

## Community Notices



### Australian Breastfeeding Association

australian breastfeeding association  
**North Canberra**

- Breastfeeding Counselor (s) on hand to answer your questions.
- All mums, dads, children and mums-to-be welcome, and you don't need to be a member

If you have a question about breastfeeding please call our **free**

National Breastfeeding Helpline:

**1800 686 268** or visit

[www.breastfeeding.asn.au](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au)

to check venues:

[abanorthcanberra@hotmail.com](mailto:abanorthcanberra@hotmail.com)

### Canberra Central Combined Probus Club

Meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month, 10:00-12:00 at the Ainslie Club.

### Gentle Exercise Class

Uniting Church  
9:30 – 10:30 am each Friday  
Cost \$7.00



**SUNDAY MORNINGS 10AM  
FRIDAY NIGHT YOUTH 7PM-9PM**

**160 ASPINALL ST WATSON  
C3CHURCHWATSON.COM**

## Meg's TOY BOX

Is a community toy library.  
Run as a non profit venture  
with the support of  
St Margaret's Church

Call—02 6248 7467  
(during opening hours only)

Wed 10am—12pm  
Sat 2pm—4pm

### DROP BY AND JOIN



### THE TUCKERBOX



HOLY CROSS ANGLICAN PARISH

– **Opens every Saturday, 2pm to 4pm** –

The Tuckerbox is a not-for-profit service which helps those struggling to balance their budget. The Tuckerbox has bread, groceries (*milk, fruit and vegetables when available*).

Those on pensions, are low income families or unemployed will find this service very helpful. As a contribution, we ask a small service fee. Foodbank NSW provides the majority of stock.

Corner of Phillip Ave & Antill Street,  
Hackett—Ph: (02) 6248 5327

[www.holycrosshackett.anglicancg.org.au](http://www.holycrosshackett.anglicancg.org.au)

# THE WATZON

Issue 91 – Spring 2016

Newsletter of the Watson Community Association Inc.

### Message from the Chair

I wonder if it is true that we are to expect a wet summer. Although all the rain has made our gardens look beautiful it would be lovely to have more sun. Speaking of gardens, here is a gentle reminder to those people who are fortunate enough to have a footpath on their street; please trim your lovely hedges and shrubs to ease the passage of those walking with strollers, dogs, walking frames, sticks, shopping trolleys, etc. – or just plain walking!

In The Watson we try to cover subjects of interest to all residents of Watson and your feedback is valuable. Please feel free to call or email if you have any comment, favourable or not, about any item. If there is something on your mind which you think others may be interested in please let us know. If you have specialised knowledge of any of the flora and fauna in Watson you might like to write a short article. Perhaps a 'Do you remember?' inspired by Ally Grace's item in this issue. For instance, the street party held in Piddington Street for the Bicentenary which was a great success. How many people still have the limited edition t-shirt almost 30 years later?

This is the last edition of The Watson for 2016 and on behalf of the Committee I wish you all a very relaxed, safe and enjoyable holiday period. *Liz Grace, Chair*



### In this edition

Planning update  
Woodlands update  
Feature – Owls  
Feature – My Watson  
News from YWAM  
Farmers' Market recipe  
Gardening Tips  
Property price guide  
Community Notices  
Local Services

### Contact us

#### Chair

Liz Grace 02 6241 6785

#### Deputy Chair

Richard Larson 02 6241 3024

#### Secretary

Gillian Helyar 02 6255 0238

#### Treasurer

Carrie Wright 02 6241 1018

#### Watson Woodlands Convenor

Richard Larson 02 6241 3024

### Next meeting

The next WCA Inc. meeting is scheduled for **Monday, 30 January 2017 at 7:30PM** at the **Hall in the Fair** on **Tay Street, Watson.**

All welcome.

## Watson Community Association

The Watson Community Association Inc. (WCA Inc.) aims to promote, protect and enhance the social, cultural and physical environment of the community of Watson, and the welfare, community spirit and quality of life of its residents.

