

The Commonwealth Block, Melbourne

Studies in Australasian Historical Archaeology

Martin Gibbs and Angela Middleton, Series Editors

The Studies in Australasian Historical Archaeology series aims to publish excavation reports and regional syntheses that deal with research into the historical archaeology of Australia, New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific region. The series aims to encourage greater public access to the results of major research and consultancy investigations, and it is co-published with the Australasian Society for Historical Archaeology.

An Archaeology of Institutional Confinement: The Hyde Park Barracks, 1848–1886

Peter Davies, Penny Crook and Tim Murray

Archaeology of the Chinese Fishing Industry in Colonial Victoria

Alister M Bowen

The Commonwealth Block, Melbourne: A Historical Archaeology

Tim Murray, Kristal Buckley, Sarah Hayes, Geoff Hewitt, Justin McCarthy, Richard Mackay, Barbara Minchinton, Charlotte Smith, Jeremy Smith and Bronwyn Woff

Flashy, Fun and Functional: How Things Helped to Invent Melbourne's Gold Rush Mayor

Sarah Hayes

Good Taste, Fashion, Luxury: A Genteel Melbourne Family and Their Rubbish

Sarah Hayes

Port Essington: The Historical Archaeology of a North Australian 19th-Century Military Outpost

Jim Allen

The Shore Whalers of Western Australia: Historical Archaeology of a Maritime Frontier

Martin Gibbs

The Commonwealth Block, Melbourne

A Historical Archaeology

**Tim Murray, Kristal Buckley, Sarah Hayes,
Geoff Hewitt, Justin McCarthy, Richard Mackay,
Barbara Minchinton, Charlotte Smith,
Jeremy Smith and Bronwyn Woff**

Studies in Australasian Historical Archaeology
Volume 7



SYDNEY UNIVERSITY PRESS

Published 2019 by Sydney University Press
In association with the Australasian Society for Historical Archaeology
asha.org.au



© Tim Murray, Kristal Buckley, Sarah Hayes, Geoff Hewitt, Justin McCarthy, Richard Mackay, Barbara Minchinton, Charlotte Smith, Jeremy Smith and Bronwyn Woff 2019
© Sydney University Press 2019

Reproduction and communication for other purposes

Except as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part of this edition may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or communicated in any form or by any means without prior written permission. All requests for reproduction or communication should be made to Sydney University Press at the address below:

Sydney University Press
Fisher Library F03
University of Sydney NSW 2006
AUSTRALIA
sup.info@sydney.edu.au
sydney.edu.au/sup



A catalogue record for this book is available
from the National Library of Australia.

NATIONAL
LIBRARY
OF AUSTRALIA

ISBN 9781743323694 paperback
ISBN 9781743322246 epub

Cover images: Mahlstedt fire insurance plan of the city block, Map 8a (1923); Casselden Place Site, aerial perspective, looking northeast from Lonsdale Street during phase 1, 2002 (Photo: Tony Jenner).

Cover design by Miguel Yamin and Ming Wei
Layout by Ming Wei

Contents

List of Figures	vii
List of Plates	ix
About the Authors	xi
1 Introduction and Context	1
Tim Murray	
2 Agencies of Change: Government Perspectives on Little Lon	7
Kristal Buckley and Jeremy Smith	
3 The First Campaign: Little Lon	19
Justin McCarthy	
4 Assemblage Analysis and Outcomes: Phase 1	43
Tim Murray	
5 Smaller Investigations between Phase 1 and Phase 2	53
Tim Murray	
6 The Second Campaign: Casselden Place	55
Richard Mackay	
7 Assemblage Analysis and Outcomes: Phase 2	69
Tim Murray	
8 Little Lon and Museum Victoria: A Tale of Benign Neglect, Restoration and a Bright Future	87
Charlotte Smith	
9 Diversity and Change in Little Lon: Ongoing Historical and Archaeological Research	99
Sarah Hayes and Barbara Minchinton	
10 An Update on the Commonwealth Block Project: A Second Phase of Targeted Feature Cataloguing	113
Bronwyn Woff	
11 The 2017 Excavations: 271 Spring Street, Melbourne	119
Geoff Hewitt	
12 Little Lon and the Archaeology of the Modern World	139
Tim Murray	
Plates	143
Index	147

