

# AUSTRALIAN ARCHAEOLOGY '95

Proceedings of the 1995 Australian Archaeological  
Association Annual Conference

Edited by

Sean Ulm, Ian Lilley and Anne Ross



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# TEMPUS

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Anthropology Museum  
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# LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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- Bryce Barker Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba, Queensland, 4350, Australia
- John Bartley Centre for Instrumental and Developmental Chemistry, School of Chemistry, Queensland University of Technology, GPO Box 2434, Brisbane, Queensland, 4001, Australia
- Philip Boot Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, The Faculties, Australian National University, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, 0200, Australia
- Sandra Bowdler Centre for Archaeology, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, Western Australia, 6907, Australia
- Bill Boyd Centre for Coastal Management, Faculty of Resource Science and Management, Southern Cross University, PO Box 157, Lismore, New South Wales, 2480, Australia
- Deborah Brian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland, 4072, Australia
- John Campbell Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, James Cook University, Townsville, Queensland, 4811, Australia
- Eleanor Casella Department of Anthropology, University of California at Berkeley, 232 Kroeber Hall, Berkeley, California, 94720-3710, United States of America
- Noelene Cole Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, James Cook University, Townsville, Queensland, 4811, Australia
- Maria Cotter Centre for Coastal Management, Faculty of Resource Science and Management, Southern Cross University, PO Box 157, Lismore, New South Wales, 2480, Australia
- Bruno David Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland, 4072, Australia
- Luke Godwin Queensland Department of Environment (Central Coast Region), PO Box 3130, Rockhampton Shopping Fair, Rockhampton, Queensland, 4701, Australia
- Rosemary Goodall Centre for Instrumental and Developmental Chemistry, School of Chemistry, Queensland University of Technology, GPO Box 2434, Brisbane, 4001, Australia
- Paul Gorecki Acacia Heritage Research Pty Ltd, PO Box 292, Pennant Hills, New South Wales, 2120, Australia
- Miranda Grant PO Box 414, Jabiru, Northern Territory, 0886, Australia
- Shelley Greer Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, James Cook University, Townsville, Queensland, 4811, Australia
- Jay Hall Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland, 4072, Australia
- Elisabeth Hatte Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, James Cook University, Townsville, Queensland, 4811, Australia
- Lara Lamb Department of Anthropology, Northern Territory University, PO Box 40146, Casuarina, Northern Territory, 0811, Australia
- Ian Lilley Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland, 4072, Australia
- Scott L'Oste-Brown Queensland Department of Environment (Central Coast Region), PO Box 3130, Rockhampton Shopping Fair, Rockhampton, Queensland, 4701, Australia
- Harry Lourandos Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland, 4072, Australia

## *List of Contributors*

- Josephine McDonald Jo McDonald Cultural Heritage Management Pty Ltd, 15 Bankside Avenue, Undercliffe, New South Wales, 2206, Australia
- Angela McGowan Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Environment and Land Management, GPO Box 44A, Hobart, Tasmania, 7001, Australia
- Winifred Mumford Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, The Faculties, Australian National University, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, 0200, Australia
- Lyndon Murphy 9 Dauphin Terrace, Highgate Hill, Queensland, 4101, Australia
- Tim Murray School of Archaeology, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria, 3083, Australia and Institut d'Art et d'Archéologie, Université de Paris I (Panthéon-Sorbonne)
- Wave O'Connor Centre for Coastal Management, Faculty of Resource Science and Management, Southern Cross University, PO Box 157, Lismore, New South Wales, 2351, Australia
- Quandamooka Quandamooka Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, PO Box 77, Dunwich, Stradbroke Island, Queensland, 4183, Australia
- Norma Richardson Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, GPO Box 4646, Darwin, Northern Territory, 0801, Australia
- John Richter Australian Centre for International and Tropical Health and Nutrition, University of Queensland Medical School, Herston Road, Herston, Queensland, 4006, Australia
- Gail Robertson Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland, 4072, Australia
- Andrée Rosenfeld Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, The Faculties, Australian National University, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, 0200, Australia
- Anne Ross Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland, 4072, Australia and Department of Management Studies, University of Queensland, Gatton College, Queensland, 4345, Australia
- Matthew Salmon Cultural Heritage Projects, 9 Shearwater Street, Peregian Beach, Queensland, 4573, Australia
- Dana Sattler Centre for Coastal Management, Faculty of Resource Science and Management, Southern Cross University, PO Box 157, Lismore, New South Wales, 2351, Australia
- Claire Smith Department of Archaeology and Palaeoanthropology, University of New England, Armidale, New South Wales, 2351, Australia
- Sharon Sullivan Australian Heritage Commission, GPO Box 1567, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, 2601
- TALC Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, 4 Lefroy Street, North Hobart, Tasmania, 7000, Australia
- Robin Torrence Division of Anthropology, Australian Museum, 6 College Street, Sydney, New South Wales, 2000, Australia
- Claudio Tuniz ANSTO Tandem Accelerator (ANTARES), Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation, PMB 1, Menai, New South Wales 2234, Australia
- Sean Ulm Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Queensland, 4072, Australia
- Alan Watchman Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, James Cook University, Townsville, Queensland, 4811, Australia
- Richard Yelf Georadar Research Pty Ltd, 412 Eastbank Road, Coramba, Coffs Harbour, New South Wales, 2450, Australia



