ARCH8403 Directed Study in Cultural Heritage Management

Oaklands Estate: A History and Assessment of Archaeological Potential

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This report has been produced as a part of the assessment for ARCH8403 Directed Study in Cultural Heritage Management, Graduate topic in the Department of Archaeology, Flinders University, South Australia.
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Executive Summary

The following report details a study undertaken into the history and archaeological potential of the site of the former Oaklands Estate at Marion in South Australia; the study was undertaken as part of a Directed Study in Cultural Heritage Management at Flinders University, SA.

Oaklands Estate was home to a number of Adelaide’s early influential families including: the Kearne family, the Crozier family, the Taite family, and the Pethick family. Each of these owners managed the substantial property in different ways, at various time periods the estate has been used for: the growing of fruit and raising of livestock, the production of wine and wine grapes, and as a stud farm for racing Thoroughbreds.

The study aims to document the history of the estate, its people, and to assess any archaeological potential that the estate may yield. The research component of this study was broken down into three stages: an archival research stage, correspondence and meetings with local historian David
Jarman, and two field trips to the site aimed at collecting some basic GIS Data.

This report puts forward and assessment of which areas of the site are most likely to yield well preserved archaeological deposits, and provides recommendations regarding what future work would be required to definitively locate these deposits.
Introduction

This project was conducted as part of a Directed Study in Cultural Heritage Management at Flinders University and centred on the site of the former Oaklands Estate; one of the original great homesteads of Adelaide it stood in the Marion area from 1844 until the late 1960s. A Kaurna Cultural Heritage Management Plan was conducted for the site in 2011; this report however, will focus on the historical archaeological potential of the site. The aims of the project were as follows:

To collect and present a history of the estate at Oaklands with particular reference to the homestead and any other physical features that could point to archaeological remains.

To collect and present a history of the people who lived at, or were associated with, Oaklands Estate.

To research the original extent of the estate, and to locate areas of archaeological potential within the reserve and assess these areas on the basis of their ability to yield deposits and useful information; and to present this data in map format.

This project was conducted in conjunction with Marion City Council and with David Jarman and the Marion Historical Society.
Methods

Archival Research

In order to gather information about the estate I made a trip into State Records, and to the State Library. At the State Records building a computerised search on the estate was performed and this returned records of a compulsory acquisition order that was issued by the State Government in order to obtain land to build the Warradale Army Barracks (The Mail 1940:4).

At the State Library a second computer search was performed using the following search parameters: “Oaklands Estate”, “Oaklands”, and “Oaklands Reserve”. This search returned a number of historical photographs as well as a magazine article relating to the estate.

I also utilised the National Library of Australia’s Trove online newspaper collection to conduct research into the Estate, this proved to be an incredibly useful source and provided a large number of articles about both the estate and its owners. As this project focussed on the history of the Estate and its inhabitants I conducted searches of both South Australian and interstate/national newspapers using the following search
formats: “Oaklands Estate”, “Oaklands Homestead”, “Oaklands House”, “Samuel Kearne”, “John Crozier”, “Thomas Currie Taite”, and “William Pethick”. From the results that were returned from the above search parameters I also found some references to the Army base adjoining the Estate and the proposition that it be used as the site for a hospital in the South. This caused me to widen my search to also include: “Warradale Army Barracks”, “Oaklands Hospital”, and “South Western District Hospital”.

Site Visit One

The initial visit to the site was conducted in mid-June and included myself, Anita McDonald, and David Jarman a local historian specialising in researching the history of Oakland’s Estate. David showed myself and Anita around the reserve and pointed out areas that he thought may have potential for archaeological deposits, he accompanied this with a number of historical photographs from which he identified existing landmarks, and some floor plans of the estate that he had been constructing as part of an ongoing oral history collection. At the conclusion of this site visit David provided both myself and Anita with computer discs containing copies of his research into the estate so far.
Meeting with David Jarman (local historian)

I was introduced to David through Anita McDonald of the Marion City Council; he is a local historian who has been conducting research into the history of Oaklands Estate and its occupants for some time. This research has included a number of interviews with relatives of the later occupants and people who can recall visiting the homestead in their lifetimes. I was lucky enough to schedule a meeting with David in which he allowed me to look over the research he has conducted on the site.

