



## REID RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION INC. NEWS LETTER AUGUST 2019

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### REID RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION 75<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

The Reid Residents' Association Inc. (RRA) – originally the Reid Progress Association – first met in August 1944. Over the last 75 years, RRA has worked hard to conserve the amenity and heritage values of the precinct. This lovely suburb owes much to the hard work of many Reid residents.

We have booked the Canberra Institute of Technology Reid Restaurant on Thursday 19 September so we can gather together and mark those 75 years.

We are delighted to have Dr David Headon, cultural consultant and historian, Foundation Fellow at the Australian Studies Institute (ANU), Cultural adviser to the National Capital Authority (2000-07), an Associate of the National Museum of Australia and the Canberra Raiders RL Club historian. David was tasked with writing the biographies of our early prime ministers, known as The First Eight Project. George Houston Reid is the subject of his second biography due to be published this year. David will definitely do justice to this extraordinary man, after whom our suburb is named.

Cost includes a welcome drink (wine, orange juice, mineral water etc.) and nibbles, and a 3 course dinner. All further beverages will need to be paid for on an individual basis. The CIT Restaurant provides an opportunity for their hospitality, culinary and hotel management students to demonstrate their skills under the supervision of professional chefs and managers. Please see the invitation below and we will look forward to seeing you on Thursday 19 September.

#### INVITATION

To Reid residents & friends

You are most cordially invited to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of Reid Residents' Association Inc. and living in this beautiful suburb

**Thursday 19 September 2019**

Guest speaker: **Dr David Headon**

Topic: **A Man for All Seasons: George Reid, Australia's Fourth Prime Minister**

Venue: K Block Reid CIT Restaurant

K Block, 37 Constitution Ave Reid

Time: 6.30 pm for 7 pm

Cost: \$40 per head

Bookings through Trybooking: <https://www.trybooking.com/BEYIQ>

## A TALE OF THREE HOUSES OR 'AN EPOCH OF INCREDULITY'?

We must be thankful we have ended up with only three Mr Fluffy houses in the Reid Housing Precinct (Heritage Register Entry 20023, *Heritage ACT 2004*):

- 46 Euree Street, Block 3, Section 37
- 72 Coranderrk Street, Block 3, Section 31
- 23 Dirrawan Garden, Block 5, Section 28

One would have presumed for Reid, with its very core being entered on the Heritage Register under the Heritage Act, that the rebuilding Mr Fluffy process would have been straight forward. Far from it! The Reid Residents' Association (RRA) and neighbours to these blocks have had to contend with the labyrinthine measures that even the ACT Government finds difficult to explain in a logical, open and transparent way. Multiple letters to, and meetings with Government have not reduced the obfuscation. The refrain 'we followed the process' is constantly trotted out. Efforts to point out that the 'process' is flawed are ignored despite the evidence that heritage values are being eroded.

Development applications (DA) were considered appropriate in two of these rebuilds, Euree and Coranderrk streets. Sadly, for the first cab off the rank, Euree Street, DA notices went astray in some instances and were not provided to the neighbours most affected. It is also entirely possible that residents opposite and adjacent were not aware of the impact on the streetscape of what was eventually rebuilt on this block. The Heritage Council actually rejected the proposed rebuild twice but were overturned – apparently entirely within the 'process' – by the Major Projects Review Group (MPRG). Heritage expertise was ignored and no heritage expert appears to have a position on MPRG.

Perhaps the Heritage Council learned the 'errors of its ways' by being effectively sidelined in the 'process' involving 46 Euree Street. Perhaps this may have had a bearing on the current issues with the proposed rebuild at 23 Dirrawan Gardens. Here we encounter the building certification process, not a DA process where at least neighbours can provide input. The certified design for 23 Dirrawan Gardens, was, as is the 'process', eventually presented to neighbours as a fait accompli. This design includes a 'featuristic' stone chimney – there are none in the heritage precinct – slit windows and even the roof pitch is out of proportion. However, the Heritage Council is reported to have stated the design 'reflects and complements' the heritage values of the Reid Housing Precinct. There was, of course, an outbreak of incredulity! Neighbours responded swiftly and their letter outlining both their opinions and concerns was letterboxed and is now posted on RRA website.

The RRA Committee supports neighbours' concerns on both design and the potential consequences of deep excavations along boundary fences for what is proposed for 23 Dirrawan Gardens. The RRA is aware that many other residents, even those not so directly in line of sight, have been writing to the Chief Minister and/or Minister for Heritage, Mick Gentleman, and expressing their disapproval and alarm at such a decision. The response to these letters has been entirely predictable and have not convinced residents that their concerns have been addressed. Reid residents, a community of people who continue to live and renovate within the parameters of the heritage values of Reid, and value the experience of maintaining the suburb's distinctive character, are being ignored.

Where is the application of underlying principles so clearly written in the heritage listing for Reid? 'Unity of form' and the importance of not impacting on the streetscape appear to have been totally disregarded as guiding principles. Where was community consultation?

The Territory Plan states 'character' is to be a major consideration in RZ1 zoned suburbs. How can the phrase 'reflects and complements' the Reid heritage area be justified in any objective way? One resident states the effect of the proposed 23 Dirrawan Garden house design actually 'rejects and disrupts' the character of Reid. Were any of these matters actually considered by the Heritage Council? Or were other considerations at play here? Perhaps gratitude of a government replenishing the Mr Fluffy coffers with the tidy sum of \$1.4 million helps? Surely, one hopes, this can't be a grace and favour situation. The design looks remarkably similar to so many of the developer stock-standard houses in Canberra's new suburbs. There, of course, it would not be out of place. Imposing it on Reid

shows a serious lack of opportunity to design a house that contributes to the suburb's character rather than degrades it.