List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Commonwealth Block site plan.	9
Figure 3.1: Location plan.	20
Figure 3.2: Commonwealth Block Site Plan.	21
Figure 3.3: Former Commonwealth Centre Building (so-called Green Latrine) on Site D, corner Spring Street and Victoria Parade, Melbourne 1968.	21
Figure 3.4: Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works Plan 27 East Melbourne (1895).	23
Figure 3.5: Mahlstedt fire insurance plan of the city block. Map 8a (1923).	23
Figure 3.6: Twin gabled building at right is the former Lugton and Sons, Engineers old boiler factory, 27–29 Little Lonsdale Street looking southwest in the early 1980s.	24
Figure 3.7: Trench Location Plan showing the basic 10-metre grid established across the site.	28
Figure 3.8: Early stages of the excavation showing cottage footings in Trench 01; view is to east northeast.	29
Figure 3.9: Volunteers in Trench 04; view is to northwest.	29
Figure 3.10: Backhoe at work in Trench 16; view is to east with Spring Street in the background.	29
Figure 3.11: General view of Trenches 16–19 and Pits G–J in Trench 19. View is to north with Spring Street in background.	29
Figure 3.12: Close up view of artefacts in Pit J in Trench 19 / Location 57B during excavation; view is to north.	29
Figure 3.13: General view to east of Pits I & J after excavation in Trench 19 / Locations 57A & B.	29
Figure 3.14: General view of CCS Site towards south east (corner of Lonsdale and Spring Streets) after first phase of excavation has been completed and demolition has commenced.	30
Figure 3.15: The large red gum stump <i>in situ</i> under footings in Trench 06 / Location 73A & B; view is to south.	30
Figure 3.16: Volunteers and archaeologists pose on the stump after removal from Trench 06; view is to west.	30
Figure 3.17: General view to east of Pits M, N, O and P during excavation in Trench 27 / Locations 30 and 31A & B.	30
Figure 3.18: Close up view of Pit N in Trench 27 / Location 31A during excavation showing some of the numerous bottles and corks recovered.	30
Figure 3.19: From left Justin McCarthy and the three Davids (David Ellson, David Knox and David Bannear) with a convoy of barrows full of artefacts retrieved from Pit N in Trench 27 / Location 31A.	30
Figure 3.20: ‘Space Locator’ showing subdivisions of the block with the Black Eagle Hotel (Location 42) and Oddfellows Hotel (Location 80A & B) highlighted.	32
Figure 3.21: ‘Space Locator’ subdivision plan overlaid with excavated bluestone footings, rubbish pits and cesspits drawn in blue.	33
Figure 3.22: Black Eagle Hotel Excavation Plan.	37
Figure 3.23: Oddfellows Hotel Excavation Plan. Note Area 76 is the cellar and lies below Area 75.	37
Figure 4.1: The Commonwealth Block showing Sites A, B and C.	46
Figure 4.2: Structure of spatial comparison of Australian material culture, form urban settings, in a global context.	50
Figure 6.1: The Casselden Place Site, with excavated features shown and allotments superimposed.	58
Figure 6.2: Archaeological excavation in progress: trench supervisor and community participants.	59
Figure 6.3: Excavation of allotments 33 and 34.	59
Figure 6.4: Excavated ‘barrel’ cesspit.	60
Figure 6.5: Onsite processing of artefacts by specialists and community participants.	61
Figure 6.6: Faunal remains included mutton beef, pork and lamb.	63
Figure 6.7: Casselden Place Archaeological Excavation Project media launch May 2002.	65
Figure 6.8: Cessation of Transportation Medal: obverse and reverse.	67
Figure 8.1: The Historical Archaeology collections at Museum Victoria before commencement of the ARC-funded Commonwealth Block rehabilitation project.	89
Figure 8.2: The Commonwealth Block assemblage at Museum Victoria after four years of labour-intensive rehabilitation.	90

Figure 8.3: The second of three EMu Historical Archaeology tabs.	91
Figure 8.4: Museum staff member registering CUB finds onsite, direct into EMu.	92
Figure 9.1: The contents of the Moloneys' cesspit on display at Museum Victoria as part of the <i>Commonwealth Block</i> project.	105
Figure 9.2: Absinthe bottle from Mrs Bond's rubbish pit.	106
Figure 9.3: Henry Cornwell's houses in Westgarth Street Northcote, 'Aliceville', 'Edithville' and 'Belleville'.	108
Figure 10.1: Status of all significant features.	114
Figure 11.1: Location of the 271 Spring Street site.	119
Figure 11.2: Subdivision of CA7 and CA9 of Section 25.	120
Figure 11.3: Overlay of lot boundaries onto a detail of Thomas Bibbs' ca. 1856 map of Melbourne.	120
Figure 11.4: Overlay of allotment boundaries onto a detail from the 1895 MMBW block plan 1019.	121
Figure 11.5: Detail from Charles Nettleton's ca. 1861 photograph of Spring Street from Parliament House, view towards the north-west.	121
Figure 11.6: View west down Little Lonsdale Street from Spring Street in ca. 1870.	121
Figure 11.7: Detail from Paterson Brothers' <i>Bird's-eye view of Melbourne, taken from the top of Scots' Church spire, Collins Street</i> (1875).	121
Figure 11.8: Detail from Charles Nettleton's 1883 photograph <i>View of Melbourne (south west) from the terrace of the Exhibition Building, Carlton Gardens</i> .	121
Figure 11.9: A view of the northern part of the phase one area looking towards Little Lonsdale Street.	122
Figure 11.10: Lot 67AB partially excavated (for legend see text).	123
Figure 11.11: Schematic plan of lot 67C and the north end of lot 68AB.	124
Figure 11.12: Part of the rear yard of 21 Little Lonsdale Street looking north.	126
Figure 11.13: Detail from De Gruchy and Leigh's 1866 <i>Isometrical plan of Melbourne and suburbs</i> . Alexander Morison's house on lot 68 is arrowed.	127
Figure 11.14: Brick-lined cesspit 5 on lot 63.	127
Figure 11.15: Detail from Mahlstedt Plan section 2 sheet 8A 1910–1915 showing internal details of Porta's bellows factory.	128
Figure 11.16: The positions of the phase two trenches are shown, together with the outlines of remaining buildings, the historic buildings and lot boundaries.	128
Figure 11.17: View of trench 2 looking towards Little Lonsdale Street, within the standing walls of the Elms Hotel (Photo: GML Heritage).	129
Figure 11.18: Subsequent view of trench 2 looking towards Little Lonsdale Street, clearly showing the later wall of rectangular basalt blocks.	129
Figure 11.19: View towards the east of trench 1 showing the disturbed western wall of the Little Lonsdale Street wing and the double cask cesspit 6.	130
Figure 11.20: The Spring Street end of trench 11 on lot 61, showing the <i>in situ</i> brickwork of the dividing wall between rooms and the passage wall joining to the rear wall of the boarding house and an asphalt surface.	130
Figure 11.21: Excavation in progress revealed the clay capping within stone-lined cesspit 7 associated with the boarding house on lot 61.	131
Figure 11.22: Stone-lined cesspit 7 associated with the boarding house on lot 61.	131
Figure 11.23: Part of the hearth and footing at the south wall of the pre-1850 brick house at 161 Spring Street revealed in trench 12.	133
Figure 11.24: Fragment of the stone-lining of the southern wall of a cesspit in the rear yards of lot 60 adjacent to the boundary with lot 59.	133

