



# 12

## **Dolphin Island Archaeology**

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**Fieldwork on Dolphin Island focused on Flying Foam Passage, in an area described in historical accounts as being used by the colonial-era pearling industry from the mid-1860s. While some historical accounts of the Flying Foam Passage are provided here, we refer the reader to Chapter 18 'Lifeways to Massacre' for a wider treatment of historical activities relevant to the northern islands of the archipelago.**

## Historical Background

The Dolphin Island location documented here is a listed historical heritage site, based on the presence of historical burials, historical engravings, and its surface assemblages of colonial-era archaeological material. Resident Magistrate Robert Sholl's journal for the period 1866–1871 refers to deaths amongst the pearling fleet, including of Malay and Aboriginal workers, but not to burials similar in number to those located here. However, as seen by one of us (K.M.), a single grave marked by stones and pearl shell cover is located on a beach 1.3 kilometres north along the shore of Dolphin Island. The remains of a Malay skeleton were also recovered (in 2004, by police) following exposure after a cyclone at a location approximately 2 kilometres south of the northern tip of the island. Sholl visited the Flying Foam Passage in February 1872 and mentioned a creek used by the pearlery for water and bathing (Sholl 18/2/1873, cited in Hutchinson 1973). The material record seems to indicate that this area previously referred to as 'Rocky Pool Creek', 'Cemetery Beach at Watering Bay' and 'Copper Beach' (Figure 12.1) was the location he visited.

In a published account of his visit to the Flying Foam Passage in 1869, Richmond Thatcher (1869) observed that the pearling luggers and whalers anchored in

Flying Foam Passage, where they obtained water from both Angel and Dolphin islands. Thatcher described the presence of petroglyphs, comparing them favourably with other Aboriginal art he had seen, recognising representation of 'lizards, turtles, kangaroos etc.' as well as historical engravings of vessels with 'the dates and names of the crew' (Thatcher 1869, 30 October).

In 1970 reports of human remains found in this area were made to the WA Museum. Then Director David Hutchinson inspected the location in 1973, the same year Dix and Randolph independently recorded several art and historical scatter sites now registered with the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH). There was a subsequent investigation in 1979 by McIlroy, who designated the whole area a 'reserve' (McIlroy 1979: 37; note we have chosen to consistently use this spelling of his last name given various spellings on different reports: McIlroy/MacIlroy/Macilroy/macilroy/MC ILROY), although this is not reflected in the records held by the DPLH. McIlroy's report to the (then) Australian Heritage Commission resulted in its listing on the (previous) Register of National Estate Places (Register National Estate Place No. 10108). Surprisingly, its statement of significance suggests it should not be listed:

The nominated location may have been a watering place for the pearling fleet during the 1860s–70s, an important industry in the history of the north-west of Western Australia (WA) (Criterion A.4). However, there is no conclusive archival or archaeological evidence to substantiate the nominators claim that the burials on the island are necessarily associated with this industry. Entry of this place in the Register of the National Estate cannot, therefore, be justified.

The site is also listed as a WA Heritage Council Place (No. 08667).

## Dolphin Island Survey

Fieldwork took place here on 6–9 May 2018, and a total 30 project person days were spent in this embayment on the eastern side of Flying Foam Passage. The main purpose of our fieldwork was to record the historical elements; in particular, the six known graves at the southern end of the beach and historical graffiti on the beachfront and within Rocky Pool Creek at the northern end of the beach (Figures 12.1–12.3; see Mulvaney 2018). Historical evidence attests to the use of this place and potable water supply by the local pearling fleet. While recording ballast and careening evidence on the intertidal mudflats, we also identified

a significant Aboriginal intertidal site (Dortch et al. 2019; Morrison 2019; and see Benjamin et al. 2020). We also systematically documented the Aboriginal rock art located around the pools along the creek line and on an outcrop adjacent to the beach. The bedrock here is blocky granophyre intruded by a number of dolerite dykes (Figure 12.2). The topography is dissected block formation with knolls and ridges, cleaved by narrow gullies and rocky creek lines. The sandy flats are dominated by spinifex ground cover and stunted white, smooth-bark eucalypts (*Eucalyptus victrix*).



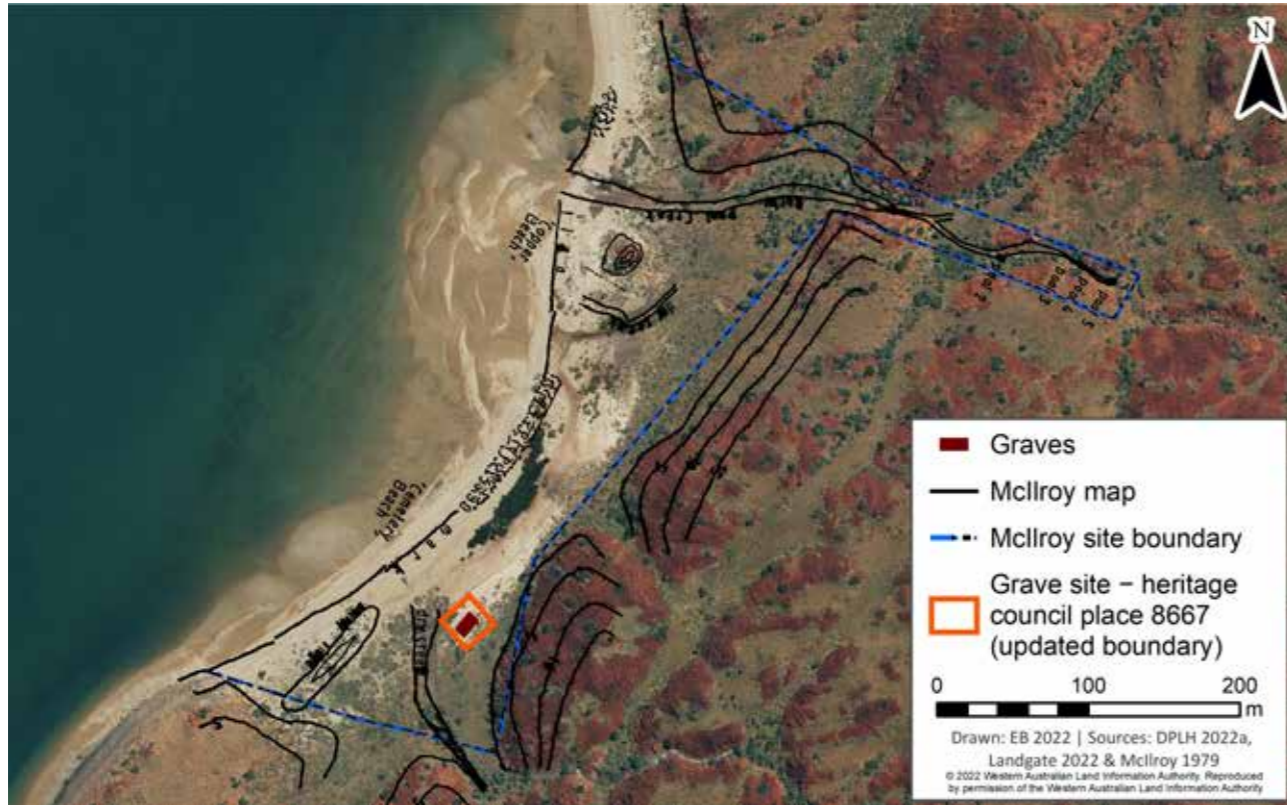


Figure 12.1. Dolphin Island historical site recording from McIlroy 1979 and listings from the 1970s overlain on the Landgate 2022 imagery.

A total of 13 sites, six with rock art, are defined based on the 2018 Dolphin Island survey records (Table 12.1 and Figure 12.4). Four sites (DPLH 11708; DPLH 11709; DPLH 11668; and DPLH 11669) were previously recorded and registered (Figure 12.3). While the DPLH site files do not provide detailed location information, the descriptions (and some photographs) match with those areas recorded during the 2018 fieldwork with some minor additions. The description for Site DPLH 11708 indicates the site recorded by Warwick Dix and Peter Randolph in 1973 may have extended north to include what is now MLP-DI003 and MLP-DI013. Conversely, Pools 3–5 photographed by (McIlroy 1979: 37) – DPLH 11668 and DPLH

11669 – has continuous rock art and is now classified as a single site.

The boundaries for two other recorded sites (DPLH 11710 and DPLH 11670) extend across the Dolphin Island survey area: however, both sites are located outside the survey area, one to the north and the other to the south (Figure 12.3). The Dolphin Island recorded rock art assemblage is considered as a single sample in these discussions (Figure 12.3) and we provide detailed information about stone artefacts and stone structures (including the graves) around Cemetery Beach.

SITE TYPES	NO.	%
Structure	4	30.8
Art; grinding	2	15.4
Historical	2	15.4
Art	2	15.4
Art; structure; grinding	1	7.7
Art; structure; artefacts; grinding; quarry; historical	1	7.7
Historical; artefacts	1	7.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 12.1. Dolphin Island site types.

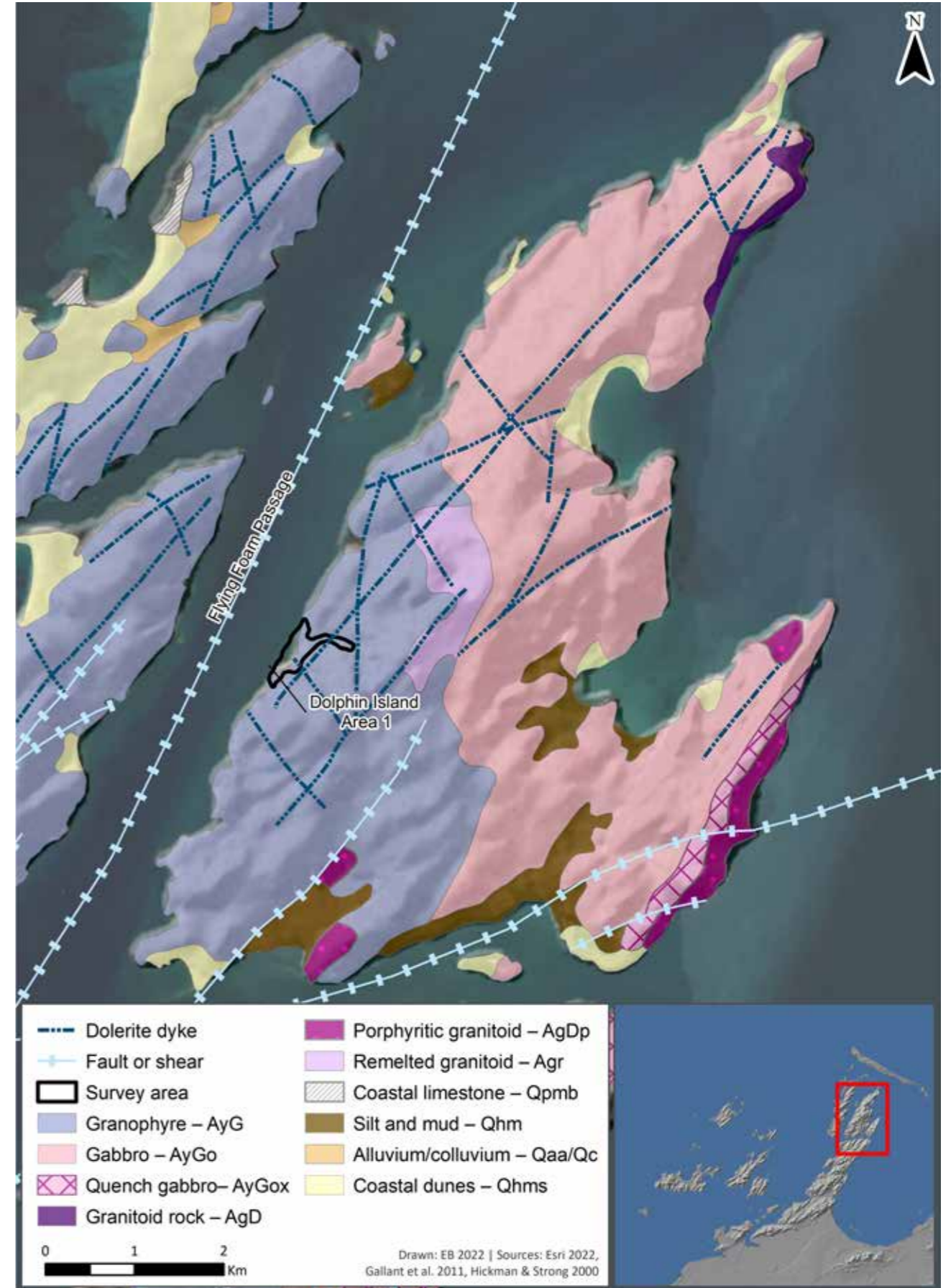


Figure 12.2. Surface geology on either side of Flying Foam Passage showing location work on Dolphin Island.



