

# Hearts and minds: Public archaeology and the Queensland school curriculum

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## Abstract

The school education system is an important public sphere where popular notions of archaeology and the archaeological past are produced and reproduced. Within the framework of an interpretive public archaeology, schools represent a significant social context in which archaeologists might seek meaningful engagement with the wider community. Analysis of the Queensland Education Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) syllabus reveals that there are many opportunities for the inclusion of Australian archaeology examples in the curricula of both primary and secondary schools. In this paper we develop a public outreach strategy for engaging the Queensland school curriculum and report on two case studies from southeast Queensland where this strategy was implemented.

## Introduction

In recent times the conceptual framework of public archaeology has been expanded beyond traditional 'public interest' models to include the notion of an active, interpretive conjunction between archaeology and society (Derry 2003; Hodder 1991, 1995; Malloy 2003; McGimsey and Davis 2000; Merriman 2004; Shanks and McGuire 1996). Such a conjunction explicitly recognises the inherent political dimensions of the archaeological endeavour and seeks to articulate the disciplinary elements of academic archaeology, 'salvage' archaeology and heritage management in a purposeful and applied relationship with the wider community. Within this expanded framework, the goals of public outreach in archaeology are no longer defined purely in terms of communicating information or raising awareness, but also as a means of bringing an 'archaeological perspective' to contemporary social discourse and as a way for professional archaeologists, from all branches of the discipline, to engage with both local and global processes of change.

In order to develop this broader interpretive approach to public outreach in Australia, it is necessary to identify and strategically engage with those specific social contexts in which the ethical practice of Australian archaeology can be made both meaningful and relevant to the daily realities of an increasingly diverse range of non-archaeological audiences. We propose that these contexts are to be found within four major 'public activity areas' of current archaeological practice: the operation of our compliance-based heritage management systems; our ongoing interactions with local and descendent communities; the representation of archaeology in popular culture, including mass media, museums, tourism, literature and art; and, the focus here, archaeological teaching and learning in our educational institutions.

The social and political connections between

archaeology and education have been considered at length by a number of authors (e.g. Barlow 1990; Davis 2000; Hamilakis 2004; MacKenzie and Stone 1990; Nzewunwa 1990). As Davis (2000:194) points out, education is 'a primary mode for transmitting society's knowledge, values and beliefs'. Consequently, the education system is a key social site at which public constructions of archaeology and the archaeological past are produced and reproduced. Jeppson and Brauer (2003:83) urge archaeologists to embrace this 'realm of cultural production and reproduction as a way to open up a greater space for archaeology's participation in public debate'. In this view, the role of archaeology in educational curricula is an important public archaeological issue.

## Australian archaeology and the education system

Recent discussions surrounding archaeological education in Australia have mainly focussed on the archaeology curriculum at university level (Beck and Balme 2005; Colley 2003, 2004; Hall et al. 2005; Lydon 2002). Such discussions have been necessitated by a variety of factors, including the professional and ethical requirements of a growing heritage management sector, and the colonisation of our higher education environments by the forces of so-called 'academic capitalism' (see Hamilakis 2004). However, while the teaching and learning of archaeology in Australian universities is a critical issue for the future of the profession, less attention has been given to the place of archaeology in our primary and secondary school systems. Although statistics show that participation in university education has steadily increased over the last 10 years, fewer than 20% of Australian adults have a bachelors degree (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2005) and only a small number of these will have undertaken archaeology courses during their university experience. It would seem that for the vast majority of Australians any formal educational experience with archaeology is limited to their school years.

As a state government responsibility, the school curriculum varies between each of the states and territories of Australia and there is currently very little data available regarding the institutionalised use of archaeology within the different educational systems. With respect to the New South Wales high school curriculum, Colley (2000) suggests that archaeology is mostly associated with the ancient history syllabus and involves overseas examples of popular classical sites, such as Pompeii. Furthermore, these examples are often delivered in traditional classroom settings by teachers with limited knowledge of archaeology or access to suitable archaeological resources. This is consistent with anecdotal evidence from Queensland. The results of a recent survey in Western Australia (Balme and Wilson 2004) show that school is not considered an important source of information about archaeology for recent school-leavers and that popular constructions of archaeology among 'educated young Australians' are