List of Plates

Plate 2.1: The Casselden Place site interpretation scheme, installed 2004.	143
Plate 6.1: The Casselden Place Site, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne.	144
Plate 6.2: Casselden Place Site, aerial perspective, looking northeast from Lonsdale Street during Phase 1, 2002.	145
Plate 6.3: Artefacts such as this gold pendant and 19th-century ‘moralising china’ provide alternative perspectives about the socio-economic status and morals of the ‘Little Lon’ community.	145
Plate 8.1: Stories from a City: Little Lon, Australia Gallery, Melbourne Museum, 2000–2007.	146
Plate 8.2: Artefacts displayed in cabinets outside Little Lon’s recreated cottages, The Melbourne Story, Melbourne Museum, 2007.	146

About the Authors

Kristal Buckley AM is a lecturer in cultural heritage at Deakin University in Melbourne, Australia. Her teaching and research interests focus on global cultural heritage practices and world heritage. She holds professional qualifications in the fields of archaeology, anthropology and public policy, and has worked in government, private practice and in the community sector. She is a former international Vice-President of ICOMOS and a former President of Australia ICOMOS. She currently works as a world heritage adviser for ICOMOS and is a board member of the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority (Tasmania).

Sarah Hayes is an *Australian Research Council* ‘Discovery Early Career Researcher Award’ recipient in archaeology and history at La Trobe University. Her current research is on how the gold rush shaped quality of life in Victoria and the factors that determine individual participation in employment and society. Sarah’s previous research focused on class construction and social mobility in early Melbourne. In addition, Sarah has worked as a tutor at La Trobe University, as an artefact specialist in consulting archaeology and in the management of moveable heritage in the museum and cultural heritage contexts. She is an editor of the *Australasian Historical Archaeology* journal.

Geoff Hewitt first graduated in metallurgy and pursued an engineering career in the shipbuilding and repair industry. An active diver, his first taste of archaeology was shipwreck excavation as a volunteer. This led to undergraduate and post-graduate studies in archaeology at La Trobe University and a new career as a contract and consulting archaeologist. Geoff’s broad interests include historical archaeologies of landscape, confinement, defence, urbanism, pastoralism and utopianism, together with histories of maritime and industrial technology.

Justin McCarthy is an archaeologist and the managing director of heritage consulting firm Austral Archaeology Pty Ltd. After graduating from Sydney University in 1982, Justin was appointed as archaeological consultant to the South Australian State Heritage Branch from 1983 to 1987. He then founded Austral Archaeology in Adelaide with offices opening in Sydney and Hobart in the early to mid-1990s. The creation of heritage legislation from the late 1970s into the early 1980s provided opportunities to work around Australia in many aspects of cultural heritage management. In terms of urban archaeology, Justin directed some of the earliest and largest excavations in South Australia, Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania. One of these projects was the Little Lon excavation in Melbourne in 1988 and then the follow-up season in 2003 in collaboration with Godden Mackay Logan heritage consultants and La Trobe University. Justin has also directed regional and thematic heritage surveys, undertaken environmental impact assessments, conservation plans, heritage assessments, research projects, industrial archaeological surveys, interpretative design for historic sites, assessment of cultural landscapes and project management. He has been a member of Australia ICOMOS since 1981 and served as an Executive Member of that organisation for two terms and is currently an Adjunct Research Fellow at Flinders University. Justin has held many positions including deputy member of the former South Australian Heritage Authority, a member of the Heritage Advisory Council of the National Trust of South Australia, an expert advisor on industrial heritage to the Queensland Heritage Council, and an independent assessor for the former Australian Heritage Commission. Austral Archaeology is currently an industry partner with Flinders University.

