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## Planning Institute of Australia 2012-2013 Oral History Project

MALCOLM SMITH

Date of birth	1941
Address/contact details	See permission form
Date/s of interview	5/12/12; 12/12/12
Place of interview	Canberra
Length of interview	4:21:55
Name of interviewer	Mary Hutchison
Interviewer contact details	<a href="mailto:Mary.hutchison@anu.edu.au">Mary.hutchison@anu.edu.au</a>
Signed permission form	Yes (includes photos)
Photographs of interviewee	Provided by interviewee
Other documentation supplied	No
Recording equipment	Marantz recorder, Rode mic (stereo), WAV file, 48khz



HMSS 0359 Planning Institute of Australia 2012-13 Oral History Project

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

Malcolm Smith was born in 1941 in Wareham, Dorset, UK, where his father was stationed with the Army. Two years later the family returned to their home city of Birmingham where Malcolm went to school and completed his secondary schooling at Moseley Grammar School in 1958. In 1960 he was accepted into the Birmingham City Council's town planning training scheme which was combined with six years part-time study for a diploma in town and country planning at the Birmingham School of Art. By the end of Malcolm's study the diploma course had been absorbed into a degree course at the University of Aston. Prior to his town planning study Malcolm had completed a one year Diploma in Public Administration. He married in 1964 and in 1967 he left the City of Birmingham town planning department to accept a town planning position with another Midlands Council – Dudley Borough Council. In 1970 he applied for and was successful in winning a position at the NCDC. He was recruited particularly to work on the redevelopment of Kingston on the basis of his recent experience in managing several urban renewal projects for Dudley Council including the acclaimed redevelopment of Kates Hill, an old mining community.

Malcolm was initially recruited by NCDC on a 2 year contract, but at the end of this period the Commission offered him a permanent position as a senior town planner, which he accepted. In 1975 Malcolm was promoted to establish and head a new section in NCDC's Planning Division, the Development Implementation Group. In 1982 Malcolm was appointed to head the Tuggeranong Planning Section at a time when development of Canberra's largest new town was beginning to accelerate again after all growth had been frozen in the Fraser years (1977-82). In 1983 he was selected to manage the multi-disciplinary Tuggeranong Town Centre Task Force, responsible for the planning, design, development and delivery of Tuggeranong Town Centre. The Tuggeranong Town Centre project received a National Award for Planning Excellence in 1992 from the then Royal Australian Planning Institute. In 1987 Malcolm was promoted to the SES level and appointed Director of Policy Planning. He stayed with NCDC until it folded in 1989 when he took up the position of first Chief Planner of the National Capital Planning Authority. He held this position until 1993 when, with a former NCDC colleague, set up a planning and design consultancy, Smith Kostyrko International. The company took on two other ex-NCDC senior professionals as Directors, the company eventually changing its name to Capital Planners. In 2006 the company merged with an international consultancy Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB). Malcolm left PB in 2008 to take up the position as Director of Planning with the Molonglo Group, a highly regarded Canberra based development company. He retired in March 2012 but still undertakes small scale consultancy work on projects of interest to him

Malcolm's brother followed him to Australia in 1973 as did his parents in 1989. At the time of interview two of his three sons and their families, and his mother, were still living in Canberra. His other son and his partner live in Sydney. Malcolm was divorced from his first wife in 1977. He remarried in 1978 but sadly his second wife died of cancer in 2007. Malcolm married again in 2011.

In discussing his early career interests, Malcolm mentioned the influence of his maternal grandfather, Archibald Hodgekinson, who worked in the construction industry as a steeplejack and is understood to have worked on the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge when he was in Australia in the 1930s. He regularly took young Malcolm on to construction sites, which intrigued Malcolm and convinced him he wanted a career in the construction and development industries.

