

7. Discussion

Despite the scale of excavations, and the depth that the backhoe excavations attained, no traces of the air raid shelters were located in any trenches or drill holes apart from Trench 7. This indicates only that an entrance to the air raid shelters was certainly located between Wards 1 & 3. This entrance was flanked by low 'L-shaped' retaining walls, capped by low grade concrete on the north, and stone on the south. The walls of the shelter were largely formed from the natural hard clay subsoil, into which a timber framework had been placed. The edges of the paths were quite damaged, suggesting that parts of the structure had been broken up, and the broken concrete chunks stacked on top of the path prior to backfilling. These fragments of damaged concrete were only roughly 10cms square and were not reinforced.

One theory circulating during the excavation amongst Repat staff, and based on Dennis Stopps' account of having seen stairs in this vicinity, was that the concrete path may have been a roof, and the gravel simply backfill rather than an intact contemporary feature, meaning that the shelter could only be found by excavating beneath the concrete and gravel paths. From the hand excavations and drill holes it was evident that the concrete path was not the roof of a stairwell, but the entrance ramp to the shelters. Furthermore, extrapolating from Figure 5.13, any stairs to the shelter would have emerged somewhere near the wards, which is not supported by historic photographs.

The interior floor of the shelter tunnel was probably timber, possibly made from slats to enable water to drain through the layer of gravel to the bottom layer of sand. The height of the tunnel walls was approximately 1.8 metres (6 ft), as evidenced in the east section, and appear to continue east into the adjoining property.

According to the historical documents the trenches were constructed with a jarrah framework (on the walls and ceiling) overlain by corrugated iron sheets, with curved sheets for the roof. The archaeology of Trench 7 clearly shows that any such superstructure was completely removed prior to the trench being backfilled, at least on the hospital side of the fenceline. As noted previously, given that the trenches presented constant problems for LeMessurier it is reasonable to assume that he would have closed them off after they ceased to be required for air raid protection. Given that it was legal to demolish them and remove their contents from June 1944

onwards, particularly if they were regarded as a 'nuisance', and that the paddock area was sold and subdivided for private housing between 1954 and 1959, it is not likely that the shelters would have been left intact. Certainly it seems likely that the entrances had been bulldozed to the fenceline and the whole area re-landscaped by 1958. The removal of trench materials is certainly consistent with practice at other similar sites, such as Keswick barracks, where trenches were removed and backfilled immediately after the war, but makes it impossible to reconcile the archaeological evidence with Dennis Stopps' or other oral histories.

7.1 Air raid shelters and the materiality of defence heritage

In the last decade nationwide programmes in England to record and list sites of 20th-century military heritage have identified a growing interest in passive air defence structures such as air raid shelters (Dobinson, Lake and Schofield 1997). In part this is because many of these sites are identified with the 'ordinary people' who built and used them (Dobinson, Lake and Schofield 1997: 288), but also because tangible World War II home-front heritage can contribute to social and political histories, develop deeper feelings of patriotism and reflective nostalgia, and encourage cross-generational communication (Kelly 2004). To date, no detailed archaeological work on the connections between memory and the material culture of World War II has been conducted in South Australia and very little has been conducted elsewhere in Australia (but see Gojak 2002), apart from isolated archaeological studies focussing on the cultural heritage management issues linked to the ongoing preservation and conservation of these sites (e.g. Edmonds and Clement 1995; Grinberg, Knight and Associates 1997). A general lack of recognition of these sites may in part result from the notion that the defence of Australia occurred only in a national, rather than a regional or state context, as a direct result of national government policies and global philosophies of war. As a result Australia's military history is often viewed in the context of the Australian experience of war in its fields of conflict, or in terms of the impact of rationing on the civilian population and not in terms of the defensive landscape of Australia itself. Ironically, many of these domestic places and objects formed a large part of people's everyday working lives and therefore also played a major role in the formation of Australia as a nation, socially, culturally and economically. At least 43 air raid shelters are known to survive archaeologically in Australia (Table 7.1). Some of these seem to have been built between 1940-41 in response to the perceived devastation of the war in Europe and before any direct attack on Australian soil had taken place, but most are likely to date to 1941-42.

