

# Self Guided Walking Tour

## LAKESIDE Walk

**Your self guided walk along the shores of Lake Burley Griffin to some of Canberra's national institutions.**

**Begin your Lakeside Walk at Commonwealth Place. Stand on the path located in the centre. Here you can see some key features of Walter Burley Griffin's 1912 prizewinning plan for the national capital. Griffin's plan was designed around his Land and Water Axes. The Land Axis extends from Mount Ainslie (straight ahead across the lake) through to Capital Hill, site of Parliament House (directly behind you) and beyond to Mount Bimberi in the Brindabella Range. The Water Axis extends from Black Mountain (with the Telstra Tower on top) located to your far left through to the Australian-American Memorial on the far right and following the line of Constitution Avenue on the northern side of the lake.**

This prominent location at the edge of Lake Burley Griffin, in the centre of the Land Axis, gives the visitor a magnificent view across the lake to the Rond Terraces and Gallipoli Reach, with Anzac Parade and the Australian War Memorial in the background. To the left, across the lake, you can also see Regatta Point (home of the National Capital Exhibition), the Canadian Flagpole, the Captain Cook Memorial Jet and Commonwealth Park, with the city skyline as its backdrop. Further across the lake, to the right, is Kings Park, the Russell Defence Headquarters with the Australian-American Memorial and, in the foreground, Aspen Island on which is located the National Carillon.

On your left and right on this side of the lake fly the flags of the approximately 80 countries which have a diplomatic presence in the national capital. The flags, each identified by a plaque at the base of the flagpole, are lit at night and fly continuously 24-hours a day.

While here, take the opportunity to visit the Gallery of Australian Design in the eastern wing of Commonwealth Place and the Waters Edge café/restaurant in the western wing.

**Commonwealth Place to the National Gallery of Australia, Reconciliation Place, the National Library of Australia and return**

**TIME:** 1 hour

**DISTANCE:** 2 kilometres

**DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY:** Easy, some steps

*Time does not include visiting the National Gallery of Australia, High Court of Australia, Questacon and the National Library of Australia Technology Centre (Questacon) and the National Library of Australia*

**Your Values, Your Culture, Your Stories**

**»» Our Nation, Your Capital**

## **BEGIN YOUR WALK AT THE ENTRY TO COMMONWEALTH PLACE**

- 1 Commonwealth Place is a community venue in the heart of the nation's capital. The grove of white birch trees is planted in the shape of the Southern Cross—the constellation depicted on the Australian Flag. The walkway along the Land Axis in the centre of Commonwealth Place is a 'river' of Victorian blue-stone paving leading to Reconciliation Place. On the walls of the walkway are satellite images of the Australian continent.

Commonwealth Place Forecourt — the timber jetties — reinforces Griffin's Land Axis, acting as a gateway to the parliamentary area.

- 2 Speakers Square was a gift from the Canadian Government to mark Australia's Centenary of Federation in 2001. The gift is a 10-metre square pavement artwork designed by Canadian artist John McEwen. Speakers Square provides a stage or focus for events, celebrations and ceremonies.

The gift symbolises the shared experiences of people of all nations, living together as one under the heavens. The design depicts the night skies of September in the northern and southern hemispheres, joined together by curved bands representing the common aspirations and values that unite all people. It is symbolic of the long-standing friendship between Canada and Australia. The Southern Cross and the North Star are featured in the artwork.

To begin the Lakeside Walk, look towards Lake Burley Griffin, cross to the right and walk along the lake edge to the east. On the right is the rear of the High Court of Australia. The British coat of arms on the rear of the building is a reminder that our legal system derives from Britain's Westminster system.

- 3 The National Carillon is located across the lake on Aspen Island. It was a gift from the British Government to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the founding of the national capital of Australia on 12 March 1913. The tower rises to a height of 50 metres. With 55 bells, weighing between seven kilograms and six tonnes, the National Carillon is unique by international standards. Stop and listen to the Westminster Chimes on the quarter hour.