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characterised by a number of common misconceptions, including the notion that there is no archaeology to do in Australia, and that archaeology has little contemporary relevance to Australian society. Similarly, surveys of archaeology undergraduate students in Sydney (Colley 2005) demonstrate that although school may be a significant context in which some people develop a general interest in archaeology, such interest is predominantly based on Old World and classical themes together with various romantic images of archaeology as adventure and discovery in ‘exotic’ overseas locations. Owen and Steele (2005) show that perceptions of archaeology amongst primary school children in Adelaide reflect a number of ‘common erroneous beliefs’, most notably a strong association of archaeology with dinosaurs. Taken together, these findings suggest that Australian archaeology does not feature prominently in the mainstream learning activities of our primary and secondary schools. Nonetheless, there is strong anecdotal evidence that teachers are keen to incorporate Australian archaeological experiences into their teaching plans when the opportunity arises and many Australian archaeologists actively seek to include school students in their public outreach activities (e.g. Owen and Steele 2005).

One way of improving archaeological representation in schools might be to consider how Australian archaeology can be utilised to achieve curriculum outcomes beyond the generally narrow association of archaeology with ancient history. By demonstrating the potential of Australian archaeology to meet a wide range of existing educational goals across the school curriculum it may be possible to open up spaces for more formalised and ongoing involvement of the profession in both the theoretical and practical learning environments of Australian schools. With this aim in mind, we develop a public archaeology engagement strategy with respect to the Queensland school curriculum and report on two case studies where such strategy was successfully implemented.

**Engaging the Queensland school curriculum**

The Queensland school curriculum offers many opportunities for the inclusion of Australian archaeological examples and experiences. The most obvious place within the curriculum is in the Queensland Education Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) syllabus for Years 1 to 10, as it is designed to build on human curiosity about the diverse ways in which people interact with each other and the environment (the Key Learning Area) (Queensland School Curriculum Council 2000:1). The SOSE syllabus is complex and is underpinned by concepts, values and processes that derive from ‘disciplines including history,

geography, economics, politics, sociology, anthropology, law, psychology and ethics’ (Queensland School Curriculum Council 2000:1).

In overview, the practical teaching guidelines of the syllabus are contained within 120 short statements, known as Core Contents, concerning what students should learn at each of the various educational levels from Years 1 to 10. Teachers are required to formulate their teaching plans and to choose activities that illustrate and support these Core Contents. In the following analysis we provide a detailed examination of the Queensland SOSE syllabus to demonstrate how the Core Contents are derived and the potential relevance of Australian archaeology as a means of achieving these stated learning goals. While any in-depth consideration of the situation outside Queensland is beyond the scope of this analysis, a brief review of the various education department websites reveals that learning areas broadly comparable to the Queensland SOSE syllabus exist within the school curriculum of all states and territories (Table 1).

The Key Learning Area of the Queensland SOSE syllabus is achieved through Key Learning Area Outcomes that contain Core Learning Outcomes and Discretionary Learning Outcomes (Figure 1). Core Learning outcomes are those considered essential for all students to acquire during the first 10 years of schooling. Discretionary Learning Outcomes are those that go beyond what is considered essential at any particular level (Queensland School Curriculum Council 2000:13). Core Learning Outcomes are designed so that students gain understandings of natural and cultural phenomena and their interactions in such areas as group formation, material culture, past ideas, events and actions, identity construction and the value of heritage through the application of sociocultural and sociocritical enquiry (Queensland School Curriculum Council 2000:10-11). These Key Learning Area Outcomes occur in four Strands:

- *Time, continuity and change*, which emphasises understanding the ways ideas and behaviours remain constant or change within human groups through time and their cultural heritage implications;
- *Place and space*, which concentrates on the role of natural and cultural processes within environments and the significance and social patterning of places;
- *Culture and identity*, which deals with concepts of cultural diversity and perceptions; and
- *System, resources and power*, which ‘emphasises the processes and human experiences associated with citizenship, government, economy and business’ (Queensland School Curriculum Council 2000:11-12).

