

Editorial

This is the first volume of our journal to bear the banner *Australasian Historical Archaeology* and as such formally acknowledges the strong ties and intellectual cross-fertilisation which exist and have taken place between historical archaeologists in New Zealand and Australia. It is fitting that this issue of the journal should commence with an article by Nigel Prickett on the archaeology of the New Zealand wars. Those of us who participated in the field excursion associated with the 1990 Auckland conference were deeply impressed with the evocative fortification remains from the wars and with the all-essential detailed reading of the landscape which epitomise Nigel's research.

The paper by Tony Lowe and Richard Mackay explores the significance of the Old Sydney burial grounds as part of a cultural heritage management program which saw construction work impinging upon a cemetery only in part relocated a century ago. Michael Pearson who has contributed articles on whaling now reveals yet another secret love, ships' tanks, those large, square metal containers which lie about practically every historical site in Australia. Finally we have an authoritative source to which we can refer when describing what are now dog kennels, chook houses, roofing for miners cottages, fireplace backings and all other uses of a make-do nature. Into every archaeological journal a bit of theory must be added and that is provided in an article titled 'Meaning from artefacts: a question of scale'. Here Judy Birmingham looks at the Wybalenna artefacts and relates the needs of theory building to the archaeological data. This article should provide readers with an indication of the richness of the Wybalenna research and encourage you to acquire a copy of *Wybalenna: the archaeology of cultural accommodation in nineteenth century Tasmania* which is available from the Society.

The second half of the journal is a neat package which explores life at the edge of Australian society and builds upon frontier and catastrophe theories. Migration to the goldfields of Victoria is looked at by Susan Lawrence Cheney and followed by a detailed description of communities and linkages in the Southern Tablelands goldfields of New South Wales. Barry McGowan's report of a field study of the extensive and isolated remains of gold mining in a locale now all but uninhabited. The mining theme and world systems theory is developed further by Denise Gaughwin from the perspective of extractive industries in northeast Tasmania, again the product of extensive detailed field survey.

Links between environmental factors and landscape patterns are reviewed by Anne Cannon as she applies catastrophe theory to the woolsheds of the lower Lachlan River district of western New South Wales. Gaye Nayton picks up the frontier theme and applies it to artefacts excavated in the once thriving coastal port of Cossack, Western Australia. Gaye provides a valuable guide to the identification and dating of lead bottle seals.

A particularly insightful review by Peter Bell contrasts *Sojourners: The Epic Story of China's Centuries-old Relationship with Australia* and the volume edited by P. Weggars *Hidden Heritage: Historical Archaeology of the Overseas Chinese*. Bell expresses concern as to why Australian archaeologists have provided so little to the

debate on Chinese historical archaeology in contrast to the stunning work by our New Zealand colleague Neville Ritchie.

By far the bulk of resources expended on historical archaeology in Australia are associated with cultural heritage management programs, yet they do not feature proportionately in the literature. This is as true for Chinese sites as for large urban excavations. Articles by Anthony Lowe and Richard Mackay are welcomed as is the article by Denise Gaughwin, both products of cultural resource management programs. One would hope that someday those who grant approvals for developments which require archaeological investigations would approve projects only if the report is in a state of imminent publication and would not recommend archaeologists who do not publish their work. Granted there are many 'watching briefs' not worthy of publication but many projects recall the words of Penelope M. Allison in her review of the French efforts toward cultural heritage management of Rome recounted in *The Eagle and the Spade: Archaeology in Rome during the Napoleonic era 1809-1814*.

In my opinion this book is principally about the practicalities of French cultural resource management during their occupation in Rome. It is with great disappointment that I learnt nothing about the significance of this activity to the history of archaeology and material culture studies. Is there a lesson to be learnt here? Are today's increasing concerns for cultural resource management; computerised excavation recording methods; preservation of material remnants of our past (whether for political or cultural reasons); and presentation of those remnants for the public, causing neglect of the intellectual output resulting from the investigation of material culture?

As editors of the journal we have found it difficult to accumulate sufficient articles of a high standard. Publication delays occur when conference papers and articles by emerging scholars need to be further developed following review by either the Editorial Committee or by the reviewers. Historical archaeology here has an exceptionally limited academic base. There are more prehistoric archaeologists in many universities than there are historical archaeologists in all the universities of Australia. To the best of our knowledge, only three archaeologists in Australian universities concentrate their activities on historical archaeology. We are not certain what the situation is in New Zealand but our colleagues under the long white cloud may be in a similar situation.

Again, the editors would like to thank Mary Casey and Tony Lowe for assisting with the proof reading of the journal as well as Ilma Powell for her assistance in helping us gather all the bits and pieces together.

JUDY BIRMINGHAM
Centre for Historical Archaeology
University of Sydney

BRIAN J. EGLOFF
Cultural Heritage Management
University of Canberra

© Copyright 1994 Australasian Society for Historical Archaeology.

Opinions expressed in this journal are the responsibility of the author alone and it is not to be assumed that they represent the views of either the editors or Australasian Society for Historical Archaeology.

ISSN 1322-9214