Indigenous Heritage
Three features are highlighted:

3. Reading Matters
The Oxford Companion To - Australian Gardens. The pinnacle of publications on Australian Gardens.

4. Keppel Islands
Aboriginal people’s 5000 year old connection with the Keppel Islands explored.

6. Foundation Stones
Protecting Aboriginal heritage at Mungana Rock Art Site Chillagoe, Queensland.

8. Digging Deep
Queensland’s younger generation getting excited about Australia’s cultural heritage.

9. St Helena Island
Moreton Bay Environmental Education Centre gives students the chance to learn about convict life on St Helena Island.

10. Regional News
Features projects from Central Queensland - The EPA’s A&TI Youth Scholarship and Indigenous Archaeology.

11. Grants
Grants from the EPA’s Queensland Community Cultural Heritage Incentive Program.

12. Heritage News
Queensland Cultural Heritage Council’s newest member named Young Queenslander of the Year 2003.

**A 5000-YEAR-OLD CENTRAL QUEENSLAND ABORIGINAL TRADITION**

This issue looks at the Aboriginal history associated with South and North Keppel Island, Central Queensland. The Woppaburra people lived near the coast in dwellings made by bending saplings into an arch, thatching them with ti-tree bark and piling earth and stones around the sides.

Foundation Stones looks at how EPA and QPWS staff have worked in a partnership to remove graffiti at Mungana Rock Art Site Chillagoe, Queensland.
Chair’s Comments

Heritage council members listened to heritage issues that were raised by Charters Towers and Ravenswood residents.

Once again the Queensland Heritage Council has demonstrated its commitment to the program of interaction with regional and rural Queensland when council members visited Charters Towers and Ravenswood. Heritage council members listened to heritage issues that were raised by Charters Towers and Ravenswood residents. Charters Towers tour guide Susan Phillips gave Heritage Council members a tour of the Venus Battery, Court House, Masonic Lodge, and the Heritage Information and Centre and Stock Exchange. Ravenswood Restoration and Preservation Association representative Tracy Hales showed Heritage Council members the Railway Hotel, Ambulance Building, Imperial Hotel, and several other listed places that demonstrate why Ravenswood is one of Queensland’s most significant heritage towns.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate one of our newest council members, Alice Chang, on being named Young Queenslander of the Year 2003. Alice, a 22-year-old medical student from Brisbane studying at James Cook University in Townsville.

Reading Matters

THE OXFORD COMPANION TO: AUSTRALIAN GARDENS

The Oxford Companion To: Australian Gardens is an excellent book demonstrating the creativity, history and diversity of Australian and Queensland gardens between the 1800s and 2002.

This book takes readers on a fascinating journey back through time when creativity was flowing and technology was lacking. The book has more than 1500 alphabetically arranged entries, that come to life through a wide range of beautiful illustrations.

The history of Aboriginal gardeners, gardening books, nurseries, Botanic gardens and parklands are among the varied topics discussed. It includes 350 entries that examine historical aspects and themes in Australian and Queensland gardens and is a great guide for gardening buffs.

This wonderfully detailed book provides readers with the opportunity to browse through more than 750 biographical entries detailing the lives of significant figures including Thomas Shepherd, Edna Walling and Marion Griffin, in the world of Australian garden making. The work of Brisbane landscape gardener Alexander Jolly is depicted, describing how he transformed the hilly streets of Ithaca, with rockeries and embankment gardens between 1884 and 1890.

How gardeners expressed their artistic creativity from the 1860s is described by Sydney-based heritage consultant Colleen Morris. She tells how wire-work ornaments and fencing became a popular garden accessory.
A popular central Queensland holiday spot that attracts thousands of Australian and overseas tourists each year holds the secrets of a lifestyle once had by the island’s ‘salt water’ people.

Tourists flock to the island to soak up the sun, swim and enjoy the activities that the resort offers, but what they don’t know is there are signs that the Woppaburra people lived on North Keppel Island for 5000 years, and 700 years on South Keppel Island.

Woppaburra people have the opportunity to look into the past of their ancestors when elders pass on stories told by their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents about life on the Keppel Islands in the days before European settlement in 1884.

About 60 Woppaburra lived on South Keppel and about 30 lived on North Keppel, carrying out their daily tasks of gathering food from the coastline and mainland.

Midden sites, burial sites, a bora ring, stone artefacts and campsites are evidence of the Woppaburra people’s connection to the land.