State/Territory	Curriculum Learning Area	Education Department Web Location
QLD	Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE)	<a href="http://www.education.qld.gov.au">http://www.education.qld.gov.au</a>
NSW	Human Society and its Environment (HSIE)	<a href="http://www.det.nsw.edu.au">http://www.det.nsw.edu.au</a>
VIC	Civics and Citizenship (from 2006)	<a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au">http://www.education.vic.gov.au</a>
SA	Society and Environment	<a href="http://www.decs.sa.gov.au">http://www.decs.sa.gov.au</a>
WA	Society and Environment	<a href="http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au">http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au</a>
TAS	Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE)	<a href="http://www.education.tas.gov.au">http://www.education.tas.gov.au</a>
NT	Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE)	<a href="http://www.deet.nt.gov.au">http://www.deet.nt.gov.au</a>
ACT	Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE)	<a href="http://www.decs.act.gov.au">http://www.decs.act.gov.au</a>

**Table 1** Comparable learning areas within the school curriculum of each Australian state and territory.

Each of these four Key Learning Area Outcome Strands is taught across eight Key Learning Area Outcome Levels. These levels comprise a Foundation Level, for students who do not enter schooling with the skills to undertake Level 1 tasks, six levels of increasing sophistication and complexity achieved across the first 10 years of schooling and a level known as ‘Beyond Level 6’ in which all learning outcomes are discretionary. Typically students will demonstrate Level 2 outcomes by the end of Year 3, Level 4 by the end of year 7 and Level 6 by the end of Year 10 (Queensland School Curriculum Council 2000:42).

The syllabus also identifies that the four Key Values of democratic process, social justice, ecological and economic sustainability, and peace are integral to achieving the Key Learning Area. The learning occurs using five Key Processes of investigating, creating, participating, communicating and reflecting. The Key Concepts taught in the syllabus derive from a combination of the four Key Values and five Key Processes. Each of the four Key Learning Area Outcome Strands consists of five Key Concepts, but they differ for each Strand. The Key Concepts for each of the Key Learning Area Outcome Strands in the SOSE syllabus are shown in Table 2.