It also aims to inform the community about issues concerning Watson. One way the WCA Inc. does this is through the quarterly production and distribution of the Watson – a community newsletter.

## Woodland Working Group report

*The Woodlands Working Group was formed as a sub-group of the WCA Inc. to protect, enhance and care for the valuable patch of threatened native Yellow Box/Red Gum Grassy Woodland known as Justice Robert Hope Park. Much work has been done over the past years to decrease the effects of years of commercial use, and increase the component of indigenous species of flora and fauna in the Park.*

At the end of August members of the working group prepared holes and planted 90 *Acacia* and *Bursaria* shrub seedlings. Over late winter, Parks and Conservation employed a contractor to thoroughly treat the rabbit burrows in the park, which has been very successful.

An extremely wet September has delayed working bees and grown an extremely fine crop of exotic grasses and weeds in parts of the reserve from existing plants and new plants from the remnant seed bank. Weed treatment continued in the 1000 square metre experiment enclosure and surrounds where some of the more uncommon species have been planted. Every new species added to the park is creating a little more biodiversity. It is extremely pleasing to note that some specimens have started to reproduce from seed into weeded areas in the enclosure. We are hoping to replicate this experiment in other areas within the park but it requires a lot of hard work, diligence and patience.

Please remember that Justice Robert Hope Park is a dog-on-leash area reserved for the benefit of our native animals and plants. The kangaroos seem to have temporarily gone up to higher ground after the wet spell. In the barer areas of the park you might be lucky enough to see the odd Blue Tongue, Shingleback, Bearded Dragon (lizards) or even an Echidna. While collecting a water sample opposite Roma Mitchell Street, a tadpole was seen in the water proving once again that it is a good breeding ground. Also an Apostlebird was noted feeding on the margins of the dam. This must have been an off-target migrant. Apostlebird's are not cited in the Canberra Ornithologist Group's bird book for the ACT.

An order for around 400 seedlings has been placed with Greening Australia for next year's winter-spring planting. Parks and Conservation will be assisting the working group by preparing the holes for planting and with labour. If anyone has spare time to help in any way please contact Richard Larson (Convenor) on 02 6241 3024.



## Local services

**Duncan's**  
**PLUMBING**  
**SERVICE**  
PTY LTD  
**Ph 6254 5678**

## Report - Majura Spring Carnival

The Majura Primary School Spring Carnival was a huge success.

We had perfect weather, bargains galore, scrumptious food, talented entertainers, and a beautiful community!

A HUGE THANK YOU to the generous sponsors and donors whose support have made this event possible. Thank you to all who came and enjoyed the day!

The Spring Carnival raised close to \$30,000 for the Playscape project, which aims to rejuvenate the school's playground. For the last two years, the Majura Primary School P&C had been busy fundraising for this project. Now having successfully raised sufficient funds, landscaping works are to hopefully start soon.

### Did you know?

Residents can use **Access Canberra (13 22 81)** to formally report issues with capital infrastructure.

A Watson resident successfully used **Access Canberra** to report the inundation of the footpath through the green belt linking Roma Mitchell Crescent and Piddington Street owing to our wet winter and spring.

LUTON

## Team McReynolds Jenny, Michael & Mark

For all your real estate needs please call your local residents and Watson area specialists!

**Jenny** 0409 300 065  
**Michael** 0419 688 034  
**Mark** 0401 829 087  
**Office** Dickson 6230 0005  
**Email** jenny.mcroyolds@luton.com.au



**Evan's**  
**Gutters and fascia**  
*Free Quotes!*

- Supply & Installation
- Gutters & Fascias
- Ridge Capping
- Roof Repairs
- Replace Roofing Tiles
- Flushing & Lead
- Down Pipes
- Leaf Guards
- Water Tanks

**ph/fax 6241 7247**  
**m 0405 816 997**

## Local services

### THE WATSON Takeaway

BIG BURGERS - BATTERED BREAM -  
GOURMET PIZZAS - GREAT COFFEE -  
LICENCED VENUE.

