



# VIRTUSHERITAGE



E-News Edition 11, February 2022

## Acknowledgement of Country

Virtus Heritage is committed to the spirit of reconciliation and acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and the Traditional Custodians of the states and territories of Australia. We recognise the Traditional Owners of the lands we work within. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging in maintaining the culture, country and their spiritual and historical connections to the lands and waters.



## Welcome by Dr Mary-Jean Sutton

A new year has begun and with the continued challenges of the pandemic, our team has been increasingly busy adapting to these challenges for cultural heritage projects, and continuing meaningful engagement with communities and clients. This newsletter shares what we have achieved and learnt in the course of our work and partnerships. We are grateful to the loyalty of clients, communities and partners during this pandemic, and this newsletter focuses on the achievements from these partnerships and collaborations of the last six months.

In this edition you can read about our continuing partnerships in the far north of Cape York within the communities of Injinoo, and our continued commitment to assist Traditional Owners and historical families, with identifying, protecting and managing the resting places of their loved ones. Our Manning River project for Rhelm and Transport NSW goes beyond regulatory requirements for site based recording and documents a collaborative approach with Transport NSW, Purfleet Taree LALC and our team. Drawing on archival records, geomorphology, coastal archaeology and Elders' oral history as well as their younger generations of family to document different layers of cultural knowledge, cultural, scientific, historic and spiritual values.

We continue to undertake important Fire Access Trail cultural heritage assessments for NSW NPWS including several parks from Clarence and Nymboida regions, as well as in Nightcap, Mebbin, Goonengerry, Bundjalung and Broadwater National Parks, working with Traditional Owners. Some of these projects are featured in this newsletter. We also welcome a new team member, Pauline Fowler, Senior Archaeologist, based in Brisbane whose expertise in drone survey, GIS, cultural mapping, are important to many projects continuing in 2022.

Thankyou for taking the time to read our newsletter.

Mary-Jean

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## ‘Working Together to Look After Our Old People’ Injinoo, Cape York

Mary-Jean Sutton and Amanda Ewart

The Injinoo Cemetery and Unmarked Graves Project is part of an ongoing and much valued collaboration between Virtus Heritage and the communities of Cape York. Nearly five years ago, as part of consultation for another similar project in the Cape, local Elders identified better record keeping and management of the region’s graves as a key priority. Since then many new collaborations and connections have been forged while rising to the challenges presented by these aspirations, and we have assembled teams to provide varied skills as we continue to work towards community-driven goals. Virtus staff and colleagues have been welcomed into Cape York time and again and the people and landscapes of this

amazing part of the world have been part of so many unforgettable experiences.

The Injinoo project will draw on expertise we developed on a similar project for Mapoon. Virtus Heritage is working with the Ipima Ikaya Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (IIAC) to create reliable, lasting records of buried family members. Looking after the Old People is a significant responsibility that we are proud to be able to help with.

This latest grant-funded project will bring together:

- ground-penetrating radar (GPR) investigations
- recording of ethnohistory
- development of an

interpretation strategy, including management documentation, and provision of a community report, including an educational tool kit for use in schools and;

- a record of the results of the GPR and ethnohistorical investigations with maps.

The project began with the successful grant application (in collaboration with IIAC) and the initiation of background research. Research for these types of projects requires some lateral thinking, like piecing together a puzzle. Several days were spent in the Queensland State Archives and a day in the archives at the University of Queensland. We have been reviewing reports and photos, as well as

collecting names from historic electoral rolls, burial records and death records. Finding an original town plan from 1975 was a highlight.

Putting together this information we can start a registry of possible headstone names to take to the community and Elders to assist with identifying graves. Piecing this information together will assist with the upcoming phases of the project including face to face consultation by Mary-Jean and Simon Pearce (GHD) and GPR investigations by Emma, Harry and Elle. We are aiming to complete the next phase on work on country in May-June 2022, pandemic permitting, and we will keep you posted as the project progresses.