The issue for 72 Coranderrk Street is rather different. The proposal underwent a DA process where comments are sought from neighbours and the Reid community. Both have responded with particular concerns on the proposed dual occupancy for this block. However, is this not at odds with Territory Plan Variation 343 that specifically precludes dual occupancy? There is also the added stipulation at point of sale stating that 'heritage applies' to the block. Why then should dual occupancy be considered by the proponents? What arcane processes are involved here or is this just an example of conflicting and poorly drafted legislation?

The Government intends, in the ACT Planning Strategy 2018 to 'investigate a range of processes to improve the design and quality of our buildings and public places, including (to) conserve heritage buildings and places and value their contribution to the character of our city'.

The Government espouses commitment to 'transparency in process and information, public collaboration in finding solutions to problems, and participation in the improved well-being of the community'. Rebuilding Mr Fluffy houses in Reid appears to be an exception to these intentions and commitments. We read in *The Canberra Times* (19 August 2019) that 'The Government is committed to preserving heritage places and objects'. Does this include heritage precincts?

Surely it would be a far, far better thing for the Government to implement their intentions, listen and respect community views and act accordingly. Until we actually see commitment shifting to enacting compliance we can only remain incredulous!

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### ACT NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

The RRA Committee is working in cooperation with ACT Neighbourhood Watch Inc. (ACTNHW) For further information visit [www.nhwact.com.au](http://www.nhwact.com.au)

Reid crime statistics for May, June and July 2019

	May	June	July
Ainslie Avenue	Other property damage	Other property damage	Other property damage
Ainslie Avenue	Other theft		Burglary dwellings
Ainslie Avenue			Other theft
Ainslie Avenue			Assault
Allambee Street	Other property damage	Other property damage	
Allambee Street	Other theft		
Boolee Street	Other theft	Other property damage	
Booroondara Street		Other theft	
Constitution Avenue	Bicycle theft	Assault causing actual bodily harm	
Corranderrk Street	Burglary dwellings	Other theft	
Currong Street			Burglary dwellings

**Secure September:** This a project first launched last year in conjunction with ACT Policing to highlight ways in which residents can help to keep themselves and their property safe and secure. The key message is that everyone should accept responsibility for crime prevention – it is not just a matter for law enforcement agencies. With more people adopting simple safety measures around their home, their property and themselves, this should assist in reducing crime. Stalls will be held at Jamison on Saturday 7 September from 10.00 am – 2.00 pm.

## NEWS FROM ST JOHN'S

### Future-proofing the roof

For over 170 years St John's parishioners and other Canberra residents have had the privilege of preserving the fabric and furnishings of the heritage church for future generations.

In 1960, asbestos roof tiles replaced the deteriorated timber shingles however, now, almost sixty years later, one major hailstorm could have rendered the church unusable because no repair work could be carried out on the asbestos tiles.

The reroofing of the church with Cwt-y-Bugail Welsh slate is under way. All the asbestos tiles have been removed except for the two side porches which will happen when the roof is complete. The project cost is estimated at \$320,000+. The internal structural steel supports have had to be redesigned and are now being fabricated. Once they are put in place, Mister Shingles will start laying the remaining slate. On completion, the scaffolding will be dismantled, and the site cleaned. St John's roof, skillfully restored, will be safe, ready to face the future.

[Please see our website how you can make a tax deductible donation.](#)

### St John's Community Fair Saturday 19 October 2019 9.00 am – 1.30 pm

St John's Fair has been a regular feature in the Canberra calendar since the 1930s. It's a traditional fair jam packed full of entertainment, stalls, homemade jams and cakes, craft, books, food stalls, BBQ, Devonshire teas, coffee van, plants, clothing stall, trinkets and treasures, white elephant goods, plus lots more. Families love the children's activities which includes free jumping castle, free petting zoo, free face painting, fishing game, etc.

Experience all the fun of an old fashioned fair in the heart of Canberra. Put the date in your diary now!

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### 14th REID OPEN HOUSES AND GARDENS

Sunday 10 November 2019 1.15 pm – 4.30 pm

Bookings are essential through:

National Trust (ACT) office, open Tue. to Thu. from 9.30 am to 3 pm, 2nd floor of the Griffin Centre, 20 Genge Street, Civic

- by telephone on 6230 0533 during office hours,
- or via email to Liz McMillan on [info@nationaltrustact.org.au](mailto:info@nationaltrustact.org.au)

Tickets cost \$25 (Trust, U3A, AGHS & RRA members) & \$35 (non-members).

For more information go <https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/event/14th-reid-open-houses-and-gardens/>

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### SUPPORT REID

#### Become a supporter or sponsor

Each year it costs about \$1,800 to operate RRA. This includes website management, printing newsletters etc. **Do you run a local businesses** that might wish to insert an advertisement in our newsletter to assist our operational costs.

If you can help please contact Nadine Neilson via [info@reid.northcanberra.org.au](mailto:info@reid.northcanberra.org.au).

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### RRA Committee

Contact via: [info@reid.northcanberra.org.au](mailto:info@reid.northcanberra.org.au)

President: Marianne Albury-Colless, Secretary: Amanda Reynolds,

Treasurer & Public Officer: Derk Swieringa

Committee: Sue Byrne, Graham Carter OAM, John Little, Nadine Neilson, John Tucker