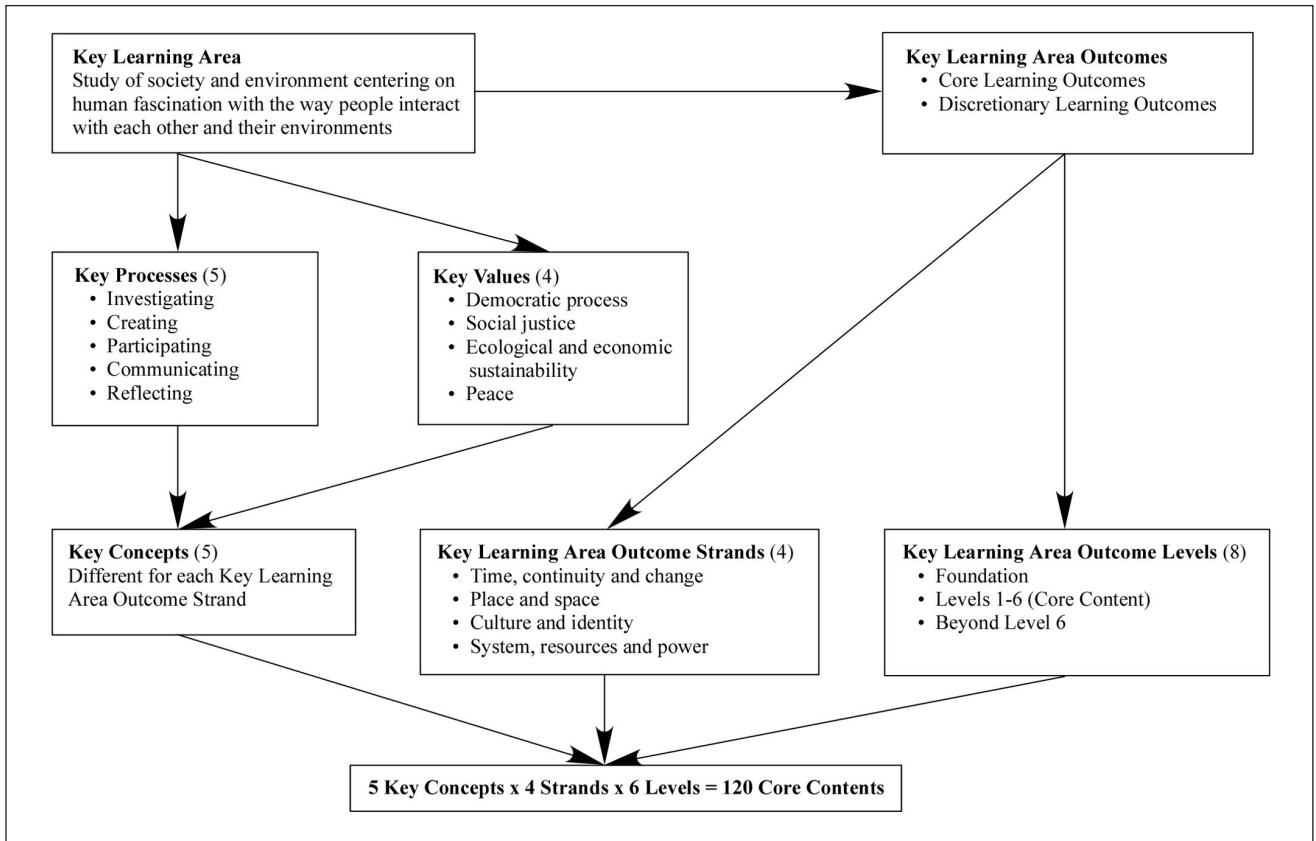


Figure 1 Schematic representation of the Queensland Education Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) syllabus.

<p><b>Strand:</b> Time Continuity and Change</p> <p><b>Key Concepts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence over time</li> <li>• Change and continuities</li> <li>• People and contributions</li> <li>• Causes and effects</li> <li>• Heritage</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strand:</b> Place and Space</p> <p><b>Key Concepts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human-environment relationships</li> <li>• Processes and environments</li> <li>• Stewardship</li> <li>• Spatial patterns</li> <li>• Significance of place</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strand:</b> Culture and Identity</p> <p><b>Key Concepts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural diversity</li> <li>• Cultural perceptions</li> <li>• Belonging</li> <li>• Cultural change</li> <li>• Construction of identities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strand:</b> Systems, Resources and Power</p> <p><b>Key Concepts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactions between ecological and other systems</li> <li>• Economy and business</li> <li>• Participation and decision making</li> <li>• Citizenship and government</li> <li>• Access to power</li> </ul>

Table 2 Learning Area Outcome Strands and associated Key Concepts in the SOSE syllabus (Queensland School Curriculum Council 2000:35-41).

Different Core Content is provided for each Key Concept within each Strand resulting in 120 different Core Contents across the six main Levels of the syllabus. Examples of Core Content are provided in Table 3. Bracketed items shown in Table 3 contain suggestions from the Queensland School Curriculum Council (2000) on the subject matter that could be used to illustrate each Core Content. No archaeological examples are supplied in any of the 120 Core Contents. Anecdotally, some Queensland teachers do provide students with archaeological input in the SOSE syllabus but it mostly concerns Ancient Egypt or Rome, which is consistent with anecdotal evidence from other states (e.g. Colley 2000). However, there are many opportunities for involvement in such a wide-ranging syllabus by Australian archaeologists and archaeological examples could be used to illustrate virtually all 120 Core Contents. Even if we limit ourselves to those areas where archaeology is unequivocally applicable to the stated learning goal, we are left with 47 Core Contents (or more than one-third of the syllabus) that can be directly addressed through Australian archaeological examples and experiences. For instance, the Core Contents of all five Key Concepts within Level 3 of the Time, Continuity & Change Strand can readily accommodate archaeological input. These five Core Contents are: evidence from diverse

sources over time, sequences and timelines about specific Australian changes and continuities, contributions of people in Australia's past, causes and effects of specific historical events and perspectives of past and present Australians from diverse cultural backgrounds. The number of Key Concepts that can be directly addressed by Australian archaeology examples for each Key Level within each Key Strand of the syllabus are shown in Table 4.

Based on this analysis of the existing situation it appears that for archaeologists to best fit their public outreach agenda into the Queensland school curriculum they should target their involvement in the SOSE syllabus to Levels 2 to 5 (i.e. middle Primary to lower Secondary) and concentrate on the Time, Continuity and Change and Culture and Identity Strands. These levels and their associated Key Concepts were targeted through two archaeological projects conducted in 2005 with involvement from the University of Queensland.