Richard Mackay AM is the founder and ‘Director of Possibilities’ at Mackay Strategic and an adjunct professor in the archaeology program at La Trobe University. Richard has worked in cultural heritage management for more than 30 years. He was a founding Partner of GML Heritage, and was an ICOMOS cultural advisor at recent Sessions of the World Heritage Committee. He is currently a Member of the National Executive Committee of Australia ICOMOS and a Casual Member of the NSW Planning Assessment Commission. He has pioneered public archaeology and community participation programs, and was the Project Director of the ‘Big Dig’ at the Cumberland / Gloucester Streets Site in Sydney’s Rocks district in 1994 and the ‘Casselden Place’ archaeological investigation project in the Little Lon area of Melbourne in 2002. He was the co-editor of the Getty ‘Readings in Conservation’ volume *Archaeological Sites: Conservation and Management*. In 2013 Richard was the inaugural winner of the Australian Heritage Council ‘Sharon Sullivan Award’ for his contribution to Australia’s national heritage. In 2003

he was made a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia for services to archaeology and cultural heritage.

Barbara Minchinton is an independent researcher and volunteer at the Public Record Office Victoria. Since completing her doctorate on settlement in the Otways under Victoria's 19th century land acts she has worked on projects including the urban archaeology of Little Lon, soldier settlement in Victoria after the First World War, and women as landowners in Victoria.

Tim Murray is Charles La Trobe Professor of Archaeology at La Trobe University. As a practising archaeologist with an interest in history and epistemology, his research and publication have focused on the history and philosophy of archaeology, the archaeology of the modern world and heritage archaeology. His most recent books include *World Antiquarianism Comparative Perspectives* (co-edited with Alain Schnapp, Lothar von Falkenhausen and Peter Miller, Getty Research Institute, 2013), *An Archaeology of Institutional Confinement: The Hyde Park Barracks, 1848–1886* (co-authored with Peter Davies and Penny Crook, Sydney University Press, 2013), and *From Antiquarian to Archaeologist: The History and Philosophy of Archaeology* (Pen and Sword Press, 2014). His current projects are based around the general theme of transnational archaeologies in the long 19th century, with particular focus on 'contact' archaeology, urban archaeology and technology transfer, and demonstrating the importance of the history of archaeology for building more robust archaeological theory.

Charlotte Smith is Curator Emeritus, Museums Victoria. Before her retirement in 2016, Charlotte was Senior Curator, Politics & Society; a significant aspect of this role was the curation and management of the museum's extensive historical archaeology collection. Charlotte has over 20 years' experience working in museums and universities in England and Australia. She has a PhD from the University of Canberra and an MA from City University, London. She was a Chief Investigator on the ARC Linkage Project *An Historical Archaeology of the Commonwealth Block* and is currently a Partner Investigator on the ARC Linkage Project *How Meston's 'Wild Australia Show' Shaped Australian Aboriginal History*.

Jeremy Smith is Heritage Victoria's Principal Archaeologist, and has been a member of the Archaeology Advisory Committee of the Victorian Heritage Council since 2002. He has worked on sites throughout Australia and the Middle East, and has contributed to a number of publications on significant excavation projects in Victoria, with a focus on the archaeology of early Melbourne. He was also a key contributor to the award-winning book *Ned Kelly: Under the Microscope* (CSIRO Publishing, 2014).

Bronwyn Woff graduated from La Trobe University with a Bachelor of Archaeology, and completed Honours in 2014. Her Honours thesis explored the reuse of glass bottles in early Melbourne. Bronwyn has several years of experience working as a freelance material culture specialist and archaeologist throughout the eastern states of Australia, mostly in Victoria and Tasmania. She specialises as an artefact cataloguer and analyst, and worked as the research assistant for the La Trobe University Commonwealth Block project between 2015 and 2017.

Introduction and Context

Tim Murray

This book is best described as an interim report on nearly three decades of excavation and analysis conducted on the Commonwealth Block in Melbourne, Australia. Each of its constituent chapters is written by those who had the most direct responsibilities for the management and execution of the excavation and analysis that had occurred on the Block since the late 1980s, and which continue to this day.

In essence *The Commonwealth Block, Melbourne* describes the cumulative history of the work of many historical archaeologists and historians who have slowly revealed the historical riches of a city precinct that has often been described in the popular and professional literature as a slum.

The authors outline their theoretical concerns and the links they made to a developing archaeology of the city in Australia. Importantly both elements of theory and method (and indeed inspiration and aspiration) changed over time as excavators and analysts responded to previous work, and to the changing disciplinary context of urban archaeology in Australia and elsewhere (see e.g. Bairstow 1990; Birmingham 1988, 1990; Fitts 1999; Green and Leech 2006; Karskens 1997, 1999, 2001; Kelly 1979; Mayne and Murray 2001; Pearson 1979; Praetzelis and Praetzelis 1992, 2005; Rimmer et al. 2011; Wall 1992; Yamin 2000, 2001a, 2001b). There is every possibility that further work will see additional developments in approach and perspective as the shortcomings of previous approaches are revealed and responded to.

Given the scale of the site and the historical and archaeological components of its database, this book does not present a comprehensive reporting of all that has been found there. One important outcome of such a long-running project has been the continuous publication of fundamental data (a process that will continue as the project moves forward) and the development of a regime of open access to its core data, which are now held at Museum Victoria, with a limited amount also available at tDAR: <https://core.tdar.org/project/407136/casselden-place-archaeological-excavations>. We plan to deposit more of our core data on tDAR in the future as funds allow. It is our earnest hope that making our data openly available will assist the development of a comparative archaeology of the modern city on a global scale, as well as expanding the pool of

analysed data for more local aspirations. This has been a major goal since the conclusion of the first phase of detailed analysis (Murray 2003; Murray and Mayne 2001, 2003; Williamson 1999) and comparative work undertaken by Murray and Crook in The Rocks, Sydney (see e.g. Crook and Murray 2004; Godden Mackay 1999; Murray and Crook 2005, *in press*), and more recently by Riccardi (2015) between Melbourne and Buenos Aires, has begun to demonstrate the potential of this multiscale approach to the archaeology of the modern city in Australia.