Table 7.1: Registered and other known air raid shelter sites across Australia

Location	Register	Description	Date
QUEENSLAND			
1. Underground hospital, Mt Isa	Queensland Heritage Register Place ID: 601102	Constructed by Mount Isa Mines volunteer labour in the grounds of the Mount Isa District Hospital as a response to the perceived threat of Japanese invasion.	March-April 1942
1. <i>STATE</i> : Balmoral Fire Station, Morningside, Brisbane	Queensland Heritage Register Place ID: 601530	Government built brick walled and concrete roofed air raid shelter of the 'pill box' type constructed at rear of fire station.	Unspecified
2. <i>PRIVATE</i> : Broadway Hotel, Woolloongabba, Brisbane	Queensland Heritage Register Place ID: 600354	Small one storeyed reinforced concrete building in south corner of hotel site 'thought to be an air raid shelter'. It has two entrances with simple timber doors and openings above. The concrete is impressed with the pattern of timber formwork, with curved corners near the doorways.	Unspecified
3. Newmarket Air Raid Shelter, Brisbane	Queensland Heritage Register Place ID: 602482	Located at the intersection of Enoggera Road and Banks Street, now used as a bus shelter. Constructed by Brisbane City Council as part of a public program to erect 200 public shelters.	Dec 1941 - June 1942
4. Acacia Ridge Air Raid Shelter,	Queensland Heritage Register	Constructed to provide protection for military personnel	1942?

Archerfield, Brisbane	Place ID: 602487	stationed nearby and built into the north face of the old Archerfield Quarry. Built by the Allied Works Council?	
5. Howard Smith Wharves, Brisbane	Not listed?	Tunnel-type shelters made of formwork concrete, located at the rear of the Howard Smith Wharves at Petrie Bight under the northern end of the Story Bridge in Brisbane.	Unspecified
6. <i>PRIVATE</i> : Suburban backyard shelter, Annerley, Brisbane	Not listed?	Eight feet deep	Unspecified
7. <i>PRIVATE</i> : Suburban backyard shelter, 73 Brown Pde, Ashgrove, Brisbane	Not listed?	Concrete shelter, 2.7m wide, 5m long x 1.8m high inside.	Unspecified
8. Civic Club, Charters Towers	Queensland Heritage Register Place ID: 600398	Concrete air raid shelter to rear of block (not described)	Unspecified
9. <i>PRIVATE</i> : Herries Private Hospital, 180 McLeod St, Cairns	Queensland Heritage Register Place ID: 602137	Air raid shelter in backyard (not described)	Unspecified
10. <i>PRIVATE</i> : Prince Consort Hotel, Fortitude Valley, Brisbane	Queensland Heritage Register Place ID: 600212	Large air raid shelter at rear of yard (not described)	Unspecified
11. Thomas Dixon Centre, West End, Brisbane	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 19006 Place File No: 4/01/001/0346	Single storey brick air raid shelter located on the eastern side of the main building, the top of which is used as an outdoor seating area opening from the former engine	Unspecified

	Queensland Heritage Register Place ID: 601024	room, now a kitchenette.	
12. Toowoomba Railway Station	Queensland Heritage Register Place ID: 600872	The station has two WWII air raid shelters: a brick and concrete shelter adjacent to the front entry stairs on Railway Street, and a smaller concrete shelter located on the northern platform near the honour board, designed for the use of QR employees.	Unspecified
13. Dunwich Public Hall, Qld	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 101987 Place File No: 4/01/078/0026	Anecdotal evidence for the floor being removed during WWII and an air raid shelter dug underneath	1940s?
14. Kelvin Grove Road, Qld	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 100011 Place File No: 4/01/001/0355 Removed from register	Remnants of an old pillar box type air raid shelter	1940s?
15. Langenbaker House, Ilfracombe, Qld	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 103820 Place File No: 4/08/206/0005	An air raid shelter was excavated to the east of the rear of the house but there is now no clear above ground evidence of this feature.	1942
16. Mount Mulligan Mine and	Register of the National Estate	Air raid shelter	1940s?

Township, Qld	Place ID: 100640 Place File No: 4/06/258/0017		
17. 'The Rocks' guesthouse, 20 Cleveland Tce, Townsville	Not listed?	Formwork concrete above-ground shelter, built at rear of guesthouse	Unspecified
18. Sandy Cape Lightstation, Qld, Fraser Island	Register of the National Estate Place ID: Place File No:	The remains of a World War Two bunker are located in a gully some distance from the lightstation.	1940s
19. Queensland University of Technology, Gardens Point	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 100313 Place File No: 4/01/001/0356	The effect of the bombing of Pearl Harbour in 1942 in World War Two, led to the erection of Air Raid Shelters and Blast Walls at several locations on the campus at Gardens Point	1940s
NEW SOUTH WALES			
20. Luna Park, Sydney, NSW	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 101189 Place File No: 1/13/027/0093	Tunnel and chamber cut into sandstone cliff	1940s?
21. Darjeeling, 2 Chambers Rd, Leura NSW	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 101238 Place File No: 1/14/006/0048	Professionally constructed air-raid shelter under the orchard. A timber roof and a 250-300mm thick concrete shell formed the underground shelter. Years later, water seeped in from a nearby spring and the shelter was	1940s?

