

VALLEYS OF STONE

*The Archaeology and History  
of Adelaide's Hills Face*





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## *The Archaeology and History of Adelaide's Hills Face*

*Edited by*

**PAM SMITH, F. DONALD PATE**

*and* **ROBERT MARTIN**

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Kōpi Books

Belair, South Australia 2006

*This book is dedicated to those who strive  
to protect and maintain the environment  
and cultural heritage of Adelaide's Hills Face Zone.*

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Reproduced courtesy of the South Australian Tourism Commission.



## Preface

THIS VOLUME PRESENTS the outcomes of the Adelaide Hills Face Zone Cultural Heritage Project. Over three years between March 2002 and March 2005, research and archaeological field surveys were undertaken to identify and interpret the archaeological and historical evidence for nineteenth century colonisation on the western face of the Mount Lofty Ranges, South Australia. Once the field work was completed and the data had been interpreted, the delighted Chief Investigators concluded:

Adelaide's Hills Face Zone is not only a significant colonial landscape, but we believe it is one of the best preserved historic landscapes representing the era of eighteenth and nineteenth century European global expansion and colonization in the world.

We look forward to being challenged.<sup>1</sup>

The Chief Investigators also feel justified in claiming that the Hills Face Zone fulfils each of the Burra Charter's criteria for cultural significance (Indigenous and non-Indigenous). These criteria are 'aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations' (Marquis-Kyle and Walker 2004:11).

The aims of this volume are twofold. First, we present the outcomes of the Hills Face Zone Cultural Heritage Project. The implementation of the Hills Face Zone planning regulations under the 1962 Metropolitan Development Plan protected this region from urban development and intensive agriculture and horticulture for over forty years. As a consequence a rare model of nineteenth century European colonisation was also protected and now provides a window into South Australia's colonial past. Historical archaeologists, historians and geographers have collaborated to reconstruct past settlement patterns and changing land uses and to understand the impacts of colonisation on the unfamiliar environment. Each chapter reveals some of the complexity of these transformations which include the deterministic role of the environment and the need for the colonists to adapt their agricultural practices to a new setting, the economic imperatives of the time and the symbolic and social mores the colonists brought with them.

In addition, we aim to share our discoveries about Adelaide's Hills Face Zone with the people of

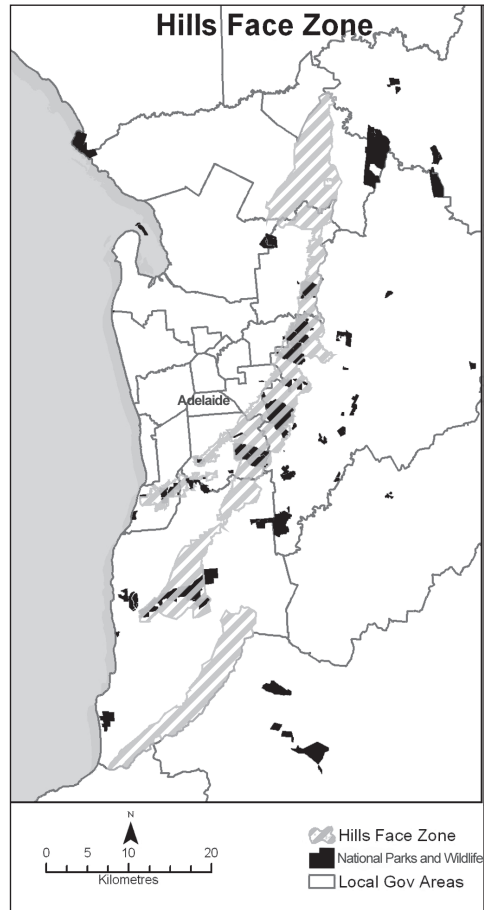


Figure 0.1  
**Map of the Hills Face Zone, Adelaide,  
showing parks and reserves.**

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South Australia and with those interested in landscape archaeology and the management of heritage landscapes. Despite planning reviews, government reports and often lively public debates in the local press, little has been written about the region. This volume and the associated website will redress that omission so that we can all celebrate the aesthetic value the region brings to the city of Adelaide and appreciate both its natural and cultural heritage values.

By cross-referencing each chapter with a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database the authors join a recent and growing trend of associating a website with their published material. Adelaide's Hills Face Heritage GIS Database forms a companion reference to this volume and the two are able to be cross referenced. Site locations, historic photographs and maps found on this GIS Database extend the information provided in this volume and include the many smaller historic sites that are not discussed in this volume.