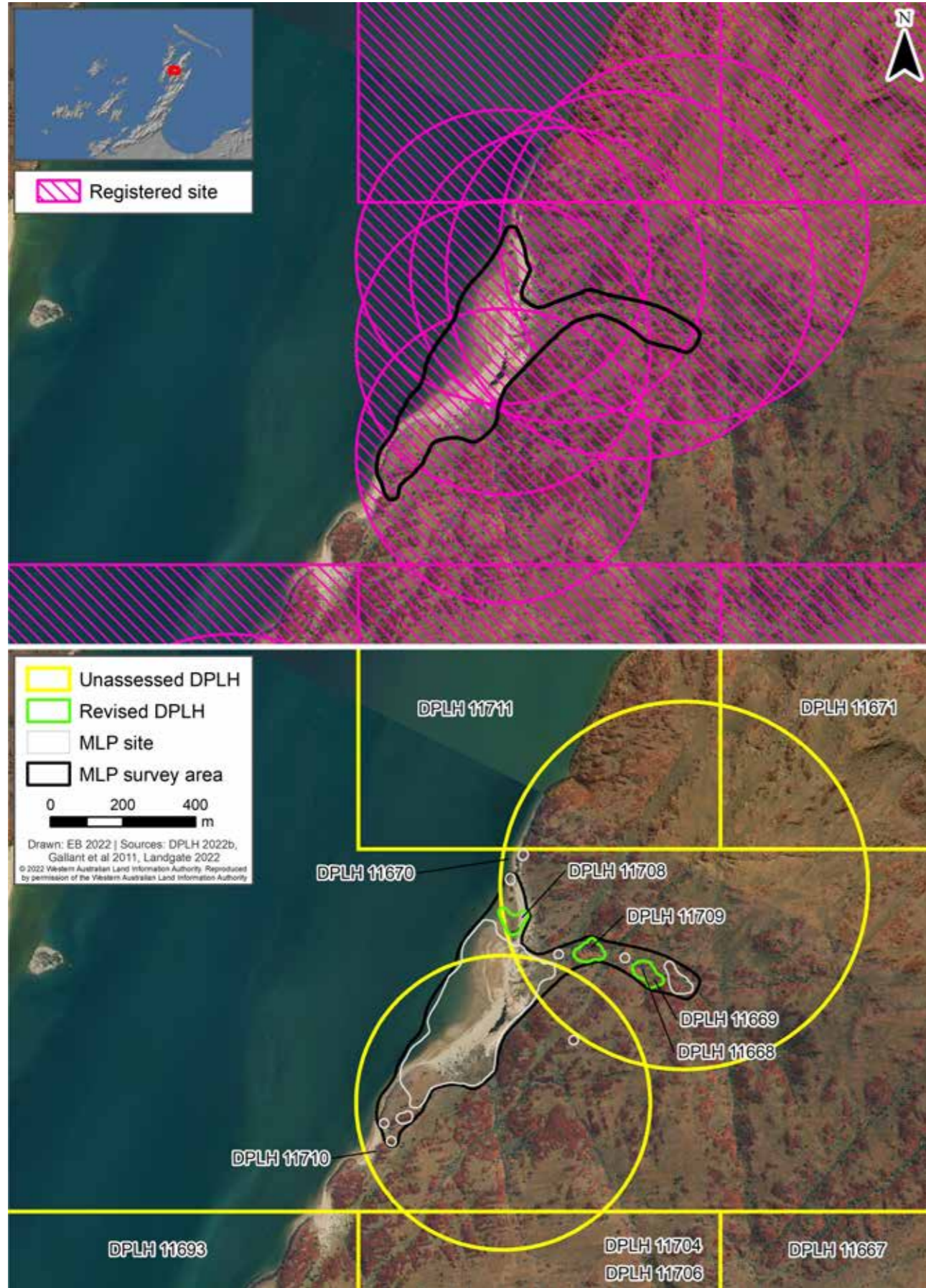


Figure 12.3. Dolphin Island: (top) previously recorded Aboriginal sites; (bottom) verified DPLH records audited by CRAR+M.

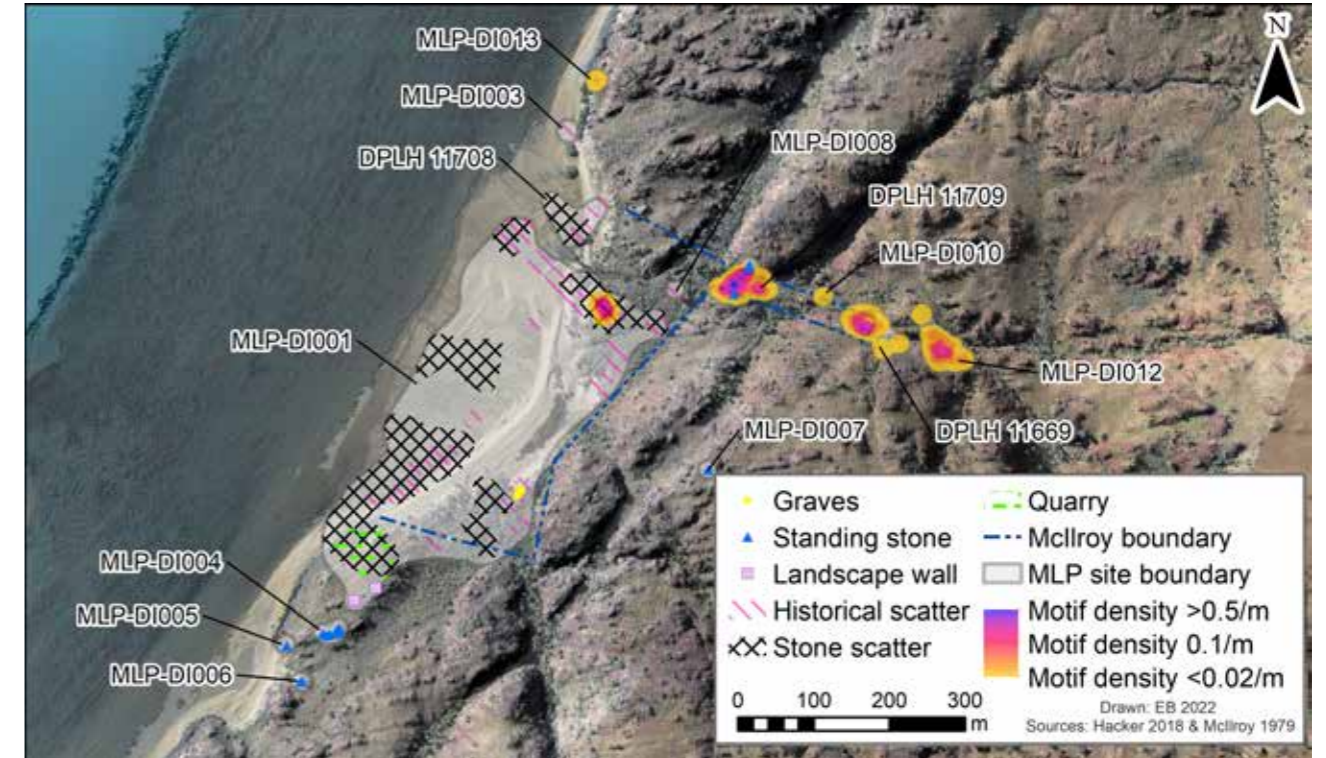


Figure 12.4. Dolphin Island Sample Area showing location of work focus, project site records and heritage site types.

Artefacts and stone structures relating to the historic pearling industry along with Aboriginal stone artefacts and rock art, including material in the intertidal and subtidal zone, were recorded (Figure 12.4). The beach stretches for some 620 metres north–south and is up to 100 m wide, backed by the rising granophyre blocky slopes (Figure 12.5). There is an Aboriginal quarry site at the southern end of the beach. The site complex associated with Rocky Pool Creek (DPLH

11709 / MLP-DI009) is towards the northern end of the beach, and there are also an isolated petroglyph site (MLP-DI010) and two larger sites (MLP-DI012, DPLH 11669 / MLP-DI011) further upstream focused around semi-permanent rock pools (Figure 12-5c). Four other sites with rock art (Table 12.3) include one medium-sized assemblage (MLP-DI001) around a rock outcrop adjacent to the beach; this also has a concentration of historical artefacts (Figure 12-5d).



Figure 12.5. Dolphin Island archaeological landscapes: (a) the stone-lined Malay pearlers' graves; (b) view of artefacts in the intertidal area of Flying Foam Passage; (c) mid-sections of Rocky Pool Creek; (d) isolated outcrop (MLP-DI001) near the beach where 72 petroglyphs were recorded.



## Rock Art

A total of 278 panels with 564 motifs were recorded. The spatial distribution of these panels places this rock art within six sites (Table 12.2). Due to time constraints,

graffiti only was recorded at MLP-DI013. There is significantly more, unrecorded, rock art in this location.

SITE NAME	MOTIF COUNT
DPLH 11709 (MLP-DI009)	258
MLP-DI012	120
DPLH 11669 (DPLH 11668 and MLP-DI011)	109
MLP-DI001	72
MLP-DI013	4
MLP-DI010	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>564</i>

Table 12.2. Dolphin Island rock art sites, showing total motifs recorded.

Geometric motifs dominate the assemblage (Table 12.3) with anthropomorphic and zoomorphic motifs

present in high numbers. Tracks are relatively rare.

MOTIF CLASS	NO.	%F	DEPICTIVE	%F
Anthropomorphic	134	23.8	134	26.4
Geometric	207	36.7	207	40.8
Other	57	10.1	-	-
Tracks	51	9.0	51	10.1
Zoomorphic	115	20.4	115	22.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>564</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>507</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 12.3. Dolphin Island class proportions.

The 207 recorded geometric motifs feature ten subjects (Table 12.5). The dominant graphic elements are arcs and ovals, followed by linear and angular geometric designs. Material culture items are grouped with the geometrics given their graphic elements best suit this ascription. Here, eight boomerangs with distinct form and tapering at ends (i.e. including one which is

described as a number 7 boomerang) were recorded in addition to the 56 other arcs of varying shapes and sizes in this assemblage (Figure 12-6a, e).

Intricate combinations of line and dot graphic elements, which is a feature of an early artistic tradition within Murujuga, were recorded amongst this assemblage (n=6; see Figure 12.6b).

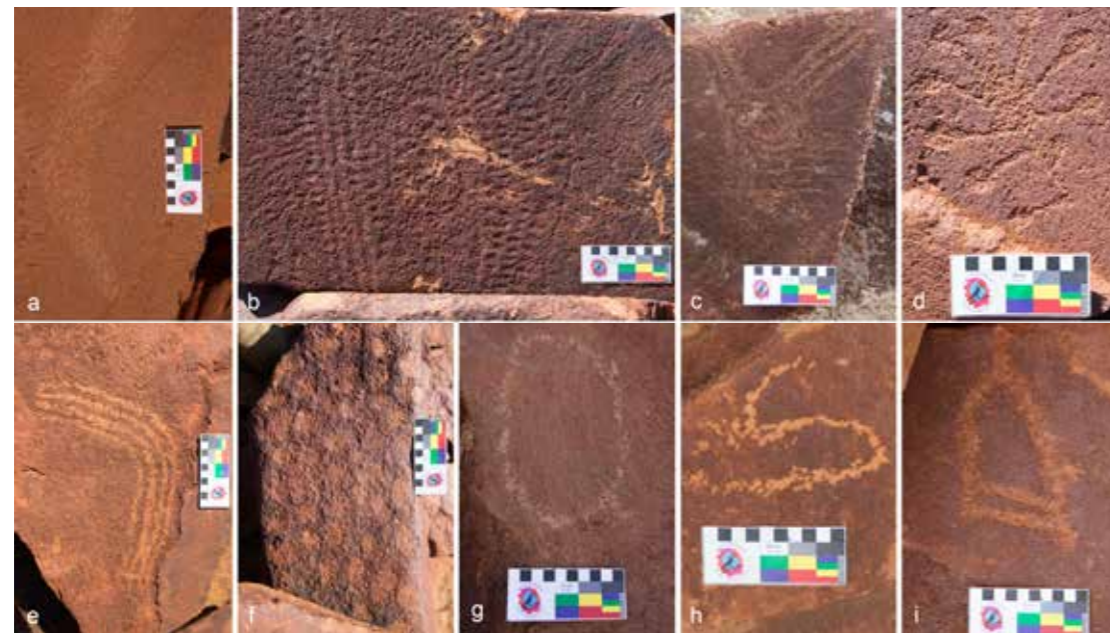


Figure 12.6. Dolphin Island Watering Bay assemblage with selection of geometric images: (a) material culture, boomerang; (b) dot and line graphic; (c) complex; (d) rayed; (e) arc set; (f) dot set; (g) oval; (h) linear; and (i) angular.

Of the 134 anthropomorphic figures, most are the linear (stick) figures, with side-profile figures the next prolific. Solid figures are the only other dominant graphic representation. Six examples of early Murujuga anthropomorphic styles, the decorated-infill figure and the archaic face, were recorded amongst this assemblage. One of the two recorded faces was reported by WA Museum staff some 50 years ago (Dix 1977). These early anthropomorphic forms are in the upper reaches of the Rocky

Pool valley, some 500 m east of the beach (Figure 12.7). More recent human forms were found on the outcrop closest to the beach. It is possible that these images were produced during the historical period by the settler or pearling people, their relatively fresh appearance and unusual style supporting this conclusion (Figure 12.8 c, d).

