

MASTER BUILDERS ACT MEDIA RELEASE

18 AUGUST 2025

Master Builders ACT brings up a historic century

Canberra, ACT – Monday 18 August 2025

Master Builders ACT today commemorates 100 years of building Canberra (18 August 2025), marking 100 years to the day since its formation.

Today marks a historic milestone for the construction industry in Canberra, as the Master Builders Association of the ACT celebrates 100 years since it was formed in its historic inaugural meeting.

On 18 August 1925, ten visionary builders gathered at what is now The Hyatt Hotel to lay the foundations of an organisation that would play a pivotal role in shaping Canberra.

Master Builders ACT President Mr Frank Porreca heralded the dedication, resilience, and ingenuity of its members who have contributed to the growth and development of the capital.

“In 1925, Canberra was a blank canvas, home to just 3,500 residents and a handful of structures amidst a landscape dominated by Black Mountain and untouched land.”

“Canberra was a city in its infancy, with only a scattering of buildings such as Old Canberra House, a hospital, and a school, alongside the Yarralumla Brickworks and Kingston Powerhouse.”

“The legacy of Master Builders ACT is woven into the very fabric of Canberra. Without Master Builders, there would be no capital.”

Today, members of the Master Builders ACT Alumni, including past Presidents, Executive Directors and Life Members, will gather at The Hyatt to reflect on a century of achievements, as the Association looks ahead to the challenges and opportunities that face the building and construction industry.

“We’ve come a long way since 1925, when those first builders got together for the purpose of supporting each other in the building of our capital.”

“As we celebrate 100 years of supporting our members, we also reaffirm our commitment to continuing to build a quality industry for our members, the ACT and region, and to be an essential partner to our members in reducing compliance burdens and growing their businesses,” said Mr. Porreca.

The Association has achieved many things in its hundred-year tenure, from successfully advocating to government on behalf of builders, supporting the development of skills to grow the ACT's construction workforce, and supporting industry through many challenging times, including world wars, union difficulties, global economic crises and the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We're facing challenging times for our industry, with critical skills shortages, rising costs, and many other obstacles."

"Master Builders ACT stands ready to support our members through these, as we have for the last hundred years, and we raise our hats to the members that have supported us through the last century," said Mr. Porreca.

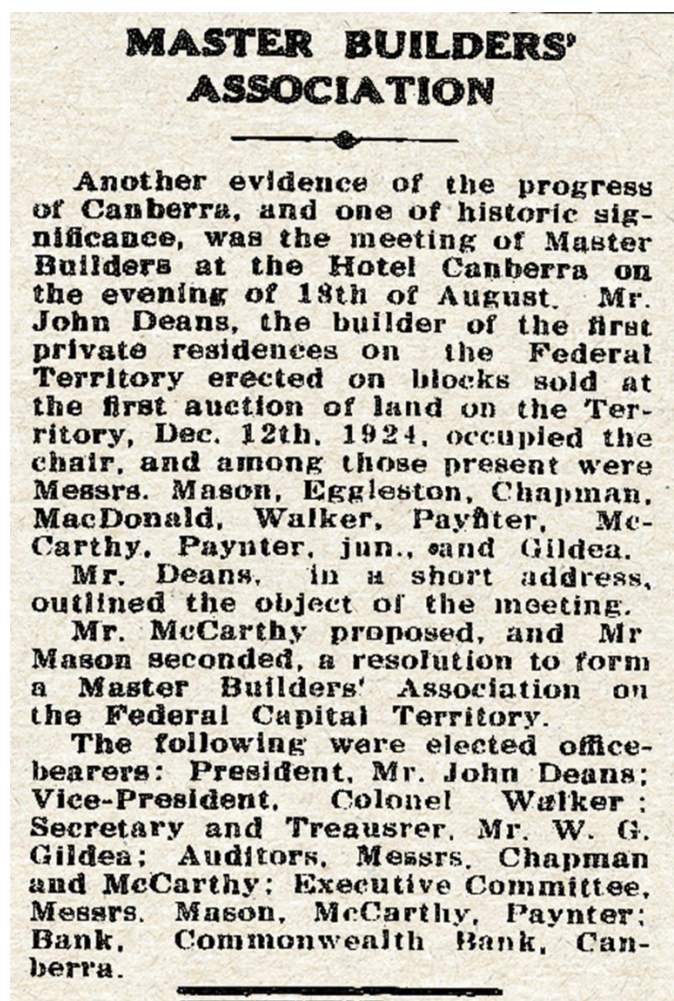
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Media enquiries:

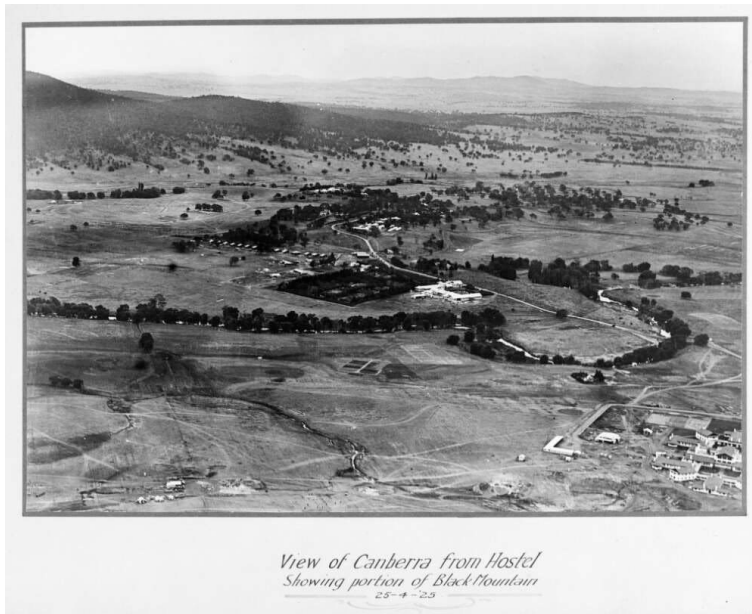
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Images

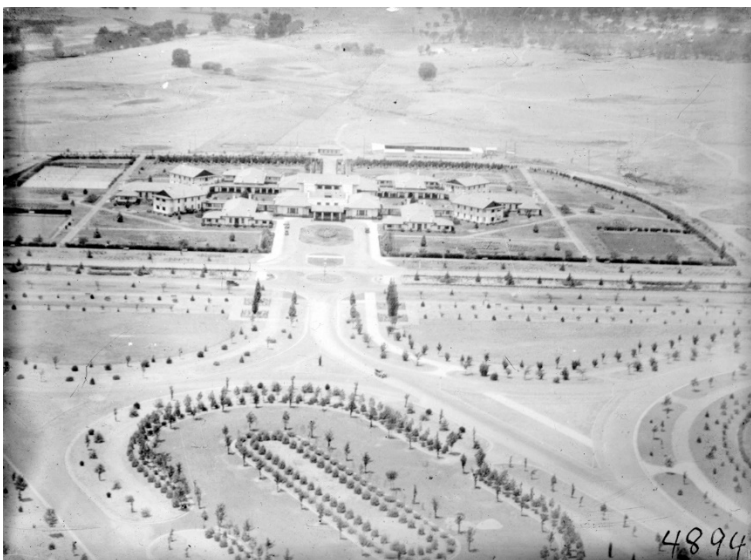
A selection of larger images are downloadable [here](#).



News article, founding of Master Builders Association of the Federal Capital Territory, Federal Capital Pioneer, 25 August 1925.



View of Canberra from Hostel showing portion of Black Mountain, 25 April 1925. National Library of Australia, nla.obj-137349044



Aerial view over Hotel Canberra and Commonwealth Avenue, 1925. Photographer: William James Mildenhall. National Archives of Australia, NAA: A3560,4894



Commonwealth Avenue looking north from Capital Hill, Hotel Canberra on left, 1925. Photographer: William James Mildenhall. National Archives of Australia, NAA: A3560,1290



Tour of Canberra by the Master Builders Association, September 1926. Photographer: William James Mildenhall. National Archives of Australia, NAA: A3560, 2282



Workmen at Kingston Power Station, 1925. Photographer: William James Mildenhall. National Archives of Australia, NAA: A3560,51



Oakley and Parkes house, 18 Mugga Way, Red Hill, built by the first President of the Master Builders Association of the Federal Capital Territory Mr. John Deans, 1925. Photographer: William James Mildenhall. National Archives of Australia, NAA: A3560, 2762



Tents and buildings at the Bachelors quarters, Acton, 1926. Photographer: William James Mildenhall. National Archives of Australia, NAA: A3560, 46



Interior of carpenters' shop with workmen and foreman at Eastlake, c. 1927. National Archives of Australia, NAA: A3560, 65



A blank slate: Prime Minister William Morris Hughes with C. S. Daley (Federal Capital Commission) and P. G. Stewart, Minister for Works and Railways on the site of Parliament House, 1 January 1923.
Photographer: William James Mildenhall. National Archives of Australia, NAA: A3560, 115