Archaeological research at the Commonwealth Block began as an exercise in heritage archaeology, specifically to mitigate the impact of major redevelopment of the site. All subsequent excavations on the Block have also been funded by the development process. It is significant that while some analysis of the important excavated assemblages was funded by developers, the vast bulk of the detailed work of assemblage analysis has been funded through a series of major grants from the Australian Research Council and by La Trobe University. I see this as being particularly significant as Australian taxpayers, rather than the financial beneficiaries of urban development, have played a vital role in enhancing the cultural capital of the city of Melbourne, and through this have made possible the gift of significant analysed urban assemblages to world archaeology. Although the experience of the Cumberland Gloucester Street site in The Rocks, Sydney, saw more developer-funded analysis, once again it was the Australian Research Council (through the Exploring the Archaeology of the Modern City project) that supported the detailed assemblage analysis of much of the original excavations there (see e.g. Crook et al. 2005; Murray 2013). As a result of this extended period of post-excavation analysis the histories of both Sydney and Melbourne have been enhanced, as it has now become possible for the specifically Australian context of migration, nation-building, and the growth of the modern city in Sydney and Melbourne, to join much better known examples from the United States (see e.g. Praetzelis and Praetzelis 2005; Yamin 2000). In the closing chapter of this book I will reflect a little further on the funding of post-excavation analysis but, put simply, without these major funds there would have been no detailed analysis and the

assemblages would have most likely remained in their boxes with their secrets intact.

The archaeology of the Commonwealth Block has made an important contribution to the archaeology of the modern city in Australia, joining the justly famous excavations in The Rocks, Sydney as one of the very few instances where archaeologists, historians and members of the general public have been given relatively easy access to the documentary records (and associated material culture) linked with urban archaeological sites in Sydney and Melbourne. It is a bit disappointing to note that over 20 years later with some notable exceptions such as First Government House (Proudfoot et al. 1991), Sarah Hayes' work on the reanalysis of 300 Queen Street in Melbourne, and the work of Mary Casey in Sydney (see e.g. Casey 2005; Casey and Lowe 2000), that important elements of the archaeology of both cities to all intents and purposes, remain unpublished. I am not so naïve to expect that the publication of our book (or indeed the comparative analysis created by Murray and Crook *in press*) will lead to a major change of heart among practitioners of heritage archaeology or their developer funders that would result in a more widespread published engagement with the many historical and archaeological issues raised by the archaeology of the modern city. Indeed the economics (and contemporary practice) of heritage archaeology militate against such an outcome. Nonetheless I am hopeful that urban archaeology in Australia (especially) will be enhanced by practitioners responding to the work our contributors have done, and in this way contribute directly to the development of the archaeology of the modern city on a global scale.

Each of the constituent chapters effectively create a history of research on the Block. Chapters 2 and 8 explore the genesis of the project as a major instance of heritage archaeology, and the response of Museum Victoria to the challenges of curating what has proved to be an extensive artefact assemblage. An important element of the management of excavated assemblages was the creation of databases that could capture the specifics of the site and its assemblages. Bronwyn Woff's discussion of our project cataloguing processes in Chapter 10 provides additional background to Dr Charlotte Smith's tale of loss and redemption in Chapter 8. These are critical learnings that derive directly from two additional related projects funded by the Australia Research Council where it became possible to make significant process on artefact analysis linking the outcomes of the two major phases of excavation and analysis.

In Chapter 3 Justin McCarthy provides a detailed account of phase 1 of excavation on the Commonwealth Block which took place on the Little Lon site. Justin creates a very clear picture of a large-scale excavation carried out under considerable time

pressure in a city that was fundamentally unused to meeting the challenges proposed by major urban excavations. It is particularly noteworthy that the site reports for phase 1 and for subsequent work on limited sections of the remainder of the Block (McCarthy 1989, 1990) were so comprehensive and so quickly available for wide circulation.

Chapter 4 reports analyses that were undertaken nearly a decade after McCarthy finalised phase 1. This research was funded via a grant to Alan Mayne and myself through the Australian Research Council. The difference between our historical and archaeological goals and those of the historians who had supported McCarthy's original research was stark. In large part driven by Mayne's revisionist history of the slum, our goal was to try to establish whether there were stories locked up in all of those fundamentally unanalysed assemblages that could add more than an archaeological exclamation point to received historical wisdom about the social history of the Block. 'Telling a different story' became an important goal for Mayne and Murray which developed into the Vanished Communities project, which employed new modes of historical presentation using multimedia visualisation technologies delivered via a CD Rom (Murray and Mayne 2002).