SUBJECT	NO.	%	SUBJECT	NO.	%
<i>Anthropomorphic</i>			<i>Tracks</i>		
Decorated-infill figure	4	0.8	Bird track	32	6.3
Face	2	0.4	Human foot	7	1.4
Linear figure	65	12.8	Human hand	1	0.2
Outline figure	1	0.2	Macropod track	11	2.2
Profile figure	38	7.5	<i>Zoomorphic</i>		
Solid figure	24	4.7	Animal part	4	0.8
<i>Geometric</i>			Bird	29	5.7
Angular	20	3.9	Fish	29	5.7
Arc	56	11.0	Lizard	7	1.4
Circular	6	1.2	Macropod	12	2.4
Complex	6	1.2	Quadruped	8	1.6
Dot	12	2.4	Stingray	4	0.8
Dot and line	1	0.2	Turtle	22	4.3
Linear	39	7.7			
Material culture	8	1.6			
Oval	52	10.3			
Rayed	7	1.4	<i>Total</i>	<i>507</i>	<i>100</i>

Table 12.4. Subject proportions for identifiable motifs.

Our recording identified that c. 20% of this Dolphin Island assemblage is zoomorphic (Table 12.4). Birds and fish are the dominant subjects (Figure 12-9), followed closely by turtles (Figure 12-10) and other marine themes, including four marine tails and four stingrays. Displaying a lot of variability are the bird motifs, these mostly comprising water birds, including a pelican, and varieties with one or two legs depicted. There is one spread-eagled bird (wings to either side), with feet on both short legs. The terrestrial fauna includes a small number of macropods (none of these have fat tails) and

the only reptile depictions are seven lizards. Of the eight quadrupeds, two are dingos and another is a thylacine. Two very small quadrupeds recorded were identified as possible sheep (they have four short straight legs and rounded bodies and are in an area that has numerous historical words). Terrestrial species are less common than marine species (Figure 12-11).

Bird tracks dominate a relatively small track assemblage (Table 12.4), followed by macropod tracks, while human feet (and a single human hand) are less common (Figure 12-12).



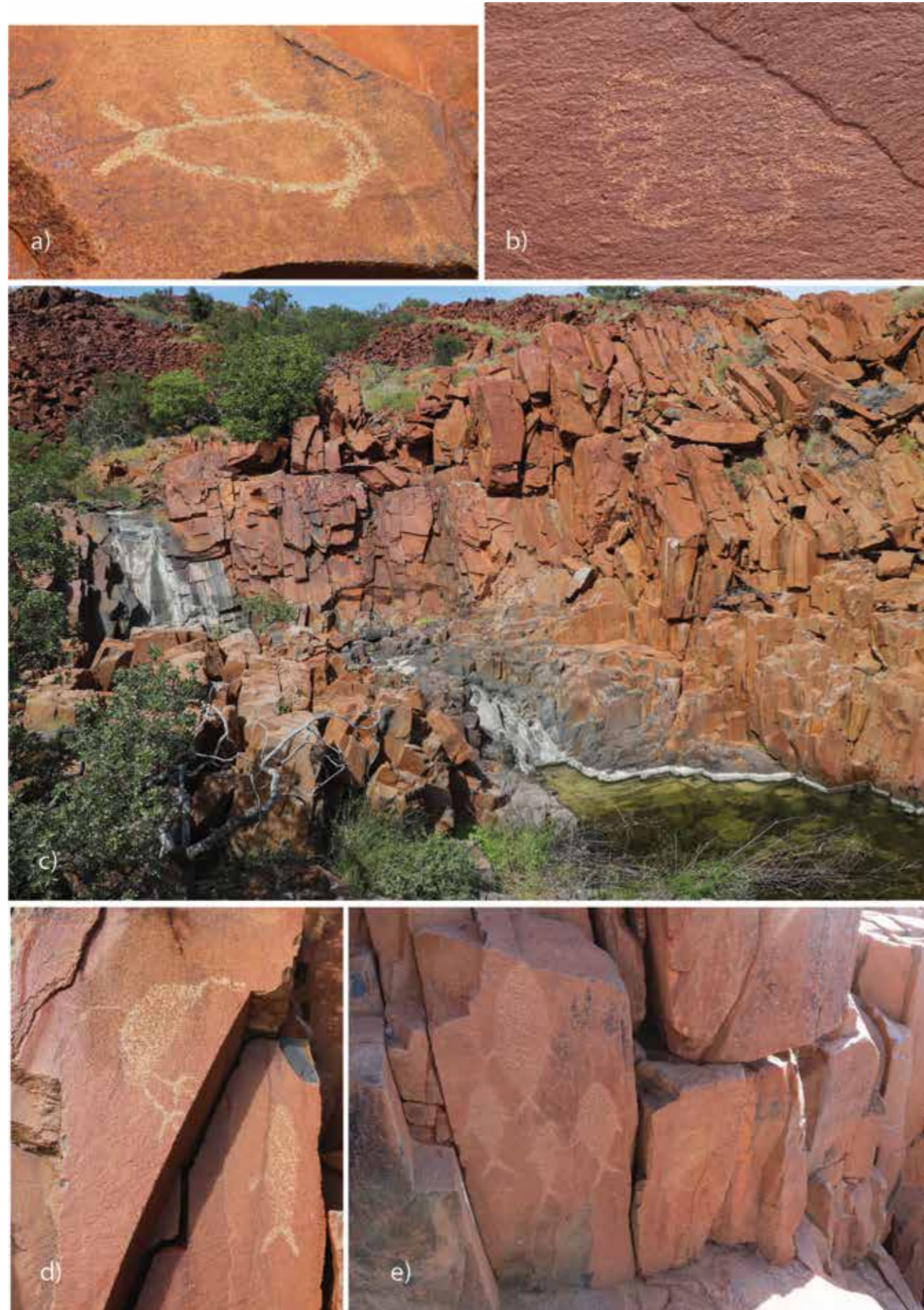


Figure 12.7. Looking south across Rocky Creek and the biggest waterhole (Pool 3) showing just a few of the many, mostly recent, motifs at this location: (a) fish over older bird; (b) crab; (d) bird and fish on different panels; and (e) a composition of four finned fish on the inner east-facing wall above the rock pool.



Figure 12.8. Dolphin Island Rocky Creek assemblage: (a) Sarah de Koning recording (b) one of the possible sheep depictions; (c) Jo McDonald inspecting a panel on the outcrop adjacent to the beach showing a recent anthropomorphic figure; (d) close-up of the figure superimposed on earlier row of anthropomorphs.

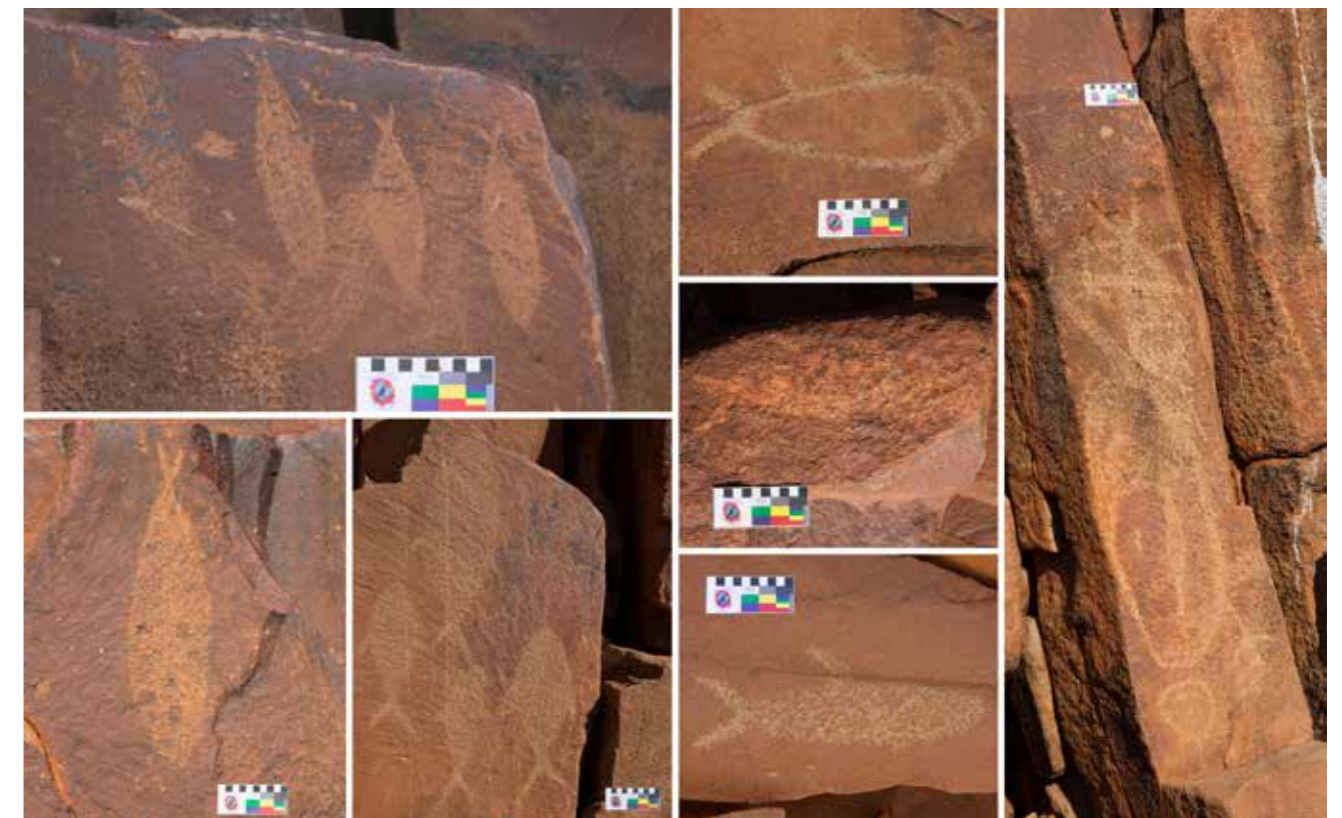


Figure 12.9. Fish images from the Dolphin Island Watering Bay assemblage. The complex panel on the right features a pelican, several fish and a stingray at the base.



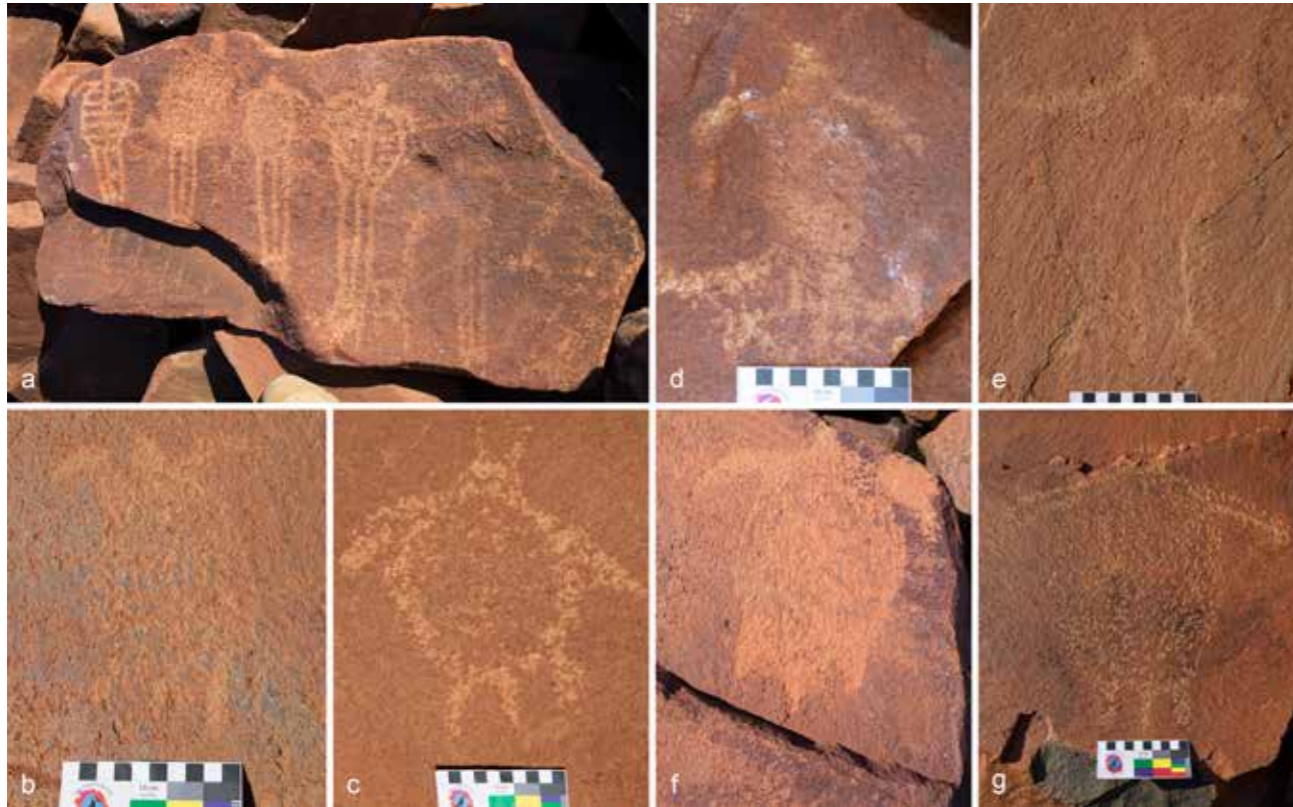


Figure 12.10. Turtle images from the Dolphin Island Watering Bay assemblage, showing (a) a composition involving five turtles with different carapace patterns and shown with trails; and (b-g) the variability in technique, weathering and design in this motif.