Catering available for office and  
events .

#### Trading Hours:

MONDAY – THURS 8.30AM – 8.30PM  
FRIDAY 8.30AM – 9.30PM  
SATURDAY 8.30AM – 8.30PM  
(CLOSED SUNDAY)

Phone Order : 02 6241 1517

Shop 3, 5 Watson Place  
Watson Shops ACT 2602

### Canberra Music Education School Singing Teacher – Leilani Wagner

Canberra School of Music (ANU) educated  
singing teacher  
Teaching all styles, levels and all ages  
Extensive experience as a performer  
Preparation for all exam levels (AMEB,  
ABSRM)

During her time at the ANU, Leilani received  
the Christel Larko Music Scholarship for her  
outstanding musical accomplishments as a  
vocalist

Career highlights include performing the  
National Anthem at the ANU graduation  
ceremonies, performing as a soloist at  
Morpeth jazz festival

Please view the following Youtube videos to  
see Leilani perform:

*If I Aint Got You* - Alicia Keys Cover; *Listen* -  
Beyonce Cover

**\$33 per ½ hour lesson**  
**Phone 0414 788 380**

Or visit [www.canberramusicschool.com.au](http://www.canberramusicschool.com.au)

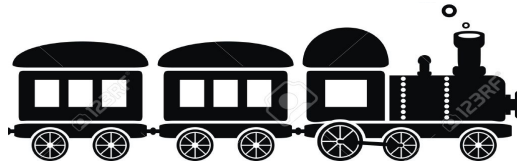
## Report – Poetry in Motion

*Poetry in Motion* was convened by Fiona  
McIlroy (a Watson resident) in 2010 to celebrate  
train travel and poetry, and now runs every two  
years, coinciding with National Poetry Week.

The **2016 Poetry in Motion Poets Train** event  
partnered with University of Canberra  
International Poetry Festival. We were nearly  
de-railed due to trackwork re-routing us to a  
bus! However, we changed the date, and 15  
poets voyaged from Kingston to Sydney Central.

Poems were performed at the Humanist Hall,  
and NSW Trainlink sponsored two prizes for the  
best poems, judged by Kathy Kituai. Winners  
were Laurie McDonald and Christopher Dorman.  
Collected poems will be published and released  
on 7 December 2016, when the Watson Taste of  
Poetry group hold their end of year antipasto  
reading at Cherryripe Café (\$15 for tapas and a  
drink). All welcome.

New poets are welcome to join the Watson  
Taste of Poetry group at Cherryripe each  
Wednesday afternoon from 3:00 – 5:00 pm.



Poem

#### Victims

numb  
vulnerable  
scarred by  
Trauma...

Sue Donnelly  
Copyright

## Watson's high fliers – our precious native birds

*We hope you enjoy learning about the beautiful birds that we sometimes see (and hear) in our  
Watson gardens and neighbouring bushland.*

### Owls

by Julie Smith

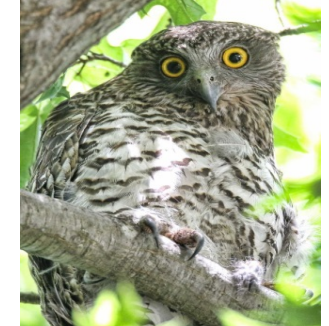
Over the years, residents have enjoyed listening to the calls of owls such as the Tawny  
Frogmouth, as well as occasional sightings of the Southern Boobook. In years gone by the  
Powerful Owl, now rarely seen, may also have been heard.

**Tawny Frogmouth Owls** nested on the Stirling Avenue reserve a year or so ago. They have also  
been seen in other Canberra suburbs such as Ainslie. They are very difficult to spot, but you may  
hear them. Reported sightings are more likely in summer on sites near Canberra's nature  
reserves. They have large territories. Family groups may be up to five birds.

