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Archaeology and Rock Art at Black Hawke Bay, Gidley Island

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Black Hawke Bay is a small inlet on Gidley Island further north along Flying Foam Passage from our Dolphin Island study site (see Chapter 12). The geology here is predominantly granophyre (Figure 13.1). At the head of this bay, on the land and in the intertidal zone, are the remains of historical occupation and maritime activities, mostly related to colonial-era sites in the later decades of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. For a wider treatment of historical activities across the northern islands of the archipelago, we refer the reader to Chapter 18 and Chapter 12 in this monograph. On the rocky slopes adjacent to the bay, 51 petroglyphs were recorded, along with two painted graffiti elements. None of the rock art can be linked to historic period production.

Background

The historical sites in this bay were described by McIlroy (1979) as part of his archaeological survey of historical sites in the Dampier Archipelago, which led to their listing on the Register of the National Estate (RNE). That report stated: 'Flying Foam Passage was a major pearling area from the late 1860s. Black Hawke Bay contains more relics and remains of structures than any other known

pearling site in the Dampier Archipelago.'

The historical settlement was heritage listed as Black Hawke Bay (WA Heritage Council Place No: 08662; RNE Place ID: 10108). An earlier one-day survey of Black Hawke Bay provided georeferenced survey points (Paterson and Souter 2004).

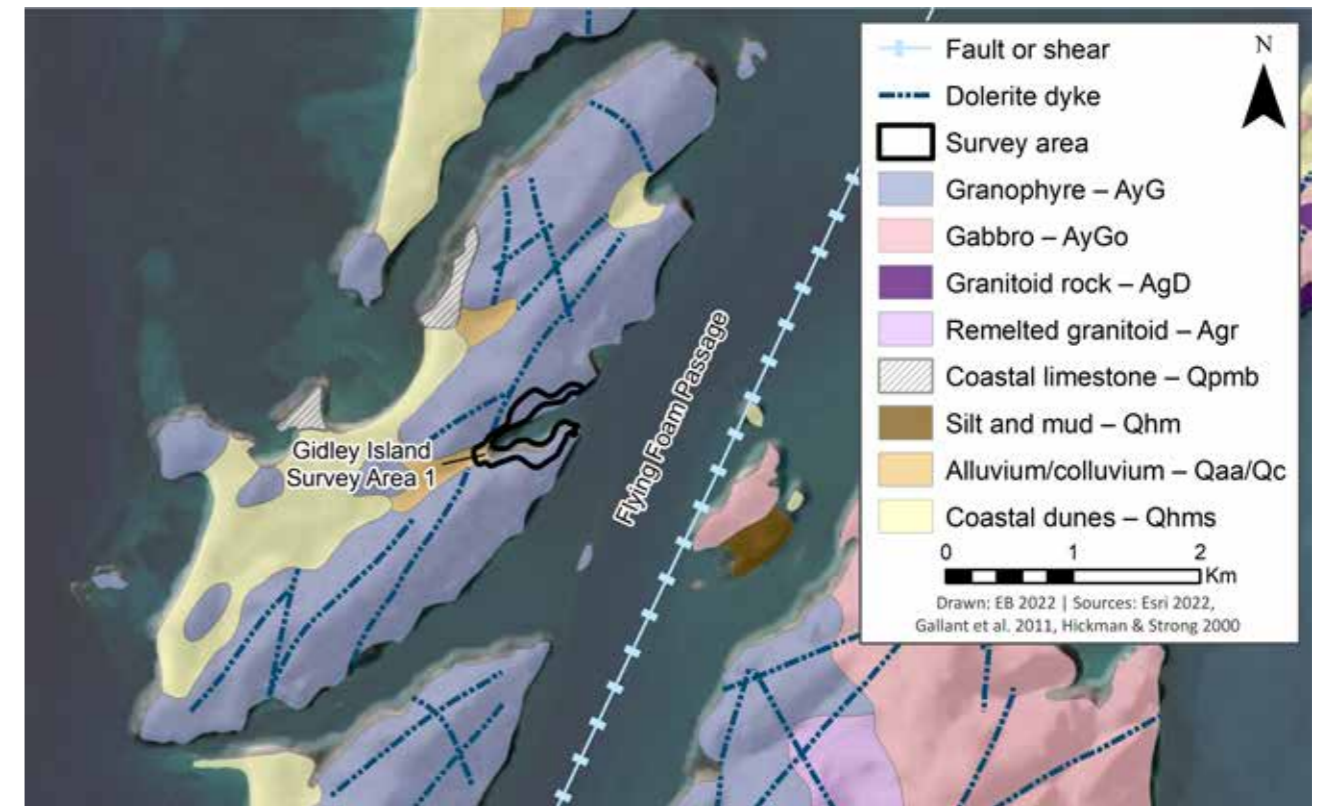


Figure 13.1. Gidley Island survey area location and local geology.

Gidley Island Survey

During this project, a single team day was spent recording the Aboriginal and colonial-era archaeology of this location. Our fieldwork focused on Black Hawke Bay as the hub of later-nineteenth and early twentieth-century pearling (see Chapter 12). Initially we describe the Aboriginal cultural heritage features located around the margins of the bay (Figure 13.2 and Table 13.1).

Ten sites were recorded during this single day's survey, with the historical site DPLH 11699 (Gidley Bay, Gidley Island) being the main feature previously recorded and lodged with the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (Figure 13.3). Nine sites contain rock art, two of which also contain historical components, and two are associated with stone structures (Table

13.1). The boundary for DPLH 11713 (Last Encounter Cove) also overlaps the survey area; however, this site is located further to the south and was not visited during the survey.

SITE TYPES	NO.	%
Art	6	60
Art; structure; historical	1	10
Art; historical	1	10
Art; structure	1	10
Historical	1	10
<i>Total</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>100</i>

Table 13.1. Gidley Island site types.

Rock Art

The rock art is found around Black Hawke Bay on the rocky knolls on the south side of the bay and in two isolated locations along the blocky slope to its north (Figure 13.4). These nine recorded rock art sites comprise just 26 panels, with 53 defined motifs. Three of the sites include just a single motif, while one site comprises most (40%) of the recorded assemblage.

Geometric motifs dominate here (Table 13.2), with tracks appearing proportionally higher, while animal depictions are few.

MOTIF CLASS	COUNT	% F	COUNT	% F
Anthropomorphic	10	18.9	10	19.5
Geometric	19	35.8	19	37.5
Other	2	3.8	-	-
Tracks	15	28.3	15	29.4
Zoomorphic	7	13	7	13.6
Total	53	100.0	51	100.0

Table 13.2. Gidley Island class proportions.