# Studying the Landscape

## Mountain bike trails and coastal tales

Elaine Lin & Harrison Rees Parkes

In June, Harry, Martin and Elaine worked in partnership with Peter Townsend of Awabakal LALC and NSW NPWS to undertake a landscape study of the Glenrock State Conservation Area for Aboriginal cultural heritage, building on the original Aboriginal cultural heritage assessments of the Hickson St Walking Track. The survey

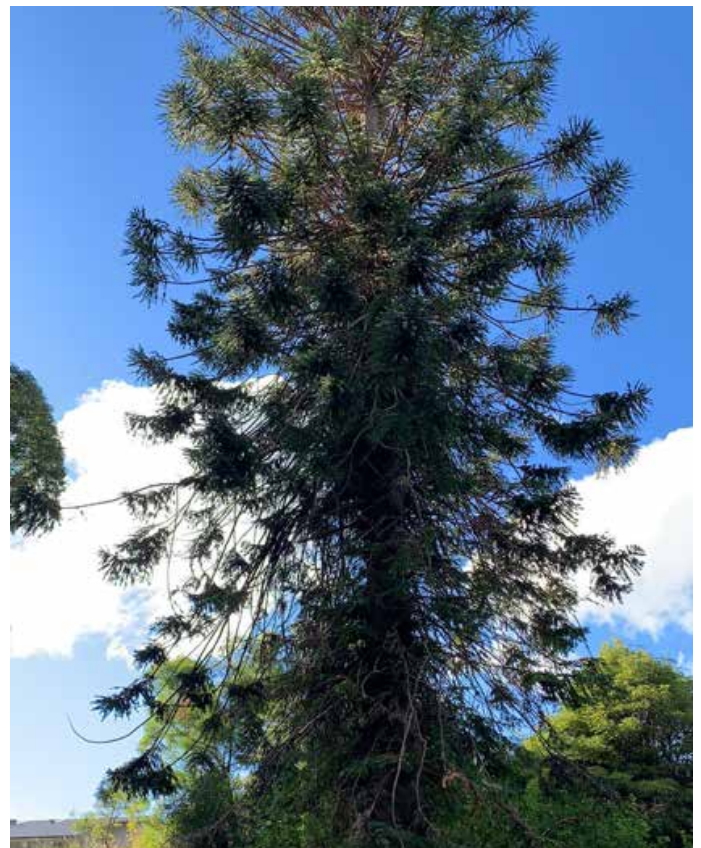
included some steep landforms with stunning coastal vistas across a well-known highly significant cultural and historical landscape, near Newcastle. As the Glenrock SCA also has State Heritage Register listed sites, including the Burwood Colliery remains, historical heritage was also recorded during the survey.



Overlooking Glenrock Lagoon meeting Burwood Beach, and Leggy Point (Little Red Head Point) from the top of the Yuelarbah Trail



Peaceful, modern touches near the Bailey's Historical Estate



Historic Bunya Pine at the old Bailey's Cottage

The landscape survey focussed on existing bike trails, however, additional survey was undertaken to better understand the SCA's cultural heritage values and to develop an initial baseline landform model for Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity. Future assessments will be undertaken by NSW NPWS within the SCA as part of the formal Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit process in the future. Once again, we were privileged to work with the Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Council on Country.



Harry stands at the base of an illegal jump, constructed by recreational mountain bike riders



Illegal Mountain Bike jump exposes the soil profile in the hill side, unmonitored unofficial tracks such as this lead to greater erosion within the SCA



White Clay Pits: Series of constructed Mountain Bike jumps along the "Pump Action" MBT.



View from Tommy's Rock Mann River NP

# Working Together to Protect Lives, Property & Heritage – Part 2

Fire Access and Fire Trails (FAFT) NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

Emma St Pierre and Martin Wright

We wrote an article in the last newsletter about our work with the National Parks and Wildlife Service on their Fire Access and Fire Trails (FAFT) Program. This program seeks to improve the functionality and accessibility of fire trails across NSW to achieve better outcomes when dealing with future fire events. The pressing need for these upgrades has been highlighted in recent years by the catastrophic bushfires that have affected communities across the country. We are continuing our work with NPWS and have recently completed a number of new FAFT Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessments (ACHA).

We have been working on the Bald Rock Management Unit undertaking surveys to identify sites and areas of significance with Mulli Mulli LALC within Maryland National Park, near the QLD-NSW border; and within Bald Rock National Park, Boonoo Boonoo National Park and Cataract National Park, in consultation with the Western Bundjalung people, who hold a native title determination over the area under the Registered Native Title Body Corporate Ngullingah Jugun (Our Country) Aboriginal Corporation.



Bald Rock NP



Bald Rock NP



Bald Rock NP



Mann River NR (Tommy's Rock Trail)



View from 4 Mile Trig

We also worked on the Nymboida Management Unit covering Mann River Nature Reserve, Barool National Park, and a small portion of Western Nymboida National Park within the jurisdiction of the Glenn Innes LALC and the remainder of Nymboida National Park within the Grafton Ngerrie LALC lands.