## TIMED SUMMARY: MALCOLM SMITH

**Interview: 5/12/12**

**Session #1**

time	subjects	proper names
0:00:00	Introduction. Family background. Family members in Australia	Wareham
0:03:58	Growing up in Birmingham; schooling; career interests, influence of maternal grandfather	steeplejack
0:06:58	Town planning as alternative to civil engineering. Acceptance into Birmingham city Council's town planning training scheme	Patrick Abercombie, Welwyn and Letchworth garden cities
0:11:09	Town planning course; key elements; teachers	Birmingham School of Planning (School of Art), Aston University, Lewis Keeble, Jane Jacobs, Lewis Mumford, Leslie Ginsberg, John Holiday
0:16:18	Work in town planning department at Birmingham City Council. Statutory Planning. Slum clearance and new high rise housing estates. Management of new tree planting	'tree lovers' league'
0:21:35	Social planning and community involvement. New town movement.	Harlow, Stevenage, Milton Keynes, Telford, Peterlee, Newton Aycliffe
0:24:59	Interest in moving from statutory to master planning. Move to Dudley Council	Dudley, Brierley Hill, Sedgley, Coseley town centres
0:28:51	Management of Kates Hill redevelopment project. Sense of achievement. Development of interest in public consultation and urban rehabilitation in contrast to comprehensive demolition and redevelopment	
0:33:12	Circumstances leading to application for position at NCDC.	Steve (Pazsit), Hans Westerman, Geoff Campbell,



		Neil Dadge, Alf Lester, Franz Ziegler
0:38:04	Interview for position. Experience of trip to Australia by boat. Arrival in Sydney sunshine	Richard Gray, Lord Holford, Australian Public Service Commission
0:43:48	Arrival in Canberra snow. Accommodation in Commonwealth Hostel. Buying block of land through public auction.	Hotel Civic, Hotel Acton, Dickson, Farrer,
0:49:14	End of session	

**Interview: 5/12/12  
Session #2**

<b>time</b>	<b>subjects</b>	<b>proper names</b>
0:00:00	First day at NCDC. Memories of Hans Westerman - his qualities as a planner and person. Meeting head of Land Use Policy Section and others working there.	Noel Lyneham, Dr Jim Connors, Arnis Siksna, John Armitage
0:04:12	First weeks and further introductions. Memories of Keith Storey. Context and issues of Kingston redevelopment.	Harry Woomelsdorf,
0:09:06	Main tasks of Kingston redevelopment, rationale and approach to it including discussion with community and identification of high rise zones. Memories of Fred Daley.	Telopea Park, Wentworth Avenue, Turner, Braddon
0:14:06	NCDC and planning early 1970s. New Urban development strategies. Settling into Canberra. Decision to take permanent position. Structure of NCDC staff positions. Planning Division. Promotion 1975 to set up new section – Development Implementation Group	Gough Whitlam, Cities Commission, McMahan, Department of Urban and Regional Development Albury-Wodonga, Orange-Bathurst, Monarto
0:18:25	Development Implementation Group; background; NCDC approach to development; decision to concentrate through Group; preparing range of development sites for sale; leasehold system; control drawings	



0:23:13	Development Implementation Group; timing imperative in relation to population forecasts. Neighbourhood planning concept and principles. Future useage provision within plan.	
0:27:59	Neighbourhood planning; road hierarchy; block size and tree planting. Concept of territorial units in Tuggeranong.	
0:31:26	Concept of corner shops. Canberra retail hierarchy as driving structure.	Kambah, Wanniasa
0:36:46	End of session	

**Interview: 12/12/12**

**Session #3**

<b>time</b>	<b>subjects</b>	<b>proper names</b>
0:00:00	Introduction. Initiatives of Development Implementation Group; introduction of performance (qualitative) standards for design and siting	
0:04:01	New approach to subdivision of residential estates (comparison with current Gungahlin). Role in Commonwealths joint venture for more affordable housing mid 1970s Delivery of demonstration estates at Isabella Plains and Calwell.	
0:08:23	Green Street project (Commonwealth) planning and engineering approaches; managing water. Discussion about housing mid 1970s	Whitlam,, Tom Uren
0:11:58	Tom Uren's support of housing co-operatives during Whitlam years. Value of these developments. Recent management of co-ops	Urambi Village, Wybelena Grove
0:15:45	Experience of inspection of housing development in Perth at Tom Uren's request. Proposal to develop similar in South Bruce. Impact of Departmental decision about release of land on outcome. Disappointment of lost opportunity. Relationship between	Paul Ritter, 'Man and Motor', Crestwood Village, Jennings

