Provisional Title:

The Cultural landscape of West Terrace cemetery Adelaide: the archaeology of colonial attitudes to death and burial.

Main Question:

What does the location, layout and graves of the West Terrace cemetery reveal about the colonial community that created and used the site? To what extent did the cemeteries plan follow or differ from contemporary British practices and why?

Secondary Question:

What are the implications for cultural heritage management of the cemetery?

The archaeological survey will focus on the surviving colonial sections of the cemetery (1837 to 1900). To answer the main question the following subsidiary questions will be posed,

-How was the cemetery site chosen and what considerations affected this choice?
-What factors influenced its plan?
-How was it intended for the cemetery to be accessed and approached? Did this change over the period? Did this vary for funeral rites and visiting rites?
-How has the cemetery been segmented?

- Socially? (Were sections reserved according to social and economic status? Where are the rich and powerful buried? What happened to the poor? What does this say about colonial social structure?)
- Ideologically? (Where are different religious denominations located? What does this say about the respective social hierarchies of the colonies religions? How does this factor link to social status and perception?)

- Culturally? (Are culturally distinct sections observable ie: Jewish burials? Were any Chinese buried there? Are there any observable cultural changes in the cemetery’s composition during the colonial period?)

- How are the graves and headstones orientated and how would the visitor have perceived them?

- To what extent did the living visit the dead and how culturally regimented was this practice?

- What is this spatial layout seeking to communicate about attitudes to death and burial?

- What did the cemetery as a space mean to a colonial society?

- Did the sites boundaries change during the colonial period? What influenced this? (Today West Terrace runs over the top of a section of the graveyard including family crypts at what is the modern main entrance)

To answer these questions it is proposed to undertake

(A) A literature survey to assess

- The nature and type of archaeological and historical research already undertaken in Australian cemeteries (to clarify the degree to which my research will comprise an original component or may build onto or critique work already undertaken). I have already begun this as part of formulating this proposal (see attached bibliography).
• British cemetery design and layout at the time of West Terrace's foundation (1837) and attitudes to death and burial during the colonial period in South Australia.

• Readings concerned with the preservation of cemeteries as heritage sites.

(B) Primary historical research including identification (if possible) of original site layout plans, documentation and photos. Consideration of initial adherence to, or variation from such plans and why?

(C) A field survey of the site involving field walking and recording of the colonial sections (and any incursions from later periods) to compare the layout, position and social/religious segmentation of sections with any historical plans identified and to consider the orientation of the graves.

(D) A sample strategy to identify information about who was buried where in the cemetery, and what factors influenced this, involving the recording of grave inscriptions, designs and symbols, for social, religious and cultural identification and to analyse what they were seeking to communicate to the living about the deceased from a cultural landscape perspective (ie: location and orientation).

The final part of the thesis would consider the implications from the archaeological findings for cultural heritage management of the cemetery today. Population and financial pressures are seeing the re-use of graves and the destruction of headstones (Lloyd 2003:43). Archaeological method is ideally suited to highlight the significance of cemeteries as standing structure heritage
sites and to contribute to the debate about reconciling future use with the preservation of a sites cultural significance. I will be asking,

-What is the integrity of the sites fabric?

-Should the site be fully protected and future use or re-use strictly controlled or even prevented?

-How has the colonial archaeology been presented to date?

-How might it be accessible to the public in the future?

**Contribution to Archaeology:**

“Cemeteries have long interested local historians, genealogists and those concerned with heritage conservation. There seem to have been few attempts in Australia, however, to subject them to archaeological analysis, as has been done in some cases overseas (Connah 1993:150).”

My initial literature search suggests that while archaeological interest in cemeteries has increased (See attached bibliography), to date the main focus has been primarily on headstones and the information they can display. For example Peter Marin looked at headstone inscriptions to identify trends in the type and amount of information provided and why? (Marin 1998:i). My intent is to view the cemetery as a complete archaeological site and to examine the construction of its cultural landscape as a spatial text. It is my hope that this approach will provide additional insights into colonial attitudes to death and burial, develop a transferable methodology for other cemetery sites and contribute to current debate about cultural heritage management of cemeteries.
References


Lloyd, T. 2003. ‘Disregarding a tradition as old as the pyramids’ The Advertiser 29/03/03 p.43


Identified Preliminary Bibliography (These texts would form part of the proposed literature review)


**Proposed program of study**

I am applying to be admitted into the Honours program in the Department of Archaeology, Flinders University, as a **part-time student** commencing in 2005, semester 1.

I completed my studies in the Bachelor of Archaeology in 2004, including the topics ARCH 3301 and ARCH 3302 (result pending at the time of writing). Part of my degree involved cross-institutional study at Adelaide University and I have attached a print out of my un-official academic transcript for your convenience (note the result for CLAS 3014 is pending). I will be happy to provide an official transcript once this result is available. I have also attached evidence of an award won for the standard of my studies at Adelaide University.

If accepted I would seek to undertake Honours coursework in 2005 as follows

- ARCH7000C (PT 1) & ARCH7000D (Pt 2)

Including HUMN 7000 (6 units), ARCH 7003 (6 units) and an additional topic (6 units) (to be decided).

In 2006 I would undertake ARCH7004A (Pt 1) and ARCH7004B (Pt 2) to complete my thesis ARCH7004 (18 units). Please note that I will be overseas in the middle of 2006 (longstanding commitment) for a yet to be specified time, however I would ensure this does not impact on the progress and completion of the thesis through prior negotiation and planning with my prospective supervisor.