1. Quartz-tipped drill, Keppel Is, Qld.
2. Shell-tipped drill, Mapoon, Cape York.
   (Photo - Howard Hughs)
4. Shell necklace found on Keppel Island.
Woppaburra spokesman Bob Muir said some of the middens found on the island were 5000 years old.

“Middens, a bora ring, remains of a hut at Wreck Point, a burial cave, buried campsite and exposed campsite are some of the remains found by archaeologists on the island,” he said.

“Many of these sites are in danger from erosion from human traffic. We built a 40m-board walk over one midden site and erected interpretation signs to inform visitors about the site.

“A lot of people don’t know that the Woppaburra people originated on the island.” Mr Muir said they would like to see monitoring and protection of the sites from natural and human impacts.

He said the sites held important information about the Woppaburra people’s history that could be shared with non-indigenous people.

“Keppel Island is very important to the Woppaburra people as many elders have not yet set foot on it – they only know about the island from their parents’ stories.

“Younger Woppaburra people bring some of the elders to Keppel Island for the first time so they can get a sense of belonging.

“It’s important for elders to know where they come from so they can get a sense of place and pride.”

Mr Muir said Europeans thought the Woppaburra people were a unique race compared to mainland Aboriginals. As a result Europeans sent their bones to Australian and overseas museums.

He said that in the past 10 years the Woppaburra people had taken the remains of 22 of their ancestors to the island for burial on two separate occasions.

EPA archaeologist Mike Rowland said he first started archaeological fieldwork on Keppel Island in 1978.

“From the start of my work, linguistic, material cultural and biological evidence suggested that the Woppaburra people had been isolated to some extent from the adjacent mainland,” he said.

“I gained a perspective about the Woppaburra people through the logs of European coastal explorers and from the more detailed reports of Walter Roth and Archibald Meston who held the roles of Aboriginal Protectors.

“While the Keppel Islanders were murdered, used, abused manipulated and finally removed from the islands in 1903, surprisingly little is learnt about them as individuals or as a group.

“However the reports and archaeological investigations have provided much information on the material culture of the Woppaburra and their way of life in a small coastal environment.”

Mr Rowland said that Walter Roth collected both skeletal remains and grave goods from all the Keppel islands and they have since been the focus of considerable study.

He said the first recorded visit of a group from the mainland to Keppel Islands was in 1865.

Mr Rowland said one of the most satisfying aspects of the archaeological investigations on the Keppel Islands had been working with Bob Muir and other Woppaburra people and sharing thoughts and ideas with them.

He said the way they used and managed the environment of the Keppel’s had lessons for everyone.

In 1984, 40 Keppel Islanders attended a reunion on Great Keppel Island.

Mr Rowland said that the Woppaburra people continue to trace their relations from Tasmania to Cairns.

“They have also undertaken their own research in recent years from written and oral reports,” he said.

The Woppaburra people built a 40m-board walk over one midden site to help protect it.

Black and white photos supplied by John Oxley Library
The Aboriginal history associated with Chillagoe stretches back 29,000 years, that is why these Aboriginal rock art sites are an important tool in gaining knowledge and understanding about Aboriginal culture.

Chillagoe Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service Ranger Brett Edwards found the disturbing drawings while carrying out routine duties near the Mungana Rock Art site.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Cairns Cultural Heritage Branch, with the approval of a representative of the traditional owners, organised a project in January this year to reduce the impact of graffiti.

Cultural Heritage Branch Senior Conservation officer Ross Brown worked with QPWS officers Danny Chew and Johnny Fred to remove as much of the graffiti as possible.

Mr Brown said the site had been vandalised on numerous occasions but it was only the second time the site had received treatment to remove the graffiti.

"In 1991 a substantial amount of graffiti was cleaned away at Wallumba and Mungana rock art sites," he said.

"On that occasion a rock art conservator from the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service provided specialist assistance.

"With the most recent episode of vandalism at Mungana the graffiti could be seen quite a distance away from the site alcove. The area vandalised was about 650mm high and 550mm wide. It was offensive and disrespectful towards Aboriginal culture and the site. "A limestone rock was used to draw across the imagery – this left etched grooves and a white pigmentation over the panel."

Mungana Rock Art Site is located just outside the boundary of Mungana National Park.
A limestone rock was used to draw across the imagery.

