarders to supplement her income. She was known for her kind and generous nature, helping people in times of hardship during the years following the Great Depression. She would always find a mattress for anyone who had nowhere to sleep.

### The Sainsburys

Glenn and Betty Sainsbury were the last family to live in the Cottage, moving in as tenants of Mrs Oldfield in 1957 and staying until 1960. Due to a lack of accommodation in the developing National Capital, boarders rented rooms in the Cottage. Glen was a carpenter by trade and Betty worked at the Australian War Memorial. The Sainsburys had three children named Wendy, Brian and Sue. They all shared fond memories of growing up in the Cottage and thought that living there was a lot like camping.