

Michelago residents divided over 'violence' of war games in the bush

By KATRINA IFFLAND,
Rural Reporter

A group has called on Yarrowluma Shire Council to reject an application seeking permission to operate the war game "paintball" near Michelago, because it would "legitimise violence".

The application, lodged by Phillip Dachs, of Queanbeyan, requests permission to operate the game on a privately-owned 50.6ha property, about 10km from Michelago.

Paintballing — or skirmish as it is also known — is a form of combat in

which paying participants, armed with weapons that discharge a paint-filled gelatine ball, compete in military-style events. Invented in the United States, the game has become so popular that a one-day event can clean as much as a \$1000 profit.

Yet it seems the prospect of people dressed in army fatigue gear and descending on masses every weekend has created some division in Michelago, 40km south of Canberra.

Many residents believe the game will bring needed revenue to the village, that it is a legitimate and

healthy way of "venting frustration", and will be a drawcard for tourism.

As one paintballer put it, "with the camouflage outfits and paint on your face, standing around with people as ugly as yourself, you're doing everything that you have been told not to do with a gun. You're shooting it at people to eliminate them."

"But it is not that you're shooting people, you're marking them. It's a good and exciting sport."

Many residents believe the game will ruin their bucolic ambience and pose an environmental threat.

"It's a game for little men, little Rambos," one angry Michelago resident said. "I cannot understand why anyone would want to run around shooting at other people. It is also an environmental hazard. Imagine all the trees that will be left sprayed with paint." She was also concerned at the firearms involved in the game.

According to police recommendations, people wishing to conduct paintballing ventures needed to apply for a ministerial permit to possess the correct weapons.

In a government paper obtained

by *The Canberra Times*, it was claimed that the air rifles used in paintballing were regarded as illegal weapons if not licensed, and were capable of injuring humans.

The same paper states that incapacitation could be avoided by wearing protective gear.

The ACT Government rejected approaches to have the game approved in the ACT. The game may be played legally in Queensland, Victoria, South Australia and NSW under certain conditions.

A petition against the application

has been signed by 29 concerned Yarrowluma Shire residents. They claim the game would create problems for "already failing roads". It would also "legitimise violence, even if simulated, for our children and community".

Yet a spokesman for Yarrowluma Shire said that the paint used in the game was a biodegradable, vegetable-based dye, and did not pose an environmental threat.

The spokesman said that, until recently, Mr Dachs had also operated paintballing on a property near Yass.

debated by council before it votes on the matter tomorrow.

Mr Dachs' latest bid was not the first time he has tried to have his game approved. A similar application was rejected by Queanbeyan council last year.

According to a Queanbeyan council spokesman, the bid was knocked back because the council believed that the game would cause traffic congestion on a rural road.

It is also believed that, until recently, Mr Dachs had also operated paintballing on a property near Yass.

Polyukhovich to enter plea

ADELAIDE: Ivan Polyukhovich, the first Australian to stand trial for European war crimes, is expected to make his first appearance in the Supreme Court today on charges of murder.

Polyukhovich, a 76-year-old Adelaide pensioner, is scheduled to appear in the Supreme Court to enter a plea on charges that he murdered eight Jews in Nazi-occupied Ukraine in 1942 and a further charge of being involved in the execution of up to 850 Jews in the village of Serniki in 1942.

On June 5, after a lengthy committal hearing, Magistrate Keilyn Prescott found Polyukhovich had a case to answer on only two of the original eight charges filed, which related to the murder of six people.

But a month later the federal Director of Public Prosecutions, Michael Rosenz, QC, re-laid charges that had been dismissed by Mr Prescott.

IN BRIEF

Brits love thy Neighbours

LONDON: Australian television shows continue to wow British viewers, with three programs making it on to the latest top-10 list. *Neighbours* drew more than 15 million viewers for a single episode to rank the third most-watched show last week while *Home and Away* came in fourth with 12.8 million and *Crocodile Dundee* ninth with 10.5 million.

Suspect cleared

SYDNEY: A 24-year-old man questioned in relation to a murder at Kiama on the NSW South Coast last week has been cleared.

He was taken into custody at Nowra in connection with break-and-enter offences yesterday morning, but later was dismissed as a suspect in the murder of Kim Narelle Corrigan, 27.

Freak road death

BRISBANE: An eight-year-old Gold Coast girl died while undergoing emergency surgery on Saturday after being hit by the wheel of a car which spun off a four-wheel drive as it travelled along a road at Carrara.

