The Australian Historic Shipwreck Preservation Project 2012

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Project update

- Background
- Planning
- Preparation
- Logistics
- Fieldwork
- Excavation strategy
- Preliminary archaeological results from three 2012 fieldwork periods

Desert archaeologist excavating underwater
AHSSPP Clarence (1841-1850) - Aims

- Understand site formation processes, colonial shipbuilding and lifeways associated with a colonial trader.
- Develop a new intervention for historic wooden wrecks at risk.
- Develop a procedure for the rapid imaging of assemblages – before their reburial.
- Develop site-specific in situ preservation protocols for the long-term stabilisation of the site. A semi-stasis ‘time capsule’.
- Conduct and improve conservation monitoring techniques following reburial of the site and associated artefacts.
- Contribute to the development of a sustainable, cost-effective and strategic national approach for wreck management.
- Make significant contributions to current international reburial and in situ preservation protocols.
The AHSPP Project addresses:

The UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage (UNESCO 2001)

The ICOMOS Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage (ICOMOS 1996)

Need to focus attention on *in situ* preservation as the preferred method for the long-term preservation of underwater cultural heritage
Clarence (1850)
Port Phillip Bay
Novelty 1: Jack-up Platform Barge Over Site
Novelty 2: X-Ray
Novelty 3: SSBA + comms
Novelty 4: On site cataloguing
Bagging Clarence – 3,500!
Initial excavation plan 2012

Final excavation plan 2012
Novelty 5: High resolution images of artefacts embedded in SR4
Excavated 0 – 9m datum with dredge
Cleaning and Storage
Sampling and Analyses
Novelty 5: Preparation for Reburial
Preparation for Reburial
Preparation of Sacrificial Samples
Reburial On-Site
On-Site Placement
Novelty 6: – Cloth + PVC

tarpaulins 4 x (7 x 14 m)

shade cloth (7 x 25 m)
November
Novelty 7: Wrapping it up!

1) Site stable + anoxic state
2) Artefacts recorded in detail
3) Structure recorded in detail
4) Artefacts re-interred
5) Successful intervention
6) Three protective layers
7) Already recolonising biota
8) Monitoring every 6 months
9) Coring on and off-site
10) Further wood + core studies
11) 84 practitioners involved
12) First such longitudinal study
13) World Peace 😊
Acknowledgement
The Australian Research Council (ARC) has recently awarded a large Linkage grant to investigate the excavation, reburial and in-situ preservation of shipwrecks and their associated artefacts, which are at risk. The project will focus on the early Australian-built wooden coastal trader *Clarence*, wrecked near St Leonards in Port Phillip Bay in 1850. The project will run for

The Deptford shipyard on the Williams River, NSW

Friday 14 September Chief investigator Mark Staniforth recently spent five days (5-10 September 2012) conducting research in