Chapter 5 reports smaller excavations undertaken at 17 Casselden Place and elsewhere on the Block by other consultants that further established the archaeological potential of the unexcavated parts of the Block. These laid the foundations for the major phase 2 excavations at Casselden Place undertaken by a consortium comprising Godden, Mackay Logan Pty Ltd, Austral Archaeology, led by Justin McCarthy, and La Trobe University, reported in Chapter 6. The analysis (especially its theoretical underpinnings) of the work done at Casselden Place is briefly summarised in Chapter 7, and builds on major publications flowing directly from the excavation and analysis funded by the developer (see GML et al. 2004; and contributors to the issue of the *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, Murray ed. 2006).

Chapters 9 and 10 report new analyses funded via two further grants from the Australian Research Council and represent the outcomes of significant collaborations between Murray and Museum Victoria, especially Dr Charlotte Smith (Murray 2011; Smith and Hayes 2010; Smith and Murray 2011). This research was undertaken by Dr Sarah Hayes as a post-doctoral fellow and by historian Dr Barbara Minchinton, and has borne additional fruit in publications related to the history of waste disposal in the city, and the ownership of property by women in mid-to-late 19th-century Melbourne (Hayes 2011; Hayes and Minchinton 2016; Minchinton 2017).

Chapter 11 reports the outcomes of the latest excavations on the Commonwealth Block undertaken

by Geoff Hewitt for GML which made significant new discoveries in a small unexcavated area of the Block. Chapter 12 concludes the volume.

CHANGES AND TRANSFORMATIONS

Little Lonsdale Street, in central Melbourne, was notorious for much of the 19th and 20th centuries as a foul slum and brothel district. Little Lon, as the neighbourhood was locally known, became entrenched in national Australian popular culture from the time of the First World War when it was featured by the well-known poet and journalist, C.J. Dennis (1915). In 1948 two entire city blocks at the eastern end of Little Lonsdale Street were resumed by the Commonwealth Government. This precinct, a mosaic of houses, shops, warehouses and factories, was almost totally razed and rebuilt.

Notwithstanding half-a-century of ‘renewal’, traces of this vanished community and of its forgotten history remained for McCarthy and others to uncover. Research by historians and archaeologists came to reveal a working-class and immigrant community that was much more than just a slum occupied by the itinerant and the criminal. It was a place with a long and complex history of social, cultural and economic transformation.

Today, apart from an incomplete shell of late 19th-century buildings along the southern side of Little Lonsdale Street, and around the perimeter formed by Spring, Lonsdale and Exhibition Streets, the surface physical markers of this former community had been obliterated. The internal laneways, and the entire block north from Little Lonsdale Street to Latrobe Street, have gone. The homeplaces, workspaces, and with them the inhabitants of Little Lon were swept away by the public policies designed to clear central Melbourne of its ‘slums’.

In 1948 the Commonwealth Government compulsorily acquired the blocks on either side of Little Lonsdale Street, from Latrobe Street in the north to Lonsdale Street in the south, and from Spring Street in the east to Exhibition Street in the west. Most of the northern block to Latrobe Street – including Cumberland Place – was bulldozed in the late 1950s and 1960s to make way for an enormous government office tower. Because of its green ceramic cladding, the Commonwealth Centre became known to Melburnians as the ‘green latrine’. It was demolished in the late 1980s and is now the site of yet another high rise apartment block. Much of the rest of the Commonwealth Block has since been cleared and developed by the organisations that have funded all of the excavations (and some of the analyses) we report here.

However the stereotype of slumdom, so effectively described by Mayne (1993, 2017) came to define the essence of Little Lon in the minds of Melburnians, and one of the most remarkable outcomes of our

research has been the longevity of such perceptions – even in the face of detailed archaeological and historical data demonstrating the contrary (see e.g. Murray 2005). This was the realm of Madame Brussels, Chinese opium dens and sly grog outlets now being seen as a strong marketing ploy for contemporary gin distillers and local bars. Nonetheless it is also the case that the historical narrative of the precinct has changed to include a more nuanced account of life on the Block. This is perhaps the most significant transformation of the historical context of archaeological analysis of inner-city Melbourne that has happened over the last 30 years. Gone has been the total reliance on the old narrative of slumdom which has now been joined with engaging alternative stories competing for public and professional attention (see e.g. Annear 1996; Arnold 1997; Brown-May 1998; Canon 1975; Davison 1978; Davison et al. 1985; McConville 1980, 2000; Mayne 2006; Mayne and Murray 1999; Mayne et al. 2000). In its place we have constructed a truer representation of the lives of so many people who lived at the margins of Melbourne society from 1850 to 1950 and restored something of a vanished community lying at the heart of this great city.

Nonetheless it is also the case that our attention as historical archaeologists has moved away from just demonstrating the shortcomings of what Mayne has called the ‘slum myth’. Our attention is also drawn to seeking a deeper understanding of social and cultural transformations in 19th century urban migrant communities in Australia (and elsewhere), as well as sharpening a focus on political economy of places at the margins of new societies being born at the uttermost ends of the earth. We have barely begun.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Each of the authors has made their own acknowledgements. I here acknowledge the great skill and commitment of Mr Wei Ming, Archaeology, La Trobe who was responsible for the production of this book, and many of its images. I am very happy to acknowledge my extensive debt to long-time collaborators historian Professor Alan Mayne and archaeologist Dr Penny Crook. They have done their level best to inject some creative history-making and empirical rigour into my work on the modern city. I also acknowledge the great contributions of Dr Sarah Hayes and Dr Barbara Minchinton to the work at Little Lon. I thank the readers of the draft chapters for their speedy and careful work. Last I thank the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, California, for the award of a Fellowship during the last quarter of 2017. During this time I was able to make real progress towards completing the long term research project of which the archaeology of the Commonwealth Block forms an important part.