Shonky car sellers

MELBOURNE: The Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce will send a report to the state Government on alleged shonky private car sellers after a survey found buyers made an average loss of \$3500. A phone-in found 15 per cent of more than 100 callers reported buying stolen cars while others were sold vehicles still under finance.

Pillar crushes two

ADELAIDE: Two children, swinging on a rope attached to a veranda support, were crushed to death when a brick pillar collapsed at a birthday party at Ingle Farm.

A two-year-old girl died instantly on Saturday night, and a three-year-old boy died later in hospital.

Free land in WA

PERTH: Kellerberrin Council in Western Australia has joined the neighbouring Bruce Rock Council and offered free land and other incentives to prospective home builders and business operators in a bid to boost the economies and populations of country areas.

Limit the migrants - Ruddock

By FIA CUMMING

The Federal Opposition has promised to restrict the migrant intake to types of jobs that cannot be filled by Australian workers.

The Opposition spokesman on immigration, Phillip Ruddock, said last week migrants' applications would be assessed according to the number of jobs available for their skills.

Mr Ruddock said the points system used to assess migrants would be changed to reflect an up-to-date assessment of the job situation. He said this would result in a big cut in overall migrant numbers when unemployment was high, as it is now.

The change would also ensure that migrants did not arrive here, only to find themselves on the dole queues.

For example, if there was a shortage of trained computer technicians, people with those qualifications would receive the maximum points towards their entry approval. The jobs-based assessment would apply to both concessional family migration and occupational migration categories, Mr Ruddock said.

If there was no shortage of computer technicians, no points would be awarded for the qualifications. Under the present system, anyone with recognised qualifications receives 20 points for that training, regardless of whether the skills are in over- or under-supply in Australia. A

further five points is awarded for qualifications in four occupations considered most in demand.

"For most people, you can get the extra 20 points simply by having a degree or trade qualifications. The fact that the occupation wasn't one that was in demand was not likely to be a determining factor," he said.

Mr Ruddock said the present system allowed migrants to come here totally unprepared for the economic, social and labor market conditions that they faced.

"Many migrants have been given a distorted picture of Australia and arrived with high expectations," Mr Ruddock said. "These have largely not been met and many professional and skilled migrants have been unable to find appropriate work in the current recessionary climate."

Mr Ruddock promised that a Coalition government would provide much more accurate information to people considering migration.

The Fraser Government had provided potential migrants with information about the job vacancies for each trade or profession, before they applied for entry. But this was discontinued by Labor when it won power in 1983.

"The Coalition has emphasised on a number of occasions the importance of providing intending migrants with a complete picture of the Australian economy and way of life before they make the important decision to migrate."

Fretilin 'remains strong'

MELBOURNE: Fretilin remains a strong factor in an "extraordinary psychological resistance" to Indonesian rule in East Timor, according to a senior Australian Catholic clergyman who has just visited there.

Monsignor Hilton Deakin, Vicar-General of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, said the pro-independence guerrillas, while not militarily active, still were a "potent psychological force" 16 years after Indonesia invaded East Timor.

Monsignor Deakin returned to Melbourne on Saturday after three weeks of travelling through East Timor, during which he said he was under constant surveillance by Indonesian security forces.

He said there was a view among some East Timorese that there should be a rapprochement with Indonesia, as resistance was futile.

"There are some who are saying

Fretilin has run its course, but my impression is that the majority say 'no, it's still there, it's not militarily active, but it still exists out in the mountains'. Fretilin has become part of the psychological factor."

Indonesia was a neo-colonialist power which ruled by military force, and East Timor "is not integrated into the republic as Indonesian authorities claim", he said.

Monsignor Deakin's visit followed his address on the 18th anniversary of Fretilin's founding.

He said on Saturday that the official Australian Government attitude was according to the gospel of economics. "We condemn South Africa on human rights and went to war with Iraq over Kuwait, but the Government lacks moral vision over human-rights violations in East Timor," he said.

Pigs, parks and protection pose problems

By CHARLES MIRANDA

As a spectacular sun sets, David Ryrie leans on his four-wheel-drive vehicle and surveys his land at Michelago on the ACT-NSW border.

It has never been this bad. Years ago rabbits were the problem but they have been virtually wiped out. The wild pig is proving more resilient.