Rock art sites are important because Archaeologists record the imagery and attempt to date it, determine changes in style, and relate them to changes in society and the environment. The EPA is introducing a state-wide initiative in its attempt to combat vandalism against some of the state’s most unique Aboriginal art work sites by trialing moveable video surveillance cameras. Carnarvon Gorge National Park in central Queensland will be the first site to be monitored under the proposed new scheme.

Mr Brown said vandalism on Aboriginal rock art sites was irreversible, as the etchings can not be fully removed, and could impact upon the scientific and cultural values. He said the degrading treatment given to the sites showed a lack of respect for Aboriginal culture.

“Every act of vandalism at different Aboriginal rock art sites contributes further to the deterioration of these unique sites. “These sites are already struggling to survive natural causes of deterioration,” Mr Brown said.

QPWS Ranger-in-charge officer Danny Chew said the oldest Aboriginal occupation site at Chillagoe was excavated by Bruno David in 1989.

“From that excavation Bruno David came to the conclusion that the earliest occupation of this particular site may have been as far back as 29,000 years,” he said.

“It is annoying to find that the site has been vandalised. “The public does not realise how important these sites are to gain knowledge and understanding about Aboriginal culture that is thousands of years old.”

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A limestone rock was used to draw across the imagery.
the GGCH project was initiated by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at University of Queensland in collaboration with members of Aboriginal communities in the study area.

“The study area includes Bundaberg, Gladstone and Monto,” Mr Ulm said. “While out working in the field students are paired up with experienced excavators, where they get on the job training, which includes learning what an artefact is and what tools to use. “They are exposed to all facets of excavation work.

“It’s amazing how popular archaeology is – there are so many young people volunteering to participate in excavations we had to develop a volunteer program.”

The volunteer program provides students with the opportunity to see and work with archaeologists on artefacts in a controlled environment. Some young people have had the excitement of finding Aboriginal artefacts that are up to 20,000 years old.

Mr Ulm said once students start field work 90 percent loved it, while the other 10 percent hated it. Field work can often involve demanding physical exertion in difficult conditions.

An excavation is not only about fossicking about in the ground it also involves spending a large proportion of the day and night with work colleagues, as an excavation can take up to three months to complete. The University of Queensland fourth year Archaeology student Jenna Lamb said she loved discovering about Australia’s history. “The whole idea about discovering artefacts from the past is amazing,” she said. “People just don’t realise how much Aboriginal history is in our country just waiting to be discovered.”

DIGGING DEEP

Young Queenslanders are taking up the challenge of digging deep into the state’s past to find out about our colourful cultural heritage.

Cultural heritage, in particular archaeology has seen an increase in popularity with young people aged between 17 years and 25 years. These young budding Indiana Joneses can’t wait to get down and dirty to trace Queensland’s cultural heritage.

Australian Archaeological Association National president Sean Ulm said there had been a large increase in the popularity of archaeology courses throughout Australia. “I have more than 100 students in my first year classes – archaeology is very popular with the younger population,” he said.

“Young people are very interested in Australia’s cultural heritage. “Once the younger generation start to realise how amazing Australian cultural heritage is they can’t wait to become involved in excavations.”

University of Queensland Archaeology Honours student Nathan Woolford said he became interested in archaeology because of his Aboriginal background.

“I love the field and theory work associated with archaeology,” he said. “The majority of field work I do is excavating Aboriginal sites and early European settlements.”

Students have been participating in the Gooreng Gooreng Cultural Heritage Project (GGCHP), an interdisciplinary Aboriginal cultural heritage study of the Burnett-Curtis region in southern Central Queensland.

Mr Ulm said students from University of Queensland had been involved in many excavation projects in central Queensland. He said the GGCH project was initiated by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit at University of Queensland in collaboration with members of Aboriginal communities in the study area.

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One program developed by the Centre is an archaeology program for high school students in years 10, 11, and 12.

In 2003 the Centre and QPWS joined forces to present the archaeology program as part of National Archaeology Week.

On St Helena Island students are given the opportunity to participate in an authentic archaeological experience. This includes reading maps that have the original layout of the island (as it was in 1867), and marking out a site where they thought prison cells were once located.

The Moreton Bay Environmental Education Centre Principal Eileen Mitchell (Mitch) said students learned much about the historic value of the island through this process.

A relaxing 45 minute boat ride seven kilometres north east of Wynnum Manly will deliver you to St Helena Island Queensland’s very own historic national park area which is managed by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS).

St Helena Island was established as a high security prison between 1867 and 1932.

As the boat chugs its way through the ocean you wonder how many prisoners ignored the threat of sharks and tried to swim their way to freedom.