The evocative call of the **Southern Boobook Owl** is occasionally heard at night in Watson  
throughout the summer. They live in pairs and hunt at night over a large territory, roosting  
during the day in thick bushy trees. Sightings are recorded mostly in spring to early summer.

The **Powerful Owl** is rarely seen these days, though they were recorded visitors to Turner in  
2015 (<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-03-03/powerful-owl-in-haig-park/6277956>). Powerful  
Owls have been heard by residents in Watson in the past decade, but deprived of suitable native  
bushland in which to hunt and breed, this bird is now counted as only a 'rare breeding resident'  
in the ACT, and may never be seen or heard by our children or grandchildren.

For full details – including more images and recordings of these birdcalls, visit the Canberra  
Ornithologists Group website (<http://canberrabirds.org.au/our-birds/capital-region-birds/>).



Images LR: Tawny Frogmouth (courtesy Perth Zoo); Southern Boobook Owl (courtesy Canberra Ornithologists  
Group); and Powerful Owl (courtesy Geoffrey Dabb).

### Want to help protect these Owls and other threatened species?

#### Woodlands Working Group

Are you interested in the neighbouring bushland, or want to become involved with caring for the  
Justice Robert Hope Park? Contact Richard Larson (Convenor) on 02 6241 3024.

## Planning update

### Major developments in progress

As detailed in the last issue of the Watson, three major developments are in progress in North Watson – developments which will increase the number of dwellings in Watson by approximately 15%.

- In September there was another public consultation for the development of the Channel 9 site (next to the Carotel) and in October representatives for development met with members of the WCA Inc.
- No further news has been received about the development at the Carotel. A Colliers International board was erected at the Negus Street / Roma Mitchell Crescent site at the end of October advertising development on the site.
- Other large developments on Watson's doorstep include: the Kamberra site – with further public consultations scheduled in November and December 2016 and February 2017 (for further details see [www.kamberraonfederal.com.au](http://www.kamberraonfederal.com.au)); and the Canberra Park Resort - with work well underway on the corner of Wells Station Road and the Federal Highway.

The WCA Inc. will continue to work with the developers wherever possible to encourage developments that complement the surrounding neighbourhood and provide community infrastructure – pathways, public gardens and play grounds.

### A master plan for Watson

To ensure developments as a collective complement our suburb, and public amenity is developed for the increased population, the WCA Inc. is lobbying the ACT Government to provide a comprehensive master plan for Watson.

The older section of Watson contains about 1300 households. Development over the last 12 years has increased the number of households by over 1200 - meaning residences in Watson have nearly doubled. This is a significant degree of change. It cannot be presumed that the infrastructure that currently exists will be sufficient with the number of households set to rise by a further 15% in North Watson.

Furthermore, the developments over recent years, and in progress at the moment are ad hoc - with little coordination of development in relation to community infrastructure – pathways, parks and gardens and playgrounds.

In July the **WCA Inc. wrote to the Chief Minister requesting a comprehensive master plan for Watson**. A copy of that letter is available for you to read at Pages 8-9. While no substantive response had been received at the time of printing the Watson, the WCA Inc. continues to lobby the new government.



## Recipe

On Watson's doorstep each Saturday morning is the Capital Region Farmers Market - held at EPIC and run by the Rotary Club of Hall.

The WCA Inc. are pleased to be able to bring you another recipe from the Rotary Club of Hall's "Capital Region Farmers Market Recipe Book".

This recipe is courtesy of regular and long term contributors Minto Galloways who rear their animals just 15 km from the Market. The cattle are entirely raised on a diet of grass or hay, and no GM food is used, nor are they grain fed.

