

Editorial

Not being tied to a specific theme, the seven papers in this sixteenth edition of the *Journal* are more reflective of the diversity of historical archaeology in Australasia than those in recent volumes.

The first paper titled 'Pattern and Purpose in Historical Archaeology' by Emeritus Professor Graham Connah is the text of a paper he presented at the Society's 1997 Annual Conference held in Queenstown, New Zealand. The only changes made in this published version are some minor alterations and the addition of references and a bibliography. The paper outlines his concerns (in his opinion 'the crisis') facing historical archaeology in Australasia, more particularly in Australia, and his suggested solutions. While to some his main solutions will seem all too simplistic (publish more in both academic and 'people' publications), the paper is essential reading for anyone concerned about the future of historical archaeology, and in particular, its declining academic standing in many Australian universities. Historical archaeology in Australasia does not have a secure guaranteed future, so all archaeologists with an interest in the discipline long-term need to consider Professor Connah's observations based on many years experience as an academic-archaeologist, founder-editor of the *ASHA Journal*, and Past President of the Association.

The second article by Susan Lawrence is an inspiring essay on 'The Role of Material Culture in Australian Archaeology'. Material culture has been a growing area of research in recent years and a considerable body of literature has emerged which incorporates theoretical, methodological, and applied approaches. Historians, anthropologists, sociologists, economists, and museologists have all been active participants in debates concerning the nature of material culture historical processes. She cogently argues that it is through the study of material culture in its social and physical contexts that archaeology has the most to contribute to these interdisciplinary debates but cautions that its potential has yet to be fully realised. Reasons for this failure are canvassed in the paper. It concludes with an informative example, based on recent fieldwork at a colonial whaling station in Tasmania, showing the potential of archaeology to contribute to material culture research within terrestrial and maritime archaeology.

Penelope Allison's paper (the third in the volume) is centred round 'The Household in Historical Archaeology'. It commences with an informative review of some recent approaches to the study of household activities through the archaeological record, followed by a summary of her research at the well-known Italian site of Pompeii, to demonstrate techniques for using the archaeological record, not only to present new perspectives on the use of space in Roman houses, but also to highlight the need for careful assessment of relationships between documentary and material evidence. The second part of the paper returns closer to home to discuss the application (underway at present) of similar methodology to the investigation of household behaviour on an Australian pastoral estate, the Old Kinchega Homestead, western New South Wales, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

An historical and archaeological survey and technological study of four nineteenth-century water-powered flourmills in the New England region of New South Wales is the subject of the fourth paper. The data was collected as part of a recently completed Ph.D. in Historical Archaeology from the University of New England, Armidale, N.S.W. It follows earlier studies on 'the transfer of watermill technology from Britain to Australia' and 'water-powered flourmills in Tasmania' published in *Australasian Historical Archaeology* volumes 14 and 15 respectively. Together, Warwick Pearson's studies of

watermilling are informative on many aspects of the use, adaptation and rise and decline of water-power in nineteenth-century Australia. As has been ably demonstrated many times before, a fuller understanding of many historic industrial processes can be gleaned from careful investigation of surviving field evidence on the original locations, in this instance water-powered flourmill sites.

The fifth paper, by Phil Moore and Neville Ritchie, presents the results of their comprehensive study of the unique in-ground gold ore-roasting kilns on the Hauraki goldfield in the North Island of New Zealand. The study involved a review of the ore-roasting process, examination of historical accounts of the kilns and their operation, and recording, mapping and assessment of all known kiln-sites. The history of ore-roasting at each of the principal sites is related to the surviving field remains. The paper also incorporates an analysis of the kilns design and operation. Comparisons are made with similar (but not identical) gold ore treatments and technology on the Australian goldfields, partly to ascertain why some New Zealand mining companies adopted ore-roasting in huge underground kilns at a time (1889-1898) long after it was largely discontinued in Australia, where the heyday of ore-roasting was in the 1860s.

Valerie Hill's study of 'The Welsh Village', an abandoned late nineteenth-century gold mining settlement in central Victoria, is an attempt to gain an understanding of human perceptions of the landscape as reflected in historical and archaeological evidence, and in turn how the landscape both constrained and influenced human activity (mining and habitation).

The seventh article is Gordon Grimwade's paper on the 1700 km-long Canning Stock Route (CSR) which crosses a remote part of Western Australia. It was surveyed and constructed in the period 1906-1910 to provide access to southern markets for the Kimberley region and used sporadically until 1959. Since the 1970s the CSR has become popular for recreational four wheel drives. This paper provides a preliminary record of the wells, graves, and more recent material culture of the route. While it questions the well-intentioned private restoration work on the CSR it recognises the need to upgrade facilities, particularly water sources. The lack of management of this important archaeological site, despite its nomination to the Register of the National Estate, is addressed as a case study. He concludes with a plea for both more archaeological work and better management of the key components of this and similar Australian icons.

The final article by Martin Carney reinterprets an assemblage excavated in 1989 at the 'Babes in the Wood Inn' site in Parramatta. The original interpretation is shown to be inconsistent with the archaeological and documentary records. The author's sleuthing indicates that the deposit was largely created as a result of on-site production at a cordial factory and not, as originally determined, the result of activity at a hotel. The author convincingly makes the point that the application of fixed functional interpretations during initial analysis contributed to the misinterpretation of the assemblage in this instance and potentially in others. The case is a salutary lesson to us all.

Finally thanks to all the contributors, both those who get to see their efforts in print in this volume and those who 'missed the cut' this time, but whom I hope to read in a future *AHA* volume, hopefully the next one. My thanks too to the *ASHA* Editorial Committee, Brolga Press, Aedeon Cremin, Reviews Editor and currently President of *ASHA*, and Susan Lawrence, editor of the previous *AHA* volume for their advice and assistance.

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