Figure 13.3. The 1979 survey at Black Hawke Bay focused on the margins of the bay and the central area of the settlement, while our surveys expanded the archaeological site.

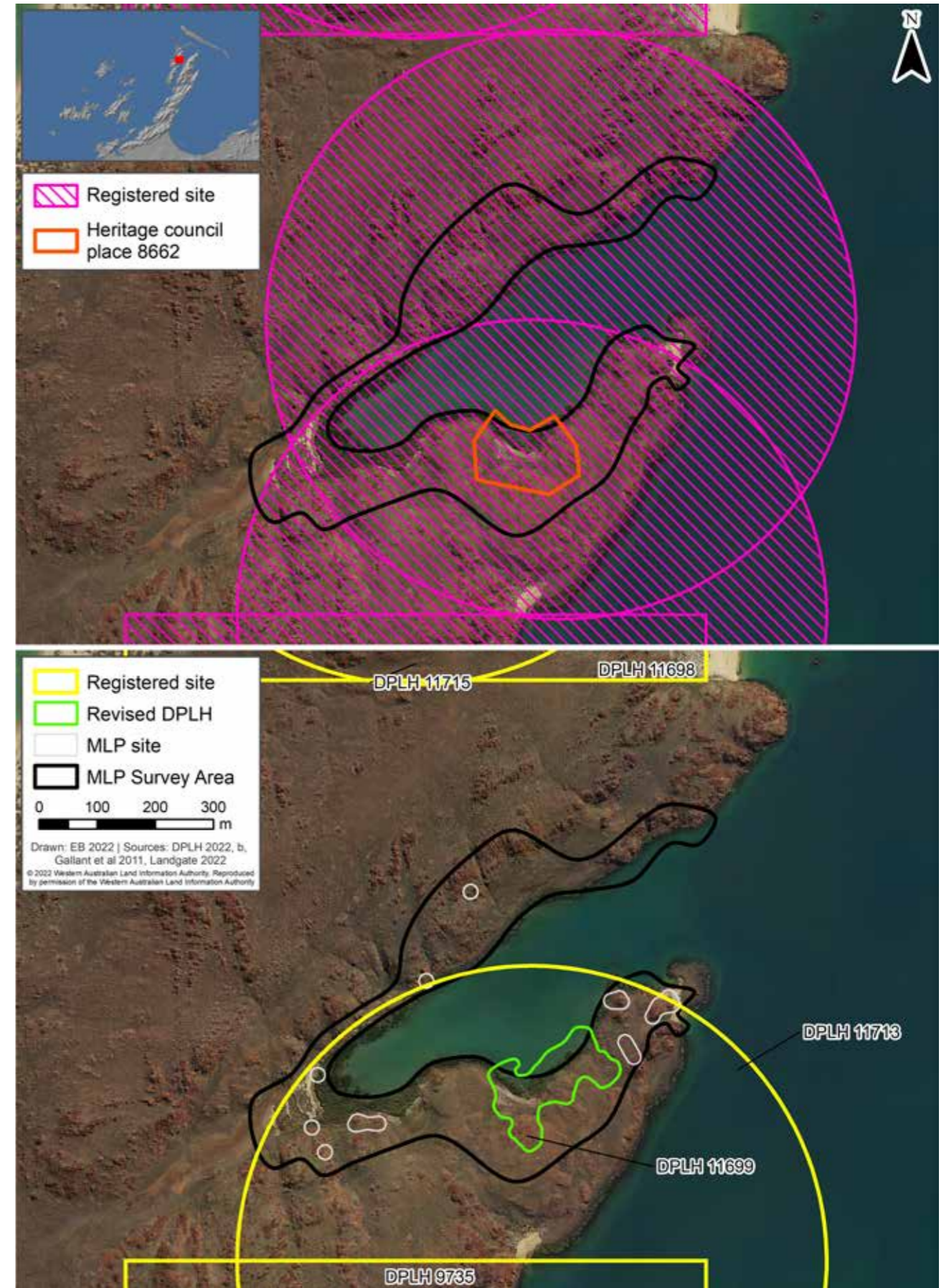


Figure 13.2. Gidley Island showing location of all recorded sites within the survey footprint.