The Hills Face Zone Cultural Heritage Project was undertaken by staff and students from the Departments of Archaeology and Cultural Studies and the School of Geography, Population and Environmental Management at Flinders University in collaboration with ten Industry Partners and with the further assistance of volunteers from the wider community. Thirty-eight field surveys were completed, over 900 colonial sites or cultural impacts were entered into the Hills Face Heritage GIS Database, three Honours theses were submitted and 84 undergraduate research projects were completed. In addition, 160 visits were made to private landowners to record historic cultural impacts on their property.

The Hills Face Zone is defined by the western face of the Mount Lofty Ranges and extends for approximately 90 kilometres from Sellicks Hill south of Adelaide to Gawler, north of Adelaide. The region is entirely within the Adelaide metropolitan area (defined in the Metropolitan Development Act 1993) and is shown in *Figure 0.1*.

Now, in 2006, the region exists within the broader planning framework of the Metropolitan Planning Strategy that identifies the Hills Face Zone as a major component of the Metropolitan Open Space System (MOSS).<sup>2</sup> The Hills Face Zone is the largest and most visible component of MOSS and maintains its aesthetic qualities through the application of strict development controls and the sweep of parks and public open space within the Zone.

Planning SA, through MOSS, and Flinders University provided a seed grant in 2001 and during that year a multidisciplinary team of five Chief Investigators formed a Steering Committee, the Industry Partners agreed to support the project and an Australian Research Council Linkage-Projects Grant application was successful. The grant provided funding for a Post Doctoral Fellowship over the next three years and the Industry Partnership funding provided for a part-time Research Assistant and project support. In addition, Flinders University School of Humanities provided three research grants for studies affiliated with the project.

The aims of the Hills Face Zone Cultural Heritage Project were to:

- Document Indigenous<sup>3</sup> and European cultural impacts on the landscape of the Adelaide Hills Face Zone

- Identify and document sites of cultural heritage significance
- Recommend selected sites as cultural tourism destinations

Analyses of cultural landscapes assist in deepening our understanding of human impacts on the environment and research into the cultural uses of landscapes provides insights into past human behaviour and how it shaped the landscape that we all live in today. Such analyses use a recently developed landscape paradigm employed in historical and Indigenous archaeology to identify the patterns connecting human behaviour with a particular place and time (Anschuetz *et al.* 2001:157). It is this approach that has been used in this study.

The landscape archaeology paradigm was derived from earlier systems-based approaches to human landscape use developed in relation to settlement pattern and human ecology studies (Clark 1952; Willey 1953, 1956; Steward 1955). Archaeologists quickly recognised the advantages of shifting their focus from the study of single sites to regional variation, but it was Binford's studies in particular, that established a landscape methodology in archaeology (Binford 1980, 1982). Willey's (Willey 1953) study of the Virú Valley, Peru was particularly relevant for the present study. Willey systematically examined approximately 350 square km and based his spatial interpretations on the analysis of aerial photographs and on a method for understanding social change over time. These earlier methods for the interpretation of spatial and diachronic changes across a defined landscape have been revolutionized over the past two decades and are now applied to a wide range of landscape situations (for example, Ashmore and Knapp 1999; Roberts 1996; Ucko and Layton 1999). In addition, archaeologists are experimenting with GIS technologies and the development of computer models to quantify social changes and to refine predictive modeling (Johnson and North 1997; Kvamme 1999; Gillings *et al.* 1999).

Archaeologists are primarily concerned with understanding the meanings underlying culturally determined phenomena and, whereas many earlier approaches to human landscape use emphasised the primacy of the natural environment, landscape archaeology focuses on the interactions between culture (i.e. learned behaviour, norms) and the environment. In the Hills Face Zone Cultural Heritage Project it was the cultural 'baggage' that the colonists to South Australia brought with them from Europe that determined how they initially viewed, interpreted, and used the new and unfamiliar landscape. This 'baggage' included industrial and domestic building technologies, social mores, agricultural and horticultural practices and culturally determined settlement patterns.

The approach developed by the project team was influenced by the settlement ecology method (defined by Anschuetz *et al.* 2001:177). This approach to the interpretation of the data acknowledges that cultural landscapes are shaped by people whilst acknowledging variables within the environment. The application of this method to the data collected allowed us to interpret the cultural uses of the natural resources essential for the economic development of the colony and to understand some human impacts on the environment.