# PREFACE: AUSTRALIAN ARCHAEOLOGY '95

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Sean Ulm, Ian Lilley and Anne Ross

All of the papers in this volume are based on papers, session overviews and posters presented at the 1995 Australian Archaeological Association (AAA) Annual Conference. The Conference was held at the Gatton College campus of the University of Queensland (a former agricultural college located approximately 150km west of Brisbane in Queensland, Australia) from 6-9 December, 1995.

The Conference was hosted by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at the University of Queensland in collaboration with the Department of Anthropology and Sociology and the University of Queensland Archaeological Services Unit (UQASU). It was one of the longest AAA conferences ever – enduring over a tiring four days. It was also one of the largest conferences on record with over 220 registered participants. In total, over 85 formal presentations were made at the Conference, including 49 papers of which 27 appear in this volume. Many of the papers which do not appear in this volume will appear elsewhere.

Conference sessions covered a variety of topics including 'Queensland: Cinderella State No More' (convened by Ian Lilley and Jay Hall), 'Change in Australian Prehistory: Scale, Trends and Frameworks of Interpretation' (Bryce Barker, Harry Lourandos and Bruno David), 'Back to the Drawing Board: New Perspectives on 35,000 Years of Prehistory in Island Melanesia' (Anita Smith and Christina Pavlides), 'New Directions in Cultural Heritage Management' (Anne Ross and Josephine McDonald), 'Pacific Archaeology' (John Craib and Terry Bonhomme), 'Recent Research in Australia' (Claire Smith) and 'Use of Stone Artefacts in Australian Prehistory' (Richard Fullagar).

The Annual General Meeting of the AAA was dominated by discussions centred on the dispute between the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council and some archaeologists from La Trobe University over the repatriation of archaeological materials excavated as part of the Southern Forests Archaeological Project. The Conference was preceded by intense media coverage of the case and a special panel discussion on the 'Repatriation of Non-Skeletal

Remains' was held at the Conference. Discussion papers from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council, Angela McGowan (Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service) and Professor Tim Murray (School of Archaeology, La Trobe University) were circulated prior to the session and appear in the final section of this volume. We believe that these papers signal the emergence of a new era of archaeological practice in Australia where increasing negotiation between heritage owners, researchers and regulatory authorities will be required to ensure that indigenous cultural property rights are preserved.

Sharon Sullivan's introductory paper picks up on this theme. Sullivan's paper was originally delivered as a special guest presentation after the Conference Dinner. She outlined the history of change in cultural heritage management over some 25 years, and showed how many of these changes have impinged on the practice of Australian archaeology generally. In particular, she emphasised that questions of ownership of the resource now dominate much of the research and environmental impact assessment studies which are undertaken in this country:

Our view of the past is linear and time bound. In Aboriginal society, another view of the past prevails. Traditionally the ancient past lives in the present ... Archaeological primacy is about the Aboriginal past – but for Aborigines the past is part of a story-making process which hasn't stopped (Sullivan this volume).