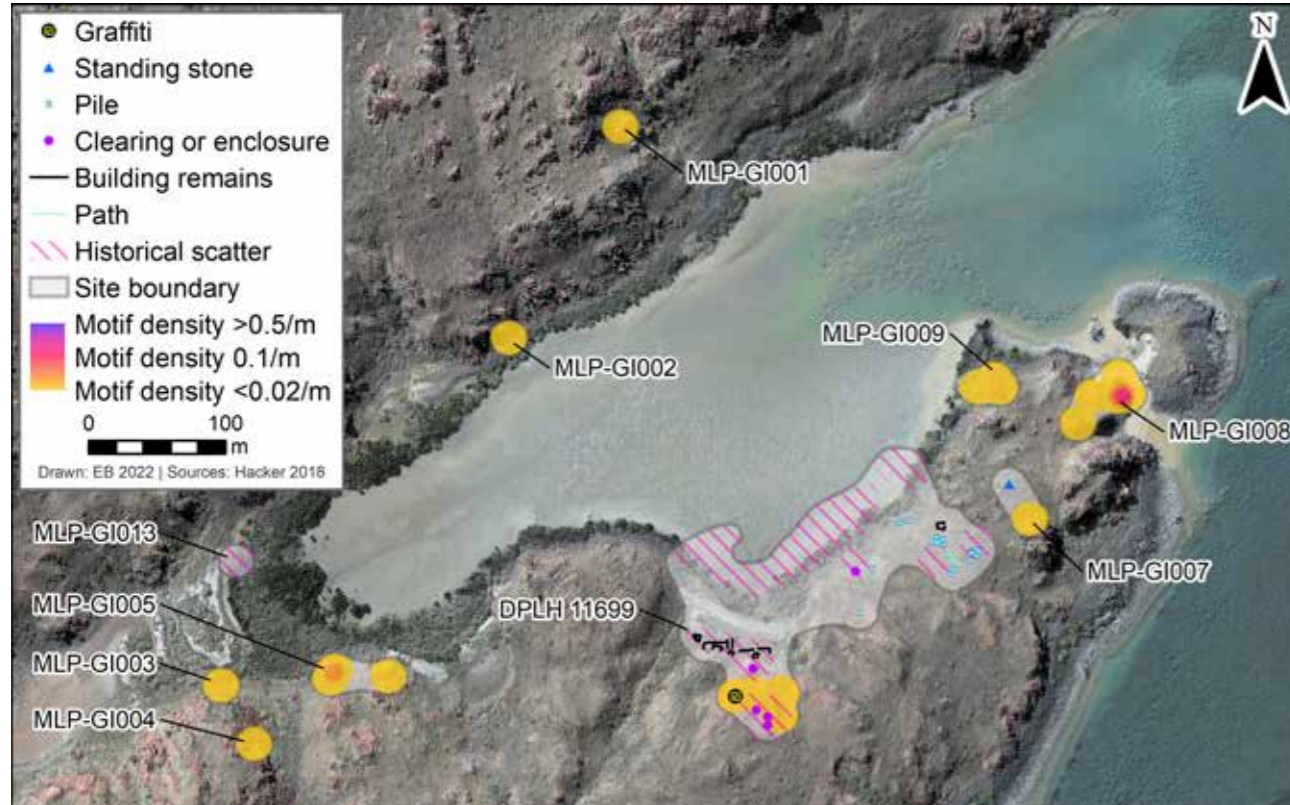


Figure 13.4. Gidley Island showing location of focus of work and the cultural heritage character. The historical settlement and the rock art are largely not contiguous.



Figure 13.5. Black Hawke Bay on Gidley Island: (a) looking north out over the bay; (b) view over site MPL-GI009 across the bay to sites MPL-GI001 and 2; (c) view north over part of the pearling settlement; (d) view south-west across the bay towards sites MPL-GI006 and 9.

Two examples of graffiti are the only motifs recorded within the 'Other' class. This graffiti is painted on two adjacent vertical panels (Figure 13.6a–c). The top panel, now a weathered series of vertical lines, may have originally been initials and date. The bottom panel has a schematic depiction of a human face and an outstretched arm with an arc at its end. Considering the focused historical occupancy of this location, it might have been expected that more graffiti would be found here, especially given the focused historical inscriptions present to the south across Flying Foam Passage on Dolphin Island (see Chapter 12). Pigment analysis was not undertaken, and it is assumed this is a relatively modern paint (although surprisingly weathered). The colour and texture were observed to

be like that used in painting survey marker crosses for aerial photogrammetry work across the archipelago (Ken Mulvaney, personal observation, 2022).

Not unexpectedly, with such a small sample size, there is a limited range of subjects (Table 13.3). Amongst the rare zoomorphic depictions, there is a quadruped of undetermined species (Figure 13.6d). This animal has claws displayed, a bent tail, proportionally small snout and pointed ears, and either a cloacal protuberance (marsupial) or testes (canine). The shape and length of limbs, shape of snout and ears preclude this image as a representation of a quoll. The length and thickness of the tail is thylacine-like, but the tail-curve is characteristic of the graphic convention for Pilbara dingos.

SUBJECT	NO.	%	SUBJECT	NO.	%
<i>Anthropomorphic</i>			<i>Tracks</i>		
Linear figure	5	9.6	Bird track	15	28.8
Profile figure	2	3.8	Macropod track	1	1.9
Solid figure	3	5.8	<i>Zoomorphic</i>		
<i>Geometric</i>			Bird	1	1.9
Angular	5	9.6	Fish	1	1.9
Arc	4	7.7	Quadruped	2	3.8
Dot	1	1.9	Turtle	3	5.8
Linear	4	7.7			
Oval	2	3.8			
Rayed	3	5.8	Total	51	100

Table 13.3. Gidley Island subject proportions for identifiable motifs.

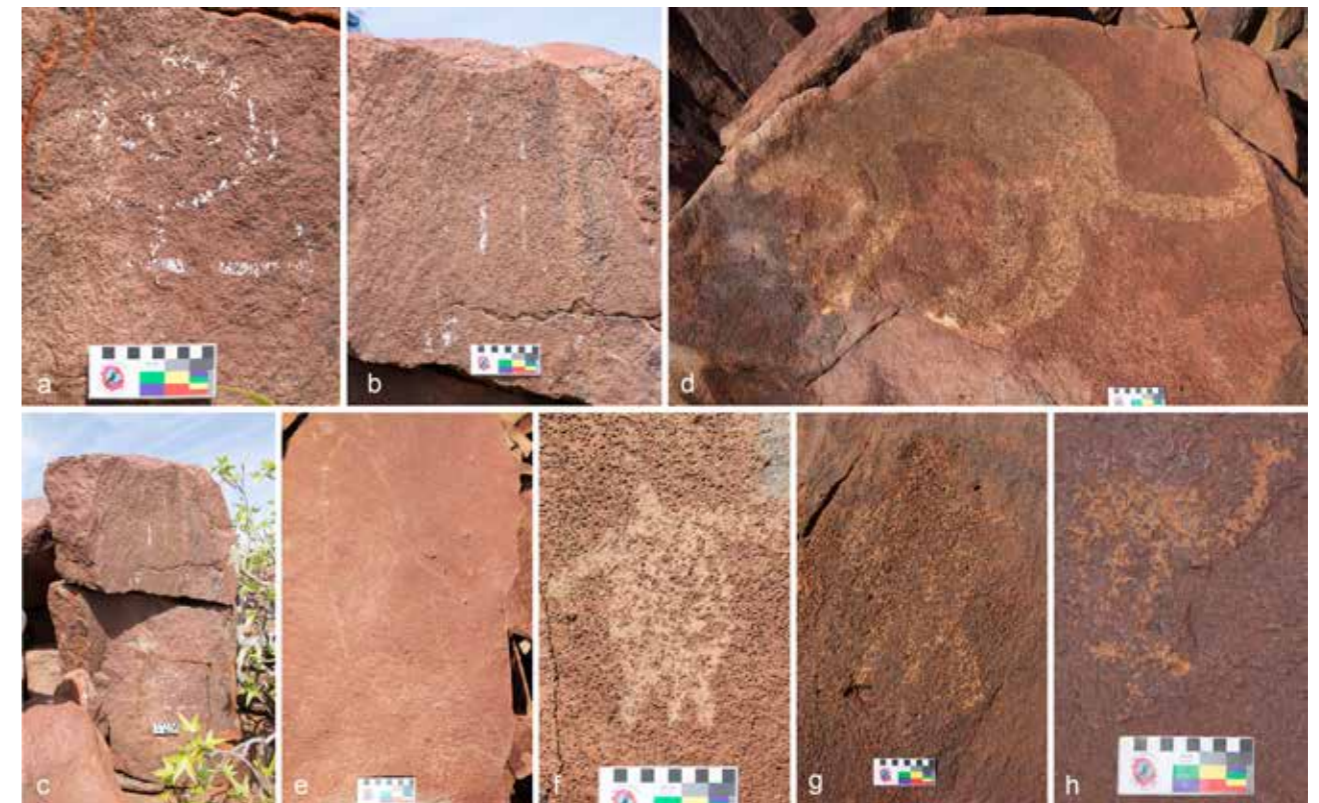


Figure 13.6. Selection of Black Hawke Bay, Gidley Island petroglyphs: (a–c) relatively modern graffiti; (d) possible thylacine depiction; (e) fish with ventral and dorsal fin depicted and rounded indented tail shape; (f–g) turtle petroglyphs of different contrast state; and (h) bird motif, possibly representing an emu.