### Steak "Auld Reekie"

(a traditional Scottish recipe for 4)

- Four 250 g fillets of Galloway steak
  - 4 tablespoons Scotch whisky
  - 350 g double cream
  - 125 g grated smoked cheese
  - 25 g butter
  - Salt and pepper to taste
1. Pan fry the steaks according to preference (rare, medium) and keep warm.
  2. Pour whisky into a pan and flame (take care when setting light to the whisky).
  3. Add cream and grated cheese and bring slowly to a simmering point. Continue to gently simmer, stirring from time to time, until the sauce has been reduced by half.
  4. Season with salt and pepper, and mix in the butter for extra flavour.
  5. Pour sauce over the steaks and serve with a selection of fresh vegetables.

## Local services



### WATSON

• **EFTPOS is available - no minimum expenditure required**

• **Free home delivery services**

**Come in & experience the service for yourself.**

**Phone: 02 6255 6800**



Chaos, overwhelm and clutter in your home, your office, your life?  
I can bring calm, order & space back to your day & mind.

Call Virginia Wells – 0422 490 131

E: [virginia@getwellsorted.com.au](mailto:virginia@getwellsorted.com.au)

W: [www.getwellsorted.com.au](http://www.getwellsorted.com.au)

FB: [www.facebook.com/getwellsorted](https://www.facebook.com/getwellsorted)

### Help Wanted!

Do you have experience in setting up and maintaining a Website? Are you a Facebook aficionado or, at least, reasonably comfortable with it? If so, you are just the person we need.

*Please contact a committee member if you are interested. We need to move with the times!*

## Vale

### Ian Bland

It is sad to report the passing of long-time (53 year) Watson resident, Ian Bland. Born in Canberra, he lived in Forrest until his marriage and moved to Watson as one of the original residents. Ian left school at 14 and had a variety of jobs before going to TAFE and setting up an electronics business in Fyshwick. He met and married his wife, Evelyn, after a six-month courtship and they had three children.

Ian was a serious collector! He and Evelyn kept menus from their cruises and his beer can collection is amazing. Some of his stories about gathering the beer and Coca-Cola cans were extremely funny and his neighbours were familiar with the signs going up for the get-togethers with other collectors.

Ian was a valued member of the Canberra Central Combined Probus Club holding the position of Secretary for two years and also organising varied and interesting guest speakers for the monthly meetings for several years. His red cap and flannel shirt were a familiar sight to his neighbours and he always had a wave and a word as he sat on his front patio.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Evelyn, Kim, Michael, Dallas, their partners and children.

## Local services

**The Academy of Interactive Entertainment** has rooms for hire.

Why not contact them about hiring rooms for your organisation?



**Canberra Technology Park**  
49 Phillip Avenue  
Watson ACT 2602

**Contact details:**  
Phone: +61 2 6162 5131  
Fax : +61 2 6207 3759



**NOW OPEN FOR DINNER**

Daniel has been a local of Watson his whole life, and brings his expertise to 'The Knox' - by locals, for locals. Offering brunch 7 days a week, family afternoon teas, a gourmet lunch and dinner menu and, of course, great coffee everyday.

**NEW opening hours:**

**Monday - Wednesday 7:00 am to 4:30 pm Thursday**  
– **Saturday 7:30 to Late**  
**Sunday: 7:30 am to 3:30 pm**

[https://www.facebook.com/  
theknoxmadeinwatson/](https://www.facebook.com/theknoxmadeinwatson/)

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## Local services



### Canberra Carotel Motel

Relatives coming to visit? Friends or family coming to Canberra for an event?

The Carotel Motel is an ideal place for them to stay. It has a wide variety of room styles that offer affordable, comfortable and convenient accommodation for their stay in Canberra.

Check us out online at  
[www.carotel.com.au](http://www.carotel.com.au) or call us on  
62411377.



**The WCA Inc. particularly wishes to thank the Australian Catholic University (ACU), Signadou Campus in Watson, for printing this Newsletter as a community service.**

The Campus has about 1,000 students and is conveniently located 5km from Canberra's city centre.

For more information on courses available please call them on 02 6209 1100—Mon to Fri 8:00 am – 5:00 pm or visit [www.acu.edu.au](http://www.acu.edu.au).