Anschuetz *et al.* suggest three fundamental steps in order to identify structures in the landscape:

1. action spaces in which people focussed their economic, social and ideational interactions with their environments,

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2. search spaces in which people interact to fulfil particular needs, and
3. awareness spaces about which groups maintain a minimal level of knowledge.

The use of this method provided a framework for understanding the spatial patterns in the archaeological record across the nineteenth century colonial landscape. For example, the settlement patterns associated with each of the colonial industries, the central role of permanent water resources and how water was used and the impact of the new technologies introduced from Europe and England – some of which were able to be adapted to the new environment and others that damaged it.

The flow of information into the project and the project outputs are summarised in the flow chart in *Figure 0.2*.

The primary data sources were the many archaeological sites documented by the project teams during preliminary field surveys and two approaches were used to identify landscapes as high priority areas for full heritage surveys and in-depth research.

### **Parks and reserves (public land)**

Archaeological field survey methods were used to document the European cultural impacts in parks and public reserves (Renfrew and Bahn 2004:62-89). These areas were accorded the highest priority as they had been protected from farming and other ground disturbing activities for a minimum of forty years and up to 150 years. The aim of these preliminary surveys was to identify sites for further research and 38 preliminary archaeological field surveys were undertaken by community volunteers, students and members of the project team between 2002 and 2004. Transects were walked across defined areas with team members spaced approximately 10 m apart, depending on the steepness of the terrain and ground visibility. The locations of all cultural impacts were determined by GPS and recorded on Site Information Proforma. The reports of most of these surveys have been published in the five volume series *Historic Sites and Landscapes – Hills Face Zone Cultural Heritage Project Reports* (Smith, Piddock and Pate 2004, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d).

### **Privately owned land**

Seventy-five percent of the Hills Face Zone is privately owned. Letters were posted to approximately 2,500 land-owners inviting them to contact us to record colonial sites on their properties. This resulted in approximately 160 visits to private properties and contributed significantly to the overall project. The reports of surveys on private land were also entered into the GIS database – although access to the data is not available to the public in order to protect landowners' privacy.

As the project progressed Adelaide's Hills Face Heritage GIS Database became the nerve centre of the project. All site locations were entered into the database, together with summary information, historical details, photographs and short bibliographies. Interpretations using this data included reconstructions of historic landscapes, modelling of landscapes using slope and aspect analyses to predict the most favoured locations for house sites and agricultural terracing, and mapping spatial and temporal changes in land use by colour coding to indicate era. At the completion of the project this database held approximately 900 entries covering the first century of European colonisation

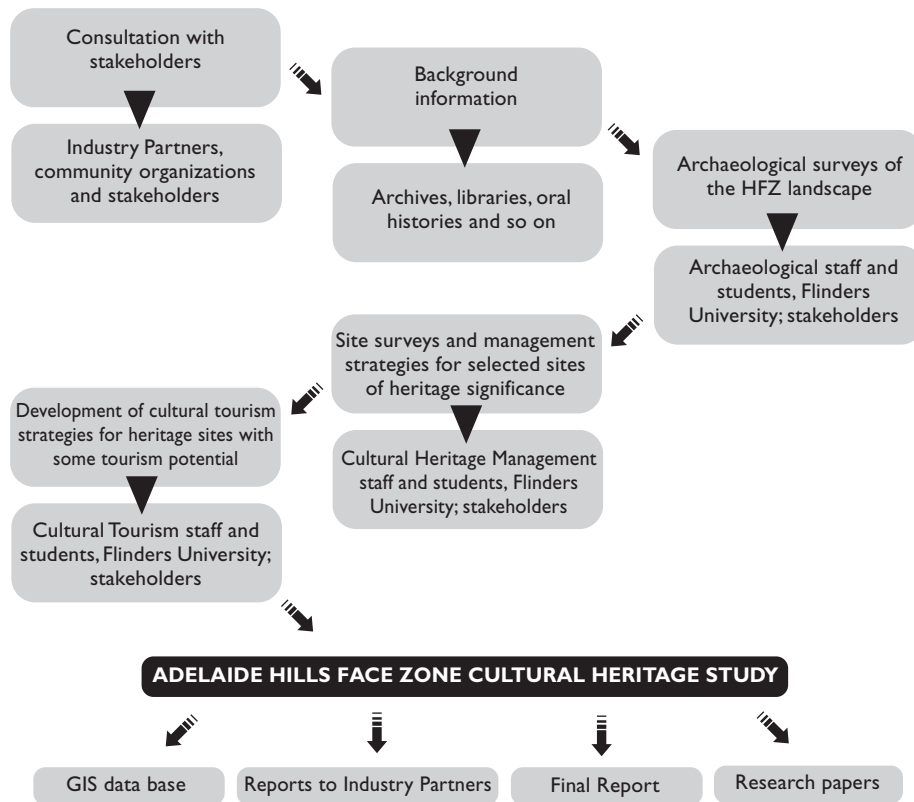


Figure 0.2 Flow of information into/from the Hills Face Zone Cultural Heritage Project.

from 1836 to 1936 – South Australia’s centenary and, conveniently, the date of the first aerial photographs.

