

EDITORIAL

As indicated in last year's editorial, this sixth volume of this journal is the final one from the present editor. As befits such a swan-song, this issue has a greater number of papers and (due to the efforts of Michael Pearson) a greater number of book reviews, than ever before. The real reason for this special effort, however, has been the celebration of Australia's Bicentenary, an event that has particular significance for Australian historical archaeologists. The extra content also reflects this editor's continuing conviction that a journal such as this has a vital role to play in the creation of a body of published literature, without which a discipline cannot contribute to the furtherance of knowledge and understanding. Happily, others are beginning to share this editor's concern at the low level of publication compared with the growing amount of heritage activity. In the last of the book reviews published here, for instance, Linda Young remarks on the problem of non-publication: 'Reams of research disappear into files in this manner, and that is a shame and a loss'. It is heartening to find that some other voices are crying in the wilderness.

When the first volume of this journal appeared in 1983, one reviewer hinted that it was unlikely that the journal would ever really achieve its intention of not being restricted to historical archaeology within Australia itself. Previous issues have, however, published papers dealing with subject matter from New Zealand, Antarctica, the United States and Europe, and the present volume continues this practice. The papers include contributions from New Zealand, the western United States and West Germany, as well as from New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania, and South Australia. It is always sweet to prove critics wrong.

First come a group of three papers dealing with aspects of industrial archaeology. Denis Gojak on the Gara River Hydro-Electric Scheme contributes to a subject area on which there is as yet little published Australian material. Similarly, Brian Rogers on an early Wollongong coke works adds importantly to our knowledge of a type of site that has had relatively little attention previously. David Bannear's paper, on the other hand, deals with the better known subject of copper smelting but reminds us yet again of the important role that archaeological evidence has in the proper understanding of the historical past.

The fourth paper, by Pam Blackman, provides an archaeological analysis of a house in Queensland and should serve as a model of what can be achieved in this respect with little time and no financial assistance. The following two papers, however, look at a very different subject: that of 'overseas Chinese' sites. Andrew Piper investigates the degree of cultural conservatism that is indicated by our evidence for Chinese miners' diet in nineteenth-century southern New Zealand, and Priscilla Wegars discusses Asian artefactual evidence from western North America that has relevance also for Australia and New Zealand.

The final five papers all have a somewhat technical character. Ted Higginbotham, Michael Macphail and Brian Davey examine the soil and pollen evidence from part of the gardens of First Government House in Sydney and use it to throw light on the historical environment of the area. Don Ranson and Brian Egloff score a published 'first' with a paper examining the Australian application of earth-resistivity surveying, using two famous Tasmanian historical sites as case studies. Sue Pearson also investigates a new research area in Australian historical archaeology: the systematic use of plants as site indicators. The next paper, by John Bignell, examines a markedly different subject, discussing in detail the technical process of restoration as applied to a Tasmanian watermill. Finally, the last paper, by Rudolf Gerharz, Renate Lantermann and Dirk Spennemann, discusses the use of Munsell Color Charts in archaeology, providing in the process a lot of the advice on their use that many of us have long wished for. The volume ends with no less than fourteen book reviews on a variety of publications.

As previously, this issue of the journal has benefitted from the help of many people. Foremost among them must be Douglas Hobbs, of the Department of Archaeology and Palaeoanthropology in the University of New England, whose graphic contributions are now almost totally by electronic means. Others at the University of New England whose assistance must be acknowledged include Steve Clarke of the Department of Geography, the staff of the Photography Department, and Mrs Di Watson of the Department of Archaeology and Palaeoanthropology. As in previous years, I also remain grateful for the help of numerous anonymous referees, the patience of the authors, and the continued support of the committee of the Australian Society for Historical Archaeology. Finally, I would emphasize that Beryl Connah has done far more of the work on this journal than many would realize. To her, and to everyone who has contributed to the publication of the first six volumes, I extend my sincere thanks.

And so, my part is done, it is now someone else's turn.

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