Site Visit Two

The second site visit was conducted in early November and was conducted by myself and a fellow graduate student Vanessa Orange. The purpose of this trip was to map the contemporary layout of the Oaklands Reserve and to obtain GPS co-ordinates for major landmarks that could be used in conjunction with historical photographs to estimate the approximate location of the buildings of the original estate. We arrived at the site early and constructed a rough mud-map of the site (Appendix One) on which we identified trees and other landmarks that we felt were likely to be identifiable in
photographs. These landmarks were numbered 1-14 (see table one) and we then set about obtaining GPS co-ordinates using Garmin E-trek units, we used two separate units to ensure accuracy was maintained for each point. These points were then recorded on the map, and later a more detailed map of the area was drawn up by myself.

Table One: GPS co-ordinates of Major Landmarks collected at Oaklands Reserve.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point Number</th>
<th>Easting</th>
<th>Northing</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0276239</td>
<td>6124251</td>
<td>Oak tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0276257</td>
<td>6124250</td>
<td>Oak tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0276259</td>
<td>6124240</td>
<td>Oak tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0276239</td>
<td>6124223</td>
<td>Vineyard North Corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0276237</td>
<td>6124180</td>
<td>Vineyard South Corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0276238</td>
<td>6124291</td>
<td>Palm tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0276200</td>
<td>6124300</td>
<td>Magnolia tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0276169</td>
<td>6124273</td>
<td>Peppercorn tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0276152</td>
<td>6124289</td>
<td>Cement slab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0276146</td>
<td>6124299</td>
<td>Palm tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0276156</td>
<td>6124311</td>
<td>North West Corner of Car park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0276159</td>
<td>6124234</td>
<td>South West Corner of Car park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>0276273</td>
<td>6124278</td>
<td>South East Corner of Car park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>0276273</td>
<td>6124273</td>
<td>North East Corner of Car park</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Historical Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historical Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Historical Figure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Kearne purchases Oaklands Estate</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>?</td>
<td>The Kearne family arrive from England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of the estate is completed</td>
<td>1844</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 1848</td>
<td>Samuel Kearne is severely injured in a horse riding accident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An earthquake hits the Marion area, Kearne reports to have felt the quake but</td>
<td>June 1856</td>
<td>Samuel Kearne dies, the Estate is left to his sons John and Samuel Jnr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>does not report damage to the property</td>
<td>July 1857</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oaklands Estate is sold to the Hon. John Crozier</td>
<td>1866</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April 1887</td>
<td>The Hon. John Crozier dies, the Estate is left to his son William</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oaklands Estate is sold to Thomas Currie Tait</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 March 1914</td>
<td>Tom Derrick is born at Oaklands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brighton train-line construction goes ahead cutting through the centre of the</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estate</td>
<td>October 1914</td>
<td>Thomas Tait puts Oaklands up for sale as an extensive subdivision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tait leases a parcel of land to the AIF for use as a camp ground</td>
<td>November 1914</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oaklands Estate is subdivided and sold in separate lots</td>
<td>Throughout late 1914</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The vineyards are sold to Hamiltons</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>Citizens of Marion district are concerned about sale of estate and petition the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>government to purchase the land for a reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The homestead is leased to William Pethick</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A fire is started in one of</td>
<td>July 1923</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Estate’s sheds, theft if suspected</td>
<td>September 1924</td>
<td>Thomas Tait dies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archibald Grey Thornton is arrested on suspicion of robbery</td>
<td>July 1923</td>
<td>he admits to the theft but denies starting the fire at the Estate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory re-purchase agreement is enacted by the State to acquire land for Warradale Army Barracks</td>
<td>June 1940</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leased ends and land is purchased by the Crown</td>
<td>October 1949</td>
<td>Tom Derrick is killed in combat during WWII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homestead and associated land are proposed as the new site for the South Western District Public Hospital</td>
<td>October 1949</td>
<td>Council representatives approve site as the location for the hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital site goes ahead at Flinders instead, land is proposed as parklands</td>
<td>1960s-1970s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homestead is demolished</td>
<td>Late 1960s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warradale Army Barracks is closed down/abandoned</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A History of Oaklands Estate

Oaklands Estate was established by Samuel Kearne in the Oaklands Park area of South Australia; construction of the homestead was completed in 1844. The property has had a number of owners and a number of uses throughout its operation as a working property.