Angular geometric motifs, in this case cross (X) shaped (26.3%, n = 5), are an unusually common geometric design in this assemblage. Linear and arc shapes are the next most common (see Table 13.3), with two of the four arc motifs being arc pairs (Figure 13.7a–b).

The track motifs (30.8%) represent more than double the assemblage proportions normally found. All but one of these are bird tracks: the exception is a macropod track (Figure 13.7c–d). While most are single bird track depictions, variety includes a line of three and an offset pair (Figure 13.7e–j).

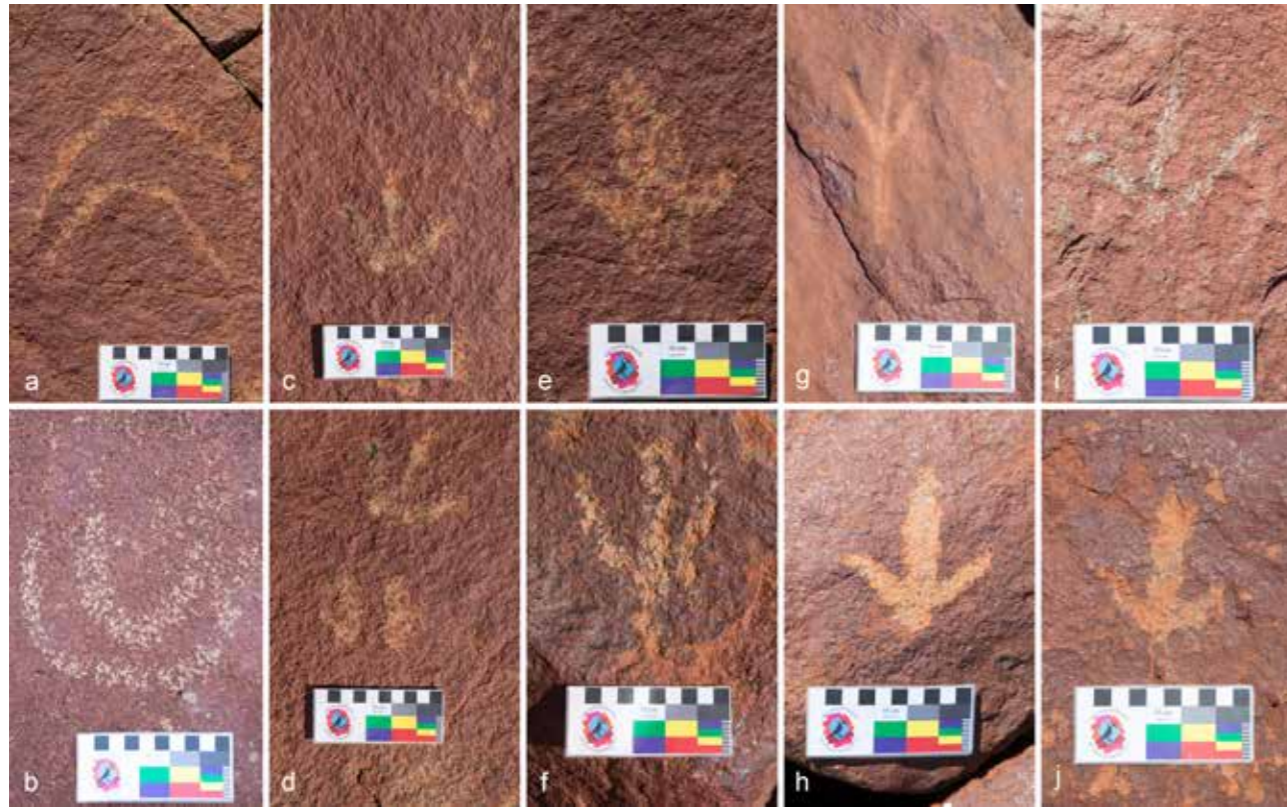


Figure 13.7. Selection of Black Hawke Bay, Gidley Island petroglyphs: (a–b) variations on the arc pair motif; (c–d) trail of bird track motifs with the only macropod track recorded in this assemblage at base; and (e–j) variations on the bird track design.

Linear forms are the most frequently found, which is not surprising given the dominance of geometric and track motifs in this Black Hawke Bay assemblage. The zoomorphic class, while small, demonstrates a range of solid and solid combination designs (Figure 13.7).

FORM	COUNT	%F
Linear	33	65.4
Solid	9	17.3
Linear; solid	7	13.5
Outline	1	1.9
Linear; outline	1	1.9
Total	51	100.0

Table 13.4. Gidley Island form of identified motif classes.

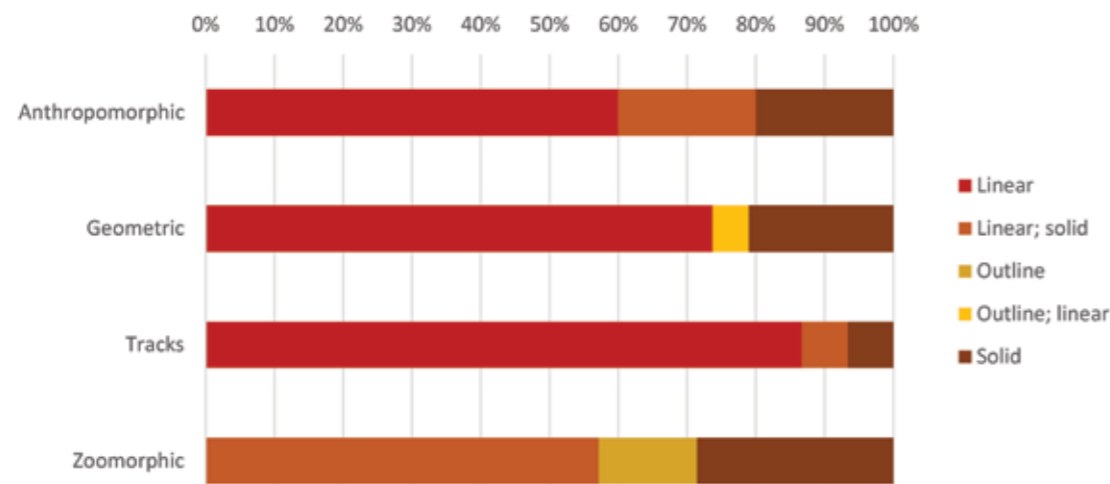


Figure 13.8. Black Hawke Bay, Gidley Island, recorded petroglyph forms as a percentage within each of the four motif classes.

