

Acknowledgements and Preface

‘No (wo)man is an island’.

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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.

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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.

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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' (<http://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.