

Editorial

This 13th issue of QAR contains an edited collection of conference papers concerning archaeological work in southeast Queensland. Unlike most such volumes, which normally represent the outcome of a conference or conference session, this one was actually planned before the conference was conceived. Aware that well over a decade had passed since an issue of QAR had been devoted to this archaeologically-industrious part of Queensland (Volume 5), I had been considering another for 2001 or 2002 that could provide a vehicle for publishing accumulated knowledge locked up in theses and reports. However, it wasn't until early in 2001 and a meeting with Sean Ulm over morning coffee at 'Wordsmith, The Writer's Cafe' on the UQ campus that the volume (and its conference link) began to emerge as a reality. At that meeting Sean proposed a symposium dedicated to southeast Queensland archaeology that assembled a varied cross-section of researchers from diverse segments of the discipline in order to share new information and to stimulate future research. Needless to say I was in total accord with this initiative as it provided an excellent staging ground for the collection of papers I had been seeking – and much more. Thus, Sean and I agreed to join forces in the convening of the symposium as well as the editing of its proceedings and went off to our respective schools to seek seeding funds. We also sent out a call for papers and set about arranging a date and venue.

The symposium, 'Recent Archaeological Research in Southeast Queensland', was held on 28 September 2001, at Women's College on the UQ campus. Over the course of this day 12 papers were delivered on a wide range of topics including molecular archaeology, stone and bone artefact analysis, historical archaeology, palaeoenvironmental studies, cultural resource management and regional syntheses of spatio-temporal patterning and change in the regional archaeological record. The symposium was well attended, the papers were well received and the discussion was full and often lively. While most delegates were drawn from the University of Queensland as expected, we were pleased at the strong representation from the local archaeological consulting community and several government authorities as well as staff and students from the University of New England, the University of Melbourne and Southern Cross University.

For various reasons, not all the symposium papers could be published in this volume. Nevertheless, the seven titles in this issue are fairly representative of the whole in demonstrating a significant change in the local archaeological community and its focus over the 14 years since Volume 5 was published. They reflect a general trend away from a focus on basic field-based research towards higher-order synthesis and explicit testing of models generated by previous research (McNiven; Ulm) and detailed analyses employing new technology (Rowland and Connolly; Francis; Hlinka *et al.*). Several papers point to an expansion of scholarly interest in historical archaeology not represented in the 1988 volume (Rains and Prangnell; Prangnell). Thus, while a relatively disparate collection in terms of topics, the group represents the current shape and direction of archaeological activity in this region of Queensland at the beginning of this century. As such it may one day be used as a comparative benchmark in the assessment of the history of our discipline, at least in this part of the world.

The great success of this symposium is owing to the various and generous contributions of funds, time and expertise. Thus, many thanks go to the School of Social Science and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at the University of Queensland for funding and administrative support as the symposium's joint sponsors. Women's College is applauded for its modern and inmate lecture theatre and its superb catering service. Congratulations and thanks go out to all the presenters and other symposium attendees for their contribution and support. As co-editors of this collection of symposium papers, Sean and I sincerely thank the score of individuals from a dozen institutions who have anonymously acted as referees for the submitted manuscripts and to Tony Eales who enhanced many of the submitted illustrations. Finally, as QAR editor, my sincere thanks to Sean Ulm for taking the lion's share of the load on this issue.

Jay Hall – Editor