

Editorial

The seven papers in *Australasian Historical Archaeology* 2004 represent a diversity of archaeological projects, a mixture of consultancies, museum, post-graduate students and university-based projects. Most explore, in some detail, methodological and analytical choices made in response to their specific projects.

Three papers (Harris, Ginn & Coroneos; Casey; Crook & Murray) offer in depth discussions of specific types of archaeological deposits: a large municipal rubbish dump, underfloor deposits and cesspits. Harris, Ginn and Coroneos, two archaeologists and a historian, worked on the Victoria Park project, Brisbane, a large consultancy project. The methodology for sampling the municipal dump and an analytical approach based on Blee (1991), 'Sorting functionally-mixed artifact assemblages with multiple regression: a comparative study in historical archaeology' is discussed. This is the first publication of any detailed methodology and analytical approach for such a project in *Australasian Historical Archaeology*. While the analytical methodology used is American the results offer some important comparative material for archaeologists undertaking such projects.

The formation, excavation and analysis of underfloor deposits from working-class houses in Pyrmont, Sydney are the subject of Casey's paper. While a fairly common type of archaeological deposit on Australian sites there has been limited publication of such material. Casey presents the results of analysis for seven houses, focusing on the kitchens and the quantities of sewing-related artefacts as well as children's toys. This discussion starts with the development of the artefact catalogue and database used for analysis, explores the model used to identify the potential for these types of deposits to form, then focuses on a preliminary comparative analysis of the kitchen underfloor deposits.

Crook and Murray present preliminary results from their reanalysis of cesspits from the Cumberland/Gloucester Streets site, The Rocks, Sydney. This university-based project, part of the Exploring the Archaeology of the Modern City, discusses the sanitation background and formation of nine cesspit deposits. They examine the models for these types of deposits, where their cesspit backfills fit into these types of deposits and the issues they identified where these deposits appear to be a mixture of depositional activities. They note that none of their examples are the typically expected 'clearance deposit', mostly being a mixture of primary and secondary refuse activities and few are likely to be linked to specific families due to high tenancy turnover.

The results of the examination of two quite different graves are examined in detail. Paterson and Franklin's work on the excavation of skeletal remains of victims of the 1629 *Batavia* massacre (cover image) presents an overview of work to date on Beacon Island, off the coast of Western Australia. The extent of scientific analysis undertaken on the black soil material encasing the skeletons is a response to the signifi-

cance of this event in the pre-colonial period, the focus on maritime archaeology in Western Australia and the need to have scientific certainty about such an important event and the related evidence. This paper also discusses the reasons for the attribution to a specific mass burial known from the contemporary sources.

Hewitt and Wright's work on quite different burials from the former Melbourne Gaol investigates the possible identification of their most intact skeleton of a prisoner. After a discussion of the excavation methodology, the debunking of the potential for lime to decay bodies, and issues surrounding the variety of earlier twentieth-century exhumations in this area, the authors thoroughly consider the possible identity of their skeleton using World War I medical records and other historical sources. In the end their ambivalence about naming the individual results from the incompleteness of the records and the poor (bungled) recording of the earlier exhumations. Much of this work is based on Geoff Hewitt's Master's thesis.

Katrina Stankowski's paper is also the result of her Master's thesis. The Polish settlement at Polish Hill River in South Australia, a small late nineteenth-century development, was the subject of detailed research, oral history and excavation. The results of this work are fascinating. The author considers that other than wall niches very little of the Polish immigration is visible in the material record. This is in stark contrast to the obvious physical presence of contemporary Germans which forms an important part of modern South Australian identity, notably in the wine regions of the Barossa Valley. Their houses and village forms were transplanted from Germany and evidence of locally-made pottery with German influences is also found.

Alister Bowen's paper, also based on his Master's thesis, examines the sites of early commercial fishing found along the far south coast of New South Wales. A range of sites are identified with evidence of fishing technology, including: launch maintenance, net making/mending, net tanning and drying, and fish cleaning. The evidence for this is described and discussed. This is a new topic for historical archaeologists and Bowen is currently enrolled in further research on Chinese fishing in Victoria.

Many thanks to the authors for their patience, persistence and assistance in getting another journal out. The anonymous referees, as always, provided great comments and support to the authors and the editor. Their efforts are appreciated. Special thanks to Sarah Colley who organised the anonymous referring of my paper. Tim Adams and Tony Lowe provided some of the figures and location plans in a number of the papers. Next year's journal will have a guest editor, Martin Gibbs. Seasons greetings and best wishes for a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.

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