		condemned.	
22. HMAS Platypus, High St, North Sydney	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 101226 Place File No: 1/13/027/0094	The former Coal Store, although not purpose built as an Air Raid shelter, is a rare surviving example of an Air Raid shelter which demonstrates the principal characteristics of the adaptive design of large shelters; in this respect it is representative of a wide range of Air Raid shelters	1906 - 1910
23. Lavender Bay, Milson's Point, NSW	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 105772 Place File No: 1/13/027/0053	Same as Luna Park shelter	1940s?
24. Price Cottage, Quirindi, NSW	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 103764 Place File No: 1/02/181/0006	A WWII air raid shelter is located under the main floor area of the house and is entered by way of a trap door.	1940s?
25. Prison Barracks Precinct, Cockatoo Island, NSW	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 1950 Place File No: 1/12/022/0085 Commonwealth Heritage List Place ID: 105256 Place File No: 1/12/022/0085	The free overseers' quarters was erected between about 1850 and 1857. The second quarters to the east was built at the same time. Later it was used for battery storage, and then for chemistry and photographic purposes. During the Second World War it was converted to an air raid shelter.	1850-1857 (air raid shelter conversion unspecified)

26. Spectacle Island Explosives Complex, Drummoyne	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 15323 Place File No: 1/17/013/0006 Commonwealth Heritage List Place ID: 105393 Place File No: 1/17/013/0006	Tanks for the Storage of Torpedo Cable were built in 1886 and were used as an Air Raid Shelter in 1942.	1886 (air raid shelter conversion unspecified)
27. Nelson Head Inner Lighthouse, Nelson Bay, NSW	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 103368 Place File No: 1/09/064/0029	Restored WW II bunker	1940s
28. RAAF Base, Dubbo, NSW	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 100489 Place File No: 1/03/203/0010 Commonwealth Heritage List Place ID: 105403 Place File No: 1/03/203/0010	Semi-underground PBX bunker	1940?
29. <i>PRIVATE:</i> Graythwaite, Edward St, North Sydney	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 105826 Place File No: 1/13/027/0025	Air raid shelters were added within the building	1940s?
30. <i>PRIVATE:</i> Waverton	Archaeological survey only (Gojak)	Brick and concrete air raid shelter in back yard	Unspecified

VICTORIA			
30. PRIVATE: 23 Mitford St, St Kilda, Vic	Register of National Estate Place ID: 15257 Place File No: 2/11/046/0020	Full, in ground, reinforced concrete structure 9.4m long x 1.5m wide x 2.1m high. Barrel vaulted ceiling, air vents, stairs to entry. Between 1936 and 1952 the building was used as a Red Cross hospital.	1941
31. Albion Explosives Factory (former) Deer Park Vic	Register of National Estate Place ID: 17992 Place File No: 2/12/051/0003	Monolithic concrete construction, featuring a flat roof, timber entrance doors and ventilation slits around the top of the walls. The interior is divided into several rooms, including a listening room, casualty room and air raid shelter	1940s?
32. Limestone Building, Jackson Rd, Portsea Vic	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 5819 Place File No: 2/18/021/0025 Commonwealth Heritage List Place ID: 105178 Place File No.: 2/18/021/0025	The cellar was rediscovered in 1941 and used as an air raid shelter.	
33. Quamby Flats, Toorak, Vic	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 15669 Place File No: 2/11/042/0062	House designed 1941 by Roy Grounds. The inclusion of an air raid shelter in the development reflects the concerns of wartime Australia.	1941

34. Spotswood Pumping Station (former) Vic	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 5527 Place File No: 2/12/055/0017	The buildings are symmetrically laid out, with a brick embankment at the rear which contains an air raid shelter.	1880s (air raid shelter unspecified)
35. Defence Explosive Factory Maribyrnong	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 18437 Place File No: 2/12/051/0005 Commonwealth Heritage List Place ID: 105325 Place File No: 2/12/051/0005	A range of Air Raid Protection (ARP) shelters were constructed on the site, including concrete bunker style shelters and shelters for individuals. The latter consist of a concrete pipe sunk vertically into the ground and covered with a concrete slab. Zigzag slit trenches were also dug for members of the workforce to take shelter in, but these have long since been filled in.	1940s?
36. Fort Gellibrand, Williamstown, Melbourne	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 103804 Place File No: 2/12/055/0018 Commonwealth Heritage List Place ID: 105615 Place File No: 2/12/055/0018	Splinter-proof shelter dates from 1938-42 and is a concrete bunker. It is associated with the Artillery Proof Range.	1938-1942
37. RAAF Base, Mallacoota, Vic	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 101839 Place File No: 2/09/270/0177	The Operations Room is a large rectangular bunker which is half submerged in the ground. Approximately 36m long and 7m wide	1942