Given the granophyre geology, pecking predictably dominates petroglyph production (Table 13.5). The bird track motif demonstrates the most technical variation: with an abraded, a pounded and a scratched motif alongside 12 pecked images. Two angular geometric and one linear anthropomorphic figure are created by pecking and gouging the rocks' weathered rind.

The vast majority (85%) of these motifs are less than 30 cm long, again reflecting the dominance of tracks (i.e. c. 50% of the track motifs are smaller than 10 cm, the rest 10–14 cm (Table 13.6). The possible thylacine, at 132 cm, is the largest petroglyph in this Black Hawke Bay assemblage. A linear figure (100 cm), a fish motif (70 cm) and one of the turtle images (46 cm) are the only other petroglyphs larger than 40 cm.

TECHNIQUE	COUNT	%F
Pecked	45	88.2
Gouged; pecked	3	5.9
Abraded	1	2.0
Pounded	1	2.0
Scratched	1	2.0
Total	51	100

Table 13.5. Gidley Island technique of identified motif classes.

SIZE CATEGORY (CM)	COUNT	%F
1–10	14	27.5
11–20	21	41.2
21–30	9	17.6
31–40	3	5.9
41–50	1	2.0
61–70	1	2.0
91–100	1	2.0
131–140	1	2.0
Total	51	100

Table 13.6. Gidley Island size of identified motif classes.

Given the focus of historic pearling activity, it was expected that there might be rock art (inscriptions or graffiti) relating to this period. This was not the case. Nonetheless, most (75%) of the rock art is relatively unweathered in appearance, falling in contrast states 4 and 5 (Table 13.7). This includes the potential thylacine depiction. Only five petroglyphs are more weathered, in CS2. There is no CS1 art. These more weathered

petroglyphs are three bird tracks, a linear anthropomorph and a rayed geometric design.

Thus, while there is no evidence of older art production in this location, and the majority of the art appears to have been produced since the sea level stabilised here, there are no indications that any of this was produced post-contact.

CONTRAST STATE	NO.	%F
CS1	NA	
CS2	5	9.8
CS3	8	15.7
CS4	26	51.0
CS5	12	23.5
Total	51	100.0

Table 13.7. Gidley Island contrast state of identified motif classes. [insert Table 13.7 fig alongside]

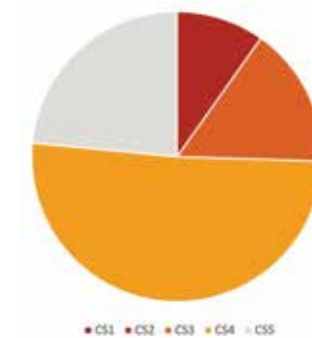


Figure 13.8. Black Hawke Bay, Gidley Island, recorded petroglyph forms as a percentage within each of the four motif classes.

Gidley Island Historical Archaeology

A handful of historical accounts describe the use of Black Hawke Bay (also spelled Black Hawk) during the pearling era, as it offered a safe anchorage and location to careen and tend to vessels operating in the Flying Foam Passage. In 1908, an unidentified writer recalled that during a cyclone, 'You may in safety anchor in that little mosquito and sand-fly paradise off Flying Foam Passage, called Black Hawk Bay' (J. W. M. 1908: 3). The risks to the pearlmen were sometimes extreme, as revealed in the loss of the *Anne* at Black Hawke Bay in a 'hurricane' in 1894. A newspaper account of the event is based on a letter by Captain F. L. Parkes (of the *Cutty Sark*), who described being in Black Hawke Bay with the schooner *Anne* and other pearling vessels. They had finished preparing the vessels for the season, including painting the boats. As there was pearlshell to transport, the captain of the *Anne* loaded his vessel with shell and was bound for Cossack but was forced by the developing hurricane to return and anchor at 'Bird Rock', outside the entrance to Black Hawke Bay. The storm almost tore the *Cutty Sark* from the bay, despite three sets of anchors on

chains being set in place. Other vessels survived at West and East Lewis islands and in Hampton Harbour. In the morning, as the rain cleared, the crew of *Cutty Sark* could see the masts of the *Anne*, which had sunk during the night. The *Anne* had been hit by waves and unexpectedly capsized, with the captain and other crew drowning in their locked cabins. An unnamed Japanese worker died trying to leave the vessel. Surviving Malay and European crew members either swam to Black Hawke Bay or made their way in small whaleboats. The bodies recovered were buried at Cossack. Over following days, the surviving vessels resumed the work of pearling. There is no description of the location of the wreck of the *Anne* on the Western Australian Museum register of reported shipwrecks, suggesting it is still to be discovered.

A historical photo shows four pearling vessels at low tide (Figure 13.9), which, according to de la Rue, are the schooners *Cutty Sark* and *Fanny Thorton*, and the luggers *Sea Gull* and *Albatross*. They are located where there is material evidence for maritime work, discard, repair and anchoring (Figure 13.10).



Figure 13.9. Historical photo of ships at low tide at Black Hawke Bay (from de la Rue 1979).