Carillon recitals and tours are conducted throughout the year. For information and bookings contact the National Capital Exhibition on 02 6257 1068 or [nce@natcap.gov.au](mailto:nce@natcap.gov.au)

Continue to walk ahead to the Sculpture Garden of the National Gallery of Australia. You may wish to wander through the garden at this point to admire the sculptures.

- 4 Sculpture Garden Over three-hectares in size, the garden was designed to complement and soften the geometric lines of the National Gallery building. Harry Howard and Associates designed the Sculpture Garden in 1981 to display important monumental sculptures from many countries within outdoor 'galleries'. There are summer, winter and spring gardens, each with its own characteristics of space, foliage and light. Hidden in the garden's marsh ponds, Casuarina forests, secluded sitting nooks and shady pathways are 26 sculptures. At certain times of the day, fog created by a fog sculpture drifts through the shadows of the Casuarinas.

Turn right and continue up the short ramp to the footpath alongside Parkes Place to the National Gallery. On the left is a long ramp. Proceed up the ramp.

- 5 The National Gallery of Australia has a permanent collection of more than 100 000 artworks across four main collection areas: Australian art, Indigenous and Torres Islander art, Asian art and International art. Situated on a 10-acre site, the National Gallery was opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 1982. The National Gallery's main entrance is at present four floors above the ground; however, a major enhancement of the building is underway which will improve visitor, display (including new Indigenous art galleries) and storage facilities.

Among key works in the National Gallery's collection is The Aboriginal Memorial, an installation of 200 painted hollow log coffins by the artists of Ramingining in Arnhem Land. A collaborative work involving 43 artists, it is dedicated to all Indigenous Australians who have lost their lives defending their country since non-Indigenous settlement.

Walk along the overpass to the forecourt of the High Court of Australia.

- 6 The High Court Of Australia is the highest court in the Australian judicial system. Edwards, Madigan, Torzillo and Briggs Pty Ltd designed the building, which was opened in 1980. The forecourt and main entrance are approached via a long, paved ceremonial ramp. A waterfall, designed by Robert Woodward and constructed of South Australian speckled granite, runs the full length of one side of the ramp.

The 40-metre tall building contains 4 000 square metres of glass.

Moving on from the High Court of Australia walk across to the National Portrait Gallery.

- 7 The National Portrait Gallery, which opened in December 2008, is home to the nation's portrait collection and displays some 400 portraits of people who have shaped Australia. The Gallery aims to increase the understanding of the Australian people – their identity, history, creativity and culture – through portraiture.

Sydney-based architectural firm Johnson Pilton Walker was awarded the job of creating the gallery, with construction commencing in December 2006. The design of the new building draws inspiration from Canberra's environment and natural light and links the visitor's experience of the gallery spaces to the Australian landscape. The Gallery comprises spaces for the collection and temporary exhibitions, a café, shop, function room, theatrette, education and school group areas and basement carparking.

Outside, below the café exit of the National Portrait Gallery, is Reconciliation Place.

- 8 Reconciliation Place The artworks of Reconciliation Place, to be added to over the years, carry inscriptions and images on various themes and events, enabling individual interpretation and understanding of Australians' shared journey towards reconciliation. The location of Reconciliation Place, in the parliamentary area on the traditional land of the Ngunnawal people (Indigenous people from the Canberra region), establishes the reconciliation process physically and symbolically at the heart of Australia's democratic life and institutions. Reconciliation Place consists of a central circular mound and pathways extending in three directions, linking it to Commonwealth Place to the north, the High Court of Australia and National Gallery of Australia to the east, and Questacon and the National Library of Australia to the west.

From the Reconciliation Place artworks, continue to the right along the path of Reconciliation Place. Halfway along, stop and look at the entrance to Commonwealth Place and the vista along the walkway all the way to Mount Ainslie. Continue along the path to the second and third sets of artworks. Having viewed the artworks, continue on to Questacon.