Additionally, a FAFT ACHA was undertaken with Bundjalung Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) for Broadwater National Park, and a number of sites were identified within this culturally sensitive landscape.

Positive outcomes have been achieved as a result of the assessments in the Bald Rock and Nymboida Management units, where all sites that were identified within the project

areas (mainly artefact sites and scarred trees), are able to be avoided so that they will not be impacted by the proposed upgrade works. Where sites within Broadwater National Park cannot be avoided, including a midden, artefacts and PAD.

The unique geology, amazing views, and rich flora and fauna within these parks, as well as some wild and wet weather and hairy off-road beats, made spending time in these incredible landscapes recording sites, learning about cultural heritage from community, and working with NSW NPWS again, a fantastic experience for our Archaeologists.



Mann River NR



Nymboida NP



Bald Rock NP



Cataract NP



# Cedar Party Creek Historical Archaeology Find

Gina Scheer

During October 2021, the lines of bricks seen here were first observed by Virtus Heritage. Both lines, vertical - where three courses are visible, and horizontal - extending almost two metres in length. The surface clearing works were being undertaken by Virtus Heritage, along with registered Aboriginal parties, under Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit No. MidCoast AHIP C0004759, MidCoast Council, Cedar Party Creek. These bricks were certainly an unexpected find!



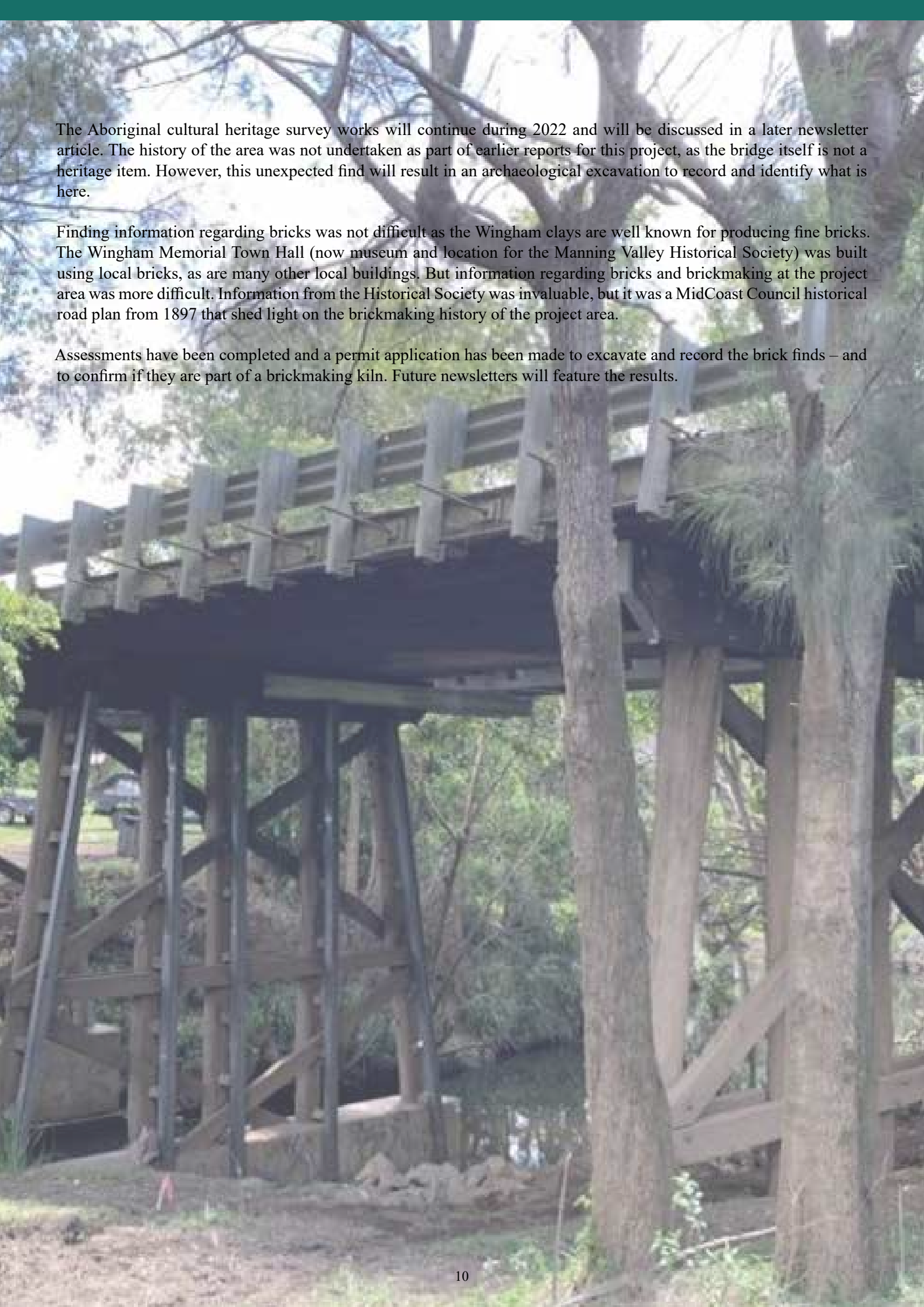
MidCoast Council (MC) had commissioned Virtus Heritage to undertake an Aboriginal cultural heritage survey of the area on the banks of Cedar Party Creek in Wingham. MC are building a new bridge over the creek to better access the town of Wingham from the northeast. The area has been a river crossing for hundreds of years, with European mention of a ford after the town of Wingham was founded in the 1840s-1850s. The first bridge was constructed here in 1869 and after that it was washed away by flood waters a replacement bridge was built in 1896. That bridge has been patched, repaired and added to over many years and in 2022 it will be replaced.