	NCDC and land administration departments.	
0:20:53	Approaches to planning during Whitlam years; Department of Urban and Regional Development. Role of Development Implementation Group in developing metropolitan areas. Halt in Tuggeranong development during Fraser years	Planning Institute, 'Razor Gang'
0:24:55	NCDC review of Tuggeranong development – main issues and debate. 1982 Hawke government enables development to go forward. Appointed head of Tuggeranong Planning Section. Environmental and heritage issues in Tuggeranong and their outcomes	Urban Economics Group, Lanyon Bowl
0:29:33	Development during period of Hawke government. Features of territorial and neighbourhood units. Corner shops concept and issues	
0:33:55	Retail hierarchy in Tuggeranong and gateway locations. Tuggeranong Town Centre. Proposal of Erindale as alternative site. Debate and issues.	
0:38:06	National Capital Planning Committee. Memory of Peter Harrison. NCDC culture and experience of.	Gordon Stevenson, John Andrews, John Overall, Tony Powell
0:42:10	Seconded to head up New Town Centre Task Force. Building Tuggeranong Town Centre. Formation of Tuggeranong Community Council. NCDC consultation processes. Community participation in development of Town Centre through group of community representatives	Ros Kelly, Erindale College
0:46:16	Development of distinctive qualities of Tuggeranong. Land/use relationships. Location of Service Trades Area. Building height	Woden, Belconnen,
0:51:19	Tuggeranong colour scheme (red roofs as unifying element). Recent changes and response to. Approach to Tuggeranong Foreshore Development and role of community participants.	Greg Deas, Carcoar, Tuggeranong College, Anketell Street, McDonalds, KFC
0:56:46	National Planning Award for Tuggeranong	National Capital Open Space



	Town Centre 1992. 1987 promotion to Director of Policy Planning	System, Gungahlin
0:59:29	End of session	

**Interview: 12/12/12**

**Session #4**

<b>time</b>	<b>subjects</b>	<b>proper names</b>
0:00:00	Issues in development of Tuggeranong Bus Interchange.	ACTION, Transport Workers Union.
0:04:03	Development of Hyperdome . Issues of shopping centres. Work on Gungahlin Town Centre as consultant. Community use of shopping centres	Leda, Lend Lease, Coles Woolworths, Aldi,
0:09:07	Discussion of own uses of shopping centres. Consultancy for Woolworths development of Conder Group Centre	Rosemary Lissamore, Tuggeranong Homestead, Lanyon Market Place,
0:14:00	Community working group involvement in development of Lanyon Market Place. Informal work for Tuggeranong Community Council including support in saving Tuggeranong Homestead from proposed development	ACTPLA (ACT Planning and Land Authority)
0:17:29	Issues of 1990s ACPLA plans for infill around Foreshore. Story of successful opposition to this	Harold Hird, Lincoln Hawkins
0:21:00	Last year at NCDC. Harold White Review of NCDC. Self-government issues. Work culture last years. The principle of two development fronts	Professor Pat Troy, Malcolm Latham
0:26:08	Developments in community consultation at NCDC. Greater focus on social and cultural planning through influence of Jill Lang. Memories of Tom Uren. First golf club housing estate in Canberra	John Mant, Murrumbidgee Golf Course
0:31:20	Memories of other Commonwealth Ministers and NCDC staff including David Hain and Arnis Sikсна. Review and redevelopment of Civic	Tony Staley, Gordon Bryant, Clyde Holding, City Walk, Petrie Plaza
0:36:39	Later career of Arnis Sikсна. Issue of moving on from NCDC and options for staff. Own	ACT Planning Authority





	interests for future. Offered position of first Chief Planner of National Capital Planning Authority.	
0:40:55	Transition to new arrangements. Organisation of NCPA (later NCA) and numbers and selection of staff. Appointment of Chief Executive. Draft National Capital Plan. Decision about location of NCDC Library and its later fragmentation.	Barry Browning, Paul Carmody, Geoff Campbell, David Wright, Better Cities
0:46:46	End of session	