In the past 10 years, since the 1982 drought, pigs have increased and are destroying the bush and grazing lands by rooting up the ground and introducing noxious weeds.

"Until then it was a big event to go out and hunt a pig, then suddenly in the early '80s they came all the time," Mr Ryrie said.

AT THE local pub the stories of close calls with wild pigs flow as freely as the beer. There was a giant razorback at Burke, a mauling at Mudgee and damage at Dubbo. Tall tales, yes, but each has the same basic theme: the pig is a pest.

For most the wild pig meant one more thing to contend with alongside dropping stock prices, overseas subsidies and the weather.

David Ryrie, of Michelago Station, doesn't mince words when he talks about the problem.

He had noticed the increase in numbers and although did not know for sure what had caused it, blamed the growing number of national parks. He believed authorities could do more, and the unemployed could also help.

"In the old days we had old bushmen living in the mountains who kept them in check, but as they moved out, got older, or whatever, things changed. There's also a lot more small landholdings these days, and that means not as many full-time people on the land," he said.

"But, yes, the parks are a problem. That's why farmers get so upset when they keep declaring new parks when they can't control what they've got."

"The last thing you want to be is bordering a state park. You'll have every problem in the world. There's lots of enthusiasm for getting it all declared and opening it all up, but when it comes to the hard grind of looking after it, nobody wants to know about it then."

Mr Ryrie said that out west the problems were a lot worse, but because of the drought and the concentration of pigs around water points, the pigs could be wiped out. "There's plenty of people out there sitting on their tails doing nothing because of the recession or whatever, and it would be a very good time to tackle them."

The problem was not as bad in the local region because it was more green, but in the late winter months the pigs left the mountains and scavenged for whatever they could get, from grubs to roots. While they were not desperate enough to attack sheep for food, they were not environmentally friendly.

"The biggest problem is they root around, digging up everything and

making seed beds for introduced foreign weeds ... it can look like a bulldozer's gone through the area."

Foreign grasses like St John's Wort, serrated tussock, sweetbriar and Spanish broom could become major environmental problems if not controlled.

According to the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, about \$120,000 was spent last year on weed control spraying in the Kosciusko National Park alone. A total of \$200,000 will be spent this year on control programs which include weeding, pigs, wild dogs and goats.

Aerial shooting programs were used effectively to control pigs last year in the Ullandra Nature Reserve, as were traps and permanent ground bait stations.

Shooting was one way of culling numbers but it could scatter small groups of pigs, and authorities preferred and recommended trapping or baiting.

David Ryrie has a number of traps in the hills around his 2800ha property and catches an average of four pigs a week.

The large traps, made of steel-mesh fencing, were baited with food scraps and could catch up to eight pigs at a time. They were then destroyed.

In other parts of the state pigs could be killed for profit, but there was not a big enough stock in the ACT district to attract professional shooters.

The Cooma office ranger of the Rural Lands Protection Board, Jim Buckley, said the pig problem in his region was "quite bad".

One local had shot 90 pigs this year. The animals were breeding and travelling more, and a feral pig group control program was being established.

Initiated in March this year, the idea of the program is to liaise with local farmers and state forest authorities to get "information on file" and put together a "pig activity report".

Mr Buckley said he was encouraging farmers to contact the office. Beside their damage, feral pigs posed a health risk as potential carriers of foot-and-mouth disease.