All landscapes and sites accorded a high priority following the field surveys were investigated. Historical research and site recording and interpretation were undertaken by undergraduate Cultural Heritage Management and Cultural Tourism students, Archaeology and Cultural Tourism Honours students, members of the project team and by specialists and interested individuals from the wider community – many of whom contributed to this volume.

Research methods included interviews, archival research and the use of aerial and historic photographs. The works of colonial artists and historic photographs have been essential for the reconstruction of many colonial landscapes and we are grateful to the Art Gallery of South Australia for allowing us to access their collection of paintings and lithographs by colonial artists. From the commencement of the project a Hills Face Zone Photo Archive was compiled on an Access database. This database contains historic photographs of sites within the Hills Face Zone held by the Mitcham Heritage Research Centre, the Local History Collection of the Burnside Library and archival documents.

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Aerial photographs of the study area have been central to the analysis of spatial and temporal changes in the region and we have been fortunate in having access to a set of aerial photographs of the Hills Face Zone for each decade since 1936. In addition to assisting to locate historic sites that are no longer obvious, the aerial photographs have been used in conjunction with contemporary GIS data sets to understand ongoing environmental and cultural changes during the twentieth century.

In this volume historians and geographers have worked with historical archaeologists to interpret the archaeological data. This multidisciplinary approach has enabled us to provide insights into the past from several perspectives. Geographic Information Systems technologies have provided a powerful tool for the interpretation of spatial data representing the nineteenth century and the narratives of individuals with long-term family associations to the one area of land provide family stories of bravery, loss and endurance.

This volume is arranged in two sections. The chapters in Part One interpret information presented in the previously published five volumes of survey reports (Smith, Pidcock and Pate 2004; 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d) and bring together information relevant to the study area as a cultural landscape. Individual case studies are presented in Part Two. As described above, these interpretations reveal that the colonial transformations of this landscape, although complex, were generally determined by the colonists' use of European agricultural technologies and the necessity to adapt to the new environment, the changing economic imperatives of the nineteenth century and by the symbolic and social mores the colonists brought with them.

The abundant natural resources were essential for the growth of the new colony and several chapters of this volume illustrate the technologies used to manage the soil, water, stone and timber and their role in the local economy. The imported and adapted technologies for quarrying stone, an essential building material, are described through several case studies in the chapter *Quarries and quarrymen of the foothills*, by Christine Bender and Susan Pidcock. In a case study of the Delabole quarry, *From Cornwall to South Australia: The Delabole Quarry and Village*, Susan Pidcock compares a slate quarry south of Adelaide with a nineteenth century counterpart in Cornwall. This comparison reveals new historical information and the extent to which traditional Cornish technologies influenced economic development within the colony.

Water and fertile soil were also essential natural resources for the establishment of the colony of South Australia. In the chapter *Farming rocks*, Gwen Fenton and Don Fenton trace the history of Montacute from the time when it was a flourishing mining community and the site of Australia's first gold strike to a market gardening community steeped in local tradition. The chapter *The Mitcham Water Works 1879-1930*, by Doug Lane, Pam Smith, Maggy Ragless and Aidan Ash, recounts the rediscovery of the Mitcham Water Works which supplied the village of Mitcham with water between 1879 and 1930. The small reservoir, dam wall, wells and pipeline had lain buried and forgotten for over seventy years until survey teams succeeded in locating and documenting each element of the system during 2004. The chapters *Brownhill Creek and the Tilley family* by Andrew Tilley and *Dry-stone walls and water wheels: Managing water in colonial South Australia* by Pam Smith

exemplify the necessity for the colonists to adapt to the new Australian environment, or risk losing their investments. These chapters provide rare insights into colonial irrigation methods and water management, essential to both the horticulturalists and the market gardeners of the hills.

