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LAKE VICTORIA BURIAL REPORT STAGE (2)

BURIALS TO BE PROTECTED 2000-2001

WARNING...

This Report Has Pictures Of Aboriginal Remains That May Offend Some People.

WARNING !

THIS REPORT CONTAINS PHOTOGRAPHS

OF ABORIGINAL SKULLS AND SKELETONS

Aboriginal people who do not like to see photographs of the skulls and skeletons of their ancestors should know that some are shown in this report.

Unfortunately, this report is mainly about Aboriginal burials. Because of the seriousness of the loss burial sites, it is necessary to use pictures to show what is happening.

RONALD JOHNSON

Mrs. Kelly - 12-4.2001

CHRISTINE KELLY

Esther Mitchell

ARTHUR LAWSON

CORAL LAWSON

R J Lawson

RAY LAWSON

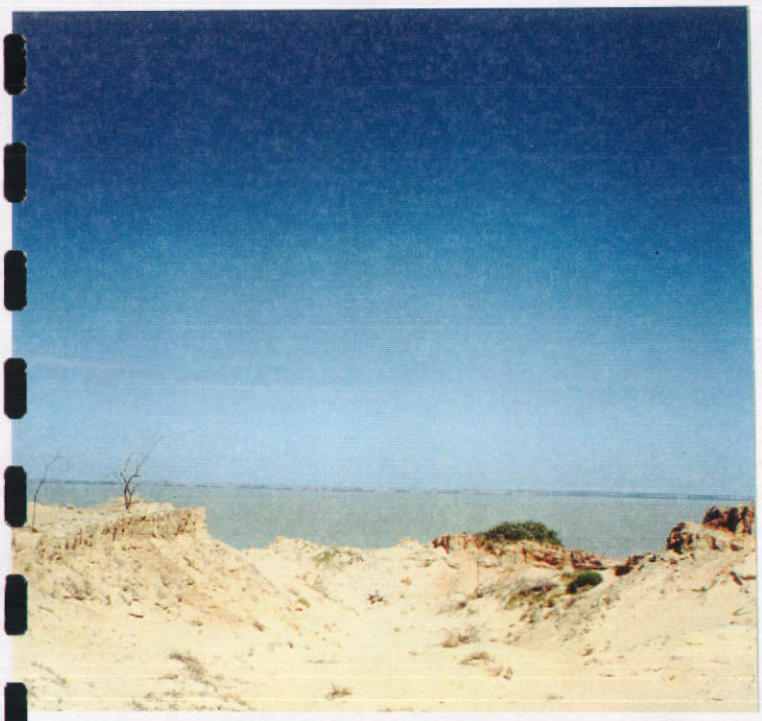
Rod Johnson

Rose Coombes

ABORIGINAL
LAND COUNCIL
OF S. AUSTRALIA

This sandy dune above the foreshore of Lake Victoria shows vegetation loss that has completely been scoured out.
With a lot of dunes the season can change from times of extreme to erosion that cuts away the environment causing burials to be exposed and shell middens that are lost to these large areas.
When water mitigation was started at Lake Victoria the conditions changed dramatically with the over high and low water causing wind to gather more erosion power to scour out and remove the foreshore and the outer dunes.
Where animals cause damage we are able to determine where these areas occur by the gullies are where they come to water over time then water runs down these after rain and causes these to get to be big wash-outs running towards the lake.

In this picture the area can be seen to have a lot of sand exposed that has revealed a lot of material.
The shell that we see here has a lot of human remains within this and will need to be recovered for reburial.
Those mounds of sand that we see are possibly where the original dunes are vegetated and still trying to survive.
These areas could be planted up with native grasses and shrubs and trees that will grow under these harsh conditions. I believe that kerosene grass will grow with goose-foot and other ground covers. But the funding and climate are crucial in the planting of these areas.



In these blow-outs a lot of sand is lost by erosion and lots of vegetation loss then when this gets to a lower layer this is scalded out where a burial is exposed. The bone that has been exposed is then recorded picked up for a pit to be dug to place the fragments in a hole.