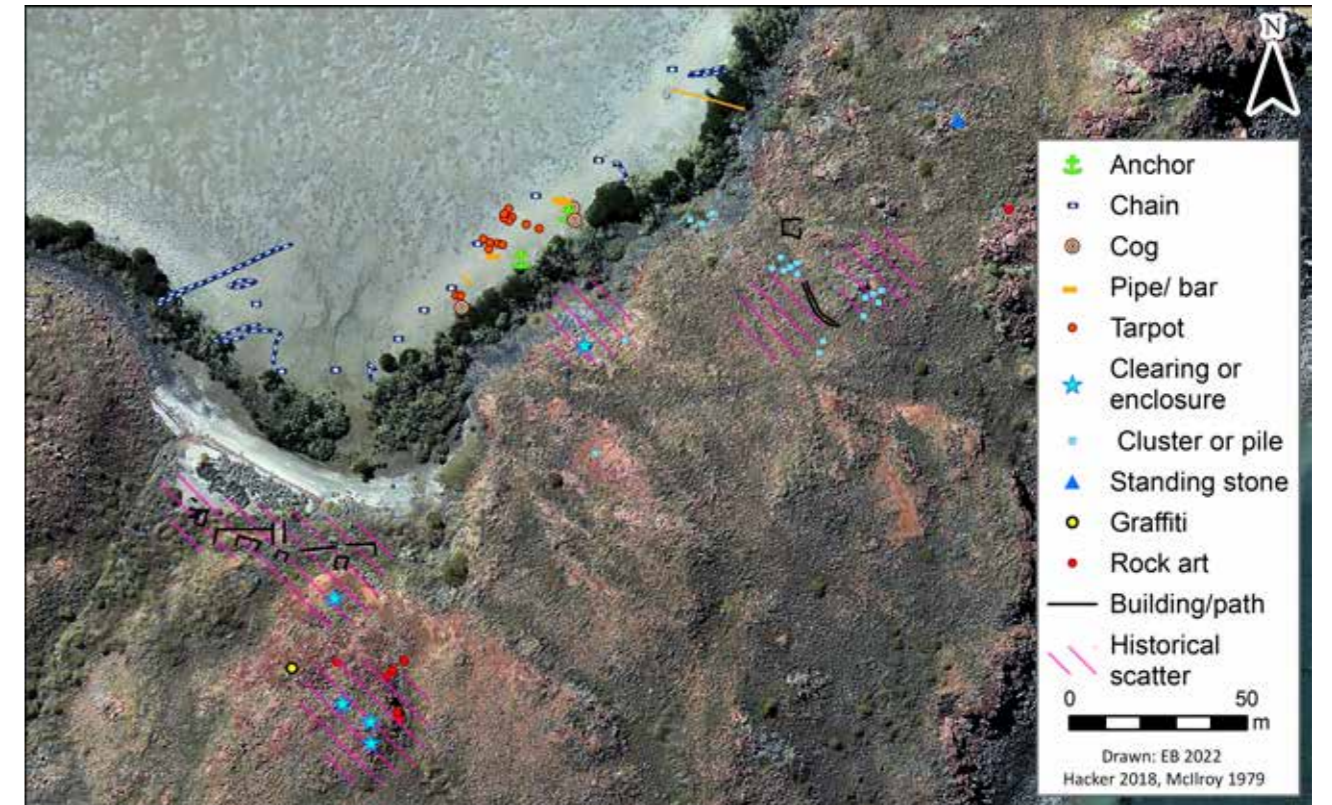


Figure 13.10. Black Hawke Bay: south-east area of the bay showing distribution of historical material, rock art, standing stone and cleared areas.

With the exception of a single standing stone (MLP-GI007, Figure 13.11a), all the structures recorded on Gidley Island were assessed in the field as being associated with activities during the historical period and are within the main site DPLH 11699 (Figure 13.4). The single low standing stone (Figure 13.11a) is interpreted as likely to have been a marker memorialising a personal event (Beckett 2021: 230). This structure is located a little over 25 m to the north-west of the depiction thought to be a thylacine (Figure 13.6d) and near enough to be part of the same site.

The primary concentration of structural remains includes a small rectangular building, stone walls and platforms formed against a rock outcrop with remains of structures upon them and a stone lined ramp (Figure 13.10), some of which were initially cleared by McIlroy (Figure 13.12). Artefacts associated with the use of these places include remains of ships' tanks used for storing water in colonial sites (Figure 13.13). Fragments of wall with limestone mortar suggest that these buildings were decorated in the past. Most (54.3%) of the recorded stone structures are clusters/piles of stones located to the north-east of the beach. Many of these are associated with historical artefacts and are located at either end of a 'pathway' bordered on either edge with clustered stones. These structures are all located on the eastern edge of DPLH 11699, 140 m north-east of the beach (Figure 13.11b).

The most prominent structures are the eight foundations/footings of buildings related to the historical

activities occurring at this site (Figure 13.12). These reflect attempts to make a clear ground for occupation and stone footings for simple structures – of which canvas or grass thatch are possible (as indicated in historical photographs). These structures may also have used metal sheeting, such as corrugated iron; however, the tendency towards more curved stone piles would more likely suggest canvas or grass walls. These structures are primarily located on the shoreline on the western side of DPLH 11699, overlooking the bay where the vessels were anchored.

Five clearings/enclosures, all associated with historical artefacts, were also identified. Three of these structures are located with a good vantage over Searipple Passage and may have functioned to provide shelter for lookouts. It is possible that these were created by Aboriginal people before the arrival of the pearlmen and reused during the historical period. Two more clearings/enclosures were located on the eastern side of the settlement. These substantial structures were cleared and mapped by McIlroy (Figure 13.13).

STRUCTURE TYPE	COUNT	%
Historical cluster/pile	19	54.3
Building	8	22.9
Historical clearing/ enclosure	5	14.3
Path	2	5.7
Standing stone	1	2.9
Total	35	100

Table 13.8. Black Hawke Bay stone structure types.



Figure 13.11. Black Hawke Bay stone structures: (a) placed standing stone; (b) one of the heaped stone clusters; (c) stone circle forming cleared central area.



Figure 13.12. Aerial image of Black Hawke Bay historical stone structures and other archaeological material, overlain with Mcllroy's 1979 survey results.



Figure 13.13. Primary structures at Black Hawke Bay cleared by Mcllroy in 1979.



Figure 13.14. Black Hawke Bay historical evidence including (a) ships' tanks photographed during site visit in 2012; (b) building fragment with limestone render.

Historical Artefacts (1970s–present)

Artefacts collected by the Mcllroy expedition are held in the History Collection at the Western Australian Museum or reflected in their field photographs. Other artefacts were recorded on later surveys, including for our project. This is significant material evidence for aspects of daily life at Black Hawke Bay by the workforce and includes Asian domestic wares. Importantly, there is no artefactual evidence for Aboriginal workers – such as the flaked glass found elsewhere – although historical sources indicate they were present in the Flying Foam as divers (see chapters 11, 12 and 18).