- 9        Questacon Since its official opening in 1988, Questacon has shown hundreds of thousands of children and adults that science and technology are relevant and important to our daily lives, yet can also be fun. Questacon contains over 200 exhibits, most of them hands-on and interactive.

At the corner of the Questacon building stands 'The Astronomer' by Tim Wetherell. This sculpture is made from surviving parts of the Yale Columbia Refractor telescope formerly at the Mt Stromlo observatory outside of Canberra, which was destroyed during the 2003 bushfires. On the King Edward Terrace side of the Questacon building are a series of sculptures depicting a variety of sports. These sculptures, designed by Ken Cato, were used for the Melbourne 1996 Olympic bid.

Continue along towards the National Library of Australia. This area, named the Science and Humanities campus, is being transformed into a park to enhance pedestrian access between the two national institutions. The fountains in the forecourt of the National Library building have twin-jets that rise to a height of eight metres.

- 10       National Library Of Australia As Australia's largest and one of its leading research and reference libraries, the National Library holds some of the nation's most important treasures, including Captain Cook's Endeavour Journal. Walter Bunning designed the building, as well as the Captain Cook Memorial Globe and Jet, situated in Lake Burley Griffin. The National Library was officially opened in 1968.

The National Library holds more than six million items stored on 250 kilometres of shelving. Maps, music, ephemera, manuscripts, pictures, oral histories and online publications join with books to tell the story of Australia and the Australian people.

- 11       Knowledge, a sculpture by renowned Australian sculptor, Tom Bass, is located above the entrance to the National Library. In the centre, the sun-radiating shape denotes enlightenment; to the right, a branch symbolising the tree of knowledge and life grows out of the sun's rays; to the left, a series of curved forms create an ark, suggesting a place where knowledge is deposited.

Another Tom Bass sculpture, 'Ethos', is located in Civic Square in the city centre outside the entrance to the ACT Legislative Assembly.

Walk to the right of the National Library of Australia to the Henry Moore sculpture.

- 12       Two Piece Reclining Figure No.9 This cast-bronze sculpture by Henry Moore was installed in 1970. The scale is just over life-size because Moore wanted his works to 'stand out-of-doors and be seen in a natural setting, and figures seen out-of-doors always look slightly smaller than they are'.

Continue to the left from the sculpture along the length of the National Library of Australia. Cross the lawn to the Australians of the Year Walk on the lakeside promenade.

- 13       Australians of the Year Walk is a permanent record of those Australians selected as Australian of the Year, Senior Australian of the Year, Young Australian of the Year and Local Hero. As a symbol of national aspirations and achievement, it is fitting that the Australians of the Year Walk is located in the national capital. Incorporated in the pathway are five metal strips, forming the five stave lines to a music score. The plinths represent the notes to the music score of Advance Australia Fair, which can be read from west to east.

Continue along the lakeside promenade past the plinths to recognise future Australian of the Year recipients. Turn right into Peace Park.

13 Peace Park Nestled between a grove of trees and bushes, this park was commissioned by the National Consultative Committee on Peace and Disarmament, during the 1986 United Nations Year of Peace. It is a lasting symbol of Australia's commitment to peace and provides a place for contemplation.

An International Tree of Peace (a Bunya pine, *Araucaria bidwillii*) was planted in the park as part of the Centenary of Federation celebrations on 12 March 2001. Many of the heads of diplomatic missions based in Canberra aided its planting by placing around the tree small samples of soil from their respective countries.