Its initial owners, the Kearne’s, used the property as a mixed farm producing wine grapes and fruit as well as raising horses and other livestock. They continued this tradition until the sale of the estate in 1866.

The Crozier family continued to keep horses on the property but their time at the estate from 1866 to 1907 was dominated by a marked increase in winemaking and production; in an 1895 newspaper advertisement Crozier calls for interested workers to assist with the grape harvest and winemaking (The South Australian Advertiser 1895:7).

Thomas Taite and family, who lived on the property for a relatively short time from 1907 to the early 1920s, established the Oaklands Estate Racehorse Stud Farm which focusses on the breeding and racing of Thoroughbred racehorses (The South Australian Register 1924:13).
Finally the Pethick family were the last owners to use the land for farming purposes, while they leased the farm it was once again used as a mixed farm producing fruit, grapes, and nuts as well as raising animals.

The construction of the Brighton train-line in 1914 resulted in the first major subdivision of the property (The South Australian Register 1950:1; 1897:3); the then owner Taite sold off a large portion of the land that was cut off from the rest of the property by the new line. Approximately 150 acres of the property were sold off for housing with a large portion of this land being purchased by the Crown for the construction of a number of Housing Trust properties (The South Australian Advertiser 1950:12).

At this time Taite also leased a parcel of land along Oaklands Road to the Army for use as a soldier’s camp and training ground (The South Australian Register 1914:8). This section of the property continued to be used for military purposes and was eventually acquired by the Crown under a compulsory purchase order in 1940 and became the site of the now closed Warradale Army Barracks.

In the early 1920s Taite announced that the remainder of the property was to be subdivided further and offered for sale or lease. The property was offered in four lots comprising: the
vineyards, the outbuildings and cellars, the homestead, and
two workers cottages. Following this division the vineyards were
taken over by Hamilton Wines, and the homestead was leased
to the Pethick Family.

In October of 1949 all leasehold agreements on the property
came to an end and the remainder of the estate was
purchased by the Crown as the intended site for the future
South Western District Public Hospital (The South Australian
Advertiser 1949: 12; 1950:14; 1953:3; 1954:17). Talks about the
construction of this hospital continued for the next two
decades and while the site was inspected and approved a
number of times the hospital eventually went ahead as the
Flinders Medical Centre at Bedford Park, resulting in the
eventual demolition of Oaklands House in 1967 to make way
for a public reserve.

A number of small disasters occurred at the estate, the
property withstood two minor earthquakes, one in 1856 and
another in the 1920s, neither of which did any damage to the
homestead (The South Australian Register 1856:2). Its proximity
to the Sturt River meant that the property was subject to
regional flooding; however the foundations of the house
meant that while the stables flooded frequently the water level
never reached the homestead (Jarman 2011). Finally in 1923 a
fire was started at the property that destroyed a number of storage sheds, it is thought that this fire was associated with a theft that occurred at the same time and one Archibald Grey Thornton was arrested for both crimes though he insisted that he had nothing to do with the fire (The South Australian Advertiser 1923:13; The South Australian Register 1923:11).

**The People of Oaklands**

*Samuel Kearne and Family*

Samuel Kearne and his family were the original owners (and builders) of Oaklands Estate having purchased the land from their home in England and the then making the voyage to Australia to build their new property. There has been some contention with regards to the arrival of the Kearne family, some accounts detail that they sailed to Australia on a ship owned by them, while others would indicate that they actually purchased the ship after their arrival in Australia.

The popular story from here is that they intended to sail the ship up the Sturt River loaded with building materials and labour only to discover that the river was in fact a seasonal creek (Jarman 2011). Alternate transport was arranged and the homestead at Oaklands was constructed by 1844.
The Kearne family consisted of Samuel Kearne, his wife, and their two sons. Both of Samuel's sons, John Kearne and Samuel Kearne Jnr, married daughters of one Michael Featherstone. Following Samuel Senior’s death in July of 1857 his two sons began to think about leaving ‘The Colony’ to return to England; as early as June of the next year they had begun the process of selling of their assets in Australia to prepare to return home. A newspaper advertisement was published on a monthly basis until December of 1858 advertising a two day auction for the sale of stock and materials of Oaklands Estate. This sale took place on the 1st and 2nd of December and included the sale of some of the property’s prime horse stock as well as farming equipment and furniture (The South Australian Register 1857:2; 1857:3; The South Australian Weekly Chronicle 1858:8).