As you leave the boat and start the long walk towards the fragile remains of buildings where prisoners were once housed and fed, you feel a sense of the isolation and desperation prisoners must have experienced while imprisoned on the island.

To help keep the cultural significance of the island alive thousands of school children from throughout Queensland make the trek to St Helena Island to learn more about its unique cultural heritage.

Between 10,000 and 11,000 students visit the island each year.

The Moreton Bay Environmental Education Centre, Charlotte Street, Wynnum, has developed a number of educational excursion programs to ensure school children have the opportunity to experience first hand the colourful history of the island.

The Moreton Bay Environmental Education Centre teachers help students take on roles from some segment of the island’s history and guide them through experiences to give them an understanding of life on the island when it was used as a high security prison.

“Students can see how the island’s boundaries, and buildings have changed over time due to changes in the environment.

“High School students really love getting involved in working out where prison cells were once located, how to accurately peg out the site with rope and then working out for themselves from the evidence they have gathered what this really meant in terms of people and their lives.”

School students have the opportunity to participate in an authentic archaeology experience.
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY ENCOURAGES A&TSI YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP – CENTRAL OFFICE

Enhancing employment skills and providing support for Indigenous youth is the force driving the EPA participation in a joint project with the Department of Main Roads (DMR).

The EPA provides four Indigenous Secondary Scholarships under the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Education to Employment Scheme, which is run by DMR. Senior Workforce Management Officer Daniel Abednego said the scheme offered scholarships to year 10 secondary school students throughout Queensland. “EPA participates in this scheme by addressing long terms goals in the objectives of the A&TSI Employment and Development Strategy 2002/2003 implementation plan,” he said. “The scheme provides financial support and encourages students in year 10, 11 and 12 to remain at school. “The project is also designed to bring students into employment and potentially link them with traineeships, cadetships or university placements.”

Mr Abednego said capacity building at a community level, should students decide to stay within the community after finishing secondary education was another aspect of the program. He said this scheme reinforces the link between the EPA and Indigenous community. Mr Abednego said the scheme would enhance the working relationship between the EPA and DMR. Parks and Planning Division have agreed to host the 4 scholarship students. Workforce Management Unit will continue to administer and facilitate the Scheme, and also organise mentoring from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services in Cairns and Mount Isa and possibly Forestry and Wildlife Division Brisbane.

EPA ARCHAEOLOGIST DISCUSSES INDIGENOUS ARCHAEOLOGY FROM 200 YEARS AGO

Indigenous archaeology stretching back 200 years was the hot topic of discussion during a lecture presented by Environmental Protection Agency Cultural Heritage Acting Regional manager Carl Porter during National Archaeology Week recently.

Mr Porter described how the Indigenous archaeological record, material remains of the Aboriginal occupation of Australia stretching back 50,000 years ago, had changed after the arrival of Europeans, to traditional owners, elders, EPA and QPWS staff and the wider community. He said he became fascinated with the post contact archaeology – how cultures change after contact with Europeans – while working on the Bowen Basin Cultural Heritage Project in 1996.

“Historic camp sites and fringe camps are some of the sites I studied while working on this project,” Mr Porter said. “I came across flaked bottle-glass tools used by Aboriginal people, which was a new material used for traditional activities. “Both glass and metal were widely traded between Aboriginal groups after white men arrived in Australia.” He said glass was worked into tools such as the highly elaborate and beautiful Kimberly point, which was a type of spear point with finely pressure flaked edges. Mr Porter said metal axes replaced ground edge stone axes, and were exchanged along established Aboriginal trading routes.

“They were even depicted in rock art. At the lecture I displayed pictures of artefacts, such as bark coffins and canoes that had been manufactured with metal axes. “I also spoke about how there were new types of sites, such as Native Police, fringe camps, missions and reserves.” He said archaeological techniques could be used to investigate what life was like in places like Cherbourg Aboriginal settlement in South East Queensland, and the Police Creek Fringe camp in Gladstone hundreds of years ago. Mr Porter said at the Taroom settlement on the Dawson River, ground-penetrating radar was used to locate a cemetery that many of the old people remembered. “Mapping the locations of long-vanished places and buildings showed how people’s activities were structured within the space of the settlement, and how they created new ways of maintaining their culture. “It’s important to recognise that Aboriginal traditions continued in the post-contact era, but there were also great changes as new materials became available and old lifestyles were altered. “Aboriginal culture has remained dynamic up to the present day,” he said.
GRANTS

QUETTA MEMORIAL CHURCH – THURSDAY ISLAND

The Quetta Memorial Church on Thursday Island was erected after 133 passengers aboard the R.M.S Quetta drowned when it hit unchartered rocks and sank off Albany Island on February 28, 1890. The incident was classed as one of Queensland’s worst maritime disasters. The bodies of the dead that were found are buried on Thursday Island. Anglican priest Reverend McLaren, who was visiting the Island at the time of the disaster decided that a permanent memorial for those lost at sea should be built.