Figure 12.11. Faunal images from the Dolphin Island Watering Bay assemblage with: (a-c) macropod; (d-e) bird; (f) quadruped, probably a dingo; and (g-h) lizards.



Figure 12.12. Dolphin Island Watering Bay assemblage with selection of track images: (a-b) anthropomorphic foot; (c-d) macropod; (e-j) three and four-toed bird tracks and trails.

The main form used in the production of this assemblage is linear, closely followed by solid, and linear + solid forms (Table 12.6). Patterned infill is found on only 20 motifs (3.4%), seven of which are turtles with

carapace designs and three are decorated-infill anthropomorphic figures.

OTHER	COUNT	% F
Fragments	2	3.5
Graffiti	22	38.6
Grinding patch	19	33.3
Linear other	13	22.8
Random pecking	1	1.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 12.5. Dolphin Island 'other' motif class subject proportions.

Grinding patches and other utilitarian marks recorded as 'Other' are only present in small proportions. Given the moderately coarse-grained granophyre bedrock, relatively few linear scratchings were documented here. The reasonably high number of historical graffiti elements and/or inscriptions attests to the historical

use of this location by pearlers (Table 12.5), although several of these elements could have been produced more recently. Clear examples of this graffiti are shown in Figure 12.13 and this assemblage is discussed in more detail below.





Figure 12.13. Selected Dolphin Island graffiti traced onto the enhanced panel photographs: (a) H T 1872 and W H 186 (3?); (b) C W Ferguson 1870; (c) Tonkin; and (d) ROY 873.

FORM	COUNT	%F
Linear	181	35.7
Solid	114	22.5
Linear; solid	110	21.7
Linear; outline	33	6.5
Outline	30	5.9
Linear; outline; pattern	13	2.6
Outline; solid	8	1.6
Marks	5	1.0
Other combination forms	13	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 12.6. Form of depictive motifs.

As is found generally on granophyre geology, pecking dominates this Dolphin Island assemblage (Table 12.7). A striking feature of this assemblage is that an equal portion of fish images utilise either pecking or abrasion, with the remainder being a combination of these two techniques (17.2%). This technical peculiarity in motif production is also observable in the macropods

(see Figure 12.9 and Figure 12.11).

Five of the 22 items of graffiti use this similar variety of techniques, with another four examples incorporating abrasion plus pecking. The more usual method for such markings is scratching. Only six of the Dolphin Island graffiti were scratched, with another two using both scratching plus abrasion.

TECHNIQUE	COUNT	%F
Pecked	395	77.9
Abraded	66	13.0
Pecked + abraded	20	3.9
Scratched	9	1.8
Gouged; pecked	5	1.0
Combination techniques	12	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 12.7. Dolphin Island techniques of identified motif classes.

As with most Murujuga rock art, the majority (67%) of motifs are <30 cm in size. No motifs recorded here were over 1 m in length and only 37 petroglyphs (7.4%) are over 50 cm long. This size range reflects the generally smaller available block surfaces in Rocky Creek. The largest

figures are a macropod depiction (98 cm) and a lizard (97 cm), while one profile anthropomorph measures 85 cm and a pelican 83 cm in length (see Figure 12-9).

SIZE CATEGORY (CM)	COUNT	%F
1-10	54	10.7
11-20	188	37.1
21-30	100	19.7
31-40	87	17.2
41-50	41	8.1
51-60	18	3.6
61-70	9	1.8
71-80	4	0.8
81-90	4	0.8
91-100	2	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>100</b>

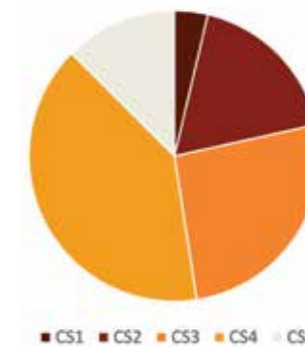
Table 12.8. Size of identified motif classes at Dolphin Island.

Only 4% of this assemblage is heavily weathered (CS1), while almost half the assemblage is in the less weathered / more recent periods (Table 12.9). As is found elsewhere across Murujuga, terrestrial fauna subjects dominate the low-contrast range, along with the archaic faces and older Murujuga human forms and complex figurative motifs. Conversely, marine subjects are more

frequently in higher contrast states. Here there is also a spatial separation, with the earlier art being located around the upper pools in the interior valley, while the more recent, marine themes are focused at the beach and in the lower reaches of the creek line.

CONTRAST STATE	COUNT	%F
CS1	18	3.7
CS2	87	17.8
CS3	127	26.0
CS4	195	40.0
CS5	61	12.5
NA	19	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 12.9. Contrast state of identified motif classes.



## Historical rock art

This graffiti is dominated by names, initials and dates, and largely concentrated towards the west end of the creek, downstream of the first major pool (Figure 12-14). The five numerical dates range from 1870 to 1919, with one unclear example possibly from the 1860s (Figure

12-17). Most inscriptions do not provide sufficient additional information to conduct a meaningful historical analysis. The dates indicate multiple eras of use, for example '1887' and '1919'. Several inscriptions may be linked to notable characters in the colonial period.





Figure 12.14. Dolphin Island historical inscriptions and graffiti distribution.

MOTIF	DETAIL	DESCRIPTION
<i>Coastal</i>		
DIA02-2018-E001-01		Two masted sailing boats with superstructure and one keel; superimposed over a fish
DIA02-2018-E002-01	G V GEORGE - VINCENT	
DIA02-2018-E003-01	G V	
DIA02-2018-E004-01	SOIM GV	Indistinct letters, see drawing.
<i>Lower pool</i>		
DIA02-2018-B015-01	C W FERGUSO 1873	
DIA02-2018-B026-02	H T 1872 WH 186?	Thin abrasions with parallel guidelines above and below Pecked letters, with guidelines scratched; superimposed over raised arm solid anthropomorph Thin numbers, last one unclear
DIA02-2018-B027-02	A	
DIA02-2018-B027-03	J I/L(?); or H	Combined may be incomplete H
DIA02-2018-B048-01	H	
DIA02-2018-B049-01	TONKIN	Tonkin and additional scratching
DIA02-2018-C028-01		Very superficial scratching, chevron design
DIA02-2018-C029-02	J.P	new outline of fish added?
DIA02-2018-C032-01	1919 HALL ??	
DIA02-2018-C034-01	ROY 1873	
DIA02-2018-C035-01	?? GH	Indistinct marking GH
DIA02-2018-C036-01	A	
DIA02-2018-C037-01	A	
<i>Upper creek line</i>		
DIA02-2018-B098-04	1887	Most visible is a date 1887 once image enhanced with D-stretch Some scratched marks at the top which may once have been letters
DIA02-2018-B130-01	F. A. W	[indistinguishable date below]
DIA02-2018-B149-02	JZEM(?)/V	
DIA02-2018-C092-01	NO	Someone had covered with a rock

Table 12.10. Historical inscriptions details at Watering Bay, Dolphin Island (see Figure 12.15 and Figure 12.16).

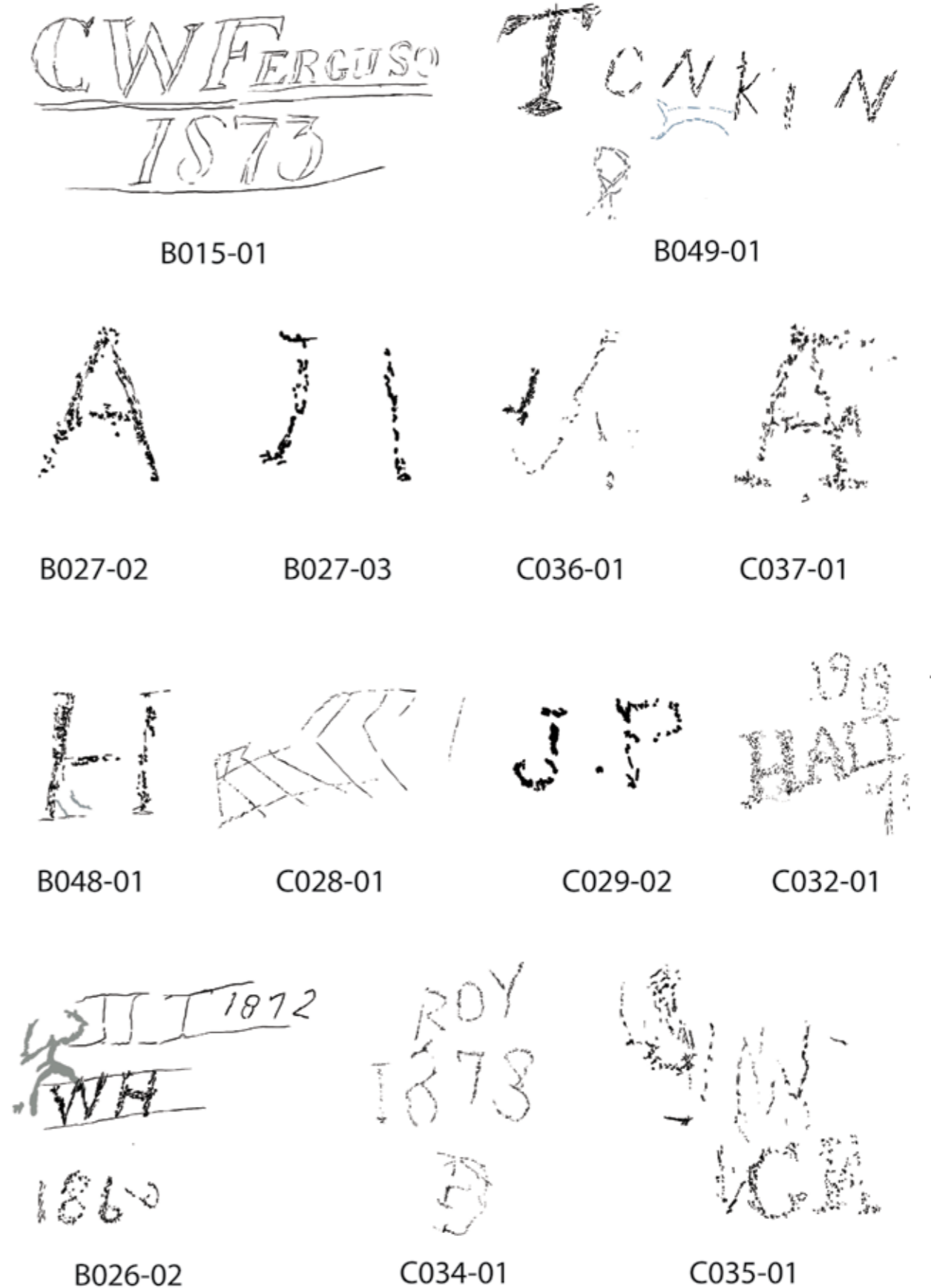


Figure 12.15. Graffiti found along Rocky Pool Creek in a main cluster and more dispersed (see Figure 12.14).