REFERENCES

- Annear, R. 1996. *Bearbrass: Imagining Early Melbourne*. Melbourne: Reed Books.
- Arnold, J. 1997. The Laneways of Melbourne. In Finch, L. and C. McConville (eds.) *Images of the Urban*, pp. 78–84, Sunshine Coast University College.
- Bairstow, D. 1990. Urban Archaeology: American Theory, Australian Practice. *Australian Archaeology* 33: 52–58.
- Birmingham, J. 1988. The Refuse of Empire: International Perspectives on Urban Colonial Rubbish. In Birmingham, J. et al. (eds.) *Archaeology and Colonisation: Australia in the World Context*, pp. 149–171, Sydney: Australian Society for Historical Archaeology Incorporated.
- Birmingham, J. 1990. A Decade of Digging: Deconstructing Urban Archaeology. *Australian Historical Archaeology* 8: 13–22.
- Brown-May, A. 1998. *Melbourne Street Life: The Itinerary of Our Days*. Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing.
- Canon, M. 1975. *Life in the Cities: Australia in the Victorian Age*. Melbourne: Nelson.
- Casey, M. 2005. Material Culture and the Construction of Hierarchy at the Conservatorium Site, Sydney. *Australasian Historical Archaeology* 23: 97–113.
- Casey & Lowe Associates, 2000. Archaeological Investigation: CSR Site, Pyrmont (Jacksons Landing). Unpublished report prepared for Lend Lease Development, 3 vols, December 2000.
- Crook, P. and T. Murray, 2004. The Analysis of Cesspit Deposits from The Rocks, Sydney. *Australasian Journal of Historical Archaeology* 22: 44–56.
- Crook, P., L. Ellmoos and T. Murray, 2005. *Keeping up with the McNamaras: A Historical Archaeological Study of the Cumberland and Gloucester Streets Site, The Rocks, Sydney*. Sydney: Historic Houses Trust of NSW.
- Davison, G. 1978. *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.
- Davison, G., D. Dunstan and C. McConville, 1985. *The Outcasts of Melbourne: Essays in Social History*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- Fitts, R. 1999. The Archaeology of Middle-Class Domesticity and Gentility in Victorian Brooklyn. *Historical Archaeology* 33(1): 39–62.
- Godden Mackay Heritage Consultants, 1999. *The Cumberland/Gloucester Streets Site, The Rocks: Archaeological Investigation Report*, Volumes 1, 3–5, prepared for the Sydney Cove Authority. Sydney: Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd.
- Godden Mackay Logan, La Trobe University and Austral Archaeology, 2004. Casselden Place, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne: Archaeological Excavations – Research Archive. HV report collection no. 3916.
- Green, A. and R. Leech (eds.), 2006. *Cities in the World, 1500–2000: Papers Given at the Conference for Post-Medieval Archaeology, April 2002*. Leeds: Maney Publishing.
- Hayes, S. 2011. Amalgamation of Archaeological Assemblages: Experiences from the Commonwealth Block Project Melbourne. *Australian Archaeology* 73: 13–24.
- Hayes, S. and B. Minchinton, 2016. Melbourne’s Waste Management History and Cesspit Formation Processes: Evidence from Little Lon. *Australian Archaeology* 82(1): 12–24.
- Karskens, G. 1997. *The Rocks. Life in Early Sydney*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.
- Karskens, G. 1999. *Inside The Rocks: The Archaeology of a Neighbourhood*. Alexandria, NSW: Hale and Iremonger.
- Kelly, M. 1979. Roads to Yesterday. In Stanbury, P. (ed.) *10,000 Years of Sydney Life: A Guide to Archaeological Discovery*, pp. 2–9, Sydney: Macleay Museum.
- McCarthy, J. 1989. Archaeological Investigation – The Commonwealth Block Melbourne, Victoria. HV report collection no. 198.
- McCarthy, J. 1990. Archaeological Investigation – The Black Eagle & Oddfellows Hotels (Site B), The Commonwealth Block Melbourne, Victoria.
- McConville, C. 1980. The Location of Melbourne’s Prostitutes, 1870–1920. *Historical Studies* 19(74): 86–97.
- McConville, C. 2000. Big Notes from a Little Street: Re/newing Social History in Melbourne? *Australian Historical Studies* 32: 325–327.
- Mayne, A. 1993. *The Imagined Slum: Newspaper Representation in Three Cities, 1870–1914*. Leicester: Leicester University Press.
- Mayne, A. 2017. *Slums: The History of a Global Injustice*. London: Reaktion Press.
- Mayne, A. and T. Murray, 1999. ‘In Little Lon ... Wiv Ginger Mick’: Telling the Forgotten History of a Vanished Community. *Journal of Popular Culture* 33(1): 49–60.
- Mayne, A. and T. Murray (eds.), 2001. *The Archaeology of Urban Landscapes: Explorations in Slumland*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Mayne, A., T. Murray and S. Lawrence, 2000. Historic Sites: Melbourne's Little Lon. *Australian Historical Studies* 31(114): 131–151.
- Minchinton, B. 2017a. 'Prostitutes' and 'Lodgers' in Little Lon: Constructing a List of Occupiers in Nineteenth-Century Melbourne. *Australasian Historical Archaeology* 35: 64–70.