**Toowong Cemetery case study**

Toowong Cemetery is located 4.5 km west of the Brisbane CBD and is the largest cemetery in Queensland, with well over 100,000 burials on more than 100 acres of land. It has been in continuous operation from before its official opening in 1875 up to the present day. The first

<p><b>Strand:</b> Time, Continuity and Change</p> <p><b>Concept:</b> Evidence over time</p> <p><b>Level:</b> 2</p> <p><b>Core Content:</b> Students know about evidence from events, artefacts, stories and symbols from familiar and different times and settings (birthday, Australian flag, Olympic Games, religious celebrations, fables and fairytales)</p>	<p><b>Strand:</b> Place and Space</p> <p><b>Concept:</b> Stewardship</p> <p><b>Level:</b> 3</p> <p><b>Core Content:</b> Students know about field studies (use of instruments, data collection, sources of information)</p>
<p><b>Strand:</b> Culture and Identity</p> <p><b>Concept:</b> Construction of identities</p> <p><b>Level:</b> 4</p> <p><b>Core Content:</b> Students know about connections between personal identities and material and non-material aspects of different groups (fashion, music, art, symbols, attitudes, activities, values)</p>	<p><b>Strand:</b> System, Resources and Power</p> <p><b>Concept:</b> Interaction between ecological and other systems</p> <p><b>Level:</b> 3</p> <p><b>Core Content:</b> Students know about interactions between people and natural cycles including the water cycle (fishing and the water cycle, livestock grazing and the food chain, manufacturing and the nitrogen cycle)</p>

**Table 3** Examples of Core Content within the Key Concepts of different Strands in the SOSE syllabus (Queensland School Curriculum Council 2000:35-41).

Strands	Levels						Total/30
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	
Time, Continuity & Change	1	2	5	5	4	3	20
Place & Space	1	3	3	2	1	0	10
Culture & Identity	0	3	4	3	4	1	15
System, Resources & Power	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Total/20	2	9	13	10	9	4	

**Table 4** Number of Key Concepts that can be directly addressed by Australian archaeological examples for each Level and each Strand of the SOSE syllabus (maximum cell value=5).

person buried in the cemetery, in January 1871, was then Governor of Queensland Sir Samuel Blackall, and many notable Queenslanders have since been interred there, including Australia's shortest-term Prime Minister, Francis Forde. The cemetery was designed as a nineteenth century Victorian mortuary park following the closure of the North Brisbane (Paddington) cemeteries, and its spatial layout and monumental architecture reflect the changing social and religious trends present in Brisbane over the past 130 years (Fowles 1924; Friends of Toowong Cemetery 1997).

The Toowong Cemetery project was initiated in 2005 following discussions between Hilda Maclean of the Friends of Toowong Cemetery and two of the authors (JP and MH). The discussions stemmed from the involvement of the Friends of Toowong Cemetery in National Archaeology Week (NAW) 2004, when guided tours of the cemetery were given to the public. At that time, it was recognised that the cemetery held great potential for public archaeology projects, and the focus was narrowed to the suggested inclusion in NAW 2005 of a survey by primary school students of an area of the cemetery. An ideal site for the project was the former cemetery dam, which was drained in 1905 following the drowning death of Elizabeth Dale in January of that year. The dam had since been largely filled in and its location was no longer discernible. In May 2005 a group of approximately 50 children, from Years 3 and 4 of Toowong State School, were supervised by archaeologists from the University of Queensland in a project which involved using pre-1905 maps and grave plot records to triangulate the position of the dam wall (Figure 2). The 100th anniversary of Elizabeth's death and the 130th anniversary of the cemetery itself gave added impetus to the project.

The Toowong Cemetery project was designed from the outset to engage school students using Queensland's SOSE syllabus. In addition to locating the dam, the children were divided into groups of 6–7 and taken on a guided tour of the cemetery to the graves of Elizabeth Dale's brother and niece, as well as those of Elizabeth's husband and Elizabeth herself. The life and death of each family member was discussed, and the children identified the funerary architecture and transcribed the headstone inscriptions present. In conjunction with the dam survey these extended activities allowed for discussion of changes through time and the social information encoded in the landscape – important aspects of both the SOSE syllabus and archaeological enquiry. Each student was supplied with a workbook containing a map, pictures of funerary architecture, a reproduction of an oil painting of the dam, photographs of headstones, and writing space, to assist in covering each of the different syllabus aims. At the end of the project, selected students reported back to their classmates on the results obtained and information they had learned. The result was a learner-centred approach that used all five processes of the SOSE syllabus (investigating, creating, participating, communicating and reflecting) and addressed five Key Concepts within two Strands (Table 5).