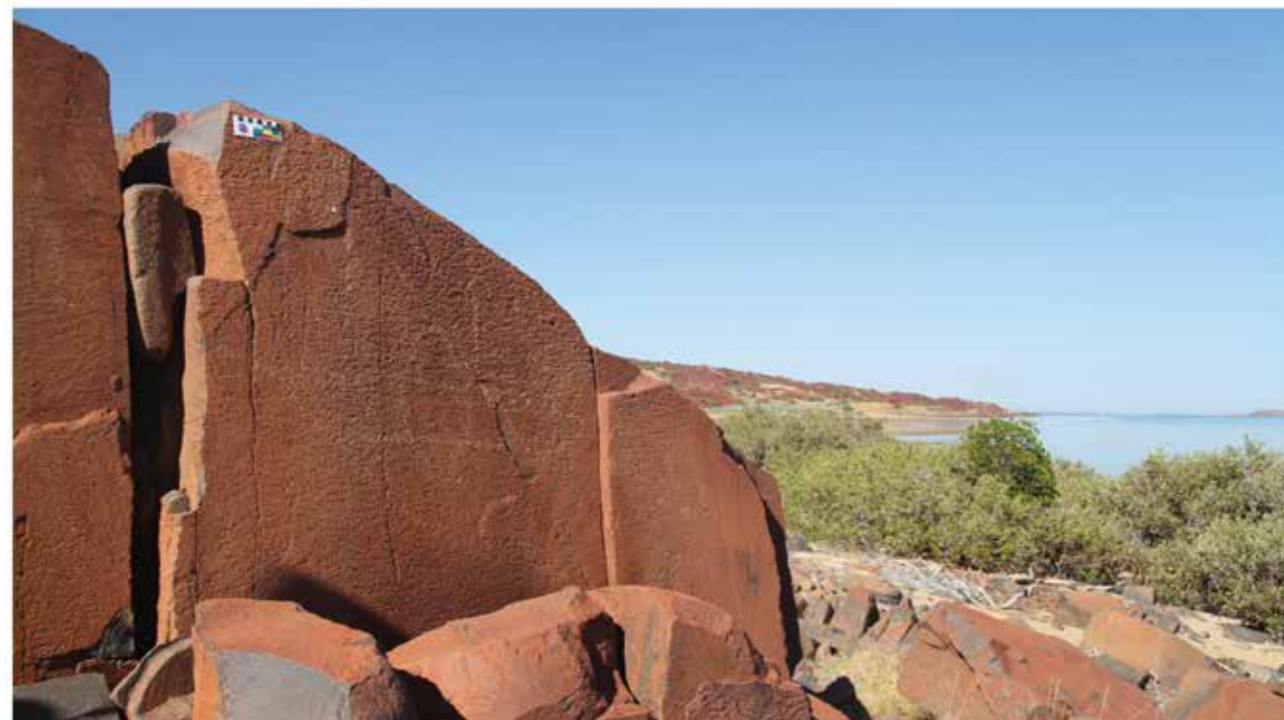
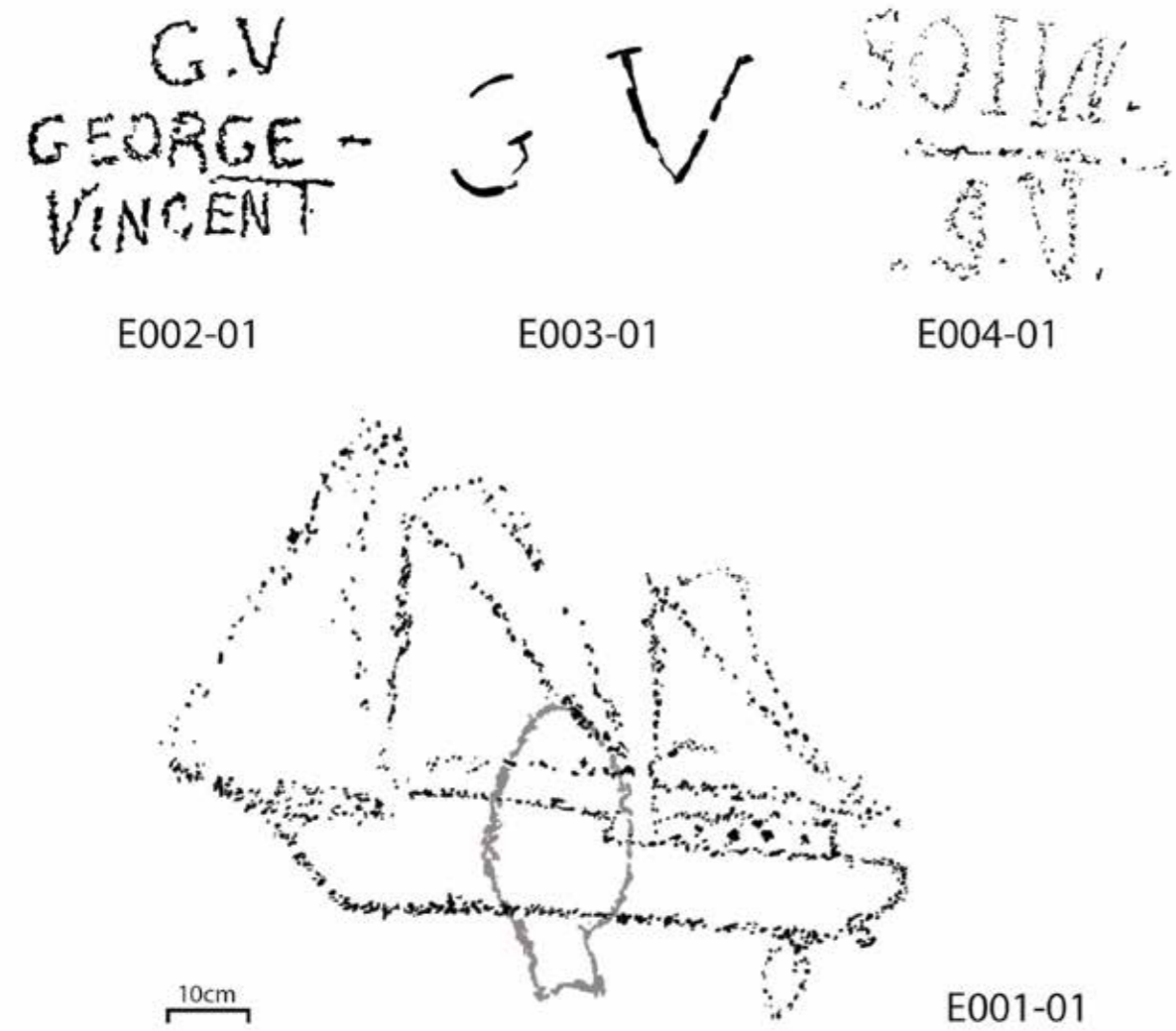


Figure 12.16. Historical inscriptions from the beach (MLP-DI013) with an image of a boat and inscriptions related to (the) George Vincent.



Figure 12.17. Inner valley engravings: Victoria Wade and Rachel Bell recording panel B130.



## DIA02-2018-B015-01 – 'CW FERGUSO 1873'

A C.W. Ferguson is listed as living in Perth in 1911 ('Farewell to Mr C. W. Ferguson', *The Swan Express*, 20 October 1911, p. 2). However, it is not known whether this individual visited the Pilbara. Hutchinson (1973) reported that on

an earlier visit by Warwick Dix he recorded an inscription as 'WH FERGUSON' 1873. D-Stretch, however, confirms this as 'CW'. There is another inscription (B026) which has the initials 'WH' (Figure 12.15).

## DIA02-2018-B026-02 – 'WH'

The initials are conceivably related to William Shakespeare Hall (born 1825; died 1895). Hall was a pioneer settler (Figure 12.18) who arrived in the Swan River Colony as a child in 1830 and first travelled to the North West as a member of the Gregory expedition of 1861. In 1863 he established Andover Station on behalf of J. Wellard before moving to Cossack to begin pearling, where he reportedly relied on Aboriginal and Malay

divers (Wilson 1972). William Shakespeare Hall was one of the settlers who was made a special constable and participated in the Flying Foam Massacre in 1868 (see Chapter 18). The numbers '186[unclear]' below the 'WH' appear to refer to a year in the 1860s (Figure 12.13). Note that the 'HT 1872' could refer to Tonkin (on panel B049, and this T is produced in the same ornate style.

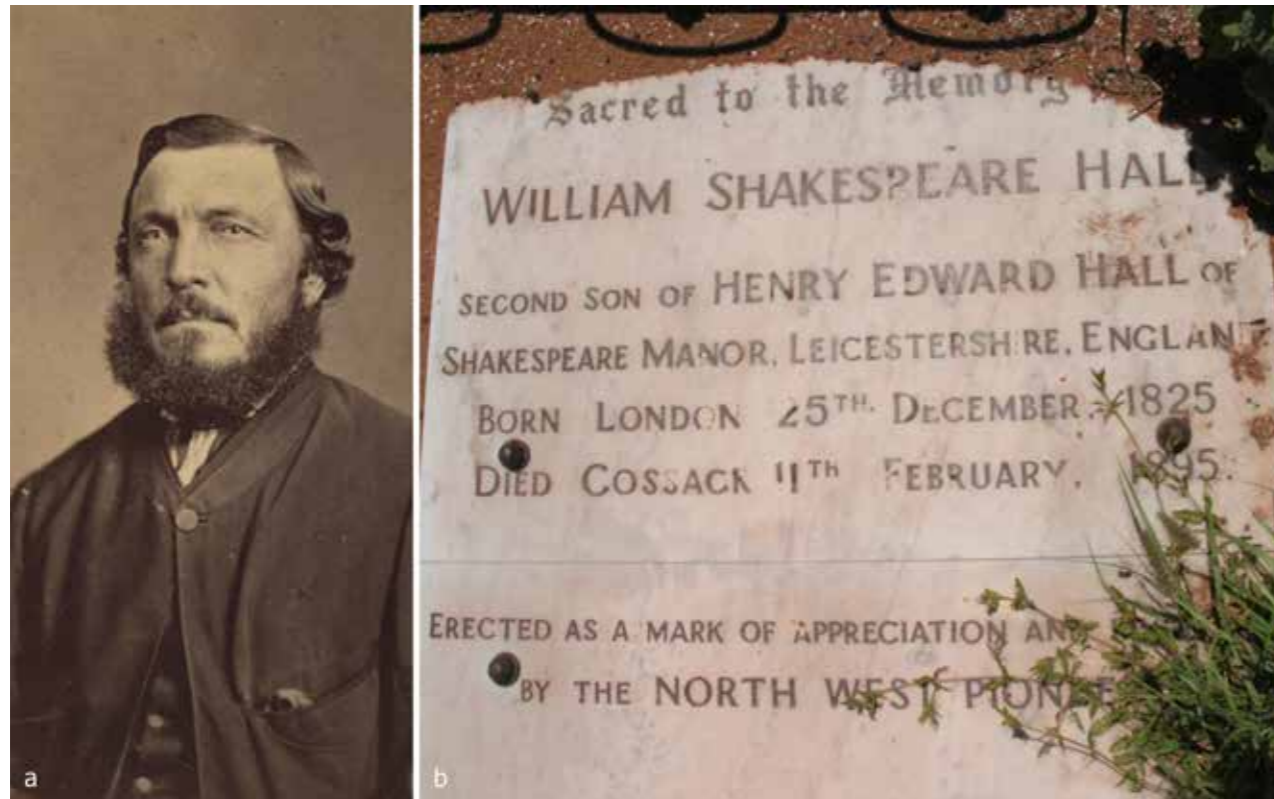


Figure 12.18. William Shakespeare Hall (a) studio portrait; and (b) detail of his gravestone in Cossack cemetery (photo Ken Mulvaney).

## DIA02-2018-B149-02 – 'JZH(E?)MV'

This motif was reported by McIlroy, whose field notes describe this as JZVWV and as a Dutch name (the reason for this interpretation is not provided).

## DIA02-2018-B049-01 – 'TONKIN'

The 'Tonkin' inscription is possibly related to 'L. Tonkin' who was in the North West at the peak of the pearlshell

fishery era and would have known the key colonists. A newspaper report of 17 December 1879 describes the

arrival in Fremantle of the schooner *Planet*; onboard were Sergt and Mrs Vincent and their children, H. W. Sholl (son of Robert Sholl) and L. Tonkin along with 'a native',

possibly a prisoner given the presence of Sergeant Vincent (Figure 12.19).



Figure 12.19. Newspaper mentions of persons possibly responsible for historical graffiti: (a) *Inquirer and Commercial News* (Perth: 1855–1901), Wednesday 17 December 1879, page 2; and (b) *Herald* (Fremantle: 1867–1886), Saturday 25 December 1875, page 2.

## DIA02-2018-C034-01 – 'ROY 1873'

The *Herald Western Australian Almanack and Commercial Directory* produced annually between 1873 and 1885 listed residents of the colony. The only individual named

Roy was an F. Roy, merchant and shipping agent, resident of Cossack in the 1884 Almanack.

## DIA02-2018-C032-01 – '1919 Hall'

The Hall inscription with date of 1919 (very faint) conceivably relates to a descendant of William Shakespeare Hall.

## DIA02-2018-E001-01, E002-01 and E003-01

On the beach is an isolated group of panels depicting a ship and the name George Vincent as well as the initials GV (Figure 12.16). There may be an association with Sergeant Vincent, who was in Roebourne in the 1870s, although his initial may have been 'R' (Sergeant R. Vincent, Roebourne, 4 July 1874, Report, Police Records, Acc. No. 129, Battye Library Western Australian Times, 4 September 1874; see Wrecksite 2008). Sergeant Vincent and his wife, five 'native prisoners' and a cargo of '68 hhds pearlshell, 71 bales of wool, 4 casks tallow, 18 tons

copper ore, baleskins and sundries' are described as sailing on the *Rosette* to Perth in 1875 (see Figure 12.19). If this is not the same person, there is a strong possibility of a historical association.

However, there was a George Vincent living in Perth on Stirling Street in May 1880, according to a Police Gazette report of a theft of a watch from his residence (SLWA 1880, May 12).

Another possibility, given the location of the panel on the beach and close to the water's edge, is that this is



one of the images of boats seen by Richmond Thatcher in 1869 when he described engravings depicting the 'dates and names of the crew' (Thatcher 1869, 30 October).

## Dolphin Island Stone Structures

Almost half (n = 12 or 46%) of the 26 stone structures recorded here are standing stones located on the southern end of Cemetery Beach within sites MLP-DI004, MLP-DI005 and MLP-DI006 (Figure 12-20 a–b). These standing stones are all located on an elevated outcrop and are highly visible from the local area. They are interpreted as markers for the rock art and quarry which is also located here (Beckett 2021: 230). There was insufficient time during the fieldwork to record the rock art around these standing stones and further systematic work may result in these sites being amalgamated with MLP-DI001. Three standing stones were also recorded above the waterhole at DPLH 11709 and may have also been used as markers for this important water source. An isolated standing stone was also identified within MLP-DI007, although no detailed survey work was done in this area and further work is likely to yield other archaeological material.