- Minchinton, B. 2017b. Women as Landowners in Victoria: Questions from Little Lon. *History Australia* 14(1): 67–81.
- Murray, T. 2005. Images of Little Lon: Making History, Changing Perceptions. In Murray, T. (ed.) *Object Lessons: Archaeology and Heritage in Australia*, pp. 167–185, Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing.
- Murray, T. 2006. Integrating Archaeology and History at the Commonwealth Block: Little Lon and Casselden Place. *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 10(4): 395–413.
- Murray, T. 2011. Research Using Museum Collections Need Not Be a 'Vale of Tears', Though It Often Is. In Smith, C.H.F. and T. Murray (eds.) *Caring for Our Collections: Papers from the Symposium 'Developing Sustainable, Strategic Collection Management Approaches for Archaeological Assemblages'*, pp. 79–88, Melbourne: Museum Victoria.
- Murray, T. 2013. Expanding Horizons in the Archaeology of the Modern City: A Tale in Six Projects. *Journal of Urban History*, 6 March 2013, doi:10.1177/0096144213479308.
- Murray, T. (ed.) 2003. *Exploring the Modern City: Recent Approaches to Urban History and Archaeology*. Sydney: Historic Houses Trust of NSW.
- Murray, T. (ed.) 2006. *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 10(4).
- Murray, T. and P. Crook, 2005. Exploring the Archaeology of the Modern City: Issues of Scale, Integration and Complexity. *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 9(2): 89–109.
- Murray, T. and P. Crook, *in press*. *The Archaeology of the Modern City in 19th Century Australia: In Search of the McNamaras*. New York: Springer.
- Murray, T. and A. Mayne, 2001. Imaginary Landscapes: Reading Melbourne's Little Lon. In Mayne, A. and T. Murray (eds.) *The Archaeology of Urban Landscapes: Explorations in Slumland*, pp. 89–105, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Murray, T. and A. Mayne, 2002. *Vanished Communities: Investigating History at Little Lon, An ARC Funded CDROM*. Melbourne: La Trobe University and Swish Group.
- Murray, T. and A. Mayne 2003. (Re)Constructing a Lost Community: Little Lon, Melbourne, Australia. *Historical Archaeology* 37(1): 87–101.
- Pearson, M. 1979. Historic Sites: Themes and Variations. In Stanbury, P. (ed.) *10,000 years of Sydney Life: A Guide to Archaeological Discovery*, pp. 96–105, Sydney: Macleay Museum.
- Praetzellis, A. and M. Praetzellis, 1992. Faces and Facades: Victorian Ideology in Early Sacramento. In Yentsch, A.E. and M.C. Beaudry (eds.) *The Art and Mystery of Historical Archaeology: Essays in Honor of James Deetz*, pp. 75–99, Florida: CRC Press.
- Praetzellis, M. and A. Praetzellis (eds.), 2005. *Putting the 'There' There: Historical Archaeologies of West Oakland, 1-880 Cypress Freeway Replacement Project*. California: Anthropological Studies Center, Sonoma State University.
- Proudfoot, H., A. Bickford, B. Egloff and R. Stocks, 1991. *Australia's First Government House*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin and the Department of Planning.
- Riccardi, P. 2015. A Tale of Two Cities: Nineteenth Century Consumer Behaviour in Melbourne and Buenos Aires. Unpublished PhD dissertation, La Trobe University.
- Rimmer, J., P. Connelly, S. Rees Jones and J. Walker (eds.) 2011. Special Collection: Poverty in Depth: New International Perspectives. *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 15: 533–636.
- Smith, C.H.F. and S. Hayes, 2010. Managing the Commonwealth Block Assemblage: An Australian Case Study. *Collections: A Journal for Museum and Archive Professionals* 6(3): 171–188.
- Smith C.H.F. and T. Murray (eds.), 2011. *Caring for Our Collections: Papers from the Symposium 'Developing Sustainable, Strategic Collection Management Approaches for Archaeological Assemblages'*. Melbourne: Museum Victoria.
- Wall, D.D. 1992. Sacred Dinners and Secular Teas: Constructing Domesticity in Mid-19th-Century New York. *Historical Archaeology* 25: 69–81.
- Williamson, C. 1998. Slums and Sluts: Lonsdale Street Project Report. Unpublished report for the La Trobe University, Melbourne.
- Yamin, R. 2001a. Becoming New York: The Five Points Neighbourhood. *Historical Archaeology* 35(3): 1–5.
- Yamin, R. 2001b. Alternative Narratives: Respectability at New York's Five Points. In Mayne, A. and T. Murray (eds.) *The Archaeology of Urban Landscapes: Explorations in*

Slumland, pp. 154–170, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yamin, R. (ed.) 2000. *Tales of Five Points: Working-Class Life in Nineteenth-Century*

New York. Reports prepared for Edwards and Kelcey Engineers, Inc. and General Services Administration (Region 2), 6 vols. John Milner Associates, West Chester, Pennsylvania.