Acknowledgements and Preface

‘No (wo)man is an island’.

This research would not have been possible without the assistance of many people. I would particularly like to thank my PhD supervisor, Andrée Rosenfeld, for her support, friendship and inspiration over the years. My advisers, Isabel McBryde and (the late) Anthony Forge also generously imparted experience and wisdom.

A large amount of excavation and rock art recording fieldwork was undertaken, assisted by many of my professional colleagues and post-graduate peers. My thanks go to all of these people.

The Great Mackerel site was excavated with the help of Terri Bonhomme, Neville Baker, Dominic Steel and Jon Barlow. Bronwyn Conyers (then NSW NPWS) and Harry Mumbulla (then Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council) visited the site during excavation. Sharon Sullivan (then NPWS Regional Director) granted permission to excavate within a National Park: Geoff Spencer (then Superintendent, Ku-ring-gai Chase NP) and Alex Kneer (then KCNP Ranger) allowed us to camp at The Basin and to use fire-trails not otherwise open for general use.

During the two field seasons at Big Yango, I was assisted by John Appleton, Val Attenbrow, Sally Brockwell, John Clegg, Hilary du Cros, Sarah Forbes, Neil Hanson, Margrit Koettig, Judy McDonald, Andrew McWilliam, Helen Marshall, Kelvin Officer, Tony Ogden, Ann O’Gorman, Andrée Rosenfeld, Annie Ross, Somsuda Rutnin, Jonathan Saunders, Laurajane Smith, Kate Sullivan, Paul Taçon, Marina Walkington, and Vivienne Wood. Helen Brayshaw, Ann Conway, Dave Lambert, Ian Webb and Richard, Sonia and Ben Wright also trekked along the Boree Track to visit. Excavation at Big Yango would not have been possible without the permission of John Bowen. Thanks to the Bowen family and to property managers, Steve and Janine Marsh for their hospitality, assistance and good humoured tolerance.

Val Attenbrow, Tessa Corkill, Denise Donlon, John Edgar and Judith Field assisted in the excavation at Upside-Down-Man. Dave Lambert assisted in the collection of the art charcoal samples from this site for AMS radiocarbon dating.

Rock art recording work along the Boree Track was undertaken with the assistance of Mary Dallas and David Bell. Frying Pan Rock will never be the same!

Much art recording work was undertaken during the Sydney Basin Rock Art Project, funded by three National Estate Grants. Thanks to Laurajane Smith, Annie Ross, Bronwyn Conyers and Warren Bluff (Stage II) and Mary Dallas, Paul Taçon, Steve King, Jim Hatfield and Ken Cutmore of Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (Stage III). The NSW NPWS provided a helicopter for recording work in the remote north-west of the region, and a boat for work along Berowra and Cowan Creeks. Mary Dallas provided accommodation aboard the Cruisin’ Bokkus Club during the Berowra Waters stint.

Many art sites were recorded in the Warre Warren Aboriginal Place, funded by the NSW Forestry Commission. Assistance here was provided by Kelvin Officer, Jan Klaver, Dave Lambert, Ingereth McFarlane and Kerry Navin.

David Macgregor (ANU) assisted tirelessly and cheerfully in the preparation of the many field trips. Field funding for the excavations at Mount Yengo and Great Mackerel was provided by the Australian National University.

Ingereth McFarlane and Beth White assisted with the sorting of some lithics (Yengo 1 and UDM). Phil Boot and Huw Barton commented on some artefacts identified with resin/blood/plant residue. Dominic Steele analysed the faunal remains from Yengo 1. Seeds from UDM and Yengo 1 were identified by Nena Panich of the Seeds Laboratory, NSW Agriculture Department.

Conventional radiocarbon dates were provided by the ANU Quaternary Research Centre. Some AMS dates were provided by the Arizona University AMS Facility, others (UDM) were
provided by the new facility at ANSTO, Lucas Heights. An Australian Museum Grant-in-Aid paid for two of the UDM shelter AMS dates. John Head (ANU Quaternary Research Centre) provided advice in all matters charcoal.

Ross Cunningham and Christine Donnelly (Faculties’ Statistics Department ANU) provided statistical guidance. The advice of Richard Wright in this regard was (as usual) invaluable. Figures 1.1, 2.1, and 3.1 were drawn by Win Mumford; Figures 6.15, 6.16, 7.6 and 7.7 were drawn by Joan Goodrum. All other illustrations and photographs were created by the author.

My years in residence in Canberra were a stimulating time. Discussions over cappuccinos, beers or the Wash-and-Sort Lab sink with Kim Akerman, Debbie Bird-Rose, Sally Brockwell, Denis Byrne, Sarah Colley, Annie Clarke, Barry Cundy, Sarah Forbes, Darrell Lewis, Ingereth Macfarlane, Kelvin Officer, Colin Pardoe, Somsuda Rutnin, Paul Taçon and Vivienne Wood enriched the intellectual exercise and enlivened the social sphere.

Various friends and colleagues generously read and commented on parts of the original thesis: Val Attenbrow, Helen Brayshaw, Peter Douglas, Ian Lilley, Beth White and Annie Ross. Thank you also to Peter Veth for commenting on parts of this monograph, for reactivating and encouraging my participation in rock art research and for always being stimulating! Gros Bisexes!

The original thesis was originally dedicated to my family (by descent and marriage) - Neil, Oliver, Jesse, Judy, Laurie, Simon and Katie. The conversion of this thesis into a monograph has again required the encouragement, support and co-operation of my (now transformed) residence group. This version is dedicated to Peter, Oliver, Jesse and Zoë – with additional thanks to Sue O’Connor and Andrée Rosenfeld for making me do it!!

Jo McDonald
Canberra

A note on the title and dates:

‘Information superhighway’ is a now-obsolete term that was used to describe the future of what existed up until the mid-1990s as ‘the Internet’ (//www.Wikipedia.org/). ‘Dreamtime Internet’ doesn’t have quite the same implication as I had originally intended – so I have retained this now out-dated phraseology in the title of this work.

All the radiocarbon dates returned during this research were uncalibrated. Although more recent research in the region, including that undertaken under the auspices of consulting archaeology, has been calibrated, I have not undertaken a recalibration exercise (McCormac et al. 2004). This is justified by the fact that Attenbrow’s (2004) publication of Mangrove Creek was not calibrated and many dating aspects discussed here relate to her data.