The activity was run in the morning over a period of 2.5 hours, which ensured the children were not tired out (the cemetery tours involved walking across sometimes steep terrain) and their enthusiasm levels and concentration were maintained. Positive feedback was received from the teachers accompanying the students, the archaeologists involved, and the students themselves, as well as the local government councillor who came by to observe the



**Figure 2** Students and teachers from Toowong State School surveying in the Toowong Cemetery (Photograph: Catherine Westcott).

<b>Strand: Time, Continuity and Change</b>	
Concept	Application
Evidence over time (Level 2)	The students learnt about the life and death of Elizabeth Dale and her immediate family members. They examined the architecture and artefacts associated with the deaths of different people including Elizabeth's brother whose impressive funerary monument was raised by his fellow gaol warder workmates.
Evidence over time (Level 3)	The students gained knowledge of the customs and material culture of late nineteenth and early twentieth century people, as well as of past attitudes to death, religion and the operation of Queensland law in the years following Federation (through discussion of the inquest into Elizabeth's death). The students discussed the documentary evidence for Elizabeth's death, which was drawn heavily from newspaper accounts of judicial proceedings and police enquiries, as well as gaining an insight into the legal processes following Elizabeth's death.
Heritage (Level 3)	The students physically interacted with the built environment of the cemetery, and used >100 year-old maps to observe the changes to the cemetery environment over time, including the loss of many nineteenth century headstones bulldozed in the 1970s, and the obscuration of the dam location through infilling activities.
<b>Strand: Culture and Identity</b>	
Concept	Application
Cultural diversity (Level 3)	The students observed the grouping of burials in the cemetery according to religious denomination and other group memberships, for example paupers and soldiers. The cultural symbolism displayed on the headstones and in the inscriptions is very evident in Toowong Cemetery.
Construction of identities (Level 2)	The Victorian cemetery is highly inscribed with symbols. Students gained insight into the meaning of some of these symbols and the way symbols and the physical layout of the cemetery reflect the identities of the different groups buried within it.

**Table 5** Key Concepts addressed by the Toowong Cemetery case study.

exercise. The students were able to relate their previous experiences with the deaths of family members to the stories of the people buried in the cemetery, and were particularly interested in the graves of children that they came across during the survey work. They were also very keen to speculate on the possible accident/murder/suicide aspects of Elizabeth Dale's death. The students applied critical reasoning and problem-solving skills in locating and interpreting the site of the dam, while making use of the benefits of an archaeological approach to the investigation of sociocultural phenomena.

It is clear that the cemetery provided a ready-made 'hands on' environment for the integration of many Key Concepts within the Queensland SOSE syllabus, while also presenting an opportunity for articulating with other aspects of the school curriculum, including numeracy and literacy. Cemeteries are ubiquitous components of the social landscape throughout Australia (and worldwide) and therefore offer a consistent resource for teaching archaeology in schools. Future activities associated with National Archaeology Week in Queensland are planned to continue utilising this resource.

**Mill Point Archaeological Project case study**

Mill Point is an historical archaeological site located on the shores of Lake Cootharaba in the Cooloola Section of Great Sandy National Park, within Queensland's popular Sunshine Coast region. European settlement of this area began in the mid-1800s and was primarily driven by the rich timber resources that once dominated the Sunshine Coast hinterland. Construction of a sawmill at Mill Point began in 1869 and was funded by a partnership of businessmen who had made their fortunes on the Australian goldfields. The

sawmill operated until 1892, by which time the virtual exhaustion of the timber resource had rendered the venture unviable. During its heyday the mill employed up to 150 men who, with their families, made up a thriving settlement on the shores of Lake Cootharaba. In addition to the mill complex itself, the settlement included shops, workers houses, a school, a hotel, a tramway system for transporting timber and a cemetery in which 43 burials are recorded (Brown 2000:154-167).

In 2003, local community concerns about the long-term management and preservation of the site saw its nomination to the Queensland Heritage Register. At that time the Mill Point Archaeological Project (MPAP) was established to provide a broad-scale archaeological survey of the site. MPAP was originally established as a collaborative undertaking between the University of Queensland, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Noosa Shire Council (Ulm 2004). To date, three archaeological field seasons have been conducted with surveys undertaken in February 2004 and February 2005 and excavations in July 2005.