John Crozier and Family

The Hon. John Crozier purchased the estate at Oaklands from the Kearne family in 1866 when he first made the move from New South Wales to South Australia (The South Australian Advertiser 1887:6; 1887: 7). Crozier actually arrived in Australia as a ‘colonist’ in 1838, a good 6 years before the Kearne family
established Oaklands Estate, but at this time he was engaged as a land manager at Rederdale near Parramatta (The South Australian Advertiser 1887:6; 1887:7).

He then went on to manage a number of other properties including Sandhill’s Station and the station property Kulnine which he owned in conjunction with a Mr George Rutherford (The South Australian Advertiser 1887:6; 1887:7). By this stage Crozier’s family had grown to include his wife, their 8 sons and 1 daughter. Upon his purchase of Oaklands he moved with his family to live at the estate and stayed there til his death in 1887.

In the year after the move to Oaklands John Crozier first ran for a seat on the legislative council, he stayed heavily involved with politics both at a state and local level until his health began to deteriorate (The South Australian Advertiser 1887:6; 1887:7).

In April of 1887 Crozier passed away after a drawn out battle with heart disease, the property at Oaklands was left to his son William Crozier, who subsequently sold the property in 1907.
**Thomas Currie Taite and Family**

Thomas Currie Taite purchased Oaklands from the Crozier family in 1907; however most of his lifetime was spent in Broken Hill where he built his name and his fortune (The South Australian Register 1924: 13). He arrived in Adelaide in 1894 with his wife whom he met in South Africa 7 years earlier. Taite walked from Adelaide to Silverton rather than pay for transport and later moved from Silverton to Broken Hill just as the town was starting to make a name for itself.

Whilst in Broken Hill he made a name for himself as the man who designed and built some of the first shops and hotels in the town (The South Australian Register 1924: 13). He also held interests in a number of mines both in Broken Hill and in Queensland, and also had an active role in both the Masonic and Druid societies of Broken Hill (The South Australian Register 1924: 13).

Late in Taite’s ownership of the property the Brighton train-line was approved and cut through the centre of the vast estate. This proved to be unpalatable to Taite and he subsequently put the acres of land now separated from the main block up for sale immediately. This comprised some 150 acres of land that was to be sold off for development; some of this land was acquired under a compulsory purchased agreement by the
crown while the rest was put up for private sale (The Mail 1914: 9; Barrier Miner 1914:1; The South Australian Register 1914:4).

Later the estate was remainder of the estate was subdivided and sold off once more; in the 1920s it was offered for sale or lease in four parts (The South Australian Register 1923:14). The first part being the 460 acres of land including the vineyard, olive trees, garden, and orangery; the second was the main residence and 5 associated acres of land; the third the wine cellars and associated buildings including the stable, coach house, and a smaller dwelling of 7 rooms; and the final parcel being two small workers cottages sufficient for workers families.

William Pethick and Family

William Pethick took up a lease of the Oaklands Homestead and its associated small acreage in 1926 with his wife Doris (Dossie) Pethick. The two resided on the property until 1949 when the lease was concluded and the land was once more purchased by the Crown.
Other Associated Figures

There are a few other figures of note that can be connected with the Oaklands Estate; one of particular interest is Tom Derrick. Derrick was born at Oaklands in 1914 to parents who were both in the employ of Thomas Currie Taite; he was in fact named after the then squire of Oaklands and reportedly spent his toddling years watching the soldiers train at the Oaklands Army Camp. His family moved away from the estate in 1916, and while Tom held a number of jobs he reportedly showed no interest in the Armed Services until the onset of WWII. At this time he was living in Berri with his wife and chose to enlist in the 2nd 46th Battalion in 1940. In 1945 he was reported as a casualty of war, killed in action defending his men, and died as a war hero (Army News Darwin 1945:4).
Assessment of Archaeological Potential

In order to make an assessment of the archaeological potential of each area of the site, it first needed to be established where the original extent of the estate stretched to.

Geoff Grainger made a trip to the Land Services Group and provided a list of the section numbers that comprised the original estate at Oaklands and their subsequent purchase dates:

Sections 116, 146 and 147 (bought December 1843) – 240 acres; Sections 144 and 145 (bought January 1846) – 160 acres; Part Section 110 (bought March 1854) – 26.75 acres; Three portions of Section 117 (bought April 1847, November 1849 and July 1855) – 2.125 acres. These land purchases come to a total of 428.875 acres (173.56 hectares).