As you may be aware that some areas are to hard for digging but the problem is resolved by digging for a softer soil close by at a meter deep. As you can see in this picture the bone is collected up and placed in the hole then this is re-buried.

This burial has a lot of red ochre in the pit and the bones are bundled up for burial that may have taken place many thousands of years ago. The bone has red ochre painted on it and where the skull is indicates a more darker red ochre. Another interesting discovery is that the layer of where the burial is in a megafauna area.

Because of the nature of this burial the sandbags had to be placed over the prepared site and then packed tightly. The bags are made of the material geo-fabric that can let water and sand in to allow seeds to be trapped to promote future growth as the area builds up over time.

Where a burial is not to badly eroded this can be protected another way, the rib area exposed show that a full person is buried here.
The head is pointed down because the blow-out area has lost a lot of burial sand that has blown out over the years.

The next step is to protect this site with sandbags and place these over the prepared burial area. Edward King and Peter Lawson are filling the bags with sand so they can fold them onto the site to be protected.

A good example of a blow-out or shifting dunes can be seen here and some can stretch for kilometres. In the background a shell midden is exposed where the scattered remains of a burial can be found.

The area has a lot of scatter bone and will need to be picked up we have a area that will require Peter and Edward to carefully pick up on their hands and knees as the bone material is small.

I really don't have any reason to climb up on this area but we did and found a surprise on the top in a spot that was washing down.
The blow-out has this huge pedestal of compressed sand and clay that has a low end that is badly falling away towards the lake. In a small wash-away on the top about the middle we found a burial.

We had to be able to protect this by getting sandbags to the top without disturbance to the face -wall as this appeared very steep. Here is Peter and Edward filling sandbags up whilst Alf is inspecting the burial.

With most blow-outs there is only the hollow left and most material left but when you look from the top down you can see the incredible back country.

At the base and surrounding dunes you are able to see the huge area of these blow-outs.

If you can bring yourself to the age where the landscape was all level these areas would be in a perfect form showing no blow-outs but as water rises and falls the land is badly eroded.

The bags had to be roped up by hand to the top and the site was then filled with sand to prevent further problems of erosion. In this picture you are able to understand the difficulty in getting the bags to the top safely.

The height of this area is a good 10 to 15 meters and very fragile and where the bags were pulled up was the only safe area to do this well, the site used about 25 bags and they were matted into each-other so to help slow or stop erosion.

Aboriginal Heritage Division
Annual Report
2000/2001

Programme: Aboriginal Heritage

Project Name: LAKE VICTORIA (STAGE 2)
Project Description/Objective: Protect and maintain burials and employ local people.

Location/Reserve: LAKE VICTORIA
LGA: Wentworth
Electorate: Lower Darling Far Western

Salary Funding "A"	Recurrent "B"	Funding Capital	External	Total
$10,732.80	$	$		$20,094

Name	Participants Contribution	Amount	
Peter Lawson Edward King		Total: Wages	$10,732.80
Elders	Ray Lawson Alf Kelly		$400.

Achievements

The on going protection to protect burials is still an important issue that can't be Overlooked as this job has its rewards seeing these sites protected in someway. This type of work will never be completed because burials are always being eroded and this makes work difficult as the seasons change and expose more and more new burial each time. This work was funded by the Western Directorate with many THANKS and hope that this will continue into the future.

Aboriginal Heritage Division
Aboriginal Heritage Project Proposal
2000/2001

Project Name: Lake Victoria Outer Lake – Stage two Burial Protection Works

Location/District: Lower Darling Area- Far West Region.

Project Manager: Randelle Blair

Telephone: 03 5021 8921 **FAX:** 03 5022 2037

1. Background:

Lake Victoria became known as a nodal point for intense Aboriginal occupation in 1994. Since that time extensive efforts have been put towards protection of burials around the lakeshore up to the high water level of 27 mts. Burials in the lunettes and sand dune systems beyond this point were ignored until 1999 when NPWS commenced protective works on exposed burials in these areas on adjoining station properties. Over a three month period some 250 additional burials were protected.

It was evident that many other burials remain unprotected and this funding is sought so that this protection work can continue, hence the stage two label for this project. The work is to concentrate on Talgarry, Dunedin Park, Noola and Nulla Stations. The actual extent and number of burials remains unknown, so depending upon numbers, it may not be possible to cover all properties.