The Aboriginal cultural heritage survey works will continue during 2022 and will be discussed in a later newsletter article. The history of the area was not undertaken as part of earlier reports for this project, as the bridge itself is not a heritage item. However, this unexpected find will result in an archaeological excavation to record and identify what is here.

Finding information regarding bricks was not difficult as the Wingham clays are well known for producing fine bricks. The Wingham Memorial Town Hall (now museum and location for the Manning Valley Historical Society) was built using local bricks, as are many other local buildings. But information regarding bricks and brickmaking at the project area was more difficult. Information from the Historical Society was invaluable, but it was a MidCoast Council historical road plan from 1897 that shed light on the brickmaking history of the project area.

Assessments have been completed and a permit application has been made to excavate and record the brick finds – and to confirm if they are part of a brickmaking kiln. Future newsletters will feature the results.



# WELCOME TO OUR NEW TEAM MEMBER

## PAULINE FOWLER



Virtus would like to welcome Pauline Fowler to our team. Pauline joins us with over 6 years' experience in the cultural heritage industry. Working primarily in Queensland and New South Wales, she has vital skills in fieldwork, research, consultation and the application of technology in archaeology.

Pauline completed her studies at the university of Southern Queensland (Bachelor of Arts) and University of Queensland (honours). Her thesis research focussed on predicting Aboriginal movement patterns using the spatial distribution and environmental context of known shell midden sites, in combination least cost path modelling. As a result of this study, she has gained a unique understanding of the human utilisation of sand and island environments. Excavation experience in similar environments (Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and North Stradbroke Island), has also enhanced this understanding. This research also sparked her interest in the application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in cultural heritage management. Pauline not only saw the advantage of GIS in data analysis, but grew her skill set to actively use geoprocessing and analysis tools such as weighted predictive modelling, heat mapping, and database management.

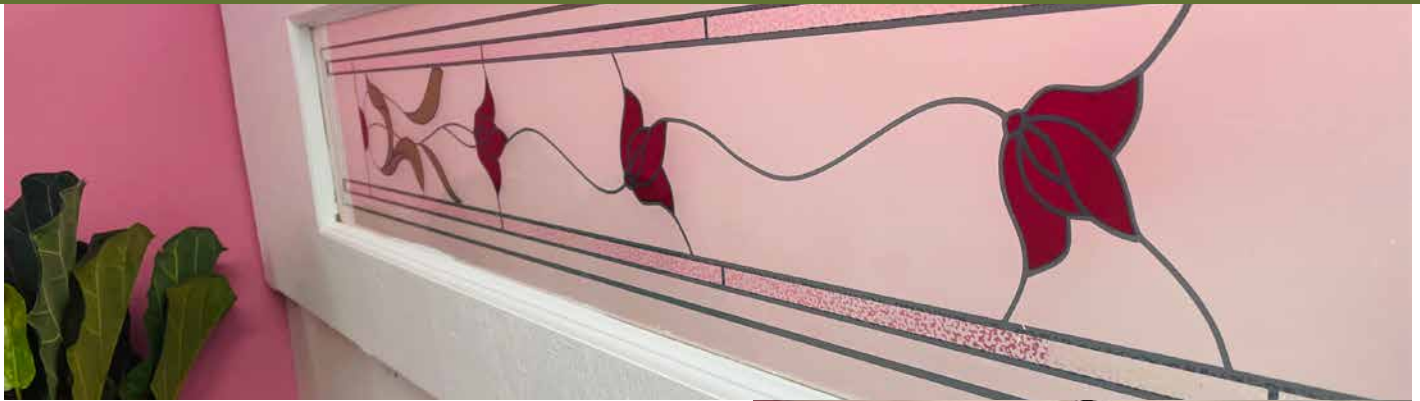
Pauline has undertaken extensive fieldwork programs including long-term open excavations on Aboriginal heritage projects in the Ripley Valley Region, Queensland; large scale excavation of a historic timber structure in Toowoomba, Queensland; 3 years of field seasons on condition assessments and auditing in the remote northwest district of Queensland; a technical advisor role on weekly cultural heritage surveys in the Surat Basin; and many other surveys and mechanical/manual excavations. This experience has given her the ability to identify, document and assess heritage values under Queensland and New South Wales State legislation.