During the planning for the February 2005 field season a test program designed to integrate the archaeological experience within the SOSE syllabus was developed. Initially, all schools from the local education district were offered the opportunity to participate in the program. Five schools responded positively to the invitation and several others registered their interest for future participation. The enthusiastic response from local schools confirms that many teachers are highly receptive to the idea of incorporating Australian archaeology into their teaching plans. In order to gauge the feasibility of including an ongoing school's program within an existing larger

Strand: Time, Continuity and Change	Application
Concept  Evidence over time (Level 4)	Students interacted with archival photographs, newspaper reports and artefacts to construct understandings of colonial life at Mill Point and discussed the different types of information they had gained from these different sources of evidence.
Change and continuities (Level 4)	Students learned about early European settlement in their local area, the impact of settlement on Indigenous people and were required to reflect on how they thought the life of a nineteenth century school pupil living at Mill Point would have been similar or different from their own lives today.
Causes and effects (Level 4)	Students gained knowledge of the historical processes and events that gave rise to the Mill Point settlement, including the Gympie gold-rush, and considered the role of the timber workers and their families at the Mill Point settlement who have left few written accounts of their lives. The demise of the sawmill and the exhaustion of the timber resource were also considered.
People and contributions (Level 4)	Through interaction with the physical remains of the sawmill and the material culture of those who lived and worked at Mill Point the students were able to construct an understanding of the early timber industry and its role in European settlement of the Sunshine Coast region.
Heritage (Level 4)	The students visited a heritage listed site within a National Park and were required to interpret various archaeological features present in the landscape. They observed first-hand the damage done to the site by bottle collectors and looters and considered arguments for why the site should be protected, as well as issues associated with the ongoing management of the site including tourism and research potentials.

**Table 6** Key Concepts addressed by the Mill Point Archaeological Project case study.



**Figure 3** Students from Gympie West State School survey a grid square for surface artefacts at Mill Point (Photograph: Nicole Bordes).

archaeological project, a Year 6 class from Gympie West State School was selected to take part in the pilot program.

The 21 students spent the entire school day on site undertaking a range of archaeological activities. Following a general induction and orientation, which included the distribution of workbooks, the children split into smaller groups and toured the site accompanied by archaeologists

from the University of Queensland. Assisted by archival photographs and newspaper reports the students were required to interpret various archaeological features and answer some (mostly reflective) questions in their workbooks. At the end of this exercise each group reported back to the others about the results of their interpretations and investigations. Further activities included measuring

and recording artefacts, such as bricks, using the MPAP artefact recording key, and the day culminated with a 'gumshoe' survey in which the students flagged artefacts visible across the surface of a 25m x 25m grid square (Figure 3). The activity program specifically addressed all five Key Concepts within Level 4 of the Time, Continuity and Change Strand of the SOSE syllabus (Table 6).

The teachers accompanying the children provided extremely positive feedback regarding the structure of the program and its relevance to their teaching plans, while the archaeologists who participated all agreed that the pilot-program provided a significant public outreach opportunity for Australian archaeology. As for the children themselves, their obvious enthusiasm and enjoyment is perhaps best summed up by the comments of 10 year-old Clair:

*I had the best time and loved every bit of it!*

The Mill Point Archaeological Project provides many opportunities for engaging the school curriculum in a public outreach context and future field seasons will further develop the 2005 pilot program aimed specifically at the SOSE syllabus for the middle primary to lower secondary years.

## **Discussion**

The ease with which archaeological concepts, methods and reconstructions can be incorporated into the SOSE syllabus contrasts strongly with the lack of consideration currently given to Australian archaeology within the Queensland school system. Of particular relevance for archaeologists is that two projects of widely differing budgets, scale and duration were each able to successfully involve school students not only in practical, field-based archaeological activities, but also in providing concrete examples of past cultural, social and environmental interaction directly relevant to the established SOSE syllabus as taught in Queensland schools. The Toowong Cemetery project was specifically designed as a one-off, half-day activity as part of both National Archaeology Week and the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the cemetery itself. The Mill Point project, on the other hand, is a long-term multi-disciplinary endeavour with involvement from government agencies and other stakeholder groups, and which contributes to a number of academic projects from undergraduate to PhD level at the University of Queensland. The size and logistical complexity of a particular project is not, therefore, a primary factor in determining the success of any school engagement strategy.