2. Project Objective (What is the expected outcome from completing the project?):

The ultimate objective is to provide permanent insitu protection to the exposed burials in these areas so that they are not further degraded by natural erosion and trampling from introduced stock.

3. Project Scope (What works will be required?):

Protection of the burials by construction of sand filled geo textile bag mounds over the burials. These form highly durable non-erodable protective covers for the burials. The geo-textile has the added advantage of acting as an effective seed trap which facilitates regeneration of vegetation after rains which in turn acts as an ongoing sediment trap thus eventually providing natural cover for the burials.

4. Methodology (What specific tasks will be performed, by whom?):

This work will be undertaken by two Aboriginal community members under the direct supervision of the Aboriginal Sites Officer: Mr Randelle Blair. The work involves locating the exposed burials and manually filling and building the sand bag mounds.

5. Reporting (How often will reports be prepared and in what format? Note; financial reports will be required within 5 days of each month.):

A final report will be prepared at the completion of the project, financial reporting of expenditure will be supplied to the AHO in accordance with the timelines required for her overall financial reporting.

6. Timeframe (When will the project be commenced and what milestones are available?):

The project is planned to commence in early January 2001 and be completed eight weeks later.

Budget:

a) CHD Contribution

• Wages (includes 2 inspections by elders)	$11,132
• Consultancy	Nil
• Travel Costs	$5300
• Admin (printing, stationary, etc)	$3617
• Materials and Equipment	$1878
• Other - please specify	Nil
Total:	**$20,094**

b) District Contribution (include in kind contribution)

NB: Includes archaeologist, ASO and Project Manager.

• Salaries and Wages	$5500
• Consultancy	Nil
• Travel Costs	Nil
• Admin (printing, stationary, etc)	$400

- Materials and Equipment Nil

- Other - please specify

Total District Contribution: $5900

8. Performance Indicators (how will you know the projects objectives have been met?):

Reduction in the number of unprotected burials

9. Community Consultation (Who, how and when will community consultation occur):

This project is exactly the same as was undertaken last year (1999) has received the endorsement of the Dareton Local Aboriginal Land Council and the Barkindji Elders Committee. The elders have requested that they be kept up to date with proceedings and two site visits have been built into the costings for the project.

10. Project Endorsement:

11 8 2000
R Blair

Project Manager

Regional Manager (where appropriate)

Manager Ops/Manager CHU

Manager, CHD

* All project proposals to be forwarded to the Manager Operations, Aboriginal Heritage Division.

Lake Victoria Stage 2: Off Lake- Project Officer: R Blair. RG-6338-100030

Line Item	Number	Unit Amt	Budget Cost	Actual Costs	Balance
Materials					
Geotextile Bags	600	$ 5.50	$3,300.00		$3,300.00
Shovels	2	$ 35.00	$70.00		$70.00
Water Cooler (Large)	3	$ 15.00	$45.00		$45.00
Sunscreen Box	1	$ 25.00	$25.00		$25.00
Hats	3	$ 15.00	$45.00		$45.00
Sunglasses	6	$ 25.00	$150.00		$150.00
Gloves (prs)	6	$ 4.50	$27.00		$27.00
			$0.00		$0.00
			$0.00		$0.00
			$0.00		$0.00
			$0.00		$0.00
			$0.00		$0.00
					$0.00
Hire Charges (weekly costs)					$0.00
			$0.00		$0.00
			$0.00		$0.00
			$0.00		$0.00
			$0.00		$0.00
			$0.00		$0.00
					$0.00
Casual Labour					$0.00
Elders Visit 2 visits x 2 people	4	$ 100.00	$400.00		$400.00
Aboriginal Labour 2 x 80	80	$ 134.16	$10,732.80		$10,732.80
Travel					$0.00
Travel Allowance		$ 122.40	$0.00		$0.00
Fuel and vehicle Costs	10600	$ 0.50	$5,300.00		$5,300.00
			$0.00		
			Running Total	$0.00	$20,094.80
			$20,094.80	Balance	$20,000.00