## My Watson

Watson was my childhood home. I was born in the Canberra Hospital in 1969 - when it overlooked Lake Burley Griffin, and my dear Mum still lives in the same house where I grew up. The same house, in fact, that my parents built in Piddington Street in 1963. Whenever I visit I find myself reminiscing, I realise that those memories are quite deeply emotional and indeed shaped me into the person I am today.

There is a book by Margaret Balderson entitled "Ä Dog called George". The first page describes, from memory, an "airstrip" behind Piddington Street. This was my back yard and was affectionately known by our family and many others as "the back track". Many a tree has been climbed, cubby houses built, tricycles and bicycles crashed, mushrooms picked, dogs walked and horses ridden along the back track over the years. I don't know how Margaret knew about this special place ... perhaps someone can shed some light? I was always proud of the fact that the back track was famous enough to be mentioned in a real book!

I do recall the park at the top end of Holroyd Street. It has changed location slightly and I am sure the local kids would be envious to hear that we used to have THE biggest, THE longest slippery slide in Canberra! Well, I don't know that for a fact but I have never seen one like it. We also had the highest set of swings I have ever seen, before or since. And a sensational seesaw! It didn't turn, it wasn't on springs – it was just a plank of wood with a handle at each end and it provided hours of delight for all of the neighbourhood kids. Does anyone have any photos of the old park?

Some things haven't changed. The scout hall on Simpson Street has had a coat of paint and it's lovely to see Majura Primary School (nee Watson Primary) still alive with children's laughter. Mrs Chapman, you were my primary school teacher and my inspiration. I fell off those monkey bars and had my first kiss in those school grounds. Mount Majura was my Everest, the Starlight drive-in was my Saturday night and the Showground, now EPIC, was my Disneyland with horse shows, roller skating and the Cha Cha when the Show was on. It was \$1 a ride back then!

My Dad was environmentally active and was partly responsible for saving the Woodland area in North Watson, now known as Justice Robert Hope Park. I make a point of visiting this special place whenever I'm in Canberra and I'm sure he would be pleased to see people utilising the park and understanding its significance. It has been used by geocachers and who knows, there may even be a Pokemon hiding there!

It is warming for me to see so many new families moving into Watson. The trendy eateries at the shops and the markets on Saturday mornings generate a wonderful vibrancy in the community.

I hope you enjoy making your memories here as much as I did. Watson is now in your hands.

*By Alina Grace (Watson resident from 1969 - 1990 although she still calls Watson "home")*

## Hints for your summer garden – with Cedric Bryant

- Check and flush all drip irrigation systems. Lift drip lines [which may have become buried] **on top** of the soil and **under** mulch.
- Plant lemon or lime trees into a well-drained soil in full sun.
- Mulch all garden beds **without delay** using *Canberra Organic Mulch* from Canberra Sand and Gravel (Vicars Street, Mitchell).
- Plant petunias for summer colour. It takes about eight weeks from planting to full flowering provided the plants have been fed regularly. Maxicrop seaweed plant nutrient is ideal.
- Now that spring flowering shrubs have finished flowering give a light trim, **up to but not more than one third off** at any time.
- Apply an organic spray for mildew on roses, vegies, etc. Mix one part **full cream** milk with eight parts water. Spray on top and under the leaves. Repeat in two weeks.
- New to Canberra or gardening? Buy a copy of *The Canberra Gardener*, written for local conditions by the Horticultural Society. Available from newsagents and bookshops.



## Summernats 2017

Summernats is an annual motor festival held at EPIC in early January, and attracting large crowds from interstate, as well as locally. Previously, Watson residents in the vicinity of EPIC have raised concerns principally around noise, smell and visitor behaviour.

The WCA Inc. has worked with the Summernats organisers over several years - raising these concerns and establishing a less combative relationship. In response, Summernats have made a number of changes over the years to minimise the effects on locals. The number of complaints has decreased, presumably as a result of these actions, though there are some weather factors such as wind strength and direction which mitigate the impact.