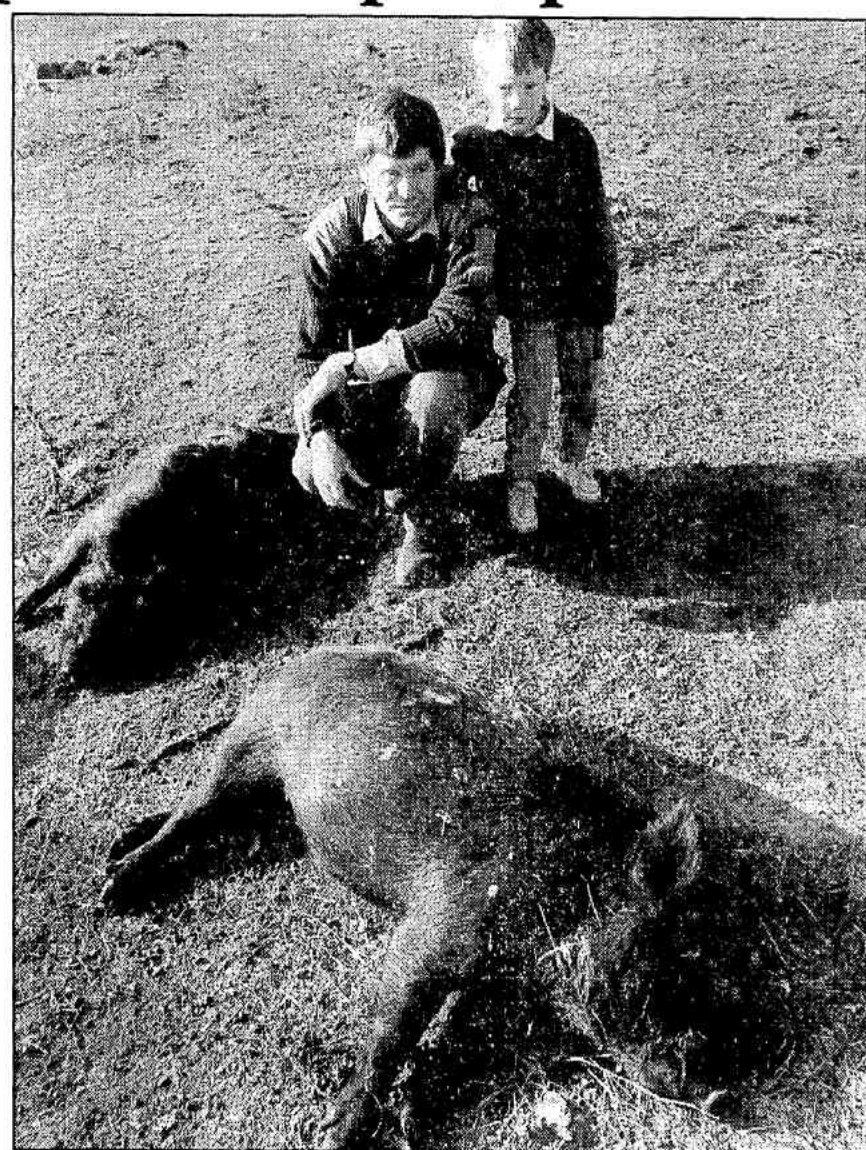
The manager of Namadji National Park, Brian Terrill, said Namadji had a pig-poisoning program which reduced the number of pigs in the park by 90 per cent annually.

The acting superintendent of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service Queanbeyan district office, Patrick Shaughnessy, said his office had just begun free-baiting again in an attempt to assess numbers.

He said there were about 35 traps in a local reserve, and there had been a good success rate this year — between 140 and 190 pigs caught and shot between March and mid-June.

The feral pig management report prepared by the Bureau of Rural Resources for the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation outlines the nature of feral pig management in Australia and future trends and management.

It saw eradication as not being optional. In areas where feral pigs have a major unacceptable impact,



Michelago farmer David Ryrie, and his son, Alexander, 6, with wild pigs shot by local farmers on his land.

"higher levels of control may be warranted", but the report recognised that in parts of Australia where pigs have little impact on crops or sheep production, better use could be made of this animal as a resource.

In 1987, Australia became the world's largest pig exporter, to markets including France, Germany, Spain and Japan. Between 500kg and 1000kg of feral pig is consumed in Australian restaurants every year; an additional five tonnes are processed into smallgoods.

In the ACT, feral pigs do not fall under any Act. In NSW the 1934 Pastures Protection Act has officially declared feral pigs noxious since 1955. In the ACT they are not considered to be noxious.

'Wilderness' opposition

The federal National Party Member for Gilmore, John Sharp, says he will "strenuously oppose" any nomination of wilderness areas that risks harbouring feral animals or contributes to stock or crop damage.

Mr Sharp said he would support farmers, councils and Rural Lands Protection Boards' opposition to wilderness nominations, such as those made to the NSW Government last week by the conservationist group the Colong Foundation for the Goodradigbee and Goobragandra areas.

"Once something becomes declared wilderness country, it means no-one can graze the country and you can't burnback for bushfire pre-

vention. You simply lock it up and let it go back to the natural state, which sounds fine for some, but in the process it becomes a harbour for feral animals.

"National Parks should be accessible to all people to enjoy."

Mr Sharp said landholders in the Tumut and Yass districts would be disadvantaged by the acceptance of those particular areas, and conservation groups "should take a careful look at the effects of their selfish land-grabs".