The artefacts in the collection at the Western Australian Museum reveal the diverse overseas commodities accessible to the North West in the colonial era as well as evidence for local Pilbara production –

with a soda bottle branded from Roebourne (Figure 13.15). The WAM collecting process was focused on complete vessels, many of which were apparently on site in the 1970s. Today no artefacts of comparable historical value were seen at the site, presumably reflecting past collecting processes and the fossickers visiting the bay. Not all the artefacts collected by WAM are in its collection today; the WAM archives indicate that many objects collected by the WAM expedition stayed in Karratha with a private collector. Many of the objects presumed to have stayed in the Pilbara are portrayed in a contemporary photograph of artefacts (Figure 13.15). Their fate is unknown.



Figure 13.15. (a) Assemblage of historical artefacts at Black Hawke Bay; (b) Asian rice bowl collected by McIlroy (Courtesy WA Museum Collection).

Food consumption and storage

The ceramics in the museum collection are largely related to food consumption and storage (Figure 13.15), and include Asian-manufactured wares (Figure 13.16). An earthenware jar, possibly made in Bristol by Powell, is dated by the maker's mark to 1894. Another vessel is reflected in a base fragment of a larger stoneware vessel (Figure 13.16c–d). Fragments of a decorated earthenware shallow bowl and mug are examples of affordable wares of the colonial era (Figure 13.16a–b).

The Asian tablewares are mainly small, decorated rice bowls, termed *min yao* (folk ware), which were common to overseas Chinese communities in the nineteenth century (Choy 2014). One example at Black Hawke Bay is decorated with 'double happiness characters' (Figure 13.17a), a vessel commonly manufactured in the eastern region of Guangdong, in Dabu County in the Mei Xian Prefecture (Choy 2014: 4). The other sherds and vessels include other examples of popular Chinese decorative traditions (Figure 13.17b–e).

A range of bottles and vessels reflect food consumption at this settlement, and the workers' access to flavourings that moved through global circuits of the British Empire. 'Bovril' meat extract was a food that dates to the Napoleonic wars, when the beef extract was used for the soldiers – it became a popular food supplement across the British world (Figure 13.18a). The presence of this food supplement on a frontier is thus unsurprising. 'Hayward's Military Pickles' were sold in these embossed bottles thought the later nineteenth century before paper labels were used (Figure 13.18b). Other pickle bottles were present, having a wide-mouthed closure that allowed removal of the foods with a spoon or similar implement. Salad oils were often packaged in bottles decorated with embossing, as they were seen at the meal table – two examples were found at the settlement (Figure 13.18d). Another example (T1979.231b, Figure 13.18c) is undecorated, and reflects semi-handmade bottle manufacture, given the asymmetrical shape.



Figure 13.16. Domestic and utilitarian ceramic artefacts from WA Museum collection: (a) stoneware bottle (T1979.243); (b) bowl (T1979.248); (c) earthenware mug, 1890s–1910 (T1979.247); (d) stoneware storage jar (post-1894) (T1979.249).



Figure 13.17. Asian wares: (a) rice bowl with 'double happiness' design (T1979.244b); (b) rice bowl with swallow design (T1979.244 a); (c) small bowl (T1979.245); (d) bowl sherd (T1979.244c); (e) bowl sherd (T1979.244d).



Figure 13.18. Food containers: (a) two-ounce Bovril bottle (T1979.229); (b) Hayward's Military Pickles bottle (T1979.235a); (c) handmade bottle for salad oil (T1979.231a); (d) mould-made bottle for salad oil (T1979.231b) (WA Museum Collection).

Alcohol and beverage bottles

Significant alcohol consumption was reflected in the archaeological record, with a tendency towards spirits. As found across much of colonial Australia, gin and schnapps were particularly common, with the distinctive 'case gin' bottles with rectangular section dominating. One gin bottle was marked 'AG' on the shoulder and 'Avan Hoboken and Co. Rotterdam' on the side panel (Figure 13.19b). This Dutch gin producer was prevalent across the Australian colonies given its bottles are found in many Australian colonial sites. A stoneware bottle marked 'Erven Lucas Bols Het Lootsje Amsterdam' reflects another gin container common in the late nineteenth century.

Other alcohol beverage bottles were unmarked, being generic containers used for alcoholic beverages through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. None appear to postdate the early twentieth century based on bottle manufacture technique. In the bottles not collected by the museum there were other embossed schnapps/gin bottles (Figure 13.19b) and one rare clear glass case bottle, probably nineteenth/early-twentieth century given the 'blob' closure (Figure 13.15a). Another dark-olive case bottle is embossed 'Silver Stream Schnapps' – an 1896 edition of *The Bulletin* has an advertisement for Robert's Wine and Spirit Store in Sydney as selling 'Gilbey's Silverstream Schnapps' as well as 'The celebrated Wolfe Schnapps' (Figure 13.15a). Two salt-glazed stoneware bottles with small handles were photographed by the museum (Figure 13.15a). In Dutch these are called 'jeneverkruik' for 'gin jug' and were commonly used for spirits and may have had paper labels. Three dark-olive glass bottles made in a three-seam mould would date to the late nineteenth century.

One of the most significant bottles is a rare example of the production of aerated cordials in the colonial North West and provides a possible means to date the use of the site more precisely (Figure 13.20). The maker's mark states 'John Johnson Roebourne'. John H. Johnson operated the Roebourne Cordial Factory, with advertisements in local newspapers in 1891 and 1892 (*Nor'west Times and the Northern Advocate* 1892a, b). The bottle is a Codd patent seal bottle, where the aerated contents held a glass marble in place as a stopper. Codd bottles were produced in various patented designs from the 1870s: this bottle could be either a 'one-way pour' patented in 1872 or an 'Empress patent' made from 1886 (Burke and Smith 2004: 368). These patent bottles would have been imported by Johnson and were intended to be returned for reuse. An advertisement in 1892 suggests that many were not returned: 'on and after January 1 the undersigned will charge 6/- per dozen for all empty aerated water bottles not returned'. (*Nor'west Times and the Northern Advocate* 1892a). It is not clear how long this business survived. In August 1894 Johnson became the proprietor of the Roebourne Hotel on Sholl Street (*Nor'west Times and the Northern Advocate* 1894) as well as the cordial factory. The factory was reported as being slightly damaged in the cyclone of 1898 (*Nor'west Times and the Northern Advocate* 1898) and was advertised as late as 1902 in local papers. Another Codd bottle was collected by the museum and can be firmly dated to post-1888 given the clear patent 'Niagara' design (Figure 13.15a, top row, third from left).



Figure 13.19. Alcohol bottles: (a) stoneware bottle, maker's mark 'Bols Gin' (T1979.242); (b) olive case gin bottle, maker's mark 'Avan Hoboken and Co. Rotterdam' (T1979.243); (c) olive bottle, single down-tooled closure for cork (T1979.239); (d) olive bottle, turn-past mould manufacture (T1979.238) (WA Museum Collection).