14 STOP AND LOOK

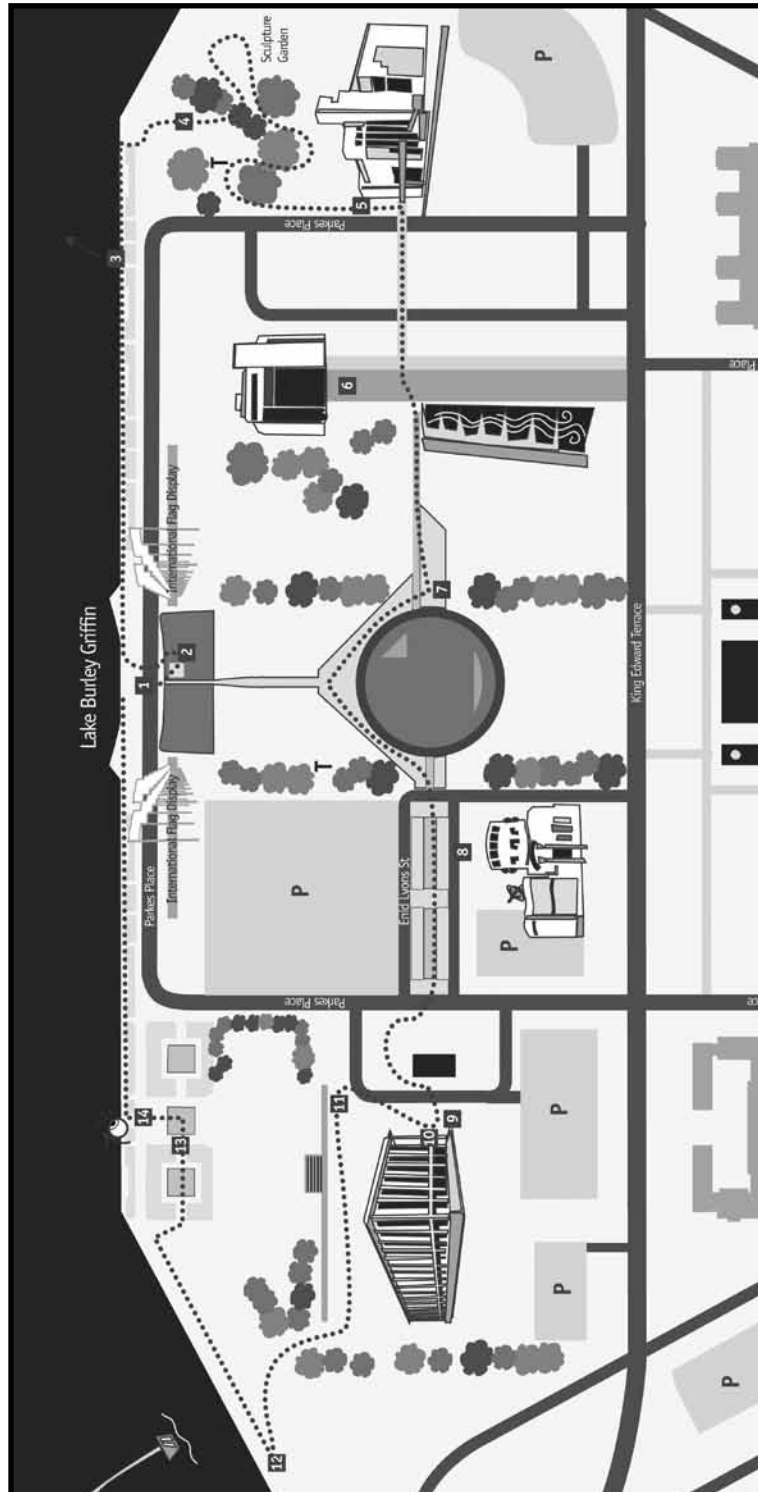
From Peace Park return to the lakeside promenade at the lake's edge. Here you are in close proximity to:

- Commonwealth Avenue Bridge
- Captain Cook Memorial Jet
- Regatta Point and the National Capital Exhibition
- Canadian Flagpole

Continue to your right to Commonwealth Place.

**This ends the Lakeside Walk**

# LAKESIDE Walk



Australian Government  
National Capital Authority

Collect your colour copy from the  
National Capital Exhibition, Commonwealth Park.  
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