The subdivision of the property into housing blocks can be seen in Figure One; this part of the estate is now covered by private housing and while some of these blocks have potential to yield archaeological deposits it is unlikely that they would be easily accessible for the purposes of an excavation and therefore are deemed to have low potential for the purposes of this report.
For the portion of the estate that lies within the bounds of the Sturt River Linear Park a map has been drafted to identify which areas are the most likely to yield potential archaeological deposits. Using historical photographs of the homestead and a map constructed by David Jarman from oral history accounts of the site, it is estimated that the homestead itself falls within the area of the Reserve.

The location of the homestead has been estimated and marked on the map in Appendix One using 6 landmarks identifiable both in historical photographs and on the map created by David Jarman. These landmarks include a number of distinctive historical trees including a peppercorn tree (see Figure Two), two palm trees (see Figures Three and Four), and a magnolia tree (see Figure Five). The other landmarks consisted of the current roadway into the reserve which follows the same path as the former driveway from Oaklands Road to the property, and a cement slab thought to be the floor of one of the out-building located to the rear of the homestead.

A large portion of the homestead is most likely located beneath the bitumen car-park at the reserve, although a portion of the house at the North Western corner appears to fall outside the bounds of the car-park. The homestead itself
presents some minor issue with regards to the presence of archaeological deposits.

The portion of the homestead that falls outside the bounds of the car-park has been reported as not having an associated basement area and therefore while the area is exposed and would make for easy access to conduct an excavation, there is less likelihood that there would be preserved deposits associated with this section of the homestead. The main homestead, however, was reported to have a large cellar beneath the house that the refuse from the demolition was back-filled into, which is presently covered over by the bitumen car-park.

Often car-parks are associated with well-preserved archaeological deposits, and given the reported back-filling of the basement it is likely that at the very least this area possess the potential to yield the original foundations of the homestead. The difficulty that will arise with this section of the site is that any excavation would require the removal of at least a portion of the car-park surface. A ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey, or similar, could yield further information about whether it would be worth conducting excavations of this area. It can be concluded however, that this section of the site yields the highest level of archaeological potential.
Mapping conducted at the reserve also revealed that the stable blocks and associated buildings are likely located within the boundaries of the reserve. An advertisement for the sale of the stables indicates that the wine cellars were located below the stables and therefore this area also presents a high potential for archaeological deposits. The issue with this aspect of the site is that the exact location of the stables is much harder to pin down than that of the homestead. The rough area of the out-buildings has been estimated on the map in Appendix One and a GPR survey could help to narrow down their exact location.

Finally the garden areas and orange orchards associated with the homestead have also been outlined on the map and these have been determined as possessing a medium level of archaeological potential. The orange orchards in particular are a good candidate for archaeological surveying, as while they may not possess a high concentration of archaeological deposits they are located directly below the old driving school off Oaklands Road. The area has been covered in cement which could act to preserve archaeological deposits, and this area is likely to be excavated as part of the wetlands redevelopment. If excavations are to occur in this area then an archaeological foot survey could be useful in locating any
artefacts or deposits that may be disturbed during the excavation.

Figure One: Section Map of Subdivision of Oaklands Estate circa 1914

Figure Two: Peppercorn Tree at Oaklands Reserve
Figure Three: Original Palm Trees at Oaklands estate

Figure Four: Balcony view of palm trees at Oaklands Estate
Conclusions

It is clear that Oaklands Estate has a rich history associated with a number of Adelaide’s early influential public figures. There is potential for this site to yield some good archaeological deposits and a number of areas that would be suitable for further consideration have been outlined above, however, if any archaeological work were to go ahead further assessment of the area would need to be conducted to better determine the presence of archaeological deposits.
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APPENDIX ONE

Mud-map of Oaklands Reserve with GPS Co-ordinates

09-11-2012
APPENDIX TWO

Layout of Oaklands Homestead and Estate courtesy of David Jarman
APPENDIX TWO

Layout of Oaklands Homestead and Estate courtesy of David Jarman

![Diagram of Oaklands Homestead and Estate]
APPENDIX THREE

Map of Oaklands Reserve showing areas of archaeological potential. 09-11-2012