The Quetta Memorial Church was constructed after 2000 pounds was raised in a public appeal in Queensland. Memorials to people, and relics from the Quetta and other Torres Strait shipwrecks are displayed in the Cathedral. It is the only known memorial church in Queensland associated with maritime disasters.

An annual Memorial Service is held for those who lost their lives in the disaster, although the majority of the congregation are Islanders, and not a single Islander died in the disaster. From its inception, the Quetta Memorial has functioned as a place of pilgrimage and as a tourist attraction.

OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART CHURCH

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church was built on Thursday Island in the late 19th century. It has a close association with the work in the Torres Strait and New Guinea of the Order of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, a Catholic congregation founded in France in the 1860s.

It is a good example of late 19th century timber church with decorative Gothic elements and side verandahs.

It still retains many of its early fittings and fixtures, including the choir loft, pews, altar, decorative fretwork, the 1930s painted trompe l’oeil murals on the sanctuary wall and altar.

The Restoration Committee Incorporated of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church at Thursday Island was successful in obtaining a $5000 grant to carry out a detailed fabric investigation of the church.

The detailed fabric investigation will involve office based documentation of site records and preparation of a Fabric Condition Report. The aim of the investigation is the consolidation of site information, prioritisation of conservation work and enhancing community awareness of sound conservation planning processes.
NEW LISTINGS IN THE QUEENSLAND HERITAGE REGISTER

The Queensland Heritage Register lists places of cultural heritage significance throughout the State. Below is a selection of recently entered items. If you require information on nominating a place to the register then please telephone (07) 3227 6499 for a complimentary information sheet, or e-mail heritage.council@epa.qld.gov.au

SOUTH-EAST QLD

FORMER COORPAROO FIRE STATION

The former Coorparoo Fire Station is an important example of fire stations erected in Brisbane suburbs by the Queensland Government through the Metropolitan Fire Board during the 1930s. The building was in continuous use as a fire station from 1935 to 1976. It is an important example of architecture and planning of Brisbane suburban fire stations of the 1930s incorporating offices and engine room to the ground floor and a residence to the first floor. The interiors in both operational and domestic areas are intact.

LOLWORTH CREEK BATTERY - CHARTERS TOWERS

Lolworth Creek Battery was a small isolated battery and power plant of the late 19th century design and manufacture still in use in the 1930s. The place also contains a rare surviving weighbridge with scales. The bush-timber frame of the battery shed is partly intact. Below the shed on the creek bank are three earth concentrate tanks which, with a group of rendered stone cyanide tanks and tailings sands, illustrate the crude processing technology. There is also evidence of a camp, including a metal wood stove.

OTHER PLACES RECENTLY ADDED TO THE REGISTER INCLUDE:

PALMER RIVER GOLD COMPANY DREDGE, 105km south-west of Laura, Mount Elliot Company Metallurgical Plant Battery, 2km south-west of Cloncurry, TC Beirne Centre and Fortuneland, Fortitude Valley, Brisbane Royal Showgrounds, Brisbane.

If you require further information on these or other places listed in the register please e-mail Joanne.Ketter@epa.qld.gov.au

CULTURAL HERITAGE NEWS

ALICE CHANG NAMED YOUNG QUEENSLANDER OF THE YEAR 2003

Queensland Cultural Heritage Council’s newest member Alice Chang was recently named Young Queenslander of the Year 2003. Alice was nominated for the Young Queenslander of the Year Award by one of her friends. Alice said she was very surprised to win the award. “I have had such a great start to the year, first I was named on the Heritage Council, and now this,” she said. “I am delighted that I have won the award. It shows that the government is giving recognition to young people for their contribution in making our society a better place.” Alice is working with the other members of the Heritage Council to raise the profile of heritage places that are important to young people. She interrupted her studies at James Cook University to travel to Brisbane to accept her Award on the Queen’s Birthday long weekend. Alice headed to Europe in July for a well earned four week holiday.