**Interview: 12/12/12**

**Session #5**

<b>time</b>	<b>subjects</b>	<b>proper names</b>
0:00:00	Development of National Capital Plan. Designated areas and others of special national concern. Principles and policies concerning these.	Barton, Yarralumla, Mt Ainslie, Black Mountain, Red Hill, Rosemary Follett
0:05:05	Further considerations of National Capital Plan: general land use policies relevant to urban structure of Canberra; implementation policies relevant to environmental requirements. Public consultation re Plan in Canberra and other capitals. Issue of Commonwealth and Territory ownership. Amendment of Plan	Murrumbidgee River Corridor, George Tomlins
0:09:22	NCPA consultancy work.	Multi Function Polis (MFP)
0:14:04	NCPA involvement in Commonwealth Better Cities program. Examples of projects under the program in Perth, Brisbane and Sydney. NCPA advice on sites for Australian Defence Industries.	Keating, Brian Howe, Pymont, Darling Harbour
0:19:33	Invited to attend international conferences on basis of recognition of Canberra as a model of urban development	Ankara, New Delhi, Saskatoon Cairo (Capitals of the World Association)
0:22:51	End of session	





  
**Interview: 12/12/12****Session #6**

<b>time</b>	<b>subjects</b>	<b>proper names</b>
0:00:00	Leaving the NCA 1993. Own view of direction of NCA and role in fostering understanding of Canberra's role as the national capital. Establishment of consultancy business	Wal Kostyrko, Smith Kostyrko International
0:03:57	Examples of international work in Fiji and Turkey	AUSAid, AESOP (Australian Executive Senior Overseas Program), Lutoka City Council, Turkish Planning Institute, Erkal Kece
0:07:59	Further examples of international work – infrastructure planning in Mongolia. Initial work in private sector. Variety of work	Mongolia, Rob and Chris Purdon
0:11:45	Expansion of Smith Kostyrko International to SKCM and later change to Capital Planners	Paul Cohen, Claire Middleton
0:15:17	Process of closing business 2006 and decision to amalgamate with Parsons Brinckerhoff. PB's interest in Capital Planners' client list.	
0:18:12	Examples of Canberra work as SKCM and Capital Planners. Development in City West over long period	Australian Estate Management, Land Development Agency, Gay Williamson, Susan Conroy,
0:22:02	Further examples of clients and projects: Kamberra Winery Complex. Story of association with Tim Efkarpidis from NCDC days and the development of the Efkarpidis' business prior to formation of the Molonglo Group	Woolworths, CIC, LendLease, Hardy Wines, Tim Efkarpidis, Shopright Supermarkets, Cannons, Belconnen Markets
0:26:43	Long term association with Molonglo Group's development of the Acton site as planning consultant and offer of job with them as Director of Planning. Interest of work at New Acton and poignancy of site as own first home in Canberra	Nectar (Efkarpidis)
0:31:20	Efkarpidis' approach to business. Decision to retire. Finding replacement Planner at Molonglo Group. Current work	Hayes



0:35:16	Reflections on Canberra Planning since self-government. Disappointment with Gungahlin and planning issues including block size and road system. Fragmentation of planning responsibility. Lack of strategic planning.	Territory Plan, Brownfields development.
0:39:55	Molonglo Group providing new model for development in Canberra. Enjoyment of Canberra and pride in it. Canberra lifestyle.	
0:42:51	Unsung heroes in Canberra Planning – NCDC and ACTPLA. Experience of interview	Bruce Balfour, Col Nicholas, Mike Quirk
0:46:49	End of session	