The active learner-centred approach adopted in the case studies reported here provides a number of benefits that could not be achieved through more traditional lecture-based, instrumentalist public education methods. The field environment combined with supervised hands-on activities captures the excitement of discovery and adventure that is often associated with popular interest in archaeology (see Balme and Wilson 2004; Colley 2005), while at the same time challenging stereotypes and misconceptions about the archaeological past. Not only does such an approach raise awareness of Australian archaeology, but also directly promotes an understanding and appreciation of ethical archaeological practice and its relevance to Australian society. It is important to note that these benefits extend not only to students but also to the teachers accompanying them. Additionally, a practical learner-centred approach in

the field can be used to create opportunities for critical reflection amongst participants, currently an important issue in the theory and philosophy of archaeological pedagogy (Fagan 2000; Hamilakis 2004). The Queensland School Curriculum Council (2000:8) specifically advocates the learner-centred approach for teaching the SOSE syllabus and teachers appear to welcome the opportunity for field-based archaeological experiences. Australian archaeology is therefore well positioned for a major public archaeological engagement with the primary and secondary school system in Queensland.

Instances of longer-term engagement with school curricula can be found in both North America and Europe. For example, in the United States Jeppson and Brauer (2003) report on an archaeological program that has been operating as part of the Social Studies curriculum in the Baltimore County Public Schools district for 20 years; while in Spain, Bardavio et al. (2004) describe the rescue of a Neolithic site in Catalonia which took place over several years utilising curriculum-orientated participation of local secondary school students. These international examples demonstrate that the long-term public outreach benefits of engaging school curricula extend well beyond the immediate experiences of students to incorporate the wide variety of individuals and groups that constitute a school 'community', including teachers, parents, grandparents, bureaucrats, educationalists, politicians and businesses. In particular, the positive impact on attitudes to heritage and 'stewardship' are highlighted.

There is undoubtedly much scope for the greater inclusion of Australian archaeology and for the involvement of Australian archaeologists in our schools. Field-based programs that specifically support a range of curriculum outcomes, and which appeal to widespread popular interest in the process of archaeology, are a powerful educational tool for teachers. At the same time, such programs provide significant public outreach benefits for the archaeological profession and present opportunities for wider community engagement. The task now is to initiate an ongoing professional dialogue with teachers and educationalists and to develop our capabilities in delivering high quality curriculum focussed educational experiences. We should aim to establish formalised partnerships within the education sector and work towards the implementation of a fully resourced schools initiative.

## **Conclusion**

As has been observed by Lilley (2005), Nicholas (2001) and others, popular misconceptions and 'colonial' stereotypes continue to pervade broader social constructions of Australian archaeology and Australia's archaeological past, despite an increase in the public educational efforts of archaeologists. The nature and character of these constructions have significant implications for the practice, ethics and influence of professional archaeology in contemporary Australia. It is now time to consider how we approach public outreach in Australian archaeology and maximise the return on our efforts. In this paper, we have identified the school educational system as a key social context for Australian archaeologists and presented an interpretive public outreach strategy for incorporating Australian archaeology into the Queensland school curriculum. The successful implementation of this strategy with respect to two separate



projects shows the exciting possibilities that can emerge when the expanded vision of a socially active and politically engaged public archaeology is adopted.

### Acknowledgements

Ian Lilley, Sarah Colley and Sean Ulm read this paper and all provided very useful comments. We would like to thank Hilda Maclean, President of the Friends of Toowong Cemetery, Ivan Chillman, Sexton, Toowong Cemetery, Deb Nash, Principal of Toowong State School and Donna Hourigan, Gympie West State School for the involvement of their organisations. Thanks also to the archaeologists from the University of Queensland and the Environmental Protection Agency who supervised in the field: Sean Ulm, Catherine Westcott, Karen Murphy, Tam Smith, Alison Crowther, Adrian Murphy, Anthony McKeough, Elissa McKay and Delyna Baxter. Thanks to Val Chapman for facilitating the initial involvement of the Friends of Toowong Cemetery in National Archaeology Week. Special thanks to Natalya Epicheva for assisting with the production of the final paper and, most of all, our gratitude goes to the participating students from Toowong State School and Gympie West State School whose energy and enthusiasm made the projects such rewarding experiences.

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