In case studies of three noted horticulturalists previously unpublished information highlights the fertility of the soil and abundance of water from the many natural springs during the nineteenth century. Robert Martin's chapter, *George Stevenson's Garden*, reveals a garden which made a significant and largely overlooked, contribution to the fledgling colony. The chapter *Two Nineteenth Century nurseries of the Adelaide Hills* profiles noted horticulturalists, Charles Giles and Charles Newman, both of whom also made significant contributions to the economic development of colonial South Australia. Susan Piddock has painstakingly reconstructed the ruins of the Newman Nursery complex to identify each structural element. She has also reconstructed the historic landscapes of both nurseries to reveal the process of adaptation and change over time. Giles' substantial property, Grove Hill, continues to be maintained by a direct descendant of Charles Giles whose collaboration with this project has provided an opportunity to document the extensive infrastructure of a nineteenth century horticultural enterprise.

The social mores the colonists brought with them from Great Britain and Europe are reflected in several chapters and case studies. In the chapter *Population expansion in early Adelaide reflected in gravestones and cemetery monuments, 1836-1865* by Donald Pate demonstrates another aspect of cultural continuity with the 'homeland' and the changing character of gravestones through time.

Roads and railways were the arteries of colonial South Australia and the archaeological evidence for two colonial transport corridors was documented by the Hills Face Zone Cultural Heritage Project survey teams in collaboration with specialists in transport history. *The Great Eastern Road* by Bill Stacy will surprise readers with its detailed descriptions of the long-forgotten byways that represent seven construction phases. The first phase was a dirt track opened in 1837 that wound over Mount Osmond to link the city with new settlements east of the ranges. The gradients proved to be too steep, however, and within a few years the track was rebuilt through the Glen Osmond, a route marked by the well preserved Toll Gate at the entrance to the gorge. Likewise, Janet Callen rediscovers the origins of the Adelaide-Melbourne railway in *Blood, sweat and toil: Building the Hills Railway*. The construction of this railway through and over the Adelaide Hills challenged nineteenth century engineers and this was one of the great railways built in Australia. Little known historic sites linked to the history of the railway are scattered along the railway route and provide interesting and entertaining insights into railway history and technologies.

Government owned properties in the hills face region include many of South Australia's most accessible parks and reserves and Glenthorne Farm.<sup>4</sup> Most have views over the Adelaide Plains and provide a variety of recreation and tourism opportunities within the Adelaide Metropolitan Area. The documentation of the many historic landscapes within the parks has extended our knowledge about historic land uses and located known historic sites within a social or economic landscape context. Pam Tambllyn, in the chapter *For public purposes: The Government Farm and Belair National*

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*Park, 1840-1920*, has reconstructed the history of the Belair National Park based on archival documents and photographs. Her research has provided new insights into the history of the park, one of the first national parks in Australia, and will form the basis of a proposed Heritage Trail. Likewise, Maggy Ragless's chapter *Shepherds Hill Recreation Park: Suburban bush merges in time and place*, provides new historical information based on the author's personal association with the park and her commitment to historical research. The people of South Australia have all benefited from the legacy of the Cleland family through their commitment to the area between the Southeastern Freeway and Greenhill Road as a conservation park. In the chapter *The Cleland Conservation Park and Waterfall Gully*, Robert Martin and Susan Piddock document the history and the historical archaeology of this rugged landscape that forms the backdrop to the city of Adelaide and Gordon Copland in *Chinaman's Hut: An enigma* attempts to identify the origins of a remote cottage ruin located in the park.

Glenthorne Farm, located at the top of O'Halloran Hill, has a diverse history with many phases that reflect developments within the colony and, later, the state of South Australia. The first land grant was taken up by Major O'Halloran, the first Commissioner of Police to the colony. After changing hands twice, during which the mansion Glenthorne House was constructed, the property was purchased by the Australian Army for use as remount depot at the start of World War I and later, in 1947, it was taken over by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and used as a field station. The history and archaeology of the property have been examined by Keryn Walshe and Pam Smith and presented in the chapter *Glenthorne Estate by the Field River: From Lizard Lodge to CSIRO field station*.

The Yurrebilla Trail is an international standard three-day walking trail linking many of the hills face parks between the Belair National Park and the Black Hill Conservation Park at Tea Tree Gully. The natural and cultural heritage values along the trail have been interpreted and documented by South Australia's National Parks and Wildlife staff with assistance from the Hills Face Zone Cultural Heritage Project. In the chapter, *The Yurrebilla Trail: Linking hikers to the heritage of the Adelaide Hills*, Rebecca Brown and Anna Rebus use their research for the development of tourism information along the trail to provide an overview of natural and cultural heritage assets of the Hills Face Zone and highlight the future tourism potential of the region. In the final chapter of the volume, *The Adelaide Hills Face Zone cultural heritage management*, Donald Pate and Pam Smith provide an overview of the significance of archaeological heritage in the region to the ongoing development of cultural identities in Australia.