The WCA Inc. recommends Watson residents report any concerns during the event by contacting **Access Canberra** on **13 22 81** – the official government process. Access Canberra will on-forward any reports it receives to the Summernats organisers.

During the event, a representative of WCA Inc., along with other stakeholders, will attend a meeting each evening with Summernats organisers. The WCA Inc. will also use this forum to report any concerns to the Summernats organisers.

Summernats will be held from 5 – 8 January 2017. Further information is available at <http://www.summernats.com.au>.

## Watson property prices guide

Ever wondered about house prices in Watson?

We've compiled a list of Watson sale prices for the period 1 July – 30 September 2016 for you.

Date	Address	Price =	Type
13/07/2016	12A/111 Knox Street	\$229,950	Unit
06/07/2016	25/35 Tay Street	\$350,000	Apartment
21/07/2016	10/20 Federal Highway	\$335,000	Apartment
20/07/2016	22/20 Federal Highway	\$327,500	Apartment
21/07/2016	91 Ian Nicol Street	\$325,000	Apartment
30/09/2016	36/23 Tay Street	\$310,000	Apartment
21/09/2016	28 Aspinall Street	\$600,000	Townhouse
09/08/2016	45/215 Aspinall Street	\$572,000	Townhouse
29/08/2016	28B Molesworth Street	\$500,000	Townhouse
26/07/2016	12 Hearn Street	\$700,000	Land
29/09/2016	17 Wade Street	\$630,000	Land
29/09/2016	28 Simpson Street	\$620,000	Land
06/08/2016	52 A'beckett Street	\$900,000	House
24/09/2016	27 Simpson Street	\$810,000	House
17/09/2016	8 Peden Place	\$793,000	House
03/09/2016	28 Negus Crescent	\$765,000	House
03/09/2016	82 Irvine Street	\$722,000	House
15/08/2016	32 Windeyer Street	\$664,000	House
19/09/2016	123 Knox Street	\$661,000	House
04/10/2016	21 Bettie Mcnee Street	\$541,000	House
16/07/2016	10A Dickinson Street	\$510,000	House

The contents of this list and other ACT house sale prices and information are freely published online.



## News from YWAM (Youth with a Mission)

Youth with a Mission (also known as YWAM and pronounced "WHY-wham") is a global movement of Christians from many cultures, age groups, and Christian traditions who are united in a common purpose to know God and to make Him known. This is outworked through a diverse range of training programs (for youth as well as others). YWAM operates in more than 1,100 locations in over 180 countries, with over 20 locations in Australia – including here in Watson (76 Federal Highway (corner Zelling Street)).

### Community Garden

A community garden 'in the making' can be seen on the corner of Zelling and Antill Streets. Progress has been slow due to wet weather (usually a gardener's delight). A government grant has been fully utilised on construction of the outer fencing of the garden and the partial completion of a greenhouse. Garden plots for individuals to lease (approximately 4.8 x 2 metres) are still being developed. These plots will exist alongside communal garden space. If you are interested in helping in the garden or being kept up to date with developments, please contact Robyn on 0434 818 008 or [robyn.corbett@gmail.com](mailto:robyn.corbett@gmail.com).

### Hands On

On Monday afternoons between 1:00 – 3:00 pm a creative group with a difference is underway. Hands On seeks to make lovely and/or useful things that can be given to those in need. Two projects on the go are knitting blanket squares for children in Russian orphanages, and making cloth dolls for children in Indian slums. Future projects include: making lavender bags for residents of local nursing homes; putting together birthing kits that World Vision distributes in developing nations; and growing fruit and vegetables in the community garden for The Pantry and other places. A light lunch is provided and it's a great opportunity to relax and socialise. If you are interested in joining, or just helping the group, please contact Linda on 0420 770 369 or [tleteuati@gmail.com](mailto:tleteuati@gmail.com).

