

## Editorial

It seems somehow appropriate that the final issue of QAR in this millennium departs a little from what has gone before and perhaps epitomizes the future shape of archaeological practice and product in this country. QAR 11 not only happens to fall just as the twentieth-century ticks over but it also happens to represent a positive and timely outcome of a lengthy and often-fraught reconciliation process between the scientific interests of Australian archaeologists and the cultural property interests of indigenous Australians. All articles in this issue concern the wide-ranging and multidisciplinary Gooreng Gooreng Cultural Heritage Project which is being carried out by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at the University of Queensland in collaboration with the Gurang Land Council and members of the Gooreng Gooreng Aboriginal community. This joint investigation of the Aboriginal heritage of the Burnett-Curtis area of Central Queensland began in the early 1990s and has gathered momentum as early research results triggered more detailed higher-level studies. As this region was little understood archaeologically prior to the project's initiation, the substantive articles herein represent a significant addition to knowledge both for archaeology and the Gooreng Gooreng community – as well as a promise of much more to come. As we cross the Y2K boundary, I feel sure that this project will help signal a new level in cooperative and mutually beneficial heritage research ventures between Aboriginal traditional owners and archaeologists.

This volume is distinctive for two other reasons, both of which represent a departure from past practice. It is the first to be guest-edited and is the first to be dedicated to a particular regional research project. When I was approached by Ian Lilley over a year ago to consider publishing the manuscripts being prepared on the early fieldwork results of the GGCHP

as a single guest-edited volume, I relished the opportunities that this notion presented. In making available under one cover a number of related studies of a circumscribed study region it offers ready access to researchers within a coherent research design while underscoring the growing regional trend of archaeological research in this country. In line with QAR philosophy from the outset, it contains data-rich substantive articles that are, in this case, largely the distilled outcome of postgraduate thesis research. This promotion of the work of younger scholars provides the kind of recognition and encouragement that students need early in their careers. Importantly, this largely postgraduate student output within a multidisciplinary and intercultural research team highlights the positive outcomes of a healthy working relationship between campus-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander units and archaeology/anthropology departments. In this case the guiding hand has been that of Michael Williams, Director of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at the University of Queensland, who has fought long and hard for such academic links. His appointment of Ian Lilley and Sean Ulm led to the development of a robust research program within which numerous UQ archaeology students have participated at various levels. The production of this group of papers on the GGCHP by joint editors Lilley, Ulm and Williams is testimony to both the strength and durability of this inter-departmental relationship and to just what can be achieved with good will and cooperation between universities and Aboriginal communities. The product stands as a useful model for others to emulate. As a final note, following the success of this issue, QAR would welcome the submission of other project-based and guest-edited collections of manuscripts.

Jay Hall – Editor