Pauline is an advocate for the applications of photogrammetry (3D modelling) in archaeology and has used both cameras and drones to digitally preserve cultural heritage sites. She strongly believes that these emerging techniques provide a new and exciting way to preserve, interpret and share archaeology outside of traditional methods. These innovative tools provide value add on to projects and clients to promote and interpret cultural heritage in consultation with communities.

Pauline will be working as an archaeologist and GIS spatial analyst with Virtus based in Brisbane, involved in the preparation of reports, research, community engagement, fieldwork and mapping requirements.

UPDATE - Pauline has since been promoted to Senior Archaeologist. A big congratulations to Pauline on her hard work.

# NOTICEBOARD



## OFFICE UPDATE

Our Kingscliff office is almost complete and we couldn't be happier in our new space. A special item in this newsletter edition has to go to our chandelier and stained glass feature, which was developed by Anthony, Kelly and Mary-Jean by recycled local materials, in our reception area. I think the pictures speak for themselves on how amazing it looks.

We are almost there and have some special artwork pieces on the way that we would love to share in future editions



# NOTICEBOARD

## MS CHARITY BAKE OFF

On 2 October 2021, Virtus Heritage took part in a 'Bake Off for MS' and we had a lot of fun doing it. Most of our staff members and business partners were in lockdown and we wanted to do something nice for everyone and at the same time raise some money for a charity along the way.

We purchased an assortment of Wattle Seed Pavlova, Damper and Lemon Myrtle Spice kits from an Indigenous owned company from the Torres Strait, Mabu Mabu <https://www.mabumabu.com.au/shop>

We registered a fundraising account with Kiss Goodbye to MS and Virtus Heritage announced the company would match any donations made. On the day we had a Zoom link going so we could all log on and bake together with our families.

In total we raised over \$1,700 for Kiss Goodbye to MS which we hope will help with eradicating MS, and supporting families living with MS, like our amazing colleague, Kelly.

We had so much fun that we have made this an annual Virtus Heritage event.



## CEnvP Heritage Specialist Certification



Apply Now for CEnvP Heritage Specialist Certification

The Certified Environmental Practitioner (CEnvP) Scheme offers a specialist certification in Heritage, open to suitably qualified practitioners of at least ten years' experience. As part of the wider CEnvP Scheme, Heritage specialist certification is overseen by an expert committee of Heritage professionals. The Heritage certification recognises the training, experience, professional conduct and ethical behaviour of practitioners via an accredited, profession-neutral process. The assessment for certification is rigorous and completely independent.

Heritage can sometimes be seen as mysterious by those outside the industry. To mitigate this, certification provides an impartial, external measure on the quality of the work, which can give confidence to those who engage Heritage services. By becoming certified, Heritage practitioners can demonstrate to stakeholders, clients and the community that their work meets the highest standards of professionalism and ethical conduct. Certification recognises the skills and experience developed throughout a career in Heritage, and enhances marketability in a competitive sector.

For the purposes of certification, Heritage Practice is the implementation of heritage practice, legislation and guiding principles to identify, interpret and manage the cultural and historical significance that is recognised in an object, place, landscape or setting. Heritage professionals acknowledge that cultural and heritage significance is the sum of the aesthetic, historic, scientific, social and spiritual qualities or values of a place or object. To apply for CEnvP – Heritage, visit [cenvp.org](http://cenvp.org).



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