STRUCTURE TYPE	COUNT	%
Standing stone	16	61.5
Historical cluster – grave marker	6	23.1
Landscape wall	2	7.7
Historical cluster/pile – ballast	1	3.8
Historical cluster/pile – cairn	1	3.8
Total	26	100

Table 12.11. Dolphin Island stone structures.



Figure 12.20. Dolphin Island stone structures: (a–b) standing stones; (c) historical cluster/pile, possibly ballast, in intertidal zone; and (d) recent cairn constructed on beach, possibly associated with the recreational activity of geocaching.

There is also an inscription of 'George Vincent' on Rosemary Island (see Chapter 7).

Individual point locations for the stones of the six historical graves were recorded during this survey. These features are discussed in detail in the following section. Two landscape walls within MLP-DI001 are on the edge of the quarried area, indicating that a range of activities occurred at this site.

Two historical cluster/piles were identified. The first, interpreted as historical ballast, was identified in the intertidal zone on the southern end of Cemetery Beach (Figure 12.20c). The second cluster/pile is a high cairn of relatively loosely stacked rounded stones from the nearby creek line (Figure 12.20d). It is located prominently above the beach but was not mentioned by McIlroy (1979) and would seem likely to be a more recent construction. This structure is known to be used by local tour operators visiting the island (Ken Mulvaney, pers. comm., 2020).

## WA Museum Expeditions to Historical Burials

Despite their significance to the history of colonial-era pearling, the graves at Dolphin Island that were partially excavated in the 1970s have never been published.

The graves are located at the south end of the beach, close to where the beach meets the rocky escarpment

in an area now dominated by low scrub, which masks the graves' location from the Flying Foam Passage. The graves are marked by six parallel rectangular arrangements of clustered stone on the sand, aligned north-east–south-west (Figure 12.21).

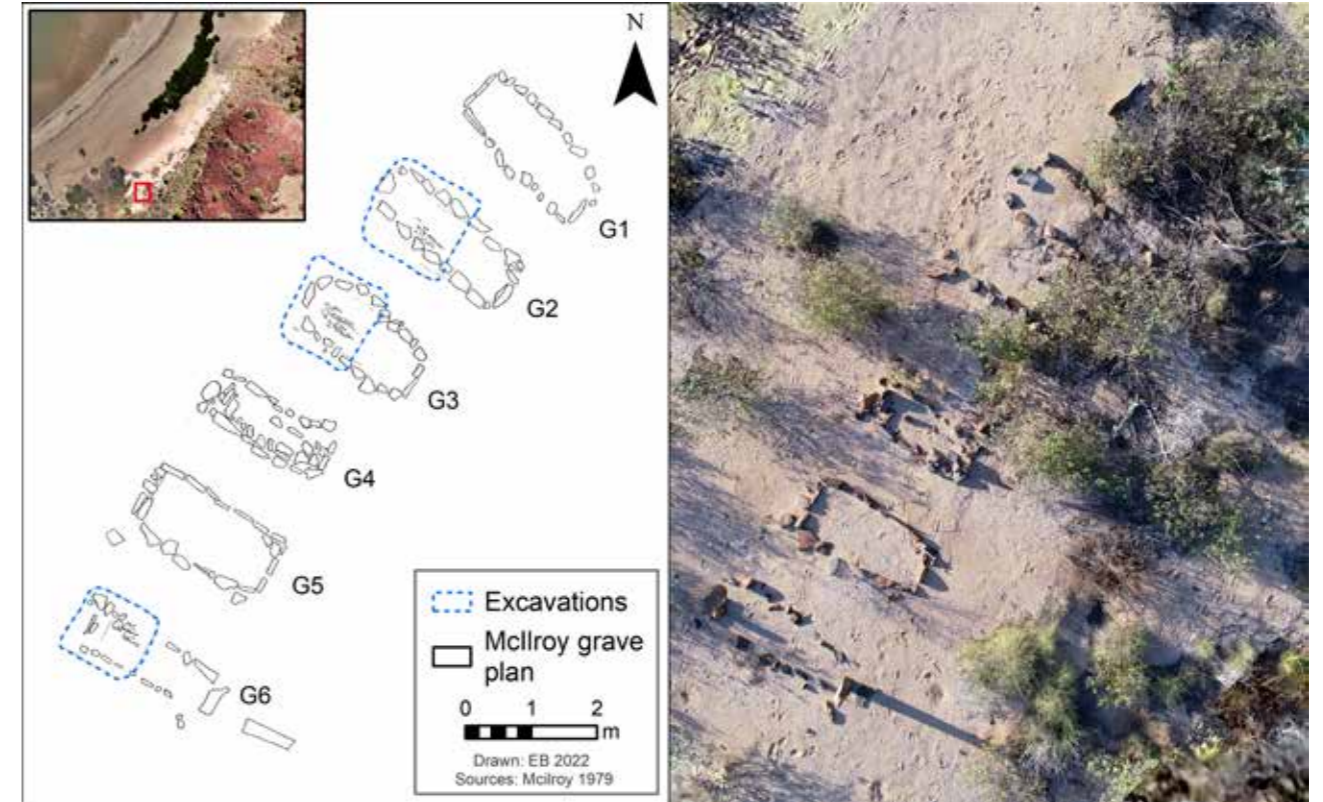


Figure 12.21. Historical burials at Dolphin Island: (left inset) showing location of graves; (left) line drawing of graves and McIlroy's excavations; and (right) aerial image of graves in 2018.

The history of site investigations began with a visit and report by the Fisheries and Fauna Department (a government agency from 1964 to 1974) in June 1970. An internal WA Museum memorandum (1973) states that this was presented to the WA Museum. A grave that was 4 feet deep was documented. Anthropologist Mance Lofgren (WA Museum) identified the skull as 'male, European about 30 to 40 years old' (Hutchinson 1973). This is now held in the ancestral remains store at the WA Museum (Annie Carson, pers. comm., 2022). It is not clear which grave this was; however, it may be Grave 4 given it was later described as appearing disturbed.

On 2 August 1973 there was an expedition to the site by WA Museum Head of History David Hutchinson, Warwick Dix, Martin Thompson and Karratha local R. E. Armstead. They reported five graves; however, the subsequent investigation by McIlroy (1979) identified a sixth grave, situated immediately south of the other five (Figure 12.21: G6). As there are six stone marked graves, it is assumed one was obscured at the time of the 1973 survey.

Hutchinson describes that he excavated the northernmost grave to a depth of 2.5 feet, excavating with 'trowel and bare hands' to expose the individual 'from skull to waist'. The person was 'on their side'. As Hutchinson states that the person was 'at the edge of the grave', this suggests the grave cut and fill were observable. He also states that he felt the stones marking the graves may have been added later, as they did not align with the grave-pit. The sand was sieved (mesh size unknown) but no artefacts or clothing were found. Based on the photographs taken by Hutchinson, Lofgren determined that the individual in Grave 2 was an adult European male aged 30–40 years. Neither of these two individuals (the WA Museum excavation and the Fisheries Department) showed evidence for ante-mortem injury.

Hutchinson collected three fragments of a case gin bottle (Table 12-12 and Figure 12.22). The partial inscription suggests this was a bottle of Wolfe's Aromatic Schnapps, manufactured in Schiedam in the Netherlands from 1859 to 1941, and advertised for sale in Australia



and the USA for its medicinal purposes: 'A superlative Tonic, Diuretic, Anti-Dyspeptic and invigorating Cordial' (Argus, Monday 17 January 1859, page 7). Hutchinson also observed historical engravings (discussed earlier).

ACCESSION NO.	OBJECT NAME
CH1971.116.a-d	GLASS FRAGMENTS
CH1973.113	GLASS FRAGMENTS -3-

Table 12.12. Items collected by Hutchinson in 1973 in WA Museum Collection.



Figure 12.22. Case gin bottle fragments (WA Museum Collection).

Jack McIlroy visited the site in July 1979 during his recording of historical archaeological sites in the Dampier Archipelago. He reports that the WA Museum skull could be either Asian or European, suggesting an updated assessment was made in the intervening years. He notes that the WA Museum skull was "misshapen or lopsided" (McIlroy 1979: 37).



Figure 12.23. The six graves following excavation by McIlroy viewed from the eastern rock ridge, at low tide (see Figure 12.21 for numbering) (WA Museum Collection).

The 1979 WA Museum expedition included Peter Board, Barry Sargent and John Patterson. They cleared the vegetation and revealed the previously unreported sixth grave – this is the southernmost grave. McIlroy decided to excavate graves 2, 3 and 6, as Grave 4 appeared disturbed.



Figure 12.24. WA Museum images of graves 2 and 3 during excavation (WA Museum Collection).

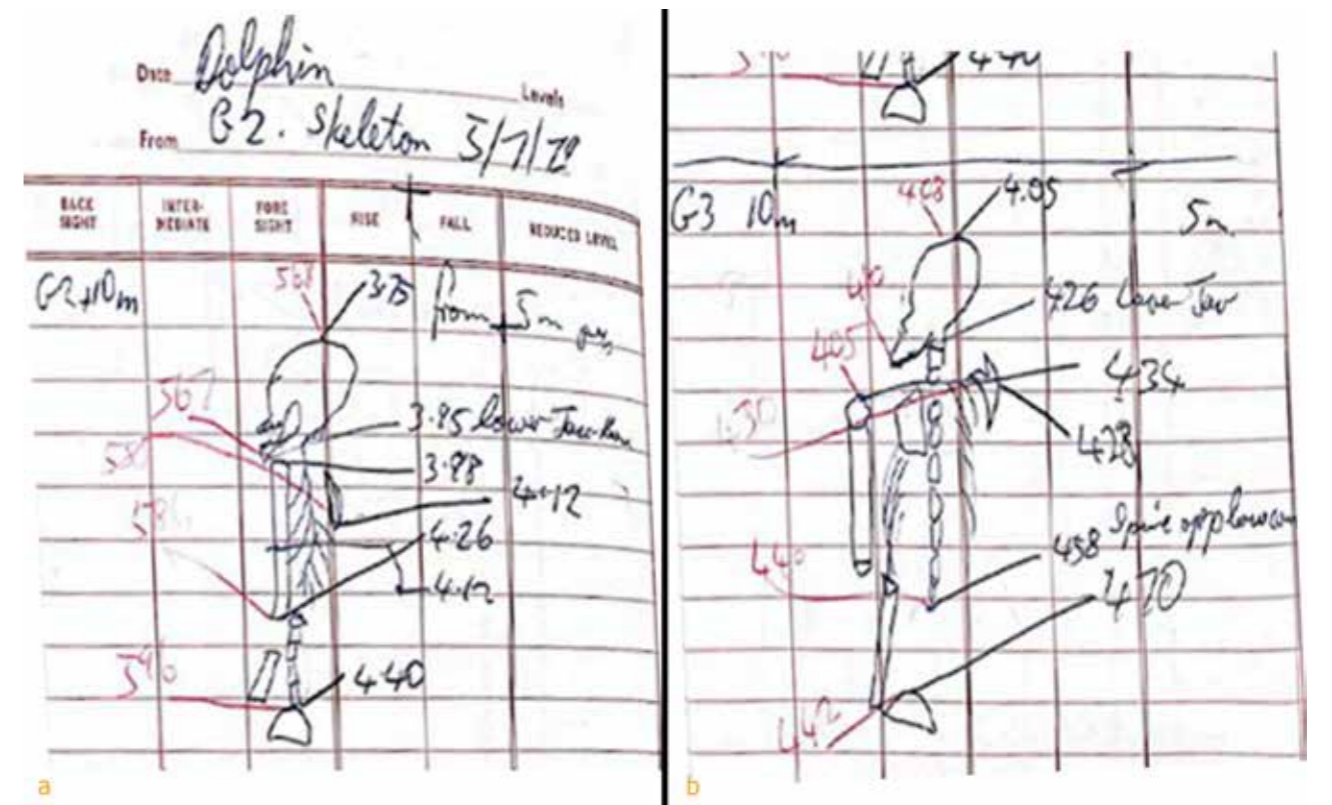


Figure 12.25. Extract from McIlroy field notes: (a) for Grave 2; and (b) Grave 3 (WA Museum Collection).



Grave 2 included no grave goods despite sieving and use of a metal detector. The grave cut and fill were not discernible in the sandy matrix. The individual was buried at a depth of 75 cm below the current surface. Grave 3, located at 85 cm depth, similarly had no grave goods. Both individuals were buried on their right side, facing south and head towards the west. Grave 6 was

buried at a greater depth (115 cm) and appeared to be on top of a darker natural soil underlaying the beach sand. Following the archaeological excavations, the graves were backfilled and the marker stones returned (see Figure 12.23). WA Museum notes record no skeletal material was removed; however, there is a human incisor (tooth) in the WA Museum Collection (Figure 12.26).



Figure 12.26. Images of the human remains (a) Grave 2 cranium and mandible; (b) incisor from Grave 2, held in WA Museum History collection; (c) Grave 2 cranium and upper body during excavation; (d) Grave 3 head and upper torso during excavation; (e) Grave 6 head and upper torso during excavation (WA Museum Collection).