"Farmers and graziers in the Wee Jasper and Argalong areas will not thank the Colong Foundation when wild dogs and pigs invade their properties."



ROADS AND TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

MITTAGONG BYPASS — TRAFFIC SWITCH AT WELBY NEAR MITTAGONG

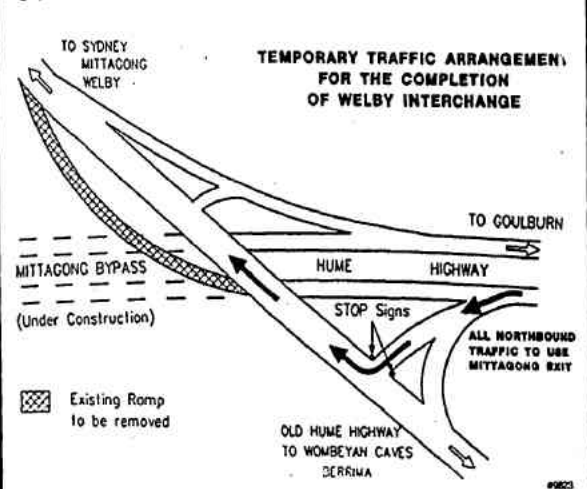
A switch of traffic for northbound motorists on the Hume Highway at Welby will take place on Monday 27 July 1992 to enable essential roadworks to be undertaken.

Northbound traffic will be directed on to the existing Mittagong/Wombeyan Caves offloading ramp.

Motorists travelling north to Mittagong and beyond will be required to stop at the top of the offloading ramp before making the right hand turn on to the Old Hume Highway.

Wombeyan Caves bound motorists, and southbound Highway traffic, are not affected.

These temporary arrangements will apply for three weeks, and will be clearly signposted.



TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENT FOR THE COMPLETION OF WELBY INTERCHANGE

LAW LIST

HIGH COURT

Before a single justice, Chief Justice Mason, at 10.15am: For reception, Newcrest Mining (WA) Limited v The Commonwealth of Australia and others.

FAMILY COURT

In Court 2, before the Full Court, at 11am: Williams and others v Spautz.

Before Justice Finn, in Court 1, at 10am: Taylor, Kubank, Gabelione, Stokman.

Before Justice Coleman, in Court 2, at 10am: Celestino.

Before Registrar Davis, in Court 3, at 9.45am: Forke/Thomas, Jackson, Weid, Seretich/Clapham, Farris, Carder, Stephenson, Smith, Mawhinney, Blake, Coleman, Fenton/Barry, Shell, Grant, Lynch, Mochan, Bellchambers, Cosart, Tonkin, Schuyt, Lenz, Summerfield, Morgan, Cole, Lau, McBrearty, Mutton, Ingram, Milne, Adams, Grantham, Clout, Whitting, Hickey, Ferguson/Wallace, Williams, Adams, Mueser, Stokman, Milne, Polle/Moran, Vollebregt, Chippine.

Before Deputy Registrar Morrissey, in Court 3, at 1.15pm: The conciliation conference lists as follows: Van Straten.

A.C.T. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS TRIBUNAL

AMP Building, Hobart Place

Before Senior Member Beddoe, Hearing Room 2, 4th Floor.

Application for extension of time — hearing 10.30am: Zanetti and Registrar of Weapons.

Before Senior Member Beddoe, Mr Atwood, Member, Mr P. Corkery, Member, in Hearing Room 1, 4th Floor.

Hearing:

At 10am: Seangier and Commissioner for ACT Revenue.

At 1.15pm: Seangier and Commissioner for ACT Revenue.

A.C.T. CREDIT TRIBUNAL

Before the Credit Tribunal, a directions hearing, the Credit Tribunal Hearing Room, 2nd Floor, Murray House, 21-23 London Circuit, Canberra City.

At 10am: In respect of applications pursuant to Sections 85 and 86 of the Credit Act 1986 by the Western Banking Corporation.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMISSION

Before Commissioner Lawson, in Hearing Room 1:

At 10am: Retail and Wholesale Shop Employees (Australian Capital Territory) Award re classifications.

At 11.30am: Application by the Australian Workers' Union and another for the ratification of a consent award re wages and conditions.

At 2.30pm: Stuenkel and Packard (ACT) Award re fourth minimum rates adjustment.