Medicines and health

There were a range of items related to health and hygiene. A bottle embossed with 'Elliman's Royal Embrocation for Horse Manufactory, Slough' was probably for humans, as while the rub was developed in 1847 for horses, by 1850 it was also widely used for people's aches and pains (Figure 13.21c). Another bottle at the site was embossed 'Chamberlain's Cough Remedy' – this was an American medicine from the late nineteenth and twentieth century (Figure 13.14a). 'Eno's Fruit Salt' was invented around 1850 and tended to contain sodium bicarbonate and citric or tartaric acid. The bottle at this site has a medicinal-style stopper closure, which could be nineteenth century or early twentieth century (Figure 13.20a). Another bottle photographed at the site (not in the WAM collection) was possibly 'Clarke's World-famed Blood Mixture' (Figure 13.15a), which was intended to cleanse impurities from blood and treat scrofula, scurvy and skin diseases (Market Lavington Museum 2015). A fragment of a lid for a ceramic toothpaste container was from 'S. Mawson & Sons, Cherry Toothpaste' (Figure 13.20d), cherry flavouring being more common in the colonial period with several manufacturers in the British Empire.



Figure 13.20. Aerated cordial bottle, maker's mark 'John Johnson Roebourne' (T979.233) (WA Museum Collection).



Figure 13.21. Bottles for medicines and hygiene: (a) Eno's Fruit Salt bottle (T1979.234); (b) medicinal-style bottle with 'H' embossed (T1979.236); (c) 'Elliman's Royal Embrocation for Horse Manufactory, Slough' bottle, mould-made with hand-applied closure (T1979.232); (d) ceramic container for toothpaste (T1979.246) (WA Museum Collection).

Utility and personal care

There were a range of utilitarian objects, unsurprising for a work and commercial settlement (Figure 13.22). Ink wells reflect record-keeping: a glazed stoneware jar produced by Doulton, Lambeth, was commonly used as a container for ink in the nineteenth century; another glass ink well had a jagged closure, of a type called 'bursting off' or 'blow-over' typical for some ink bottles. This bottle was made for Angus and Co. Pty Ltd in Melbourne (an identical bottle was excavated in Victoria, H7822-1209, Casselden Place, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne; Museums Victoria Collections 2005). Other ink bottles were photographed by WAM, although all did not make it into the collection (Figure 13.15a). As at other sites in the islands, matchboxes have survived, with one rectangular

matchbox from the common colonial brand 'R. Bell and Co' in the collection (Figure 13.22a). An iron wrench was the only tool, perhaps reminding us that these items would always be removed at the abandonment of settlement – except in this case. An olfactory insight into life on the frontier is suggested by the presence of perfume bottles (Figure 13.14a). In the WAM collection is a bottle from Roger et Gallet, a French perfume company founded by merchant Charles Armand Roger and banker Charles Martial Gallet in 1862. Similar bottles have been found in Australia. While perfume may suggest the presence of women, men also used perfume in this era, and in fact apparently carried this brand into battle!



Figure 13.22. Utilitarian artefacts: (a) matchbox (T79.250); (b) stoneware ink well (T1979.227); (c) glass ink well (T1979.228); (d) wrench (T1979.253); (e) perfume bottle, 'Roger and Gallet' brand (T1979.230) (WA Museum Collection).

The 2018 survey of the settlement reported a similar range of material, yet very few objects were as complete as those reported and collected in the 1970s. Determining the date ranges of manufacture of the artefacts present at this settlement (Figure 13.23) suggests site use in the 1890s. Much of the technology related to bottle manufacture is not able to be dated;

however, the Niagara patent bottle provides a terminus ante quem of 1888, and the Roebourne cordial suggests 1890s through to early 1900s. The prescription seal bottles also suggest 1890s (Burke and Smith 2004: 365). It may well be the site was used earlier and had a more intensive use in the 1890s.

	1865-1870	1870-1875	1875-1880	1880-85	1885-90	1890-95	1895-1900	1900-1905	1905-1910	1910-1915
John Johnson cordial						1891		1902		
Mawson toothpaste										
Chamberlain's Cough Remedy										
Elliman's Royal Embrocation										
Eno's Fruit Salts										
Clarke's World-famed Blood Mixture										
Silver Stream Schnapps										
Wolfe Schnapps										
Hoboken Schnapps										
Erven Lucas Bols										
Cod patent										
Niagara' design					1888					
Torpedo bottle										
Case gin bottles										
Embossed salad / vinegar bottles										
Blob closure										
Double-collar seal										
Prescription lip closure										

Figure 13.23. Date ranges for production of artefacts reported at the Black Hawke Bay site.

Conclusions

The settlement at Black Hawke Bay on Gidley Island is significant for several reasons:

- The record of historical archaeological material at the bay reveals the primary concentration of the colonial pearlshell fisheries in the Flying Foam Passage. There is clear evidence for colonial boat repair and related discard behaviours in the intertidal zone, where ballast piles, chains and ships' parts are present (McIlroy 1979).
- The dateable artefacts suggest a possible terminus ante quem of 1888 and a likely use period of the 1890s. This is supported by historical accounts of the shipwreck in 1894.
- Life at the settlement saw access to a wide range of commercial goods. Aside from the main building there were few attempts at substantial residential structures beyond simple campsites along the edge of the bay. This may reflect the itinerant character of working life at this settlement.
- The small number of Asian wares suggests that Asian workers were present at the site. There is very little evidence for Aboriginal people being part of this colonial-era occupation, unlike at other locations in the archipelago. Given the known

tensions that existed between Aboriginal people and pearlshells, this suggests major variation in colonial cross-cultural experiences in the islands.

- The structures at the settlement are interpreted to be mostly from the historical period. These structures reveal an infrastructure for the processing, storage and transshipment of pearlshell, with several of the low round shelters possibly reused Aboriginal cleared structures. A single low standing stone was also documented.
- The small rock art assemblage encountered is too small for meaningful quantification. The absence of very early art (there is no CS1), or much focused art production here at any phase, suggests an absence of potable water in this landscape has always made this a transient location for this type of place-marking. There is a significant dominance of bird tracks, with a range of styles depicted.
- The most notable animal motif here is a thylacine-like creature, with claws but an unusual posture, and a dingo-like tail. Turtle motifs dominate this small assemblage, with fish and quadrupeds in equal number.

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