The identification of Adelaide's Hills Face Zone as a significant heritage landscape in addition to its already notable aesthetic and environmental qualities, must alter approaches to the administration of the region. Historic themes, the current basis for assessing a heritage landscape for inclusion on the State and National Heritage Registers, ensure that the priorities already structured into society are maintained and reinforced. The Hills Face Zone Cultural Heritage Project identified sufficient evidence to nominate the region as a significant heritage landscape but it does not meet all



of the current criteria required to be nominated as a heritage landscape of national significance. The following recommendations arising from this project seek to encourage a conceptual broadening of the criteria to permit such a nomination:

- The cultural heritage values of the Hills Face Zone should be acknowledged in the current legislation and individual historic sites protected from further development.
- A heritage policy should be developed for the Hills Face Zone. This could be considered under the Metropolitan Open Space Scheme (MOSS).
- The development of a cultural heritage management strategy by National Parks and Wildlife for the many historic sites identified within the parks and reserves in the zone. (National Parks and Wildlife SA has agreed to develop such a strategy).
- The nomination of the Hills Face Zone for inclusion on the State Heritage Register and the National Heritage Register as a heritage/conservation zone. This was investigated several years ago by the National Trust of South Australia. There are acknowledged difficulties in relation to privately owned land.
- The nomination of the Hills Face Zone as a Biosphere Reserve, the UN category for the protection of cultural landscapes. This form of nomination does take private landowners into account. The focus of the nomination would, however, shift from the protection of historic sites to include the interaction between landowners, the environment and specific cultural impacts on the environment.
- The Hills Face Zone Cultural Heritage GIS database should be regularly used in conjunction with other layers of GIS data already consulted by Local Government planners when considering development plan applications. If approval of a new development results in damage to a historic site or structure included on this database, but not included on the State or Local Heritage Registers, then the site should be fully documented by an archaeologist prior to the commencement of work. This should be adopted as a regular procedure when development plans in the Hills Face Zone are being assessed and the additional cost should be borne by the owner/developer. During this project it was found that several significant early colonial structures had been destroyed in recent years, but had not been recorded.

The Chief Investigators<sup>5</sup> of the Hills Face Zone Cultural Heritage Project and the editors and authors of this volume take the opportunity to thank our Industry Partners, the many volunteers who participated in the project and the many individuals who contributed to the project. This has been a truly multidisciplinary project with wide community collaboration; it has contributed to the understanding of our colonial heritage and will continue to contribute to future planning of the Adelaide Hills Face Zone.

**Pam Smith and F. Donald Pate**

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### NOTES

- 1 These conclusions were presented at a Forum to mark the end of the project Adelaide's Hills Face Zone: A Heritage Landscape, State Library of South Australia, May 2005. Five volumes of Survey Reports were also launched by John Hill, Minister for Environment and Heritage, on this occasion.
- 2 MOSS is a strategy to develop a linked network of open space (a second generation of parklands) in and around metropolitan Adelaide.
- 3 Consultations and surveys with the Traditional Owners have also been undertaken and will be reported at a separate time and under directions from the Kurna Heritage Committee.
- 4 Glenthorne Farm is not currently included in the Hills Face Zone. At the commencement of the Hills Face Zone Cultural Heritage Project in 2002 the Marion South Plan, promoted by the City of Marion, proposed that the Hills Face Zone should be extended to include the northern portion of Glenthorne Farm. The property was included in the heritage surveys on the recommendation of the City of Marion staff.
- 5 Associate Professor Donald Pate, Dr Pam Smith, Dr David Bass, Dr Susan Piddock and Ms Lyn Leader-Elliot.

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## **Adelaide's Hills Face Heritage Geographic Information Systems Database**

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The Adelaide's Hills Face Heritage Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Database is designed to be a companion to this volume and there are references to the database in most chapters in this volume.

All archaeological sites referred to in the text are geographically located on an aerial photograph within the database. Additional background information about most sites is also provided, together with historic photographs, maps and references.

The development of the GIS database is described in Chapter 8. To find a site you must select it from the following website:

**<http://ehlt.flinders.edu.au/archaeology/hfzchp/index1.htm>**