Police 'held pistol to head' of alleged robber

By GILLIAN FIELD

A man told the ACT Supreme Court on Friday that police had forced him to confess by holding a pistol to his head before and after a videotaped interview.

John Martin Cumberland, 24, is facing 11 charges before Justice John Gaillop. He had been charged with four counts of burglary, five counts of theft, one count of using a false instrument (forging a cheque), and one count of robbery. He has pleaded guilty to three of the charges — one of burglary, one of theft, and one of signing a false name on a cheque.

Prosecutor John Ibbotson said Cumberland's claim that he was forced to confess was inconsistent with the video confession. Cumberland had volunteered information, and had corrected police about other crimes they suggested he had been involved in. Mr Ibbotson said that if Cumberland had been honestly terrified of police, he would have agreed to everything they said.

Detective Constable Gregory Ransie told the court on Wednesday that he and Detective Michael Pearce had gone to a flat with a search warrant, on March 4, 1990, to look for stolen goods. The flat belonged to Cumberland's mother, and they found Cumberland hiding under a bed.

On the videotape of a police interview shown on Wednesday, Cumberland said he had burgled houses to "get money to buy drugs". He said he had done at least five. He offered to show police where they were. He had taken money and jewellery from some of the houses, and nothing from others.

Confession was forced: claim

He agreed he had taken a handbag from a woman in a car, and said it had been on Northbourne Avenue, while stopped at traffic lights, not in a car park in Bunda Street as police suggested. "I was stoned and drunk at the time," he said. The car was a "friend's, a blue Ford."

"I jumped out of the car I was in, opened her door, took her bag, and jumped back in my car." The bag had contained a cheque book and about \$20. He said he had then cashed a cheque for \$180 at the Canberra Raiders Leagues Club in Mawson.

When asked about a handbag taken from a woman by a man on a bike, he said he had also taken that handbag. The incident had occurred near the ambulance station in Dickson. He had taken the bike from a garage a few days earlier because he was being chased after a burglary.

Constable Ransie said the accused had confessed on the video to things which had not previously been discussed and which police had not known about.

He said that he recognised Cumberland's name while in the car on the way to the police station as the "BMX Bandit" who he had investigated about 10 years ago. The Bandit had broken into cars and stolen goods.

On Thursday, defence lawyer Terry O'Donnell suggested that Pearce had told Cumberland to take off his clothes and had hit him while at the City Police Station. Pearce had sat

him down with a file marked "break ins" and told Cumberland to confess to a number of them. He had then shut the door, pulled out his gun, called Cumberland an "arschhole", and knelt him in the ribs and back.

Mr O'Donnell then suggested that while Cumberland was talking to the Magistrate, Peter Dingwall, on the phone about having his interview time extended by police, Pearce was holding a pistol at his head.

He also suggested that when police had taken Cumberland to O'Connor to identify the burgled houses, Pearce had taken out his pistol, and told Cumberland to cooperate or he would "waste" him in the gutter.

Pearce told Mr O'Donnell that it would be an "outrageous" way to get a confession. He denied using force at any time on Cumberland and said he had never threatened anyone with his pistol. He said Cumberland had been questioned before the taped interview, but computer records had been used, not files. He also said Cumberland had pointed out houses of his own accord.

On Friday, Mr Ibbotson read to the court a list of prior convictions which included burglary, armed robbery, car theft, escaping from custody, assaulting police, and breaching bail conditions. He said Cumberland had been in prison for 13 months, and had been released in May, 1988.

Cumberland also had a lengthy record as a juvenile. He was now wanted in Melbourne because he had skipped bail. Cumberland's criminal record had been first raised by the defence.

The defence case continues on Monday.

Court told man had 'no idea' on indecent acts

By MICHAEL BACHELARD

A man who committed two acts of indecency on a four-year-old boy had "no idea" why he had done it, the ACT Supreme Court heard on Friday.

The man had pleaded guilty to the charges and was facing sentencing proceedings.

The court heard that the boy had told his mother on March 22 that the defendant had "let me see something in his pants I'm not allowed to see" the previous Friday night.

The boy had also said he "did not like touching [the man's] dick because it did not feel good".

The boy's mother had been sharing accommodation with the defendant at the time of the offence. He had been baby-sitting her children while she was at a funeral.

In a statement to police, the defendant had admitted the acts. He said he was an alcoholic and had been "pretty pissed" at the time of the offences. He was also a user of cannabis.

The defendant told police that on the night in question he had called the boy and shown him his erect penis.