### The Pantry

The Pantry has been operating for several years now, on Thursdays from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm. For a small fee, families or individuals experiencing short or long term financial need can access a small range of grocery items as well as fruit, vegetables, bread, meat and dairy. Come through the Zelling Street entrance, drive up to the back of the property and meet up with our friendly Pantry team of Lyle and Lynnette. Morning /afternoon tea and a friendly chat are optional extras. Enquiries to Leonie on 0419 017 552 or [tesol@ywamcanberra.org](mailto:tesol@ywamcanberra.org).

Further information on YWAM is available by telephone on 02 6241 5500 or email [info@ywamcanberra.org](mailto:info@ywamcanberra.org).

## Letter to the Chief Minister

ACT Chief Minister [barr@act.gov.au](mailto:barr@act.gov.au)

cc ACT Minister for Planning and Land Management [gentleman@act.gov.au](mailto:gentleman@act.gov.au);  
ACT Minister for Transport and Municipal Services [fitzharris@act.gov.au](mailto:fitzharris@act.gov.au);  
Director-General, Environment and Planning Directorate [environment@act.gov.au](mailto:environment@act.gov.au)  
[tony.hodges@act.gov.au](mailto:tony.hodges@act.gov.au)

July 2, 2016

Dear Chief Minister,

I am writing on behalf of the Watson Community Association (WCA) to request that the Environment and Planning Directorate initiate a process involving the WCA and the Watson community in developing a coordinated plan for the expanding suburb of Watson. At present there appears to be no overall planning of current and future demands on physical and social infrastructure for the suburb.

Watson is a very attractive suburb with a blend of old and new, diverse organisations and businesses, a valuable and much loved reserved woodland (Justice Robert Hope Park) adjoining Canberra Nature Park, and an active and committed community. It is close to the city and the upcoming light rail.

The suburb is now 50 years old but has seen increasing change from open space to residential areas over the past few years. Watson is unusual in the ACT as it is one of Canberra's oldest suburbs but still contains undeveloped space in the area previously planned for commercial tourist and recreation developments in North Watson. Development in this area is now rapidly occurring with no overall plan in place. New greenfield suburbs are planned with knowledge of expected population and infrastructure required, but older suburbs such as Watson are currently vulnerable to unplanned population expansion without reference to infrastructure needs.

The development that has occurred in Watson over the last 12 years has increased the number of households by over 1200. The older section of Watson contains about 1300 households meaning that the number of residences has almost doubled in a decade. This is a significant degree of change. It cannot be presumed that infrastructure exists, or will continue to exist, with sufficient capacity at contemporary community standards.

## Letter to the Chief Minister

Furthermore, each of the many separate developments over recent years has been ad hoc, with little coordination of development in relation to community infrastructure such as pathways for pedestrian and cycling activity, pre-school and school capacity, traffic flow and speeds, parking capacity, commercial development, aged care facilities and public amenities such as toilets, meeting rooms, play areas and community gardens.

In addition, ad hoc development has incremental effects on wildlife and protected parkland in the precinct. As you are no doubt aware, Watson adjoins parts of the Majura Nature Park, which is an endangered ecological community. We also have a long history of community interest in protecting and enhancing the Justice Robert Hope Park. The continued chipping away at the integrity of this community through developments on its edges has potentially serious consequences for their viability and connectedness, and is taken very seriously by this community.

A forward thinking plan will better guide future development and will reduce the time, effort and anxiety of the planning department, the developers and the community in considering each new individual proposal. Currently there is one new development approved (approximately 100 dwellings) and the WCA is aware of a further three significant proposals.

Especially in view of current developments in Dickson, Downer, the light rail and the City and Gateway Urban Renewal, we think there is an urgent need to ensure that development in Watson is appropriately planned and coordinated, and reflects community aims and needs.

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss a process for the local community to be involved in the development of an appropriate master plan for Watson, and hope that a commitment can be made by government well before the election date.

Yours Sincerely,  
Gillian Helyar  
Secretary, Watson Community Association

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