38. Victoria Barracks A Block, St Kilda Rd, Melbourne	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 5440 Place File No: 2/11/049/0010 Commonwealth Heritage List Place ID: 105167 Place File No: 2/11/049/0010	Strong rooms and an alternative or emergency bomb proof War Cabinet Room or 'bunker' in the basement. HQ of Defence until 1958	1940s
39. ADI Footscray, Vic	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 19122 Place File No: 2/12/051/0007	Numerous air raid shelters	1940s
WESTERN AUSTRALIA			
40. Kalumburu Airfield, WA	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 100984 Place File No: 5/09/213/0029	Air raid shelter trenches	1943
41. Wireless Hill Park, Canning Hwy, WA	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 10645 Place File No: 5/12/014/0003	No evidence of air raid shelter obtained but supposedly one existed	1940s?
TASMANIA			
42. Angelsea Barracks Tas	Register of the National Estate Place ID: 11301	Standard design in reinforced concrete with barrel-vaulted roof.	1942

	Place File No: 6/01/004/0182 Commonwealth Heritage List Place ID: 105488 Place File No: 6/01/004/0182		
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY			
43. PRIVATE: Calthorpes, Canberra	ACT Heritage Register	1927 house with shelter in back yard	1942

Note: This table does not include bunkers, underground operations rooms attached to large military/defense or industrial installations, many of which had substantial air raid precautions built into their fabric.

This wider context makes the Repat's air raid shelters even more important as an historical and archaeological site. Home-front heritage is typically devalued in comparison to battlefields and military sites, since the domestic needs of families and non-combatants is often the anonymous background to conflict. Relatively little is known of the domestic home-front in countries such as Australia, in particular, which experienced few, if any, direct wartime encounters. In a southern city such as Adelaide the understanding of civilian reactions to the threat of war is even more remote, although several oral history participants described a very real sense of fear in the face of a possible invasion or attack. Valerie Howe, who lived in a house behind the Repat, described a feeling of extreme apprehension during the war, particularly 'once the war was declared and ... when Japan came into the war. We were told very little, we knew very little about what was going on in Broome and Darwin. I think we knew nothing about what was going on in Broome, of course that was war secrets. It wasn't until many years later that I was in Broome and saw the planes and read the stories. ... There was never anything tangible. It was the imagination that was rampant.' (Valerie Howe interview, 11/9/07). The Repat shelters are therefore an important site for representing the physical traces of a landscape of fear generated by potential wartime threat.

The other way in which the Repat shelters can be seen as a significant heritage site is through their function after the war as a hub around which aspects of the social identity of the Repat community has been constructed. Why do the air raid shelters at the Repat seem to invite the telling of stories? At a local level it may be connected to the particular type of community epitomised by the Repat. Hospitals, as Blankenship and Elling observe (1962), support separate, semi-isolated communities:

Each is the hub of a network of loyalties, commitments, and values which are specific to it ... [with] volunteers, staunch adherents in the community, loyal workers, and devoted doctors, nurses and board members. This type of commitment ... is generated by the organization itself as a cooperative, purposeful system with minimum reference to the larger community and power structure (Blankenship and Elling, 1962:267).

Analysis of oral histories shows that the shelters were far from forgotten in the aftermath of the war. Stories about them circulated amongst staff who joined the Repat much later, contributing to a sense of community that extended beyond the initial military constitution of the hospital into the present day civilian community. After the war, as the hospital became centred on veterans and the process of repatriation, connections to the past became more and more central to the process of defining its identity. The invented nostalgia generated across 60 years of Repat culture became a vehicle for constructing a popular cultural sense of place that bonded people to each other and to their workplace locality.

At a more general level, memory is vital to all forms of conceptualising heritage, and the values given to the past in the present. If Appadurai's (1996) assessment of the fragmentation inherent in modern communities is accurate, then one of the key factors in strengthening a sense of community is fortifying their relationship to place. Irrespective of whether this involves "real" social memory or the invented nostalgia of social myth, community archaeology has the potential to forge such ties in a way that few other practices can. In this sense, then, social myth is as vital a force for community strength as any other kind of commemorative practice, although its distance from the orthodoxy of the archaeological past brings back echoes of the academic/public divide. Darvill refers to this very personal structure of knowledge as

contemplative knowledge: 'beliefs and understandings that provide a basis for attachment to a place, time or event and ... which contribute to a sense of identity and a place in the world.' (Darvill 2007: 449, 451). He notes that people often are completely uninterested in other categories of knowledge, such as narrative knowledge, typified by the big picture truths of history or archaeology. Instead, people seek a different experience for their own personal reasons, however much we might wish to tell them otherwise or have them believe a different story. We echo Delle (2008) when asking, should archaeologists debunk such social myths when they function to unite communities?