As well as the papers relating to the repatriation debate, several other papers in this volume deal with the changes which are occurring in the practice of Australian archaeology.

These Proceedings depart in several major ways from its predecessors. First, all of the papers in this volume were presented in some form at the Conference; no other contributions are included. Second, the full range of issues covered at the Conference are represented in the volume rather than it being restricted to a single session topic or theme. Third, all papers were refereed (except for session

overviews and the final section on, 'Repatriation Issues in Australian Archaeology'). Finally, with the exception of Davidson *et al.* (1995), we believe that this is the first time that presenters in the Poster Session have been invited to contribute to the general AAA Conference Proceedings.

Some authors have chosen to submit essentially what was presented at the Conference while others have substantially rewritten contributions in light of comment and discussion at the Conference and at the suggestion of referees and the editors. Papers by Robertson, Goodall *et al.*, and Rosenfeld and Mumford were originally presented as posters.

The work of the 44 contributors represented in this volume provides an up-to-date overview of the diverse interests of contemporary Australian archaeologists and Australian Archaeology '95.

### Acknowledgements

First we must thank sponsors of the 1995 AAA Annual Conference, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, and the University of Queensland Archaeological Services Unit (UQASU) for support and use of resources. The Department of Management Studies, University of Queensland (Gatton College) provided considerable resources both during the Conference and in the weeks leading up to it. Su Davies, Deborah Brian, Jim Smith, Chris Clarkson, Jon Prangnell and Bryce Barker deserve particular thanks as other members of the Conference Organising Committee for helping make things run smoothly and successfully from start to finish. We extend our thanks to University of Queensland anthropology and management studies students Paul McInnes, Vanessa Kruger, Kate Quirk, Chloe Welsh, Kate Steele and James Kewley. Thanks are due to Brett Jardine for helping to keep the Conference running with his unfaltering knowledge of all the complex gadgetry in the Main Lecture Theatre. Special thanks to Professor Craig Pearson (Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Gatton College) for helping to fix the air-conditioning so promptly. Lyn McKenzie (Gatton College) put up with last minute changes to accommodation etc. John Cockburn of the Lawes Campus Club was flexible and accommodating in the provision of refreshments to delegates. We extend a particular debt of gratitude to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council, La Trobe University and the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service for supporting the debate on repatriation and for contributing papers to this volume.

In preparing the manuscript for publication we thank the Australian Archaeological Association Inc. and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, University of Queensland for financial assistance, the Department of Anthropology and Sociology and the Department of Management Studies (Gatton College) at the University of Queensland also provided access to facilities and resources. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at the University of Queensland agreed to sponsor publication of the Conference proceedings from the outset. Ann Andrews (Archaeology and Natural History Publications, Research School of Archaeology and Natural History, Australian National University) and Anna Bartos (Anthropology Museum, University of Queensland) provided constant advice on formatting, layout and editorial procedures. Finally, the series editors of *Tempus*, Jay Hall and Leonn Satterthwait, provided support and advice throughout the preparation of the manuscript for publication. We extend particular thanks to Brit Asmussen, Deborah Brian and John Richter for proof-reading in the final dying stages. John Richter also touched-up, fiddled with and even redrew many of the figures in the volume. Thanks also to Chris Croker, Chris Clarkson and Jim Smith for providing miscellaneous computer advice.

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University of Queensland), Dr Jo McDonald (Jo McDonald Cultural Heritage Management Pty Ltd), Jon Prangnell (Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Queensland), Norma Richardson (Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory), Mike Rowland (Cultural Heritage Branch, Queensland Department of Environment), Dr Claire Smith (Department of Archaeology and Palaeo-anthropology, University of New England), Dr Philip Smith (Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Queensland), Dr Jim Specht (Division of Anthropology, Australian Museum), Dr Nicola

Stern (School of Archaeology, La Trobe University), Dr Robin Torrence (Division of Anthropology, Australian Museum), Dr Peter Veth (Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, James Cook University), and Dr Peter White (Department of Prehistoric and Historical Archaeology, University of Sydney).

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