The description of the burials as extended and lying on their right-hand side was interpreted as consistent with Islamic burial practices. The ethnicity of the individuals requires further work; however, since these have been variously described as European and/or Asian. The individuals from the three graves are described as adult males, with McIlroy's report describing Grave 2 as Asian and Grave 3 as likely European. The contiguous nature of the burials might suggest that they all died at the same time, although excavation did not confirm whether there was a single burial trench or separate graves.

The journal of Robert Sholl, Resident Magistrate between 1866 and 1871, refers to deaths within the pearling fleet, including of Malay and Aboriginal workers. He visited the archipelago in February 1872 and mentioned a creek used by the pearlmen for water and bathing (Sholl 18/2/1873, cited in Hutchinson 1973).

This WA Museum expedition also collected artefacts

(Table 12.13). A metal detector was used to locate four Dutch East Indies coins: three one-cent coins dated 1856 and one half-cent coin to 1857 (Figure 12.27). These were all found close to the rock pools, presumably within site MLP-DI001. These suggest the presence of Malay labourers.

ACCESSION NO.	OBJECT NAME
T1979.205a	METAL SHEATHING, copper
T1979.206	BUTTON, metal
T1979.207	SHERD
T1979.208	METAL NUT, possibly
T1979.209	POTTERY SHERD
T1979.210	TOOTH
T1979.224	COINS, Dutch East Indies, -3-
T1979.225	COIN, HALF CENT, DUTCH EAST INDIES
T1979.226	METAL PLATE, thin - fragment - inscribed
T1979.259	LEAD PELLETS

Table 12.13. Items collected by McIlroy in the WA Museum Collection.



Figure 12.27. The four Dutch East Indies coins from 1856 and 1857 (T1979.224.a-c; T1979.225) (WA Museum Collection).

As well as Asian artefacts, two ceramic sherds were collected by McIlroy (Figure 12.28). One is the wall and heel (base) of a stoneware (porcelaneous) bowl, likely a rice bowl, possibly with a 'Double Happiness' design in the Min Yao (folk ware) style (Choy 2014). The other

is an earthenware vessel fragment, possibly (given the lack of curvature) a larger barrel style storage vessel. The vessel has a transparent glaze, and the unevenness of the firing is revealed by the colour variation in the section of the fabric (Figure 12.28c).



Figure 12.28. Two ceramic sherds: (a) T1979.209, stoneware vessel, Chinese blue on white; and (b) T1979.207, earthenware vessel sherd, transparent glaze, probably local Asian manufacture given variation of fabric in (c) section (WA Museum Collection).



Other artefacts collected by McIlroy included a metal fragment with decorative inscription, metal used for boat repair, bullets, metal casing and a button (Figure 12.29).



Figure 12.29. Other artefacts collected by McIlroy: (a) (from left) bronze casing, lead bullets; (b) four-hole sew-through trouser button; and (c) copper sheeting used for boat repair (WA Museum Collection).

## Artefact Recording

All surface artefacts recorded in 2018 are organised into several distinct site concentrations. The boundaries between concentrations may have resulted from drifting beach sand near the shore (Figure 12.30). We distinguish

between stone artefacts and historical artefacts, with most of the latter being glass (Table 12.14 and Table 12.15).

HISTORICAL ARTEFACT TYPE	COUNT	LITHIC ARTEFACT TYPE	COUNT
Bottle base	12	Manuport	1
Bottle base; bottle shoulder	1	Complete flake	46
Bottle body	6	Longitudinally broken flake	1
Bottle body; bottle base	1	Multi-platform core	4
Bottle body; bottle shoulder	1	Single-platform core	15
Bottle fragment	35	Total	67
Bottle neck	6		
Bottle neck; bottle shoulder	1		
Bottle shoulder	2		
Bullet	1		
Clay pipe	1		
Jar base	1		
Sheet metal	6		
Strap	5		
Whole bottle	13		
Total	92		

Table 12.14. Historical and Aboriginal stone surface artefacts recorded at Dolphin Island. All stone artefacts recorded in the intertidal zone have been reported (see Dortch et al. 2019).

MATERIAL TYPE	COUNT
Blue glass	2
Clay	1
Copper alloy	10
Ferrous alloy	2
Olive glass	69
Pearl shell	1
Tinted glass	6
Vitreous stoneware	1
Granophyre	67
Total	159

Table 12.15. Material types of surface artefacts recorded at Dolphin Island.

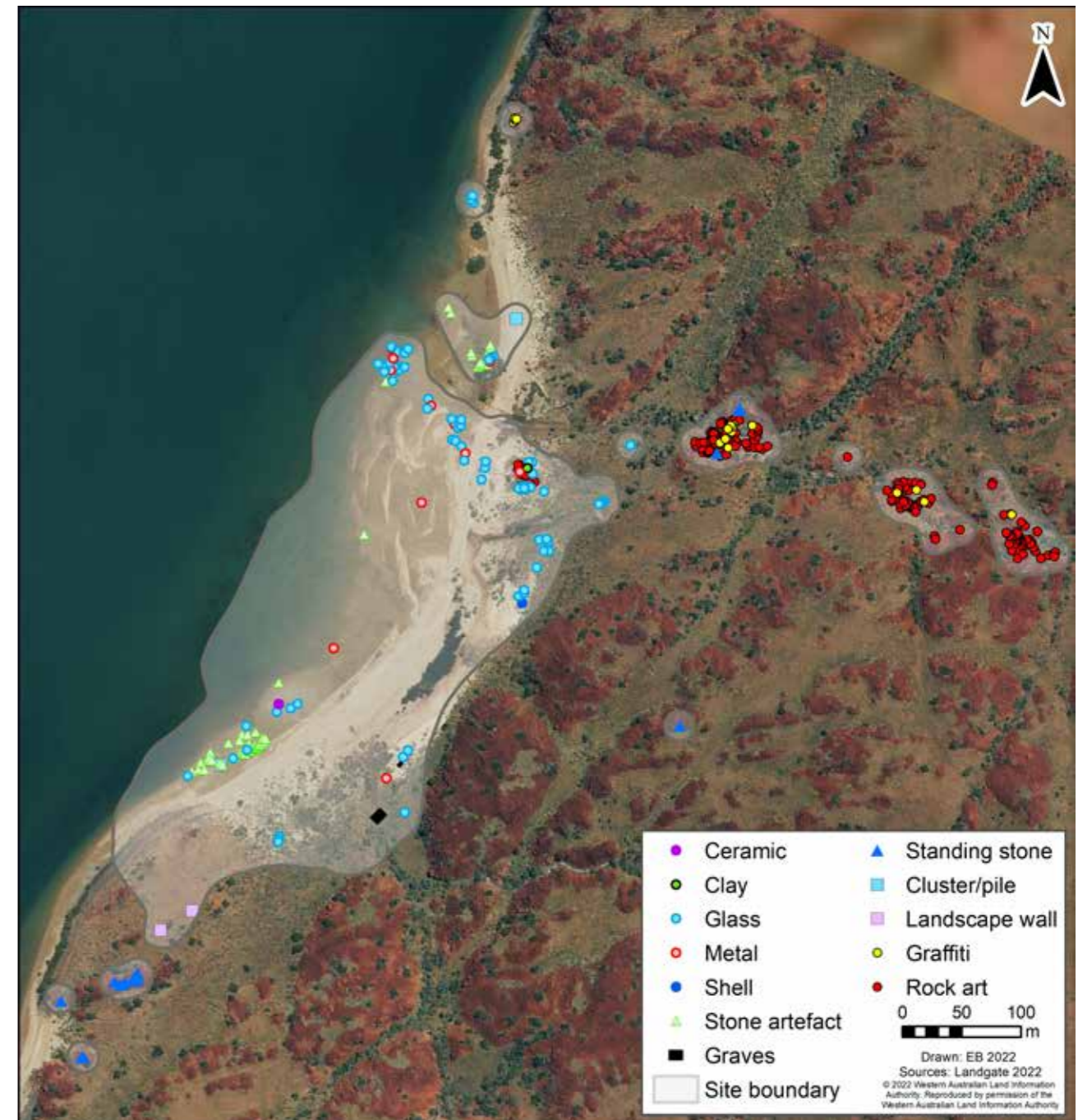


Figure 12.30. All archaeological surface material recorded at Dolphin Island historical activity area.



## Site MLP-DI001 (North)

The surface archaeological evidence from Site MLP-DI001 is dominated by bottle glass. Much of this is from beverage bottles, likely discarded from vessels either at anchor at high tide or careened at low tide. One distinctive bottle is represented by fragments with a rounded base (Figure 12.31 a–b). These 'round bottom sodas' were also referred to as 'ballast bottles' and, in this case, those with a distinctly pointed base and amphora-shaped body as 'torpedo' bottles or 'bombs'. They were commonly used for soda, mineral water and ginger ales. They were made throughout the nineteenth century; however, without the closure it is hard to date this example. The seam suggests a two-piece mould was used, which would indicate a date in the second half of the nineteenth century. The partial inscription '...ALDTON' may have indicated production in Geraldton. The other partial inscription reads 'SES'. One possible maker would have been the Geraldton-based Trefusis Aerated Water and Cordial factory, which was managed and eventually part-owned by a Mr William Jose: the SES could be his last name with a possessive 's' – a common practice for such branded goods (Bain 1996: 119). This place opened in 1875 and operated through the 1880s and onwards. It appears that Mr Jose made 'lime juice and soda, lemonade, strawberryade, sarsaparilla, seltzer water, potassium water, ginger ale, lithia, soda water and syrups, all of which won him a number of medals in England and Europe at the International Fairs' (Bain cited in City of Greater Geraldton 2018).

Copper sheeting in this area is reflective of boat repair, as nineteenth-century pearling luggers and smaller tenders were often wooden-framed vessels whose hulls were protected by metal sheeting. One small rock pile is interpreted as a ballast mound (see Figure 12.20c), which suggests that vessels on-loaded with pearl shell cargo at this location. Two pearl shells found at the site are a further reminder of this extractive industry in the Flying Foam Passage (Figure 12.31c-d).

The lithic material located in the intertidal zone has been described elsewhere (Dortch et al. 2019), with further recording across the intertidal site undertaken by Patrick Morrison (2019).

A second concentration of artefacts is on the beach and around the stone outcrop (Site MLP-DI001), presumably derived from episodes of camping and recreation. A single clay pipe was found here (Figure 12.31e). There is also evidence for Aboriginal people here during the pearling phase, from a single glass core from a dark olive bottle base (Figure 12.31f). A metal strap, possibly from a container, had been modified with one end being bent back to form a hook, forming an item with unknown purpose (Figure 12.31g). This repurposing of the metal strap may also have been done by a non-Aboriginal person.



Figure 12.31. MLP-DI001 (North) surface artefacts: (a–b) DIA01-2018-EF019: blue torpedo soda bottles; (c–d) DIA01-2018-EF071: pearl shell found on the surface; (e) DIA02-2018-CF001: clay pipe stem fragment; (f) DIA01-2018-EF082: dark olive glass, base, single-platform core – three flake scars (one truncated at proximal end); (g) DIA02-2018-CF002: metal strap bent to a hook; and (h) DIA01-2018-EF052: ammunition casing.

LABEL	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	CLASS
DIA02-2018-CF001	Clay pipe stem, thicker at one end. Not diagnostic	Clay	Clay pipe
DIA01-2018-EF019	Glass, bomb, 2 frags, base and body, mould made, blue (rare), maker's mark: ALDTON: R. /:SE	Olive glass	Whole bottle
DIA01-2018-EF021	Glass, bottle, tinted, base and body, mould, maker's mark :75 /B	Olive glass	Whole bottle
DIA01-2018-EF022	Glass, bottle, light olive, shoulder and finish, turn paste, single collar	Olive glass	Whole bottle
DIA01-2018-EF023	Glass, bottle, olive, base, push-up	Olive glass	Bottle base
DIA01-2018-EF024	Glass, bottle, base, olive, push-up	Olive glass	Bottle base
DIA01-2018-EF025	Glass, bottle, olive, neck and finish, single collar	Olive glass	Whole bottle
DIA01-2018-EF026	Glass, olive, push-up	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF028	Glass, bottle, olive, fragment	Olive glass	Whole bottle
DIA01-2018-EF029	Glass, bottle, olive, fragment	Olive glass	Whole bottle
DIA01-2018-EF031	Glass, bottle, olive, fragment	Olive glass	Whole bottle
DIA01-2018-EF032	Glass, bottle, olive, fragment	Olive glass	Whole bottle
DIA01-2018-EF033	Glass, bottle, olive, fragment	Olive glass	Whole bottle
DIA01-2018-EF034	Glass, olive, bottle, body and shoulder	Olive glass	Bottle body; Bottle shoulder
DIA01-2018-EF035	Glass, olive, bottle, body, case gin	Olive glass	Bottle body
DIA01-2018-EF037	Glass, olive, push-up	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF039	Glass, olive, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF040	Glass, olive, push-up	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF041	Glass, olive, neck, finish, single collar	Olive glass	Bottle neck



## Site MLP-DI001 (South)

The southern cluster of artefacts along the main beach is primarily located within the intertidal zone (see Dortch et al. 2019). The historical artefacts, dominated by alcoholic beverage bottles, are assumed to relate to short-term episodes of careening, anchoring and camping. A single fragment from the base of a stoneware jar (Figure 12.32a) was found. The absence of a maker's mark deters determining its historical function. Pearling vessels were commonly used both for transport and storage of consumables and other liquids, including

poisons and ink. There is also evidence for boat repair and industrial items, with copper sheeting consistent with hull repair, and a metal cast-iron rod with a hand-wrought head consistent with nineteenth-century metal fastenings (Figure 12.32 b–c).

One glass bottle base has flake scarring; whether this is anthropogenic or natural is difficult to determine (Figure 12.32d). This artefact was located on the intertidal reef flats, which, being subject to natural forces, may have produced this multidirectional flaking.



Figure 12.32. MLP-DI001 (South) surface artefacts: (a) DIA01-2018-EF012, stoneware jar, base fragment, with glazed interior and exterior; (b) DIA01-2018-EF017, copper sheet c. 12 x 12 cm, with rounded nail holes; (c) DIA01-2018-EF069, wrought-iron fastening, 48 cm, 5 cm diameter head; (d) DIA01-2018-EF015, glass, olive, bottle base with flake scar.

LABEL	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	CLASS
DIA01-2018-EF012	Stoneware jar, base, frag, glazed interior and exterior	Vitreous stoneware	Jar base
DIA01-2018-EF002	Glass, bottle, light olive fragment body. Non diagnostic	Olive glass	Whole bottle
DIA01-2018-EF006	Glass, bottle, base, handmade 1860s to 1870s Intertidal zone	Olive glass	Bottle base
DIA01-2018-EF009	Glass, bottle base, handmade Intertidal zone	Olive glass	Bottle base
DIA01-2018-EF010	Glass, light olive fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF011	Glass, olive, bottle, base and body, handmade	Olive glass	Bottle body; Bottle base
DIA01-2018-EF015	Glass, olive, bottle, base, handmade, edge damage but flake scars probably not intentional	Olive glass	Bottle base
DIA01-2018-EF016	Glass, olive, bottle, neck, frag, turn paste	Olive glass	Bottle neck
DIA01-2018-EF067	Glass, olive, base and shoulder, turn paste	Olive glass	Bottle base; Bottle shoulder
DIA01-2018-EF068	Glass, tinted, fragment	Tinted glass	Bottle fragment

LABEL	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	CLASS
DIA01-2018-EF053	Glass, olive, base	Olive glass	Bottle base
DIA01-2018-EF054	Glass, blue, fragment	Blue glass	Whole bottle
DIA01-2018-EF055	Glass, olive, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF056	Glass, olive, body, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF057	Glass, olive, body, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle body
DIA01-2018-EF059	Glass, olive, bottle, body, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle body
DIA01-2018-EF060	Glass, olive, neck and finish, single collar	Olive glass	Bottle neck
DIA01-2018-EF061	Glass, olive, body, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle body
DIA01-2018-EF062	Glass, olive, body, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle body
DIA01-2018-EF064	Glass, olive, body, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle body
DIA01-2018-EF072	Glass, tinted, fragment	Tinted glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF073	Glass, olive, fragment x 2	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF074	Glass, olive, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF075	Glass, tinted, fragment	Tinted glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF076	Glass, olive, fragment EF077 - Glass, tinted, x 2	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF076	Glass	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF077	Glass, tinted, x 2	Tinted glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF078	Glass, olive, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF079	Glass, tinted, fragment	Tinted glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF080	Glass, olive, base, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle base
DIA01-2018-EF081	Glass, olive, finish, single collar	Olive glass	Bottle neck
DIA01-2018-EF082	Glass, dark olive, base, single-platform core – three flake scars (one truncated at proximal end) emanating from one edge	Olive glass	Bottle base (core)
DIA01-2018-EF083	Glass	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF084	Glass	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF085	Glass, dark olive, case gin, fragment x 2	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF086	Glass, light olive, fragment x 4 One frag marked: U Glass, blue, fragment x 1	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF087	Glass, dark olive, base fragments x 2; fragment x 1 One base fragment is a single-platform core with three parallel flake scars Glass, tinted, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle base
DIA01-2018-EF088	Glass, dark olive fragments x 2 Glass, tinted, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF089	Glass, dark olive, fragment x 2	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF091	Glass, olive, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF092	Glass, dark olive, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF093	Glass, dark olive, neck	Olive glass	Bottle neck
DIA01-2018-EF094	Glass, dark olive, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF095	Glass, dark olive, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF096	Glass, olive, push-up	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF099	Glass, olive, neck fragment Baker fragments in 2 m radius	Olive glass	Bottle neck
DIA01-2018-EF100-01	Glass, olive, fragment x 2 Glass, clear, fragment x 1	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF101	Glass, dark olive, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF102	Glass, olive, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF103	Glass, olive, fragment, x 3; Glass, clear, fragment x 2; Midden	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF027	Copper sheeting, 10 x 6 cm	Copper alloy	Sheet metal
DIA01-2018-EF030	Copper sheet, 10 x 18 cm, square nail hole, torn edge	Copper alloy	Sheet metal
DIA01-2018-EF038	Copper, sheet, 18 x 9 cm	Copper alloy	Sheet metal
DIA01-2018-EF051	Copper ships fastening, 2 cm long, round head	Copper alloy	Strap
DIA01-2018-EF052	Copper jacket bullet, tip covered in carbonate, not fired. Base reads: RAC 12 mm diameter, 30 mm length sheath, 41 mm total length	Copper alloy	Bullet
DIA01-2018-EF058	Copper, 6 x 5 cm	Copper alloy	Sheet metal
DIA01-2018-EF063	Copper ships fastening, round head, 3 cm	Copper alloy	Strap
DIA01-2018-EF065	Copper, strip, right angle corner, 14 x 12, 10 round holes	Copper alloy	Strap
DIA02-2018-CF002	Metal strap, bent at one end, like a hook	Ferrous alloy	Strap
DIA01-2018-EF071	Pearl shell	Pearl shell	

Table 12.16. Artefacts at MLP-DI001 (North).



LABEL	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	CLASS
DIA01-2018-EF070	Glass, dark olive, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF112	Glass, dark olive, neck and shoulder Glass, dark olive, fragment x 4	Olive glass	Bottle neck; Bottle shoulder
DIA01-2018-EF113	Glass, tinted, push-up Glass, dark olive, fragment	Tinted glass	Bottle fragment
DIA01-2018-EF114	Glass, dark olive, base fragment, possible flake Glass, dark olive, shoulder fragment	Olive glass	Bottle base
DIA01-2018-EF017	Copper sheet c. 12 x 12 cm, round nail holes on 3 sides, 4th side broken	Copper alloy	Sheet metal
DIA01-2018-EF069	Wrought-iron fastening, 48 cm, 5 cm diameter head	Ferrous alloy	Strap

Table 12.17. Artefacts at MLP-DI001 (South).

## Site MLP-DI002 (same site as DPLH 11708)

This site is on the northern side of the creek washout, and thus proximate to MLP-DI001. A similar range of artefacts occurs here, including alcohol bottles, copper

LABEL	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	CLASS
DIA01-2018-EF046	Glass, olive, shoulder, three-piece mould Glass, olive, finish, single collar, turn paste Glass, case gin, olive, body, frag	Olive glass	Bottle shoulder
DIA01-2018-EF047	Glass, olive, base, push-up Glass, olive, frag x 2	Olive glass	Bottle base
DIA01-2018-EF050	Glass, olive, base, frag	Olive glass	Bottle base
DIA01-2018-EF048	Copper sheets x 2, 13 x 3 cm and 9 x 4 cm	Copper alloy	Sheet metal
DIA01-2018-EF042	Glass bottle, olive, base and body, makers marks base 5. Side: &CO /:M	Olive glass	Whole bottle
DIA01-2018-EF043	Glass, bottle, amber, 3 frags, turn paste, base and finish, single collar, slender compared to modern beer bottles	Olive glass	Whole bottle
DIA01-2018-EF044	Glass, blue tint, shoulder	Blue glass	Bottle shoulder
DIA01-2018-EF097	Glass, olive, fragment	Olive glass	Bottle fragment

Table 12.18. Artefacts at MLP-DI002 (DPLH 11708).

## Discussion

The Dolphin Island Watering Bay and Rocky Creek landscape is significant for several reasons. These include:

- The presence of submerged stone tools in the intertidal zone suggests Aboriginal occupation from before Dolphin Island was formed by sea-level rise during the Early to Mid-Holocene (Dortch et al. 2019; Morrison 2019).
- Our limited recording of rock art and standing stones suggests a widespread use of this locality for a range of purposes, of which we have captured but a small part. There is a focus on the semi-permanent pools in Rocky Creek, and the good-quality lithic material which has been quarried from the southern end of the beach.
- A deep-time style sequence is demonstrated by this relatively small rock art assemblage which includes archaic faces, dot-headed figures and complex geometrics and by c. 4% of this assemblage being heavily weathered (CS1).
- More recent art production is indicated by the

large assemblage of fish and other marine themes, with over half the assemblage being less weathered (CS4 and CS5).

While the area was only recorded over a very short field season, the density of petroglyphs recorded along the creek line is comparable with other semi-permanent locations across the archipelago (Figure 12.33). Site MLP-DI009, located around the first pool along the creek line, has the highest density at 702 motifs/hectare.

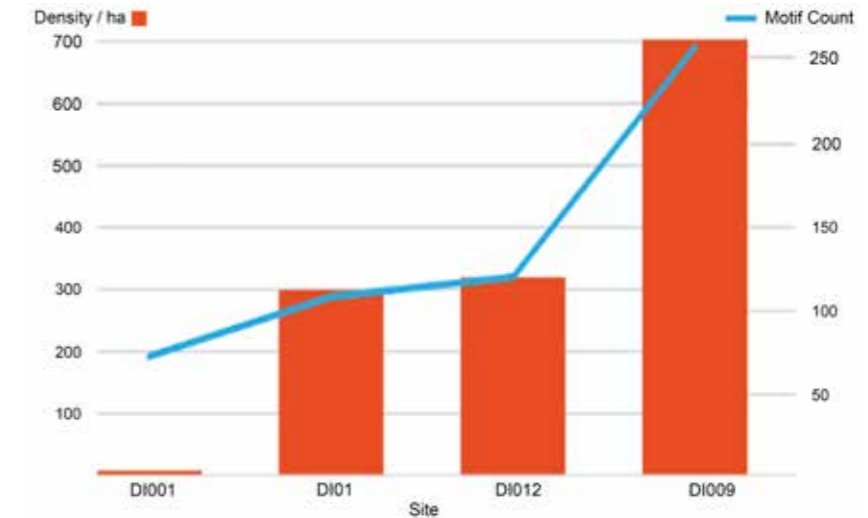


Figure 12.33. Density of art production in the four defined rock art sites in this small sample. Note that DI001's art assemblage on the small beach-side knoll is underestimated for density because the large area site boundary is based on the other archaeological evidence at this site.

- The presence of historical material and a ballast pile in the intertidal zone also provides clear evidence for colonial-era boat repair and discard behaviours during the pearling phase of historical use.
- The historical evidence for the contemporaneous burial of six individuals is suggestive of Islamic burial practices, consistent with what could be expected of interment of Malay divers. Yet the absence of detailed morphological evidence or grave goods means that the ethnicity of these remains has not been confirmed. This should be further investigated.
- The Asian ceramics and coins are material evidence for the presence of individuals who moved through the multi-ethnic indentured labour force of the colonial pearlshell fisheries.
- The historical artefacts include limited evidence for Aboriginal people's continuing tool production in this historical landscape using glass bottles.
- Similarly, there is little evidence for Aboriginal people continuing to use this place to produce rock art after the 1860s, apart from the possible depiction of sheep— that is, as evidence of introduced subjects (see Figure 12.8b). There is a very fresh anthropomorphic motif pecked in the rock pile adjacent to the beach (see Figure 12.8d). This may have been produced either by an Aboriginal person or one of the individuals of mixed ethnicity visiting this place during the pearling period. The pecked boat on the northern beach and its proximity to various inscriptions referring to George Vincent suggests production by a European hand.

- The historical inscriptions clustered around the main rock pools are a powerful reminder of the transfer of the islands to colonial control as the pearling fleet based itself in Flying Foam Passage. The possible attribution of an inscription to William Shakespeare Hall would be particularly significant given his participation in the posse that executed the Flying Foam Massacre.

Discussions with Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation are under way around possible future works in this area to resolve the questions raised by the history of investigation in this landscape. If deemed appropriate, there could be further research into the historical burials. A forensic anthropologist could better describe the individuals and their likely ethnicity, any pathology and perimortem evidence to understand the time and likely cause of death. A careful best-practice forensic excavation and sediment analysis may determine whether these people died during a single episode, and if they were buried in individual graves or a trench. More detailed historical investigation may better determine the likely relationship of the individuals to known historical fatalities. Isotopic analysis may help provenance these people to their homelands. Further work could be done on the WA Museum's collection of earthenware sherds to determine whether their origin is island South-east Asia. Further historical research on the individuals whose initials, names and inscriptions are detailed in the historical graffiti at this place, some made before 1869, could confirm the nature of this early contact period interaction site, particularly considering the events of the 1868 Flying Foam Massacre which took place in this northern part of the archipelago.



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